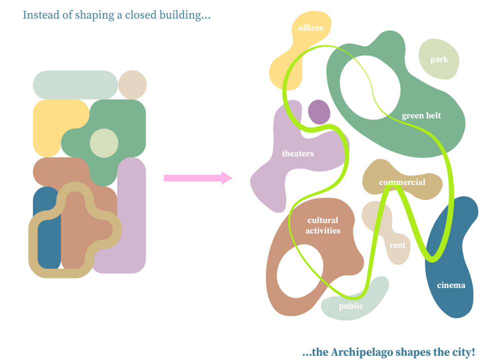
AMERSFOORT-STADHUISPLEIN (NL)

Cultural Archipelago

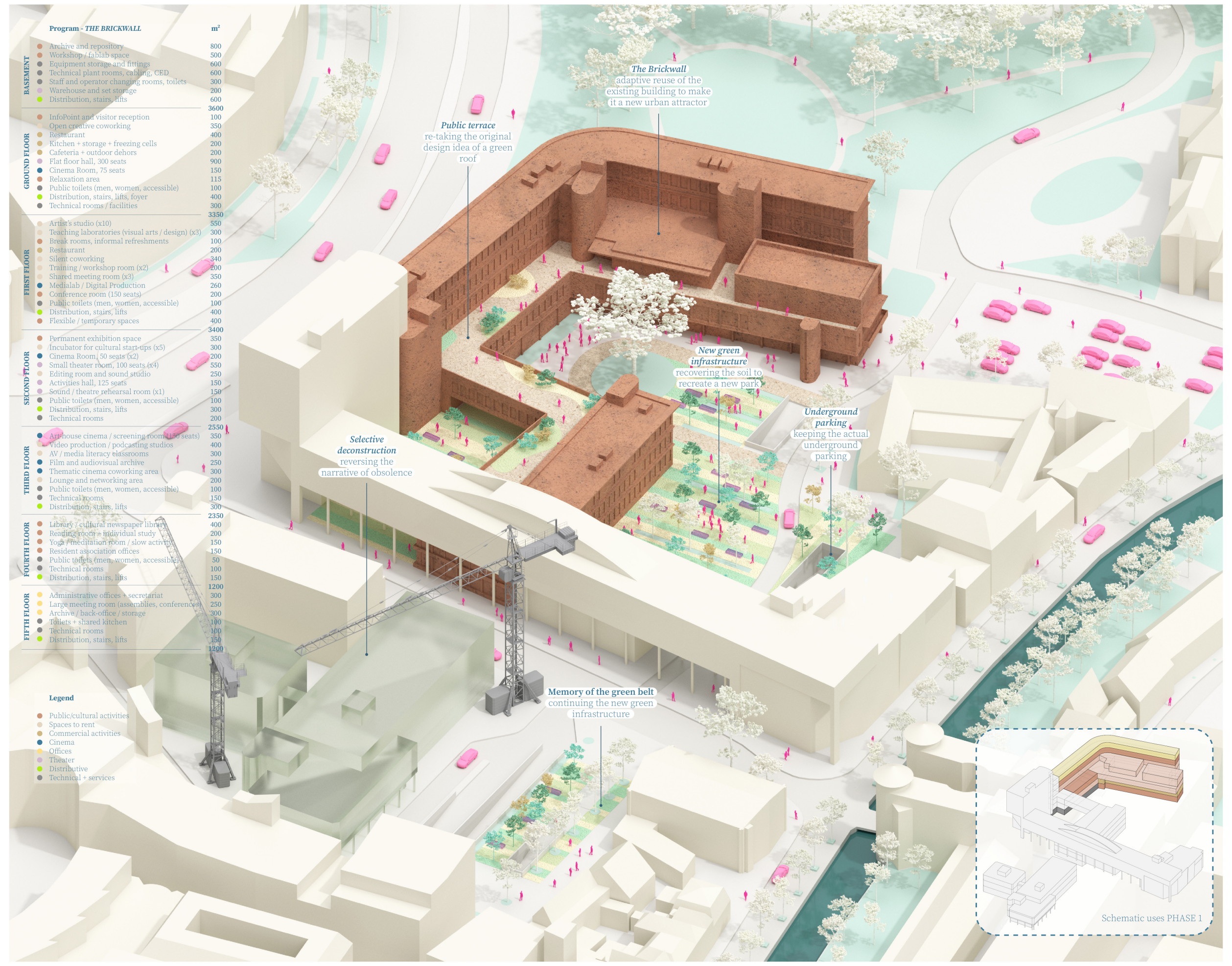
Reactivating the Existing, Reconfiguring Memory, Remaking Culture

