

RAAAF [Rietveld Architecture - Art - Affordances]



RAAAF: After Image, design 2015-2016, realization 2018

Location: Sugar Factory Groningen

Since 2006, **RAAAF** operates location- and context specific work at the crossroads of architecture, art and science. The studio has developed a design approach of 'strategic interventions' deriving from the respective backgrounds of the founding partners: Prix de Rome Architecture laureate Ronald Rietveld and philosopher Erik Rietveld. Through a unique working method based on multidisciplinary research with scientists and other specialists, RAAAF's real-life thinking models link local qualities with long-term strategies.

Their interventions result from confronting their own independent fascinations with urgent societal issues, searching to break free from conventional limits and show what could happen if we lived by a different set of rules. Thus each project becomes a manifesto in itself. A striking example of this is the installation 'Vacant NL', the Dutch contribution to the Venice Architecture Biennale 2010. Another example is the cut-through monument 'Bunker 599', which unorthodoxly questions the Dutch and UNESCO policies on cultural heritage. 'The End of Sitting' is a thinking model that questions our 'sitting society'.

RAAAF's work has been published world-wide and exhibited at leading art- and architecture biennales such as those of São Paulo, Istanbul and Venice. The studio has won several prestigious awards, including the Prix de Rome Architecture 2006, the Rotterdam Design Prize 2011, the Architectural Review Award 2013 and a VIDI-award of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). In 2013 RAAAF earned the title of New Radical and Dutch Architect of the Year. The various juries emphasize the ability of the studio to cross and stretch the disciplinary borders of architecture, philosophy and art.

In 2016 Ronald & Erik Rietveld became members of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts (KNAW).

After Image

After Image is illustrative for the world below the Dutch surface, consisting of millions of pillars. RAAAF's intervention reveals a small part of the exciting underworld of a former sugar silo. After the radical demolition of the Sugar Factory only a seemingly desolate concrete area remained. RAAAF discovered a colossal city of pillars hidden beneath the site - By revealing this world of pillars, the soul of the site reappears and the site becomes historically readable. By revealing the foundation of just one silo an enormous concrete cathedral appears 40 feet below ground level.