

A10



#28
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Start

- Refuge, Aðalvík
- Conversion of university buildings, Linz
- University complex, Hasselt
- Villa, Bratislava
- Hospital, Espoo

Ready

- Apartments, Tartu
- Residential building, Graz
- Metro station, Barcelona
- House, Grai-guenamanagh
- Housing, Zurich
- Residential blocks, Belgrade
- Sports hall, Tartu
- Apartment block, Jürmala
- Office and architect's dwelling, Rotterdam
- Housing estate, Poznan
- Community health centre, Cartagena

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- Interview: Saša Randić
- The fabrication of tradition in Zlatibor, Serbia
- A guided tour around Amsterdam's A10
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A tour around Amsterdam's A10

Although the canal houses, Dam Square and Museumplein are reason enough to visit **Amsterdam**, if it's 21st-century architecture you're after, you need to venture outside the historical centre.

NETHERLANDS — TEXT: KIRSTEN HANNEMA

For it is along the banks of the IJ inlet and around the A10, Amsterdam's ring road, where it is all happening right now. Where new and refurbished residential areas, striking public buildings and the high-rise skyline of the Zuidas (South Axis) business district are springing up. As ever, Amsterdam is a magnet for those looking for work and for start-up businesses. The number of inhabitants continues to rise at the expense of rural municipalities. The city has to build because ever since the Second World War it has had to contend with a significant housing shortage. According to Statistics Netherlands, the Dutch capital (current pop. 755,269) will have 837,000 inhabitants by 2025. But Amsterdam *wants* to build, too, in order to be able to compete with other Dutch and European cities. What they are competing for is the middle class, for the (highly) skilled employees sought by the service and creative sectors. The presence of that middle class is a precondition for businesses establishing their head office in the city, which in turn attracts new businesses and 'high potential' people.

Amsterdam's strategy for kick-starting this positive spiral, is change. Former harbour and industrial sites are transformed into new live/work areas. Entire neighbourhoods in post-war districts are demolished and the repetitive porch- and gallery-access flats make way for varied residential environments that are also supposed to head off socio-economic problems. The concept of change applies also to spatial policy. Instead of continuing to expand, as was still quite normal in the 1990s, the watchword now is consolidation. The gaps in the urban fabric – former marshalling yards, a demolished hospital complex, noisy locations along railway lines – are now being filled with compact buildings. Even the one real expansion area, the artificial island district of IJburg, has opted for a housing density twice that of the average Dutch suburban development (70 dwellings per hectare instead of the usual 35).

This 'mini-tour of Amsterdam' (covering a total of 60 km), takes in seven areas: in the middle of an imaginary circle is the southern shore of the IJ, and around that in a clockwise

direction, Noord, IJburg, Oost, Zuidoost, Zuid and the Westelijke Tuinsteden. The starting point is Central Station, 15 minutes by train from Schiphol Airport. From here you can easily reach all seven areas by train, tram or metro. Best of all, however, is to hire a bicycle (with cycle route map) at the station and set aside two days for a stiff but rewarding bike ride.

Southern shore of the IJ inlet

Walking eastwards from Central Station it takes only a few minutes to reach Oost-erdokeiland which is still in the throes of development. The **Public Library (1)** is the first of several completed blocks. **Jo Coenen** designed a classic temple of the book (see also A10 #26) that banishes the stuffy image of the library with its bright, white interior full of voids and festively lit bookcases. Travel the escalators right to the top floor and enjoy the view from the café and its roof terrace. Like the library, the neighbouring **Conservatoire (2)** deserted the city centre in search of more space. The classrooms and no fewer than five auditoriums are constructed according to the box-within-a-box principle with the circulation space around the outside acting as an acoustic shield (against the adjacent railway) and visible behind the glass facades (see A10 #24).

Asimilar strategy was employed for the **Funen housing development (3)** on a former industrial site a little further to the east where **Frits van Dongen's** perimeter building acts as a buffer against the railway. Van Dongen also drew up the spatial masterplan for the green interior which contains 16 small apartment blocks (dubbed 'hidden delights') designed by several different architects. Note in particular the blocks by Van Sambeek & Van Veen (for the 'pied-de-poule' brickwork), Geurst & Schulze (concrete with planted facade) and NL Architects (undulating grass roof, still under construction).

