REFLECTION PAPER

SCRATCH
SCAR
SCORE

IN SHUFFLE MODE

Scratch, scar, score;

an action research (master's thesis)
exploring the societal and political
relevance of architecture and
the position of the designer,

in shuffle mode.

A reflection on a complex integrated circuit (chip) of appropriating space and exploring its socio-spatial relevance (scratches) while continuously moving back and forth between informed intuition and factual research (shuffle).

The designer as transistor linking and amplifying impulses, building up turning points (score) with social and political empowerment and a timeless design as my legacy (scars).

KU LEUVEN LUCA

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DANKWOORD

Ik wil graag beginnen met een bedanking aan alle mensen die me elk op hun eigen manier gesteund, geholpen of begeleid hebben. Bedankt aan alle fantastische personen met wie ik dit prachtige en leerrijke verhaal heb mogen opbouwen!

In de eerste plaats wil ik mijn promotoren prijzen voor de verrijkende, eerlijke en aangename begeleiding en het opvolgen van de stroom aan onstuimige/ruwe verslagen. Bedankt, Dag Boutsen voor de verruimende visie en jouw inspirerende geest. Bedankt, Aurelie De Smet voor jouw scherpe analyse en overvloed aan boeiende tips en linkjes.

Graag bedank ik ook mijn ouders, die mij op alle mogelijke manieren gesteund hebben; niet alleen tijdens deze intense thesis maanden. Dankjewel, grote broers. Reindert, om me met je sarcasme op te vrolijken tijdens momenten van radeloosheid. Brecht, Floor en kleine Lars voor de ontspannende avonden en lekkere maaltijden.

Een onnoemelijk grote bedanking aan de Boerenhovers, zonder jullie was het boerenhof nooit zo'n prachtige plek, noch zo'n inspirerend verhaal geworden! Helaas zijn jullie te talrijk om iedereen persoonlijk te noemen; toch, aan elk ieder van jullie bedankt! Ik lauwer jullie voor de fantastische inzet Hoe klein of groot de participatie, jullie bouwen mee aan een betere omgeving. Ik wil de standvastige kern extra prijzen voor hun onuitputtelijk engagement en steunende aanmoedigingen.

Vervolgens even in het Engels: Thank you Petra Pferdmenges for sharing your expertise and to bring up masterful questions.

Stefaan Vervaet, wijkregisseur Rabot-Blaisantvest, bedank ik voor zijn bemoediging, openheid en het eerlijk beantwoorden van al mijn vragen.

Daaropvolgend wil ik Dimitri Vandeberghe en Wannes Degelin van Samenlevingsopbouw Gent loven voor hun inzet ondersteuning en advies.

Dank aan al diegene die de tijd namen hun ervaring en kennis met mij te delen.

Ten slotte een dankwoord voor mijn vrienden. Even vragen hoe het gaat en interesse tonen in mijn werk vormden voor mij een belangrijke steun. Jullie spontane opmerkingen inspireerden mij. De momenten samen gaven me zoveel energie.

Een speciale vermelding voor Katelijn De Visscher. Dat je het boeren-hof aanhaalt in een presentatie over duurzaam bouwen en het doorgeven van de positieve feedback die je daarop kreeg, was voor mij een echte boost. Yasmine Peerts, ik kan jou niet genoeg bedanken om tot laat mijn Engelse tekst na te lezen en voor het plezier dat we daarbij beleefden.

Kanttekeningen:

* Dit project is verre van alleen mijn verhaal, het is opgebouwd samen met vele geëngageerde betrokkenen. Ik verwijs hier met 'verhaal' naar mijn onderzoek en output van het project.

* Genk, getekend door de mijnindustrie, is zijn identiteit en toekomstbeeld kwijt met het weg-trekken van de Ford fabriek. In de huidige context waar stabiliteit slechts een illusie blijkt te zijn, moeten de Genkenaren hun economie en ruimtelijke omgeving heroriënteren. Ze moeten op zoek naar een plaats in deze onzekere maatschappij en in de door de industrie getekende woonwijken. Wij kiezen ervoor de huidige onzekerheid en tijdelijkheid aan te grijpen als basis voor het ontwerp. De interviews met 'sleutelfiguren' van deze stad vormen het fundament voor het onderzoek en ontwerp. Een ruimtelijk proces wordt ontwikkeld. De transformatie breekt de achterkant van deze typerende tuinstad typologie open en maakt plaats voor een woekerende structuur die ruimte biedt aan de gemeenschap en het veranderlijke. Deze structuur is een open frame voor persoonlijke invulling. Ze is verplaatsbaar, alles kan de volgende dag plots anders staan.

< Team: Brenda Vandenberghe & Hanne Van Reusel. Begeleiding: Martine De Maeseneer, Gideon Boie. Ontwerp opdracht 'Conflict&Design', 1e master architectuur uAD (urban Architectural Design). Faculteit Architectuur KULeuven, Sint-Lucas Gent, 2013.

* DE SMET, A. 2013. The role of temporary use of waiting spaces in urban (re)development, Pro-spective Research for Brussels. 18 October, Faculty of Architecture KULeuven campus Sint-Lucas Gent.

Beste lezer,

Wat ik u graag nog wil meegeven voor u zich door 'mijn'* verhaal laat meeslepen:

Dit boekje is slechts één deel van het volledige onderzoek (master-proef), deze tekst tracht zes maand intensief werk samen te vatten. Ik wil u graag meenemen in mijn persoonlijke en, daaruit voortvloeiend, maatschappelijke zoektocht.

De masterproef is een kans om zes maand lang op zoek te gaan naar 'mijn waarden' als architect. Klinkt zwaar — en dat durft het eerlijk gezegd soms ook wel zijn — maar de weg die ik aflegde (en nog altijd bewandel) is even aangenaam als boeiend. Ik hoop dat u er ook van zult genieten.

Hoe ik bij participatie als vertrekpunt terecht kom? Wel, dat sociale... De 'conflictddesign' opdracht* in Genk was een eerste uitlaatklep voor mijn drang om meer vanuit het persoonlijke, het menselijke en de sociale omgeving te ontwerpen. Een diepgaand sociaal onderzoek en het betrekken van de inwoners vormen hier de basis voor het ontwerp met een proces als resultaat. De ultieme trigger kwam er door de presentatie van Aure-lie De Smet over haar onderzoek 'The role of temporary use of 'Wait-ing Spaces' in urban redevelopment'*. Ik wist plots heel erg zeker welke richting ik uit wou.

Opmerking bij voetnoot 'participatie in de architectuur' p. 8
De participatievorm waarover in het artikel 'Samenspraak' geschreven wordt, associeer
ik met wat door Doina Petrescue wordt beschreven als 'georganiseerde participatie'
in 'Losing control, keeping desire'.

"There is a difference between 'organised participation' which is also somehow 'pre-
formed' and under control, inducing the same symptomatic reactions, and a 'trans-
versal participation' (issuing from 'transversality' as a method) which transverses
different social strata, which is neither hierarchical (vertical) nor symptomatic
(horizontal), and generates unexpected and continually evolving reactions. How to
organise a 'transversal' participation is a real architectural question."

< PETRESCU, D. 2005. Losing control, keeping desire.
  In: PETER BLUNDELL, J. PETRESCU, D. & JEREMY, T. Architecture and Participation.
  London: Taylor & Francis, pp. 49–50.

De keuze voor mijn promotoren volgde hier vlot uit voort, Aurelie voor de theoretische kant en Dag Boutsen voor de praktijk. Twee autoriteiten waar het participatieve architectuur betreft. Al wil ik hier direct bij onderstrepen dat tussen theorie en praktijk, net als bij het volledige onderzoek, nooit een onderscheid geweest is. Die dingen lopen compleet door elkaar.

U merkt het waarschijnlijk al aan de schrijfstijl, deze tekst is vrij persoonlijk. Het is ook geen toeval dat u hier mijn persoonlijk handschrift-lettertype leest. Ik wil hiermee de eerlijkheid en het eigene aantonen, deze vormen de bron van mijn verhaal. Hierachter gaat behoorlijk wat theoretisch en door de praktijk bepaald onderzoekswerk schuil. Dit is onlosmakelijk verbonden met die eerlijkheid en het menselijke. Dan mag het al eens wat persoonlijker zijn.

Het onderzoek en het ontwerp vormen één onlosmakelijk geheel, het één volledig afhankelijk van het ander. In dit actie-onderzoek ontwikkel ik mijn eigen case study, een ruimtelijk laboratorium. Ik vertrek vanuit mijn persoonlijke vragen. (Genre: Wat kan ik hier nu op deze plek als meerwaarde betekenen? In hoeverre bepaal ik wat er ruimtelijk ontwikkeld 'moet' worden?) Die vertalen zich in de realiteit en in de case acties (testen wat ik kan bereiken). Het is de basis waarop ik achteraf terug reflecteer (wat heb ik nu precies gerealiseerd?). Dit is een explorerend onderzoek; ik verken en tast af. Mijn vragen volgen mee met de stroom. Ook hier is er geen harde grens tussen reflectie en actie, ik wijk af van het conventionele onderzoek, een 'onderzoek-exploratie'.

* Odo Marquand describes the present as the 'epoch of strangeness in front of the world'. The current zeitgeist is characterized by "the fleeting relationship between the subject and her/his world, conditioned by the speed with which change takes place. Changes in reality, in science, in behavior, and in experience inevitably produce a permanent strangeness."

< originele bron niet gekend; deze tekst wordt geciteerd in
DE SOLA-MORALES RUBIO, I. 1995. 'Terrain vague'. Anyplace. Cambridge, MA: MITT Press, pp. 118–123

* Participatie in de architectuur en stedenbouw wint terug aan belang. Dit wordt geïllustreerd door een recente uitgave van het digitale tijdschrift 'Footprint': 'The Participatory Turn in Urbanism'. Footprint is een tijdschrift toegewijd aan onderzoek binnen de architectuur en stedenbouw. In dit tijdschrift bespreken Eva Maria Hierzer and Philipp Markus Schörkhuber het belang van participatie voor de democratisering van de maatschappij en diens fundamentele bekritiserende rol ter verbetering van stadsplanning.

< HIERZER, E. M. and SCHÖRKHUBER, P. M. 2013. 'Infrastructural Critique. The Upside-Down of the Bottom-Up: A Case Study on the IBA Berlin 84/87'. Footprint. [Online]. #13, pp. 115–121. [Accessed 13 May 2014]. Available from: http://www.footprintjournal.org/issues/show/the-par-ticipatory-turn-in-urbanism

Ook het huidige nummer van A+ (nr. 247 april-mei) illustreert deze trend in het artikel 'Samenspraak'. Hoewel ik vragen stel bij de participatievorm die hier naar voor geschoven wordt (zie opmerking p. 6), toont dit artikel –in een invloedrijk Belgisch architectuurtijd-schrift– het groeiende belang voor participatie aan.

< MARTIN, T. 2014. 'Samenspraak'. A+. #247, april-mei, pp. 52–53

In dezelfde editie van A+ publiceert ook een interview met Tom Balthazar, schepen stads-ontwikkeling, wonen en openbaar groen van de stad Gent. Schepen Balthazar –in zijn politieke functie van invloed op het actie-onderzoek– onderstreept in dit interview het belang van burgerparticipatie.

< A+, Architectuur in België. 2014. Torens, vloek of zegen. A+. #247 april-mei, p. 42

* Terrain vague, de Solà-Morales beschrijft de potentie van deze vervreemde plekken. Ze vormen eilanden in het stedelijke weefsel en demonstreren de huidige tijdsgeest van onzekerheid. Ze roepen door hun leegte en onbestemdheid dromen en verwachtingen op.
Zie ook p. 56 en 126

< DE SOLA-MORALES RUBIO, I. 1995. 'Terrain vague'. Anyplace. Cambridge, MA: MITT Press, pp. 118–123

Bij dit actie-onderzoek komen een hele waaier aan boeiende thema's aan de oppervlakte. Deze tracht ik zo veel mogelijk te vatten en verder te ontwikkelen. Om het beknopt te houden, grijpt deze reflectie-nota fragmenten aan van het volledige verhaal; fragmenten die ingaan op de meest elementaire thema's. Aan de hand van het schema (p. 71) kan u gemakkelijk instappen in het verhaal, inspringen volgens thema. Het is aan de hand van deze kernbegrippen dat de link tussen mijn klein-schalig laboratorium en zijn bredere maatschappelijke context onmisken-baar wordt. Die toegepaste persoonlijke zoektocht speelt namelijk in op grotere vragen.

Mijn zoektocht, twijfels en actie-onderzoek zijn een kind van hun tijd. Ons huidig tijdperk* wordt ook in de architectuur discipline gedomi-neerd door vragen en onzekerheid. De grote verhalen zijn verdwenen. De versnippering en splitsing leiden er toe dat we zelf op zoek moeten naar onze eigen waarheden en visie. We bevinden ons in een complex en onzeker ontwikkelingsveld, als persoon maar ook in de architectuur en stedenbouw. Met de '-ismen' zijn namelijk ook onze houvasten vervlogen; de illusie van zekerheid en stabiliteit doorprikt. De eigen verantwoordelijkheid wordt benadrukt. De angst om fouten te maken is groot. Vertrouwen wordt een beladen facet. Onzekerheid en tijdelijkheid vormen, of juister ver-vagen, ons toekomstbeeld. Wij voelen ons vervreemd.

Het is in deze context dat het huidige participatieve discours* opnieuw zijn betekenis vindt. Het 'terrain vague'* illustreert deze vervreemding in al zijn onbepaaldheid en veranderlijkheid. Het is juist op deze plekken, de 'urban niches', dat burgers de kans krijgen hun eigen visie en identi-teit voor de buurt te ontwikkelen. Ze laten ruimte voor utopie.

De zoektocht heeft geen pasklare antwoorden opgeleverd. Wel verstrekt ze boeiende inzichten en stelt ze nieuwe vragen die ik graag verder wil exploreren. Dit verhaal stopt namelijk niet met het einde van mijn masterproef.

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode — Hanne Van Reusel
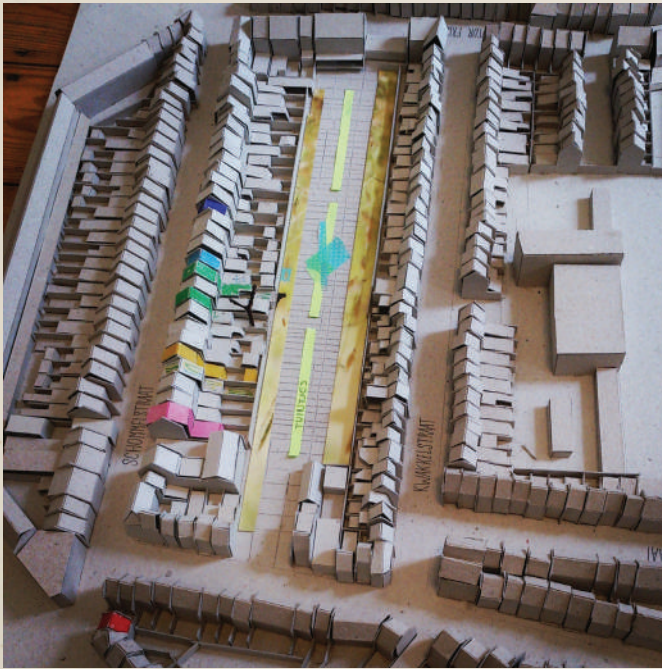
Aansluitend bij deze onzekerheid en instabiliteit in onze 21ste eeuwse maatschappij tekent zich ook de drang om andere oorden te verkennen. Ik wil onbekend gebied ontdekken en mijn zoektocht daar verder zetten. Ik heb er heel bewust voor gekozen deze reflectienota in het Engels neer te schrijven. Hoewel mijn actie-onderzoek zich situeert in zijn eigen specifieke omgeving — sociaal, ruimtelijk en politiek — zie ik ook de potentie om zijn eigen context te overstijgen. Ook buiten de landsgrens (of eerder taalgrens) kan dit actie-onderzoek betekenis vinden. Ik ga daarom na deze inleiding verder in het Engels.

