

# A BED, A CHAIR AND

A TABLE

STORIES FROM THE POORTGEBOUW

*Experimental Publishing*

Master Media Design and Communication

Piet Zwart Institute

Willem de Kooning Academy

Rotterdam







INTRODUCTION

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POORTGEBOUW. ALGEMENE  
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ARCHIVE.

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Omschrijving : DO Zuidwest gevel

Datum: 02 - 04 - 2007



# PREFACE

Before squatting was banned in the Netherlands in 2010, there were two conditions which allowed individuals—in the eyes of the law—to claim any space as their home. First, one would have to prove that the property had been vacant for over a year. Second, they would have to show clear evidence of their current inhabitation. In order to meet the minimum requirements, this meant the space had to contain at least three pieces of furniture: *a bed, a chair, and a table*.

The book you are holding explores the significance of these three objects in relation to one of the most well known former squats in Rotterdam, The Poortgebouw. On the surface, these objects appear mundane. Yet, upon further exploration, we found that each symbolize a unique facet of the past 37 years of life in and around the Poortgebouw.

The Poortgebouw is an imposing 19th century building, a national monument located on the south bank of the river Maas in Rotterdam. Once intended to house the head administrative office for *Rotterdamsche Handelsvereniging*, it never fulfilled its initial purpose. Before it was completed in 1879, the building's owner, Lodewijk Pincoffs, went bankrupt and fled to the United States (Pomian 2007).

Since then, torn between its many personalities—an office building, a national monument, a potential brothel, a squat, a communal living space—the Poortgebouw remains a remarkable illustration of an autonomous housing project in

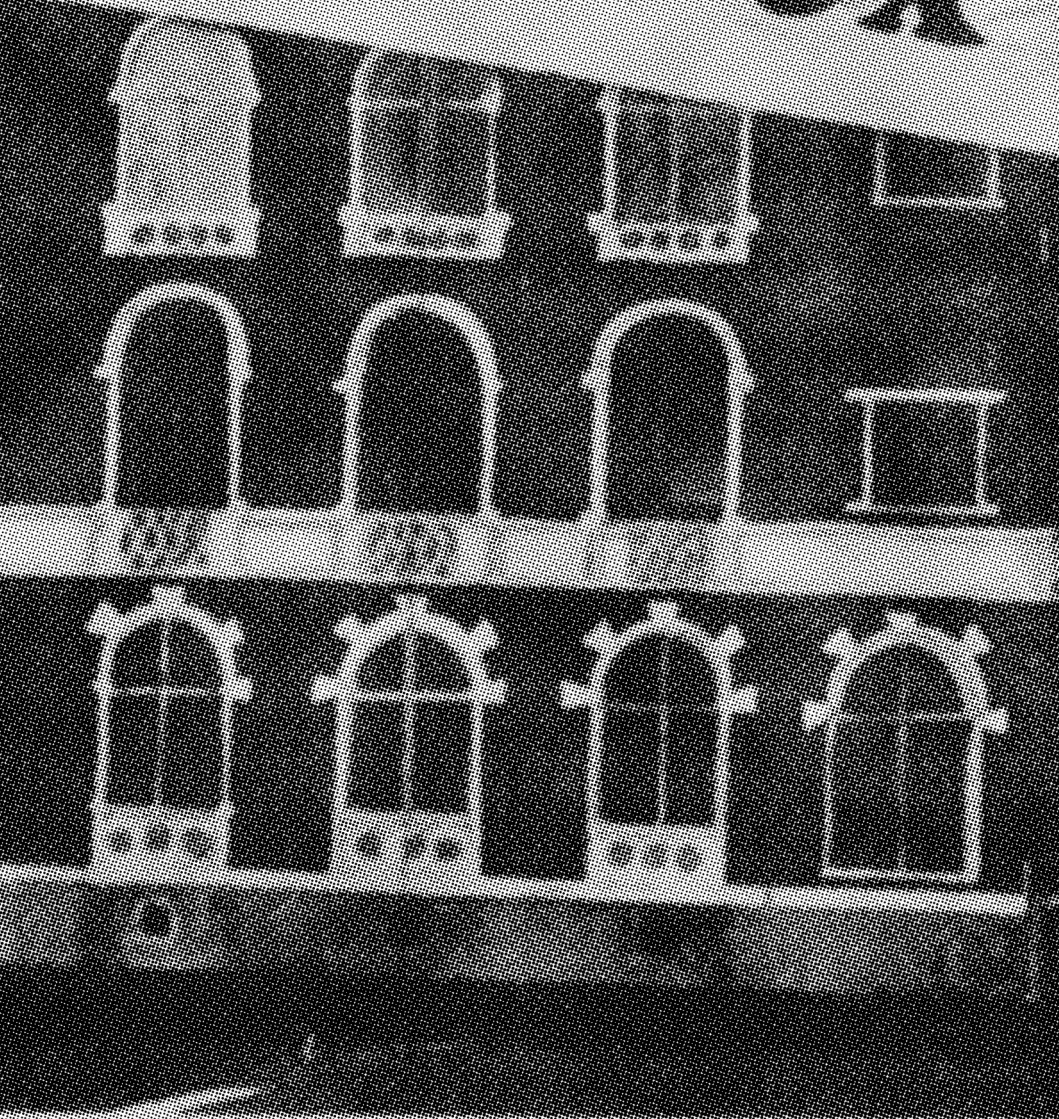
FIG 2  
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING  
OF THE POORTGEBOUW. 2007.  
AUTONOMOUS ARCHIVE.

the Netherlands (Tóth 2007). Today, the Poortgebouw is not a squat. To say it is would overlook the years of struggle it took to become legalized and recognized as a living group under their own terms. Yet, the four years it was squatted (between 1980 and 1984) remain a crucial part of its identity. They are the foundation of the community's history, culture and future goals. Though the Poortgebouw maintains a radical leftist identity, nowadays it involves less direct political action and more social interaction. Nevertheless, the occupation of the Poortgebouw 'is not an isolated practice but a collective intervention in the urban fabric. It avoids further deterioration in decaying areas [...] by building up social networks and street life. These are palpable social benefits, though they are not easy to measure with official statistics.' (Martinez Lopez 2015, p.38) Accordingly, the cultural value of squats and activist communities remain vital, especially as cities continue to change and gentrify. Surrounded as it is by corporate and luxury apartments, the Poortgebouw's future grows increasingly uncertain.

The intricacies of its architecture are second only to the multitude of stories that emerge from its history. In the process of collecting testimonies from figures inside and outside the Poortgebouw, we became aware of the many parallel narratives that have formed around it. For this book we have gathered these tales of resilience, political struggle, frustration and friendship from various institutional and autonomous archives, personal collections and imaginations. Here, different voices build a collective narrative, sharing the experiences of artists, writers, builders,

FIG 3  
PHOTOGRAPH OF EROSCENTRUM  
PROTEST BANNER. DE OUD ROT-  
TERDAMMER, 2006. AUTONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# Seen sex





anarchists, teachers, students, bystanders, and politicians. It is not strictly chronological, as memories hardly ever are. Instead, it loosely follows the shape of a novel—a story that develops slowly until the turbulent climax, and an epilogue of a future, imagined in a dozen different ways.

The bed, chair, and table help organize these narratives into three different perspectives. They fill the space inside and outside the building, both figuratively and physically. Beds tell stories of intimacy, personal experiences, and of making a home out of the Poortgebouw. Chairs are filled by the people who take a seat while attending a gig, or a house meeting on the latest crisis. Tables facilitate a community or municipality to gather around in order to plan, strategize and, ultimately, fight against disruptive forces.

This publication stands on the shoulders of a previous work, the *'Autonomous Archive'* (see page 192) of the Poortgebouw. It was initiated in 2017, by students of the *Piet Zwart Institute*, Rotterdam as an attempt to digitize and expand the collective's existing paper archive. Our aim is not to merely build on this *'Autonomous Archive'*, but to 'approach archiving from a lateral view, to enter the river of time sideways.' (Pad.ma 2010) In this book, oral history offers windows through which we can engage with the archival material. It gives context, makes new connections and reveals how 'certain choices and events [...] influenced a person's later life, and in which personal, social and institutional context that was able to take place.' (Pieterse 2017, p.128) Another function of the archive, and of this book, is to strengthen the position of the Poortgebouw and provide a mechanism for future resistance.

FIG 3





As researcher Özge Çelikaslan notes, the archive ‘is a *milieu de mémoire* that gathers what would otherwise be forgotten, distorted or intentionally erased from the social memory. It also allows us to question what is visible and hidden and creates a space of collective investigation.’ (Çelikaslan 2017, p.32) This publication does not intend to speak louder than existing archives and narratives, but to provide another voice amongst many. The woven narratives provide triggers for the reader to further explore the Poortgebouw’s archive and to see this building, its community, and potential future amidst all of its complexities. It is therefore ‘not representational, it is creative, and the naming of something as an archive is not the end, but the beginning of a debate.’ (Pad.ma 2010) If the archive is not about the preservation of the past but a tool to influence the future, this publication makes visible the vibrant network that is at stake.

Çelikaslan, Ö. (2017). Autonomous Archiving. In Dekker, A. (ed.) *Lost and Living (in) Archives Collectively Shaping New Memories*. Amsterdam: Valiz.

Martinez Lopez, M. (2015). Squatting for Justice: Bringing Life to the City. In Moore, A. and Smart, A. (ed.) *Making room: Cultural Production in Occupied Spaces*. Barcelona: Other Forms, The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest.

Pad.ma (2010). ‘10 Theses on the Archive.’ [online] Pad.ma. Available at: <http://pad.ma/documents/OH/40> [Accessed 14 Nov. 2017].

Pieterse, J. and Scagliola, S. (2017). The Hidden Value of Oral History in an ‘Open’ Society. In Dekker, A. (ed.) *Lost and Living (in) Archives Collectively Shaping New Memories*. Amsterdam: Valiz.

Pomian, R. (2007). ‘*The Architecture of the Poortgebouw.*’ [online] The Poortgebouw. Available at: <https://poortgebouw.org/2007/05/18/the-architecture-of-the-poortgebouw/> [Accessed 14 Nov. 2017].

Tóth, K. (2007). ‘*Poortgebouw: A Dutch Case Study.*’ [online] The Poortgebouw. Available at: <https://poortgebouw.org/2007/05/26/poortgebouw-a-dutch-case-study/> [Accessed 14 Nov. 2017].

FIG 4  
DECLARATION:  
THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW IS  
SQUATTED.  
1980.  
AUTONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

Vrydag-3 okt 1980

Eindelyk is het dan zover, het Poortgebouw heeft een bestemming gekregen!

Afgelopen nacht hebben wy, Rotterdamse Kraakgroepen, met zo'n 50-70 man/vrouw het al jaren leegstaande Poortgebouw gekraakt.

Dit, omdat het in deze tyd van vele woningzoekenden asociaal is om woonruimten als kantoren(lege), en dergelyke leeg te laten staan.

Ook echter als protest tegen de nieuwe op handen zynde "LEEGSTANDSWET", waarin de overheid pretendeert de leegstand tegen te willen gaan, maar die in feite neerkomt op een "ANTIKRAAKWET", waarin het recht op het kraken van lege panden verkracht wordt.

Kraken is een verweer van vele woningzoekenden tegen 't feit dat fundamenteel recht op wonen wordt vertrappt door beleggers en speculanten.

Tegelykertyd ook een gevecht tegen gemeenten en overheid, die er niet in (willen)slagen de grote woningnood te bestryden.

Wy hebben daarom speciaal het P.G.B. gekraakt, omdat dit al jaren leegstaat, het best te bewonen is, en omdat het pand goed te gebruiken is voor allerlei activiteiten.

Onze bedoeling is om het pand bewoonbaar te maken, om er een kraakspreekuur te gaan draaien en in overleg met de buurt te gaan gebruiken voor jongeren-activiteiten, zoals een jongerencentrum o. id.

Wy hopen met deze verklaring op uw solidariteit.....  
het ROTTERDAMS OVERLEG KRAAKGROEPEN

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rotterdam

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achter de eisen van de bewoners van het poortgebouw.  
kragen is een noodzaak wonen is een recht.

col 38 1 5-21

## TIMELINE

- 1879 The Poortgebouw is built as the headquarters for the *Rotterdamsche Handelsvereniging (RHV)*. Shortly before construction was completed, the politician, port baron and founder of the *RHV*, Lodewijk Pincoffs, went bankrupt and fled to the United States.
- 1882 After the scandal, the building falls into the hands of the *Gemeente of Rotterdam*. Under the city's management, the Poortgebouw saw a range of uses, including periods as offices for companies like the *Holland America Line*.
- 1932 The building is used as the head office of the *Haven Bedrijf Rotterdam* (Port Authority Rotterdam).
- 1940 Nazi Germany invades the Netherlands. Being on the South side of the river, the Poortgebouw survives bombardment.
- 1977 The Port Authority moves out of the building, leaving it empty for 3 years. During this time, the city draws up plans to turn the Poortgebouw into an eros centrum. The proposal was made as an attempt to regulate prostitution in nearby Katendrecht, but was immediately met with strong opposition from neighbours and local councils.
- 1979 Tensions between the municipality and the inhabitants of Feijenoord and Noordereiland reach its highest point. Protests break out, and on 24 March, the police discover a small fire at the Poortgebouw. A few months later, the city drops its plans for building.
- 1980 The Poortgebouw is squatted by the *Rotterdam Overleg Kraakgroepen* as part of a national protest against a lack of affordable housing, titled '*Wij jongeren eisen*' (we the youth demand). The group intended to transform the Poortgebouw from abandoned office space into an autonomous zone, a *jongerencentrum* (youth centre) with housing and socio-cultural and political activities.
- 1980 The owner of the building, the City of Rotterdam, decided that the squatters could be tolerated (*gedoogd*) as they had no immediate plans following the failed *Eroscentrum* concept.
- 1982 The *Vereniging Poortgebouw* was founded in September 1982 as the official organisation for the living group to renovate and later rent the building from the municipal *Gemeentelijke Woningbedrijf Rotterdam (GWR)*.
- 1982 40+ police raid the Poortgebouw to seize a pirate radio transmitter, which was being used by residents to broadcast *Radio Oranje*.

FIG 5  
TELEGRAM  
ABOUT A  
NEW SQUAT,  
FROM THE  
POORTGE-  
BOUW. 1981.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

The renovation is completed under the conditions of <i>HVAT Woningen</i> , and the first rent contract is signed.	1984	<i>De Groene Groep</i> press on, and win their case in the Rotterdam court. The residents request an appeal. During this time, the Poortgebouw limits its events and activities.	2006
The Poortgebouw is officially legalized. The Poortgebouw is officially classified as a municipal and national monument.	1986	The residents win their case in the appeals court in <i>Den Haag</i> . <i>De Groene Groep</i> is forced to continue its rent contract with the collective, or else find equivalent housing for all 30 residents.	2010
<i>The Gemeentelijke Woningbedrijf Rotterdam (GWR)</i> is privatized and renamed as <i>Woningbedrijf Rotterdam (WBR)</i> .	1994	After years of conflict, The Poortgebouw is sold to <i>DWV NL TPlus VI BV</i> , another private owner. Renovations on the façade and structure of the building are still yet to be carried out.	2016
The <i>Erasmusbrug</i> is opened, linking the Kop van Zuid to the city centre. Meanwhile, the local government forges ahead with a regeneration scheme of the surrounding neighborhood. This redevelopment was also intended to help to change the image of Rotterdam — from an industrial port to ‘Manhattan on the Maas’.	1996	Residents of the Poortgebouw start work on an ‘ <i>Autonomous Archive</i> ’ of their history, and collaborate on various projects with cultural institutions in Rotterdam such as <i>Het Nieuwe Instituut</i> and the <i>Piet Zwart Institute</i> .	2017
Poortgebouw residents fight plans to evict their garden and to take away the trees along the riverside. The city eventually wins.	1997		
The Poortgebouw is sold by the <i>WBR</i> to <i>De Groene Groep (DGG)</i> , a private development firm, for 450,000 euros. During the process, the inhabitants were not consulted.	2001		
<i>De Groene Groep</i> announces plan to cancel the rental contracts of the <i>Vereniging Poortgebouw</i> , evict the tenants and renovate the building for office space. The residents take the case to court, and propose plans to buy out the development firm.	2004		

FIG 6  
PHOTO-  
GRAPH FROM  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW. UN-  
KNOWN. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.







# VOICES

ANIA

Ania is an architect, researcher and co-founder of Amateur Cities—an online platform connecting city thinkers to city makers. She has called Rotterdam home since 1996, and she believes places like Poortgebouw are “certainly worth fighting for.”

CESARE

Cesare moved from one of Den Haag’s most well known former squats, the *Blauwe Aanslag*, into the Poortgebouw in 1995. After moving out in 1997, he co-founded the sustainable design practice Superuse Studios, where he still works today. He is still known to the current residents as the guy who built the kitchen and fought to save the Poortgebouw garden.

E.T.C. DEE

E.T.C. Dee has been an active member of the European squatting movement for most of the last twenty years, and continues to squat in Rotterdam today. He has been going to the Poortgebouw for years and is writing a chapter dedicated to its history in his forthcoming book about squatting. He also organized the SQEK Conference in the Poortgebouw in 2016.

GIULIA

Originally from Italy, Giulia is an artist and student at the *Piet Zwart Institute*. She is a current inhabitant

of the Poortgebouw, and has lived there since 2015. She is also one of the initiators of the Poortgebouw’s ‘*Autonomous Archive*’.

FIG 7  
PHOTO-  
GRAPH FROM  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
UNKNOWN.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

JERE

Jere has been an active figure in the squatting scene since he started touring Europe with his band and publishing anarchist zines in his native Croatia. He has lived in the Poortgebouw since 2015 and currently works as a researcher in the field of urban critical theory.

KATIA

As a researcher at *Het Nieuwe Instituut*, Katia is heavily involved in the museum’s current programme on squatting as a spatial practice, entitled *Architecture of Appropriation*. She has worked closely with the Poortgebouw and its archive, which she first came into contact with in 2014 through her friend Rianne.

LAURA

Laura is a journalist and researcher at the Verhalenhuis Belvedere (City Story Centre) located in Katendrecht, Rotterdam. She has only seen the Poortgebouw from afar.

LIDEWIJ

Lidewij lived in the Poortgebouw as a student for several years in the late 1980s. Later she provided technical advice to Peter, Christine, and the legal team which fought the Poortgebouw’s case against the Groene Groep. Today she teaches architecture and urbanism at TU Delft, with a specialisation in cohousing and sustainability.

MARCEL &amp; JUANITA

Marcel and Juanita are lawyers who specialize in the field of social and housing rights. Between them, they have some two decades of experience in dealing with both criminal and civil litigation of squats.

Marina is an architect, researcher and director of *Het Nieuwe Instituut*'s Research Department. Together with Katia Truijten and others, she is currently leading the museum's Architecture of Appropriation programme.

MARINA

Sebas moved into the Poortgebouw in 2012, and now acts as the treasurer of the association. He is also a member of the board and is often involved in matters of building maintenance and renovation.

SEBAS

Artists and writers by trade, Peter and Christine came to the Poortgebouw in 2002, at a time of emerging crisis for the collective. Over the next six years, they became instrumental in the legal proceedings against the building's new owners, *De Groene Groep*. During this time they also published critical texts and case studies about the Poortgebouw through their project *WHY Rotterdam*.

PETER & CHRISTINE

Siebe is a writer and philosopher who lived in a squat in Crooswijk for some time in the 1980s. During that time he visited the Poortgebouw often and has since written several texts on squatting culture. Today he heads the Fine Arts and Public Space programme at the *CBK (Centre for Fine Arts) Rotterdam*.

SIEBE

Rianne was born and raised in the South of Rotterdam, and fulfilled her dream of living in the Poortgebouw in December 2013. Since then she's been an active member of the association and is one of the initiators of the collaboration with *Het Nieuwe Instituut*.

RIANNE

Oz is a Piet Zwart Institute graduate and former inhabitant of the Poortgebouw. Now based in Turkey, he lived in the Poortgebouw between 2009 – 2010.

OZ

Together with artist Jeanne van Heeswijk, who published the art piece on squatting titled *Papieren Huis* (Paper House), Ramon works for Stichting Freehouse and Gemaal op Zuid, both co-operative social centres in the Afrikaanderwijk neighborhood.

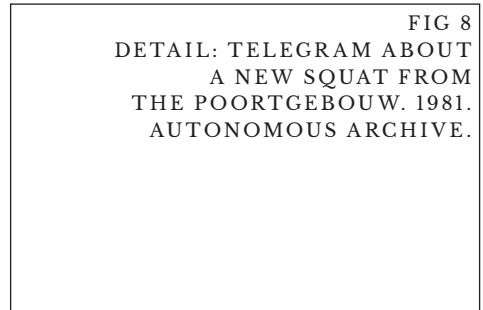
RAMON

Okach is the neighbourhood manager for the areas *Feijenoord*, *Noordereiland* and *Kop van Zuid* (where the Poortgebouw is located). He has worked for the municipality for thirteen years and is often involved in conversations between the building inhabitants, its owner and its surrounding neighborhood.

OKACH

Wim lived in the Poortgebouw from 1981 til 1989. Though he was not part of the original group of squatters, he was heavily involved in the renovation effort which led to the legalisation of the building.

WIM



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van het poortgebouw

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FIG 8



# A B E D

FIG 9  
'POORT-  
GEBOUW:  
MEER DAN EEN  
WOONGROEP'.  
ROTTERDAMS  
DAGBLAD,  
2004.  
AUTONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



## POORTGEBOUW NIEUWS!!!

"Die groeperingen, die weigeren zich te binden aan door de sociaal-democratie geaccepteerde normen, organisatiepatronen en vormen van aanspreekbaarheid, worden ondergebracht onder de noemer van a-sociaal, illegaal, anti-democratisch. Stakende havenarbeiders zijn bijna per traditie met deze begrippen geëtiketteerd. Maar ook nieuwe vormen van acties van krakers, anti-monarchisten of gewoon groepen die hun onvrede buiten bestaande organisatiepatronen afreageren, vormen een verstoring van het beheerste beeld van de compacte stad.

Tegen dergelijke acties schromen sociaal-democratische bestuurders niet het meest grove politiegeweld in te zetten. De afstand en overenigbaarheid van de sociaal-democratie met deze groepen wordt daarmee benadrukt: groepen die niet duidelijk georganiseerd zijn, die niet via duidelijke representanten aanspreekbaar zijn.

Uitdrukkelijk is dat de sociaal-democratie momenteel de grootste moeite heeft deze huidige vormen van sociale onrust te integreren in haar eigen politiek. Het 'cement' dat de sociaal-democratie placht te zijn tussen linkse beweging en de staat lijkt nu ouderdomsverschijnselen te vertonen."

Bovenstaande is een fragment uit het boek "De beheerste stad", een kritiek op het ontstaan en de intenties van een sociaal-democratische stadspolitiek in Rotterdam.

Dit fragment tiepeert onze positie op dit moment vrij reeël.

Tot nu toe voor zover ik weet heeft alleen het Algemeen Dagblad (1) een bericht opgenomen n.a.v. onze laatste brief aan het college van b en w dd. 11 december 1980. Uiteraard ~~kan~~ weten we nog niet wat er vrijdag in b en w vergadering besproken is, misschien dat we komende week daarover bericht ontvangen van b en w.

We moeten er rekening mee houden dat ze ons niet zomaar ongenoeid zullen laten en daarom moeten we voorbereid zijn op een evt. gewelddadige ontruiming. Barrioaderen zal nu meer dan ooit tevoren door moeten gaan. Houten balken, beddespiralen, autobanden, grote spijkers enz enz enz. Als het tot een ontruiming komt, moeten we het ze in ieder geval niet gemakkelijk maken.

Het is twee voor twaalf en het wordt nu toch donders wel eens tijd dat ook jij je steentje daartoe bijdraagt!

Je kan ook op je doosje gemak dat boek gaan zitten lezen. De beheerste stad, verkrijgbaar bij Van Gennep op de Nwe. Binnenweg voor vijftien gulden en je konklusies er uit trekken. Laat de discussie maar losbarsten.....



AANSTEKEN

H.H.

EN WEGMETEN!



# MY FAVOURITE THING ABOUT LIVING HERE? EVERYTHING! YEAH!

KATIA

There are many crazy stories [about the Poortgebouw]. Sometimes, it's hard to verify these stories, but I think that is beautiful. For instance, you've probably heard of it, there was a wall through the middle of the building that was dividing people considering themselves to be more anarchists or artists. And they didn't really want to live together for a while. That's one history of the Poortgebouw.

PETER

We will never forget our two-story 'room with a view' on the Maas side of the building. It was our home and office. In the summer, the sun blazed in until 11 pm. Wake up to the sound of baby ducks outside the window. The view over the skyline sprouting with new high-rises. Strange harbour machinery and rigs being towed from the Hef past our window towards the Erasmusbrug. It's a hard memory to top when it comes to living quality.

FIG 10  
EARLY  
NEWSLETTER  
FROM THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW  
COLLECTIVE.  
1980.  
AUTONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



The Poortgebouw was like an action figure for grown-up kids, with all its variations. You can jump into the water from the windows. You can enter from one side and exit on the other. You can climb to the roof from the attic. You can watch the bridge going up and down from some of the rooms. I hid a secret toy in Poortgebouw. I am curious to know if somebody found it.

