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EXPRESS YOURSELF - a talent hub for Den Haag Zuid-West

graduation plan

**personal information**

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**Why I chose the studio?**

For me, the link between society and architecture is one of the most fascinating aspects of the architectural discipline. The public space, whether it's inside or outside, is reflecting this relationship. The field of public buildings is strongly interwoven with that. People, their habits and activities are a fundamental part of this architecture. Buildings especially the ones dealing with a public, social or cultural dimension are always influenced by the ideas, values, norms, beliefs, relationships and forms of their social context. Society produces buildings, and the buildings, although not producing society, help to maintain or influence many of its social forms. My bachelor graduation project was dealing with a hybrid living complex, which already combined different public facilities and spaces with housing. The theoretical base for the assembly of programs and knowledge about multiplicity didn’t go in-depth still. With my choice for the Public Buildings Graduation Studio I aimed to get new and more profound input on public architecture and multiplicity and with this develop a stronger position for my design.

**the design assignment**

**Problem statement**

The social structure of Morgenstond in Den Haag Zuid-West is characterized by low social cohesion, relatively low life satisfaction and minor engagement with the immediate surrounding. These conditions result into a passive lifestyle of inhabitants, which feel worthless, lonely and depressed. They don’t see the necessity to engage with the public life. Plans of gentrification and densification with different social classes will increase social segregation in the neighborhood. Therefore, empowerment and motivation are needed to build bridges.

**Research question**

We need a resilient social structure for a positive future development of the social environment of the area. In my concept, empowerment is creating the framework for that. Through self-determined motivation, which derives from strengthening of self-identity, a pursuit of quality in abilities, and the awareness of impact on other people, citizens of Morgenstond and users of the design will get more aware of their own talents, interact with different people and become more active in public life. The creation of motivation not only activates behavior, but also determines its
The physical form of the PUBLIC CONDENSER must support these meetings, so there is opportunity to follow many of the ongoing activities and be inspired by what others are doing.” (Public Condenser Brief, 2019) This process of inspiration by others is exactly what I want to achieve with the enhancement of empowerment within my building. People of all ages, sexes, nationalities etc. will encounter inside and see what others are doing and with this enhance acceptance but also activeness. Within a sequence of spatial situations curiosity and inspiration will be stimulated.

Method description
I start my approach with a general research of the site according to the studio’s structure. With this I used specific methods of site analysis as observation, notation and interviews. This gave me a first overview over the area and a direction in which to go for my conceptual design and design specific research. For the design specific research, I investigated specific fields of the architecture discipline. Literature research opened the idea of empowerment through architecture. The transformation of these theories into actual space is supported by architecture-psychological theories of Flade and Kaplan. I find analogies in other typologies with case studies for architecture of staging of sequences. This typological research helps me define different spatial sequences. References from different buildings illustrate my thoughts and structure them. After creating a building type with a strong framework, I am doing a typology transfer on the site-specific circumstances.

Literature
On empowerment:

On perception of space:

On the design process:
RELEVANT INFORMATION
FROM P1

In the first phase of the graduation project we did a profound analysis of two case study areas from which we chose our designing area. In groups we researched into different fields of the city structure: City, Connection, People and Power. The different research fields gave me insights into a wide knowledge about the site. City and Connection mostly bring out physical and space related recommendations that can be used in the design stage and power and people mostly provide social and organizational advises which helped to come to a design brief and conceptual idea.
From the general introduction we can conclude that we have to be careful how the space provokes activity. The neighbourhood is missing in public life even if itself the district would be of a size of a mid-size dutch city. The overview of the different spacial qualities let me conclude that there is a big amount unused green transit spaces in the neighbourhood. We need to create an activator for the park and the different zones on the site. These two points can be realised through creating a place where social contact is activated, activity is provided and existing social groups are present in the design/urban space.

From the analysis of the elements of architecture, I conclude for myself that it is important to not create another „Diamond“ but take the DNA of the place, connect it to the place and create a space specific design. Further important points are, that new services and densification are planned. The old school building on the site is protected, which motivates me to keep it and incorporate it in my design.
The Hague Zuid-West is clearly designed on masterplan level. Building blocks are carefully placed in an orthogonal grid with lots of space in between. The space in between itself is mostly left open and filled up with empty green fields of grass. These fields are generally left unused. The Dutch call it 'kijkgroen': green to look at.

The character of the space is influenced by the vast amount of green space. Often it is unhierarchical and unused.
MELIS STOKEPARK

The park mainly consists of fields and trees, almost no bushes at all. This makes the happenings in the park very visible from the surrounding streets. Lots of social control.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General appearance</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Liveliness</th>
<th>Social contact</th>
</tr>
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Spatial qualities of the site
CONNECTION
The connection to the surrounding and The Hague in general are done in various layers. The site is located at the crossing of the two main axes of sports and commercial which the public condenser could work with. This is called the green cross. The Loevesteinlaan edge of the area could become an important arrival point coming with the car. The street should be developed into a “north-south” connector for cars whereas other streets would be released from too much car traffic. The Melis Stokelaan will be a bike and public transport dominated street and with this the visual and physical connection needs to be worked out, especially the visual interconnection from the tram, which runs along Melis Stokelaan. The same goes for the visual connection from the area to the Melis Stokepark, which should be strengthened to further activate it. Within the next 10 years, The Hague Southwest should provide 10.000 new residentials and enhance its connection to the city center as well as to the beach. As the analysis shows, most of the new residentials will be located in the direct surroundings of the Melis Stokepark. The same counts for the roads that will enhance the area’s connection to the city and beach. This means that the site specific area in which the public condenser should operate is in massive transition.
traffic overview
Site location in relation to bus coverage within Southwest Meer, R. van der. Based on map from openstreetmap.org.
PEOPLE
The neighbourhood needs a common sense and identification point. Social Cohesion is very low. Ethnical and social diversity are defining the local identity and should be represented in the design. It needs a place where people feel welcome and social interaction can happen. Main social issues are poverty, health issues, high unemployment, low salaries and the “forgotten” youth. From an analysis of bottom-up initiatives we see that within the social structure people tend to engage less. Access to participation should be expanded. Also bottom-up projects in The Hague have too less space. The research shows clearly that the design needs to respect a variety of people. Diversity needs to be represented.

POWER
The new building could work as an icon to bring people together and into the neighbourhood. For me not in the sense of a “crazy” building but because of the attractiveness of the space and the program. The public condenser could work as a sort of top-down bottom-up project.

1. Social cohesion: create a place where people get to know each other and increase tolerance and understanding towards each other. This can be an multifunctional event space, or programs that interact with each other.

2. Youth: give the youth a perspective and let them discover their talents. This can be through sport activities, youth center facility or even night activity.

3. Elderly: provide a better infrastructure for elderly. They lack in health support and social interaction.

4. Health: health is a big issue in the area and a lot of people would need support. For this space for workshops (e.g. cooking, diet), health education, therapy and sport facilities can be part of the concept.

5. Multicultural: keep in mind the different ethnic groups to make an inclusive design. The design should to be inclusive for all cultural and ethnic groups.