Urban / Cultural network

The Archipelago



Mending the green infrastructure



Program - *THE BRICKWALL*

		m²
BASEMENT	Archive and repository	800
	Workshop / fablab space	500
	Equipment storage and fittings	600
	Technical plant rooms, cabling, CED	600
	Staff and operator changing rooms, toilets	300
	Warehouse and set storage	200
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	600
		3600
GROUND FLOOR	InfoPoint and visitor reception	100
	Open creative coworking	350
	Restaurant	400
	Kitchen + storage + freezing cells	200
	Cafeteria + outdoor dehors	200
	Flat floor hall, 300 seats	900
	Cinema Room, 75 seats	150
	Relaxation area	115
	Public toilets (men, women, accessible)	100
	Distribution, stairs, lifts, foyer	400
	Technical rooms / facilities	100
		3350
FIRST FLOOR	Artist's studio (x10)	550
	Teaching laboratories (visual arts / design) (x3)	300
	Break rooms, informal refreshments	100
	Restaurant	200
	Silent coworking	340
	Training / workshop room (x2)	200
	Shared meeting room (x3)	350
	Medialab / Digital Production	260
	Conference room (150 seats)	200
	Public toilets (men, women, accessible)	100
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	400
	Flexible / temporary spaces	400
		3400
SECOND FLOOR	Permanent exhibition space	350
	Incubator for cultural start-ups (x5)	300
	Cinema Room, 50 seats (x2)	200
	Small theater room, 100 seats (x4)	550
	Editing room and sound studio	250
	Activities hall, 125 seats	150
	Sound / theatre rehearsal room (x1)	150
	Public toilets (men, women, accessible)	100
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	300
	Technical rooms	200
		2550
THIRD FLOOR	Arthouse cinema / screening room (150 seats)	350
	Video production / podcasting studios	400
	AV / media literacy classrooms	300
	Film and audiovisual archive	250
	Thematic cinema coworking area	300
	Lounge and networking area	200
	Public toilets (men, women, accessible)	100
	Technical rooms	150
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	300
		2350
FOURTH FLOOR	Library / cultural newspaper library	400
	Reading room + individual study	200
	Yoga / meditation room / slow activity	150
	Resident association offices	150
	Public toilets (men, women, accessible)	50
	Technical rooms	100
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	150
		1200
FIFTH FLOOR	Administrative offices + secretariat	300
	Large meeting room (assemblies, conferences)	250
	Archive / back-office / storage	300
	Toilets + shared kitchen	100
	Technical rooms	100
	Distribution, stairs, lifts	150
		1200

Legend

- Public/cultural activities
- Spaces to rent
- Commercial activities
- Cinema
- Offices
- Theater
- Distributive
- Technical + services

PHASE 1

RE-ACTIVATE

Adaptive Reuse of the existing building and public space

(Year 1-3)

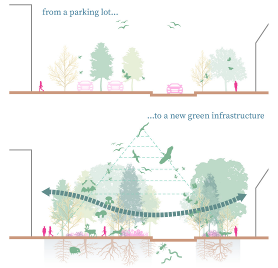
The first phase of the project is rooted in the decision to preserve and re-activate **The Brickwall**, the former city hall by Antoon van Kranendonk, into a cultural cornerstone while maintaining its historic civic role. The building's geometry and height directly reference Amersfoort's lost second medieval wall, transforming it into a modern ruin that anchors layers of urban memory. RE-ACTIVATE begins with the recognition of the building's historical and architectural value, and with the belief that, especially today, preserving and reusing existing structures should be the priority, with the environmental urgency, the goal to reduce emissions, and the will of maintain heritage. So, as opposed to the vision of including temporary uses in this structure before its eventual demolition, RE-ACTIVATE is to **permanently adapt the building**, allowing it to host stable cultural, educational, and civic functions, reinforcing a sense of continuity and identity.

