Syllabus – MSC3 Public Realm Rotterdam
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Title:
Refreshing the Dutch urban block.

Location:
ABN AMRO plot in Rotterdam city center, between the Coolingsel and the Lijnbaan.

Topic:
The MSC3 Studio Public Realm will touch upon the issue of the public realm in relation with the current urban redevelopments in the city center of Rotterdam. The subject of the studio is to provide the center with a new building which will densify the city. We will develop different strategies to tackle several issues and to meet the needs of the city of Rotterdam. We have to take in consideration that we are living in a period where we not simply demolish every old unused building and replace it by something new. We are shifting to a period where the existing will be transformed and redeveloped. The studio will touch upon this subject by the two monuments on the site, which will remain. The location of the site is in the city center of Rotterdam. Framed by the Coolingsel, the Binnenwegplein, The Lijnbaan and the Van Oldebarneveltsplaats. At the eastside, the Coolingsel side, the location will be fenced through a early modern headquarter of the ABN AMRO bank. At the Westside, the Lijnbaan side, the location will be fenced by the Lijnbaan buildings, an after war restructuring of Van den Broek and Bakema. These two buildings are monuments and have to be preserved. The Office tower in the middle of the plot will be demolished. The destination of the Jungerhans building is up to us. It can be demolished or be preserved. We have the task to design a building which fits the urban fabric and will densify the Lijnbaankwartier.

Problem Statement:
The growth of Rotterdam is through the harbor based on labor and capital. Nowadays and in the future the urbanization will be based upon knowledge. Rotterdam, and the rest of the Netherlands, will need more space for this knowledge. To be ready for the future Rotterdam needs a new center for the knowledge society.

- How do I design a building that contribute to the knowledge society.
- How do I design a building that fits the current urban fabric and meets the requirements for the future?
- How to design a building that gives space for the public realm, but also densifies the city?
- How to design the transitions form public to private?

Goal:
My goal is to design a building that fits in the urban fabric of Rotterdam. Breaking through the monofunctionality of the Lijnbaan. The design has to fit the conditions which are set up in the masterplan. I am deeply interested in designing the public, collective and the private domain. Especially the transition between these spaces. Nowadays we will meet more and more heavily densified cities, these cities need buildings with multiple functions stacked one atop the other. The
hybrid buildings. The public and the private have to be designed very carefully in these buildings. In my design I will explore these chances and qualities of these buildings.

My goal is not only to come to a design, but also to understand the process. How to deal with such a difficult subject? How to deal with the research and the translation from the research to a masterplan? The entire process from beginning to end I want to understand and make my own.

**Method:**

To achieve an appropriate design for the plot in Rotterdam, we will first do research to the existing building blocks of the center. We will do this to learn from the current blocks and urban tissue of Rotterdam. In the research we will analyze components of the blocks to fully grasp them. In my essay I will touch upon the issue of the public space inside buildings. What are the characteristics that have determined the arcade? And what do we need to design a public space inside a building that attracts people?

**Relevance:**

The project is about the urban fabric in the center of Rotterdam. The building has great influence on the character of the city of Rotterdam. It will change this character as well. Also the social life in the center will change by making such a building with this amount of functions. We have to do research to develop new mixed programmes and strategies to meet the social, cultural, political and economic problems of the 21st century. To find solutions for enhancing the knowledge based economy what is laying ahead of us. As well as solutions to deal with the different flows from public to private.

**Program**

The first conclusions we could take from the analysis is that Rotterdam misses a core for its urban fabric. The urbanization of the past years and especially of the coming decades is based on the information society. This information society is built up on knowledge, which comes from the creative business and innovation. The knowledge of the future is a product of smaller companies, self-employed people and freelancers. For the new building is this the point where we put our focus on. Besides the program of retail office and housing we want to stimulate these self-employed people and freelancers by giving them spaces to work, and creating the facilities for them to use. We want also add functions for the creative class. But also restaurants, bars and Education. The first idea of my program is to design different aspects. Like I said in the topic Goal, I would like to design the public (retail), collective(some offices, education or cultural) and private space(dwelling). And my main concern is to design the transition zone between them.

**Planning:**

The 32 weeks are separated in 5 moments in which we will give a presentation. The P1 to P5. At the P1 we will show the results of our research. In the weeks after P1, till P2, we will go from the research to develop a masterplan for the site. Everyone will design a part of the masterplan individually. At the P2 we will give a presentation about the masterplan and the individually design. The period till P3 I will use for further development of the individual design. The individual designs are still in close contact with the masterplan and will serve to strengthen it. After the P3 the project will be developed further in depth. This to come at the P4 with a well thought and developed design. The weeks after P4 will be used to complete the project work and make the design worthy for presentation. At the P5 I will give a presentation with drawings, models, and impressions.