

**RAAAF**



**Bunker 599** – Culemborg, 2013 i.c.w. Atelier de Lyon (material: cut reinforced concrete, 5 x 5 x 6 meter)

In a radical way this intervention sheds new light on the Dutch and UNESCO policies on cultural heritage. At the same, it makes people look at their surroundings in a new way. A seemingly indestructible bunker with monumental status is sliced open, revealing the minuscule interior of one of the New Dutch Waterline's 700 bunkers, normally completely cut off from view. Paradoxically, after the intervention Bunker 599 became a Dutch national monument.



**Link video documentation:  
Making of Bunker 599 (4.43 min.) >>>**

<https://vimeo.com/213978423>



Teams of specialized craftsmen are actively involved in the process of making our artworks. Specialists include firemen, brass founders, master carpenters, church bell makers, styrofoam cutters and crane operators. Finding excellent craftsmen is necessary for realizing the artworks and crucial for the quality in materialization that we strive for.

Many of our interventions are about articulation of the void by taking things away. In a world filled with stuff such a **'poetry of absence'** is crucial.

Through deliberate destruction, radical changes in context, and seemingly contradictory additions, a new field of tension arises between *present, past and future*.

Hardcore Heritage represents a new way of thinking about monuments and cultural heritage.

**HARDCORE  
HERITAGE**



Bunker 599 was the start of a series 'Hardcore Heritage' artworks. Through deliberate destruction, radical changes in context and seemingly contradictory additions, a new field of tension arises between present, past and future.

Read more in 'Frontiers in Psychology': <https://bit.ly/2Skpo6Y>



**Still Life, 2019 – Museum Het HEM, Amsterdam** (material: casted brass, steel beams, crane trolleys)

During the Cold War, millions of bullets were made for NATO soldiers worldwide in the former bullet factory Het Hem. At the time, the factory was full of trays with brass bullet casings. The artwork *Still Life* questions the abandoned war factory and creates a link between the present, past and future of this historically burdened heritage. The source material of the bullet production has been melted and casted into four heavy brass plates. Their movement forces the visitor to relate to the work over and over again. The brass plates move slowly away but inevitably return.



Link video documentation: *Making of Still Life*, 3 min. >>>

<https://vimeo.com/357374405>  
password: RAAAF



Still from video documentation

Link video documentation: Making of Still Life, 3 min. >>>

<https://vimeo.com/357374405>  
password: RAAAF



VACANT NL

Dutch contribution to the Biennale 2010

by RAAAF

Dutch Pavilion in the Giardini di Castello, Venice

Open to the public daily from 10:00 to 18:00 hrs from 29 August  
to 21 November 2010

