

# AMSTERDAM CHILDREN'S PLAYSCHOOL



## Introduction

*"Games are the highest form of research"*

*Albert Einstein*

"Nederland" is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, member of the European Union. Just as its name indicates, the territory is formed by low (neder) land (land) among which one quarter part is situated below the sea level. Its most influential historical region is the province of Holland.

The current territory of Holland has never maintained stable. For many years, the geography of the region has been dynamic. Some examples are the Frisias islands that were originally connected to the mainland, and the main rivers, Rin and Mosa, changed their course in various occasions in an impressive way.

The people in Holland found themselves living in an unstable and floodable area. In the 10th century, the habitants of the region were dedicated to cultivating the land by draining it. Nevertheless, the draining provoked the ground to shrink in about fifteen meters. Later they started to build the first emergency levees to reinforce some critical points in the coast line. Subsequently, the autonomous authority "waterschappen" was created, which had the power to enforce its laws and decide on water management.

In the XVI century, the Dutch started to gain land from the sea transforming them into lakes and polders. This continued until de 20th century, for this reason the ancient maps of Holland do not look like the current ones. The struggle to dominate water plays an important role in the development of Holland as a maritime and economic power and the

personality development of the Dutch. Thanks to these mechanisms of generating common ground, in the Netherlands there is a sense of belonging and a concern for the public and collective space for the enjoyment of all citizens.

Something similar occurred a few years later, after World War II, facing the desolating outlook of the destroyed buildings. In the 40s any citizen that identified an empty site in Amsterdam could communicate it to the authorities and solicit that a playground be built. The architect, Aldo Van Eyck, was in charge of transforming these destroyed sites into playgrounds for children. Between 1948 and 1978 he installed around 700 parks in the city and its surroundings.

These set of interventions are based on the urban regeneration and the recovery of destroyed sites, due to World War II, to be used as temporary playgrounds for children. Van Eyck did not only intervene and transformed the sites but he also designed and projected each element. He determined where the trees would go; he designed the benches, pavement and established each play element to the detail. Van Eyck advocated the need to question the radical functionalism and attacked the rationalists' interventions. The creation of small scale playgrounds was a human alternative to the international style that dictated the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM).

Van Eyck is part of a tradition of Dutch architects that enriched the city through buildings and planning. Some of them not only improved the Dutch urban landscape but were recognized internationally for their contributions to architecture and urbanism, some of them are Gerrit Rietveld, Hermn Hertzberger, Jaap Bakema, John Habraken, Rem Koolhaas, MVRDV, Neutelings Riedijk and Wiel Arets, among others.

**Proposal**

Amsterdam today is a consolidated European city and it is designed entirely because of its wide architectural tradition. In the urban area, buildings clog alignments, the parks are all designed and there are practically no abandoned sites like in the Van Eyck era. However, the population continues to increase along with the need for collective spaces. Schoolyards are the first public spaces that humans know and educational spaces are essential for the education and civic development of the population. Schools are fundamental pieces in the formation of a city and its people.

In this context, ARCHmedium proposes the creation of a new children's day care in the city of Amsterdam, whose starting point is, once again, children playgrounds in relation with public spaces. The proposal combines educational classrooms with patios that set different privacy gradients. The more public ones would be plazas, the semi-

private patios would depend on its schedule and the private yards would be for exclusive use of the day care. We propose the creation of open spaces where the physical formation is just as important as the intellectual, and where the children can grow enjoying the maximum sun light and in close relation with the water.

In addition to the day care program, the intervention must maintain and maximize the current cultural activities organized by the Stichting Het Stenen Hoof association. In week days the children would occupy the space and at night and weekends the space would be transformed for cultural activities organized by the association. The pier will transform into a cultural and educational epicenter for all ages.

The competition takes the initial strategy of Aldo Van Eyck of transforming empty sites into playgrounds, and inverts it generating a positive, in the consolidated city of Amsterdam. How should new public spaces be in a city? How does architecture create new scenarios to grow?



## Site

Until the XIII century the city of Amsterdam was a small fishing village. During the following centuries the city limits increased through successive extensions, being that in the XVII century there was the most powerful expansion through the realization of new concentric canals and the development of the western area. The city is an urban laboratory where brilliant residential and urbanistic proposals have been generated over the last 100 years of history.

The competition takes place in the west sector of Amsterdam. The surroundings, which have strong port character, combine industrial buildings with a neighborhood of residences and buildings of architectural avant-garde. The typological and formal combination is one of the most important attractions of the sector, which is located between the residential neighborhood of Westelijke Eilanden and the port area Houthavens.

