

Zeitschrift: Werk, Bauen + Wohnen
Herausgeber: Bund Schweizer Architekten
Band: 89 (2002)
Heft: 09: Kunstwelt Sport = Le sport, un monde artificiel = Sport, a melting pot

Rubrik: English

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 03.04.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

risme des logements sociaux. Le hall d'entrée à deux niveaux est animé par un programme urbain qui, intentionnellement, annule le caractère public «interne» du seul ensemble résidentiel pour introduire la ville dans le quartier et, inversement, faire du quartier une partie de la ville. L'inhabituel de ce point d'attraction est un hammam placé au dessus du hall d'accès de manière à bien marquer cet espace public. L'aura aseptisée de l'habitat dans un ensemble qui prétend gérer correctement au vie du corps, entre en effervescence avec la réalité matérielle et la présence sensorielle du bain turc. Les habitants de Boba Fett qui utilisent le hammam comme une extension de leur salles de bains privées, rencontrent spontanément d'autres citadins fréquentant les saunas. De cette manière, non pas malgré, mais en raison de l'intimité corporelle, le hammam crée une nouvelle forme de domaine public. Celui-ci est corollaire à l'ouverture sur la ville de la colonie introvertie et constitue la base d'une shared zone entre l'architecture et la ville. Un domaine public faisant sortir le corps de son rôle de figurant pour en faire l'acteur d'une démarche d'habitat se déroulant au delà de ses propres quatre murs.

English

Nanne de Ru
Original version of pages 14–17

Leisure Unleashed

Informal sports as a challenge for the production of space

The leisure and sports phenomenon emerged at the beginning of last century. Its planning is however still approached through the initial functionalist planning methods used for leisure. As new leisure activities increasingly occupy areas that were not designed for them, it becomes clear that leisure and sports planning needs to revise its goals rigorously and gear itself towards really unleashing leisure.

66

The phenomenon of leisure as we know it today first emerged in the early twentieth century, when industrialization and modernization were completely changing society. As the rise of Fordism changed manual labour into mechanized labour, the call for the institutionalization of labour was increasingly heard. In The Netherlands from 1891 onwards, workers and socialists campaigned for an eight hour working day, using the slogan: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of leisure and recreation and 8 hours of sleep. This was finally established in a series of labour laws that created a formal border between time spent on production and time spent at leisure. The leisure-

led emancipation of the workers triggered serious debates among the ruling classes in which the nature of the leisure and sports activities of the working class played a central role. Not only was the leisure industry increasingly providing the masses with 'amoral' pleasures, the biggest fear was that the working class would spend its acquired leisure time on 'vulgar' mass activities such as drinking and gambling. In order to safeguard their moral and religious values, the ruling class initiated a 'civilization campaign'. In this campaign, informal and indeterminate leisure and sports activities were institutionalized through numerous sports federations, nature movements and health campaigns. Thoroughly purged of extreme ideological perceptions (communist or fascist) and charged with the religious virtues of morals and reason, leisure and sports were geared towards constructing a society with a 'risk-free' mass culture of healthy and 'meaningful' leisure.

Leisure as a Quantity

The growing need for recreation and sports facilities in the booming cities of the twenties became a significant issue for planners at that time. In 1927, the Dutch urbanist C. van Eesteren during his famous lectures on the 'Functional City' showed a slide of an informally created peripheral soccer field and states: "[this is] one of the elements of the modern city plan that needs to be completely understood in order to be rightly situated"¹.

A few years later, this statement was repeated in the 1934 General Expansion Plan for Amsterdam. This expansion plan was based on research conducted van Eesteren and Th. van Lohuizen on the four functions of the city: housing, industry, infrastructure and recreation. The quasi-scientific research method that van Eesteren and van Lohuizen developed for the General Expansion plan for Amsterdam generated data as a key tool for programmatic quantification. This method was to be highly influential in the C.I.A.M. IV research on the functional city. Through their research, van Eesteren and van Lohuizen reveal that the enormous amounts of recreational areas were needed for the future. However, in the course of research on programming these enormous green expanses, van Lohuizen established that leisure is too ephemeral for programmatic determination. As a result of this inability to deal with leisure in a programmatic sense, it was decided to divide the function of recreation into four generic spatial categories: parks, sports fields, *people's parks* and recreational areas. The lack of programmatic determination made, these areas into the functional tools of the civilization campaign. Filled with sunbathing meadows, soccer-fields, botanical gardens and peaceful green they become the areas where modern men walk, exercise, cycle and rest. Places where the future population of Amsterdam would be able to engage in healthy and meaningful leisure and sports activities.

