1. This project has always been about enriching transport places and the title ‘a clearing amidst movement’ is a reference to the act of clearing as organising principle as well as being an urban interior to experience as well.

2. I have subdivided this presentation into 4 chapters:
   - A short context of my general interest: enriching transport place
   - A study on the history of Marconiplein as a historically specific place of transport
   - a new agenda, in which I will propose a re-organisation based on the findings from previous chapter
   - The proposal itself in more detail

3. General interest: treating transport systems as the passage of places rather than merely the passage of undesirable passage of time.

4. An key moment in the project happened during a series of on-site visits of tram-, train- and metrostations throughout Rotterdam. Many of them, like Parkweg shown here are praised in local and architectural as ‘ideal’and ‘every aspect being used for the travelers’ experience’, which to my opinion can be read as their critique as well. The photo and arial view show the station acts as monotonously paved non-place between busy transport domains and the park.

5. Station Blijdorp, the most recent award winning station shows exactly the same. It is a beautifully materialised isolated hole in the ground, renders a former sqaure lined with shops into another seperated transport domain experience.

6. I found Marconiplein, which was to become the project site later on, being similar to many of these metrostations in this sense: a monotonous island of asphalt between green urban fragments and transport systems.

7. The abstraction in transportation maps hint at the underlying notion for these smaller stations. A critique on them has been well phrased by George Papam Papamattheakis in his essay ‘’Ecologies of interuption’’: ’the features of spaces of logistics are problematic when expanded to the realms of architecture and urban planning. People are treated like mobile packages rushing from A to B on a networked, yet frictionless surface, as if transportation is solely based on the space of flows, serving only the circulation of capital and information.’’

8. The design manuals for the Dutch railways hint at another force at work in the approach of station design like the ones shown. Shown here are diagrams for the organisation of stations on all scales present in the Netherlands. The yellow parts of diagram have become synonymous with the real estate.

9. And as Ivan Nio points out in his essay for the Dutch railways, both Dutch Railways and ProRail, who owns the real estate, work with a model of experience based on branding theory. They are effective for figuring out brand-attachment based preferences of individual consumers. They are unfit however for understanding factual and sociological

behaviour of people amongst ‘strangers’ in public.

10. Despite Nio’s recommendations, the latest proRail publications seem to take the trend to the next level nonetheless, promising ‘consumer convenience’ through a ‘smart, connected and safe’ station as city. One could easily think the same of shopping malls and resorts. The model of experience for places like these fit very closely to Richard Sennet’s description of the ‘prescriptive’ city as ‘closed’ and ‘user-friendly’, who warns us about this rendering us less and less willing to deal with discomfort, strangers or unpredictable events.

11. How different ‘stations’ have become from the historical Dutch ‘herberg’ where a place, transport systems were inherently related to strangers.

12. I had become increasingly distatisfied with the usual role for architects which merely aimed to materialise physically isolated real-estate for the traveling-consumer. And wanted to return to a more basic understanding of the term ‘Station’ as a regular ’stopping’ place, a site and location. More alike the mentioned Stations of the Cross, then the ‘military posts’ of transport systems.

13. The stations of the Cross are a series of images placed at ‘stops’ which are placed to make a spiritual pilgrimage through contemplation. A station in this sense is a meaningfull place and ritual related to a historical event taken place.

14. Rather then seeking solutions in commerce or religion I have been looking for a relation between landscape, infrastructure and strangers that could frame moments of public transport as a meaningfull intermezzo between destinations.

15. Kahju bridge was one of the examples of such moment that really stuck with me. it is a street on top and underneath of a butress dam along which a series of baclonies and buildings are placed.

16. The balconies open up to either the buildings or onto views on the water. It can be crossed at a lower level on both sides. The infrastructure of the dam has established a shared public landscape and experience where strangers move amongst eachother.

17. It was Stan Allen in his lecture about an infrastructural urbanism that helped my find the words. In his propositions for an infrastructural urbanism he states for example it being about:
- fixing points of surface, acces and structure with bottom-up means (which an important relation to the third theme)
- It organises and enables a series of flows and movements and exchanges.
- Within it their is no absolute gain of freedom, but recognition of potential free play in another dimension.

