Practising critical architecture

Ian Chaplin
Robert Nottrot
Martijn Stellingwerff
Roel van de Pas
Daan Vitner
Introduction

What do you mean by....
and why would you...

Practise critical architecture?
Practise critical architecture?

Practices sustain a working society
Practise critical architecture?

Often certain aspects within the practice don’t add value, but have just become common.
Practise critical architecture?

The practice of architecture shows a lot of signs of being out of sync with society and its practitioners
Observations about current architecture practice

1. **efficiency** and **prospective**

2. **function** controls what can be built

3. minimal amount of **uncertainty / openness**

4. construction of **finished projects**, civilians cannot influence public space
Uncritical development of public space
De Binnenrotte, Rotterdam (1600-2015)
Observation 01

Efficiency and prospective
Rotterdam
(1340)
Rotterdam, de Binnenrotte
Rotterdam, de Binnenrotte
(1871)
Rotterdam, de Binnenrotte
(1878 - mei 1940)
Rotterdam, stadsdriehoek
German occupation (1940)
Rotterdam, *Binnenrotte*
Binnenrotte, Spoortunnel
Rotterdam, Binnenrotte
Rotterdam, *Binnenrotte*
Huge emptiness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MA</th>
<th>DI</th>
<th>WO</th>
<th>DO</th>
<th>VR</th>
<th>ZA</th>
<th>ZO</th>
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Binnenrotte,
West-8 (1987)
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Binnenrotte,
*West-8 (1987)*
Observation 02

Function controls what can be built
Building proces
Corporate use

commissioner → Investors → Completed Project → Earnings

Function
Observation 03

minimal amount of uncertainty / openness
Rotterdam, stadsdriehoek
German Occupation 1940

1940

1945
Project proces
Corporate expansion

Larger Commissioner  →  Bigger project

rapid growth
Observation 4

Construction of finished projects, civilians cannot influence public space
Rotterdam,
Stad zonder hart (1966) Jan Schaper
The project

The role of the architect on the Binnenrotte case
Reaction to Observation 01

Efficiency and prospective
Playfulness

*Reinterpreting efficiency*
Reaction to Observation 02

function controls what can be built
Co-production
Low investments -> Low threshold
Agile process
Heterogeneous Civilization
Concept proces
Low investments -> Low threshold
Architect as spatial guide
Architect as spatial guide
Interfunctional opportunities
Interfunctional opportunities

Recreatie

Cultuur

Flora & Fauna

Interfunctional opportunities
Reaction to observation 3

minimal amount of uncertainty / openness
Building process
Private use

commissioner → Investors → open Project → Earnings

Function
Open sequences and functioning
Herzberger & Van Eyck
Reaction to observation 4

construction of finished projects, civilians can not influence public space
Open and Retrofitable Form
Reageren
Gesprekken met Hans Van der Ban (Beeldendkunst adviseur Rijksbouwmeester) & Nils van der Beek (TAAK)

Karel Appel (1969)
Plaatsmaken
Gesprekken met Hans Van der Ban (Beeldendkunst adviseur Rijksbouwmeester) & Nils van der Beek (TAAK)

Johan Tahon (2009)
Rotterdam Collective

Wants to be able to built something in the public space away from the cities bureaucracy
Architect as curator

appointed by Collective,
approved by the government

Tasks:
Governs
Writes the spacial regulations
Protects safety consideration
Gives support
Ian Chaplin as spatial curator

Will curate with the ideals of supporting the heterogeneous in appearances, spatial qualities and use
Social Architect
Expert in time, form and space
Introduction to the Masterplan:

Socio-spatial Experimentation grounds
Pedestrian routes
*Retail and Leisure*
Binnenrotte,  
*Three sectors*
Binnenrotte,
*Three sectors*
Pedestrian routes

Retail and Leisure
Masterplan
Three Sectors -> Two phases
Masterplan

*Three Sectors -> Two phases*
Masterplan

Three Sectors -> Two phases
Phase I
The Beta project
Phase II
Expansion outside and inside
Phase II

Concept: Expansion outside
Phase II
Concept: Expansion inside
Introduction to the building

The Beta version for the architecture of the area
Phase 01: The Beta plan:
Public space, public play: the architect as curator
The human body
Volume-study
Spatial division
Volume
Spatial division
Development of the form
Spatial division of the elements
Development of the form
Spatial division of the elements
Development of the form
Connections between the elements
Development of the form
Development of the elements
Development of the form
Design process of the openings
Development of the form

The safety issue; adding the legs
Development of the form

Adding playfulness
Development of the form

Size of the elements
Development of the form
Elements on the grid
Development of the form
Creating playful connections
Development of the form
Bridge across the elements
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction

The tunnel situation
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction
The tunnel situation
Construction
Precast concrete elements
Construction
openings
Construction
Placing of the installation holes
Space for individual development

Floorplan of selected elements of the frame
Space for individual development
Floorplan of the selected element improved by the users - step 1
Space for individual development

Floorplan of the selected element improved by the users - step 2
Space for individual development

Floorplan of the selected element improved by the users - step 3
Space for individual development
Floorplan of the selected element improved by the users - step 4
Space for individual development
Section of selected elements of the frame
Space for individual development
Section of selected element improved by the users
A city centre formed by the citizens
A place open for different solutions