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voor Architectuur

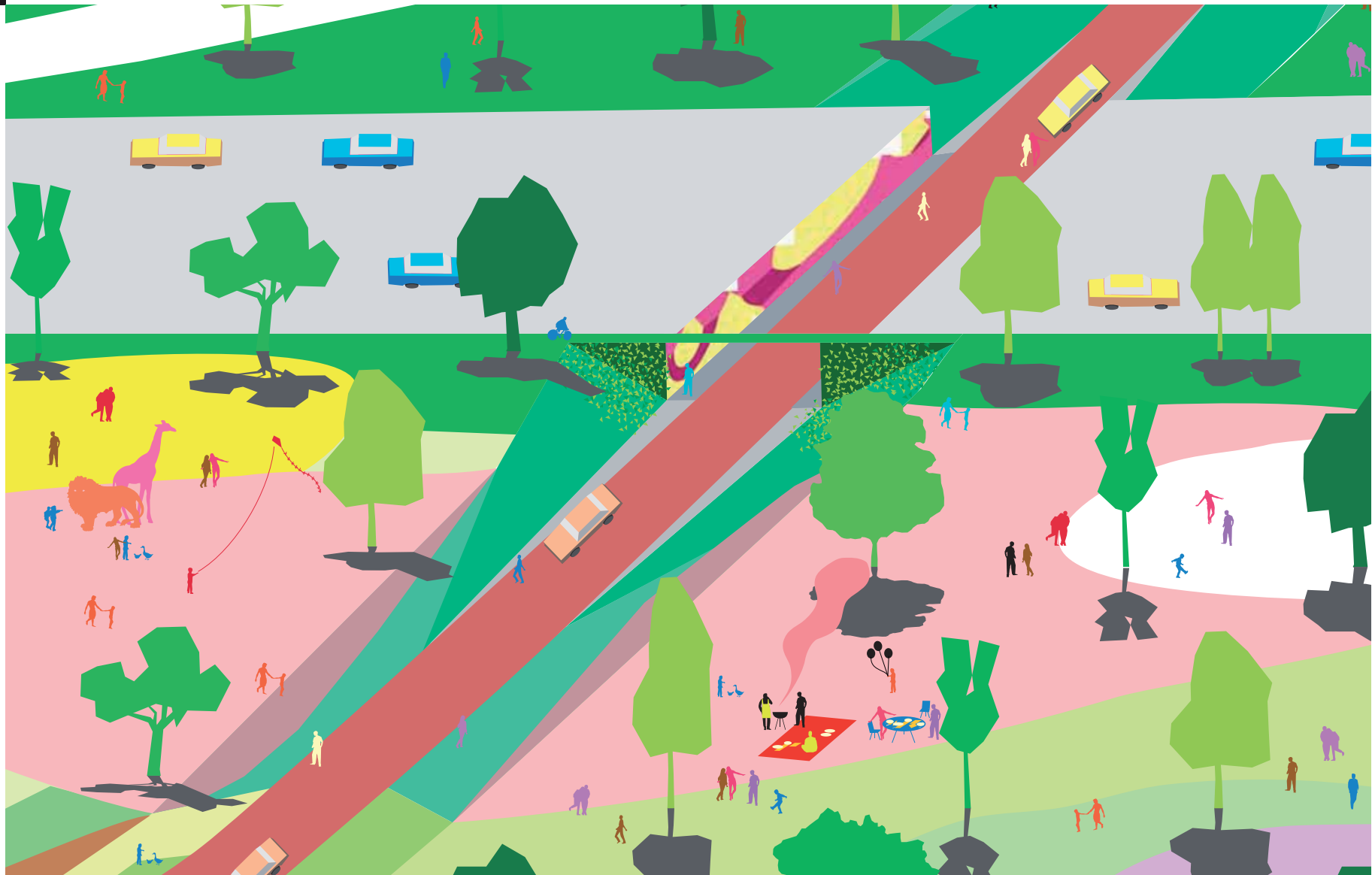
the Netherlands
Architecture Fund

Lay-out09

platform for recent design research

Lay-out is an irregularly issued publication devoted to design research undertaken with support from the Netherlands Architecture Fund. The Fund invites design firms to compile an issue of Lay-out. Lay-out 09 *Maakbaarheid* is published in a special English edition.

Maakbaarheid is a project within the context of the 4th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam by Crimson Architectural Historians on the post-war urban landscape in Rotterdam. Ideas of 'makeability' from the 1950s to the present day are the inspiration for bottom-up designs that look to the future. Nine concrete design proposals for nine existing Rotterdam locations are presented, all of them designed in collaboration with many local stakeholders.



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A project by Crimson Architectural Historians presented at the 4th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam in the fall of 2009. Following a critical analysis of urban planning in Rotterdam from the 1950s to the present day, nine urban projects are being proposed for nine locations in the city. Crimson's historical and political analysis of Rotterdam reveals an ongoing belief in the *maakbaarheid* (Dutch for 'makeability') of urban society that has informed urban policies and projects for more than half a century. All the locations are symptomatic of the inertia or even paralysis that is currently gripping urban planning and development in Rotterdam and causing the city to fragment. Urban ideals therefore remain theoretical and ineffective. Crimson identifies the ongoing privatization and deregulation of planning in the past decades as one of the major causes of the decline of Rotterdam planning. Particularly problematic is the loss of a coherent body of knowledge about the city as the basis for its development.

To address this problem, Crimson has tried to inject deep knowledge of the city's urban history into a deregulated planning and development process. The goal is to have nine projects of a limited scale that are realistic and at the same time represent typical situations in the urban and economic structure of contemporary Rotterdam. Continuity and coherence is sought on two levels: with the site's history and with the city as a whole.

Each project started out with a coalition of local parties, developers, housing corporations, activists, entrepreneurs, home owners associations, each with their specific interests, agendas and know-how relevant for the location. Crimson combined these questions into realistic briefs and matched them to architects and urban planners. With the historical site analysis as a basis, a collective design process was started, to which each party contributed its specific interest and knowledge, with the developer or the housing corporation taking the lead and committing to the future realization of the project.

These are the 'Facts on the Ground' with which Crimson wishes to demonstrate

a) that knowledge of the development and history of sites is not only crucial but also inspiring for the reanimation of difficult and seemingly inert urban situations

b) that urban ideals of openness, emancipation, modernity and coherence can also be realized in a deregulated, privatized city with many stakeholders

c) that forming coalitions with relevant stakeholders is the basis for any urban project that wishes to combine idealism with realism

Maakbaarheid

Facts on the Ground in Rotterdam

Reinventing Urban Projects in Rotterdam and searching for a new Credibility for Architecture and Planning after the Financial Crisis of 2008



Maakbaarheid in the 50's, Lijnbaan Area Rotterdam, Van den Broek & Bakema/Maaskant & Van Tijen 1953

M*maakbaarheid* is an enigmatic Dutch term that usually refers to a period in Dutch society in the 1960s and 1970s when government policies were explicitly aimed at spreading wealth, knowledge and power through massive bottom-up emancipation policies. *Maakbaarheid* is difficult to translate. Literally, its meaning lies somewhere between makeable and feasible; conceptually it is connected to terms such as social engineering, with a strong whiff of progressive public interventionism.

The integration machine

Thirty or forty years ago, these interventions consisted of equalising incomes and the education system in order to stimulate individuals from all classes to develop and educate themselves. It also meant large subsidies for non-elitist cultural, musical and art initiatives. Under the umbrella of the government, different parties – housing corporations, trade unions and entrepreneurs – worked on creating an ideal model of society through planning. Architecture, planning and housing were important aspects of this *maakbare samenleving* (makeable society): designing it, shaping it, contributing to it and presenting it. In short, *maakbaarheid* was the Dutch interpretation of the current biennale's main theme: the Open City – the city as an 'integration machine' encouraging distinct communities and groups to settle, interact and establish dynamic relationships.

Rotterdam, the ultimate *Maakbaar* city

Maakbaarheid is not just about describing a quality or function of urban spaces; rather, it denotes the way that these spaces are produced. Crimson's initiative focuses on Rotterdam, widely seen as the unofficial centre of architectural and urbanistic energy in the Netherlands. It examines ways of making the Open City here, harnessing a strong public ambition to shape architecture using the best figures of the design world. That this initiative to revitalise the architect's role in shaping society comes from Rotterdam seems inevitable. The city is not just a magnet for

architectural firms, Rotterdam is also *maakbaarheid's* locus classicus: the ultimate 'makeable' city, having been remade in radically different shapes several times in the last century alone.

Graveyard of urban planning

By a curious coincidence, *maqbar* is also the Persian word for graveyard. Perhaps this is a better description of Rotterdam, which, despite its heroic aspects and can-do idealism, is also strewn with the cadavers of past attempts to shape society through architecture and urban planning. The number of times a new project has promised to reinvent the city is far outweighed by the number of times the idea of shaping urban society through architecture has been declared officially dead. The optimism of the IABR comes at a time when Rotterdam is facing the consequences of the global economic crisis more intensely than any other city in the Netherlands. Politically, it has abandoned most if not all of its public planning ambitions and its architects' offices are scrambling to survive, forced to shed the experimental, speculative urban ambitions on which their international fame has been based. Smaller offices are filing for bankruptcy at an alarming rate. Larger partnerships from Rotterdam (for instance KCAP, Ector Hoogstad Architecten, Claus en Kaan and EGM) are also suffering, but are predicted to come out as strong monopolists, dividing up jobs and commissions from increasingly risk-averse clients among themselves. The urban renewal process of the past decade, involving an immensely complex coalition of public and private institutions and corporations, is now more or less accepted as a complete failure, without any measurable effect on the liveability (economic strength, crime rate or education levels) of the areas involved.

Rotterdam, closed city

On a political and moral level the idea of Rotterdam as a progressive, modern and open city has also become harder to defend since the introduction of Rotterdam Law, a



Maakbaarheid in the 70's, Heliport housing, Jan Verhoeven 1977



Maakbaarheid in the 90's, Erasmusbridge, Van Berkel & Bos 1996

controversial set of legal tools used to limit the number of people on benefits who aren't native to the city from getting houses in certain neighbourhoods. The Rotterdam Law is just one example of a whole new set of policies and political agendas aimed at discouraging the concentration of poor people and ethnic minorities. So for nearly a decade, Rotterdam has been carefully crafting tools for demographic control over its citizenry, a control that often goes beyond the so-called *maakbaarheid* of society, associated with the leftist 1970s.

No more wishful thinking

There is also a parallel between the many overblown urban plans recently proposed for Rotterdam, and its inclination to select, stop, spread and concentrate its inhabitants according to income, ethnicity or religious beliefs. There is a famous interview with former mayor Ivo Opstelten – popular for his unwavering commitment to repressing small-time criminality – in which he discusses the constant eviction of heroin addicts and dealers from squats in poor neighbourhoods. He also tells a critical journalist that if you keep on spreading around the addicts and dealers for long enough, they will simply 'evaporate'.

In the face of all this wishful thinking about the *maakbaarheid* of Rotterdam, we are forced to accept that sometimes the ambitious urban schemes, argued and designed in the spirit of the Open City, are mere window dressing. Does this render hopeless or corrupt the assumption that *maakbaarheid* could be reintroduced as a viable route towards consciously and rationally constructing the Open City? Possibly, but first it is important to reconstruct when, where, by whom and for what purposes the term has been used in the past few decades. Doing so gives a perspective on planning and social engineering in the Netherlands that is infinitely more ambiguous, contradictory and rich than the familiar mantra that Dutch society used to be *maakbaar*, but now it isn't anymore. It also acts as a rebuttal to the opaque way in which

architecture and urban planning are being used to manipulate and manufacture society.

Nine realistic projects

To this end, Crimson has organised nine realistic projects in which design is not used to imagine a future as a way to revolutionise the present, but as a tool to change a specific situation and architecturally represent existing programmes and urgent spatial questions. The radical quality lies in not imagining a different societal set-up, but in accepting and understanding existing roles and possibilities and working with them to achieve precise and limited goals. These projects neither assume the return of public planning as we knew it, nor do they propose visionary solutions. They are not big plans, they are small plans – though this doesn't mean the actual scale is small or is unrelated to a larger context. On the contrary, each small project is embedded in a larger-scale analysis of the urban context and accepts the current playing field of highly decentralised and privatised urban development, planning and policymaking.

Coalitions of partners

Each project is based upon a coalition of partners, with the architect present from the outset to synthesise the various ideas and interests. In these coalitions – as opposed to many of the partnerships since the 1990s – the roles, responsibilities and agendas of the different players are sharply defined. All parties share an interest in establishing Open City qualities, by connecting different user groups, areas, programmes and institutions. All parties are also convinced of the spatial and social need for less fragmentation, less segregation, more cohesion and more coexistence.

Within this consensus, each participant has a distinct role. Municipal urban planners offer their knowledge of the city and of the long-term developments in order to embed each project in municipal policies. Client-users – mostly housing corporations and project developers – provide a question and an idea of use. Architects translate the question into a spatial and symbolic answer. Uniting these disciplines, Crimson edits, defines and poses the question in such a way that all parties can work together for the higher goal of developing realistic urban projects based on real needs. Presenting this process as transparently as possible opens up the possibility of a new culture of *maakbaarheid* in urbanism.

Urban speculation

Though the projects will be realised in practice, they also contain a level of urban speculation for other parties to develop. So each project consists of a 'real' part, and the potential of further development. In financial terms, they are safe, dependable options that aim to re-establish trust in architecture, planning and development as investments that actually deliver. To achieve this it is crucial that the private interests of the stakeholders and the public interest of the project are clearly separated and articulated, as should also be the distinction between the real and speculative aspects.

In terms of the public agenda, each project tries to achieve authentic *maakbaarheid* goals.

Waalhaven • In Waalhaven, an industrial zone between the harbour and the city, the aim is to provide new workspaces that spatially reconnect the two zones while also opening up economic possibilities for the inhabitants of the neighbouring area, so potentially emancipating young, immigrant citizens.

Spangen • In Rotterdam-West the area of intervention is the former harbour-train dyke between Spangen (a once shiny example of social-democratic *maakbaarheid* from the 1920s, but by now a largely immigrant area with problems of drugs, crime and unemployment), and an isolated triangle filled with public amenities such as a petting zoo, swimming pool and sports fields. The project consists of transforming the dyke and adjacent area into new types of public space that can be shared and used, opening up and intensifying the use of the public facilities by the inhabitants of Spangen.