Zoals in het begin reeds vermeld, is dit slechts een fragment van de output na deze zes intensieve maanden.

- Om te beginnen is er deze samenvattende nota, die fragmentarisch de geest van het actie-onderzoek en de belangrijkste thema's naar voor schuift.
- Het proces illustreer ik visueel aan de hand van een tijdlijn ——> http://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline/latest/embed/index.html?source=0AkD-3X9QvCyJdFRUN3LJNFdtRm1CQUNvBEpOY1F5c3cd font=Bevan-PotanoSansd map type=tonerd lang=en d height=650 en een conceptueel filmpje. ——> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYD0kzcD70k
- De blog geeft de kans om een blik te werpen achter de schermen van het proces en toont de meeste beelden. ——> withinrabot.blogspot.be
- U kan zich helemaal verdiepen in het uitgebreide reflectielog-boek, waarin ik chronologisch en gedetailleerd zowel het proces als de aansluitende thema's neerschrijf.
- U kan onze publieke Facebook pagina liken en zo ons — de geëngageerde buurtbewoners hun en mijn — activisme steunen. ——> http://facebook.com/Boerenhofrabot
- Of nog beter, u kan mij helpen in het vinden van steun (financiële of andere) voor verder onderzoek.

En natuurlijk, niet te vergeten, altijd welkom op het terrein zelf, om 'het boerenhof', mijn ruimtelijk laboratorium, mee te beleven !

Scratches, 'hippie-graffiti', on the wall closing off the boerenhof from the street.

GRAFFITI

= Writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place.

< OXFORD DICTIONARIES, Graffiti. [Online]. [Accessed 9 May 2014].
  Available from: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/graffiti?q=graffiti

= Graffiti is mostly an illegal act, a form of art, expressing social and political statements.

I start with a very specific context-based action research, in which I explore questions that matter to me. My self-made case study is inseparably connected to its broader socio-spatial and political context. While exploring my personal and specific search, I can link it to broader themes. Through this process I manage to extract different themes and personal conclusions. These multifaceted themes are assembled in the scheme on page 71.

In this way I manage to link my context-determined discoveries to larger societal questions. With this action research (master's thesis) I scratch* the notion of 'architecture' and the 'architect'.
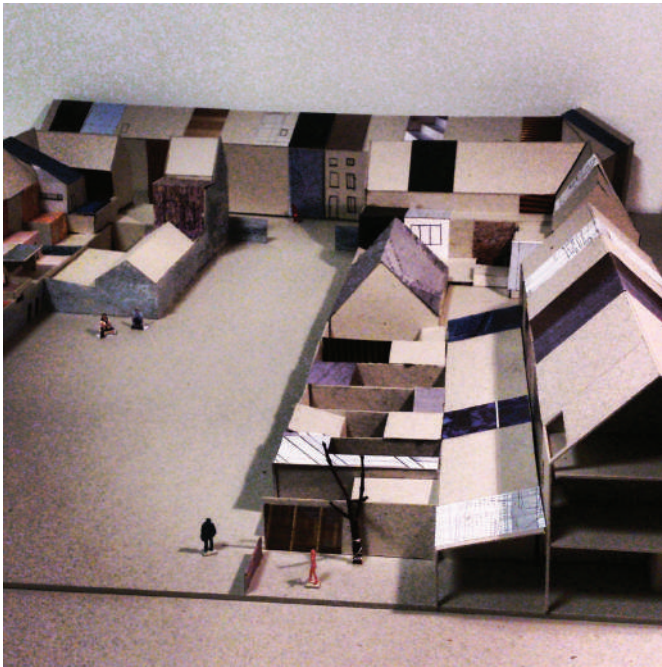
STORY

— an account of incidents or events
— a statement regarding the facts pertinent to a situation in question
— anecdote; especially : an amusing one

< MERRIAM–WEBSTER, Story. [Online]. [Accessed 9 May 2014]. Available from:

  http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/story

THE BOERENHOF STORY

The master's thesis will result in what I like to call the 'boerenhof story'. I prefer to use the term story, as action research is an inextricable mix of case study, research and design. It is a case study I 'created' myself, the object of very close observation. It is a part of the process, supported by my personal reflection. The story is both the start and the outcome of my work, shifting between design research and research design.

It is a beautiful story about local residents who oppose the existing plans for an open terrain in their neighbourhood. They stand up and show what beautiful things are possible on this place. These residents create a better world, developing their own neighbourhood and bring about spatial and social movements through the temporary use of a blank terrain. Along with their engagement, their emancipation and political notion grows.

It is a cheap story, I myself invested less than 20 euro in the project. We started from scratch, a blank and empty surface while having hardly any means. The project though, develops to have high value for all those involved, actively or not.

"Cities are not static structures, but active arenas marked by continu-ous energy flows and transformations of which landscapes and buildings and other parts are not permanent but transitional structures. Like a biological organism, the urbanised landscape is an open system, whose planned complexity always entails unplanned dross [= waste, refuse]."

< BERGER, A. 2006. Drosscape. Waiting Land in Urban America. New York, Princeton Architectural Press, p. 44

The boerenhof, the location, is a 'waiting space', an unused urban place awaiting its planned redevelopment. It is an open field for an explorative process of trial and error.

< DE SMET, A. 2014, The role of temporary use of Waiting Spaces. Eindverslag onderzoeksproject PRFB 2008 'Tijdelijk gebruik als eerste stap naar herwaardering en revitalisatie'. Prospective Research for Brussels.

"*In the contemporary context we begin to see that these sites (waiting spaces) could offer other opportunities for urban planning, development and management.*" (DE SMET, 2014) It is a wiped out surface to scratch on in search of my notion of architecture and its societal and political relevance.

I unravel 'triggers', 'movements' and 'pop-ups' in the boerenhof story and some of the reference projects (or better processes),

TRIGGERS a little impulse or spark, initiated by specific actors. Consciously or not they encourage other actors to bring about change. There is a certain causality that triggers these decisions or actions.

MOVEMENTS Mostly the results of triggers, but sometimes happen without a clear reason. The process of appropriation, the amount of involvement, growth are examples of these changes in mindset or space.

POP-UPS express a sudden surprise. These are mostly physical changes, the cause of which I cannot precisely determine. These acts are mostly very impulsive and often become triggers themselves.

During the temporary use of the boerenhof a wide range of small and major happenings occur. Fragmentic developments are selected from these ongo-ing chain-reactions. I categorise these in forms, subdivided in three types: trigger, pop-up and movement.

These forms are documents where I answer briefly to key questions (what, who, where, when, how...). By consistently filling out these documents every week, I manage to present a chronological and visual report of the actions. Together they display the progress and evolution of the project. All of these forms can be found on my blog or in the logbook.

TRIGGER — access

PROGRAM	Painting desired access / opening
INITIATOR	Designer
LOCATION	The wall between inner area and the private
PUBLIC	Involved locals & visualisation to others
TOOLS	Brush & paint < personal material
COSTS	—
SITUATION	I want to visualise the idea of more accessibility, not only as a trigger towards The Boerenhof group, also as an ecouragement towards the whole neigh—bourhood

MOVEMENT — beyond the wall

MOVEMENT · Usage terrain vague — appropriation.......
ACTORS · Not yet active neighbours with an access.
CAUSALITY · When I see these neighbours standing.......
behind their wall watching what is........
going, I go and talk to them. They are...
triggered by the terrace of Tomas &.....
Marieke. I invite them to join and so......
they decide to install their own ter—....
race. Even though these neighbours have a
very open access to the area, this is the
first time I see them cross the separa—...
tion wall...................................

POP UP — scarecrows

PROGRAM	Protecting the seeds from the birds........
INITIATOR	Herman (= biologist)...........................
LOCATION	The inner area sown in strip...................
PUBLIC	Functional goal. Wood & old clothes <...
TOOLS	Personal surplus material and personal ....
	tools..
COSTS	—..
SITUATION	The seeds need to be protected from the
	birds eating them. The most efficient ....
	way to keep the birds aways is to make
	some scarecrows. The colourful flags bring
	a pleasant atmosphere...........................

TRIGGER — Facebook group

PROGRAM	Create a platform for The Boerenhof
INITIATOR	Designer
LOCATION	Facebook — online
PUBLIC	All active neihbours
COSTS	—
SITUATION	The mailing is getting too complicated. Everyone receives several mails a week both about the plans for the next sunday as well as on the juridical aspect. On Facebook it is easier to filter the topics of personal interest and it has a lower barrier to interact.

In the reference and boerenhof time line, the following terms will be added.

ACTS I use this term to describe the weekly actions. They act as the main division in a play. It stresses the importance of the action that takes place; it is about doing. Participants are eager to contribute, others get involved merely due to curiosity.

EVENTS are the major, more organised acts. The workshop and opening event are examples of this. These acts are well thought through and demand more preparation. They usually manage to involve more participants as well.

These anchor elements (trigger, pop-up and movement) aid me in reconstructing the process behind reference projects. I add the terms 'event' and 'act' for this reason. Arranged on a time line they offer me the opportunity to position the boerenhof story in between other established cases like Le Grand Ensemble, Boulogne-sur-Mer (Construire Architectes) of which the reconstructed time line is displayed on page 36.

This collection of references offers me an insight in processes of related projects. More cases similar to the boerenhof project, like Rommelwaterpark in Ghent, point out the faults and positive outcomes of parks with equivalent plans.

The digital time line displays the forms, making links to the blog, Facebook and film.

Comparing the time lines of these cases with my own project provides me with more insight in my action research. The most important information I conclude is the difference in time scale (months in stead of years). Due to the short time span of the master's thesis only a fragment of the process (the beginning) is shown. The boerenhof story zooms in on a long term trajectory.

Another important key note is the 'disappearing' of the in-between, the developments that occur in between main events. Only the important turning points in the story of the references are traceable. However, these mile-stones need to be built up. These smaller, not 'noteworthy', events appear to be crucial to the boerenhof story.

CONSTRUIRE ARCHITECTES
Le Grand Ensemble,
Boulogne—sur—Mer

TRIGGER

publication Manifeste
Construire Ensemble

TRIGGER

presence: Sophie,
architect, moves in

EVENT

introduction 'plans'

POP-UP

create a personal
technical file of
every house, first
page photo and
data of residents

'COMMANDE'

mayor gives
Construire arch.
command for
self-rehabilitation

TRIGGER

Give residents plan
of their own house

EVEN

TRIGGER

Work on house
Sophie (permanent
architect)

start comm
garden an
< Kinya M

RESIDENTS

on site

off site

2010

CONSTRUIRE

GOVERNM.

MOVEMENT

Residents think about their house on a differe

RESEARCH

Social and architectural research.Build up trust.
Get to know neighbourhood through personal ex

TRIGGER

make inhabitants chose colour facade and interior < Anne Sophie Lecarpentier

TRIGGER

interior works < Marion CREACTIF

exterior works

EVENT

realise community house, Pompidou Mobile

TRIGGER

children decorate façade < Flavie Cournil

EVENT

atelier crochet

RETREAT

construire finishes project

POP-UP

wood of pavilion used for heating in winter

TRIGGER

workshop on maintenance house

EVENT

common city and pavilion Maruyama

2011

2013

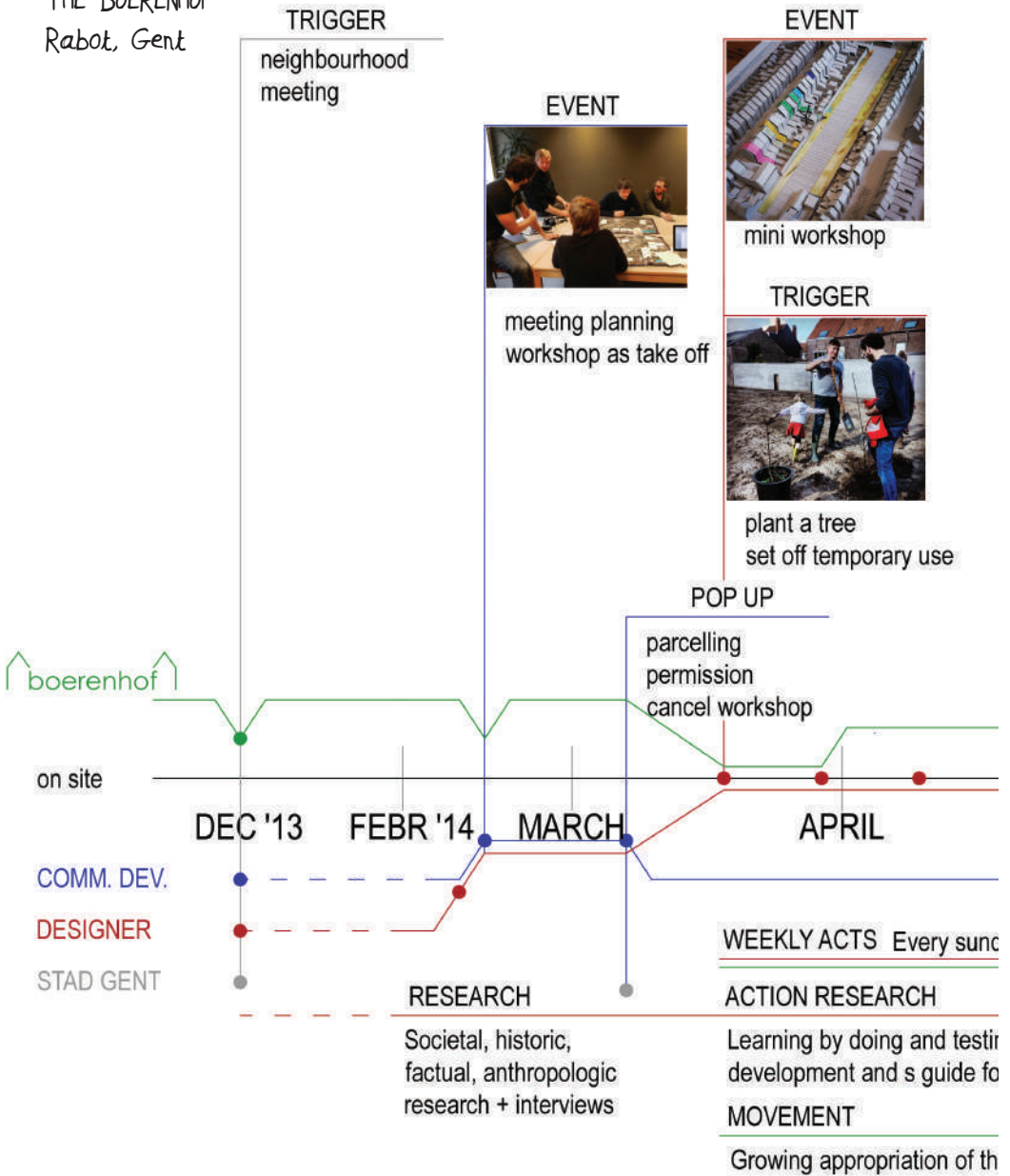erent level. Residents start discussing about their house, living conditions.

