P5. Controlling the realms

A strategy for structuring incidental encounter
Masterplan

*Rotterdam: A fragmented city*
Analysis

1. City scale:
Inner city lacks legibility due to its lineair character.

2. Sint Jacobsplaats:
Post-war buildings in Rotterdam disrupt the classical city ideal.
1. Inner city has a linear structure

Most popular shopping streets in Rotterdam connect to the Lijnbaan, but have very little attractive connecting streets in between. The result is the feeling of being ‘lost’ at the end of a shopping street.
Analysis of main public routes Rotterdam
Main consumerist routes

Main consumerist hub

Temporary consumerist routes
On regular days the Binnenrotte is an oversized and desolate hybrid between street and square.
Twice a week it transforms in a lively market place.
Main consumerist routes

Main consumerist hub

Temporary consumerist routes

A.

B.

C.

D.
Main consumerist routes

Main consumerist hub

Temporary consumerist routes
2. Post-war buildings in Rotterdam disrupt the classical city ideal.

The functionalist post-war experiments in Rotterdam neglect the classical notion of square and street.
A clear hierarchy between the realms in the traditional city
The city of Rotterdam as a collage

Cut with the Kitchen Knife through the Beer-Belly of the Weimar Republic, Hannah Höch, 1919, collage of pasted papers, 90 x 144 cm, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, and Leon Krier
The city of Rotterdam becomes a tabula rasa.
Boundaries have been dissolved. The city can no longer be read as a clear canvas.
Newer additions help recreate the canvas, but don’t listen to it’s ‘rules’. (1945 - now)
“The context is determined by the 18th century grid, the remaining prewar structures generated by the grid, and the postwar reconstruction, which is usually at odds with the grid. The old buildings define and are defined by the street; the new buildings diffuse and dissolve it.”

Rem Koolhaas on Berlin in SMLXL
Modernist experiments don’t keep to the traditional rules of a city.
Functionalist experiments in Rotterdam dissolve the clear hierarchy between public and private.
3. The underground train track divides the area in two

Based on interviews with residents we noticed the psychological and physical rupture the ‘ramp’ creates in the Sint Jacobsplaats.
Train tunnel divides the Sint Jacobsplaats in two disconnected areas.
Conclusions

1. **City scale:**
Inner city lacks legibility due to its linear character and needs interconnections. The Sint Jacobsplaats can be an extra public node.

2. **City scale:**
Post-war buildings in Rotterdam disrupt the classical city ideal. A more classical hierarchy needs to be reinstated to create clearer boundaries between public, collective and private spaces.

3. **Sint Jacobsplaats:**
The underground train tunnel divides the site both psychologically and physically in two.
MASTERPLAN

Reinstating the classical hierarchy
With the introduction of MVRDV’s markethall and by activating the Sint Jacobsplaats with public functions a network is created.
Create an extra public node.
Preserve the existing qualities.
creative enclave  public route  tranquil enclave

analysis corresponding typologies
The tranquil enclave
SITE ANALYSIS

Rules of the site
Current routes
Shifting front and backside of perimeter block
Train tunnel doesn’t allow building on it
DESIGN

*Reinstating the traditional hierarchy*
Respect front and backsides
Add iconic tower at the end of the Binnenrotte.
Lower the urban block so it becomes a plinth.
Divide the block into urban villa’s, allowing the existing buildings to breathe.
Activate the route by adding public functions along the edge of the block.
Diversifying the public route

A walking network with alternating street spaces and small squares often will have the psychological effect of making walking distances seem shorter. The trip is subdivided naturally, in manageable stages. People will concentrate on movement from one square to the next, rather than on how long the walk actually is.

Based on Jan Gehl.
Public gardens along route,
Housing access from the level semi-public garden, dwellings facing the lower garden to guarantee privacy.
Shop and dwelling back to back.
Interior of urban block forms ‘hofje’.

Perimeter buildings

Controlled access

Back to back structure

PUBLIC SPACE
COLLECTIVE SPACE
PRIVATE OUTER SPACE
PRIVATE INDOOR SPACE
DESIGN

The urban villa
Diversifying the dwelling typology

The residential buildings are a play on the urban block. To prevent an incredibly dull continuation of ‘portieken’ and to connect the ramp with the block interior, a strategy of the urban villa’s as a ‘portiekwoning’ is introduced. This creates a wide variety in access types and a variety in dwelling types.
Floor plans urban villa.
DESIGN

The public plinth
Programme tower
Public Bathhouse
Idea store and public bathhouse, Sint Jacobsplaats, Rotterdam
Tekst is een natuurlijk
The idea store

The ground floor is an area of public action and display, a continuous parade of personalities and bodies, a stage got a cyclical dialectic between exhibitionism and spectatorship.

“The new library is a *locus aemonus*, a variety of pleasing and inviting places. A multitude of reading places should be created: the café, the bookshop, the silent studie space, the salon with fireplace and piano music, a garden with a murmuring fountain, etc.”

*Bart Verschaffel*
Tunnel gives problem with foundation tower
Foundation through tunnel on sand layer
Columns carry forces down through tunnel
Entrance to the hotel
A-typical plan
Placement of cores
Genesis of zones
Public, collective and private
Look into public atrium from corridor
Public, collective and private
Restart of pattern
Public route
DESIGN

Incubators
Rule 129. Centralized common areas

No social life can exist, whether it is a family, a work group, or a school group, without the continuous possibility of informal contact between its members. Common areas have to be realized for spontaneous and informal use.

C. Alexander, Pattern Language
routes touching the communal space

center of social life / place for the unexpected

shared facilities

C. Alexander, Pattern Language
The incubator
133. The stairs as a stage
Stairs are not just some aid to traverse a height difference. The stairs are part of the space itself, a volume, a spatial part of the building, and unless this space is brought to life, it will remain a dead corner and disconnect the building.

Christopher Alexander, Pattern Language
135. Play of light and dark
Create differences in light intensity throughout the building in such a way that people, being phototropic creatures, automatically walk to important places when they walk to the light; seatings, entrances, special places.

Christopher Alexander, *Pattern Language*
DESIGN

Facade
Monolithic facade
Ventilation
Fan coil in hotel units
Ventilation dwellings
Mechanical and natural ventilation in dwellings
Heat exchange in smartbox
Brises soleil - summer
Water heating - summer
Water heating - winter