6. Bottom-up: provide flexible space or rooms for bottom-up initiatives or events to make starting and engaging in bottom-up more attractive. It would also put bottom-up in a more prominent location and with this encourages people to engage.

7. Safety: create a safe space for everyone. Designing space be conscious about safety issues in the public space (e.g. dark corners, visible connections)

8. Poverty: provide people with possibilities that they are not able to afford which can form a base for a positive personal future development. It may be place for education as well as motivation or information.
As other big Dutch cities Den Haag is also a very ethnic diverse with a history of giving people a new home. People of 180 nations 50.000 expats and more than 3000 international students live in Den Haag. It houses 160 international organizations. But it is also the most segregated city in the Netherlands. (Huis kopen om te verhuren, 2019)

People with certain backgrounds tend to live in the same districts. In Den Haag the differences between neighbourhoods with a very high percentage of immigrants, and others with a low percentage is very large. (Statistics Netherlands, 2019)

![Image of migration and segregation](https://maex.nl/denhaag/#/initiatives)

Top ten municipalities with the largest proportion of non-western immigrants in % of total population, 1 January 2000 (Statistics Netherlands, 2019)

Segregation of non-western immigrants in the four large cities in %, 1 January 2000 (Statistics Netherlands, 2019)

![Image of socio-economic circumstances](https://www.stadmakers.nl/?author=1)

Poor socio-economic circumstances of the neighbourhood result in low participation in neighbourhood initiatives and in the ability to express their social and spatial needs, as in Escamp.

![Image of low participation](https://inindebuurt.nl/)

low participation in the public environment
Keu’s genoeg was built in 1958 and was former school building that became vacant in 2012. After two years of vacancy, the building was transformed into Keu’s genoeg offers an addition to stimulate entrepreneurship, self-development, and offer spaces for games and hobby activities. In addition, it is possible to rent office units, meeting rooms and gathering spaces for a club house. Together with Samonda, a snooker club, they rent the whole building and a dance club called Nitsamin where they perform three days per week dance exercises. The club offers weekly classes to every target group; youth, elderly and middle aged. According to the organisation Samonda, they attract approximately 600 visitors per week and is 300 days open per year.

The initiators envisioned to realise spaces and program that are absence in the neighbourhood and surveyed amongst local citizens, whereas the building should create support base for the function. Furthermore, every function should complement the already existing functions, housed in the old school building and eventually a business was the most appropriate option. The initiative suffered to be financial feasible, on one hand they called in the help and input of the local citizens, on the other hand, increases it the involvement of the neighbourhood to sustain the viability of the organized building. Volunteers maintain on daily basis the building.

woman living in Morgenstond already around 20 years
age: 48

How do you experience Morgenstond / the site?
It is a nice neighbourhood to live here. I feel like it
is a place where you can feel safe and welcome. It is
only a matter of your own mindset. I am part of the
Buurtinterventieteam and feel like it helps the people in
the sense of giving them psychological security.

Which improvements do you wish for?
I wish for a place for the youth. Now they don’t really
have a place to go and the last youth centre got shut
down. Also there are not a lot of nice shops in the
neighbourhood.

man living in Morgenstond for 8 years working in Keu’s
genoeg
age: 56

How do you experience Morgenstond / the site?
I am working at Keu’s genoeg for help that I get from the
state cause I would be unemployed otherwise. Right now
we are very busy with offering and organizing integration
courses for migrants.

What do you wish for in the future?
The new plans of the municipality of bringing diversity
to the area is a bit ironic to me. We already have a lot
of diversity in the neighbourhood and it feels more like
homogenising again.

Mother living in Morgenstond since 2,5 years visiting Melis
Stokepark with her little daughter
age: 38 and 42

How do you experience Morgenstond / the site?
I don’t really like the upper part of Morgenstond and don’t
feel well there but where I live in the lower part it is really
good. The park here is nice as well for the kid to play. Here
they can play outside and in the Zuiderpark there is an
indoor playground when the weather is bad.

Which improvements do you wish for?
People here need motivation to get up and motivated. That
is my main hope for the future.
In general, the healthiness in Morgenstond is lower than in Den Haag. An index for that is the perceived healthiness of the inhabitants.

Another indicator for an unhealthy lifestyle is the percentage of people with diabetes. In Morgenstond (12%) it is higher than in Den Haag (8%) and in the Netherlands (7%). It can be connected to overweight, unhealthy diet and too less exercise.

Not only the physical health in Morgenstond is worse but also the psychological health. People living there have a higher chance of depression, anxiety disorder and tend to feel lonelier.

There are very few activities for young people in Morgenstond. They often have a background of poverty and migration. The current situation leads to gatherings in the streets and parks.

The JIT ("Youth Intervention Team") creates a point of contact for youth between 12 and 27 in need of help in Den Haag Zuid. They help with living, working, education, debt, relationships and health issues.

Young people tend to group up according to their ethnic background which worsens the disconnection and integration. Education and especially language skills are suffering which leads to a high rate of people without diploma, unemployment and low future perspectives. The ultimate result from that is drug abuse, criminality and radicalization.

People in Morgenstond are living an unhealthy lifestyle. There is no real prevention action. Creating a place of future for youth can give them orientation in their lives.
SOCIAL COHESION

The neighborhood Morgenstond is one of the 40 problematic Neighbourhoods in the Netherlands. The selection of these is on a basis of 18 criteria. They often have to deal with problems as cultural tensions, unemployment and criminality.

For a first overview of the satisfaction of inhabitants social cohesion is an indicator. In comparison with Den Haag in general it is visible that the neighbourhood has a lack of sense of local community. This could also derive from the neighbourhood as a transitioning neighborhood.

Poverty is a big issue in Morgenstond. 39.6 % of the households live with/below the social minimum, in comparison with 20.7% in Den Haag in total. A serious problem in the neighbourhood are private depts. (Denhaag.incijfers.nl, 2019)

Many children live in poverty. It lacks for money for their education, food during school or individual support. Because of poverty health problems in the neighbourhood are more common and extra health services can’t be archived. A lot of different social problems derive from poverty: criminality, low education and youth without perspectives.

To make the neighbourhood safer and more liveable inhabitants started a project cooperating with the police and municipality. The “Burtinterventieteam Morgenstond” consists of 20 inhabitants of Morgenstond of all ages and nationalities. The oldest volunteer is 82 years and the youngest 22. Each Thursday evening / night they walk rounds through the neighbourhood in at least teams of two. They understand themselves as extra ears and eyes of the police. (Lammersen, 2010)

CRIMINALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morgenstond</th>
<th>Den Haag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sometimes feels unsafe in own neighborhood, in %</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often feels unsafe in own neighborhood, in %</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>score for safety in the neighborhood (average)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poverty and missing perspective are part of many daily lives in Morgenstond. The missing social cohesion could result in a space for coming together. Creating a safe space for everyone is an upcoming task.


PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS FROM PI AND MORE SITE RELATED RESEARCH

The neighborhood is characterized by a strong grid structure in its urban layout, a vast amount of un-hierarchical green spaces, that are often not well used nowadays and a mostly generic architecture with an endless repetition of the same elements, forms and materials. All in all we can conclude that it is a typical post war urban planning, that was very much fitted to the back then contemporary users and wishes but lost its attractivity during changes of time and changes in the social structure.
The openness of the area by the vast amount of green and non-hierarchical public spaces creates many non-places and places without characteristics. People tend not to use the public space because of that.
There are key social issues arising. The social cohesion is significantly lower as in The Hague in general. Plans for gentrification and densification could increase social segregation and frustration within the existing social structure. People of morgenstond have a lower life satisfaction because of for example worse health situation. The life standards are often influenced by poverty and unemployment. This results into a passive lifestyle of inhabitants, which feel worthless, lonely and depressed. They don’t see the necessity to engage with public life.

One answer addressing these problems is creating a new inclusive identity through empowerment and self-driven motivation of all inhabitants. Empowerment can create the base for the positive future development of the social structure. I believe that architecture can contribute to that and that the new Public Condenser will function as an incubator of empowerment and with this contribute to the establishment of a diverse and resilient society. It will showcase the talents and identities of the neighborhood.
aims for the new building
ALL YOU NEED IS YOUR OWN IMAGINATION
SO USE IT THAT'S WHAT IT'S FOR (THAT'S WHAT IT'S FOR)
GO INSIDE, FOR YOUR FINEST INSPIRATION
YOUR DREAMS WILL OPEN THE DOOR (OPEN UP THE DOOR)
IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE IF YOU'RE BLACK OR WHITE
IF YOU'RE A BOY OR A GIRL
IF THE MUSIC'S PUMPING IT WILL GIVE YOU NEW LIFE
YOU'RE A SUPERSTAR, YES, THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE,
YOU KNOW IT

VOGUE, Madonna, 1990
I am walking along Melis Stokelaan. It is a big street dividing the neighborhood of Morgestond. I am passing a park - not a lot of public activity in there. It may be the low visual connection which doesn’t really drag me using the paths inside the park instead of walking along the big street. I arrive at a shopping mall. People are passing by. They are walking - commuting from the house to the shop or to the tram. No one is strolling, no one is using the urban space to enjoy it. To my right there is still the park with no clear borders and thresholds to two of its sides. It seems like its floating within a vast amount of un-hierarchical public space. The architecture is rigid and generic. An overall grid structure keeps it all in place and elements are repeated endlessly. People that pass me by seem sad, stressed or just emotionless. I am thinking: “I want you too feel important. I want you to feel happy. I want you to enjoy and do what you love. I want you to feel **EMPOWERED**.”
Empowerment through architecture, a talent house in Den Haag Zuid-West

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AR3AP010 MSc. 3 PB Seminar
Research Methods, Fall 2019
ABSTRACT
This paper discusses the implementation of the concept of empowerment of people in the architectural design process. Empowerment of the individual can contribute to a positive and resilient development of social structures in problem neighborhoods by generating individual and social blossoming as well as acceptance and social cohesion. I believe that architecture can form out places of empowerment. That’s why the new public condenser should be an incubator of empowerment, to make the citizens of Morgenstond and the user of the design get more aware of their own talents, interact with different people and become more active in public life.
To get a base for a design process framework, that promotes empowerment, I will lay out the psychological process of empowerment and connect this with the architectural theories of Flade and Kaplan & Kaplan on the emotional reaction to space. Key element of that is the contrast of understanding (coherence & legibility) and exploration (complexity & mystery).
This theoretical framework is then translated into a toolbox for design processes. The methodological approach of grouping design strategies into five tools provides an open, non-hierarchical reference structure. This toolbox will refer to the studios overall theme of multiplicity, materialize the concept of empowerment and shape the public condenser as house of inspiration.
The aim of this paper is to explore the possibilities to integrate the concept of empowerment into the architectural design process to use this knowledge for the design process of a new public condenser in Morgenstond. Defining relationships between perceptual and actual aspects, finding precise connections of clustering the program as well as generating ideas and guidelines for the design process can be used as strategies for future design tasks, especially my graduation project.

Keywords: Empowerment, Motivation, Self-Expression, Multiplicity, Affordances, self-determination, Antje Flade, Rachel and Stephen Kaplan, Margitta Buchert, perception, public condenser
1_ INTRODUCTION
The neighborhood of Morgenstond is accounted as one of the 50 problem neighborhoods in the Netherlands. The social development is similar to many post-war urban plannings outside of city centers. After the moving out of the first very homogenic young family population in the course of a suburbanization trend in the late 60s’ and 70s’, the district lived through a process of urban decay. Spatial aspects as a vast amount of unused green space, the generic public realm and a mostly monofunctional structure are influencing the attractivity of the district. Multiculturalism but also relatively high unemployment, poverty and low education are lived reality in Morgenstond. The social structure is characterized by low social cohesion, low life satisfaction and minor engagement with the immediate surrounding. These conditions result into a passive lifestyle of inhabitants, which feel worthless, lonely and depressed. They don’t see the necessity to engage with the public life.

Plans for gentrification and densification with new social classes could increase social segregation and frustration in the existing social environment. The new vision of the municipality ‘bestemming Zuid-West gebiedverkenning’ is aiming for an intense densification of the neighborhood with new dwellings and with this ‘diversify’ Zuid-West economically. Without any interventions for social cohesion in this process, social tensions will intensify.

One answer addressing these problems is creating a new identity through empowerment of the inhabitants. Empowerment, which is created through a deep inner motivation and a new self-confidence, can build bridges and form a base for a resilient social structure. I believe that the ‘public condenser’ for Morgenstond is a chance to contribute to the establishment of a diverse and stable society and functions as incubator for empowerment.

This paper discusses how personal empowerment can be implemented in the design process as core concept for the public condenser. The theoretical framework will provide background knowledge and opens the possibility to transfer the theory of empowerment into architectural guidelines. For that, a methodological approach that groups architectural design concepts, strategies and methods into five approaches provides an open and non-hierarchical reference system for design elements and decisions, that I can refer to in my design process for the public condenser in Morgenstond. The subjects of creating place, forming and joining, programming, choreographing and staging deliver strategies for the design process. The latter three will be further explained in theory transfer because of their interconnection with the theory of empowerment.

2_ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
The two main theories behind the toolbox for the design process are the psychological theory of empowerment and the architecture perception model by the psychologist Antje Flade, which creates a framework for a theory transfer into architectural elements. First, the general psychological process of empowerment and the importance of self-determined motivation is laid out to understand its relevance. Secondly it is essential to sensitize the own perception and to grasp how we perceive space, to consequently make proper decisions. It is to determine which parameters shape our perception in order to be able to manipulate emotions and perceptions through our design decisions.

2.1_ PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF EMPOWERMENT
To understand the term of empowerment, it is crucial to define the terminology. The Oxford English Dictionary explains it as “the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights”. Empowerment animates action, activity and behavior that constructs a positive level of force. Disempowering on the other hand, produces,
visible in Morgenstond right now, the feeling of worthlessness and helplessness. This new perception of the empowered self can subsequently be instrumentalized for contributing to individual and social development.