The convent • In the 19th-century area of Rotterdam-Noord, another project centres around Het Klooster, a former convent which, like the area surrounding it, has suffered the effects of recent urban renewal. By analysing the building's inherent spatial and architectural qualities, a set of functionally fitting programmes is distilled in order to re-embed the historic structure within the neighbourhood. At the same time, the surrounding public space is redesigned and reorganised, including the adjacent and now introverted public and cultural amenities (school, church, cultural centre, houses, old people's home). Out of the resulting square and the adjacent amenities, the project aims to create a vibrant neighbourhood centre.

Hilleplein • Hemmed in between railway lines, busy roads, a school building and Rotterdam's largest mosque lies Hilleplein, bordering on some of the city's most disenfranchised neighbourhoods. Here, the project consists of developing a



Maakbaarheid in the 00's, restoration of the Steamship Rotterdam, 2009

new landmark for education and culture, including a library, neighbourhood centre and houses. Rather than trying to reinstate spatial continuity in a completely fragmented area, it seeks to establish a new sense of urban dignity by focusing on a public programme and high-quality architecture.

Carnisse • The many standard 1940s blocks built by architect Jo van den Broek present a completely different challenge. In Carnisse, an area which has one of the lowest real-estate values in the city, flat ownership is largely in private hands. To prevent a downward cycle it is necessary to address the technical as well as spatial problems of the blocks. The aim is to give the owners of the small apartments an architectural toolbox to take the refurbishment of their blocks into their own hands, thereby improving their living conditions as well as the overall attractiveness of the area.

Hofbogen • The soon-to-be abandoned Hofbogen train line dates from the early 20th century and includes two stations and almost 2km of viaduct, running through a 19th-century area in the north of Rotterdam. This viaduct will be redeveloped through a series of new commercial and cultural programmes and this project will reanimate the surrounding city and transform the train line from a barrier into a connective element.

Central district • Following World War II, the centre of Rotterdam was extensively rebuilt and the effects of this still endure in the ubiquitous zoning of functions. In the redevelopment around Central Station this zoning runs the risk of creating a monofunctional and isolated area, while erasing the small-scale creative economy already established there. The brief for this so-called Central District forcibly connects the isolated super development around the train station with the potential circuits and routes of the inner city. Replacing the *tabula rasa* approach by a gradual growth model forms an integral part of the redevelopment.

Kleinpolder • The Kleinpolderplein is one of the most impressive highway sections in the city but it bisects a neighbourhood, causing a destructive impact on the surrounding urban areas. This project aims to tunnel, bridge, resurface and penetrate the motorway in order to counter this impact and facilitate cross-traffic, especially pedestrians and cyclists.

Hoboken • Finally, the Park-knot Hoboken project also aims to bridge different parts of the city that have been separated by infrastructure (in this case a dyke) to create a meaningful continuous public space between three parks and the main city hospital.

Site specific & straight forward

Creating a series of projects that share an ethos of straightforwardness and realism is surely more effective in answering the city's needs than another out-of-the-box alternative, or spectacular 'transformational vision'. As generations shift, so do the ethics of urban intervention, analogous with do-it-yourself punk bands and entrepreneurial hip-hop artists superseding the bombastic symphonic rock played by millionaires in sports arenas.

By re-embedding architectural and urban projects in the highly specific context of a location, user and programme, we hope to save them from the damaging competition for attention and political support to which masterplans or grand visions often fall victim. The straightforwardness of the site-specific project could be a much-needed antidote to the degradation of credibility that big plans have brought to architecture and urban planning –but making a small plan in no way means having small ambitions. Being precise about the feasibility and the effectiveness of a plan means being completely accountable, a risk that very few makers of big plans are willing to take. Equally crucially, such projects set an example by showing what can be done, how it makes a difference, and that you can actually do it.

Carnisse

Coalition

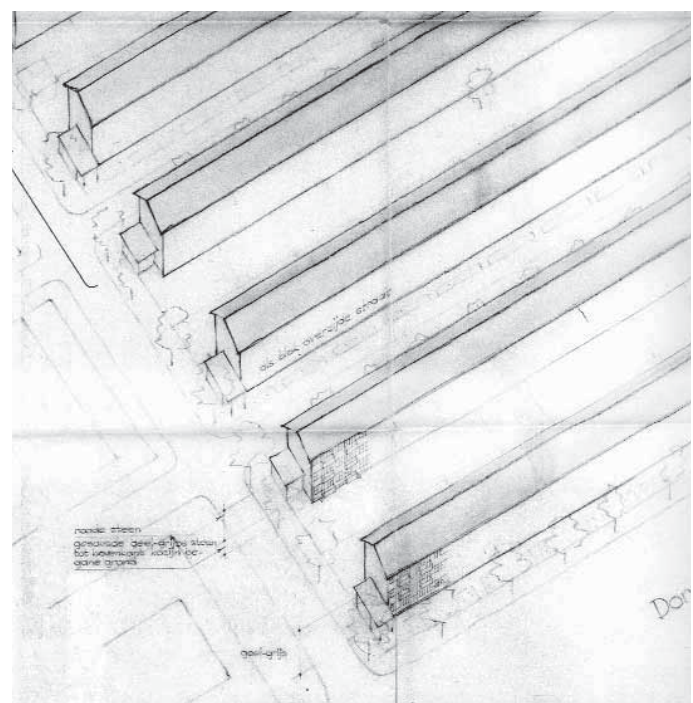
Design: DaF Architects
(Rotterdam, NL) – Daan Bakker,
Catherine Visser, Paul van der
Voort, Laura Orrú, Marie-
Antonieta Cossu, Polle Koks,
Marieke Veling

Projectdeveloper: Com Wonen –
Arno van der Laan, Folkert
Schroten, Jan Kooistra, Myrna
Tholens

**Historic research and coordi-
nation:** Crimson Architectural
Historians



Blocks 'Algemeen Belang' ('Common Interest'), J.H. van den Broek 1938



Axonometry Vogelbuurt ('Birdnames Neighborhood'), J.H. van den Broek 1940



Urban plan for Rotterdam South, W. Witteveen 1937



Rotterdam South, 2009

3000 Identical Apartments

The project for the neighborhood of Carnisse is focused on a series of near identical housing blocks that were built in clusters. Not only in Carnisse, but throughout the entire city of Rotterdam a total of 3000 apartments was built between 1938 and 1941. This wave of standardized blocks, indistinguishable except for tiny manipulations that make them fit in the different urban contexts, adds up to 1 % of the total amount of dwellings in Rotterdam in 2009. As such it is one of the most successful experiments in standardization undertaken in the pre-war period by any architect from the modern movement.

The Modern Workers Dwelling

J.H. van den Broek, famous for his open courtyard block with flexible floor plans in the Vroesenlaan, had been seeking ways to solve the problem of building large numbers of good,

modern workers housing. He had reached the conclusion that the problem was neither technical nor architectural, but rather organizational and managerial. Only when the private building companies would be able to make a profit on cheap apartments, there would be a dependable production. Subsidies by cities and the national government, industrialization or architectural visionary plans could produce only tiny realized experiments, but not the necessary large quantities of better cheap housing.

Collectivity & Building

Van den Broek provided the small building businesses of Rotterdam with a package deal. It consisted of a typical floor plan, a building system, an urban envelope and a set of urban and architectural guidelines. The builders could invest in one or more units of six dwellings around a staircase. They could decide -within slim margins- on the placement of the



Expansion and adaptation of a balcony

balconies, the kitchen and a third bedroom. Collectively they would order the building materials, set the rents, and arrange the building permits and the urban design. The result was long slabs of walk up flats, three stories high, built by up to six different small family contractors. They flanked the new streets in Rotterdam south, west and north.

Pleasantly Messy

Between 1938 and 1940 a total of 753 apartments was built. The package deal turned out to be a huge success. The wartime destruction created a demand for thousands of new houses. Van den Broeks model was rolled out over the city with a speed and on a scale that was entirely unforeseen by both the architect and the builders. The result is four neighborhoods in Rotterdam, entirely consisting of 3000 of Van den Broeks utterly simplified modernist apartments. Never having been owned, rented out or maintained by housing corporations or large developers, the blocks, the streets and courtyards have developed in a pleasantly messy way. People have added their own balcony fences, garden sheds, front doors and paintwork. The uniformity of the blocks has been transcended by seventy years of private use.

Time For Another Round

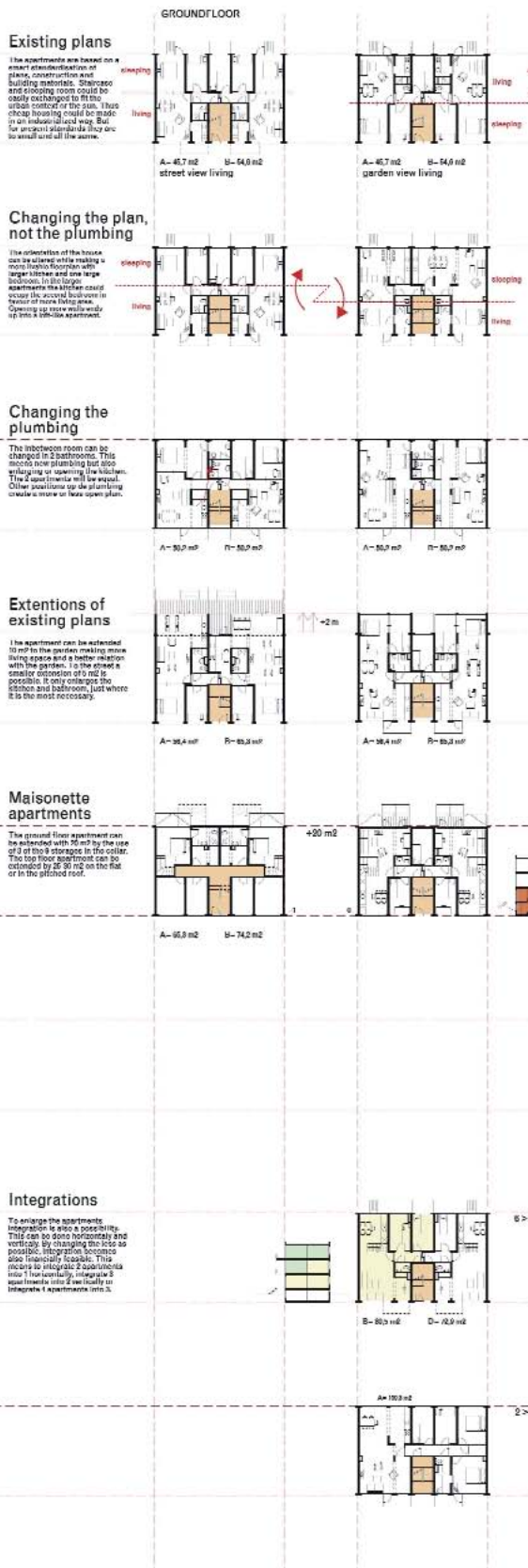
The fact that these blocks have been and will stay privately owned, has produced highly specific neighborhoods, with a rare urban quality, like Carnisse. At the same time, these cheap dwellings, built in some of the poorest urban areas of Rotterdam, are threatened by urban blight, vacancies, illegal usage and physical decay. With not one single owner to be made responsible this asks for another round of innovative architectural solutions.

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Develop a toolbox of architectural interventions, with which individuals and homeowner associations can enlarge, maintain, renovate and transform their apartments and their segments of the slabs
- Develop an architectural language that allows for differentiation, but still stays within the grammar used by Van den Broek in 1938
- Make sure that these interventions are realizable, technically and financially
- Take one of the clusters of six flats around a staircase owned by the housing corporation, as a showcase for the realization of the toolbox

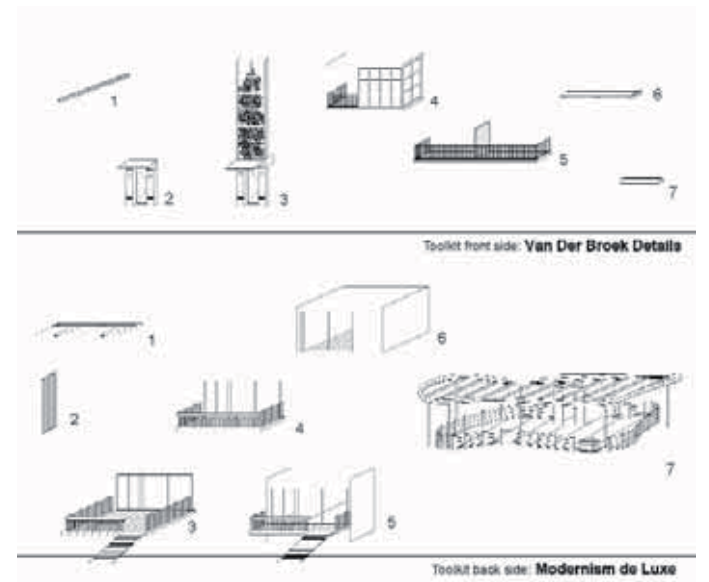
PUZZLE OF PLANS



Adaptations Urkersingel



Adaptations Urkersingel



Hilleplein

Coalition

Design: FAT Architects

(London, UK) – Sam Jacob

Project developer: Woonstad

Rotterdam – Edwin Dortland,

Theo Voogd

Other participants: De Piramide –

Renée Ketting, Cheryl Kurstjens

Historic research and coordi-

nation: Crimson Architectural

Historians



Anything But A Square

Hilleplein, meaning Hille-'square', is anything but a square; it is a place where the prewar workers housing of Hillesluis unravels into a seemingly suburban or even ex-urban condition of a motorway overpass, a train line, large megastores and a soccer stadium. The red brick apartments and the streets are separated from all these elements by the viaduct that cuts through like a knife. The still unfinished Essalam Mosque dominates the area.

Where The City Met The Harbor

Until just 1980, this area had a totally different atmosphere. A huge pedestrian bridge carried the workers to and from the wharves on the other side of the train yard, and during the

weekend the fans of the Feijenoord Soccer Stadium. Many bars and cafes existed around what is now the ragged emptiness at the edge of the neighborhood. Also then the area was complex and chaotic. Its landscape was determined by old dikes and polders and by some of the first attempts to build cheap housing for the explosively growing harbor city of the late nineteenth century. This was where the city met the harbor, to mutual benefit and mutual annoyance.

Left In The Shadows

The harbor left the city from the sixties onwards. The city tried to find ways to fill in the left over spaces. This caused the degradation of what is now called Hilleplein. First the disappearance of the wharves and their replacement by suburban housing meant that the people of Rotterdam South needed no longer to cross the train yard. Secondly the redevelopment of the former harbor areas with the Kop van Zuid Waterfront development caused the building of the Laan op Zuid, a huge boulevard going from north to south, but passing by Hillesluis, leaving it in the shadows.

