

SVESMI +
Amsterdam
Academy of Architecture
with Berndnaut Smilde

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SOLO SPACE: A SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM AS A TYPOLOGY AND AN EXPERIMENT

AMSTERDAM 2020

SOLO SPACE

A Single-Artist
Museum As
A Typology And
An Experiment

SVESMI +
AMSTERDAM
ACADEMY OF
ARCHITECTURE
WITH BERNDNAUT
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PUBLICPRIVATE

by Anastassia Smirnova

‘Artists’ museums are a welcome antidote to the sameness and smoothness of big museums, which typically link one or two works by each of hundreds of artists into a suspiciously tidy story’. –The New York Times

The coronavirus crisis has forced us to rethink the demarcation between the public and private space in the city. Individual homes – stages for domestic life – have become office spaces and places for unusual social interactions. As people started working remotely en masse, they were also forced to expose their intimate environments during online sessions and use them for new functions.

At the same time, social distancing rules have introduced a different understanding of personal boundaries, also in outdoor spaces: while walking in the street, people seem to occupy a larger volume, as if moving in their own bubble of air. Bound to the circles marked on the ground in parks and city gardens, we all began to see the surrounding context differently through very unusual lenses.

In fact, the recent crisis has only made existing tendencies even more apparent. The borders between public and private space are being actively redrawn. The public and the private interfere with each other in intricate ‘yin-yang’ algorithms, changing the rules of engagement and introducing new protocols for space use.

The multidisciplinary studio SOLO SPACE offered an opportunity to investigate nuanced balance between the private and the public within the framework of an unusual typology: a single-artist museum.

Inspired by famous examples such as The Noguchi Museum in New York or The Yayoi Kusama Museum in Tokyo, studio curators invited the students to design a small art cluster in the city of Amsterdam. Not just any museum, but a museum of and for one person – an institution at the intersection of private and public domains. On the one hand, it was to contain the whole universe of a contemporary artist with exhibition halls, studios, meeting rooms and other possible functions. On the other hand, it should be envisaged as an engaging cultural and public centre with various amenities open to all.

The Dutch contemporary artist Berndnaut Smilde, who is currently based in Amsterdam, became a central inspirational figure to the studio. His work that borders on scientific experimentation is open to multiple interpretations. With his very engaging visuals – videos, photos or live performances – the artist investigates a broad range of themes: from climate and ecological issues to the very nature of art and the relationship between space and time.

Through conversations with the artist and visits to his workshop, but also through the research into the single-artist museum typology and the interviews with professional curators, our studio team was able to construct a set of briefs for a cultural centre and a garden in Amsterdam. Focusing on various aspects of Berndnaut Smilde’s work, we have created a gallery of projects – or rather a collection of ideas about what a single-artist museum could be in the future – on a famous empty plot in the very centre of the city.

DEFINITIONS

THE TYPOLOGY

by Anna Bern & Alice Dicker

As its name clearly suggests, a single-artist museum is a publicly accessible institution dedicated to the work of one specific artist. A museum of this kind could, of course, reach out into many artistic worlds or explore all kinds of contexts, but it is always committed to and built around a particular character. Very little of consistent research has been done on this museum typology so far, but it is safe to say that early examples were mostly commemorative. They were established to preserve the memory, the body of work, and, at times, the living space of a deceased artist. With their traditional emphasis on domestic intimacy and small-scale expositions, even the best and most popular of them usually exude an air of melancholy as their central hero

remains forever absent. Today, single-artist museums are becoming more diverse, expanding their programs and focusing with gusto on living painters, sculptors, and performers of all kinds. The typology mutates into something more vivid and volatile. The changes call for new definitions, new narratives, new protocols of use, and new architectural designs.

ARTISTS

Dead or alive, artists always retain control of their own museums. To design a single-artist museum is to initiate a long-term conversation – or even build up a spiritual relationship – with its central figure. In case of a project, an artist paradoxically becomes a client and a co-author, a curator and an exhibit, an inhabitant and a genius loci – all at the same time.

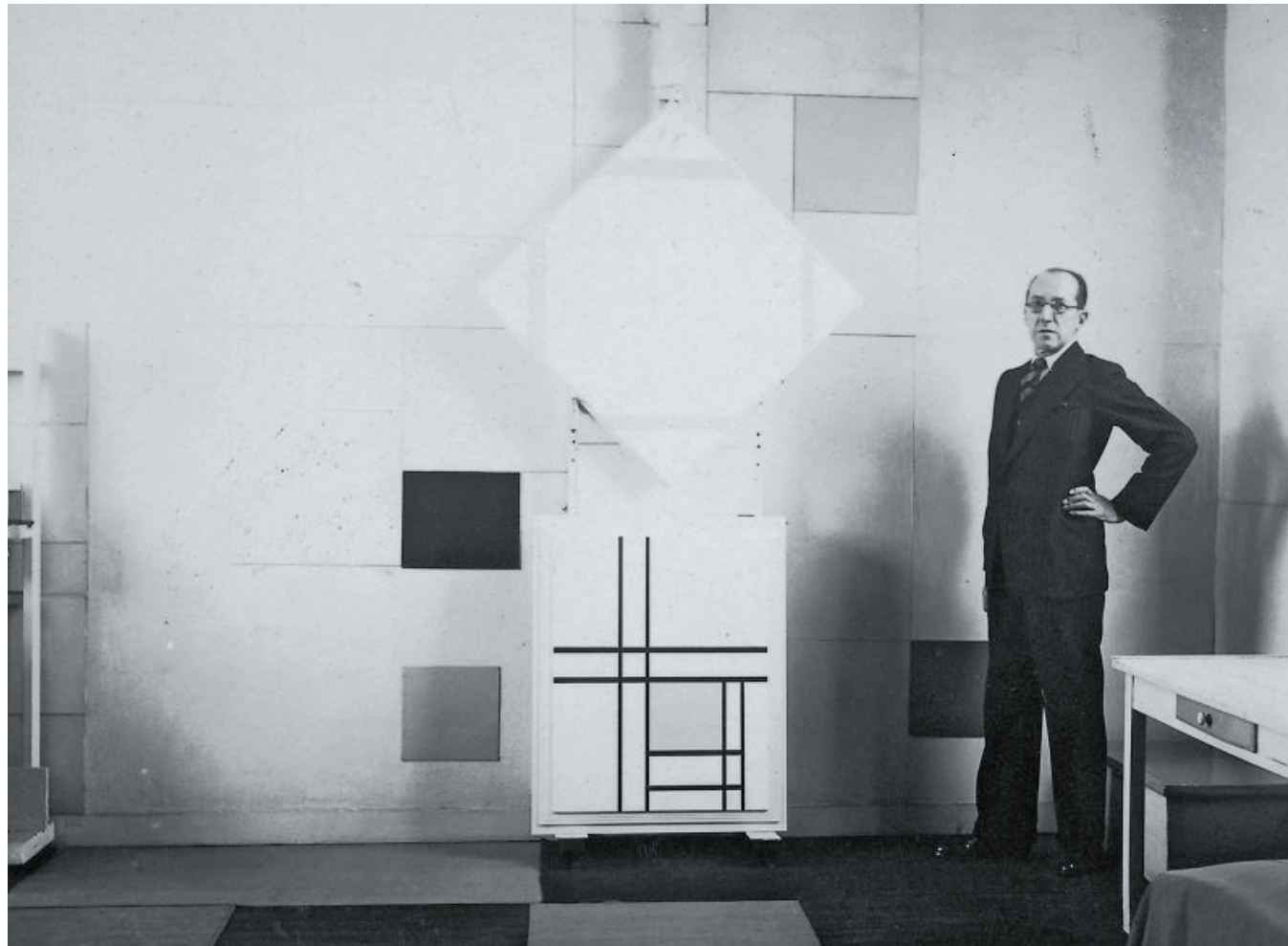
FOUNDERS

Most of the single-artist museums were founded by the artists’ family, friends and fans. Sometimes, the initiative came from local municipalities or cultural foundations. On rare occasions, it was a decision of an art collector fascinated with one particular author to share his or her collection with a broader audience. Today, there are more artistic venues that seem to be derived from a traditional single-artist museum typology, but operate differently – with complex programmes and very intense agendas. Most of these contemporary variations – creative clusters of all kinds – are curated by the artists themselves and evolved over time, reflecting the development of their artistic careers

PUBLIC

Some of the single-artist museums are incredibly popular and attract massive numbers of visitors. For instance, the Georgia O’Keeffe museum in Santa Fe or the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam welcome millions of international visitors every year, often relying on blockbuster exhibitions. Yet for most single-artist museums the mission is to remain small and reach out to a rather specific, limited audience that is interested in a much deeper and more refined experience.

AN ARTIST AND HIS STUDIO



Piet Mondrian in his Paris studio, 1933. Photo by Charles Karsten
The artist who poses next to the painting at his workplace looks simultaneously formal and vulnerable.

Since the times of the early modernity, an artist at work has remained an attractive and yet deeply mysterious figure. Any place of artistic production has always been surrounded with an aureole of wonder: how exactly is art created? Where and why does it happen?

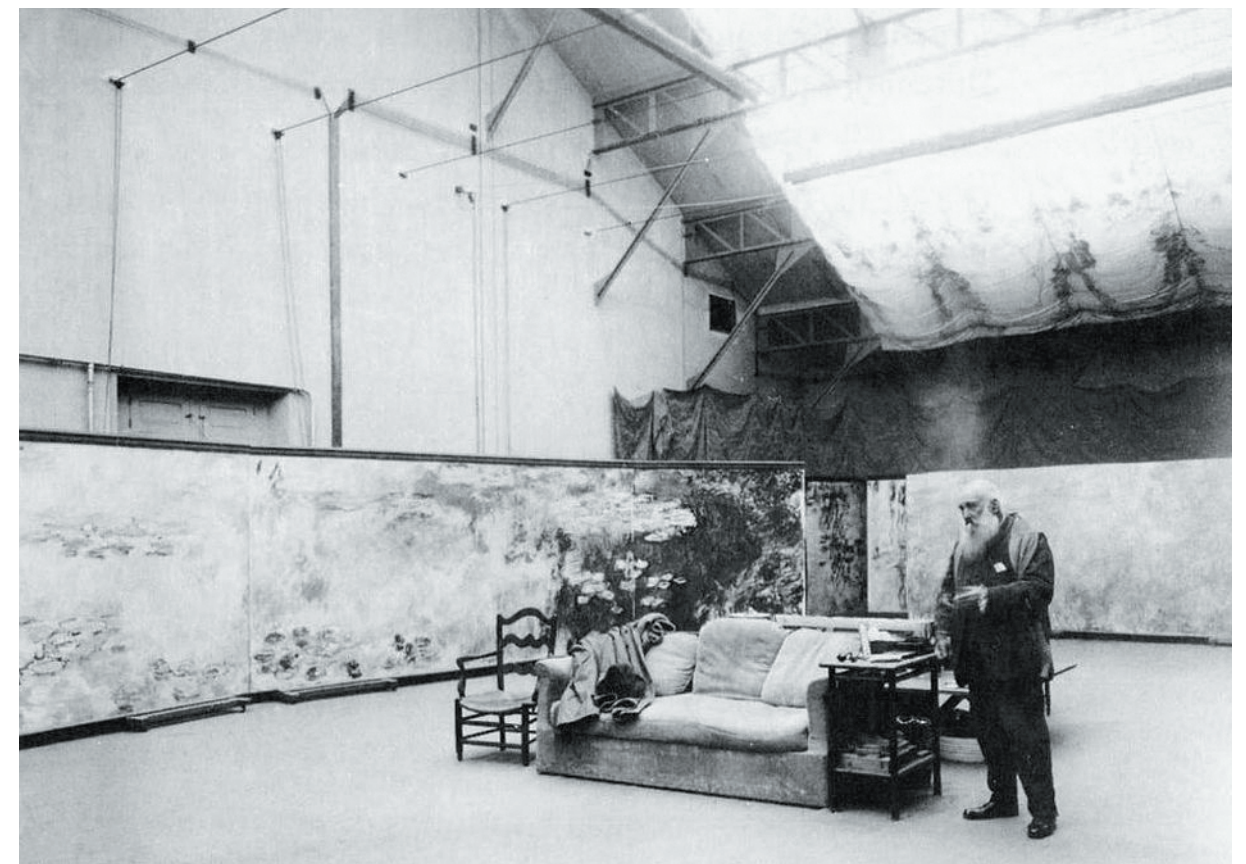
Numerous paintings, drawings, and later photographs, depicting artists in their studios, not only portrayed them for posterity, but also tried to somehow capture at least some particles of the miracle of art, dispersed in a poetic atmosphere of an atelier.

For anyone, designing today a museum – a home? a nest? an exhibition hall? – for a living artist, the question about the spatial qualities of the workshop should be at the centre of the projective exploration. To what extent does the space define the creative process? What space could be considered productive for a particular artist? How should the private and the public space be balanced in such a museum?



Camille Claudel and Jessie Lipscomb in their workshop on Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, 1887. Photo by William Elborne

Totally immersed in the process, the artist becomes so inseparable from her art that the border between them is blurred.



Claude Monet in his studio at Giverny, 1919. Photographer unknown
Soft, dispersed daylight from the curtained window and the very air of the studio are the protagonists of the artist's space.

SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM: IN SEARCH OF HISTORY

A complete history of single-artist museums is yet to be written. We can only start tracing the routes of this museum type, looking at, for instance, early depictions of the visitors at various artists' ateliers in times of the Dutch Golden Age or, later, in the salons of the Impressionists. It is clear that the typology only formed and became truly recognisable in the twentieth century, long after the first classical art museums opened their doors to the public. Single-artist museums and their growing popularity indicated a rather advanced stage of cultural education of the masses: in order to appreciate their specificity and focus, the public should have first familiarised itself with a broader context of art.

In the early genre paintings, portraying the artists – almost exclusively men – in their studios, we usually see the compositions and atmospheres similar to the portraits of saints in their secluded cells: lonely souls fully absorbed in their sacred metier and detached from the rest of the world.



Rembrandt van Rijn, The Artist in his Studio, 1628



Gerrit Dou, Man with an Easel, 1630

Yet, the art historians note the appearance of very different depictions of artistic studios from the seventeenth century on. Less of a hermit, more of a merchant or an entertainer of rich visitors, the artist is being presented in these paintings as a host of his own salon – a semi-private space where guests seem to feel at ease.



Hieronymus Francken II and Jan Brueghel the Elder, The Archdukes Albert and Isabella visiting the collection of Pierre Roose, 1621-1623



Frederic Bazille, The Artist's Studio, Rue de la Condamine, 1870

In the nineteenth century, the artist’s studio becomes even more wired into the public sphere: in all kinds of ‘life’ classes and workshops artists produce art as if on an open stage. It seems, that the very process of art production is being now exposed to a broader audience, while, as Custave Courbet showed so well in his seminal allegorical picture, the world enters the studio.



Gustave Courbet, The Artist’s Studio, 1854 – 1855



F. Hauge, Visitors to An Artist’s Studio, 1875



School of Fine Arts, Painting Workshop, students painting ‘from life’, late 19th century, Photographer unknown



L’ Atelier Delacroix, people queuing to enter the newly open museum. Photographer unknown, c.1930s



Ed. Renard, Studio of an Artist Eugene Delacroix in Paris, 1852 (later the artist’s museum)



Édouard Manet, Monet Painting In His Studio Boat, 1874



Philip R. Morris’s Studio, 1882

With an advent of painting en plein air, the artists (and their new mobile floating studios) became more familiar to social groups which never ever had access to artistic sanctuaries – the village folks. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, with the general democratisation of art production the relationship between the actual studio space and nature also becomes more nuanced, blurring the boundaries between inside and outside.



Andy Warhol’s Silver Factory. Photo taken at the Andy Warhol’s Factory exhibit at the Waterloo Region Children’s Museum in Kitchener by Mohammad Jangda, 2009.



The last book by the Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson is called Open House (2017). It is an invitation into Eliasson’s proverbial Berlin studio that functions as a crossover between a cultural hub, a single-artist museum and a start up company.

After the Second World War, multifaceted artists, such as Andy Warhol and Joseph Beuys, started working in an extremely public way, exploiting supporting teams of assistants and turning their studios into large-scale performance factories. The very process of production became an exhibit and a crowd of spectators – to a certain extend – a crowd of co-authors. One might say, that these artists have built their own ‘museums’ themselves, but they only functioned well while the artists were still alive and active.

SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM: A CATALOGUE

This catalogue presents a number of single-artist museums we have found in various parts of the globe. Grouped according to geographical locations, they demonstrate an extremely broad variety of spatial and programmatic arrangements. From modest original homes of local artists to large-scale museums in parks dedicated to the world-class stars, they are all examples of very focused curatorial efforts, offering opportunities for an in-depth exploration of just one individual artistic universe.



Galeria Claudia Andujar, 2015
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Brumadinho, Brazil
Architect: Arquitetos Associados



Clyfford Still Museum, 2011
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Denver, USA
Architect: Allied works architecture



Noguchi Museum, 1980
Initiative: Artist
Location: New York, USA
Architect: Isamu Noguchi + Shoji Sadao



Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, 1997
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Santa Fe, USA
Architect: Richard Gluckman, Allegretti Architects



Cy Twombly Pavilion, 1995
Initiative: Art Patron + Artist
Location: Houston, USA
Architect: Renzo Piano



Frida Kahlo Museum, 1958
Initiative: Artist's family
Location: Mexico City, Mexico
Architect: Unknown



Yaacov Agam Museum of Art, 2018
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: LeZion, Israel
Architect: David Nofar



Juming Museum, 1999
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Taipei, Taiwan
Architect: Ju Ming



Ken Iwata Mother and Child Museum, 2011
Initiative: Unknown
Location: Imabari City, Japan
Architect: Toyo Ito and Associates



Galeria Adriana Varejão, 2008
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Brumadinho, Brazil
Architect: Tacoa Architects



Galeria Miguel do Rio Branco, 2008
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Brumadinho, Brazil
Architect: Arquitetos Associados



Galeria Psicoativa Tunga, 2011
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Brumadinho, Brazil
Architect: Rizoma Arquitetura



Judd Foundation, 1996
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: New York, USA
Architect: L. G. Knipe (1925), D.Judd



Chihuly Garden and Glass, 2012
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Seattle, USA
Architect: Owen Richards Architects



Andy Warhol Museum, 1994
Initiative: Art patron
Location: Pittsburgh, USA
Architect: Richard Gluckman



Dogançay Museum, 2004
Initiative: Art patron
Location: Istanbul, Turkey
Architect: Unknown



Aivazovsky Gallery, 1880
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Russia, Feodosia
Architect: I. K. Aivazovsky (1845)



Fundación César Manrique, 2013
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Tahiche, Las Palmas
Architect: Cesar Manrique



Yayoi Kusama Museum, 2017
Initiative: Artist
Location: Tokyo, Japan
Architect: Kume Sekkei



Hiroshi Senju Museum, 2011
Initiative: Art patron + Artist
Location: Karuizawa, Japan
Architect: Ryue Nishizawa



Nakamura Keith Haring Collection, 2007
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Yamanashi, Japan
Architect: Atsushi Kitagawara Architects



Fundação Nadir Afonso, 2016
Initiative: Unknown
Location: Chaves, Portugal
Architect: Álvaro Siza



Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, 2000
Initiative: Government
Location: Cascais, Portugal
Architect: Eduardo Souto de Moura



Museo Chillida Leku, 2000
Initiative: Artist + artist's family
Location: Gipuzkoa, Spain
Architect: Joaquin Montero



Museum Picasso, 1963
Initiative: Artist
Location: Barcelona, Spain
Architect: Unknown



Fundació Joan Miró, 1975
Initiative: Artist
Location: Barcelona, Spain
Architect: Josep Luís Serp



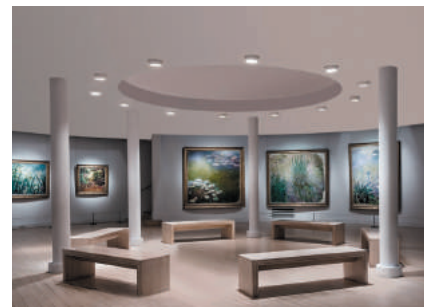
Musée Rodin, 1727–1919
Initiative: Artist + Government
Location: Paris, France
Architect: Jean Aubert



Musée Camille Claudel, 2017
Initiative: Art patron + government
Location: Nogent-sur-Seine, France
Architect: Adolfo Scaranello with A.N.A.U.



Musée Matisse, 1963
Initiative: Artist + Artist's family
Location: Nice, France
Architect: Unknown (17th century)



Musée Marmottan Monet, 1934
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Paris, France
Architect: Unknown



Musée Marc Chagall, 1973
Initiative: Government
Location: Nice, France
Architect: Andre Hermant



Museum Tinguely, 1996
Initiative: Unknown
Location: Basel, Switzerland
Architect: Mario Botta



Zentrum Paul Klee, 2005
Initiative: Art patron
Location: Bern, Switzerland
Architect: Renzo Piano



Musée Hergé, 2009
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Brussels, Belgium
Architect: Christian de Portzamparc



Mondriaanhuis, 1994
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: Amersfoort, Netherlands
Architect: Leo Heiderijk (reconstruction)



Escher in Het Paleis, 1760 - 2002
Initiative: Art Patron
Location: The Hague, Netherlands
Architect: Pieter de Swart



Van Gogh Museum, 1973
Initiative: Government
Location: Amsterdam, Netherlands
Architect: Gerrit Rietveld, Kisho Kurokawa



KunstHausWien, 1991
Initiative: Art Patron + Government
Location: Vienna, Austria
Architect: Friedensreich Hundertwasser



Giorgio De Chirico House-Museum, 1998
Initiative: Artist's family
Location: Rome, Italy
Architect: Unknown



Franz Marc Museum, 1986 - 2008
Initiative: Artist's family + art patron
Location: Kochel am See, Germany
Architect: Diethelm & Spillmann



Felix Nussbaum Haus, 1998
Initiative: Government
Location: Osnabrück, Germany
Architect: Daniel Libeskind



Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, 1980
Initiative: Artist
Location: St. Ives, UK
Architect: Unknown



Millesgarden. 1936
Initiative: Art patron + government
Location: Lidingö, Sweden
Architect: Evert Milles, Johan Celsing



Munch Museet, 2020
Initiative: Government
Location: Oslo, Norway
Architect: Estudio Herreros

SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM: VARIATIONS

A few characteristic examples that are analysed on this spread show how the size, the programme, and spatial arrangements can vary within the same museum typology.

XS Yayoi Kusama Museum

AXONOMETRY



SIZE (m2)



131M2

PROGRAMME



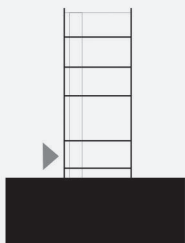
PLOT AREA

0 M²

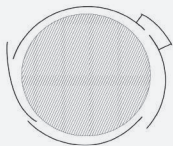
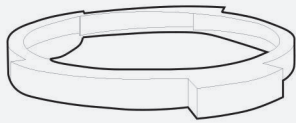
ROUTING



CONNECTION TO THE
LANDSCAPE



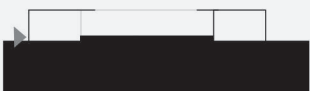
S Ken Iwata Museum



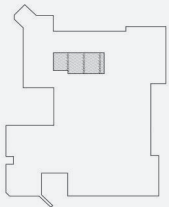
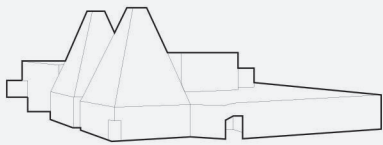
197M2



1715 M²



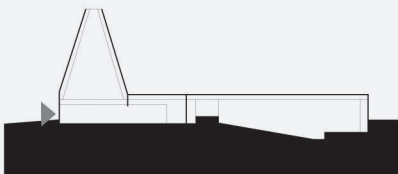
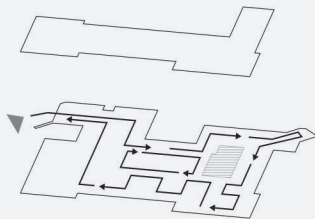
M Casa das Histórias – Paula Rego



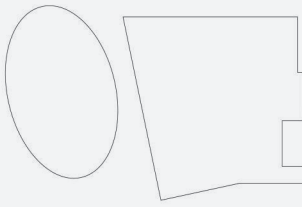
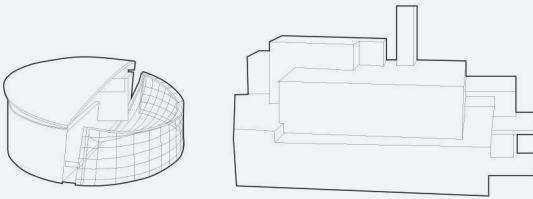
2330M2



14170 M²



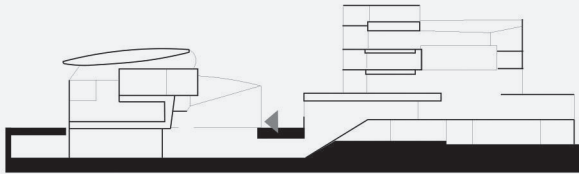
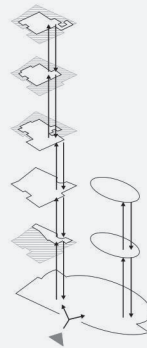
L Van Gogh Museum



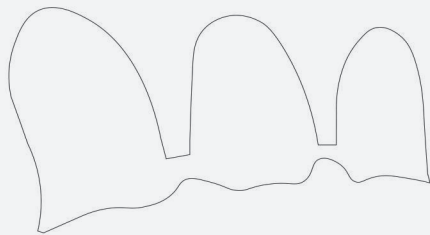
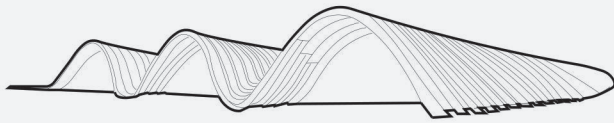
15175M2



2330 M²



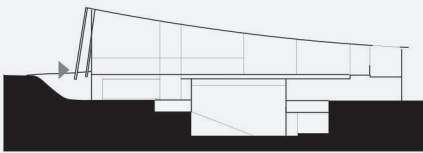
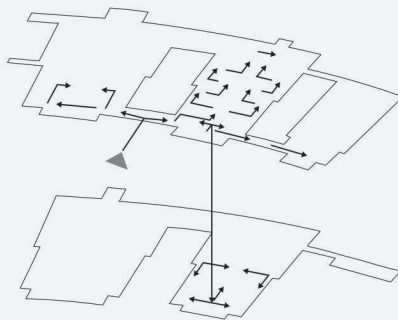
XL Zentrum Paul Klee



16000M2



37200 M²



INSTITUTO INHOTIM, BRAZIL SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM IN PARADISE

Officially opened to the public in 2006, the Instituto Inhotim in Brumadinho, Brazil, is the largest open air museum in the world: it occupies 140 hectares of former farmland. Dozens of pavilions, each designed by a local architect for a specific Brazilian or international artist, are scattered across the Institute's picturesque park. In many projects, architects and artists worked together, creating unique spatial constructions for particular art-pieces and performances. Visitors can spend days in this park, wondering from one pavilion to another and discovering artists such as Adriana Varejão, Doris Salcedo, Claudia Andujar, Olafur Eliasson, and Miguel Rio Branco.

Photo by William Gomes

THE ARTIST

by Eva Kirschbaum
& Niene Laan

Berndnaut Smilde is a visual artist based in Amsterdam. If you do not immediately recognise the name, you most likely remember his images of beautiful clouds 'imprisoned' in the most unexpected interiors around the world. This is the so-called 'Nimbus' series, which brought Smilde his first international success.

Today, his star is on the rise. Our team was very lucky to meet him at this particular moment in life when he has already achieved a lot and is keen to critically reflect upon his own work, but, at the same time, is open to potential changes of interest and shifts in focus. Smilde is constantly exploring new themes and techniques, looking beyond his patented imagery.

To design a museum for an artist-in-progress is a daunting challenge and poses a dilemma. Do you provide a space that faithfully serves his current needs or one that is flexible enough to cater for his future artistic practices? Do you want to make the artist comfortable or create a zone of discomfort and risk? Do you treat the artist as a client, a collocutor or a co-author?

The conversations with Smilde about the space he needs for life and work laid the foundations for this chapter (essentially, we consider it to be our portrait of the artist) and, also, for our project briefs.

SMILDE IN THE MEDIA

When we are interested in someone these days, we habitually start with an Internet search and take a deep-dive into this person's social media. We look at the images he or she posts, the websites this person likes and read the stories in the articles and interviews. We think that the digital age allows us to decipher practically anyone fairly quickly. However, the information we find could be very biased – a created image. For example, the image of Berndnaut Smilde is that of 'The Cloud Artist', playing God for a few seconds by controlling the elements. His Nimbus series seem to fit perfectly in our current social media world, given that pictures of his work are being liked and shared all the time. On the other hand, Smilde's success on social media makes you wonder: are his clouds the only thing that define him or is there more to this artist?

Among 30
Must-See
Artists at
the Armory
Show

Delivers
experience

Top Ten
Inventions
of 2012

The 10-
second God

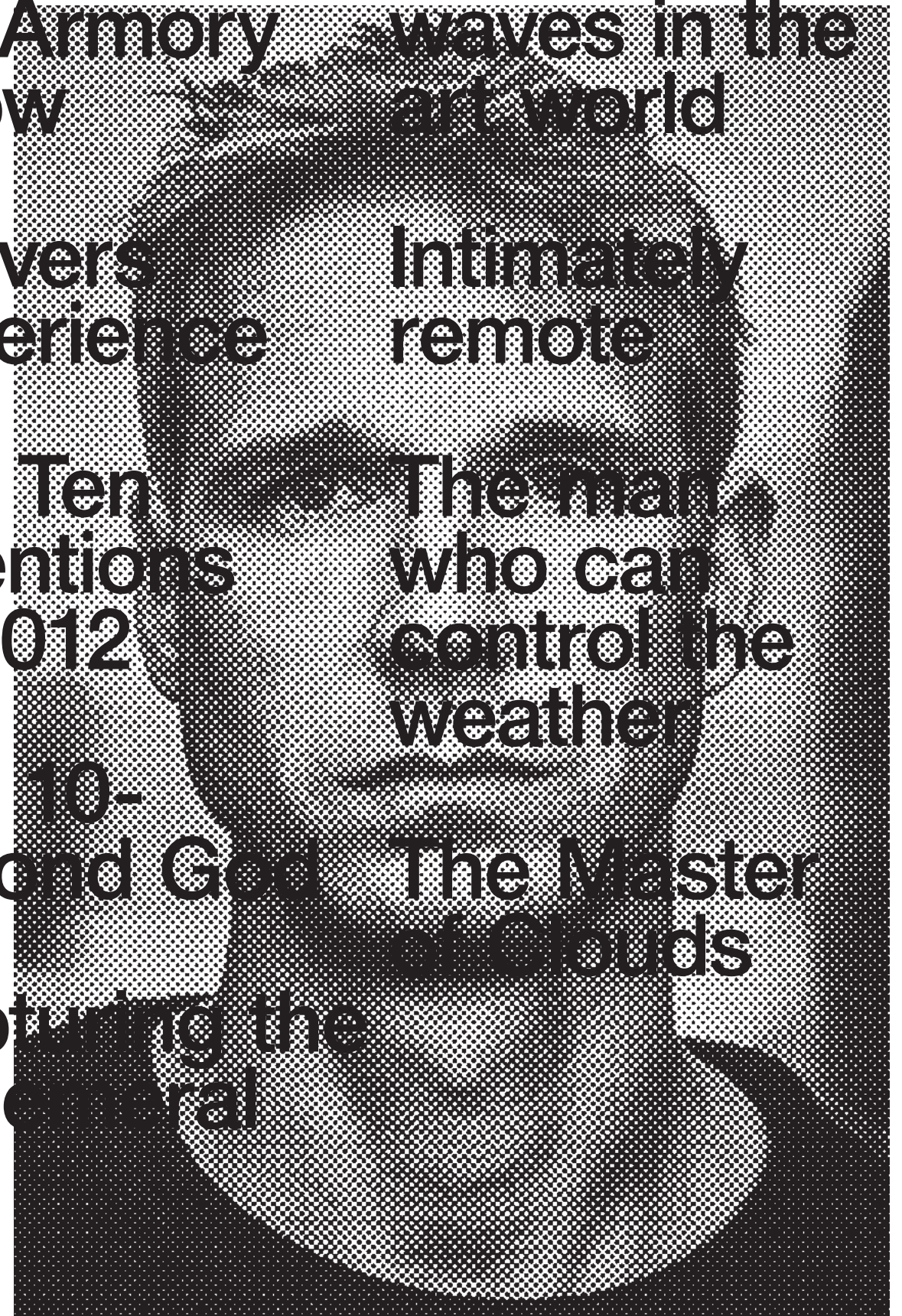
Capturing the
Ephemeral

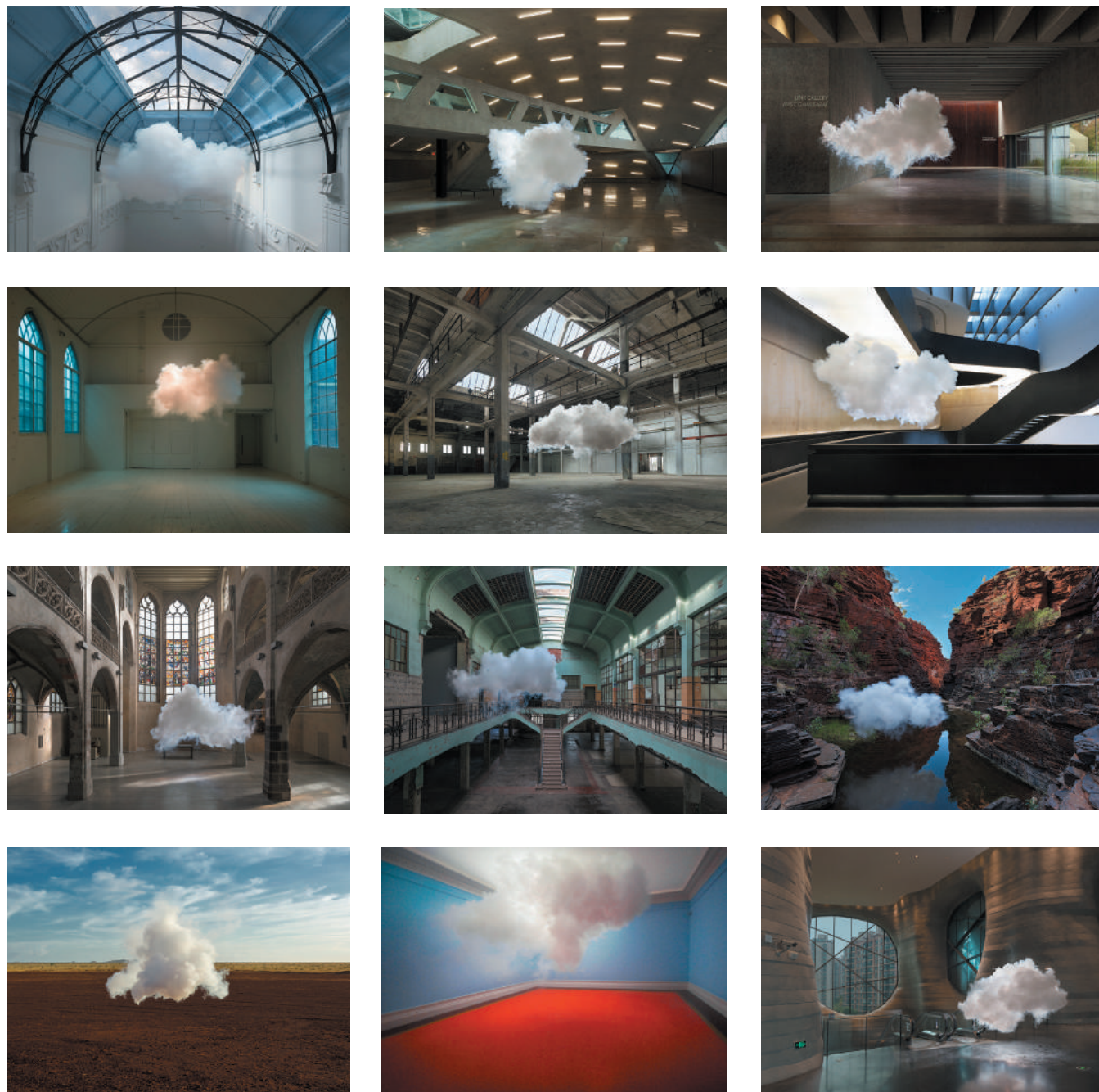
The artist
who is
making tidal
waves in the
art world

Intimately
remote

The man
who can
control the
weather

The Master
of Clouds





'Berndnaut Smilde creates fluffy clouds in locations where nature never would place them. The Dutch artist's sculptures last five seconds – ten seconds tops – before they disappear.'