You feel empowered in an environment where you are self-motivated. Motivation in general is described as the energy for action. Motivation not only determines which actions are performed but also its persistence and duration. The persistence and duration are mainly dependent on the quality of motivation, which is operated along a bipolar spectrum, from controlled/extrinsic motivation to self-determined/intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is induced by an outside source, e.g. financial profits, regulations or simply avoidance of consequences. This can be effective but also lead to lower performance and less lasting behavior as soon as the imposed force is gone. In contrast, intrinsic motivation derives from own interest, enjoyment and personal values. This leads to a more intense engagement, more creative behavior, better problem solving, better performance and positive emotions. It tends to persist longer.

Consequentially, the aim of my design is to provide an environment which allows self-determined motivation. According to the theoretical framework of self-determination theory, self-determined motivation succeeds in a context that satisfies the three basic psychological needs of human beings. These are autonomy, competence and relatedness. Relatedness is the feeling of being cared for and being connected to others. It represents a sense of belonging and importance to other people and their lives. Achieving competences makes you feel effective in your environment and provides a sense of mastery of things that are important to you. As last element you need a sense of autonomy. Autonomy is supported by the feeling of being choice full and self-initiating. In a symbiosis of these three factors you will be doing things whole-hearted, which is the reason for a better performance, duration and stronger cooperation.

This brings us to the statement of Ed Deci: “Don’t ask how you can motivate other people! […] Instead ask, how can I create the conditions within which other people will motivate themselves.”
“Don’t ask how you can motivate other people! That’s the wrong way to think about it. Instead ask, how can I create the conditions within which other people will motivate themselves?” — Ed Deci
**EMPOWERMENT**

What is empowerment and how is it created?

**empowerment**  
/ˈemˈpaʊəm(ə)nt/  
noun

"the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights."

Empowerment animates action, activity and behavior that constructs a positive level of force. This process can enhance the individual's success.

**contribute to**  
individual and social blossoming

**motivation**  
driving force of action

- **extrinsic motivation**  
controlled and driven from the outside

  - lower performance  
  pressured motivation  
  less cooperative

- **intrinsic motivation**  
out of interest, enjoyment and values  
self-determined

  - better performance  
  more creative behaviour  
  positive emotions  
  long lasting

**whole-hearted action**
2.2 PERCEPTION OF SPACE

To be able to work with the process of empowerment in architecture, the awareness about our perception and how it can contribute to stimulate the process of empowerment is fundamental. In her book ‘Architektur - psychologisch betrachtet’, the architecture psychologist Antje Flade illustrates how emotions are triggered through the perception process. She establishes a simplified representation of the reality with the Model of “Mensch-Umwelt-Beziehung” (Human-Environment-Relationship). She puts the perception process into three steps: sensorial processes, emotional reactions and environment-related actions.

Sensorial processes describe the pure reception of stimulation of the senses. The emotional reaction to this is determined by the sensorial volume. It can be too low (understimulation), too high (overload) or the ideal sensorial volume for the aimed emotional reaction to the environment. Environments can trigger emotions with different amplitudes and are consequentially emotionally perceived spaces and with that can also be determined as affective spaces.

To be able to control the emotional reaction, Antje Flade refers to the theories of the psychologists Rachel and Stephen Kaplan dealing with the creation of an ideal stimulation volume. This stimulation volume is produced within the tension field of understanding and exploration. These result into four main stimulation qualities: coherence & legibility for the understanding and complexity and mystery for the exploration. Coherence and legibility let us grasp our environment and complexity and mystery invite to explore it. For a deeper understanding, Flade defines the different elements more precise. Coherence refers to the inner organization of an image, building or the environment. The perception is coherent when individual pieces connect and create a complete-whole. Legibility needs information procession. The environment is readable, if it is easy to orientate and build up a cognitive map. Complexity refers to the amount and variety of individual elements. The more numerous and diverse, the more complex is the environment. Mystery can be described by enigmatic, uncertainty and secret. Mystery includes a promise to more information. These four elements are a referential structure to balance out the right stimulation volume, which evokes wanted emotions and spatial associations.

With the help of sensorial processes, the human being perceives the physical environment. An emotional reaction to the sensorial process is created by the stimulation volume within coherence, legibility, complexity and mystery. This awareness enables us to make decisions and create spatial situations that generate emotions that trigger the empowerment process, e.g. autonomy and self-determined motivation. Therefore, the model works as a translation tool from the theory of empowerment into design strategies.

SOURCES:
Which strategies and architectural elements do I need to achieve the "ideal amount of stimulation"?
3. THEORY TRANSFER INTO DESIGN PROCESS GUIDELINES FOR AN EMPOWERING ARCHITECTURE

So how can we lay out the architectural design process to integrate the theory of empowerment? The following chapter will translate the theoretical base into design process guidelines for a new public condenser, that stimulates empowerment of the residents. They refer to the key element behind empowerment (self-driven motivation) and its formation through an ideal stimulation volume. Five design principles mentioned by Margitta Buchert in "Simply Design. Ways of Shaping Architecture" give structure to the guidelines by representing different layers and scales in the design process: Creating place, forming and joining, programming, choreographing and staging. For the formulation of universal guidelines, I will focus on programming, choreographing and staging., as they lay out multiplicity as support for empowerment, materialize the concept of it and shape the public condenser as house of inspiration. This should create a toolbox which I can refer to in design decisions for the public condenser and use as a support of idea finding for an empowering architecture.

3.1. PROGRAMMING / MULTIPlicity AS PROACTIVE PROXIMITY

An important part in the design process is the definition of the program and its clustering. Firstly, to define the program and provide the pre-conditions for an inspiring environment through architecture, offering a variety of different activities and functions can form the base to satisfy the three human basic psychological needs. Autonomy needs to be included. Providing temporary and flexible spaces can create opportunities for initiatives of the users. This refers back to Friedmann definition of empowerment as "self-organization" as means of gaining control over means to a livelihood. Providing assistance to self-initiatives can enable leadership development and empowerment. Competence can be expressed through spaces of representation within the programmatic approach, e.g. exhibition space, stages but also visual connections to course rooms. Having places which provide a sense of mastery strengthen the organic life of the local community and create a citizen participation. Communal functions and social spaces play an important role for the feeling of relatedness. That’s why these need to be carefully designed instead of being put in leftover or circulation space. In the case of the public condenser relatedness is also created through establishing functions that people of a “problem” neighborhood would normally not see people from their own background doing. This can strengthen their confidence and a local “non-geographically specific identity” . Secondly, the clustering of program should stimulate different neural areas, to ensures that the stay at the building is not only characterized by one main interest point, but that the contrast of functions create a tension field, underline possibilities and give inspiration and motivation for future visits. For that grouping similar functions into individual zones can provides their requirements and produce a tension field by the clash of the sensual perception of the different zones: dynamic/static, silence/music, light/darkness. This programmatic approach of grouping and clashing is a way to create a proactive proximity of program, which inspires people to try new activities and open-up. The accumulation of very different program and the resultant cognitive tension starts exploratory behavior and curiosity. This is a big part to the empowerment process, as they provide motivation that comes out of your own determination and the will to get active. This represents the core principle of multiplicity for me. It is not a pure accumulation but a combination of programs, that through the combination create synergies and a positive side effect, in this case stimulation to an empowerment process.
3.2_ CHOREOGRAPHING / FRAMING OF SENSUAL SEQUENCES

To stimulate exploratory actions between these zones of program, new opportunities and hidden properties should be revealed in different spheres of the building. The building itself forms out an exploratory object. It needs to provoke the user’s curiosity, offer opportunities to uncover new situations and satisfy the cognitive motivation. The building can be interpreted as “a meta-affordance for learning the strategies of exploratory behavior under the conditions of novelty, lack of clarity and certainty”.

