

RESEARCH, STORIES, STRATEGIES, ACTION!

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SCHOOL X  
FOR X THE  
X CITY X

ANNUAL  
OVERVIEW  
2021

# \_INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR THE CITY

This annual report looks back at the activities of the Independent School for the City in the year 2021 – the third year in the existence of the School. After launching the School in October 2018, we started a year in which we tested various activities and further developed the organisational structure of the School. This eventually led to the presentation of a full one-year programme in September 2019. The courses that followed generated a lot of enthusiasm and many people attended the School's Out! events in that time. However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the subsequent restrictions, strongly influenced the remaining year. At first, we had to postpone or cancel some of the activities, but after some months we managed to develop a more hybrid programme. Some of the activities could continue in the School in relatively small groups, while for example our School's Out! events were turned into livestream sessions. We invested in audio-visual equipment to make this possible and eventually we even organised a fully online international symposium, 'Taking Back Housing', in collaboration with the International New Town Institute. This also allowed for more hybrid education activities in which participants or lecturers could contribute to the programme remotely.

In 2021 we were able to build upon this experience, which allowed us to develop a more flexible programme that could

deal with various levels of restrictions. We started the year 2021 with the first edition of the three-month intensive programme called Dirty Old Town. Together with 7 participants from various countries in Europe, and a diverse team of urban specialists, designers and researchers, we explored the inescapable contradictions and complexities of the city. After two weeks of introductions to the working methods of the School and its partners, as well as to the city of Rotterdam, the participants took part in three thematic workshops of each 2 weeks dealing with Climate Change, Crime and Superdiversity. Through lectures, excursions, and workshops we offered the participants the freedom to deepen their knowledge and to develop their own position on the pressing urban issues of our time. Eventually each participant developed an individual project that was digitally presented at the end of April during a livestream event and was published on our website.

While the third Corona-wave in April and May did not allow us to organize any other live activities in the School, we did continue the School's Out! events online, sometimes in combination with a small physical audience in the School. After starting the year with a talk by former UNHCR official Kilian Kleinschmidt in January and Pascale Sablan (Adjaye Associates) in February, we used the March edition of School's Out! for the Award Ceremony



Photo by Maarten Laupman. Summer School Let's Be REAL!

of the prestigious Rotterdam Maaskant Prize that was awarded to our Dean Team Member Michelle Provoost for her in-depth research into the (global) city and social issues that are anchored in the built environment. In April we continued online with a presentation by the Israeli architect and researcher Zvi Efrat and in May we invited Malu Borja of the Ecuadorian architecture collective AI Borde for a lecture.

In June the regulations were slightly eased which allowed for a hybrid School's Out! with landscape architect Adriaan Geuze (West 8) as our guest and a small physical audience in the School. On 17 and 18 June we also organised the first of four sessions of our 'Polder of Babel' programme – a series of activities for civil servants that we developed at the request of the municipality of Rotterdam and Het Nieuwe Instituut, parallel to the Dutch contribution to the 17th Venice Biennale of Architecture. The first two days were focused on the topic of the Anthropocene in relation to the urban development of Rotterdam. After the summer we visited the Venice Architecture Biennale to take part in the Pavilion Days, and in October we had a two-day session about Superdiversity, and eventually will organise a final event in 2022 in which all 15 participants will present their findings to their colleagues at the municipality.

In the summer of 2021, we were able to organise the two-week summer school 'Let's Be R€all!' at the end of July. For this summer school we collaborated with the Venezuelan-American architect Alfredo Brillembourg and Tessa Steenkamp of Urban Think Tank and with the Rotterdam-based association Stad in de Maak in order to develop strategies for alternative housing models together with a group of thirteen participants from all over Europe. The situation concerning COVID-19 normalised after the summer break, which made it possible to continue our programme as planned. However, building upon our experience in 2020 we decided to repeat the online version of the Film and Architecture Studio, since the format of the course worked very well online and it allows for people from all over the world to participate, which is of great added value to the course. In October we continued with the one-week studio 'Into the Woods' about the relevance of micro forests and greening the city in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Veenstra (LOLA) and in November we organized a studio titled A City of Comings and Goings, building upon the research of Crimson Historians and Urbanists on the relationship between migration and urban development, with the Afrikaanderwijk as a case study. We wrapped up the year with a hands-on Urban Tissue Weaving studio with Bart Gorter and Ernst van der Hoeven on the principles of weaving as a metaphor for urban planning, architecture and urbanism. Parallel to these activities



Photo by Maarten Laupman. Dirty Old Town 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman. Into the Woods workshop



Photo by Maarten Laupman. School's Out! with Adriaan Geuze

we continued the hybrid School's Out! evenings with Jan Willem Petersen in September, who talked about his research on the reconstruction of Afghanistan and exhibition designer Herman Kossmann, whom we invited in October. In addition, in November we co-organised an online international symposium on 'Minorities' and 'Telling the Story' with the International New Town Institute.

### Exposure and Output

While the Corona restrictions made it more difficult to organise large activities in the School itself, we still managed to reach a large and international audience, especially through our online events. The School's Out! events were livestreamed and well viewed, and as the recordings remained on our website they are still being watched. Some of them reached over 300 views. Furthermore, we participated in various events and conferences in which the School was presented, like a lecture by Michelle Provoost during the 'Designing Cities for All' programme in Pakhuis de Zwijger, and a contribution by Mike Emmerik to the online MINDSCAPES Conference by Kunstinstituut Melly and SICK festival Manchester, as well as to the talk show 'Towards a New European Practice' organised by Architecture Workroom in Brussels. To keep a certain presence and visibility in the City, we also launched a two-week poster campaign in June on billboards around Rotterdam with slogans of the School proclaiming for example: 'Love your Dirty Old Town', or 'Make the Invisible Visible' and 'Take Back Housing'.



# ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR THE CITY

The Independent School for the City was established in 2018 to create an international platform and meeting place for knowledge exchange. It explores the complexity and contradictions of the global city from the local and specific point of view of being based in the European Port City Rotterdam. The school approaches the contemporary city in an interdisciplinary, conceptual and pragmatic way. Social Sciences, Economy, Planning, Design and History are brought together in a transdisciplinary community of learning, open to everyone who is involved with the city.

The Independent School for the City organizes various educational activities at the post-graduate level, each with approximately 20 to 25 (international) participants from various multidisciplinary backgrounds. It does not have a fixed curriculum that one has to follow from A to Z, but offers a flexible framework of activities, which is adapted and tuned to current events every year. The program is motivated by the daily practice of its founding organizations: Crimson Historians & Urbanists and Z.U.S [Zones Urbaines Sensibles]. Together they took the initiative of founding the School, advocating and using an incremental development of the city in an activist and critical way, with history, participation and (permanent) temporality as instruments. The activities are developed using the international network of Crimson and ZUS, as well as the broad variety of Rotterdam-based design offices and 'urban' organizations.

In addition to the educational program, the School functions as a public architecture centre; A place where architecture and urban research are celebrated, showcased and discussed. Where professionals, students, city makers and other interested parties can talk, learn and debate about the city with other 'urbanists' in an informal setting. A place to gather and celebrate the eternal modernity of Rotterdam in the raw industrial atmosphere of our building designed by architect Hugh Maaskant.

The Independent School for The City is deliberately independent and autonomous and from that position can be more critical, experiment more, and reach a different audience than the established institutions and accredited schools. Yet, it has deep roots and a strong presence in the city of Rotterdam and is part of a wide and diverse international network of practices and institutions. The School wants to be just as complex, useful and stubborn as the city in which it originated. It does not defend professional, commercial or political interests and does not do city marketing. Ultimately, the Independent School provides a platform to face the challenges of the city with an open mind, without window dressing.

With its conferences, debates, workshops and educational programme, the School has become an indispensable meeting place in the heart of Rotterdam, a place where there is always something to learn and discover. Since its establishment in October 2018, the School has acquired a valuable place within the ecosystem of architecture institutions in Rotterdam, as can be seen in the annual report as well as on the website: [www.schoolforthecity.nl](http://www.schoolforthecity.nl)



# \_PUBLIC EVENTS

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #14 KILIAN KLEINSCHMIDT



**DATE** Friday 29/01/2021  
**SPEAKERS:** Kilian Kleinschmidt, Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout  
**VIEWS** 320 (online)

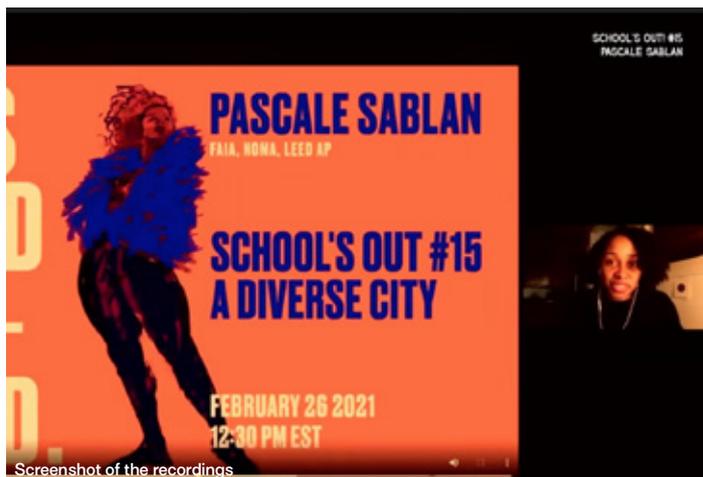
We kicked off 2021 with a lecture by one of the best known and most published experts in the world on migration, development and refugees. Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout talked with Kilian about new tactics and ways to deal with migration in the light of current global developments, migration as a permanent phenomenon, the myth of return, the need to professionalize aid work and how to turn a crisis into opportunities. Together we explored what this means for our migration strategies, urbanisation and our cities.

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #15 PASCALE SABLAN



**DATE** Friday 26/02/2021  
**SPEAKERS:** Pascale Sablan, Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout  
**VIEWS** 250 (online)

Pascale Sablan talked to us from New York about how communities make their diversity a central part of shaping the built environment. In a Superdiverse City like Rotterdam, where most design decisions are still made from a bastion of elite whiteness, such a conversation was much needed! With her organisation 'Beyond the built environment', Pascale is fighting for an equitable and reflectively built environment, through architecture. She also became the New York Associate of David Adjaye Associates and will add her unique insight and energy to this world-wide design firm, no doubt revolutionizing its portfolio.