The site, in the form of a pier, shapes a positive line in the coastline of the city of Amsterdam; it redefines the limits just like it has been done for centuries. The port, which was gained by the

sea in a strategic way, is a playful space that is interconnected to the city exceptionally as it is well connected to public transportation and is a minutes' walk from Amsterdam Central Station. The connection is not only formal but also social, proof of these are the cultural activities that the Stichting het Stenen Hoofd association has organized on the site.

The pier was built in 1905 and was used as a port booth being the place of disembarkation for foreign ships. As of 1968 the shed was demolished and several applications were shown that none were carried out. Some of the plans were to build luxury towers, a prison and even a heliport.

Just a few meters from the site you will find the Silodam. This building is the magnificent result of the intervention of the port silos by MVRDV architects for hosting a mixed program of housing, offices, work and commercial spaces. On the back side of the block there is a school - Brede School De Zeeheld - which the competition aims to complement with the uses of the daycare. In front of the site there is a plaza with trees and a playground for children - Barentszplein -, it also has a bar. The competition should dialogue with the uses and preexisting buildings and generate new synergies with each other.



## 2.2 Program

The program is divided into 3 fundamental parts: Daycare, cultural activities and outdoor spaces.

The daycare, destined to shelter children from 1 to 5 years old, should comply with the stipulated program regarding the classrooms, circulation areas and facilities. In addition, you should take as a starting point the characteristics of the “Openluchtschool” - open school - to encourage the use of terraces, patios and gardens. Contact with sunlight should be maximized, understanding the physical formation as important as the intellectual.

The building should include basic facilities for the Stichting het Stenen Hoofd associations, such as a small room for meetings and events.

The outdoor spaces of the school (terrace and patios) should be projected as well as the interior. Also, a part of the surface should not be intervened; this will be for the collective use of cultural activities and/or sport activities of the school and/or association.

\* You can enlarge or reduce areas by 10 % depending on the will of each project. The surfaces of the rooms can be used whole or subdivided into many rooms as deemed appropriate. Exhaustive attention will not be provided to the precise resolution of the surfaces contained in the program, but the relationship of architecture with the program and the city.

\* Being as it is an academic competition, the proposed areas in this brief should be taken as guidance. You can add or eliminate areas to the program in order to fit your proposal, provided that it justified in the panel.

### *Daycare*

Hall	30 m2
Classrooms	
A (4u x 30 m2)	120 m2
B (4u x 40 m2)	160 m2
C (2u x 50 m2)	100 m2
Daycare office	20m2
Teacher's lounge	20m2
	<b>450m2</b>

### *Cultural Activities*

Hall	10 m2
Event room	50 m2
WC (2u x 20 m2)	40 m2
	<b>100m2</b>

### *Outdoor spaces*

Private patio A (4u x 30 m2)	120 m2
Semi-private patio B (4u x 40 m2)	160 m2
Semi-private patio C(4u x 40 m2)	160 m2
Public square	
	<b>380m2</b>

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<b>Total</b>	<b>930m2</b>
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## 3. Organization Criteria

## 3.2 Prizes

### 3.1 Eligibility

#### 3.1.1 Students

This category will accept architecture and related fields undergraduate students who can prove their student status on the day the competition launches with some official document (student ID or enrolment papers).

Graduate, masters, and PhD students who are currently enrolled in some official course can also participate, but only if they obtained their undergraduate degree less than 3 years ago.

**The 3 year rule applies to graduate, masters and PhD students who are CURRENTLY ENROLLED only!**

#### 3.1.2 Young Architects

This category will accept young professional architects who graduated less than 10 years ago (according to their degree expedition date) can also join the competition and opt to win the “young graduates” prize which will be awarded separately from the student prizes.

In both categories teams can be formed by just one member or up to six (6). Members of a team don't necessarily have to be students at the same university or live in the same country.

It is not necessary that all members of a team are architecture specialists. Having a photographer, artist, philosopher, etc. on a team can help to see the project in a new way, thus enriching the final result. However, it is recommended that at least one member of the team has some experience in architecture.

The registration fee is paid per team, regardless of how many members form it.

#### 3.2.1 Students

1°	2°	3°
2.500€	1.000€	500€
+		

- Considered for publication in an architecture magazine.
- One-year subscription to WA and Mark magazine.
- Exhibition at ETSAB Barcelona
- Reviews in digital magazines and several architecture blogs.
- 1 year subscription to ARCHcase Premium.