MOVEMENT

Documentary on project < Jacques Kebadian

MOVEMENT

Open construction site, 'chantier' leads to integration and debate

experience.

THE BOERENHOF
Rabot, Gent

TRIGGER
neighbourhood
meeting

EVENT

mini workshop

EVENT

meeting planning
workshop as take off

TRIGGER

plant a tree
set off temporary use

POP UP

parcelling
permission
cancel workshop

boerenhof

on site

DEC '13   FEBR '14   MARCH   APRIL

COMM. DEV.

DESIGNER

STAD GENT

RESEARCH

Societal, historic,
factual, anthropologic
research + interviews

WEEKLY ACTS Every sund

ACTION RESEARCH

Learning by doing and testi
development and s guide fo

MOVEMENT

Growing appropriation of th

TRIGGER

open fence

EVENT

opening event
invite neighbours

RETREAT

Lowering down
presence and
impulses

EVENT

Creatief Kwartier
Rabot network
event

COME BACK

TRIGGER

barbecue

EVENT

making the grid

EVENT

meeting on
cooperation

EVENT

Buurt Bestuurt
discuss parks
in Rabot

EVENT

visit
alder-
man

MAY

JUNE

ay meet and work on site. Weekly cluster of triggers, pop-ups and movements.

g on site. Reflection logbook provides insight in ituation,
r further actions. Scientific and intuitive factual.

MOVEMENT

Tactical -> strategic development.

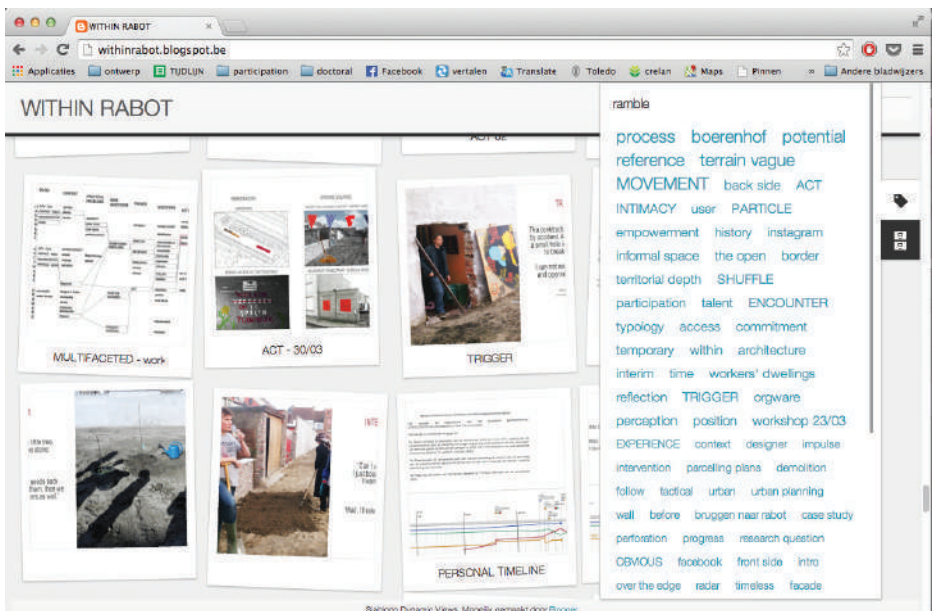e boerenhof. More and more neighbours get involved, a gradual process. Social cohesion.

MOVEMENT

Self-organisation, emancipation, empowerment. In-between commitment through Facebook.

MOVEMENT

Open boerenhof

MOVEMENT

Closing in

39

The blog presents the action research in progress linked to different themes and key words (labels).

These forms and reference time lines are presented on my blog. The historical background, planning, fragments of interviews, mappings, presentations, research of further potential developments, schemes, theoretical references and so on, are also displayed on this medium.

The blog is a representation of the course of the action research. It is an accessible tool, yet illustrating the multifaceted layers. The labels, shown under each blog post, express the interlinking of the broad range of these topics.

> withinrabot.blogspot.be

THE BOERENHOF SITUATION

When I start my thesis, the boerenhof, an inner area in Rabot Ghent, is a fallow land. The municipality bought this enclosed terrain situated in an urban fabric characterised by very densely built worker's dwellings, originating from the industrialisation period.

* OOPENBARE VERKOOPING eigendom met huis, werkhuis, tuin- en bouwgrond te Gent Kerkstraat 44 - Pannestraat. 1974. [Poster]. At: Gent: Zwarte doos, stadsarchief Gent.

WEZENBEEK P. 1984. De evolutie van de Gentse Rabotwijk (1872-1913). Een industrieel archeologische studie. Het ontstaan van een arbeiderswijk. Gent: Rijksuniversiteit Gent, Faculteit van de letteren en wijsbegeerte.
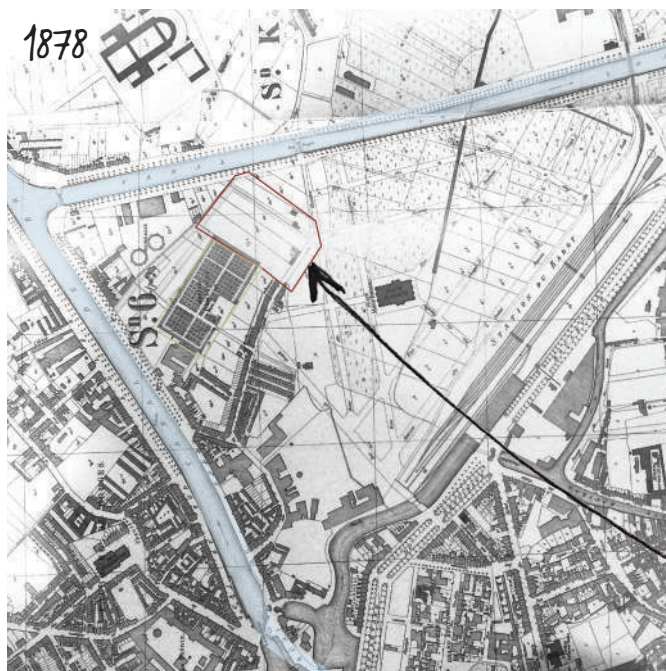
PLAN OF RABOT. 1878. [Plan]. At: Gent: STAM, Stadsmuseum Gent, permanent exhibition.

> Romantic, referring to the idealised image project-
> ed on its historical background. The active neigh-
> bourhood association refers to this romanticised
> past, expressing their desire of living in a green
> and natural environment.

In its history, this terrain was considered wasted space.
It started rather romantic*, as farmland in the middle of the 'Wondelgemse Meerschen', marshy land just outside the city walls. This parcel was comprised of one of the few buildings in the area, a farm and horse sheds (Openbare verkooping, 1974 & Wezenbeek, 1984).

Times changed, the industrialisation period took place in all its tumult. The city walls were demolished, factories rose at this advantageous transport junction. During the rural exodus people tried their luck in the city, populating Rabot. Though, notwithstanding the huge demand for housing, the textile barons did not manage to gain the maximum profit out of this land because of the original parcel division. Coincidentally an open unexploited inner area arose in this fully built district.
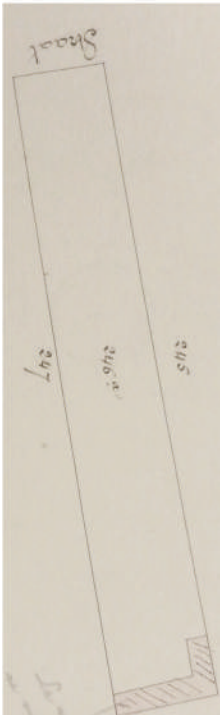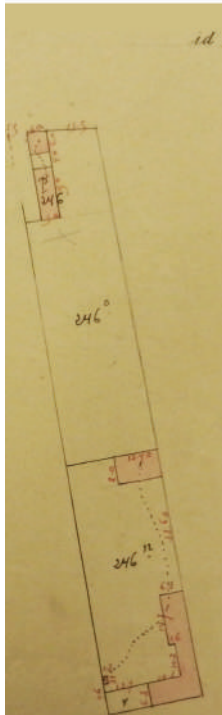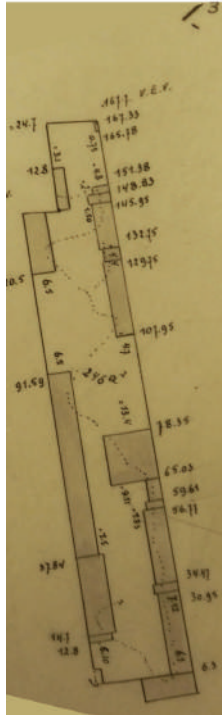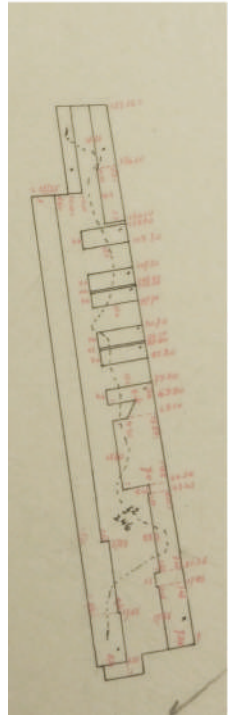
1846   1926   1955   1964

PLAN OF INNER AREA THE BOERENHOF parcel 246K2 — 44810K0246/00M000. 1846. 1926. 1955. 1964. [Cadastral plan].
At: Gent: Cadastral archive.

The request is advised against because of the
following motivation:
"This plan is detrimental for the urban environment
and does not align with the intention to improve the
living quality in the 19th century districts, there is
not any greening, nor an added value for the environ-
ment. A qualitative urban development is compromised."

< VAN EECKHOUT, S. (Gemeentelijk stedenbouwkundig ambtenaar Gent).
    2009. Email to Van den Abbeel Iris (Programmaregisseur Gent),
    15 December.

It did not take too long before a profitable destination was found, the gap
was filled with garage boxes for rent. However, a few years ago the munici-
pality blocked the further profit driven exploitation of the inner area. In 2009
the urban planning department rejected the request to demolish the garage
boxes in favor of constructing new ones. The municipality used this opportu-
nity to buy the ground.

De Bewonersgroep Boerenhof wil
een alternatief bieden en vraagt een
groenere invulling

- meer groen in de wijk
- rust voor de omwonenden
- plaats voor volkstuintjes
- een rustplek in de buurt
- een ontmoetingsplaats

Mits opoffering van de 2 nieuwe kavels
in de Kwakkelstraat kan er een efficiëntere
parking komen voor 20 auto's met een
minimum aan overlast voor de omwonenden

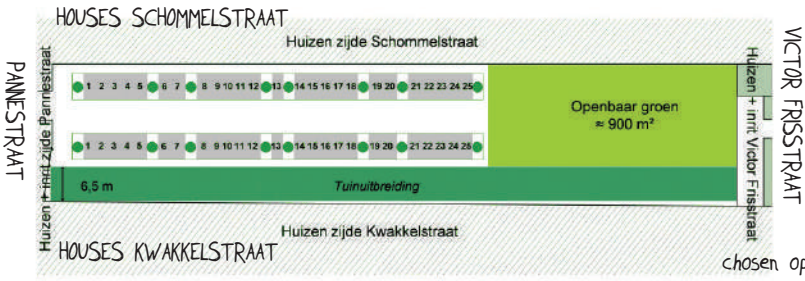Wij willen in afwachting een betere invulling geven aan het terrein

- volkstuintjes - fietskeuken
- kunstprojecten   - wijkgebonden initiatieven
- knutselateliers   - …

Wij willen klachten en bedenkingen bundelen

heb je klachten of verontrustende feiten te melden over
het binnengebied dan mag je ons op de hoogte brengen

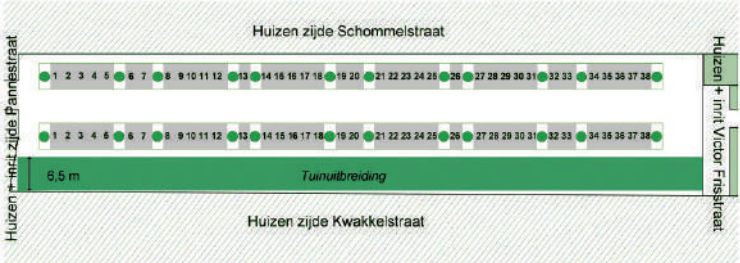A pamphlet proposing alternative suggestions by The Boerenhof – Sept. 2011

'The Boerenhof', the name of the neighbourhood association can be translated as farmstead. In the common language the inner area is called this way referring to the horse shed and barn that used to stand on the terrain. It denotes to the idealised past and expresses the desire for more green and nature in the district.

In 2011 the municipality became the owner and planned garden additions for one side of the adjacent housing (Kwakkelstraat), 80 parking spaces and a small patch of public green. This, however, did not align with the desires of its neighbours. They disagreed with the planned parking spaces and assembled, naming themselves The Boerenhof neighbourhood association (2011). They argued for a completely green destination and made alternative proposals: nature, a silent place, a common garden… The city reacted both receptive and noncommittant towards their initiatives.

HOUSES SCHOMMELSTRAAT

PANNESTRAAT

VICTOR FRISSTRAAT

Huizen zijde Schommelstraat

Huizen zijde Pannestraat

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Openbaar groen
≈ 900 m²

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

6,5 m   Tuinuitbreiding

Huizen zijde Kwakkelstraat

HOUSES KWAKKELSTRAAT

Huizen + inrit Victor Frisstraat

chosen option

— *minimum parking*

— *maximum private*

Huizen zijde Schommelstraat

Huizen zijde Pannestraat

5 m   *Tuinuitbreiding*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Openbaar groen
≈ 450 m²

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

6,5 m   *Tuinuitbreiding*

Huizen + inrit Victor Frisstraat

Huizen zijde Kwakkelstraat

Huizen zijde Schommelstraat

Huizen + inrit zijde Pannestraat

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

Openbaar groen
≈ 600 m²

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

6,5 m   *Tuinuitbreiding*

Huizen + inrit Victor Frisstraat

Huizen zijde Kwakkelstraat

Huizen zijde Schommelstraat

Huizen + inrit zijde Pannestraat

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38

6,5 m   *Tuinuitbreiding*

Huizen + inrit Victor Frisstraat

Huizen zijde Kwakkelstraat

The four options offered by the municipality — April 2011

As a compromise, the city planned an informative meeting, offering the present participants to choose between four similar options. The discussion got highly polarised and eventually the second option was agreed upon. This option was preferred because of the minimum amount of parking, 50 places, and more private space.

The Boerenhovers, however, still fought the official plans through juridical procedures and lobbying. In 2012 they set up a temporary use on a small part of the inner area, still filled with garage boxes. Unfortunately only small projects were actualised as the dilapidated structures, glass shards, waste and cat cadavers obstructed the construction of city gardens.

