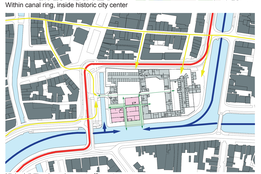
Hypothesis: The youth of Leeuwarden needs a makers-place in the city center. A fabrication laboratory where they can gather and explore the world of self production in a workspace shared with the surrounding studios of local creative entrepreneurs. This will activate the young generation, spark their interests and give them a perspective on their future possibilities and roles in society.

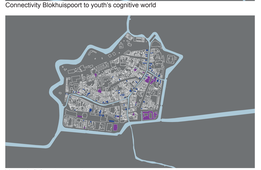
Location Makers-place in Leeuwarden

Within canal ring, inside historic city center


High visibility along -heavy- traffic routes

Youth centers within their neighborhoods, mainly in outer ring

Connectivity Blokhuispoort to youth's cognitive world


Vacant buildings Leeuwarden

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design: Suzy Chong
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visiting critic: Maaike Westinga
begeleiding MA+U: Jan Willem van Kuilenburg & Pieter Feenstra

MAKERS-PLACE

BREAKING OUT A new life for a centuries old former prison. With the discontinued use as prison the Blokhuispoort is ready for new residents. The makers-place will provide a new dynamic for the city. To accommodate this a transformation is required from closed and impenetrable to extrinsic and permeable, from imposing and restrictive to facilitating and free. Balancing design interventions of literally breaking out and adding eye-catching elements express and attract new life.

With the nomination of Leeuwarden as the host city of the European Capital of Culture -ECoC- 2018 the opportunity presents itself to invest in the city's potential. This project investigates and tests the contribution an architect can make to create a lasting legacy by creating the physical framework to support an already existing social phenomenon.

Makers-place is a creative production center where ideas can be thought up and directly be produced and shared through a variety of workshops and spaces. This is where manifestations and events can take place during the event year. Where the pioneering entrepreneurs pass their initiatives on to future generations.

Leeuwarden's future generation is currently struggling with high poverty, a high percentage of dropouts, under-qualified youth, and high unemployment. They have collectively communicated the need for a centrally located place where they can meet new people. Just like other dutch cities Leeuwarden's city center has had an increasing amount of vacancy in a former commerce and consumption dominating area. The makers-place will ad a new vibrant function transitioning away from consumerism, a new program also imaginable for other cities. In the case of Leeuwarden it is a new phase to provide a continuation in use for the penitentiary complex.

The program asks for a location which can accommodate a clustering of spaces around a collective core. For interweaving within the urban context, the functions should be able to offer sufficient contact with the surrounding city fabric.

In the historic city center, located just within the canal ring, lies Blokhuispoort. The wide canal gives the complex high visibility. Located alongside the car- and public transport routes towards the city, it is a ensemble known by the citizens. With it's mysterious, hermetic appearance it also catches the eye of visitors. The surrounding water system and a heavy traffic artery create a barrier between the complex and the city. Behind the walls a local community of entrepreneurs have been keeping the complex buzzing after the discontinued use as prison. Zooming in the structure of the complex reveals a series of linear buildings creating several courtyards. The highest visible south-west side provides a morphology for clustered programming and interaction with the surrounding city.

Aerial view current state Blokhuispoort

Section over galeries: a light gallery with light flooding in from the roof and a dark gallery to display multi-media art

FROM HERMETIC TO PERMEABLE
Modernization of penitentiary buildings, is leading towards vacant national heritage. The buildings are often located in city centers, re-use can give important impulses to the cities. In this case of Blokhuispoort it is a transformation from closed and impenetrable to extrinsic and permeable, from imposing and restrictive to facilitating and free.

BLOKHUISPOORT
This former prison is currently already partly in use by cultural entrepreneurs. It's appearance makes it a well known building in the city. It is a clustering of buildings, forming several courtyards. It is well located within the city fabric, offers connection to the water and has good visibility. The closed character is a positive challenge for transformation.

Current state Blokhuispoort

Physical accessibility and relation to water canals and city floor

Section central hal

Entrance: dynamic facade showing life behind former prison walls

New staircase and logia in central hal

Gallery displaying work entrepreneurs

Part of the workshop is based on the FabLab principle - laboratory for digital fabrication -. Here people can work with digital fabrication ranging from lasercutters, 3D-printers, vinyl cutters, embroidery machines and a milling machine but also with traditional wood-workshop equipement. But making can also be cooking, which can take place in the 'clean'-workshop. Activities taking place will have affinity towards the 'teenworld', with their love for gaming, gadgets, fashion, snacks, etc. but will be set within a wider context, showing them the possibilities within those subjects.

Sharing the workshop creates a network of learning. Professionals and workgroups offer apprenticeships in their studios. The system of master and apprentices is a fundamental learning situation in which a person learns by helping someone who really knows what he is doing. Older youth can teach younger youth, retired or elderly people offer to teach in what their interest has been, in tern youth teaches them in the use of digital applications. This knowledge exchange blurs boundaries between groups generations.

Light gallery ground floor

Studio second floor with elevated floor

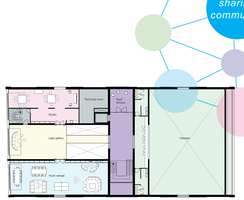
Textile lab

Studio ground floor opening up to canal

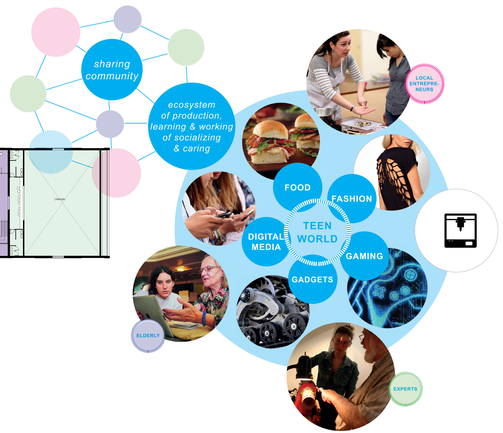
Ground floor

First floor

Second floor



Third floor



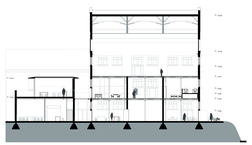
In the connectivity map the connected frame in three steps from Blokhuispoort is projected. The reach spans towards all the first step lines of the secondary schools. The reach over water from the Blokhuispoort outwards runs passed the city ring. 'Three-Step' analysis method visualizes for every urban element under investigation the connected frame in three steps from the point of origin. Hence it gives insight into the depth and reach of this specific element in its urban context as well as the 'connectivity' … of the urban fabric as a whole.' [source: Boise]

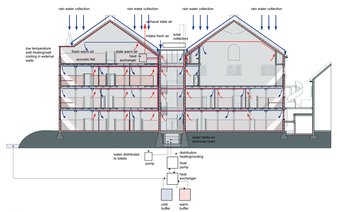
Stripping the area of cluttering created through the years, reveals individual entities with axises drawing in, transforming the hermetic complex to a permeable whole.

Diverse functions
source: group research
municipality and realtors
Business units
source: group research
observation Jasper Viek
Map: Suzy Chong

New addition on former forge

Break out interventions creating exposure


Section A



Installations