#### 10 Honorable mentions

- Considered for publication in an architecture magazine.
- Exhibition at ETSAB Barcelona
- Reviews in digital magazines and several architecture blogs.
- 1 year subscription to ARCHcase Premium.

#### 3.2.2 Young Architects

1°
2.000€

- 2.000€
- Considered for publication in an architecture magazine
- One-year subscription to WA and Mark magazine.
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- Reviews in digital magazines and several architecture blogs.
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#### 3 Honorable mentions

- Considered for publication in an architecture magazine
- Exhibition at ETSAB Barcelona
- Reviews in digital magazines and several architecture blogs.
- 1 year subscription to ARCHcase Premium.

The Young Architects prize will be awarded separately from the student prizes. Students won't opt to win this prize in the same way that young architects won't opt to win student prizes. The projects submitted by these two groups will be judged separately.

\*Publications and subscriptions are subject to the agenda and availability of the magazines.

\*Depending on which country you live and pay taxes in, the cash prizes might be subject to some withholding to comply with the corresponding legal regulations.

### 3.3 Jury

The jury will be formed by the following members:

- **Co Govers - Local Architect**
- **Flores & Prats**
- **Ramón Faura**
- **David Tapias**
- **Iñigo Ruiz- Young architect**

\*All members of the jury have expressed their willingness to take part in the voting process of this competition. However, their participation is subject to their professional commitments.

### 3.4 Calendar

<b>June 15th 2016</b>	Special Entry period starts
<b>August 15th 2016</b>	Special Entry period ends
<b>August 16th 2016</b>	Early Entry period starts
<b>Sept. 15th 2016</b>	Early Entry period ends
<b>Sept. 16th 2016</b>	Regular Entry period starts
<b>Oct. 16th 2016</b>	Regular Entry period ends
<b>Oct. 30th 2016</b>	Submission deadline
<b>Nov. 10th 2016</b>	Jury meeting
<b>Nov. 27th 2016</b>	Winners announcement

### 3.5 Registrations

The entry periods will be divided as follows:

<b>Special</b>	June 15th - Aug 15th	60.50€*
<b>Early</b>	Aug 16th - Sept 15th	90.75€*
<b>Regular</b>	Sept 16th - Oct 16th	121€*

\*Registration prices include VAT (value added tax).

The registration fee is per team, regardless of how many members are on the team.

If a team wants to submit more than one proposal to the competition they will have to register each proposal separately and pay an additional fee for each proposal they wish to submit.

For a project to be accepted the team must be properly registered to the competition. All registrations will be done through the ARCHmedium website (ARCHmedium.com), where you will be asked to choose between several payment options.

After completing the registration form each team will be assigned with a registration code. It's important to keep this registration code in a safe place since it will allow your team to access the intranet where you'll have access to your registration status, payment tools, and the upload form to submit your project as we will explain in further sections of this document.

### 3.6 Payments\*

All payments made through Bank Transfer or Western Union must be identified with the registration code of the team they belong to so that we can relate them correctly. If we receive a payment that is not properly identified we won't be able to relate it to your team and your participation will not be confirmed until you provide a proof of payment.

## Accepted payment methods:

### Credit or Debit Cards.

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You may use any major credit or debit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, etc.). All payments will be handled by PayPal to ensure the highest security standards on the web. ARCHmedium will never get direct access to your card details. Your registration will be confirmed automatically. We do not charge any extra fees for the use of this payment method.

### Pay-Pal.

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It is the fastest, easiest, and most secure way to pay online. Your registration will be received instantly. We do not charge any service fees when you use Pay-Pal, debit cards, or credit cards.

### Bank Deposit

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You must make a deposit of the stipulated amount (according to your registration period) to the account below. \*\*

Bank: Caixa Catalunya  
Account holder: ARCHmedium  
# Account: 2013 0405 94 0203925775  
Concept: Registration Code (three letters)  
IBAN: ES7420130405940203925775  
SWIFT: CESCEBXXXX

### Western Union

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For payments via Western Union please contact us at [marketing@archmedium.com](mailto:marketing@archmedium.com)

\* Once the payments are received and the registration is confirmed the fees won't be refunded or transferred to other competitions under any circumstance.

\*\* The date that must be considered to identify which registration period you belong to is the date that ARCHmedium will receive the deposit and not the day that it is sent.

\*\*\*Any bank fees that this operation might generate must be paid by the sender.

## 3.7 FAQ

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During the competition, all participants are permitted to ask questions which help them better understand the project description and/or any other aspect of the competition.

Any questions that are not resolved in this document or in the FAQ section on our website must be made through the ARCHmedium's Facebook page. This ensures that all participants have access to the same amount of information.