OZ

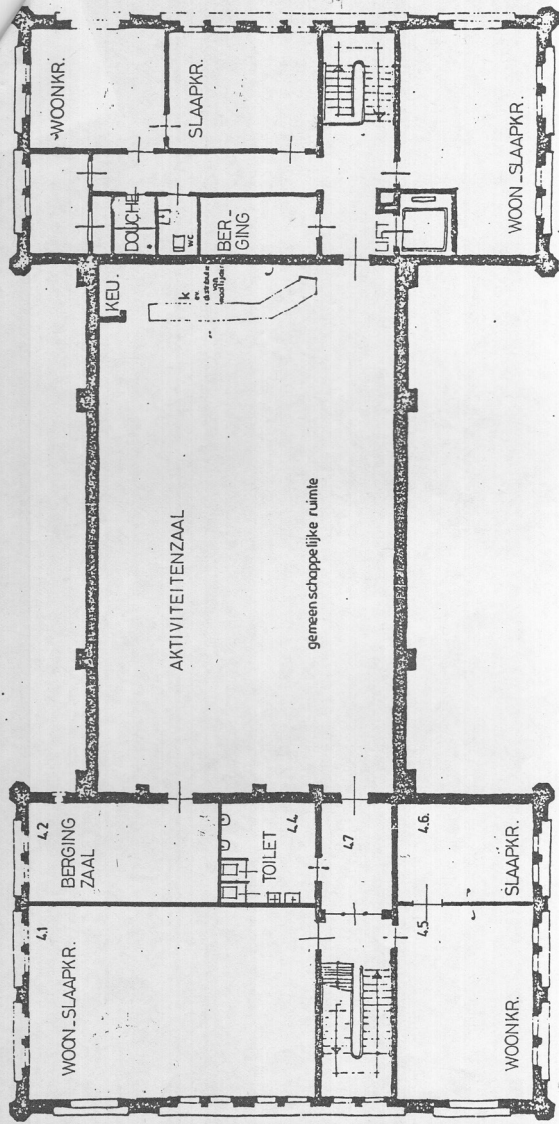
Sometime in the eighties, I was the owner of a little silkscreen factory in Katendrecht. A rough place to be at that time, with plenty of prostitutes and drug addicts. During a night out, I noticed something strange. On both sides of the Poortgebouw building I saw people crossing the street holding little wooden sticks. They were playing some sort of game in the middle of the night. Some weeks later, I got down there to attend a New People's Meeting. I presented myself and asked for a place to sleep. So that's how I ended up living in the Poortgebouw, just a year after it was squatted. When I moved in, the whole building was being renovated by the people themselves. So, we were busy with that for a couple of years. We also managed to build a completely new in-between floor and get a silkscreen printing studio installed there.

WIM

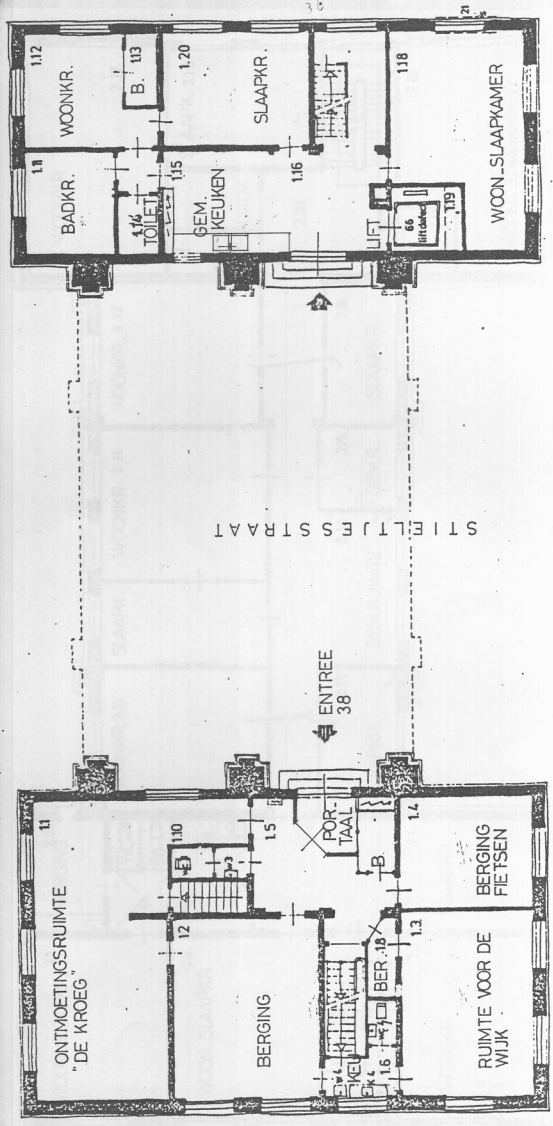
My favourite thing about living here? Everything! Yeah! I think these kinds of affordable and self-crafted places to live are really rare and hard to find, and it gives you the feeling that, just by living here, you have opportunities that others don't have. But you have to want it. You need to

JERE

FIG 11  
FLOORPLAN  
OF THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW,  
THIRD  
FLOOR. UN-  
KNOWN. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



3<sup>e</sup> verdieping  
poortgebouw



begane grond  
poortgebouw

R

be ready to have some psychological, personal, collective, communal, whatever kind of pressures and issues. I really love it.

RIANNE

My favorite part of living here is the space. You can rollerskate in the attic, we have a darkroom... It's the space you share. You know, the community that squatted it, they made this initial planning for the building, with 28 rooms. And the municipality said no, we can make 52 units out of this house. And they said no, no, no—this is a living community. So I have my own space, but I don't see it as my house, I see the whole building as my house. We share space, we share opportunities, we share knowledge. That's the nice thing; even though, yes, we could make three more units upstairs in the attic, but that would mean that we can't have events there, that we don't have the opportunity to create these amazing things. So that's what I love about it, that there's space to breathe and live and to share.

KATIA

There is also a story about the female attic. All the women were living there and producing beautiful magazines.

LIDEWIJ

We had a lot of discussions in the house, especially about who did what. At one point, we as women were fed up with the discussions about cleaning and decided to get our own floor, in the attic. We built our own bathroom and kitchen and set our own standards in keeping it clean.

FIG 12  
FLOOR-  
PLAN OF  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW,  
GROUND  
FLOOR. UN-  
KNOWN. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

The house is huge. It's like having an elephant as a pet sometimes. I mean, it's the same with people, their charms are usually really close to what makes them annoying—like when somebody's an extrovert and they can be outgoing or they can be too loud. So it's the same thing with this house. It's really big, so if something has to be done it costs a lot. Keeping it warm is a problem. And, of course, there's a lot of people. Sometimes it feels like no one is here, and all of a sudden they all decide to go to one corner of the house, where they don't fit, and you want to make some pasta and it's impossible. And things move around quickly, they disappear quickly. Not that anything has ever been stolen, it's just been misplaced. And because it's such a huge space, you have to run a marathon just to retrieve it.

What I really love is the story about the kitchens. I think there are five kitchens in the Poortgebouw. And what is beautiful is that the Poortgebouw is hosting people from different nationalities. And there is one kitchen where the Italian people are usually cooking, and in the other the Spanish. At any hour of the day, you could go to a kitchen, because it is their time to have dinner. Also, I love how the day cycle in the Poortgebouw works. In the morning, it is really quiet, some people are making coffee in the kitchen. And at night, sometimes there is suddenly a dance party in one of the rooms, or the attic is transformed into a circus.

It's interesting what the space tells about the spatial practices of the people who have lived there—about their different personalities, about their traces and stories.

FIG 13  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







You know, Cesare is the guy who built our kitchen.

I remember the first meeting we had there, we were sitting around the table discussing our project, while in the kitchen one of the inhabitants, who had recently arrived to the house, was cooking dinner. He was cooking for himself. He didn't know any of us. But he brought the food to the table where we were sitting, and shared it with us. To me, that was amazing. I like that energy.

When you come home, it's like... when you turn on the television and change the programmes. These guys are smoking a joint and chilling, these guys are talking about astronomy, the Italians are cooking again, this guy just broke up with his girlfriend so he wants to talk about it. You can just choose which kind of programme you want to watch. That's the part I like a lot. The edges are loose, in a way, and whatever we do can be negotiated or changed by ourselves. Of course, there are 30 people that have a say in the whole thing, like the municipality, the owners... But we really have a certain autonomy for the way we want to live.

There are not really any fixed roles or tasks. But I can say that we are divided into groups, and each of us has to participate in at least one group. And at the moment, I am very busy with this archive project, of course, but I also always help out in communication, IT, organizing activities, cleaning. Poortgebouw means a lot of cleaning.

FIG 14  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

It's a physical exercise to be in this house. [...] For me, it feels like I'm constantly conscious of the whole space in my mind, and that's really nice, really liberating—but also overwhelming.

RIANNE

I have always lived with a lot of people. And for me, it's very important to share things with others. It makes me feel at home, to have a lot of people around me. Also, [I like] the fact that we can have a space to organize whatever we want. With a lot of help, support, and freedom at the same time.

GIULIA

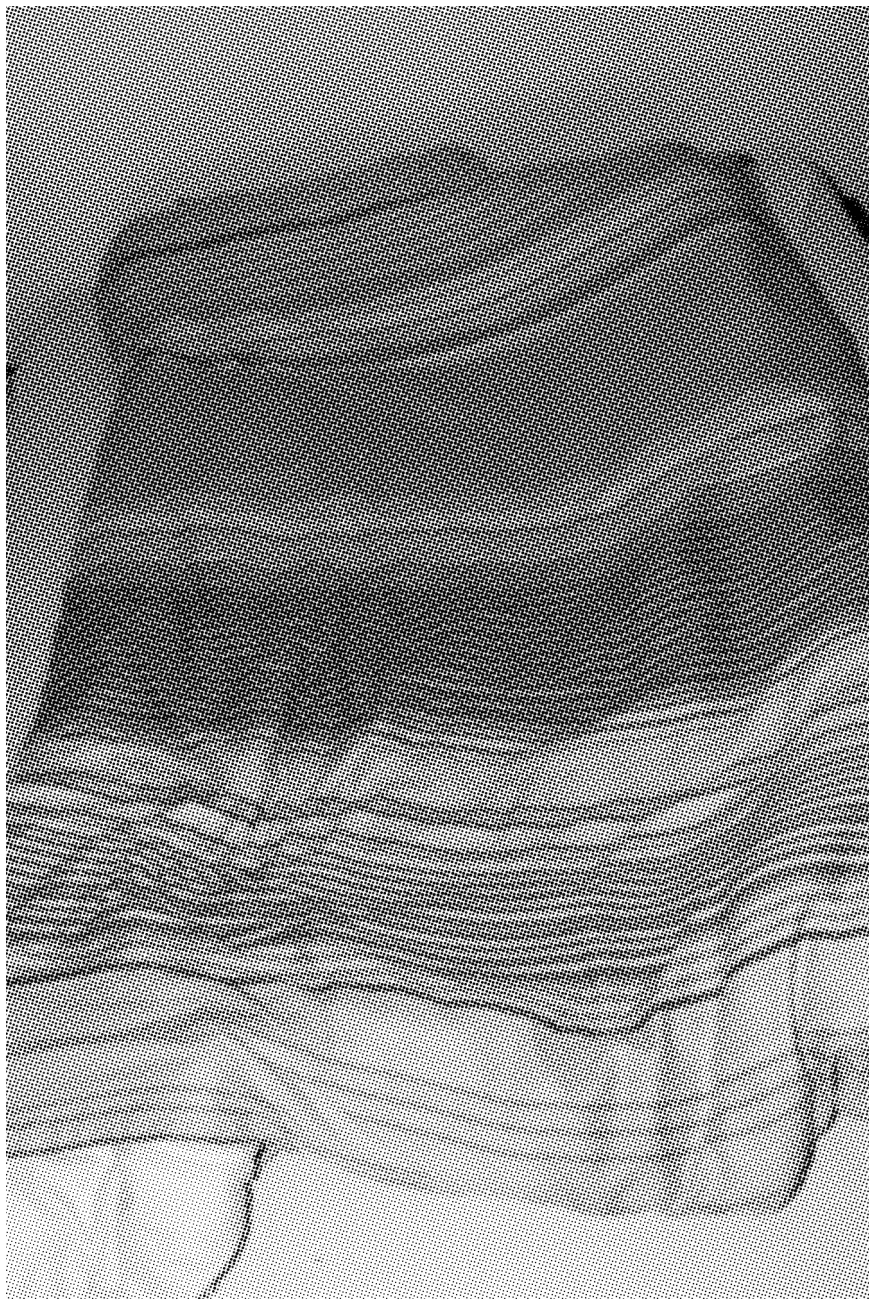
I used to go there a lot. I did not have ideologically committed ties to the Poortgebouw, but I liked it as a place, and I liked all these houses of people running around and shit.

SIEBE

The Poortgebouw is a positive place, but it has never been really strong and opinionated. It's more about living together in a house. With pros and cons. The only action I had there—it's probably why they still remember me – was when we built the garden. As a young architect I made a design for what our garden could be. I hoped that by doing something and showing it to the politicians you could change their way of doing. At the time we had a garden, and there were four big poplar trees standing there that shielded the garden from the wind from the Maas, and it made the garden a place you could really enjoy being in, as opposed to now. Now it's empty, paved with stone. I never see anyone sitting there, and I find that so hard to see. We kind of tried to prove that it could be another way; we invited politicians to come and sit in the garden, we made a fire pit... And then, right after my graduation, I spent one or two weeks literally living in those trees, trying to stop them from chopping them down.

CESARE

FIG 15  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







*'Gebiedsplan Feijenoord 2014-2018':*

*Gemeente Rotterdam, 2014.*

Report: The residents of this neighbourhood feel that there's currently not enough greenery in the outdoor spaces.

PETER

The Poortgebouw is very symbolic. This kind of mutant place which doesn't fit in with its urban surroundings in Kop van Zuid. That really fascinates us.

RIANNE

As a child, I used to imagine that I would own the Poortgebouw, that it would be my castle and I would do crazy stuff with it... and basically, it happened. I still have that every day when I open the front door, it's like I can't believe I live in this castle, it's so incredible.

LIDEWIJ

At the Poortgebouw we lived outside the traditional family cycle.

SEBAS

I've always disliked living in a 'normal' way, just a family in a house. I like the sense of community, and the freedom to shape and take responsibility for my own living space together with other like-minded people. Squatting provides the opportunity to experiment with this and at the same time makes a city more interesting and livable.

WIM

The Poortgebouw is not just a few living quarters. It is some sort of 'free haven.' It's a rented place, but it didn't sell out!

FIG 16  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

# IT WAS LIKE THERE WERE A THOUSAND INHABITANTS, WITH A THOUSAND DIFFERENT STORIES

I come from Den Haag. I was there for the first 30 years of my life. [...] Then, for some reason, I thought it was a good idea to join the army. [...] Somehow I believed it was a good thing to defend our democracy with weapons. While I was in the army, I had a good friend in Den Haag who was living in a squat opposite the *Paard van Troje*, and every weekend I went to his place. So I went back and forth from the military to anarchist music parties at the squat. I was in between two completely different cultures, at 18 years old.

CESARE

FIG 17  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







Quickly, I understood or realized that I made the wrong decision, so I tried to get out of the service on conscientious objection. The reason I'm telling you this is that those two things together were important influences on my view of the world. I saw the army from the inside out, I saw the people in there and the way they were thinking. It was like seeing a cut through of Dutch society.

CHRISTINE

We came to Rotterdam with no real reason. We thought we would stay for three months or so. [...] We saw that the Poortgebouw provided very good opportunities for people who don't have ordinary jobs or ordinary reasons to be somewhere.[...]

That was quite interesting, because the type of characters you met there often had unusual biographies. In this way, the legal construction of this place provided a pool for social diversity.

GIULIA

[I ended up living here] through this girl I met, Mariana. She's a circus artist and she was living here for many years. She wanted to sublet her room, and I really needed a room because I got evicted from the previous house. I was living in an *anti-kraak* and they sold the house without telling us. So we had two weeks to move. I moved here thanks to her. In the beginning, I was just subletting the room. And then, after 4 months of staying, there was a free room, so I applied and the people voted me in.

CESARE

I lived in two different places. First, in the *Blauwe Aanslag*, the famous squat in Den Haag. I think that was a really awesome place, it was—it sounds stupid—but it really felt like the best years of my life, when I was living there. When I moved

FIG 18  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

to Rotterdam I was looking for a place like that, and the only thing I found was the Poortgebouw, which was a bit of a disappointment, to be honest. [The most difficult thing is] the fact that you're sharing a place with a lot of people. I mean, it's an amazing thing, but of course, some days you just want to be alone and it's quite impossible. But I think it's part of living in this house, to be able to deal with conflict. And it's hard, but it makes you grow a lot. It's a good experience for yourself.

When I moved here two and half years ago, it was for university [studies]. In the beginning, I was living at a friend's place, sleeping on his couch. I didn't know anyone or anything. Then, a friend of mine, whom I knew from the squatting scene in Amsterdam, said "Maybe you can check [the Poortgebouw]. Maybe you would fit in." [...] So I applied with a short email, that everybody had to send, and I came here. At the viewing, there were twenty people, and everybody was super cool, vegan, had travelled the world and knew everything. They said things like "I can repair boats and build spaceships." And I thought "Fuck, this won't work." Then I saw another guy, a few places from me, who was also like me, [saying] "I am from Barcelona and love squatting. And I can help with... cooking... and stuff..." And that was it. I thought that this guy was cool, so we talked afterwards and we went for a few beers. He had also just moved and didn't know anyone.

Nadat het Poortgebouw door ons gekraakt was, deed de Gemeente al na twee weken de toezegging dat het gebouw voor jongerenhuisvesting bestemd zou worden. Eveneens beloofde de Gemeente ons dat zij tot 31 augustus 1984 geen maatregelen zou nemen om tot ontbreuking van het P.G. te komen. Bovendien zouden we als woongroep erkend worden als de helft + 1 van de huidige leden van het bewoners collectief (krantenwoningzoekend zou zijn (wat bij ons het geval is).

W

## WOONGROEP

2)

Na de kraakactie ontstond er een woongroep in het P.G. van zo'n dertig mensen, allen dakloos. Hierbij waren mensen van verschillende kraakgroepen, jongerenorganisaties, werkende jongeren en studenten betrokken.

Doordat vele mensen elkaar helemaal niet of slecht kenden bracht het wonen in een woongroep van dit soort in het begin veel moeilijkheden met zich mee. Voornamelijk hierom was het dan ook dat contacten tussen gemeente en krakers nauwelijks tot stand kwamen. Naast enkele informele gesprekken was er van echt overleg geen sprake.

Wij waren in die tijd bezig om normaal met elkaar te kunnen leven; de Gemeente op haar beurt reageerde afstandelijk en agressief.

Na een jaar met elkaar samengewoond te hebben, is er een hechtere woongroep ontstaan, met voor een groot gedeelte de mensen die in het begin hebben meegedaan.

\* Woongroep moet PG verlaten.

Om de mensen uit de buurt een indruk te geven hoe wij leven, organiseerden we op 12 september een open dag, waarbij 'smiddags mensen van de gem. uitgenodigd waren voor een open dispuussie. Maar op 10 sept. ontvingen we een brief van de gem., waarin de „resterende“ bewoners verzocht werden het pand op korte termijn te verlaten.

✶ Fchter is er met ons nooit overleg gepleegd oever de huurprijs. Het bedrag van 68.300,- lukte voor ons dan ook uit de lucht gevallen.

We zijn ~~er~~ best bereid om een ver. te worden, maar daar is ook nooit over gesproken. Op dit moment wordt daar aan gewerkt, we zijn bezig ver. stat. uit te werken.

Uiteraard zijn we wel bereid de energiekosten te betalen, maar dan wel graag met rekeningen op onze naam en niet, zoals gebeurd is, op naam van het Navenbedrijf.

Als reactie op deze brief hebben we er een bezugsstuurd waarin we de onzekerheden hebben rechtgeerd en nogmaals onze ideeën en standpunten uiteengezet.

Te hebben we de gem. verzocht het overleg met ons niet te starten, ~~omdat we inmiddels vast omvangde plannen aan het uitvoeren zijn, i.s.m. de Ac. voor Bouwmarkt~~

De gem. antwoordde hierop dat we in ~~overleg konden met de projectgroep. Fey. Noord. en met de dienst volkshuisvesting, in overleg konden gaan, voor de ontwikkeling van verbouwingsplannen voor het pg.~~

Samen met de Baf (Bew. org. F. N.) en de hierboven genoemde instanties is nu een overleg aan de gang waarin tot nu toe iedereen zijn standpunten duidelijk heeft gemaakt.

Wast willen wij /u.  
goed.

Ⓟ

Apparently, they voted both of us in, but they had to decide who would get the room. And they wanted to make another dinner to decide. They didn't know that we had gotten close in the meantime.

And then, before the dinner, we met in front of the house. We said to each other "It's stupid that you won't get the room because of me, or the other way around. Let's try to live together and see if it works. [...] So we came to dinner, preparing to be really nice and in the end we said "Well, before you vote, you could consider us living together." And everybody was like "What?!"

GIULIA Yeah, everybody was like "Yes! We don't have to decide!" I was not at the meeting, but I remember that people couldn't choose and wanted them both. That actually happened. They made the decision easy, otherwise we would have had a hard time. It is so difficult sometimes.

KATIA [I got to know the Poortgebouw through] a friend who was living there, Rianne. She is also really active in the community. It must have been three years ago, or maybe longer. I was already working here at the *Het Nieuwe Instituut*. So sometimes, when it was really late, I would stay at the Poortgebouw. Somehow the Poortgebouw and *Het Nieuwe Instituut* complement each other in a nice way.

JERE The most difficult times were the ones when I, personally, was not handling myself so good, but then again, you have the benefits from the house. [...] That's something that this place gives you, that renting a regular place cannot give you.

FIG 20  
NOTES ON  
LIVING AR-  
RANGEMENTS  
AT THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
1983. AUTON-  
OMOUS AR-  
CHIVE.

When you have hard times you have a personal network of people who can either help you, or they can leave you alone.

That's what is nice in this house. When you have problems, you always have support. And when you organize something outside, or when you have a school event, everybody comes. You are always the one with the most friends coming.

I grew up in the neighborhood. And I was always coming here in my teens, to go to shows. I knew some people who lived here, but there was a huge incoming / outgoing at that moment. So I never really went beyond the venue, up to that point. And then I moved to another city... And when I came back to Rotterdam, I found out that there was a spot available in the building.

Back then, they still had these messy '*New People Meetings*', and whoever applied was welcome to come; they didn't have any preselection whatsoever. So it was basically 20 people sitting in a circle telling how awesome they are and why they should live here. And I have this thing with odd jobs; I was working as a ship's cook at the time, so I said, "Well, if I'm working, I'm not here for a couple of months, but if I'm here I'm really here. So I'd have a lot of time to do my part." When I came back from the meeting, I was convinced I'd never get it. But I got it! And it really felt to me like a lifelong dream coming true.

I entered the Poortgebouw in my student time. I left Delft because I didn't like it, and I heard from a friend about the Poortgebouw and that they were looking for new inhabitants. It was nice that I could include the Poortgebouw in my studies.

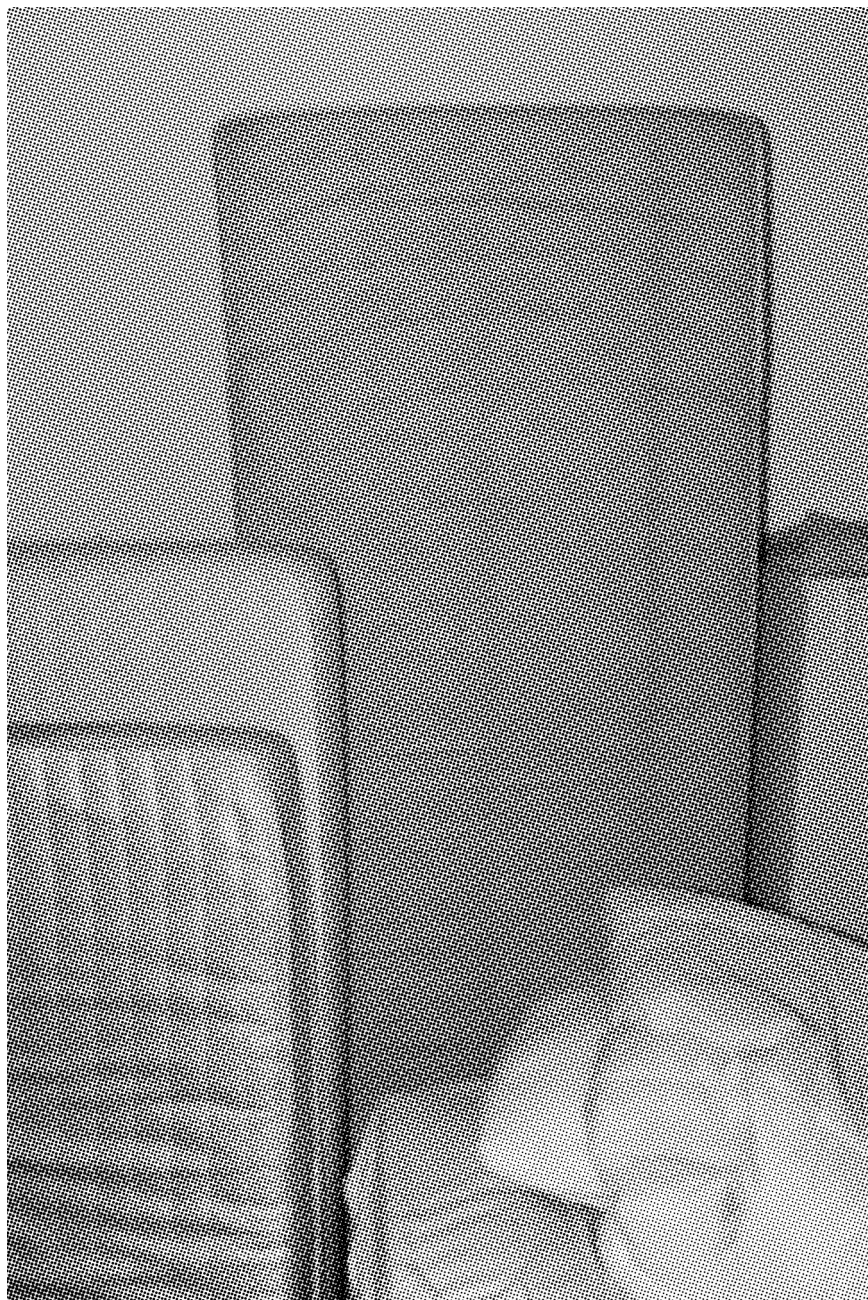
GIULIA

RIANNE

LIDEWIJ

FIG 21  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







That's when I co-wrote the *zelfbeheer* (self-management) contract between the housing association and the Poortgebouw, after the process of renovating the building a few years earlier.

MARINA We have organized a series of events with the Poortgebouw, including some lectures and dinners. And what I like so much about the Poortgebouw is that every time I am there, I always feel at home. I think probably that's because it's a space that is continuously being negotiated. They are used to being generous, welcoming, to have respect for each other, despite differences, and to learn how to live and make decisions together. And that's something that you feel immediately when you go there.

