

Sylvia Hendriks

Port of refuge

A welcome to refugees

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Amsterdam Academy of Architecture

Graduation Projects 2014-2015

Architecture

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A welcome to refugees

The current migration flow to Europe is starting to assume substantial proportions. Every year, thousands of refugees arrive in the Netherlands. They travel not only by boat across the Mediterranean, but also by plane. This journey by air from outside Europe's borders is their entrance into the 'Schengen' zone, which determines registration in the first EU country of arrival. The Netherlands has a deterrence-based asylum policy, which becomes particularly clear during the registration process for refugees that takes place in detention at the airport. Like criminals, refugees await their asylum procedure in prison with similar restrictions. A Western country like the Netherlands, which presents itself as a humane and modern community, can not deal in such a way with people in need. The refugees often come having suffered a traumatic experience in their country of origin and strongly in need of safety and peace.

In this project, I want to show that it is possible within the existing policy and politics to deal with refugees in a humane way. A place where safety and privacy is guaranteed for a vulnerable group of people, and the two-week registration process can be completed in an efficient manner for all parties. On the border with the Netherlands and the rest of the world, the building is positioned at a location in the Dutch 'polder landscape', elusive and detached from its immediate environment. Matching the subdued nature of the vulnerable users, the Port of Refuge focuses on the views of the ever-present horizon.

The programme derives its scale from a recognisable architectural form of living, which refers to the surrounding built context of 'polder' barns and farms. Fitting into the grid of the Haarlemmermeer polder, living areas, recreational areas and offices will form a so-called lintdorp (ribbon village) in the polder. The building is materialised from one material, which will show multiple shades and merge into the Dutch air. The building retains its proximity to the outside world by means of the flat finish detailing of the facade.

The building contains individual and inviting spaces inside. The diverse users with their own needs each receive a residence overlooking the horizon. One can stay outside in several places and there is an ongoing collective space without gates, fences or closed doors. After 14 days, there will be definite answer about the future: asylum procedure or a return.

Positioned in a no man's land, the project facilitates a first step into a possible new future without making any promises.