Moroccan Community, Dubai Money, Egyptian Style

What once was the center of the neighborhood became a strange left over space on its edge. The decision was made to build the Mosque here, perhaps as a cause for new centrality: the largest one in Western Europe, built by Polish builders for the Moroccan Community, with Dubai money, designed by a Dutch Firm, in the Egyptian Style. Beautiful as this building may be, it stands isolated, forlornly amidst the poor brick houses and the busy traffic. Other developments have gone in the same direction: large apartment buildings, primary schools, randomly strewn over the urban landscape.

Which Hardware?

What we see in Hilleplein could be described as a landscape of urban disintegration. Big objects and large infrastructural works are passing each other by. The blocks and streets of the former workers neighborhoods are disconnected from their surroundings. This is an area with a huge memory of nearly one and a half century of permanent and often radical change, and three decades of failed attempts to stitch together its fragments. It is also an authentically proletarian urban neighborhood, multi-ethnic, poor, but vibrant and with a sense of community. Which hardware could best serve such software?

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Create a building that through its program, its visual presence and its spatial structure plays the role of a 'square': a meeting place and a symbolic gathering place for the neighborhood
- Design a multifunctional building, housing a primary school, housing for the elderly, social and cultural functions, office space and reception for the housing corporation, and a parking garage
- In the design of the building, reflect the contrasting and eventful history of its surroundings, such as the pre war brick housing, the steelyards and wharves where the workers used to be employed, the exotic architecture of the new Mosque and the fact that this area once was and could again be a social heart of the neighborhood



Hilleplein, 1898



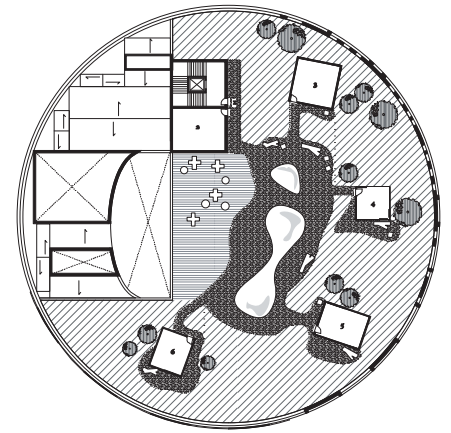
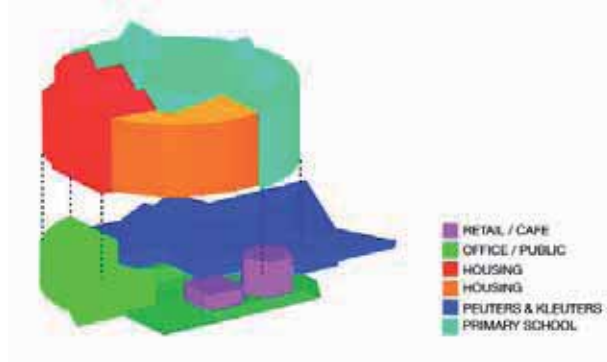
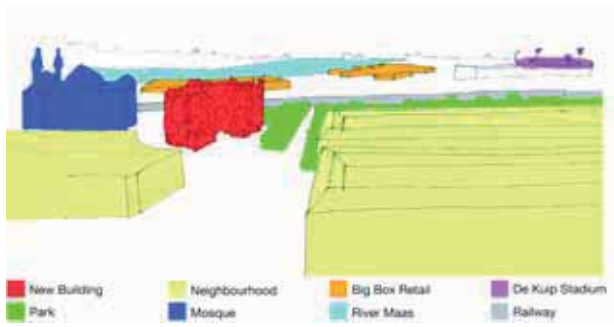
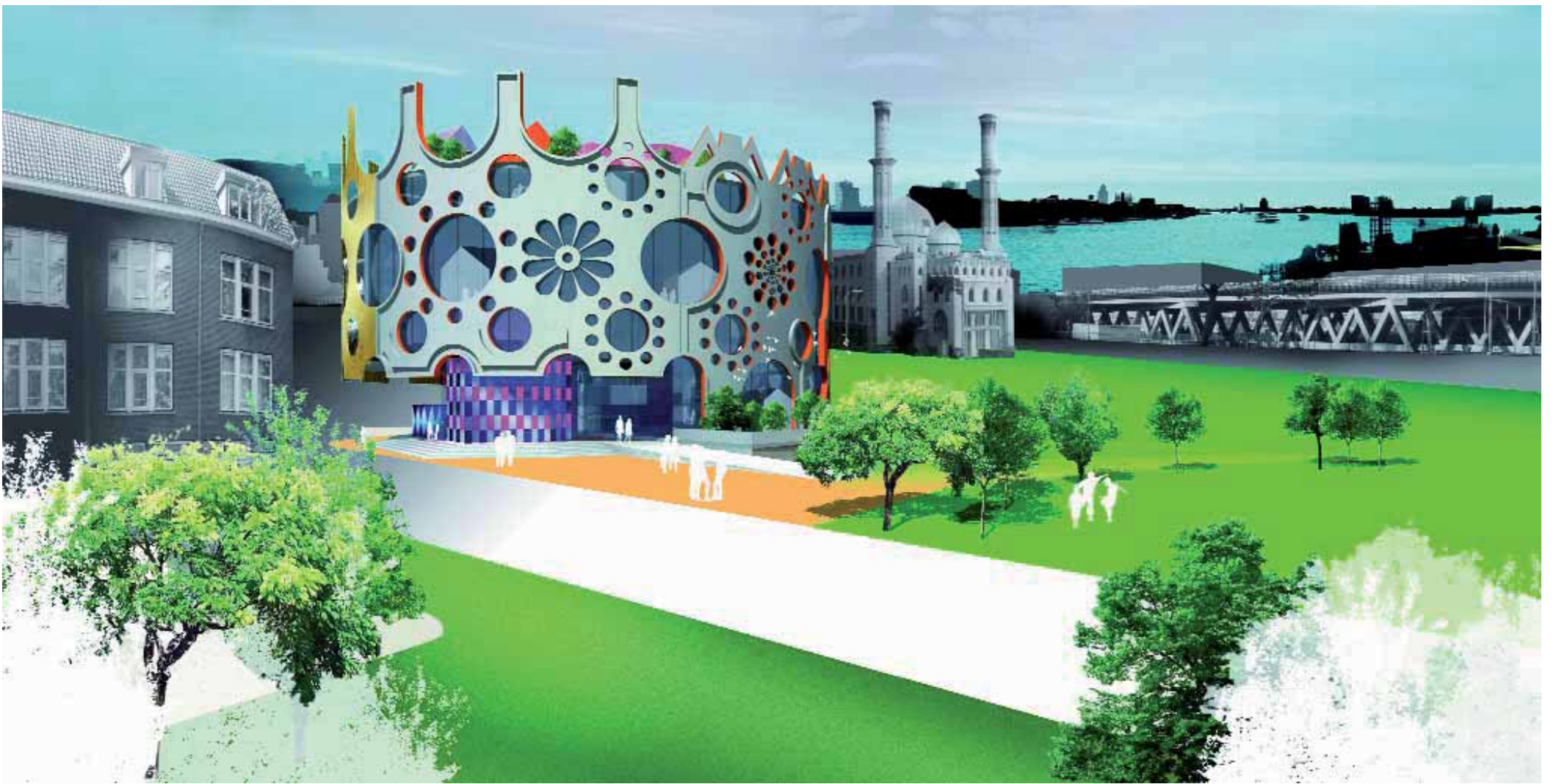
Hilleplein, 1933



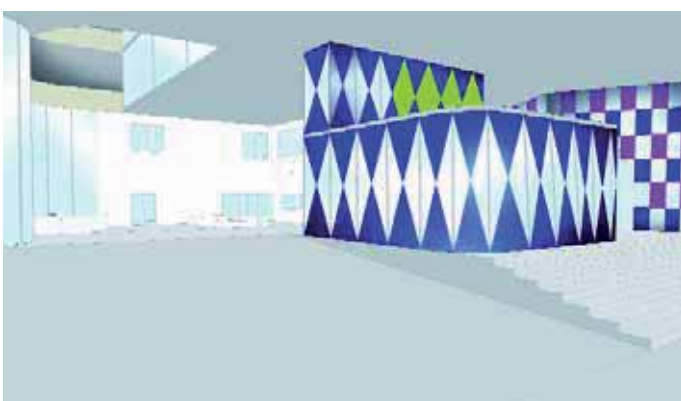
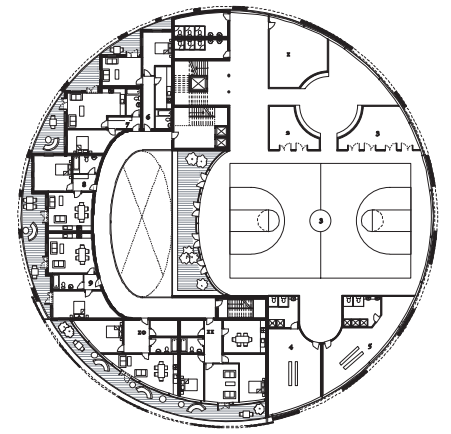
Hilleplein, 2009



Hilleplein 30's, looking towards pedestrian bridge to the shipyards



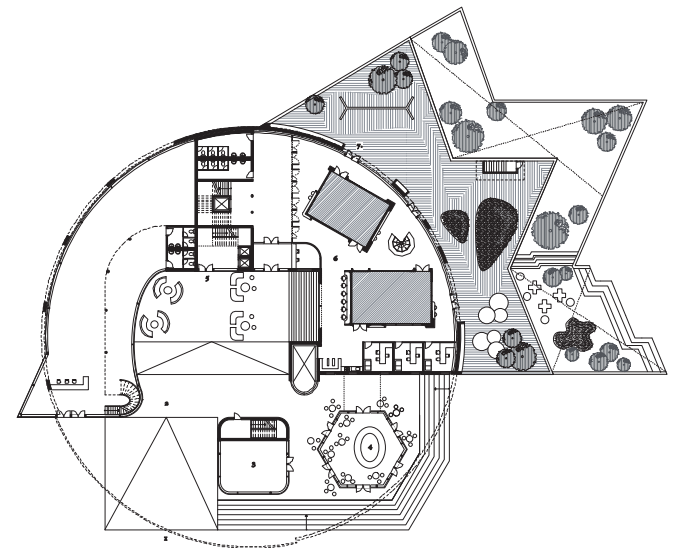
Roofscape



Entrance groundfloor



Interior primary school



Hilleplein schoolbuilding
 Roof: playground primary school
 3d to 5th floor, left: housing, right: primary school
 Groundfloor, public function, right: primary school and daycare center

Klooster

Coalition

Design: DaF Architecten (Rotterdam, NL) – Daan Bakker, Catherine Visser, Paul van der Voort, Laura Orrú, Marie-Antonietta Cossu, Polle Koks, Marieke Veling

Projectdeveloper: Woonstad Rotterdam (Gerdie Bours with Gerhard Hup)

Other participants: local municipality Rotterdam Noord, Riette van der Werff, KDV (José Slobbe, Renate Verschoor) and inhabitants of Het Klooster and surrounding area

Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



Catholic Convent

The red brick fortress like compound “Het Klooster” (The Convent) is a witness to the strong historic presence of Catholics in the predominantly protestant city of Rotterdam. The building, designed by Jos Margry (1912-1922), is part of a whole generation of monumental catholic churches, schools and convents. They were built in the first quarter of the twentieth century, throughout Rotterdam, when the city was growing at an unprecedented pace. All of these buildings were built in a clearly identifiable catholic style. This particular building, dedicated to the Saint Hildegardis, formed a catholic cluster with the neogothic Hildegardis church next to it. Margry’s father, Evert, built it in 1890.

Rare Monumental Objects

When the Church and the Convent were built, they were rare monumental objects in a hardly planned, extremely densely built up workers neighborhood in Rotterdam-North. The nuns in the convent were also the teachers in the primary school and the nursery. They played a central role in the busy proletarian neighborhood, filled with ‘immigrants’ from the catholic southern regions of The Netherlands. The nuns themselves were not allowed out on the streets. This explains the structure of the building. The building’s interior circulation and its connections to the outside world were planned to make sure that the nuns could reach every part of the building from their quarters, while the people could enter and leave the building at certain points. Thereby the building has become both an open public centre, and a closed, mysterious introverted block. It consisted of three parts: the convent where the nuns lived, and around two courtyards were the school and the nursery. The middle and most clearly neogothically designed part holds the mensa and the chapel for the nuns.

Ruthless Renovation

If we flash forward to the late seventies and eighties, Rotterdam was going through huge changes due to de-industrialization, immigration and secularization. The Convent did not fare well, neither did the neighborhood. After the last nuns had left and the school was closed, the building was, unlike many of its kind in Rotterdam, not demolished. It was re-used as a community centre, cheap and small housing, school and day care centre. To house all these functions a ruthless interior and external renovation was carried through, that catered to every detail of the new program, but with total ignorance of the building’s monumental architectural potentials.

Urban Renewal

The same thing happened to the neighborhood as a whole. As part of the urban renewal aiming to improve housing conditions, the area was renovated. This was done with ruthless disregard for the architectural characteristics, but purely with functional, economic and hygienic goals. One of the results was the replacement of all original window openings by ugly plastic windows; the once clear urban structure became confused, with blocked streets and illogical design of routes and squares. The convent building is now a badly deteriorated closed block, forbidding because of thirty-year-old renovations and an overload of fences and blocked doors. Its interior is a maze of small rooms and corridors.

