Reflection P4

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The graduation project is concerned with the “ZuidasDok” (fig. 1) in Amsterdam as a major and infra-structural node that accommodates many diverse functions. An immense number of travellers make use of the station every day. These circumstances make ZuidasDok a potential location for not only the usual commercial facilities attached to stations, such as food courts, small retail franchises and meeting spaces, but also more substantial elements that profit from and feed the dynamics of the location. As an interior, the station is not only a space for circulation and waiting, but can be a healthy part of a public interior that extends into the tissue of the neighbouring areas.

![fig. 1 ZuidasDok](image)

The task of this graduation studio is to find a proper architectural intervention for the ZuidasDok, so as to turn it into a real destination of the city, a place worthy of travel or an extended visit in itself, rather than merely a traffic hub.

The chosen method to deal with ZuidasDok is to introduce a big public room made of a huge canopy supported by columns, which the trains go through. This space stretches across the station and extends to the squares on both sides, reinforcing the urban axis on the north-south direction (fig. 2)
while bridging and fusing the different types of spaces. The continuous public room in monumental scale makes an autonomous entity in the environment, and provides an interior place for various activities. The station is no longer a freestanding building but becomes a part of the huge public interior. This public interior fulfil the station's function if needed, while more importantly, it collects people in the town as a public place with a strong image of a “forest” comprised of the canopy and the supporting columns, through which people move and with which people can identify.

fig. 2 The context. Stronger relation of the north-south direction is needed.

In order to achieve the desired character and quality of the place according to the concept and idea, the structure as the dominant element was designed carefully. The exact form of the structure was adjusted throughout the design process. After the material and other details also came into consideration, the form with specific dimension and appearance was determined at last. The linear columns in the very first image (fig. 3) are changed into tall arches arrayed in a triangle grid, which reinforce the imagery of a “forest” and suggest the image of the gothic cathedral besides (fig. 4). The double images reinforce the public and monumental character of the place, which gives strong impression and is easy to indentify so that people would gather and stay.

The intervention for the ZuidasDok provides it with a new public interior, a place collecting people and allowing all kinds of activities, which acts as an enlivening node in the neighbouring areas and a destination in the city beyond the traffic hub.
Research work contributing to the design includes the study in the Research Seminar course concerning several existing stations and how to make a station a destination in itself, the study in the Research Method course about the balance between commercial benefits and public benefits in public interiors, and the analyses in the Design Studio Workshop for chosen public interior cases.