To be able to create this exploratory journey through the building, it is important to come back to the idea of the tension field between understanding and exploration. To balance out the ideal amount of stimulation for the whole choreography through the building, it is necessary to create a variety of spatial situations that invite you to explore and at other moments understand. To trigger emotions of curiosity, fascination and self-driven motivation in one place, it needs moments of different stimulation volumes for a diverse visit to not have an overload of stimulation. To see how this is done in existing buildings, case studies were analyzed. A recurring sequence, that allows a journey of diverse perception through buildings is detectable.

This sequence can be divided into three zones in relation to the emotional reaction that these spaces are generating. First the zone of the entrance, where a clear arrival gesture is opening your choreography through the building. This zone articulates an orientation and attraction point that gives a clear overview and with this provides understanding. After that a more mystical, twisty and exploratory zone is triggering the exploratory behavior of the user/visitor. The expectation of discovery is explored enthusiastically. Just as in story telling this provides the tension for the climax. The climax is then expressed in an impressive last zone within the sequence. The user will get a feeling of being overwhelmed and impressed but at the same time also appreciated. These three zones of the entrance, the zone of curiosity and the show in the end are creating an intriguing journey through the buildings. This climatic arrangement of spaces helps creating curiosity, joy and an intrinsic motivation of exploring the possibilities. This way of thinking about sensual sequences and the choreography through the building helps appropriation and can be a starting point for the empowerment process.

3.3_ STAGING / ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

As mentioned earlier, the building can be referred to as a meta-affordance of exploratory behavior that stimulates empowerment. The concept of affordance is introduced by Gibson (1979), and suggests that “the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill”. In this way affordance indicates which motivation arises to do certain things in a certain way with a certain purpose in mind. A meta-affordance then is an “affordance of a higher order (level) that affords affordances of lower levels.” Consequently, the overall spatial situations and its meta-affordance for exploratory behavior is composed by many affordances of individual architectural elements.

As my goal is to provide a guideline for an architectural design process that includes empowerment, the creation of a catalogue of design elements and strategies can help to consciously provide the space with the ideal amount of stimulation through individual elements. To set up the catalogue the elements and strategies can be divided into the two contrasting fields of understanding and exploration to later in the design process refer to the creation of different sequences of stimulation (see choreography). Elements on the side of understanding are for example: iconography,
materiality, transparency, visual guidance, haptics, identity ... and on exploration: hints & tips as semiotic objects, transformable objects, interactive environments, transformable elements and so on. These can be further defined. E.g.: 

**Materiality:** each programmatic zone can be kept in a coherent materiality to create an effective mental image of the space and with this increase legibility. 

**Interactive environment:** transformable elements as curtains can support autonomy and interactive furniture can create exploratory and with this initiating behavior through the ability of being manipulated.

The creation of components of a toolbox can help during the design process to consciously take decisions, based on the emotional reaction and counterchecking the used elements if these contribute to empowering environments. The individual elements may be used in different intensities according to the aimed reaction in different zones.

4. A REFLECTIVE DESIGN PROCESS

I believe that for the neighborhood of Morgenstond, as well as in general, empowerment as concept for a new public building can help to start a dialogue between different inhabitants, as well as giving the people a voice and a place to express. It will be a space that enables self-development, creates a place of active community and forms out a base for a resilient development.

This illustrates the importance of the theory of empowerment as integral part of the design process. This paper supports a reflective design approach through the open and non-hierarchical reference system, that provides a framework to implement the concept of empowerment into the design process. It helps to define and cluster programs, create different sensual sequences and choose adequate architectural elements. It doesn’t predefine one way of doing things but opens a train of thoughts that can stimulate idea finding. The conscious layout of the design process provides guidelines to make mindful decisions on various architectural design layers. That also includes backing up one layer with the other as they are all interconnected. The structure of design parameters set the foundations for the compositional development of a design. All in all this framework connects perceptual theories with an actual design of spaces.
Endnotes

1. The Hague department of urbanism and Planning, “Gebeed-ver
9. ibid.
10. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
19. Antje Flade, Architektur - Psychologisch Betrachtet (Bern: Huber, 2008), 56.
20. Ibid.
22. Flade, Architektur - psychologisch betrachtet, 112.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Flade, Architektur - psychologisch betrachtet, 115.
34. Poddiakov, Exploratory and Counter-Exploratory Objects: Design of Meta-Affordances.
35. Flade, Architektur - psychologisch betrachtet, 56.

41. Poddiakov, Exploratory and Counter-Exploratory Objects: Design of Meta-Affordances, 52.

Bibliography:

Having the idea of empowerment and the theory of perception through an ideal stimulation of coherence, legibility, complexity and mystery in my head lead me to look for conceptual inspirations for my program and spatial configuration. Because of my initial idea of ‘the great show’ and showcasing as main element of the empowerment process, I looked into referential projects of an ‘great show’ architecture, as theaters, concert halls, buildings that just architecturally express a show and as inspiration for the program the circus.

Because of its balancing act between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, a very diverse audience and performer and a place loaded with inspirations and meetings of the most contrary people, the circus immediately came to my head. Of course I don’t want to literally refer to a circus with my building but I just took ideas from it as base of my design program.

From the case studies I came to 2 concept points, which form the key elements of the empowerment process in my building:

1. the program: different association fields define a variety of programatic zones
   Here the proactive proximity of different programs and activities should animate people to go out of their comfort zones and get inspired and inspire others with the own actions.

2. the sequence: the idea of the great show is translated into an architectural sequence of spaces
   The different sequences will stimulate different emotions and feelings and with this form out an important part in the empowerment process, keep curiosity and open minds.

With this approach, the Public condenser should showcases the neighbourhood, their talents and the community. It creates a place of fascination, experience, empowerment and self development.
CIRCUS

Balancing act between high & low culture: a place that is loaded with inspiration, fascination & empowerment.