JERE This is the first place I lived, where I didn't choose the people who I live with. Usually, when you go for squatting or do things like that, you first form a kind of group and then go for it, or you live with friends. [...] Here, I didn't choose.

For me, the most annoying part is that, for example, when the venue takes one and a half years to get repaired—what the fuck! But, on the other hand, I didn't put so much effort into it, so... There's always a bit of hard times, but the times that I remember as bad were the times that I was bad in my own head.

SEBAS Some of the biggest struggles living in this house are:  
– having to live with my partner and daughter in the smallest room of the house  
– rebuilding my room (still not finished after two years)  
– balancing work/family/house affairs

FIG 21  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

I don't think I'll know anyone there now. But I used to hang out with the Feijenoord guys, the people who played in bands, and my friend Mike. He was from Angola, or Mozambique. Mike used to be in charge of the events of the Poortgebouw.

I remember there was one guy, from Mozambique, who had come to the Netherlands without the right papers. The Poortgebouwers back then gave him a job in the event space, so he could make a little bit of income, and also allowed him to live there. So his rent was paid by the house. But what started initially as a nice, social idea, just got very out of hand. He started acting like he owned the place, as if he was the "curator" of the event space. [...] Naturally, he kind of found his existential justification and his self-esteem in this function. We had so many discussions about this because we didn't want to take that away from him. But this event space had to be more open to other ideas. And he felt threatened by that. So that was something we had to learn... It's important to divide the tasks, but in a group like this you have to set some common guidelines.

The situation with him wasn't a problem we could resolve internally, so we had some external advisors come in and help us. What do we do with this on a social level, on a group level? It became so absurd that we actually had two P.A. systems, one for his activities and one for the house activities. The door to the *eetcafé* was even nailed shut one time... There was screaming, crying, insults. So it was really uncomfortable. There was a certain time, at the peak, when his name would come up at every house meeting.

FIG 22  
'TOTEM-  
PAAL...'.  
ROTTER-  
DAMS DAG-  
BLAD, 1997.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# 'Totempaal' illustreert verze

De bewoners van het Poortgebouw hebben de hoop op behoud van hun tuin nog niet opgegeven. Het bord kondigt met geestige teksten de oplevering van de opnieuw ingerichte, openbare stadstuin aan. De 'totempaal' eraf illustreert het vasthoudend verzet tegen de verwijning van groen en het —wijja— op-roepen van goede geesten.

Foto Jaap Rozema/  
Rotterdam  
Dagblad



**Rotterdam** — Het conflict tussen de bewoners van het Poortgebouw en de gemeente over de inrichting van de openbare ruimte rondom het monumentale bouwwerk spitst zich toe. De begin jaren tachtig illegaal aangelegde tuin moet plaatsmaken voor een parkje. De bewoners verzetten zich daar met hand en tand tegen. Op de ontruimingsdatum houden ze open dag, waarvoor ze uitnodigingen hebben verstuurd aan inwoners van de nieuwe wijk Kop van Zuid.

De presentatie van de stadstuin is 2 maart vanaf 13.00 uur. Zo blijkt uit het geestige 'projectbord' in de

tuin waarachter een totempaalachtig kunstwerk is opgetrokken. De totempaal illustreert volgens de Poortgebouwbewoners, die zichzelf met verwijzing naar het aanwezige groen opzoumerars-tuin-avant-la-lettre noemen, het verzet en het oproepen van goede geesten.

De opening van de 'Stadstuin van Daag' gaat gepaard met enige feestelijkheden, zoals optredens van een vuurspuwer, een jembé-groep (trommels), acrobaten, kinderspelen en het aanrichten van een kampvuur. Bezoekers van het feest wordt verzocht plantjes mee te nemen om te tuin verder op te

fleuren. Ter plaatse zijn bloembollen te koop.

De bewoners van het Poortgebouw hopen met de opening zo veel steunbetuigingen te krijgen dat de tuin alsnog mag blijven.

„De hele Kop van Zuid,” zegt Cesare strijdvaardig, „is anno 1997 bezet door tegels van beton. Wij bieden moedig weerstand aan de betogelaars. Met de opening van de stadstuin laten we de keus aan Rotterdam en de bewoners van de Kop van Zuid of de bomen en dit kleine kunstwerk kunnen blijven voortbestaan. Of dat bulldozers de stadstuin volgende week platwalsen.”

Intussen is de bewoners door het OntwikkelingsBedrijf Rotterdam een kort geding in het vooruitzicht gesteld als de tuin niet uiteindelijk per 3 maart is ontruimd. Vandaag wordt de uitspraak van de commissie beriep en bezwaar van deelgemeente Feijenoord verwacht over het bezwaarschrift van de Poortgebouwbewoners tegen de kapvergunningen voor de bomen langs de kade. In zijn bezwaarschrift eist de Vereniging het Poortgebouw, mocht roeien toch onvermijdelijk zijn, dat de zes te kappen bomen worden vervangen door nieuwe. En wel op ongeveer dezelfde plaats.



# wordt jongerenhuisvesting ebouw-krakers snel hun zin

18 OKT. 1980

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(20)

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dam 3

(Van een onzer verslaggevers)

ROTTERDAM - Het Poortgebouw, dat twee weken geleden na een razendsnelle en minutieus voorbereide actie door jongeren werd gekraakt, zal worden verbouwd tot een wooncomplex voor één- en tweepersoons-woonhouders. Het college van B en W van Rotterdam besloot gisteren dit oude herengedeeftgebouw, dat lange tijd op de nominatie stond om erocentrum te worden, voor jongerenhuisvesting aan te melden bij het rijk.

Eis van het gemeentebestuur is nu dat de krakers het pand verlaten om plaats te maken voor de bouwvakkers. De plannen om in het gebouw een krakerscafé en een illegale zender te vestigen zullen de jongeren op moeten geven.

De krakers bleken gisteren nog niet op de hoogte van het gemeentebesluit. Hun eerste reactie was sceptisch: "We willen zelf het Poortgebouw ook wel verbouwen, daarvoor hebben we de gemeente niet nodig. Met het geld dat ze op die manier uitsparen kunnen weer een aantal leegstaande woningen bewoonbaar worden gemaakt".

## Gereserveerd

Hoewel de krakers het toejuichten, dat "hun" Poortgebouw een woonbestemming krijgt, lijken ze zich gereserveerd opstellen tegen de plannen van B en W. De groep van op dit moment achtien bewoners wil zelf het beheer houden over het gebouw. In ieder geval wil men niet de gemeente Rotterdam gaan praten over de manier waarop het Poortgebouw zal worden verbouwd.

"Opnieuw blijkt dat de gemeente pas wat doet tegen de wetteloosheid van de krakers."



Het Poortgebouw

FOTO: LEUNIS VERLINDE

## Woongroep Poortgebouw toch gezamenlijk elders?

KOP VAN ZUID - De bewoners van het Poortgebouw hebben dinsdag weer iets meer vertrouwen gekregen in een gezamenlijke toekomst. In de vergadering van de commissie fysieke infrastructuur beloofde wethouder Marco Pastors een brief naar het Woningbedrijf Rotterdam te zullen sturen waarin hij pleit voor een vervangende ruimte voor het

Poortgebouw waarin de hele woongroep terecht kan. Tot nu toe was er slechts sprake geweest van vervangende woonruimte per individu. De woongroep wil in een nieuw onderkomen graag samen blijven. De Bewoners van het Poortgebouw moeten het momentele pand verlaten omdat eigenaar de Groene Groep er kantoorruimte in wil maken.

## Mysterieuze bewoners Poortgebouw

Rotterdam - Wethouder Pastors heeft nog één poging gedaan om de bewoners van het Poortgebouw aan andere huisvesting te helpen, maar daarmee is het ook voorbij. Hij heeft geen zin meer zich verder in te spannen.

Enkele politieke partijen hebben gevraagd de bewoners te helpen, maar het omgekeerde gebeurt niet, constateert Pastors. Voor de herhuisvesting is het nodig dat ze zich bekend maken, maar dat doen ze niet. Zelfs de grootte van hun groep is niet bekend.

Het Poortgebouw is drie jaar geleden door het Woningbedrijf Rotterdam verkocht aan de Groene Groep Monumenten bv. Overeenkomsten is dat het WBR binnen twee jaar tot twee keer toe aan elke bewoner individueel vervangende woonruimte aankoopt. Maar dan moeten ze zich bekend maken. De 'krakersgroep' had een volledige lijst met namen van de huurders, die er overigens voor een habbekrats onderdak hebben, moeten overhandigen. Dat is niet gebeurd. Pastors heeft WBR-directeur Arjan Schakenbos gevraagd nog één poging tot herhuisvesting te doen en

GEM. VERBODEN TOEGANG 14.10.80



E.T.C. DEE

If you're living in a group of 30 people and you have different kitchens, you're going to have a lot of conflict. It's inevitable. I've had that when I've lived in big squats. It's kind of created by the architecture itself, for example in the Poortgebouw. And that's totally normal when you're living with people. And then there's another thing: because the Poortgebouw has been there a long time, people have been kicked out for being drunk, or they were dating someone who lived there and it didn't end well. And all these things can end up with people saying "I don't go to the Poortgebouw anymore." And that's a shame.

LIDEWIJ

In general, I like to live in cohousing. [...] But, in the current situation, I would not want to live in the Poortgebouw. At this age, it doesn't help that the place is under threat. I need different things now. What I also miss is a shared vision between all the inhabitants. It was there in the past. We didn't have the same opinions, but we all were activists. From women's rights to environmental rights, sans-papiers and so on.

WIM

After almost 8 years, I moved out, as I felt the need for more privacy. Then I squatted a little house in Delfshaven. But I never ever will forget about how special it was to be part of the first decade of this place. Up until now I am close friends with some of the people from that precious period. In the first few years it was a very strange, nice and tight community.

E.T.C. DEE

People have suggested [living in Poortgebouw] to me at times, but it never really felt like a real option for me. I've always lived with cats, and that would be a reason to have a garden, also for my

FIG 23  
NEWS CLIP-  
PINGS ABOUT  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
1980 - 2005.  
AUTO-  
NOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

own sanity. But living with 30 people is very compressed.

I thought about maybe living in Poortgebouw for a while, because I really love the space, it's quite dear to me, I have also friends living there. And at the same time, I was also thinking that, because I work in the *Het Nieuwe Instituut*, for me this is also a little bit like the Poortgebouw in a way. I have a team that I am working with the entire week, so I was thinking maybe, if I would not have been working with the *HNI*, [...] I think I would live in Poortgebouw. Maybe in another time.

KATIA

A main personal reason we chose to leave the house was the sense of having a 'manager's syndrome'. We invested a lot of time into formulating and communicating the 'creativity' within the Poortgebouw, but the price was ignoring our own creative/artistic work and potential.

PETER

The Poortgebouw seems out of place now. I don't think I could live there if I were a kind of post-squatter type [of person], living in a completely gentrified area, with the Jewish memorial on one side, and all the middle class folks on the other side. I would negotiate for a good price and buy myself out, see if I can find another squat, or a place somewhere else.

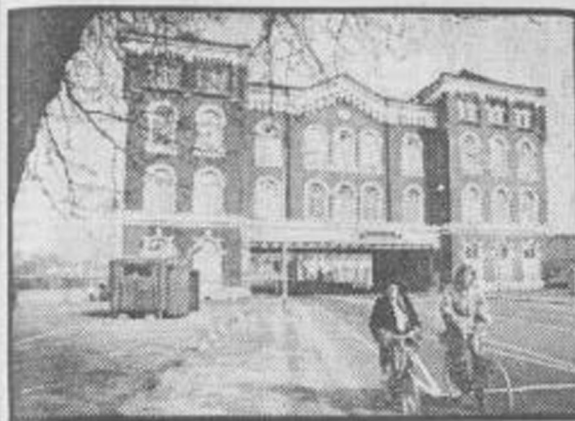
SIEBE

Of course I am concerned about [the future]. We are all very conscious and aware of it. But, at the moment, we just don't know. So it's a doubt, but it's also just part of the deal. I'm at a stage in my life where I don't see myself living in Rotterdam for a long period of time. So maybe that's why living in the Poortgebouw also becomes a bit temporary.

GIULIA

FIG 24  
'RAAD ROTTERDAM DOODS-  
BANG VOOR AMSTERDAMSE  
TOESTANDEN'. HET VRIJE VOLK,  
1982.  
USING SPACE ZINE, TENTH  
EDITION.

Poortgebouw - krake



**Raad**

**dood**

**Amsterdams**

ers worden huurder

**Rotterdam**

**lsbang voor**

**e toestanden**

# A LOT OF POOR PEOPLE, WITH NO TIME TO BE AN ACTIVIST, JUST TRYING TO STAY ALIVE

SIEBE

In Dutch, *kraak* is also another word for burglary. You *kraak* a safe. In English, squat is just squatting. It's completely different. My parents didn't like it. It never had a good reputation. But it was so enormously big. The economy was so bad in the early eighties. Young people today really don't see how bad the economy was back then.

CESARE

It all started for me when I was studying architecture and I went to a student camp in Sweden, and on the way we stayed for a few nights in a house in Copenhagen. It was a shared house, and there were 15 people living in a villa with a garden around it, and someone was baking bread every morning, someone was doing something else, someone was repairing the house, and there was such a good atmosphere. So I came back from

FIG 24



that trip thinking that I want to live like that, I don't want to live in a house on my own. I had several reasons: first, it fitted my idea that if you share one washing machine with 15 people, the sharing makes you less of a consumer. You use less stuff. And socially it's interesting, everybody has different skills and they can help each other out with those skills; so I thought it was a good way of living.

I've never called myself a 'squatter', or being part of the 'squatters movement'. Maybe I even hated the idea of the 'squatters movement'. I'd seen it in Amsterdam as well and I didn't like it very much because it was very charismatic, [with] people who thought they were very heroic, and people [who] looked up to them.

They always pretended to be anarchists, but they had their own kind of authoritarianism, and sexism. For me, the situation in Rotterdam was very different. They did have a modest squatter's movement here, however, the way I used to live in the Crooswijk squats, it was very proletarian, intercultural. A lot of poor people, with no time to be an activist, just trying to stay alive.

I went to Amsterdam in 2012, I think. It was two years after the squatting ban, and it was quite tough. People who were still squatting were super dedicated. It was a combination of disillusion and enthusiasm. People were trying really hard, but would be harshly put down by the police, by reality, by whatever. But in Amsterdam, you had the heritage of the squatting spirit and this whole

SIEBE

JERE

FIG 25  
SQUATTING  
ARRANGE-  
MENTS WITH  
GEMEENTE  
ROTTERDAM.  
1980. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# Gemeente Rotterdam

Stadhuis Coolingsiel 40  
Postbus 70012 3000 KP Rotterdam



Aan  
het bewonerscollectief  
van het Poortgebouw,  
Rotterdam.

Afzender Dhr. Van Wezel

---

uw kenmerk	afdeling	telefoon
		(010) 179111
uw brief van	ons kenmerk	doorkiesnummer
	V 111.125 <sup>153</sup>	
betreft		datum
Poortgebouw.		24 december 1980

Geachte dames en heren,

Door u zijn diverse besprekingen gevoerd met de heer Van Wezel en wij bevestigen hierbij dat door u met hem de volgende afspraken zijn gemaakt:

Van de zijde van het "bewonerscollectief"

- aan ambtenaren van volkshuisvesting zullen geen belemmeringen in de weg worden gelegd als het pand voor het maken van plannen moet worden betreden.
- het bewonerscollectief zal een positieve inbreng leveren in de vorm van deelname aan een in te stellen werkgroep bij het maken van de plannen.
- het bewonerscollectief onderwerpt zich aan de door de gemeente gestelde toewijzingsregels.
- toewijzing van de woonruimte na realisering van de gezamenlijk gemaakte plannen kan aan het bewonerscollectief geschieden mits het een zodanige urgentie heeft, dat het voorrang verkrijgt boven andere woningzoekenden. Deze urgentie kan blijken na een onderzoek door woonruimte zaken.

Urgentieregels (voorlopig alleen voor het poortgebouw)

de helft plus één van de huidige leden van het bewonerscollectief dient urgent woningzoekende te zijn. Urgent woningzoekende is iemand die minimaal aan de volgende voorwaarden voldoet:

a.



infrastructure. Everybody knew everyone from the scene. It felt really compact, what was left.

In Rotterdam it's totally opposite. You have some people squatting, but it is very individualistic and very introverted. I think the big reason for that is that there is no place to meet. Everything depends on friendships and people knowing people. For this reason it is a little bit more distant.

CESARE

Somehow, I think the people that live in the Poortgebouw now are for a big part students, who are just temporarily there. And I think that was the difference between the Poortgebouw and the *Blauwe Aanslag*, because for the people living at the *Blauwe Aanslag* it was really their life. At Poortgebouw it seems people came just for the period that they study, because it's cheaper rent than other places... and you just have to say that you're vegetarian and that you're social, and then they let you in. "Hi, I'm vegetarian! At least for these next few years." I'm exaggerating a bit, but I think that's more or less the problem. And then there are a few people for whom this is really their life, and you always get this conflict between them and the people that kind of pretend. [...] Because if it's not your life, you won't take the hard road, you won't choose to work hard to change something about your own building or the environment around it.

GIULIA

I think the youngest person living here is 23-24, and the oldest is around 60. The most active group, we are all between 25-35 years old. And we all come from different nationalities, from 11 or 12 different countries. There are a lot of artists, musicians, performers, but also builders,

FIG 26  
NOTIFICATION ABOUT  
RENTING  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
1981. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

teachers. This is one of the first communities I've seen where differences are sort of important, valuable. Because in Italy, for example, in many squats and social centres, there's always this tendency of following one trend, one ideology... and all the people around you are your friends or people that are very similar to you. And here I find it very honest, that everybody is quite different. And I mean, we are not very political in the things we do—which sometimes I feel we should be more. But at the same time it's very interesting that we are like this; more heterogenous.

In Austria we lived in typical shared apartments or alone. And personally I never thought I would want to live in a group. I can live very well by myself. It's kind of interesting, it's still the only way I could imagine doing that—the way it was at the Poortgebouw. Actually my friends and relatives didn't believe it, "You, living in a group?!" But I did it, perhaps just to be critical towards the system. For me, that's when living like this became interesting. Because it was a pool for political critique and thinking about society.

Before I moved to Rotterdam, I used to live for several years in Amsterdam, which had a completely different squatters community, with a very strong macho identity and unity.

I'm squatting at the moment in Rotterdam. I started squatting in England because I was a student in London. [...] I was already working while I was a student, but if I had wanted to pay a normal rent, I would have had to find a better paid job. Then I would have been working to pay my rent, effectively.

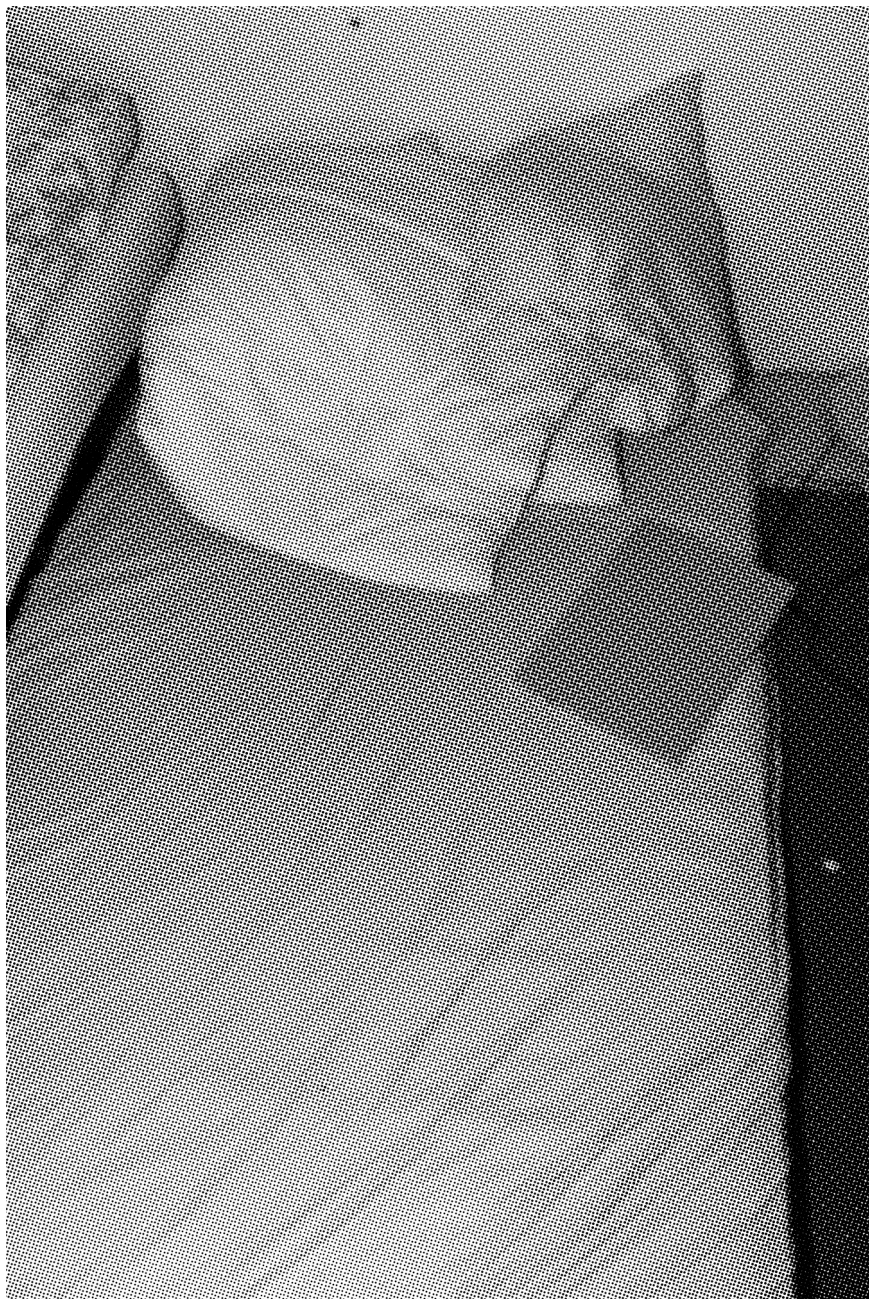
CHRISTINE

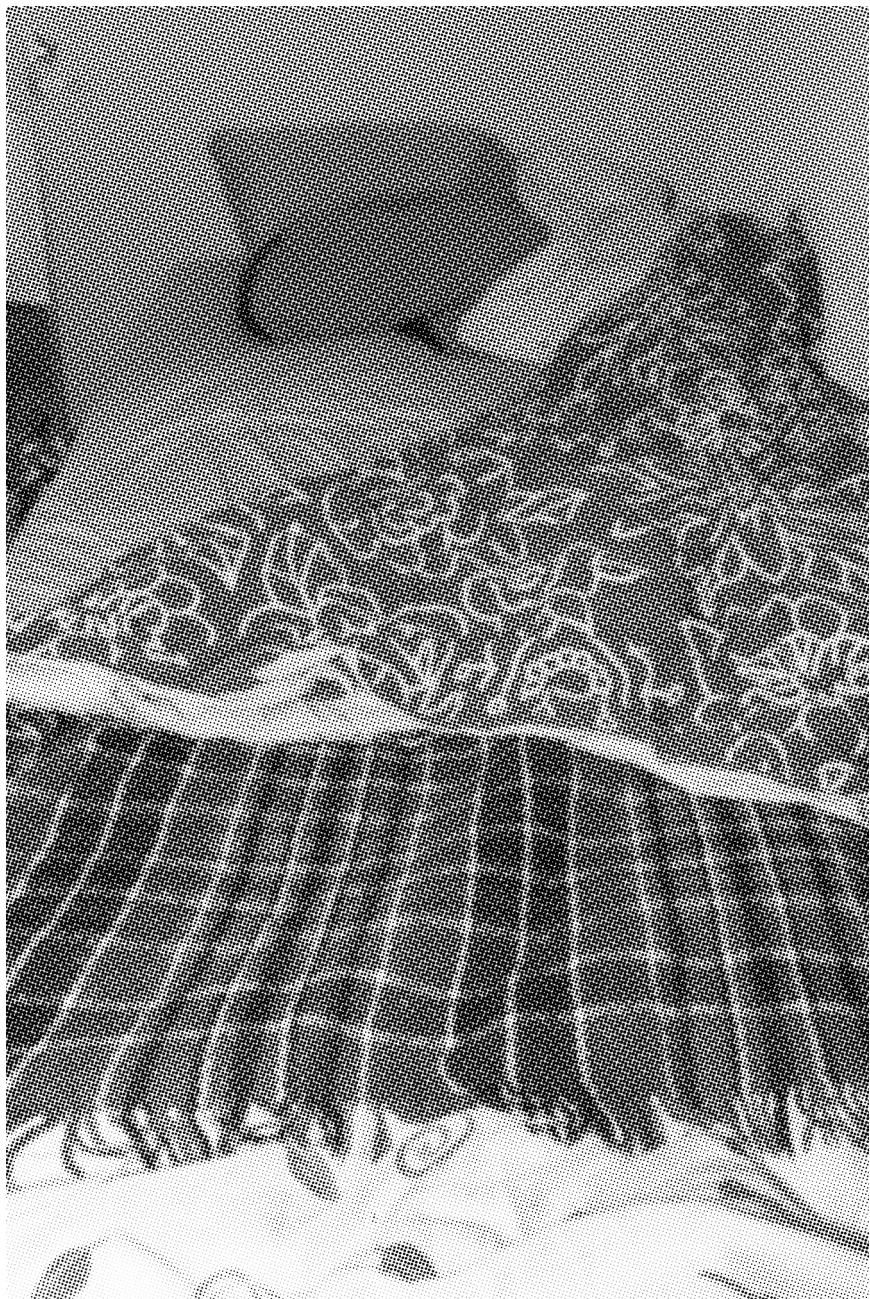
SIEBE

E.T.C. DEE

FIG 27  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







I didn't want to go down that path, so I started squatting. Since then, for most of the last 20 years, [...] I have squatted for periods of time in different countries and it's proved a really useful way for me to pursue the things I want to be doing, rather than being forced to pay rent. I've lived in different setups, sometimes in squats with a public function, like a social centre, but, to be honest, now I'm quite happy to be living in a private residential squat. Although, I do miss the fact that in Rotterdam there isn't very much going on in terms of squatted venues. There's only a squatted bicycle workshop that's open as a public space, at the moment.

