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Beautifully Unconventional



Overcoming Collective Limits



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WORD OF WELCOME

We are living in transitional times, biodiversity, climate change, social injustice, covid-19. The only certainty we seem to have is that things are uncertain. We also know that the long-term ability of our planet to thrive requires action, transformation and transgression towards ways of being that respect the social and ecological systemic boundaries of our planet. Mission Impact is born out of the need for an educational approach to facilitate students to discover what their personal or professional contributions may be in this quest. In the first edition of this magazine, we present Mission Impact as an experiment that explores how education takes action to transform the regions around our institutions by transforming our learners.

As higher education holds a special place in society as beacons of learning, our institutions have the capacity to guide the collective learning that we as society must go through if we are to make it through these transitional times and uncertainty. This pilot represents an initial step, a small step, towards a higher education that creates space, not just for students but for all learners,

to envision (radically) alternative future narratives. Stories that fit within a society based on thriving in socio-ecological integrity. Stories which transgress currently perceived limitations and exceed possibility. It is a place for dreaming and acting on making these critically hopeful dreams reality. Above all, Mission Impact is a place for learners to develop their capacity to guide societal learning through transformative action.

This first pilot was largely conducted online and involved 17 students from 12 programmes and 9 nationalities all working together. The context of study was in the Binckhorst, The Hague. A former industrial area that is also in transition. For a few months, this region was their (digital) space for play, learning and transformation.

In this magazine, you can find a selection of the results of this experiment, it highlights alternative narratives for the future of the Binckhorst, reflections by learners, artistic expressions, and is a tangible artefact left behind by the very first cohort that was crazy enough to join us on this journey.

We cannot thank the students enough, as well as everyone who was involved in making this pilot successful in these strange and uncertain times, for their energy and passion. Without every one of you this would never have been possible. We cannot express enough how proud we are to have had the privilege to experience your unfolding as the leaders of tomorrow. We invite the reader to engage with this collective learning experience, and we sincerely hope that it is as transformative for you as it has been for us.

Bas van den Berg

Gabriela Bustamente Castillo

Coordinators of the Mission Impact minor



IMAGINE...

Imagine you could go to any urban environment. Which place on this Earth do you really want to explore? It can be a big city, small town, it doesn't matter.

What gets you excited while you're on your way there?

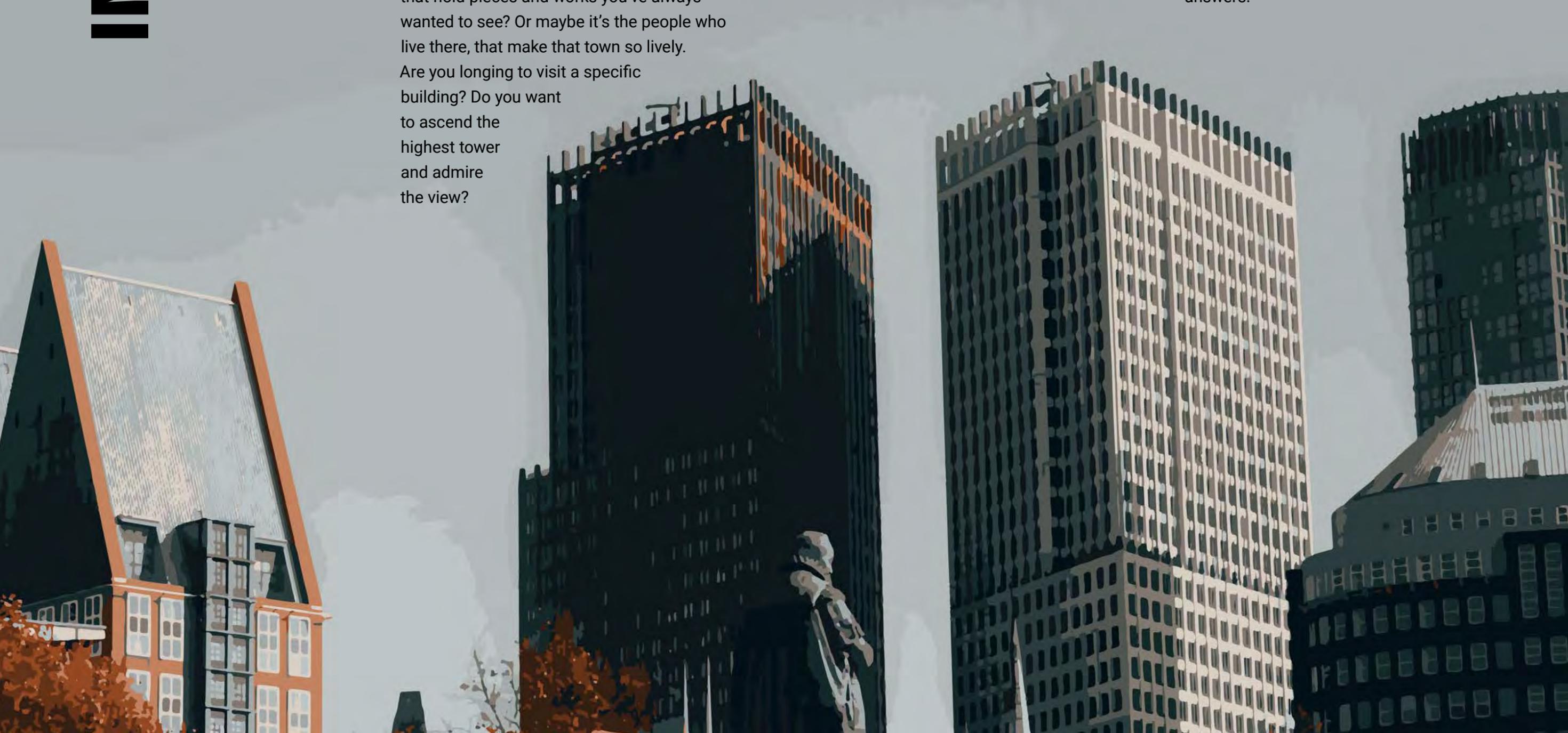
Is it the iconic architecture that is waiting for you to take a selfie with it? Is it the museums that hold pieces and works you've always wanted to see? Or maybe it's the people who live there, that make that town so lively. Are you longing to visit a specific building? Do you want to ascend the highest tower and admire the view?