National Geographic Magazine, 2019



THE NIMBUS PROJECT

'The Nimbus works present a transitory moment of being present in a specific location. They can be interpreted as a sign of loss or becoming, or just as a fragment from a classical painting. People have always had a strong metaphysical connection to clouds and through time have projected many ideas on them. I am interested in the temporary aspect of the work. It's there for a few seconds before they fall apart again. The physical aspect is really important but the work in the end only exists as a photograph. The photo functions as a document of something that happened on the specific location and is now gone.' Berndnaut Smilde

SMILDE: BEHIND THE SCENES

While admiring beautiful, serene images by Smilde, we cannot imagine all the preparatory work that one perfect shot requires. For instance, to get into the right church or palace for just one 'Nimbus' session, Smilde has to send multiple emails, secure access to the space, and reserve it for a longer period of time.

In recent years, finding suitable spaces for the Nimbus sessions has become much simpler for Smilde as he is now often invited to shoot at a particular spot. At the beginning of his career, he had to arrange everything himself, reaching out to the authorities in order to get all necessary permits (especially, to shoot in fragile historical spaces, which could be damaged by the fog and water needed to create a cloud).

After choosing a wrong sandwich for lunch, the photographer and I had to work with a strong truffle aftertaste for hours

Between 11:45 and 12:15, the sun shines through this window. It is this particular light I wanted to capture on the cloud. You can see the very tip of the cloud being lit

Tripods holding the lighting and the fog machines

Storage racks packed with numerous artefacts, sometimes you can find quite unexpected things there, such as a sport bag filled with bones

Facing piazza della repubblica

Water on the floor – I am spraying water to keep the air moist

I particularly liked this frame with the central perspective and the high window. Together with the light and the colour of the roof, it seems very painterly

I'm holding a water sprayer in my right hand and a remote for the fog machines in the other

Green chair in order to protect the tripod from moving

On top is the laptop connected to the camera

A metal box for transporting the fog machines can be also used for other purposes, here we use it as a table for the laptop which is connected to the camera

MAKING OF NIMBUS DIOCLEZIANO AULA

'Commissioned by the Emperor Diocletian in 298 AD, the Baths of Diocletian could fit up to 3,000 people. This bath complex was the largest in ancient Rome. The building now houses the National Roman museum. This particular room is neither open to the public nor it is an exhibition space. It is a kind of a storage room for ancient objects and architectural fragments. Most of the sarcophagi, columns, and statues that are stored here are over 2,000 years old, just as the building itself. I like the contrast between their heavy materiality and fleeting lightness of the cloud.

It usually takes about a day to test everything and a day to actually film the cloud. On site, I'm constantly adjusting the settings until I find the right balance for the cloud to look just right. The density, size, shape and height is something I carefully measure and adjust. The clouds have to be of a certain weight – not physical! – they need to have presence. In a way, it is similar to how classic painters used the clouds to create the right atmosphere for their landscapes. The light, reflections, and shadows are all important and part of the process.'

Berndnaut Smilde



Smilde's studio at the Westerdok in Amsterdam

**So how is his process organised?
When Smilde arrives to a new location,
he usually takes time to analyse the
space. When and from where does the
sunlight enter the space? What is the
best angle for the shot?**

**When the perfect spot is finally found,
he starts preparing the site. To produce
a cloud and make it visible, you need to
create cold and humid conditions.**



Testing the equipment in the Kunst Station
in Cologne before the experiment

**For Smilde, the process of creating
the cloud is not a performance and it
is never being filmed. What matters is
the final image of a cloud in an interior,
which captures just one brief moment
in time.**

SMILDE: NOTES ON ART & LIFE

the question that
naggs me: where
do I find the
sublime?

my work isn't about
performing

i like my studio to
be as clear as an
empty box

the juxtaposition
of objects of very
different sizes in
one installation
excites me

i always count
the steps while
climbing up a
stairs, i just want
to know the
number

i often work at
locations with a
rich history and
they can tell you
a lot about their
previous functions,
you walk around
these spaces
like a detective,
uncovering clues
and stories based
on smells or
sounds or some
random details you
find

for me, it is all
about being in the
right place at the
right time

sometimes, you
want to experience
emptiness

to measure means
to know



SMILDE: OTHER WORKS

There is always a risk that an artist would be remembered just by one work or a series that was picked up by journalists or praised by art historians. Berndnaut Smilde is much more than his popular Nimbus series. To design a museum for him means to explore his art in its entire diversity and understand his scope well.



Breaking Light – Scheveningen 2015, flyer and still from the video

‘Every lighthouse has its own unique lighting rhythm for nautical navigation, depending on its specific location. By refraction of the light beam through a prism, we send a rainbow into the surrounding landscape at regular intervals.’ Berndnaut Smilde



Gamut, 2014

GAMUT is a composition of wooden pillars with the images printed on them and deeply engrained into the wood. The images refer to the postcards from the early 1900s – the souvenirs from another ‘ideal’ world.

CONDITIONER is a fully functional installation that consists of several ventilation shafts, weaving through the gallery space and converting the air into antiseptic air.



Conditioner, 2009

SMILDE: INSPIRATION

At the beginning of the studio, our team had a chance to visit Smilde's atelier in Amsterdam. Berndnaut talked about his projects and showed us many objects and references that inspired him. We have collected some of them on this spread as clues that can help to understand his artwork better.



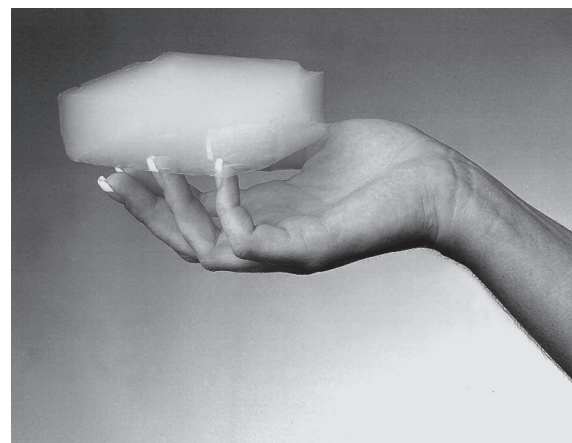
SEA LANDSCAPE BY ANDREAS ACHENBACH
Smilde is fascinated with romantic paintings of various eras and often 'quotes' them in his work



ANTIPODES
The word antipodes comes from the Greek and means 'with feet opposite (ours)'. that is, inhabitants of the opposite side of the globe. The idea of an anti-world and anti-creatures inspired Smilde's experiments with geographical locations on the opposite side of the planet.



OLD POSTCARDS
Smilde collects memories about an idealised past world and old postcards become strong visual references for many of his conceptual works.



AEROGEL
Aerogel is often called the 'frozen smoke'; it is the lightest solid material on earth, 99,8% of it is air.



SHIP SINKING IN ITSELF
Strange and paradoxical objects from cheap souvenir stores, always attract the artist's attention



TOY HORSE
Smilde says that this particular toy horse led him to the very idea of making artificial clouds. We did not understand what he meant, but loved the horse anyways.



THE MODEL OF A LIGHTHOUSE
Lighthouses are the protagonists of many projects of the artists.



20+C+M+B+20
Smilde is interested in mysteries and allegories. He loves the so-called 'chalking the door' tradition. During the time of Christmastide, many Christians (including Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, among others) chalk their doors with a pattern such as 20+C+M+B+20, with the numbers referring to the calendar year (20 and 20, for instance, for 2020); the crosses stand for Christ; and the letters have a twofold significance: C, M and B are the initials for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar), but they are also an abbreviation of the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat*, which means, May Christ bless this house.



THE SITE

by Krijn Nugter

Our team needed a plot for the SOLO SPACE project. How could one find a place for a new museum? Where to begin? How to choose?



Masked studio team during the research session, Amsterdam, October 2020

We looked at many locations: a park on the outskirts of Amsterdam; a parking lot of the famous city zoo; a patch of farmland next to the municipal border; and an old parcel of land in the up-and-coming area in the North.

What were we searching for? For the purposes of the studio which aspired to explore the potential of a particular museum typology, we needed a place that would have a certain metaphorical significance and, at the same time, would allow for a multiplicity of spatial experiments.

We wanted a plot that would be simultaneously empty and very visible, straightforward and controversial, meaningful and ready to acquire the new meaning. In fact, we needed a paradox. We found one – together with the artist.

Nobody, except for us, was happy with the choice.

THE END OF THE WORLD...

The mist and mystery engulf you upon arrival. The horizon is blurred by the rain; you cannot spot any familiar silhouettes. You hear some noises or maybe you do not. This place is deserted. Water surrounds you, but who needs water? It is cold, it has no smell, no colour. The sky is reflected in the wet pavement and it is hard to say where the reality ends and the illusion begins. A car with tinted windows passes by. Brake lights flicker a couple of times, then disappear into the grey nothingness.

COORDINATES
WATER LEVEL
LENGTH OF THE QUAY
TOTAL SIZE OF THE PLOT

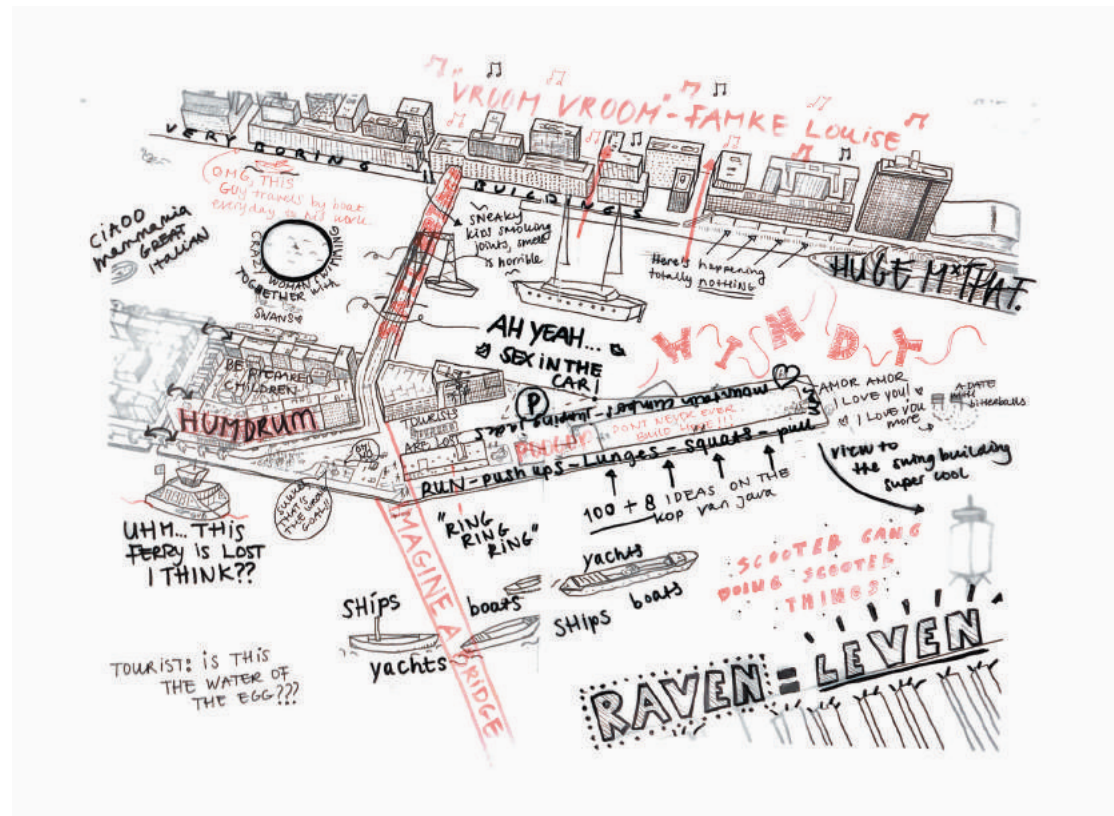
52°22'46.5"N 4°55'04.8"E
1.80 m above NAP
750 m
4,684 m2



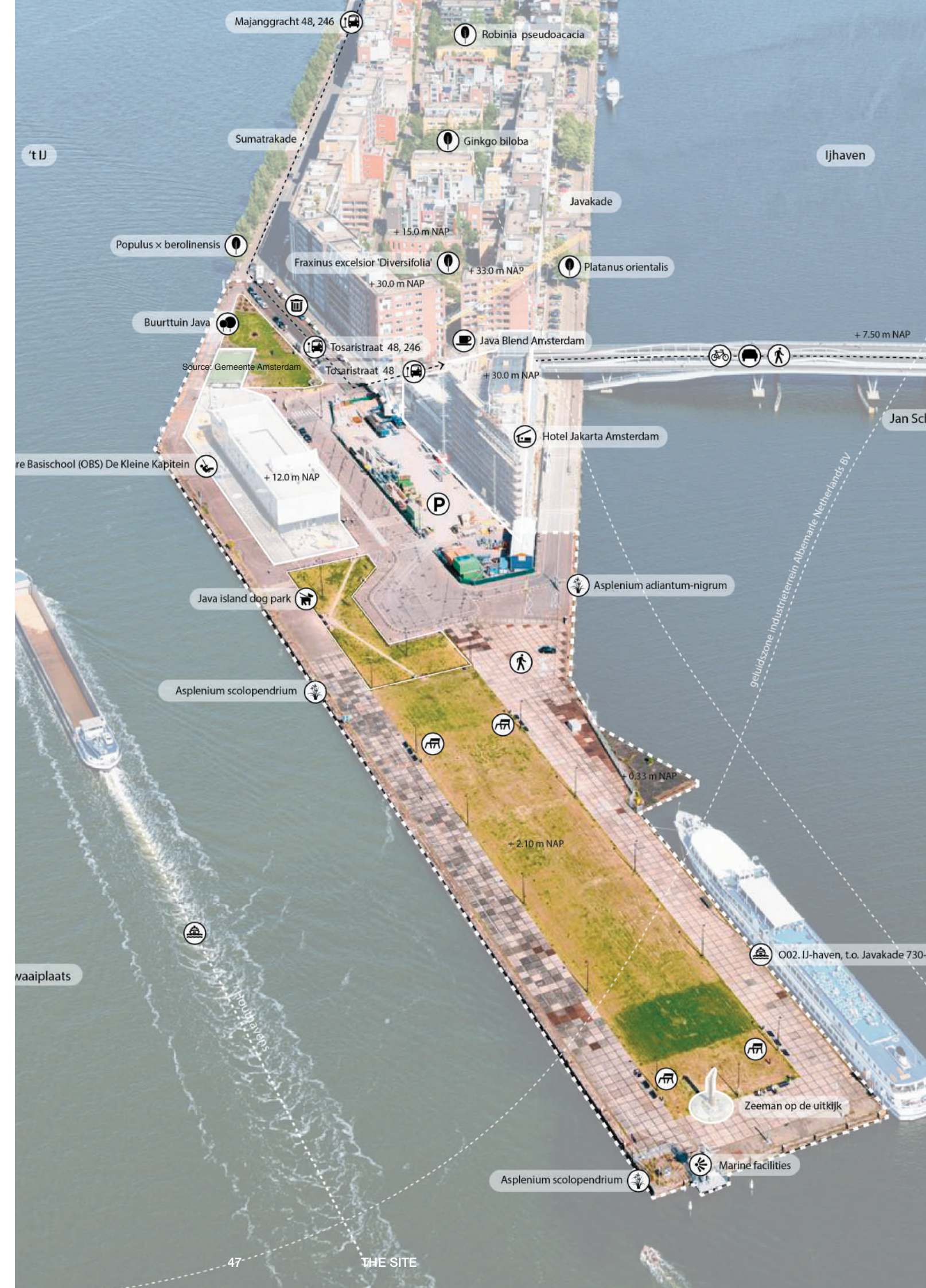
PHOTO BY KRIJN NUGTER, 2020

...IN THE CENTRE OF AMSTERDAM

Kop van Java-eiland, the largest empty plot in the centre of Amsterdam, has no specific function. It is just a long patch of grass in a 'frame' of concrete blocks at the tip of the Java island. Its elongated rectangular shape is the legacy of a dam that protected the city in this area in the nineteenth century. Although its location is unequivocally central and it is well connected to the mainland, there is something deeply anti-urban about this place. No surprise that it remains a subject for endless disputes – should it be developed or left empty forever? – since the 1990s when the rest of the Java island was turned into a neighbourhood planned by Sjoerd Soeters. All architects know this place as an 'enchanted void': it teases the imagination and yet it seems condemned to remain empty.



In the process of research, the team members produced a series of the so-called Soft Atlases, e.g. field notes made directly on the map or an axonometric projection of the plot. Inspired by the well-visualised research by the Dutch artist Jan Rothuizen, our Soft Atlas helped to document the details and elements that are usually hard to capture through classical architectural drawings or photographs. Sounds, smells, textures, small-scale objects and routine activities were described with words and tiny sketches; the portrait of the plot was complete.



THE SITE: A TIMELINE

The history of the joint KNSM /Java island – man-made like many other islands near Amsterdam – can be roughly divided into the four major periods. While its shape has remained practically the same since its construction in the late 19th century, its atmosphere and its modes of use have depended very much on the spirit and demands of different eras. The place has changed quite dramatically over time.

1890's



The dam called the 'wave-breaker' is built to protect the eastern harbour area of Amsterdam from the tidal waves. The city port begins to expand.

1900's



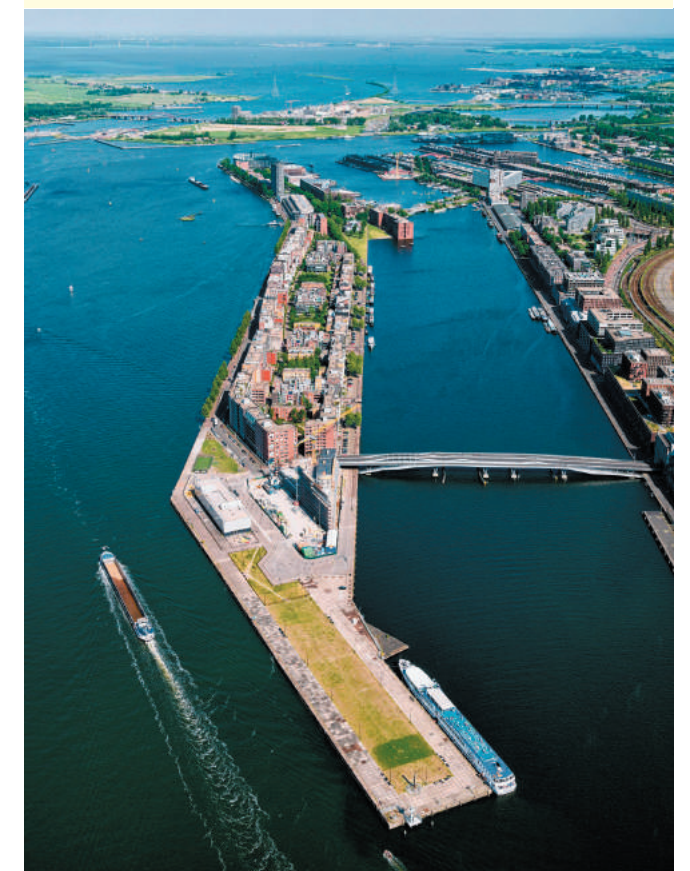
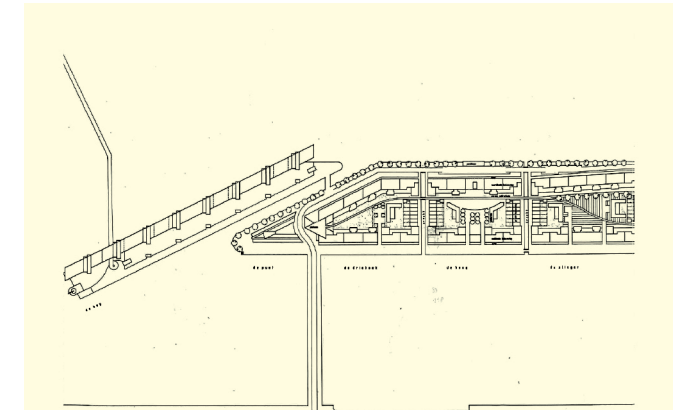
At the turn of the century, the dam is transformed into a long quay for the freight ships. Soil is dredged from the bottom of the IJ river to reinforce and expand the dam, turning it into a long, narrow island. The new warehouses and a railroad are built for the storage and transportation of goods: the island becomes an important part of the international harbour network. The Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (KNSM) buys the entire island in 1903. The company trades the industrial goods for exotic products from Indonesia, but also ships thousands of passengers to and from East Asia.

1960's-1970's



Most of the freight companies move to the fast-growing port of Rotterdam. The Amsterdam harbour, including the KNSM/Java island plot, is sold to the municipality. For a long time, the area lies in neglect. Squatters move in, gradually hijacking the island and transforming the empty storage sheds into living quarters and art studios. The place becomes a cult destination for fans of Amsterdam subcultures. One of the most famous 'squat restaurants' in the city called 'The End of the World' opens its doors to the visitors. Lit by candlelight, it serves Indonesian starters, strange slave meals, Japanese vegetarian food, and many more exotic dishes.

1990's

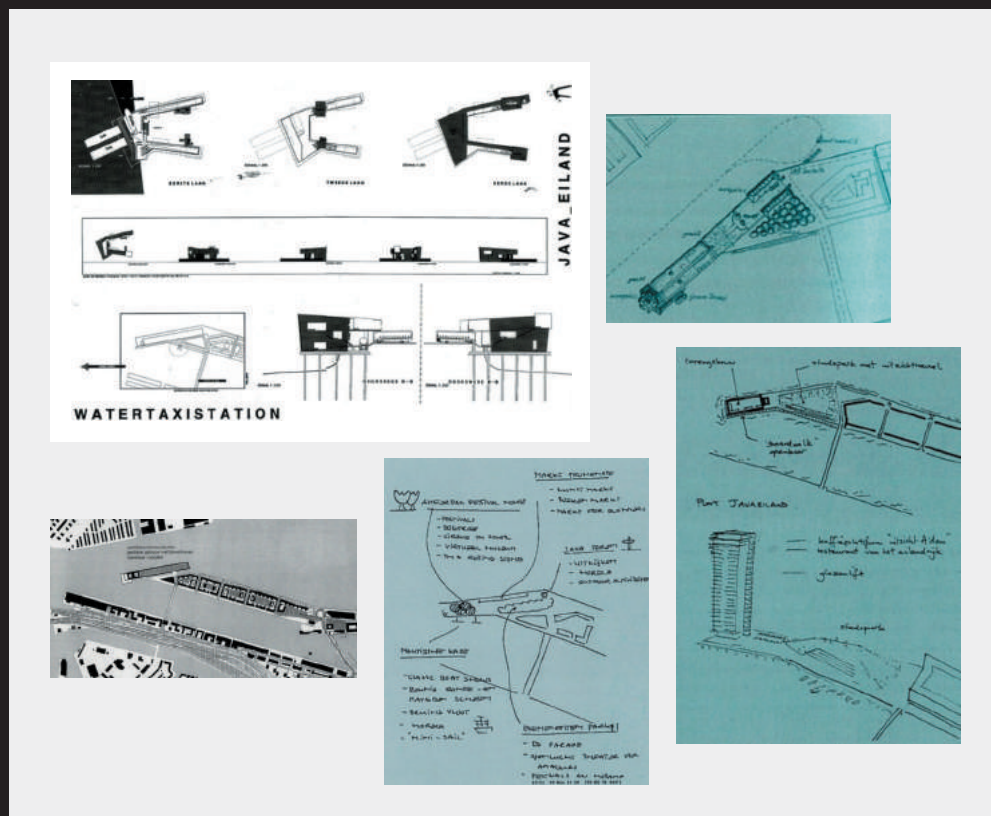


The city grows very fast and so does the demand for housing. A new urban development plan for the city islands is designed by Sjoerd Soeters: the neighbourhood for young middle-class families replaces the remnants of the former harbour. However, Soeter's plan is not entirely realised. The tip of the island remains empty. Investors and developers compete for the right to build here, but none of the projects are given the green light. In the spirit of anti-capitalist movements, many locals start to promote the idea of leaving this plot forever vacant.

100 REJECTED IDEAS

The Amsterdam Centre for Architecture (ARCAM) in collaboration with the municipality has initiated an open 'design competition' for the citizens to accumulate ideas for the Kop van Java-eiland. It was a truly democratic project for all: the organising team has collected dozens of proposals, sketches, and texts. In 2000, one hundred ideas were selected and published as a small album '100 ideeën. Kop Java' by Projectgroep Oostelijk Havengebied.

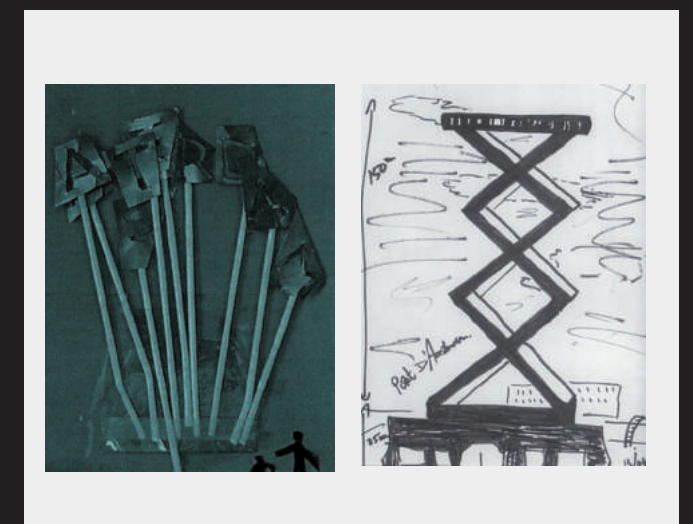
The competition entries ranged from quick amateurish sketches to the more professional designs for further development of the Java island. Some proposals followed the logic of the existing neighbourhood, while others offered alternative schemes in stark contrast to Soeter's masterplan.



Some submissions promoted more ambitious, at times, even utopian large-scale plans. Collages and renderings formed an unprecedented gallery of urban fantasies that became an important chapter of the city history.



Some contributions had a more mysterious, artistic quality. These sketches and texts helped to develop the foundation myth of Kop van Java, defining it as a place for artists and art production.



Many designers proposed to build site-specific art objects or monuments that would be visible from afar, but would not occupy the whole plot.

'I like this place. I can disappear here.'
Sjors van Dijk, father of three.

24.10.20



PROJECTS

SOLO SPACE
Berndnaut Smilde's
Museum and Garden

Project Leads:
Alexander Sverdlov
Inna Tsoraeva

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Smilde In Residence
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- 112

Two Elements
Stefanie Krietemeijer
- 124

The 'Smilde' Archipelago
Sherif Azmi

SMILDE IN RESIDENCE

by Alice Decker

'I come to my studio only two or three times per week, but, in fact, I am always working.' B. Smilde

Being an artist is a full-time job, with little or no division between professional and personal life. This project is dedicated to Berndnaut Smilde, an artist of many talents and one who has a very specific method of artistic production that requires a certain degree of intimacy and isolation.

In contrast to large-scale traditional museums, the relatively new single-artist museum typology provides a specific, intimate and, at the same time, democratic experience to its visitors. With the shift of focus from commemorative single-artist museums to ones for living artists, the process of creating a design scheme is now based on close collaboration with the client-artist.

Inspired by Smilde's lifestyle, this project proposes a very intimate museum that is also a home. Living, working, meeting friends, exhibiting art – anything can happen here. The interior spatial organisation of this mutant building refers to antique cabinets of curiosities with many nooks and crannies that make it possible to show and store all kinds of objects. In this non-hierarchical exhibition setting, the juxtaposition of artworks, inspirational

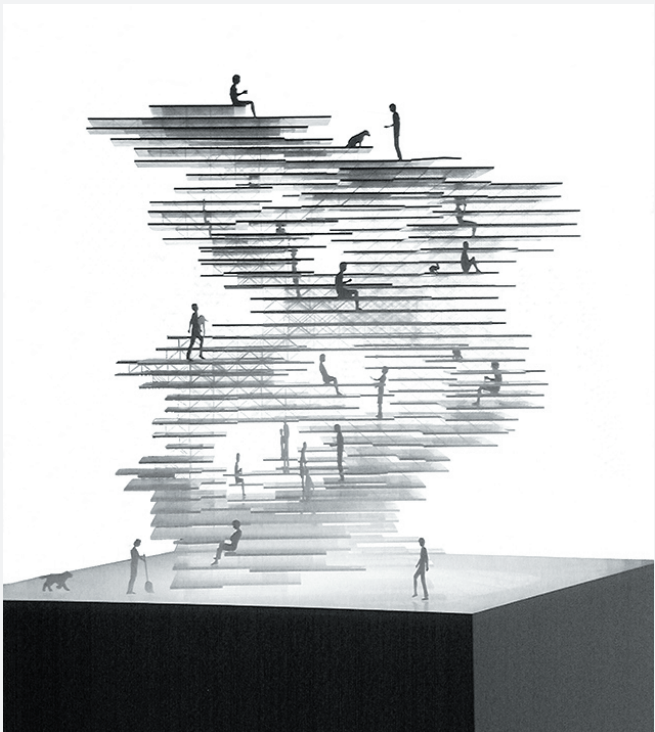
elements and personal objects defines the unique character of the museum's collection. The guests and artist are invited to come up with their own narratives within this space. While guests explore Smilde's universe, the artist himself plays the role of a curator and, at the same time, of an exhibit in his own museum.

The building itself is a mini tower perched on the waterfront: due to its relative height and its privileged position on the flat tip of the island, it offers unique views over the city of Amsterdam. The elements that form and define its facades also frame the city's panorama for the visitors, creating picturesque 'snapshots' of the river and its banks.