Demolition of the rundown garages, photos by neighbour Bernadette. — 2013

The rundown garage boxes, used for anything except parking cars, were demolished in 2013. The panels infested with asbestos and all the litter was removed, along with the structures, the shed, the orientation points for the bats, the height levels… A new smooth layer of earth covered the past; the separation wall was nicely reconstructed again, an enclosed tabula rasa.
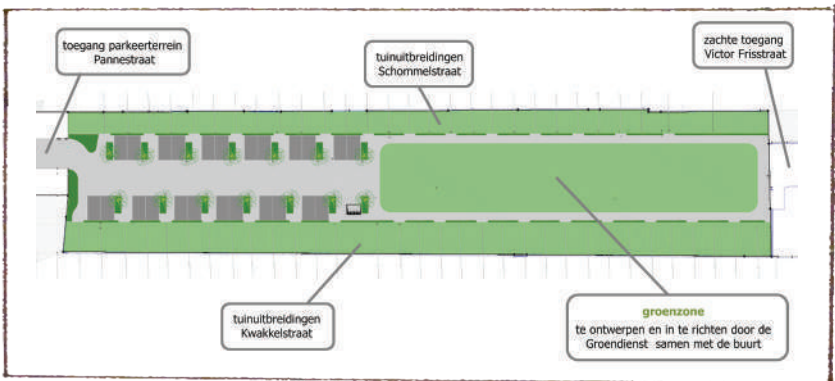
The latest plan as officially communicated by the city of Ghent — 2013
STAD GENT. 2013. Folder herinrichting binnengebied Kwakkelstraat. [Pdf]. [Accessed 10 June 14].
Available from: http://www.gent.be/eCache/WRA/1/85/370.html

The municipality gained a parcelling permission for the inner area containing garden additions for the adjacent housing (both sides), public green and 50 parking spaces. Even though by that time, the politicians had already made a new admission by promising to only construct 24 spaces. The Boeren-hovers continued to defend their cause; a juridical appeal managed to cancel the plan in December 2013.

Terrain vague, Ignasi de Solà–Morales describes its evocative potential: "Void, absence, yet also promise, the space of the possible, of expectation." These 'other spaces' in the interior of the city are a "physical expression of our fear and insecurity and our expectations of the other, the alternative, the utopian, the future."

< DE SOLA–MORALES RUBIO, Ignasi, 1995, 'Terrain vague', in 'Anyplace', Cambridge, MA: MITT Press, 1995, pp. 118–123

* <u>Boundaries:</u> The physical boundaries of the boerenhof are quite strict, the terrain is closed off by a wall, fences and a gate. Mentally, however, the perception of the boerenhof is vague. From this perspective the place is open; its destination is uncertain.

Here is where my involvement starts. The boerenhof is an open space, waiting for the plan's execution. A terrain vague, an in-between, perfect for temporary use, brimming with potential. An anchor point for the neighbour-hood, a place that can have meaning outside of its (strictly determined) boundaries.[*] A playground for an 'architectural' process.

Welcome neighbours to discover the boerenhof! — opening event April '14

So here we are, the Boerenhovers and I. We have come a long way since I initiated the temporary use project by arranging a workshop and a first cautious planting act. It has been a gradually unfolding exploration of the boerenhof and its potential, a process of trial and error and a display of perseverance through an eventful process of development.

The start of the temporary use, planting the first tree — March '14

The first tree has been planted, an eclectic mix of indigenous seeds and plants spread across the land. Shuffled soil becomes a green carpet and fans out across future car circulation space. We work out a more strategic grid and paths proliferate in between both planned and unplanned out-comes.

The weekly sunday get-togethers result in a gradually evolving process. Small triggers inspire a wide range of varying spatial actions, referred to as scratches. New ideas and programs pop up. The social context is shifting and things are moving.

'scratch' has a more applied meaning, which will be described later in the paper p. 99
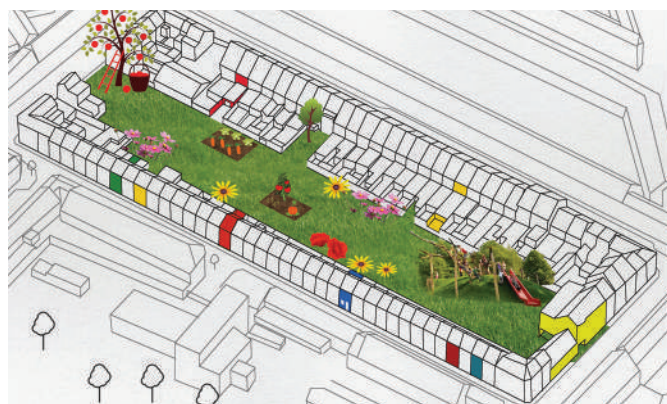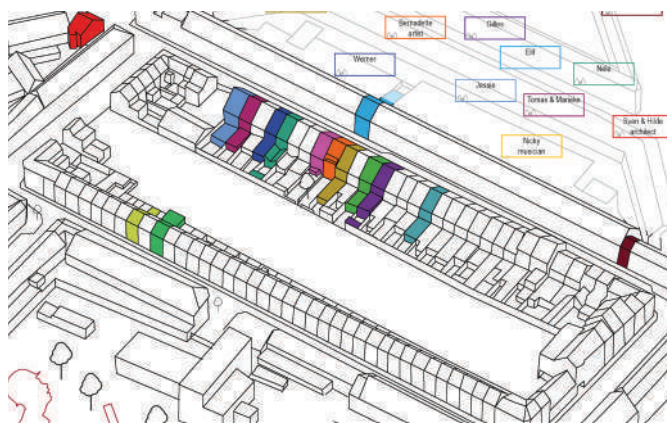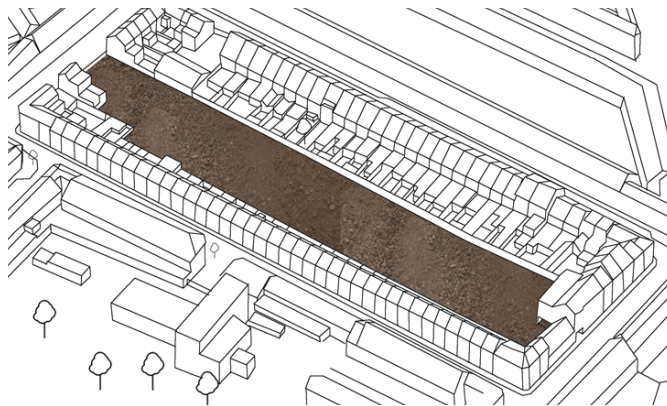
From terrain vague to a place to dream about, supported by local talents

Meanwhile I use the boerenhof story as an opportunity to reflect on all the acts and events. I not only recapitulate the process into triggers, movements and pop ups and relate them to different themes, but I reflect on the weekly progress, writing down personal interpretations in a elaborate logbook as well. These interpretations, accompanying the factual description, are supported by links with the theoretical field. Facts and reflections blur together.

Working the land, beginning of a green development – ACT 02 March '14

How can I reconstruct the boerenhof story briefly? The reflection diary (logbook) of the master's thesis, together with the time line, will give a detailed chronological report. The film, blog, photo album and Facebook pages illustrate the project visually. Let me reconstruct the story by highlighting the most significant elements of the action research. They are linked to anchor themes summarised in the multifaceted scheme on page 71.
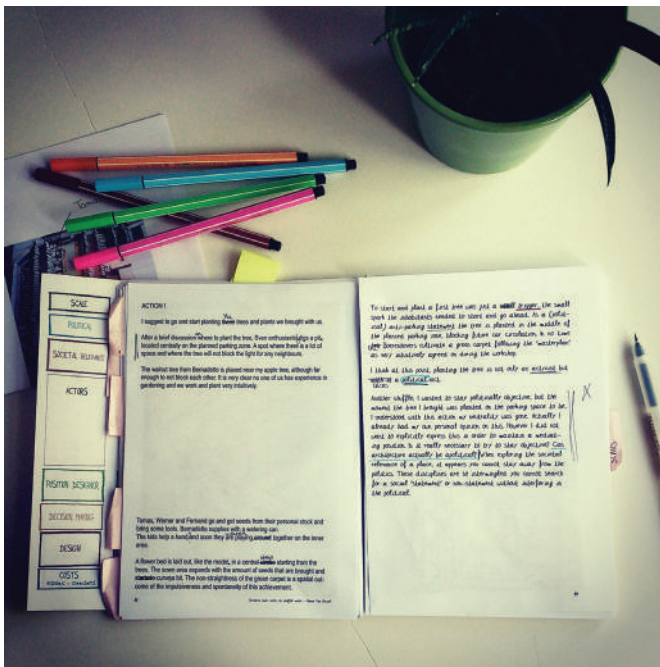
The logbook is a working document and an outcome of the action research.

The 388 pages of the logbook provide a detailed insight in development pro-
cess of the temporary use. The reflections closely follow up the occurrences.
Bit by bit it brings up the social, spatial and political results of my actions and
rises new questions as well.

The book is both a tool for, and the output of my action research. On the left
side I try to give on objective report on major and small events. The right
side gives space to a intuitive and scientific train of thought. It offers an in-
sight in the uncertainty and fear playing during the decision-making course,
amongst many other aspects. Reference projects are analysed here to guide
me in my further actions. It addresses the flux and shifts in the process and
in my position. Most of all this right part offers me a platform to take a step
back and have a look from a more distant point of view. Through this tool,
I can explore my role as designer and critically look back on my personal
actions.

It is due to this meticulous reflection, resulting in an extensive logbook, that
an interesting web of themes is brought to light. These allow me to position
my personal situation-bound explorations in the wider architecture discipline.

The hard work results in a colourful boerenhof – ACT 09 May '14

The scheme is shaped like a chip, a complex integrated circuit in which all participants play a crucial role, affecting each other as well as the context of the boerenhof and its architecture. Different levels are highlighted in this process: the design, its societal relevance, the political conditions, the role of the actors and designer; the process and motivations behind decision-making and the costs, both economically as commitment wise.

The colours represent these major themes that are brought to light during the development of the boerenhof. They link the case-specific elements with their broader societal conditions. The themes and their key concepts are listed on the left side, represented horizontally in the scheme from very local (left) to the broader urban scale (right).

I would suggest to discover the boerenhof first and to explore the broad range of actors involved later. From thereon the linked concepts can be found. Some connections are coloured, as they represent the social, economic, political... links.

SHUFFLE
terrain vague
SCORE – turning point

SCAR
empowerment
activism

SCAR
social cohesion
social condenser
Facebook
empowerment

SHUFFLE in relations
LOCAL RESIDENTS
    David, Nesrin, Sonja, Igor,
    Melis, Anna, Freddy...
– The Boerenhof
    Sven, Hilde, Tomas, Laurens
    Bernadette, Werner, Jill,
    Yves, Jessie, Marieke, Gert
    Tomas, Fleur, Fernand, Nele

– Community Development
    Wannes d Dimitri

MUNICIPALITY
– District director Stefaan
– Politicians

SHUFFLE in role
transistor
lock d key
architectural trust
retreat?

SHUFFLE in process
fear d uncertainty
decision-making

temporary – timeless
SCRATCH – SCAR
authenticity
detail | major event
tactical – strategic

economic

commitment

LOCAL

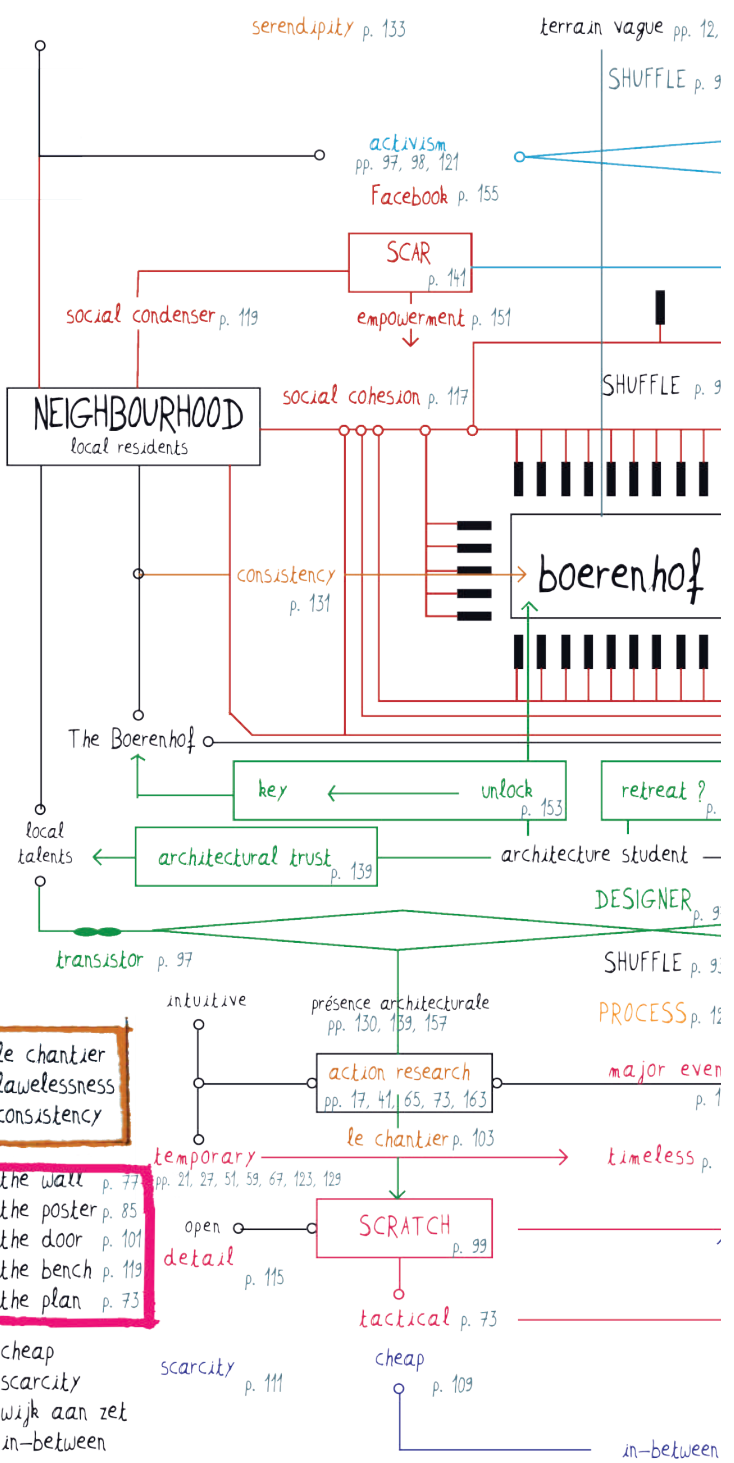|	
CONTEXT	SHUFFLE terrain vague SCORE – turning point
POLITICAL	SCAR empowerment activism
SOCIETAL	SCAR social cohesion social condenser Facebook empowerment

ACTORS	SHUFFLE in relations
	LOCAL RESIDENTS
	    David, Nesrin, Sonja, Igor,
	    Melis, Anna, Freddy...
	– The Boerenhof
	Sven, Hilde, Tomas, Laurens
	Bernadette, Werner, Jill,
	Yves, Jessie, Marieke, Gert
	Tomas, Fleur, Fernand, Nele
	
	– Community Development
	Wannes & Dimitri
	
	MUNICIPALITY
	– District director Stefaan
	– Politicians

DESIGNER	SHUFFLE in role transistor lock & key architectural trust retreat?
PROCESS	SHUFFLE in process le chantier fear & uncertainty lawlessness decision-making consistency
DESIGN	temporary – timeless the wall p. 77 SCRATCH – SCAR the poster p. 85 authenticity the door p. 101 detail	major event the bench p. 119 tactical – strategic the plan p. 73

COSTS	economic cheap
	    scarcity
	commitment wijk aan zet
	    in-between

serendipity p. 133   terrain vague pp. 12,

SHUFFLE p. 9

activism pp. 97, 98, 121
Facebook p. 155

SCAR p. 141

social condenser p. 119   empowerment p. 151

SHUFFLE p. 9

social cohesion p. 117

NEIGHBOURHOOD
local residents

consistency
p. 131

boerenhof

The Boerenhof

key ← unlock p. 153   retreat? p.

local talents ← architectural trust p. 139   architecture student

transistor p. 97   DESIGNER p. 9

SHUFFLE p. 9

intuitive   présence architecturale pp. 130, 139, 157   PROCESS p. 12

action research pp. 17, 41, 65, 73, 163   major even p. 1

le chantier p. 103

temporary pp. 21, 27, 51, 59, 67, 123, 129   timeless p.

open   SCRATCH p. 99

detail p. 115

scarcity p. 111   cheap p. 109   tactical p. 73

in-between

URBAN ○———○ regional

turning point p. 123

SCORE
p. 123

political p. 121

sp.a   groen!

