A new craft school for Amsterdam Noord

Space for everyone

The present tendency to conceive schools as safe havens for pupils is both understandable and necessary. Yet, the constant fear of crime and violence, the desire to have the school ‘locked down’, to keep an eye on the pupils, to keep an eye on the surrounding area, is stifling. The design proposes a sequence of squares and courts, bound and constricted by the pedestrianised school building. The left over space that is now the Mosveld is transformed into a structured series of public spaces.

The Mosveld facade is a representative face to the large market square. It allows a band in the whole and composition of the surrounding spaces. The facade is also situated here, and together with the entrance hall and the entrance ‘gate’ it can be the perfect stage for a manifold of activities.

The schoolyard, as part of the sequence, becomes a public square where pupils and neighbours can repair. It also forms the main connection between two parts of the neighbourhood.

The sculptural shape of the school gives a cause of scale to our approach. It is open for interpretation. It is a massive grey block? Perhaps from a distance, but close views and experience the subtle colouring of the paving stones. Feel their texture and discover they are 

In situ concrete structure with cardboard insulation

In the interior, the simple materials again dominate. They get their quality from the way they are combined and assembled. A good example is the flooring system that exists of rear of timber beams that are covered together, with a thin layer of concrete poured on top. The play of scale and distance from the exterior is repeated inside. Where you touch materials they reveal something new. A bronze door handle you touch it with a ring, than a standard door handle. The there are few larger than standard. The window sills are covered in paving stones. Where they are usually cold when found outside, here they are warm because of the floorheating system underneath.

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