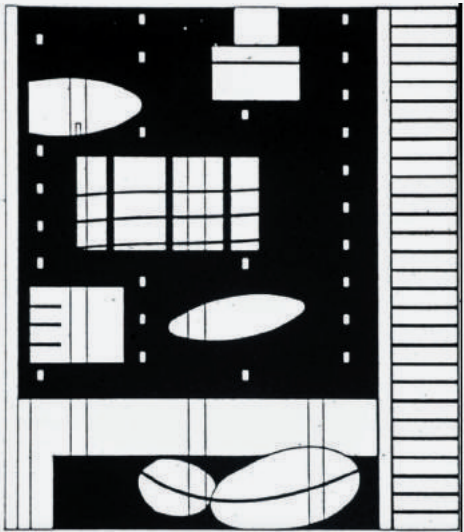
PROGRAM

TOILET, OFFICE, KITCHEN, DEPOSIT, BEDROOM, BATHROOM, LIVING ROOM, DINING ROOM, READING ROOM, OBSERVATORIUM, EXHIBITION SPACE 'THE VOID', EXHIBITION SPACE 'THE CAVE OF CURIOSITIES'

REFERENCES



PRIMITIVE FUTURE HOUSE PROJECT, 2001.
Sou Fujimoto



TRÈS GRANDE BIBLIOTHÈQUE,
Paris, 1969. Office for Metropolitan
Architecture



TOTES HAUS U R, Venice,
2001. Gregor Schneider

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



NEST



MINIATURE
WORLD

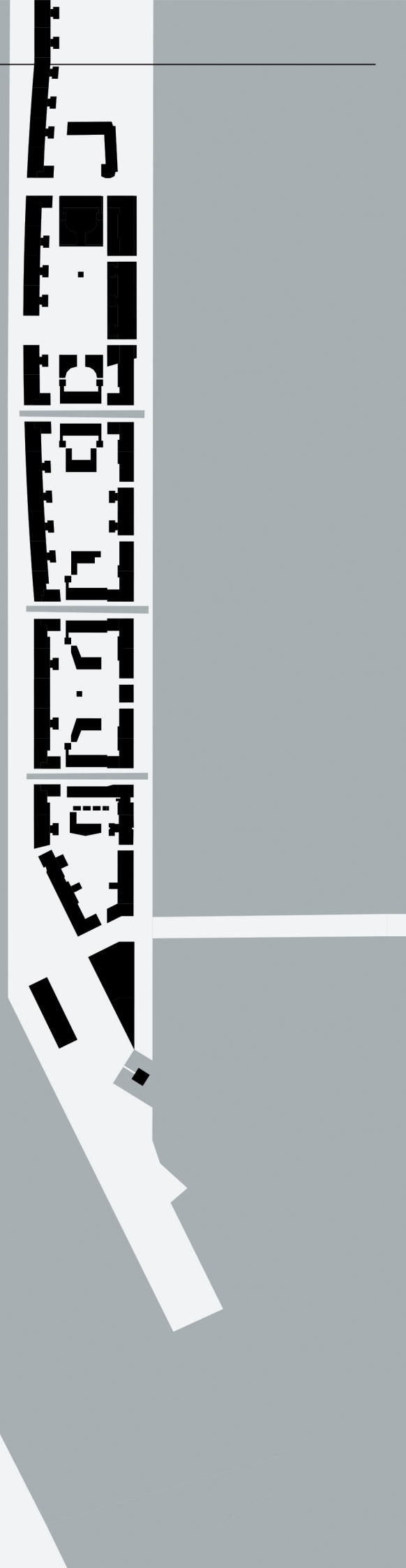


LIGHTHOUSE

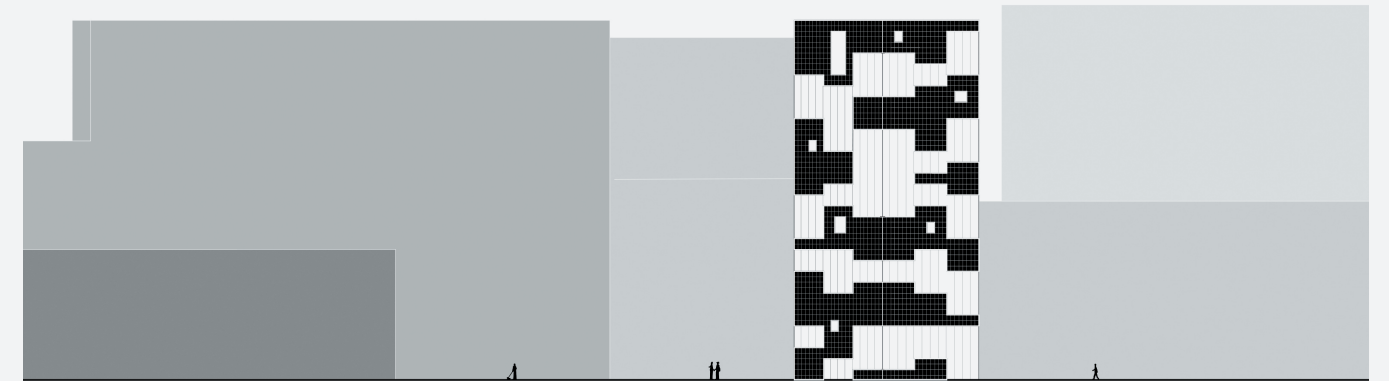
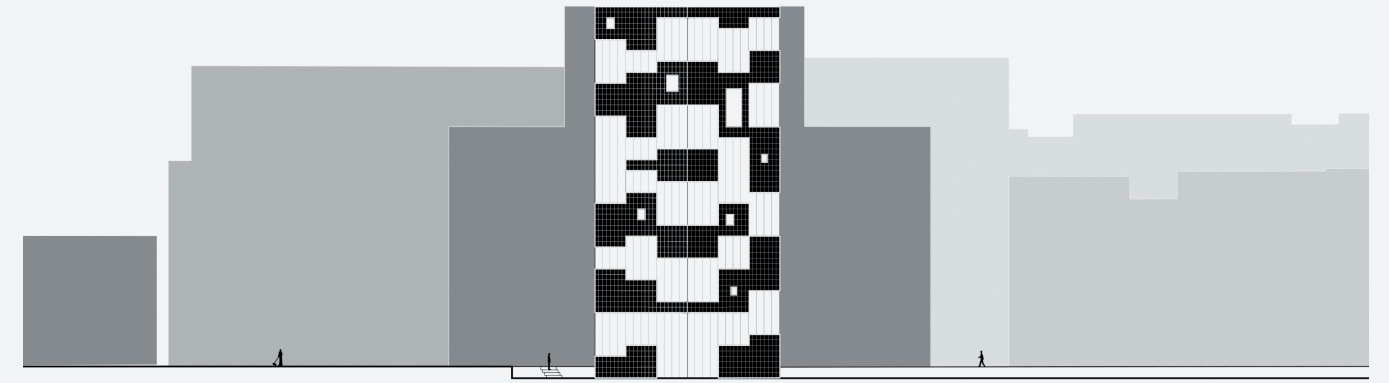


CABINET OF
CURIOSITIES

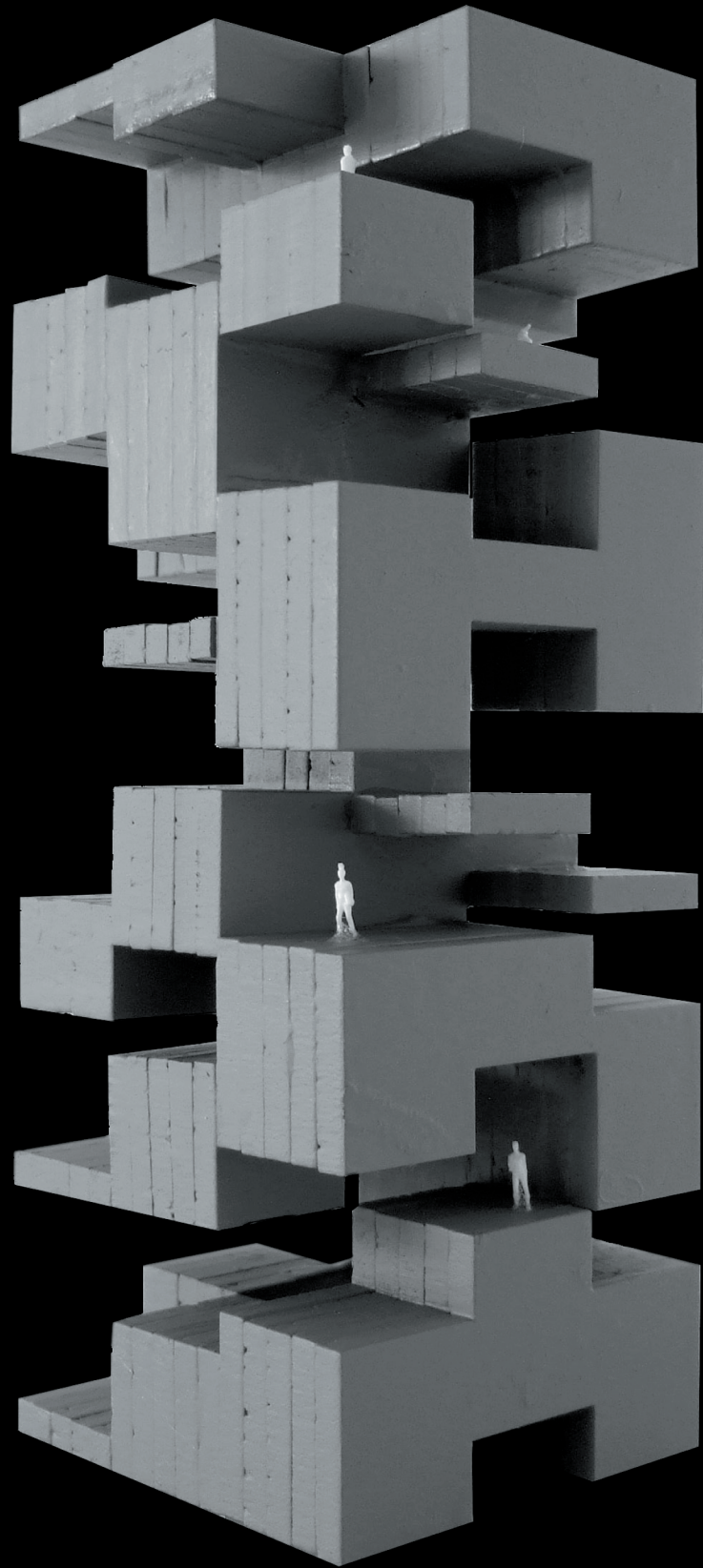
SITE PLAN



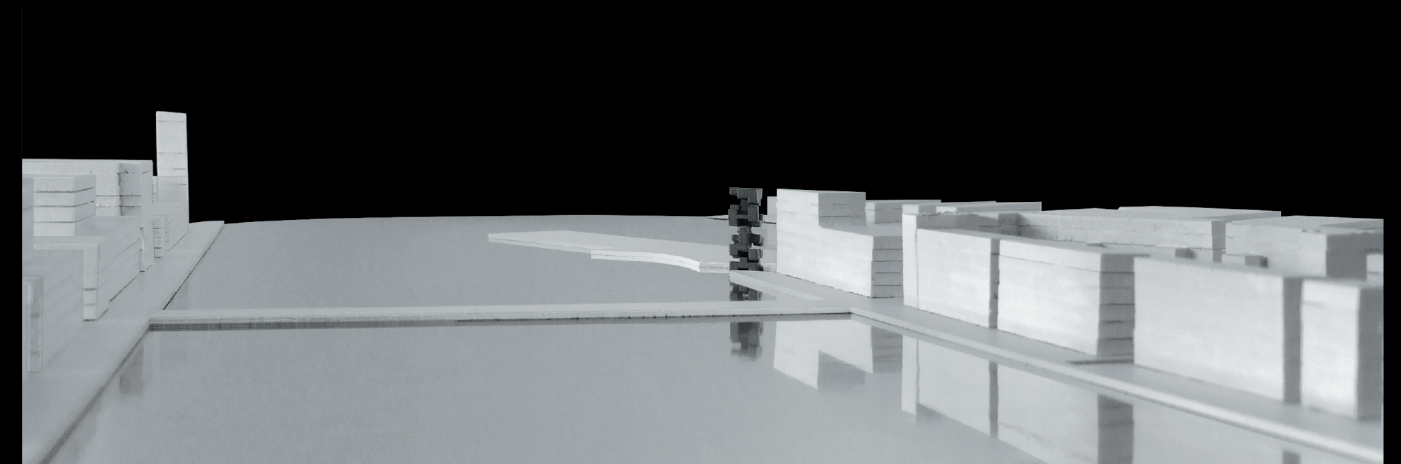
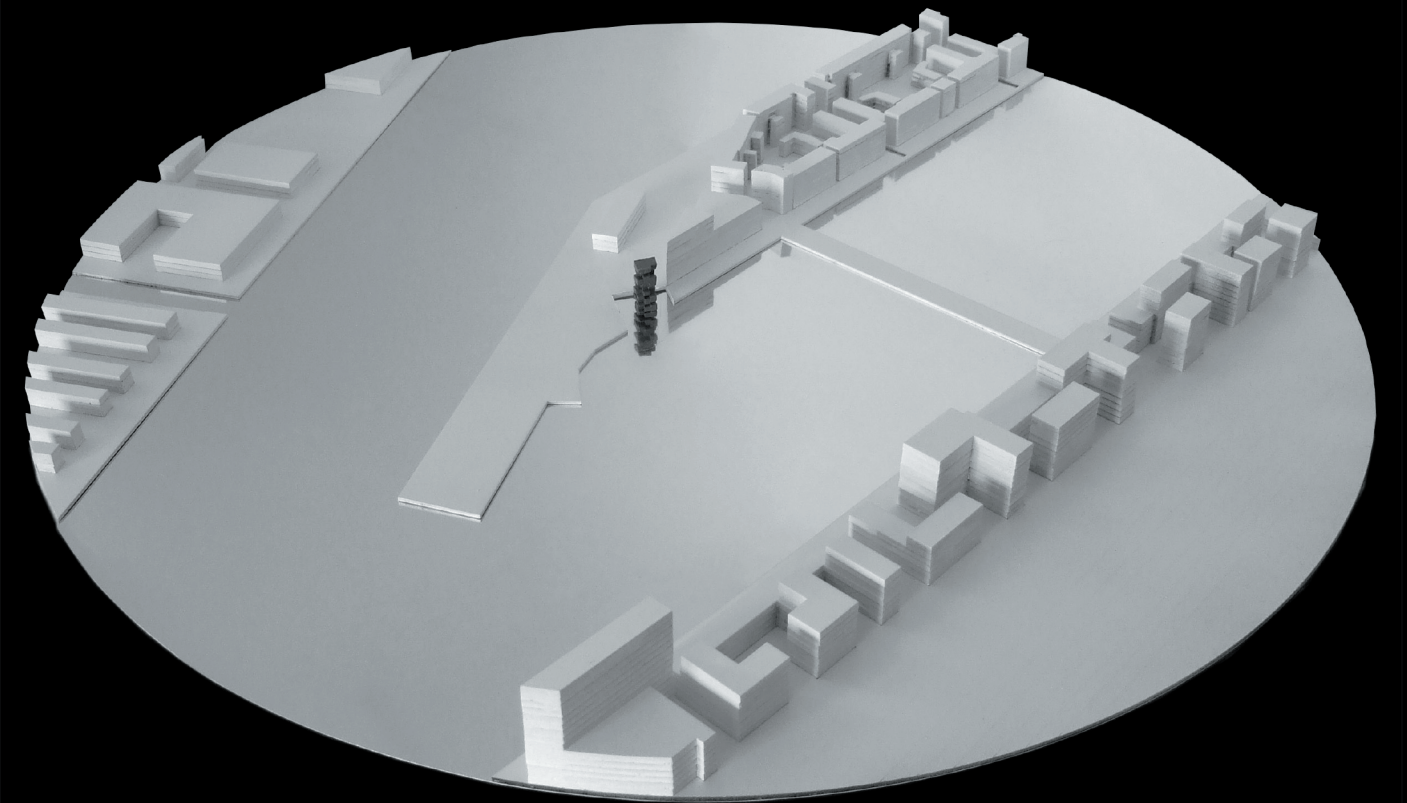
FACADE



Smilde in Residence museum is situated at the very edge of the plot and reminds us of a lighthouse, a type of building – and a metaphor – important to the artist's work. The museum's position – not at the very tip of the island, but closer to the existing buildings – makes it possible to leave the Kop van Java-eiland unchanged: empty and windy as it is.



The tower is composed of massive blocks stacked on top of each other. This dynamic structure of solids and carved out voids houses a series of cabinets – Smilde's cabinets of curiosities - connected by passages. Through multiple openings in between exhibition chambers the visitors can observe the surrounding city.



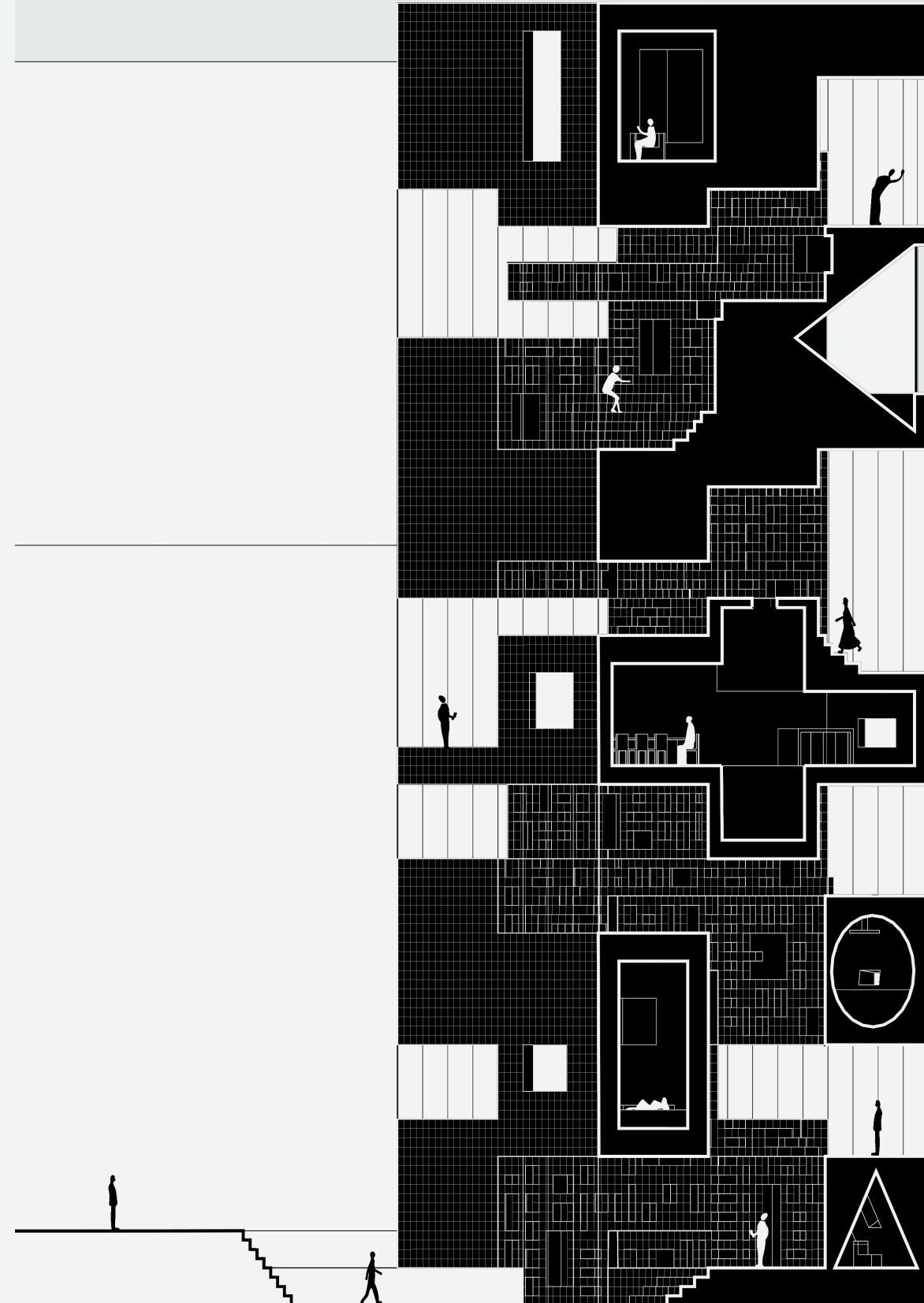
The museum will be the first in a row of buildings on Java island. It has its own small harbour – which is cut out from the existing embankment – and its whimsical silhouette is reflected in the water, creating a strong vertical accent (or an illusion of it) in contrast to the flat landscape of the area.

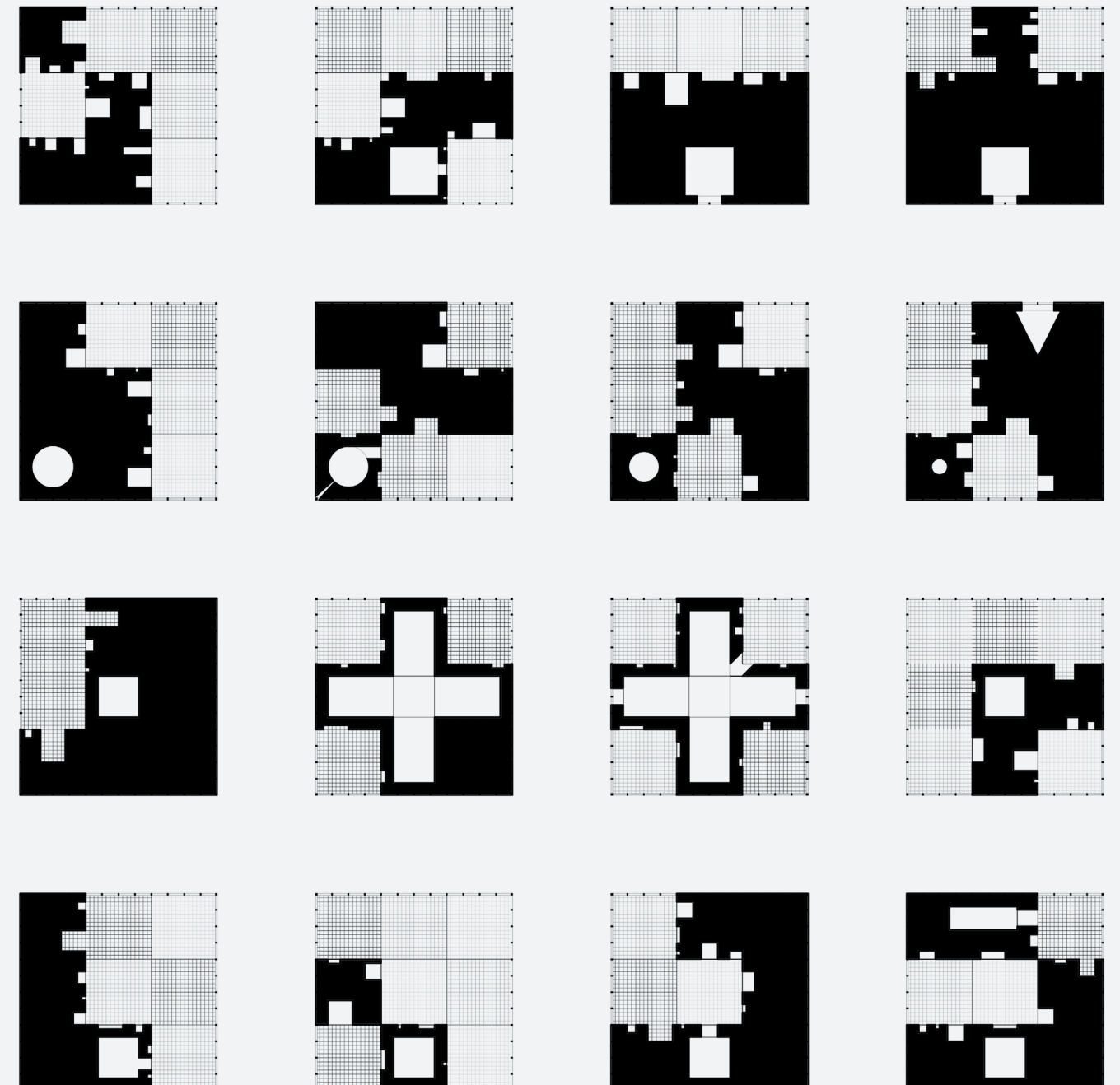
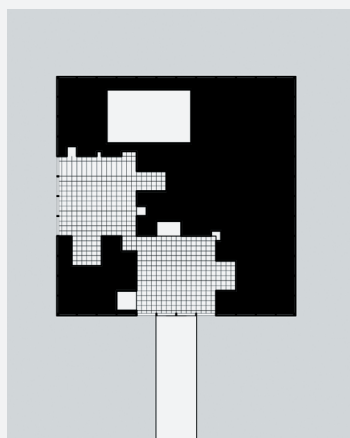
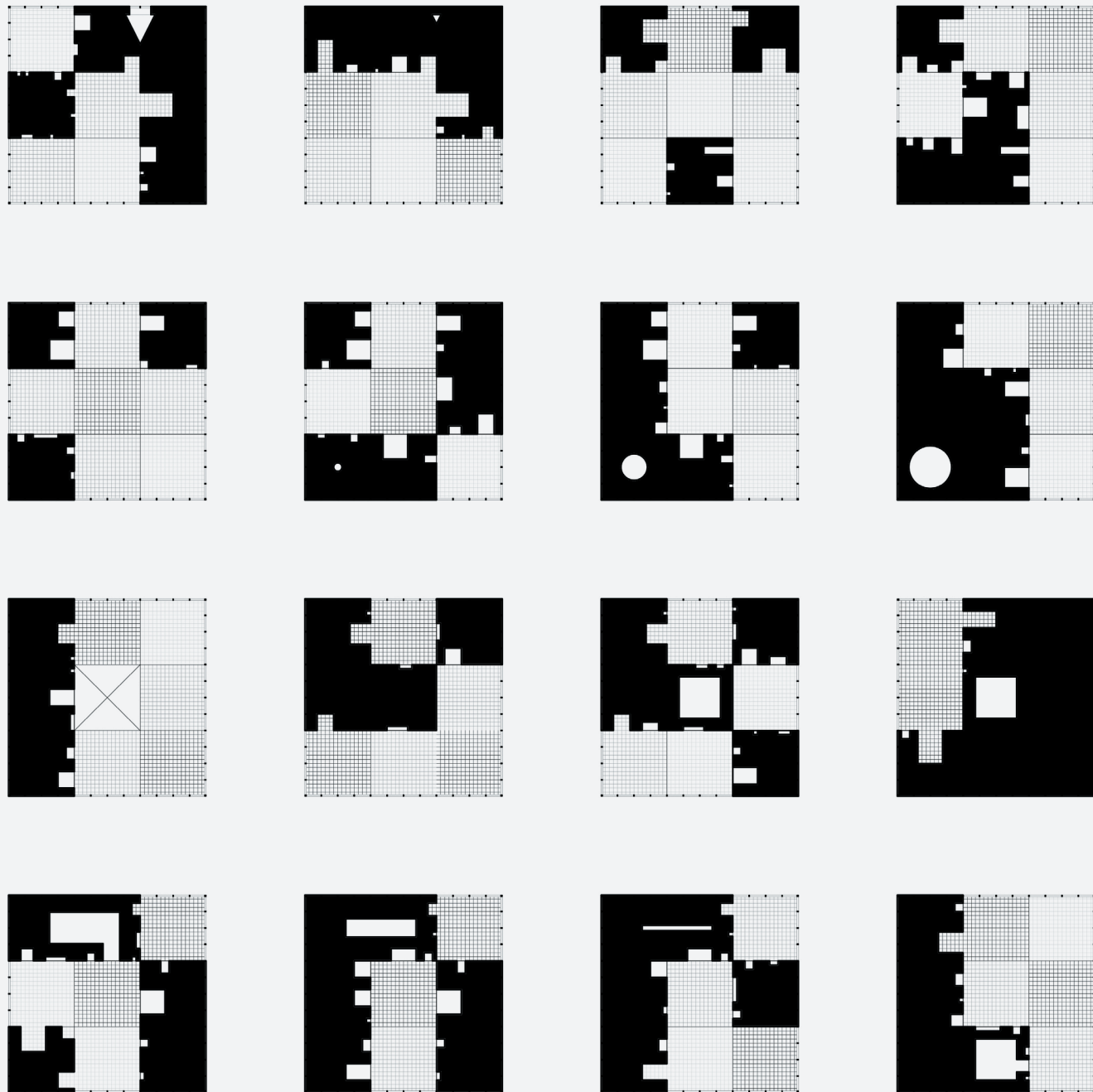


The massive blocks, of which the tower consists, host the museum's collection, while spaces that form the core of the building constitute Smilde's living spaces.



The building can be accessed from the island via a small-scale underwater bridge that articulates the moment of transition between being outside and inside the museum.

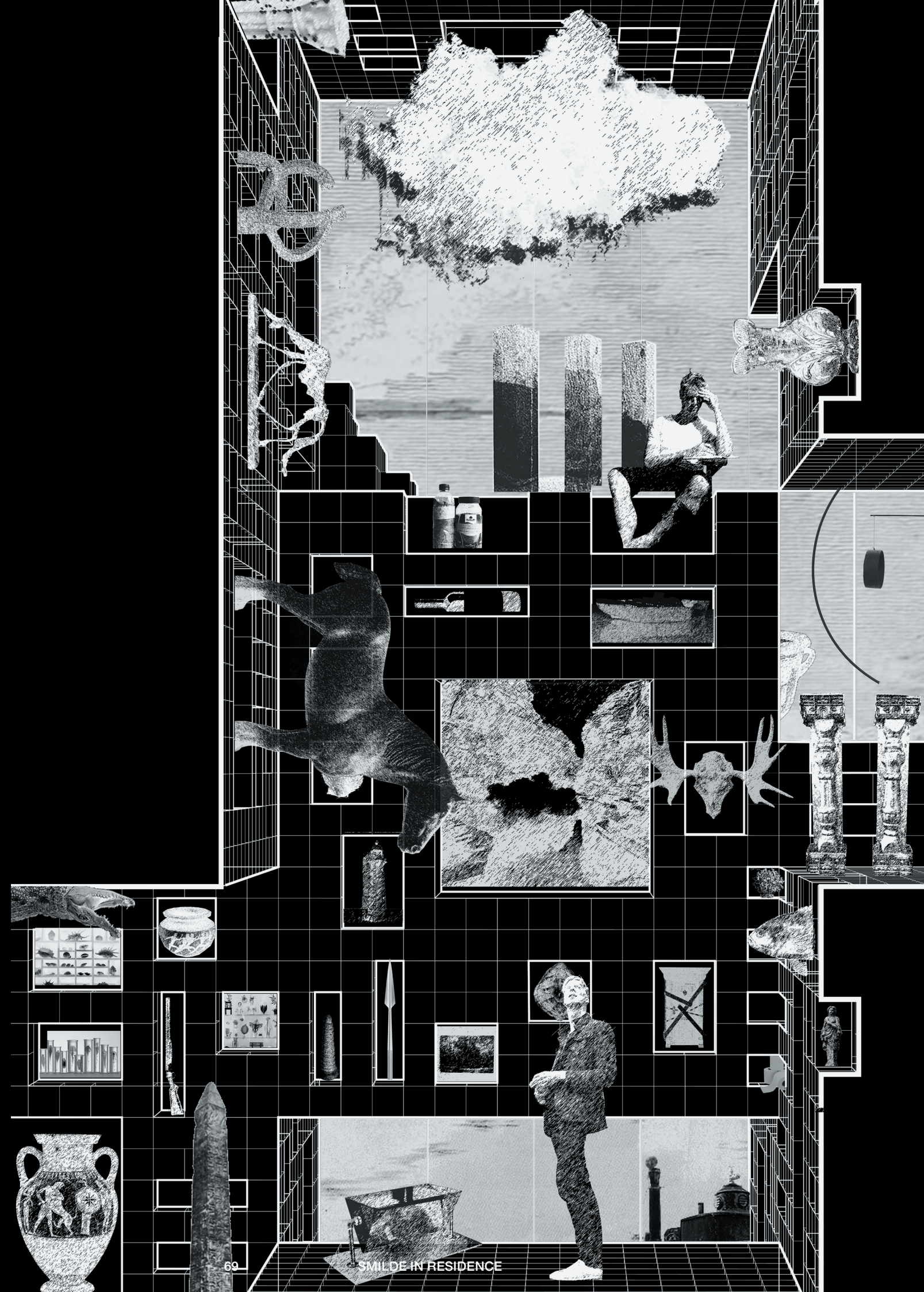




The balance between masses and voids defines the structure of the building. The museum has its own extremely diverse interior landscape with 33 levels and connecting passages between them.



The Smilde in Residence museum hosts multiple artefacts that are exhibited and stored on various shelves and displays. With all its passages and diversity of galleries, the museum turns into an artist's 'cave' of curiosities: an overwhelming yet exciting visual mosaic.



FRAMING THE ART

by Eva Kirschbaum

'My work is about framing that one perfect moment.' B. Smilde

This Smilde museum will frame both the art it exhibits and the city of Amsterdam. It will also give the artist an opportunity to experiment and make things he has never tried making before. The museum is envisaged as a dynamic space – a stage for various performances and actions. This museum is a machine. It is a factory and a lab. Its robust and raw aesthetics are in stark contrast to Smilde’s ethereal and ephemeral art, but also offer a suitable background – or a plinth - for it. The museum is also the artist’s home. The building is literally a frame. It is as simple as a theatre box. It implies theatrical gestures and grand scale. It is engaged in a dialogue with other landmarks along the river. In changes the island, it changes the city, it changes the skyline.