Lingering Functionalism

However long ago this may seem, the effects of the functional planning model with its rigorously separated functions are still incredibly present today. Despite attempts in the sixties and seventies to abandon the rigorous functional and programmatic separation of modernist planning, business districts remained mono-functional peripheral phenomena while public recreation areas are still characterized by 'standard picnic tables, cheap greenery and rough turf'². Planning departments seem to cling on to the 'classical' functional differentiation of public leisure spaces. In Rotterdam, for example, a brochure issued by the department for leisure, recreation and sports states that its ambition is to offer it's the city's inhabitants 'meaningful' leisure activities, and goes on to mention the amount of parks, sport fields and *people's parks* within the city. In Rotterdam it seems, leisure is still perceived the same way as the innocent and meaningful activities once envisioned by the functionalists: a stroll in the park or a day of liberating *people's park* labour.

Ever since the early seventies however, leisure and sports have escaped their stigma as meaningful and morally just activities, slowly but surely developing into the ultimate phenomenon of a pleasure economy. Now, the leisure industry seems to be coming up to full steam as the increased demand for leisure *experiences* is not only met through the creation of complete leisure environments, such as theme parks, holiday resorts and the like, but also through increased specialization within the commodities used for leisure. Meanwhile, outdoor public leisure spaces are increasingly avoided as their users look for pleasure outside parks and recreational areas; in areas where one would normally not expect such activities to occur.

The Unplannable

The Maasvlakte near Rotterdam is such an area. As one of the last big land reclamations, it was planned for the unplannable – the unforeseeably big future industry complexes of Rotterdam harbour. Nowadays the Maasvlakte has not only been taken over by huge industrial complexes; throughout the years when it was waiting for the unplannable harbour industries, large parts of the Maasvlakte were occupied by other unplannable programs and activities that could not logically be expected to proliferate there: nature and leisure.

Along the artificial coastline of the Maasvlakte, the wind swirls up from 'artificial' dunes creating a particular thermal aerodynamic. Paragliders use this aerodynamic and gently float along the coast. Just one kilometer away, an old couple park their motor home behind the dunes, under a huge electricity pylon. These leisure activities are free in their appearance, yet increasingly professional in their performance. This can also be seen in another part of the Maasvlakte where a *Mad Max* film shoot seems to be going on, as off-the-road bikers, quads and 4x4 cars gather and wildly gouge out huge dunes of exca-

vated mud. Strips of tarmac waiting to connect buildings temporarily change into illegal race-tracks.

On these perpetually sprouting construction sites generating ground for "wild" uses, the desire to be off-the-road is paradoxically celebrated week after week. Even though these leisure activities were not planned, they have generated networks that manage and facilitate such activities over years. Racers decide when to meet through the Internet and the web-cam on one of the industrial complexes tells surfers when the surf running. Small enterprises related in a very loose way facilitate the growing number of leisure activities. The website opened by the local shooting club attracts 50,000 visitors a year. Because of its informal connection to the local diving club, golf course, quad-rental and paintball club, programmes can be custom-made: shoot, dive, fly and raft before having a barbecue with your company.

Unsettling or meaningful?

The informal activities that take place on the *Maasvlakte* stand as an example for the ways in which new leisure and sports activities invade our built environment. The ephemeral nature of these activities and practising urbanists' persistent neglect of spaces planned for leisure, reveal the paradox of leisure planning: how to plan the informal? This paradox is – unconsciously – underlined in a report recently published by the municipality of Rotterdam in which the *Maasvlakte* is described as a place for 'disturbing' leisure activities³. According to the report, the disturbing leisure activities that appear on the *Maasvlakte* are becoming increasingly popular. Therefore, *macho-centers* (places to see and to be seen with your macho-stuff) should be planned for the future.