Northwest of the station, on the former marshalling yards of **Westerdokeiland (4)**, is one of the most densely built areas in the Netherlands with 175 to 300 dwellings/ha. Such high densities could have produced a forbiddingly massive built result, but because the sub-plans and individual blocks were designed by different architects, there is plenty of variation. The periscope-like cantilevers, staggered balconies and green courtyards almost make it seem as if the neighbourhood has grown organically.

New dwellings, especially for young families, also mean more school pupils. Many schools have remodelled existing buildings, or built new ones. A fine example is the **extension of a primary school (5)** by **Snelder Architecten**, where the tiered extension doubles as outdoor space.

Because Amsterdam's three Gymnasia (high schools teaching Latin and Greek) have for years been swamped with more applications than they can deal with, a **Fourth Gymnasium (6)** was established. It has found temporary accommodation in the former Houthavens (timber docks), which are being redeveloped as a residential area. **Hvdm**, who also designed the student housing block next door, cleverly disguised the fact that the building is made up of shipping containers with very carefully detailed wooden facades.

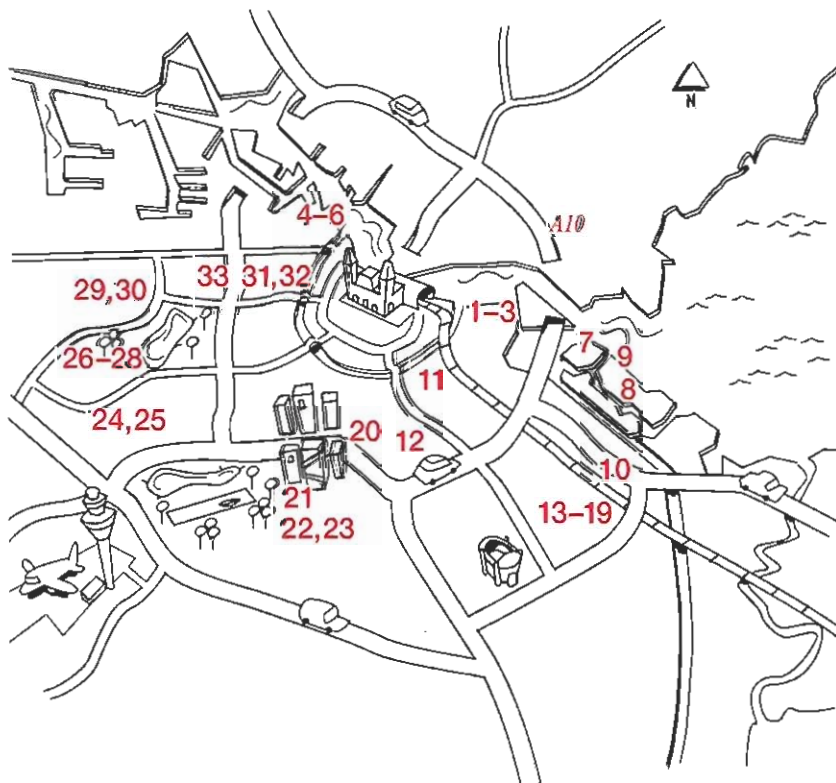
Noord

From the Oude Houthaven you take the ferry to Noord, once occupied by the NDSM shipyards and dry docks, now in the process of becoming a creative hub. MTV Nederland occupies a former sawmill renovated by Max van Aerschot while TV producer IDtv has set up in Trude Hooykaas's remodelled Kraanspoor (see A10 #18). The shipyard itself is now an art and cultural centre with a skate park and studios.

Follow Klaprozenweg, then Papaverweg to Johan van Hasseltweg and behold the hectic development of Noord. A North-South metro line is being built to connect the district physically with the southern shore, but it is very much behind schedule and grossly over budget. For the time being, inhabitants of Overhoeks, a new neighbourhood being built opposite Westerdokeiland, will have to take the ferry to the city centre. Overhoeks is the name of the tower on the former Shell site, where housing and offices are currently under construction and where the Film Museum (design: Delugan Meissl) is due to be built. Further along, West 8 is working on Noorderpark, Noord's very own 'Central Park'. There are plans, too, for Buikslotermeer at the end of the metro line. Noord is very much a work in progress.