PROGRAM

PUBLIC SPACE
STAGE & GALLERIES
3490 M2

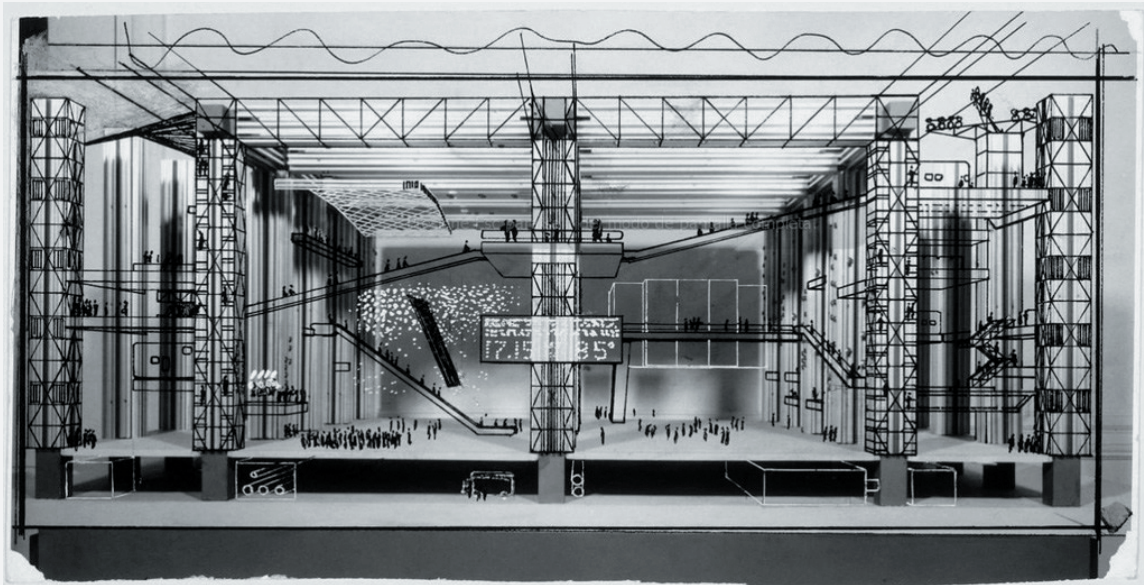
PRIVATE SPACE
HOUSE OF SMILDE
65 M2

STORAGE & TECHNICAL SPACE
3320 M2

REFERENCES

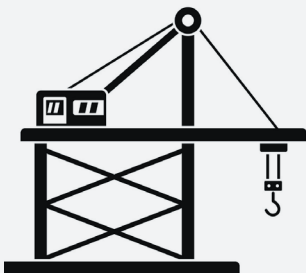


EXPO '70, Osaka, Japan. Kenzo Tange

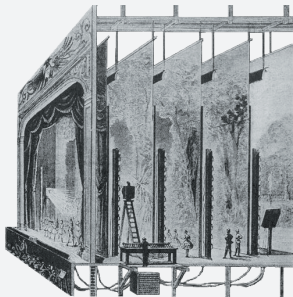


FUN PALACE, 1965. Joan Littlewood & Cedric Price

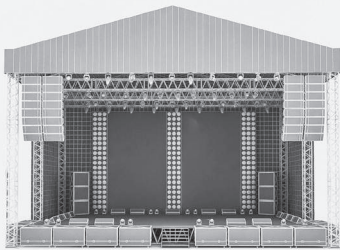
INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



PORT CRANES

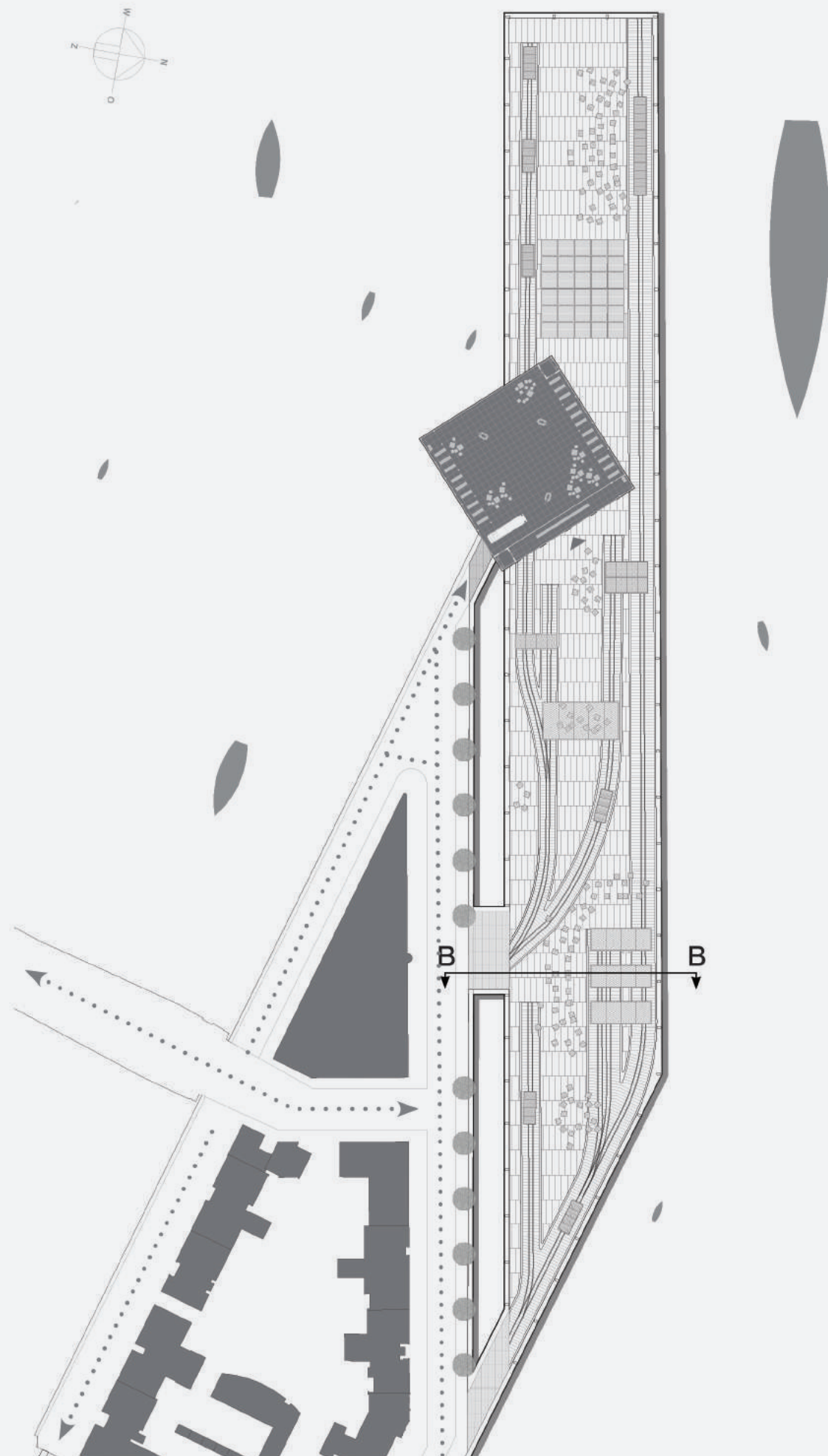


BACKSTAGE



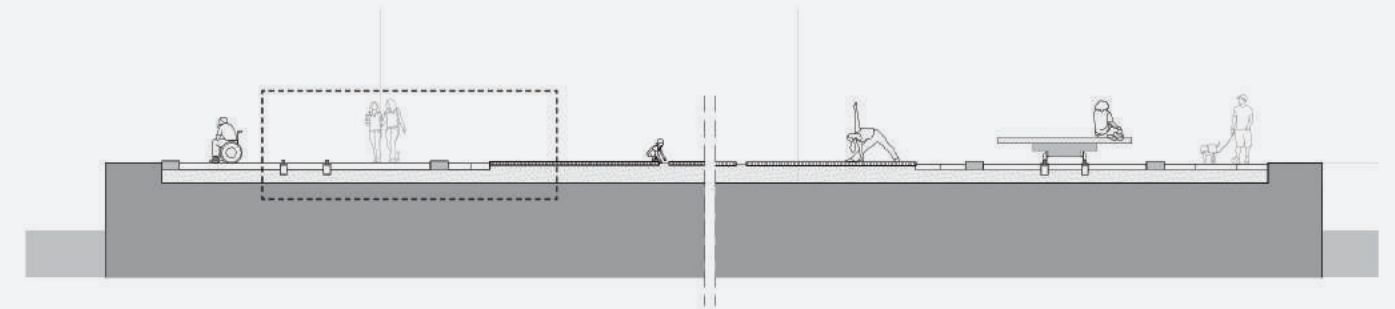
CONCERT PAVILION

SITE PLAN

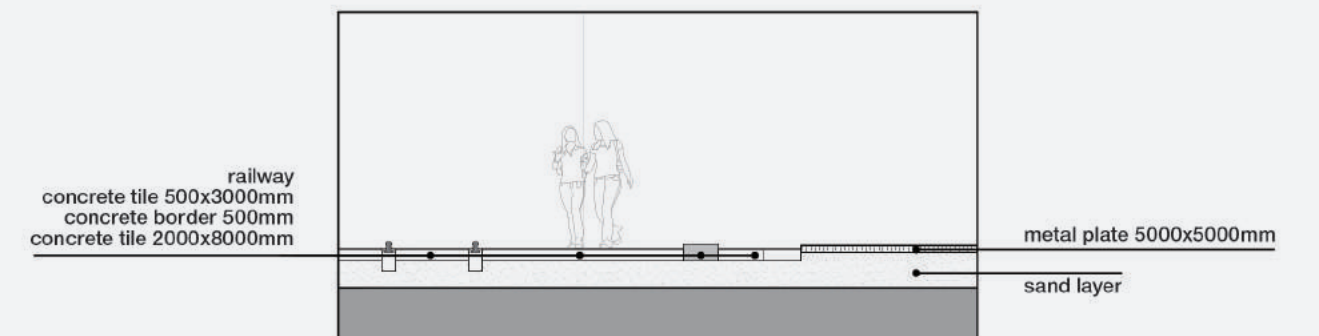


HARDSCAPE ELEMENTS

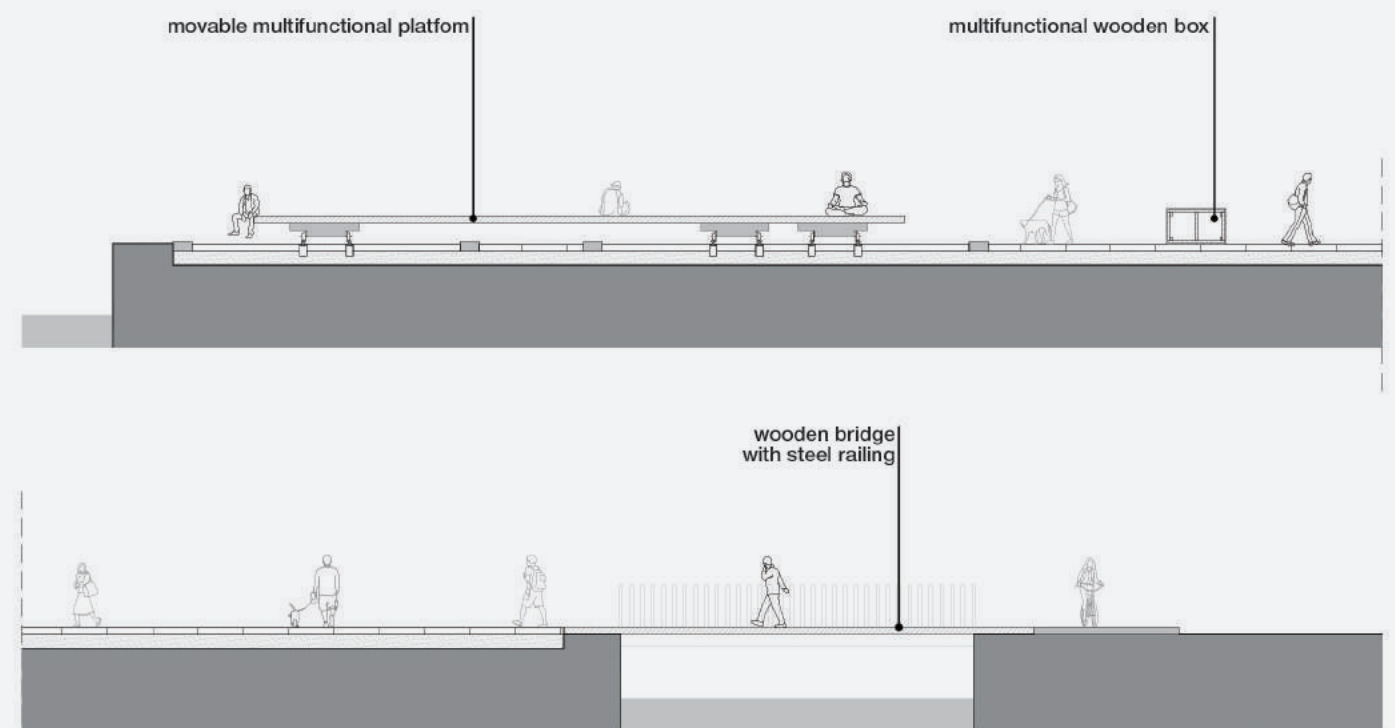
SECTION A-A



DETAIL PAVING



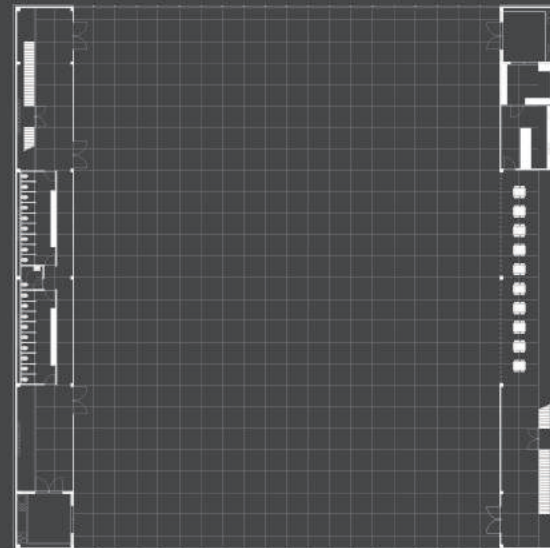
SECTION B-B



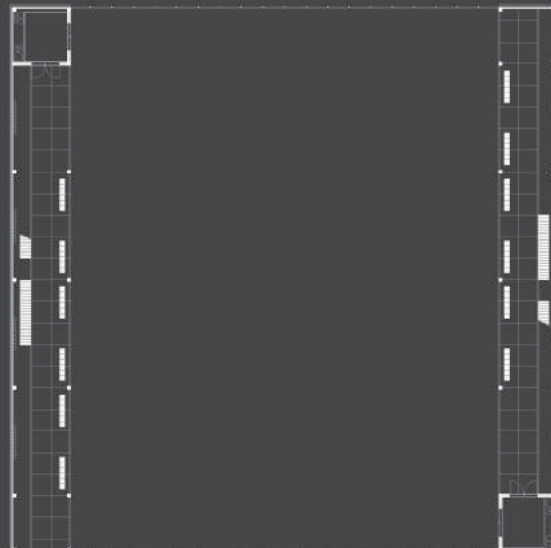
FLOOR PLANS



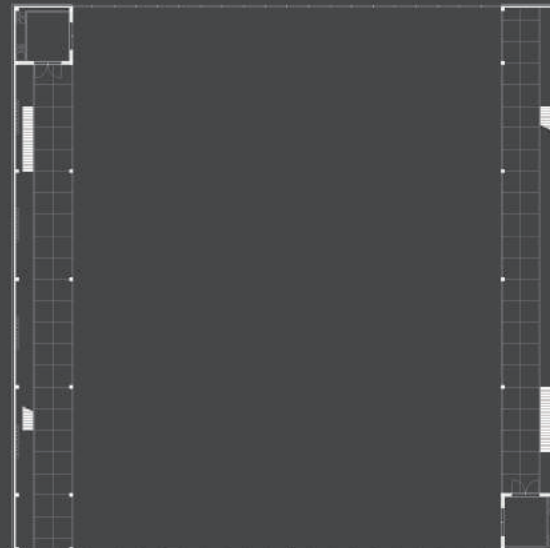
PUBLIC ENTRANCE & STORAGE SPACE



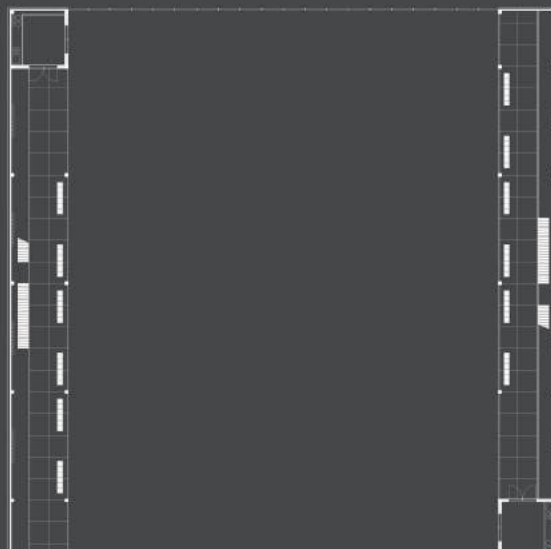
MAIN STAGE



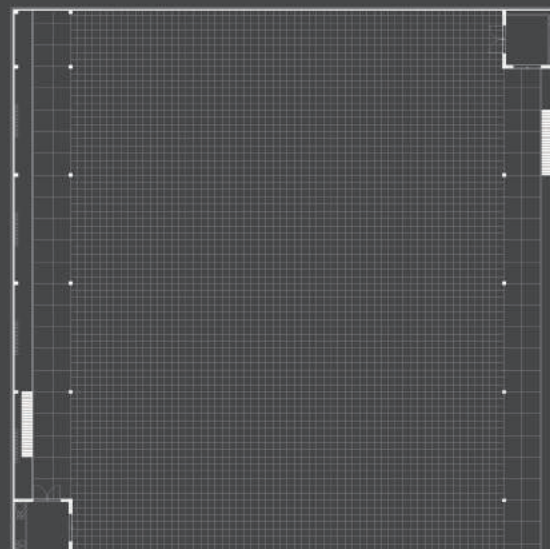
GALLERIES



GALLERIES & SMILDE'S PRIVATE HOUSE

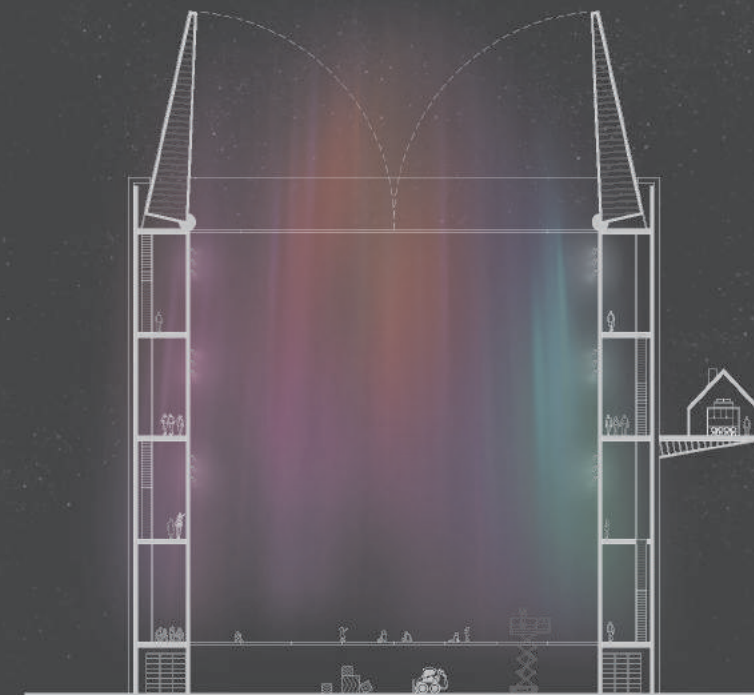
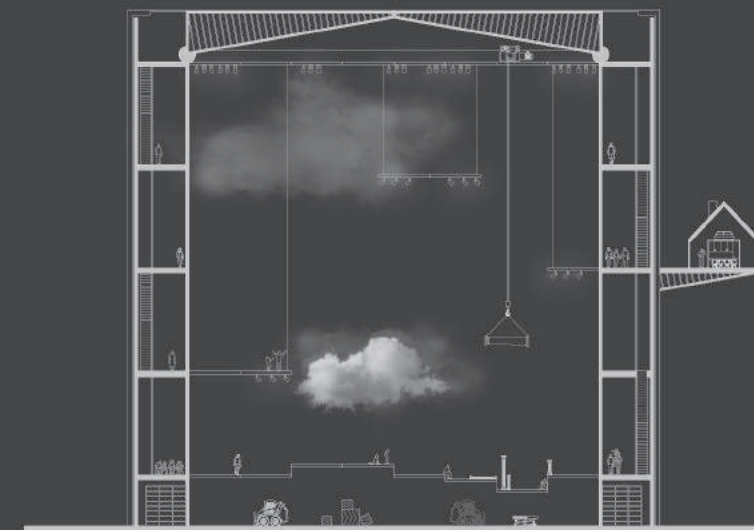


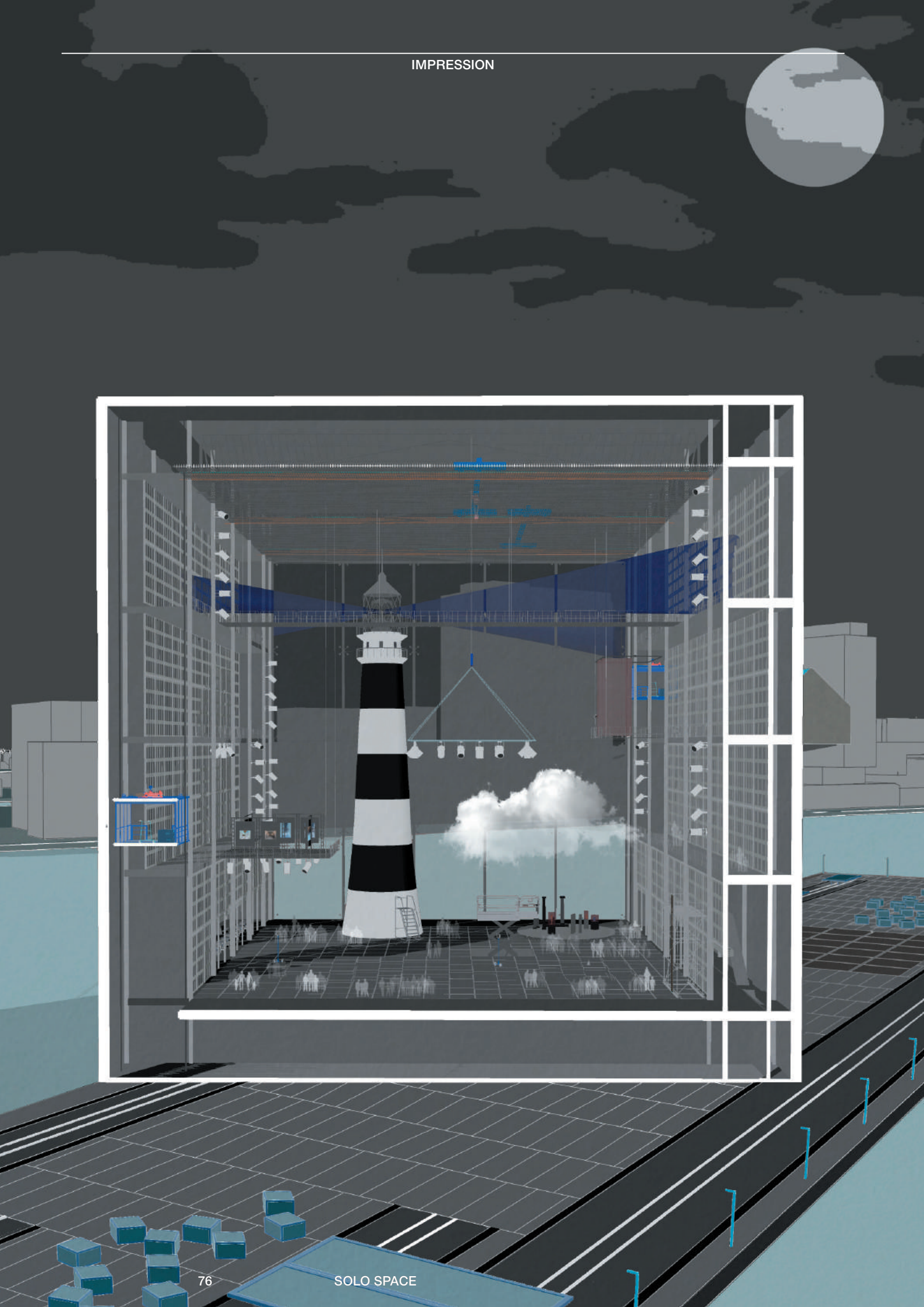
GALLERIES



TECHNICAL SPACE WITH FLEXIBLE CEILING STRUCTURE

SCENARIOS





MUSEUM OF PHENOMENA

by Krijn Nugter

“It is an image of the seemingly impossible. I place a natural phenomenon in a man-made environment to create this productive ambiguity.” B.Smilde about the Nimbus project

The Solo Space studio assignment was clear: to design a museum for one artist. The team has collectively selected the project site at the Kop van Java-eiland on the river IJ – a beautiful, empty, and slightly mysterious place in the centre of Amsterdam.

How to design a museum for just one person in such a central location? Is it fair that the Kop van Java-eiland will belong to only one artist?

I think that this assignment could be also understood as an invitation to create a flexible, original, and democratic public space, inspired by the free spirit of squatters and artists who inhabited the island in 1970s-1980s, a space for Berndnaut Smilde’s studio, but also for many others who cherish Amsterdam’s unique artistic character.

The city has so many museums already, but none of them are that free and open to all.

This Museum of Phenomena is imagined as a landscape that grows spontaneously over time, with no restrictions or imposed regulations. Animals and plants inhabit this museum and help it to evolve. The art will be exhibited here in the most casual and free manner; the visitors will explore the museum, decide where to go and what to do and – by moving around freely – illuminate change it collectively. This will not be the Smilde museum, but the museum of Smilde’s art as well.

PROGRAM

11 (OR MORE) ART RESIDENCES

REFERENCES



SECOND NATURE, GRADUATION PROJECT 2014-2015. HANNAH SCHUBERT
The uncontrollable and unpredictable nature is the only force that defines the metamorphosis of the building.



LINEAR GARDENS, 2019. STUDIO OSSIDIANA
‘Linear Gardens is an installation dedicated to the discovery of new relationships between architecture and horticulture in the urban realm. The installation begins with the idea of gardens as places of abstraction, as well as earthly places, full of smells, matter, life, places to be touched, cultivated and discovered.’



‘THE LAUNDRY’, 2020. DENIS ESAKOV
“The group of citizens will perform a role of a ‘collective architect’ and construct the place for their own purposes and activities.”

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



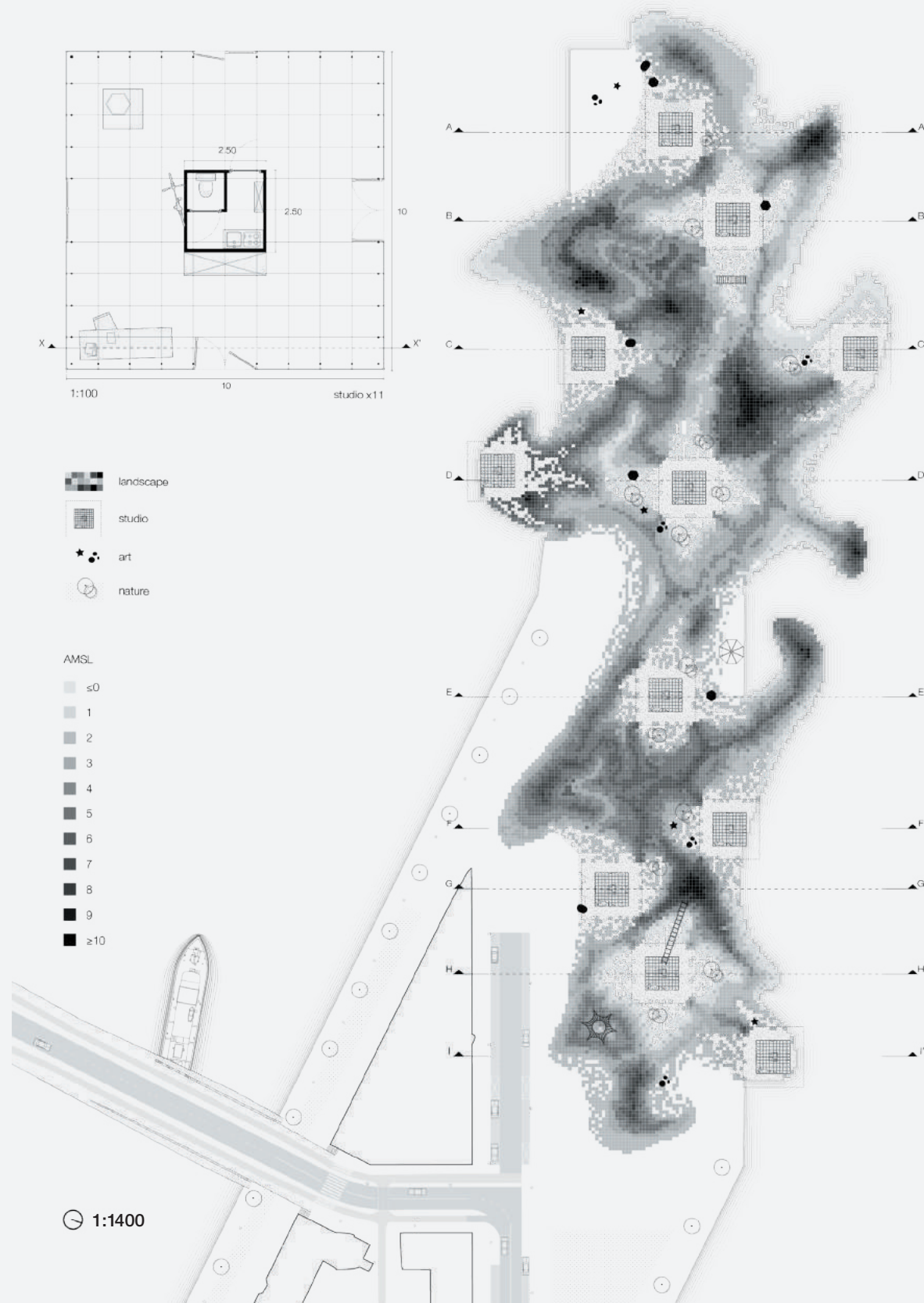
AMSTERDAM CANAL PLANTS



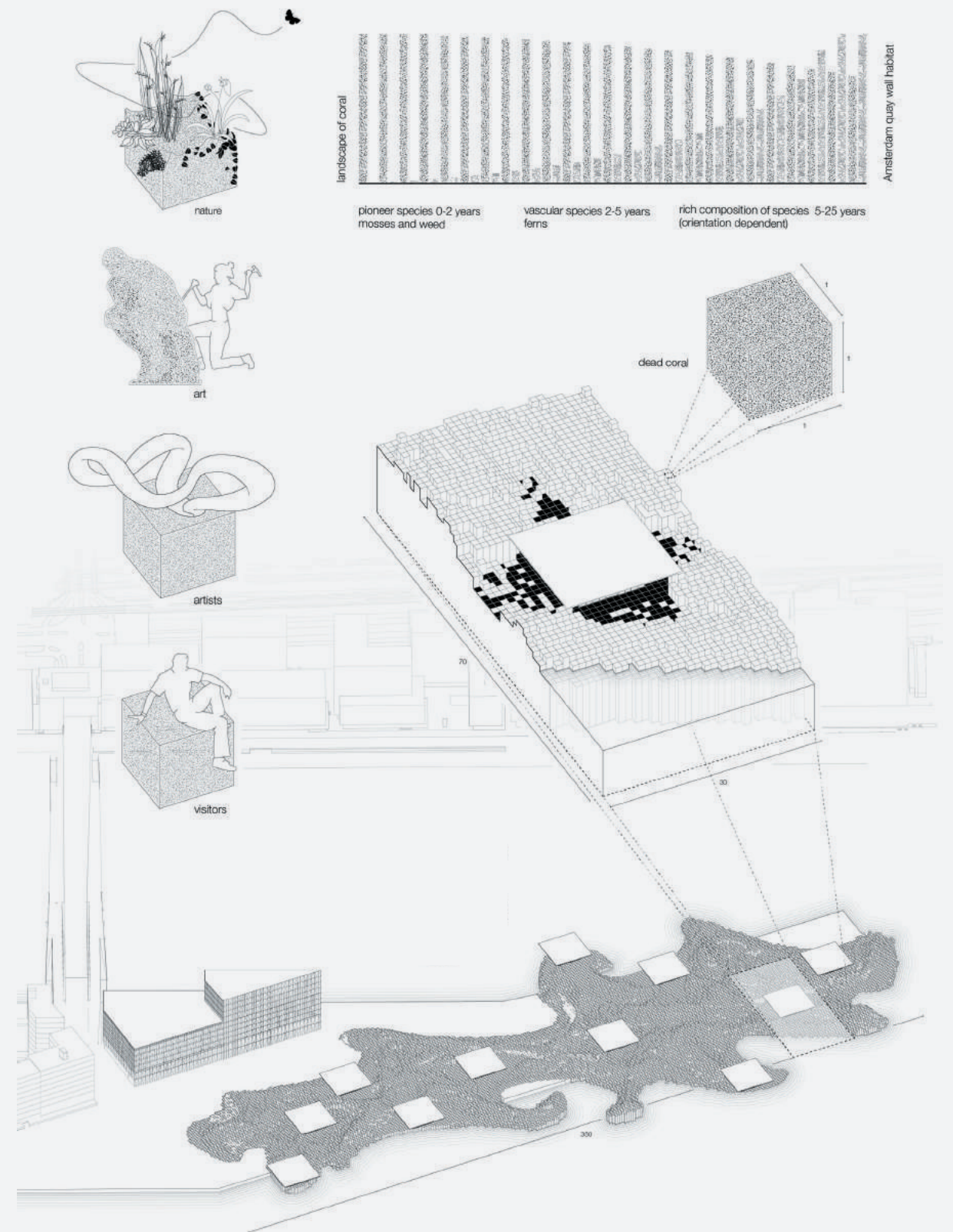
KOP VAN JAVA PAVEMENT BLOCKS



CORALS FROM JAVA, INDONESIA

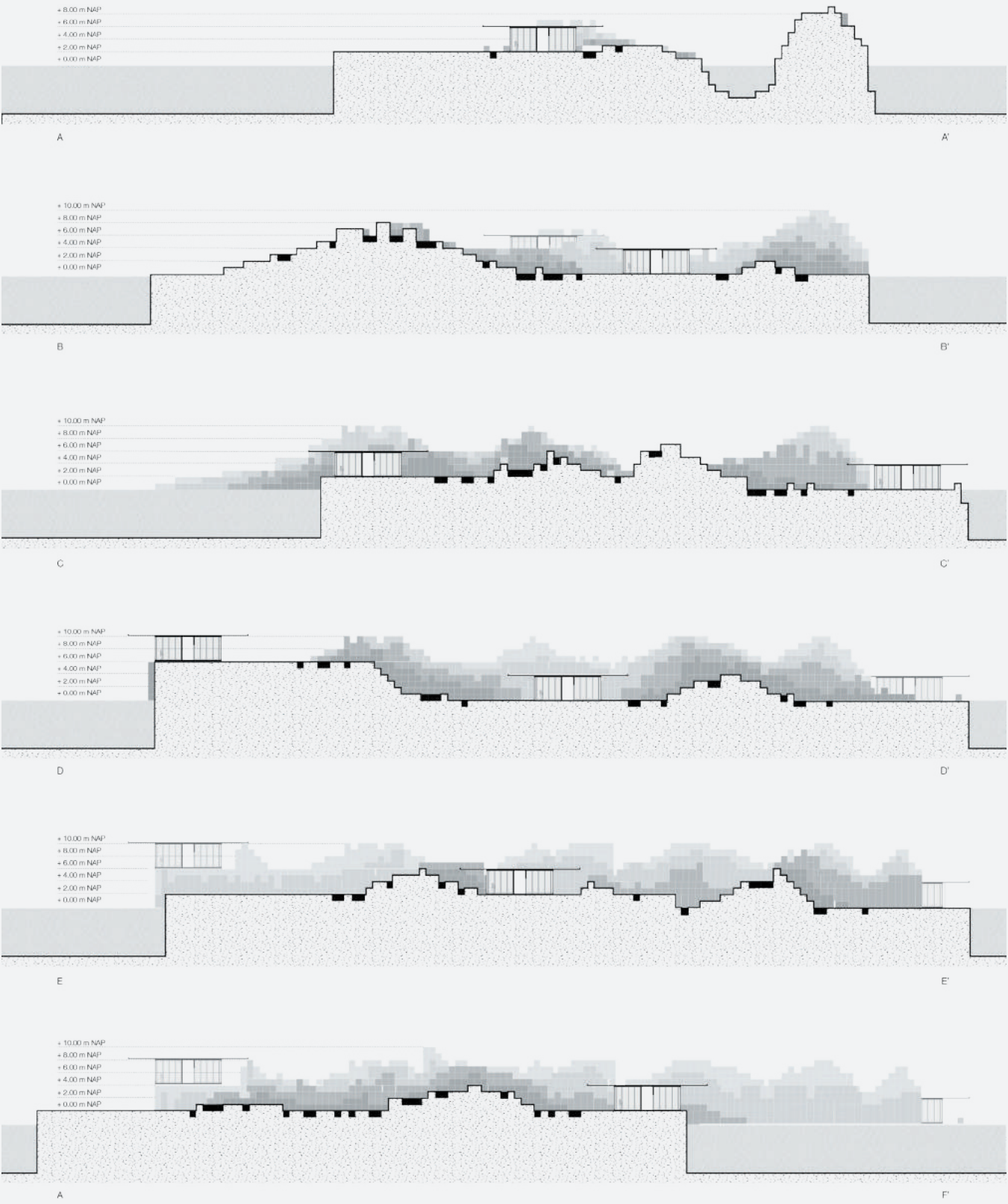


The museum is shaped like a sea monster or a colony of algae, which invades the empty plot at Kop van Java-eiland. It is the core idea for this museum: to let it conquer the plot with the help of vegetation and art. This partly natural, partly artificial landscape is an open-air exhibition hall. But what do we consider an exhibit here? The art, the artist or the museum itself?