Again A Focal Point

The Convent and its immediate surroundings can be restored to its original state of a focal point for a proletarian neighborhood, which is getting more popular every day. The sensitivity of the archaeologist combined with the optimism of the architect is needed to clear out thirty years of clutter. What could be a contemporary reincarnation of the original



Garden daycare center, before 1960



Cloister, before 1960



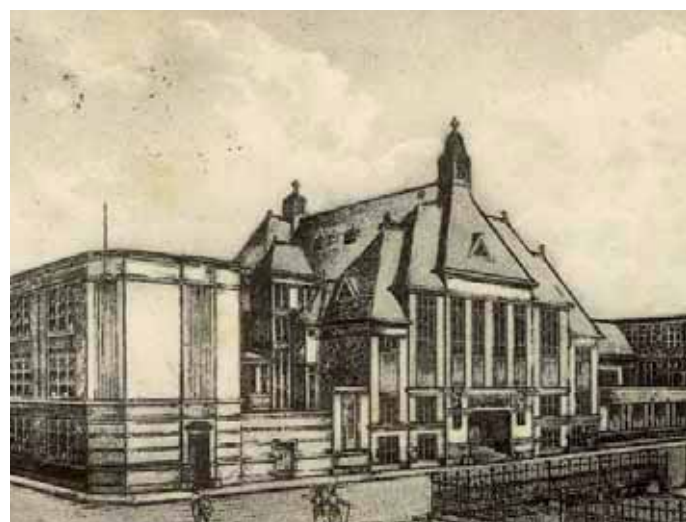
Hildegardis Convent’s first sisters, 1923



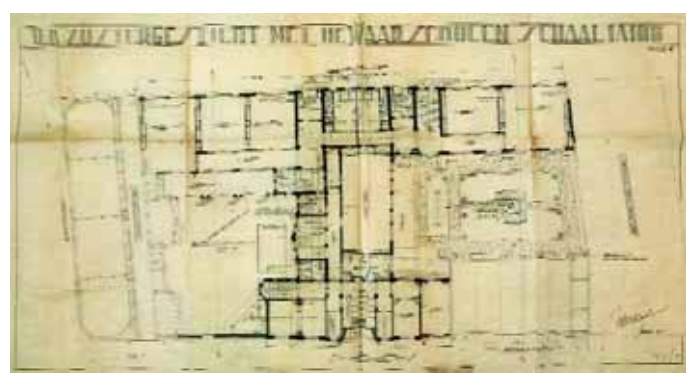
Land use plan for ‘Het Oude Noorden’ (‘Old North Neighborhood’), 1900



Het Oude Noorden, 2009



Streetview Hildegardis Convent, J. Margry 1922



Groundfloorplan Hildegardis Convent, J. Margry 1922

combination of openness and closedness? Of the mystery of the convent versus the daily use of the school and the nursery, that determined the building’s quality?

Synthesis

The agenda’s of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Counter the closed and hermetic character of the original building, exacerbated by the installation of fences and other security measures in the eighties, and focus on creating connections to the surrounding streets and squares
- Precisely understand and unravel the inner labyrinth of spaces and corridors and reintroduce a spatial and functional clarity
- Work from the inside out, by first introducing piecemeal interventions that then spill out over the entire building and the surrounding neighborhood
- Re-animate Het Klooster as a social and cultural icon in the neighborhood
- Propose effective measures to reorganize the placing of cultural and social buildings in the block-street-square urban structure of Het Oude Noorden



Het Oude Noorden before and after interventions DaF



Public space after interventions DaF



Garden daycare center, spring 2009



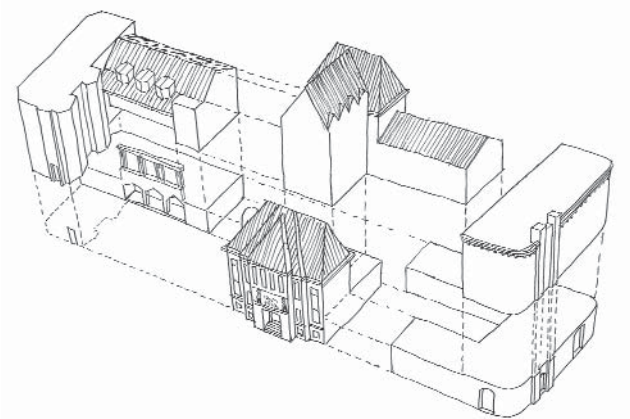
Garden daycare center, summer 2009, after first intervention by DaF



Facade Convent after selective cleaning and restoration



Youth center and café, after restoration



Untying the knot: school + daycare center + youth center + neighborhood center + housing + café

Hofbogen

Coalition

Design: ATELIER SERAJI ARCHITECTES & ASSOCIES (Paris, FR) - Nasrine Seraji, Roland Oberhofer, Nicolas Fevrier, Nick Risteen

Project developer: Hofbogen BV in corporation with Vestia Noord (Marije Faber) and Projectgroep Zomerhofkwartier (PWS Rotterdam, Com Wonen and OPP/BVG)

Other participants: NADC - Hoi Chin Chong, Estrade Projecten - Gijs van der Kleij

Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



Hofbogen (Elevated Trainline Hofplein), 1915

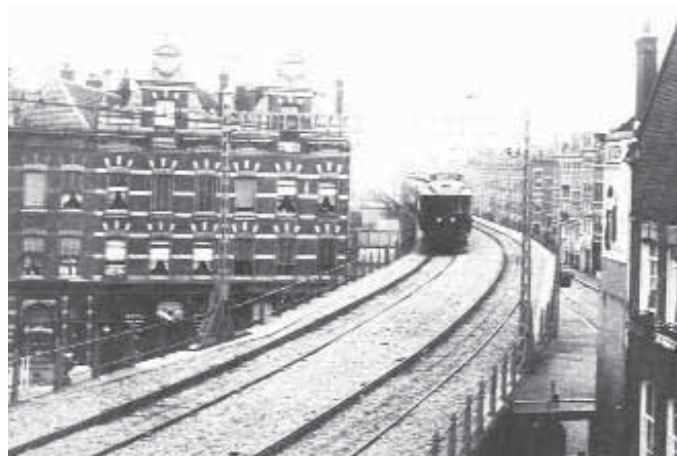
Hofbogen, 1947

Hofbogen, 2009

189 Arches

The Hofplein viaduct is a 1.9 km long viaduct, built in the northern part of Rotterdam in the early 20th century. It consists of 189 arches and forms the start of a railway line linking Rotterdam with The Hague and Scheveningen. The Hofplein line was a luxurious and comfortable alternative to the existing railway line to The Hague via Delft and mainly carried seaside visitors from Rotterdam to Scheveningen and commuters from The Hague and Wasseenaar.

The building of the Hofplein viaduct, which took place in 1905-1907, was a spectacular breakthrough in the development of railway viaduct construction. Never before had an elevated railway been built that consisted only of reinforced concrete. For this, the Hofplein viaduct was declared a national heritage in 2002. It was also the first electric railway line in the Netherlands.



Hofbogen, Zomerhofstraat, 1908



Hofbogen, Vijverhofstraat, 1920's

Crossing The City And The Polder

The starting point of the Hofplein line was situated in the inner city of Rotterdam with a monumental station building 'Station Hofplein'. The viaduct continued into the northern parts of Rotterdam, crossing the existing 19th century neighbourhoods all the way up till the city boundary at the time, the Bergweg station. From there on the viaduct sliced through the still virginal polder landscape, until it reached its end near the Noordercanal.

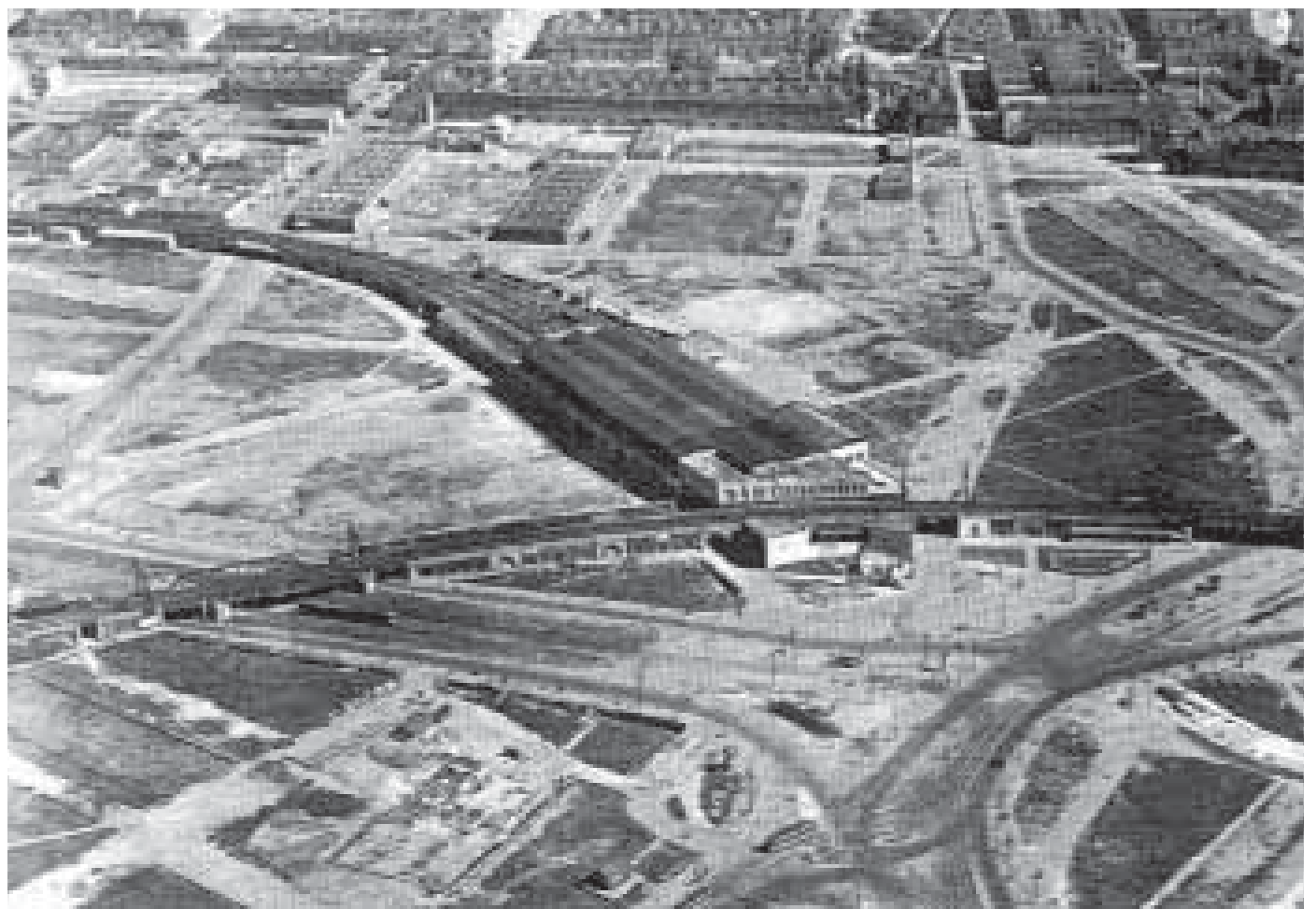
As the city expanded, the surrounding farmland was transformed into new neighbourhoods on both sides of the viaduct during the beginning of the 20th century. By the 1940's the city boundary was already pushed up until the Noordercanal. The viaduct became completely enclosed, and at certain points the line was literally wedged in by these later urban expansions.

Becoming A Warehouse Building

Although originally planned as an open structure, immediately after its completion in 1908 the arches in the first part of the viaduct were filled with simple wooden facades to be used as small shops, ateliers and storage space. This process continued rapidly after the bombardment of Rotterdam in 1940. The shortage of workspaces in the city centre led to the complete filling in of the structure. The original open construction transformed into an elongated warehouse building, forming a 2 km barrier in the northern part of the city. Nonetheless, the activities in the arches also served the neighbourhoods, therefore the viaduct became at the same time much more integrated in the urban environment.

New Perspectives Needed

But: The original grandeur of the viaduct and its stations was soon lost after WWII. Firstly, Station Hofplein was largely



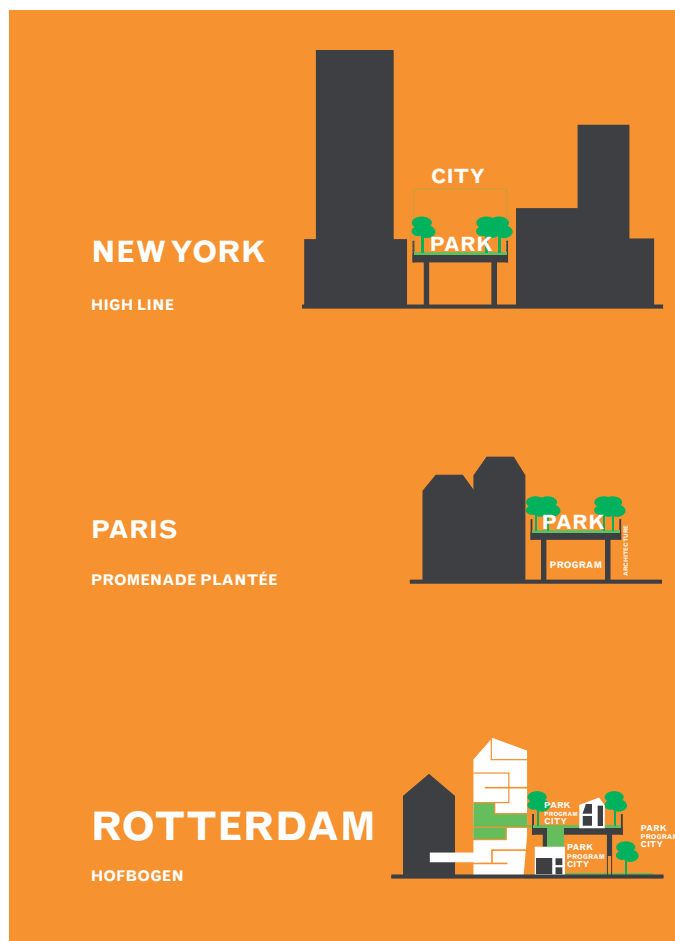
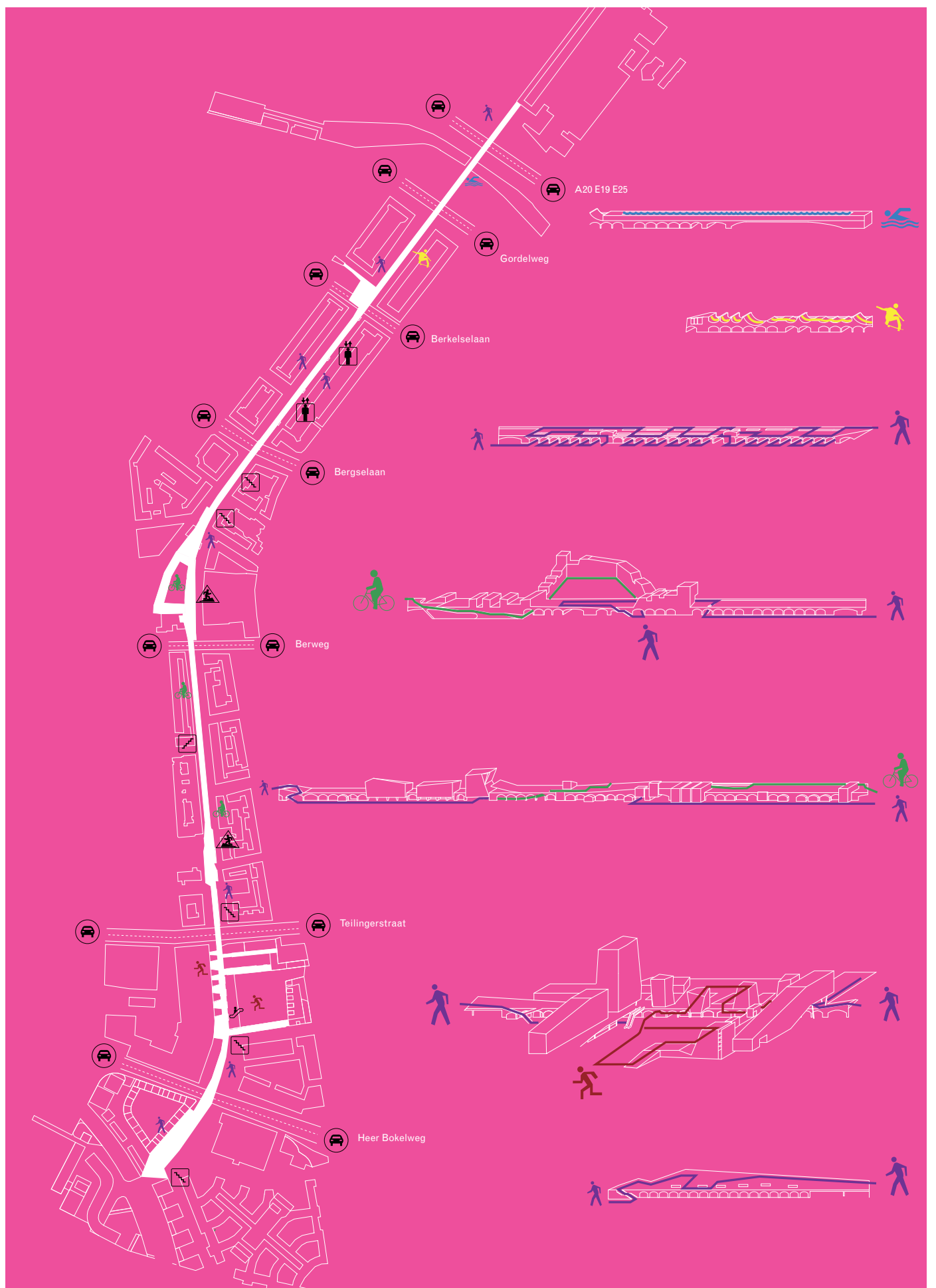
Station Hofplein after the bombardment, 1945