I still find it outstanding what I, an individual, can learn and profit from while living in a more or less self-organized group. This cannot be said often enough. Going through personal, political, social, and cultural learning processes, outside and beyond the conventional education systems not everyone is or feels invited to. Not to forget the practical skills. It sounds cheesy, but want it or not, you'll be a more mature and alert citizen afterwards and know yourself—your origins, prejudices, norms, behaviours, neuroses, etc.—better.

I used to have this stupid, naïve question that I would ask people: "What if you would suddenly come across a boat full of missiles and guns and bombs? It's yours and you can decide what you want to do with it. Would you sink it, sell it to the best offer, or sell it to someone you believe has an ideology you support? And most of them would sell it to the best offer. Regardless of what that person would do with it. For me that was quite a shock. I grew up with these kind

FIG 28  
A BED IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

of hippie parents, in safe and half-idealistic surroundings. I even went to the army for idealistic reasons. And then, at the same time, I was going to these squats, where I met anarchists who were—in my point of view—saying things that were much too radical, too black and white, too much the other side of the coin.” “That’s bad and that’s good”—very judgemental. I didn’t like that at all, but there was also a group of people in the squatting scene who were much more about taking responsibility and building their own culture. And that was the part I really liked.

Most squatters did not live in a squat because they were ideologically committed to the squatting movement—but because they needed a house to live. [...] So, we had a lot of contact but not as ‘squatters’. Just as people, living somewhere.

SIEBE



DAY: 13-1-16

Menu

Smoked paprika soup

Veggie wrap with multiple

sauses lonneker + emily

HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND? \$30,-

LEFT OVER FOOD:  
wraps/dough  
little chutney and veggies.

CUSTOMERS:	HOUSE CUSTOMERS:
#####	

9

EXTRA: Migration and Identity night:  
We bought a grill and oven scale, ☺ instruction scale first page of this book



DAY: 6-1-2016 lonneke

## Menu

Pumpkin Soup

Black bean Chile with garlic

mushrooms and mixed salad

HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND? ±34,- + baking paper, silverfoil, plastic foil

LEFT OVER FOOD:

littlebit

mostly soup

CUSTOMERS: ± 30 (incl.

housemembers)

HOUSE CUSTOMERS:

EXTRA: very nice 8kv ☺ + rock 'n roll music

FIG 30  
EETCAFÉ  
MENU. 2016.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# A CHAIR

FIG 31  
KRAAK  
KAFEE  
POSTER.  
1980.  
AUTO-  
NOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



# KANAL KANAL

WOENSDAG v.o. 7 UUR

ZONDAG v.o. 4 UUR

# POORT- GEBOUW

WINKEL  
2017

IN HET  
ROOKTOEGEW

FLY  
2017



# THEEKUIS

WIL VOOR 3 DOOR JONGEREN

OF SWINTRY

# KOM!

2017





# THIS MAY BE THE LAST PARTY

SIEBE When I came to live in Rotterdam in the early eighties, the Poortgebouw was one of the few cool venues to hang out. So I went there for the concerts. If you wanted to go out, you went to the Poortgebouw. There were only a few places in the city where you could see really great bands. It was always exciting to go upstairs, to the attic. And, later on, I started meeting people who lived there, and they had all these wonderful groups of people involved in all kinds of shit.

WIM In the eighties there were plenty of parties at the spacey topfloor. It was mostly the punk and new wave scene. The most difficult thing was getting all the equipment and drinks up there.

The old elevator was very difficult to handle, and depended on us sticking wooden sticks into the relais... hmmm... sparks included.

E.T.C. DEE The first time I went there, I think, like most people, I was really impressed with the building. I went to the cafe and they had this thing where they collectively bought a pallet of dry foods from the organic wholesale, then they delivered it and you can take what you need from it. We'd been doing that at the squat I was living in before, so I was really excited to find that at the Poortgebouw.

FIG 32  
THEEHUIS  
VAN, VOOR,  
EN DOOR  
JONGEREN  
POSTER.  
1980. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

In 2001 we spent a lot of time at *WORM*. [...] We picked up a Poortgebouw flyer, and it said “This may be the last party.” We actually reintroduced that title in other events because we liked it. It’s a good motto. And then we met this one guy, Kristiaan [former inhabitant], who said to us, “Yeah, you have to come, because it’s only gonna be there for another three months!” [...] And then we started to go to concerts there.

P&C (PETER & CHRISTINE)

Some of my favorite memories are:

- Open stage
- New People Meetings
- Watching soccer championships in the attic
- Watching the fireworks on Erasmus bridge from my room
- Waking up and seeing the tallest sailing boat of the country in front of my room

SEBAS

The *Eetcafé* was our meeting place and our main interface with the outside world, where we opened the door to the city. Whether people even perceived it or not—that always fascinated us. For instance, there is this Landtong building, this big complex right beside the Poortgebouw. We started doing open days to try and get those people living there, to actually come in.

PETER

I knew the Poortgebouw 10 years ago. Then it had some court problems, and the living group was quite divided. And now, it seems there is a core of people in the house who are trying to make things a bit more active again. I was able to organize a conference there last year, a squat

E.T.C. DEE

FIG 33  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





conference, and without the Poortgebouw I would not have been able to do what I wanted, which was to have a space for up to 50 people to talk for free.

RIANNE

There are many events I'll always remember. One of them was the *SQEK (Squatting Europe Collective)* event. It was this big squatting convention, some punks from London came, and they were really funny. I didn't go to the *SQEK* at all, I just hung out with those guys.

GIULIA

The *SQEK* benefit party was cool.

RIANNE

And I really liked the open stage [events], I can't choose which one was the best. We've had many moments that were really special, when we felt more free and confident to use the venue. We had really nice events with really weird bands. And the place was always full of people, and even though you live here, you'd have no idea how somebody organized this, you just help with the door, and all of a sudden there's a cool brass band standing there, playing drums and stuff. And everybody is shaking it, and you're dancing with all these people from the circus school. It's pretty cool.

CHRISTINE

There's other highlights, like an event where we invited the *Hondenkoekjesfabriek*—you know the place of this noise collective called *The Fucking Bastards?* They wired the whole house with surveillance cameras.

FIG 34  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.



It was called *Civic TV*. It was sort of a combination of psychogeography, squatting, urban art scene, and a noise-interruption performance by the *Bas-tards*.

It was pretty cool in the nineties, because you had all these crossovers starting to emerge. The official art world, and music scenes and squatter scenes... everything mingled.

When we started, there was a lot of punk concerts. Rotterdam had this 18th generation of pop-punk-hardcore. So there was a lot of that in our early years. And then there was a shift in other musical directions. But you have to imagine, the first time we came there, there was a whole orchestra playing *The Cure* covers and other stuff like that. That was really great. And that was in the attic. In the attic we had more performative stuff, and in the *kroeg* [ground floor pub] it was mostly classic punk, which I thought was kind of obsolete.

We also established a connection with *v2\_*—in those days, pre-social media, we were interested in subversive things like hacktivism, having had this pirate radio station in the eighties.

*Report on illegal radio broadcasts. Police Rotterdam, 1981.*

Illegal broadcasts from the Poortgebouw in the Stieltjesstraat in Rotterdam. [...] This channel is, as far as known to us, live each Monday from 17:00 till midnight. Attached to the report is a stencil [...] in which the owner of the channel asks for financial support and material for the broadcasts.

FIG 35  
POSTER,  
RADIO  
BROADCAST  
AT POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
1980. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

EERSTE UITZENDING  
PARTY LINE  
ROTTERDAMSE RADIO  
MAANDAG 13 OKTOBER  
22.30 - 1.30

MET O.A. INFO OVER EKST  
BEZITTING - JONGERENPRO -  
TEST '80 - INVAL POLITIE  
KONINKRIJKE - LIVE OPNAME'S  
O.A. VAN SUSPECT. KRISCHÉ.  
SLITS - DIV INDIANEN / KANAL  
ROETGESCHW - EN - AUF GENT'S

PARTY LINE  
22.30 - 1.30  
FM BAND - 99.5 MHz

EERSTE UITZENDING



# CIVIC TV



**FIRST EPISODE: 22 NOV. 2003**  
**POORTGEBOUW, ROTTERDAM**

*Introduction to getting to hell. What can we do about it?*

*CIVIC TV is a one-day event showcasing critical and subversive alternatives to the indoctrinated understanding of civic "normality".*

*Bomans, I., Stencil announcing Radio Oranje. 1981.*

For the best coverage, point your antenna in the direction of the Social Academy. Remove the cable connection. [...] We ask you for radio programs and money (bah).

RIANNE SIEBE

Then, at a certain time, the events stopped. There was no venue anymore. The whole attic is probably houses now.

It's a bit unclear how and what and why things changed, for me. But basically, at one point a few people [from the house] talked to the neighbourhood cop and found out that he had heard complaints. But he never corresponded it back to us. We only heard from the police when we asked for it—that people were annoyed by us. But we thought we were perfect. So it was a bit of a shock. And some people really freaked out about that comment, which was only a comment, not an official complaint; no letter, no cops at the door telling us to tone it down. It was just a complaint, and also they were the ones who asked to hear it.

E.T.C. DEE OKACH

At times, I talk with [the neighbours] about it, ask them for their opinion. [...] They find it a pity that the building looks the way it is now. But I never heard any complaints.

They still have a bit of tension with whether they can advertise events and stuff like that. Personally, I think it's much better to have the door closed when doing events because I think it works out better for everyone, for noise reasons, and also to control the people coming in.

FIG 36  
CIVIC TV  
FLYER.  
2003. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

After that, people started freaking out that we were going to lose the house. And then, there was a little... not tension or friction, but there was a divide in the group, between the people who thought it was bullshit, and people who thought that if we made one more sound, we would be kicked out of the house immediately. And we wanted to insulate the venue, but this house is really big, which makes everything slow, so it took about a year to get that done. That had a huge impact on the house. Because this house is not made for staring at your own belly button. For the group dynamic, you really need strangers to come with their stories, to keep it alive with their life force. We need to share our space.

RIANNE

[It's been] Almost one year [since the last party]. But it was funny to see, during the lecture about squatting, there were these 17 year old Dutch teenagers there. And they were really interested. It makes me very happy to see that.

GIULIA

I was happy to be there yesterday, they started to have bar nights again. [...] It was a very nice social event. It's interesting, I don't think many people in that room were squatters, or even that knowledgeable about squatting. It seemed to be very international. The Poortgebouw comes from the squatter scene and keeps a radical identity, but it also developed its own field of interest, which is more students, artists, things like that. And that reflects the people living there as well.

E. T. C. DEE

Whenever we jointly organize events at the Poortgebouw, people say "This was the best event organized by *Het Nieuwe Instituut* that we have ever attended!" Which is funny, because it wasn't even held at *Het Nieuwe Instituut*. So it's a special place.

MARINA

FIG 37  
BRAAK  
SMAAK  
EVENT FLY-  
ER. 2005. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD U

MOVIE 9-3

THE EDUCATORS

BRABR

SINARABR

STRAATJONGEN



WWW.KRAAKREUMERKVEILIGWONEN.NL







These performances are available on CD  
from 1994 & 1995 at \$19.95 by using our code

E.T.C. DEE

It would be great if the Poortgebouw was more active. Personally I have some energy to help with some bar nights, cafe nights and things like that. We're also talking about doing a squatters advice hour, or *kraakspreekuur*, at the Poortgebouw. That would really help people who want to squat but don't know how, or if they are already squatting and they have questions. I think that is something that Rotterdam is definitely lacking, because there are people with lots of knowledge but it's hard to access them. And for people who just moved in, how else would they will meet these people?

MARINA

There should be some mechanisms that allow these spaces to be self-managed. In the case of the Poortgebouw, they tried to generate income though the bar, the circus workshops, the performances. But we have to recognize that these are spaces which allow people with a lower income to live there. You cannot ask these same people to renovate these spaces without any support. It's either the municipality supports them, or they allow them to develop certain economies that bring some income, and make it possible to maintain the space.

P&C

We watched the best concerts there in our house slippers. Sometimes with 50 people, other times just 5. And we learned so much about alternative lifestyles (in terms of housing, traveling, migrating, working, surviving) from these artists and the countless curious guests of the house.

RIANNE

In the Poortgebouw, you can have bad bands and still have a good evening.

FIG 38  
TRAM-  
MELANT  
EVENT FLY-  
ER, 2006.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# IT WAS LIKE SOCIETY IN A NUTSHELL

[The Poortgebouw] was different from the *Blauwe Aanslag*. I used to characterize it like this: the *Blauwe Aanslag* was a working house in a city that was only about meetings, and Poortgebouw was like a house that only had meetings in a city that was working all the time.

Around 2004 there were meetings once a week, at least. There were even sub-meetings. Sometimes, we split it up: a meeting for the event group, and then the law group, and then the future group... It was very hard, the knowledge transfer gets very complicated when you do all this stuff, and then you have to double-time to explain the stuff.

We are not saying that the two of us did everything, there were five or six people, who formed the hard core of the legal group. But then, the house meeting also had to be about internal maintenance, new people, cleaning... It was very tiring. And it was very hard to find a way to make these meetings shorter. After three hours, no one can think anymore.

CESARE

P&C

FIG 39  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





RIANNE

When we meet, we have to have more than half in attendance to make important decisions. The house meetings are mandatory, but I have a feeling that some of the new people don't really understand their gravity. You have to make time for it. Because the house meetings are really important, that's when everybody comes together, to see each other, but also to talk about what we think about.

WIM

[In the eighties] a lot of meetings were held about which people could move in, and about the ever ongoing and difficult renovation. And last but not least... whether the very expensive central heating could be turned on. On many of the winter days, people were clothed in all kinds of massive sweaters.

LIDEWIJ

[The most difficult times were] the discussions when someone had to leave. It was hard, especially when the person in question was using drugs. Having a building that was open to visitors—it was impossible to combine with the use of hard drugs. It didn't work. And another issue is that it is really complicated to live with someone using drugs. People would say one thing and do the other.

PETER

It's important to know that not everybody came to the meetings. It was considered a valid excuse that someone had to work or study. But the Poortgebouw is not a hobby... Time was often wasted one week to the next because there were 10 people one week, next week it was 12, but 6 of those people were different than the week before. So they needed to be updated on what happened in the last meeting. There were always house notes that you could read, but not many people did that.

FIG 40  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.



We were happy when there were 12, that was really good. It was never 20 people. Never. Even in the most critical time. It's hard to imagine. It is, of course, frustrating when you know what's on stake, the very bed you sleep in, and people don't even show up.

We set up an evening where we invited old Poortgebouwers to come, and for us to meet and learn from them. This was probably in 2003 or something like that. That's when we met Lidewij Tummers, an architect, and Joep de Heer, he lived in Feijenoord and worked for *Cineac*, a community TV station, and Frans Vermeer, who worked in this pirate radio station when the building was still squatted, amongst other people.

We kept hearing: "You know the squatters, the original group? They don't want to have anything to do with the house anymore..." And some other people from the late nineties were "burned out" and kind of disappeared... So it was kind of an archaeology dig to find all of these people, and then one would tell you something about the other. We heard things like: "Well, this is what you have to do now. This is what the Poortgebouw is all about." A lot of people spoke from their memories of how it was. And the people we spoke with were very active members in the collective at their time. So, on the one hand, meeting them was very motivating for us; but on the other, it felt like being lectured—with 10 different strategies, and 10 different versions of what the Poortgebouw needed to be.

FIG 41  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





We had to decide on one combined approach to fit the current group.

P&C Sometimes it was very hard to make consensus decisions, even when 10 people are for something and one or two are vehemently against it—it's hard not to fall back into democratic majority rules. You think, oh my god, there's already so many people who want something, and two that say "no", that's harder than democracy. It was like society in a nutshell. And there were a lot of negative things, very intense times... In this crisis time, personal and organisational things got mixed up, and people became hostile—bike tubes were slashed open, on the black board someone wrote "nazi group" or something like that, then one guy just ripped the whole board off the wall! Sometimes we were really shakey the whole day. Because we couldn't get away from it, like at the university or a workplace, because we lived and worked there. Sometimes we didn't open the door when someone knocked. There were times when we both said: "It's enough for today."

We tried to have our own realm, too, but it was very hard to keep to your own interests and your own peculiar ideas. Some people really burned out on this, and we tried not to. In so far, we didn't get too involved in personal matters, after a while we learned.

CESARE There were not really fixed responsibilities, I just took responsibility, I did whatever was necessary. I don't like meetings, I just like to do, so for instance, if I thought it was a good idea to do something about the garden, I just went to the people who I knew had an interest in the garden, and I said,

FIG 42  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

“Shall we do something about the garden? Yeah, let’s start tomorrow.” Otherwise, you have to go through meetings, and by the time you’re ready with the meetings, you don’t feel like doing it anymore. It was a bit too bureaucratic for me.

FIG 43  
TRAM-  
MELANT,  
FCKN  
BASTARDS  
EVENT FLY-  
ER, 2005. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

EETKAFÉESTJE  
19 Nov. - 19:00 uur



POORTGEBOUW  
BENEFIT

-VEGAN FOOD-



00:00 - 02:00

DJ'S: Puzon & PeeJee

DAMAGE DONATION

UFI  
(SKA)

BANDS: 20uph

FCKH' BSTRDS

(NOISE)

EIE BANDITA (electronic)

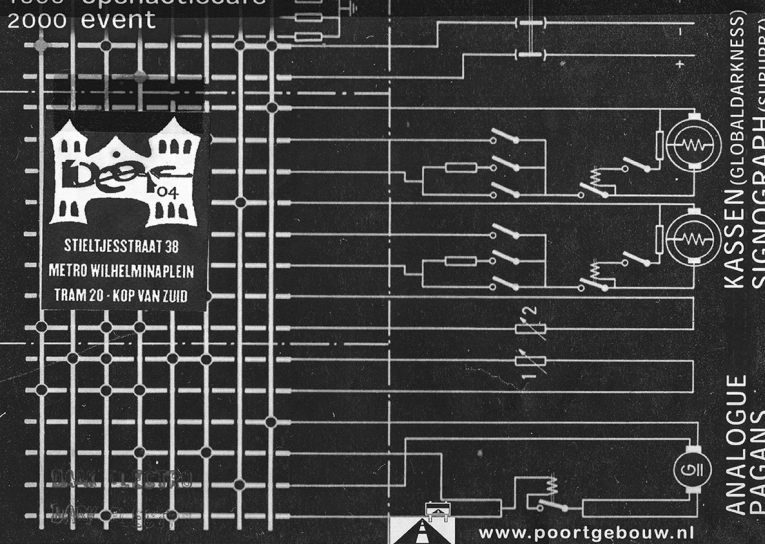
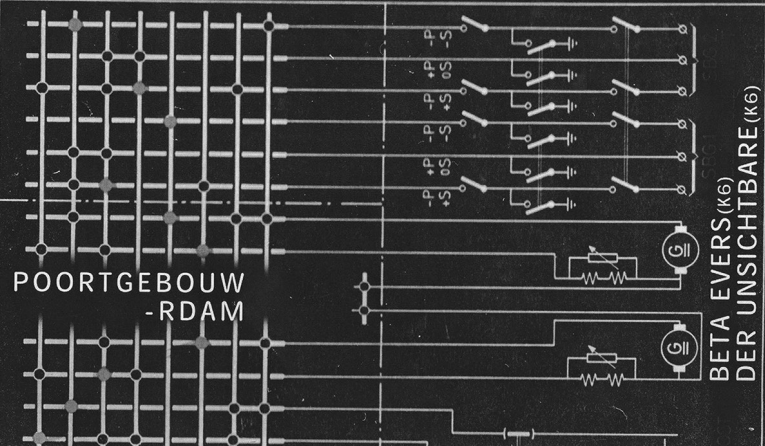
POP

MISTAKE (punk)



19.11.04

KOMMANDO 6



# WHAT NEIGH- BOURHOOD? THERE WAS NONE

SIEBE I think everyone in Rotterdam knows the Poortgebouw. They probably know it's a squat or used to be a squat. I mean, it's a beautiful building, and it used to be the office of Lodewijk Pincoffs. Pincoffs has a statue, because he was a bad guy for years, but now he is celebrated again as a corporate developer. He fits well in the contemporary era.

LAURA Oh, I thought there was another building called the Poortgebouw. I thought it was more in the harbour. But I have wondered about that place... when the bridge was open, I thought: "What a nice building."

RIANNE My parents come here all the time, and my nephew, they love it. I grew up here, but the area really changed. They made Legoland of this part of the neighbourhood, it's weird city planning. It's very divided, very dispersed and eclectic, in a not very informal way.

CESARE When I came to the Poortgebouw, it was a harbour area, so mainly warehouses, and a lot was torn down already. A lot of empty space.

FIG 44  
KOMMAN-  
DO 6 EVENT  
POSTER.  
2004. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

What neighbourhood? There was none. Nothing was built. It was empty. You can see [that now] everything is new. All past the millennium. Before, it was a run down port. There was Hotel New York, that was squatted as well by artists, and further along the river there was the Utopia, the water tower, which was a squat as well. There were a lot of artists and communities along the river, but there were no neighbours, you had to cycle through the dark to get there. It was just a polluted port, [used for] storage, and bankrupt companies, because the port moved further out the city. You can't imagine what it looked like, completely different. There was a huge discussion to turn Poortgebouw into a prostitution centrum.

*Meeting notes: Neighbourhood Committee Feijnoord / Noordereiland. 1981.*

In september we talked about the Poortgebouw. Because of a imminent eviction we proposed to give the collective of inhabitants three months to specify their plans. The neighbourhood committee still thinks that the building should be used for housing, social-cultural facilities and that it is 'open' for the neighbourhood.

I think [people would describe the Poortgebouw] like an autonomous castle. I think it is interesting that the architecture is this gate, and I believe they sometimes call it a castle themselves. I think you have to know about its history, the people living there and the events to see that it is really open. Otherwise you would just be very intrigued by this strange place.

## WOMEN UNITE!

### HEKSENNACHT!

Zaterdag 20 juni om 22 uur start de heksennacht in Rotterdam. we verzamelen bij het Vrouwenhuis, Eendrachtsweg 71.

De 'heksennacht' is een fakkeltocht langs de enge plekken in de stad.

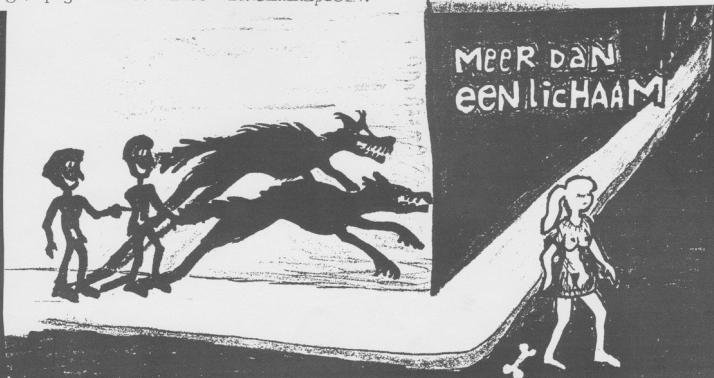
De aanleiding is helaas de recente verkrachting van een vrouw aan het Weena in Rotterdam. Vrouwen zijn vogelvrij ten aanzien van het verbale en fysieke geweld van mannen. Dit moet maar eens stoppen, we eisen de straat terug!

Misschien kun jij tijdens de tocht vuurspugen of verkleed gaan als heks. dat lijkt me leuk, Bring what you would like to find!

Zaterdag kun je naar het Poortgebouw komen om je slaappullen er neer te leggen, Zaterdag-nacht kun je in het Poortgebouw blijven slapen. Zondag zouden we kunnen gebruiken om te brainstormen over een actie tegen seksistische reclame. Ik zal zorgen dat er zondagmiddag een eko/vega-lunch zal zijn, met een donatiepotje ernaast. Zondagavond is er in het Poortgebouw (openbaar) eetkafee en daarna spelen er drie anti-seksistische bandjes. Dit zijn: de Re-sisters uit Zwitserland Homomilitia uit Polen en Golli! uit Noordwijk.

Je kunt me bellen voor meer info: Laura, 010 4231385

Poortgebouw stieltjesstraat 38 Rotterdam. Te bereiken met Tram 20 en metro Slinge/spijkens: halte Wilhelminaplein.



## TAKE BACK THE NIGHT!

# GHUI

(SCHIZO-NOISE)

# PERSIL

(FUZZY ELECTRO-POP)



21 december  
POORTGEBOUW

STIELTJESSTRAAT 38 ROTTERDAM METROSTATION WILHELMINAPLEIN  
DOORS 20:00 [WWW.PERSILMUSIC.COM](http://WWW.PERSILMUSIC.COM) [WWW.ANTENNA.NL/SIC-REC](http://WWW.ANTENNA.NL/SIC-REC)  
[WWW.POORTGEBOUW.NL](http://WWW.POORTGEBOUW.NL) [WWW.MYSPACE.COM/POORTGEBOUW](http://WWW.MYSPACE.COM/POORTGEBOUW)

There is always this sort of balance between not having too much attention, to not get other actors involved and increase the pressure, while it is also good to present yourself publicly. And I think that they are actually doing this, for instance with the open monument day.

The type of neighbourhood the Poortgebouw is located in, is maybe not their main audience. I think it is more the rest of the city. Also there is an international audience over there, for example when the *SQEK* was held there. There are a lot of different communities interacting with this place.

GIULIA

I've met some people from the neighbourhood. But some of them still think that we are dirty, messy and punk. Which is also true, but we also do other things. It's always a bit of a process to try to open a conversation with them, but I think lately we are doing quite well.

PETER

The Poortgebouw is the symbol of squatting in Rotterdam written in stone. It is ingrained in the minds of Rotterdammers that the Poortgebouw is a squat. 'Legalized squat,' we have to correct, especially to 'official' partners. We're renters.

GIULIA

There's a prejudice. But this neighbourhood is quite funny. We have this division between these houses which were not here in the past, when the Poortgebouw was squatted. And they're rich, they're people that don't really have a connection with each other. And then, you have these people from the *Peperklip* area, which in the past was considered a dangerous area. There's this quite strange division. But, when we open the house, I always see people who are very happy and very enthusiastic.