ENTERTAINMENT
- exploration
- process
- training
- movement
- unconventional disciplines
- talent development
- physical extract health
- fascination
- curiosity

TRANSFORMATION
- tickets
- beyond expectations
- lights
- mind travel
- new experiences
- individual
- find yourself
- creating dreams
- new impressions
- go home with new perspectives

DIVERSITY
- identity
- very different audiences
- all classes
- strong entity
- colors
- circus community
- collective memory

THE GREAT SHOW
- impress
- perform
- confrontation
- feedback
- you matter
- the highlight
- watch
- discover something new

THE GRAND ENTRANCE
- new experiences
- individual
- find yourself
- creating dreams
- new impressions
- go home with new perspectives

TALENT HUB ZUID.WEST
- fun
- games
- pre- & post-shows
- food
- preparation for the show
- part of the experience

CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH
A first derivation of my programmatic approach
The first metaphor is fascination and curiosity. The outdoor space and the central arrival point/entrance should trigger these incentives and form a place of meeting and strolling.

A circus is a place you go to have fun, to watch a spectacle, to be entertained. Fun brings people together and moments of happiness bounds groups. THE ENTERTAINMENT. This zones offers moments to enjoy and to let go of the daily business.

The circus stands for strong social cohesion. Despite consisting of very different protagonists, they form one big family. UNITY IN DIVERSITY. In this zone, the complexity of the local population is represented and a place for getting to know each other is created.

The travel is shown in the MENTAL JOURNEY. A journey to the inner self and own thought will start in the new urban condenser. The user will open up for new hobbies and enjoy „me-time“.

The artists underwent a long process of exercise, this is translated in the zone of THE TRANSFORMATION. The space should evoke movement, feelings and expression. It will let talents develop and shine.

Last but not least - the staging. The experience of the circus is crowned in THE PERFORMANCE. This is the place where talents can present what they can. It is a place of empowerment, applause and personal growth. There is no such thing as envy and resentment.
The idea of the great show can also be interpreted architecturally. This element of a great show is a classical element in architecture. Several examples build up their spatial experiences in a way that works with tension and mystery. A sequence of a grand entrance, a narrow and winding alley and in the end an impressive element express this story telling.

Process-wise it is opening the question: Is the performance the actual great show in this building or is it the whole process of getting active and engage. In the case of the Public Condenser the latter is the case. The great show means that people see other people doing something and getting inspired, whether it’s that they actually perform or if they only train or produce. The sequence of spatial situations will be carefully designed. Psychological elements of causing curiosity and motivation are translated in architecture through the sequence.
The first metaphor is fascination and curiosity. The outdoor space and the central arrival point / entrance should trigger these incentives and form a place of meeting and strolling.

A circus is a place you go to to have fun, to watch a spectacle, to be entertained. Fun brings people together and moments of happiness bound groups. **THE ENTERTAINMENT.** This zones offers moments to enjoy and to let go of the daily business.

The circus stands for strong social cohesion. Despite consisting of very different protagonists, they form one big family. **UNITY IN DIVERSITY.** In this zone, the complexity of the local population is represented and a place for getting to know each other is created.

The travel is shown in the **MENTAL JOURNEY.** A journey to the inner self and own thought will start in the new urban condenser. The user will open up for new hobbies and enjoy „me-time“. The artists underwent a long process of exercise, this is translated in the zone of **THE TRANSFORMATION.** The space should evoke movement, feelings and expression. It will let talents develop and shine.

Last but not least - the staging. The experience of the circus is crowned in **THE PERFORMANCE.** This is the place where talents can present what they can. It is a place of empowerment, applause and personal growth. There is no such thing as envy and resentment.
CASE STUDIES

sequences in other examples

Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg

Circus, Vienna
New York Public Library, New York City

Altes Museum, Berlin
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Matrix</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The grand entrance</td>
<td>Drag people in and attract attention</td>
<td>Make clear where the entrance is</td>
<td>Front row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space of curiosity</td>
<td>Create curiosity</td>
<td>Make uncertain hide develop tension</td>
<td>Main connect to the outside buffer zone between entrance and great show volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The great show</td>
<td>Impress stay in the head produce a stage confront observer and performer</td>
<td>Central peace big volume vertical extension over the whole volume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to the outside / context</td>
<td>Give hints let some preview happen but keep the mystery move inside the 'tent'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategy</td>
<td>elements</td>
<td>choreography</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>iconography</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="iconography" /></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>reduction</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="reduction" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>complexity</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="complexity" /></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="complexity" /></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mystery</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="mystery" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>readability</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="readability" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mystery</strong></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="mystery" /></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPOLOGY GUIDELINES

3 INGREDIENTS

ORGANIZATION

- LINEAR
- CENTRAL
- MIX

CIRCULATION

ARTICULATION

- BIG GESTURE
- MYSTERY
- SHOW
PROCESS OF BREAKING UP THE STRONG HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE

One main critic point from the P2 presentation was that the building typology creates a very hierarchichal and classical structure, in which the experience story had a too much already layed out structure. Individual exploration and storylines weren't too much in consideration. The first step to think more about the user experience instead of one overall pre-layouted way of perception was to understand the process of training as part of the show. The spaces around are used for exploration. As a third follow up the next step was to have one central showcasing element and the training parts individually, so that the user is exploring several routes for different uses. The last step and also the most important realization was that for the concept, there shouldn't be a separation between the show and the training / everyday activity. The training / everyday activity becomes the central part so to say the great show of the building. The empowerment process really starts off with the idea of getting inspired and encouraged to do something. What better way of seeing people from your own background training and just doing what they like instead of
seeing an already perfectly worn out performance (danceshow, exhibition, play, lecture, etc.). It is less about the perfect performance but the imperfection of the process of practicing. With this concept the practicing / the everyday activity is the great show. It showcases the neighborhood, its talents and activities.
The new talent hub is creating a crosspoint for different activities and encounters between people and cultures. The diverse program will provide a place where everyone can go and get inspired. People of different ages, cultures, lifestyles or interests face each other, what increases visibility, acceptance and tolerance within the urban social structure. It will be a space for everyone, where you can go with your friends and family as well as meeting new people. The different zones of the building provide activities and events that people get inspired by. Visual connections play an important role from different spaces within and mostly inbetween the different zones. This interconnection will support social encounters, cultural experiences and encouragement for people to be active and explore.

With this approach, the Public condenser showcases the neighbourhood, their talents and the community. It creates a place of fascination, empowerment and self development. It represents the identities and stories of Den Haag Zuid.West.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the aim of the design</th>
<th>the target group</th>
<th>sizes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The PUBLIC CONDENSER is a home to everyone:</td>
<td>netto surface [5.980 m²]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'long-term' residents use the building to have fun, get inspired, refuel physically and mentally, get active in their lifestyle and open up to the new comers to the neighborhood without having the feeling of being unprivileged.</td>
<td>A. Entrée! [180 m²]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'new' residents come and get to know the neighborhood and their neighbors. They can help to inspire but also learn from looking outside their bubble.</td>
<td>B. Connect! [1.000 m²]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visitors from outside the neighborhood will come and visit events, shows and festives. The public condenser will showcase the neighborhood outside its borders.</td>
<td>C. Think! [1.100 m²]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NETT + TARRA = GROSS
5.980m² + 750m² = 6.730m²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sizes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technic Space</td>
<td>[150 m²]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>[1.800 m²]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**E. Design!**  [900 m²]
workshop space: pottery, sewing, wood, painting, assembly space, workspaces, exhibition space

**C. Think!**  [1.100 m²]
library, multimedia library, digital and analog photography lab, video game lab, experimental lab, children corner, learning / work space

**D. Move!**  [1.300 m²]
music rooms (DJ studio, Music studio, Rehearsal room), dance studios 2x, fitness + course rooms, yoga, climbing, multisports cour, skate park

**B. Connect!**  [1.000 m²]
café, cooking, coming together, community activity, food service, event space, start-up space, leisure rooms, urban gardening

**F. Explore!**  [1.300 m²]
stairs, exhibition space, silent space, meeting places, lecture hall
the individual zones

A. Entrée  [180 m²]

dive into the new world of interaction and activity, create a gesture which leads you into the building and catches your attention

- entrance hall
- ticket counter / information
- toilets
- garderobe / locker
- backoffice

B. Connect!  [1.000 m²]

In this area the visitor feels essence of the local culture of diversity. They can experience the smells, sounds and stimulation of multiculturality.