destroyed in 1940. As a direct result of the post war urban renewal plan for the inner city of Rotterdam (Basisplan, 1946) the once iconic station was now tucked away in a corner for no one to see. Secondly, the maintenance of the viaduct was extremely poor and the arches were filled in a random way. It led to a cacophonous image of loud facades that attracted bad tenants, creating unattractive and unsafe spaces in and alongside the structure. The surrounding neighbourhoods were largely inhabited by immigrants. They were in decline and dealt with unemployment and crime. In 2007 two of them (Bergpolder and Agniesebuurt) were officially proclaimed 'problem' area's by the Dutch Ministry of Housing. In 2010 the viaduct will lose its original function because the current Randstadrail will discontinue its service on the Hofplein viaduct, leaving the 2km long roof of the viaduct empty. How can the viaduct spatially and programmatically be renewed and reconnected to its urban context?

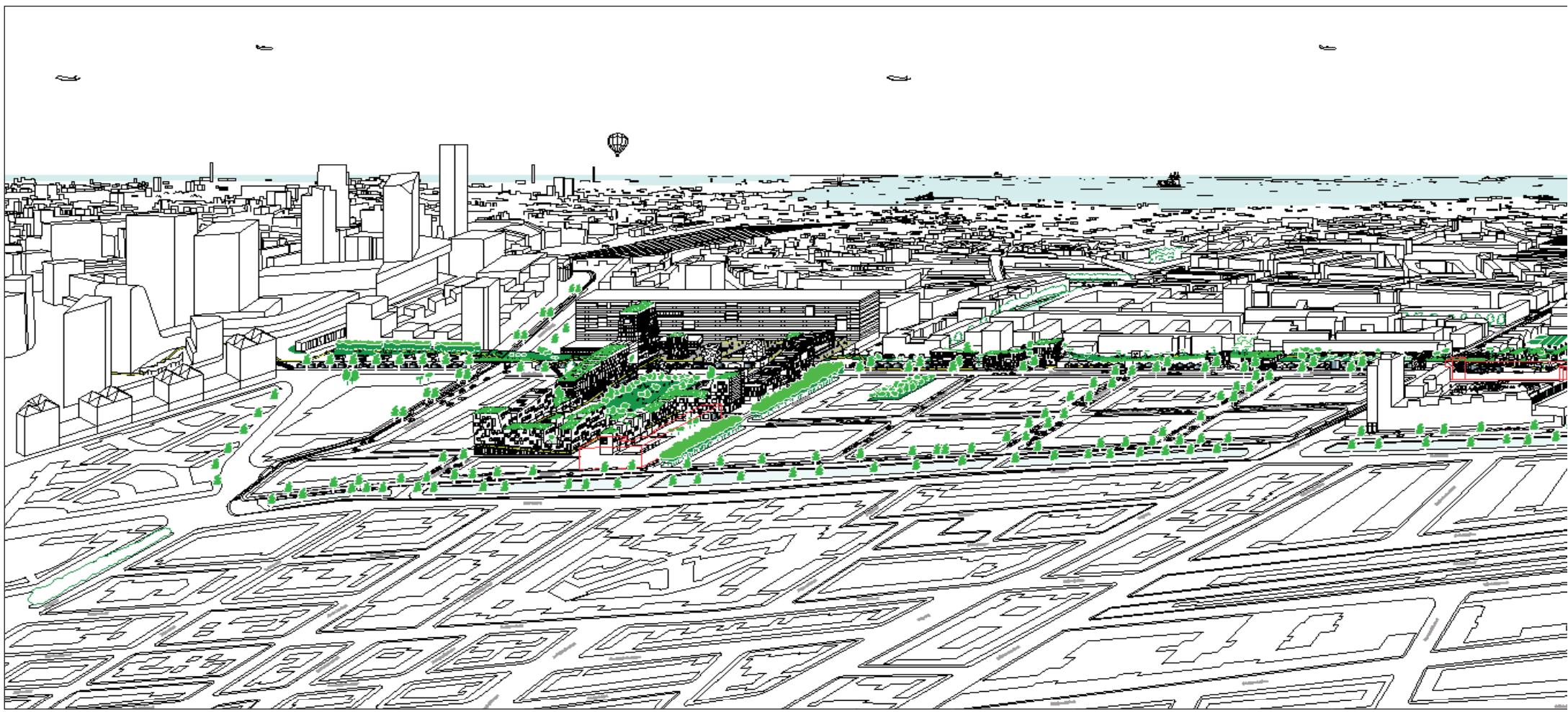
Synthesis

The agenda's of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief:

- Redevelop the soon to be abandoned train line Hofbogen with a series of new housing, commercial, and cultural programs in and around this 'longest building of Rotterdam'
- Focus on two development areas in the direct proximity of the viaduct: Zomerhofkwartier and Bergpolder. Combine the design proposals with the existing plans for the future transformation of the upper deck of the viaduct into a new public and collective space and aim to strengthen both programmes
- Reanimate, through these interventions, the surrounding city and turn the train line from a barrier into a connective element



Comparison with other 'urbanized' former trainlines



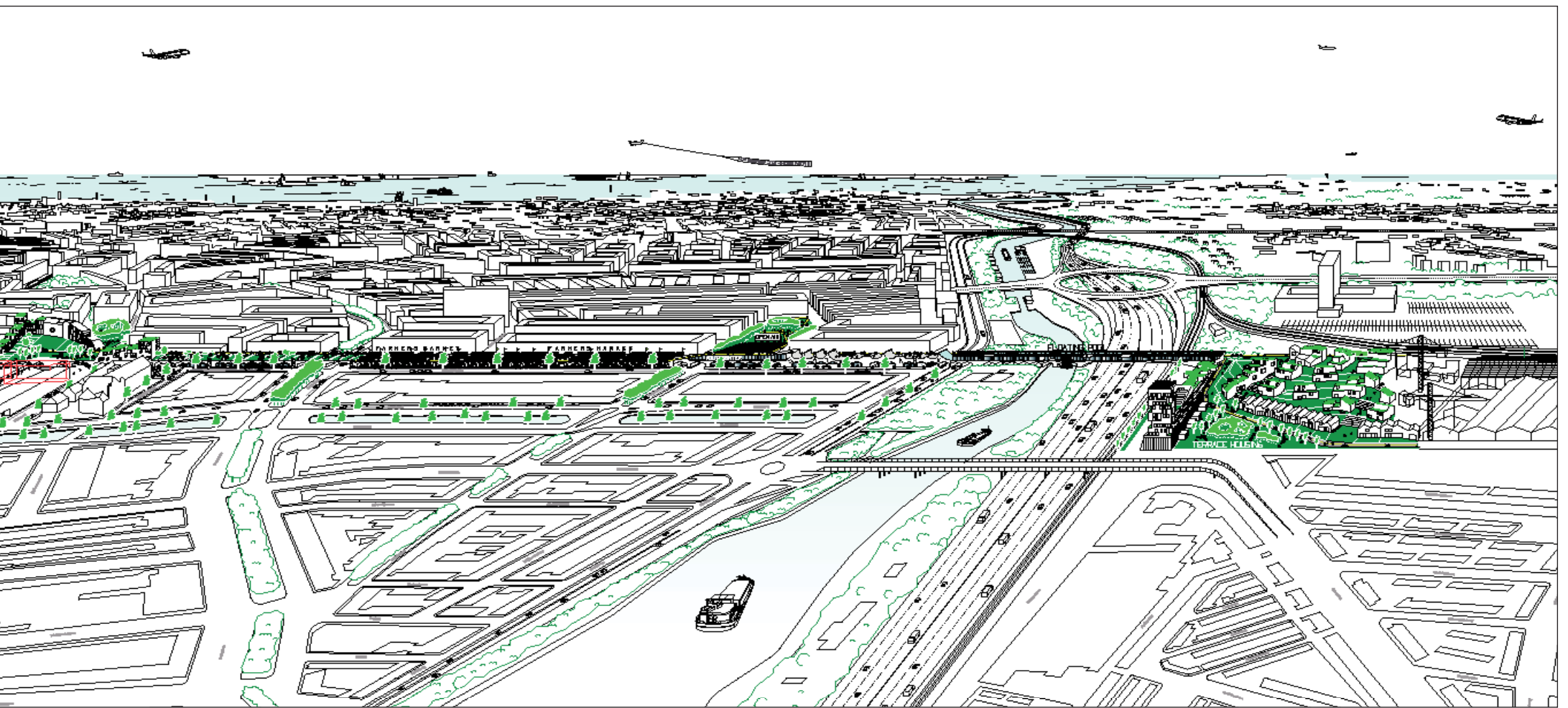
Bergpolder, close to Bergwegstation



Bergpolder, close to Bergwegstation



Zomerhof quarter



Zomerhof quarter



Proposal for Hofbogen, crossing highwayA20



Proposal for Hofbogen as part of Agnese neighborhood

Klein-polder

Coalition

Design: Maxwan Architects + Urbanists (Rotterdam, NL) – Rients Dijkstra, Hiroki Matsuura, Martijn Anhalt, with Arthur Borejszo, Jason Hilgefort, Nara Lee, Nobuki Ogasahara, Michiel Raats, Kris Schaasberg, Harm te Velde
Special thanks to: Baukuh
Project developer: Woonstad Rotterdam – Dominique Strörmann, Gerben in 't Hout, Kay Schellen

Other participants: dS+V – Inge Breugem, local municipality
 Overschie – Dick van Dongen, Observatorium – Ruud Reutelingsperger and Rijks-waterstaat

Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



Kleinpolderplein, the massive traffic interchange on the northern edge of the city, splits the community of Overschie in two halves. It also separates the area from the rest of city for all but motorists. Its impressive yet traumatic presence in the middle of the city shows how urban development and traffic planning have developed in different directions, mostly ignoring each other, while sharing the same, scarce, space.

Tree Lined Avenue

Originally, Overschie was a mediaeval village between Rotterdam and Delft. The explosive growth of Rotterdam in the early twentieth century absorbed it. Already in 1928 an urban plan was drawn up, embedding the old village core in the same system of blocks, squares and streets as those of the new northwestern neighborhoods of Rotterdam. At the same time the new road from Rotterdam to Delft was also planned and constructed straight through the newly expanding Overschie. It was then supposed to become a wide, tree-lined avenue.

Highway System

Just before WWII it was decided that the new road should be exclusively built for motorcars, anticipating the post war highway system. During WWII the autocratic occupation government finally pushed through the long awaited annexation of Overschie. But urban developments after the war did not cause the spatial integration of Overschie into Rotterdam. Under the new urbanistic regime of the Bauhäusler Lotte Stam-Beese, the pre war organic urban

design of Overschie was overlain with a modernistic approach. In a combination of functionalist design and New Town planning, Overschie was treated as a separate entity. The fifties ushered in the era of highway planning. The Netherlands were covered with a network of concrete highways, designed top down and projected on the landscape.

Disastrous Sophisticated Planning

Precisely where Overschie meets Rotterdam a double oval of traffic interchanges was implanted to receive the new highway A13. Less than a decade later, when Overschie was nearly finished, the ovals were turned into the largest three-dimensional interchange of the Netherlands. Four layers of tunnels and flyovers knotted together into a magnificent if otherworldly concrete and asphalt sculpture. This futuristic object was surrounded by small-scale suburban houses from the thirties and carefully placed modernist slabs in the garden city from the fifties. While both elements are the result of sophisticated planning, their disastrous meeting was never wished for, nor avoided.

Pragmatic Solutions

Since its construction, no convincing solutions have been put forward to change this situation, except the proposition of another highway to the east, making the A13 redundant. But this idea already dates from the nineteen fifties...

In the meantime Overschie, hidden behind the interchange of Kleinpolderplein, has held on to its identity as a very particular urban village that has learned to live with the concrete monster that sits in its middle. But it is segregated by the highway into a popular western part and a much less desirable eastern part.

Due to environmental, safety and health reasons, the highway is covered with noise and pollution barriers, making it even more of an obstacle. Every morning and afternoon the interchange is packed with traffic jams. It was not the job of the traffic planners to make the area accessible for pedestrians, cyclists or local traffic, and the urban planners were too convinced of the hopelessness of the situation. It is time for another approach. Instead of large scale and long term ideas thought up by engineers and planners, we should design pragmatic, realistic solutions, embedded in the real needs and possibilities of Overschie.