What do you think are the important things that create the identity of this place? How does it stand out? How does it compare to another city or town or village? What makes you think of this place? What do you want to experience there?

What if this place would become regenerative? Would it be able to keep its current identity? Or do you fear it would lose its allure? Would buildings lose their beauty when covered in solar panels? Would you not enjoy the view anymore when wind turbines are visible on the horizon?

Or would you enjoy the extra amount of greenery? Would the absence of traffic noises be calming? Would the local cuisine improve when freshly picked fruits and vegetables are utilised?

When an area is undergoing a transition, these are some of the conflicting forces to take into consideration. What other benefits will becoming regenerative bring? And how can we overcome the fear that change might threaten what we hold so dear? There are fitting solutions to every problem. Our challenge is to ask the right questions to find the right answers.



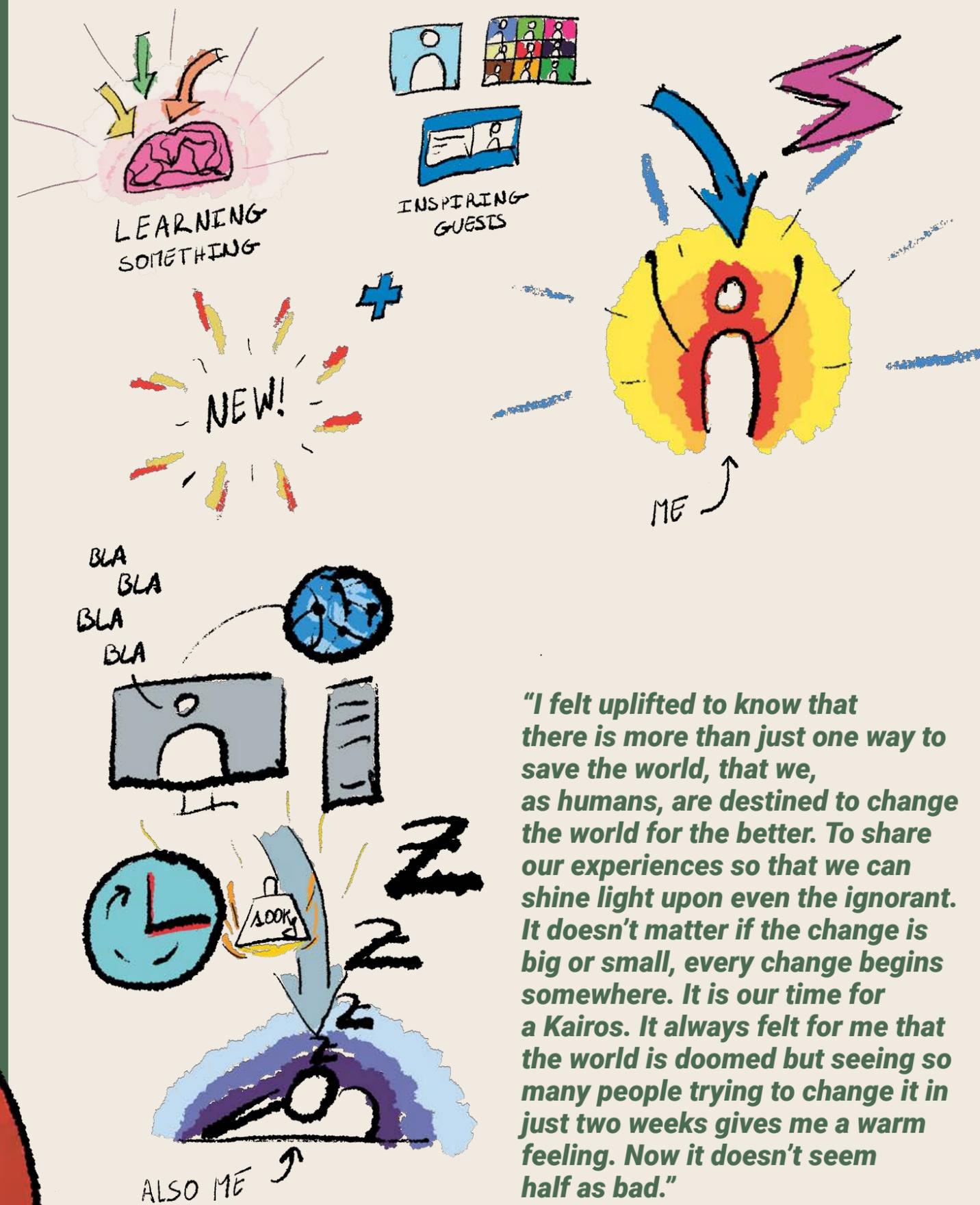
8 TOWARDS SAFE SPACES IN EDUCATION

Personally as a student, if I were to point to one thing that accelerated the growth of the students in this minor, it would be the Collective Reflective Sessions. These sessions were a designated space in which we, as a collective of students, got to reflect on the minor, on the project, on our learning and on our experiences. The structure of these sessions varied. The first one contained a guided meditation, written-down reflections, storytelling and drawings, to the last few simply being a session to share honestly what each of us were going through – inside and outside of the minor. Feelings and predicaments that we usually would set aside, labelling them as “personal” or unimportant for our groupmates to know about, became encouraged to share with the intention of caring for one another.