IJburg

Via the picturesque Nieuwendammerdijk you can cycle all the way to Schellingwouderbrug and further east towards IJburg. IJburg (18,000 dwellings) is a completely new district being built on artificial islands and, unlike many other Dutch growth areas, it is urban rather than suburban in character. Keen to avoid uniformity, IJburg's masterplanners (Ton Schaap, Felix Claus and Frits van Dongen) designed an urban grid in which each block is designed by a different architect in accordance with certain basic rules. For example, the use of brick is mandatory, there are prescribed percentages of high- and low-rise, and the street level has to be lively (e.g. no blank-walled storage areas). This, the relatively high density and the provision of a number of different residential environments (water dwellings, build-your-own plots, city blocks) has →





1 PUBLIC LIBRARY (2001–2007)
 Architect: Jo Coenen & Co
 Address: Oosterdokskade 143



2 CONSERVATOIRE (2001–2007)
 Architect: De Architecten Cie.
 Address: Oosterdokskade 151



3 FUNENPARK (1998–2009)
 Masterplan: De Architecten Cie. (F. Van Dongen)
 Architects: various
 Address: Funenpark



4 WESTERDOKEILAND (1999–2009)
 Masterplan: OD205 (Peter Defesche)
 Architects: various
 Address: Westerdok



5 SCHOOL EXTENSION (2003–2009)
 Architect: Snelder architecten
 Address: Roggeveenstraat 14



6 FOURTH GYMNASIUM (2008)
 Architect: hvdn architecten
 Address: Stavangerweg 902



7 PRIVATE HOUSES (2004–2008)
 Architects (clockwise starting top left):
 Diederendirix, VMX, FARO Architecten,
 Rocha Tombal Architecten
 Address: Jan Olphert Vaillantlaan, Cornelis
 Zillesenlaan



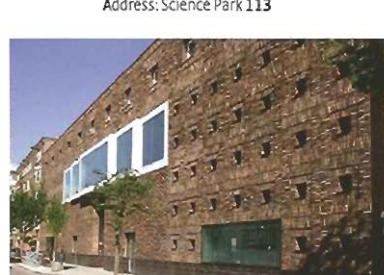
8 APARTMENT BUILDING (2003–2006)
 Architect: Van Sambeek en Van Veen
 Architecten
 Address: IJburglaan



9 APARTMENT BUILDING (2000–2009)
 Architect: DKV
 Address: Bert Haanstrakade



10 AMOLF INSTITUTE FOR ATOMIC AND MOLECULAR PHYSICS (2006–2009)
 Architect: Dick van Gasteren architecten
 Address: Science Park 113



11 MULTIFUNCTIONAL CENTRE (2006–2009)
 Architect: Marlies Rohmer
 Address: Joubertstraat 15



12 WATERNET OFFICE (2000–2005)
 Architect: Architectuurstudio Henman
 Hertzberger
 Address: Korte Ouderkerkerdijk 7



13 AMSTERDAM BIJLMER ARENA STATION (2007)
 Architect: Grimshaw Architects with
 Arcadis Architecten
 Address: Hoogoorddreef



14 HOUSING (2003–2006)
 Architects: Van Sambeek en Van Veen
 Architecten, Claus en Kaan Architecten
 Address: Stramanweg, level with the Arena
 building



15 F-SIDE HOUSING (2007)
 Architects: ONL [Oosterhuis_Lénárd]
 Address: Claus van Amsbergenstraat



16 GERENSTEIN APARTMENT BUILDING (2007)
 Architect: Heren 5
 Address: Bijlmerdreef 938–1092



17 FENICE APARTMENT BUILDING (2002–2008)
 Architect: Köhler Salman Koedijk
 Architecten
 Address: Bijlmerdreef 554



18 BIJLMER SPORTS CENTRE AND PARK THEATRE (2004–2008)
 Architects: Vera Yanovshtchinsky
 Architecten (sports centre), Paul de Ruiter
 (theatre)
 Address: Anton de Komplein 157