# \_PUBLIC EVENTS

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #16 MAASKANT AWARD CEREMONY FOR MICHELLE PROVOOST

DATE	Friday 26/03/2021
SPEAKERS	Monique van Bull, Achmed Aboutaleb Caro van de Venne, Esther Agricola, and Michelle Provoost
VIEWS	Speech: 335 Award ceremony: 170 Documentary: unknown

On Friday 26 March 2021, Dean Team member of the School Michelle Provoost was awarded the prestigious biannual Rotterdam Maaskant Award by Achmed Aboutaleb, chairman of the board of the Rotterdam Maaskant Foundation and mayor of Rotterdam. The jury commends Michelle for combining reflection with action and for engaging others with the fate of the city through her own, original vision. The honour of the award is bestowed upon her for her “profound research of the global city and into all those social issues that are rooted in the built environment.”

Michelle’s speech, the award ceremony, and the documentary about Michelle by Gabriëlle Provaas and Rob Schröder can be watched online.

The festive award ceremony of the Rotterdam Maaskant Prize 2020 was opened by Monique van Bull, secretary of the Rotterdam Maaskant Foundation, followed by an introduction by Achmed Aboutaleb – chairman of the board and mayor of Rotterdam. The nomination of Michelle Provoost was then explained by Caro van de Venne, chairman of the independent jury and founder and Partner of Barcode Architects. Eventually Esther Agricola, vice-chairman of the board handed the Maaskant Prize 2020 to Michelle Provoost.



Photo by Maarten Laupman. March 2021



Ahmed Aboutaleb  
Burgemeester Gemeente Rotterdam  
voorzitter bestuur Stichting Rotterdam-Maaskant

Screenshot of speech by Ahmed Aboutaleb



Photo by Maarten Laupman. March 2021



We're standing here outside  
a Maaskant building: our office.  
Screenshot of the documentary

# \_PUBLIC EVENTS

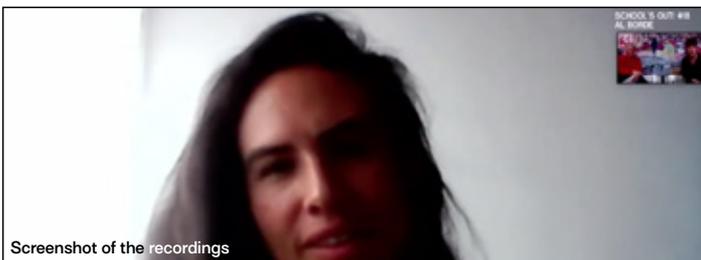
## SCHOOL'S OUT! #17 ZVI EFRAT



**DATE** Friday 30/04/2021  
**SPEAKERS** Zvi Efrat, Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout  
**VIEWS** 150 (online)

Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout talked with Zvi Efrat about his latest book, *The Object of Zionism – The Architecture of Israel*, which is a critical study of Zionist spatial planning and the architectural fabrication of the State of Israel from the early 20th century to the 1960s and '70s.

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #18 MALU BORJA



**DATE** Friday 28/05/2021  
**VIEWS** 100  
**SPEAKERS** Malu Borja, Michelle Provoost and Simone Rots

Malu Borja from the Ecuadorian architecture collective *Al Borde* talked with Michelle Provoost and Simone Rots about her projects and principles of their collective. Founded in 2007 in Quito, *Al Borde* is led by architects Pascual Gangotena, David Barragán, Maria Luisa Borja and Esteban Benavides.

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #19 ADRIAAN GEUZE



**DATE** Friday 25/06/2021  
**SPEAKERS** Adriaan Geuze, Michelle Provoost and Mike Emmerik  
**VISITORS** 25  
**VIEWS** 250 (online)

Adriaan Geuze, one of the most influential and famous landscape architects of the Netherlands, talked about one of his latest projects: the Houston Botanic Garden (Texas, USA) – a former golf course that was turned into a 132 acres park of ecosystems, horticultural displays and walking trails. In conversation with Mike Emmerik and Michelle Provoost, Adriaan took us along the design process and talked about the process of winning the design competition, his visions for the place, his contact with the client.



# \_PUBLIC EVENTS

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #20 JAN WILLEM PETERSEN



DATE Friday 24/09/2021  
SPEAKERS Jan Willem Petersen and Michelle Provoost  
VISITORS 40  
VIEWS 70 (online)

For the first School's Out! after the summer holiday we invited architect, urban planner, and researcher Jan Willem Petersen, who talked about his work in Afghanistan. Jan Willem traveled multiple times to Afghanistan between 2013 and 2016, where he scrutinized the international reconstruction efforts disguised as a local Afghan, aiming to gain a better understanding on the legacy of the schools, roads, mosques, clinics, government buildings, factories, markets, police stations, prisons and airports initiated by the Netherlands and how the interventions relate to the unruly Afghan reality.

## SCHOOL'S OUT! #21 HERMAN KOSSMANN



DATE Friday 19/10/2021  
SPEAKERS Herman Kossmann, Michelle Provoost and Jord den Hollander  
VISITORS 40  
VIEWS 106 (online)

Herman Kossmann talked about his pioneering work in exhibition design, which started in the 1990's, when he founded Kossmann.dejong together with Mark de Jong. The practise developed into an international operating design studio that aims to create engaging, narrative spaces through a combination of different media and collaboration across disciplines.