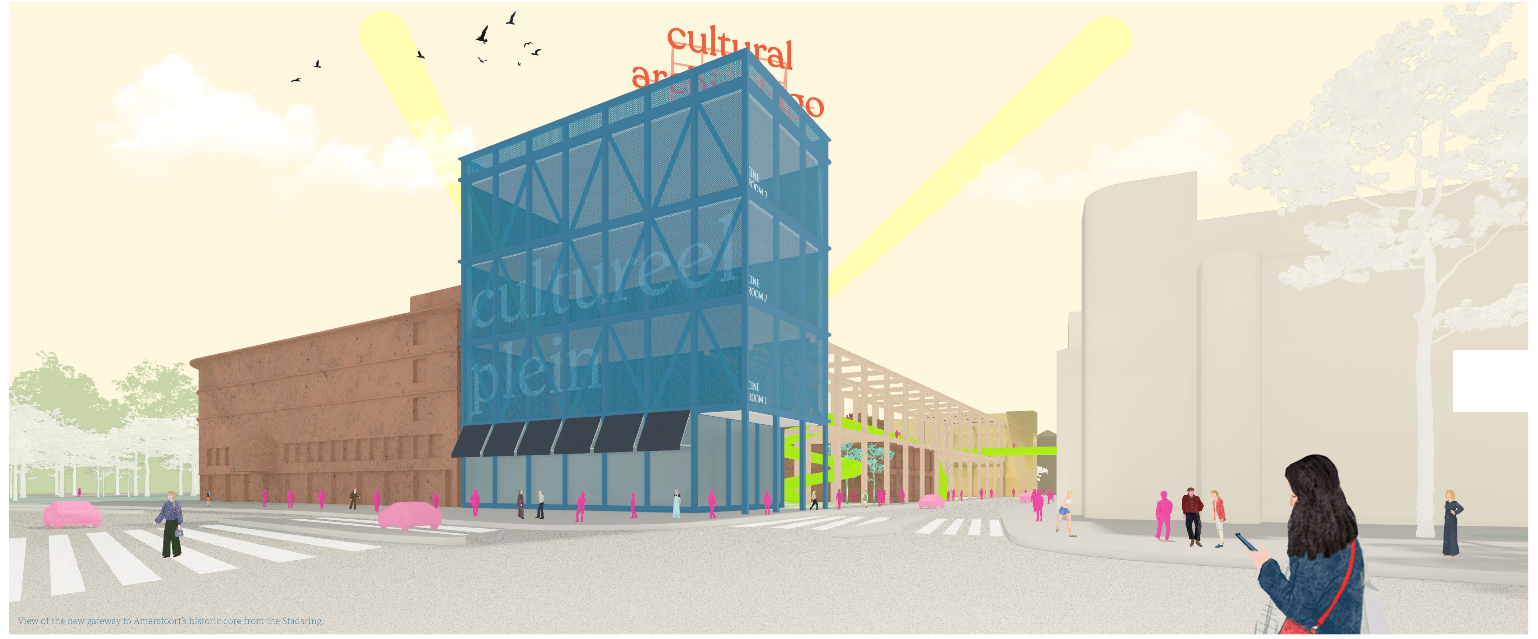
Interventions are primarily internal, designed to accommodate new programs while respecting the existing structure. **Interior layouts are reconfigured for flexibility and accessibility**, making room for a neighborhood library, congress halls, community offices, co-working spaces, temporary galleries, classrooms, small-scale theatres (300, 150, 100, and 100 seats), and small scale cinema rooms, **offering flexible environments for both public initiatives and private actors**. Managed publicly, these rentable spaces generate economic sustainability while supporting creativity and inclusion; **it will also attract new stakeholders together with the more established ones**.