FIG 46  
GHUI PERSIL  
POSTER.  
2006. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



Of course, it depends on the event. With open days there are usually a lot of people from very different ages. And they're all very happy to listen to our stories. But when we do parties, we have a different audience. Last Saturday, at the Birthday Party of the Poortgebouw, there were so many young people who were really happy that we were open again after a long time.

People often said the Poortgebouw seemed totally inaccessible, like a fortress. Even after we did all these open days, the next week they still said the same thing. It was also in their heads. You just have to try; there's enough opportunities to get in if you want.

When you look towards Entrepothaven, then you see this terrible, ugly thing, like a piece of the Great Wall of China: the Poortgebouw. And it is an icon in the South; it should be something wonderful. [...] The Entrepothaven is almost unknown to the average Rotterdammer; because it's so hidden away. So, the Poortgebouw acts as a hindrance to what could be a fantastic location.

It's also because of the architecture, I think. It doesn't have a big front door. It's a bit of an ominous building.

I think for the Poortgebouw, this particular space, it is also a kind of weird neighbourhood to be in somehow. There are a lot of offices, it's really next to the water. It is almost like a village.

I think they are really making an effort [to be open for the neighbourhood]. And they are super open

CHRISTINE

OKACH

PETER

KATIA

FIG 47  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





to collaborations with other initiatives and organisations. During the open monument day, they always give a tour and people are really surprised about its history and the community that is living there. And what is also good to mention is that still, as we've seen with the other case studies and communities we have been working with, they are always referred to as squatters. Although, in the case of the Poortgebouw, that was more than 30 years ago and it has been legalized since 1984, and people are actually paying rent. First to the municipality, now to a private owner. So they are not squatters, but they share a mentality and an idea about what a city should be, accommodate and what kind of practices should be part of it.

MARINA

We have visited quite a few places which are squatted, or used to be, or are in the process of being squatted. They are quite different as well, but in all the cases, our experience has been positive. For example, last week we were visiting a community in Groningen, who lived in what it was a former hospital and which I think now houses around 200 people. It was inspiring to see how they live together. In addition to the bedrooms, they have a bar, a cinema, a series of exhibition spaces, and all the corridors, all the in between spaces, are public, their doors are completely open, day and night. These spaces open up possibilities to think about new ways of living together. Compare the model of the condominium, based on segregation, with a space like this one. It gives me hope.

FIG 48  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

I would say that, at the moment, we have forced interaction with people around, which is usually OK. We can talk to them and they find ways to understand us. But there is some kind of genuine co-existence... not really... it's more like tolerance. And all these issues—noise and people hanging around—would be annoying no matter the place. We try to involve people from the neighbourhood in some events that we make, like matinee, open stage to invite kids. I think these things work and there are some people who maybe come from a little bit broader sense of neighbourhood, like Kralingen, that like these kinds of messy places.

JERE

It's a shame that [the garden] is gone. It was really nice and beautiful. When the sun goes down over the river, you could just sit there. A sign that things have changed [is that] around the Poortgebouw is a non- alcohol zone on the street, but the Poortgebouw itself and the garden are actually not included in the zone. So you could drink beer there. And sometimes, the police would come and they have to be told that and shown the map. That would not happen now. I think this age of tolerance is gone a little bit with the council, so that is also a change from the past.

E.T.C. DEE

This year, for the first time, I met with some of the residents. [...] The Poortgebouw was always quite closed. It's only recently that they seem to be interested in opening up and also doing more for the neighborhood. Last week they even took part in our neighborhood watch.

OKACH

FIG 49  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.









Having good contacts with the neighbourhood is important. Trouble with the neighbours can negatively influence your position in court. It can help if you, for example, can show letters of support from the neighbours.

For me, insisting on being part of the neighbourhood, I don't find it that important. Because a neighbourhood is just a physical accident of being close to certain people. In the Netherlands, they try hard to be good with the neighbours. In other places, squats are much more closed and have different ways of creating social networks outside of the house that support the house. I really believe that you should manage this co-existence with the surroundings, but I think much more effort should be put in creating a strong bonding network with your artificial neighbourhood, with people who do similar things in the city, in the region, in Europe, in the world.

For me, that is the beautiful part of squatting. Since I was 19 and I first got involved in these things, I practically never had to pay for a hotel. There is this unspoken language between us where we understand from the way we talk, we look, we come from—there is an unwritten trust that simply works. That is because before me there was somebody who built this network. I think that is the part that I should do, and every generation should have this mission. That is how you keep things alive. Being good with the neighbourhood will not maintain the movement.

FIG 50  
A CHAIR IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

FIG 51  
SQEK CON-  
FERENCE  
POSTER.  
2016. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# SOEK CONFERENCE

18-23 MAY 2016 . ROTTERDAM

# RESISTANCE TO CENTRAL- FICTION

## THE SQUATTING MOVEMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS

It is a movement without a central authority, but with a strong sense of community. This movement has been active in the Netherlands since the 1970s. It has been a central force in the development of the squatting movement in the Netherlands.

## THE CONFERENCE

The conference will be a central event in the development of the squatting movement in the Netherlands. It will be a central force in the development of the squatting movement in the Netherlands.

## WEDNESDAY 17th

### WELCOME

BIKE TOUR OF CENTRAL ROTTERDAM AND USES OF RESISTANCE

FILM NIGHT & PRESENTATION OF SOEK COLLECTIVE

## THURSDAY 18th

TALKS BY MEMBERS OF SOEK + DISCUSSIONS

PAPER ONE

## FRIDAY 19th

SEMINAR: CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN OCCUPIED SPACES

## SATURDAY 20th

(TO BE CONFIRMED)

MORE DETAILS AT: [WWW.SOEKCONFERENCE.COM](http://WWW.SOEKCONFERENCE.COM)

ROTHSCHILDENWEG 11 (WAGH) | 3013 CA ROTTERDAM | THE NETHERLANDS



37

BIRTH  
DAY

POORTGEBOUW

STELTJESSTRAAT 38

ROTTERDAM

SATURDAY 7TH OCTOBER

Open Doors 15:30

Breakfast till afternoon, signing and vacancy after 19:00

Movie screening "Loren: Beautiful Power"

Exotic Virgin beer

14th Open Stage with direct show

Live Music & DJ Set by the Poortgebouwers

Home is more than just a place!

FIG 52  
POORT-  
GEBOUW  
37TH BIRTH-  
DAY EVENT  
POSTER.  
2017. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



# AND A TABLE

FIG 53  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





# YOU'VE BEEN SOLD, DON'T WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING?!

*'Wittkamp, S. 'Poortgebouw met ontruiming bedreigd'.  
Metro, 2005.*

Project developer *De Groene Groep* has bought the [Poortgebouw], a monument from 1879, without the knowledge of its residents, for a measly price of 450.000 euros. The real estate developer is now planning to turn the building into prestigious offices. But the residents are refusing to be chased out of their beloved home.

In 2002 some of the inhabitants did know more about the court case, but strange enough, it took until we lived there to really get people to talk about it. We really had to ask: "What's gonna happen? You've been sold, don't we have to do something?!" It took a while before we even understood who was there when the house was sold. It was not an open topic at that time. We often heard: "Well, we have three years." So it was a bit paralysed. They were taking care of their cultural activities and group life, but not of their existence. And we

CHRISTINE

FIG 54  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

thought, well, we are outsiders, what do we know? But then, slowly, things started moving. Not just because of us, also because the clock was ticking. But at first, there were barriers. And from time to time, that feeling comes again. I think it's because, when you live there, it's such a threat that you don't want to deal with it every day. Because you have to live there and fight for it at the same time.

[Back then] Poortgebouw had a very defensive reputation. There was this small anarchist group, *WHY Rotterdam*—a really cool name—not sure where they came from, but they made a lot of articles and magazines, you must find some in the archives somewhere. They tried to turn Poortgebouw into an anti-gentrification war machine.

[When it comes to their legal issues], there were two people, Peter and Christine, who had a lot on their shoulders. I don't really remember in what ways other people helped, it was really them doing this work for 8 years.

In 2004 we got a piece of paper with the cancellation of our rent contract. But we were prepared for it. We already had our lawyer in place. We had even built up an external network to support us. And it was already a topic in every house meeting, which were also happening more often than before. But it was really not nice to get that letter, stating in writing that you have to get out.

It's incredible how many confrontations you face and how much you learn from that about how the world is organized.

SIEBE

E. T. C. DEE

CHRISTINE

CESARE

FIG 55  
'VER-  
KOOP...'  
RD,  
2005.  
AUTO-  
NO-  
MOUS  
AR-  
CHIVE.

# 'Verkoop Poortgebouw moreel niet fatsoenlijk'

**Rotterdam** — De gemeenteraad van Rotterdam is er allerminst gelukkig mee dat het Woningbedrijf Rotterdam (WBR) het Poortgebouw heeft verkocht aan een projectontwikkelaar en het niet eerst aan de huurders heeft aangeboden. Om gemaakte fouten goed te maken zou de corporatie er goed aan doen de woongroep uit het Poortgebouw een nieuw collectief onderdak te bieden. Een brief met die strekking

gaat wethouder Pastors naar het WBR schrijven op aandringen van de raad. „Maar meer dan dat doe ik niet. Daar mee ga ik al heel erg ver.” De wethouder vindt de verkoop van het Poortgebouw geen zaak van de gemeente. „Wat er met het pand gebeurt is een zaak van de eigenaar. Het enige wat wij kunnen doen is erop toezien dat alles volgens de regels gebeurt.”

Het Poortgebouw aan de Stiel-

jesstraat op de Kop van Zuid werd twintig jaar lang door het WBR verhuurd aan een woongroep van dertig mensen, onder wie veel kunstenaars.

## Kantoor

Vier jaar geleden werd het monumentale pand achter de rug van de bewoners om verkocht aan De Groene Groep, die er een kantoor van wil maken. De woongroep kreeg drie jaar de tijd om te verhuizen, maar

zolang de rechter geen uitspraak heeft gedaan, weigeren de bewoners te vertrekken. Hoewel de gemeenteraad erkent dat de overheid formeel geen partij is in het geschil, wil de politiek dat het WBR

duidelijk wordt gemaakt dat „niet voldaan wordt aan morele fatsoensnormen”, zoals PvdA'er Metin Çelik in de raadscommissie voor volkshuisvesting zei. „Het WBR gaat wel vaker op deze manier

met bewoners om. Dat moet ophouden.”

Pastors gaf aan een kantoor „acceptabele nieuwe bestemming” te vinden voor het Poortgebouw, waar nu een woonbestemming voor geldt.

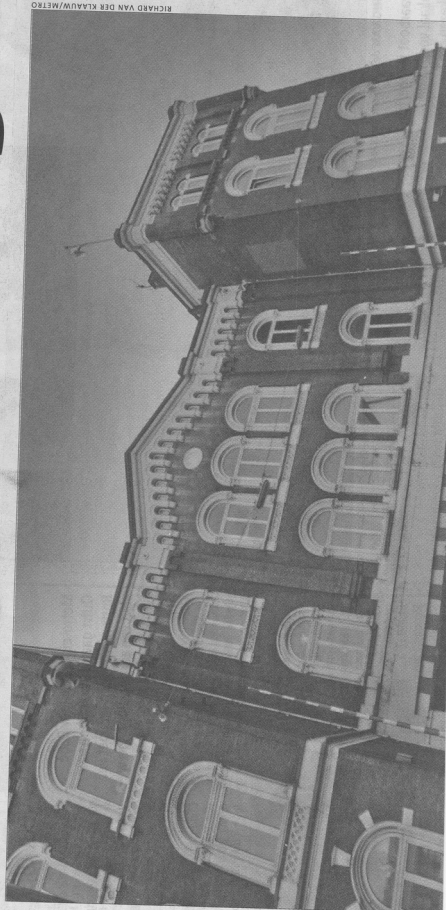
Hij wil de projectontwikkelaar vrijstelling verdienen voor het geldende bestemmingsplan. „Dertig mensen die op straat komen te staan vind ik geen goede reden om daar tegen te zijn. Het is geen unieke situa-

tie: in Rotterdam worden jaarlijks 1500 woningen gesloopt, dat betekent dat er iedere week dertig mensen hun huis uit moeten.”

Pastors gaf wel aan een cultuurnutmakelaar te willen inschakelen om te bezien of de culturele activiteiten van de Stichting Poortgebouw elders kunnen worden ingezet. „Maar de cultuur- en woonfunctie hoeven van mij niet samen te vallen.”



# Poortgebouw met ontruiming bedreigd



RICHAARD VAN DER KLAAUW/METRO

I looked into the Dutch law system and tried to find the reason for them to cancel our rent contract. And I found a clause called *dringend eigen gebruik* which is when the owner claims back the building for ‘urgent own need’. And that turned out to be right—they tried to use it to get us out. But of course it wasn’t about their ‘own need’, it was about their economic need. Which is kind of amazing, that that’s even a valid reason. But you have to imagine that this private developer, he bought the building from the city, and it’s not really his fault that he thinks like that. The fault is with the city, who gave away their social responsibility. Because the private developer said, “Well I have no social agenda. Why should I be interested in that?” So of course we hated him, but that was just the way it was.

*‘Verkoop Poortgebouw moreel niet fatsoenlijk.’  
Rotterdams Dagblad, 2005.*

Alderman Pastors indicated that an office was “an acceptable new destination” for the Poortgebouw, which is currently being used as a residential space. He wants to release the project developer from the building’s current situation. “That thirty people will end up on the streets is not a good enough reason to start a dispute. This is not a unique situation: 1500 houses are demolished every year in Rotterdam, which means that thirty people have to leave their homes every week.”

I gave technical advice (on the court case). I worked together with Peter Voogt and Rogier Scheltes, he was the lawyer for the collective. We went back to the documents from the beginning, like the first rental contract and the modifications

FIG 56  
‘POORT-  
GEBOUW  
BEDREIGD  
MET ONTRU-  
MING’. ME-  
TRO, 2005.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

enforced upon it such as the new bridge foundations and stadsverwarming. Digging up and explaining this information enforced the position of the Poortgebouw in the case against *De Groene Groep*.

For example: regarding the maintenance, there is the question of defining what is the interior and what is the exterior. What to do with a window for example? These types of technicalities aren't clear amongst judges.

The ongoing court case involved a lot of continued extensions. Then, more time was asked by *De Groene Groep* to investigate possible alternative houses for the group—which in the end they didn't manage to do. Parallel, our alternative renovation plan for the Poortgebouw was put on pause by the owners' unwillingness to negotiate a sale with our partners from social housing corporations and other third parties. This was frustrating. So it was a standstill for a longer period of time – looking back now, till beginning 2010 when the Poortgebouw 'won' the court case.

They also had the possibility to buy it [in the past]; I think most groups had the possibility to buy it in the 1980's and 1990's. A lot of people were too lazy, I think, didn't want to take responsibility, even called their attitude 'political'.

In our time we had found partners that said: "We have a million euros." But then the owner wanted a ridiculous sum for the house. It didn't make sense for any possible partner to spend so much and then the renovation on top.

PETER

SIEBE

PETER

FIG 57  
'POORTGEBOUW IN VERZET'.  
ROTTERDAMS DAGBLAD, 2006.  
AUTONOMOUS ARCHIVE.

# ongroep weigert zich op straat te laten gooien na 25 jaar oortgebouw in verzet

**befaamde  
ebouw** moet  
rechter op 1  
ruimd zijn. De  
ers peinen  
er een vertrek.  
ijid voor actie.

**GEMA  
AM**

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ver kan worden ver-  
d. Geen denken aan  
ca dertig bewoners  
ijfentwintig jaar uit  
ongroep het Poortge-  
en jagen ten faveure  
ren.

tijd tegen de eige-  
het monument, de  
Groep Rotterdam,  
oongroep momen-



0 achterstand. De

achter bepaalde on-  
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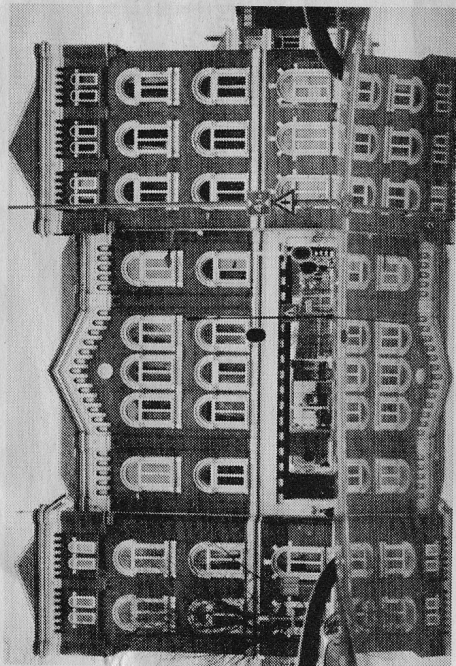
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et in het hoger be-  
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p het beroep aan.

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wordt op het alterna-

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nruchte geschiede-  
t Poortgebouw. De  
aavenbaron Lode-  
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eind negeantiende

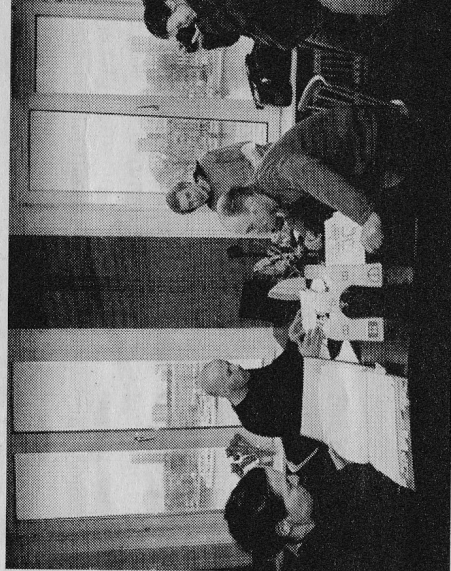


**Een bewoner van het Poortgebouw legt de laatste hand aan actie-spandoeken. Een daarvan hangt reeds aan het pand.**



**Het Poortgebouw van buiten. Van een afstand ziet het er mooi uit. Van dichtbij is duidelijk dat er veel onderhoud nodig is.**

moie bestemming zou zijn.  
Katendrecht was gesloten en  
de lichtkooien moesten er-  
gens heen.  
Krakers voorkwamen dat.  
In oktober 1980 bezetten zij  
het pand en de gemeente ge-  
deerde de sissie-  
bl-



**Een huisvergadering in het Poortgebouw. De bewoners o-  
len een alternatief plan. FOTO'S JAAAP ROZEMA**

woners. Daarmee groeide het  
Poortgebouw uit tot een expe-  
riment in zelfredzaamheid;  
het Ontwikkelings Bedrijf  
Rotterdam nam de buiten-  
kant voor haar rekening, de  
woongroep knapte de bin-

Natwintig jaar huu-  
ben betaald, verko-  
OBR het Poortgebouw  
2001 voor een heel zaa-  
je aan de Groene  
Sindsdien verkeert d  
rele broedplaats in g



In the end, there was no victory because we still had the shitty owner. That was just one step.

Personally, we wanted to devote our energy to renovating the house, that was our goal. It was frustrating that we could never do anything, but of course, it was better than being evicted. After years of developing a future plan, together with architects and experts, you want to go to work, you want to finally change something, and not just resist against a hostile owner.[...] I would have liked to look for a social owner or an alternative ownership model like ones that exist in other places. And my understanding is that's not what happened after the verdict in 2010. They said: "We won, and now we turn to our cultural activities again", but the group didn't proceed towards a substantial change.

In short, there were two court cases. We lost in the Rotterdam court in 2006. Then we went to the appeal court in Den Haag and 'won' it in 2010. However, we had already left end of 2008. The *Gemeente Rotterdam* has always played a key role in the story of the Poortgebouw. They were the original owners. They allowed the Poortgebouw to end up in private hands. And some politicians admitted this. At the time of the hassle with *De Groene Groep*, the housing portfolio was in the hands of Marco Pastors from *Leefbaar Rotterdam*. He definitely didn't want to be involved. In city hall there was solidarity from the *SP* and *GroenLinks*, who did what they could to lobby for us on a political level.

FIG 57





Smelt, H. 'Verbouwing Poortgebouw verdient navolging'.  
*Bouw*, 1983.

The renovation of the Poortgebouw is a special and unique project for several reasons. [...] In the negotiations between the municipality and the inhabitants/squatters several constructive and creative solutions were made. The positive experiences from this experiment can be used in other cases.

It is a scandal that [the municipality] didn't do anything to protect it in the past thirty years, or to stop it from being sold to a private commercial developer. It is a municipal monument! The traffic underneath the building is a problem. Maybe you already heard about it, but the municipality removed the signs that hung in front of the building, that warned about the height of the passage. It was a way to make the truck drivers at least slow down and to avoid accidents. But they took it away because it 'didn't fit the image' of the new public spaces on Kop van Zuid. It took a lot of effort of the residents to have them put back.

Matthieu Knibbeler from *Bureau Monumenten* was a "fan" of ours, both secretly with behind the scenes information and openly with other parties. On the district level the Feijenoord cultuurscout, Roelof Kok, supported and promoted us a lot after we raised his interest.

We were responsible for the inside, and the people we were paying the rent to was responsible for the outside. But I think til now they still haven't done anything. And that's one of the weird things about the Poortgebouw—and I think it's the way

LIDEWIJ

CHRISTINE

CESARE

FIG 58  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW IS  
LISTED AS A  
NATIONAL  
MONUMENT.  
1986. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



Monumentnummer: 46873

Smallepad 5  
3811 MG Amersfoort  
Postbus 1600  
3800 BP Amersfoort  
[www.cultureelerfgoed.nl](http://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl)

T 033 421 74 21  
F 033 421 77 99  
E [info@cultureelerfgoed.nl](mailto:info@cultureelerfgoed.nl)

Status : rijksmonument  
Inschrijving register : 16-10-1986  
Kadaster deel/nummer : 9272/13

Woonplaats: Rotterdam Gemeente: Rotterdam Provincie: Zuid-Holland

Plaatselijke aanduiding:  
Stieltjesstraat 38 3071JX Rotterdam

Kadastrale gemeente: Sectie: Kad.object: App: Grondperceel:  
Rotterdam 5e afd. Q 589

Omschrijving:

POORTGEBOUW totstandgekomen naar ontwerp van J.S.C. van de Wall in 1879 als kantoorgebouw van de Rotterdamsche Handelsvereniging, in eclectische, vooral op het Romaans geïnspireerde, bouwtrant. Het gebouw bestaat uit twee dwarsstaande vleugels van elk vier bouwlagen onder pannen schilddak, opgetrokken in baksteen op een natuurstenen plint, en een verbindingsstuk in het midden van twee bouwlagen en kapverdieping onder pannen schilddak, dat de eigenlijke poort vormt. Dit middengedeelte heeft aan beide zijden een middenrisaliet ter breedte van drie vensterassen en wordt bekroond door een frontonachtige kroonlijst met gepleisterde boogfriezen die aan beide zijden van de lisenen onder de rechte, gekorniste kroonlijst worden voortgezet over de breedte van een vensteras; in het midden een gepleisterde tondo met vierpas; de rondboogvormige vensters zijn voorzien van een geprofileerde, gepleisterde omlijsting gedragen door halfzuilen met bladkapitelen en onderaan voorzien van een gepleisterd fries met gestileerd bladmotief in reliëf. De noordelijke dwarsvleugel telt aan de smalle zijden twee vensterassen, de zuidelijke dwarsvleugel drie, maar deze heeft voor het overige dezelfde detaillering als de gevels van de noordelijke dwarsvleugel: omlappende, geprofileerde gepleisterde cordonlijsten boven de plint en tussen de eerste en tweede bouwlaag; gepleisterde blokken in de rondbogen boven de vensters op de begane grondverdieping; gepleisterde, geprofileerde rondboogomlijstingen gedragen door halfzuilen met bladkapitelen op de eerste en - gedeeltelijk - op de tweede verdieping, en onderaan voorzien van een gepleisterd fries met gestileerd blad-motief, gevat in ruiten respectievelijk tondi; en gekoppelde rondboogvensters, gescheiden door lisenen en uitkragend door middel van een rondboogfries op de derde verdieping, waarvan de hoeken worden geaccentueerd door zeszijdige, afgeknotte hoektorentjes op natuurstenen consoles en die wordt afgesloten met een omlappend gepleisterd rondboogfries en kroonlijst. In de doorgang zijn aan beide zijden drie toegangen opgenomen met geprofileerde, gepleisterde, rondboogvormige omlijsting, de middelste met stoep. Kantoorgebouw in eclectische baksteenbouw met voor de jaren '70 van de 19e eeuw kenmerkend gebruik van op Romaanse, Byzantijnse, Gotische en Renaissancevormen geïnspireerde decoraties, deels gepleisterd, zoals rondboogfriezen, bladkapitelen en -

En veramping poortgebouw sinds 1981

Doort bewerkt door Vrechten en van der Vliet, en aanvullingen door Chasthuys zonder ruimtelijk inzicht.



friezen, vierpas en cordonlijsten en blokken in de vensterbogen, Markeringspunt in de door bouwopdrachtgever L.Pincoffs in gang gezette ontwikkeling van het moderne havenbedrijf en de handel in Rotterdam, zowel door de verschijningsvorm als door de situering op een der havenhoofden, oorspronkelijk bedoeld als pendant van twee identieke kantoorgebouwen te weerszijden van de Binnenhaven. Kantoorgebouw van karakteristieke architectuur en situering en van belang uit oogpunt van de ontwikkeling van handel en havenbedrijf.

*Hoofdcategorie:*

Handelsgebouwen, opslag-  
en transportgebouwen

*Subcategorie:*

Handel en kantoor

*oorspronkelijke functie:*

they're going to get rid of them at some point. That's their strategy. Because the Poortgebouw is paying rent. But the Poortgebouw is known to the people around it as a squat, and so they are held responsible for the fact that the building looks like shit from the outside. Even though they have been paying rent for 30+ years, now to a company that doesn't do anything about the outside. That rent money should be spent on the outside! Instead what's happening now is they're waiting, and waiting, until, at some point, they'll find a weak spot in the group, that they don't resist anymore, that they don't respond fast enough to the procedures to evict them. And if they find that weak point, [the inhabitants] will be out. And nobody is going to support their case; because the area around them has become so rich, and they look so much like the wrong thing there now, being shabby and dirty.