SCAR
p. 141

empowerment p. 151

MUNICIPALITY

politicians

lawlessness
p. 107

social services
coordination department
urban planning department
community landscape service
district orientated department

district
director

COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

→ closing in

professional

architecture office

decision-making
p. 135
fear — uncertainty
p. 137

theoretical research

technical and practical knowledge

authenticity
p. 147

the plan p. 143

plan

fix pp. 97, 126, 129, 136

transistor
p. 97

SCAR p. 141

trigger
pp. 26, 61, 89, 97, 121, 125

→ strategic p. 98

'wijk aan zet'
pp. 109, 143

economic investments
p. 109

Revolution, an activity or movement effecting changes in the socioeconomic and / or political situation.

THE BOERENHOF (R)EVOLUTION

Throughout the action research, I develop small, story-based insights and conclusions, which I can link to their broader context.

It becomes clear how even the smallest spatial action can have a significant social importance or become a strong political statement. The temporary use makes this place an anchor point for the neighbourhood and a catalyst for its own development.

The action research is about a process of affecting and being affected. This flux results in a shuffle mode, both in its development, the interrelation between involved actors and my role. → *see this paper p. 93*

The aims and results are classified in three self-determined concepts: scratch, scar and score, which will be further clarified in the next summary.

THE BOERENHOF (R)EVOLUTION

process | turning point | gradually

trigger | communication | ~~final~~ event | score

timeless | terrain vague | away from fix

alternative for fix | changes | vision & desires

solid base | accessible | présence architecturale

open schedule | shift | opportunities

plan | professional knowledge | personal intution

adaptive management | suck it and see

slow place | reverse movement | mutual

strategic | movements | socio–political | spatial

scar | wijk aan zet | bigger scale | grid | logical

scratch–scar combination | natural irregularities

scar | socio–political strength

open | share power | emancipate

self–organisation | broad public | manager

continue | commitment

bit by bit | close in | organisational base

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode — Hanne Van Reusel

Firstly there is THE WALL. This spatially strong element has been present for a long time in the boerenhof history, separating the private houses from the private garage boxes. There is a stone barrier between the inner area and its adjacent surroundings. Later on it will appear this border is not completely strict when the wall is uncovered during the demolition of the garage boxes: several adjacent housing have an opening or door.

Collages of the wall's potential developments — workshop March '14

The wall is the start of (my part of) the boerenhof story. It is the only physical element left after the tabula rasa, it is even partly reconstructed by the contractor. The boerenhof is a linear terrain surrounded by the carefully maintained and limed wall. In the beginning of my action research I explore its possibilities. It is a crucial in-between that is enclosed but has the potential to open up.

THE WALL

used to be
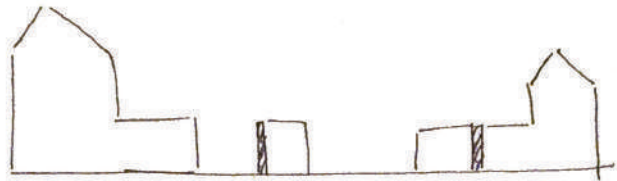
PRIVATE   PRIVATE   PRIVATE

bought by
the municipality
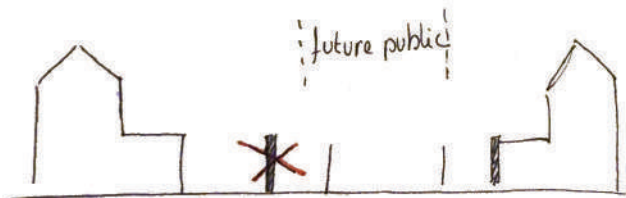
PRIV.   PRIV.   PRIV

as-planned

future public

PRIV. ⟶ | PUBLIC |← PRIV.

as-developed

approriated

PRIV.   COMMON   PRIV

Sketches on the territorial depth of the wall.

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode — Hanne Van Reusel

The separation notion of the wall; however, is not as strong as it seems. The future garden addition offers the adjacent neighbours to own a part of the inner area. This implements that it will no longer be a border between different owners. The parcel line will be moved by a few meters, making it necessary (or desired) to install a new delineation later, which renders the current one useless.

Although the addition of the gardens is not yet realised, the perception of space alters, making the symbolic meaning of the wall significantly weaker. Without any physical transformation, the notion of this spatial element changes and because of this, it becomes easier to overcome the fear of breaking through the wall.

Cautiously breaking through the wall, planting in the garden addition. — May 2014

At this moment, after three months of temporary use, the wall separates private and common ground (although privately owned by a public institute). By appropriating the terrain, the wall is involved automatically.

From the very beginning, the adjacent residents express their desire to have a personal access to the inner area. To encourage them, I bring paint and a brush so they can draw their plans on scale one to one.

Neighbours start to break through the wall, making creeping holes in it; getting more interaction with the boerenhof. The better the accessibility, the easier the appropriation and the easier the movements. It is no coincidence neighbours start to develop their future garden the moment they have imme- diate access or the other way around.

De oude garageboxen zijn gesloopt.
Een open terrein aarde wacht op een nieuwe bestemming.
Wat kan dit gebied nu voor de buurt betekenen?

We komen alvast samen! Om bloemen te zaaien
en om te dromen van meer open ruimte.
Wat kan deze lege vlakte voor jou betekenen?

WAT?
Bloemen inzaaien - Workshop - Barbecue

WANNEER?
zondag 23 maart 2014 van 15 uur tot ...

WAAR?
binnengebied Kwakkelstraat – Pannestraat –
Schommelstraat – Victor Frisstraat

WIE?
Samenlevingsopbouw, buurtgroep Boerenhof en jullie !
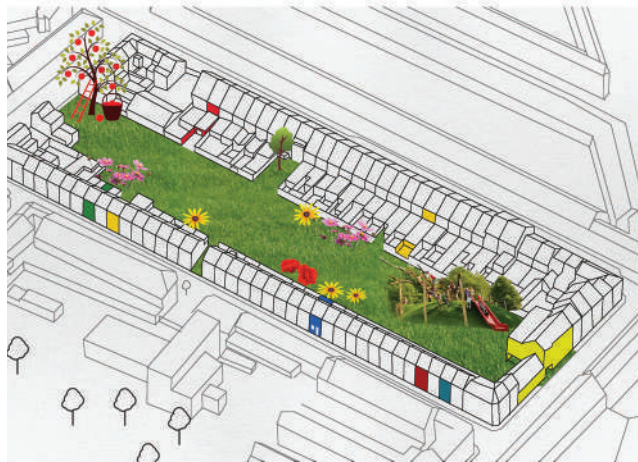
boerenhof

The first design of the poster. – February 2014

THE POSTER or pamphlet is another important element in the design. In order to make publicity for the planned workshop in March, the Boeren-hovers, Community Development and I gather to discuss the practical arrangement. A pamphlet can be useful to inform the nearby residents. I volunteer to work out an idea and design a logo for The Boerenhof.

redraw
the wall

adding
city gardens

place deleted
house back

De oude garageboxen zijn gesloopt.
Een open terrein aarde wacht op een nieuwe bestemming.
Wat kan dit gebied nu voor de buurt betekenen?

We komen alvast samen! Om bloemen te zaaien
en om te dromen van meer open ruimte.
Wat kan deze lege vlakte voor jou betekenen?

WAT?
Bloemen inzaaien - Workshop - Barbecue

WANNEER?
zondag 23 maart 2014 van 15 uur tot ...

WAAR?
binnengebied Kwakkelstraat – Pannestraat –
Schommelstraat – Victor Frisstraat

WIE?
Samenlevingsopbouw, buurtgroep Boerenhof en jullie !

boerenhof

2nd design, adjusted to the remarks & adding city gardens. — March 2014

As a first step, I talk with some of the neighbours and the development workers about their expectations for the poster. My starting point is their suggestions, ideas and desires; assembling them in a conceptual drawing and collage. I choose a naive, even childish style. As suggested to me by the development workers, I try to keep it simple and use a lot of colour.

The programs are the ones expressed by the Boerenhovers during the previous meetings: fruit trees, a peaceful resting place, vegetation and an adventurous playground. The flowers on the sides demonstrate the plan to sow in the future gardens during the workshop event.
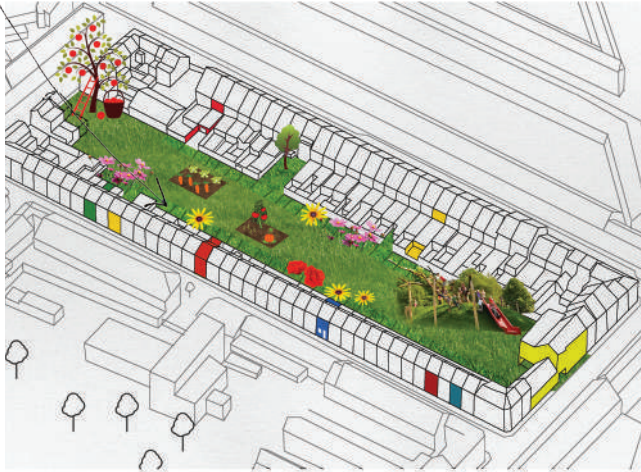
I implement some spatial changes in the urban fabric as well; opening parts of the wall and removing a house to create an extra passage.

One week before the workshop, the pamphlet is shared with all the actors involved. Some feedback and a few adaptations follow. The district director suggests to redraw the removed house so as to not frighten its residents. "*The situation is a bit too delicate.*" Nele (The Boerenhof) asks to stress the potential use as city gardens. I adjust the drawing, following their remarks and suggestions.

+ garden addition more visable
+ different shade of green
+ extended parcel division lines

De oude garageboxen zijn gesloopt.
Een open terrein wacht op zijn bestemming.
Wat kan dit gebied nu en later voor de buurt betekenen?

Welkom op 't boerenhof !

WANNEER?
Zaterdag 19 april vanaf 14u - aansluitend bij de rommelmarkt

WAT?
Samen komen - planten - koffiekar - kinderactiviteit

WAAR?
Binnengebied Kwakkelstraat – Pannestraat –
Schommelstraat – Victor Frisstraat

VOLG ONS!
facebook.com/Boerenhofrabot

WIE?
buurtgroep
⌂boerenhof⌂

The Boerenhof is only organiser

Current composition, used for the opening event. — April 2014

Unfortunately the workshop gets canceled and the poster remains unpublished, until the opening event in April. The Boerenhovers bring up the drawing again, using it as a communication tool. Before the poster gets printed, however, another adaptation follows: *"We should make the garden additions more clear or people will think we want to cancel this part of the plan as well. Hanne, could you still edit this? Maybe extend the parcel lines?"*

In this image, through its different layers of adjustments, fiction and reality become more and more intermingled. The residents project their ideas and dreams on the poster, without them having to be fixed in the form of a traditional plan. The conceptual drawing becomes an important element in the process as both the district director and the neighbours take this drawing seriously.

Although it does not sett off any physical change or intends to be a ready-made design, it does shape space on a mental level. It creates expectations, triggering potential functions for the inner area. Through their comments, the actors appropriate the 'plan', projecting their visions or concerns. The drawing is a common design of which I am the assembler/ editor…

The temporary use, showing a vision and leaving space for more ideas.

The drawing is ideal for my intentions, it causes the people passing by to imagine a possible future. At the same time the poster leaves plenty of space for new concepts and thoughts. Because of its openness everyone can project their own desires on it, point out what they do or do not like; realistic or not.

Similarly, the physical blank surface with its temporary use leaves space for suggestions and impulses. The destination is formed one bit at the time but can easily be changed, like a photoshop drawing, and react on impulses or limitations.

The design is a common product. Everyone interacting with the development of the poster or the temporary use - from the most committed neighbour, to the group of visitors only briefly interacting by having a picnic - build up layers. They all further develop the space, physically or visionary. For me, there is no place for authorship marking the terrain here.

The spatial outcome, the result of a complex set of layers & changes.

During the thesis's evolution major SHUFFLES occur, the development is not at all a predictable course. The principal actors constantly shift their position due to changes in the process or vice versa and because of this my role is positioned in a constant 'in between' flux.

I will give one example of these shuffle-turning points, a week before the workshop it appears the parcelling permission is again assigned by the municipality. It is the same plan as the one rejected in court, concerning parking spaces. The intentions to start up temporary use to develop the site towards a definite destination is endangered. It clashes with the official plans to wipe out the complete surface. The terrain falls back from its precarious unplanned state to a fixed destination, set out in a rigid plan.

The shuffle mode, referring to the randomised music play lists, is cru-
cial in the process and receives meaning on different layers.

* First of all, there are ⌈shuffles in the process⌉ External
  factors, like the new parcelling plan, can suddenly shake up the
  whole situation thoroughly. These changes cause a chain-reaction,
  influencing the internal relations between all involved. A variant
  on this is when gaps in the communication lead to different
  perceptions on the same situation. The moment this is cleared
  out, this results in a changed image. The situation needs to be
  redefined; this results in an altered process.

* ⌈The shuffle in internal relations⌉ between actors is strongly re-
  lated to this. After the cancelling of the workshop (shuffle in
  process) the Boerenhovers and I start to predominate the tempo-
  rary use. Both of us become more active and develop a closer
  relation (shuffle in position).

* As part of the previous shuflle, I can define the constant change
  in my role as designer. During the whole development I will
  continuously move back and forth between very different
  functions. ⌈'The shuflle in role'.⌉

This causes a chain-reaction; shuffling both the process and the interrelation between actors. Community Development decides to cancel the workshop as there are too many ambiguities. Both The Boerenhof and I are back on our own as we were counting on the development workers. Through this change we find each other in our desire to finally start doing something. I continue with the workshop, although in a small setting consisting of the neighbours that are already committed. From this moment we become active players, the cooperation between us grows significantly. Community Development and the city stay on the background. This shuffling results in uncertainty and vagueness, both not very typical characteristics for architecture.