The transformation enhances the building's usability without compromising its architectural character and relation with the existing urban layout.

Simultaneously, the surrounding public space undergoes **ecological regeneration**: surface parking and impermeable paving are removed and replaced with permeable surfaces, local vegetation, and pedestrian-friendly paths. Even The Brickwall participates in this regeneration breathing new life into its large terrace, turning it into a green and public connection with the rest of the project. This landscape reintroduces the **memory of the green belt** that once was the area, reclaiming the site as a porous and livable public ground. Importantly, while surface parking is eliminated to create a more pedestrian-centered and ecological environment, the existing underground parking structure is preserved and remains in operation, ensuring functional continuity for mobility and accessibility needs of the city and the Archipelago.

RE-ACTIVATE therefore operates on both architecture and soil, articulating a **new balance between the built and the natural**. It is an intentional gesture—a rejection of obsolescence and an affirmation of adaptation. In doing so, it positions permanence not as stagnation, but as a future-oriented act of care, putting the first phase as the foundation of the Cultural Archipelago, anchoring the site's memory while initiating its transformation.





View of the new gateway to Amersfoort's historic core from the Stadsring

---

AMERSFOORT-STADHUISPLEIN (NL)

Cultural Archipelago

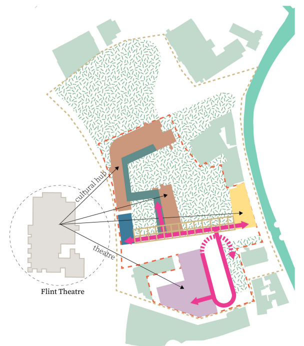
Reactivating the Existing, Reconfiguring Memory, Remaking Culture

New pedestrian permeability

By completely emptying the bridge building, the lot is further opened to public use, while at the same time rediscovering the original meaning of the park and the brick building

Connections between the archipelago

The elevated walkway connects all buildings of the new cultural archipelago, serving as urban infrastructure and public space, linking the cultural archipelago which includes the Flint Theatre

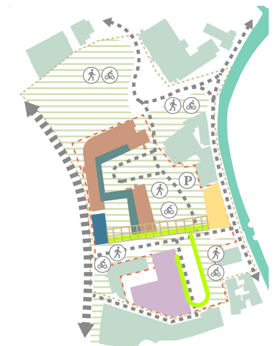


Recreating the green corridor

Impermeable pavements are replaced with permeable ones and trees in compatibility with the car park below. Part of the old green ring is thus recovered, creating a new green corridor.