LIDEWIJ

It is really common to have a divide between the interior and exterior for rental buildings. It is often done for office buildings, because it offers more freedom. The interior has a different life cycle than the exterior. Interiors are changed more often, but the investment might be in the range of hundreds or thousands of euros, while renovating the exterior will cost ten thousands, or hundreds of thousands of euros.

JUANITA

Catering to the interests of the owner can be helpful in some situations. And renovating the building is beneficial, not only to you, but also to tackle the bad state of maintenance, which can be used as a reason to evict you.

FIG 59  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW IS  
LISTED AS A  
NATIONAL  
MONUMENT.  
1986. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

So what do I think they should do now? I think they should open up. Fuck the people that they're paying rent to; take care of the outside themselves. Put a kind of alternative grand café out there, with good food, responsible products. Open up, put a terrace. Offer a service to the people that live around them; invite them in, and slowly get to know their surroundings. That would be the way to survive, but they never did that. Even when I was living there, we tried to get to that point, but it was hard.

When I first heard that there was a new owner, I had hopes. I thought, yes—we'll be able to get things moving, and we might make something beautiful out of it. I think the municipality should do its best to make something out of the Poortgebouw. But the only thing we can do, is to monitor the state of the building. If it becomes too dangerous, then the building inspector can make an official order to renovate certain parts.

You get tired. You can't always be fighting. Researching back into the history of the house, we know that there are always these times where the house goes to sleep. And then suddenly there's times of "Oh, we have to fight!" So there's a pattern, but the house always survived.

CESARE

OKACH

P&C

FIG 60  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.







# YOU MAKE YOUR CASE STRONGER IF YOU HANG A PAINTING AND PUT A PLANT NEXT TO YOUR TABLE

MARCEL

To start off: *huisrecht*, or domestic right, and the ‘involability of the home’, is one of the most important juridical phenomena for squatters. It gives protection to any inhabitant of any building, whether you are squatting a place or living there under a legal title.

In the past, you could make a claim on this domestic right as soon as you stepped into an empty house and set down your camping furniture. But, unfortunately the Dutch supreme court eventually decided that was too simple. You first have

FIG 61  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

to prove the occurrence of household activities—show that you're really living there.

Today, just putting a bed, a chair and a table in the room is not sufficient. You make your case stronger if you hang a painting and put a plant next to your table.

In practice this ends up under the judgment of whichever police force is handling your case. Some start to base their decisions on a 24 hour rule; or 48, or even 72 hour rule. So they claim that any squatters found within that time period can be evicted immediately. Which in my opinion is complete bullshit.

If you want to stay in a building for a longer time, you have to pay attention to the legal aspects of squatting. Without *huisrecht* you can easily get evicted, so think about how you'll create this. Try to avoid being caught red-handed when you enter the building—when you don't have *huisrecht* yet. There are several ways to create *huisrecht*, for example by cooking, cleaning, sleeping and playing games. Everything you would do in a house applies to this. And to avoid discussions with the police, make sure you document those activities well.

When the *Kraken & Leegstand* law was passed, criminal eviction suddenly had legal ground. Before that it was not allowed; and up until the last days before the new law was passed; judges were still saying there was no legal basis to conduct a criminal eviction. But well, the parties in the government who drafted this proposal thought this was the way

FIG 62  
POSTER  
FROM: MET  
EMMER EN  
KWAST.  
DUIVEN-  
VOORDEN, E.  
2005.

**GEM. ROTTERDAM  
BEDREIGT**

# **POORTGEBOUW**



**OVERLEG MET GEMEENTE**

**GEEN ONTRUIMING**

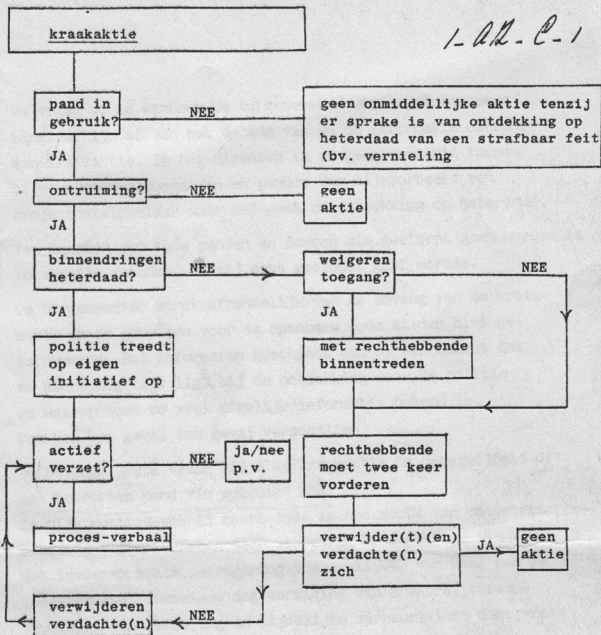


**ONTRUIMING = OORLOG**

SCENARIO VOOR POLITIEOPTREDEN BIJ KRAKEN

*C. v. Aarnoudse*

1-22-8-1



Toelichting

Het scenario voor de behandeling van een kraakactie is weergegeven in bovenstaand schematisch overzicht. De respectieve stappen komen overeen met de in de betreffende dienstorder vastgelegde politieke aanpak van zo'n actie.

Ten behoeve van de besluitvorming in de verschillende fasen is overleg tussen burgemeester, hoofdofficier van justitie en hoofdcommissaris noodzakelijk. Daarbij dient beschikt te kunnen worden over relevante informatie.

De vraag

E.T.C. DEE

to put an end to squatting once and for all. At least, they figured that with this new law in hand, any new squats would not have a chance. That was the wet dream. But they didn't count on the fact that even though squatting was now illegal, squatters could still claim protection of domestic rights. So things didn't go exactly as they thought it would.

Until the law changed, people had 'Squatters advice hours' [*Kraakspreekuren*]. And then the right wing politicians managed to stop these because they were said to be promoting an illegal activity. So, when that stopped in 2010, that did have effects in terms of people that wanted to find out what's going on.

CESARE

No, I don't know many squats in Holland anymore. I think they kind of succeeded in getting rid of it. There's the *ADM* in Amsterdam, that's one of the last kind of free havens. But that's also gonna go.

FIG 63  
POLICE  
SCHEME ON  
SQUATTING  
ACTIONS.  
1982. STADS-  
ARCHIEF  
ROTTER-  
DAM.



# WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO THE CITY? THE RICH, OR EVERYONE?

My first impression of Rotterdam was of this industrial, grey city—but also an exciting one. There were a lot of spaces that were not regulated per se; there was an underground scene of music and culture that I found liberating and inspiring. Yet when I came back in 2015, I didn't find those places, at least at the beginning. I thought: maybe it's because I'm getting old, and I'm no longer in the know of what happens in the city. Or maybe is it because Rotterdam is no longer the port city that it was before and has made a transition towards the creative industries. In a way, it is true that it has transformed its model for cultural production.

Rotterdam is a city in a continuous state of becoming something else. As if it is always waiting to make it, right? But it never fully arrives there. I think that is liberating in a way, being in a city that is always experimenting. [...] What I like the most about Rotterdam is that I have the feeling that

MARINA

FIG 64  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





it's a place where you can take risks—and if you fail, it's OK, you start over again. That makes me feel excited about living here.

SIEBE

I don't even know if there are squats today. The whole market has been taken over by companies like *Ad Hoc*, because everyone knows [they] have to deliver these empty spaces to project developers so they can rent it out again. And they were already there in the days of squatting, but they had a very bad reputation. Gentrification is not over yet. There are still a lot of poor people that need to be kicked out. That is the attitude.

LIDEWIJ

Most buildings today are owned by housing corporations. They were semi-public in the past, then went private, but after some were affected by corruption they were put back under public control. So they are still private, but bound to rules.

Other countries, like Germany, and I imagine Greece, but also countries like Spain, they have more of a tradition of collectives that own houses. This is not really the case in the Netherlands. [...] Given these circumstances, most corporations are used to building non-mixed forms of housing. So there is a lack of mixed forms of property.

ANIA

When it comes to the changes that the South and many other parts of Rotterdam have undergone in the last years, one of the problems that I see is that the visions of change are not created for those who live there, but for those who are supposed to come and change these places for 'the better'. I remember a billboard advertising the bright future of

FIG 65  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

Afrikaanderwijk as a great place to live in 2025. What is such an offer supposed to communicate to the people living there now? What does a good neighborhood mean anyway? Is a rich neighborhood good per se or are there other values that should be considered?

I think Katendrecht changed in a good way, because I have been here since 2005 and you wouldn't want to live here then. I think from the sixties until 2005 or 2008 there was a lot of development going on here, a lot for the good. On the other side, you can't forget the people who born here, built this area and they fought for this area as well. The native Katendrechtters are forgotten. There is a big difference between the born Katendrechtters and the new rich... Born Katendrechtters can't go to Deliplein or to the restaurant every week and the new ones can.

You are not free anymore to live where you want to. The government will check if you make enough money first; because they want to divide the money over the city. That's why it's important to make communities stronger from within, because it's not getting any easier to live in this neighborhood.

*'Viva Poortgebouw'. Using Space 10, 2016.*

The Poortgebouw has always had to fight for its survival, since it is the odd one out and clearly greedy capitalists see the money which could be rinsed from the building. Who has the right to the city? The rich or everyone?

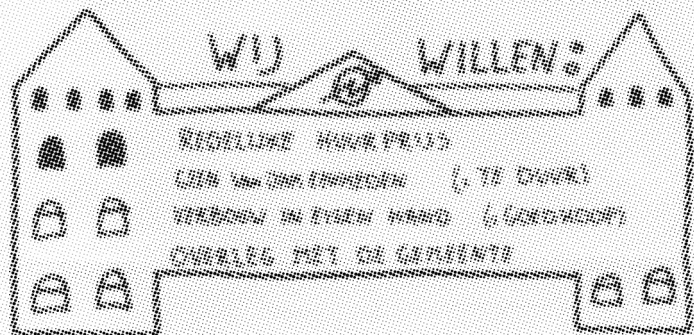
LAURA

RAMON

FIG 66  
'POORTGE-  
BOUW IN  
VERZET'  
POSTER.  
1980. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# POORTGEBOUW IN VERZET. GEEN ONTRUIMING!

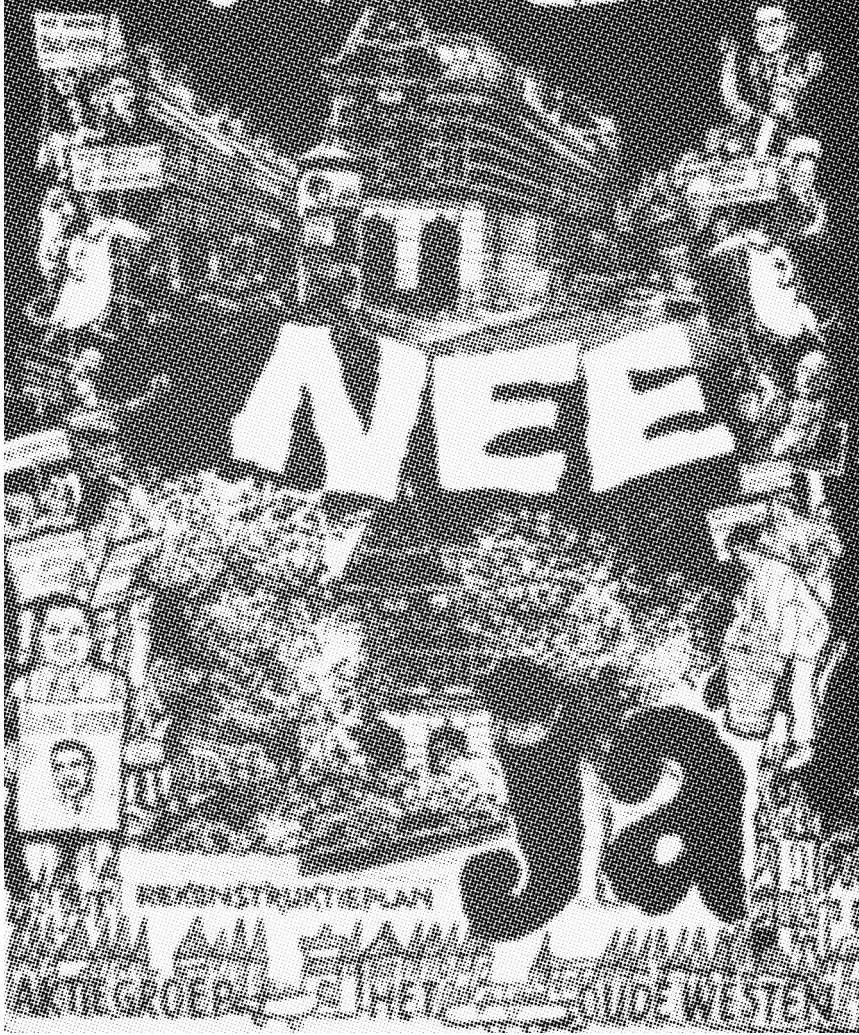
AL VEER VIL DE GEMEENTE EEN PRESTIGE-  
OBJECT IN HET POORTGEBOUW. EERST HOEREN-  
KAST. NU VEER ONBETAALBAAR ... OM EENHEDEN



DE 52 REVENUES VAN POORTGEBOUW  
HANDEN AF VAN HET POORTGEBOUW



KUN JE HIER LEVEN



TU  
NIE



PETER

You have to see the Poortgebouw in the context of the development of Kop van Zuid. I think the city, when they gave the rent contract in 1984, if they could have seen the masterplan of the area 5 years later... They probably would have thought, maybe we shouldn't have given it out. All of a sudden, the Poortgebouw looks kind of cool.

LIDEWIJ

The neighbourhood councils were quite active and strong in the 1980s. I know that the people from *Feijenoord* were happy that the Poortgebouw was squatted, because then the city couldn't go through with their plans to turn it into an eros centrum. [...]

In that time, there were some people interested in experimenting with housing. They were open for more citizen involvement. So this attitude of the institutions helped. Although it was only a small number of people—they were from left wing parties, or interested in new forms of housing. That still helped to convince the people who had their doubts about the safety of the Poortgebouw.

KATIA

I think it is interesting how squatting is an improvised practice and always has to deal with other institutions and the legal framework. So, all these interactions with the law, with institutions, with the city, with the neighborhood.

MARINA

Squatting has been institutionalized here for a long time; and it used to be legal. I think this spatial practice boomed in the post-war period in European cities, such as Amsterdam, where the urban centre was devastated, affected by economic crises and decay, and mostly vacant. In that situation, how are you going to tell someone who's looking for a home that you cannot use those existing infrastructures? There are

FIG 67  
POSTER  
FROM: MET  
EMMER EN  
KWAST.  
DUIVEN-  
VOORDEN, E.  
2005.

spaces that are available, and people without homes. What is the priority then? The right to property or the right to housing? I believe, as the squatting movement does, in the right to housing before the right to property.

I think that one of the important things we are doing with this project [*the Autonomous Archive*] is that we're collaborating with institutions such as *Piet Zwart*, who have supported the Poortgebouw in the past. All of these collaborations are very important to show to the city in general that we are here, and we are also part of the cultural development of this city.

GIULIA

I consider that *Het Nieuwe Instituut* has a responsibility, as an institution that depends on the ministry, to also recognize the importance of the squatting movement for the built environment. Especially since squatting was banned a few years ago. I wouldn't say it was an activistic position, because I'm not an activist; I'm more like a civil servant... But yet I believe that institutions can be very active and have a role in this conversation.

MARINA

The *Autonomous Archive* has already become part of the archive here. The other way around, not yet. But, I think it would be great somehow to become part of each other's history. I think both kinds of institutes are very important for Rotterdam.

KATIA

There were questions, like why a cultural institution like ours should be working on spatial practices that have been illegal for years? How can we make sure there are not power relations at play?

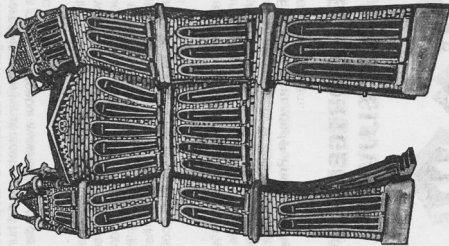
MARINA

Our aim was to have a genuine collaboration and, at the same time, to be aware what this collaboration entails for all the

FIG 68  
PROTEST  
BUTTONS.  
2006. COUR-  
TESY OF  
PETER &  
CHRISTINE.



# POORTGEBOUW GEEN KANTOOR!



# WONEN GAAT VOOR!

Vereniging Poortgebouw - Stieltjesstraat 38  
3071JX Rotterdam NL - [www.poortgebouw.nl](http://www.poortgebouw.nl)

## ZONDER POORTGEBOUW WEER EEN BEETJE MINDER ROTTERDAM

Het Poortgebouw is klaar voor de storm.

De Vereniging Poortgebouw is een erkende woon-groep van 130 bewoners en al 22 jaar lang de wettige huurder van dit Rotterdamse monumentenpand. Een uniek sociaal experiment wordt nu bedreigd met ontruiming, om plaats te maken voor het zoveelste prestigieuze kantoor.

Projectontwikkelaar "De Groene Groep" heeft de hand weten te leggen op het Poortgebouw, voor de prijs van een luxe appartement (460.000 Euro). Een prijs die de bewoners zelf ook wel hadden kunnen betalen, als ze de kans hadden gehad. De nieuwe eigenaar heeft ideeën met het gebouw waar de bewoners niet meer in passen en begint in September 2004 een rechtszaak om de bewoners op straat te zetten.

## LEVENDE STAD OF GRAUWE LEGOWERELD?

Het Poortgebouw werd in 1980 gekraakt uit protest tegen de woningnood in Nederland. De stichters van onze groep stelden zich ten doel om dit verlaten kantoorgebouw te transformeren in een woonbaar huis en een levend centrum voor sociale en culturele activiteiten. Na lang onderhandelen ging de Rotterdamse gemeenteraad in 1982 akkoord met een door de bewoners voorgesteld plan. De huur zou betaalbaar blijven door gemeenschappelijke voorzieningen en zelfwerkzaamheid aan de inrichting en het onderhoud van de binnenkant van het gebouw.

In september 1982 werd de Vereniging Poortgebouw opgericht zodat de woongroep het gebouw kon gaan renoveren en huren van de gemeente. Alle betrokken partijen waren zeer tevreden na de renovatie en in mei 1984 werd het eerste huurcontract getekend. Tegenwoordig betaald iedere bewoner een vaste huur (220 euro of 340 euro voor 2 pers.) en werkt hiermaast 8 uur per maand aan het onderhoud van het pand.

Sindsdien biedt het Poortgebouw een vrijplaats voor internationale kunstenaars, musici, studenten en mensen uit vele andere beroepsgebieden. De bewoners delen niet alleen een gebouw maar ook een levenswijze: gezamenlijk problemen aanpakken, kennis en kunde delen, elkaar inspireren en elkaar bijstaan. Van een verwaarloosd monument maakt zij een ontmoetingsplaats voor maatschappelijke, culturele en politieke discussies en activiteiten waar anders in Rotterdam geen plaats voor zou zijn.

Siedens als Rotterdam worden steeds meer gereduceerd tot een verzameling anonieme hokken, ontworpen om mensen in op te bergen en hun activiteiten te reguleren. Zelfs culturele "broedplaatsen" worden door de overheid uit de grond gestampt; bureaucraten beslissen waar, wanneer en door wie er mag worden geëxperimenteerd. Het Poortgebouw was al een echte broedplaats, lang voordat dit woord in de mode kwam bij de overheid. Het Poortgebouw laat een model van samenleven zien dat nu meer dan ooit relevant is: niet wachten op een paar kruimels van een aftakelende verzorgingsstaat of cultuurbeleid, maar zelf iets opzetten en samen in stand houden. De waarde van zo'n gemeenschap is niet uit de drukken in kwartaalcijfers en winstmarges.

In juli 2001 verkocht het Woningbedrijf Rotterdam (WBR), een semi-privatiseerde beheerder van onroerend goed, het Poortgebouw aan een commerciële projectontwikkelaar, "De Groene Groep" ([www.degroenegroep.nl](http://www.degroenegroep.nl)). Pas achteraf werden wij van de verkoop op de hoogte gesteld. De Gemeente ditzo, meeswakte om onze manier van wonen mogelijk te maken, heeft zo de weg geïvloed voor de exploitatieplannen van De Groene Groep. Er is in die tijd wel veel veranderd, maar is het wel zo nodig voor deze stad om er weer een kantoorgebouw bij te krijgen? Staan er niet al genoeg dure lege kantoren in Rotterdam?

agents involved. So far it has been extremely productive and beautiful. I'm particularly interested in the fact that Poortgebouw is developing their own archive. It's no longer *Het Nieuwe Instituut* attempting to include the architecture result of the squatting movement as part of the national archive, but the community of Poortgebouw is actually constructing, documenting its own history according to their own terms.

GIULIA

I don't know if it was different in the past. But since I've been here, we have been putting a lot of effort into opening conversations with institutions. And yes, I think it's very important. But, of course, we also have to be critical about it. We have to consider the interests of both sides. But for me it's really weird to see any collaboration at all, maybe because I'm from Italy and it's completely different there, how they treat places like this. A museum wouldn't be so eager to support a squat in Italy. I really appreciate how it's going here.

JERE

I don't know if what we are doing with *HNI*, with this squatting architectural documentation, the archive... when it started to happen, I thought, this is the funeral of squatting. It is the last mourning, with trumpets and everybody is sad and then happy to remember those glorious times of what it was. And I cannot make up my mind about it, is it good or right to do these things...

But I think once you describe things, and try to put them in brackets, and document them and make architectural drawings about a place, this place loses its original meaning. There is this... I don't remember who said that... once you give something a name, the thing is dead. Squatting is not so

FIG 69  
'POORTGE-  
BOUW GEEN  
KANTOOR'  
FLYER. 2006.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.



much a political phenomenon anymore, although it is still very political. It can send a strong message against property, which is one of the most embedded values in our society, which certainly can be questioned. You can mobilize people for important questions like the refugee crisis, gentrification.

We try to reflect on our role as an institute. What it means to present these criminalized practices. In all cases, we closely work together with the communities' spaces, when it is very evident that the residents really made an effort to preserve the building, because the owner was completely neglecting or demolishing even the building from inside out. We've tried even to send them a letter, to support them sometimes.

I remember a brochure on squatting with a significant title *Nood kraakt wet*, which can be translated quite literally as 'The Need Cracks the Law'. I think this logic should inform the current discussion on the city more. Who should be the main actor in this discussion, however, seems to have come to a very confusing point. Should it be finance—occupying the space of the city with empty buildings that serve merely as machines for speculation, or should it be citizens—occupying the space they need to live in a city?

Many things can be really powerful when addressing squatting, but the problem is that there is this gap between what the squatting community used to be, what political communities used to be, and what our generation is trying to say.

And maybe what we are doing now is turning ourselves in a little bit of laboratory to see what we

KATIA

ANJA

JERE





actually are—does this make any fucking sense? I mean for me it would be easy to move 10 super radical militant anarchists in here and do everything by the old school cookbook of anarchism. [...] For me, it would have meaning. But it would change a lot of how Poortgebouw would seem from outside, and how much Poortgebouw is a machine to grind this grim reality that is happening around. What I like is that, at least, the Poortgebouw is not a gentrifying machine. That Poortgebouw is really like an *Asterix et Obelix* image in the middle of what is happening and there is not even the tiniest risk of gentrification happening around us, because we are idiots and we don't allow it to happen.

MARINA

I have to say that even in the last few years, what we have accomplished—and I mean not only *Het Nieuwe Instituut* but everyone together—is we have brought squatting into the cultural conversation. Instead of talking about the problem, or the illegality of squatting, people are starting to ask what can it add to our cities? What is relevant, what can we learn from these spaces and these spatial practices? And I think that's what we can do. We are hopeful that every effort we are doing, every effort that the Poortgebouw is doing, it's summing up. And in the end there'll be results.

FIG 71  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

# IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT HEROICS AND POLITICS

Right now, I think *kraken* has some negative connotations. Squatters have always been portrayed like crazy people who break everything, people who completely destroy the house that they squat. I mean, yes, that has also happened. I've seen squatters go into a house with their dogs, make one room into the shithole for their dogs, spit on the ground, and basically tear the building down while they were living there. That is also part of the truth. But it's the only part of the truth that is shown. The whole positive part—which is much bigger—is not shown enough.

The Poortgebouw used to be the most radical, political, defensive, conspiracy-driven group of squatters in Rotterdam. There were others as well, but I can't tell you much about them because I was new and the movement evaporated in the second half of the eighties. [...] I was fed up with the movement in Amsterdam. I liked it a lot here because it was fragmented and ordinary, just the way most people are.

CESARE

SIEBE

FIG 72  
PHOTOGRAPH OF PEOPLE WORKING  
IN THE POORTGEBOUW ATTIC. 1980.  
USING SPACE ZINE, TENTH EDITION.







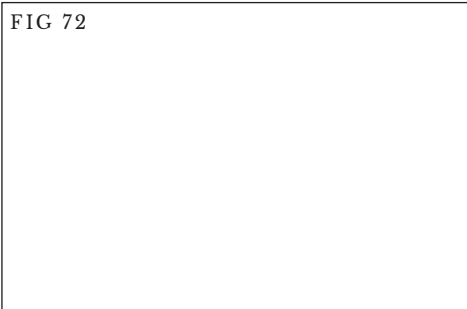


The *Blauwe Aanslag* in Den Haag was a very positive place. But everybody left in the end. And the people who came back were the hardcore anarchists. These are the guys that make a bad name for the alternative scene; I don't like them at all. I mean, I think they have a function... I'm afraid that unfortunately, violence has a function; it's the last thing that the politicians are scared of, even though I think it only works in their advantage. Because that's how they get people to think we are crazy idiots and that we're against the status quo just to be violent. It's actually about something completely different. For me it's about not liking society as it is and trying to change it in a positive way; in a way that is more social and allows for more equal chances, and is more fair on the environment and the animals.