In the original research questions (during the midterm review) I express the desire to find a balance in my role as designer. I could not have been further from the truth, there was no solid intermediate position to be found. I constantly needed to re-balance and re-connect. My role is not that of a curator*, managing all actors and their relations; I simply do not have this amount of control or stability.

note can be
found overleaf

* Urban curating, a term belonging to Raoul Bunschoten and refered to by Doina Petrescue in 'Losing control, keeping desire': "An architect who acts as 'curator' defines their professional location in the middle, in between institutions, clients, and users. Rather than a master, they are a mediator."
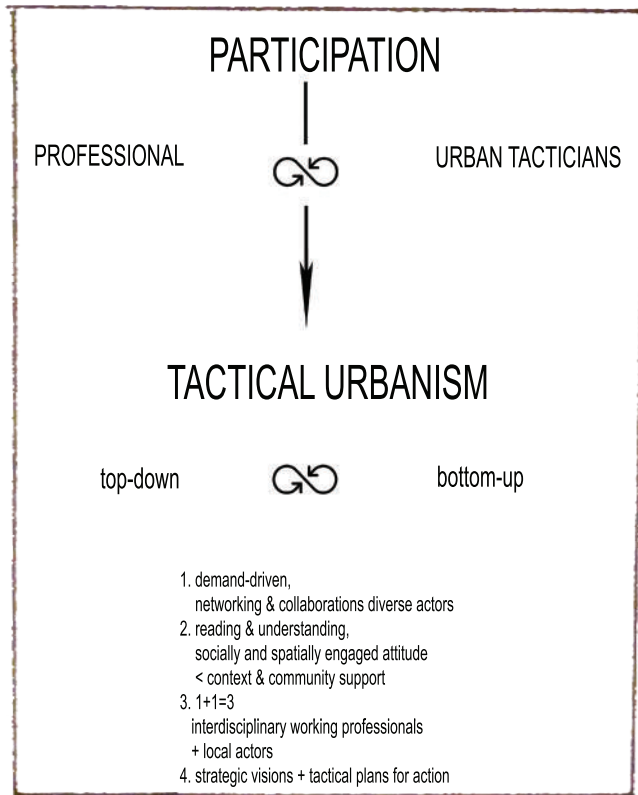
PETRESCU, D. 2005. Losing control, keeping desire. In: PETER BLUNDELL, J. PETRESCU, D. & JEREMY, T. Architecture and Participation. London: Taylor & Francis, pp.56–57

* The transistor is the most important component in an electronic chip. Its purpose is to amplify, strengthen or link electronic impulses.

The shuffle mode is the key aspect in my experience as **DESIGNER.** In this temporary test field, a state of flux, my personal practice illustrates that my position is very unstable. It is shuffling in between extremes (the grey) and is highly determined by both my personal decisions and those of all the other actors involved. There is no fix. I move back and forth between different roles: student, curator, participant, researcher, designer, activist, organiser, manager, analyst… getting in contact with a wide range of facets playing on different levels, fully exploring what I can trigger here.

One of my major questions was (and still is): What is my contribution? How can I use my (professional) knowledge without having to build buildings?

I can conclude my main contribution is that of a **TRANSISTOR.** * Linking and amplifying impulses, giving triggers that cause different movements and pop-ups. As a transistor I have been building up the development, reinforcing what was already there.

PARTICIPATION

TACTICAL URBANISM

bottom-up

1. demand-driven,
   networking & collaborations diverse actors
2. reading & understanding,
   socially and spatially engaged attitude
   < context & community support
3. 1+1=3
   interdisciplinary working professionals
   + local actors
4. strategic visions + tactical plans for action

* A tactical approach is characterised by a socio-spatial activism, tactical methods, hybrid collaborations and emancipation.

* Strategic acts concern different scales and time sets; it is more about the organisation of the collaborations, understanding the underlying processes & values and facilitating emancipation. The last is more linked with the professional approach. However the Boerenhovers slowly take over this part, considering the greater effect of their tactical actions.

DE SMET, A. 2014, The role of temporary use of Waiting Spaces. Eindverslag onderzoeksproject PRFB 2008 'Tijdelijk gebruik als eerste stap naar herwaardering en revitalisatie'. Prospective Research for Brussels, pp. 74 – 80

The temporary use results in superficial spatial changes, SCRATCHES on the surface of the terrain. These scratches are both physical and symbolic. Every sunday, and in between these tactical acts,[*] layers and meanings are added to the boerenhof. This results in a multitude of mental and spatial appropriations, making this space more unique and personal; memories, stories, even close relationships are connected to them. Although these achievements seems small, not noteworthy even, they are of crucial importance in the process and gain significant architectural, social and political value.

One example of such scratches is the bench. This urban furniture will be discussed later on in this reflection paper p. 119.

A little, low budget door as entrance to the boerenhof; quite some effect.

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode – Hanne Van Reusel

The DOOR is another nice representative of the strength and potential of these scratches.

To provide a private access to the boerenhof for one of the adjacent neigh-bours, who is ill, one of the Boerenhovers decides to make an opening in the separation wall. A little wooden door is constructed to close off the gap again when desired. It is an intuitive, low budget and fast construction.

This perforation is a very small spatial intervention, a tactical architectural operation. However, the physical change is rather small, but it has major effects on this man his living and housing comfort. Through this one small spatial change the living conditions improve significantly. It is a small step to help this man out of his isolation. It is an important achievement for the accessibility of the boerenhof.

CHANTIER
= French for construction site / works
= a term developed and applied by Patrick Bouchain.

Construire Architectes explore the practice of an architecture in process and try to avoid the dislocation between the construction period and the relations it can establish. It is as important to elaborate an open construction site as to develop a design, both go hand in hand.

The door also illustrates the aspect of the CHANTIER.* It is not only the spatial intervention as such, but it is most of all about how it got there. It is the intentions speaking from it, that make this spatial intervention so valuable. Once again the importance of building up layers and meanings cannot be stressed enough. To achieve this, time is crucial and evolution necessary.

During my education we learned about the 'how' of a design, the focus is on the technical construction not on its 'growth'. As an architecture student I am trained to consider how future users perceive the end result, but forget about the perception during the building construction.

BOUCHAIN, P. 2014. Lecture series 'Hetzelfde Anders'. 31 March, Faculty of Architecture UGent.

COLARD, J-M. and Treclat, S. Ouvert au public. Entretien avec Patrick Bouchain, architecte. [pdf]. [Accessed 9 June 2014]. Available from: http://jeanmaxcolard.com/media/portfolio/tel-echargements/patrick-bouchain_7rj0.pdf

PELEGRIN-GENEL, E. 2014. 'Architecture: Point Haut, un chantier ouvert au public'. Le Huffing-ton Post. [Online]. [Accessed 5 June 2014]. Available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/elisa-beth-pelegringenel/architecture-un-chantier-ouvert-au-public_b_5165800.html

POULARD, B. 2014. 'Quand un chantier vit au rythme d'actes participatifs et culturels'. Batiweb. [Online]. [Accessed 5 June 2014]. Available from: http://www.batiweb.com/actualites/vie-des-so-cietes/quand-un-chantier-vit-au-rythme-dactes-participatifs-et-culturels-23-01-2014-23631.html

RICARD, S. 2014. lecture series 'Stad en Architectuur. 6 March, STUK Leuven.

Patrick Bouchain, leading architect of Construire Architectes, addresses the issue of how urbanity should rise from the construction site on. Usually this period is an in-between, the works are locked off severely. When the shielding fences are taken away the place appears to suddenly emerge.

It is important to allow its neighbours and future users to already explore the site. *"Pour faire des lieux ouverts, il faut construire des lieux bruts qui laissent la possibilité à son occupant d'oser le transformer lui-même, de se l'approprier."* (quote Patrick Bouchain, PELEGRIN-GENEL, 2014)

At this point the boerenhof is supposed to be a safely locked off site without any construction works going on until now. It is temporarily an unused space. By opening it up, it evolves bit by bit; it becomes alive. It turns into a story of transmission.

* Tactical urbanists "are interested in urban improvement projects that can be done fast, and flexibly, and cheap. ... So many of them are concentrating on a whole new toolbox of techniques that allow citizens and governments to fix urban problems (many of them created by the automobile) without waiting around for years in the permitting process, and without spending tons of money. ... Smart, fast, cheap, flexible, nimble, open—source — it's the new New Urbanism. "

< GOODYEAR, S. 2011. 'The new New Urbanism: Fast, nimble, flexible, and tactica'. GRIST. [Online]. [Accessed 5 June 2014]. Available from: http://grist.org/urbanism/2011—06—07—the—new—new—urbanism—fast—nimble—flexible—and—tactical/

DERUYTTER, K. Samentuin als Buurttuin: Koekelberg. [pdf]. [Accessed 9 June 2014]. Available from: http://samentuinen.velt.be/component/content/?view=featured

VAN OENEN, G. 2010, Het recht van de tussentijd. In: LINDEMANN, S. and SCHUTTEN, I. 2010. Stedelijke transformaties in de tussentijd. Hotel Transvaal als impuls voor de wijk. Amsterdam: SUN trancity, pp. 121—126

This chantier status also pleads for a certain LAWLESSNESS. Using a terrain in the mean while liberates it from the strict official regulations. Due to this it questions these rules and tries to make them align with reality.

The example of the door (p. 101) demonstrates how easily a space can develop and grow when the slow and heavy administrative procedures can be skipped. The Boerenhovers do not have the time (nor the chance) to request a building permission for this small perforation. Cautiously they break through the separation wall.

An important aspect in this is toleration. The municipality does not intervene; although, an official letter clearly state that making holes in the wall is illegal. It is due to this act of toleration that there can be opted for an alternative that is liberated from the inflexible and stifling regulations. An added value can develop in this temporary lawlessness. It results in a nimble* local urbanism.

✱ MERCIER, C. 2014. Walking Madou. Creative Adjecencies conference. 3 June. Faculty of Architecture KULeven campus Sint-Lucas Gent.

SUEDE 36. Walking Madou. [Online]. [Accessed 10 June 2014]. Available From: http://www.suede36.be/fr/content/walking-madou

ECONOMIC BALANCE
estimated costs (€ euro)

THE CITY

constr. parking	33..900	
constr. park	234.000	
garden add.	−130.000	< strategic and financial review report city Ghent
exploitation	5.000	estimated yearly costs when plans are realised

budgets provided by the municipality

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

budget	5.000	!! budget shared with the Witte Kaproenen project

THE BOERENHOF

juridical costs	175	similar costs have been made for the appeal in 2013, however these costs should be repaid !
opening event	100	
budget	2.500	

DESIGNER, me

workshop	10
tree	3
lock	1,5

STAD GENT, Strategie en Coördinatie, Dienst Financiële Planning. 2013. Meerjarenplan 2014 – 2019. Toelichting: strategisch en financieel overzichtsrapport. [Pdf]. [Accessed 30 May 2014]. Available From: http://www.gent.be/eCache/THE/2/172.html

The boerenhof story is a CHEAP one. I invested less than € 20 in it. Almost nothing compared to the estimated costs of € 137.900 for the construction of the current (undesired) plans. The budget (Wijk aan zet) the neighbours received (€ 2.500) to maintain and build up the inner area, is half of the yearly planned exploitation costs for the municipality (€ 5.000).

Tactical urbanism and temporary use both have the advantage of being cheap. Reference projects manage to significantly spend less money than the officially planned budget. At the same time they bring up the real desired spatial transformation. 'Walking Madou',*a temporary conversion of a shopping street in Brussels (office Suède 36) can boast about its low price tag. The transformation only cost € 70.000, which is nothing compared to the € 700.000 for the official definite plans, which is still a huge amount compared to my € 20.

However, the economic costs might be extremely low, but the engagements are huge. The commitment of all those involved managed to establish a significant socio-spatial and political outcome.

TILL, J. 2013. Architecture and the Politics of Scarcity. 2 May, Umea school of architecture. [Accessed 27 April 2014]. Available from: http://www.arch.umu.se/en/events/public-lectures/making-architecture-politically/politics-of-scarcity/

TILL, J. 2014. 'Scarcity and Agency'. Journal of Architectural Education. [Online]. 68:1. Taylor & Francis online, pp. 9–11. [Accessed 9 June 2014]. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10464883.2014.864894

The low budget aspect of this project addresses the notion of SCARCITY. This term points out the lack of means and it questions the real need of expensive investments.

Based on the meaning of scarcity as developed by Jeremy Till, the desire or need for means should be put in a bigger context. Before thinking about how to design an economical project, an architect should question: "*Is it necessary to build that building in the first place?*" (TILL, 2014) The Boerenhof brings up the waste of investing in a paved parking. The plan is not sustainable. If actualised, the neighbours plan to still fight this decision and to transform it in a green space anyway.

There are still other parks and squares in Rabot that crave some investment. Is it not more socio-economical correct to share this planned budget with the nearby El Paso playground from which all redevelopment plans are frozen due to lacking means? When applying this way of gradual and community-based spatial development, a lot more can result from this budget.

The plant bed borders; scarce means, an innovative outcome.

Scarcity is not only a limitation. The closing down of options makes innova-tive. The focus is brought back to what is there. What is at our disposal and how can we use it?

The plant bed delineations are a strong illustration of this. How can I accen-tuate the planted zones to prevent them from being trampled? I do not want to invest money in this. So I need to fall back on what is available.

On the boerenhof lay two and a half residual pallets from last week. I brought orange tape, a cutter knife and a pair of scissors with me. From the 'neighbours of the red house' I was able to borrow two hammers and Berna-dette (The Boerenhof) offered me a box of nails.

I do not have the amount of material to completely delineate the 50 meters long green carpet and the additional plant beds adjacent to it. It can be enough to visualise the borders without explicitly constructing them.
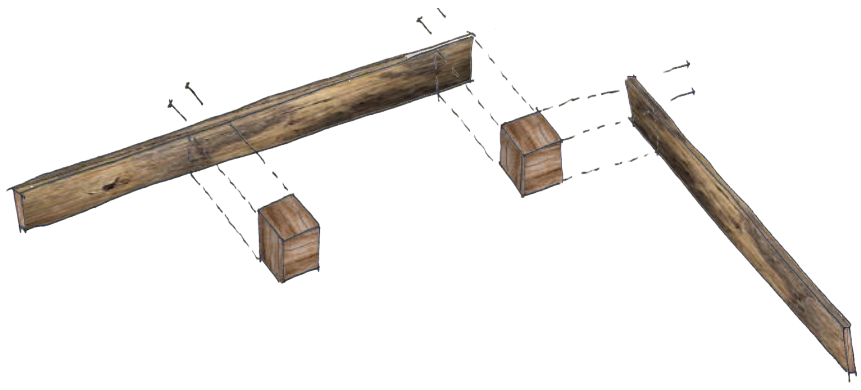
The constructions on the boerenhof are characterised by simplicity and practicability.

Related to the previous topic, there is the importance of simplicity in DETAIL. There are only basic devices (personal tools) and only a few of us are experienced in constructing more complex details. Practicability is essential for locals to construct elements on the boerenhof. The neighbours choose to not design and construct the greenhouse themselves although that was the initial plan; it is easier, cheaper and faster to buy a ready-made one.