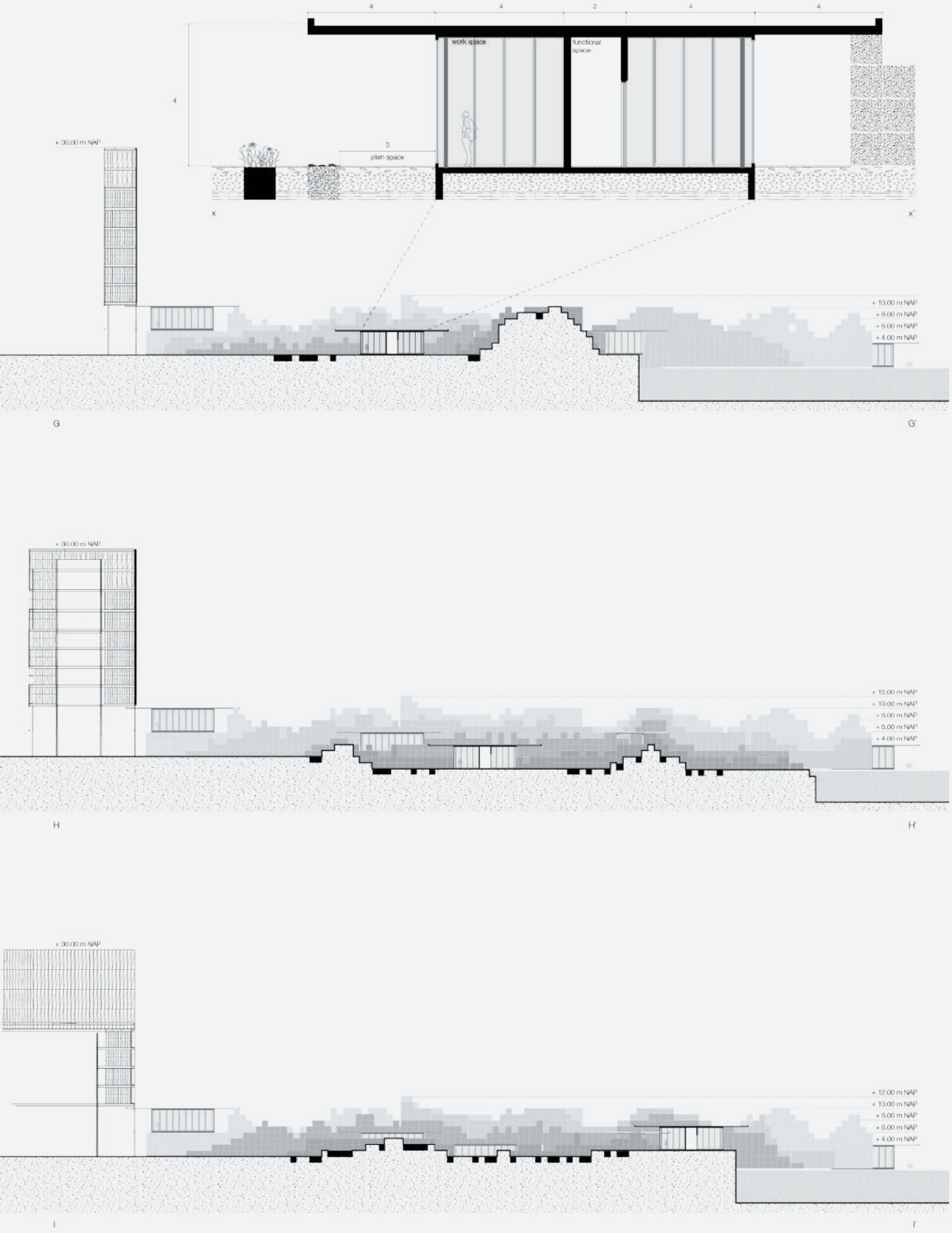


The landscape is made out of identical porous cubes of dead coral, which can be used for multiple purposes. The porosity allows the greenery to invade the museum and overrun it in the future. The composition of the blocks provides a unique experience: there are no fixed routes through the maze of the blocks and the encounters with art can happen almost accidentally. Every time you come to this museum, it looks and feels different: new artists, new art, new paths, new perspectives, new forms, new vegetation, etc.

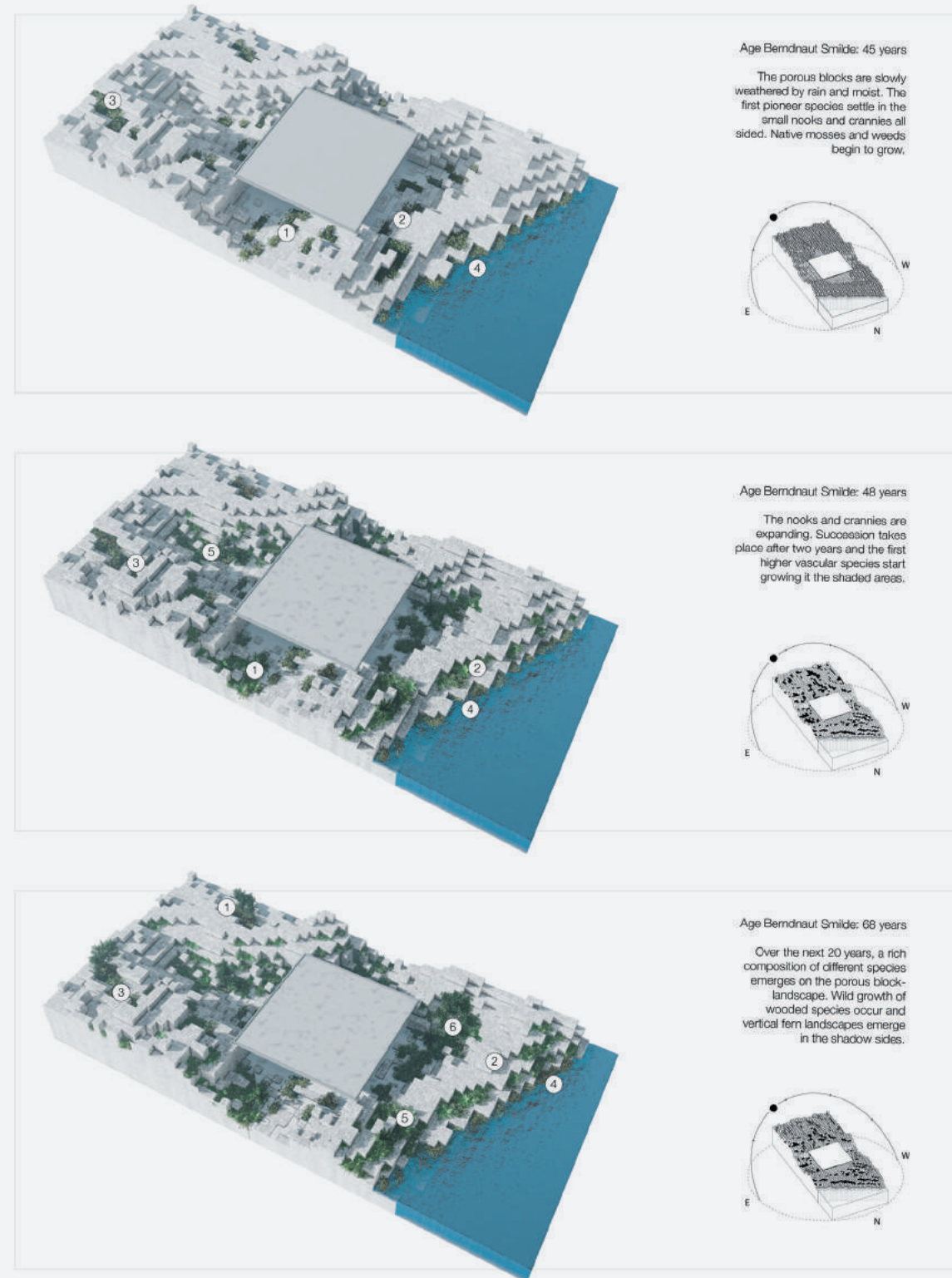
SECTION



SECTION

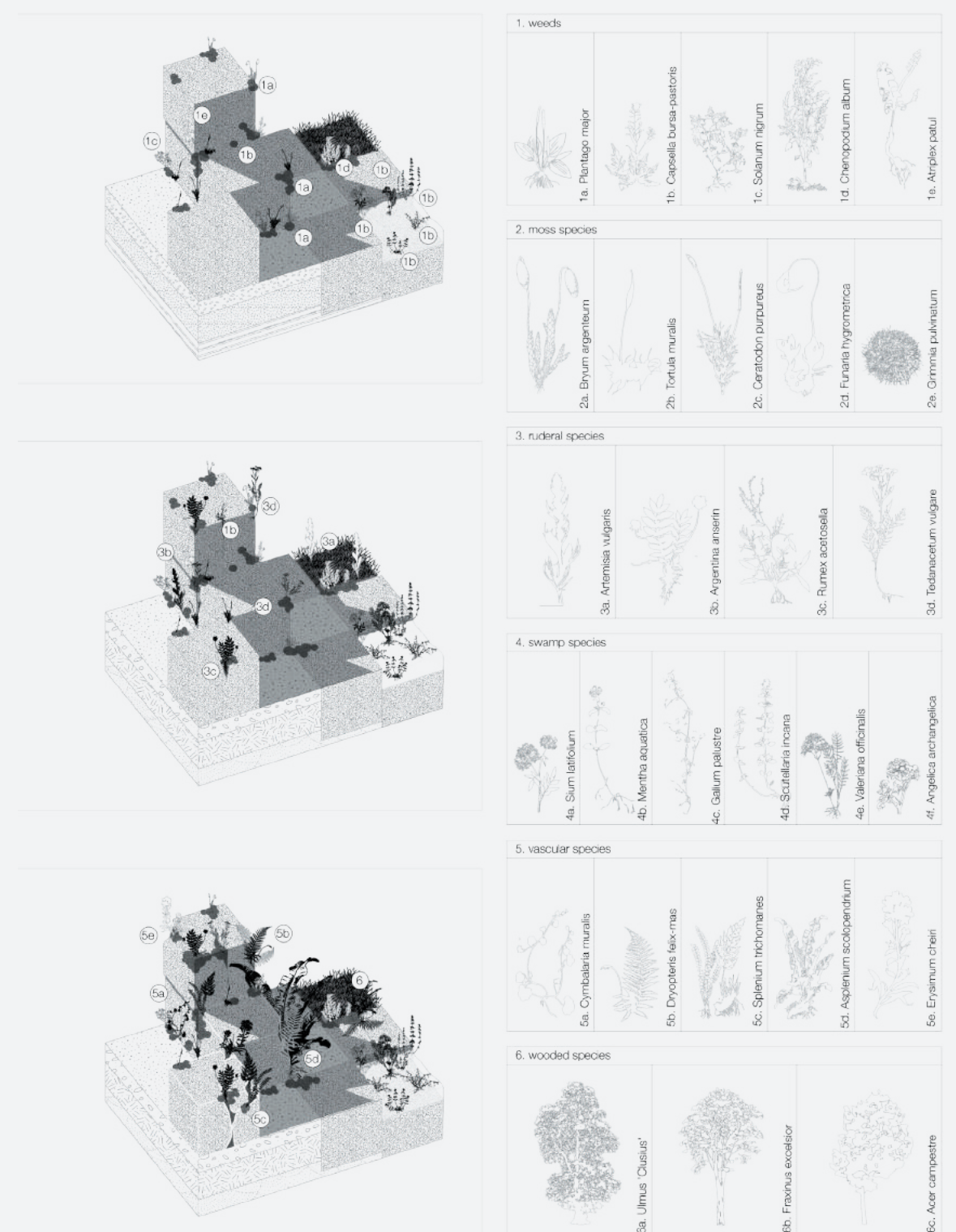


PLANTING SCHEME

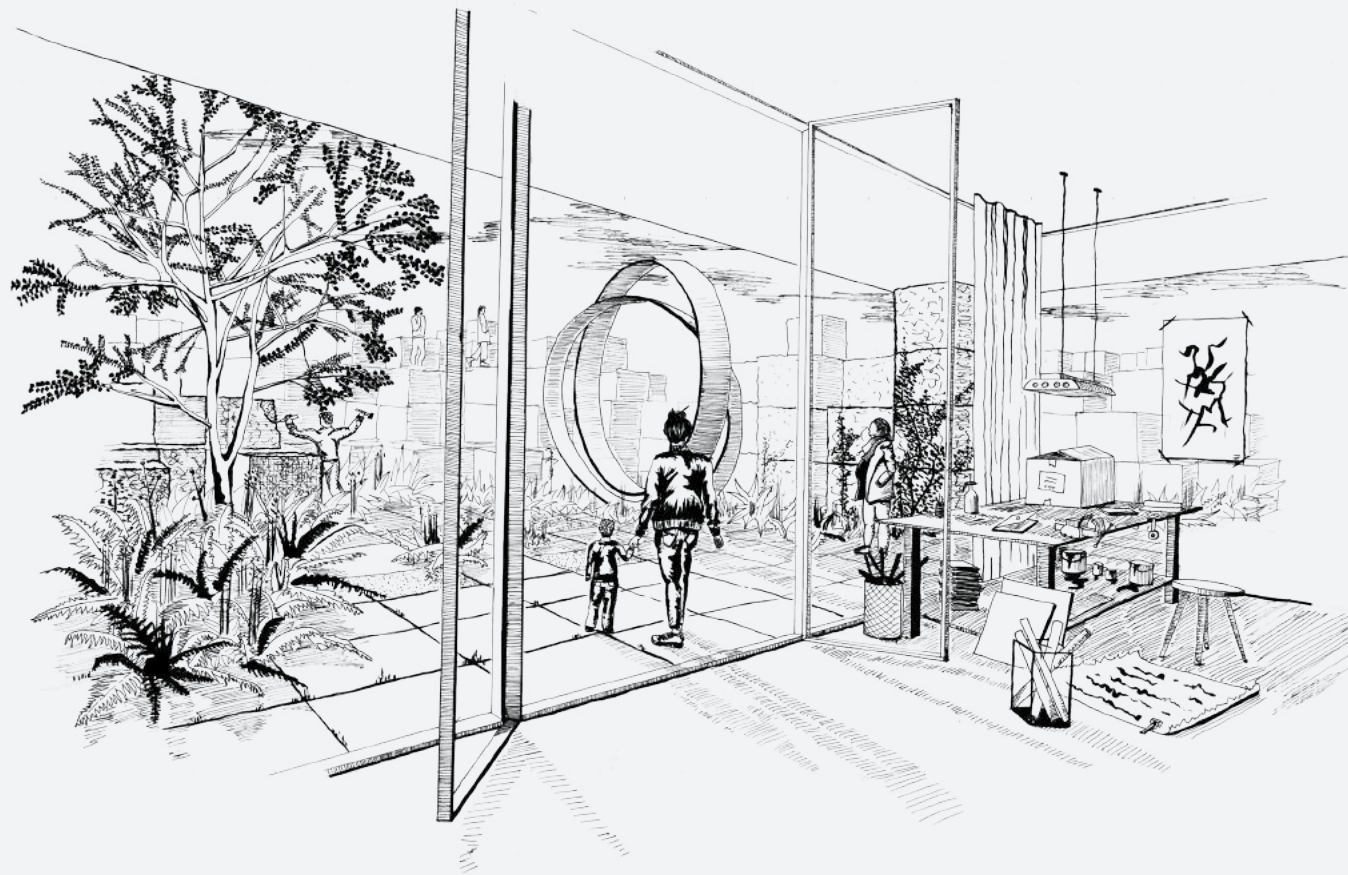


The city of Amsterdam is known for its beautiful canals. The less well-known and crowded quays in particular are home to delicate plant species, which define the very character of the locality. The Museum of Phenomena enters into a kind of a dialogue with the city canals, offering a very different viewpoint on how the relationship between land and water can be negotiated. It introduces a more natural transition between the river and the landscape, enhancing local biodiversity and also introducing entirely new plants.

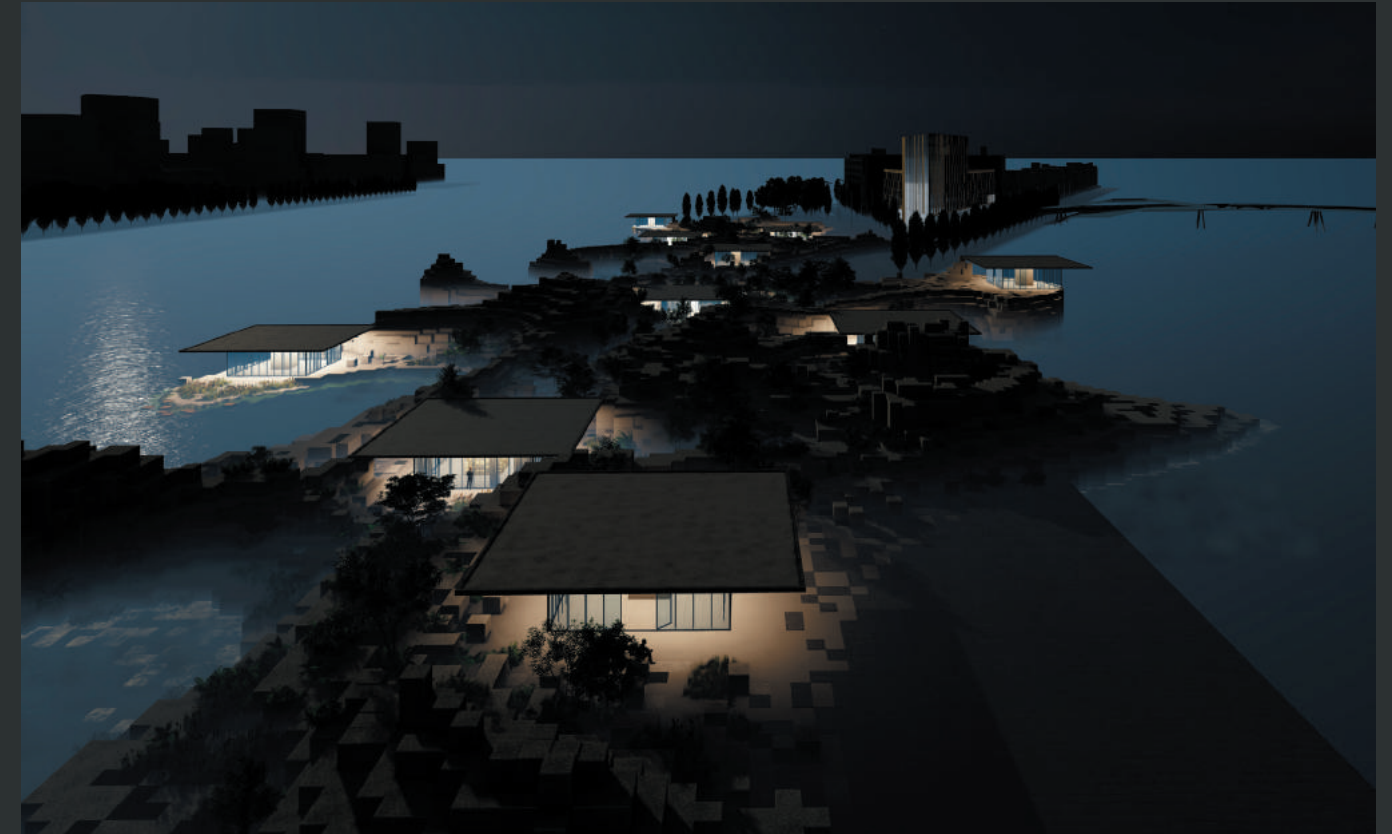
PLANTING SCHEME



Porous building blocks form the proper basis for various plants to thrive. Small but dense fern gardens will grow in the shadow, while the flowers will blossom and wild greenery will spread on the sunny hills. Some small trees will even grow here and there.



It's Wednesday afternoon. A mother and child walk around the museum, gaze at the large-scale artworks and admire tiny gardens. Just a few other visitors explore the landscape, slowly moving between the coral structures. Berndnaut Smilde is working on his new open-air installation in peace and quiet.



Night is approaching and the artists in the studios turn on their lights. The Kop van Java-eiland shimmers in the dark, its reflections dance in black waters. All visitors have already left. Berndnaut Smilde is finishing his work somewhere in the museum.



In the morning, mist engulfs the landscape, turning it into a wonderland in the middle of nowhere. Birds are chirping, it is a bit chilly outside but sun beams puncture the curtain of fog and gently illuminate the grass that grows through the pores of coral blocks.



There are empty platforms that work as pauses in the complex landscape of the museum. What will happen here today or tomorrow? Will an artist build his new installation or organise a performance here? Maybe the local artistic community will prepare dinner and invite guests to dine together at a long table? Or maybe this space will remain as it is – empty and windy with a beautiful view over Amsterdam.

NO LANDMARK

by Merle Soeters

'I'm looking for a space where I can discover something.' B. Smilde

Our project site, the Kop van Java-eiland, is probably one of the most famous empty plots in the centre of Amsterdam. Originally built as a wave barrier, the Java/KNSM island today is an exclusive housing area. Only its tip remains empty – an elongated rectangular patch of grass framed by concrete slabs. Windy and a bit forlorn, it seems to be floating on the river IJ like a mysterious jetty. No place, in my opinion, is more suitable for an artist who creates indoor clouds or artificial rainbows over European cities.

The exceptional formal simplicity and emptiness of the site became the starting point for the NO LANDMARK project. The new museum is a very simple and very long complex made of mundane bricks, the typical Amsterdam material. It occupies the entire site, creating a composition of private and public chambers. All outdoor spaces as well as the library, the restaurant, and the auditorium are publicly accessible: in a way, the complex also functions as a city park. At the same time, some of the galleries and studio rooms are closed and can be visited by invitation only.

PROGRAM

LOBBY		RESTAURANT/BAR	375 m2
CLOAKROOM	20 m2	ATELIER + HOUSE	500 m2
TOILETS	25 m2		
ENTRY	50 m2	GALLERIES	
ADMISSION/TICKETS	25 m2	gallery 1	400 m2
OFFICES	50 m2	gallery 2	375 m2
STORAGE	100 m2	gallery 3	300 m2
MUSEUM SHOP	30 m2	gallery 4	100 m2
		LIBRARY	375 m2
		AUDITORIUM	500 m2

REFERENCES



SERPENTINE GALLERY PAVILION, London, 2011. Peter Zumthor & Piet Oudolf

This pavilion is a simple black box with a central courtyard that encases Piet Oudolf's lush garden. Zumthor chooses the most refined and 'sensual' materials to create a contemplative space and emphasise the spirituality of this monastery-like setting



CAN LIS FAMILY HOUSE, MALLORCA, 1972. Jørn Oberg Utzon

The manner in which the famous architect Jørn Utzon uses the same material in both the interior and the exterior of his private villa blurs the border between outside and inside



GATE VILLA, JAPAN. Makoto Takei and Chie Nabeshima

A building with a very modest, mundane facade, but with a radical floorplan and a very bold composition of interior spaces.

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



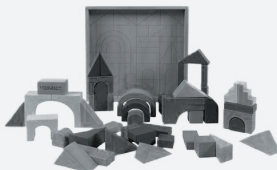
DANDELLION



GAME OF HIDE-AND-SEEK

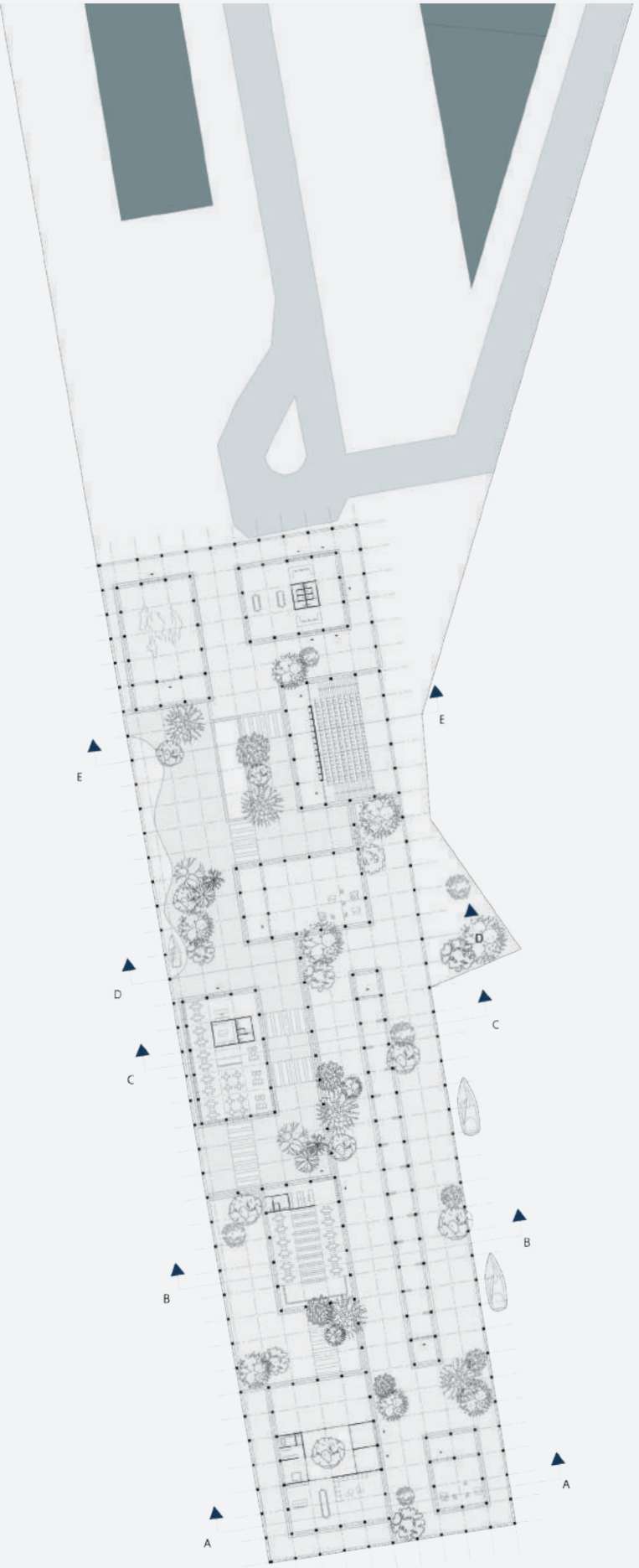


OLD FACTORY

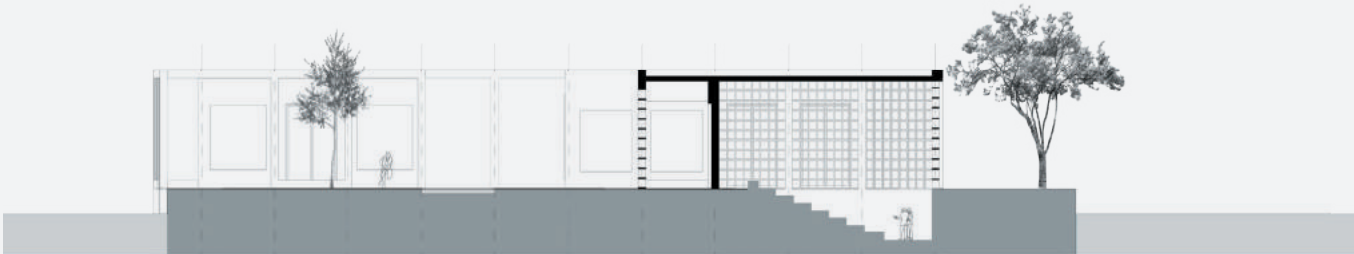


TOY BUILDING BLOCKS

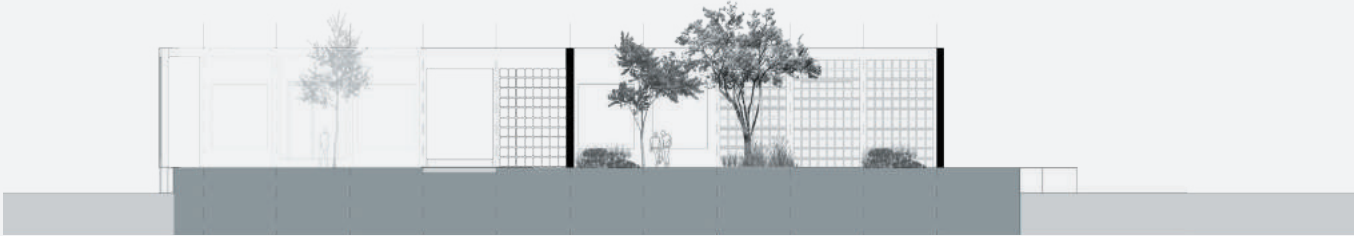
PLAN



SECTIONS



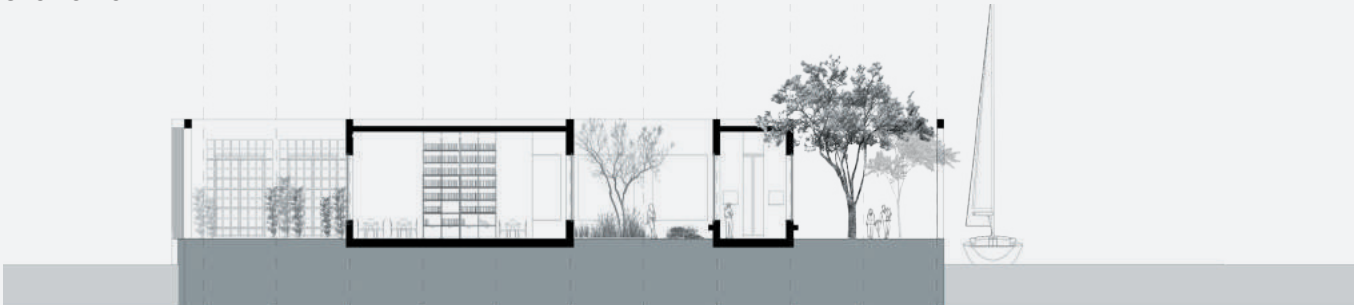
SECTION E



SECTION D



SECTION C

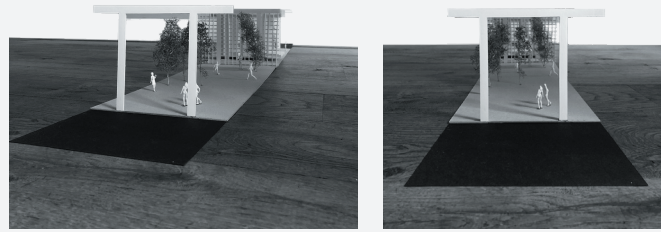


SECTION B



SECTION A

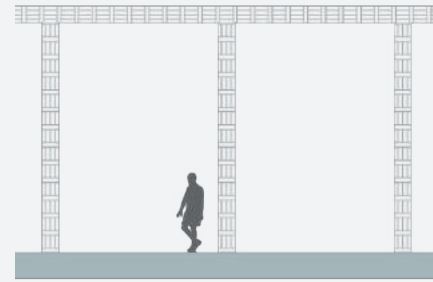
MODEL



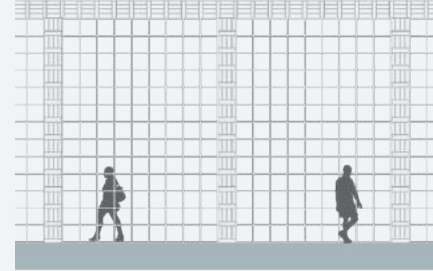
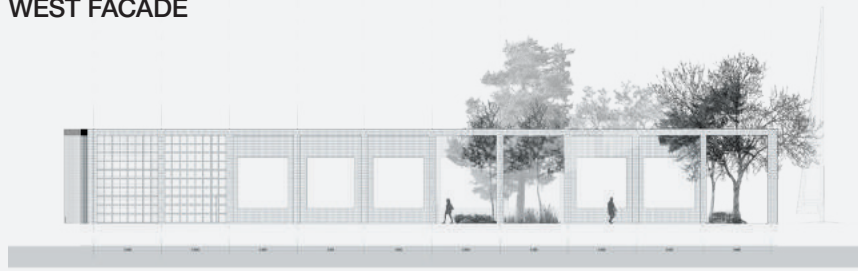
DETAIL