18. CHAPTER II: Marconiplein
This translation of critique into an interest and potential agency for landscape and infrastructure did happen gradually throughout the project. The second crucial moment after visiting the metro stations was picking a location: traffic square Marconiplein examplified many, if not all, of the previously mentioned considerations and made them

tangible. Reconstructing a history of this site has proved to me how a place-specific history and characteristics are great allies in helping to establish a greater sense of place.

19. The traffic square currently is an important node of public transport, situated on the edge of the 20th century expansions of Rotterdam.

20. SUBCHAPTER 00-30
Through archival research and a reconstruction of the sites lay-outs I have identified four key periods that hint at a distinct relation between transport and place. Every sub-chapter tells of different historically present qualties that I have ended up synthesizing into a new proposal for this square.

21. Marconisquare was located at a corner on the dyke between Schiedam and Delfsehaven leading north to a livestock farm.

22. The 1916 expansion plan and annexation of Deltsehaven bij the city of Rotterdam lead to the realisation of a new working-class neighbourhood: Spangen. Marconiplein was to become the edge of the cities boulevard, where trams and the harbour train would cross.

23. During this period Marconiplein was a paved open square on which pedestrian, cyclists, trams, horses and dog-carts would mix. Shown here is the open view towards Schiedam and a waiting chamber.

24. In the other direction the square led into the city. The boulevards shops and pavement was extended onto the square as a place to linger on the edge.

25. On those boulevards travelers, flaneurs and shopping all shared the same space.

26. SUBCHAPTER 40-60
During the following years, the open sqaure would transform into a place of high speed motorised movement and distribution.

27. From edge of the boulevard and city in 1916 the site changed drastically.

28. Harbor, Rotterdam and Schiedam grew bigger and closer together. Marconiplein was no longer an edge, but became point of arrival and distribution of traffic from Schiedam, the harbour and industry of the Spaanse polder on the north.

29. A bombardment during the world war paved way for modernist plans which were already present. Flats and big scale car-infrastructure were to become a funnel of traffic into the city.

30. The sqaure was re-organised with a roundabout with trams crossing the centre, dishing outwards into different direction, establishin a new centre of attention.

31. Motorised traffic was viewed as spectacle of freedom, technology and speed. The extension of the boulevard became the site to experience this.

32. SUBCHAPTER 70-NOW
The third state has been from the 70's untill now. In which it grew into a complex infrastructural knot between very different urban fragments.

33. Marconiplein had been functioning as primary entrance of the city in the previous period.

34. A few decades of constantly changing road networks and the realisation of a new metrostation in 1986 transformed Marconiplein into a increasingly complex infrastructural knot. The role of being a specific entrance and site of experience had been abandoned.

35. The site had become merely a raised island of isolated traffic domains placed together in vast open space between very different urban fragments in the 80's already.

36. The realisation of the metrostation and changes in tram worsened the cacaphony. However an important change since then has been to attempt understanding Marconiplein as station rather then merely an infrastructural junction.

37. Despite the notion of being a place where public transport systems stop, the site is still very much a site of drive-through culture where anyone wants to pass through by as quickly as possible. The cacaphony of isolated traffic domains are only related to eachother by the safety measures that are put in-between them.

38. The past two decades the station didn't really change in essence but much did change around it which I believe should have been much more significant for it.

39. So far the harbour area and it's railway infrastructure had been an inaccesible border around Spangen.

40. But now industry is moving further towards the east, the railways have been transformed into green parks and walking routes. As a result, Marconiplein, already a node within bigger transportation networks, became situated as a node between big green fragments that run through the city on a much larger scale. Local initiatives have already identified a loop of green fragments and called it 'de groene connectie' which they use to rally and gather a series of green and social initiatives.

41. During my walks along this route, I came to appreciate this network as an experience alternating between surprising moments of nature between intermezzos of transport.

42. Because of this, I came to read Marconiplein as a surprise of public transport within a rithm of green and places of transport. A proper connection to these fragments would be the most straightforward way of enriching the relation and route between dwelling and the station.