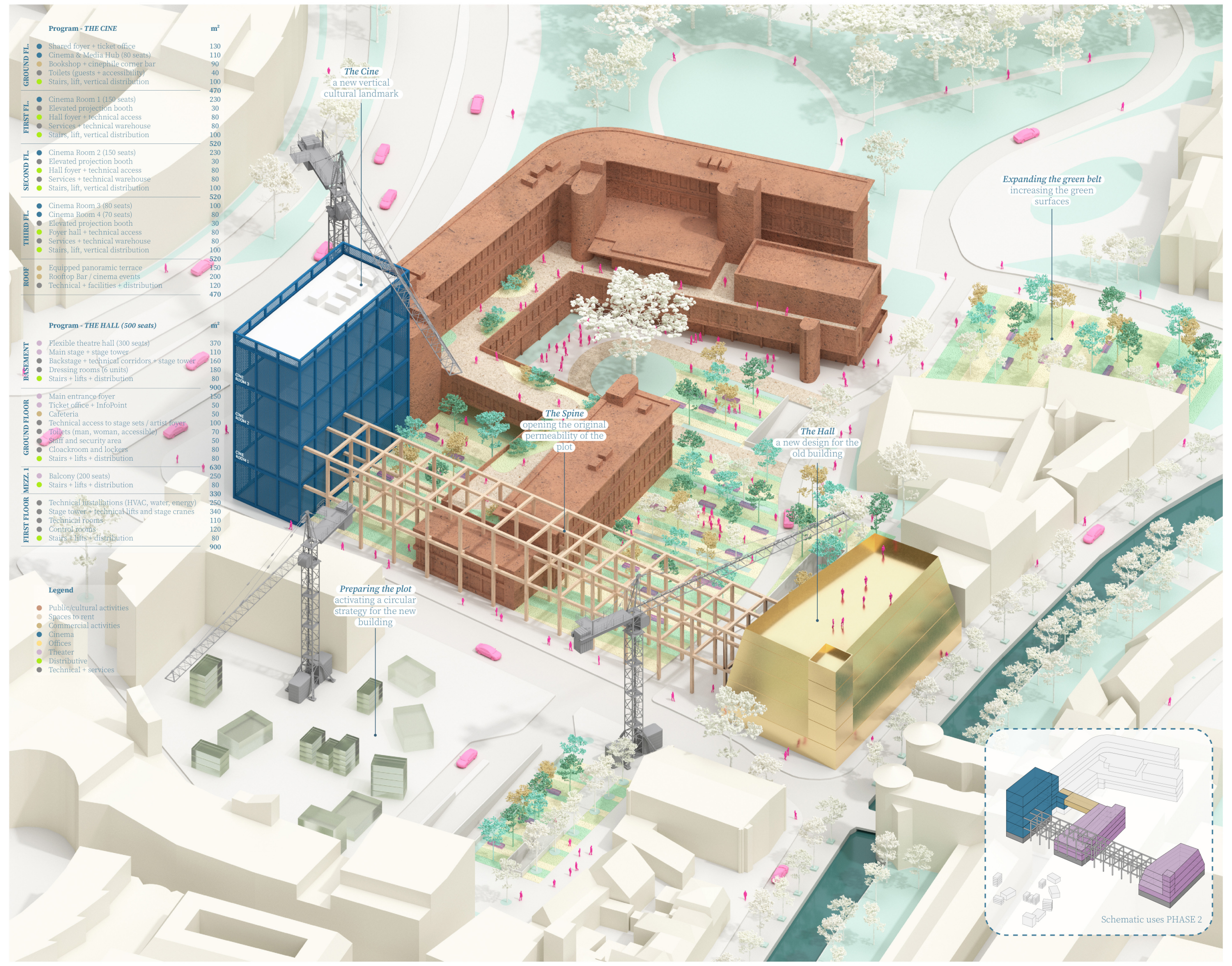
Slow / fast mobility

A better synergy is created between vehicular and pedestrian traffic, considering to maintain a small degree of carriageability of the lot (for service and loading/unloading)



Building's heights

The heights of the current buildings are maintained as much to avoid altering urban memory and identity as to reinforce the concept of urban continuity.



Program - *THE CINE*

		m²
GROUND FL.	Shared foyer + ticket office	130
	Cinema & Media Hub (80 seats)	110
	Bookshop + cinephile corner bar	90
	Toilets (guests + accessibility)	40
	Stairs, lift, vertical distribution	100
		470
FIRST FL.	Cinema Room 1 (150 seats)	230
	Elevated projection booth	30
	Hall foyer + technical access	80
	Services + technical warehouse	80
	Stairs, lift, vertical distribution	100
		520
SECOND FL.	Cinema Room 2 (150 seats)	230
	Elevated projection booth	30
	Hall foyer + technical access	80
	Services + technical warehouse	80
	Stairs, lift, vertical distribution	100
		520
THIRD FL.	Cinema Room 3 (80 seats)	100
	Cinema Room 4 (70 seats)	80
	Elevated projection booth	30
	Foyer hall + technical access	80
	Services + technical warehouse	80
	Stairs, lift, vertical distribution	100
		520
ROOF	Equipped panoramic terrace	150
	Rooftop Bar / cinema events	200
	Technical + facilities + distribution	120
		470