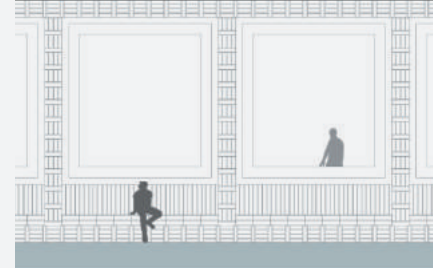
LAYERS



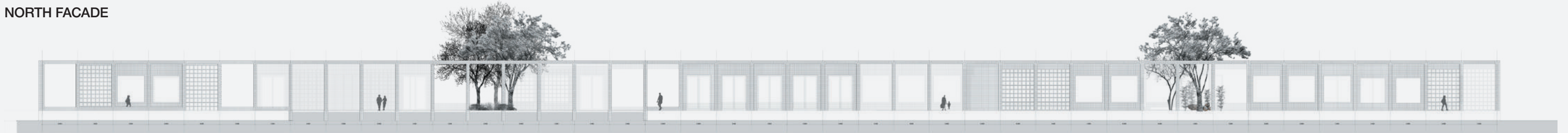
WEST FACADE



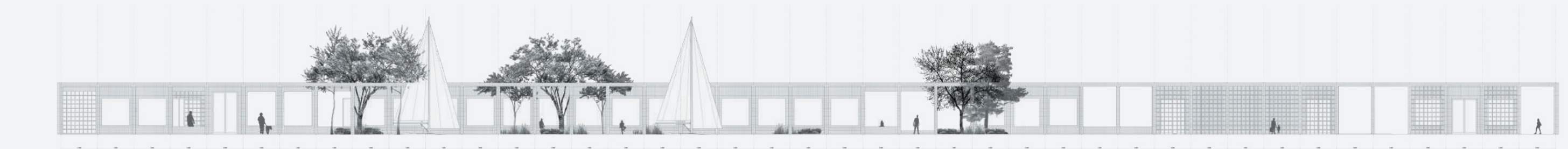
EAST FACADE



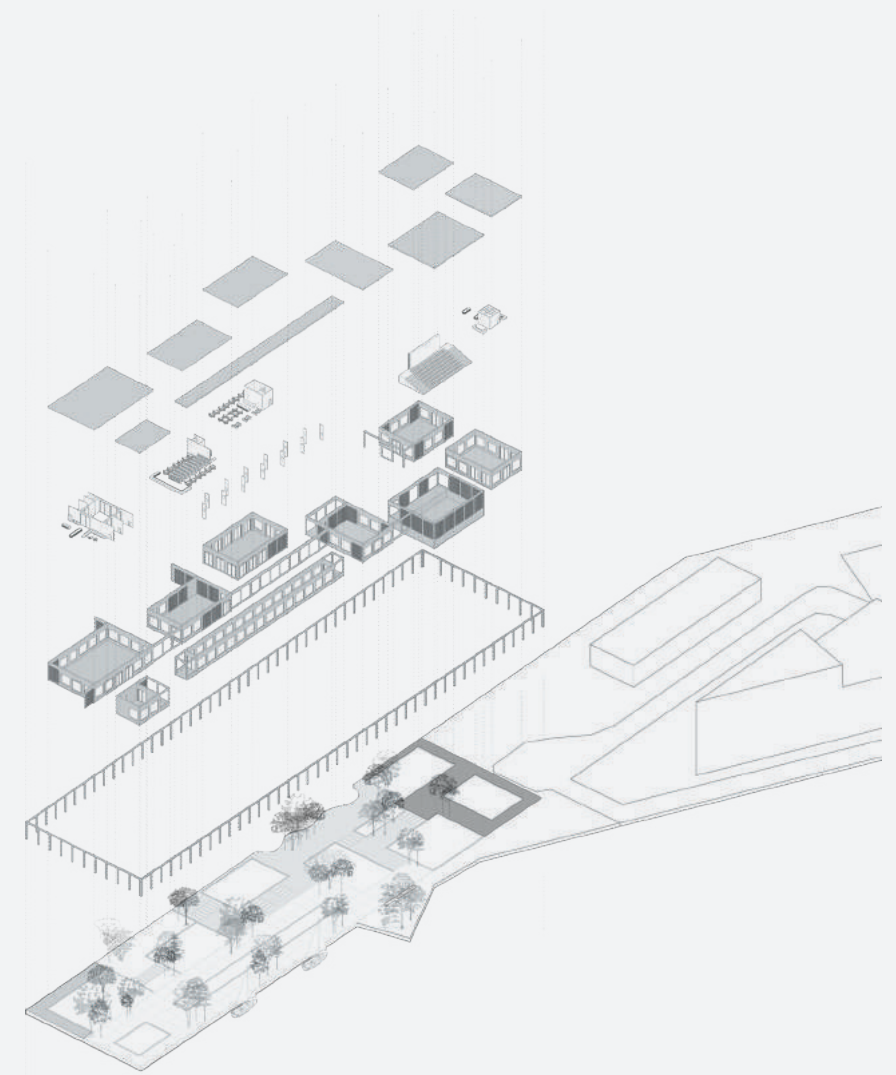
NORTH FACADE



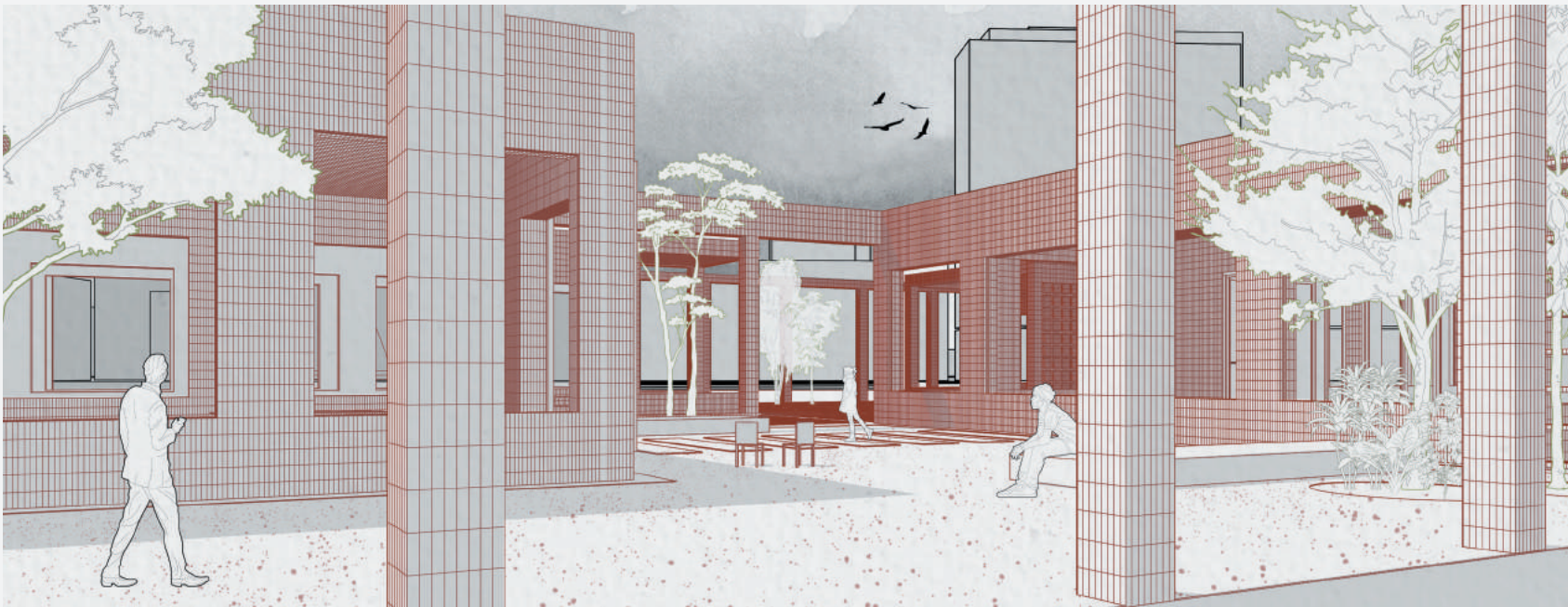
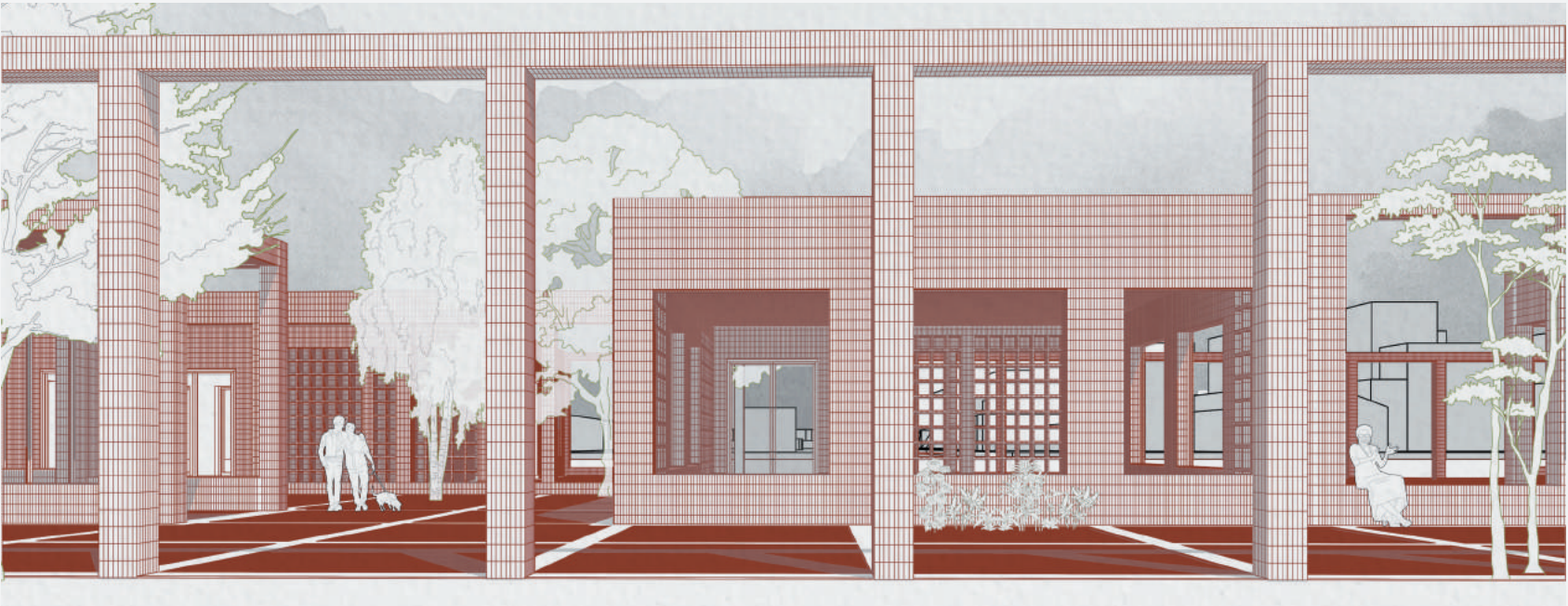
SOUTH FACADE



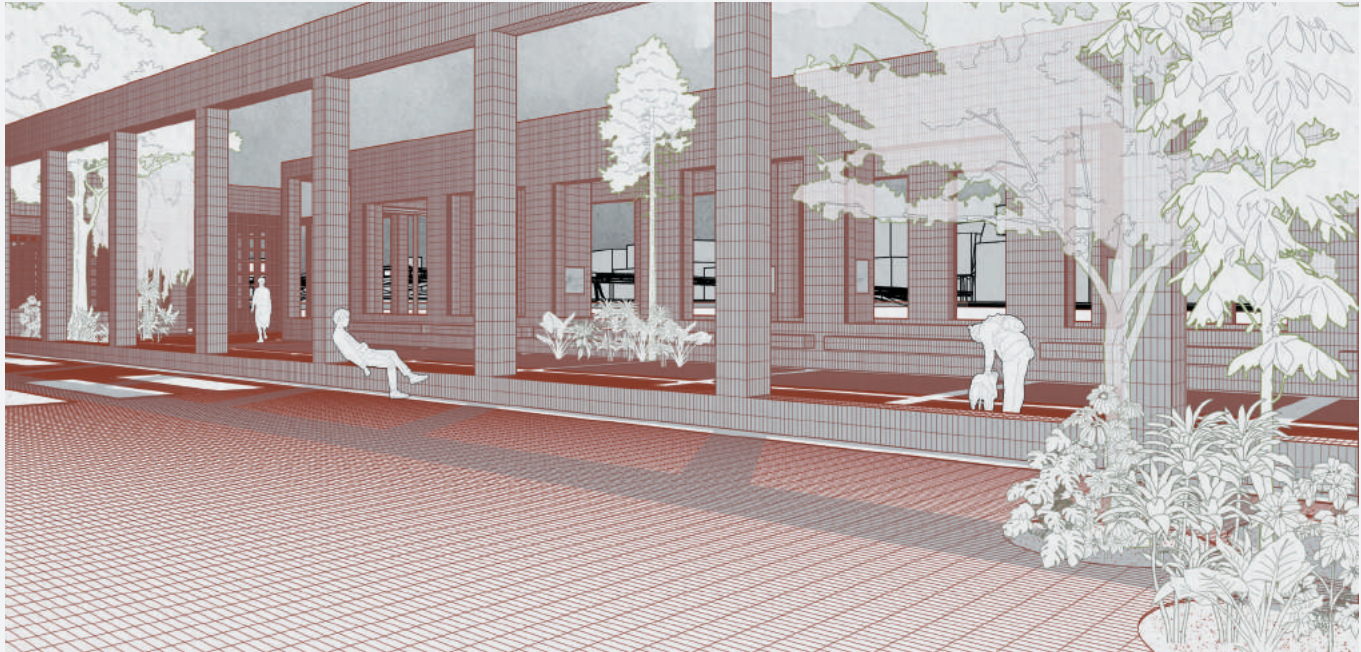
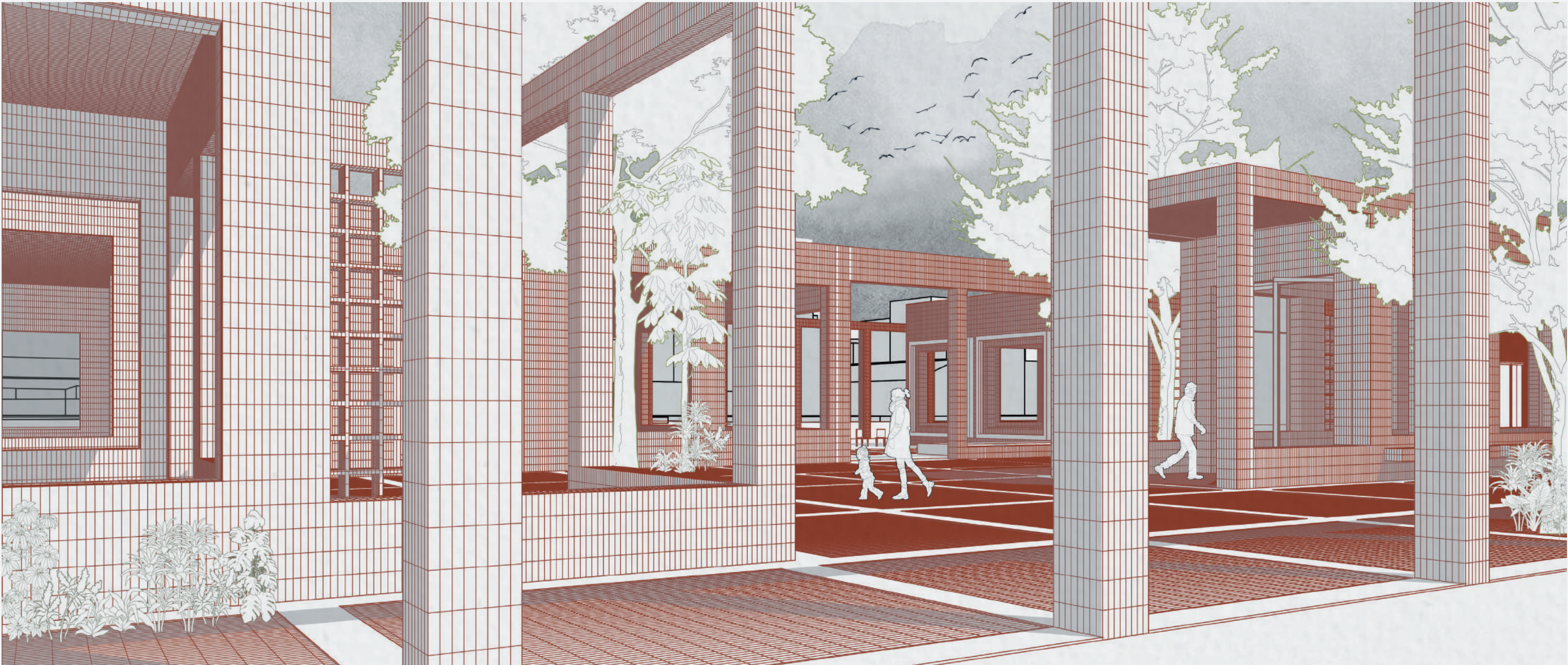
Modular galleries stretch along the water with the trees which grow in the inner courtyards visible above the walls.



NO LANDMARK museum has many facades. The main one follows the perimeter of the site, creating a fenced off interior space where the other open and closed 'containers' (each with a slightly different facade) are arranged in a free composition.



The whole museum complex is understood as a collection of rooms – open and closed – built out of the same bricks. It is even hard to distinguish inside and outside spaces from each other; they form one continuous environment adorned with plants and full of natural light.



INFINITY

by Anna Bern

'I like those in-between moments, when you enter the space and you don't know yet what is going on...' B. Smilde

What if a single-artist museum is the typology of the future? What if these museums dedicated to particular artists become the most popular cultural institutions in our world of individualisation and customisation?

Berndnaut Smilde is a visual artist who constantly transforms himself. The museum he needs should provide a broad variety of spaces for these transformations. Smilde also has a strong interest in curatorial projects: he wants to exhibit others and show his own art in the broader artistic context.

Although its silhouette is not prominent and the museum is situated partially underground, the new Smilde art centre adds a certain landscape complexity to the site at the Kop van Java-eiland. It creates a gentle artificial hill that does not affect the integrity of the plot. The museum is a new place for culture and leisure, and also offers unexpected views over the river IJ and the city skyline.

PROGRAM

OUTDOOR	GROUND FLOOR	-1 FLOOR
ENTRANCE SQUARE public amphitheatre ramp	LOBBY info tickets café desk entrance to the exhibition galleries exit from the exhibition galleries toilet disabled toilet mother & child room storage	AMPHITHEATRE seats speaker's desk toilets storage
PUBLIC GARDEN pier café public roof the sunset gallery	FIRST EXHIBITION HALL	LIGHTING EXHIBITION HALL
PRIVATE GARDEN pavement accessible roof	OUTDOOR SPACE	TEMPORARY EXHIBITION HALL exhibition space for friends small hall double-height space storage
	MAIN EXHIBITION HALL zone A zone B zone C entrance to garden	

REFERENCES



Hiroshi Senju Museum, Karuizawa, Japan, 2012. Ryue Nishizawa, SANAA.



Yokohama International Passenger Terminal, Kanagawa Yokohama, Japan, 1995. Foreign Office Architects (FOA)

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



BASEMENT



ARCHES



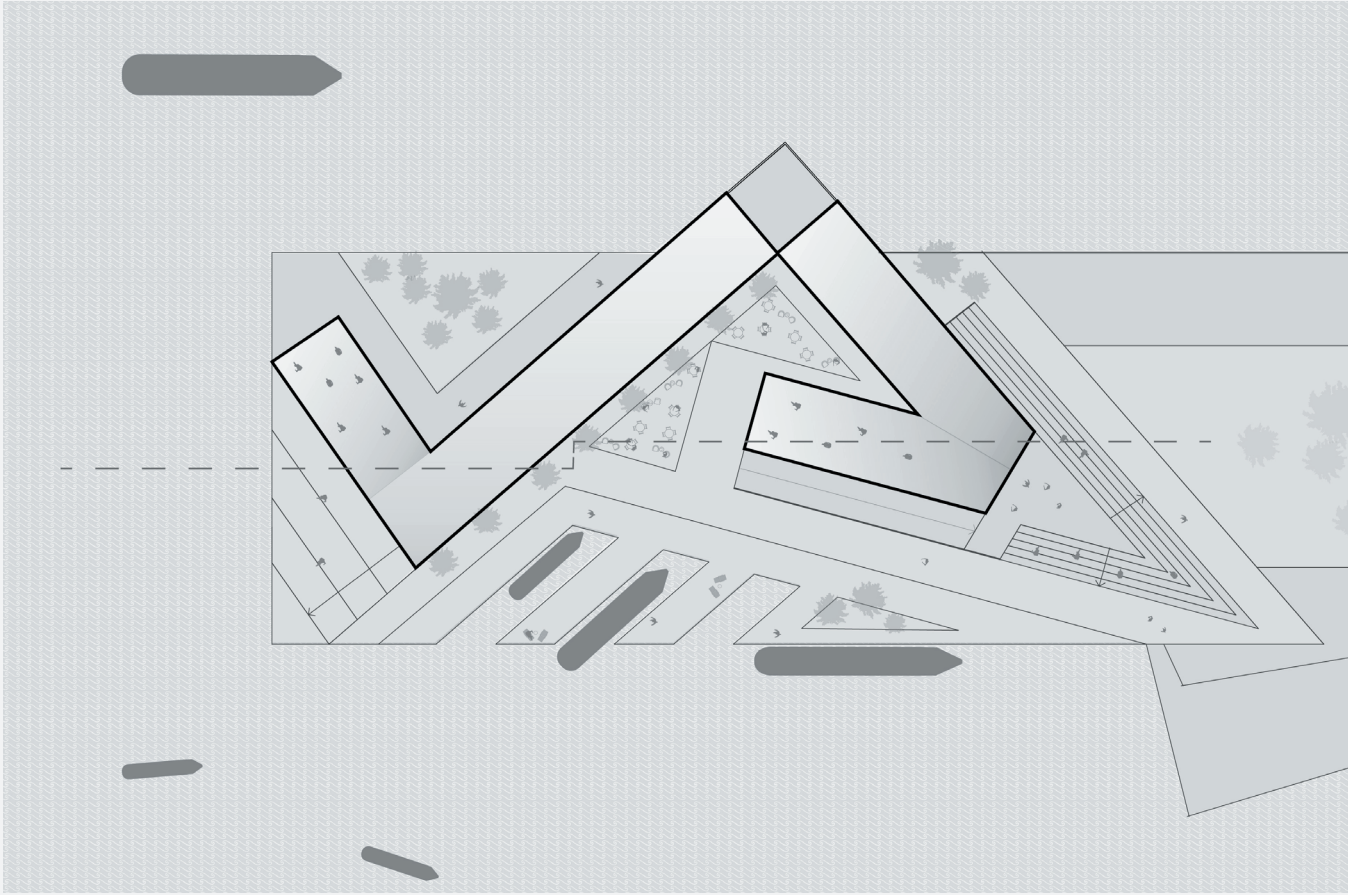
TOY RAILROAD



ISLAND

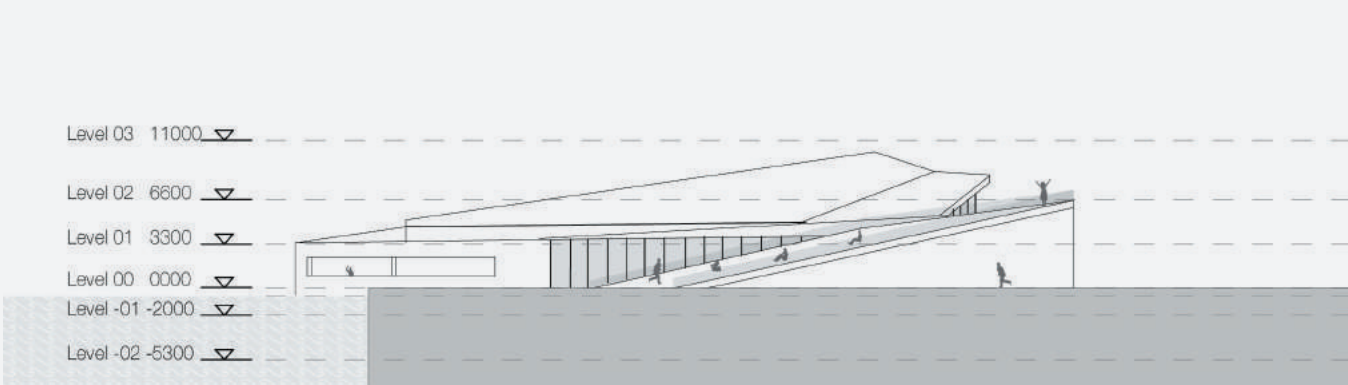
MASTER PLAN

M=1:700



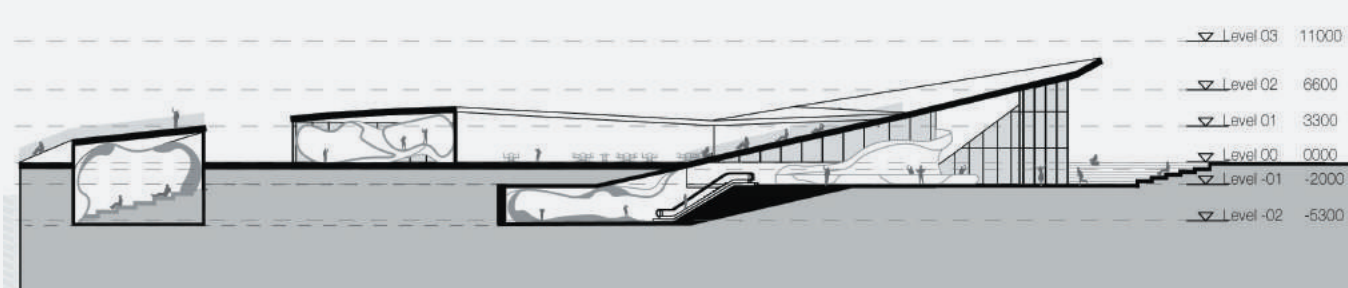
EAST FACADE

M=1:700



SECTION

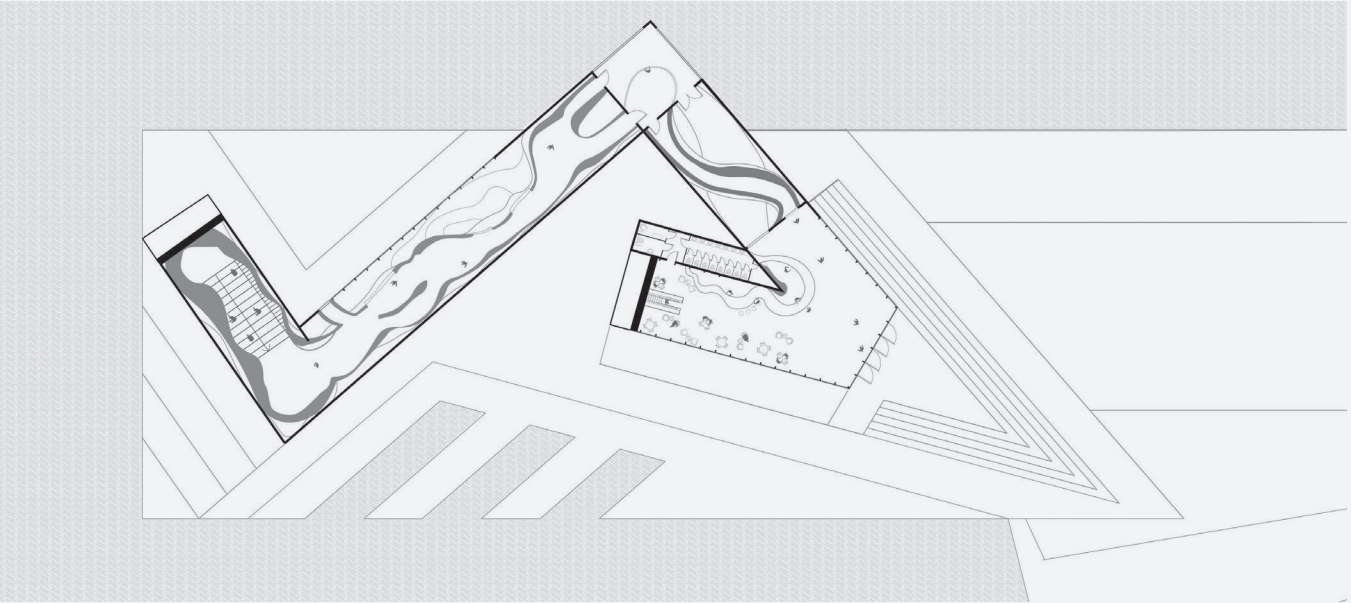
M=1:700



The museum is located at the edge of the plot and its territory is divided into two parts: a public garden and a private garden. All visitors have access to the terraces of the café and can watch the ships passing by or sunbathe on a publicly accessible rooftop. Those who buy the tickets can enter the private rooftop from the museum building and also look into the exhibition galleries from the outside space.

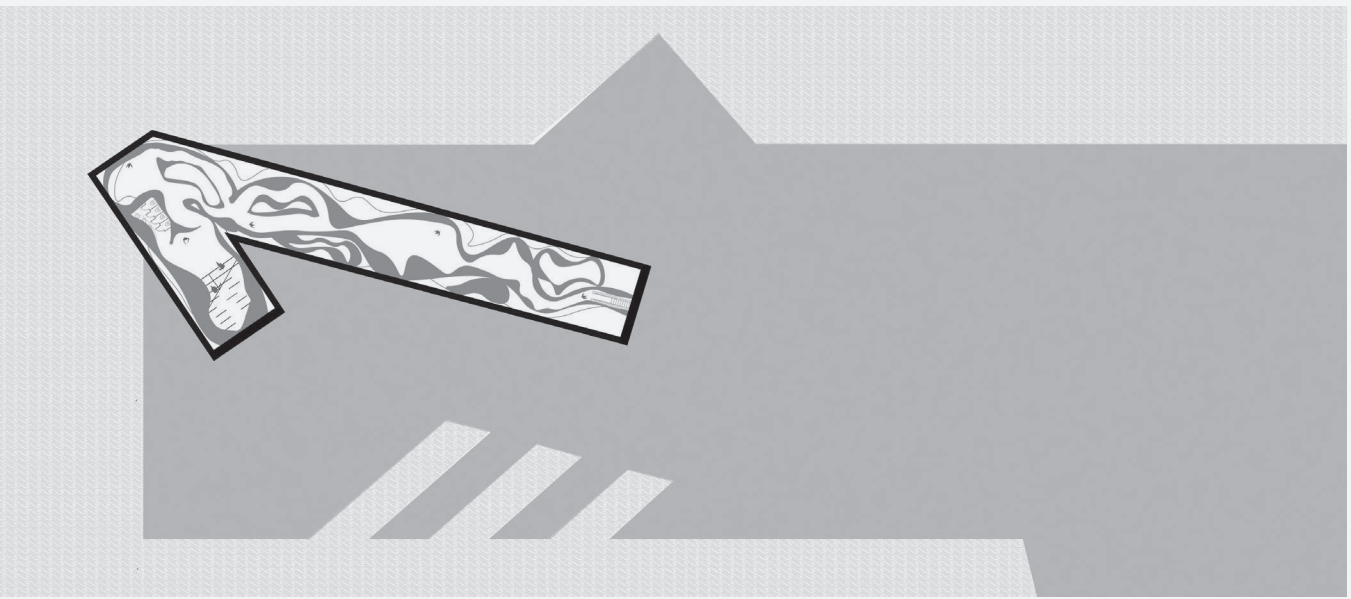
PLAN GROUND FLOOR

M=1:700

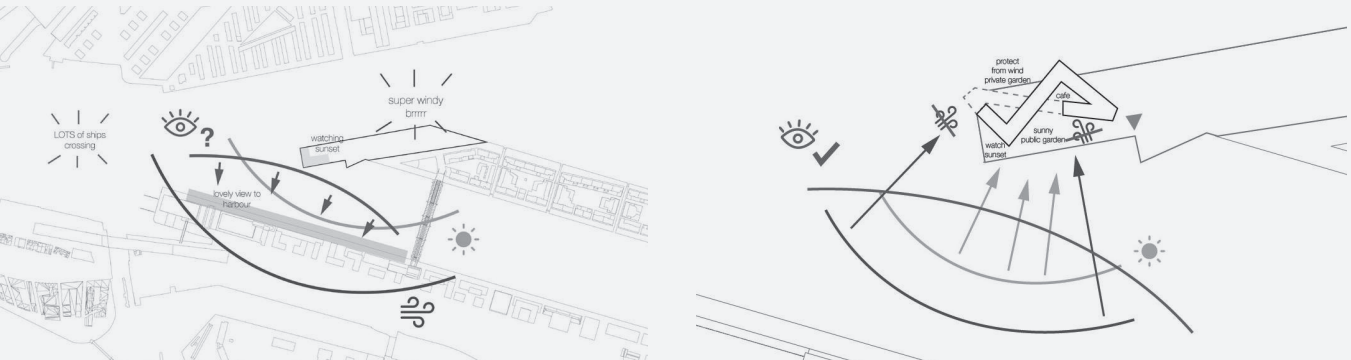


PLAN - 1 FLOOR

M=1:700



RESEARCH



SUN / WIND STUDY

SUN / WIND STUDY PLACING

The museum building protects visitors from strong winds, while at the same time not blocking the sunlight, so walking along the tip of the island becomes more comfortable even in colder seasons.

SMILDE’S FALLEN LIGHTHOUSE

by Niene Laan

'I like to create unimaginable situations.'

B. Smilde

The single-artist museum is a typology that has been around for only one hundred years. The most important characteristic of a single-artist museum is its focus on one artist; all the stories it tells are about just one person.

In his work, an artist Berndnaut Smilde questions our reality by creating playful, unimaginable situations and toying with the viewer’s perception. His museum will do exactly the same. The project proposes re-imagining the Kop van Java-eiland, turning it into a bleak landscape of sandy dunes and adding an even greater end-of-the world feeling to its atmosphere.

A mysterious fallen lighthouse will house the artist’s studio. The museum has no strong silhouette and will not interfere with the city skyline, but will become the new cultural destination for locals and tourists alike. Although the museum is supposed to become a space of retreat and focused creativity, the project also exploits the slightly cartoonish aspect of the image of the fallen lighthouse and brings forward the irony and humour in Smilde’s art.

