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Cinematic Rotterdam: the times and tides of a modern city

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CHAPTER 11. DEVELOPING COMPOSITIONS

§ 1. a view from afar

‘Rotterdam is the most modern city of Europe’, proclaims the German documentary ICH WILL LEBEN (1960, Herbert Viktor/IFAG)¹¹⁷⁴. The film emphasizes the city’s efficiency, while it shows its new landmarks¹¹⁷⁵. Rotterdam is called a brave city, with references to Erasmus and the German sailors’ church; the new city gives hope for the future after the tragedy of the war, as represented by Zadkine’s sculpture. A similar image is drawn by the British production A CITY RESURRECTED (1964, Dody M. Cowan), which stresses furthermore the openness of Rotterdam. City planner Van Traa explains that only one third of the city centre is built area, instead of the two thirds from before the war.

‘God made the world, the Dutch made Rotterdam’, proclaims the BBC documentary LAND OF DEW (1961). Land is gained from the sea for the completion of the ‘Europoort’. Rotterdam tried hard to make its port the largest of the world. It attracted substantial attention from abroad. The German documentary ZUM TOR EUROPAS (1964, Renate von Ammon e.a.), made for the Bayerische Rundfunk, follows the river Rhine from Switzerland to the Netherlands, in order to emphasise the importance of Rotterdam for Germany¹¹⁷⁶. It praises its modern city and the new suburbs that offer a residence to the workers of the rapidly growing port. It is illustrated by images of Hoogvliet; although it is built near the industry, it is nevertheless surrounded by greenery, while the people enjoy the fresh smell of sea-air. ‘Here the future has started’, it is said.

Television offered a way ‘to communicate the city’ to foreign audiences. Such documentaries suited television programming, because of duration, content and costs¹¹⁷⁷. But many escaped the attention of film critics and historians. Innumerable foreign productions were made on Rotterdam¹¹⁷⁸; as a case, I will consider one of them in further detail. In 1964 the Austrian ÖRF made ROTTERDAM (dir. Walter Klapper). Whereas Dutch television focused merely on specific issues of the reconstruction, as the city in general was assumed to be known, foreign productions drew integral accounts of its post-war planning and architecture. They presented a functionalist city in *optima forma*, as a model case. A closer look at such ‘a view from afar’ shows how Rotterdam was turned into an international planning model. The cities of Europe that were destroyed during WWII shared a common fate. Rotterdam had unintentionally become part of an international ‘alliance’ of cities. Europe needed success stories, and Rotterdam offered one, under the motto *sterker door strijd* (“stronger through struggle”), which was even added to its coat of arms after WWII.

This ÖRF production accompanied an exhibition on Rotterdam that was organised at the town hall of Vienna, and which was part of a series of exhibitions on major European cities¹¹⁷⁹. In return, an Austrian week was organised in Rotterdam, with various presentations¹¹⁸⁰. Within this perspective of international exchange, of ‘friendly spying’ as it was called by the Viennese Mayor Franz Jonas, it is no coincidence that the ÖRF production was part of a Eurovision project – a series called ‘Town Building and Planning’¹¹⁸¹. The Eurovision (EBU) framework enabled the

¹¹⁷⁴ This television production was also shown at Luxor on *Opbouwdag*, 1960-05-18; *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*, 1961: 31.

¹¹⁷⁵ Including the ‘Groothandelsgebouw’, ‘De Lijnbaan’, ‘De Bijenkorf’, ‘Maastunnel’, and the brand new ‘Euromast’.

¹¹⁷⁶ Special attention is paid to Duisburg, as the biggest inland harbour. Rotterdam, however, gets the most attention, with its docks, cranes and industry (e.g. Van Nelle). Next are shots of the city centre: ‘De Lijnbaan’, praised for its rest and comfort, the Euromast, Maastunnel and the metro, which is under construction.

¹¹⁷⁷ Television often used 16mm reversal film instead of the negative-positive printing of 35mm film for cinema.

¹¹⁷⁸ Various references to visits of foreign directors are made in the official magazine of the city of Rotterdam (*Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*).

¹¹⁷⁹ ‘Rotterdam op Tournee’, p20 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 2/4, 1964. The exhibition (‘Rotterdam in Kort Bestek’) travelled afterwards to various cities in Germany.

¹¹⁸⁰ May 1964, in a.o. Ahoj’, Rijnhotel, Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen; see: p23 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 3/1, 1964

¹¹⁸¹ It also included films on London, Vienna, Copenhagen, and Venice, a.o.

ÖRF to collaborate with the Dutch NTS, which arranged soundman Géza Lászlóffy and cameraman Peter Alsemgeest. The latter was familiar with Rotterdam and a specialist in construction works. This is an instance of an institutional infrastructure at a higher level of integration, which provides overhead services. It enables flexible work relations, not through a local agglomeration economy, but through transnational networks that are locally anchored.

Besides institutional structures like Eurovision, this production was also created through intra-personal contacts – a double linking that is also addressed in the anthropological literature on networks across formal and informal realms (e.g. De Certeau, 1997; Riles, 2000 a.o.). This film had been an idea of Friedrich Hansen-Löve, who was the director of the ÖRF culture department. He was often in the Netherlands, as his wife was Dutch, so the choice to make this film was easily made. The script was written by his friend, the novelist, sociologist and visual artist Karl Bednarik (•1915-†2001). The two of them were among the pioneers of Austrian quality television. Since they were in a circle of friends of filmmakers, writers, artists and architects, the city planner of Vienna, Roland Rainer, got involved too, as a consultant and as a co-author of the screenplay – together with director Walter Klapper. Rainer (•1910-†2004), a major figure of Austrian modernism, considered Rotterdam as a model for his own work¹¹⁸². Through CIAM he knew architect Jaap Bakema and city planner Cornelis van Traa. The latter became a consultant to the production as well, next to port director Frans Posthuma.

Grete Bednarik, who collaborated with her husband from behind the scenes, has recalled that he visited Rotterdam for a week¹¹⁸³. Like usual, his script was structured through the way he encountered things himself. It began with his arrival by aeroplane. The film starts with aerial shots of the ‘Nieuwe Waterweg’, the gateway to the sea, and Pernis with its oil refineries. To shoot this one needed aerial-photography permission¹¹⁸⁴. For military reasons, it was not permitted to show the two banks at once, nor the transformer facilities. Director Klapper, however, followed neatly the script by Bednarik. Alsemgeest even used a wide-angle lens, so that they had an enormous overview. When they showed the material to the captain in charge, he was overwhelmed and Klapper could go on. In this way the opening scene presents the Netherlands as the cradle of modern planning and urbanism: land is taken from the sea, which is the ultimate artificial land. The title ‘Rotterdam’ appears in curly letters, it crumbles, and reappears in straight letters. This typographical wittiness already tells what Rotterdam is about. It was an idea of Hansen-Löve himself, who was a master of inventing titles, according to Grete Bednarik.

After flying over Rotterdam, the aeroplane lands at ‘intercontinental Airport Schiphol’. It might seem odd to begin a film on Rotterdam in Amsterdam, but it suited Bednarik to show a larger urban system. For regional traffic, the film tells us, Rotterdam has its own airport, while it also has a heliport that provides a direct connection to the city centre. In this way the film addresses the separation of functions and traffic flows, which is the principle of zoning.

Bednarik also drew the storyboard. He noted every place from where to shoot, and even indicated camera angles. Since he had made art works in large buildings, he knew how to look at architecture. The topic of this film was not only highly visual, the film could also be pre-arranged, since many (traffic) movements were predictable. The film was as planned as the city it showed. Cameraman Alsemgeest has mentioned that this project was probably the least free of all he did. He was just told where and what to shoot. Therefore he tried to get the most out of the compositions, to have the images really move, and if possible to get people in. According to him, everything was so well-organised that he and Lászlóffy made fun of director Walter Klapper. ‘He looked more like an administrator, noting down the recordings, and walking around with the clap’, so they called him ‘Herr Klapper der Klapper’. Grete Bednarik recalled that back home

¹¹⁸² Telephone conversation of the author (FP) with Roland Rainer, 2003-12-06; email reply of Roland Rainer, sent by Christian Kröpfl of Atelier Prof. Rainer, 2004-01-19; Rainer worked till the end of his life.

¹¹⁸³ Interview by the author (FP) with Grete Bednarik, Vienna, 2003-12-08.

¹¹⁸⁴ In an interview by the author (FP) with Peter Alsemgeest, Hilversum, 2003-11-27.

Klapper had the plan – inspired by the rationality of Rotterdam – to cut all shots in equal lengths, but Bednarik and the woman doing the editing resisted.

After the introduction, a large parking lot in front of the central station is shown from the air. A train moves over the bridge *De Hef* and the *Luchtspoor* (“Air Track”). Crowds of cyclists move through the Maastunnel at rush hour. Open and closed spaces are interchanged. Shots of small chaotic streets in the city centre are followed by shots of highways with separated lanes, as the solution to congestion. But it is not all about separation of functions; in the Leuvehaven port activities still take place in the city. City planning, it is said, is not just building houses, but the coordination of flows, of time, of the urban dynamics. The port emphasizes the need for that, since it requires the organisation of innumerable movements. This city at water needs ongoing supply and transshipment. It is illustrated by a ‘ballet of cranes’, by trucks transporting wood, and by endless oil pipes. Next to it are services to enable all this, from a victualling boat to supply food, to ship building. The latter is of special importance, since it is among the most complex engineering works. It is a discipline that knows how to use space efficiently, which has been a model for modern city planning and architecture. It is therefore no coincidence, the narrator says, that this came to full blossoming in Rotterdam.

The film has a spatial quality itself. Aerial shots are followed by street shots, which give a human touch. Deliberate compositions make old buildings look modern; a mill and the modernist Bergpolderflat are both portrayed in Rodchenko-style. Shots through corner windows make use of reflections. Tracking shots along buildings, like in Pendrecht, cause the architecture to ‘move’. Things suddenly move into the image, from behind still objects.

Rotterdam is presented as the radiant model of modern architecture and planning: dynamic, efficient, open, open, and human. The latter is illustrated by shots of laundry hanging at a Rhine barge, ‘De Lijnbaan’ shopping area for pedestrians, and housing quarter Pendrecht where kids play around and turn on their rollerskates, while grown-ups walk around to enjoy fresh air. It is, the narrator concludes, ‘the promise for the European youth’. This was addressed after CIAM had been dissolved. Instead of functions the human being had become central. This shift was also manifest in ‘De Lijnbaan’ and ‘Pendrecht’; Bakema emphasised the possibility for people to meet. Bednarik pointed in the same direction. In one of his writings he said that culture is not made by massive organisation, but by individual contacts, preferably in the vertical dimension, between people of uneven backgrounds¹¹⁸⁵. Yet, we can consider the film as the ultimate CIAM-vision, corresponding to its most elaborate ideas and concerns. The city is ‘more than real’.

The film is above all an attempt to explain modern urbanism. In 1953 Bednarik wrote the sociological essay *Der Junge Arbeiter von Heute, ein neuer Typ* – which was translated into several languages. He argues that we tend to perceive our environment as self-evident and natural; it is hard to realise the actual values and premises that preceded it and the complex mechanisms that make it function. Bednarik states that this awareness is even more difficult due to the acceleration of changes that had taken place. In the 1920s, for example, a young worker used to live with several family members in one room, while in the 1950s he got a room for himself¹¹⁸⁶. Here is a direct connection to ROTTERDAM. It displays the modern city, to know what has been done, so that it can be elaborated. In that respect the film is as open as the city it shows.

§ 2. Open Studio

On Dutch television, Rotterdam got frequently shown for the developments in the port and the advancements of its reconstruction, next to various events like congresses and sports games. This attention increased with the growing demand for television broadcasting, which required more programmes to be made. Yet, there was hardly any professional support locally available, which offered an opportunity to filmmaker Jan Schaper (•1921-†2008). Since 1955 he had already

¹¹⁸⁵ Bednarik, 1955 [1953]: 133-135.

¹¹⁸⁶ Bednarik, 1955 [1953]: 82-83.

worked as a television cameraman, but incidentally. To give it a structural base he turned his 'Open Studio' into a production unit, for camerawork, sound recording, lighting and editing. He was supported by his wife Christine van Roon, who often accompanied him, doing the sound recordings, while she took also care of the administration of the studio. Schaper contracted various talented collaborators, among them the cameramen Ferenc Kálmán Gáll and Mat van Hensbergen¹¹⁸⁷. As the Open Studio was initially established as an actor's group, its members could occasionally assist. This was an advantage in respect of the fluctuations within the field of television production. It might be seen, within Scott's geometry of cultural production, as a small-scale variant of a labour pool, with a variety of skills, that serves rapidly changing work relations.

The Open Studio was established in a building at the Schiekade in Rotterdam. It also used the historic *Zakkendragershuisje* in Schiedam, which Schaper had got at his disposal from the municipality, to establish 'a cultural platform'. For about ten years the Open Studio operated from Rotterdam, until it moved to an old farmhouse in the countryside. While working on the new accommodation, Schaper had a grave accident which actually ended his career¹¹⁸⁸.

In a decade or so, the studio collaborated on more than one thousand television productions, among them well-known programmes¹¹⁸⁹. The studio worked for all Dutch broadcasting stations, whether they were Protestant Christian, Catholic, liberal or socialist¹¹⁹⁰. This even included the commercial television 'pirate' TV Noordzee (REM), for which Schaper and his colleagues made the recordings of the infamous Rolling Stones concert in Scheveningen (1964-08-08)¹¹⁹¹. The fact that the Open Studio was established in Rotterdam has contributed to the frequency of recordings made in the city, like some exterior shots for JA ZUSTER, NEE ZUSTER and, for example, recordings for a series on professions, which Schaper directed himself, in collaboration with Jan van Hillo (TOEKOMSTMUZIEK, 'Future Melodies', NCRV, 1962-1964). For an episode on business (1963-01-04) Schaper and Kálmán Gáll made shots in the yards of Wilton-Fijenoord and Verolme, and in the city centre; for episodes on clergymen and mannequins some of the people came from Rotterdam. Of special interest are also staged documentary shorts on the port, which Schaper directed and produced for the youth programme VERREKIJKER (NTS). In the first one, DE PIER (1965), a boy called Tom visits the pier of Hook of Holland where he watches ships leaving the port, like the 'SS Rotterdam'. He forgets the tide: flood is coming, but he reaches the beach just in time. In another film (DE TROS, 1965), Tom observes a tugboat, and he is invited to come aboard. He watches a torn hawser and wants to know more about the way these ropes are made, so he comes to visit the old ropery in Vlaardingen, for which Schaper, not by coincidence, made already a (commissioned) documentary before (350 JAAR IN TOUW, 1961).

Although the Open Studio collaborated on various productions, the emphasis was on informative programmes. As such Schaper also made news reports and documentaries on events and issues in the city, like a taxi strike, a pastoral council at 'De Doelen', developments concerning shopping centre 'De Lijnbaan' and various reports on air pollution in the port area¹¹⁹². Among them is a number of critical documentaries by the NCRV. Whereas the VPRO had first shown POLDERS VOOR INDUSTRIE (1961, Wim van der Velde), with nature, farmhouses and villages being sacrificed for industry, the NCRV showed a specific case: the dramatic and

¹¹⁸⁷ As well as Hans Visser and Robert Collette a.o., and for sound Hans de Ridder, Martin van Dalen a.o.