In contrast to the semesters I have taken before this, felt gratifying to speak so openly about my perceptions of the minor and my state of being with it. Sharing my thoughts to not only my peers that take the time to simply listen but also to a teacher who is empathetic, encouraging and responsive. And in the midst of a pandemic where we were deprived of our social interactions, this space to connect on a much deeper level was very much needed. You can read next to this text some of the excitement reflected in the student’s writings during their first collective reflective session.

The open and honest communication within this space allowed us to be who we are – amongst each other – and to see one another truthfully. And though we faced intense and exhausting moments in the minor, to share those experiences with one another and know that we weren’t alone in this process made it not only bearable, it gave it meaning, and made it all worthwhile.

If we didn’t mention it before (and I’m sure I can speak on behalf of all the Mission Impact minor participants), consider this a post of our appreciation for creating this space within higher education. Because as we have experienced, there are amazing things that can happen when we can choose to be open with one another. One of the least is to develop relationships that will last beyond the initial setting that is Mission Impact.



“I felt uplifted to know that there is more than just one way to save the world, that we, as humans, are destined to change the world for the better. To share our experiences so that we can shine light upon even the ignorant. It doesn’t matter if the change is big or small, every change begins somewhere. It is our time for a Kairos. It always felt for me that the world is doomed but seeing so many people trying to change it in just two weeks gives me a warm feeling. Now it doesn’t seem half as bad.”

—Carl Oprinsen, Student

As autumn arrives

A creative expression from the first Collective Reflective Session

As autumn arrives,
creatures from far and wide,
venture to the heart of the forest
where they encounter a concerning scene.