PROGRAM

- MUSEUM

 - Entrance / reception
 - Wardrobe
 - Toilets
 - Storage
 - Depot
 - Exhibition permanent
 - Exhibition flexible
- LANDSCAPE

 - Pathways
 - Dune landscape
- STUDIO

 - Kitchen
 - Toilet
 - Bathroom
 - Auditorium
 - Experimental space
 - Swimming pool

REFERENCES



CENTRE POMPIDOU, Paris, 1977. Richard Rogers, Renzo Piano



CUBIC HOUSE OF KUBOGAOKA, Moriya, Japan, 2013. Kichi Architectural Design



MUSEUM DE PONT, Tilburg, The Netherlands, 1992. Benthem Crouwel Architekten

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



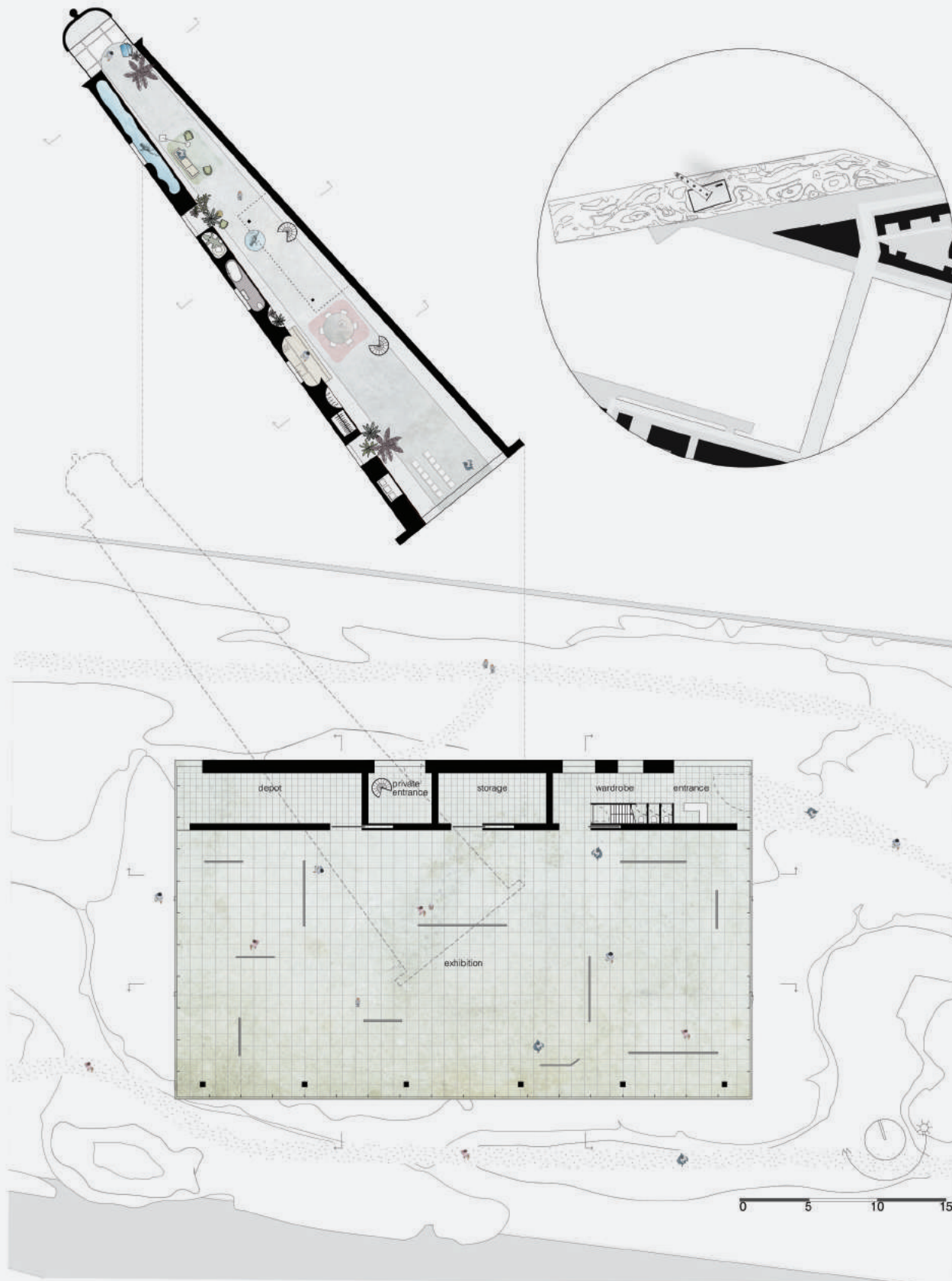
LIGHTHOUSE



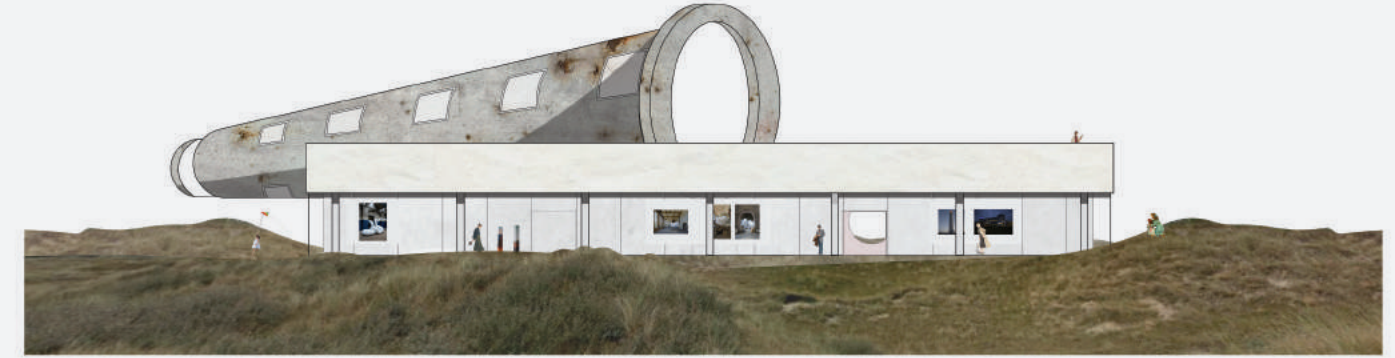
ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE



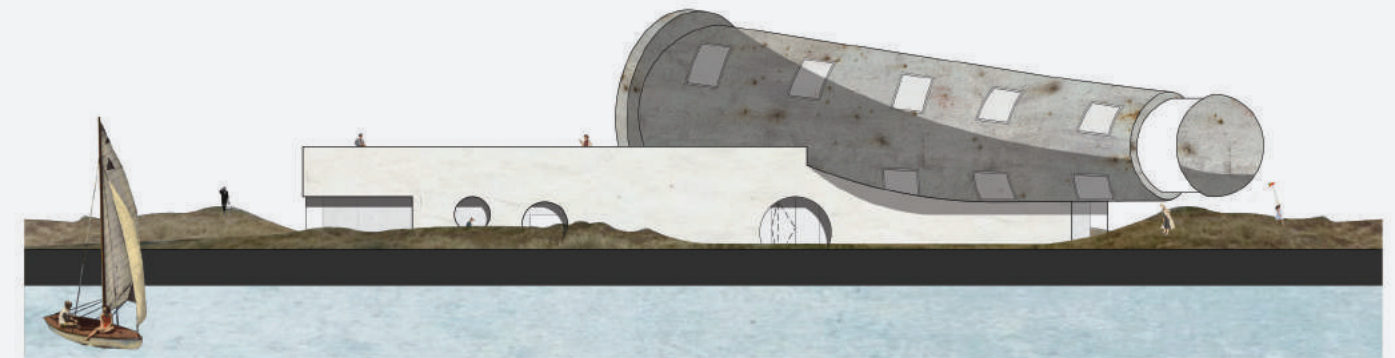
SPYGLASS



The museum is composed of a big open space that houses the exhibition with a zone for various functions in the northern section. Inside the 'lighthouse' space, all functions are located inside the walls and the large central volume is left empty.



SOUTH FACADE



NORTH FACADE



WEST FACADE



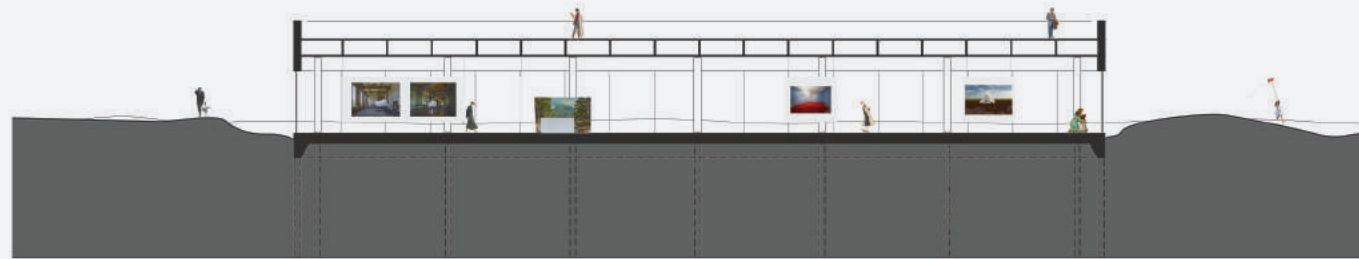
EAST FACADE

The facade of the museum will slowly be overrun by the moss and weeds. It will therefore blend even more into the surrounding landscape of pale dunes.

SECTIONS



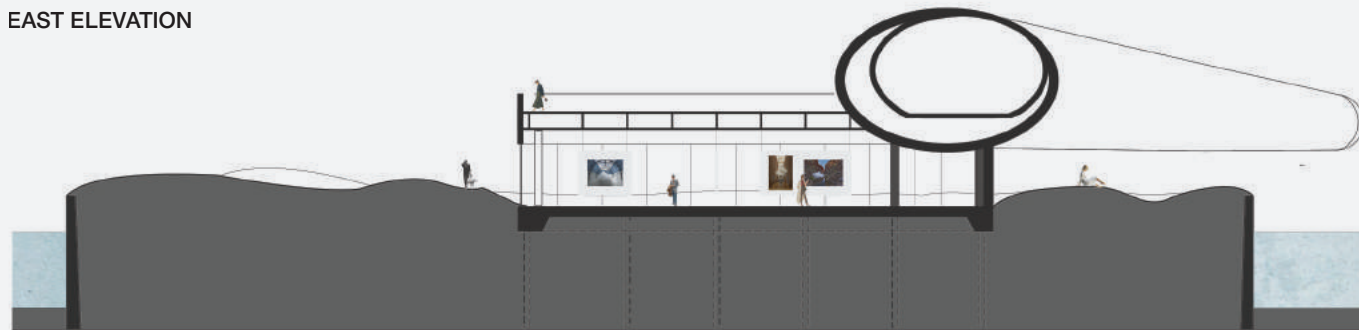
NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

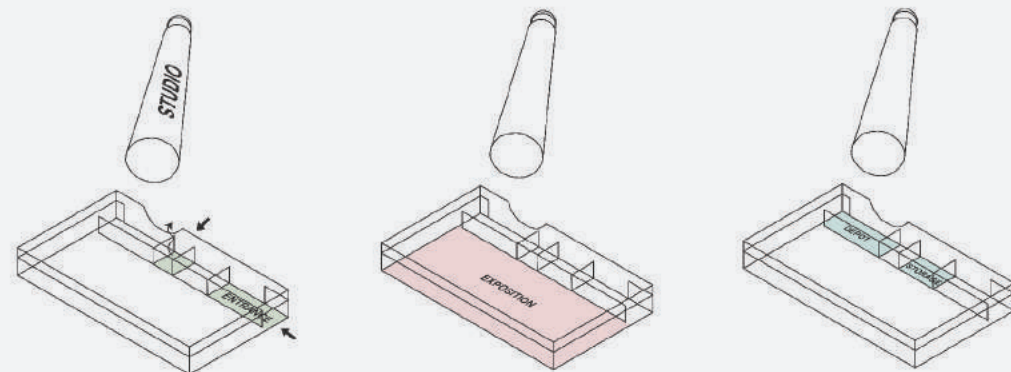


EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

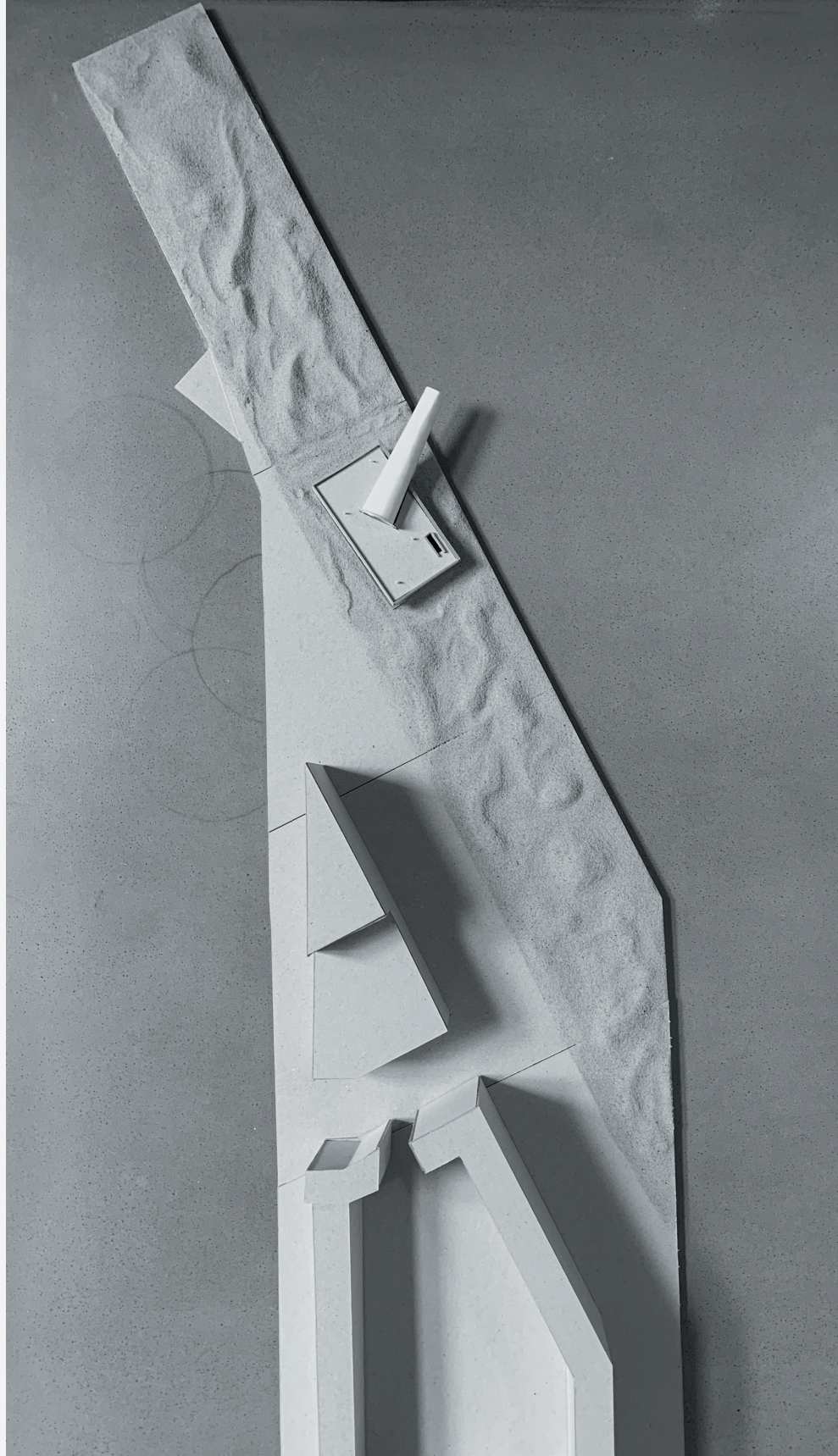
AXONOMETRY



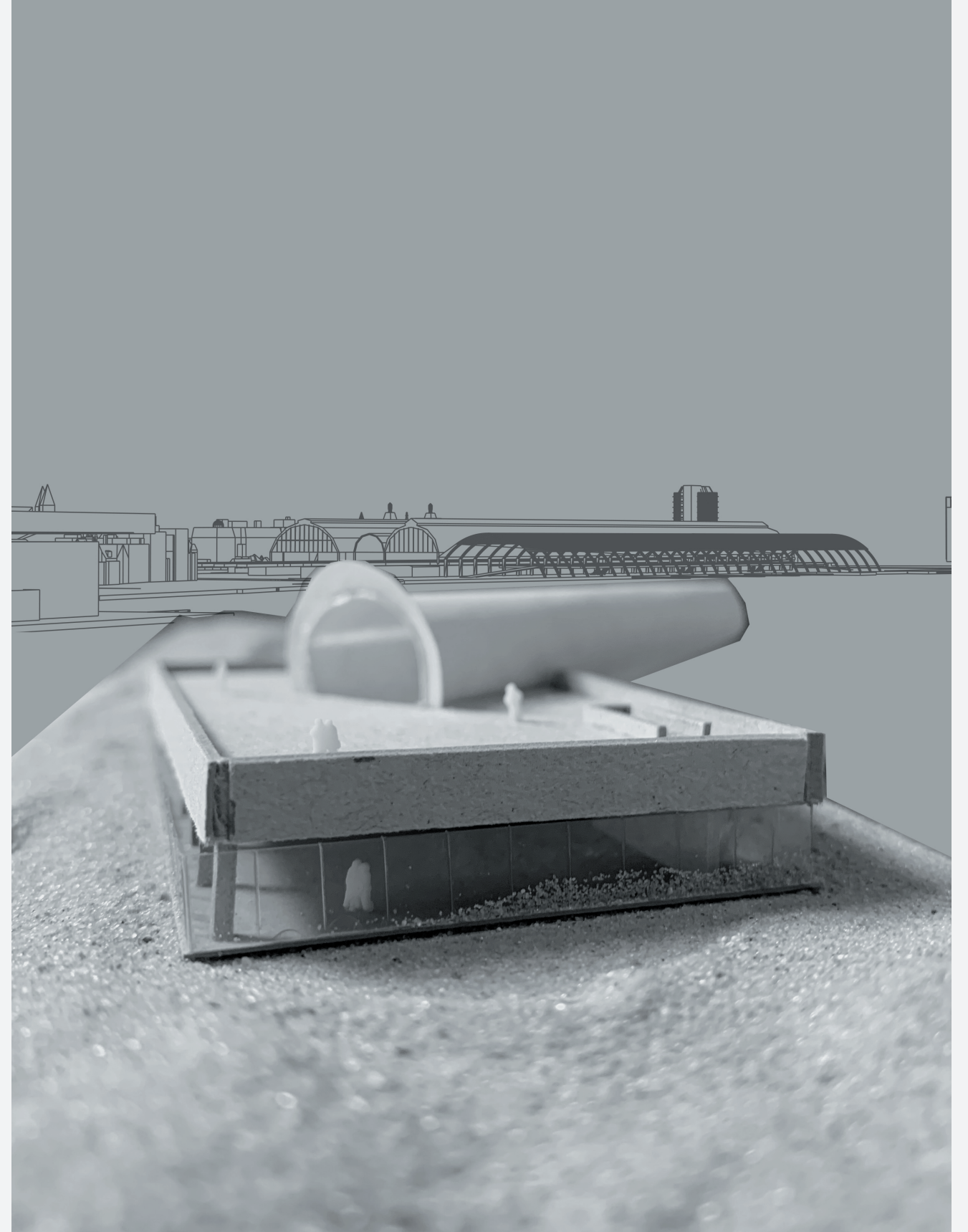
SECTIONS



The horizontal body of the 'lighthouse' is a container for Smilde's mysterious private world. He will work on his next experiments in the central open space, but could also give lectures here or simply withdraw from the busy city. He will also have access to the private swimming pool at the bottom of the 'lighthouse'. While swimming, he can wave to the visitors of the museum through the windows.



The museum blends in with the dune landscape. It is not a landmark that can be seen from afar; it does not destroy the visual integrity of the Kop van Java-eiland.



Visitors can stand at the very edge of the roof and admire the landscape together with the skyline of the city.

TWO ELEMENTS

by Stefanie Krietemeijer

'I really like romantic landscape paintings. They bring nature into your home.' B. Smilde

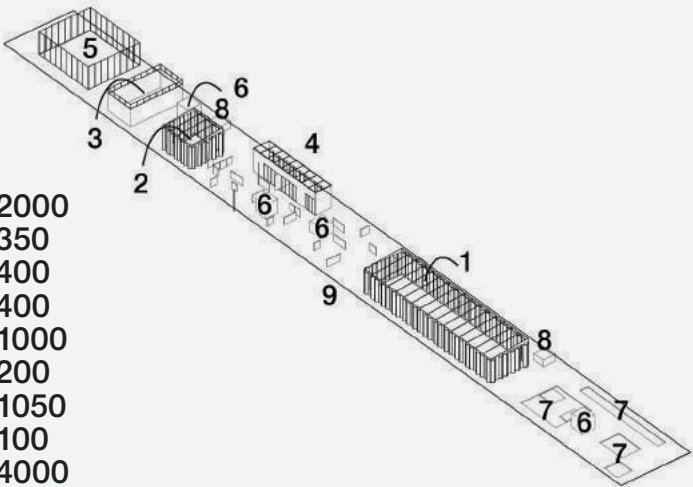
Berndnaut Smilde has a rare ability to show ordinary, everyday objects in a completely different light. The artist can capture and create atmospheres by orchestrating the contexts. He often plays with perspectives and positions his art against strange backgrounds. At the same time, he remains humble, non-sensational, open to the ideas of others and his museum should somehow reflect his character.

The Two Elements project proposes the creation of a mixed-use space which is simultaneously a museum and a communal garden for local residents: a solo space and a collective space on the same plot.

Two main elements define the character of this unusual museum: tall, thin columns and lush vegetation. This museum could be compared to a forest which is denser in some areas and thinner in others. More vegetation and columns in the centre of the building create an atmosphere of deep woods, while in more open public spaces at the periphery of the museum – with less columns and greenery – the visitors are more exposed to the daylight and can enjoy the views over the city. With the gradual growth of vegetation, the museum's inner landscape is constantly changing – in a way, it is a work-in-progress – creating a variety of backgrounds for Smilde's art. Large glass boxes house a variety of programmes – from exhibitions and workshops to auditoriums and cafés.

PROGRAM

1	GLASS HOUSE EXOTIC GARDEN	2000
2	GLASSHOUSE CAFÉ / TICKETS	350
3	AUDITORIUM	400
4	WORKSHOP + KITCHEN	400
5	OPEN GALLERY	1000
6	EXHIBITION BOXES	200
7	WATER BASIN	1050
8	TOILETS BACK OF THE HOUSE	100
9	PUBLIC GARDEN	4000



REFERENCES



KAIT WORKSHOP, KANAGAWA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, JAPAN, 2008. JUNYA ISHIGAMI ARCHITECTS

"Ishigami designed the Kanagawa Institute of Technology's Kait Workshop to be flexible for both students and the public. Visible behind its glass walls are more than 300 steel columns that differ in size, reminiscent of trees in a forest."



STICKS AND STONES, NEUE NATIONALGALERIE, BERLIN, 2014. DAVID CHIPPERFIELD

'There is nothing more complex or more simple than to arrange 144 columns in the most beautiful room in Berlin, and wait to see what it does, spatially (...) you see different symmetries, different spaces.'



MANAGEMENT SCIENCES UNIVERSITY, BORDEAUX, 2008. LACATON & VASSAL

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



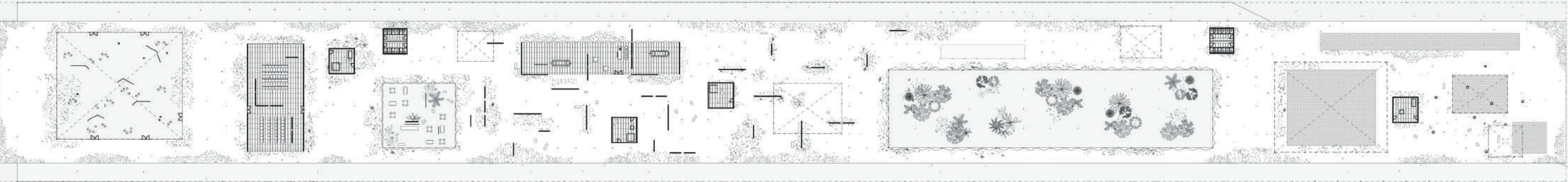
ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE



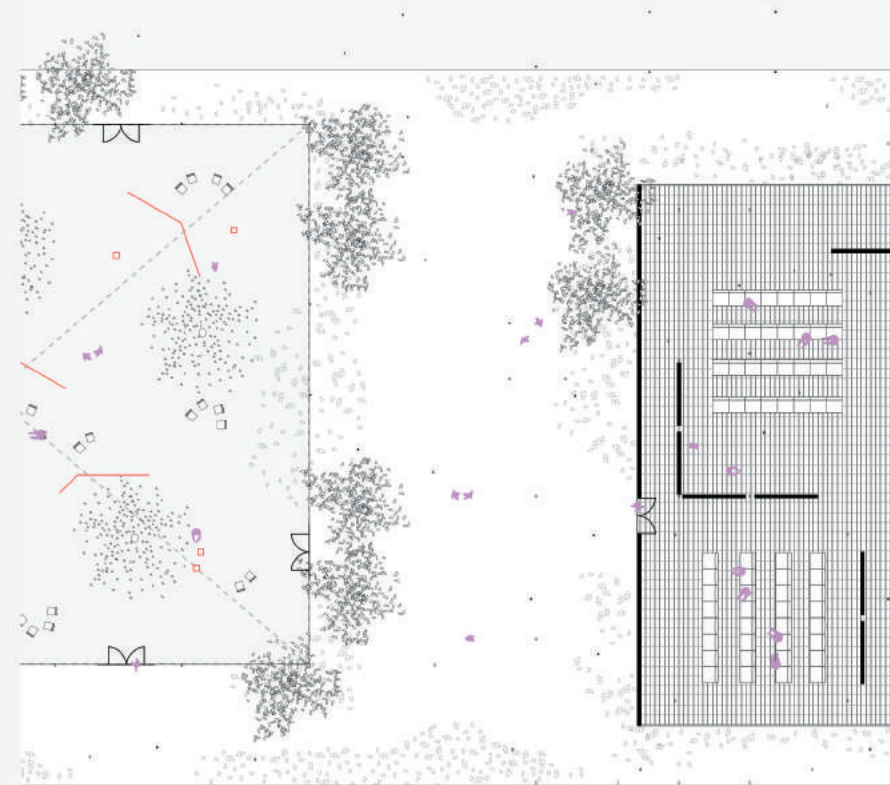
FOREST



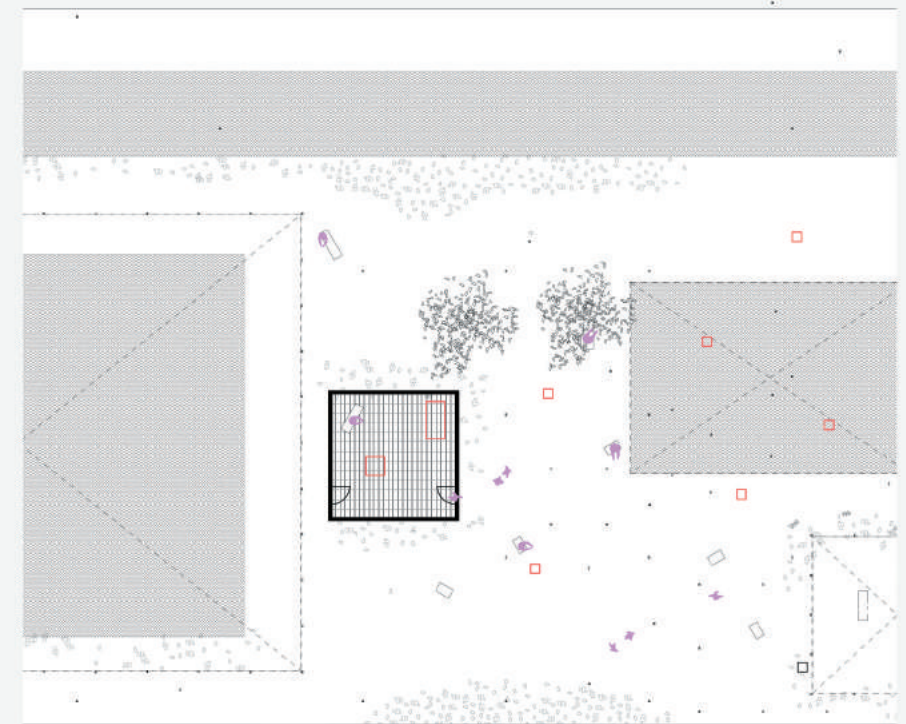
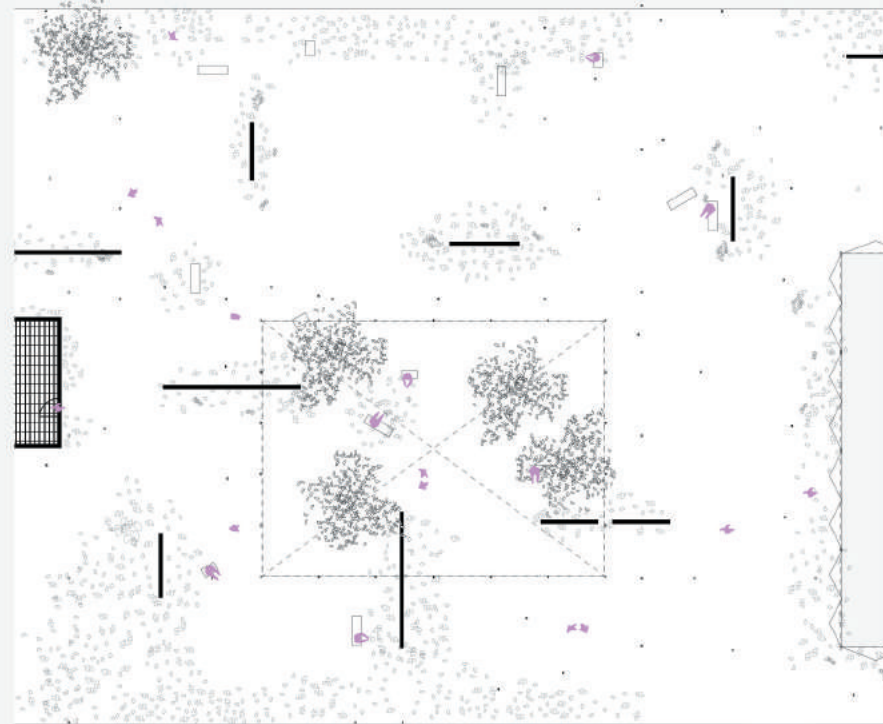
GLASSHOUSE (CRYSTAL PALACE)



1:1130



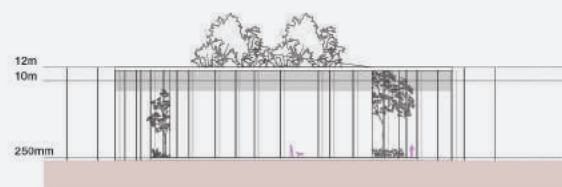
1:420



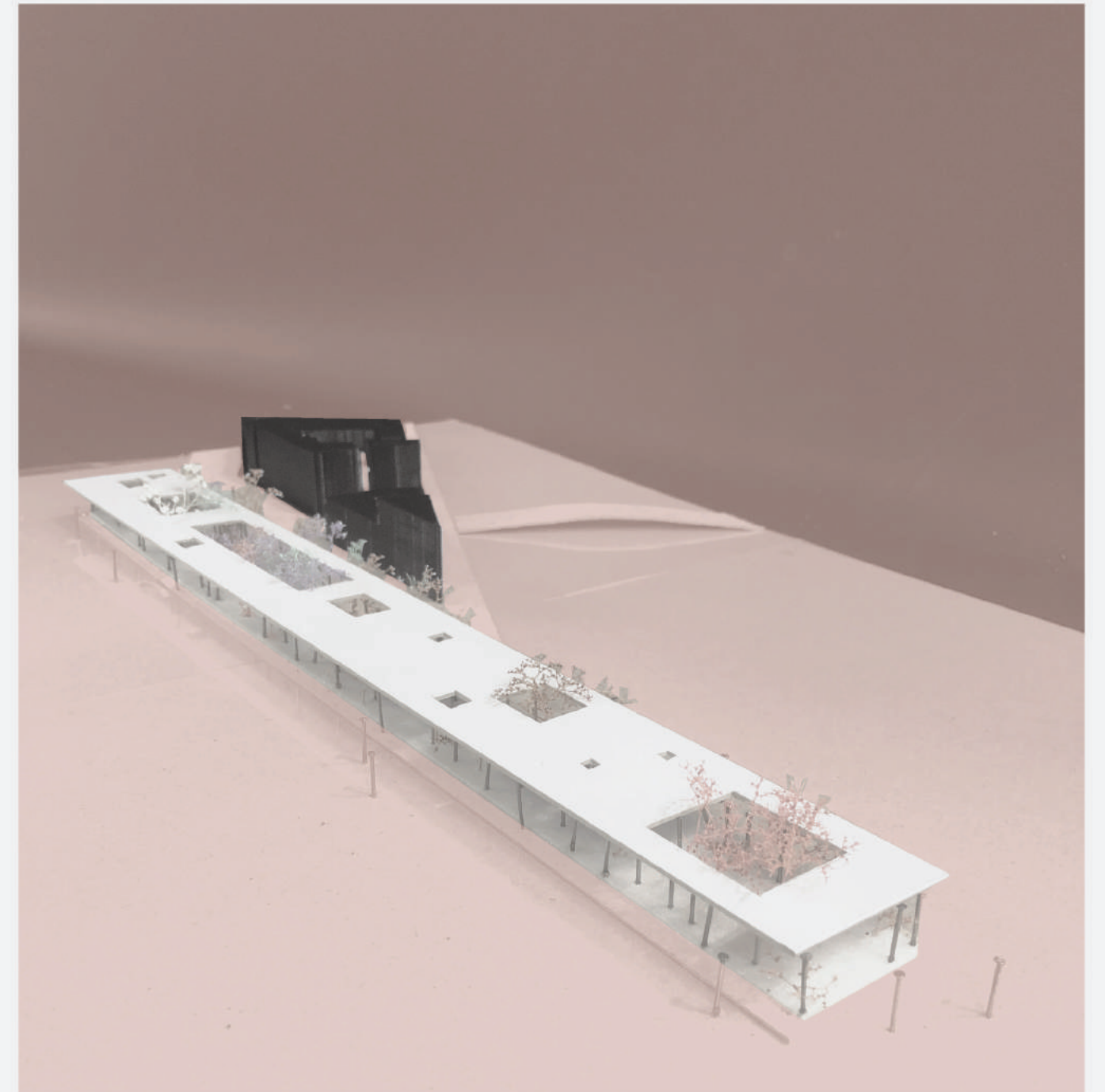
FACADE



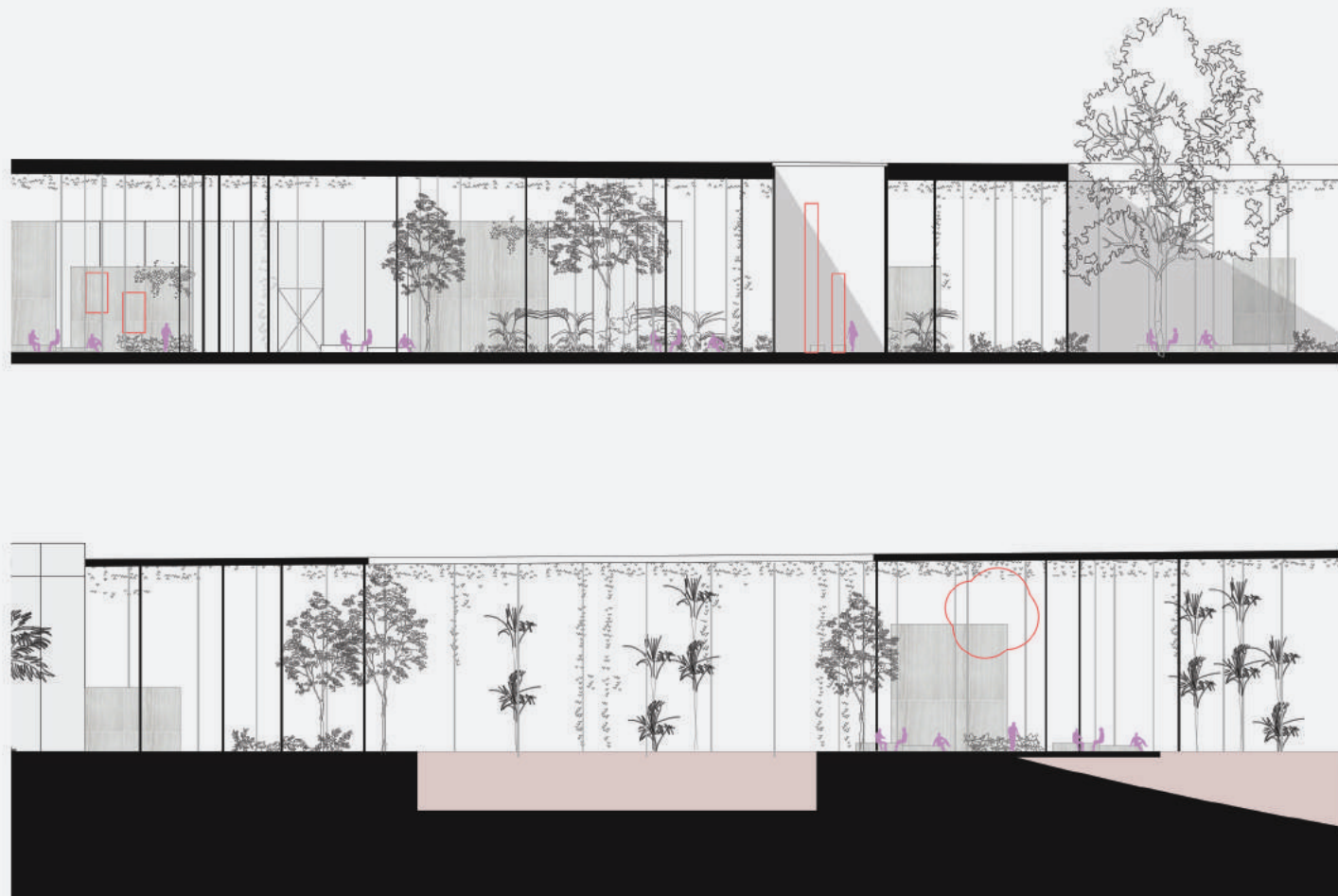
1:140

WEST FACADE
1:1130SOUTH FACADE
1:1130

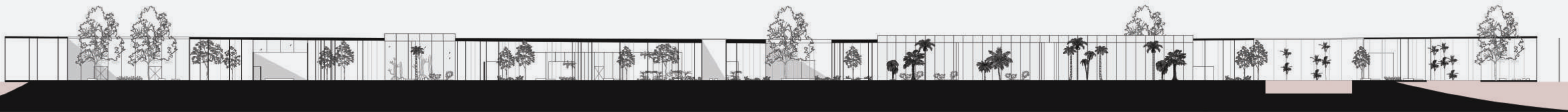
MODEL



The building occupies the entire plot, emphasising its formidable length. The glass facade displays a gradient of sorts: it is clear that the density of columns and vegetation increases towards the centre of the building. The lowered ceiling in the centre enhances this effect.