43. Rethinking Marconiplein also makes sense from the perspective of the densification plans that aim to add at least 10.000 new dwelling units which will rely on Marconiplein as most important node.

44. In order to establish Marconiplein as a specific site of experience linked to bigger networks of green and transport I am proposing to re-establish a sense of place through historically present qualities and site specific characteristics.

45. Through a reconstruction of the lay-outs based on archival research of each periods I want to re-introduce the following ideas. Shown here is Marconiplein between 1900 and the 1930's.

46. Two things I want to re-introduce: the extension of the boulevard as edge of the neighbourhood as a place of commerce and linger with views on a lively scene of movement. Secondly: the use of tree canopies as threshold around the waiting chamber whilst maintaining a sense of openess and clear lines of sight.

47. This map shows the period between the 40's and 60's. It shows how the figure of a circle creates a sense of distribution and establish a flat, but strong centre of attention.

48. As Marconiplein was and still is situated within a vast open space between very different urban fragments, such figure might give the site a distinct shape and character which help mediate between the big differences around the site.

49. This is the current state of Marconiplein and cleary shows the increased complexity.

50. Interestingly the circling of movement now takes places by trams around the metrobuilding which could become a bigger theme. The neighbouring parks around the site are highlighted in green and will be made much more important.

51. There is one important notion that I am introducing which will bring all these mentioned qualities together. During the process I have been looking at all kinds of bigger stations and public spaces and the ones that proved most important all share the act of clearing and as physical interior.

52. Rotterdam central station for example shows how transport systems are put around a public quare, becoming a decor of movement around it.

53. An interesting achievement of the architecture is how it puts the public place on the centre stage rather then merely materialising the stations real estate.

54. Skanderberg square was a more park-like crucial influence. Here a former traffic square is cleared of traffic which are hidden behind gardens full of lingering people.

55. Not systems, but the resulting people become the decor: waiting, moving and lingering around the edges of a vast open place with fountains introducing a degree of play and surprise.

56. CHAPTER III: A NEW AGENDA

The act and interior of the clearing together with re-introducing historically present qualities form the backbone of my proposal for the site. With these in mind I have set a new agenda to re-organise the site.

57.I have set this agenda as a story that continues from the abstract transport maps that are already existing, but at some point also begins to recognises a sense of place and spatial experience as well. Shown here is a map of the Metropolitan area the Hague and Amsterdam, not mine. I have included a yellow to mark the location of Marconiplein.

58.Zooming in to the scale of Rotterdam: this is the public transport network of trams-busses and the metro. Marconiplein again at the yellow dot. Interestingly, this map has already started to include some location such as parks and the zoo.

59.I am proposing to zoom in one step further at which it seems to makes sense to start include a sense of experience of space and place.

60.In the case of the site of Marconiplein I have included park surfaces, the road and key neighbouring buildings as key spatial characteristics of Marconiplein. The resulting diagram shows clearly how the station dominates the centre as a place full of transport systems.

61.I would propose a re-organisation, clearing the transport systems from the centre, enlarging the circle for the trams to create an attractive green centre connecting to the parks around it. On the east side the boulevard acts as edge of the neighbourhood again.

62.Marconiplein becomes a park and station with a ground figure of a circle, adressing different urban fragements around it in different ways:
- It connects the harbor area, station and boulevard with a bridge.
- It will create a node between green fragments and in doing so find a pleasent an rich connection to the neighbourhoods around it.
- It will re-activate the edge of the boulevard.

63. This agenda helped establish a role for architecture that is not focussed around real estate and commerce, but aims to construct a bridge and a site of transport between parks and the boulevard. I will eplain the proposal along two crucial architectural figures which I have been designing: a ‘canopy’ that shelters and frames spaces and a ‘carpet’ which adresses different uses and interiors through the materialisation of the ground floor.

64.Topography is an important character not yet mentoined. Visible on this slide is how the site is a raised dyke-platform that is part of the primary water defence.

65.The platform mainly provides a level surface for the station on top of it. Bus, trams and the metro entrance are organised around the shortest walking distance between them.

66.Shown here is the metrostation, situated 8m below the surface.

