

26 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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Common Ground

Participant info

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Project info

How do you activate an unused site in the “in-between space” and transform it into a common area for residents of surrounding neighborhoods? It is clear that it’s important to articulate the autonomy of the places around. But on the same time the in-between space should constitute a vital connection between them. Could the urban intervention achieve both goals simultaneously? The answer to this question is given by means of a prototypical approach at one specific location in the district; the Rosary-square. The square holds all the aspects which are typical for in-between spaces in Parkstad (NL): concentration of undefined borders, variety of functions, diversity in architecture, inaccessible areas and high vacancy rates. The urban plan consists of five instruments. Together they form the prototypical methodology for dealing with interspaces in Parkstad.

The urban plan is closely related to the architectural intervention. One vacant building in particular is transformed; the Rosary-church. This church dates from 1957 and was designed by renowned architect Frits Peutz. The brickstone church is sober and robust. Her character is strongly shaped by the rhythm and expression of the load-bearing framework. These elements form the basis for the architectural intervention. The research into the dialogue between old and new played a crucial role during the design process. After several attempts it seemed like the “contrastmodel” couldn’t give any satisfaction. None of them did sufficiently fit into the context. The search led to the transformation of the Rosary-church into an Open Society for the broad associational life of local residents. The communal building is designed with the idea that old and new can be balanced by obtaining analogy. The character of the addition engage in dialogue with the architectural qualities of the existing ones. A subtle distinction without explicit polarity is consciously chosen.