Program - *THE HALL (500 seats)*

		m²
BASEMENT	Flexible theatre hall (300 seats)	370
	Main stage + stage tower	110
	Backstage + technical corridors + stage tower	160
	Dressing rooms (6 units)	180
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	80
		900
GROUND FLOOR	Main entrance foyer	150
	Ticket office + InfoPoint	50
	Cafeteria	50
	Technical access to stage sets / artist foyer	100
	Toilets (man, woman, accessible)	70
	Staff and security area	50
	Cloakroom and lockers	80
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	80
		630
MEZZ. 1	Balcony (200 seats)	250
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	80
		330
FIRST FLOOR	Technical installations (HVAC, water, energy)	250
	Stage tower + technical lifts and stage cranes	340
	Technical rooms	110
	Control rooms	120
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	80
		900

Legend

- Public/cultural activities
- Spaces to rent
- Commercial activities
- Cinema
- Offices
- Theater
- Distributive
- Technical + services

PHASE 2

RE-CONFIGURE

Structural Reuse with transformation of the envelopes and spatial identity

(Year 3-6)

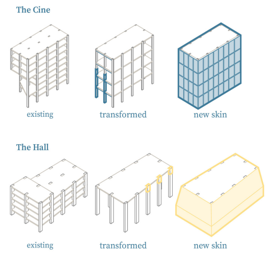
The second phase focuses on the transformation of the Molenstraat street profile. This ensemble consists of three distinct yet connected volumes: **The Spine** (the bridge building), **The Cine** (the tower), and **The Hall** (the corner building). The approach is to **preserve the existing** volumes and radically reconfigure their meaning, functions, and interaction with the city.

The Spine, once an architectural and urban barrier, is completely hollowed out. Its load-bearing structure is preserved and repurposed as an open public infrastructure — **a permeable urban connector that visually and physically reopens the site**. The Cine is transformed into **a vertical cultural landmark**: it houses cinema halls, public terraces, and event spaces. Its floors are restructured, and the envelope is renewed to enhance performance and visibility.

The Hall **is entirely restructured to house a new 500-seat theatre** with a new skin and improved openings, activating its ground floor and creating a stronger dialogue with the urban context. Together, these three volumes join forces with The Brickwall to form a small cultural city based on the previous, eterogeneous, layout—a dense, multi-layered node where movement, events, and daily life coexist.

The second phase also serves to establish a new architectural threshold for the city. The redefined façades are designed to form a recognizable identity — **a contemporary gateway to Amersfoort's historic core**. This architectural composition, while **preserving the footprint and urban memory of the existing complex**, introduces a new civic frontage. It embodies a visual landmark, one that symbolically frames the passage from the outer city into the cultural archipelago and then into the historic city. The public realm is finalized through the completion of the urban park and the complete removal of surface parking, replaced by green infrastructure and slow mobility paths.

RE-CONFIGURE is thus **an act of urban rewriting**. It embraces complexity and stratification instead of erasing them. By shifting thresholds, exposing structures, and enhancing existing relationships, the intervention reframes these buildings as active contributors to the city's cultural ecosystem. It proposes a model of transformation that is both economical and poetic: one that **challenges the tabula rasa approach and instead fosters a richer, more interconnected urban condition intertwined with memory' stratification.**



View from the new elevated pathway looking at Molenstraat

View from the new green corridor inside the plot

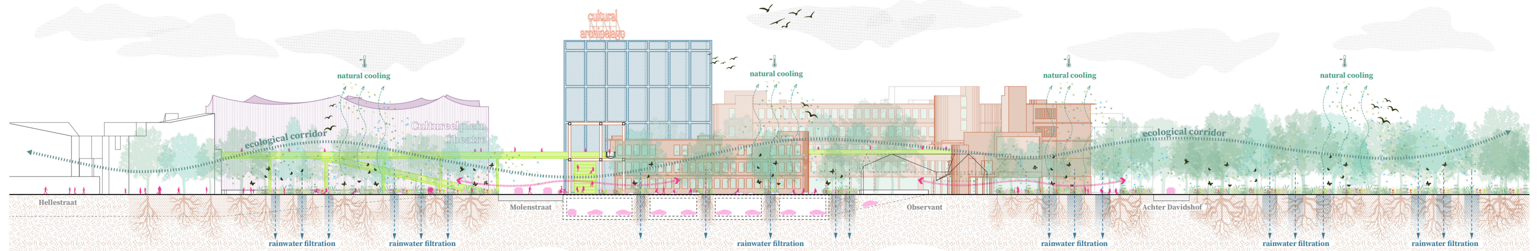
AMERSFOORT-STADHUISPLEIN (NL)