1:700



1:1540



1:210

The space between the glass boxes/rooms is an area where visitors of the museum and the local residents of the Kop van Java-eiland can spend their leisure time: it is open to all. There are several types of these 'in-between spaces'; some of them are more intimate, while others are more festive and public.

VEGETATION

HANGING PLANTS

- Ficus pumila
- Eucalyptus

GRASS

- Poa labillardierei
- Miscanthus

CLIMBERS

- Hedera
- Parthenocissus Henryana
- Ficus pumila

BUSHES

- Boston Fern / Nephrolepis
- Philodendron
- Vitex agnus castus

TREES

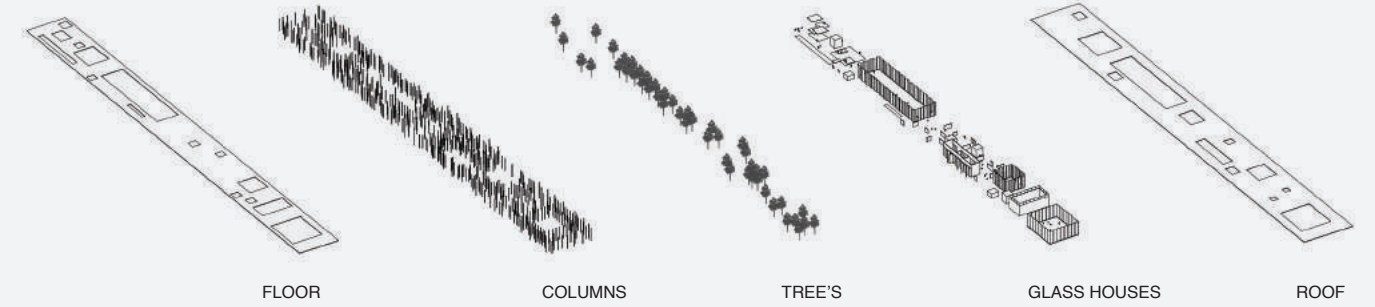
- Acer Campestre
- Fraxinus excelsior
- Acer campestre baronne
- Liquidambar

EXOTIC PLANTS

- Monstera
- Strelitzia Nicolay
- Alocasia Zelena
- palm trees
- cactus



AXONOMETRY



The glasshouse offers warmer and more humid conditions for exotic plants such as palm trees, ferns, and cacti. The condensation on the glass walls make them partially opaque: the vegetation will be barely visible from the outside as if it is hiding in a mysterious mist. During the relatively warm Amsterdam summer, some of the exotic plants can be moved outside onto the embankment, changing the character of the Kop van Java-eiland area quite radically.



A visitor passing through the museum will experience various interior settings: the interior changes approximately every 40 metres as the numbers of columns and the amount of vegetation increases or decreases.



MATERIALS



The museum building will be filled with light. Over time, the vegetation will take over the architecture and the columns will be less visible, as if swallowed by greenery. The building will be built out of grey anodised steel (columns), concrete (floor) and glass (walls).

THE ‘SMILDE’ ARCHIPELAGO

by Sherif Azmi

'ARCHITECTURE IS A PLINTH FOR MY ART' B. SMILDE

Dig and divide, shatter the land into an array of islands.
Leave the fragments, hermetic solo spaces.
An archipelago emerges with no actual meaning
Like follies in a park, inherently romantic.
Entertaining rather than didactic.
Fragments of fantasy.
Plinths for the art.
The landscape fades into a dreamscape,
Blurring the real and the surreal.

Large museums which exhibit a variety of artists are often based on a one-size-fits-all concept; white boxes of galleries act as neutral containers for the art. To design a single-artist museum means to design for just one person, to create a unique space that reflects the artist's character and his approach. In other words, the place should be absolutely tailor-made.

In my project for the artist Berndnaut Smilde, I asked myself: 'How should I interpret his art spatially?' Or to put it even simpler, as an almost childish question: 'If Smilde were a building, what would he look like?' We were invited to imagine his museum on the vacant plot in the heart of Amsterdam, the so-called 'Kop van Java-eiland' (Tip of Java Island).

My first reaction was to propose a sunken museum that would make it possible to preserve the emptiness of the site, while at the same time serving as a metaphor for Smilde's elusive art, which is both concrete and intangible.

In the final project brief, I focused on the fact that Smilde always worked with various media and a broad range of themes. His museum should be able to expose and support this diversity, allowing for rich curatorial scenarios. Thus, the concept of the distributed museum started to form: a loose coalition of islands bearing different structures, some of them imagined as the remnants of past architectures. I started to work on the archipelago of architectural fragments, each fragment serving as a plinth for a future art piece.

PROGRAM

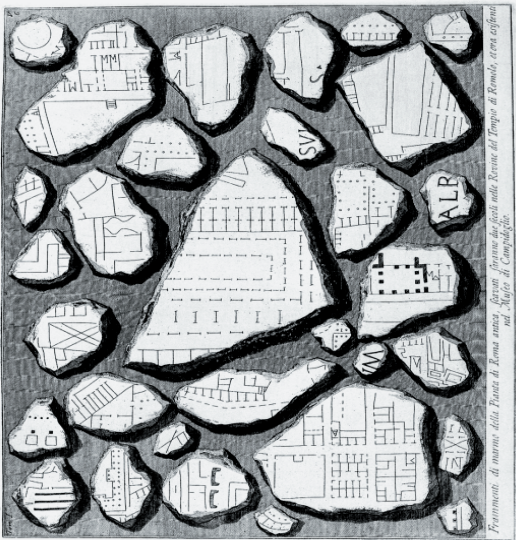
ENTRANCE info point
ARCHES
COLLONADES
ARCADES
PORCHES
COURTYARDS
GARDENS

WALLS
CHAMBERS
STAIRCASES
PLATFORMS
CORRIDORS

REFERENCES



Via Appia Antica, 1756.
Giovanni Battista Piranesi

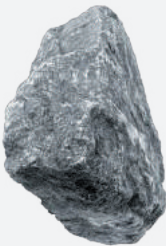


The Roman Antiquities, t. 1,
Plate V. Map of ancient Rome
and Forma Urbis, 1756.
Giovanni Battista Piranesi



Campus Martius Antiquae Urbis,
Rome, 1762 PLATE NO. XXXVI
Giovanni Battista Piranesi

INSPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS



ROCKS



RELICS



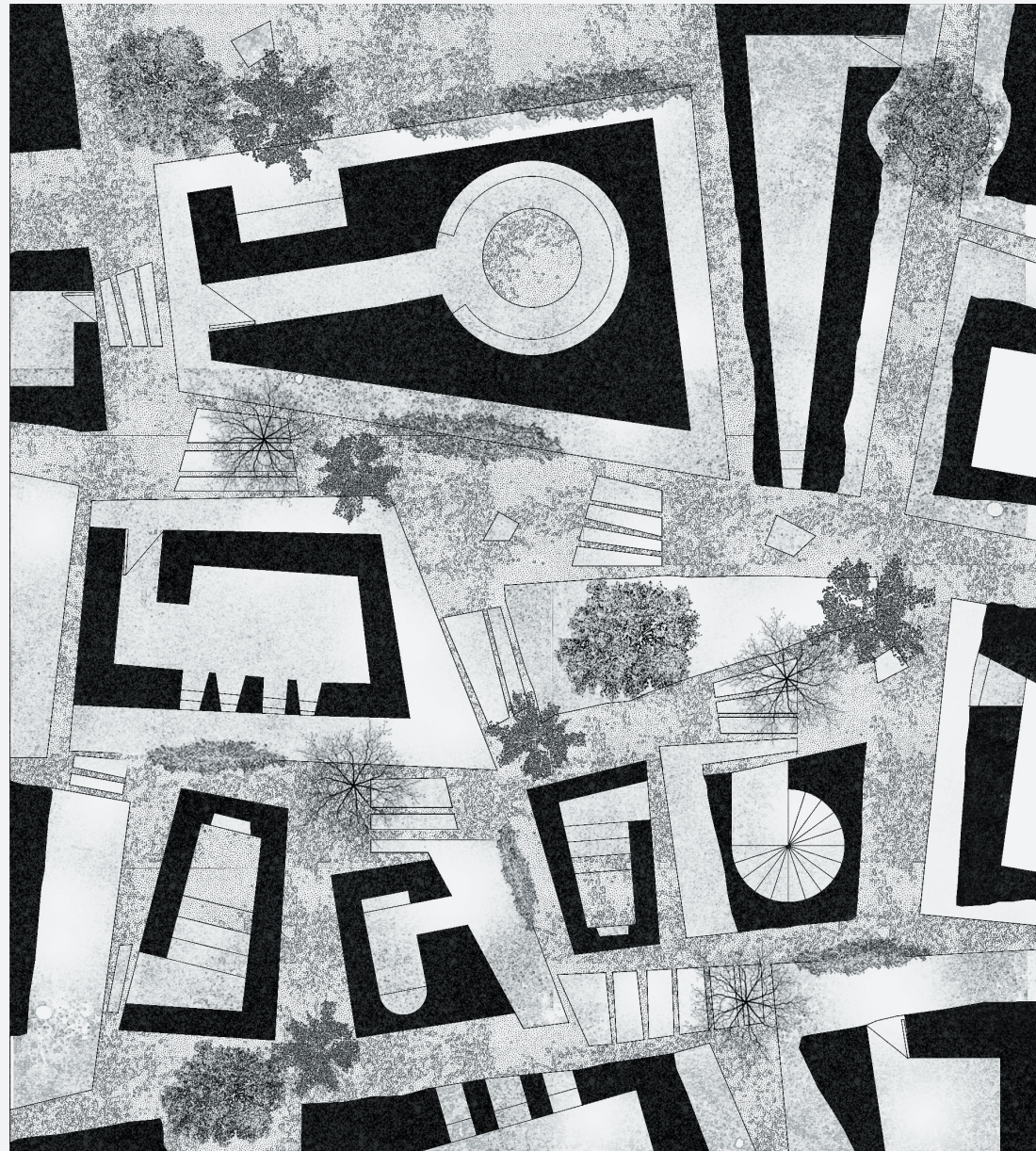
PLINTHS



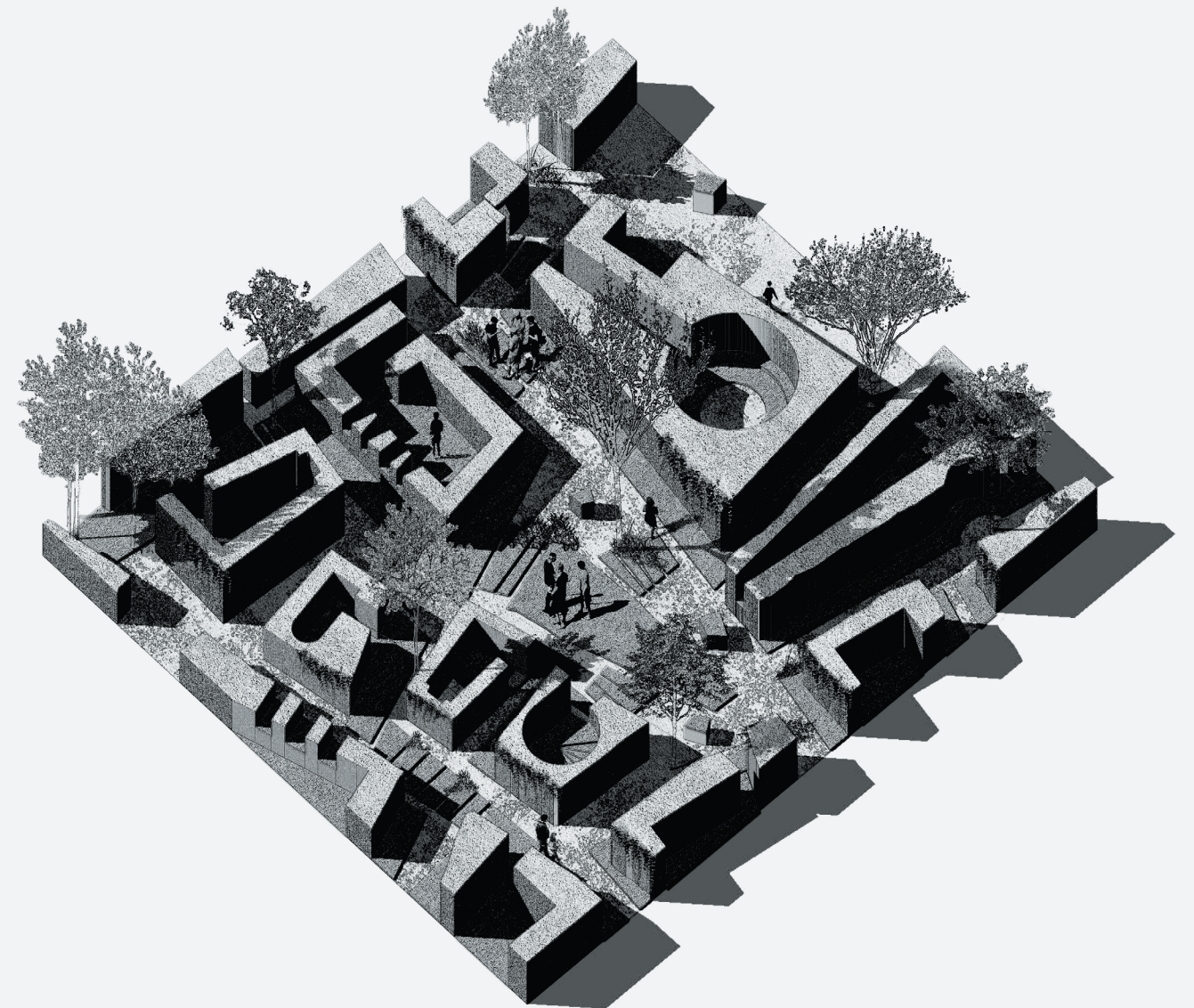
The tip of the island is divided into a number of smaller islands, forming an archipelago of museum 'spaces' of various sizes and forms. The islands would appear 'sunken', rising about 3 to 5 metres above water level and maintaining the visual integrity of the Kop van Java-eiland.



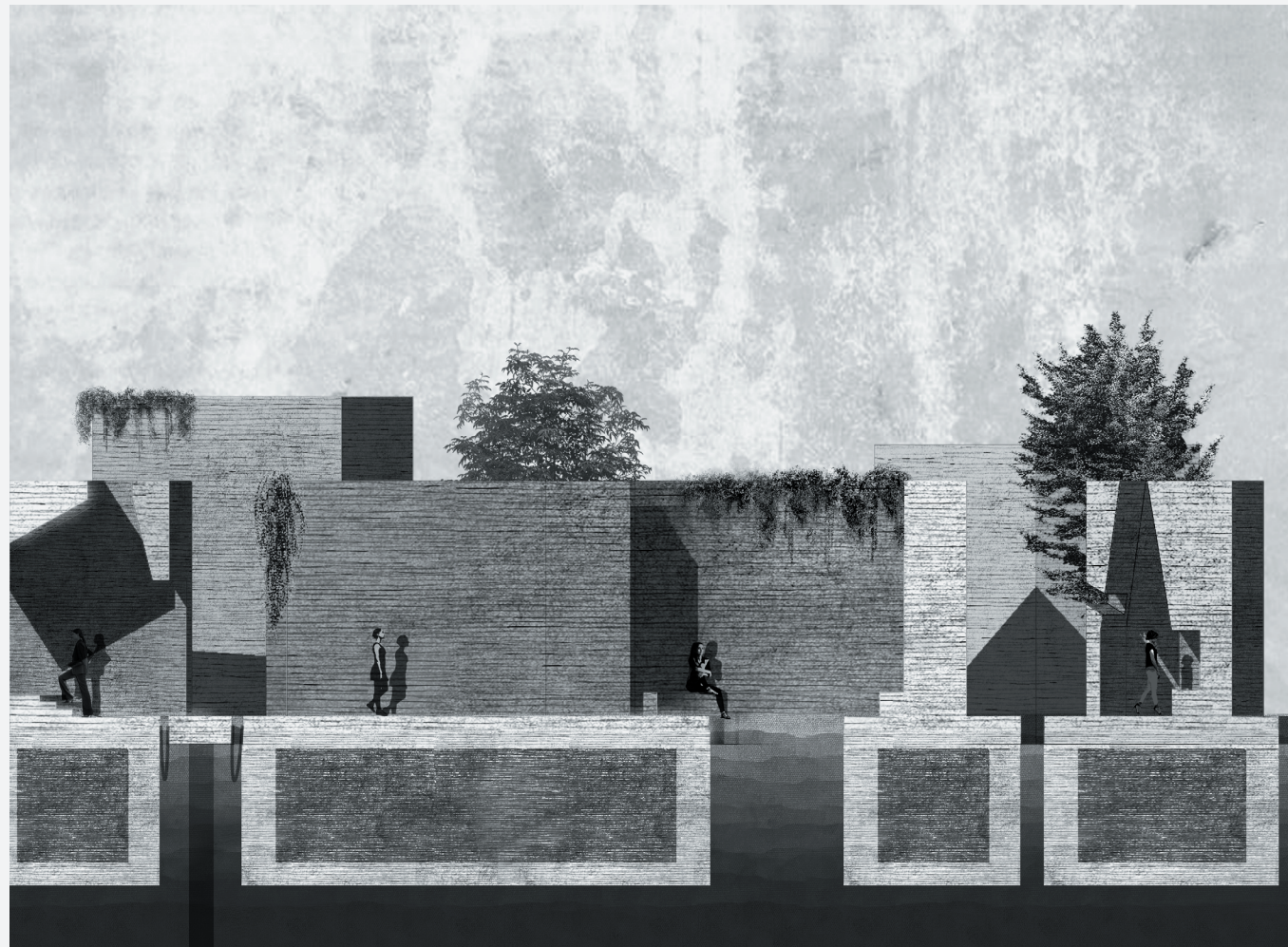
The hermetic solo spaces/islands will become plinths for the artwork. The place will feel like an almost natural rocky landscape, where visitors can roam freely from island to island and behave as they desire. Exposed to the elements, the structures will be constantly reshaped and eroded by wind, water, and vegetation.



The monolithic structures – each of which are situated on their own island – are only connected by the stepping stones positioned in between them. With no bridges, people will have to leap from one island to another. The crossing of water here requires an effort; to enter and exit is a formidable endeavour.



Like follies or ruins in an eighteenth-century park, the island structures have no special meaning or function. The function emerges as a consequence of a visitor's or curator's decision. For example, a staircase that leads nowhere can be turned into an open gallery space.



The masses are floating on empty caisson concrete chambers. While getting from one island to the other, the visitor will feel the subtle movement of the platforms. It will feel like stepping from one boat onto another.



Although it is situated in the heart of the city, the museum's introverted architecture provides a place for quiet contemplation.



The visitors to this museum enter the atmosphere of fantasy. The architectural fragments are reminiscent of archaic ruins; nature reclaims them and artworks are to be discovered as if they were the relics of the past



Inspired by the etchings of Piranesi, the museum becomes a dreamy wonderland, 'inhabited' by people, plants, animals and the works of art.

CONVER- SATIONS

SINGLE-ARTIST MUSEUM IN PARADISE

Interview with Paulo Soares, coordinator of the Instituto Inhotim by Alice Dicker (SOLO SPACE)



Photo by Brendon Campos

PAULO SOARES is the leader of the team responsible for the management of the existing collections and the new developments at the Instituto Inhotim, the largest open air museum in the world. Being in charge of this enormous cultural park means to curate and maintain dozens of pavilions, each dedicated to a specific artist. We had a unique opportunity to ask Paulo a few questions about his life and work in this single-artist museum paradise.

SOLO SPACE: Instituto Inhotim is located near the small settlement of Brumadinho – far from any large city. To be honest, it is not very easy to get there. Why was the Institute built in such a remote location?

PAULO SOARES: It started with Bernardo Paz, the creator of Inhotim. Bernardo has always been an art collector and one day he decided to transform – in a very organic way – the vast open land that belonged to his farm into the garden for sculptural installations which then gradually grew into the cultural cluster we know today. When applying for my position at Inhotim, I was warned that I would have to deal with an institution that owned a collection that would have suited a high-class New York City museum, without the context of New York. This location brings about many challenges, but it also makes this museum totally unique.

SS: What would be the ideal way to explore this 140-hectare park full of single-artist pavilions?

PS: Even to scan very quickly through our entire art collection would take at least two full days. The rhythm of the visit can vary from person to person though. Some pavilions can keep you occupied the whole morning. At the Inhotim, visitors can move from one venue to another by small open buses that circulate around the park. However, my recommendation is to explore the museum on foot. The hiking paths that cross the park (actually, it is a beautiful botanical garden) are part of the museum's narrative. To walk slowly thorough the humid, often dense forest, feeling the heat and, sometimes, fatigue, makes the experience complete.

SS: Many of the Inhotim's venues are designed for – and often with – a living contemporary artist. How did you organise this collaborative work?

PS: Some of the involved artists had strong ideas about how the galleries should look (mainly these were the artists who work very directly with space and architecture). Architects can also have very strong spatial concepts. Of course, it led to conflicts. I think, our most successful example of a full integration of art, architecture, and landscape is the pavilion dedicated to the Colombian artist, Doris Salcedo and her installation 'Neither'. The collaboration between the artist and the architect resulted in an almost perfect harmony between the content and the container. In this case, art was architecture and architecture acquired the qualities of a sculpture. And another example. The gallery dedicated to the Brazilian artist Adriana Varejão became a very recognisable icon of Inhotim: every visitor remembers its solid volume perched above the blue lake on a grassy shore. Adriana created most of the art, exhibited in the gallery, on the Inhotim's territory during the pavilion's construction. For me, this is the perfect combination of an artwork and space.

SS: How do you imagine the Institute's future?

PS: The park and its collection will definitely keep expanding, but with more specific plans and maybe at a slower pace. The pandemic partially influenced the direction of this expansion. In the current situation, we would rather create the new open air installations than build new closed galleries.

EXTRACTION

Contemporary art curator Dorien Laan (LAM Museum, NL) responds to the questions of her cousin, the architect Niene Laan (SOLO SPACE)



Project poster by Dorien Laan

PROJECT VIEWPHONE:

The Lisse Art Museum (LAM) is a museum for contemporary art that focuses on works specifically related to food or the culture of consumption. In the spring of 2020, it had to close its doors, like many other museums, due to the global pandemic. However, the museum wanted to remain connected to their visitors and initiated a special project titled the 'Viewphone'. The idea was very simple: you make an appointment by email and then the museum curator calls you to introduce a specific piece of art from the museum collection along with its author. The conversation lasts only five to ten minutes and it is a great challenge for a curator to make the explanation concise, clear, and engaging.

DORIEN LAAN is a concept creator at the LAM museum, where she focuses on educational programmes and exhibitions. Dorien also curates special projects that activate and engage the public in unexpected ways.

SOLO SPACE: I am curious, who eventually called?

DORIEN LAAN: You would not believe it, but we received hundreds of phone calls from all kinds of people. From Australia and Japan to India and the United States. It was really impressive that people, who would probably never get the chance to visit our museum, could experience it via the mobile phone. The majority of the people who called already had an interest in art, but were especially drawn to this unique experience. We also tried to reach out to the people who wouldn't normally make the effort to call. For example, we worked together with secondary schools, so students could make a call in class. In addition to that, we also had parents who contacted us to make an appointment so that one of their children could have the conversation.

SS: How were the artist/works selected?

DL: The employees of the museum who took the calls had complete freedom to choose a piece of art and the nature of the conversation. We did not want to limit them in any respect, but let them pick what would suit the caller's particular interest. They are already trained in having these kinds of conversations, because we do not have any museum wall labels (with the names of the artists or information about the works). Visitors always need to start a conversation to learn more.

SS: How does the conversation work?

DL: The employee of the museum usually has two artworks pre-selected. After asking you a question at the beginning of the call they pick one of the two. They usually start the conversation in a very casual way, thus making people feel comfortable enough to ask questions or share anecdotes from their own life. The goal is not to perfectly explain a piece of art or give all the details about the artist, but to have a conversation and discover what associations people have when talking about certain types of art.

SS: Did the pandemic help you to understand anything new about the relationship between the museum and the (potential) visitors?

DL: The pandemic made us think about the very essence of the museum. We have realised that for us the primary goal of LAM is to stimulate a dialogue about the art between the employees and the visitors. During the lockdown, we missed having these conversations. We realised that the best conversations happen when we listen and let the visitor share his or her story, to create space for a dialogue. Therefore, the Viewphone will remain active in the future and we will continue having these exciting conversations.

SS: Why do you discuss only one piece of art – one artist?

DL: On your regular museum visit you are usually confronted with multiple artworks of various artists, all in the same space. With the Viewphone, however, we extract one piece of art – or one artist – out of the museum context. We challenge the caller to explore this artwork in a different way. He or she cannot see the piece and is obliged to listen to the explanation. As we ask the callers to imagine quite a lot, we focus on just one artwork. In a way, it is like a very intense visit to a one-artist show, but just for 5-10 minutes.

VAN GOGH FOREVER

Marije Vellekoop, Head of Collections of the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam talks to Berndnaut Smilde and Anastassia Smirnova (SOLO SPACE)



Preparation for the official opening of the Van Gogh museum, May 14, 1973, Amsterdam. photo: Rob C. Croes

SOLO SPACE: The Van Gogh Museum is a single-artist museum for and about an artist, who died a long time ago. However, the museum welcomes millions of visitors every year. How do you explain this popularity unrivalled by any other single-artist museum in the world?

MARIJE VELLEKOOP: Vincent van Gogh is a very popular artist, loved by many. People do feel somehow connected to his artworks; they are colourful and radiant, they have recurrent, recognisable themes. Van Gogh also painted 'normal' working-class people, which is very attractive. Thanks to his correspondence, we know a lot of details about his stormy life – and it is inspiring. People recognise themselves in him or empathise with his struggles. We are honoured to be able to tell Van Gogh's story in our museum – by various means.

SS: Do you think that a single-artist museum for a living artist should be fundamentally different in programme, management and spatial organisation?

MV: For a single-artist museum of that kind, it is obviously easier to keep adding artworks over time, constantly enriching its collection with new works. The Van Gogh Museum gets this opportunity very rarely. Also, the living artist him/herself will most probably be interested in being involved in the museum's curatorial work: this might have a radical impact on its management. As to the spatial organisation, in my view it depends more on the type and size of the works you exhibit, than on whether the artist is dead or alive.

SS: How did the Van Gogh museum benefit from its architecture? Is there anything missing in the current scheme? If you were to add more spaces to the existing complex, what kind of space would you add?

MV: The building of the Van Gogh Museum was specifically designed for this particular collection. In my opinion, the sizes of the galleries are optimal for the artworks we exhibit. However, the very recent research of the damaging influence of light on paintings and drawings prompted us to take measures to keep daylight out of the building – alas! With time the original building got too small for our temporary shows, so in 1999 we added the Exhibition Wing and later on – the new entrance hall on the Museumplein (Museum Square) to connect the museum to the public space and the architectural ensemble of the Museumplein. I think it was a good decision since the old entrance at Paulus Potterstraat was next to a busy street and could not cope with the huge numbers of visitors attending our museum daily. In the future, just like any other Head of Collections in the world, I would like to add more gallery space for the permanent exhibition. We may grow slowly, but we grow by adding amazing pieces.

SS: What do you think about the future of a single-artist museum as a typology? Could this museum type offer an alternative to large-scale classical art museums that stir so much controversy about, for instance, colonial origins of their collections or the didactic way in which they represent art?

MV: In my opinion, single-artist museums should not be an alternative, but an addition to the classical art museums. We are not better, but different. Museums of all kinds do matter and they will keep making an impact tomorrow – with all the art they exhibit, all the knowledge that they gain. Most of the works in our collection, for instance, are part of the Van Gogh family legacy, but that doesn't mean that we do not keep an eye on the current social themes and do not address them. Museums should be the places where we still dare to have conversations about controversial subjects – especially next to the artworks that provoke us and spark exchanges of opinion.

IMAGE SOURCES

ALL IMAGES ARE USED FOR
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CHAPTER 1

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_ L' Atelier Delacroix, people queuing to enter the newly open museum. Photographer unknown, c.1930s musee-delacroix.fr/en/museum-studio/from-studio-to-museum/from-studio-to-museum

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_ Photo taken at the Andy Warhol's Factory exhibit hosted at the Waterloo Region Children's Museum in Kitchener by Mohammad Jangda, 2009. [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Photos_from_The_Velvet_Underground_Era_\(Andy_Warhol%27s_Factory\)_\(3222682315\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Photos_from_The_Velvet_Underground_Era_(Andy_Warhol%27s_Factory)_(3222682315).jpg)

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_ View of the Inhotim Pavillion. Photo by William Gomes. Courtesy Instituto Inhotim

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All other images in this chapter are selected from Berndnaut Smilde's archive and under his copyright

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_ Masked team members during the research session, October 2020. Anastassia Smirnova's photo archive

_ SOFT ATLAS, image by Krijn Nugter and Stephanie (for SOLOSPACE)

_ IN THE MIDDLE OF AMSTERDAM, image NRC

_ THE ISLAND: A TIMELINE, all images are from Gemeente Amsterdam Het Stadsarchief

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CONVERSATIONS

_ Portrait of Paulo Soares coordinator of Instituto Inhotim, Brasil. Photo by Brendon Campos. Courtesy Instituto Inhotim

_ Poster for the Kijktelefoon project. Courtesy Dorien Laan, LAM curator.

_ Van Gogh Museum before the opening. Photo by Croes, Rob C. / Anefo. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Persconferentie_en_bezichtiging_Rijksmuseum,_Vincent_van_Gogh_te_Amsterdam,_inte,_Bestanddeelnr_926-4094.jpg