67. These are the grass surfaces of the neighouring green fragements. The old dykes in the north however act as green 5m high barriers to steep and narrow to linger or walk on them. In the south srass surfaces and paths extend down towards the station from the 12m high roofpark towards the south.

68.Cycle lanes are squeezed in between the station and grass surfaces.

69.The proposal can best be introduced starting with the re-organisation of the site through the figure of the circle. The canopy as architectural figure is crucial in this regard.

70.The existing station dominates the site as raised platform for transport systems.

71.I am proposing to clear the site from systems, transforming them into a decor around a public clearing. Trams, bus and metro-exit are connected with a single station floor that circles around the clearing. The systems are placed around the outer edge and in doing so remain open towards the clearing. The traffic square has been re-organised based on existing plans found for the harbour area.

72.I would aso propose to change topography of existing site.

73.The sifhting of soil together towards the sides shields the station and clearing against traffic noise whilst creating a good overview. The lowered clearing provides better acces to the lower northern neighbourhoods. The station floor and it's platforms remain at the same level.

74.A new bridge will connect the new main street for the harbour area to the station and boulevard in a straightforward manner.

75.The height of the dyke is used to shorten the bridge landing at the station.

76. As an extension of this bridge I propose a secondary bridge acting to distribute people straight towards the transport platforms whilst proving a continues shared shelter underneath. The design of this secondary bridge has been the object of design for this project.

77.The built canopy of the station extended by a ring of trees and together they frame a series of urban interiors within and around it. The grass surfaces are made accesible by a series of paths connecting the green fragments whilst providing an alternative route between platforms as well.

78.The canopy, both the built and grown parts has two main funcions: The first is to frame a new centre and space of attention, reclaiming it from the currently dominant Europoint towers. Secondly it acts as decor for movement up, behind and underneath it, providing lines of sight underneath for intuitive navigation.

79.The overal section shows how the station and bridges gradually open up to a park-like setting and vica versa. The dyke, bridges and trees shield the clearing from traffic noise. As the clearing gradually descends down to the northern neighbourhoods, the parks, station and bridges are introduced as figures around it. Around the clearings edge one finds mainly Populus tremula trees, known for their loud bristling leaves which together with the dyke and bridges will mask traffic noise. The high monumental Fagus sylvatica tree acts to emphasise entrances around the clearing.

80. Like the trees, the bridge becomes a wooden canopy and provides a rithm of shelter and openness. Brick of local clay with it's specific color reaches up to meet the wooden structure. The principal height of the ceiling has been determined by the height that is generally reserved for navigational information so that information displays can still be read. Moving people and trams are be seen up, under and behind the canopy. Lingering or sheltering people can gather underneath the bridge or in the gardens.

81. The overall floor plan of this built and grown canopy, showing a transition between station and park. The built canopy consist out of a repeatable segment.

82. The deck of the bridge acts as distributing element leading people from the harbour area-bridge directly towards the tram platforms. It also provides an interesting walk between tree canopies, with open views outwards onto the surrounding area.

83. The stations canopy is built with a single repeated segement and curves back and forth creating small balconies between tree canopies.

84. A wooden waffle-like construction of laminated wood resembling the trees branches is placed on top of concrete columns which will be clad in the local brick on-site. Each segment has 4 prefabricated 'boxes' which are joined together and placed on big steel pin-joints. The bottom of the boxes is left open to expose the waffle-structure 'branches' in the ceiling.

85. The section and floor plan show how a waffle-construction creates both a deck- and ceiling surfaces at the same time. The number of elements and height of the wooden structure has been limited and determined by the 2,5m width of the kerto-q boards and maximum measurements for regular transport. The outer boards of each prefab box are twice as thin so that when joined together they create the same thickness. The stairs are constructed differently, consisting out of two curving concrete walls. Like the columns, they will be clad in brick on-site in order to relate them to the ground.

86. The wood leftover from cuttingthe ceiling into the boards is used for facade cladding and the fence. The fence and facade act as a whole, but follow a slightly different rithm and contourlines in order to open up towards both movement on the deck and on the ground. On top of the prefab 'boxes' of the waffle-construction a series of boards is placed to thicken the floor and help tightening the prefab boxes together. These boards are cut slightly shorter in order to create a gutter that collects the rainwater.