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Develop a number of interventions to reconnect both halves of Overschie where they are split apart by the A13 highway
- Develop an intervention for the Kleinpolderplein interchange to improve the entrance to Overschie and reconnect the networks for cyclists and pedestrians
- Combine the infrastructural interventions with new spaces for culture and social activities



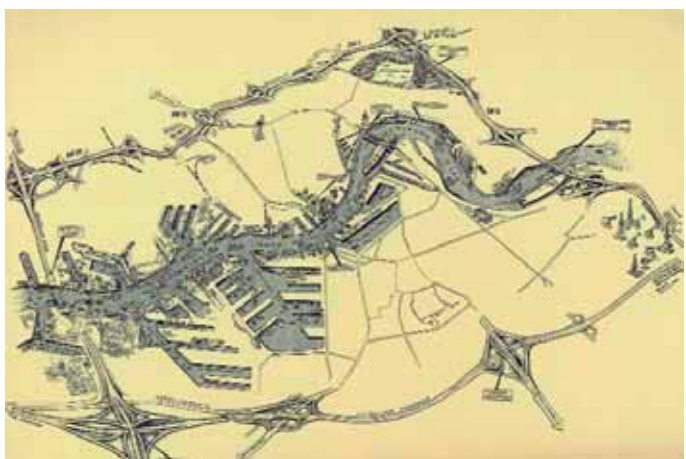
Overschie, 1909



Overschie, urban plan by Lotte Stam-Beese 1952



Overschie, 2009



Rotterdam Ringroad, 60's



Kleinpolderplein, early 60's



Underpass Zestienhovense Kade, current situation



Intervention: turning the Zestienhovense Kade underpass into a socio-cultural containerterminal to be used for band practice, graffiti workshops, table tennis, solar studio, community center...



Underpass through the Sidelinge Park, current situation



Intervention: smoothing out the edges of the underpass, integrating the road into the Sidelinge park and creating shared space



Intervention: reorganizing the margins of the traffic lanes into a logical, safe and visually arresting system for pedestrian and bicycle use. Turning the space underneath Kleinpolderplein's Interchange into a monumental civic space



Park Knot Hoboken

Coalition
Design: ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles] (Rotterdam, NL) – Elma van Boxel, Kristian Koreman
Project developer: dS+V – Ilta van der Mast, Perry Boomsluitter, Arjen Knoester
Other participants: inhabitants and entrepreneurs of Hoboken, partners Hoboken 2030
Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



Hoboken, 1875



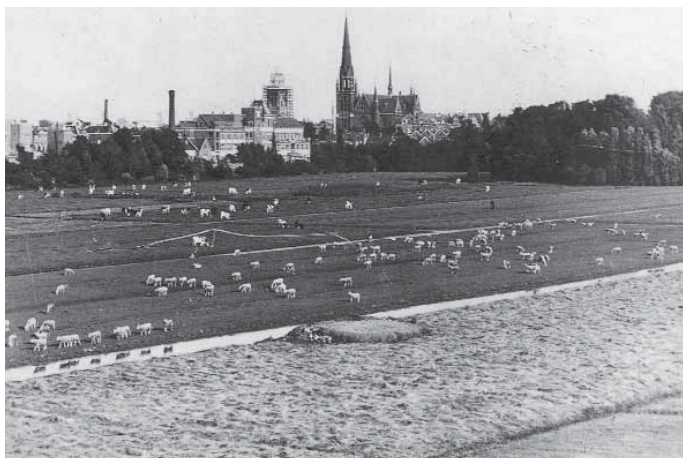
Hoboken, 1909



Urban plan Hoboken, W. Witteveen, 1927



Hoboken, 2009



Hoboken, 1915



Hoboken, 1973

The 'Hoboken Park Knot' that this project intends to untie refers to the untidy meeting of two large parks, two small ones and a gigantic medical complex (i.e. hospital, medical faculty, children's hospital and research centres) around a busy urban traffic artery on an immense dike, protecting the centre of Rotterdam against flooding. This knot is a small but crucial element in the development of the 'Rotterdam Hoboken 2030' area, situated close to the Rotterdam city center.

19th Century Picturesque

In the middle of the nineteenth century the first part of the area was created, the Zocherspark: a huge park along the river Maas in the English picturesque tradition designed by the famous landscape architect J.D. Zocher. Its ponds, meadows, hills and clumps of trees were built at the periphery of nineteenth century Rotterdam in the wake of the harbor development. The park was separated from the old city by a low dike, carrying a semi-rural road, and by a green area, an immense emptiness called "The Land of Hoboken". From the late nineteenth century onward this emptiness became surrounded by the explosively growing city. Many different plans were proposed to build an entirely new city centre here, but they were never executed. The landowner refused to sell his lands to the Rotterdam authorities: the land of Hoboken stayed open.

Organic Urbanism

Finally, in the late twenties a master plan by city planner W.G. Witteveen was accepted and realized. It used The Land of Hoboken as an immense green wedge stretching from the Zocherspark into the city-center, organically flanked by brick building blocks and monumental institutions and offices like the Boymans van Beuningen Museum and the Unilever office. The plan also reorganized the cross-town traffic by building a

sunken highway connecting to the Maastunnel. When the Second World War broke out, ca. 20% of this plan was finished, and its broad outlines are still the main structuring elements of this part of the city.

Metabolic Proto-High-Tech Complex

After the war, the promise of coherence was broken with the heightening of the dike to protect Rotterdam against the sea after the great flood of 1953. This created a huge barrier between the different parks in the area and between the river Maas and the residential areas of western Rotterdam. A series of rapid transformations and developments filled up the land and ruined the subtle integral urban design by Witteveen. Especially the Erasmus Medical Centre and university that moved to this area produced one of the Netherlands most impressive metabolic proto-high-tech architectural complexes of the sixties. Clad in the space age white panels designed by Jean Prouvé, this masterpiece showcased elevated streets, bridges, sunken plazas and helicopter pads all across the Hoboken area.

Desperate Fragmentation + Enormous Possibilities

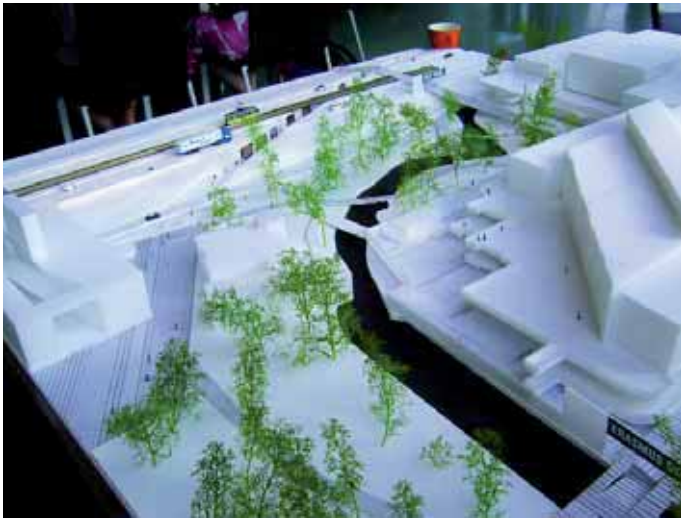
In the eighties and nineties, culture, art and architecture became major players in shaping the area. The Museum Park and its central piece, the Kunsthal, were designed by OMA with Yves Brunier. The northern part of the Hoboken area was dedicated to the Netherlands Architecture Institute, designed by Jo Coenen. A Natural History Museum was renovated and enlarged by Erick van Egeraat. The result is an inner city area that is successful and unique as a collection of elements and confrontation of different qualities: The Boymans Museum, the new cultural institutions, a collection of nineteenth century and twentieth century parks and the largest inner city university Medical Centre in the Netherlands. They're all

sandwiched between the city centre and the riverfront: a 'city branders' dream come true. But at the same time, it has become an area bearing the traces of privatized and fragmented development. Most fragments are inaccessible from and for each other. The dike presents a formidable barrier. It prevents easy access to the beautiful but underused Zochers' Park. The Park Knot symbolizes the desperate fragmentation of the city of Rotterdam, but also the enormous cultural possibilities of urban planning, landscape design and architecture.

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical analysis of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

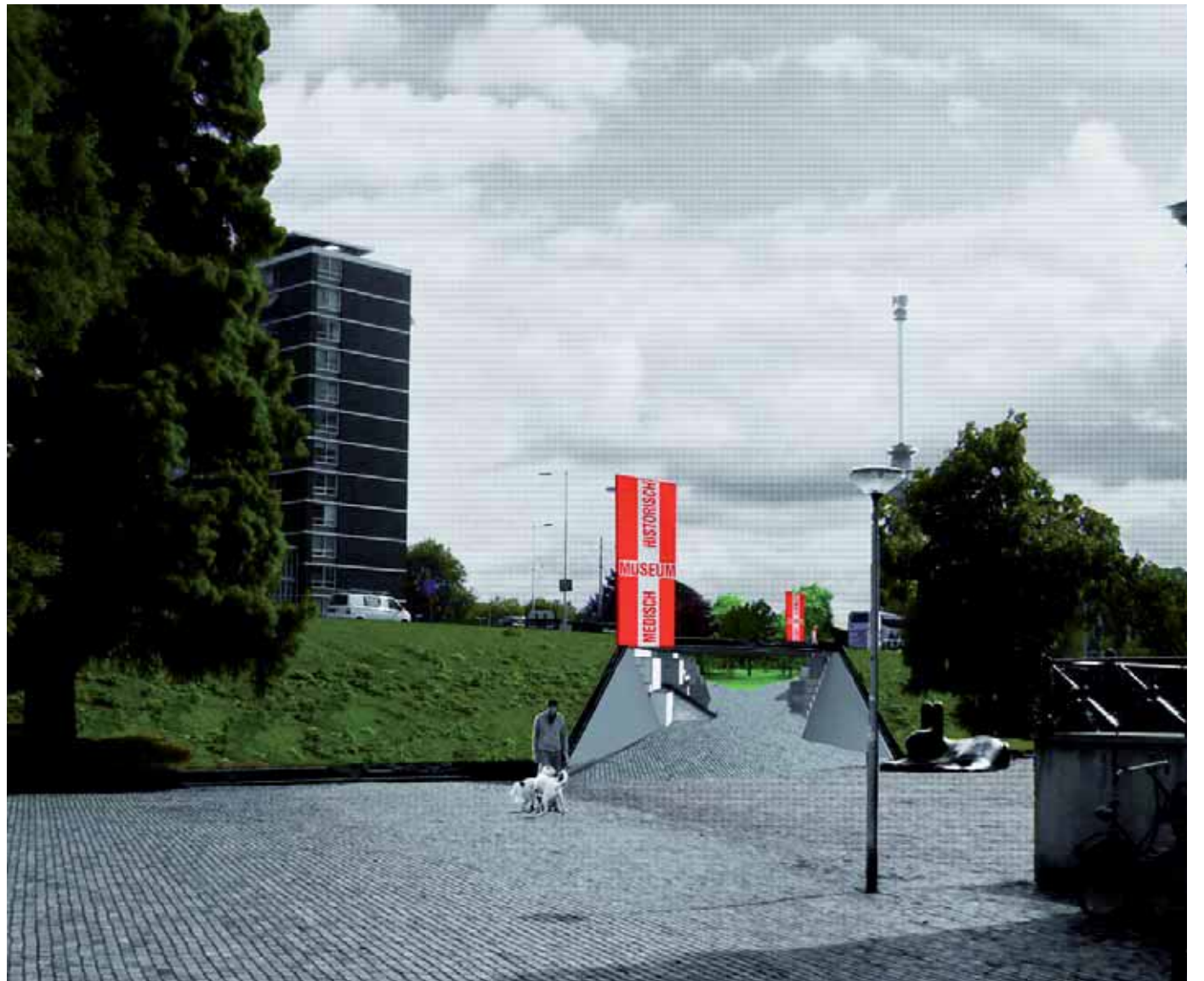
- Counter the development in introverted zones with an approach for the connecting public space
- Propose a solution for the barrier formed by the road-on-a-dike that splits apart the site
- Design a series of architectural and landscape interventions to better connect the park and the hospital
- Propose programs and activities that would connect the cultural institutions, the hospital and the public space
- Absorb the wishes and ideas of the inhabitants and business owners that have committed to the design process
- Create coherence, not with a new master plan, but with a series of strategic interventions, based on a clear concept for the identity and quality of this location



Reconnecting Erasmus Medical Center, Museumpark, Kunsthal, Natural History Museum, Zocherspark, and adding a new subterranean museum



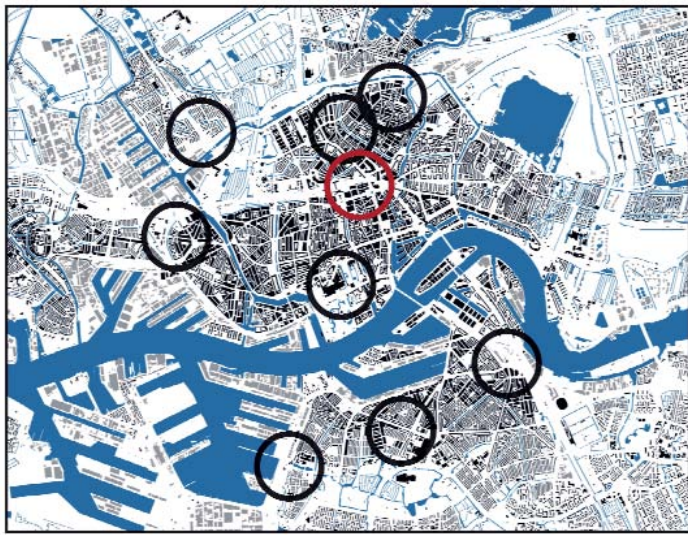
Museum for Medical History cut through the dike



View from Museumpark to Zochers Park, through Museum of Medical History

Central District

Coalition
Design: ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles] (Rotterdam, NL) – Elma van Boxel, Kristian Koreman
Project developer: LSI project investment nv – Fransje Sprunken, Robbart Valk
Other participants: dS+V – Fons Meijer, Esther de Bever
Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



Nervously Beating Heart

Rotterdam's largest and symbolically most important urban project for the next decade is that of the drastic renewal of the Central Train station and the surrounding area. Once upon a time, it was the nervously beating heart of Rotterdam, a complex system of streets and blocks, a railway station, a seventeenth century city gate, lots of cafes and restaurants, small workshops and department stores around the permanently congested Hofplein square. Efforts by the best architects and urbanists of the Netherlands from H.P. Berlage to W.G. Witteveen, Mart Stam, and J.J.P. Oud could not untie this Gordian knot. For that the destruction of the Rotterdam city centre by the German Wehrmacht in May 1940 was needed.