What I'm getting to is that, at some point, we had an action at the City Hall, where we were trying to make our point clear that we didn't want to leave, and the government was deciding whether they would knock down the building or not. We were in this whole process of figuring out all kinds of possibilities, alternatives for the urban plan. And then it just became a big fight.

In response, we had theatrical sketches; one of them was a scenario where we were going to tear the City Hall down. We got two people to climb up onto the City Hall and swing around a big wrecking ball onto the façade of the building. The ball was made from rubber mattresses, it didn't do anything to the building. I played the mayor: I had a suit on and a lot of very bad perfume, my hair was gelled back, and I had this golden chain. And at some point, the others 'attacked'

FIG 72



the City Hall with a battering ram which was also made from rubber. But the moment that they reached the door, the military police came out and started basically knocking everybody down. People broke ribs, people were blinded, got glass in their eyes... it was totally ridiculous.

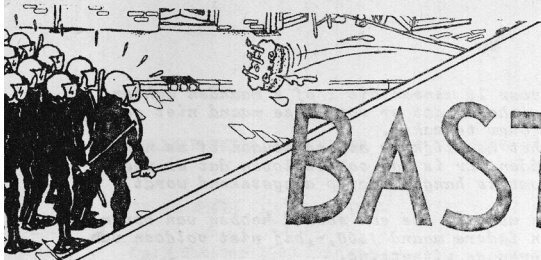
I sat down on the bench and just watched it all happen. They didn't touch me, didn't ask me anything, probably because I didn't look like a squatter. So I could observe it all, and it was a ridiculous, ridiculous amount of violence for no reason other than being able to put in the newspaper the next day that we were violent, when it was the opposite. I'm biased, OK—but I was really in the middle of it all and I could see what was happening and I'm absolutely sure that it started with the police. And it's not the first time that I've seen it. They literally said in the newspaper that some of these anarchists had been holding a policeman down and that they put gasoline over him and started throwing burning joints on him. That did not happen. No one in that group would do that.

From that moment, it was over. There was a reporter who was in the police station that night—we saw him—and he was talking to the police about what he was going to write up, [...] and he wrote four articles about that event in one newspaper. And from that moment on, the whole city was against the squat. And so they freed their way to evict us and tear the building down. That's how the media manipulates these things.

[Today] there are smaller squats that don't have that long of a history, or political position. They are more private. There are some in het Oude

JERE

FIG 73  
PROTEST  
POSTER.  
1981. AU-  
TONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



# BASTA '81

## ZATERDAG 19 DECEMBER

DE HELE DAG... **AKTIE!**

### DOE MEE TEGEN

VERLAGING JONGERENUITKERINGEN EN -LONEN  
WONINGNOOD EN ANTI KRAAKWET  
KERNWAPENS EN KERNCENTRALES  
VROUWENONDERDRUKING EN SEXISME  
STEEDS MINDER JONGERENVOORZIENINGEN  
POLITIEGEWELD EN MILITAIRISME

MILJARDENWINSTEN VOOR BANKEN EN MULTI'S (DE WERKELIJKE MACHTHEBBERS)

DES MIDDAGS... **DEMONSTRATIE**

15.00" VANAF SCHOUWBURGPLEIN

**MET VERRASSINGEN!**

DES AVONDS... **CRISISFESTIVAL**

17.00" POORTGEBOUW STIELTJESSTRAAT

MET PUNK ROCK RASTA  
INFORMATIE



B-10-  
1982 letter of  
complaints  
to a newspa  
per

Not Using  
anonymity &  
denied PG as  
place of residence

In strijd met de journalistieke gewoonte om de anonimiteit van ver dachten te handhaven door alleen initialen en woonplaats te vermelden, heeft het Vrije Volk in de krant van 13-10-82 het Poortgebouw als woonplaats genoemd van verdachten.

Wij zien dit als een bewust in een kwaad daglicht stellen en van de Rotterdamse Kraakbeweging.

Doelbewuste misdadige afbeelding door de overheid wordt klakkeloos door de pers overgenomen o.a. door het gebruik van termen zoals; raddraaiers, reischoppers, terroristen, etc, etc, daarmee een hele beweging in kwaad daglicht te stellen. Dit leidt ertoe dat kraken als iets illegaals wordt gezien en er een wig tussen de kraakbeweging en de overige bevolking wordt gedreven.

Noorden, Charlois and in West. But it is getting less and less. It is interesting now that in Amsterdam squatting is becoming a thing again. It is not fashionable yet, but people are picking it up for political reasons.

SIEBE If you talk about squatting, everybody thinks about Amsterdam. But in most cities there were squats, and people were squatting here in Rotterdam as well. But I had a very different opinion about all of this. I once went to a big squatters' meeting in the Oude Noorden. I didn't like the whole scary atmosphere. A guy even talked about guns and violence, and police... I didn't like the whole idea. I'm an idealist, I'm not into violence. And I immediately saw that it did not give a good impression of the squatters that I knew from Crooswijk, who were completely different people. So the whole social issue of squatting was never talked about; it was always about heroics and politics.

KATIA Whatever you think about whether squatting should be legal, or illegal, people see that it can act as a critical voice in the city pointing at real estate speculation and private owners that are really neglecting their property. This voice is somewhat missing now. People were also saying this in Amsterdam last year, that they miss this critical voice in the city.

JERE It's not true. They just don't want to listen to [this critical voice]. The thing is, Amsterdam is an amazing example of that: the last mayor of Amsterdam was a guy who was squatting for ten years of his life, and yet he is the guy who evicted the biggest number of squats since 2010.

What they are trying to do, they are trying to play this non-ideological game where they can please everyone —big investors, Chinese companies, small people,

FIG 74  
LETTER OF  
COMPLAINT TO  
NEWSPAPER. 1982.  
AUTONOMOUS  
ARCHIVE.



hipsters—everybody can fit into what Amsterdam tries to be. And it's simply not true. Not everybody can fit into a city. Especially if there are certain groups that, by purpose, exclude the others. And when they say that they miss this critical voice; sorry, but you were the ones that propagated the ban, you were the ones that were doing it, and you are the ones that claim that that's no longer a part of the Dutch culture. And if you talk to people who are our age, or older, everybody will say that this culture was forcefully changed. That this liberal Netherlands of the seventies and eighties was a different construct than what the Netherlands tries to be now. And when you walk around Rotterdam, it's simply disgusting how many super young people are in a suit and tie. I mean, for me, that's an equally ideological position; the same as being a punk with mohawk and anti-capitalistic patches. If you are 23 and you think that you have to wear a suit and earn big money and bring in investments from all over the world, you belong to a certain ideological camp. And the fact is that the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and the Netherlands in general, they listen more to these kinds of young people than to the other kinds of young people, because that's the game they want to play. But, at the same time, they know that they have to sell this all inclusive story.

I actually think that they are not creating any kind of infrastructure for this voice to develop. I cannot go to one of the best universities in the world and not hear one word of urban critical theory. We hear about social responsibility, sustainability; you hear about all these moral, ethical concepts, but

FIG 75  
'PRO-  
TEST...'  
DE OUD  
ROTTER-  
DAMMER,  
2006.  
AUTON-  
OMOUS  
ARCHIVE.

# Protest in Feijenoord

**In 1979 werd in de woonwijk Feijenoord een protestoptocht gehouden tegen de plannen van B&W voor de vestiging van een eroscentrum in het Poortgebouw. Dit plan was ontstaan vanwege de sluiting van bordelen en seksclubs op Katendrecht.**

Het opknappen van de wijk en de kwestie van de dreigende prostitutie aldaar waren geen zaken die alleen de jonge bewoners in de buurt raakten, ook oudere bewoners spraken daarover hun woordje mee. Een aantal bewoners liet zich via de Bewoners Organisatie Feijenoord (kortweg BOF) vertegenwoordigen. Juist de gewone dagelijkse problemen vonden zij belangrijk in de wijk, zoals de tijds slecht onderhouden woningen, de ardenzorg en de opvang van buitenlandse

Deze laatste groep vormde een

hoog percentage van de bevolking. "Veel is hier in de wijk de laatste jaren opgebouwd en we hebben dan ook veel waardering voor de jonge krachten die zich volledig inzetten voor de belangen van de wijkbewoners en de integratie van migranten. Het eroscentrum dreigt de stadsvernieuwingsplannen te vertragen en dat nemen wij niet. De bewoners van Katendrecht willen ook van de prostitutie af. Wij willen hier rustig door de straat kunnen gaan. Als het eroscentrum hier wordt gevestigd gaat de wijk zeker verpauperen en



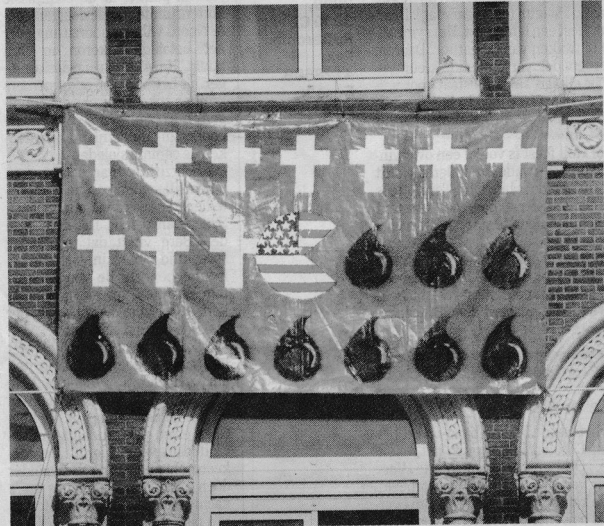
daartegen verzetten wij ons." Mede door het verzet van de bewoners gingen de plannen voor seks in het Poortgebouw niet door. Trouwens een aantal jongeren had destijds

deze locatie al gekraakt en als woongebouw in gebruik genomen.

Leen van Vreewijk



n



Op het Poortgebouw in Rotterdam-Zuid hangt een protestuiting die met een paar simpele symbolen duidelijk maakt waar het volgens de maker in de Tweede Golfoorlog om gaat. Olie ten koste van mensenlevens. Foto Jaap Rozema/Rotterdams Dagblad

Foto Jaap Rozema/Rotterdams Dagblad

## Acties in Rotterdam tegen oorlog

**Rotterdam** — Nog voordat het eerste schot was gelost, was het Rotterdams protest tegen een oorlog in Irak al in volle gang. De een hing een provocerend spandoek op, een ander protesteerde kunstzinnig en weer anderen bereidden zich voor op demonstraties in de stad.

Het comité Rotterdam Tegen de Nieuwe Oorlog riep alle scholieren en studenten in de stad op om vandaag te demonstreren. Leerlingen zouden zich om 12.00 uur verzamelen bij het ROC Zadkine aan de Schiekade.

Vanaf Zadkine zou de optocht naar andere scholen gaan om daar — op de Wolfert van Borselen, het Marnix Gymnasium, de scholen op de Beukelsdijk, het Christelijk College Henegouwen en het Albeda College — leeftijdsgenoten op te halen. De demonstranten liepen vervolgens over de Coolsingel richting het monument van Zad-

### Protesten van scholieren, kunstenaars en bewoners

bier. De bewoners schakelden dan ook direct de media in. Die kregen van Opstelten en de korpschef te horen dat ze van niets wisten. „Het was dus gewoon pure intimidatie van de politie,” zegt hij verontwaardigd.

Bij de bewoners wordt druk gespeculeerd over wie de orders dan wel heeft gegeven...„Je moet er niet aan denken dat de macht van de Verenigde Staten tot in Nederland reikt en dat ze onze rechten gaan afnemen,” zegt Ellen. Het spandoek hangt inmiddels weer aan de gevel. Een van de bewo-

ners heeft nu ook een Palestijnse vlag uitgehangen.

In de Witte de Withstraat laten kunstenaars op een hele andere manier hun mening over de oorlog horen. „Wat subtieler,” omschrijft Cies Breijs van kunstgalerie Mama het. In de etalage staan twee televisietoestellen met Bush en Saddam in beeld. Voorbijgangers kunnen twee microfoontjes inspreken die aan het raam voor de tv's zijn bevestigd. Op het moment dat ze dat doen, beweegt de mond van Bush of Saddam. „De kunstenaar wil zo de mogelijkheid creëren voor mensen om zich te uiten over de oorlog,” zegt Breijs.

Binnen zijn drie andere beeldbui-zen neergezet, ook met het portret van Bush. Op de apparaten is te zien hoe het hoofd van de Amerikaanse president wordt gevormd door bekende Amerikaanse merken zoals Coca-Cola en McDonald's.

they're always wrapped in something else. But critical theory, which is actually about gentrification, which is actually about urban struggles, which is actually about these things: not one single word. So the truth is, they just choose what to invest in: culturally, politically.

CESARE

I think the whole system is built in such a way that we are basically enslaved. And that sounds very harsh, and those are the things I heard the anarchists say back then, when I was much younger, and at that time I thought „Come on, it's not that bad. We are free, and we make our own decisions... la la la.“ But slowly over the years... I start to think, they're kind of right. It's a subtle system but it channels you into a situation where you end up feeling you're actually not that free.

JERE

I really think that the Netherlands is not a pluralistic society. You have a lot of freedom, but in terms of what is appreciated and what is invested into and collectively discussed... I grew up in a country that had just grown out of communism when I was born. And I grew up with these dark stories about how everybody is the same in communism. And everybody wears the same clothes and everybody buys the same products because nothing else can be bought and it's terrible and blah blah blah. And then, after that, we had kind of a proto wild-wild-west capitalism, which looks like shit and is really bad. So you have many different kinds of yoghurts, but actually you would really rather just have one yoghurt and a job. But that's what happened. And then I come here, and I see these same kind of things are good; people can live good. But

FIG 76  
'ACTIES IN  
ROTTER-  
DAM TEGEN  
OORLOG'.  
ROTTER-  
DAMS DAG-  
BLAD, 2003.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.

there is no pluralism, everybody buys the same shit! Everybody goes to the same shops, all the opinions of people I hear are the same. All the academic knowledge that is produced comes from the same discourse. Practically, this is not a pluralistic society, because there is no coexistence of many differences, but there is tolerance of one major truth and all the marginal things that pop around it.

I think society should just collapse and make it a bit worse. Let's make it a bit worse! I don't know, I think some fusion is possible, otherwise we have a big chaos. We never learn. With the last crisis I had a little hope that maybe they would put on the breaks... That people would maybe realize that something has to change. And a lot of things did start changing at that moment... But unfortunately the economy somehow recovered. So now we are going back to business as usual.

I think we need a few more of those breaking moments, and then I don't imagine it will go with a big collapse, but there will be a reevaluation. It seems there are so many people aware of the situation—and so many young people aware of the situation—that I don't understand why we don't all just get up and fucking change this thing.

FIG 77  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.





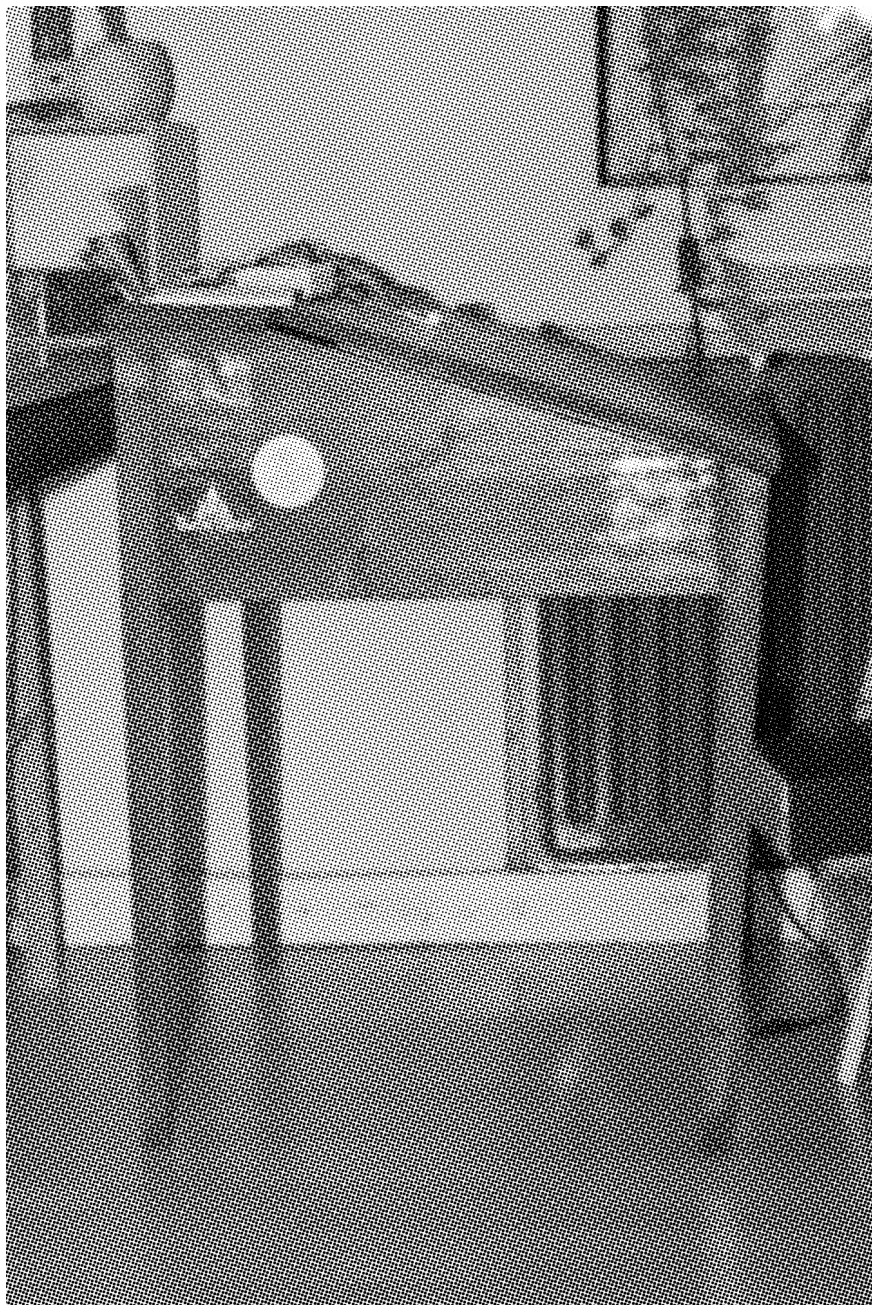
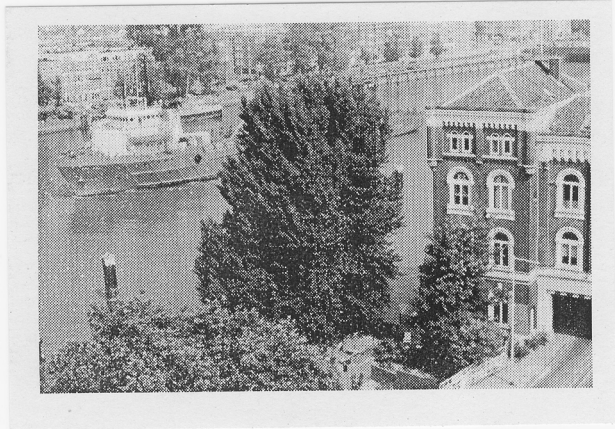


FIG 78  
A TABLE IN  
THE POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
2017.

# EPILOGUE

FIG 79  
POSTCARDS  
FROM THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
UNKNOWN.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.



**HET POORTGEBOUW** is een van de oudste panden van Rotterdam-zuid, het is in 1870 gebouwd in opdracht van Lodewijk Pincoff, die de basis legde van het succes van de Rotterdamse wereldhaven. Pincoff ging echter nog voor hij zitting kon nemen in zijn 'paleis' failliet en nam de wijk naar Amerika. De gemeente werd eigenaar en vestigde er onder andere het KNMI en het havenbedrijf. In de jaren 70 kwam het leeg te staan en was er het voorstellen er een Eroscentrum te vestigen. Dit werd door bewoners van Feijenoord voorkomen.

In oktober 1980 werd het pand als protest tegen de woningnood getraakt. Al snel werd duidelijk dat de jongeren er van de gemeente mochten blijven wonen. Het verbouwingsplan van de gemeente zorgde voor een te hoge huur. De jongeren kwamen met een eigen voorstel: zij zouden de verbouwing zelf doen en verantwoordelijk blijven voor al het interne onderhoud. De gemeente zou zorg dragen voor het onderhoud van het dak en de buitenruimte. Sinds 1984 is de bewonersvereniging het Poortgebouw zelf verantwoordelijk voor de huur en overige vaste lasten welke door de gemeente worden betaald. De huur wordt ieder 30 procent van zijn jaarlijkse bruto loon gedeeltelijk vergoed. De huur wordt betaald op basis van de draagkracht van de inwoners. Het gebouw wordt geleid door een bestuur met leden van de lokale gemeenschap. Iedere bewoner heeft zijn eigen voorzitter maar we delen tegens, een woonkamer, sportruimte, oefenruimte en een café. De tuin, diverse activiteiten en de overtuiging dat er geen plaats is voor seksisme, racisme en milieuvervalsing.

De tuin wordt nu bedreefd, de bomen moeten volgens de gemeente wijken voor een betaald plein, op voorstellen onzorgvrij, zoals een openbaar toegankelijke stadstuin die door ons wordt onderhouden werd niet ingegaan.

Als u een kijke wilt komen nemen in het Poortgebouw, leiden wij u graag rond. Belt u voor een afspraak: 4231385.

SNIP



KNP

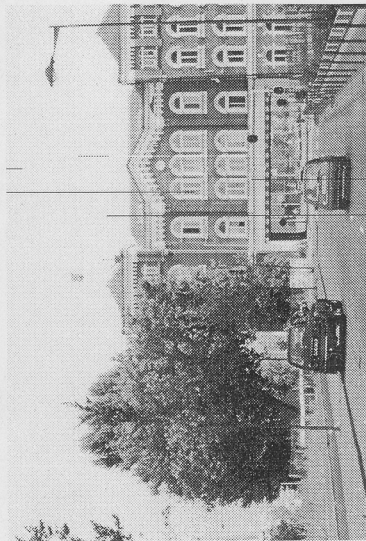
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SNIP



KNP

# THIS CITY REALLY NEEDS THIS PLACE

CESARE Why is it so important to squat? I mean, I always had a conflict with my mother about it. She was always very strict, kind of like — “It’s somebody else’s property, and you don’t touch it. Point.” And in a way I can respect that, I can understand that’s how it should be. But at some point the people who are owning property are not respecting the rest of society. And that’s where I think things start to become less black and white.

I think squats are — or at least used to be — a really important thing in the cultural and political development of a city. And an opportunity for young people to kind of figure out who they really want to be or how they really want to live as an alternative to the mainstream culture.

CHRISTINE Our group was always fluctuating. [...] So there were varying degrees of understanding that The Poortgebouw is a historic space in many respects. Because it’s not about us two, or five, or 30, it’s for the future. It sounds a bit cheesy, but it’s for our descendants, so they can still have a place in the city of Rotterdam, or wherever, where such things are possible.

FIG 80  
POSTCARDS  
FROM THE  
POORT-  
GEBOUW.  
UNKNOWN.  
AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE.



The Poortgebouw is an urban pearl. It's the rare old building in the area. In the former harbour area, all buildings have been erased (except the Entrepot warehouse). There is a piece of wall preserved as a monument to the Jewish deportation that took place from there, the Poortgebouw, and that's it.

For me, the important thing is the community that lives there now. A lot of people have lived at the Poortgebouw. It's really been a place for a lot of things. That shows the importance of it.

I think our role is less political; more social and cultural now. There are not so many actions. [...] I like the idea of being sovereign in this house. There is a duality in this because you want to be sovereign and you want to be acknowledged in your own sovereignty. So this is something that we're doing with the archive: getting recognition for our story. This city really needs this place.

What is needed is that Rotterdam looks at the errors and the successes of other cities. I don't think Rotterdam should model itself as a development driven city, with high end restaurants and very expensive apartments. That's not what the denizens of Rotterdam are proud of, and it's not what attracts people to this place. We have to keep the essence of this city, and I think the Poortgebouw is part of it.

LIDDEWIJ

RIANNE E.T.C. DEE

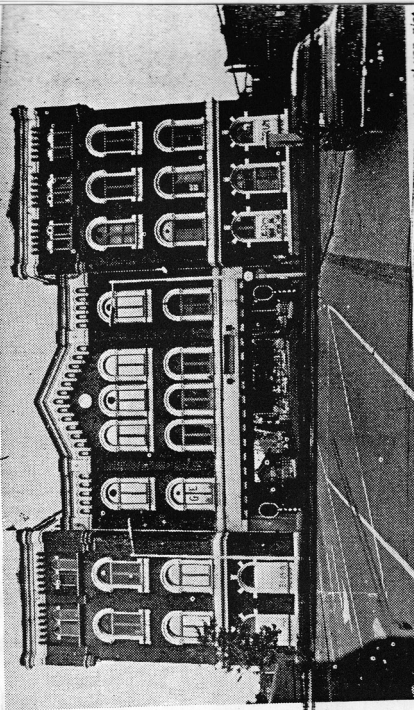
MARINA

07 JULY 1981

HET ROTTERDAMS-  
NIEUWS  
BLAD  
ARTICLE

ANALYSIS OF  
IMPROVEMENT  
OF THE BUILDING BY  
THE ROTTERDAMERS

# Rotterdams- nieuws betreurt verpaupering Poortgebouw



voord — Het Historisch Genootschap 'Rotterdam' heeft van harte dat de sluimerende verpaupering van het door krakers bewoonde Poortgebouw worden gestopt.

zouden het ten eerste betreuren, als het Poortgebouw moeten worden gesloopt', is de mening van J. J. Dutilh, voorzitter van 'Rotterdam'.

3 oktober van het vorig jaar werden gecreëerd. Maar dat oude onderkomen heeft het Havenbuurt-Genootschap. Het Poortgebouw wordt weliswaar nog bewoond door de krakers, maar de wilden vestigen er een groep krakers tot behoud van het gebouw. Aanvankelijk had de organisatie het eens zo karakteristieke gebouw in een erbarmelijke toestand.

Het historisch genootschap, dat tot doel heeft het behoud en de verbetering van de monumenten, heeft een voorstel ingediend voor de geschiedenis-

van Rotterdam en omgeving, vindt het jammer dat ze als jongerenhuisvesting te realiseren, maar het college kon niet anders dan de verpaupering van het Poortgebouw er zo manifesteren. Het zou toch menswaardig zijn om het gebouw te behouden. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte.

