A new place for ceramics in a city of stone

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Tu Delft | Faculty of Architecture | Interiors Buildings Cities
Msc 3/4 Graduation studio | Maastricht, City of Stone
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Architecture should relate to the **material aspects and traditions** of its place while answering its **contemporary situation**.
A design for a contemporary Centre for Ceramics with workshops and exhibition space in the historical centre of Maastricht.
Framework

**Material culture studies** is an interdisciplinary field telling of relationships between people and their things: the making, history, preservation, and interpretation of objects.
Material culture of Maastricht

Natural Stone

Ceramics
Natural stone and the city

Maastricht

quarries
Natural stone and the city

The natural stone culture of Maastricht has had a big influence on the building culture of the city. This culture is most visible within the first city wall.
The ceramic industry of Maastricht started with the establishment of Sphinx on the edge of the city centre. After the world wars the industry dropped down leaving Mosa the only remaining factory active and resulting in a disappearance of the ceramic culture from the city centre.
Research Question

How to relate the craft institute to the natural stone and ceramic culture of Maastricht while answering its contemporary cultural, architectural and programmatic situation?
Place - Typology - Tectonics & Materiality
Place
The building is placed in between historical centre and sphinx area
Bringing the ceramic culture close to the people while underlining its industrial history.
Responsibility to relate to the building culture of the city centre
Site

Establishing connection between culture of ceramics and natural stone culture of the city centre.
Typology
Combining typologies from city centres and industrial area's

To establish this connection the project combines typologies from the industrial area as well as from the city centre.
Combining big and small gestures

Giving weight to the reintroduction of the ceramic culture into the city centre by creating a big space for everyone. To support this gesture, annexes are put in front of the hall in the form of a tower to draw the people towards the building and in the form of walls and houses to offer a gradual transition to the surroundings.
Site characteristics

' Lindenkruis' with corner gardens

Secondary street

Firestation with tower and underpass

Back 'gardens' and line of trees

Front gate on street leading to route along gardens

Primary street with characteristic architecture
Big volume presents itself as a big open space for people to come together.
Building in line with the street and taking over its characteristic roofscape
View from the main street
Garden alley

Setback from trees to create a public garden route behind the gate and introducing tower in reaction to the firestation while placing it on important sight lines.
Introducing volumes that align with and relate to scale of houses while continuing the little squares from Lindenkruis
View from Lindenkruis
Typology and the interior

Typology of big hall and smaller annexes
Typology and the use of the space

The large workshop space in relation to the supportive spaces around it
Monumentality gives weight to the 'reintroduction' of the ceramic culture to the city. While the rooms in the annexes offer more intimate places to withdraw.
Flexibility & future use

Typology of big hall with smaller spaces on the side can be used in many different ways.
The exhibition vs the workshop

Visitor

Craftsman

(Above: Sphinx factory in use, Below: Russian Porcelain room)

(EKWC: Europees Keramisch Werkcentrum)

The different scales correspond with the programme and can have meaning for both the visitor and the craftsman.
Relationship between visitor and craftsman
Routing visitor

View on workshop and experience of monumentality in relation to the ceramic culture.
Routing visitor

First Floor: walk around workshop to get an overview of the making of ceramics
Routing visitor

First floor: Enfillades of exhibition rooms to view the ceramics in a homely setting.
Routing visitor

Fourth floor: lookout is oriented on the city centre as well as on the sphinx area
Routing visitor

- Library: 50.85 m²
- Open archive: 655.21 m²
- Study rooms: 72.87 m²
- Exhibition: 87.15 m²

Second Floor
Routing visitor

Experience of ceramics in an industrial scale and high density.
Workshop and supportive spaces
The project strives to bring the ceramic culture closer to the city centre and the people by taking place in between its former industrial site and the city centre and combining typologies from both settings.
Tectonics & Materiality
Most common use: Stone as accent in facade

Notable other use: Stone fully covers facade
Houses with facades fully covered in belgian limestone

Tradition forms a layer through the old centre involving not only houses but also important public buildings, like the city hall.
Tectonics of 'In Den Steenen Bergh'

Stacking of stones give the impression that they are loadbearing while actually the side walls are.
Analysis of natural stone tectonic language

Blocks

Posts and lintels

Infills

Floors
Translation into facade and structure

Incorporate tectonic language for the design of the structure and the facade as a mean to relate to the historical city while at the same time creating awareness on the process of ‘making’.
Structure

Stacked block walls are used for the intimate annex spaces while post, lintels and infills are used to open these walls up and to take care of the open space of the hall.
Integration

On the place where the two structures meet, blocks are used as an infill wall while, due to the reveal of the door, they give the impression as if they are part of a thick loadbearing wall. Also, a layer of steel is added to make the building work, taking care of the mezzanine, furniture, etc.
Masonry closes the facade while frames with infills take care of the window. Expression of floors to make it look as if the facade is carrying the building.
Light vs heavy

A distinction is made between the annexes in the front and the hall whereas due to small window reveals, the glazed cornice and the stretcher bond the facade of the hall gives expression to the lighter structure behind it.
Translating natural stone tectonic language into contemporary materials that, like ceramics, are mouldable while being able to express stacking. This to merge the ceramic culture with culture of natural stone.
Translation into contemporary building materials that also express stacking: concrete masonry and prefab columns, beams, frames and infills.
Materials of the surroundings

Brick houses and concrete firestation
Brick from ceramic waste material which, like Belgian limestone, shows the traces of its origin.
Materials facade

Prefab concrete 'window' frames
Colors

Ton sur ton: taupe/warm grey in combination blue/cold grey
Colors

Marina van Dieren, Disturpt Disturbance, ‘Jacquard’ weave

The inside is of the jacquard weave is an inverse of the outside and shows how the fabric is actually made.
Inside vs outside

The inside is the inverse of the outside making people more aware of how the building is actually made. Natural stone as the most durable material is used as an accent and on those places that wear the most quick: the plinth, the floor and the places of spatial transition.
Surface finishing

As a counter reaction to the hard and cold materials a layer of timber is used as a finish at those places that you touch while moving through the building. For the exhibition spaces the structure is finished with a layer of stucco making the space less about the structure and more about the exhibition.
Conclusion
Conclusion

Blending the two material cultures of Maastricht together shows how architecture can innovate through tradition.
End