# \_PUBLIC EVENTS

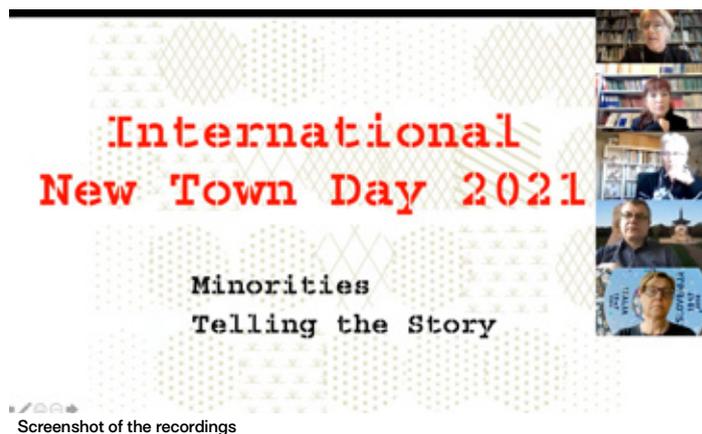
## INTERNATIONAL NEW TOWN DAY 2021: “MINORITIES” AND “TELLING THE STORY”

DATE	29 November 2021
SPEAKERS	Simone Rots, Michelle Provoost, Shane Downer, Jasna Fakin Bajec, Blaz Kosovel, Francesca Skelton, Anouar Kassim, Francesca Bertin, Elsa Turkusic, Margriet Panman, Aneta Vasileva and Stefan Ghenciulescu.
PARTICIPANTS	50 (online, closed session)

On the 29th of November, the Independent School for the City and the International New Town Institute (INTI) have collectively organized the International New Town Day 2021. This year's edition took the form of an online expert meeting, focusing on the topics of “Minorities” and “Telling the Story”.

The ‘Minorities’ theme aimed to address that the New Towns have been built with a specific group of people in mind to inhabit them, but in reality, the population of these settlements is varied and rich in minorities. Even though the New Towns were not initially designed for diversity, it is important to know who the minorities are, what their background, needs and stories are, in order to address and adapt to them in the future developments of the Towns. The second theme, ‘Telling the story’, targeted the negative image that the New Towns have. Often described as places that you don’t want to find yourself in, the Towns need to tell their rich story and positive aspects and engage in showcasing their narrative through different mediums such as exhibitions, artworks, festivals, books, cartoons, and all the kinds of media that can communicate to the outside and inside people about the history and future prospects of the New Towns.

The goal of this International New Town Day was to extend the platform on a European level and exchange knowledge on the current questions that the New Towns have regarding these



themes. Alongside INTI and partner New Towns (Milton Keynes, Nissewaard/Spijkenisse, Grand Paris Sud/Evry, Nova Gorica), a new series of New Towns have been invited to showcase their values and heritage and find similarities amongst each other. This association and representation can possibly lead towards ideas sharing, connection strengthening and new projects that could be supported by EU-subsidies (CERV, Urbact and/or Creative Europe).

The INTD 2021 has put a spotlight on several fascinating New Towns from all across Europe, and has followed up upon the existing partners and their progress. The talks have been about Dimitrovgrad (Bulgaria), Ilijas (Bosnia Herzegovina), Milton Keynes (United Kingdom), Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Zingonia (Italy) and Zoetermeer (the Netherlands). All New Towns are facing a potential recognition of their heritage and transformation. The presentations focused on either one or both aforementioned themes and speakers have stated their personal interests towards the progress of these initiatives.

# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## DIRTY OLD TOWN

**DATE:** 01 February - 23 April 2021

**TUTORS:** Dirk Sijmons, Herman Kossmann, Arnold Reijndorp, Neeltje ten Westenend, Leeke Reinders, Ewout Dorman, Mike Emmerik, Michelle Provoost, Wouter Vanstiphout, Elma van Boxel, Kristian Koreman

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Thijs Barendse, Sereh Mandias, Rene Boer, Warda Belabas, Jord den Hollander, Maarten Laupman, Teun van den Ende, Jan Meeus, Han Dijk, Loes van der Wees, Rob Luyk, Valerie Kuster, Vincent Karremans an Jeroen Smit

**PARTICIPANTS:** 7

From 01 February until 23 April 2021, we offered our first 12-week programme in contemporary urbanism that took the modern city as its subject and Rotterdam as its testing ground. During these weeks we explored the urban dynamics by bringing together different disciplines from historical research to artistic expression. Participants in the programme looked into the inescapable contradictions and complexities of the contemporary city. Using Rotterdam as a pars pro toto for many other cities in the world, we've been looking beyond its current popularity and tried to see the city as it really is, and as we can imagine it to become. Collectively we explored the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead of us, but also looked explicitly at the character of the city. This is not only defined by its trendy restaurants and iconic buildings, but also by its sharp edges. It's a place that can be old, new, dirty and beautiful at the same time. It is this complexity that we love, and which simultaneously poses challenges for our city. This intensive programme included a series of lectures, excursions and workshops focusing on specific research methods and pressing social issues. Three thematic workshops formed the backbone of the course: Inequality in a Superdiverse City, Crime as part of a Global Network and Citizens of the Anthropocene.



Photo by Maarten Laupman

# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## SUMMER SCHOOL LET'S BE R€AL!

DATE: 19 - 30 July 2021

TUTORS: Alfredo Brillembourg, Tessa Steenkamp, Mike Emmerik, Michelle Provoost and Wouter Vanstiphout.

CONTRIBUTORS: Stad in de Maak (City in the Making), Rene Boer (Failed Architecture), Martin Boers (VPS), Teun van de Ende (Vers Beton), Tord Isdal, Charlie Koolhaas and Frederic Levrat.