This straightforward solution reveals that the planning of public leisure areas has become problematic and that in all the years of planning leisure as 'meaningful' activities, people forgot that the concept of what is regarded as meaningful could change. Now, the increasing discrepancy between the political idea of meaningful and the actual demand for specific leisure activities has rendered the public parks and recreational areas meaningless. Instead of sticking to 'top down' programmed leisure and sports areas, the new leisure activities emerge from the 'bottom up', from a specific point of interest. This shows not only in the way that existing features of the landscape are used to unleash specifically designed leisure commodities, but also in the way specific life-styles evolve around the different user-groups that organize these new leisure and sports activities. Caught in a 'top down' programming mode, the "official" macho center oversees the evasive manoeuvres inherent in the present volatile and indeterminate nature of leisure.

Bottom Up

Meanwhile, commercial businesses within the leisure industry are increasingly aware of the or-

ganizational powers innate in the informal new leisure and sports activities. As more and more businesses start to realize that the marketing of their product is becoming more important than the design and appearance of the actual product, 'top down' marketing approaches (such as *theming* and *branding*) are increasingly combined or even replaced by 'bottom up' marketing. This approach taking the local and individual as breeding grounds for new global icons brings together individual expression, mass-customization and the promise of eternal fame within the construction of a product based lifestyle.

These 'bottom up' marketing strategies can be illustrated with the example of (street) soccer related marketing done by *Nike*. Street soccer is a pure and potentially heroic form of urban outdoor leisure, as a large amount of time is spent on mastering new tricks with the ball in order to be able to out-smart your opponent in the smallest possible area. Street soccer having previously been the breeding ground for many of the soccer superstars today, *Nike* recently started to connect street soccer to the *Nike* life-style through an intricate marketing campaign. Under the slogan 'no coaches, no refs, no crying', *Nike* launched a series of informal street-soccer competitions (both on-line and in real time) that connect street-soccer to the *Nike* experience, and – as a crucial result – stimulate the continuation of the informal appropriation of urban space as a prolongation of their marketing campaign. As individual expression remains a non-negotiable aspect of informal street soccer, the concept of mass-customization becomes an essential issue for the products related to the marketing campaign. Within this trend, the commodities used for informal leisure and sports offer an almost endless variation in appearance, approaching the potential of unique and custom designed commodities; paradoxically enhancing the expression and attitude of the individual user who stands within a user-group that has now become very large indeed.

A Question of Organisation

As a model of «anti-planning», the 'bottom up' leisure activities taking place in our contemporary built environment show urbanism's failure to address new living conditions and the ongoing rise of leisure standards. Ever since the civilizing rules of Functionalism became governing ones, public leisure space has been reproducing itself as surplus greenery. Meanwhile, by implementing 'bottom up' marketing methods, the leisure industry has found a way to cash in on the previous 'uselessness' of informal leisure and sports activities. Combined with mass-customization, this allows the leisure industry to intensify the illusion of choice and to exaggerate uniqueness by constructing of an *ersatz* informality. Even though commercial performance remains the main purpose of the 'bottom up' marketing approach, it does reveal conceptual alternatives to the massive implementation of the 'top down' model in traditional urbanism.

Taken purely as an organizational principle, the 'bottom up' approach indicates that leisure *planning* now must focus intensively on the performance of the informal. This informality represents the flexibility to go from passive to intensive utilization with great ease, a rather simple definition demanding a radical change in the way leisure planning is considered. In order to cope with the blossoming of new leisure and sports activities, planning will have to concentrate hard on the 'specific' rather than on the 'generic'. Thus, leisure planning will have to abandon the rigidity of the master plan, defining flexible frameworks allowing for a 'bottom up' development of leisure instead. Only through this strategy can a truly liberating alternative to the *ersatz* informality of the leisure industry be offered.

1 Lecture by van Eesteren for 'de Opbouw', 1927. Source: Vincent van Rossum. *Het algemeen uitbreidingsplan: geschiedenis en ontwerp*. Nai publishers 1993.