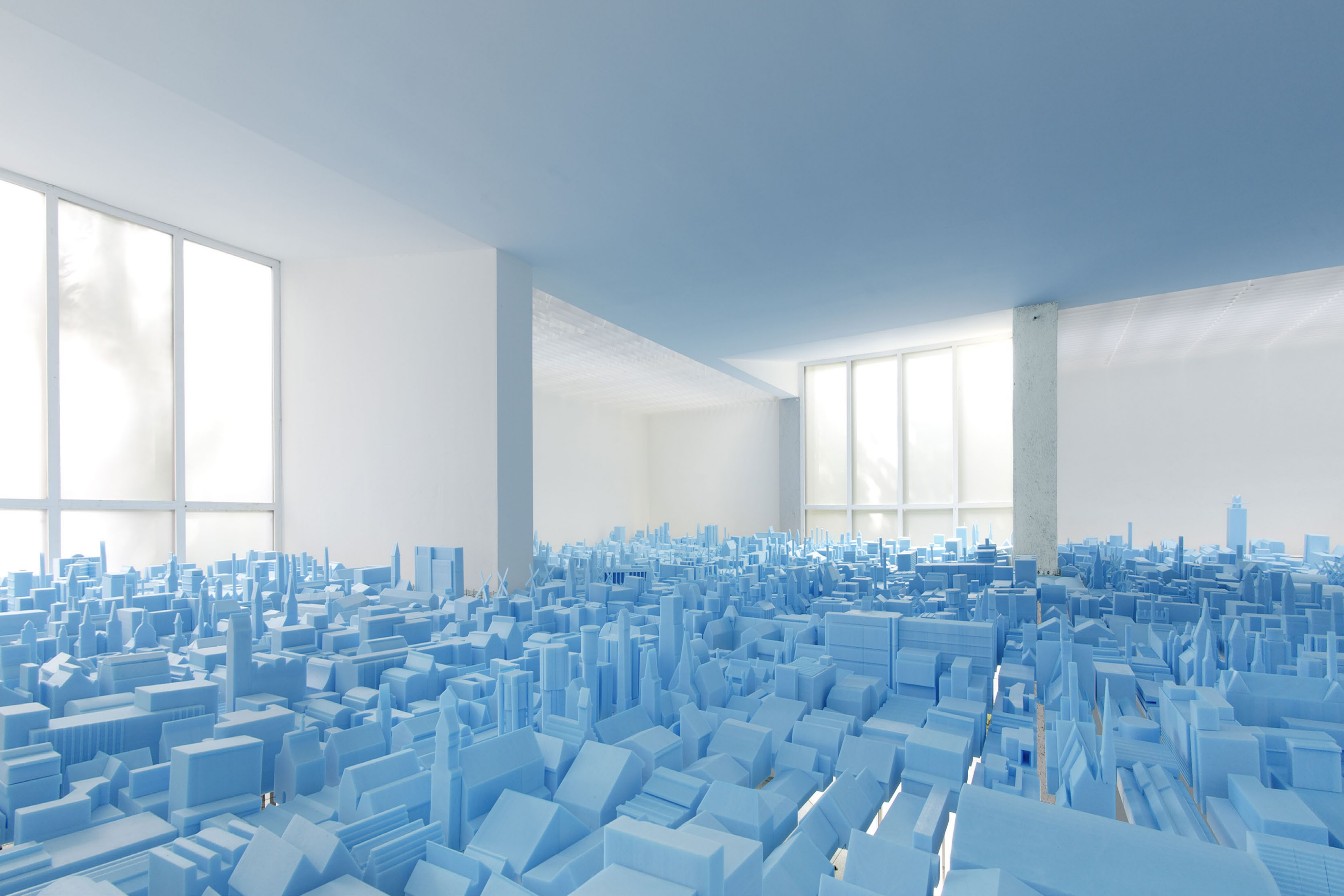
**THIS BUILDING HAS BEEN VACANT FOR MORE THAN 39 YEARS\***

\* Exhibition space is in use for 3.5 months a year.  
Building was built in 1954 and has been vacant for 39 years.  
Dutch Pavilion (1953-54) by Gerrit Rietveld. Photo: Jan Versnel



**Vacant NL – Venice Biennale 2010** (material: blue styrofoam, steel cables and wood)

Vacant NL is the Dutch contribution to the Venice Biennale 2010, in which the potential of 10.000 governmentally-owned vacant buildings (from the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th century) was shown. The groundfloor was left completely empty. It refers to our discovery that the pavilion stands on Dutch soil (in Venice) and has already been vacant for 39 years; seven months a year. The Gerrit Rietveld pavilion itself becomes part of this *total installation*.