¹¹⁸⁸ The farmhouse was located between Schoonhoven and Lopik, in the Green Heart. Schaper finally recovered from the accident, and started to work again, but this was limited to a few productions on which he collaborated, e.g. a script for IN GESPREK (1978, René van Nie), a PTT film on the social dimension of telephony (Amsterdam).

¹¹⁸⁹ E.g. MIES EN SCENE (Mies Bouwman), and (children) series such as PIPO DE CLOWN, DORUS and JA ZUSTER, NEE ZUSTER.

¹¹⁹⁰ It worked, however, most frequently for the following stations and directors (a.o.): VARA (Henk Barnard), NCRV (Jan van Hillo/Kees van Langeraad), KRO (Joop Reinboud), and the small IKOR (André Truymán).

¹¹⁹¹ Cf. www.mediapages.nl/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1761 (2008-04-03)

¹¹⁹² Resp.: ATTENTIE [taxi strike], NCRV, 1965-04-01; KENMERK [pastoral council] IKOR, 1967-01-23; REGIOVIZIER [De Lijnbaan], AVRO, 1967-11-11; [Niet Bekend], Pier Tania/VARA, 1965-05-19; BRANDPUNT, KRO, 1966-02-24.

merciless vanishing of the village Nieuwesluis¹¹⁹³. Next to that, Schaper also collaborated with Ad Langebent, to report on air pollution in the harbour, especially in respect of the oil industries (BRANDPUNT, KRO, 1966-02-24) and with Jan van Hillo on a series about environmental issues, called WIJ STINKEN ERIN (1970)¹¹⁹⁴. The first episode deals with pollution in the Botlek area, including spectacular images of a fire at a Gulf refinery.

With the Open Studio, a certain convergence took place between *Standort* and *Tatort*. At the same time, however, the Open Studio made recordings all over the Netherlands. Moreover, the Open Studio was asked to make recordings across the globe¹¹⁹⁵. Schaper and his colleagues operated as ‘parachutist correspondents’, as Hannerz would have it (2004: 42). This was not at random though. ‘There is probably often an interaction between immediate personal experiences and general enduring orientations, on the one hand, and, on the other, the knowledge and sensibility built up by the news flow’ (Hannerz, 2004: 37). Hannerz speaks of ‘the embedding of foreign news’; there is a certain interest of the public that gets informed, which differs from others, including the way they understand it. ‘Foreign news, in other words, can be quite differently embedded in our overall background understanding of the world’ (Hannerz, 2004: 37). An example is the above mentioned documentary series WIJ STINKEN ERIN, which also included interviews in the USA with the renowned cellular biologist and environmentalist, Professor Barry Commoner, and science-fiction author Alvin Toffler. The issue at stake here, which had a direct link with the port of Rotterdam, was linked to international developments.

Schaper contributed substantially to the results of such reports. Although he was not the director, he used to have extensive conversations with the people to be interviewed before shooting. He brought the issues towards a certain level of interest and depth, and enabled them to react accordingly¹¹⁹⁶. However, Schaper’s name is often not even mentioned in the credits (including the archive files). A practical reason is the fact that the productions were shot on 16mm film and that the credits were added electronically during broadcasting. In this way names have not been documented whatsoever. Yet there is more to it. Except for Peter Scholten’s documentary JAN SCHAPER; THE CITY, THE LIGHT AND THE FILM (2005), the Open Studio has not been mentioned in any serious study whatsoever. This is partly due to the fact that it was based in Rotterdam, instead of Hilversum or Amsterdam. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the work of cameramen as compared to that of directors. Schaper’s work, however, might be compared to that of a press photographer. He made all kinds of ‘moving photographs’ of things he found interesting, especially in Rotterdam, whether or not he could use them later on.

Schaper also made commercials for cinema and promotion films (e.g. for Luxaflex, Kodak, NAM / Shell-Esso, Gasunie), which he directed and produced himself¹¹⁹⁷. They should not be framed in terms of *auteur* or art films. They have created access to the environment and supported its development, like films for the *Havenbedrijf Vlaardingen Oost* (1960, 1967) and for the *Havenvakschool*. The latter was the initiative of Jan Backx (director of *Thomsens Havenbedrijf*¹¹⁹⁸), to professionalise the labour in the port that faced increasing complexity. In 1960, Schaper collaborated with the NCRV television on a documentary about the school, and three years later Jan Schaper, Jan van Hillo and Ferenc Kálman Gáll, made another one for this

¹¹⁹³ i.e. NIEUWESLUIS VAN DE KAART, Leo Moen: NCRV, 1968-09-30.

¹¹⁹⁴ paraphrasing a proverb, meaning ‘We are Trapped’ while literally saying ‘We stink into it’)

¹¹⁹⁵ E.g. USA, Vietnam, Indonesia, Israel, Suriname, Venezuela, South-Africa, Kenya, Gambia, and European countries.

¹¹⁹⁶ As addressed by Christine van Roon, 2008-04-16; cf. JAN SCHAPER; THE CITY, THE LIGHT AND THE FILM (2005, Peter Scholten).

¹¹⁹⁷ Examples of commercials concerning Rotterdam: REISBUREAU BROERE (1969); VW-DEALER HOOGENBOOM (1966, Jan Schaper); the examples of promotional films mentioned here are: 4 DECEMBER 1964 – 12,5 JAAR N.J.F. [Luxaflex] (1964); AARDGAS WAT KOOP IK ERVOOR (1965), VREEMDE VOGELS OVER JE LAND (1971), MET KODAK IN ODIJK (1975).

¹¹⁹⁸ Cf. Van de Laar, 2000: 519. The school is currently called: ‘Scheepvaart en Transport College’.

broadcasting station, WEG NAAR DE WERELD, and more films on the school would follow¹¹⁹⁹. They show a network of different applications that served the same purpose: giving publicity to the school, to contribute to a well-organised harbour in the end.

Exemplary is also PORT OF GRAIN (MEER MANNEN MINDER, 1972), for the *Graan Elevator Maatschappij* (GEM). Schaper has called it one of his best films, which he made over a period of three years. It contains impressive shots of the handling of bulk and the labour it requires in order to feed the city, the country and its hinterland. There are similarly shots of the technical installations, and the efforts to keep the ‘port of grain’ running, with science-fiction like management systems and control chambers. Notwithstanding this functionalism, Schaper also plays with the symbolism of the subject. To show the enterprise, he follows a group of tourists on excursion through the port, particularly a young blonde woman, who wears oversized sunglasses, and who behaves like a movie star. While she sensually takes off her glasses, the installations suck and ejaculate all kinds of seeds from and into the body of the ships.

The film shows the classic elevators, which the narrator calls ‘insects’, and the transition that takes place to use mobile installations with more capacity. With five hoses each, these multipotent mastodons also look like insects. Such a view is similar to that of TOPSPORT ZONDER TRIBUNE (1970) for the *Havenvakschool*, in which Schaper called lifting trucks ‘the ants of the port’¹²⁰⁰. In an anthill, different agents have complementing tasks to do; the films by Schaper show similarly different tasks. Together they make up a cluster of films that reflect the links between agents in the port. It establishes a direct connection to the stigmergy in social insects, as a matter of social organisation mediated through signs (here: films) related to the environment.

Besides the port, there are other clusters within Schaper’s oeuvre, in particular concerning youth culture, and urban development, including his triptych on Vlaardingen, Rotterdam, and Schiedam – which were the places where he actually lived himself¹²⁰¹. Architecture and planning play an important role in it. The film on Schiedam, and its production history, is a case to put this into perspective. Moreover, it shows a transition in Schaper’s thinking, departing from the high-modernist view expressed in the film on Vlaardingen (1958).

Schaper in Schiedam

At the end of 1961, the city of Schiedam invited Schaper to make a film, due to the success of his film on Vlaardingen. Even before he presented his plan to the city council, it was reported by the newspaper *Het Vrije Volk* (1962-02-24), where Schaper had previously worked as a journalist. It had its effects. When Schaper gave his presentation, two other papers were present next to *Het Vrije Volk*, making it something important from the onset¹²⁰². They reported that Schaper turned the council chamber into a cinema to show VLAARDINGEN KOERST OP MORGEN (1958) and some draft images of Schiedam. Schaper based his plan on information from city archivist Piet Kuyer and the novella *Verbrande Erven* (1944) by Ferdinand Bordewijk¹²⁰³. His script began with *Zwart*

¹¹⁹⁹ The first one is HAVENARBEID: EEN VAK! (1960, Kees van Langeraad/NCRV). Schaper made additionally a commercial (1967), and in 1969 another documentary for NCRV (WEG VAN DE HAVEN, 1970-02-02). A ten minutes version of it was shown at the C’70, next to TOPSPORT ZONDER TRIBUNE (1970). It dealt with lifting trucks, emphasizing the skills of the drivers and stimulating the imagination of the (young) public. Cf. Polygoon, 1967-wk07

¹²⁰⁰ A similar analogy was made by the municipal office for information and publicity; it presented Rotterdam as a beehive (through graphics by designer Jeanette Kossmann). See the cover of the quarterly magazine *Rotterdam*, 1968, vol. 6/2, and e.g. of the promotional booklet *Rotterdam Europoort* (1971, Harry Edzes, ed.) – Gemeentelijk Bureau Voorlichting en Publiciteit, Rotterdam. The official logo of the municipality would later become a kind of honeycomb (see e.g. the municipal magazine *Rondvraag* 1973/1).

¹²⁰¹ As Schaper has emphasised himself in an interview by Jop Pannekoek (ROETS 14, 1989), and which is also an important issue in Peter Scholten’s documentary JAN SCHAPER – THE CITY, THE LIGHT AND THE FILM (2005).

¹²⁰² ‘Schapers film in Raadzaal: Wellicht opdracht voor documentaire’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 1962-03-24; ‘Schapers film zou en dramatisch beeld van Schiedam geven, een stad van felle historisch contrasten’, *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 1962-03-24; ‘Jan Schaper begon al aan documentaire over Schiedam’, in: *Het Nieuwe Dagblad*, 1962-03-24.

¹²⁰³ As mentioned in the first report by *Het Vrije Volk*, 1962-03-24.

Schiedam where the smoke of 300 gin distilleries had made the city black. After the collapse of this industry, due to the steam engine, the city invested in its harbour. The script revolves around the encounter between tradition and modernity, which Schaper also showed in his drafts: excavations of a Celtic settlement, the old harbours, picturesque façades and smoking chimneys in the historic centre, versus pre-fabricated housing and the construction of a new railway station. There was appreciation for his work, although Mayor J.W. Peek remarked that the script paid still too much attention to draglines and cranes, and generic housing, instead of place-specific issues¹²⁰⁴.

A few days later the commission was confirmed¹²⁰⁵. There were four aims to it: documentation for next generations, a visiting card for tourists, a welcome to new residents, and a new image of this former gin city to generate ‘goodwill’ elsewhere. The idea was to release it in July 1963¹²⁰⁶. More than a year later, in October 1964, Schaper presented the film to the Mayor and Aldermen, but it was not released. Instigated by newspaper reports, *all the chairmen* of the political parties in the city council asked the Mayor and Aldermen questions about it¹²⁰⁷. What was at stake? Schaper had become critical of the plans to sanitise the historic centre. Moreover, he advocated to place people central. In June 1965, he showed it again to the Mayor and Aldermen, at the *Zakkendragershuisje*. Still there was no approval. In January 1966, Schaper invited new Mayor H. Roelfsema and his aldermen to his studio in Rotterdam¹²⁰⁸. The ‘opinions were divided’, which lead again to questions in the city council¹²⁰⁹. In the meantime Schaper’s film on Rotterdam was broadcast on television. Not much later the Mayor and Aldermen of Schiedam accepted *SCHIEDAM Kiest voor het Water* (“Schiedam chooses for the water”)¹²¹⁰. Yet, further commotion arose as its premiere took place in the small Monopole theatre, and no further screenings were planned. Newspaper *Het Vrije Volk* spent a long article on it, since the Mayor considered the film a ‘failure’. In defence of the film, the article said:

It particularly turned out that the Mayor and Aldermen did not share the opinions of Jan Schaper concerning the commentary. Because Jan Schaper is completely honest. He does not, happily, beat about the bush. His film shows the things uncovered, but he will also show the beautiful sides. His language is real; what he goes through as a human being in a city like Schiedam is shown on the screen and that will not always be favourable – how could it be otherwise in modern society with its hurried tensions, air pollution, commerce and mass housing. But that is, it seems, exactly the power of the film. There existed also aversion to the film on Rotterdam, as one does not want to recognize, in the *Maasstad*, that one completely surpasses the human being in this gigantic ‘desert of stones’. A fact is, however, that Jan Schaper, at the screening of the Rotterdam film, after a profound explanation to the public relations people, achieved a moral victory, as one finally recognised the value of the documentary. Considered in this way the film on Schiedam will also win the hearts of the citizens, although they hardly get a chance to see Schaper’s creation, and that is a great pity.¹²¹¹

¹²⁰⁴ As mentioned in the report by the *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 1962-03-24.

¹²⁰⁵ It had to be a film of half an hour, for a budget of 36,000 guilders (ca. € 16,300, without corrections for inflation).

¹²⁰⁶ ‘Schaper filmde resten van “landelijke” Kethel’, *De Rotterdammer*, 1963-09-17.

¹²⁰⁷ ‘Raadsleden stelden vele vragen bij Begrotingsonderzoek; film van Jan Schaper voor wethouders vertoond’, *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 1964-10-22. ‘En Schaper...? Hij filmde voort’, *Het Nieuwe Dagblad*, 1964-11-14; ‘Aan de Schie’, *De Rotterdammer*, 1964-11-25 – the report mentions that on 1964-10-13 the film was shown to Mayor and Aldermen.

¹²⁰⁸ ‘De film van Jan nog steeds niet voor Alleman...’, *Het Nieuwe Stadsblad*, 1966-01-12.

¹²⁰⁹ ‘Jan Schaper: “Over drie weken is de film klaar”’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 1966-02-22; ‘Vragen van Raadsleden; waar blijft film van Jan Schaper’, *De Schiedammer*, 1966-03-02.

¹²¹⁰ Various newspaper announcements in *Het Vrije Volk* (1966-06-30), *De Schiedammer* (1966-06-30), *De Rotterdammer* (1966-06-30), *Het Nieuwe Stadsblad* (1966-07-01).

¹²¹¹ ‘Valt documentaire over Schiedam nog vóór vertoning al in ongenade?’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 1966-07-01. Original quote: “Met name bleek het college de opvattingen van Jan Schaper over de begeleidende tekst niet te delen. Want Jan Schaper is volkomen eerlijk. Hij draait er, gelukkig, niet omheen. Zijn film geeft de dingen onverbloemd weer, maar zal ook de mooie kanten tonen. Zijn taal is echt; wat hij in een stad als Schiedam als mens ondergaat komt op het

On the 5th of July 1966, the premiere took place. Mayor Roelfsema introduced the film, while Schaper himself ‘could not attend the screening due to work on another production’¹²¹².

Critics were mainly positive. Except for the repetitions they appreciated the way Schaper framed the city’s history, from ‘fire water’ to ‘fare water’ (from gin to harbour), as an argument to exploit the city’s connection to the port of Rotterdam. A critic from *De Tijd* was very enthusiastic about Schaper’s cinematography, with contrasts between atmospheric dark foggy alleys and clear and bright new housing estates, ‘which connects it with the best Dutch documentary traditions’¹²¹³. Most positive was *Het Vrije Volk*, emphasizing Schaper’s criticism.

Through a series of exciting images, accompanied by splendid music, the filmmaker shows the urban breakthrough for which everything has to move. Centuries-old trees crack and collapse under the violence of ruthless axes. With muffled bangs of demolition hammers, a historic farmhouse is razed. ...A new housing quarter emerges, called after the farm: *Groenoord* [‘Green place’].¹²¹⁴

Quoting the film comments, the article also emphasised Schaper’s claim to give space to *people*.

“People are now better off than in the past, they are also more beautiful and healthier than before, also freer and they can allow themselves more. However, one is also more hurried, nervous and lonely than before. One is now mostly concerned with oneself.” That is the oppressive warning to a municipal government that has, according to Schaper, to build a city in which a human can be oneself. “A city needs to be a meeting place...”

Besides presenting a vision to the public, Schaper was a critic and an advisor to his commissioners, with film being the medium of communication and the object of reference. Schaper created frames for urban planning, by drawing the city’s historical development and extending it; he addressed continuity and change as preconditions for urban growth.

Schaper had listened to the comment of former Mayor Peek on his first draft, to pay more attention to place-specific and historical features. The film in turn affected the municipal policy¹²¹⁵. But there is more to it. Schaper mobilised the people of the Open Studio, the residents of the Brandersbuurt (the neighbourhood of the *Zakkendragershuisje*), and his contacts in

scherm en dat zal, hoe kan het anders in de moderne samenleving met zijn jachtige spanning, luchtverontreiniging, commercie en massahuizenbouw, niet altijd gunstig zijn. Maar dat is waarschijnlijk juist de kracht van de film. Ook tegen de film over Rotterdam bestond aversie, omdat men in de Maasstad nu eenmaal niet wil erkennen, dat men volkomen voorbij gaat aan de mens in de gigantische “steenwoestijn”. Een feit is echter, dat Jan Schaper bij de vertoning van de Rotterdam-film na een grondige uiteenzetting aan de “public relations”-mensen een morele overwinning behaalde, omdat men ten slotte de waarde van de documentaire erkende. Zo beschouwd zal ook de film over Schiedam de harten van de burgers winnen, maar deze krijgen helaas nauwelijks de kans om Schaper’s creatie te zien en dat is heel erg.’

¹²¹² Roelfsema said that it had been an extensive commission and that Schaper had put his whole soul into it. He also said that the film would be available for all kinds of associations, although he did not allow the directors of Monopole any further screening, even though they were willing to do so. In: ‘Onbehoorlijk’, *De Tijd/De Maasbode*, 1966-07-06.

¹²¹³ Willemsen, Harry; ‘Meer wit dan grijs; Jan Schaper steekt de loftrumpet over Schiedam’, *De Tijd/De Maasbode*, 1966-07-06.

¹²¹⁴ See: Snelleman, 1966. Original quotes: ‘Met een serie enerverende beelden, begeleid door prachtige muziek, laat de cineast de doorbraak zien, waarvoor alles moet wijken. Krakend vallen eeuwenoude bomen onder het geweld van van nietsontziende bijlen om; met doffe klappen van slopershamers wordt een historische boerderij geslecht. ... Een nieuwe woonwijk ontstaat, genoemd naar de boerderij: Groenoord.’ Ibid: “De mensen hebben het thans beter dan vroeger, ze zijn ook mooier en gezonder dan vroeger, ook vrijer en ze kunnen zich meer permitteren. Maar men is ook gejaagder dan vroeger, nerveuzer en eenzamer dan vroeger. Men is meer met zichzelf bezig.” Dat is de beklemmende waarschuwing aan een gemeentebestuur, dat volgens Schaper een stad behoort te bouwen, waar een mens zichzelf kan zijn. ‘Een stad behoort een plaats van ontmoeting te zijn....’

¹²¹⁵ Schiedam has nowadays a well preserved historic centre. It cultivates it to such an extent that it hardly corresponds to the historic city anymore, which was dirty and hard to live in.

Hilversum; several protest actions in Schiedam were reported on television, which were shot by Schaper, except for one in which he is to be seen himself, explaining the situation¹²¹⁶. In this way even the Dutch Secretary of State C. Egas (culture & welfare) came to give a speech in favour of historic city centres. These reports became extensions of Schaper's film.

town without a heart

In 1964, Schaper started the production of *STAD ZONDER HART* (*TOWN WITHOUT A HEART*, 1966¹²¹⁷). This film, about Rotterdam, was his own initiative and financed by the Open Studio itself. The camerawork was carried out by Ferenc Kálman Gáll and Hans Visser, next to Schaper himself, while the sound recordings were done by his wife Christine van Roon and by Martin van Dalen. The film is about the reconstructed city centre. The main problem here, according to Schaper, is the limited number of dwellings. The city has become a clinical environment that is empty after rush-hour. In the morning people come in from the new suburbs, to return there again in the evening. Only on Saturdays the city is as lively as before WWII, which is illustrated by images of *EN TOCH ROTTERDAM...* (1950, Polygon-Profilti), which included shots of Von Barys's *THE CITY THAT NEVER RESTS* (1928)¹²¹⁸. The old city was characterised by intimacy, chaotic movements, street musicians and salesmen, and all kinds of folks. The new one is straight and regulated, just like the Coolsingel and the Hofplein, which lack the human scale with their new high-rise offices. Schaper advocated a city in which the people are the main concern, instead of buildings. It should be an 'urban fabric' that allows for opposed movements, in which individuals can find their own ways to discover and to develop themselves. Schaper especially made a case for the youth, as they come to the city to meet each other. Therefore they need cafés, clubs, musical stages and cultural workshops, of which there are some, but not enough.

Like in the film on Schiedam, pluriformity is propagated, instead of one particular development. Oppositions, paradoxes and conflicts make a city. People do not know what they are looking for. People give always reasons that are not essential; one does not know the essential reasons. This could be Schaper's own explanation of his films¹²¹⁹. They report the clash as well as the co-existence between tradition and modernity. With his films Schaper searches for the undefined interstice, a creative force between different positions. From that perspective, city planning is observed and tested against the human norm. Development and growth are no fixed notions that can be applied unconditionally. Development and growth are processes that need to be lived. Schaper regards cities as organic entities that have interchangingly to do with periods of prosperity and decay, and which are, after all, the result of self-organisation.

Schaper has indicated that his view was largely based upon the ideas of the American critic Lewis Mumford. Mumford in his turn (1957) considered Bakema's 'De Lijnbaan' as an example of urban planning and design based on the 'human measure'. Being involved with the reconstruction of Rotterdam, Bakema gave expression to the modernism he attempted to reform. Schaper followed a similar track, and not by coincidence, since Schaper knew Bakema personally¹²²⁰. Schaper also departed from modernist ideas without losing them altogether. In *STAD ZONDER HART* there is a scene shot from the Euromast, showing a vast urban landscape, with the comment that at this point 'one realises that something great has arisen here'. However, entering the city again one understands that it still lacks a metropolitan climate. The city plan is criticised, but not in terms of architectural style. There is a scene in the film in which Schaper shows his appreciation for the Lijnbaanflats (arch. Maaskant), which are typical functionalist

¹²¹⁶ BRANDPUNT, KRO, 1967-04-20; VJOEW, AVRO, 1967-05-26; MONITOR, NTS, 1967-10-22 (Schaper explaining).

¹²¹⁷ There exists an English version of the film, but there is no information available on its status.

¹²¹⁸ See also the request by Jan Schaper (1965-11-23) to the GAR, to make use of historical footage: Gemeentearchief Rotterdam, archive 'Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst Rotterdam' (archief van het archief), dossier 'correspondentie filmcollectie', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 461 (1958-1962).

¹²¹⁹ Based on personal communication with Jan Schaper, November 2003.

¹²²⁰ Ibid.

housing estates that are part of the overall Lijnbaan-plan. Schaper, like Bakema, favoured a renewed modernism in terms of a different programme.

In the case of Schaper's modernist *VLAARDINGEN KOERST OP MORGEN*, one can already recognise the style of his later films. It is on the one hand straight, with clear frames and some fast sequences, on the other hand it is quiet, poetic, impressionist and picturesque. *STAD ZONDER HART* and *SCHIEDAM KIEST VOOR HET WATER*, in turn, do not break with modernism. They are chronicles of the urban processes in the 1960s, but with their own style. We may explain them through the architectural theory of Hilde Heynen (1999: 224), in particular her idea of 'mimesis'. Things may appear to be normal, but the reflection suspends their continuity through small distortions. Heynen speaks of 'a moment of intensity that subverts what is self-evident' (p224) – a moment that I would call the moment of feedback that creates a 'noise'. The idea of mimesis applies first of all to architecture as 'shelter'. In the context of modernity as 'a state of homelessness', architecture cannot just recreate an existing notion of 'home'. Through mimesis, however, 'architecture can serve as a guide to this permanent quest for dwelling, not by embodying dwelling in any direct sense...but rather by framing it in modernity. This framing has, more than anything else, to do with the way architecture is offering a context for everyday life' (Heynen, 1999: 223). In the same way we can understand Schaper's work. Rather than showing everyday life *in* the modern city, his films show the modern city *as a matter of* everyday life.

Schaper had outspoken ideas about acting, and the desire to make fiction films, which he developed during his stay in Hollywood. According to him, a story fascinates when the audience does not yet know what will happen, but remains curious about it due to the play of the actor. It is best expressed by a figure that seems normal, but still has something enigmatic. In Scholten's documentary on Schaper, it is addressed that Schaper never made the feature film he had in mind¹²²¹. Although the conditions in the Netherlands were not favourable for feature film production, it is a fact that within Rotterdam the *Nederlandse Filmproductie Maatschappij* was able to do so. *STAD ZONDER HART* and other films show that Schaper was not so much concerned with narration, but with observation. Rather than staging the enigmatic, Schaper searched for it in everyday life. What seems to be normal retains unknown layers. In Schaper's triptych, the cities have become the actors, as characters with a will of their own. They play the key roles, but above all they play themselves: the play of the city.

Although *STAD ZONDER HART* was made without a concrete plan for exhibition, it was finally broadcast twice by the NCRV, first on the 14th of May 1966. As the 14th of May 1940 was the date that Rotterdam was destroyed, it attracted much attention, and it immediately raised a discussion, above all within the municipality itself¹²²². Due to this success, the NCRV asked Jan Schaper, in collaboration with Leo Moen, to make a sequel. It included interviews with the officials to enable them to explain their plans. This production would be much shorter, eighteen minutes instead of forty-seven, and made within three months. Hans Visser did the camerawork. Rather different in style, it became also a critical evaluation of urban planning, with the telling title *DE TOEKOMST WORDT DICHTGEBOUWD* ("The Future is Built Full", 1967-04-03). Alderman Polak argues that the people want to live in a modern and healthy environment. It requires new suburbs and modern traffic facilities. An image shows a RET-bus stuck in a jam. Therefore a metro is built, as RET-director Van Leeuwen explains, to supplement the Maastunnel. City planner Fokkinga shows plans to construct new accommodations in the city centre, and plans to build modern quarters like Alexanderpolder and Ommoord. The film remarks that although the reconstruction has reached its completion, one simply continues building. Where will this end,

¹²²¹ Schaper has always kept the idea of making feature fiction films. Many drafts have been made with his actors group, but no one was completed. One of his latest was *MARINA* (1974), shot in the studio of the farmhouse in Lopik. It was a slightly erotic film (at a time that Paul Verhoeven had made the explicitly erotic *TURKISH DELIGHT*, 1973).

¹²²² See, for example, the reference to *STAD ZONDER HART* in 'Valt documentaire over Schiedam nog vóór vertoning al in ongenade?', *Het Vrije Volk*, 1966-07-01.

and to what degree should a city's density be increased? Moreover, the question is asked if the urban environment is actually the most appropriate human habitat at all.

After this production, Schaper started to make more 'sequels', which he never finished. Together with innumerable images that he made all over the city, these recordings built up an extensive collection of 'moving photographs' that read like footnotes and an 'epilogue' to STAD ZONDER HART¹²²³. Not unlike the case of Schiedam, this material leads directly to the activism of the urban renewal movement, particularly concerning Het Oude Westen¹²²⁴.

While Schaper made STAD ZONDER HART, he simultaneously made HET PROCES RENESSE (1966), for the NCRV. Renesse is a coastal village in the province of Zeeland, which by then became a holiday destination, especially among adolescents. The film addresses that most of them escape the city (Rotterdam in particular), where they cannot find what they want. We see boys and girls kissing and playing with each other on the beach and in the dunes, and dancing in clubs. The narrator says that 'many girls between 15 and 18 years old become adults in one summer', which made the film controversial, so that the NCRV decided not to broadcast it. Schaper advocated that youths should have the possibility to discover themselves and each other, for which the beautiful landscape of Zeeland is a suitable environment. However, Schaper also notices that it will be disturbed by the prospect of mass tourism, which demands large accommodations; because of this the possibility for spontaneous play will disappear and boredom will come instead. This film is the counterpart of STAD ZONDER HART, by drawing a vision on urbanism outside the municipal borders and into the domain of human needs and desires. It is a recurrent vision, since something similar was presented by the fiction film LENTELIED (1936, Simon Koster), which also deals with metropolitan life in Rotterdam and leisure in Zeeland, and which was also censored, for the suggestive 'naked knee' (of actress Ank van der Moer). After thirty years the Netherlands was still not ready for this, and it also had to wait before it could become manifest within urban planning. In order to change things, Schaper also made TEGENSPEL (1969), commissioned by welfare organisation Salco, which enabled youths in Rotterdam and elsewhere to express their experiences in connection to their environment.

I have indicated some 'clusters' within Schaper's oeuvre, concerning port, city and youth, but Schaper had many other interests¹²²⁵. In this light we may also frame his work for television, which brought him in contact with many people. The Open Studio, and hence Rotterdam, became a node in the network of Dutch television. As a result, a lot of names of people working for film and television that had previously collaborated with Schaper can be mentioned here¹²²⁶.

§ 3. television news

During the 1950s, television news followed the example of cinema newsreels. In their weekly news shows, Polygoon made a story out of each item, with a beginning and an end. The approach

¹²²³ Since 2006, this collection has been at the disposal of the *Gemeentearchief Rotterdam*. In 2007, the Gemeentearchief commissioned Bert Steeman (former editor of the Open Studio) to make an inventory of the Schaper collection = *Inventarisatie Archief Jan Schaper* (AJS). I have subsequently been asked to compile a filmography and to conduct a study concerning the work of Schaper = *Filmografie en Advies aangaande de collectie Jan Schaper* (juni/juli 2007).

¹²²⁴ Early in 1970, the Open Studio was commissioned by the VPRO to make a report, directed by Hans de Ridder, on the presentation of five plans for het Oude Westen and the public discussion following it. This material, however, has (most likely) never been broadcast (it is part of the Schaper collection at GAR, AJS p65 OUDE WESTEN 1 + 2; p71-72 THOMASSEN 1 + 2 + nr. 112). Instead, the VPRO broadcast a brief radio report later on, made by Bob Visser (VPRO-VRIJDAG, 1970-03-27, at: Beeld & Geluid, docid: 77744. De Ridder would later direct the urban renewal film 'T IS GEWOON NIET MOOI MEER' (1976).

¹²²⁵ See e.g. the documentary DE LAATSTE MAN (1970), which is about the legendary football keeper Jan van Beveren, who played for Sparta Rotterdam and the Dutch national team.

¹²²⁶ Christine van Roon and Martin van Dalen became successful sound technicians. The cameramen Ferenc Kálman Gáll, Mat van Hensbergen and Hans Visser collaborated on innumerable film and television productions afterwards. Hans de Ridder became an independent director. Many more names can be mentioned, e.g. Gerard van den Berg (presenter for NCRV), Bert Steeman (editor), Gijs Konings (cameraman) a.o.

of television changed as the frequency of its shows increased. Around 1959, Polygoon lost its leading position. A few years later it lost the competition altogether. It only survived due to the fact that the government granted Polygoon a structural subsidy, for its merits in the past. Polygoon then specialised in providing backgrounds to the news, either by framing the larger picture or, on the opposite, by focusing on particular aspects.

It might be no coincidence that in 1959, too, the main newspapers of Rotterdam, and the Netherlands in general, began to merge¹²²⁷. The media landscape changed, which was happening world-wide. Here I refer to Ulf Hannerz (2004: 31). 'The print media have had to come to terms with the limitation that, to attentive audiences, they can seldom be first with major hard news. So in part, at least, they have to deal with the news, perhaps even define the news, in some other manner.' As Hannerz has it (ibid), news refers to something that just happened, or something we have not come across before or that we find surprising. We might also remark that the very notion of 'news' is connected to 'modernism', with 'new' and 'modern' pointing to the same direction. Redefining the news might therefore also, imply redefining modern society.

For the next decades, reports on local issues remained predominantly a matter of the press¹²²⁸. Although arguments were made in favour of local broadcasting, for the time being the relationship between Rotterdam and television was based on national interests. Yet, this was also subject to change, both in form and content. With an increasing frequency of television news, reports became gradually sections of larger narratives. Television news was seen as the 'front-page', which linked up to various longer reports by (competing) television news magazines that provided background information, 'feature stories' or 'human interest'¹²²⁹. This was also institutionally arranged, since all broadcasting associations operated together in the overarching NTS. Reports thus referred to one another. Some people, like cameramen, worked for several programmes at the same time. Such cross-references extended to newspapers, which initially even published reviews of the JOURNAAL¹²³⁰.

At first, NTS reports were made by a small team of reporters based in Bussum and Hilversum. Cameramen and sound technicians of Cinecentrum carried out the recordings. Over the course of the 1960s, the numbers of reports increased, and the NTS JOURNAAL frequently got to use the services of (local) freelance correspondent-cameramen¹²³¹. This established a direct connection between *Standort* and *Tatort*, so that television news became firmly anchored in the city's cultural ecology. The correspondent-cameraman for Rotterdam became Pim Korver. He had worked for Cinecentrum before, from 1958 until 1963, when he established his own company in Rotterdam¹²³². As such he would make reports for the NTS, as well as other broadcasting stations, for more than forty years (for which the city gave him an honorary distinction in 2006, the *Wolfert van Borselenpenning*)¹²³³.

¹²²⁷ E.g. *De Tijd* and *De Maasbode*, as well as the *NRC* and *Algemeen Handelsblad*. Others spent extra attention to publicity, such as *Het Vrije Volk* (see the promotion film: HEET VAN DE NAALD, 1959, Herman Wassenaar). The latter eventually redirected itself; although *Het Vrije Volk* had been one of the most popular Dutch national newspapers, it became a local newspaper (1972), next to *Het Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*; Van de Laar, 2000: 580. Cf. JOURNAAL (1971-08-25, NOS).

¹²²⁸ In fact, the newspaper *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad* started to do experiments with local (cable) television. A. Daane, in: 'Stichtingsvorm voor regionale omroep in Rotterdam', p2 in: Elfferich, Edzes, Matthijsse, 1973.

¹²²⁹ I.e. KRO's BRANDPUNT; NCRV's HIER EN NU; IKOR's KENMERK, AVRO's TELEVIZIER, NTS' MONITOR.

¹²³⁰ In the case of Rotterdam, e.g. on a report about the test trip of the 'SS Statendam' (*De Tijd*, 1957-01-24, quoted by Scheepmaker, 1981: 23; he also refers to reports by the *Rotterdams Parool*, 1957-08-19).

¹²³¹ In February 1970, the personnel of the NOS Journaal counted fifty-five people, thirty-five of them being editors; the JOURNAAL made often use of freelance-journalists (Scheepmaker, 1981: 68). This certainly counted for cameramen. Most of the reports have been left uncredited, which makes it hard to trace things today.

¹²³² Information by Pim Korver, from a conversation with FP, 2008-12-05.

¹²³³ 'Rotterdamse onderscheiding voor filmer Pim Korver', in: *Algemeen Dagblad*, 2006-01-16.

<http://www.ad.nl/ad/nl/1002/Showbizz/article/detail/92386/2006/01/16/Rotterdamse-onderscheiding-voor-filmer-Pim-Korver.dhtml> (website visited: 2009-12-03).

An early production by Korver was a report for the AVRO, about maritime towing operations¹²³⁴. It included spectacular aerial shots of an oil-rig and of tugboats at sea. As a consequence of it, many such recordings would follow¹²³⁵. The Open Studio also employed him as a cameraman, for example for an NCRV documentary on the shipwreck of the ‘Ping An’ on the Dutch coast¹²³⁶. Under the name of the Open Studio, he also made some reports for the NTS JOURNAAL, about issues like a collapsed construction of a new car park, or the theft of a police car. As he became the regular local correspondent, he would report on a range of other events, such as mutiny at a carrier at sea with the navy intervening, explosions at refineries, strikes in the port, a fire in a Turkish boarding-house, and chaos in the Waalhaven harbour due to an accident with the Norwegian ship Tatra, to mention just a few examples¹²³⁷.

J. van Rhijn became another correspondent in Rotterdam. He was a well-experienced photographer, who worked for different newspapers, while he was also Rotterdam’s correspondent of the Associated Press¹²³⁸. Just like the photographer and filmmaker Charles Breijer, who already worked for the NTS in the 1950s, he had been part of the resistance group *De Ondergedoken Camera* during WWII¹²³⁹. In the early 1960s, Van Rhijn bought film equipment and started to make newsreels as well. An early report that he made for the NTS (1962-12-19), which was internationally transmitted by the European Broadcasting Union, was about drift ice on the river Hollandsche IJssel, which obstructed shipping near Rotterdam¹²⁴⁰. Van Rhijn reported on different issues, but probably the strongest impact was had by his spectacular and often alarming reports on various accidents and especially explosions and fires that occurred once in a while at the (petrochemical) industry in the Botlek area and the Europoort¹²⁴¹. Due to the growing numbers of issues covered, it occurred that on one day Van Rhijn, like Korver, might shoot three different reports across the city¹²⁴². These reports concerned the monitoring of ‘ecological parameters’, both biotic and abiotic (or social and material). The increasing complexity of their interdependency called for a structural local media engagement.

Something similar was said by Koos de Gast (1973: 9), journalist of the *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, but he expressed it as a critique at the NOS. ‘The current broadcasting associations and the NOS hardly follow the important issues that are going on in Rotterdam and its region. Rotterdam is only news when a ship is at fire, when there is an explosion at a refinery and when an alert has been announced’¹²⁴³. His conclusion was that Rotterdam hardly counted in Hilversum and Bussum, neither in respect of major issues for the city itself, nor in the case of more ordinary things such as fairs, unlike their counterparts in Amsterdam. The national news coverage showed indeed a bias, at least in numbers, which was addressed by others too (e.g. Van der Staay, 1973: 13), but things were changing in the early 1970s – probably under influence of this discussion.

¹²³⁴ TELEVIZIER: ZEESLEEPVAART, 1964-06-18, Pim Korver.

¹²³⁵ E.g. on a Belgian fishing ship near Hook of Holland, which caught a mine in its net; JOURNAAL, NTS, 1966-08-10.

¹²³⁶ I.e. PING AN, Leo Moen, NCRV, 1966-09-27 (the accident happened near Ter Heijde).

¹²³⁷ JOURNAAL (NTS/NOS): [car park] 1968-03-06; [theft police car] 1968-06-02; [mutiny at Liberian carrier ‘African Monarch’] 1967-12-24; [fire at Gulf refinery] 1969-11-15; [strike] 1969-01-03; [boarding house, together with Van Rhijn] 1971-01-01; [harbour, accident] 1971-08-28.

¹²³⁸ Colophon of the magazine *Rotterdam*, vol. 6/1, 1968, Gemeentelijk Bureau Voorlichting en Publiciteit, Rotterdam.

¹²³⁹ http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Ondergedoken_Camera (2008-08-10). See also the photographic book *Rotterdam 1940-1946* by Van Rhijn (1947).

¹²⁴⁰ Shot near Capelle aan den IJssel (Rotterdam agglo.). The Hollandsche IJssel is a tributary of the Rhine / Maas.

¹²⁴¹ E.g. JOURNAAL, 1967-10-16, at Europoort; 1968-02-28 and 1971-10-13 and 1974-10-14 at Shell, Pernis; 1973-01-20, explosion at tanker Hallanger, Botlek; 1973-08-15, fire at factory Cindu-Key & Kramer, Maassluis; 1973-11-26, fire in a shed of chemicals at Waalhaven; 1974-05-29, fire at Oxirane, Botlek; among others.

¹²⁴² On the 29th of May 1974, for example, he reported on the (crucial) municipal elections, a fire at the chemical industry of Oxirane in the Botlek, and the arrival of fans of football club Tottenham at Airport Zestienhoven for the UEFA cup final against Feyenoord (won by the latter) (NOS JOURNAAL 1974-05-29).

¹²⁴³ Original quote: ‘De huidige omroepverenigingen en de NOS volgen nauwelijks de belangrijke zaken die zich in Rotterdam en zijn regio afspelen. Rotterdam is alleen nieuws als er een schip in brand staat, als er een ontploffing op een raffinaderij is en als alarmfase II wordt aangekondigd.’

Due to ever increasing numbers of news shows, and the involvement of well-informed local correspondents, a structural media engagement gradually emerged.

Although Korver made all kinds of news reports, he became particularly specialised in 'port affairs'¹²⁴⁴. A striking example is a report on the embarkation of a complete hospital assembly kit for the liberation front in Northern Vietnam (1974-11-04), which was designed by architect Carel Weeber and his students from the University of Delft¹²⁴⁵. Another one is on a drama with a ship called 'Eco Marino' that sank in the port of Rotterdam, with five casualties (1978-06-08)¹²⁴⁶. Next to his work for the JOURNAAL, Korver carried out various commissions, especially for companies in the port. It exemplifies the link between journalism and business¹²⁴⁷.

Van Rhijn, in turn, also made reports on shipping and the port at large, for example on the last trip of the legendary ship 'Nieuw Amsterdam' to New York (1971-11-08), and on the remarkable tragedy of a whale that visited the port, where it found its death¹²⁴⁸. However, Van Rhijn was especially committed to social and political issues. As such he shot in Rotterdam a demonstration against the war in Vietnam (1972-12-30), people occupying the Portuguese consulate (1974-01-23) and a demonstration against death-sentences in Spain (1975-09-26). Van Rhijn, who turned 65 in 1975, only occasionally made reports afterwards. In his stead, other correspondents frequently came to Rotterdam, among them Jacques de Gier, who was based in The Hague, and Hans Koekoek, who was based in Hilversum, but born and raised in Rotterdam, as the son of a cinema operator¹²⁴⁹.

The reports just mentioned do not only exemplify the local engagement with media, but they also show that international issues found their sediments in Rotterdam – the political situation in Chile would be another case¹²⁵⁰. Illustrative is also an attack of the Palestinian El Fatah movement, which was responsible for an explosion of an oil tank of the Gulf refinery in the Europoort (JOURNAAL, NOS, 1971-03-15)¹²⁵¹. The city's concerns were, in turn, transmitted abroad via the European Broadcasting Union, which included also recordings by foreign

¹²⁴⁴ As such he also shot a.o. the arrival of container ship *Nitron* (JOURNAAL, 1972-06-03), an international show of the port with all kinds of new ships (1972-10-06), and the demonstration of 'Docklift I', a floating dock to transport dredging mills and oil-rigs (1972-10-09), all shot on 16mm colour stock.

¹²⁴⁵ For more information on this project by the *Medisch Comité Nederland Vietnam*, see: Stokvis, 2005: 2.

¹²⁴⁶ Another example is: NOS JOURNAAL, 1978-09-26 (Pim Korver). It was a concentrated 'documentary' of four-and-a-half minutes on different aspects of the port, with departing vessels, dredging ships on the Nieuwe Waterweg, the Europoort development, next to such things like summer houses and allotments near the harbour.

¹²⁴⁷ A case in point is the AVRO-television documentary *SOMS WINT DE ZEE* (1979-01-08, Pim Korver), about the towing companies Wijsmuller and Smit, for which he also made promotion films. Korver also made films for other commissioners, e.g. the *Nederlands Maritiem Instituut* for which he registered the event ROTTERDAM MARITIEM 1978 (1979, Korver). The link between journalism and commissioned films is also exemplified by a film made for the police: *VAN UUR NUL TOT 24* (1968, Pim Korver).

¹²⁴⁸ JOURNAAL (NOS, 1972-05-07 and 1972-05-08).

¹²⁴⁹ Hans Koekoek started his career at Multifilm (Cinecentrum) in 1957, where he became a cameraman in 1960 (see the article: 'Hans Koekoek: "Vakmanschap in de film wordt duur betaald"', in: *Accent*, 1969-05-24, collection NFM > Koekoek). His father, Nathan Koekoek, worked as a cinema operator in Rotterdam since 1928; Hans Koekoek wrote a film script about his father's life (1988), see: GAR, archive: 'Collectie Tj. De Vries betreffende Rotterdamse bioscopen', toegangsnr. 1289, inventarisnr. 127. Koekoek also carried out various productions in Rotterdam, e.g. the promotional film *OP LEVEN EN DOOD* ('On Life and Death', 1971), with people at 'De Lijnbaan' being interviewed about big issues of life, made for *Bureau Voorlichting Levensverzekering* (publicity for life insurance).

¹²⁵⁰ Another important correspondent-cameraman in this respect is Drost, who reported from all over the Netherlands, including Rotterdam, where he made also various reports on political events, such as the international Chile Conference (1977-08-29). Rotterdam's Mayor André van der Louw played a prominent role in the Chili Comité (Chile Committee) of the Socialist International, in order to support the opposition against Pinochet. Two years before, the committee had already organised a conference in Rotterdam (1975-03-13), see: 'Bezoekers', p22 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 13/3, 1975. In those years, there were also frequently protest actions in Rotterdam against the Chilean regime, see e.g. *ACHTER HET NIEUWS* (VARA, 1975-03-27) and *KENMERK* (IKON, 1976-04-14 and 1977-03-23), about actions against the import of Chilean fruit in the port of Rotterdam.

¹²⁵¹ Cf. Van Nimwegen, 2007: 43.

television stations, especially Visnews (UK)¹²⁵². Besides that, various other foreign television crews came to Rotterdam, which made Rotterdam, in the words of Hannerz, part of the ‘global ecumene’.

ongoing news

A news report may be a little story in itself, but several together make a network, in which they are linked to other reports and documentaries, on the basis of correspondences in terms of content, form and productional features. The stories told in this way could be understood as ‘developing compositions’, which show resemblances to narrative structures from fiction film. One case would be the reports on a murdered taxi driver, in December 1970. The reports do not deal with the murder itself, but with its effects. Taxi drivers organise a one hour strike, with their cars parked at the Coolensingel (JOURNAAL, NOS, 1970-12-23). It is followed, three days later, by the cause: a man has been killed, which is illustrated by the funeral and the procession in which eight hundred taxis take part (1970-12-26). Finally the solution is shown: the first taxi in Rotterdam that is protected against criminal behaviour (1970-12-31). The story, with a running time of two minutes spread over nine days, is told from the perspective of the colleagues, and their anxiety is taken as the starting point. We might add here a seven minutes VPRO-report two weeks later (WAS ER NOG WAT, 1971-01-14), in which taxi drivers are interviewed on taking Surinamese clients, and if drivers need to be armed. Instead of the struggle of fellow taxi drivers, the identity of the murderer is the starting point, which is taken as a broad social issue.

From the network perspective we might also consider a Polygoon report made one year later, which was implicitly motivated by the murder of December 1970. It addressed that Rotterdam had got the biggest taxi centre of Europe¹²⁵³. Besides the service of operators to send a taxi to a client, the centre also undertakes action when a taxi driver calls for help. It is illustrated by a *staged* scene of an assault on a taxi driver. The driver pushes an emergency button, after which the centre asks the police and other taxi drivers to chase the criminal.

On the 3rd of April 1975, another taxi driver was killed, in Kralingseveer. This time it was a ‘crime thriller’, as the killer remained anonymous and still had to be found. Also in this case the reports became a *feuilleton*¹²⁵⁴. As the story went on, the viewer became involved with the news in order to know what would happen next. The connection with fiction film is also illustrated by a reconstruction of the taxi driver’s last rides (KRO’s BRANDPUNT (1975-05-03). The idea of a developing composition applies to many news reports. Another example is the case of the historic ‘Koninginnekerk’ (“Queen’s Church”). After it had already attracted substantial attention because of its possible demolition¹²⁵⁵, the JOURNAAL broadcast a ‘serial’ of four newsreels by Pim Korver. On the 3rd of January 1972, it reported on plans to demolish the church. Three days later, it showed a protest demonstration against these plans, which was followed one week later (1972-01-14) by a report on the demolition of the church. Two months later the serial’s (anti) climax took place, as the last tower was exploded (1972-03-22).

Being based in Rotterdam, Korver was also able to shoot another ‘serial’, on conflicts between Dutch citizens and Turkish *gastarbeiders*. The first report dealt with the fact that Dutch people entered a Turkish boarding house in the Afrikaanderwijk in order to throw out furniture

¹²⁵² Examples of transmissions by EBU, see: NTS JOURNAAL, 1967-07-24 on the opening by Luns of a BP refinery, Europoort], Korver’s report (NOS JOURNAAL, 1971-12-04) on the first Austrian ship since 1918; Van Rhijn’s report on the tanker Andromeda that got jammed under the railway bridge and obstructed train traffic (1976-02-12), or Korver’s general impression of the ready Europoort area (1978-09-26). For examples of reports by Visnews, see filmography.

¹²⁵³ GROOTSTE TAXICENTRALE VAN EUROPA, Polygoon, 1972-wk21.

¹²⁵⁴ Correspondent-cameraman Van Rhijn, for the JOURNAAL (1975-04-08), reported a funeral-procession of taxis behind the hearse of B. Hartmann. KRO’s BRANDPUNT (1975-04-16) showed the police investigating the location, checking passenger lists and taking finger prints; the taxi centre is shown and drivers are interviewed about protection. On 1975-04-29 the JOURNAAL showed the investigation procedure. KRO’s BRANDPUNT (1975-05-03) followed with a reconstruction of Hartmann’s last rides.

¹²⁵⁵ E.g. KENMERK, IKOR, 1971-10-20; HIER EN NU, NCRV, 1972-01-11.

(1972-08-10). Two days later he showed windows being smashed by Dutch people, and the police that had to intervene. The next day the JOURNAAL reported on riots. On the 14th of August, a report showed Mayor Thomassen and Aldermen Jettinghoff, Vos and Polak going to The Hague, where they discussed the riots with the central government; shots followed of the fights and police intervention. Finally, the damage was recovered. This ‘developing composition’ also included other programmes, as it became a major media event¹²⁵⁶. The *Turkenrellen* (“Turk Riots”) were a climax within a series of reports on foreigners in Rotterdam.

People from various Mediterranean countries came to Rotterdam to work in the port and ship yards like those of Verolme, Wilton-Fijenoord and RDM¹²⁵⁷. It attracted the attention of the media, which, at the same time, became also available to them to express their ideas. The NOS, for example, began the programme PASPOORT, for immigrants to make their own television programme, with editions in various languages (e.g. Turkish, Portuguese, Yugoslavian)¹²⁵⁸. Besides Mediterranean immigrants, an important influx came from the Dutch colony Suriname since its independence in 1975¹²⁵⁹. Television reported on this too, while it was also used to inform the Surinamese about matters like housing, as explained by Alderman Elizabeth Smith¹²⁶⁰. However, certain conflicts were inevitable, and Surinamese activists even occupied the Euromast to express their discontent on the municipal *Sociale Dienst* (social service). It was a way to attract media attention, which happened indeed, as the JOURNAAL reported on this protest (NOS, 1977-04-15). At the same time there were also initiatives to promote Surinamese culture by way of media¹²⁶¹.

Many more ‘developing compositions’ could be mentioned here, with the most important being those regarding the harbour strikes of the 1970s, which will be elaborated in Chapter 14.

§ 4. media and the municipality

The municipality supported the emergence of an audiovisual culture in different ways. In accordance with the ideas that had been expressed by the committee for the policy on the arts in 1957, the municipality established the *Gemeentelijke Educatieve Filmotheek*, as a film rental service to educational institutions in the city. Since 1966, until the late 1970s, it built an extensive collection. It included various titles related to Rotterdam, especially regarding its port, next to a substantial number of films that had been made for private companies¹²⁶². Except for this initiative, other developments were slightly different from those envisioned by the committee.

For the production of all sorts of films, including productions for municipal services, the committee had suggested a central role for the *Rotterdamse Kunststichting* (RKS). Until the 1970s, however, the RKS was only incidentally concerned with film. Nevertheless the art project ‘Corpocinema’ (1967, Theo Botschuyver, Jeffrey Shaw, Tjebbe van Tijen, Sean Wellesley-

¹²⁵⁶ See: TELEVIZIER III/45, AVRO, 1972-08-14; BRANDPUNT, KRO, 1972-08-11; HIER EN NU, NCRV, 1972-08-18.

¹²⁵⁷ See e.g. KENMERK, IKOR, 1974-03-13; cf. Van de Laar, 2000: 527.

¹²⁵⁸ It was a programme for immigrants all over the Netherlands, but several editions dealt with Rotterdam; e.g. İlhan Karacı spoke with Mayor Van der Louw on the problems with the Turkish ‘Grey Wolves’ (PASPOORT: TURKS, NOS: 1976-11-14) and PASPOORT: JOEGOSLAVISCH (NOS: 1977-10-06) reported on ‘Wijkcentrum Middelland’.

¹²⁵⁹ E.g. BRANDPUNT, KRO, 1974-09-28; TELEVIZIER V/36, AVRO, 1974-07-01 and TELEVIZIER VII/48, 1976-08-13).

¹²⁶⁰ TV-INFORMATIE VOOR SURINAMERS, NOS, 1976-02-09.

¹²⁶¹ E.g. a video registration by Van Heijningen of the theatre play BA ANANSI WO! WO! WO! (1977), in De Lantaren.

¹²⁶² Films about shipping and the port of Rotterdam included titles such as WIJD EN ZIJD (1964, Han van Gelder), which was a film made for shipping company Phs. Van Ommeren; BAGGER (1967, Tom Tholen), for Volker; WATERWEG (1970, Jan Wiegel), for the Nederlandse Particuliere Rijnvaartcentrale; ZEESLEEPVAART (1976, Pim Korver), for Smit, a.o. Films about the city included titles such as HOUEN ZO! (1952, Herman van der Horst) and EN TOCH... ROTTERDAM (1965, Polygoon). The majority of films, however, dealt with other subjects, and were produced by companies such as Unilever, Shell and Philips, besides Disney and other film companies, next to educational films made by the NOF/NIAM – see the brochure: *Gemeentelijke Filmotheek – Catalogus 1976*, GAR: ‘Collectie Bibliotheek’ P2815; see also: GAR: Archief ‘Gemeentesecretarie Rotterdam afd. Kunstzaken’, toegangsnr. 487.01, ‘Stukken betreffende het aanschaffen van niet-commerciële educatieve films ten behoeve van de gemeentelijke Filmotheek, 1966-1972’.

The Filmotheek was located at Wijnhaven, 25.

Miller) became famous, which was commissioned by RKS chairman Ludo Pieters. It had its premiere at the Schouwburgplein, where a large transparent dome was set up, with dynamic projection surfaces inside (smoke, foam, paint, liquids e.a.). Various kinds of film images were projected on it from the outside, which were combined with light effects from within¹²⁶³.

In 1971 the RKS got its own film section. Its main task became the organisation of Film International (International Film Festival Rotterdam – see Chapter 15.§4). The RKS also supported De Lantaren, which established a film workshop, while it organised film courses too. In addition, the RKS had a modest budget to sponsor art films, from socially motivated documentaries (e.g. WIJK 20, 1974, Staal & Verheijen), to fiction shorts (e.g. AAN DE DEUR, 1979, Thys Ockersen). However, productions made for municipal services were still coordinated by the “Office for Information and Publicity” (*Bureau Voorlichting & Publiciteit*), which I will discuss now.

In 1961, Koos Bax succeeded Jan Nieuwenhuis as the chief information officer. Bax had previously worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and knew the power of media¹²⁶⁴. He immediately approached the *Nederlandse Filmproductie Maatschappij* and commissioned two films, one dealing with the city, the other with the port, for which Jan Blokker wrote the scripts, while Eduard van der Enden became responsible for the cinematography of both films.

The first, fictionalised film is ROTTERDAM (1962, Eimert Kruidhof). An English family gets stuck in Rotterdam when their car breaks down¹²⁶⁵. When it is being repaired they go for a city tour and ‘discover’ sites like the St. Laurens church, De Lijnbaan, Hofplein, Beurs, Euromast, the airport, the port and the seaside, and finally the family stays the night at the Rijnhotel. We also see the city’s cosmopolitan life, with cafés and restaurants, people shopping, as well as Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen and sculptures by De Keyser (‘Erasmus’, 1622), Gabo, and Zadkine. The other film is POORT VAN EUROPA (“Gateway to Europe”, 1962), directed by Ytzen Brusse, who previously made RHYTHM OF ROTTERDAM (1952). First is the Euromast, adding to its fame as the city’s new icon. Next is an overview of the city, the port and its logistics (e.g. radar signalling), its industries, the Botlek and the Maasvlakte that is ‘ideal for settling enterprises’. The industry, it is said, delivers social and urban benefits, regarding housing, shopping, education and recreation. Emblematic is an image of a woman hanging out laundry with industry in the background. In Haanstra-like fashion there is also a shot of boys playing with a toy ship, followed by shots of ship building.

Meanwhile, in 1962, the port of Rotterdam had become the largest in the world, leaving New York in second place. Whereas Rotterdam served already as an international model of urban planning, the success of the port reinforced the attention all the more. As a result, television stations from all over the world came to Rotterdam¹²⁶⁶. It was coordinated by the “Office for Information & Publicity”, particularly by Ivo Blom, since 1958¹²⁶⁷. He made special arrangements, such as interviews, access to firms and sites, facilities to be used for filming, such

¹²⁶³ Premiere on 1967-08-24. It was subsequently shown in Amsterdam (Museumplein). A re-enactment took place in 2005: <http://imaginarymuseum.org/AAAPublic/corpcinema.html> (visited: 2008-07-04); this website includes: ‘Verwarde Corpcinema; “Er is hierbij geen waarom”’, *Het Vrije Volk*, 1967-08-25; ‘Kleurenbol’, *De Courant Nieuws van de dag* (Amsterdam), 1967-09-21; “‘Corpcinema’ novum in Rotterdam’, *De Schiedammer*, 1967-08-26.

¹²⁶⁴ Bax in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 53.

¹²⁶⁵ The family is actually played by Dutch actors, the Rotterdam based couple Steye and Ansjie van Brandenburg and their 12 year old son Peter, see: ‘Rotterdam in Kleur’, p22 in *Rotterdam, officieel tijdschrift van de gemeente Rotterdam*, vol 1/2, 1962.

¹²⁶⁶ This fact was presented early 1963. Reports on it included: WHERE WE STAND (1963, Alex Kendrick/CBS), mentioned (p22) in *Rotterdam, officieel tijdschrift van de gemeente Rotterdam*, vol 1/4, 1963; FLOURISHING EUROPE (1963, Japan), WHAT’S NEW (1963, GB), TODAY SHOW (1963, NBC, USA) [ibid, p21, vol 2/1, 1963]. In the next editions of the magazine more productions are mentioned, by television teams from Germany, USA, Brazil and France (vol. 2/2, 1963), Argentina, Italy, Australia, and again Japan and Germany (3/2, 1964), a.o. Since no further details are known, not all of these titles are included in the filmography.

¹²⁶⁷ Blom in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 74.

as cranes, or boats to travel through the port, collaboration of the police and the fire brigade, or something like a performance of the navy band¹²⁶⁸. Some reports were made on the occasion of official visits of foreign guests, including presidents, business delegates, and planners, who wanted to learn about the achievements of Rotterdam and to establish collaborations, which subsequently reinforced the interest¹²⁶⁹. Striking is the great interest by the Japanese, among them businessmen, managers, scientists, governors, planners and along with them, people from Japanese film and television companies¹²⁷⁰. It resulted in a long lasting collaboration between the ports of Rotterdam and Kobe. This Japanese interest was even the subject of a special report by Desmond Hamill for the British Independent Television News¹²⁷¹. The media interest caused ever more interest. This was finally also reflected by a range of educational films on the world's largest port, for elementary and secondary schools in various countries¹²⁷².

Blom also became the executive for films commissioned by the municipality itself, like ROTTERDAM – EUROPOORT (1966, Joris Ivens) and TOUCH (1967, Tom Tholen). Besides special presentations of these films, whether or not as part of campaigns, the city started an information centre, in 1966, called *Open Boek*, with a small cinema that showed films on a regular basis¹²⁷³. Besides that, Blom collaborated, on behalf of the municipality, on feature film productions. Towards the end of the 1960s, an increasing number of fiction films were produced with images shot in Rotterdam, such as THE DELAY (1968, Nico Crama), TRAFIC (1971, Jacques Tati), L'ALPAGUEUR (1976, Philippe Labro), and SOLDAAT VAN ORANJE (1977, Paul Verhoeven)¹²⁷⁴. The French crime thriller L'ALPAGUEUR may serve as an example¹²⁷⁵. Its opening sequence takes place in Rotterdam, which has been described by Clarke Fountain (2006) as follows:

In this film, L'Alpagueur ['bounty hunter'] is Jean-Paul Belmondo, who does his work with a considerable sense of humor, great charm, and in as 'clean' a way as possible. First, he busts a drug-trafficking ring operating out of Rotterdam by observing that a certain 'pregnant' woman moves in an unusual fashion. Her 'baby' turns out to be a large, specially shaped package of heroin. The drug kingpins stung by his operation seek to find the man who thwarted them....

¹²⁶⁸ Navy band: in the case of WHERE WE STAND, 1963, Alex Kendrick/CBS.

¹²⁶⁹ An example is a report on the occasion of the visit of Edward S. Olcott, from the planning division of the port of New York; 'bezoek', p22 in *Rotterdam, officieel tijdschrift van de gemeente Rotterdam*, vol 2/2, 1963.

¹²⁷⁰ See, for example, the report 'Bezoekers', p22 in *Rotterdam, officieel tijdschrift van de gemeente Rotterdam*, vol 5/2, 1967. It mentions a Japanese production on Rotterdam and the Europoort (director: Kiyoshige Onishi; reporter: Masaaki Shibatsuji, cameraman: M. Koga), who came to Rotterdam in November 1966 and January 1967. On the same page is mentioned the initiative for collaboration between Rotterdam and Kobe. See also e.g. production by Banno, Marita, Koga / NHK (Japan) > on Europoort (Rotterdam, vol. 8/3, 1970, p21); Shimoura, Tomono, Hagiwara / Mainichi Television (Japan) > on Havenvakschool a.o. (vol. 9/2, 1971, p30); Kajima Productions Ltd, Tokyo > on city and port (vol. 9/3, 1971, p22), a.o.

¹²⁷¹ 'Bezoekers', p26 in: *Rotterdam, officieel tijdschrift van de gemeente Rotterdam*, vol 11/2, 1973.

¹²⁷² One of the first was a film by MacGrawHill (USA) – in: 'Bezoekers', p22 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 4/1, 1966. Other educational productions on Rotterdam (not mentioned in the filmography) were made by e.g.: Serge Vallin / French school television > on architecture; Ronnie Mutch & Graham Ironside / Yorkshire Television > city & port; Hans May & Mark Froideveau / Swiss school television > port's mouth Hoek van Holland; A. Walter / Canadian school television > city & port (ref.: vol. 7/3, 1969, p20). See also: ROTTERDAM-EUROPOORT, GATEWAY TO EUROPE (1971, Irv Rusinov), for: Encyclopaedia Britannica (USA); Beppe Wolgers for Swedish school television, (ref. vol. 11/2, 1973: p26); George van Puymbroeck, BRT (Belgium) > on European ports (ref. vol. 12/2, 1974: p25 and 12/3: p26) [= most likely: HAVENS VOOR EUROPA, 1975, STV] .

¹²⁷³ Bertus Schmidt (director of Open Boek), in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 69. *Open Boek* was located in a wing of the *Bouwcentrum* (see also: Bax & Edzes, 1970: 16). In 1976 the *Open Boek* was transformed into H.I.C. (*Hulp- en Informatiecentrum*), located at the central post office, see: BINNENSTADSDAG (1976, J. Vrijhof).

¹²⁷⁴ Blom in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 75. For various other (French, Belgian, German, Japanese a.o.) productions during these years, see e.g. *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 10/2, 1972 – p22, and vol. 11/1, 1973 – p26-27.

¹²⁷⁵ 'Belmondo in Rotterdam', p23 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 14/1, 1976.

The opening scene is shot at a waterfront location in Vlaardingen; it looks like a deteriorated neighbourhood, especially depressing because of the autumn weather¹²⁷⁶. The scene takes place in front of a modestly modern premises that houses an Indonesian restaurant. A shot from the inside shows a view over the river, with on the other side the petrochemical industry of the Botlek. In order to arrest the criminals, policemen are hidden in a typical Dutch three-wheeled *Spijkstaal* milk van, which was used to sell dairy products door-to-door. When the arrest has taken place, Belmondo steps on board of a boat and floats away.

We thus see Rotterdam's port and ships under a cloudy sky, heavy industry, a criminal network and drugs, with indexes of exotic food and domestic dairy, as well as run-down modernism. That seems to be the French image of Rotterdam in the 1970s. How the city and the port were presented was not much of an issue to the municipality; the moviegoer would understand that the conventions of the crime thriller were different from ordinary life. Most important was the concern of attracting attention, which itself had become a *raison d'être*¹²⁷⁷. This is also exemplified by other productions, like the television drama *LIEFDE EN LANGE VINGERS* (1975, Gerben Hellinga, NOS). It tells the story of a girl who has problems at home. She and her boyfriend escape to the big city, where they live from shoplifting. The image of the city seemed realistic¹²⁷⁸. The film was made in a documentary style, due to the cinematography by Mat van Hensbergen, while the actors Cina Timisela and Maarten Spanjer were not professionals yet and unknown until then. *Bureau Voorlichting*, together with the police and the RET (public transport), collaborated also on this film that showed a marginal and unpolished side of Rotterdam¹²⁷⁹. By providing facilitating services, the municipality actively participated in the way Rotterdam was framed¹²⁸⁰.

Historian Paul van de Laar (2000: 521) has pointed to the role of Alderman Hajo Viersen for port affairs, who argued, since 1973, that the development of Rotterdam and its port in the long run required high profile services to attract highly educated workers – the so-called *Viersen-doctrine*. To that end the quality of urban life had to improve, by making the city more attractive. Viersen initiated an office for Rotterdam promotion, to show another image of the city, instead of just the port and labour. As a result, Rotterdam became more frequently present in television reports on tourist attractions¹²⁸¹. It also affected foreign media reporting on Rotterdam. In 1973, the BBC was among the first, when its producer and director Peter Adam, together with the Dutch filmmaker Ed van der Elsken, made a programme on the arts in Rotterdam¹²⁸².

To reinforce this image, a one-minute television advertisement was made (*STERSPOT ROTTERDAM*, 1975, Toonder Studio's), which presented Rotterdam as a city of leisure. First is an aerial shot of the Euromast and the port, to make clear that it is Rotterdam. It then highlights its shopping centres, its exhibitions and events, and its architecture. It finally addresses the port in terms of leisure too, for boat trips¹²⁸³. In addition, films were made for a foreign public – tourists, clients and investors, which explicitly linked the port to the city's culture and services, while

¹²⁷⁶ At the corner of the Maasboulevard and the Westhavenkade. The recordings were actually taken in January.

¹²⁷⁷ Ivo Blom would later become a senior communication consultant for the Port Authorities.

¹²⁷⁸ Recordings were made a.o. near the Erasmus University, Oude Plantage, Spangen (Café 't Halve Vaatje), see: 'Opnamen NOS-speelfilm', p28 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 13/4, 1975.

¹²⁷⁹ Maas, Judith; 'Liefde & Lange Vingers, Lokatie Rotterdam', p7 in: *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*/'Stad', 1975-09-27.

¹²⁸⁰ Many other examples could be given here, including reports in which Blom appears in front of the camera himself (e.g. *HOLLAND ZE ZEGGEN*; RIJNMOND, EO, 1975-12-10), and also various foreign productions, such as a documentary on Zadkine (1973, Michel Fresnel) for which the GEB made cranes available to the filmmakers (for this and other references, see: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 11/1, 1973 – p27).

¹²⁸¹ E.g. *ZO MAAR EEN ZOMERAVOND* [tourists at Euromast] (VARA, 1969-08-29); *JOURNAAL* [harbour round-trip] (NOS, 1974-04-14); *JOURNAAL* [Kralingse Plas, sea / Hoek van Holland, a.o.] (NOS, 1975-08-04 and 1975-08-05).

¹²⁸² Including subjects like the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen and various monuments; see: 'Bezoekers', p26 in: *Rotterdam, Officieel Tijdschrift van de Gemeente Rotterdam*, vol. 11/2, 1973.

¹²⁸³ Concerning shopping it shows 'De Lijnbaan' and 'Beursplein', the historical shopping street Binnenweg, and the modern shopping mall 'Zuidplein'. Concerning exhibitions and events it shows Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen, the Ahoy'-hall, as well as Blijdorp Zoo. The city's architecture is highlighted by the 'Bouwcentrum'.

stressing Rotterdam's position as an international hub (e.g. CROSSROAD ROTTERDAM, 1979, Kees van Eijk, Werner Jansen).

However, as Van de Laar has said, to present such an image, there must be a correspondence with the facts, sooner or later. Different from the acts of city branding is a report like that of VARA-VISIE (1978-11-14), which explicitly called the Dutch government to pay attention to the declining economic position of Rotterdam, its housing shortage, and the situation of immigrants.

The core identity of a city, and its development path, cannot easily be changed by promoting an ideal model top down, just like the other way round is highly difficult too: to change an urban system through ideal images that come to the fore in the public debate. Such changes require a gradual transverse across different levels of the city's composition, which encompass respectively the system's features, structure and organisation¹²⁸⁴. Therefore various municipal departments communicated their work by way of film¹²⁸⁵. In order to show them the municipality established a cinema at its information centre *Open Boek*. In addition to the film, this centre also organised excursions, by bus, to various municipal enterprises¹²⁸⁶.

Over the course of the 1970s, the municipal departments of "Public Works" (Gemeentewerken) and public transport (RET) set up their own information services. The former even produced films itself, through its phototechnical service. Among its productions, directed by Henk Vrijmoet, was the ROTTERDAMS JOURNAAL (1967). It included succinct and clearly explained portraits, each of four minutes, of the construction of projects such as Alexanderpolder, the Maasvlakte, and the airport (a.o.). Next to that, both Gemeentewerken and the RET also commissioned films (see e.g. films by Peter Alsemgeest, Chapter 12. §2). In most other cases the "Office for Information & Publicity" coordinated the film productions¹²⁸⁷.

An example is a film for the municipal water company, called DE DORST VAN DE RIJMOND ("The thirst of the Rijnmond", 1974). This production, directed by Elvira Kleinen, is fast, fashionable and even funny, with outstanding cinematography and slightly experimental sound¹²⁸⁸. It was commissioned on the occasion of the centenary of the "Municipal Water Production Company", but it actually explains the reasons and motivations of three new complexes (arch. Wim Quist)¹²⁸⁹. Historical information was provided by a book instead¹²⁹⁰.

The film starts with extreme close-ups of men tasting cups of water. It is followed by ships at the Nieuwe Maas transporting barrels of drinking water, a metro in a washing street, and the cleaning of bottles, among others. There are also images of the old "Drinking Water Complex" at Honingerdijk (DWL, 1874, arch. Van der Tak) during its last years. The film addresses the need for an extension of the company and for modernisation, because of the pollution of the Nieuwe Maas and its increasing amount of salt, which makes it more difficult to gain clean drinking water from the river. Next to that a growing population within the

¹²⁸⁴ cf. Conti, 2005: 33; Rooijendijk, 2005: 444.

¹²⁸⁵ Many examples could be mentioned here, such as the 'construction films' VOOR MORGEN EN OVERMORGEN and CENTRALE MAASVLAKTE, BRON VOOR ENERGIE (1972, 1975, Peter Spronkers) for GEB [electricity works]; GAS (1975, Joop van Reede); ZUIDPLEIN (1972, Aad Griekspoor) for the Dienst Stadsontwikkeling; ROTTERDAMSE BRANDWEER (1975, A.C. Kroonenberg) for the fire brigade; RECONSTRUCTIE COOLSINGEL EN BINNENSTADSDAG (1976, Ary Groeneveld) for HIC; and the fiction short P.D. DE RECHERCHE-FILM (1978, Ruurd Fenenga) for the police department, among others. Next to such films, various television reports were made about municipal departments, e.g. about the water company: VAN GEWEST TOT GEWEST (NOS, 1979-03-28), the aliens' police department: 3 DAGEN BIJ DE VREEMDELINGENPOLITIE IN ROTTERDAM (Joost Tholens / KRO, 1979-01-15) a.o.

¹²⁸⁶ Bax & Edzes, 1970: 16

¹²⁸⁷ For comparison, see for example the municipal films made for the city of Groningen (Hajema, 2001: 213) and for the city of Utrecht, which had its own film production unit (1964-1988, directed by H.W. Gomersbach) www.hetutrechtsarchief.nl/onderzoek/onderwerpen/films (2008-11-13).

¹²⁸⁸ Cinematography: Pim Heytman, sound: Henk van Aggele.

¹²⁸⁹ I.e. "Water Purification Plant Berenplaat" (1959-1965), "Water Win Complex Petrusplaat" (1969-1974) and "Waterworks Schaardijk" (1973-1977); Cf. Groenendijk, 2004 > architectuur > personen > Quist

¹²⁹⁰ Besides historical data it included also extra information on current trends – i.e. *De Watermakers* (Dijkstra, 1974).

agglomeration needs to be served. Therefore the decision was made to build the new purification plant Berenplaat, which is shown in detail. Next to that a reservoir and a water win complex ('Petrusplaat') have been made in the nature area of the Biesbosch, south-east of Rotterdam. The architecture has been adapted to its environment, which has been done, among others, by roof vegetation: the building and the reservoirs have become part of the landscape. From these reservoirs, water runs through tubes to Rotterdam. They emphasise that the city is a system and a network that links all kinds of places to one another. It is also illustrated by images as diverse as a private home with a woman having a shower, people drinking water, fountains at Hofplein and the pools at Schouwburgplein, as well as the accommodation of the polarbears in Blijdorp Zoo.

DE DORST VAN DE RIJNMOND was shown at the Cineac-NRC¹²⁹¹; the newspaper itself (NRC, 1975-11-4) announced that the film received the first prize at the international festival for industrial films in Montreux (France), while at home it was awarded the *Prix d'Amsterdam*¹²⁹². The film and its director have nevertheless been left unnoticed by historians. However, images like the opening scene of men tasting water, the female torso under a shower, but also the polar bears, for example, express what Thomas Elsaesser (2005: 204) has called 'the body as perceptual surface', which he coined in connection to the work of the Dutch documentary *auteur* Johan van der Keuken. Through the body the importance of the water company for the city is expressed, with water linking all citizens. In this way the city appears as one modern, collective body. It is comparable to Elizabeth Lebas's argument regarding Glasgow:

I have tried to suggest that [municipal] film sponsorship served several purposes, of which instruction and persuasion were no more important than an evolving representation of the body politic. As such, these representations whose political value is bound up with the modernity of their medium are useful to review our understanding of the imaginary of social democracy and the part which imagery of the city played in its construction. (Lebas, 2007: 50)

The 'social body' of the city, represented by the 'corporation', needed its constituents to realise their role and position within its development, based on a democratic order. In fact, such ideas came explicitly to the fore in discussions on local media practices.

discussions

In 1970, Alderman Van der Ploeg, for education and social work, was asked to prepare outlines for local broadcasting, and on the 18th of March 1971 the city council decided to establish the *Stichting Rotterdamse Regionale Omroep*, with Mayor Thomassen as its founding chairman¹²⁹³. It was 'hosted' by Van der Ploeg's department, but its board consisted of twenty-seven representatives of various organisations and groups in Rotterdam. Although it had been a straight forward decision, the actualisation of local broadcasting was still highly complicated. A discussion had nevertheless been started, to which the municipality dedicated an issue of the magazine *Rondvraag* (1973/1, Elfferich, Edzes, Matthijsse, eds.).

'The input of information has to come from the region and has to flow back into it', argued Adriaan van der Staay, the director of the Rotterdam Arts Council¹²⁹⁴. Local broadcasting, it was said, had a monitoring function, which, moreover, had to establish feedback loops, by repeated reports on particular issues¹²⁹⁵. Similarly, the head of the municipal office for

¹²⁹¹ 'De Dorst van de Rijnmond', p5 in: *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 1974-10-25.

¹²⁹² I.e. best informational film addressed for a broad public, awarded by the *Stichting Audiovisuele Manifestaties* (Oss).

¹²⁹³ *Gemeentebld 1971*, nr. 88; code: 1.817.6/7 – radio en televisie; decision of the city council upon the proposal of the college of mayor and aldermen (*Verzameling gedrukte stukken 1971*, volgnr. 62, O.J.V. nr. 68.2883-02). www.bds.rotterdam.nl/content.jsp?objectid=138096 (2008-08-14).

¹²⁹⁴ v/d Staay, 1973: 14. Or. quote: 'De toevoer van informatie moet uit de regio komen en terugvloeien naar de regio.'

¹²⁹⁵ J.H. Dittmar, citizen of The Hague, about his participation in an experiment with neighbourhood television by the VPRO, in: 'Tekortkomingen signaleren en beleids mensen hinderlijk volgen', p16 in: Elfferich e.a., 1973.

information and publicity, Koos Bax (1973: 4), argued that the city needed local broadcasting first of all ‘for and by the locality’. This concerned mainly the production of news programmes, programmes with local information, and specific programmes that could ‘help to support the community’. Target groups would include minorities such as *gastarbeiders*, patients, action groups, residents of the old and the new districts, as well as industrial circles, which could use the opportunity to build community relations¹²⁹⁶.

Van der Staay (1973: 13), however, warned of decimating the NOS: one would lose its achievements, while getting pseudo-NOS programmes in return. Bax argued that local broadcasting should not be a competitor of national broadcasting. It would be better, he said (p5), to think of a new overall broadcasting system; rather than being additional, local broadcasting had to become an integral part of it. This would also allow for national transmission of local productions, through ‘hatches’ (*doorgeefluiken*), based on a refined network of correspondent-producers all over the country. In this way, cities and districts could also learn from each other’s experiences.

Notwithstanding the general support for local broadcasting in Rotterdam, it was still hard to make it, due to legal obstructions, organisational and financial complications, and the problematic role in this development of the national broadcasting foundation NOS. While these difficulties were discussed, another development was taking place, that of cable television, which even allowed for neighbourhood programming. Bax addressed this issue as well.

Those casually following the current reading on the ‘new media’, can easily get the impression that cable networks are now going to bring the solution of a tricky and harping question. They demand investment, time, but then they offer a range of possibilities, and they make all things that have been said and written so far ‘outmoded’. The impression is also advanced by people that follow the development of cable networks with more than idealist interest. It is a fact that the cable will play a major role; the ‘wired city’ is possibly closer than we think. Yet, the cable does not solve the problem of local broadcasting. It offers another possibility, nothing more.¹²⁹⁷

Although one expected local broadcasting to be a fact within a few years, and while Bax spoke of a ‘harping question’ after three years of discussion, it took many more years before it became reality (local radio in 1983, local television in 1989¹²⁹⁸). Notwithstanding this problematic development, the role of media within urban development had become an important topic.

The discussion affected also the *Gemeentearchief Rotterdam* (municipal archive). In 1961, when Rudolf Renting became its director, he ‘himself took charge of the film collection. He catalogued the films in two categories: newsreels and documentaries’ (Giersbergen, 2005: 12). On the 28th of October 1971, the archive opened a film theatre in its building, on the top floor of its newly built extension, and the screening of films became a recurrent event¹²⁹⁹. Besides

¹²⁹⁶ Bax, 1973: 4. Original quote: ‘Lokaal nieuws en lokale actualiteiten; lokale informatie dus en typische programma’s die “de gemeenschap helpen dragen” als we het zo eens zwaarwichtig zouden mogen uitdrukken: uitzendingen dus voor en over lokale groepen: minderheidsgroeperingen als gastarbeiders maar ook blinden, zieken, actiegroepen, bewoners van oude (en waarom niet van nieuwe) wijken, industriële kringen (een pracht gelegenheid om aan community relations te doen).’

¹²⁹⁷ Original quote: ‘Wie met een zekere argeloosheid [...] de recente lectuur over de ‘nieuwe media’ volgt, kan gemakkelijk onder de indruk komen dat kabelnetten nu de oplossing gaan brengen van een netelig en maar doorzeurend vraagstuk. Ze vergen investering, tijd, maar dan geven ze een scala van mogelijkheden dat alles wat er tot nu toe is gezegd en geschreven ‘uit de tijd’ maakt. De indruk wordt nog in de hand gewerkt door mensen die de ontwikkeling van kabelnetten uit meer dan ideële belangstelling volgen. Het staat vast dat de kabel een grote rol gaat spelen; de ‘wired city’ is wellicht dichterbij dan we denken. Alleen, de kabel lost het probleem van de lokale uitzendingen niet op. Ze geeft een andere mogelijkheid, meer niet.’

¹²⁹⁸ The television station was called Stads TV Rotterdam, which became TV Rijnmond in 1997.

¹²⁹⁹ The first show consisted of silent films from 1925-1940, with live music by Mrs. A.J. Spijkman-Visser, and the renewed reconstruction film EN TOCH... ROTTERDAM (1965, Polygoon). Mr. P. Ratsma (head of the *topografisch-historische atlas*, i.e. film collection GAR) introduced the programme. *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*, 1972: 124. In 1973 a

preservation and presentation, Renting actively acquired films, and he commissioned filmmakers to document old parts of the city that were subject to change (e.g. HET OUDE NOORDEN, 1972, J. van Rhijn). Vrijmoet, who had made films for Gemeentewerken before, started to work for the archive as a photographer, and to manage the film collection. Since the archive already made photographic and sound recordings¹³⁰⁰, Renting argued for regular film recordings too. With information officer Koos Bax he developed the idea for a municipal film unit, and they sent a proposal to the Mayor and Aldermen (1973-06-28). 'For a long time, Rotterdam has already been in need of local newsreels and documentary shorts. If we want to give a realistic image of the city, at any moment, and to 'sell' it, the moving image is indispensable'¹³⁰¹. Another motivation was the frequent request of foreign television stations for footage.

The proposal was supported by the municipal committee for the archives, but the financial committee had its doubts¹³⁰². Mayor Thomassen made a plea in favour of the plan and asked the financial committee to reconsider it once more. The question, however, was not if film was needed – that was beyond dispute. The question was if the archive should run such a unit that would also carry out productions for other municipal departments, or if the city should work with independent filmmakers and freelancers as it used to do. The financial committee feared that the films would not be professional enough. Renting, in his turn, emphasised the importance of continuous documentation¹³⁰³. In the end the archive got the permission to employ a cameraman and a sound technician for film, but these vacancies would never be fulfilled, since no agreement was reached on investments in equipment¹³⁰⁴. As Thomassen ended his term as Mayor¹³⁰⁵, while Bax left the office for information too, the situation changed again¹³⁰⁶.

The archive concentrated itself on its primary function, to preserve documents, instead of producing them, although its photographic department would occasionally make some film recordings. What this history has made clear, after all, is a complicated ontological conception of film, as a medium to 'store' buildings and events, as 'manifests' of the city's history. This was a matter of recording, but also a matter of active participation in urban development, even to 'sell' the city. The different interests and motivations behind the plans were yet too difficult to let them converge, while the process of cinematic bifurcation complicated the issue.

programme was shown on 6, 8, 13 and 15 February – *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*, 1974: 133 (i.e. VREEWIJK IN 'T GOUD (1966, Aad den Besten), and abbreviated versions of THE CITY THAT NEVER RESTS (1928, Transfilma), TUSSCHEN AANKOMST EN VERTREK (1938, Andor von Barys), with additional sound (by GAR) – ref. GAR cat. Nr. GV 671 / GB 671). In 1974 a programme was shown on 21 and 28 of February and 7, 12 and 19 March, consisting of a film on 'Oranjefeestvieringen' (1910s), THE BRIDGE (1928, Joris Ivens), and ROTTERDAM – EUROPOORT (1966, Joris Ivens), – *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*, 1975: 109. See also: *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*, 1977: 134.

¹³⁰⁰ Cf. a television report on this sound archive: TELEVIZIER (1965-12-24, AVRO).

¹³⁰¹ Original quote: 'Reeds lang bestaat er te Rotterdam grote behoefte aan het beschikbaar hebben van locale filmjournaals en korte documentaires. Willen wij op elk moment een reële voorstelling van de stad kunnen geven en de stad kunnen "verkopen", dan is gebruikmaking van het bewegend beeld onmisbaar.' Proposal to Mayor and Aldermen, by Bax and Renting, 1973-06-28, coll. GAR: 'Archief van het Archief', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 476.

¹³⁰² Letter (1973-11-19) of J. Riezenkamp, chairman of the *Commissie voor de Financiën*, to Mayor and Aldermen, coll. GAR: 'Archief van het Archief', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 476.

¹³⁰³ Letter by Bax and Renting to the mayor (1973-12-17), GAR: 'Archief van het Archief', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 476.

¹³⁰⁴ Letter by Renting (1975-03-19) to B&W, GAR: 'Archief van het Archief', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 476.

¹³⁰⁵ The municipal commitment to film would be emphasised in a hilarious way by a farewell film that was presented to Thomassen (1974, Rien Peeters). All of his colleagues, aldermen and directors, had collaborated on it, playing fools causing trouble in a city that goes its own way.

¹³⁰⁶ The new head of the office for information, Koos Postema, proposed a continuous film production with freelancers that would be directed and supervised by his office (Letter of Postema, 1975-12-02, to Mayor and Aldermen; coll. GAR: 'Archief van het Archief', toegangsnr. 297.01, inv. nr. 476). This proposal also did not make it, since Postema soon left again, while in the meantime the *Videocentrum* got established (and Renting himself had played a role in its history too, as we will see). This centre would indeed become responsible for a continuous production of recordings in the city, albeit with a different agenda.

The era of Thomassen is characterised by an increasing importance of audiovisual media dealing with the city. Besides the fact that more films and television programmes were made than in the period before, these productions also fulfilled a different role. During the heydays of reconstruction, media provided mostly positive feedback, to reinforce the process set in motion. This gradually changed in the 1960s and 1970s. This is almost comparable to the distinction between ‘continuous stigmergy’ and ‘discrete stigmergy’ in entomology and artificial intelligence (Bonabeau, Dorigo, Theraulaz, 1999: 205). Continuous stigmergy is a matter of stimuli that generate more stimuli of the same kind. The latter is rather different; ‘because stimuli are quantitatively different, no positive feedback effect can amplify a stimulus to transform it into a more intense version of the same stimulus. A stimulus is transformed into another, qualitatively different, stimulus under the action of an [agent]’¹³⁰⁷. There is thus another kind of feedback at work with a different regulatory function. It implies a more diffuse effect of refined media practices providing local information, which I will illustrate here.

In Rotterdam, the municipal concern with media became more pervasive between 1974 and 1981, during the mayorship of André van der Louw (•1933-†2005)¹³⁰⁸. Van der Louw, who was a member of the social-democratic party PvdA, where he led the renewal movement *Nieuw Links* (“New Left”), had previously worked for the socialist broadcasting station VARA (1957-1971)¹³⁰⁹. With Van der Louw as the Mayor, the director of the “Information Office” (the word ‘publicity’ was left behind) would participate in the meetings of Mayor and Aldermen. The well-known VARA-presenter Koos Postema, who was born and raised in Rotterdam, was asked to perform that function. He considered it a challenge, but he withdrew after four months already as he understood that communication policy was of a different nature than television broadcasting¹³¹⁰. Postema returned to his former job, but a connection was made; as a presenter he would collaborate on various events and audiovisual productions related to citizen participation¹³¹¹.

Instead of Postema came Gerrit Schilder, who had worked for VARA-television too¹³¹²:

We came from a time of economic reconstruction, with a neglect of the citizens who lived in the existing bad and small pre-war houses and who did not take it any longer at a certain moment. That caused a break in political thinking, for which I can only oversee the *Partij van de Arbeid* [Labour Party], with strong quarrels between a group that actually wanted to go on as before:

¹³⁰⁷ Bonabeau, Dorigo, Theraulaz, 1999: 208; originally: ‘...under the action of an insect.’

¹³⁰⁸ Van der Louw became mayor on the 16th of November 1974, see the interviews: VRAAGGESPREK MET ANDRÉ VAN DER LOUW (NTS, 1974-11-21); ACHTER HET NIEUWS (VARA, 1974-11-02).

¹³⁰⁹ e.g. DE PAASHEUVEL, BIOGRAFIE VAN EEN 40-JARIGE (VARA-tv, 1963-07-04), on ‘De Paasheuvel’, where ‘Ruimte’/ AJC (socialist youth) celebrated its 40th anniversary. André van der Louw and Peter van Halm produced and directed it, Jan Schaper and Ferenc Kálman Gáll filmed it, and Martin van Dalen did the sound [GAR: ref. Open Studio, kaart 1]. He also collaborated on radio programmes, like UITLAAT, e.g. a report on the socialist approach towards housing shortage (1965-10-08). Next to that Van der Louw was chief editor of music magazine ‘Hitweek’ (since 1965). In 1971 Van der Louw became the chairman of the national party. For general information, see: http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9_van_der_Louw (January 2006)

¹³¹⁰ www.beeldengeluid.nl/template_subnav.jsp?navname=biografieen_p&category=collectie_informatie&artid=20607 (2006-04); see also: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 125.

¹³¹¹ Postema moderated, for example, a forum for citizens to ask question concerning the municipality at Binnenstadsdag (1976-05-22); on that occasion he also appeared as an interviewer in the RKS production HART VOOR DE STAD (Videocentrum, 1976), together with VARA-colleague Joop Daalmeijer (also from Rotterdam); cf. BINNENSTADSDAG 1978 (1978, F.P. Verheijen). The most important example (made for the Bureau Voorlichting) is EERST ZIEN, DAN GELOVEN (1978, Ton Dirkse); Postema presents the proceedings of the residents organisations in Het Oude Westen, ‘Cool’ and ‘Het Oude Noorden’, as they are collaborating with the municipality.

¹³¹² Among other for the programme KONING KLANT (1960s, VARA). As information officer, he initiated the municipal newspapers *Stadskrant* and *Rotterdam Post* for migrants, while he extended Koos Bax’ information centre *Open Boek* with personal assistance and consultancy (i.e. *Hulp & Informatie Centrum*). Occasionally the latter also commissioned films, e.g. RECONSTRUCTIE COOLSINGEL EN BINNENSTADSDAG (1976), which was made by Ary Groeneveld (who made photographs for various municipal publications as well, e.g. the magazine *Rotterdam*).

welfare first, and the rest comes along by itself, and the new generation that said: we give priority to the residents. To my mind that has put a very big and important mark on the practice of providing information¹³¹³.

The information service became an integral part of the bench of Mayor and Aldermen and its policy. It started to communicate its plans through folders, booklets, newspapers, exhibitions, forums, and indeed film and television¹³¹⁴. Moreover, following the new policy that emphasised interaction with the citizens, Rotterdam got its own *Videocentrum* (1976), above all for the production of ‘neighbourhood videos’, which was first of all intended to promote citizen participation (see: Chapter 16.§).

§ 5. emerging film practices and experimentation

Next to a number of film companies, various individuals came to the fore that started to experiment with film, of which I will mention a few examples. Among them were committed amateurs, particularly those of the *Rotterdamse Smalfilm Liga*. It resulted in celebrated titles such as *MEDDLE* (1973, Louis Smits), a surrealist experiment on memory that lives its own life, *DE SANTEKRAAM* (1974, Hans van Nierop), in which bizarre situations happen in an antique shop, and, for example, the puppet animation *DE SLEUTEL VAN DE PSYCHIATER* (1976, H. Schäfer)¹³¹⁵.