19 DE KANDELAAR MULTIFUNCTIONAL BUILDING (2005–2007)
 Architects: Ria Smit
 Address: Bijlmerdreef 1239



20 DISTRICT OFFICE AND HOUSING (2005–2007)
 Architect: Claus en Kaan Architecten
 Address: President Kennedylaan 923



21 OFFICE TOWER (2004–2009)
Architect: UNStudio
Address: Gustav Mahlerlaan



22 ZUIDERAMSTEL SANITATION DEPOT (2002–2006)
Architect: Claus en Kaan Architecten
Address: Van Heenvlietlaan 50



23 CRYSTAL COURT APARTMENT BUILDING (2008)
Architect: Tengram Architecten
Address: De Kamp



24 TOWN HOUSES (2002–2006)
Architect: Atelier Kempe Thill
Address: Domela Nieuwenhuisstraat 3–29



25 CALAND SPORTS CENTRE (2005–2007)
Architect: DaF-architecten
Address: Eliza van Calcarstraat 2



26 ANIMAL REFUGE (2006–2007)
Architect: Arons en Gelauff architecten
Address: Cokmeeweg 271



27 DE KIKKER COMMUNITY SCHOOL (2009)
Architect: DOK architecten (Liesbeth van der Pol)
Address: Evertswertplantsoen 3



28 SCHUTTERSTOREN APARTMENT BUILDING (2005–2007)
Architect: DKV
Address: Oeverpad 151–204



29 PARKRAND APARTMENT BUILDING (1999–2008)
Architect: MVRDV
Address: Dr. Collijnstraat



30 HOUSING (1998–2006)
Architect: Venhoeven CS
Address: Cornelis Outshoornstraat, Adriaan Dorsmanstraat



31 MERCATOR SPORTS PLAZA (2006)
Architect: Venhoeven CS
Address: Jan van Galenstraat 315



32 SCALA HOUSING (2008)
Architect: FARO Architecten
Address: Leeuwendalersweg



33 WALK-UP FLATS RENOVATION (2007)
Architect: Heren 5
Address: De Leeuw van Vlaanderenstraat

(A tour around Amsterdam's A10)

ensured that IJburg is on its way to becoming a genuinely diverse and lively district.

To your immediate right as you approach along IJburglaan, the main artery, is the self-build neighbourhood with **private houses (7)** that escaped the usual vetting by a design review board. Taut modernist facades stand cheek-by-jowl with neo-traditional mansions and timber eco-dwellings. It's a pleasant mishmash of projects which nonetheless constitute an entity at the level of the street.

Further along IJburglaan stands an **apartment block (8)** by **Van Sambeek en Van Veen** where the main theme is once again 'variation versus uniformity'. Live/work dwellings, loft-style apartments with a front door on the street, penthouses and an underground car park have been modelled into a sturdy brick sculpture.

Cycling back along the water, on Bert Haanstrakade, one is particularly struck by DKV's 'floating' version of the **single-family**

dwelling (9) – a block on tall columns. The floating concept not only gives residents better views, but also generates a courtyard that is open to the south and linked to the water via a shallow flight of steps ideal for catching a bit of sun, or even a fish.

Oost

From IJburg head southwards through Diemerpark and across the 780-metre-long Nescio Bridge (Wilkinson Eyre, 2005) towards Oost/Watergraafsmeer. Here you will find 'Science Park', which is being developed into an international knowledge centre with 500,000 m² of office space, laboratories, conference and educational buildings, a hotel, cultural and sporting facilities and housing. On Carolina MacGillavrylaan there is a whole row of new buildings, including hvdn's glass apartment building 'Het Kasteel' (The Castle, see A10 #21). The recently finished **AMOLF laboratory building (10)** is easily recognized by the concrete and glass in various shades of green. **Dick van Gameren** translated the

practical programme of offices, workspaces and (vibration-free) laboratories into a very spacious building with two 12-metre-high internal streets that meet in a central hall.

Of a different order altogether is the multifunctional centre **Fusion (11)** in the Transvaalbuurt (follow the Ringvaart towards Centrum). This building, on the site of an old school building, houses a complex programme of offices for a work reintegration agency and two mosques (one Turkish, one Moroccan). **Marlies Rohmer** combined the Amsterdam School style typical of this neighbourhood with Islamic motifs and ornaments, thereby creating a powerful new urban elevation for the redesigned Joubertplein.

Following the River Amstel, you will see in the distance the **office of water company Waternet (12)**. The elegant double tower by **Studio Herman Hertzberger** contains the generous and open work and social spaces we have come to associate with this architect. A panorama restaurant and conference suites occupy the top floors.

Zuidoost

Follow the signs for Zuidoost, Bijlmer station and Arena, for around 3 km from the Waternet Office.

