

The Ribbon

Intertwining the Flevopark with the Indische Buurt

Reflection Paper P5

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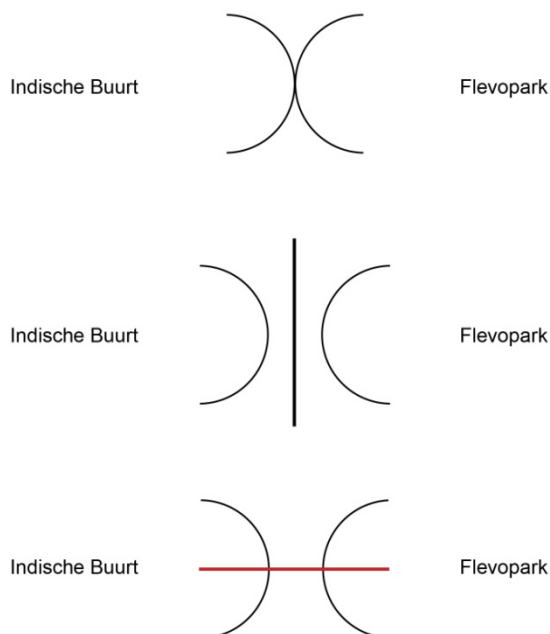
Research Question

The parks of Amsterdam should be called the 'living rooms of the city'; due to the fact that these rooms are deeply rooted in the urban fabric and because they form central points for the cultural, social and economical activities within the everyday practices of the city dwellers. Within the framework of the Hybrid Graduation Studio that deals with the topic of filling the 'gaps' in the urban fabric, this design project uses the edge between the park and the city to reconnect the neighborhoods and the park through one intervention.

Since each park has its own and unique characteristics and relation to the surrounding landscape, there is no design strategy that can be applied to each park in exactly the same way. But while most of Amsterdam's parks have a strong connection to their surrounding neighborhoods, the Flevopark can be described as disconnected from its surroundings. To regain the strength of a 'living room' for the neighborhood, the question arises on how the Flevopark can be intertwined with the Indische Buurt through one architectural intervention.

Goal

The gap between the Flevopark and Indische buurt offers the opportunity for an architectural intervention that adds value to the park as well as to the neighborhoods. The intervention should be respectful to both areas, but use the characteristics of the site to reconnect and open the park to the city. The goal is to connect the park and the city by transforming the empty gap into an attraction and meeting point for the users of both areas.



In 1940 the Flevopark and Indische buurt were designed as one unity. These areas become disconnected by the realization of the main road to the new highway. My proposal is to intertwine these two developing areas again with each other by one architectural intervention.

Figure 1 Diagram of the intervention

Research

The main research of the design project focused on the question on how an architectural intervention can act as a connecting element, like a ribbon, between the park and the neighborhood by using the empty gap between them. That specific location, the gap, was the starting point of the design and formed the inspiration for the further development. This method refers to Steenbergens idea about the relationship between architecture and landscape, where the site instead of the program forms the main force behind the design¹.

The results of the urban analysis, different model studies through various scales, the analysis of reference projects and the visits to the site, where the main sources to interpret the location and to formulate the guidelines for the design. Following these guidelines and creating a specific intervention should have a strong impact on the reconnection of both areas.



Figure 2 Formulated guidelines from the existing site

According to Rainey, the appearance of an architectural intervention in relation to the surrounding landscape can be classified in different modes called contrast, merge, reciprocity and the in-between areas. Each intervention consists mostly of a combination of these modes, but in general one is dominating and preserved by the users². This theory is used to support the design process and to distinguish the appearance of the intervention.

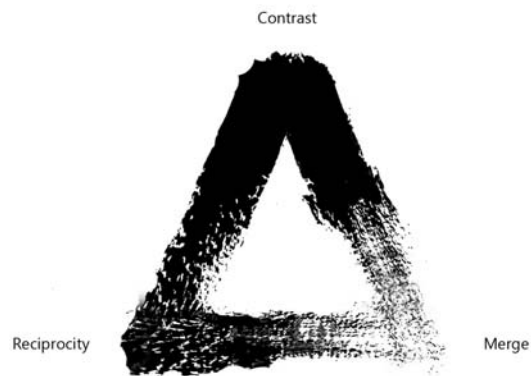


Figure 3 Guidelines for the appearance of the architectural intervention

Design

The intervention that should intertwine the Flevopark with the Indische buurt consists of three main elements: the tower, the pavilion and the wall. Each element interprets the idea of contrast, merge and reciprocity in their own way and has therefore different guidelines and a unique relation with the surrounding landscape.



Figure 4 Design proposal

²

Rainey, R. (1988), 'Architecture and Landscape: Three modes of relationship', (pp.4-6), Spaces, Volume 4, San Francisco

The first element, the tower, symbolizes the neighborhood and forms together with the already existing two towers a distinctive point in the urban fabric. Therefore it also reacts in height and proportion to the other two housing towers. This part of the intervention has thirty-eight housing units for young families and empty nesters, which currently form the main target group in that neighborhood. The tower is a collective design project with four common spaces, a roof terrace, a working area, a children area and a lobby. These areas are specially highlighted in the facade, but the general appearance of the tower is massive. To create a contrast to the existing threes, the facade of the tower is made of natural stone.



Figure 5 Tower

The pavilion, the second element, is located between the existing trees and the sloping landscape and symbolizes a piece of the park. This element is a combination of a neighborhood theater and a community building to facilitate cultural activities for children from the surrounding primary schools and playgrounds. The appearance of the pavilion is mainly wooden to merge this part of the intervention into the existing trees and landscape.



Figure 6 Pavilion

The third element, the wall, forms the foundation of the intervention. The concrete element starts with the ground floor of the theater, where it meanders between the trees and the sloping landscape. The middle part integrates the existing tunnel and creates an information wall that promotes the park and the neighborhood activities. The wall flows into the tower and highlights the common spaces that are orientated to specific views like the park entrance, the Jewish cemetery, the axes and panoramic views. The chosen mode for the wall is reciprocity to create a balance between the different elements and the surrounding landscape.



Figure 7 Wall