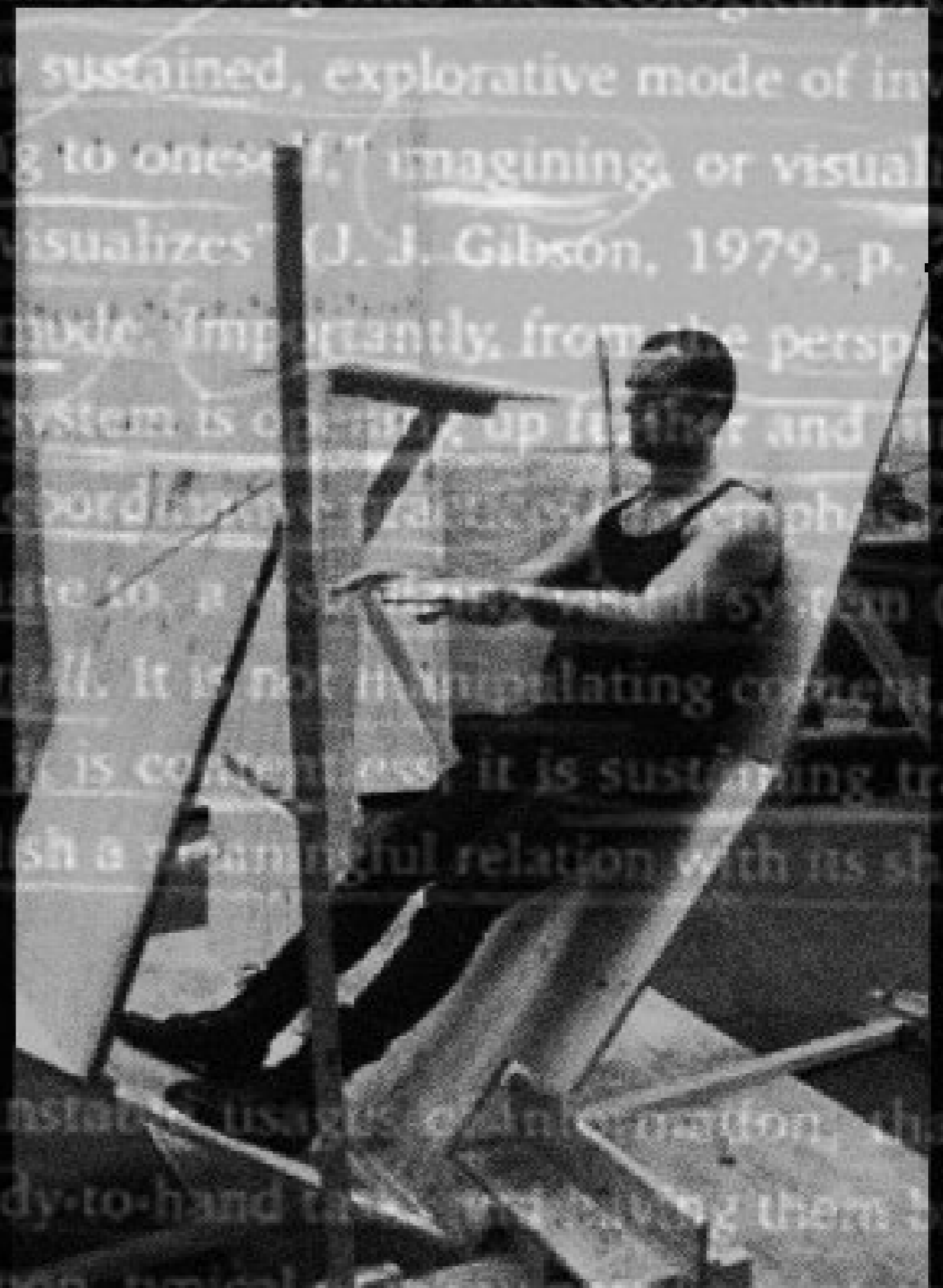
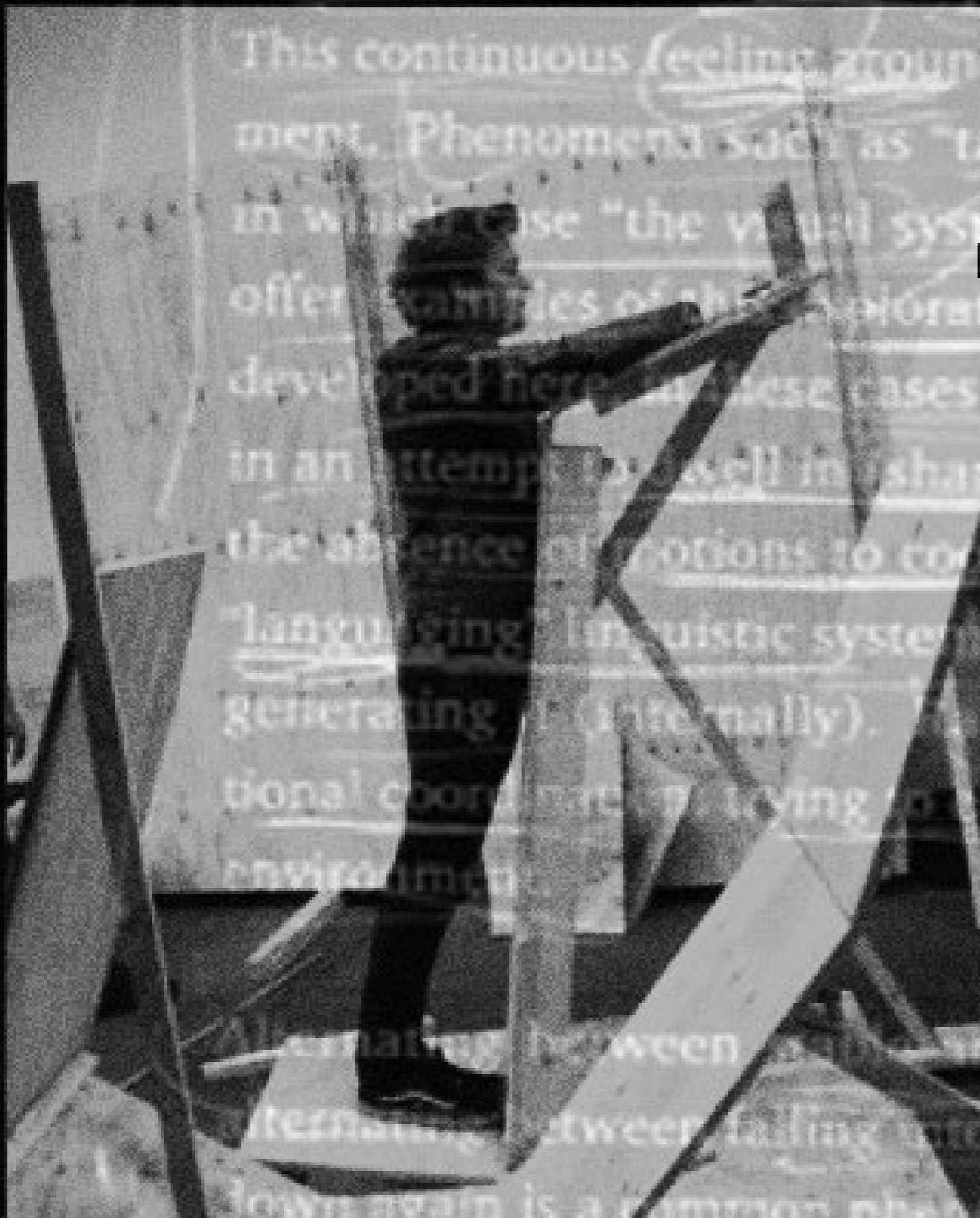