- café organized by the community
- cooking
- coming together
- multifunctional space for community activity
- social economy shop and food service
- contact for newcomers
- eventspace
- start-up space
- leisure rooms
- urban gardening
C. Think!  [1.100 m²]

The Think! zone is giving the visitor the chance to discover activities in fields of all different kinds of media. In contrast to the rest of the building it is a place of concentration and calmness.

- library
- multimedia library
- digital and analog photography lab
- video game lab
- experimental lab
- children corner
- learning / work space

D. Move!  [1.300 m²]

People get encouraged and motivated to move, to feel, to express and to perform. A creative environment where you explore your talents and let people see that you can shine is created:

- music rooms (DJ studio, Music studio, Rehearsal room)
- dance studios 2x
- fitness + course rooms
- yoga
- climbing
- multisports court
- skate park

E. Design!  [900 m²]

This is intended to give people space for crafts and hobbies they are interested in and can create a room for self finding:

- workshop space: pottery, sewing, wood, painting
- multimedia room
- assembly space
- workspaces
- exhibition space
The first design approach for the P2 result, resulted from a typology transfer of the created typology onto the site specific environment. The concept matrix and theoretical analysis helped in this step to create the design.
first volume studies
the great show
level of amusement + excitement
the grand entrance
tryout of the volume

wider urban fabric
The section A 1.500

Vectorworks Educational Version

T H E    S E Q U E N C E

TALENT HUB
MERRY CHRISTMAS

SHOWCASE YOURSELF,
TALENT HUB
DEN HAAG
ROBERT KUPZIK.
13.11.2019

Section A 1.500

Vectorworks Educational Version

tryout volumes
Because of the vast amount of open and green spaces a big volume is needed to make the area more tangeable. Working with a more landscape approach would let the area be scattered even more. Furthermore the volume builds out a counterweight to the tower next to it. The clear cubature of the new building gives urban boundaries to the park and with this makes it more attractive. Visual connections between the park and the site need to be improved. The building will work as a entrance point to the neighborhood, coming from the city center with the tram or car. Here the visual connections should be improved. The cubature will provide a self-confidence gesture.
big volumetry

URBAN BOUNDARIES

MELIS STOKEPARK

IMPROVING VISUAL CONNECTION

visual connection
I WANNA DO THAT AS WELL!
design process after the P2

abstract model

first circulation ideas
different zone characteristics
first roof structure experiments
design steps
Mont Cenis Academy, Herne: https://www.sbp.de/projekt/fortbildungskademie-mont-cenis-herne/
first material impressions
interior impressions
The talent house in Den Haag as a public condenser will showcase the neighborhood, their talents and the community and with this will be a place for fascination, empowerment and an identity for the neighborhood. The journey you will have within the building already starts on the outside. From the outside, the building does not provide too much information about what might happen inside. It gives first hints and the grand entrance makes people want to explore this „surprise box“.

The inside on the other hand will have a different articulation. It is a space where a variety of visual connections draw your eyes to activities of others and with this inspire you, as well as you inspire others. Seeing others, that you can relate to, because they come from the same background and the same neighborhood, gives you motivation and the feeling of being able to do it as well. At the same time, while doing these things you open up to people from outside your own bubble that might do the same activity. Elements as openings, transparency but also sequences of spatial configurations will create an exiting journey, in which you will discover new possibilities.

In this way the discrepancy between inside and outside should be used to increase the level of surprise.

In the inside each individual zone as well as the inbetween space will have their own character and appearance.
outside

„surprise box“

Verhüllter Reichstag, Berlin: https://www.stiftung-doku-verbuehlte-reichstag.de/das-kunstwerk/
Dar Al Muharrag cultural center, Bahrain: https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Kulturzentrum_von_OFFICE_Kersten_Geers_David_Van_Severen_5132846.html?bild=2
Kinetic Facade, Brisbane Airport: https://www.pinterest.de/pin/838678819924665668/
Dutch House: https://www.archdaily.com/120340/dutch-house-rem-koolhaas/dutchhouse1
Office RTBF, Brussels: https://www.pinterest.de/pin/54296629831952315


Aarhus School of Architecture, Aarhus: https://adept.dk/project/new-aarch

Design!

swiss education center, Buchs: https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Schweizer_Ausbildungszentrum_von_Peter_Moor_Architekten_5247229.html

swiss education center, Buchs: https://www.baunetz.de/meldungen/Meldungen-Schweizer_Ausbildungszentrum_von_Peter_Moor_Architekten_5247229.html

commercial office: https://www.pinterest.de/pin/354025220761001518/
MK Galelry, Milton Keynes: http://www.6a.co.uk/projects
Library, Luckenwalde: https://www.dezeen.com/2009/05/14/luckenwalde-town-library-by-arge-wf/
Bruder-Klaus-Feldkapelle, Mechernich: https://www.pinterest.de/pin/836191855792447038/


street mekka, Copenhagen: https://www.archilovers.com/projects/259473/gallery/2533547
The Design

The Design concept for Den Haag Zuid West focuses on creating a mixed-use development that integrates residential, commercial, and cultural spaces. The project aims to transform the area into a vibrant hub for the city, promoting social cohesion and economic growth.

Key features include:
- **Residential Spaces:** High-quality housing with diverse designs to cater to different needs.
- **Commercial Areas:** Flexible spaces for businesses, including retail and office spaces.
- **Cultural Facilities:** Art galleries, museums, and performance venues to enrich the community.
- **Public Amenities:** Parks, public squares, and green spaces to encourage community interaction.