## 3.8 Documentation

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All the necessary documentation to develop the project, such as pictures of the site, videos, AutoCad drawings, etc. will be available at the ARCHmedium website so that anyone can download them before or after joining the competition. They may access and download the materials as many times as they need to. No additional information or working material will be provided to teams after registering.

Participants are free to use all this material in the context of this competition. They are also allowed to create their own graphic documents or to find new ones from other sources.

## 3.9 Presentation

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Each team will submit only one din-A1 size (59,4, 84,1cm), landscape or portrait panel with their proposal.

This panel must be identified with the registration code of the team and the registration code **ONLY**; any panel including team names or personal names might be disqualified without refund.

Each team is responsible for choosing which information they include in their panel so that the jury may gain the clearest understanding of their project.

The representation technique is completely free (2D drawings, pictures of models, sketches, renders, collages, etc.). The jury will not only evaluate the quality of the project but also the clarity and quality of the presentation.

We do not recommend including large amounts of text on the panel. The project should be explanatory enough through the graphic material. However, certain notes might be acceptable. These notes must be written in English **ONLY**—any text written in a different language will not be taken into account and may lead to a team's disqualification.

### 3.10 Submission

Submissions must be done through the ARCHmedium's intranet only, before the date indicated on the competition calendar. You must log in with your username and password and follow the upload process. No submissions will be accepted by e-mail or any other medium. The submission page will be automatically closed after the submission date and time are reached, not allowing any modifications or aggregations after that, so please, try to upload your project 24 hours in advance so that you have time to solve any issues that might come up along the way (they always do!).

The panel must be no other size than Din-A1 and be in no other format than JPG. The maximum weight of the file is 12MB.

### 3.11 Evaluation Criteria

The jury will be in charge of establishing the key points that this project needed to address based on the site, brief, etc. and evaluate each project accordingly.

As part of the design process we recommend that each team takes the necessary time to research the working site as well as other case study projects that might relate to the brief in hand to determinate what aspects of the project are the most unique and therefore need to be addressed and successfully solved to achieve a good result.

Remember that this is an ideas competition, an opportunity for experiment and explore the limits of architecture. The jury reserves the right to award any proposal that fails at any of the parameters mentioned in these rules, as long as it justifies the breach of the rule in favor of the architectural design of the proposal.

The voting system to choose the winning projects is as follows:

1. ARCHmedium team, following the jury's instructions, will make an initial selection of 50 projects in response to the above criteria.
2. The members of the jury will study both the pre-selected projects and all others privately and include, if they consider it necessary, any of the non-selected projects in the initial list of 50.
3. At the meeting, the jurors will discuss all the pre-selected projects (The ARCHmedium's selected 50 projects plus the projects added by the jury) to decide the winner, second and third prize and honorable mentions.

### 3.13 Intellectual Property

All the material submitted to the competition will become part of ARCHmedium's files. ARCHmedium will have full rights to publish and promote this material, always making proper mention of their authors. For any other purposes the authors of the projects will keep full rights over their design.

By submitting a proposal you are giving ARCHmedium the right to use the received material in both printed and on-line publications. ARCHmedium will also have the right to modify any of the mentioned material at its will in order to better adapt it to the different formats and layouts that different publications might have.





### 3.14 Additional Notes

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- ARCHmedium reserves the right to make any changes to this document (dates, deadlines, requirements, etc.) as long as the changes benefit a majority of the competition participants. Any modifications will be announced on the ARCHmedium's Facebook page. It is each team's responsibility to check the ARCHmedium's Facebook page on a regular basis to follow and incorporate all changes.
- Under no circumstances will members of the jury, members of the organization, or persons with a direct personal or professional relationship with members of the jury or the organization be allowed to participate in this competition.
- The project of this competition is a fictitious job and will not be built. The provided documentation has been modified to better meet the goals of this competition and, as a result, the provided documents do not fully correspond with reality.
- This project is only an exercise, and therefore it will not necessarily follow any existing building or urban planning regulations.
- No one has hired or contacted ARCHmedium in order to organize this competition. The idea and program of this competition have been fully developed by ARCHmedium to serve solely as an academic exercise.
- ARCHmedium has no relation to the owners of the site where this exercise is proposed to be and therefore cannot guarantee that participants will have any access to the property.
- ARCHmedium is not held responsible for a breach of contract regarding the publications and subscriptions of the magazines.

### 3.14 Thanks

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ARCHmedium wants to thank the collaborators that have contributed to the organization of this competition. We would also like to thank the jury members, without whom this project would not have been possible.