***Pretty Vacant, 2013 - Centraal Museum Utrecht*** (material: blue styrofoam, steel wire)

The Centraal Museum wanted to buy the Venice installation. Since we always make site- specific work we never repeat any of the artworks.

Pretty Vacant is based on the 'negative spaces' of our earlier installation Vacant NL, which was the Dutch submission for the Venice Biennale in 2010.

Through the acquisition of this installation with support from the Mondriaan Fund for Visual Arts, the Centraal Museum has realized its ambition of adding Vacant NL to the 'Collectie Nederland'.



**Exploring The World of Affordances, 2013 - 2019** (material: wood, rubber, steel, etc.)

**Embodied making:** While philosophers usually create worldviews by means of words, RAAF builds tangible philosophical worldviews. Our total interventions are materialized visions and explorations of possible new worlds. They question practices and conventions that are often taken for granted. Our projects offer people and ourselves the possibility to experience what it would be like to live by a different set of rules. Our artworks are part of the longterm philosophical investigations of Erik Rietveld's research group at the University of Amsterdam which is supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO VIDI Grant) and the European Research Council (ERC Starting Grant project - AFFORDS-HIGHER). This project is also supported by Mondriaan Fund for Visual Arts.



Barbara Visser films a mock-up of  
“Exploring The World of Affordances”

**The observer observed.** For years our processes of making have been observed by ethnographers and empirical philosophers at work. Visual artists, philosophers, ecological psychologists, medical scientists, architects, filmmakers and craftsmen are brought together in the same space which functions as a living lab. We continuously make 1:1 mock-ups to test interventions at scale of our own bodies: We call this ‘embodied making’. This way of making and reflecting on our work contributes to Erik’s long-term philosophical research program.

Read more: Inaugural lecture as Socrates Professor, by Erik Rietveld Link: <https://www.utwente.nl/en/academic-ceremonies/inaugural-lectures/booklets-inaugural-lectures/2019/oratieboekje-erik-rietveld.pdf>



***The End of Sitting*** – Looiersgracht 60, Amsterdam 2014 i.c.w. Barbara Visser (material: wood & acrylic one, 25 x 15 x 2,5 meter)

The End of Sitting is a real-life *thinking model* that questions our 'sitting society'. RAAF and visual artist Barbara Visser have developed a concept wherein the chair and desk are no longer unquestionable starting points. Instead, the installation's various affordances solicit visitors to explore different standing positions in an experimental landscape. The End of Sitting marks the beginning of an experimental trial phase, exploring the possibilities of radical change for the living environment.