Urban Emptiness – Concrete Megabuildings

Its current form is mostly the result of the enormous reconstruction effort in the nineteen fifties that produced Rotterdam's new centre. At that time the symmetrical traffic interchange Hofplein was built, with its fountain becoming one of the city's main landmarks. At the other end of the district the Wholesale building was realized by the architect Hugh Maaskant, one of Europe's biggest and most ruthlessly 'American' buildings at the time. The same Maaskant also designed the glitzy marble Hilton Hotel right on Hofplein. The Italianate Central Station – now demolished – was built by Sybold van Ravensteyn and the constructivist looking Railway Postal Office – now renovated – was designed by Kraaijvanger.

The wide Weena 'boulevard' separated this family of immense hypermodern buildings, the likes of which the Netherlands had not seen before, from the city. Up to the eighties the Weena boulevard was an urban emptiness temporarily used for parks, petting zoos, festivals and pavilions. Rotterdam acquired its reputation of a windy plateau strewn with forbidding concrete mega buildings and hardly a human building in sight.

In The Shadows Of Postmodernism

The eighties and nineties finally brought the new era of wealth needed to finish the urban project. Alongside the boulevard a series of commercial office buildings was erected. They used local versions of international architectural styles, from late-modern Dallas-style glass walls to post-modern Canary Wharf rip-offs. The new developments on the Weena reduced the more discreet and smaller scale blocks of the fifties to a position in second row. It was here that vacant buildings were either squatted or rented out to smaller businesses, often creative industries. They mixed with the shady nightclubs that also flourished in the cheap and hidden atmosphere of Delftse Straat.

Welcome Back Open City

The most recent wave of innovation, in the form of the 'Central District' plan implies the destruction of the dilapidated but vibrant Delftse Straat area. The developers and city planners wish to replace it with enormous new city buildings. They would be both culturally and socially dynamic and 'open' on the ground floor level, while creating enormous amounts of commercial real estate above. The main reference point for the modernization refers back to the shape and atmosphere this area had until nearly seventy years ago: the vibrant, busy, messy, small-scale yet metropolitan pre war Hofplein area. This urban space, so deeply loathed by the pre-war planners and so thoroughly destroyed by the war and the subsequent reconstruction, now inspires the newest wave of innovation sweeping over the area. The creative industries on Delftse Straat already radiate this desired atmosphere. Can the existing conditions, users and program be included in the future development of this commercial and infrastructural district?

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Develop an area that is not compiled of isolated architectural objects but that connects to the existing centre of Rotterdam by means of a diversified urban circuit
- Use the existing programs, activities and users of the Delftse Straat area to lay the groundwork for the future urban atmosphere and economy of the new Central District area
- Working from the 'Dependance'-concept for keeping cultural institutions in the centre, propose interventions that would turn Central District into a Cultural Central District
- Propose interventions that would turn either the location or the building itself of Schiekade 189, into an intriguing gateway to the centre of Rotterdam, for pedestrians, car drivers and train passengers



Hofplein, 1923



Central District, 50's



Central District, 2009



The Dependance, temporary venue for cultural institutions, opened 2009



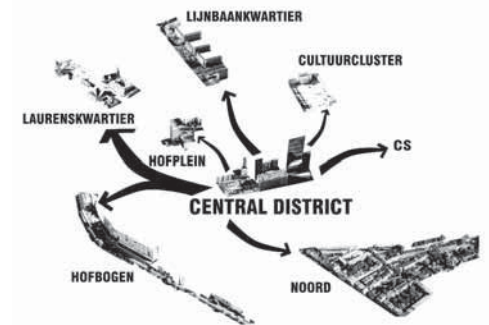
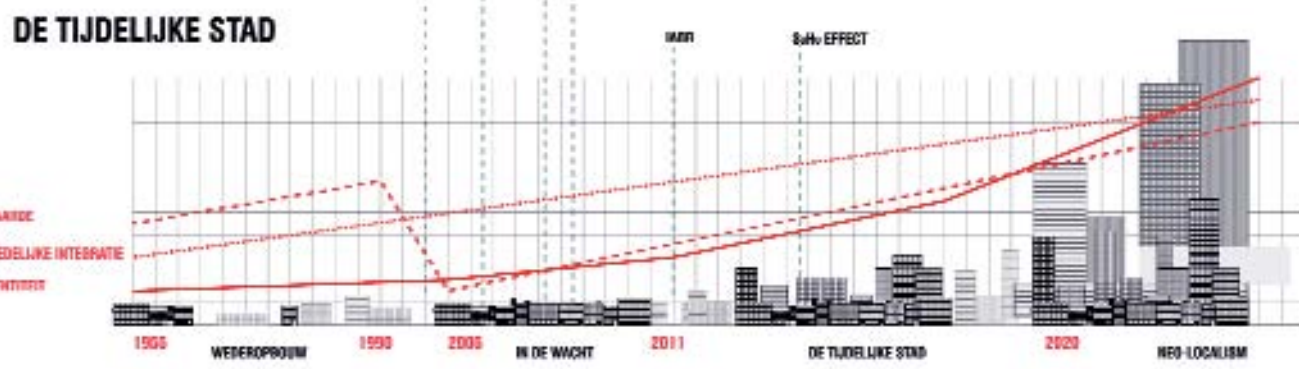
Central District, 1903



Central District in the Basic Plan for the reconstruction of Rotterdam City Center, C. Van Traa 1946



Central District, 2009



Strategy for gradual urban development through stages of temporary urban conditions in stead of tabula rasa planning

Network of public space in Rotterdam centre



Canal puncturing the Dependence

System of canals creating a connective public circuit

Spangen Traindike

Coalition

Design: FAT architects
(London, UK) – Sam Jacob
Project developer: Woonstad
Rotterdam – Dominique
Strörmann, Rudie Hoogerland,
Leo van der Burg
Other participants: dS+V –
Rik de Nooijer, local municipality
Rotterdam Delfshaven –
José de Reus,
Creatief Beheer – Rini Biemans
**Historic research and coordi-
nation:** Crimson Architectural
Historians



Spangen, housing by J.J.P. Oud 1920



Spangen train dike, 1955

Massive Brick Walls & Empty Streets

The Spangen area was built from 1914 onwards as a housing development for workers in the new harbor areas. It was designed using what was then the cutting edge avant-garde of city planning and housing architecture. Radically social democratic was also the fact that it was built publicly, not by private investors. The urban plan was designed by Pieter Verhagen, influenced by H.P. Berlage's monumental block and street models. Architecturally it used the entire city block as a unit of coherent design. The Sparta Football Club stadium became the formal and social centre of this area. The result was a tight geometrical, symmetric composition of gigantic blocks containing introverted workers housing.

Fortified And Isolated

The social and cultural life in Spangen was programmed inside the building blocks, with schools, communal gardens and even the football pitch hidden behind the massive brick walls. Spangen was isolated from the rest of the city by the Schie canal, the Mathenesserdike and especially by the long bend of the harbor train line, connecting the national railway system to an enormous train yard next to the Meuse River, serving the new docks and factories. The fortified and isolated appearance of Spangen was exacerbated by the fact that, due to reasons of economy, it was decided not to raise the ground above polder level, but to build on the existing levels. As a consequence Spangen lies two to three meters lower than the surrounding housing areas.

A Unique And Important Architectural Artifact

Spangen is truly an architectural and urbanistic shrine to "maakbaarheid". It is the only prewar example of publicly planned and built social housing on this scale in Rotterdam; it has a ruthless application of Berlagian urbanism, and a collection of severe and legendary housing blocks by the Dutch pioneer of modernism, J.J.P. Oud. It also contains an architectural icon whose influence has spread over the world since the twenties when it was first published: the Justus van Effenblock by Michiel Brinkman (1919). This block is the first example of communal workers housing, organized as a stacking of little houses along a concrete raised pedestrian street, accessible by elevator. It is the seed that would spawn a million high-rise flats for workers around the globe.

A Ruin Of Social Democracy?

But: when the harbor started to move out of the city center, and employed less and less workers, Spangen lost much of its economic reason of existence. Also the infrastructural hardware that surrounded it and had given it its shape, lost its meaning. Spangen started to degenerate into an island of unemployed, badly educated, isolated families. The only

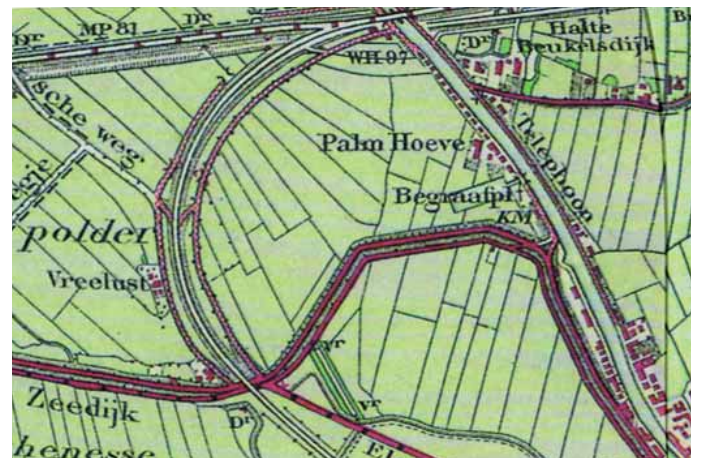
people voluntarily moving in were either poor immigrant families or many, many drug dealers and junkies. Spangen, with its terribly renovated brick workers castles buried behind the dikes, became no more than a ruin of the glory days of social democracy in the nineteen twenties....

Still, Spangen's fantastic location, its monumental form, its strong identity and the considerable civic pride it still inspires, are assets most Rotterdam neighborhoods would be proud to possess. Reinvention time?

Synthesis

The agendas of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the researchers have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- The abandoned traindike is the first limit to be crossed: make it accessible and attractive for the inhabitants of Spangen by building a bridge over the water and a staircase up to the dike
- The buildings and public facilities on the other side of the dike have their backs towards the dike, and towards Spangen: turn them around, make them visible and accessible from Spangen using the dike, as icons of public life
- Reorganize the Vreelust area, that separates Spangen from Schiedam, the highway, the metro station, the neighborhood of Oud Mathenesse and the industrial area Spaanse Polder, into a positive urban space by intensifying its current use and connecting it to Spangen. Think 'Spangen II'



Spangen, 1905



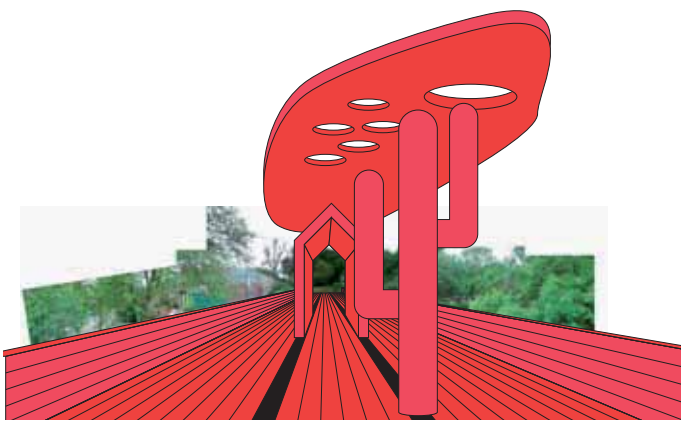
Urban Plan for Spangen, P. Verhagen 1913



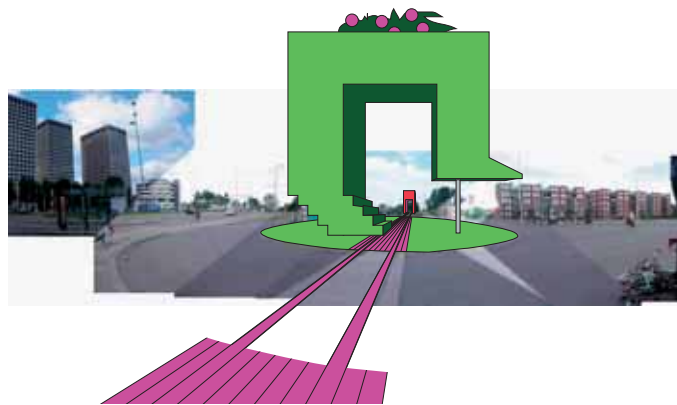
Spangen, 2009



Spangen, 2009



On top of the railway bridge



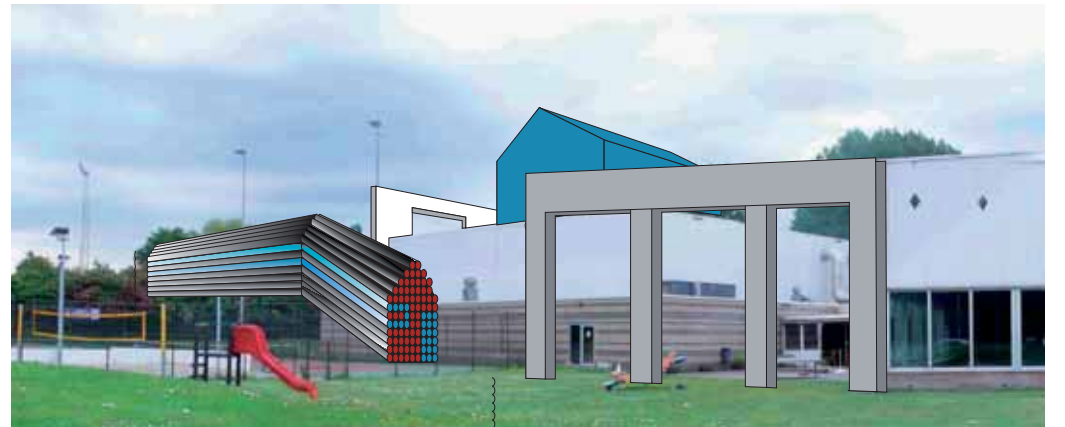
New gateway to Spangen at Marconiplein



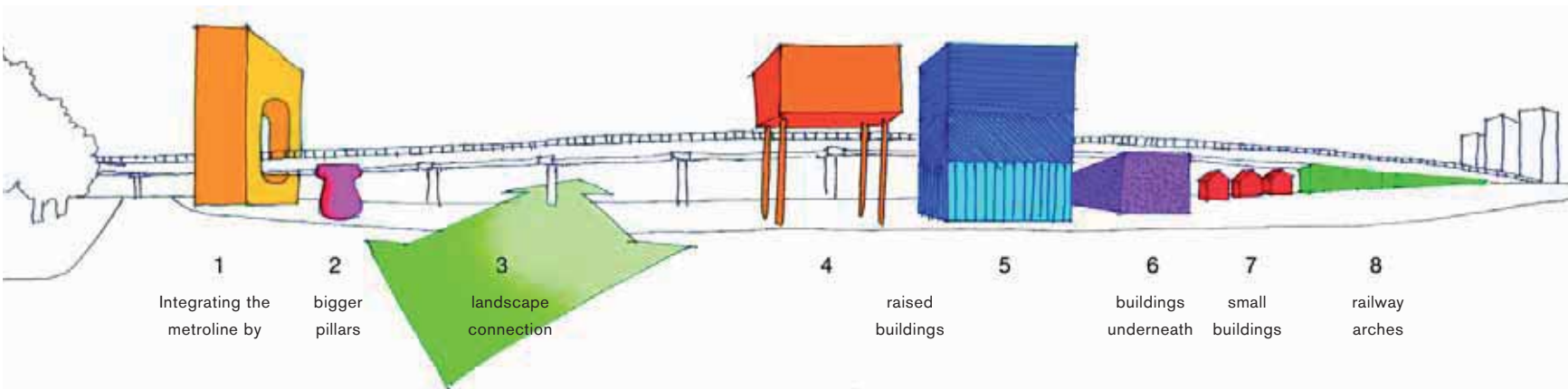
A new pedestrian bridge and stairs from Spangen to the dike