PARTICIPANTS: 15

In July 2021 we organized a Summer School together with Alfredo Brillembourg of Urban Think Tank and Tessa Steenkamp. The Summer School aimed to set an example for major cities worldwide and has resulted in the proposal of an array of solutions from different perspectives. The focus was set at the development of new strategies and organisation models for housing. This was done by means of a collective effort, while specifically focusing on existing, vacant property. Using the ambition and requirements of a real-life case study, the Rotterdam based collective 'City in the Making' (Stad in de Maak) functioned as our external client. We looked at new models of ownership and new methods of collective city making. We aimed to come up with a pragmatic method to create more affordable housing for a former elementary school in the Rotterdam neighbourhood of Spangen. Based on the mission statement of Stad in de Maak, we developed strategies for a social alternative for the current anti-squat companies that have evolved over time as the predominant (for 90% of owners, the municipality included) model for the management of temporary vacant property in the Netherlands.

In this Summerschool we tried to develop a business model that uses the language of entrepreneurs and decision makers (they have to be convinced of the financial, legal and political feasibility), while at the same time it had to be a feasible 'alternative' in which we show that vacant management can be done better: more

social, more inclusive, more problem solving oriented, more fun! The Summer School resulted in a booklet as a next step in taking back housing. The booklet forms an 'unsolicited bid book' that can be used by City in the Making and the School to convince policy makers - by using the Right to Challenge - that the management of temporary vacant buildings can be done better and less expensive by the temporary tenants themselves.



# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## FILM AND ARCHITECTURE STUDIO 2021

DATE 07 - 28 September 2021  
TUTORS Jord den Hollander, Joep Mol, Michelle  
Provoost, Mike Emmerik and Ewout  
Dorman.  
CONTRIBUTORS Thomas Kist and Elia Romanelli.  
PARTICIPANTS 11

In September 2021, we joined forces again with the Architecture Film Festival Rotterdam (AFFR) to organize the third edition of the online film and architecture studio, supervised by architect, curator and filmmaker Jord den Hollander.

Just as in the previous editions, this studio offered a comprehensive way to use cinematic language in architecture and urban design. It is a hands-on course that focuses on learning and understanding the narrative of filmmaking as a way to explore the built environment. Participants were introduced to the essential elements of filmmaking and learned how to relate these to architecture and the city. The focus of the studio was not so much on the technical aspects of filmmaking and postproduction, but rather on film as a way to structure your thoughts and to turn your findings into a gripping story.

The online Film and Architecture Studio was spread over a period of a month, allowing participants to conduct research in their immediate surroundings. During six online meetings we exchanged ideas and discussed the participants' progress with both the tutors involved as well as other participants in the course. These meetings were combined with a presentation by DOP Thomas Kist who worked together with directors as Theo van Gogh, Steve Buscemi and Stanley Tucci and who has been involved in many documentaries on architecture and the city. And the Italian anthropologist and filmmaker Elia Romanelli. Each participant developed a short movie which was screened in Rotterdam's movie theater LatarenVenster in parallel to the Architecture Film Festival Rotterdam 2021 'More Than houses.'



Photo by Mike Emmerik

# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## INTO THE WOODS

DATE 18 - 22 October 2021  
TUTORS Peter Veenstra, Michelle Provoost, Mike Emmerik and Ewout Dorman.  
CONTRIBUTORS Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch, Jean-François Gauthier & Dr. Nadina Galle.  
PARTICIPANTS 11

From 18 until 22 October we organized a one-week studio exploring strategies for radical greening our cities with Peter Veenstra of Lola Landscape Architects. As planting trees has become a popular project for local and national governments all around the world to combat climate change and to increase biodiversity, this studio focussed on concrete action and looked at what we can do ourselves when it comes to planting trees in Rotterdam. Under the supervision of Peter Veenstra and with input from urban forest specialists from all around the world, we explored the do's and don'ts of planting trees and took a step in turning Rotterdam into an inhabitable forest. Together we questioned how to make a valuable forest and how to use the movement to create better living environments for everyone. We followed an ecological approach and research and used the natural reproductivity of nature. We have examined the potential of tree seedlings that can be harvested and replanted via digital mapping, on-site documentation, speculative design research and the actual planting of a small urban forest. The studio resulted in an urban forest herbarium, a new forest map of (a part of) Rotterdam, and a physical new forest. And at the end of 2022 all participants will receive a photo of 'their' forest.



Photo by Maarten Laupman, October 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman, October 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman, October 2021