2 Maarten Hajer, Arnold Reijndorp. *In search of new public domain*. Nai publishers 2001

3 Memorandum 'Vrije tijd in Rotterdam'. COS, Rotterdam 2000

André Bideau (pages 24–29)

English text: Michael Robinson

Kinetic spectacular

Project for a sportscape as a regional engine

Structural change is turning the European industrial landscape into a leisure landscape. In many places, urban planning or casual acquisition have led to sports facilities making themselves at home in derelict area. This "reprogramming" creates the impression that there is a link between the birth of a sporting society and the death of material production: hard work on our own bodies, rather than hard work producing goods. Can a new public realm be designed in places like these?

"Superbowl" is a theoretical project for a real place between Amsterdam and Haarlem: Halfweg. Here infrastructure like motorway, railway and a shipping channel encircles a former industrial site. The CSM sugar factory's two silos tower up at the centre of its 100,000 square metres; the factory closed in 1992. Since then the factory site has been used for storage purposes; ideas for a fundamental change of use are not yet forthcoming. The "Prix de Rome" competition announced in 2001 by the Rijksakademie for Fine Arts was about opening up the CSM site to a wide range of leisure activities. Four practices were commissioned to provide a study addressing the scale of the region as well as reviving the area by public use, and mediating between the expanding Halfweg community and open nature. Firstly, a Park-and-Ride complex was to make this site on the edge of the settlement area into a hub within existing traffic infrastructures, and secondly they were to examine the links with the Amsterdam and Haarlem conurbations.

The winning project by Blue Architects addresses the relationship between traffic, leisure and nature with a *tabula rasa* strategy. Superbowl addresses redevelopment processes on a regional scale more than within the local framework – an appropriate connection if the pull exerted on surrounding communities by sporting events is considered. As a name, Superbowl refers to the rituals of American football culture that are carried out in similar arenas, while at the same time being the registered trade mark of a particular football championship. Given powerful leisure uses of this kind, outstandingly equipped peripheral areas like the CSM site can take on central functions within entire conurbations. Blue Architects have responded to this by shifting network and mobility aspects to the centre of the entire conceptual approach, while making architectural decisions on an abstract plane – which was the only way possible to make a pointed statement about the industrial site.

Connection with the road network is the driving design maxim. This probably most important ordering principle within the conurbation is stylized as an autonomous figure of movement on the site, creating sports fields contained by earth ramparts. Thus two disciplines, transport planning and sport, are fused iconographically, producing a synthetic, body-oriented leisure landscape. Here the green ramparts are used as a coherent network for a variety of purposes: protection against noise, spectator stands, cycle and jogging tracks and roads, with the variation in curve radiuses creating a diagram of different speeds.

A “signature building” is central to the composition. Its tower-like structure is part of the same transmission diagram as the arenas, and like them it derives its typology from circular geometries condensed to form three-dimensional figures. Staggered plateaux wrap themselves around the two existing CSM factory silos. Up to 30 metres wide projections from the pure steel structure are supported by spoke-like *Vierendeel* trusses. Different uses are stacked on the circular plateaux – events halls, theatre, cinemas, dining – rounding off the sports-determined leisure programme of the horizontal plane.

The silo structure – like the synthetic landscape of the “bowls” – is based on a highly performative spatial structure. In the case of the bowls this is about different speeds, while in the tower the key feature is the flexibility of a space that can adapt to various mass events. Thus one of the plateaux contains a homage to Gropius’s “Totaltheater” project in the form of a central, revolving circular stage. Despite being almost hermetically centred, the silo building enters into a kind of interplay with the exterior space. Its inclined planes come into contact with the long arena in different ways: dependent on the location of the public, either as spectator stands (for sporting events) or as a stage (for pop concerts).

There are absolutely no educational or romantic attempts regarding the industrial past in

the Superbowl project: if this suggestion for a new way of using the former sugar factory site is compared with similar social-state interventions in the Ruhr (e.g. Emscherpark), evidence of the industrial age is recalled quite differently here. The remains of the production plant are staged neither atmospherically nor formally here. Rather, the two steel cylinders are turned into a support medium, and thus become the starting-point for a different kind of performance: they are the motor in the force field of the “utopian leisure world”, as the authors coin their proposal for the CSM site. In future the silos will not be producing food, but major events for the leisure industry.