The borders between amateur filmmaking and professional practices were not so strict¹³¹⁶. Exemplary is the case of the ‘independent’ amateur filmmaker Rien Peeters (1925), who was the owner of ten cafés in the city, among them *Café De Schouw* in the Witte de Withstraat. This street was known for its newspaper offices, and Peeters’s café was the meeting place for journalists and artists. Peeters had made 8mm colour films since the early 1950s, including fiction shorts and *familiejournaals*. In the basement of his house he also started, in 1969, a small private film theatre, called ‘69’, where he showed, to invited guests, recently released features together with his own films. One of his was about the opening of his lunchroom ‘Pieterneel’ (1970), at the Lijnbaan. Not unlike many home movie makers, Peeters combined recordings of domestic and public activities, but consciously. For the opening he asked fashion designer Henk Wichers to do a show. Assisted by Philips, Wichers dressed girls in transparent plastic suits, virtually naked, but with special helmets through which they could call one another, as a precursor of mobile

¹³¹³ Gerrit Schilder, in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 87. Original quote: ‘We kwamen uit de tijd van de economische wederopbouw, met toch veronachtzaming van de burgers die in de bestaande slechte en kleine vooroorlogse woningen woonden en die dat op een gegeven moment niet meer pikten. Dat veroorzaakte een behoorlijke breuk in het politieke denken, waarbij ik alleen de Partij van de Arbeid een beetje kan overzien, met fikse ruzies tussen een groepering die eigenlijk op de oude manier verder wilde: eerst de welvaart, dan komt de rest vanzelf wel, en de nieuwe generatie die zei: wij geven nu voorrang aan de bewoners. Dat heeft volgens mij een heel groot en belangrijk stempel gezet op de voorlichting.’

¹³¹⁴ Mathijssse in: Van der Schaaf & Hazewinkel, 1996: 82.

¹³¹⁵ See also the fiction film *DE LEUGEN OMTRENT WILLEM PEER* (1970, Filmgroep Flop) – ‘Filmgroep Flop eerste prijs op NOVA-festival’, in: *Het Vrije Volk*, 1970-11-11; for *MEDDLE* (1973, Louis Smits) and the documentary *BLIKSLAGER IN KUNST* (1973, Hans Ros) on artist Johan Verheij, see: ‘Bekroning voor Rotterdamse Films’, p21 in: *Het Vrije Volk*, 1973-11-23; for *DE SLEUTEL VAN DE PSYCHIATER* (1976, H. Schäfer), see: ‘Succes voor Smalfilmers’, in: *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 1976-09-21. For other titles, see www.rvsl.nl > staat van dienst (2009-01-06).

¹³¹⁶ The RSL also invited various professional filmmakers to give presentations, a.o. Joris Ivens, Louis van Gasteren, Jan van Hillo, Herman van der Horst, Paul Verhoeven, Nico Crama, Pim Korver e.a., Smits, 2002: 42. The between amateur and professional practices also applies to what I would call ‘moving photographs’. Several photographers, among them Wim de Boek and Ary Groeneveld made recordings on film too, often without a clear purpose, and akin to still photography: a single shot of a particular movement or surrounding to ‘catch’ daily life, or a series of shots of a particular event. They often show something common as something special, by isolating it from its context, by showing it as an aesthetic feature, or as an emphasis of the spirit of the times. Although such recordings are the work of ‘professional observers’, in technique and method, and as ‘retentions’ without a public release they are akin to amateur recordings. For examples, see: Filmography > Boek, Wim de; Groeneveld, Ary – more recordings by them and others can be found at GAR.

telephony¹³¹⁷. This futuristic imagery oscillated, through double exposure, with most traditional and domestic imagery: of the family getting together to celebrate Christmas.

Not much later Wichers opened his boutique in the Witte de Withstraat (1971). Peeters recorded the opening, with a fashion show and other performances¹³¹⁸, and superimposed the images with shots of Wichers driving his Porsche. In his turn, Peeters himself opened an art gallery: 'Keerweer'. He made various short film portraits of newspaper illustrators and artists, to accompany their work shown at the gallery¹³¹⁹. In this way Peeters also made, together with Edward Luyken (camera), a graduate of the Academy of Visual Arts in Rotterdam, the experimental KUNST OP STRAAT (1979). It shows murals that had been painted across the city in the previous years, and the activities taking place in front of it. They were combined with shots of the city, again through double exposure – a technique that Luyken applied afterwards as well¹³²⁰. This cityscape was created through a train travel from north-west (station Schiedam) to south-east (Lombardijen). It resulted in contemplative sequences that were reinforced as such by ambient music, provided by Rob Maas, the director of the *Centrale Discotheek*. In his turn, Luyken made various other artistic films, such as the experimental 'construction film' INSIDE OUT (1979).

In the meantime, the Academy of Visual Arts had established a film studio – initiated by its director Pierre Jansen and television director Leen Timp in the late 1960s. It started with courses on Saturdays for everyone interested. In 1971, the academy asked the young filmmaker Thys Ockersen (•1946) to become a teacher, and he would eventually come to run the studio as well¹³²¹. It became a serious concern. Editor Bert Steeman, who had worked for Schaper's Open Studio before, became an assistant, and he would take over the role of Ockersen later on.

Besides working in the studio, Ockersen wanted students to acquire experience by participating in professional productions. He therefore proposed to make a documentary short about the Rotterdam based artist, and Academy teacher, Kees Franse, particularly about his monumental apples. After Ockersen received a grant of the RKS, without him knowing it, since the Academy (i.e. Piet Geurts) had applied for it, colleagues protested as they thought he just used the Academy for his own plans. The project was nevertheless carried out, but independent of the Academy, although one its students, the later well-known photographer Adriaan Monshouwer, still worked on it as an assistant cameraman. The film, 1000 KILO VURENHOUT (1975), which had its premiere at Film International, became a dynamic portrait of Franse, in his studio, in front of his apples at the Heemraadssingel in Rotterdam and at Schiphol¹³²².

Another project by Ockersen, which was also supported by the RKS, was a one-take fiction short AAN DE DEUR (1979), based on a story by Jules Deelder¹³²³. A man rings the doorbell, a lady opens, and the man asks if he can use the toilet. The woman does not trust him, and a play with suspense follows. The man goes to the toilet, but it takes long, and the door remains closed all the time. The lady picks up a knife and opens it, but the toilet is empty. At that the bell rings once more: there is the man again, who has lost his glasses in the bowl. For this surrealist film Ockersen casted actress and television personality Marjan Berk, and Piet Goedings. The latter was not an actor, but the hunchbacked owner of the art house and distribution company

¹³¹⁷ It was enabled through strips on the floor, to which the shoes of the girls got connected through metal parts in the soles, which were in turn linked to the helmets.

¹³¹⁸ E.g. by the musicians Herman van Veen and Harry Sacksioni, although the film recordings are mute.

¹³¹⁹ Among them are the cartoonists Teo Gootjes (*Het Vrije Volk*), and Adriaan Meijers (*Algemeen Dagblad*), 1980, see filmography > since 1980 > Peeters.

¹³²⁰ See e.g. DE HEFBRUG (1979, Edward Luyken).

¹³²¹ Ockersen remained a film teacher for about twelve years. At the studio he was assisted by Bert Steeman, who would run the studio later on. Thys Ockersen in an interview by FP, 2008-09-27.

¹³²² The film can be seen within a 'genre' of documentaries about art works, which also includes a BRONS IN BEWEGING (1964, Jaap Nieuwenhuis) about the sculpture 'Corporate Entity' (1963, Wessel Couzijn), made for Unilever.

¹³²³ The story was called 'Niks tegen Kees zeggen', which would later be published as a novella in *Schöne Welt* (Jules Deelder, Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1982).

The Movies in Amsterdam, whose shadowy empire had various enemies, among them Huub Bals of the Rotterdam Film Festival. The film was therefore not to be seen at the festival, but at the City theatre in Amsterdam. For Ockersen, who came from Amsterdam himself, the film was an inside joke, which connected, just like his own practice, the two cities.

While the Academy opened its film studio, the youth organisation AMVJ, opened its cinema 'Calypso', in 1969¹³²⁴. Dick Rijnke, a student of the experimental filmmaker Frans Zwartjes at Psychopolis in The Hague, was asked to make a film programme, and he subsequently started a film workshop too¹³²⁵. Through the AMVJ he also made a 'discussion film' on drugs, *IK WEET NOG STEEDS NIET OF IK BETER BEN* (1971), which offers impressions of the consequences of both soft and hard drugs, with a number of interviews with youngsters, and impressions of their environment. It resulted subsequently in the film *I TAKE IT FOR GRANTED* (1973), which he made together with Hans de Ridder (who worked for Schaper's Open Studio).

Another film workshop was established by De Lantaren in 1972. While this studio was supported by the RKS, this fund also sponsored various productions made here¹³²⁶. Next to the workshop De Lantaren also organised film courses, which consisted of three meetings per week over two months, given by Floor Peeters (and guests like Frans Zwartjes)¹³²⁷. The results were presented at the art house theatre of De Lantaren, where Huub Bals did the programming.

Among the people using the facilities of De Lantaren was the young Noud Heerkens, who made in this way his experimental *RE-ACTION IN A* (1979). Someone else was Pieter Jan Smit, whose first films were *ZWAANSHALS*, made at Psychopolis too, and *BOTLEK BLUES* (1979), sponsored by the RKS. The former is a series of photographs of an old neighbourhood, recorded from the four corners of a crossing; the latter, is an expressive reflection, of half an hour, of Rotterdam in general. It includes music by punk rock formation Rondos and poetry by Cornelis Vaandrager, on *De Hef*, and as such the film refers also (explicitly) to Ivens's *THE BRIDGE* (1928), yet in an unpolished, underground style.

Another young filmmaker that frequented De Lantaren, but who had already made films before, was Ferri Ronteltap. His fiction shorts were subsequently selected by Huub Bals for Film International, the annual film festival for which De Lantaren became a home, which was organised by Bals as a representative of the RKS (see: Chapter 15.§ 4).

Besides Film International, various small festivals were organised at De Lantaren, which were actively supported by the RKS as well. An example is the *Ongelukkige Liefde Festival* ("Unhappy Love Festival", 1977), where the visual arts, theatre, and film came together. For that occasion the artists Hans Citroen and Bob van Persie made a series of cinematic one-liners – with Jacques van Heijningen as the cameraman. The shorts were made as a reaction, according to the makers, to the highly formalised and much too serious art criticism of that time. Instead, they presented acted cartoons that dealt with rather banal issues that varied from corny gags to witty pieces that played with perception. This was closely related to their performances and the art works that they showed at their 'smallest museum of the Netherlands', the *Keikdoos*, a showcase at central station (see also: Polygoon, 1977-wk16)¹³²⁸. On the occasion of the so-called 'Suggestival', the group made another series of about twenty one-minute 'suggestions': *THERE'S*

¹³²⁴ Calypso, which used to be a gym before, located at the complex of the 'Rijnhotel', opened on 1969-03-26.

Rotterdams Jaarboekje, 1970: p26.

¹³²⁵ One of Rijnke's own experimental shorts is *ESCALATING EGG* (1969).

¹³²⁶ Theatre De Lantaren and cinema 't Venster (run by Piet Meerburg), located in the same building, merged in 1976 to become Lantaren/Venster, under supervision of the RKS, until 1986 when it became independent again. See also: www.lantaren-venster.nl/22-Organisatie Lantaren/Venster > Het Gebouw > Geschiedenis (visited 2007-04-20).

¹³²⁷ Regarding workshops at De Lantaren, see: Willemsen, 1979: 13. Both of them made productions at the former water works area of DWL-Honingerdijk, respectively the experimental short *LANDSCAPES* (1982) and the feature film *PENTIMENTO* (1979), since that complex had turned into a redevelopment area and the artistic enclave 'Utopia'.

¹³²⁸ It was a new way to bring art to the public, while the art itself was a matter of play. On pets' day, for example, the artists put a big cheese in the showcase, together with about eighty mice.

NO BUSINESS LIKE NO BUSINESS (1979). Initially they were presented in between performances of magicians and the like, but due their success, the series was also shown at once.

One of the pieces of the series is WERK IN UITVOERING, which starts with the, for Rotterdam, emblematic traffic sign ‘under construction’. The figure in the sign suddenly moves and walks out of the frame, to have lunch in another room. When the man (played by Citroen) starts to eat his sandwich it (auditively) turns into a harmonica, which causes a surprise effect. Finally the man continues to work, without having eaten anything. The city of labour turns into one of culture: the reconstruction newsreel is replaced by an artistic film, which shows a worker becoming a musician. However, the man continues his construction work after all. While food turns into ‘food for the senses’, the question remains if it makes a living for Rotterdam¹³²⁹. It did, at least for Citroen and Van Persie.

Together with their companion Cor Kraat they also appear in KUNST, KOEK & KOFFIE (1980) by Dick Rijneke and Mildred van Leeuwaarden, which is the first part of the documentary trilogy GROETEN UIT ROTTERDAM about the cultural climate of Rotterdam (see: Chapter 16.§4). The artists organise an exhibition of pictures on a wall in a street, where they are left during the night, in order to see what will happen to them. Most important are not the pictures on the wall, but the event itself as a conceptual work of art. The film recording, and its broadcasting by VPRO television, is an integral part of this project. Although the experiment resulted in the deception that most of the works were taken by colleagues (rather than ‘the people’), the film is based on waiting and the tension that something may happen.

Part II of the trilogy starts with Cor Kraat having an important business meeting. It took place on a boat, which was a reception organised for the new director of the RKS, the filmmaker and former VPRO prominent Hans Keller, for him to be introduced to representatives of the main cultural and business circles of Rotterdam. This meeting of Kraat with the city’s elite was no coincidence, but a way, through the connections of the VPRO, to make a contrast with the punk movement in the second and last part, with special attention being paid to the Rondos.

While Rijneke and Van Leeuwaarden made GROETEN UIT ROTTERDAM, they established their own production company: ‘Rotterdam Films’ (1979). It would be the onset of a fruitful collaboration with an extensive track record. Other companies would follow soon.

Whereas the various initiatives had initially existed as islands, or parallel movements, connections were made and a network emerged. The RKS occupied a nodal place in it, by enabling an oscillation between different realms and categories. This appealed to the ideas of students and artists, which affected them to work with film, while it also attracted filmmakers from elsewhere to establish themselves in Rotterdam (e.g. Noud Heerkens). Film in Rotterdam, moreover, got embedded in the urban culture at large, if it were only for the different artistic sections that were united by the RKS. It established an institutional infrastructure with points of interaction that provided ‘multiple stimuli’ that triggered creativity, in the words of Scott (2000: 12). It exemplifies, on a small-scale, the effects of clustering, which, at the same time helped to frame its conditions, through critical reflection and experimentation.

¹³²⁹ It is telling that Cor Kraat and Bob van Persie, together with Willem van Drunen, established (1979) the artist formation ‘Kunst & Vaarwerk’, literally “Art and Sailing Work”, a punning of the saying *kunst en vliegwerk* [‘art and flying’ = managing something quickly by all possible means]. Most commissions concerned spatial art works, see: VERGETEN VERHALEN: KUNST EN VAARWERK (2005, Harm Korst). Rather than making use of subsidies, it operated like an office for architecture, based on commissions, especially from port enterprises.