The mechanisms of satisfying desires have made modern urban complexes extremely fixed and programmed, leaving no room for the ‘other’ to happen, the divergent from normative and expected behaviors to emerge. The green spaces, although a great chance to identify gardens before, the same rigid patterns fail to satisfy the various emergent subjectivities that seek to constantly become ‘someone else’. This project was triggered by the need for a different kind of green places, part of an “otherness” of a city, offering something out of the way, as much designed as random, that could not be encountered elsewhere.

Three new gardens are popping up in the midst of Rotterdam city center, at points like a acupuncture treatment of the body. All designed in areas with unique characters, they were conceived as should be embedded into existing urban spaces, transforming the experience of public places and the perception of the city’s urbanity, as well as the infusion of the paradigmatic landscapes of fictional settings. They are chances where you can get lost, or stumble, or even get wet, where you can climb that may fall or scaffolding that make sounds, where you can sit or stand on water and walk on narrow surfaces trying to keep your balance.

The gardens of deviation are there to oppose the homogeneity and striation of urbanity. They constitute ‘leakages’ in the expectedness of current experiences in the urban realm: they are places that trigger peoples’ mind and stir emotions. Emerging in empty of meaning spaces of the urban tissue, they coexist with the ordinary and through their thresholds they filter it, making the virtualities of the existing places actual.

What if there were more of such gardens inside Rotterdam? And what if we see other cities through these gardens’ lens? Maybe more cities need such intensified pockets of affective relationships...

Keywords: city, affects, out-of-the-ordinary, heterogeneity, unexpected