Wat er nu wel of niet gaat gebeuren, weet niemand. Enerzijds heeft het college van burgemeester en wethouders aangeboden om de verpaupering van het Poortgebouw te stoppen. Anderzijds heeft het college van burgemeester en wethouders aangeboden om de verpaupering van het Poortgebouw te stoppen.

• **Worcht de sluimerende verpaupering tussens voor het Poortgebouw?** 'Rotterdam' hoopt in 81k: gevel van niet-woners hebben echter al 1 ten weten. Nadat de gemeenteraad haar voorgenomen plannen bekend maakte, lieten de krakers duidelijk weten hun Poortgebouw te behouden. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte. De krakers zouden worden toegewezen van de woonruimte.

Sindsdien is er niets bijoor gegaan. Het Poortgebouw wacht op een oplossing. De huidige Poortgebouwverpaupering...

## HOOGBOUW 'Manhattan aan de Maas' is lang niet klaar: plan

## Hog, hoger, hogst

STIJN HUSTINK  
YVONNE KEUNEN  
ROTTERDAM

**O**ok al is het geld door de kredietcrisis tijdelijk op, de ontwikkeling van de Rotterdamse skyline zal er nauwelijks onder lijden. De bouwdrift is nauwelijks te stuiten. „Want die crisis gaat uiteindelijk wel een keer over.“

Wie vanuit het zuiden over de Van Brineneoordbrug richting Maasstad rijdt, bij voorkeur vlak voor het vallen van de avond, moet het herkennen. Bij het zien van de verlichte skyline ontstaat het 'Ik-ben-weer-thuisgevoel'. Wethouder Hamit Karakas (bouw en wonen) in elk geval wel. „Het is ons beeldmerk geworden“, zegt hij over de Maasstedelijke horizon. „We zijn een compleet nieuwe stad aan het worden, met een eigen identiteit.“

Zeker, de kredietcrisis heeft geen positieve invloed, beamt hij. De gemeentelijke sprong bij sommige hoogbouwprojecten zelfs – zij het tijdelijk – met tientallen miljoenen euro's bij. Want woningen, zeker appartementen in het middeldure segment, zijn nog altijd schaars in het centrum. En hebben de bouwers even geen geld in kas, dan moet de gemeente maar het smeermiddel zijn. Want die appartementen, bedoeld om hoger opgeleiden aan de stad te binden, zijn broodnodig, legt Karakas uit.

Bouwers en ontwikkelaars die geen geld hebben, maken momen-

**De binnenstad kan nog vier keer voller. Doe je het niet, dan wordt Rotterdam een provinciestad.**

## Skyline Rotterdam verandert

Rotterdam krijgt er de komende jaren nog een aantal serieuze wolvenkruipers bij. Sommige worden al gebouwd. Montevideo op de Wilhelminapier is de hoogste, maar dat duurt niet lang meer.

AD 2401091 MB\_A2

teel een pas op de plaats. Want banken lenen nog maar mondjesmaat geld uit in potentiële kopers wachten betere tijden af. Op eigen kosten bouwen is veel te riskant, legt Karakas uit. Maar dat is slechts tijdelijk. De bouwdrift zal niet te stuiten zijn. Directeur Adriaan Visser van het Ontwikkelingsbedrijf Rotterdam (OBRT): „Die crisis gaat uiteindelijk wel een keer over.“

Ze komen er ongetwijfeld, de kolossen die nog hoger zijn dan Rotterdam's hoogste wohntoren tot nu toe: het 43 verdiepingen tellende Montevideo op de Kop van Zuid komt er hoer dan ook, die is over het 100-meterpunt heen. Nog 65 meter en Rotterdam's hoogste is gereed.

Wildra volgen projecten als De Rotterdam (147 meter), Baltimore (170 meter), de toren in de Gedempte Zalmhaven (185 meter) of de Coolingshtoren (165 meter).

Over De Rotterdam, tussen KPN-toren en Café Rotterdam op de Wilhelminapier, hebben de partijen in juni de knoop door. De Coolingshtoren is nu weliswaar op de lange baan geschoven, volgens betrouwbare mensen is van afstel geen sprake.

En er staan nog meer jokers op stapel, de één concreter dan de ander. Het gaat om zeker vijftig torens van 65 meter of hoger. Zoals de B'tower, op de plek van de Chillout-aanbouw van de Bijlmerok. Of de Calypso (71,3 meter) op de plek van de Paaluserker in het centrum. De bouwdrift lijkt onstuitbaar.

„De binnenstad kan nog vier keer voller“, meent Jan Klerks van The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat uit Chicago, ofwel de mondiale wolvenkruiperfederatie. „Doe je het niet, dan is Rotterdam straks gewoon een provinciestad. Maar doe het met beleid.“

Volgens Karakas is er zeker sprake van beleid. Hij wijst op de Stadsvisie, die bepaalt dat in maar een paar gebieden van de binnenstad hoogge-



bouwd mag worden. „Dat niet meer zoals voorheen, toen hadden we geen focus. Er melden zich ook ontwikkelaars met plannen voor torens aan bijvoorbeeld de Maasboulevard of de Schiedamsedijk. Die verkopen we voorlopig 'nee'.“

Karakas wijst daarnaast op het belang van de 'pijler'. Dat betekent dat ook aan de voet van de torens wat te bouwen moet zijn. Iets wat bij de Maastoren is mislukt: daar worden de onderste tien etages parkeer verdiepingen. En dat wilde de gemeen-

teraad niet nog een keer laten gebeuren. Vandaar dat voortaan een goede invulling gevonden is, zoals winkels of een restaurant.

Verder mogen omwonenden door hoogbouw geen last hebben van schaduw of harde wind. Deels om

## Leefklimaat

## 'Hoge gebouwen creëren een koude stad'

Regen op de Kop van Zuid? Trek de capuchon maar uit je kraag, want tegen de wind tussen de hoogbouw is geen paraplu bestand. Daar doet de luifel van het World Port Center, ontworpen tegen windhinder, niets aan af. De skyline mag dan het handelsmerk van Rotterdam zijn, hoge gebouwen leiden niet tot een prettig klimaat op straat. En om de stad aantrekkelijk te houden, moet je daar veel meer rekening mee houden, vindt een groeiende groep architecten en stedenbouwers.

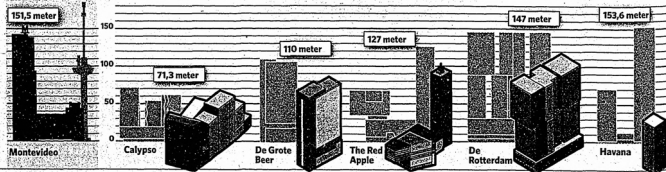
Over hen, Jan Gehl, de Deense landschapsarchitect die in opdracht van de gemeente de binnenstad onder de loep nam. Met hoogbouw moet je oppassen, vindt Gehl. „Hoge gebouwen creëren een koude stad. Noordzeelanden hebben veel wind en tussen de hoogbouw is wind vier keer zo sterk als elders.“

En wat te denken van schaduwwerking? Het 71 meter hoge Calypsogebouw dat aan de Mauritsweg komt, houdt de terrassen van het Schouwburgplein uit de zon. Het

pand ging de welstandscommissie dan ook te ver. „Het is jammer dat het er komt“, zei voorzitter Ruud Brouwers vorige jaar bij zijn afscheid. „Het is te hoog. En te prof naast de IJde nieuwe stadsplannen.“ En dat meer woningen tot meer leven op straat leiden, is volgens deskundigen niet altijd waar. Landschapsarchitect Elzjo Bindels van West 8 vindt woontoren om die reden lang niet altijd een verrijking, zal bij eerder. „Die mensen wonen in de skyline, niet in de stad.“

## Gebouwd

## Gepland of al in aanbouw



# A KEY MOMENT IS COMING IN THE FUTURE

JERE [The future is] black. In my opinion, 5 to 10 years from now, Poortgebouw won't be here. The city is changing. I think Rotterdam is on the edge of falling into a completely gentrified, generic global city kind of constructed identity.

KATIA I think it really depends on the community that lives there. Because it is a monument, there are many people that are claiming that it should be renovated. I think it has always been under pressure. And the struggle also made it a very strong community. It depends also, of course, on how the city will develop in the next years.

RIANNE I think we need to buy it. We may be two years too late for it, but I think we should still try it. Property prices have gone up so much lately that it seems impossible. I think the owner is just waiting to harvest.

GIULIA You know, when the municipality sold the house to *De Groene Groep*, or when they sold the house to our new owner, nobody took into consideration that maybe we would want to buy the building. There was no space for us, and no time to even come in with a proposal.

FIG 82  
'HOGER,  
HOGER,  
HOOGST'.  
ALGEMENE  
DAGBLAD,  
2009.  
GEMEENTE-  
ARCHIEF  
SCHIEDAM.

I hope that the inhabitants will come to an agreement with the owner after all. And that this will result in something good, like a renovation. The reality is that you probably need millions to make it into something beautiful.

I'm generally a bit pessimistic about the state of things, but I do have this feeling that it will survive somehow. A lot of the time it comes down to a few people, like Peter and Christine. Now, the Poortgebouw is reaching out for people to help, and that's great, but some of the people living there have to step up as well.

There are also new issues to be tackled. How to survive in the 'Manhattan on the Maas', be publicly accessible and inclusive, *and* remain an uncomfortable "thorn in the flesh?" In any case, it should continue to be accessible for marginalized people and groups, but also with the necessary degree of inviting broader audiences, as there is a lot to be learned from the Poortgebouw.

Currently, I don't see a long future [for the Poortgebouw]. It has a lack of institutional support, that makes it vulnerable. To create institutional support they could create a foundation. If you get people from the municipality and perhaps the housing corporation to join, [...] the position against the current owner is stronger. In the end, to offer the Poortgebouw a future, the owner needs to be replaced. Not by a private party, but a semi-public organisation (*NGO*) like the foundation.

OKACH

E.T.C. DEE

CHRISTINE

LIDEWIJ

FIG 83  
DOCUMENT 'NATIONALE  
PROGRAMMA ROTTERDAM  
ZUID'. 2014.  
GEMEENTE ROTTERDAM.



### Waar staan we nu: eerste stappen in structurele kwaliteitsverbetering

#### Centrumstedelijk milieu Kop van Zuid

Er is door publieke en private partijen de afgelopen decennia al veel geïnvesteerd om dit gebied tot een aantrekkelijk woon- en werkmilieu te maken. Private partijen krijgen de gelegenheid dit woonmilieu verder te ontwikkelen. De gemeente faciliteert en investeert in de openbare ruimte en de voorzieningen. In de focuswijken Feijenoord en Afrikaanderwijk wordt vooral door corporaties geïnvesteerd. Ook hier is echter gelegenheid voor andere investeerders.

#### Groenstedelijk milieu Tuinsteden

Tot 2020 vindt gestaag sloop en nieuwbouw plaats in de tuinsteden naast renovatie van corporatiebezit. Prioriteit ligt bij het afmaken van de in gang gezette herstructurering in Pendrecht en Zuidwijk door de corporaties. Nieuwbouw in Lombardijen en Hordijkerveld wordt gepland voor de periode na 2020. De corporaties nemen het initiatief voor transformatie van Vreewijk en Vleelwaal naar moderne groenstedelijke milieus. Na 2020 zal de transformatie van gestapeld naar grondgebonden doorgaan. De gemeente stimuleert en faciliteert dit proces en doet aansluitend investeringen in de buitenruimte, waterberging en voorzieningen. Corporaties investeren tot en met 2017 meer dan € 100 miljoen per jaar in gemiddeld 1.400 woningen op heel Zuid.

#### Rustig stedelijk milieu Stadswijken

In tegenstelling tot de grote investeringen in het centrumstedelijke en groenstedelijke milieu komen de stadswijken van Zuid er tot nu toe bekaaid van af. In de focuswijken Oud-Charlois, Carnisse, Tarwewijk, Bloemhof en Hillesluis ligt de grootste opgave om tot vernieuwing te komen. De overheersing van kleine, gestapelde woningen in voornamelijk particulier eigendom vormt hier de bottleneck. Er is slechts een beperkt aantal projecten op de middenpagina opgenomen, gaat hier ook verder op in. Rondom de particuliere voorraad zitten de Rotterdamse

partners niet stil. Vanuit het gemeentelijke programma particuliere woningvoorraad zijn in de periode 2010 tot en met 2013 ruim 2.400 woningen verbeterd. Voor de collegeperiode 2014-2018 staan nog eens 3.000 woningen in de planning, waarbij ook aandacht wordt besteed aan de verduurzaming van deze woningen. Hier is € 15 miljoen voor gereserveerd. De basisverbetering in de particuliere voorraad en de aanpak van de corporatievoorraad liggen qua aantallen in lijn met de afspraken.

#### Conclusie

De investeringen op Zuid de komende jaren overziend, kan geconcludeerd worden dat er veel gaat gebeuren. In onderstaande tabel is op hoofdlijnen weergegeven wat de belangrijkste fysieke investeringen zijn. Dat is € 1,3 miljard, heel veel. Maar we zijn er daarmee nog niet. Voor de stadswijken blijft nog steeds een grote opgave liggen, en ook voor de OV-bereikbaarheid moeten nog middelen gevonden worden. De kwaliteitslag naar een woningvoorraad met een grotere diversiteit (middels kluswoningen, samenvoegen en sloop-nieuwbouw) is zeker in de stadswijken nog maar beperkt ingezet. Wat daarvoor nodig is, staat in het volgende deel van deze folder. Het is het nog ontbrekende stuk voor de komende jaren, in het steeds mooier wordende stadsdeel dat Rotterdam Zuid is.

#### Samengevat zijn de belangrijkste fysieke investeringen op Zuid de komende jaren (2014-2018)

Verbetering corporatievoorraad	€ 400 miljoen
Gebiedsontwikkeling Hart van Zuid (waarvan €100 miljoen gemeentelijke bijdrage)	€ 300 miljoen
Gebiedsontwikkeling Stadio park (waarvan €100 miljoen gemeentelijke bijdrage)	€400 miljoen
Private investeringen woningbouw	€ 175 miljoen
Private investeringen werklocaties	€ 25 miljoen
Verbetering particuliere voorraad	€ 15 miljoen
<b>Totaal</b>	<b>€ 1,3 miljard</b>



## geplande investeringen tot 2018

### Feijenoord

- 1. Initiatieven rond de Hef**  
Nieuwbouw, ca. 110 woningen  
- Hof aan de Hef,  
- Hefkwartier,  
- Hefblok,
- 2. Kop van Feijenoord**  
Nieuwbouw ca. 100 woningen  
- Zinkerblok,  
- Oranjeboomstraat,  
- Drijvend bouwen Nassauhaven,  
- van Waningspand,
- 3. Wilhelminapier**  
Nieuwbouw en renovatie ca. 220 woningen en hotel  
- Boston en Seattle,  
- Pakhuis Meesteren,  
- Aanpak cruiseterminal,
- 4. Katendrecht**  
Nieuwbouw en renovatie ca. 230 woningen  
- Fenixbodden, multifunctionele plint en 200 won  
- Stadt en Lande, 32 won  
- Pils van Katendrecht,
- 5. Afrikaanderwijk en Parkstad**  
Nieuwbouw, 260 woningen  
- Bloemfontein fase 2,  
- Huis op zuid,  
- Parkstad, blok G o.a. part. opdr. geverschap  
- Parkstad, blok L, fase 2,
- 6. Bloemhof noord,**  
Nieuwbouw, ca 50 woningen en voorzieningen  
- Kindercampus,  
- Putsebocht,
- 7. Hillesluis vernieuwing Beijerlandse laan**  
(Sloop) - Nieuwbouw wooningen en detailhandel
- 8. Vreewijk**  
Renovatie en nieuwbouw  
- Renovatie tuindorp vreewijk ca. 240 woningen  
- Zuikerziekenhuis
- 9. Omgeving Motorstraatgebied**  
(Sloop) - Nieuwbouw  
- Landbouw buurt, fase 2,  
- Simeon en Anna fase 1: 130 zorgwoningen  
- Startmotor jongere huisvesting 500 eenheden

### Charlois

- 1. Hart van zuid**  
PPS gemeente en Ballast Nedam  
- zwembad, kunstspand en winkel aanbod  
- buitenruimte en OV station  
- renovatie hallen, nieuw congres- en muziekzaal,
- 2. Tarwewijk**  
- balkon aan de Maas



OKACH If I won the lottery, I would very much like to buy the building myself. I would do something wonderful with it. It's definitely possible; because if you look just around the corner from the Poortgebouw, there's now a hotel, *Suite Hotel Pincoffs*. Eight, ten years ago, that was also an ugly old building.

LIDEWIJ Turning the Poortgebouw into luxury apartments wouldn't be profitable, unless it was an investment for hedge funds or office space. [...] In the case of *De Groene Groep*, the owner was so fixed on the idea of luxury lofts. If he would have been more open, there would've been space for collaboration.

WIM I think a communal place like the Poortgebouw will always be of an enduring but also ever-changing importance. Every generation has had its own focus. Squatters, punks, activists, musicians, painters, circus artists, and so on. But even after it had been sold off to a 'green' investor (*De Groene Groep*), people from earlier periods helped out in the struggle. This just shows the strength of an ever expanding circle of people, all of who in one way or another got spellbound by the Poort.

OKACH You need to be realistic. There needs to be money from some source. Why should the government do the full investment? Why can't the rent can't be raised to finance the renovation? I think this is a peculiar vision. They want to live in a nice building, but don't want to contribute in the realization of it. That's not right.

GIULIA I want to imagine that a lot of work will be done, on a structural level, and on the maintenance. I really hope that this is going to happen. And then, I hope that it's going to stay

FIG 83

the way it is, with an open organizational structure, where people can come and go and do things together.

That's why it's so important that this publication also reaches the hands of politicians. It should be in the hands of the owner of the building, the state architects, the mayor of Rotterdam. It should be in the hands of the people who can guarantee that these types of places will not disappear, and that we are not subjecting every single space of this city to the logic of the market.

I think we all agree that we'd like to see those cracks cleaned up and trucks to stop hitting it from underneath, but there is still a great, self-organized group of people who live there. And with that group, and the group that follows it, there's always a chance that they can achieve that. But, in any case, for it to survive, also as a building, a very key moment is coming in the future.

MARINA

PETER

FIG 84  
POORT-  
GEBOUW SIGNUP LIST. 2005.  
AUTONOMOUS ARCHIVE.

## ROTTERDAM IN 2030

schone havenstad kleurrijk internationaal  
herkenbare skyline aantrekkelijke Europese  
stad moderne metropool intercultureel  
jonge beroepsbevolking hoogopgeleiden  
succesvolle duurzame industriële bedrijven  
innovatieve ondernemers vakmensen  
evenementen uitgaansleven filmstad podia  
tentoonstellingen muziekstad culturele  
experimenten stoer speels gewilde woonstad  
geborgtheid en kwaliteit populaire  
woningen aantrekkelijke buitenruimte  
waterrijke buurten jeugd sport brede scholen  
cultuur spelen thuiswerkers wijkeconomie  
betrokken verbondenheid trots geschiedenis

# EEN ZINDERENDE HAVENSTAD

inspiratiebron hoogwaardig openbaar  
vervoer tuktuks fiets HSL watertaxi's  
elektromobielen dynamische binnenstad  
straatkunstenaars flaneren kleurrijk  
zakenpubliek ontmoeting en ontspanning  
verrassend groen singels waterpartijen  
wonen op en bij het water rivier water-  
recreatie pioniers-mentaliteit innovatie  
ruwe diamant metropool eeuwige jeugd

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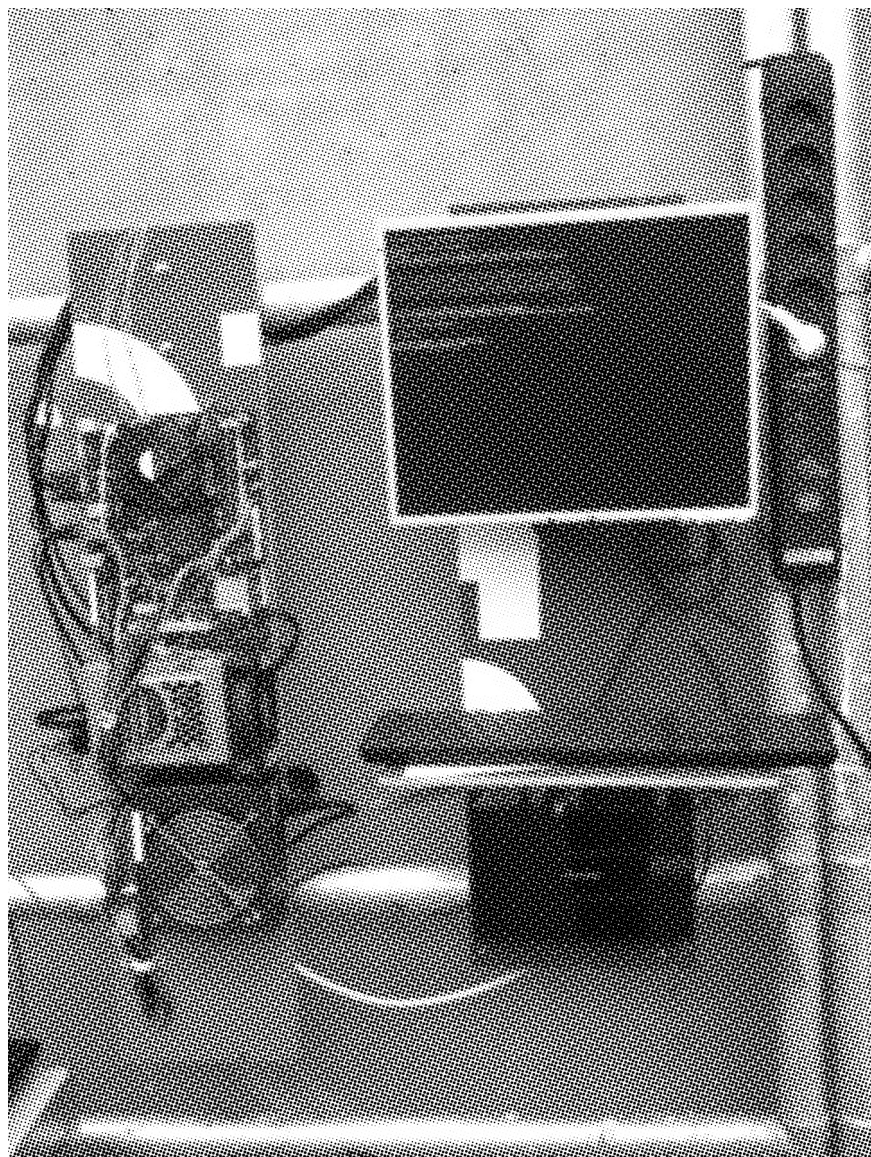
FIG 84





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FIG 85  
 THE  
 ARCHIVE  
 MACHINE IN  
 THE POORT-  
 GEBOUW.  
 2017. AU-  
 TONOMOUS  
 ARCHIVE.





THE AUTONOMOUS ARCHIVE

# ABOUT

The 'Poortgebouw Autonomous Archive' was initiated in 2017 as a collaboration between three students of Piet Zwart Institute, Max Franklin, Giulia de Giovanelli and Franc González. The project functions as an intervention upon the archive of the *Vereniging Poortgebouw*. It is a local archival machine, made from computer parts and a scanner provided by the inhabitants of the Poortgebouw. The machine runs a script called *AutoArchiver*, and uses *MediaWiki* as a digital archival platform. The aim of the project is to encourage the collaborative collection and digitization of the documents that outline the history of the Poortgebouw. These include legal and municipal notes, correspondence between inhabitants, architectural drawings of spatial transformations, event flyers and posters, annotations of meetings and a diverse collection of anarchist zines.

It should be pointed out that 'like many other appropriated spaces, the experience of the Poortgebouw's living arrangements is atypical and thus not always socially accepted' (Franklin, de Giovanelli & González, 2017). Following this, the aim of the 'Autonomous Archive' is closely tied to the Poortgebouw's political and social position.

In mapping the history of the association, the 'Autonomous Archive' serves as both a practical guide for future resistance and a powerful statement

of self-awareness. In turn, this publication is a testimony to the potential of the 'Autonomous Archive' as a site of cultural and socio-political production. Next to the 'Poortgebouw Autonomous Archive', the book 'A Bed, a Chair and a Table' works as a parallel archiving site, and puts on record new information on the history of the Poortgebouw and how that history is documented in Rotterdam. Created through a collaborative editorial and design process, this book includes extracts from interviews with protagonists, architects, historians and artists. There is also a new photographic series shot inside the building, as well as visual archives originating from the Rotterdam City Archive, and other institutions. This book has been printed by the legendary *Raddraaier* in Amsterdam, a printer that shares a similar history to the one of Poortgebouw in Rotterdam.

XPUB's Special Issue 04 is a project developed in the context of *Architecture of Appropriation*, a research project at Het Nieuwe Instituut, that examines how squatters have appropriated urban spaces using radical improvisation techniques, and how this has influenced the way we think about the contemporary city. The Special Issue has been put together by students and staff of the Experimental Publishing Study Path at Master Media Design and Communication of the Piet Zwart Institute. It encompasses a limited edition book, a Peer Production Licensed digital copy, a wiki based digital archive of documents found at the Poortgebouw, a couple of git repos, and an archive of the whole project production process.

FIG 86  
ZINE OF THE  
'AUTONO-  
MOUS  
ARCHIVE'.  
2017.  
COURTESY  
OF GIULIA.

This work is published under the terms of the *Peer Production License (PPL)*. The Peer Production License is an example of copyfarleft licensing, in which only collectives, cooperatives, worker-owned and nonprofit organisations are free to share and re-use the licensed work. Exploitations for profit by commercial entities and without explicit reciprocity is not allowed but can be negotiated with the authors and contributors to this work. This license applies to all textual content and photographs of beds, chairs and tables, made by Elisa Chaudet.

The text of the PPL as well as a discussion on copyfarleft can be found online at: [http://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Peer\\_Production\\_License](http://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Peer_Production_License).

For more information about the work, contact XPUB (<https://xpub.nl>) and the Poortgebouw (<https://poortgebouw.org>).







# IMPRINT

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