87. The elevation shows how the facade continues a rithm of shelter and opening up. The small extenstin of the brick cladding on the columns creaties a play between the lines of the canopy, ground and movement of forces in the pin-joints.

88. Shown here is how the stairs curve up from the ground towards the canopy. Like the columns the long and 37mm thin brick is placed vertically.

89. I will return later on back on the canopy in order to introduce the Carpet that I have been designing. By far, the most time in my process has been spent in drawing floor plans for the whole scheme.

90.I was interested in Kalmer square for example and how the materialisation of paving invites or discourages different uses interiors around it without any fences or walls.

91.A more parklike fitting example is Parc del clot, showing an ambiguity of topography and surfaces which are different but inviting to eachoter.

92.In hindsight I understand that the many hours spent in drawing a wide range of floor plas have been a critical means of operating to avoid floors from ''escaping the complexity of the ground floor with fences, buffer zones, and concealed spaces''. I am very sympathetic towards his critique on generic 'floors' to organise distribution. He states: ''Traversing its literal and metaphoric meanings, the floor becomes the basic tool to tame and eventually overcome physical geographic abnormalities, to homogenise context and prepare a smooth surface for the frictionless circulation of commodities.''

93. The carpet I am proposing shows a central public place where slight changes in height create shallow puddles and pools, around which a raised station floor, parks and urban interiors are arranged.

94.The station floor running along the shelter of the canopy connects all transport platforms and stairs towards the metro. Every platform relates to a different direction: Spangen to the north (which previously had been seperated from the station), the city centre and Delfste haven towards the south and the Spaanse polder and Schiedam towards the west.

95.The guiding principle of a single walking path is taken from the models for Dutch railway stations, but I have stripped it from it's relation to real estate and different domains of control and ownership.

96.I have translated this path as a physical and literal path, which bears a relationsship to a more open context and station functionalities surrounding it. This diagram clearly shows how the floor adress the transport system and information on one side, whilst inviting to a more open and inviting urban interior on the other.

97.The floor is made with a narrow brick that is found on the centre of the clearing as well. It is layed in a simple pattern with gradually fades out into the gravel of the gardens. The color is specific to the color of fired local clay in the ground of this area. The columns are made in the same brick but rotated upwards to meet the canopy structure. The inner column sets foot in the gardens that run parralel to the station floor and in doing so literally place the canopy structure as a threshold relating to both.

98.A combination of self-compacting gravel with loam, colored to the local clay create a ring of gardens and paths connecting to the parks and green routes. The garden path can also be used by travelers prefering a different path between the platforms. Bike parking and the bridge landing are combined with a generous surface of hoggin and many small trees in order to provide a sense of entrance and parklike atmosphere between the gardens and roofpark towards the south. In the northeast a path with runs between a open grass field and paved sports field on the other side. Along the path opportunities to sit and view are provided.

99. High ornamental grasses are placed in the gardens enclosing it's visitors with green and a series of brick with wooden benches are placed along its sides. A sequence of brick gutters enclose the semi-hardened pavemen whilst acting to guide the excess rainwater from the canopy and paths towards the lowered clearing, preventing it from flushing out soil from the gardens.

100. The clearing in the middle is a shared space for cyclists and pedestrians inviting both to a degree of play. The centre will be used mostly by cyclists as a result of the allignment of cycling paths, whilst the edges of the clearing will find lingering people and children between the pools and gardens. The biking lanes will have the color of the clay underneath the city centre.

101. The pattern of paving resembles the polder landscape that historically had been there with rain gutters running through it like roads. Like the polder can be, water collects in a series of shallow puddles into which a small number of fountains are placed as well.

102. The edge of boulevard has been restored as a place to linger with views onto movement. It is a good and sunny location for terraces. The paving combinies the local clay colour with brighter white and red tones in reference to the facade of the corner building. On the north side the paving is extended towards a church located on the North side of the building.

103. Whereas the carpet fixes points of access and adresses different uses, it works in combination with the canopy that primarily is used to frame spaces and movement.