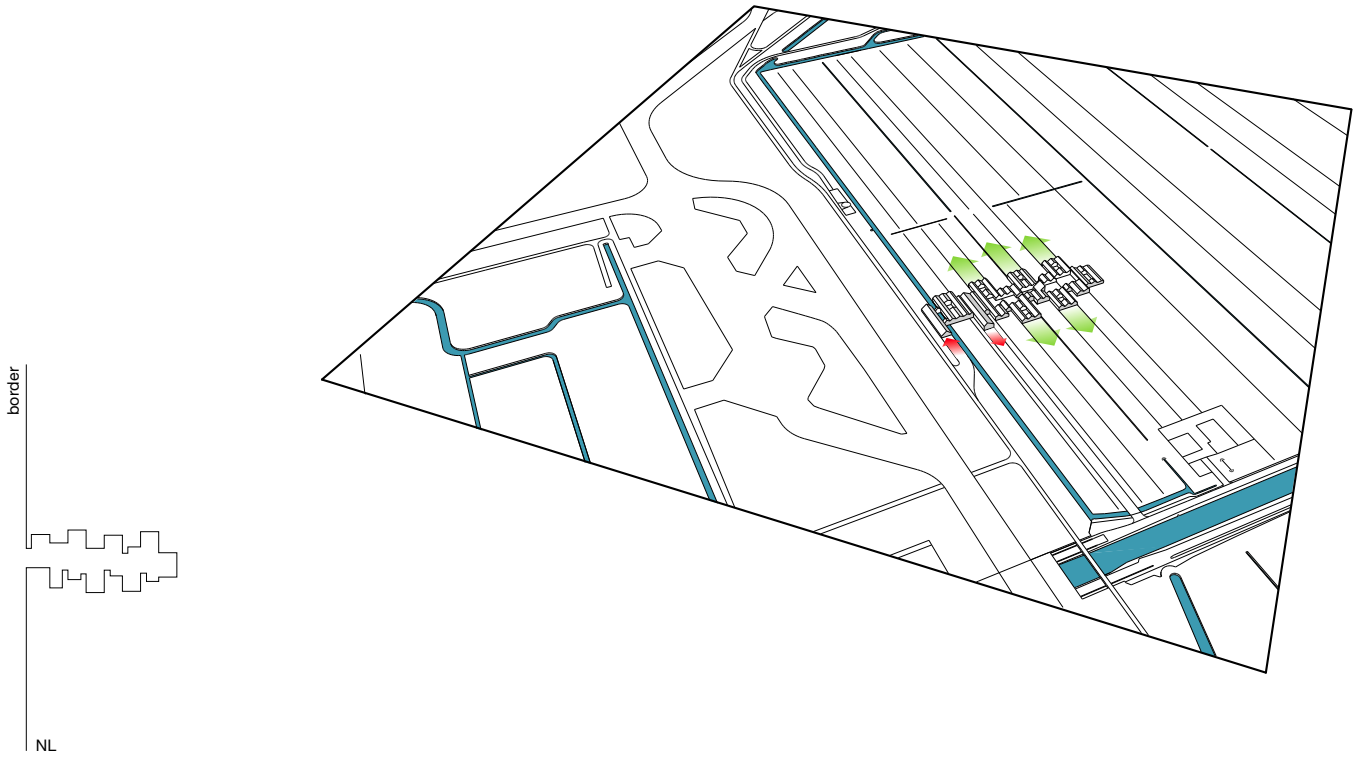
Graduation date
25 08 2015

Commission members
Marcel van der Lubbe (mentor)
Ira Koers
Rob Hootsmans

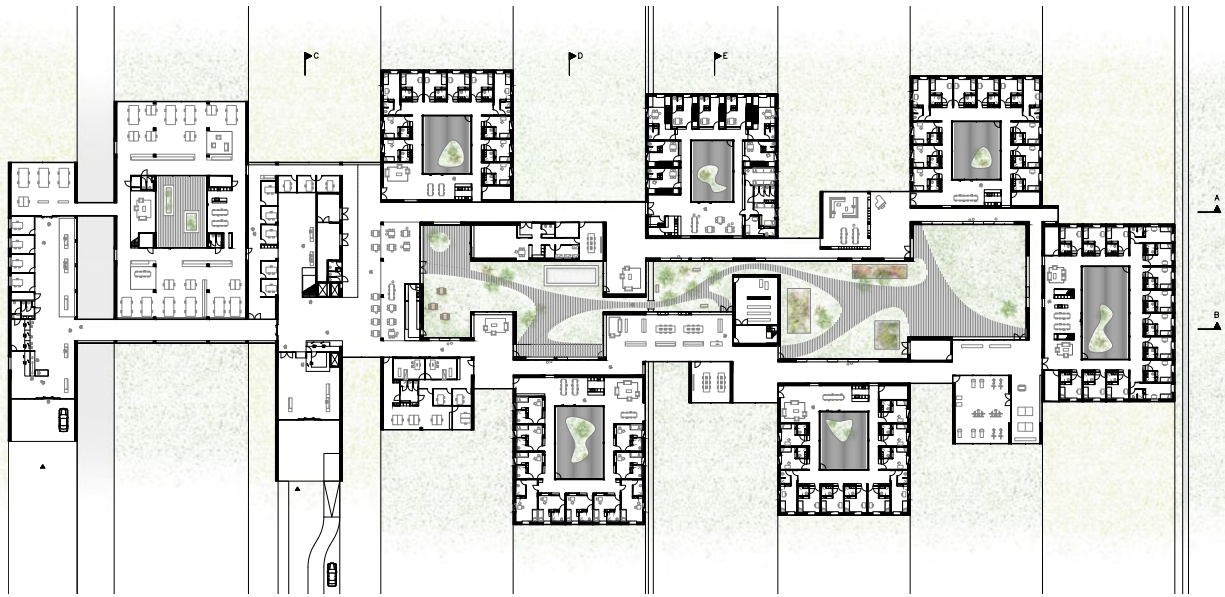
Additional members for the examination
Marnix van der Meer
Laurens Jan ten Kate



Architecture



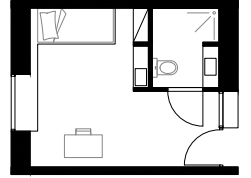
Entrance area



Collective garden



Room with a view



Master of Architecture / Urbanism / Landscape Architecture Amsterdam Academy of Architecture

Architects, urbanists and landscape architects learn the profession at the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture through an intensive combination of work and study. They work in small, partly interdisciplinary groups and are supervised by a select group of practising fellow professionals. There is a wide range of options within the programme so that students can put together their own trajectory and specialisation.

With the inclusion of the course in Urbanism in 1957 and Landscape Architecture in 1972, the Academy is the only architecture school in the Netherlands to bring together the three spatial design disciplines under one roof.

Some 350 guest tutors are involved in teaching every year. Each of them is a practising designer or a specific expert in his or her particular subject. The three heads of department also have design practices of their own in addition to their work for the Academy. This structure yields an enormous dynamism and energy and ensures that the courses remain closely linked to the current state of the discipline.

The courses consist of projects, exercises and lectures. First-year and second-year students also engage in morphological studies. Students work on their own or in small groups. The design projects form the backbone of the syllabus.

On the basis of a specific design assignment, students develop knowledge, insight and skills. The exercises are focused on training in those skills that are essential for recognising and solving design problems, such as analytical techniques, knowledge of the repertoire, the use of materials, text analysis, and writing. Many of the exercises are linked to the design projects. The morphological studies concentrate on the making of spatial objects, with the emphasis on creative process and implementation. Students experiment with materials and media forms and gain experience in converting an idea into a creation.

During the periods between the terms there are workshops, study trips in the Netherlands and abroad, and other activities. This is also the preferred moment for international exchange projects. The Academy regularly invites foreign students for the workshops and recruits well-known designers from the Netherlands and further afield as tutors.

Graduates from the Academy of Architecture are entitled to the following titles: Master of Architecture (MArch), Master of Urbanism (MUrb), or Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA).