

Archive Explorations:

# Through Queer Eyes

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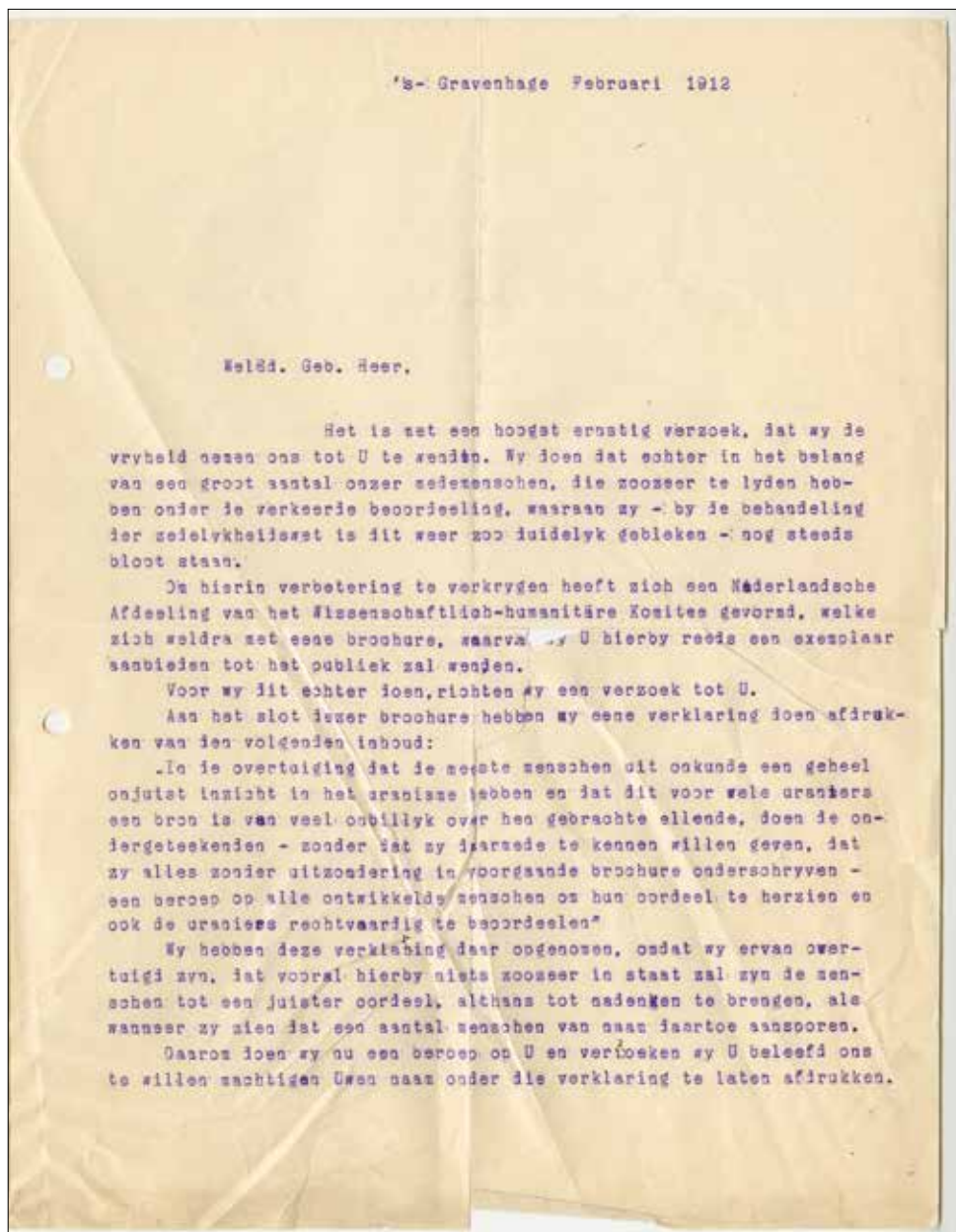
Is there such a thing as 'queer space' and can it be designed? During this evening the Archive of Architecture and Urban Planning is *viewed through queer eyes*. Looking for traces of queer history by a variety of contributions. With archivist Alfred Marks, political scientist Mounir Samuel, filmmaker Tim Leyendekker, Prof. Jasmine Rault, architect Riëtte van der Werff and architect/researcher Dirk van den Heuvel. The moderator is Flora van Gaalen (Het Nieuwe Instituut).

This handout gives one possible queer selection from the archive made by archivist Alfred Marks. Marks knows the extensive collection of architectural drawings, photos, models and other archival items better than anyone else. He has worked in the archive for many years as an archivist, and from 2014 until 2016 curated the exhibition series *Surprising Finds from the Collection*, in which he selected drawings, photographs, objects and models from the archive based on particular themes. For this event, Marks views the archive through queer eyes and reveals the richness, diversity and narrative power of the collection.

## Archive Explorations

Containing the collections of some of the most important architects and urban planners in the Netherlands, the State Archive for Architecture and Urban Planning provides an insight into the development of Dutch architecture and society over the past 130 years. Each of the four million drawings, sketches, models, professional and personal correspondence, photos, posters and news clippings has a story to tell. But many of these stories have remained untold because nobody has yet uncovered them. For the series of evenings entitled Archive Explorations we invite a range of people to undertake a journey of discovery in the archive in order to introduce new perspectives.

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BERL\_413

ARCHIVE H.P. BERLAGE

In 1911, under pressure from Christian political parties, the Decency Act was amended with Article 248b: 'The adult who has sexual contacts with a minor of the same sex whose age he knows or should reasonably suspect, will be punished with a prison sentence of maximum four years.' The entirely legitimate idea of protecting minors against abuse proved disastrous for homosexuals, given that the minimum age for homosexual relations was set at 21, while for heterosexual contact it remained at 16. The underlying idea was that youths (particularly males) ran the risk of being seduced into having sex and could thus become homosexual.

The following year, a group that included Jacob Anton Schorer and Anton Aletrino set up a Dutch branch of the Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee (Scientific-Humanitarian Committee), following the example of the committee set up by Magnus Hirschfeld in Germany. Both in Germany and the Netherlands, these committees tried to convince politicians in particular that people were born homosexual and could not be seduced into becoming homosexual. A clause like 248b (section 175 in Germany) was therefore unnecessary and only led to inequality before the law.

In 1912 Schorer and Aletrino appealed to a select group of prominent scientists and artists, among them H.P. Berlage, with a request to sign a declaration stating that Article 248b was based on misconceptions and ignorance and should therefore be scrapped. This did not happen until 1971, after about 5000 legal actions, when the discriminatory article was finally rescinded and the age limit for both homosexual and heterosexual contact was set at 16.

ARCHIVE A. STAAL

In 1939 Arthur Staal travelled by motorbike through the Middle East, taking in Egypt and the former British protectorate of Palestine and Syria. Equipped with his camera, he took hundreds of pictures of the places he visited and people he met.



STAA\_F205-1

No doubt he caused quite a stir on his motorbike, quickly making contact with locals. And the daredevils among them were all too willing to mount his bike and adopt a tough pose for the camera.



STAA\_f211-2

There were also people, always boys, who posed for him voluntarily or involuntarily. And though he cannot be seen clearly, isn't that the same boy that was on the motorbike? 'You can leave your shoes on'.



STAA\_f204-5

Or he photographed young men unnoticed and unaware of the camera: 'a fairy tale from thousand and one nights'.



## Through Queer Eyes

### ARCHIVE P. HAMMEL

In 1987 the Rotterdam branch of COC, the Dutch organization that promotes gay rights, moved into a new premises at Schiedamsesingel 175, which had been renovated by architect P. Hammel. The perfect 'queer space' you might think, but is what you see here on the photograph what you would expect?