Andreas Ruby (pages 30–37)
Translation: Rory O’Donovan

Housing Body Culture

Three examples of embodied domesticity

With the dictum “light-air-sun”, promulgated in the earlier part of the last century, housing became the object of a reforming zeal. Within this process the body was ascribed a main supporting role whereby coding from the world of sport was also applied. With the agenda of creating the New Man modernist architecture aimed at becoming a physiological and ergonomic discipline. Today it once again appears appropriate to examine conceptual questions on housing as basic concepts such as public, domesticity, and corporality demand clarification in terms of content. However we choose to define the dwelling, whether as a basic need, a sensual environment, a place of retreat, a lifestyle setting, whether we see it as introverted or extroverted, programmes drawn from the area of sport can make a significant contribution to activating and updating the notion of domesticity.

In most of the activities carried out in the home the body plays only a supporting role. It is estimated that most of our time at home is spent in bed. Somehow or other we have got used to the idea of viewing our home as a storage space for the body. The home is where the body can recuperate from the everyday strains imposed by work, leisure and consumption. In a daily life that demands from us an ever-increasing degree of flexibility in order just to get by the home becomes a traffic-free zone. The demographic trend towards a society with a high proportion of elderly people and singles means that the home is losing its traditional role as the stronghold of the family. What was once breeding ground and training place for social interaction is becoming, for an increasing number of people, a place of encounter with the self. This diminishing of its function continues a reductionist understanding of dwelling that began with the introduction of social housing in the post-war period and forced individual housing desires into the mould of socially defined housing needs.

The insidious process whereby *besoin* is substituted for *désir*, described by Michel Foucault as a basic characteristic of the disciplinary society, was significantly anticipated in the area of modern housing at the 2nd CIAM held in Frankfurt in 1929 where the theme was “subsistence level housing”. All those functions not regarded as essential for immediate domestic survival fell victim to an extensive domestic cleansing process aimed at reducing the floor area – and therefore the building costs – to a minimum. Among the projects submitted in Frankfurt was a pavilion on pilotis with two rooms and a living area of 33 square metres built in Poissy by the architects Pierre Jeanneret and Le Corbusier – as the gatehouse to the Villa Savoye, which, for its own part, represented the diametrical opposite to the CIAM ideal. This house for the *maximum* existence incorporates precisely that corporal aspect that had played a central role in the programmatic of Modernism before they were reduced to a housing programme for the underprivileged. The modern hygiene movement had emancipated the notion of “dwelling” from mere lodging to living, making it a vital activity to be shaped by the principles of healthy living. The Villa Savoye became a manifesto of this *vita activa* due to the incorporation within the house of a daily training course: the *promenade architecturale*. Placed prominently in a central position the two-stage circulation ramp connects the house’s various horizontal corporal zones: the ground floor reserved for the automobile body (the spacing of the pilotis allows three cars to be parked in the garage which, incidentally, is larger than the entrance lobby), above this the *bel-étage* that accommodates the residential body and, finally, the flat roof with the solarium for the recreational body.

From a current perspective Le Corbusier’s programme of movement appears to an equal extent both antiquated and relevant. On the one hand the didactic rhetoric of these architectural gymnastics seems essentially outdated (quite apart from the question whether, in the age of BSE and hormone-treated foodstuffs for both animals and humans a “healthy way of life” is at all possible). But on the other hand in the field of contemporary housing we can discern a flourishing body cult that, at places, reveals astonishing parallels to the performative staging of the body we find in Modernism. The width of the spectrum of possible interpretations is discussed on the basis of the three following projects, each of which places the body cult practised in a specific relationship with the private and/or public character of its setting.