Working on-site does not demand elaborate drawings on how to construct. This does not fit the flexibility and improvisatory of developing temporary use. Constructions, like the bench (p. 119), start very small and simple; they grow along the course of the project. Simplicity is necessary so that anyone can join the making-of. The process behind the development is crucial and results in a layered complexity.

Offering coffee and tea, perfect conversation starter among neighbours.

SOCIAL COHESION; most of all the boerenhof gains social significance through the 'scratching'. Hilde: "*We all got to know each other because of this little park.*" The social cohesion strengthens.

The local initiators search interaction with the neighbourhood and intend to use the terrain all together. This illustrates a social movement of neighbours actively trying to get in contact with each other and welcoming others. The involvement of more participants turns out to be a slow process that gradually develops. Bit by bit, following the spatial growth, more neighbours participate.

The boerenhof is about gardening and living together in a district troubled by tension. It is about residents actively meeting and helping each other. It is about building up something together, both physically and socially.

SOCIAL CONDENSER, is a spatial idea finding its origin in constructivist architecture. In the publication 'Content', Rem Koolhaas defines a social condenser as "the programmatic layering upon vacant terrain to encourage dynamic coexistence of activities and to generate through their inter- ference, unprecedented events."
< MCGETRICK, B. AND KOOLHAAS, R. 2004. CONTENT, KÖLN: TASCHEN, PP. 73

The main prinicple of the social condenser is the "capacity to bring people together so that they might interact with each other".
< STUDIO 8, Sheffield School of Architecture. 2009. 'What is a social condenser?'. Housingplus.
  [Online]. [Accessed 6 June 2014]. Available from: http://housingplus.wikidot.com/social-condenser

The bench has developed in different stages by different actors. — '14

The example of the BENCH, made out of pallets and developed in different stages, illustrates the social process. This self-constructed piece of furniture becomes an anchor point to meet, sit together, chat or discuss. Its design develops, causing participants to interact socially. The neighbours make a corner to encourage conversations and expand it with a plant box and a terrace.

Without being explicitly designed, it becomes a SOCIAL CONDENSER. Through its intersection of uses the bench creates an "*environment where there is potential to allow for, otherwise disperse social communities, to interact.*"

< WIKIPEDIA, The Free Encyclopedia. Social condenser. [Online]. [Accessed 5 May 2014]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_condenser

As first act of temporary use the neighbours & I plant a tree. — March '14

At the same time the scratches display a POLITICAL movement that can be illustrated by the act of the Boerenhovers planting my tree. For the workshop I brought a small tree, as a trigger for the Boerenhovers to get in action and start the temporary use. The neighbours agree on planting the tree right in the middle of the future parking zone as an anti-parking statement. Because of this we become activists causing a shuffle in our position and in my role. I am no longer politically neutral.

Planting that first tree on the future parking zone was an activist move opposing the decisions made by the municipality. During the process of temporary use, political action takes place, discussing the plans with the involved aldermen. The area and its architecture are inseparably connected to this sphere. Consciously or not, every neighbour planting on the boerenhof makes a political statement, rejecting the current parcelling plan.

MAIL IGOR:

hi

I am igor 11 year
at the pannestraat a street further
is an empty piece of ground where the
city wants to place a parking!!!!!!!
now we are already fighting it and
building gardens and trees maybe you could
help us so all neighbours would be happier
and get some air for the neighbourhood

greetings igor

RESPONSE IN NAME OF WATTEEUW,
alderman Ghent concerned with mobility

Dear Igor,

It is not sure yet if there will actually be parking on the place you
are talking about. We as well think green places in the city are
valuable and we try to cherish them as much as possible.

At the moment, we are researching the destination of this place at
the Kwakkelstraat. As soon as we have more news, we will communi-
cate it to the neighbours.

Thank you for your mail!

Bit by bit, scratch by scratch, all actors build up TURNING POINTS. The temporary use becomes the tool with which shifts are caused on the decision-making level. The citizens try to develop a democratisation process, fighting the rigid bureaucratic decision-making from the bottom; lobbying their way up towards the politicians. It is not only about changing the planned parking spaces into a green destination. The Boerenhovers fight for more participation and self-governance.

With the temporary use conflicts arise, but they start a debate on the development of the neigbourhood. It establishes a political emancipation. For example, the 11-year old Igor, who became one of the most supportive participants, starts to mail politicians and strives for more green in his district.

SCORE; the moment the situation tilts and goals are partly achieved on spatial, social or political level. These scores, however, are hardly a precise moment, it is a process of slowly building up motives and support, causing shuffles and movements.

Film fragment — boerenhof picnic, the inner area turns into a patchwork of colourful blankets/ people.

Film fragment — lightshow; enlight, illuminate, highlight, expose...

In the conceptual FILM I visualise designs of future MAJOR EVENTS. These organised happenings intend to further build up the turning points. The idea is to organise a broadly supported visual and spatial spectacle as a final event for the thesis. They highlight the terrain (literally and figurative) and could lead to the boerenhof appearing into the media. This way another score could be established.

However, the current state does not 'allow' such major events. It is too soon; working out these ideas now would be too forced; it would quite surely fail. During the process, I also figure out a 'final' event would not be appropriate. I try to encourage an ongoing design: continuing after my retreat (p. 157).

The possible major events are displayed in this film. They are displayed along with the previous and current transformations of the terrain. Through this medium I can communicate these ideas. I show them as another trigger, hoping they will pop up in a later stage; which happened with most of my suggestion.

(Terrain vague *)

De Solà–Morales addresses the need to avoid aggressive transformations. "Architecture should act through attention to continuity in the terrains vagues. Continuity of the flows, the energies, the rhythms established by the passing of time and the loss of limits."

DE SOLA–MORALES RUBIO, I. 1995. 'Terrain vague'. Anyplace. Cambridge, MA: MITT Press, pp. 118–123

<u>Fix,</u> a term used by Jeremy Till during his lecture 'Architecture and the Politics of Scarcity'. He pleas for open design instead of developing completely determined end products.

TILL, J. 2013. Architecture and the Politics of Scarcity. 2 May, Umea school of architecture. [Accessed 27 April 2014]. Available from: http://www.arch.umu.se/en/events/public–lectures/making–architecture–politically/politics–of–scarcity/

This architecture project is about a PROCESS rather than a result. It is our goal (score) to shift the temporary use into a timeless design, an open-end project. The context, the terrain vague* offers the opportunity to move away from the idea of a mono-functional fix*. This claims space for several decades until the changed zeitgeist decides it is time for a new plan; erasing all layers that had slowly formed.

The temporary use expresses a vision and is open to changes. — May '14

An open-ended TIMELESS design could serve as an alternative for the fix. Even the Boerenhovers do not succeed in agreeing on a fixed and all too precise framework. However, not everyone's wishes can be satisfied; there will always be critique.

The temporary use and conceptual drawing (poster p. 85) do succeed in representing the common vision and desire. Both of them leave plenty of place for changes, sketches, scratches and personal interpretation. Spatial decisions are made very intuitively, with consideration for the common good and in agreement with each other.

'La présence architecturale' is a term applied by Patrick Bouchain. It results in a long term and a consistent presence.
La présence architecturale "... s'agit d'être dans cet infime moment du bonheur et du malheur. ... Je souhaitais me mettre dans une position de filtre et de confiance."

HUGRON, J-P. 2013. Patrick Bouchain et l'infime moment du bonheur et du malheur'. Le courrier de l'architecte. [Online]. [Accessed 8 June 2014].

To accomplish this timelessness a certain level of CONSISTENCY turns out to be very useful. It is due to the frequence of the sunday acts, a solid basis for action is worked out. It took quite some effort to achieve the consistent opening of the terrain on sundays. However, by achieving this regularity, the terrain is more accessible. It is an easy and simple base for a proceeding design.

My weekly 'présence architecturale' * can be related to the follow up of an (open) construction site. It brings my educated knowledge into practice and results in practical experience. This consistency helps to build up the architectural trust (p. 139).
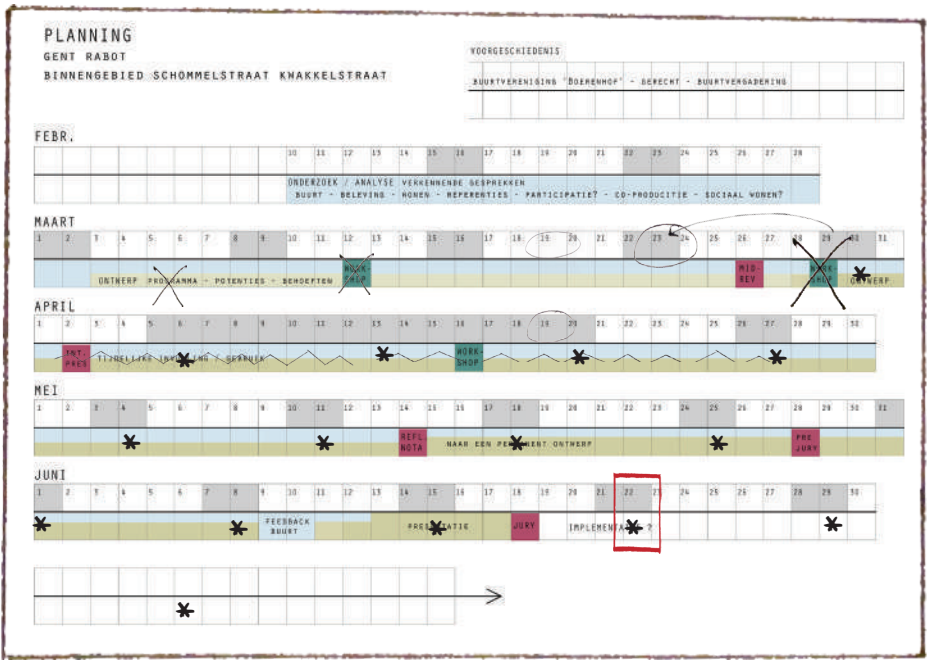
The planning is a useful starter but continuously has to adapt to reality — Febr. '14

SERENDIPITY, "luck that takes the form of finding valuable or pleasant things that are not looked for"

< MERRIAM—WEBSTER, Serendipity. [Online]. [Accessed 5 May 2014]. Available from:
http://www.merriam—webster.com/dictionary/serendipity

Notwithstanding the consistent action, SERENDIPITY determines the course. Every act I design never goes as planned. This often leads to pleasant surprises or discoveries. In the beginning I made a planning, but I had to adjust it continuously. The only schedule I have now, is an open one. I follow the consistent acts and occasional official meetings and I ramble in between.

Here I shift between being prepared and acting improvisatory. It is a constant balancing between going with the flow, serendipity, and intervening. The process is both about taking the situation in hands and being prepared to let go of control at the same time.

Decisions are made while having a meeting at the bench or during the action – May '14

In this timeless design the DECISION—MAKING process is an important issue. All actors are eager to find the best possible 'solution' or use for this location. The official agencies like the municipality and the professional designer (assigned architecture practice) tend to fall back on numeric and known data; this results in a plan.

The neighbours base their decisions on their personal intuition, experience and expertise. I position myself somewhere in between; moving along with the flow. The shuffle in role (p. 93) takes place. I relate both to my profes-sional knowledge, the expertise of other actors (including my promoters) and my own instinct.

'Suck it and see'

= Charming British expression referring to trying out something untested or kind of unknown.

> URBAN DICTIONARY. Suck it and see. [Online]. [Accessed 12 May 2014]. Available from: http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Suck+it+and+See

This is similar to the wilgentechniek as applied by Community Development. The term refers to willow trees that have a very strong resistance. However at a certain point, when bowed to deep it breaks. "When we realise something in the district we just try it out and fix it the moment it is broken. The moment it cannot be repaired anymore we remove it.

Adaptive management

Renee Kaufman uses the term in her article 'Uncertainty and Anxiety'. She pleas to not try to only relate on research data to overcome uncertainty when making decisions. It is important to take uncertainty as a given and to integrate it in a design process.

"...there already exists a mechanism for folding uncertainty into the decision-making process: adaptive management... Adaptive management institutionalizes both monitoring and modification, integrating adaptation into a design/construction/maintenance process that has traditionally been discrete and monolithic, thus creating a loop in place of linearity. Adaptive management also works from an understanding that generalized approaches need to be field-tested, with each harvest of data informing the next round of changes."

< KAUFMAN, R. 2012. 'Uncertainty and Anxiety'. Scenario. [Online]. #02: Performance. [Accessed 30 May 2014]. Available from: http://scenariojournal.com/article/uncertainty-and-anxiety/

The notions of **UNCERTAINTY AND FEAR** become really important. There is the fear to enter the locked off inner area, fear to change made decisions, fear to take in a position when there are too many ambiguities...

Usually we tend to avoid risks out of fear; however, these aspects of uncertainty are included in the temporary use. We, The Boerenhof and I, naturally apply 'adaptive management'*. We are working illegally on the terrain, not even sure that what we build will remain. If we are not sure about something, we can just experiment. The principle of 'suck it and see'*, just try and if it does not work out, change it!

Because of this principle it is easier to act. The feeling that things are moving, awakens enthusiasm and positivism. It helps people be more open to change and to face uncertainty. In a timeless design this aspect of adaptive management would be maintained.

The Boerenhovers and I, a team at work — workshop March '14

The ARCHITECTURAL TRUST is already brought up by the 'présence architecturale' (p. 131). The neighbours did not simply welcome me with open arms. It took a slow pace to get involved. First I remained at the side-line, observing and mainly did research. Slowly but surely my role became more active. Next, I offered to design the poster (p. 85) and later on organised the workshop and gave further impulses. Afterwards, the neighbours told me they appreciated the way I 'intruded'. They said it was important - if not necessary - to first thoroughly get to know the district. At the same time, the residents got the chance to get used to me and discover my intentions.

There is currently a reverse movement; the Boerenhovers want to help me. They express their desire to give something back and suggest building up a major event (p. 125). Others try to set up the greenhouse or swing before my deadline. This is a result of the beneficial cooperation and our mutual gratitude.
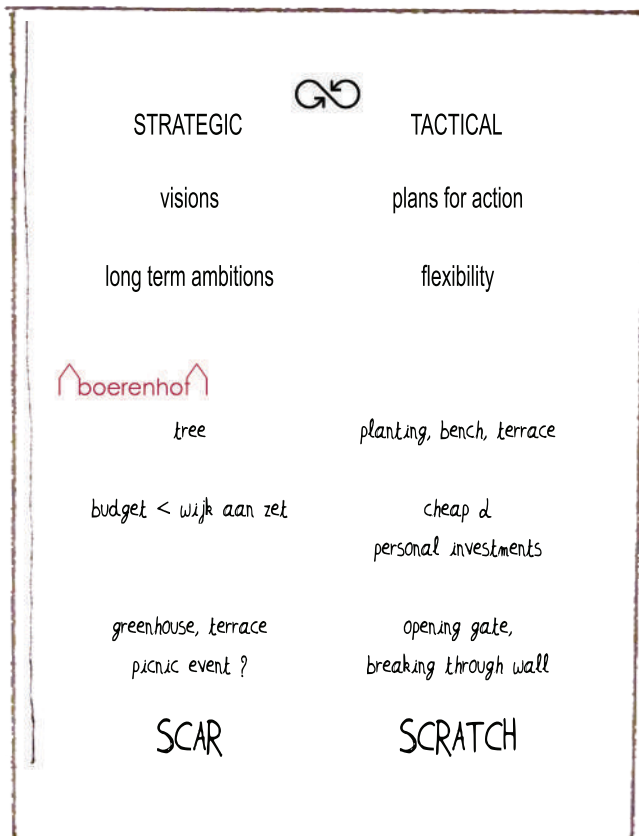
Along the course of the project, the wide range of scratches build up SCARS. They are strategic interventions leaving behind more thorough marks.