The Bijlmer was a utopian new district built in the 1970s in accordance with CIAM's 'functional city' principles. After only ten years the social problems were piling up in and around the tall apartment blocks, which attracted a constant stream of disadvantaged people. In the 1990s a sweeping urban renewal project got under way here: high-rise apartments made way for low-rise single-family housing, rental housing for owner-occupied dwellings and the elevated traffic arteries were brought down to ground level.

The by now well advanced operation seems to be successful. To date, the refurbished district's crowning glory is the new **station (13)** with its imposing and expressive steel, glass and wood roof.

Nearby, on Stramanweg, new **apartment buildings (14)** by **Van Sambeek en Van Veen** (grey) and **Claus en Kaan Archi-**

tecten (orange) are illustrative of the new Bijlmer architecture: 'warmer' (lots of brick), more varied in terms of housing typology, and more readily identifiable at the level of the individual dwelling (staggered window units, bay windows and balconies). For a row of **single-family dwellings (15)** **Kas Oosterhuis** designed aluminium facades, each with its own unique imprint. And **Heren 5** devised special brickwork patterns for the facade of the **Gerenstein apartments (16)** on Bijlmerdreef (all the projects are on or close to this road).

Another important aspect of the new approach are the public facilities and businesses at street level (instead of parking bays and storage units), as exemplified in the **Fenice apartment building (17)** by **Köther Salman Koedijk**. Opposite the Fenice, on the other side of the road, is the reconfigured Anton de Komplein, with the Bijlmer District Office (Stadsdeelkantoor), a **sports centre** and a **theatre (18)** – public facilities and meeting places intended to reinvigorate the district.

One final, typical urban renewal project is the multifunctional centre **De Kandelaar (19)**, opposite the Gerenstein apartments. It contains dwellings, a day care centre and multifunctional spaces that in the first instance will be used by five different Ghanaian religious communities. In its versatility and colour, this is one building that truly reflects multicultural Bijlmer.

Zuid

Retrace your steps from the Bijlmer to the Waternet office and continue along this road, over the drawbridge and then straight 'up' onto the big Utrechtse Bridge. Cross the Amstel and once on the other side, turn left into President Kennedylaan where **Claus en Kaan** built a 'flexible, sustainable shell' containing the **Zuideramstel District Office and apartments (20)**. A notable feature of this building is the loadbearing concrete facade which allows for free-plan floors that can easily be reconfigured to suit a different use in the future.

From here it is already possible to see in the distance the towers of the Zuidas, the new business and (luxury) residential area around the Zuid/WTC railway station, strategically close to Schiphol Airport. With an eye to the district's desired international aura, architects of standing like **Ito, SOM, EEA, de Architecten Cie.** (see A10 #27), **Viñoly, FOA** and **UNStudio (21)** have been enlisted.

Further south in leafy Buitenveldert is a public works project by **Claus en Kaan, the Stadsdeelwerf (22)**. Looking at the white 'bungalow', you would never guess that it houses the local sanitation department depot. The architects translated the down-to-earth programme into a stylish building that won the Amsterdam Architecture Prize 2008.

A stone's throw away stands **Crystal Court (23)**, designed by **Tangram**. This building, in which 36 very luxurious apartments are ranged around a glazed courtyard, is another exercise in compact construction. The challenge here was to retain views of the park on the other side of the building by keeping the footprint as small as possible. The resulting volume, which cantilevers out in all directions as it rises, is an eye-catching 'housing sculpture'.

Westelijke Tuinsteden

Follow Van Nijenrodeweg and Amstelveenseweg westwards and at the Lelylaan train station follow the signs to Osdorp. Osdorp is one of the Westelijke Tuinsteden,

a group of post-war estates of open-row housing set in park-like surroundings around a lake, the Sloterpas. Here, as in Bijlmer, socio-economic problems developed over the years. So, early this century, work started on a 15-year restructuring operation. Here, too, large parts of the one-sided housing stock have been demolished or renovated and the authorities have invested in public space and buildings, but without destroying the spatial concept and existing qualities of the original spatial masterplan by C. van Eesteren. The **town houses (24)** (see also A10 #22) by **Atelier Kempe Thill**, for example, are clearly a reinterpretation of post-war modernism.

A desire to complement existing development is also evident in DaF-architecten's design for a new **sports centre (25)**. The articulated volume accommodates itself to its surroundings in size and scale and even blends in physically thanks to its partially grassed roof-cum-playing field. Architects **Arons & Gelauff** would have liked to do something similar with their **animal refuge (26)**, which is bordered by meadows. Unfortunately the budget was too limited to allow this so they opted instead for an aluminium facade in (bright) shades of green. Other eye-catchers are another bright green building, a **school (27)** by **DOK architecten**, and the round, aluminium-clad **Schutterstoren apartments (28)** by **DKV**.