Sala Terrena (pages 32/33)

The indoor swimming pool by Next Enterprise offers an exquisite rest and relaxation enclave completely shielded from the enquiring gaze of neighbours. Embedded in the garden of a *Grün-derzeit* villa in Vienna, to which it is connected by an underground access corridor, it attaches seamlessly to the “*Wohnvorgänge*” (Scharoun’s dwelling processes) of the main building. It is

only on taking a second look that the visitor realises that the building is, in fact, a swimming pool. Instead of the typical wet room aura of washable tiling and chlorine-saturated air one immerses oneself in an underground cavern with concrete walls – some painted – and fittings of reddish mahogany. The yellow dry walling of the inserted solarium is equipped with sockets and a telephone, a specially cut-out niche provides space for a stereo system. A small kitchen completes the arrangement strengthening the visitor's impression that he has wandered into the wrong place. To find the swimming pool itself you need to look more carefully. It has been shifted off-centre and reveals itself only through two openings cut out of the concrete wall enclosing the pool, which frame the bright blue water like a picture. Living has, in a certain sense, domesticated sport transforming the swimming pool into a living-pool in which one can bathe and also – for example – live, naked.


Burning up calories (pages 34/35)

In the case of Sub-'burb, a project by Jones, Partners: Architecture, the physical activity is unmistakably part of a compulsory programme involved in living there. This suburban development is a carpet of courtyard houses, the roofs planted with palm trees evoking the garden city dream of early Californian suburbs. The housing itself is sunken and enclosed by planted courtyards that guarantee each unit its private sphere. The houses are accessed from above, via an elevated road system at roof level. From the street the approach to the house is by means of a movable stairs that can be rolled across the entire depth of the building. Using this service element provides exercise for the residents, charges the house's own batteries and, if required, can even mow the lawn on the roof. Inserted in a repetitive structure that bears a strong similarity to Mies van der Rohe's "Hofbebauung" of 1934 Sub-'burb crosses Le Corbusier's *machine à habiter* with the Californian fitness cult. In a sense the house becomes an outdoor fitness room that allows its inhabitants to absolve their daily work out in the simple act of dwelling. Whereas Grete Schütte-Lihotzky took a Taylorist approach in designing her Frankfurter Küche, cutting out unnecessary routes in order to make life easier for the modern housewife, in the Sub-'burb house the aim is to maximise the daily domestic course. After all, each time you climb the stairs you burn up calories and tone your muscles.

The body as a source of attraction (pages 36/37)

In contrast to Sub-'burb, which uses the body cult as a lifestyle attractor in order to persuade a specific clientele to purchase a house, in the project "Boba Fett" by John Bosch, Ünal Karamuk, Andreas Kittinger, Urs Primas and Jens Richter the fitness cult plays the role of an urban attractor. For the Grünau neighborhood in western Zurich, a district now showing signs of age, Boba Fett suggested a model of urban living to overcome the atavistic quality of the modernist

housing estate as a kind of dormitory surrounded by greenery. A compact 14-storey cube was densely packed with floor plans that delightedly overstep the behaviourism dominating social housing design. The double-height lobby is equipped with an urban programme that deliberately explodes the "internal" public character of a housing estate in order to incorporate the town in the development and, vice-versa, make the district part of the town. The most unusual of these attractions is a hammam positioned above the lobby in such a way that it decisively shapes the character of this space. The antiseptic aura of housing estate living that derives from the belief that the body is safely under control is fundamentally shaken by the physical eroticism and sensual presence of the Turkish baths. Residents of Boba Fett using the hammam as an extension to their private bathrooms directly encounter sauna visitors coming from the town. Because of – not in spite of – the physical intimacy the hammam establishes a new form of public realm that goes hand-in-hand with the opening up of the introverted housing development towards the city, thus forming a shared zone between architecture and town. This public realm allows the body to slip out of its supporting role making it the protagonist in a way of living that can also take place outside its own four walls.



**FORUM
GESUNDES
BAUEN**

www.ytong.ch

Arbeitsinstrument für den Architekt

www.ytong.ch

massiv gesund bauen

YTONG (Schweiz) AG Kernstrasse 37 8004 Zürich Tel.: 01 247 74 00 Fax: 01 247 74 10 info@ytong.ch www.ytong.ch