The design emphasizes connectivity and sustainability, ensuring that the development is accessible and environmentally friendly. This approach not only enhances the quality of life for current residents but also attracts new inhabitants, contributing to the overall growth and development of the area.
the plaza

the urban gardening
the watchtower

the event space
various configurations for the forum
details in the forum
Reflection

Short explanation of the preliminary results of research and design
Choosing the public building graduation studio and with this the topic of public condenser formed out the first step within my graduation process. This conscious decision represents my conviction, that architecture can contribute to the well-being of our society and social conditions. In this discipline, architecture takes part in the public sector and provides people with education, health measures or social cohesion. After the analysis of the two given case study areas, I decided to work on the site in The Hague South-West. This decision derived from the site specific social conditions in the area and the resulting necessity to act. Resulting from various aspects, as the social milieu, the connection to the rest of the city, the image of the neighborhood as well as a missing identity, key social issues arise. The social cohesion is significantly lower as in The Hague in general. People of Morgenstond have a lower life satisfaction and a worse health situation. The life standards are often influenced by poverty and unemployment. This results into a passive lifestyle of inhabitants, which feel worthless, lonely and depressed. They don’t see the necessity to engage with public life. Plans for gentrification and densification with new social classes could increase social segregation and frustration in the existing social environment. As a contributor to the neighborhoods liveability and attractiveness, my building design proposes a place of empowerment for the people. Empowerment can contribute to an individual and social blossoming and with this builds bridges and forms a base for a resilient social structure. I believe that the ‘public condenser’ for Morgenstond is a chance to contributes to the establishment of a diverse and stable society and functions as incubator for empowerment. The building design is located on the north-eastern boarder to the Melis Stokepark, and includes the former school building, nowadays used as a neighborhood center. This creates a synergy of programs and limits the competition of old and new. The design is drawn up in different sequences of experience. The visit of the building is characterized by different spatial situations and stimulation volumes. For this a big open volume creates an in-between zone, that is described as the sequence of curiosity, within which the visitor can explore and discover the various activities that are offered in the building. Programmatic zones are set into that open volume and form out a contrast to the open space. These zones fulfill the functionalist requirements for different activities and host a theme of activity (e.g. sports, crafts, education, community). This contrast of neutral and specific spaces creates the aimed tension of spontaneity and continuity. The building expresses a feeling of free expression and non-conventionality.

My approach
After the first phase of objective research about the different case study areas (Copenhagen and The Hague), and beginning to think about a design and design approach, I took a concept/theory-led derivation for my design. My first inspiration, the „Circus“ as a typology of empowerment, coming together, opening up to new impressions, activities and contacts in a more unconventional way, was the starting signal of a process development, as from there on the outcome of research and conceptual thinking determined the next steps and focus points on further research. New findings can be interpreted as discoveries that open up next steps. That’s why I would describe the process of research and design, as concept/theory-led.
The first and fundamental part of the process was a deeper analysis of the place during the group-work phase. This enabled me to grasp the situation in the neighborhood, locate the main issues and find arguments for crucial decisions, especially the creation of the design brief. The analyzed case study (Sesc Pompeia by Lina Bo Bardi) inspired me by expressing that a public building can provide circumstances for people to go there and have public amenities without it having the character of being institutionalized. It is very much close to the needs and living realities of the local people.

This influenced my first associations for a public condenser for Morgenstond, “the Circus”. These formed out a first idea what the new public condenser could be: A place where all sort of people go, where people can show off their talents, where social interaction and new meetings happen and where unconventionality creates curiosity. This led me to the idea of empowerment of people through showcasing as key element of a personal and social development. I looked into the psychological process of empowerment and the important factors contributing to personal empowerment. A theoretical framework for empowerment established which then opened up the question how to translate the findings into architectural design. For that I looked into the field of architectural psychology especially the perception theory of Antje Flade and Rachel and Stephen Kaplan. This gave me the awareness of the creation of optimal stimulation volumes, by the tension fields between understanding and exploration. From these findings I created a framework matrix that later helped me to make conscious design decisions. I looked into different case studies of “showcasing” architecture and detected the idea of thinking of my building as a story. The experience of the visit through the building should create a storyline to make people curious and let them discover. Following these findings I developed a typology for my own design. This typology was transferred onto the site specific conditions and formed out a first conceptual design, presented at the P2. The P2 result formed out the end result of the conceptual and theoretical research.

The time after the P2 was used to reflect on how to translate this theoretical approach into an actual building. Until that point the storyline through the building was very predefined. Instead of having the possibility of personal story lines through the building, there was only one overall story. Including the comments from the P2, in different steps I looked into this and tried to figure out how to break it open, with the end result of having a less hierarchal and more individual based design. It still refers to the theoretical background but leaves freedom for individuality.

Following up, I rationally defined the location, measurements and shapes of different zones by the requirements of its functions. The space in-between became of special importance as a contrast to the defined zones. The open space functions as a space of spontaneity, social interaction and discovery. It provides space for self-expression and spatial appropriation. For the atmospheric design of the zones and the different open spaces I referred to the psychological perception theory of Antje Flade and my guideline matrix, created mood-boards and looked for references. The structural and climatic design also influenced design decisions. The structural design elements build out important atmospheric elements.

The time after P4 I used to bring the project onto a higher level of precision. Special spatial situations are visualized into detail and thought about the consequences of small design decisions. The time was also used for improving visuals and the storyline.
reflection on the approach and the process of the design and research
My approach provided me with a lot of creativity and gave me the freedom to explore and dig into concepts that I find very interesting, but also especially in the beginning did not give me one way to go / a strict orientation. The approach of an open and research-led design made it possible to take input from various fields and „cherry-picking“ of idea generation. A main challenge in this approach for me was not to get stuck on already made decisions or first ideas but open up to new influences. I remember how Nathalie de Vries described it as: „digesting the first ideas, taking the essential parts of it and let go of the rest“. In this way it gave me a theoretical backbone but still an open process. The process itself was in a way an exploration. This way of dealing with a design approach was challenging for me because I normally have a really pragmatic and straight forward thinking. I enjoyed that way of challenging myself and put myself out of my comfort zone. To conclude, the approach stimulates a process of creativity but at a certain extend needs to reconnect with reality.

reflection of the feedback of tutors and how I translated it into the work
The feedback is already recognizable in the process description. Starting with the input of not taking findings too literal or get stuck on it, as the Circus idea. The feedback in the personal tutoring gave me new input and ideas how to go on with my findings, for example in form finding, thinking of the theory as a sort of typology or getting a framework matrix out of it. The P2 feedback was then a realization of ending with the purely conceptual phase and think about actual spatial consequences of decisions: breaking up the strong framework, thinking of story lines and individuality and connection to the surrounding. These valid remarks are implemented in the design decisions. In the later design phase, comments guided me, opened up new ideas for the spatial configuration and recall important elements.

The feedback in relationship to Building Technology made me realize to tell the story not only in the bigger scale but to the small scale and create a whole out of concept, design, structure, climate concept and detailing.

relationship in the context (studio, master track, social framework)
The relationship of my project obviously is closely related to the studio’s theme of public building. With the new public condenser for Morgenstond, I want to create an example of a public building that not only provides an open accessible space but works as a connector and empowers people. The idea of empowerment in neighborhoods that deal with a lot of social issues can be an enrichment for public architecture. In connection to the architecture master track, it represents the necessity or the chances that architecture can give to our everyday live, by providing spaces for everyone in our society. This leads us to the relation of the social and professional framework. The project reflects elementary questions: what do we want architecture to be and how do we imagine it to influence our living environment. In this way my project is an idealistic answer to our social context, its dilemmas and our ethical ideals as architects.