Further west, on the edge of Eendrachtspark in Geuzenveld, stands the appropriately named **Parkrand (parkside) apartment building (29)** by **MVRDV** (see also A10 #17). The 135x34x34 metre block with gargantuan perforations is certainly impressive to look at, but is it the answer to people's housing dreams? Completed in 2007, many of the apartments are still empty.

Continue along Ruys de Beerenbrouckstraat in a southwesterly direction to two **housing projects (30)** by **Ton Venhoeven**. Despite the densification that has taken place here, too, the architect has managed to maintain a human scale, with shared courtyards, gateways, street doors and a large number of different housing types. As you retrace your steps towards the city centre, see if you can spot Venhoeven's **sports centre (31)** (see also A10 #7) which, thanks to its living facades, blends with the park behind it.

The nearby Bos- en Lommerplein has been one huge construction site in recent years. Densification finds its ultimate expression here in the building over of the ring road. Many of the old walk-up flats in this area have been replaced by new buildings, like **Faro's** 230-metre-long **Scala housing complex (32)**. The architects reference the popular brick architecture on the inner-city side of the ring, with beautifully detailed brickwork and fresh white borders around the orange frames.

Finally, right beside the ring road is a **walk-up building (33)** that escaped demolition and was renovated by **Heren 5**. The reason it was spared is that no new building would have been approved on a location subject to noise and particulate pollution. The authorities did, however, insist on a noise barrier for the renovated building. The architects were not keen on this idea so they combined the renovation and noise barrier budgets and designed a transparent second skin facade from behind which the residents can watch the cars zooming past on the A10 in relative peace and quiet. ←

Reading tip: Amsterdam Architecture 2008-2009 (ARCAM/Architectura & Natura Press, ISBN 978-90-76863-77-1)

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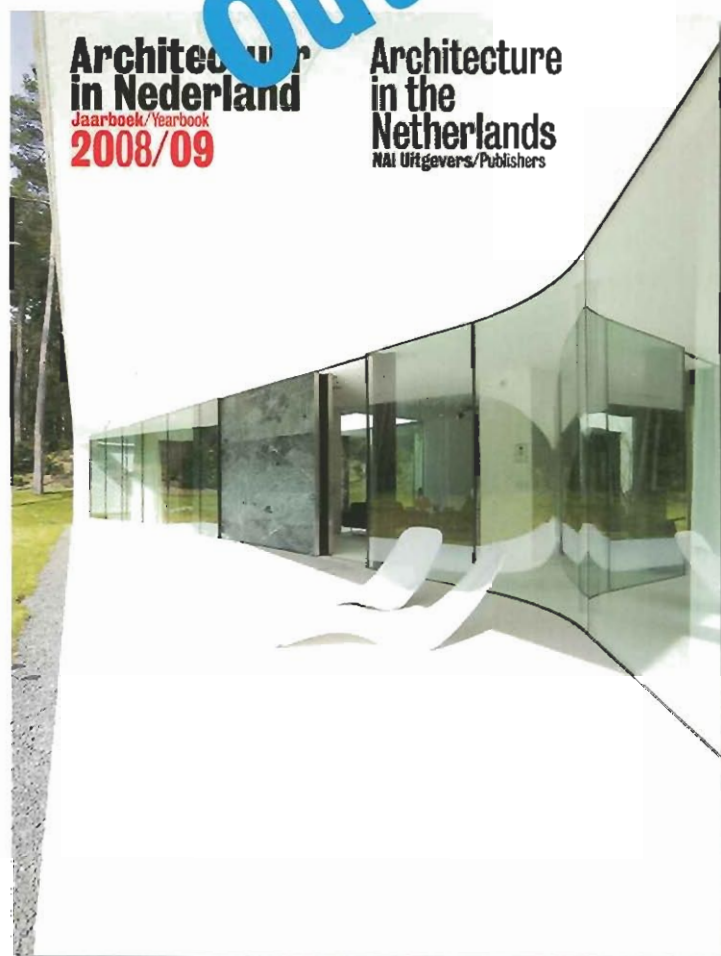
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