

Reflection

Research

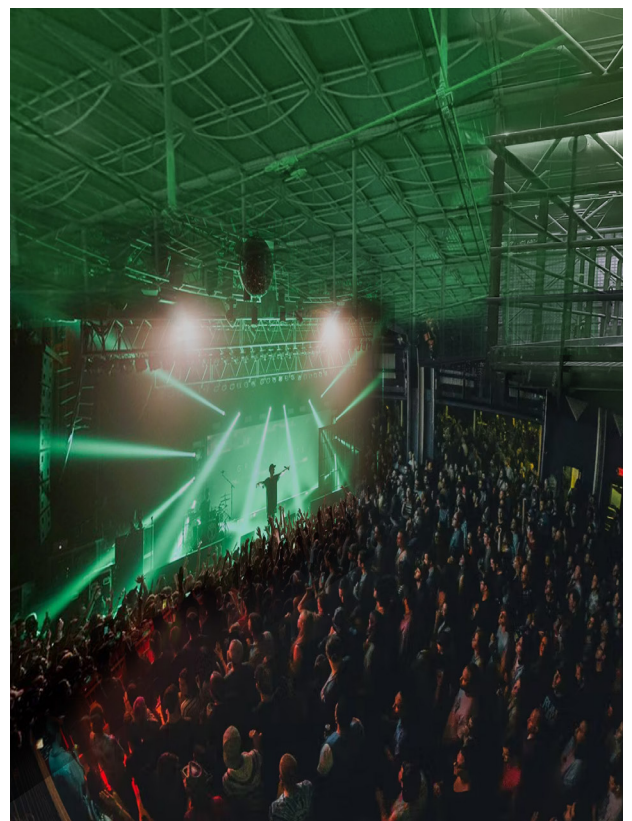
In the beginning of the Public Building Graduation Studio during the group research phase we were interested in researching attractiveness of public space. We divided attractiveness into two categories, physical appearance and functional attractiveness - a reason and appeal for users to visit certain place.

I continued individual research in direction of functional attractiveness of music buildings and their adjacent space. Although music buildings imply that their target group are people attending an event, building solely music venue creates a problem of it being vacant during off-event time.

My research was focused on aspects that would enable me to develop music-dedicated building that can be attractive and used throughout the day.

Design

In my design I transformed Haagse Afvalkathedraal (The Hague Waste Cathedral) designed by Jan Brouwer, into a Music Kathedraal. Construction of the building was preserved because of its specific appearance and importance as an exemplar of high-tech architecture. Existing exoskeleton structure with large open space inside, access for trucks and overall industrial character made this building an obvious choice for the new electronic music venue. However, music hall is versatile and able to transform in order to host different genres of music and events.



Aspect 1

Before the start of the design process, I wanted to clearly define area stakeholders and programmatic requirements. The city of the Hague introduced a set of new concert/theater related functions within Amare building. I made a conclusion that there is no need for one more “conventional” concert hall in the city.

Future plans for the Binckhorst development focus mostly on high-rise residential clusters scattered around the area. Shift towards being a residential neighborhood means it will need a meeting spot and public building to bring people of the community closer together. That was one other requirement, which resulted from research, and I aimed to fulfill.

Research provided a list of functions and activities supporting the music venue in order to create a vibrant hotspot for the residents of the Binckhorst, but also to attract people from across the country and abroad. Research was a foundation and crucial part of design that was constantly revisited and revised to strengthen the idea behind it.

Aspect 2

I chose the Public Building Graduation Studio based on the Music Marvel topic. It differs from the other studios that I have already done during MSc 1 and 2 in a way that it is a complex design process with strong research background. This project is the combination of theoretical research about the music itself, architecture of music venues and their technological requirements. Designing a building for music is clear topic with enough room for a personal interpretation. In my project I did not want to design a conventional concert hall, but rather a public building/space for diverse users and different genres of music. In first phase of design process, knowledge gained during MS 1 and 2 about theory behind architecture enabled me to come up with design concepts.

Aspect 3

The method I initially wanted to use for recognizing wishes and preferences of The Hague residents was conducting a survey and creating a data base of given answers. However, sample group from the Hague residents would not adequately represent target population that include users from wider geographical area. I think that subconsciously I still applied that method as I live in the Hague and throughout the design, I was considering my desires for type music building I want in the city. Literature review was used to study and understand technical aspects and principles of financial models behind music venues.

Aspect 4

This research contributes to the niche of public architecture by emphasizing the importance of its functionality. Architecture is an art form, but unlike other art forms that can exist purely as they are, architecture always hosts certain function. Building requirements and regulations nowadays are becoming more rigorous; building should be highly functional rather than just aesthetically pleasing. What happens to the building in unpredicted scenarios such as the global pandemic? Perhaps it is the time to start designing buildings with interchangeable program - ones with possibility to change function as many times, in order to fit the fast-changing and unpredictable future. I was guided by that thought which resulted in building construction that has a possibility of being changed or even completely demounted and rebuilt.

Aspect 5

I have one ethical issue about my project design. As I am adapting new program into already existing building, I am also changing its appearance. Existing building by Jan Brouwer has a very specific aesthetic and by doing my interventions I am wondering if it would “ruin” it. If my or any similar project was to be executed, it would need to be in close collaboration with the architect of the original design.

My Music Marvel

After visiting and observing music buildings around the World, I detected following phenomenon. Concert halls are often highly important monuments and symbols of the city, their architectural expression creates city's identity. However, no matter of their often prime location within the city, at the times events are not happening inside these buildings, they are static and rather dull places. Public Building Graduation Studio was a challenge where I changed perception of music building being monofunctional, occasionally used space, to a multifunctional hotspot and a true representation of a public building.

Case study analysis done in the first part of the studio was of great use as it provided the catalogue of music venues in various locations, of different sizes and ratios of music to other functions within the building. Looking into more building examples with various characteristics was a good ground base for better understanding the requirements for the new music building. I have worked on a connection analysis which influenced my design to have a clear routing and efficient logistical connection.

I interpret "Music Marvel" as an experience of listening to live music. Whilst listening to a live performance, space that I am in influences that experience. I noticed it by watching the same artist performing in two different venues and my personal experience was not the same. During the performance, space for both artist and audience becomes almost sacred. I paid attention to details constructing the space that would maximize an experience of the performance.

Currently Binckhorst does not have much to offer in terms of public activity. While visiting the area I was eager to go back to the city center. In my design manifesto I wanted to exaggerate idea of "reversing roles". With new interventions, Binckhorst becomes the place with "infinite" content, worth leaving the city center to come and spend time in. Focus of the manifesto is a person taking the road leading to Binckhorst – a metaphor showing that it is no longer a car-oriented area, but rather place tailored for people's desires.