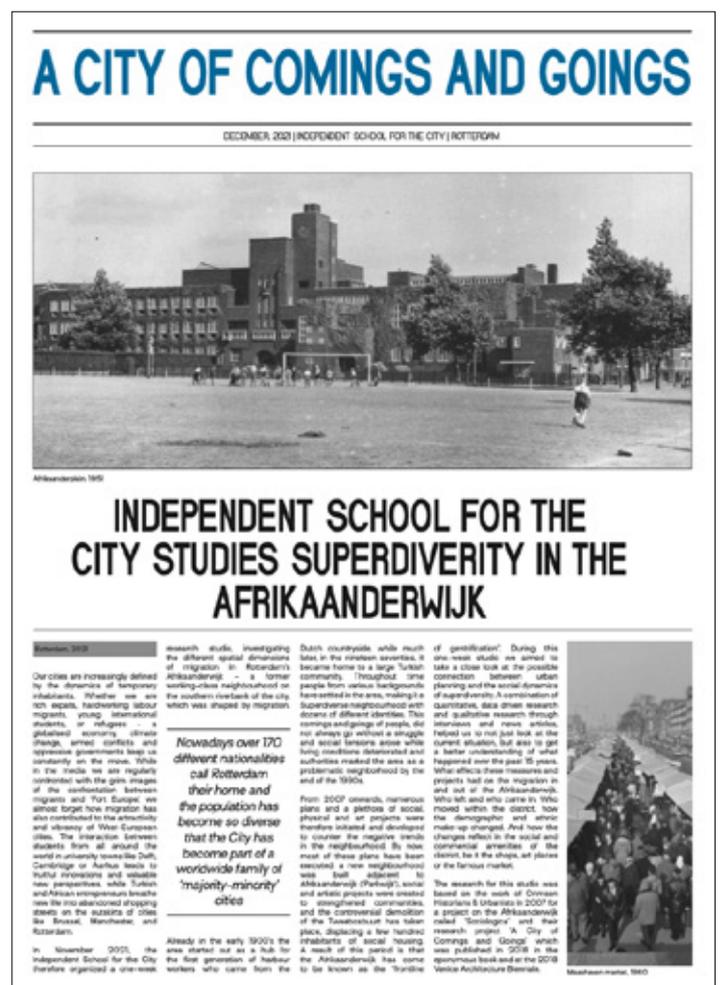
# EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## A CITY OF COMINGS AND GOINGS

DATE 15 - 19 November 2021  
TUTORS Michelle Provoost, Mike Emmerik, Ewout Dorman and Wouter Vanstiphout.  
PARTICIPANTS 5

In November 2021, we organized a one-week research studio, investigating the different spatial dimensions of migration in Rotterdam's Afrikaanderwijk – a former working-class neighbourhood on the southern riverbank of the city, which was shaped by migration. From 2007 onwards, numerous plans and a plethora of social, physical and art projects were initiated and developed to counter the negative trends in this neighbourhood. However, as most of these plans have been executed, the Afrikaanderwijk has come to be known as the “frontline of gentrification”. During this one-week studio we aimed to take a close look at the possible connection between urban planning and the social dynamics of superdiversity. A combination of quantitative, data driven research and qualitative research through interviews and news articles, helped us to not just look at the current situation, but also to get a better understanding of what happened over the past 15 years. What effects these measures and projects had on the migration in and out of the Afrikaanderwijk. Who left and who came in. Who moved within the district, how the demographic and ethnic make-up changed. And how the changes reflect in the social and commercial amenities of the district, be it the shops, art places or the famous market.

The research for this studio was based on the work of Crimson Historians & Urbanists in 2007 for a project on the Afrikaanderwijk called 'Sociologica' and their research project 'A City of Comings and Goings' which was published in 2018 in the eponymous book and at the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale.



# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## URBAN TISSUE WEAVING

DATE 10 - 12 December 2021  
TUTORS Bart Gorter and Ernst van der Hoeven  
PARTICIPANTS 7

From the beginning of civilization, weaving has played a cultural and artistic role in societies worldwide. Also the economic and scientific influence of the design and technology of looms has been significant: more than two centuries ago, the first punch cards were used on looms, which can rightfully be seen as the prerunners of the computer and formed the basis for the industrial revolution. Weaving is far more than a hobby and it certainly isn't dull or prissy.

Throwing away your old garments, clothing or fabric is something of the past! These clothes from the attic that date from another period in your life, the worn shirts your ex-lover left behind or just the silly purchases you made and which haven't left the closet since: everything that creates a meaningful story, an interesting pattern or just a beautiful colour scheme was the perfect starting material for this workshop.

This course offered the participants an exploration into the multiple meanings of weaving on a traditional Finnish weaving loom. It was a communal journey for which the Independent School for the City had teamed up with visual artists Bart Gorter and Ernst van der Hoeven, to understand the principles of weaving and to discover it as a metaphor for urban planning, for architecture and storytelling, for the computer, for the landscape and many more things. The course resulted in one large rug, collectively woven by the participants.



Photo by Sascha Harfkens, December 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman, December 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman, December 2021



Photo by Maarten Laupman, December 2021

# \_EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## THE POLDER OF BABEL COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

DATE	April 2020 – March 2022
ORGANISATION	Mike Emmerik, Simone Rots, Martijn van der Mark, Violette Schonberger and Francien van Westrenen
CONTRIBUTORS:	Michelle Provoost, Wouter Vanstiphout, Dirk Sijmons, Marjolein Demmers, Malique Mohamud
PARTICIPANTS	15

In 2020, the Independent School for the City was asked by the municipality of Rotterdam and Het Nieuwe Instituut to develop a programme parallel to the Dutch contribution to the 17th Venice Biennale of Architecture. In this programme the central question of the Biennale formulated by its curator Hashim Sarkis, “How will we live together?”, and the counter-question “Who is we?”, which was central to the Dutch contribution, was connected to the urban development of Rotterdam. Following the approach of the Independent School for the City as an interdisciplinary meeting place and knowledge exchange centre for (future) urban professionals, the community of learning on the one hand scrutinised the city through the lens of the Anthropocene, the era in which the Earth’s climate and atmosphere are strongly influenced by human activity. On the other hand, Rotterdam was examined as a Superdiverse city, a city of which more than half of its population consists of a diverse mix of ethnicities.