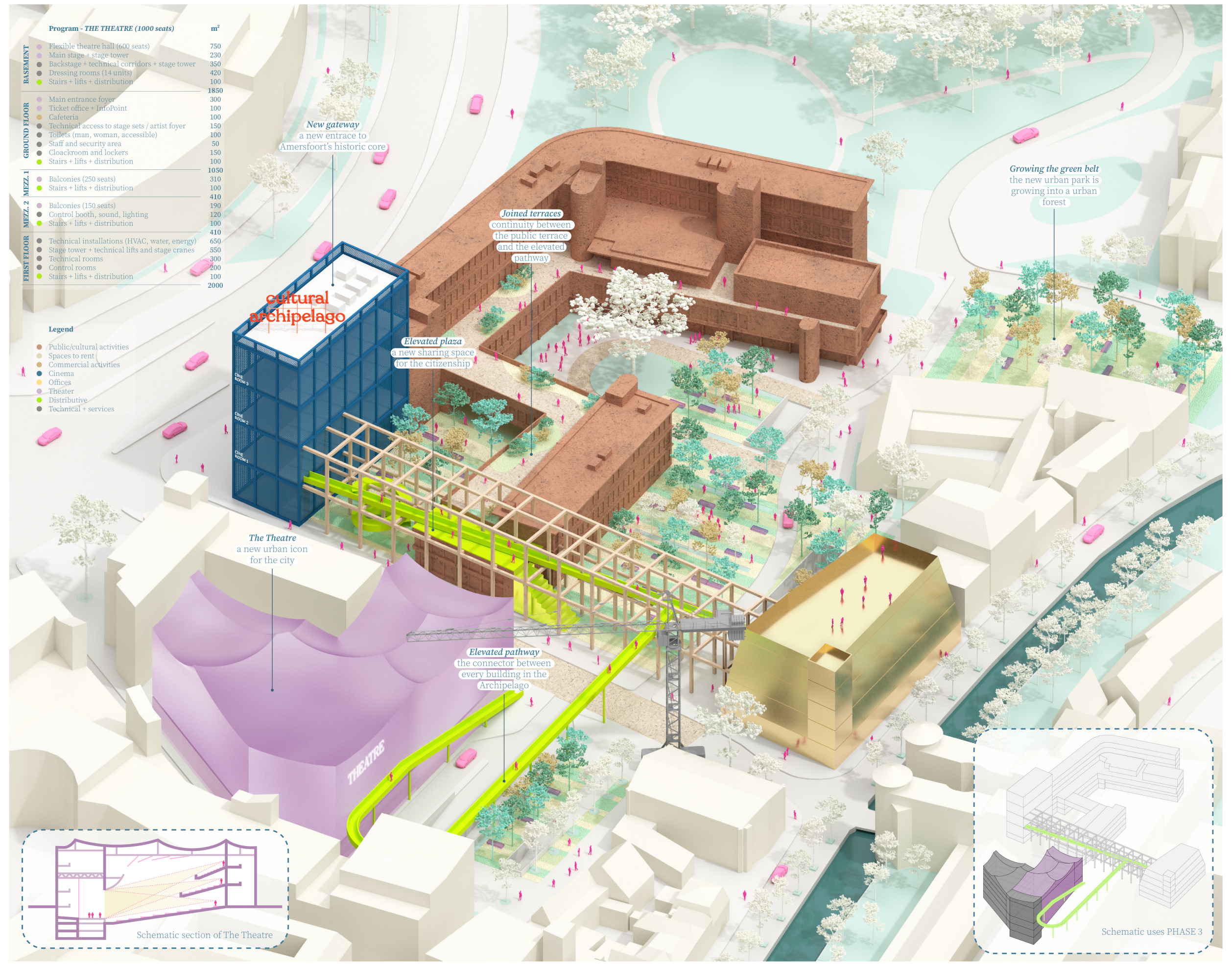
Cultural Archipelago

Reactivating the Existing, Reconfiguring Memory, Remaking Culture

Timetable

Cross section





Program - *THE THEATRE (1000 seats)*

		m²
BASEMENT	Flexible theatre hall (600 seats)	750
	Main stage + stage tower	230
	Backstage + technical corridors + stage tower	350
	Dressing rooms (14 units)	420
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	100
		1850
GROUND FLOOR	Main entrance foyer	300
	Ticket office + InfoPoint	100
	Cafeteria	100
	Technical access to stage sets / artist foyer	150
	Toilets (man, woman, accessible)	100
	Staff and security area	50
	Cloakroom and lockers	150
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	100
		1050
MEZZ. 1	Balconies (250 seats)	310
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	100
		410
MEZZ. 2	Balconies (150 seats)	190
	Control booth, sound, lighting	120
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	100
		410
FIRST FLOOR	Technical installations (HVAC, water, energy)	650
	Stage tower + technical lifts and stage cranes	550
	Technical rooms	300
	Control rooms	200
	Stairs + lifts + distribution	100
		2000

Legend

- Public/cultural activities
- Spaces to rent
- Commercial activities
- Cinema
- Offices
- Theater
- Distributive
- Technical + services

PHASE 3

RE-MAKE

Material Reuse through circular demolition and rebuilding

(Year 6-9)

The third and final main phase of the project centers on the transformation of **The Theatre**, the building currently designated for immediate demolition. It is proposed to recycle it as the structural and material base for the new Theater to activate a circular reuse. This move **reverses the narrative of obsolescence** and embraces reuse as an architectural opportunity and cultural act.

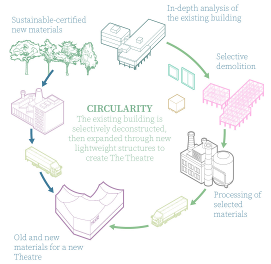
The existing building is **selectively deconstructed**, then expanded through a system of new additions made of lightweight structures—steel frames, laminated timber, prefabricated panels—that articulate **a new architectural language**. These additions wrap and sit atop the base of the existing volume, creating new space to hosts a 1000-seat theater hall with a ceiling height of 25 m which allow for a generous main theatre space, the stage tower and technical installations and systems.