Link short film: <https://vimeo.com/123389881>

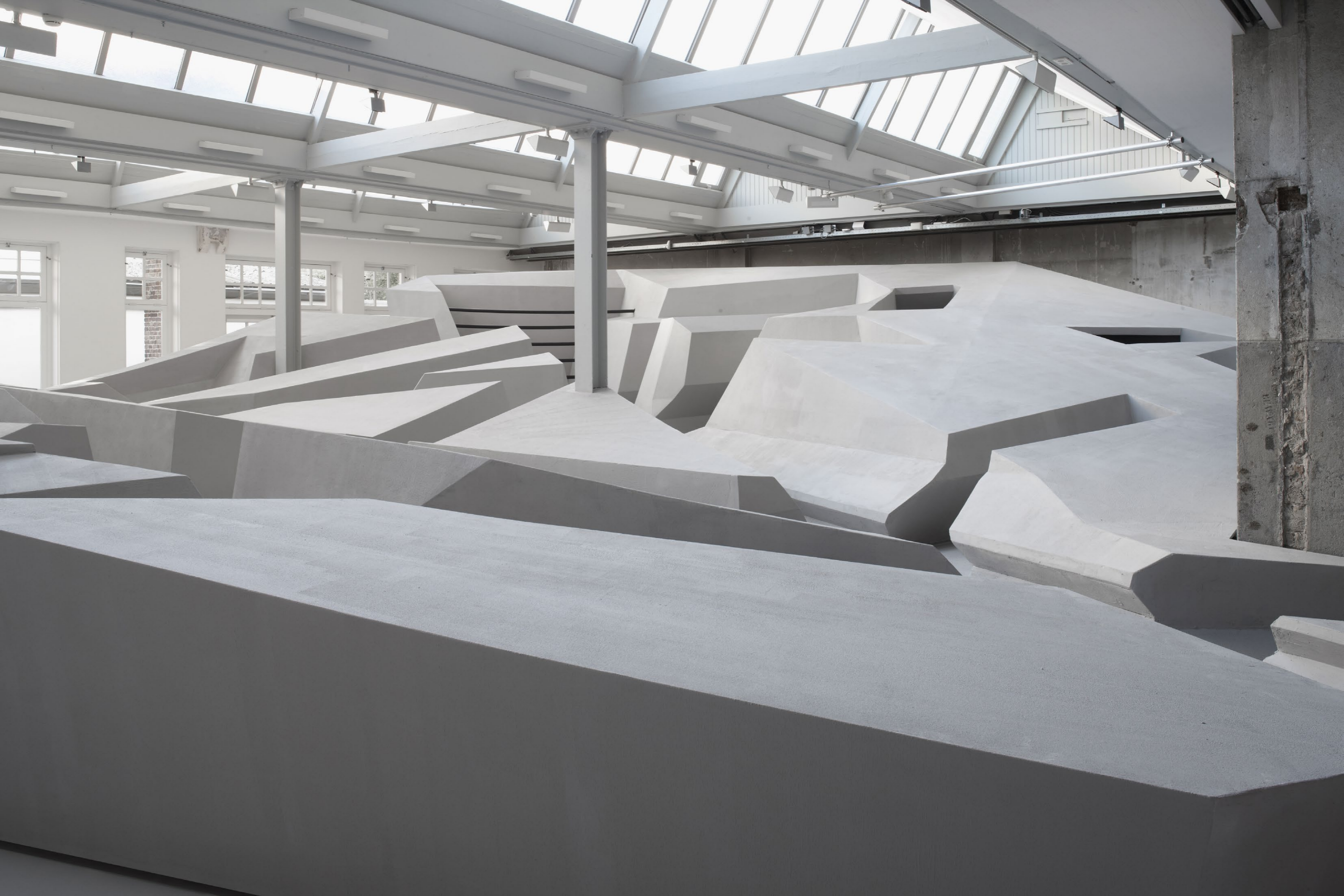
**Film 'The End of Sitting 1:1 - a projection' (15.38 min)**

Visual artist Barbara Visser made in collaboration with us the short film 'The End of Sitting 1:1 - a projection'.