The project started in 2020 with a preliminary study in which the topics of the Anthropocene and Superdiversity were further explored and geared to the city of Rotterdam through desk research, interviews, the analysis of illustrative projects and (online) conversations. The findings of this research were compiled into a reader that formed the input of four sessions with a group of fifteen employees of the municipality of Rotterdam selected from various departments: urban development, urban management, social development and the engineering bureau. Focusing through the lens of the Anthropocene and Superdiversity we



worked on different cases in Rotterdam in order to ground these comprehensive and sometimes unclear topics in the reality of Rotterdam.

During the first session on the 17 and 18 June we looked at the concept of the Anthropocene and tried to relate this to concrete projects and the development of policy within the municipality of Rotterdam. After a morning of introductions and conversations on the theory of the Anthropocene, the participants worked on a case in Het Lage Land – literally one of the lowest locations of Rotterdam. At the end of the last day, the results were presented to the invited critics: landscape architect Dirk Sijmons and Director of Natuur & Milieu Majolein Demmers. The second session took place in September and was programmed around a visit to the Venice Architecture Biennale as part of the Pavilion Days. We took part in various public activities and visited the exhibition in order to relate the presented work to the reality of Rotterdam. In October we organised the third block of the programme: a two-day session about Superdiversity, focusing on the Delfshaven neighbourhood and specifically the area around the Schiedamseweg. For this we worked together with writer, director, performer and programme maker Malique Mohamud of Concrete Blossom who started the Niteshop – a centre for street culture in the neighbourhood. In the course of 2022, we will eventually wrap up the programme with a last session during which the participants will present their findings to their colleagues at the municipality of Rotterdam.

# \_EXHIBITIONS

## CITIZENS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE AT VIENNA BIENNALE FOR CHANGE

The Independent School for the City was one of the contributors to the Vienna Biennale for Change 2021 themed 'Planet Love. Climate Care in the Digital Age'. Building upon educational activities that we organized in collaboration with Dirk Sijmons and Herman Kossmann, we developed a 1,5x1,5m cube portraying four different views towards the Anthropocene.

If we agree on living in the 'Anthropocene', the age of mankind, how do we react to this novel condition? The answer depends greatly on how we see our planet and how we fathom the position of mankind. One extreme is to see the world as a passive backcloth for our actions; the other is to recognise the living planet as a fierce actor. Humankind can be seen as a modest, pointless species or – the other extreme – as an almost omnipotent geological force. Between these extremes, an infinite number of perspectives are possible, of course. A typology can be constructed when one considers these two sets of extremes as the vertical and horizontal axes of a matrix with four quadrants, each representing a specific philosophical world view: Denialism, (Eco)modernism, Posthumanism, and Anthropocentrism 2.0. These axes expose the ideological fault lines of the environmental debates of the 21st century. All four positions are present in society, be it with wide-ranging representation.

On the left side of the matrix, some 90% of the environmental discourse can be placed. With denialism being an unsustainable position in the end and (eco)modernism increasingly failing to provide answers to the problems of the Anthropocene, our project wants to draw attention to the possible alternatives: Posthumanism and Anthropocentrism 2.0. This is all the more urgent because a large part of the design community still lingers on the (eco)modernist dream that economic growth can coexist with decreasing the ecological footprint and that most environmental problems can be solved with technical means. As a teaser, the black box to your right will offer a close encounter with these four worlds.



# \_EXHIBITIONS

## COVID-19 REPORTS

Since the COVID-19 outbreak in the Netherlands and the following lock-down in March 2020, our researchers have been compiling a weekly poster giving an overview on how the pandemic developed and the effects it has on different aspects of the economy, culture, politics and other elements of the environment we live in. The COVID-19 reports were made until July 2021. An overview of all our reports can be found on our website.



# \_ACTIVITY CALENDAR 2021

## VISITS AND MEETINGS

### JANUARY 2021

- 5 Film and Architecture studio 2020 online
- 29 School's Out! #14 with Kilian Kleinschmidt

### FEBRUARY 2021

- 1 Start Dirty Old Town programme 2021
- 15-26 Superdiversity studio
- 22 Lecture by Michelle Provoost during Designing Cities for All organized by Pakhuis de Zwijger
- 26 School's Out! #15 with Pascale Sablan

### MARCH 2021

- 3-10 Crime studio
- 15-26 Anthropocene studio
- 26 School's Out! #16 - Maaskant Award Ceremony for Michelle Provoost

### APRIL 2021

- 22 Contribution by Mike Emmerik to the MINDSCAPES Conference by Kunstinstituut Melly and SICK festival
- 23 End presentations Dirty Old Town programme 2021
- 30 School's Out! #17 with Zvi Efrat

### MAY 2021

- 28 School's Out! #18 with Malu Borja of AI Borde

### JUNE 2021

- 10 Contribution by Mike Emmerik to the talkshow 'Towards a New European Practice' in Brussels
- 19 Dag van de Architectuur, part of Rotterdam Architecture Month
- 17-18 Polder of Babel session 1: Anthropocene
- 25 School's Out! #19 with Adriaan Geuze
- 26 Open Office Day, part of Rotterdam Architecture Month

### JULY 2021

- 19- 30 Summer School Let's Be R€AL!