The invitation to the opening shows two men and women kissing, and their attire seems to be an attempt to convey diversity: 'homo', 'queen', 'lesbo', 'dike'. Now that we refer to the LHBT community, this invitation seems rather stereotypical.



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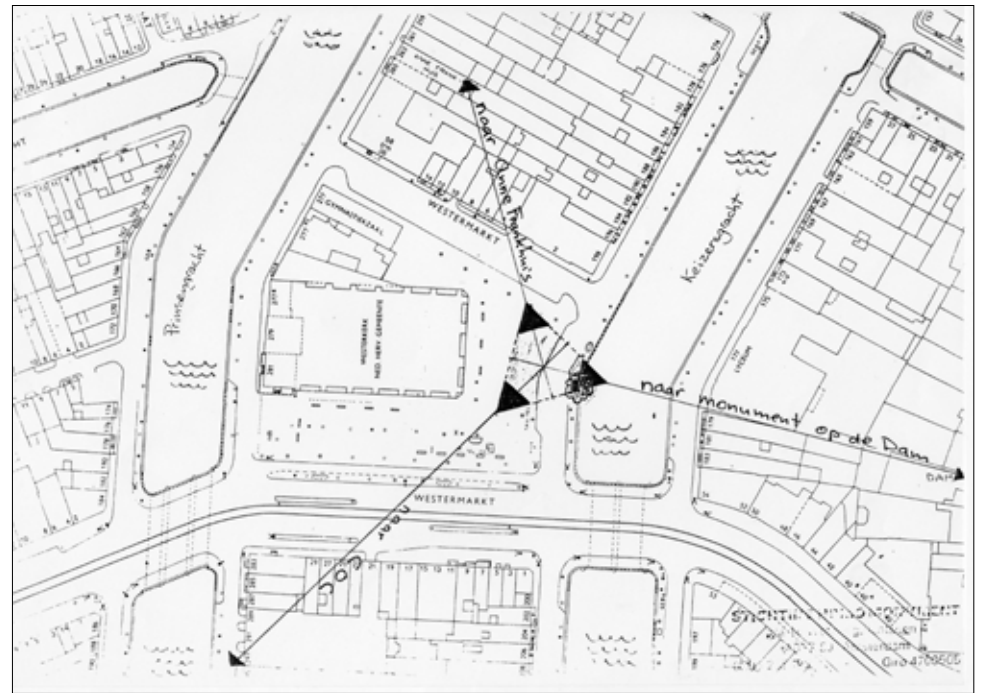


HAMM\_D38A

### ARCHIVE EXHIBITION COUNCIL

The public toilet was, and still is, used by boys and men to satisfy needs other than emptying their bladders. Many of the small buildings pictured here, known in gay circles as 'the curl', have now disappeared, and the tendency to design gender-neutral toilets does not bode well for the future.

## Het Nieuwe Instituut



STIG\_19.50-3

### ARCHIVE J. VAN STIGT

In 1979 an initiative was launched to create a memorial in memory of the gay men and women persecuted during World War II. Located near Westermarkt, the memorial was paid for through fundraising. Of the schemes put forward, the choice fell to a design by Karin Daan. The plan shows how the axes of the triangular memorial, a reference to the pink triangle that gays were forced to wear in concentration camps, point to places of special interest in the city: the Anne Frank House, a symbol of the persecution of Jews; the War Memorial on Dam Square, the site of the annual Remembrance of the Dead ceremony on 4 May (but where wreaths laid by and for homosexuals were previously removed); and the headquarters of COC, the interest group for homosexuals set up in 1946 and still active in promoting gay rights.

Today the memorial is an important site for the gay community. It is a place of gathering to celebrate freedom during Gay Pride events and to demonstrate against violence against homosexuals, for example as happened after the recent shootings at a gay nightclub in Orlando (Florida) in the US.