To fully understand the implications of this work at the the crossroads of visual art, architecture, philiosphy and emprical science we invite you to view the short film.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/123389881>







Cutting concrete



***Deltawerk //*** – Land Art Flevoland collection, Waterloopbos (NL) 2018, i.c.w. Atelier de Lyon (material: cut reinforced concrete and water)

A giant wave bassin served as a test site for the Dutch Deltaworks. *Deltawerk //* questions the ambition to build an indestructable Holland in times of climate change.

Related to this, the artwork is also an experiment in making new ruins.

In a radical way this intervention sheds new light on the practice of preserving cultural heritage: Hardcore Heritage.





**Link video documentation: Making of Deltawerk // (3.40 min.) >>>**

<https://vimeo.com/323186990/10bbf9dd19>



***Intensive Care*** - Istanbul Art Biennale 2013, istanbul Modern (material: wood, 30 x 5kW lamp, dimmer, light computer)

In the heart of the city, Atatürk Cultural Center reflects the precarious situation in Istanbul. Both the building itself and the freedom of speech – which manifests itself right at the front door, at Taksim Square – are continuously subject of debate. The light installation is roaming the twilight zone between life and death based on the breathing rhythm of a patient hospitalized at the Intensive Care. The proposal dates from March 29, 2013 (two months before the Gezi protests).

### Quotes from press reviews 'Intensive Care', Istanbul Art Biennale 2013

The New York Times, Art, 13 September 2013, by Rachel Donadio

*"One project that was unthinkable after the Gezi uprising was by Erik and Ronald Rietveld, brothers who form the Dutch collective RAAAF. They initially proposed an installation in which thousands of tiny lights would flicker like fireflies on the facade of the Atatürk Cultural Center, a landmark in the center of Taksim Square. But after the building became festooned with protest banners during the Gezi Park demonstrations, Biennial organizers never got a response from the Turkish Culture Ministry about their request, Ms. Erdemci said. (The ministry did not respond to requests for comment.)"*

Süddeutsche Zeitung

*"Starting at the Atatürk Cultural Center, the Amsterdam artist group RAAAF wanted to cast a softly glowing band of light across the city's main traffic hub, where ground is being cleared for a grand building project, whether shopping mall, mega mosque or baroque opera house. Rarely has there been a better moment for critical contemporary art."*

Financial Times, Visual Arts, 20 September 2013, by Rachel Spence

*"Also memorable was "Intensive Care" by RAAAF a Dutch studio that had originally intended to install its work, a light that responds to human presence, in the Atatürk Cultural Centre in Taksim. Deprived of that chance, Rietveld simply scaled down its model and put it in a pitch-black space within Antrepo. After the cacophony of ideas outside, the quiet, poetic provocation of that flashing square stilled the mind and opened the imagination."*

Huffington Post, 21 Oktober 2013, by Simon Johns

*"Originally, curator Fulya Erdemci felt presenting art outside to a broader public would have highlighted the city's physical and social transformation, which has been often traumatic. But the protests forced the organisers to withdraw inside just a few months before the opening. Many artists had to quickly re-contextualise their work, while others had to scrap theirs altogether and present something new."*

*Dutch brothers Erik and Ronald Rietveld's light installation projected onto the Atatürk Cultural Centre, an iconic concert venue overlooking Gezi Park, became the intimate yet just as powerful Intensive Care. A miniature rendering of the building's façade throbs with light like a life-support machine. The piece asks the question of whether the venue will survive the wrecking ball after conflicting government statements about its fate of the building - a controversial cultural landmark that was draped in banners by outlawed political groups during the protests."*



Photo by Ali Kazma of Atatürk Cultural Center at Taksim square during the Gezi protests May 29, 2013.

The contested building did not survive the controversy: it was demolished by the government in 2018.



ESKA





**Firemen – Maastricht biennale 2011** (material: 1250 fire pots )

The installation 'Firemen' creates a lived experience and a radical confrontation with the safety society we live in. While walking through a landscape of fire one can feel the danger. By law risk should be minimized. In this case the artwork maximizes the risk for visitors due to our unorthodox collaboration with the Firemen of Maastricht.



Link: Firemen video documentation ( 2.30 min.) >>>

<https://vimeo.com/356416639>