### AUGUST 2021

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- 07-28 Film & Architecture studio 2021
- 24 School's Out! #20 with Jan Willem Petersen
- 23-25 Polder of Babel session 2: Venice Architecture Biennale

- 28 Post'65 Groeikernenkring

### OCTOBER 2020

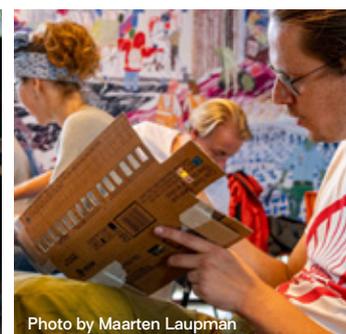
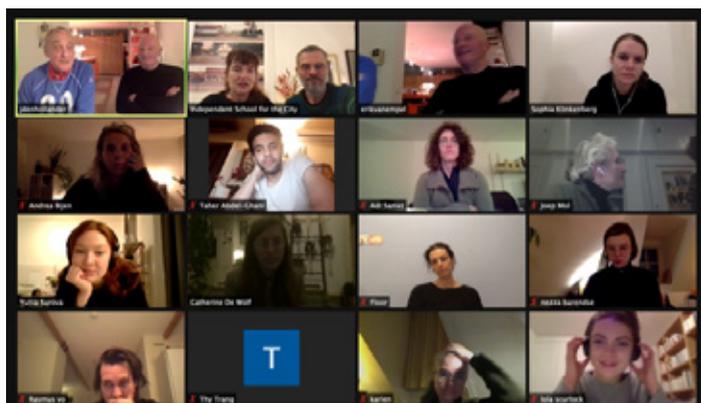
- 18-22 Into the Woods
- 29-29 Polder of Babel session 3: Superdiversity
- 29 Architecture policy meeting
- 29 School's Out! #21 with Herman Kossmann

### NOVEMBER 2021

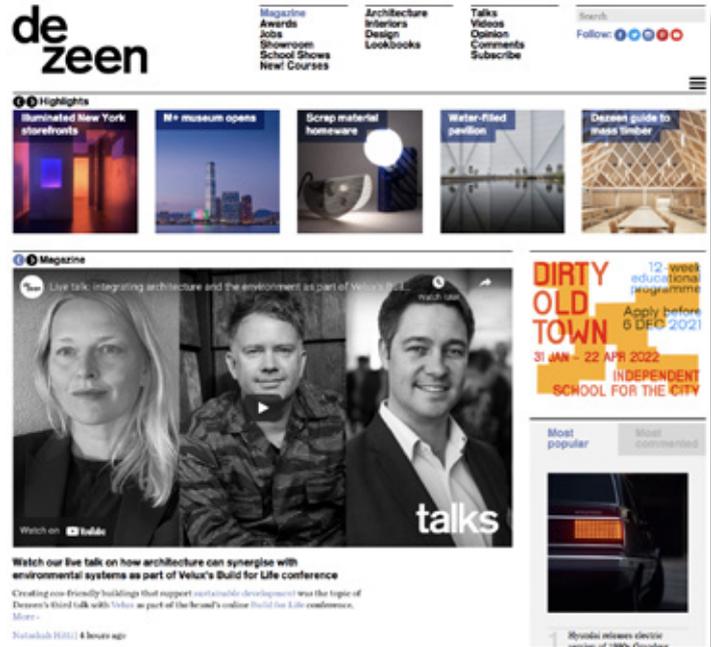
- 9 Post Groeikernenkring
- 15-19 A City of Comings and Goings studio
- 29 International New Town Day 2021

### DECEMBER 2021

- 10-12 Urban Tissue Weaving Workshop



# \_IN THE MEDIA



Advertisement on Dezeen Mobile and Desktop, online from 17 - 28 november.



Interview with Mike Emmerik in Citizens 03 about the Independent School. Issue-03



Interview with Michelle Provoost on ArchiNED about the Maaskantprijs. March 25.



# Independent School for the City

FILED AS Practice (Postgraduate Educational Platform)

TEMPORALITY 2018 - present

LOCATION Rotterdam, Netherlands

CATEGORY [Climate Change](#), [Educational programme](#), [Migration](#), [Urban](#)

Share



Interview with Mike Emmerik in Urgent Pedagogies about the Independent School May 6.



Poster campaign on billboards around Rotterdam in June 2020

## Michelle Provoost wint Maaskantprijs: “Door dieper te graven brengt ze ongeziene kwaliteiten naar boven”

Architectuurhistoricus Michelle Provoost heeft de Grote Maaskantprijs gewonnen. De jury prijst de betrokken en reflectieve manier waarop ze bij haar onderzoek te werk gaat. “Provoost geeft blijk van het soort stem die in deze tijd nodig is.”



Teun van den Ende 26 maart 2021 leestijd 3 minuten

Interview with Michelle Provoost on Vers Beton about the Maaskantprijs. March 26.

For the 17th Venice Architecture Biennale, Polder Architecture brings together artists and designers to question the spatial narrative of the botanical garden, the ecological garden, and the natural history museum.

special series archive

Guest Crit #6: Mailcore w/ Alexandra Lange



Stories on Earth: Challenging the Human/Non-Human Dichotomy  
Clara Dalich and Daphne Bakker

FA Situation #6: Witnessing Lutkermeer



Stories on Earth w/ Chiara and Daphne  
Chiara

Dirty Old Town  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FOR THE CITY  
81 JAN - 22 APR 2022  
Party before on NOV 2021

FA Situation #5: A Walk Around the A10

Advertisement on the Failed Architecture Website, online from 17 - 28 november.



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**creative industries fund NL**



City of Rotterdam

**stichting droom en daad**

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**DeZwarteHond.**

**POWERHOUSE COMPANY**

**KAAN Architecten**

**MLA<sup>+</sup>**