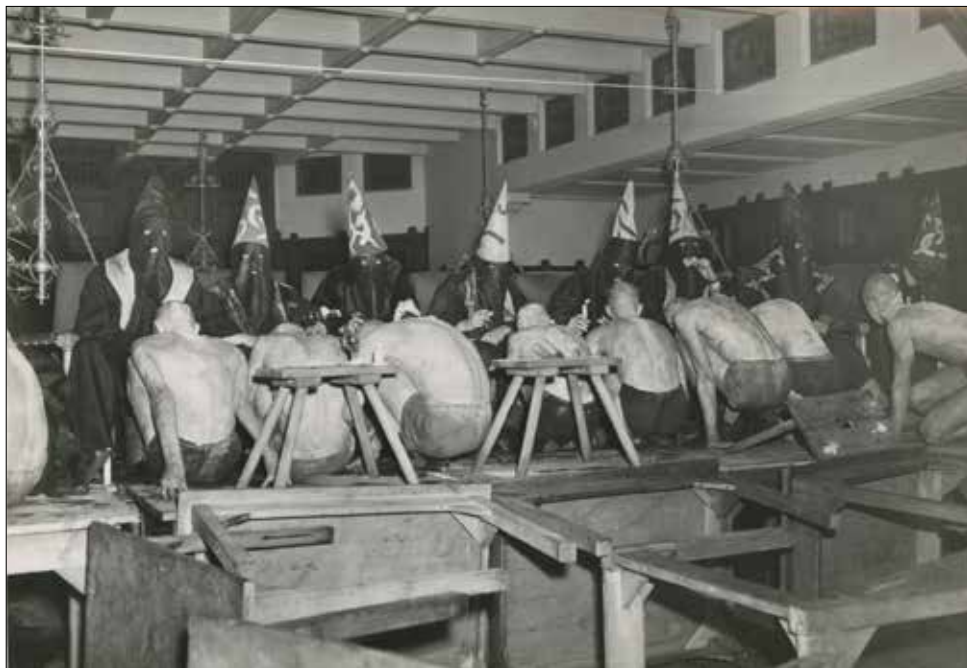


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WOEX\_49-30



WOEX\_49-24

ARCHIVE D. VAN WOERKOM

As a student in Delft, architect Dick van Woerkom was a member of the student society Delftsch Studenten Corps. Recently, the National Union of Societies (LKV) has called for the 'mores and traditions' that members of societies have passed down for generations, such as regular drinking sessions and initiation rituals, to be included on the National Inventory of Immaterial Cultural Heritage.

What a step forward that acts such as 'breast gripping', 'crotch sniffing' and 'sodomasochistic roleplay' will soon no longer be seen as perversions but as accepted and cherished expressions of 'male bonding'!

ARCHIVE W. DEN BOON

During his relatively short life, interior architect and designer Wim den Boon travelled widely. On his travels he kept a diary and took lots of photographs, many of himself. A convinced naturist, he also took many nude pictures. Among all these albums, there is one that he has given the motto: 'The decent lies of official decency'.

It is unclear whether he was protesting against the narrow-minded mentality of his time or was objecting to discrimination against homosexuals, but it does reveal his rebellious nature.



BOOQ\_FA12-2



BOOQ\_FA12-32

# Through Queer Eyes

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CAND-EIBII93

GLASS NEGATIVE COLLECTION  
WITHIN THE ARCHIVE  
EIBINK AND SNELLEBRAND

A wonderful image, intimate and affectionate, like a stanza from a poem by Jacob Israël de Haan *Aan enen jongen visser* (To a young fisherman):

Rozen zijn niet zo schoon als uwe wangen  
Tulpen niet als uwe blote voeten teer  
En in geen ogen las ik immer meer  
Naar vriendschap zulk een mateloos verlangen.

*(Fairer still than a rose, your cheeks aglowing  
Your feet more graceful than a tulip's stem  
And in your eyes there sparkled like a gem  
For friendship, such a limitless longing.)*

The last line is engraved on the Homomonument in Amsterdam.

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15 September 2016