The materials recovered from selective demolition are reintegrated into the new design: reused as cladding, outdoor furniture, scenographic features, and tactile surfaces that preserve traces of the site's past. This **circular strategy** reveals the project's constructive history, transforming residual matter into narrative architecture, while reducing CO2 consumption.

A key feature of this phase is the construction of an **elevated pathway** that enhances the structural skeleton of The Spine. This pathway becomes a new urban device, **a bridge between the past, the present and the future**: it integrates ramps, platforms, gardens, and public seating, transforming a former barrier into a connective infrastructure. **It links all four buildings** of the Cultural Archipelago, creating a walkable and continuous **cultural and panoramic promenade**. Furthermore, the elevated path connects directly to the public terrace of The Brickwall, it extends across the adjacent street, and lands on The Theatre, forming a soft bridge over existing infrastructural complexities. This strategic gesture addresses the fragmented condition of Hellestraat square while bypassing the costly and disruptive relocation of existing private underground parking ramps. By elevating circulation above them, it preserves critical access for deliveries and visitors, **avoiding major economic losses and enabling urban revitalization with minimal conflict**. The elevated path thus offers a refined and economical solution to a complex urban context, **prioritizing continuity over rupture**.

Throughout the three phases, this new cultural ecosystem gradually welcomes established institutions like **Flint Theater**, **Theater De Lieve Vrouw**, **FLOUR**, and **KOSMIK**, integrating them into a dynamic framework alongside new services, activities and stakeholders to foster a proper cultural hub.

RE-MAKE, ultimately, is both a poetic and political act. **To remake is to regenerate and to transition**. It is about transforming urban remnants into carriers of new meaning, where matter is not wasted but reimagined, and where architecture becomes a medium for memory, sustainability, and cultural life.



View from Molenstraat looking at the new Cultural Archipelago