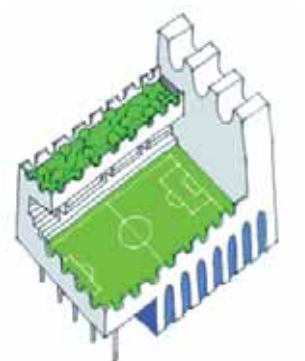
Connecting the offices of Woonstad to the dike



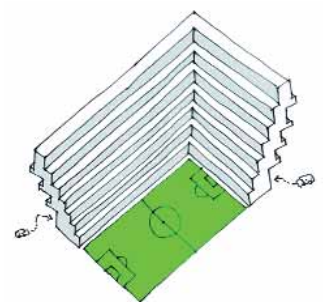
Connecting the swimming pool to the dike



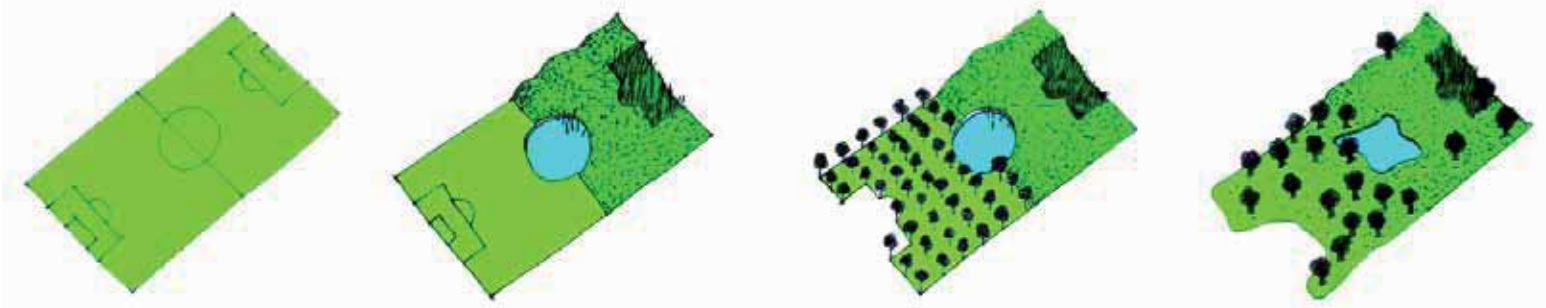
Urban tactics for the Vreelust area



SPORTS HALL + MULTIFUNCTIONAL BUILDING + COMMUNITY FACILITIES



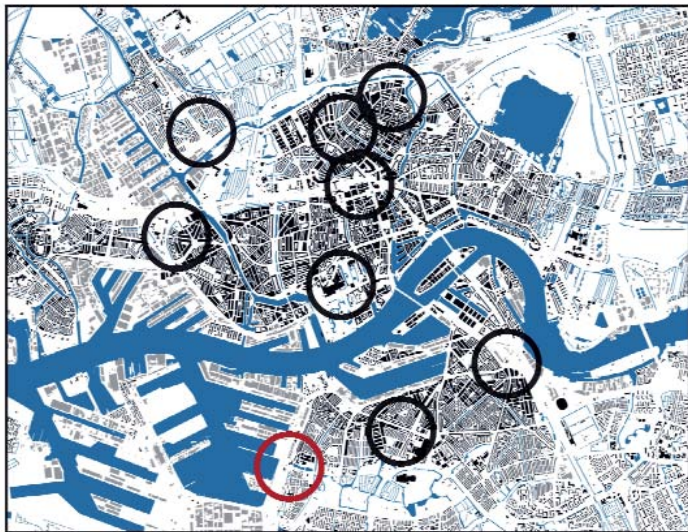
PLAYABLE DITCH + HOUSING



Waal- havenstrip

Coalition

Design: Maxwan Architects + Urbanists (Rotterdam, NL) – Rients Dijkstra, Hiroki Matsuura, Martijn Anhalt, with Arthur Borejszo, Jason Hilgefort, Nara Lee, Nobuki Ogasahara, Michiel Raats, Harm te Velde
Project developer: Estrade Projecten – Sanna Schuiling
Other participants: Foundation BAD – Kamiel Verschuren, Blauwgoed Project Development – Mark Kuijpers, dS+V – Irma Bijl
Historic research and coordination: Crimson Architectural Historians



A Summary Of Rotterdam

The Waalhavenstrip in Rotterdam South overlaps the prewar workers neighborhoods and the industrialized harbor of the twentieth century. As such, it summarizes the possibilities and dilemmas of Rotterdam urban fabric.

The area is old; along it runs the centuries old artery of the Schulpweg, once a dike connecting the tiny villages with each other. Later it became the main street of the burgeoning nineteenth century housing neighborhoods. After the polders flooded with workers housing, work began on what would become the largest harbor basin of Europe, the Waalhaven. Parallel to the Schulpweg a canal was dug out, then a new dike was built, then a train yard, then a wide avenue shared by cars, trucks, trains, cars and bicycles, then the quays and perpendicular to them the piers, then the basin welcoming ever larger freight ships, grain elevators, riverboats etcetera.

Non-Human Scale

This industrial complex, of a wholly non-human scale already in the twenties, was nevertheless close to the small-scale workers neighborhoods. Spatially and economically they existed symbiotically. After the completion of the Waalhaven, the area thrived with its combination of freight and industry. The reconstruction after the Second World War introduced a new era in modernist town planning and the embrace of the harbor as the city's essence. From the forties onward a gigantic system of parks was built in Rotterdam south, separating the pre war neighborhoods from the new modernist garden cities. The park system was prolonged and stretched so as to connect visually and spatially to the waterfront, creating a synthesis of green, water, housing, industry and freight in the so called 'window to the port', a deliberately designed interruption of buildings and piers, drawing the panorama of the harbor deep into the city.

Closed Window

The window to the port can retroactively be seen as the swansong of the integral development and planning of the

harbor and the city. From the sixties and seventies onward, automatization, containerization the oil crisis and other global phenomena broke the dependence of the city on the harbor and vice versa. This caused the harbor to move outward to the west and the increasingly out of work neighborhoods to withdraw in themselves. Inadvertently symbolic was the closing down of the 'window to the port' in the seventies by building apartment blocks right in the middle of it.

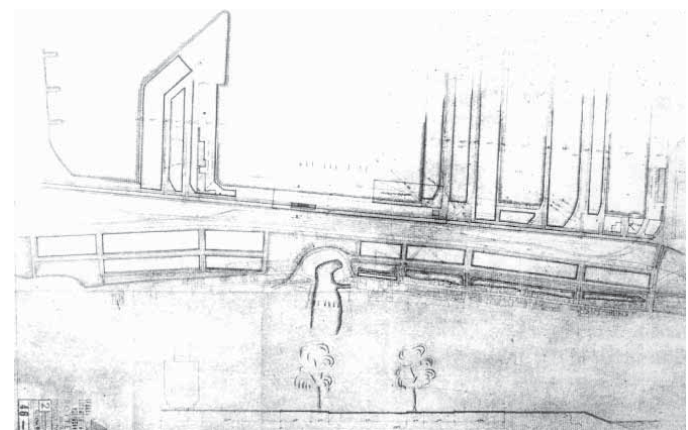
Reconnect

After decades of symptomatic treatment of the poor and inert neighborhoods on one side of the dike, and also decades of a thriving harbor area on the other side, it is now time to find ways, reasons, sites, buildings and businesses to reconnect these two worlds that offer each other such undiscovered spatial and economic possibilities.

Synthesis

The agenda's of the interested parties, the design approach of the architects and the historical knowledge of the area have been synthesized into the following design brief.

- Develop an urban zone between the Waalhaven industrial area and the neighborhood Charlois that mediates between the architectural scale of the harbor and that of the premodern city
- Propose typologies and public space interventions that can be deployed in a piecemeal fashion and that can respond to the small scale social and cultural demands of the inhabitants of Charlois, as well as to the utilitarian demands of the harbor related industries
- Translate the Skill City concept into a building that literally and symbolically bridges the gap between city and harbor
- Connect the existing fragments of public space into an urban system that connects Charlois with the large-scale elements that surround it: the harbor and the park



'Window on the Port', C. van Traa 1947



(Before) Waalhaven, 1900



Plan for Waalhaven, G.J. De Jongh 1907



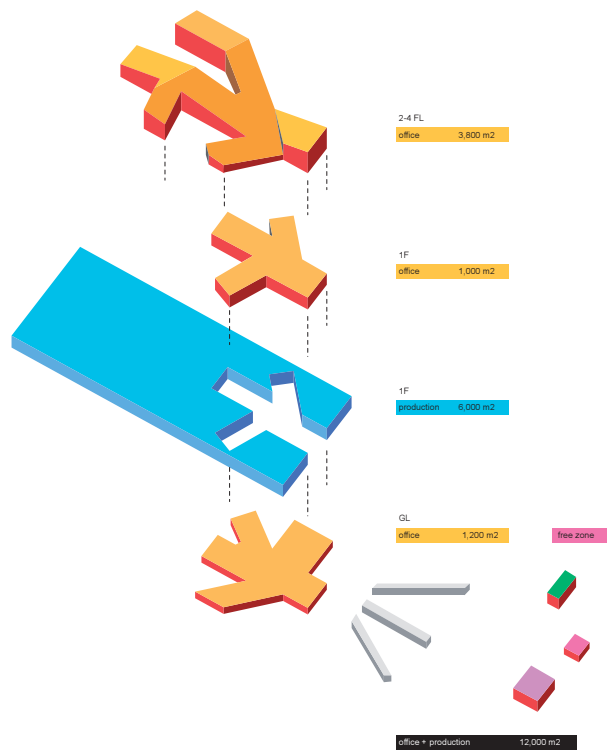
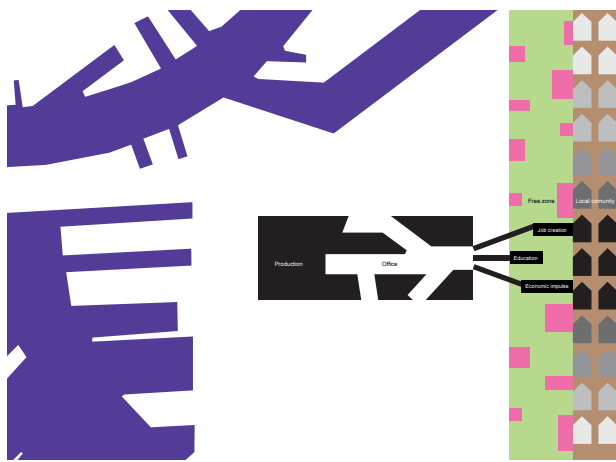
Waalhaven, 1941



Waalhaven, 2009



A new park inbetween the Charlois neighborhood and the Waalhaven industrial area containing social, cultural and entrepreneurial programs



'Skill Building', hybrid office, factory, school and workshop building for harbour related industries and local inhabitants

Reconnecting the city to the port through architecture, public space, education and employment

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The Netherlands Architecture Fund implements various contribution programmes aimed at developing and exchanging knowledge concerning the design disciplines and increasing interest in architecture, urban design, planning, landscape architecture, and interior architecture. Each year the Fund supports a large number of national and international unique and innovative projects. A total of 185 projects were supported in 2008 for a total sum of over 4.5 million euro. A core task for the Fund is to promote professional excellence. Continuous development of the design disciplines is a prerequisite for strengthening the position of design in everyday practice and contributing to high-quality spatial design at all scales. The Fund has therefore made it a top priority to support innovative initiatives in this field. The Research and Design Grant Programme has been set up for research projects and project proposals. The



The Fund subsidises design research
Two examples are:

The Chinese Dream

In 2001 China announced it would build 400 new cities within the next 20 years. This ambition prompted Neville Marsch and Adrian Hornsby to carry out multidisciplinary research with the aim of formulating a coordinating vision of the process of urbanisation in China. In their study they made use of the existing Dynamic Density Model to develop growth scenarios for compact cities. Dynamic Density refers to the combination of two things: population density and the amount of social interaction within that population. Strategic plans and concrete design proposals were drawn up at different scale levels (national, regional, city, block, and individual). The results can be consulted through a website with a databank and forum. In addition, exhibitions and workshops were held in China in which the researchers worked alongside Chinese students and professionals.

The Chinese Dream was issued in 2008 by 010 Publishers. With this extensive publication, Neville Marsch and Adrian Hornsby hope to contribute to a positive outlook on urbanisation in China. Both the publication and the study were supported by the Netherlands Architecture Fund.

www.dynamiccity.org

Lay-out newspaper makes public the results of design research carried out with the support of the Fund. A special programme for international projects focuses on the international profiling of Dutch architecture and urban design. In addition, the Fund aims to enhance the international exchange of knowledge about spatial issues that are topical in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands Architecture Fund is one of the national culture funds and is financed by four ministries: The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Netherlands Architecture Fund is located in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

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One Land, Two Systems

Since 2004 the Netherlands Architecture Fund has financially supported various projects by the Foundation for Achieving Seamless Territory (FAST). FAST studied Israeli planning policy and the influence of socio-economic and political conflicts on physical planning and architecture, in particular the role of physical planning in the oppression of the Palestinian people. FAST organised an international design competition for an alternative master plan for Ein Hud, one of the unrecognised Arabic villages in Israel where inhabitants live without services and infrastructure. The competition proposals were elaborated in a workshop on location, allowing the inhabitants of Ein Hud to become actively involved in drawing up the final plan. Moreover, the local authority became convinced to implement the master plan. The results of the study and the competition were made known in a newspaper distributed internationally to raise awareness of the violations of human rights caused by the Israeli government's physical planning policy. FAST is currently working on a publication about the role of physical planning in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in collaboration with 010 Publishers (working title: *The Atlas of the Conflict*). www.one-land.org

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