Every week something, however small, moves and new layers and meanings build up. This results in deeper social and political movements and more visionary spatial changes. Unlike the scratches, these scars cannot be wiped out so easily anymore. These strategic actions and results form the backbone of the unsure development of the boerenhof.
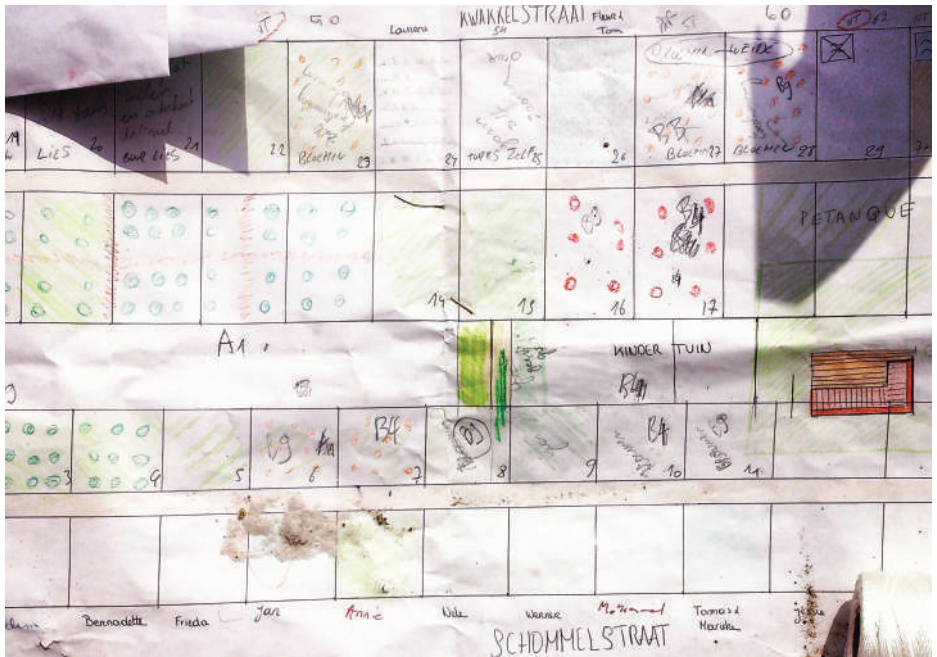
The neighbours and I draw a basic plan to develop the boerenhof more strategically. — May '14

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode — Hanne Van Reusel

The PLAN is a beautiful spatial example of these scars. The Boerenhof received a small budget; the neighbours requested a 'wijk aan zet', which is a financial support of 2500 euro granted by the municipality as part of the 'neighbourhood in action'-program. Due to this they can shape the space on a bigger scale. They are no longer limited to very cheap, small operations.

The straight and geometric grid is redrawn digitally by one of the Boerenhovers. — May '14

To develop the terrain for its mainly gardening destination, a very functional geometric grid is recommended. The outlines are drawn on paper. A path is lain out, a basic and logical devision is made. The Boerenhovers express a long term vision. What is planned should remain there longer than the one year term of temporary use.

It is striking how different the approaches to plan—making are between the Boerenhovers and me. The neighbours go straight ahead for the most obvious, simple and logical solution. — Fragment logbook p. 347 — June '14

The AUTHENTICITY of the project results from the scratch-scar combination, which is illustrated by the grid that is laid out by ropes.

The neighbours went straight for the most obvious, simple and logical solution. Their plan is pure functional, while designers tend to make plans more complex and differentiating. I personally apply a rather deconstructivist work ethic. The designer and transistor in me are in conflict here.

"The straight grid, which was for me personally becoming a conflict be-
tween the designer and transistor in me, is a nice tool that —through its
rigidness and geometry— accentuates the specific aspects resulting from
the process." — Fragment logbook p. 363 — June '14

The straight grid intersects with the random plant beds, resulting from previous actions. Through its rigidness and geometry, the grid accentuates the specific aspects resulting from the process. The outcome is the spatial product of the spontaneity of the tactical acts and the logical more strategic development. As a designer I prefer these natural developed irregularities much more than the ones I usually construct as these are real and honest representations.

Facebook pop up, the neighbours are taking more initiative — April '14

A socio-political scar is the EMPOWERMENT. I released that what the res-
idents and I leave behind, is not only an architectural outcome. At this point,
it is still not completely sure if everything we have build up so far will remain.
What surely will last, are the social and political empowerment that results
from our spatial actions.

All previously described scratches and scars help to build this up. They
strengthen the social cohesion (p.117), become social condensers (p. 119).
The neighbourhood association expands and they stand stronger now.

This also builds up their political strength. It helps them to cause shuffles
in the urban planning process and to fight the rigid bureaucracy. Each little
scratch in its way encourages the neighbours to further emancipate them-
selves.

One little lock, an important symbol.

The LOCK AND KEY , controlling the opening and closure of the inner area, become an important metaphor in the development. From the street on the boerenhof is shut-off by two wire fences. Most of us crawl behind it to enter the terrain.

In April I take the initiative to force open these fences. To do this I buy a lock so the boerenhof can be closed again for safety purposes. With the lock I got three keys, two of which I give to the Boerenhovers.

This illustrates my intentions to share power and to emancipate the residents. With these keys they themselves, can open up the boerenhof on sunday afternoon. Due to this my physical presence is no longer required for this cause. However, when I offer the Boerenhovers my last key, they refuse. It displays the difficulties we are facing with my retreat.

http://www.facebook.com/Boerenhofrabot

Boerenhof
4,6 ★★★★✦
(5 beoordelingen)
206 personen
vinden dit leuk · 24
praten hierover ·

🏷 Buurt
📍 Pannestraat / Victor Frisstraat, Gent

✓ Vind ik leuk ▾
✓ Volgend | ⚙ ▾

like ons 👍

Another illustration of the growing emancipation is the FACEBOOK page. The self-organisation most of all happens through this platform. The public page makes photos and news accessible to a broad public. It assists us in inviting people who are interested in activities.

The enclosed group is important for the moments IN–BETWEEN the sunday acts. Through this organisation the events can be planned and followed up. The commitment of the Boerenhovers is not limited to a weekly act but is a constant condition.

At first I was the only manager of the Facebook pages, as I created them. Later on neighbours joined me in this task. Becoming manager of the Facebook pages encouraged Tomas to take up a more incentive role. When I stop, the Facebook page will continue following the spatial and socio-political developments.
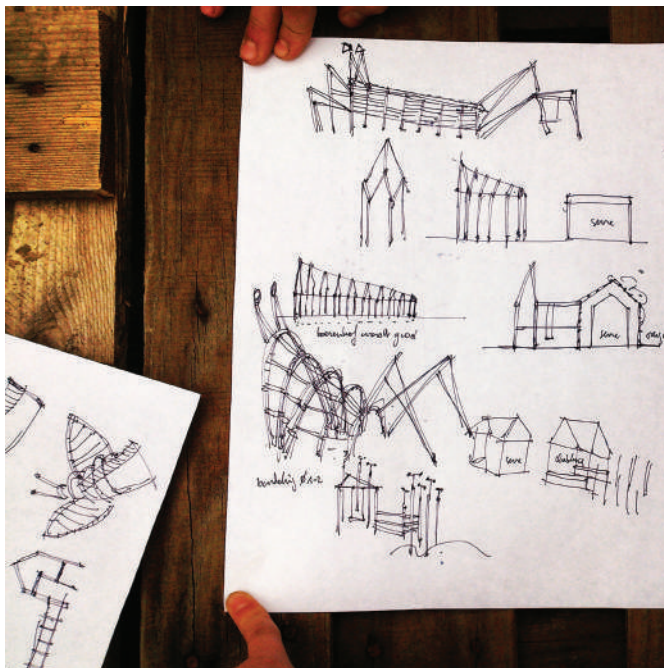
Febr. '14

March '14

April '14

June '14

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode — Hanne Van Reusel

The master's thesis is finishing now, so how do I RETREAT? I notice the growing self-organisation of The Boerenhof group. This seems a good opportunity to lower my presence. In the same way I entered, I try to leave gradually; bit by bit taking less initiative.

Sketches given to me by neighbour Sven: "With the sketches I brought last sunday, I wanted to give you a little push."
– Fragment logbook p. 330 – May '14

Not yet quitting my sunday site visits, I notice the acts start to close in. A fatigue is appearing and participants themselves notice the negative trend as well. It becomes clear how much the neighbours depend on my incentives. They start to transist energy back to me, encouraging me to take up more initiative again. I decide to come back to my decision and invest full energy to revive the process.

* The reference projects are:

– The Freehouse project, Afrikaanderwijk Rotterdam
    initiated by Jeanne van Heeswijk
    > STICHTING FREEHOUDSE, http://freehouse.nl/

– Singeldingen, Heemraadspark Rotterdam
    initated by local initiators
    > SINGELDINGEN, http://singeldingen.nl/

– De prinses op de erwt, Diemen
    initiated by group of participants
    supported by IVN (Institute for environmental education and sustainability)
    > IVN, 'Werkgroep moestuin Diemen', https://ivn.nl/afdeling/amsterdam/werkgroepen/werk
    groep–moestuin–diemen, (latest consulted 2014–06–06)
    > BUURTMOESTUIN PRINSES OP DE ERWT, www.buurtmoestuindiemen.blogspot.nl

VAN DEN BERG, Mariska, 2013, 'Stedelingen veranderen de stad. Over nieuwe collectieven, publiek
domein en transitie', Trancity – Valiz, Amstelveen

I analyse these and relate them to the boerenhof in the logbook p. 320.

It is clear I cannot simply quit and endanger the current course. It would be an enormous break in the trust relation. So what now? Based on several reference projects* I discover a strong (professional) organisational base encourages similar projects to continue.

It appears the boerenhof already has this at hand. Community Development would be an ideal partner from this point of view. However, it appears to be a rather difficult task to restore the trust relation with this actor. Due to its dependence on the slow and inflexible city agencies, plans too often get delayed or canceled.

Anyway, although the internal organisation of The Boerenhof keeps growing and the cooperation with the development workers started, I will not suddenly stop now. The process is still too fragile at this point.
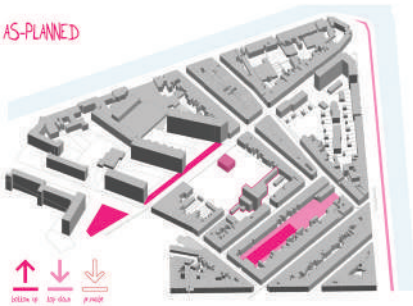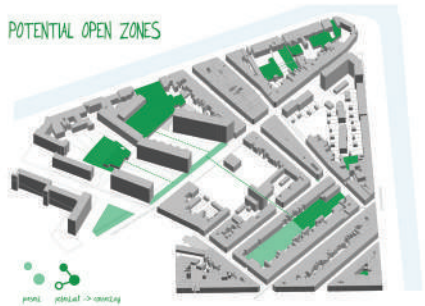
ORIGINAL SPATIAL SITUATION
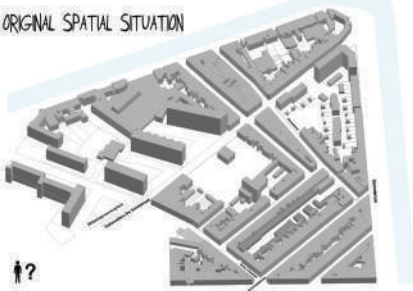
SOCIO-SPATIAL ACTIVATION
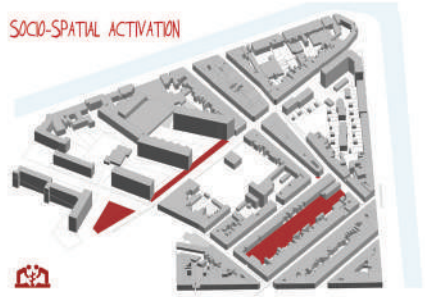
AS-PLANNED

POTENTIAL OPEN ZONES

Scratch, scar, score; on shuffle mode – Hanne Van Reusel

TO BE CONTINUED

The time line comparison (p. 35) already points out this thesis only reports on a fragment of an on-going development. I managed to gain a lot of experience and knowledge by exploring the boerenhof story. It lead to small, situation-based conclusions. However, this action research, like the project, has an open ending. A lot of questions remain unanswered.

What is the relevance of this project on a BIGGER SCALE ? Can similar inner areas be bought and opened up as urban renewal method? How can this case study be an inspiration to other 19th century districts, struggling with a lack of green space and social conflicts? It is this state of precarious openness, that made an approach possible to start from the potential of this place. Can the fragile state of being 'unplanned', which is how the boerenhof started, become an urban planning tool in the practice? Is it also possible for sites that take effect on a bigger scale, or is it only possible for these small scaled very local places to become timeless designed spaces?

It has been wonderful to be able to explore the action research through this logbook and I hope I will be able to continue it later on. — Fragment logbook p. xxx — June '14

What I learned from this project is to look for POTENTIAL , find niche spaces (logbook p. 21), instead of trying to point out conflict zones which need a solution (the problem solving idea). How can the urban development practice adapt to this approach?

How can the cumbersome URBAN PLANNING department be more open to local initiatives and participation? The municipality caries an enormous number of responsibilities, needing clear communication and consequent planning, but this opposes the shuffle aspect and the open-ended process. What is the democratising value of these bottom-up initiatives? Can they succeed in their goal to cause political shifts?

How is this type of architecture possible in the REAL PRACTICE, dominated by the economic system? Is this possible in different contexts, what if this process would be worked out in our capital city Brussels or in a country with a different culture? When and where is this practice possible?

What happens when the architect or DESIGNER RETREATS ?
How do you end the cooperation without being able to check if things are still going well?

I would like to research the AFTER of these participatory projects? Do they manage to remain without external triggers or support and how?

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Let me introduce you to the boerenhof story; a self-made case study in an exploratory action research. My master's thesis, but most of all a story about people.

It is a beautiful story about local residents who oppose the existing plans for an open terrain in their neighbourhood. As designer I transist, give impulses, link and amplify what is there. It is an explorative process of standing up and showing what beautiful things are possible on this place. This story is about creating a better world, developing their own neighbourhood.

It is a cheap story, I myself invested less than 20 euro in the project. We started from scratch, a blank and empty surface, an enclosed terrain vague. Discover what can be achieved with hardly any means.

It is an intensive story, the outcome of half a year of hard work and nimble cooperation. As designer I trigger these committed locals and incentive a temporary use. Small spatial changes (scratches) result in significant spatial and socio-political movements (scars). The residents and I explore how to contest the rigid city planning from the bottom and gradually we build up turning points (score).

The boerenhof story is an extremely interesting story. It is a pleasure to explore, I hope you will enjoy it too.