104. CHAPTER IV: Urban interiors
This combination of carpet and canopy is the main spatial characteristic of this proposal and together they create a series of urban interiors and tie them together.

105. I will show 5 sections and impressions that elaborate on this. The first: the meeting of bridges, parking and a tram stop.

106. A white and elegant bridge fitting the minimal and white appearance of the Europoint towers lands on top of the dyke embracing bike parking area underneath it. The bike parking connects directly to this tram stop or towards the metro station further down the path. It is covered by small cherry trees which will blossom bright white during spring and help filter poluted air. Coming from harbour area, on takes either ramp down towards the bike parking and boulevard or cross over the trams onto the canopydeck. Canopy deck and the station floor underneath connect to all tram platforms.

107. Views on top of the deck provides a close up view onto tree canopies and orients outwards onto the different interiors around the clearing. Tram departure times are visible from the deck at most times. The views from the station floor invite towards the gardens and play of water and movement within the clearing.

108. The second section is where the metro connects to the canopy.

109. 109. The metrostation literally opens to the canopy and clearing becoming a part of

the landscape rather than isolated real esate. A seperated waffle structure will keep out the worst weather whilst inviting daylight in.

110. Exiting from here, someone can orient quite easily. The station path guides intuitively and bike parking, the harbour bridge, all platforms and park fragments are visible from here.

111. The next section is the Boulevards edge

112. This tram stop leads into the northern neighbourhoods of Spangen and footbal stadium of Sparta. The extension of the paving and replacement of commercial activity from station to the city will lead to an interesting scene where travelers view and are viewed by people from terraces and shops. The station floor and canopy end here, with a stone stair curving down onto the parks surface. The space opens up to the parks surface on all sides new paths and a grass field in the distance. The grass field is embrace by a path underneath the Acer Rubrum trees, which color bright orange and red during autumn.

113. This section shows a part of the park.

114. Where the canopy stops, three lines of trees being. A path runs along the outer edge in the shadow of the trees, whilst providing opportunities to sit in the sun towards the clearing. The local brick used on the station floor and clearing returns here, providing generously long raised edges to sit on. This section shows well how the path underneath the Acer Rubrum trees runs between the open grass field on the right and an already existing sportscage on the left. The landscape lowers towards the northern part of Spangen that previously had been distanced by the old dyke and a 6m high stair.

115. The parkside provides a distanced view onto the stations movement and liveliness. For people walking along the ring of parks, Marconiplein becomes an interesting intermezzo of public liveliness, recreation and movement.

116. The last section is where the station meets the road, becoming the far edge of the station.

117. The other end of the canopy is where the bus comes in and loops back towards Spangen, a industry and buisness site and where the tram leaves the city towards Schiedam. The canopy provides views inwards like elsewhere and a stone stair marks the end of the canopy, connecting to the parks path like on the other end of the canopy. The bus- and tram- platforms are enclosed in a ring of Acer platanoidus, which retain yellow-brown color throughout the summer, becoming brown and bright yellow towards autumn. the reference to the bright yellow metro-tunnel that one finds further up north along the former railway. A Japanese Pagodatree with white blossom in spring take the centre stage.

118. The canopy incorporates aspects of information, navigation and ecology into it's cealing structure.

119. The two-faced logic of the station path shown earlier, becomes visible in the section

as well.

120. Specific heights are reserved for the flow of information and navigational clarity that manifests on the right hand side of the section. Underneath the canopy, attached to its structure wayfinding helps navigation, whilst further information and tram departure times are visible looking outwards from both station floor as down from the deck. The open ceiling construction on the left hand side is used to house a diversity of bird houses and high grass providing shelter for a range of animals.

121. A view onto the canopy shows how the carpet and canopy frame a decorm whilst wayfinding is still functional in between them. A closer view onto the closed parts of the facade might reveal a range of different birdhouses and nests.

122. Amongst which bats have a place as well. In respect to both ecology and the rithm of shelter en opening up views, the closed parts of the bridge will remain dark, whilst the uninhabited and open parts of the bridge will light up from within. Lights on the deck will only aim at the surface, minimizing light leakage into the sky at night.

123. Scenarios: ‘’moments of surprise’’