Fallen trees and dried up bushes
makes it unable for them to meet face to face,
so they must shout
and listen to each other's echoes.

All the forest creatures were very different.
The rabbit had never met a deer
and the deer had never met a toad.

It was confusing at first,
there were voices heard in the forest
that guide them in various ways.
Some of the creatures
had different expectations of this meeting.

But as they started to settle in,
they found joy and excitement
that they had met each other,
to learn from different stories
through their unique eyes.

There was a sense of hope in the air,
every creature had the same purpose:
to restore the forest.



12 A NEW FRIEND IN THE BINCKHAVEN

Listening to his grandfather playing the smooth sounds of Beethoven's Moonlight, during dark winter evenings, was one of Sam's fondest childhood memories. Since his first visit to the concert hall, Sam dreamt of following in his footsteps. Now Sam is playing the violin in a band instead.

The room they practice in isn't very big. It's a cosy place in a building in Voorburg, just enough for the band.

At the end of today's rehearsal, Sam carefully slides his violin in its case and looks towards the window, he realises it is already getting dark outside. While putting on his coat he untucked his blue hair out of the collar and put on his red woolly hat, whilst joyfully saying goodbye to the other band members. The air outside is cold. It had rained all day and he can smell the crisp fresh humidity of it.

Although Sam would usually bike home, he feels like walking today. He likes the cold occasionally.

On his stroll back home from Voorburg he crosses the bridge on the Binckhorstlaan, into the Binckhorst. Sam saw a familiar figure staring at the canal. It had become a routine to see this mysterious woman, and sometimes he even waved a hello at her. Often, he would wonder why she stood there looking at this boring area so much. There were only industrial buildings and it seemed nothing ever happened besides the occasional sailing boat or construction worker passing by. Sam decided to approach her to find out why she is so interested in the Binckhorst.

The Binckhorst is traditionally an industrial neighbourhood of The Hague, with many garages and diverse companies in offices spread all around mostly dull looking buildings. One of the landmarks of the Binckhorst is the harbour, where cargo ships come and go as well as many leisure boats. This harbour is connected with the port of Rotterdam, the city of Leiden and other locations through canals. In the area many buildings are under construction, just like a tunnel, that eventually will connect to the highway leading to Rotterdam.



< Listen to Sam walking home and wondering

"Hello", Sam said to her.

"Good evening", the woman kindly replied. "Is your bike alright? Do you need help", she asks, pointing at his bike.

"Oh, no, my bike is fine, I just wanted to enjoy the cold. I always pass through the area and wonder about it. It seems like such a sad place... but you must like it? I always see you here." Sam realises the woman is observing him with a discrete smile.

"Oh, how rude of me! I'm Sam", he quickly added.

"Nice to meet you Sam, I'm Maxime, but please, call me Max."

Sam is trying to find a conversation starter, but Max cuts him off, pointing at his violin case.

"Do you play an instrument?"

"I do. I play the violin; I am actually on my way home from band rehearsal", Sam said.

"Oh, how cool. Have we seen each other before?"

"You might remember me walking around here with my grandfather. He plays in an orchestra that practices close by, too. He can't go to rehearsals now, too much risk with COVID."

"Ah, yes, that rings a bell in my memory."

Both Sam and Max rest in silence for a few seconds. The ambient was quiet at that moment, looking at the harbour brought Sam back to reality from the excitement of being able to interact with this mysterious woman.

"Why are you here so regularly? My grandfather and I always wonder why you would be here so much", Sam asked a bit hesitantly.

"Ha ha, I can imagine. Alright, I can tell you if you want. You and your grandfather will finally solve the mystery", Max said.

"Yes, I am super curious."



Max starts telling Sam about why she is so frequently in the Binckhorst, and to be more precise the Binckhaven. It turns out that Max is a student in The Hague, and during her studies, she became interested in sustainability. Currently, she is taking part in a minor called Mission Impact, where the participants take an environmental problem in the area and come up with a design that will help solving it. This is when Max decided that she wanted to start a project about waste. She has done lots of research so far and is now trying to get some real-life observations in the field.

A place like the Binckhorst, in the city of The Hague is pretty special. It is an industrial area, but at the same time, it has a cultural thriving scene. The in-land harbour is also a contributor to its identity. Max then started explaining the different areas of the Binckhorst. Sam mainly knew the Binckhorstlaan, a street that goes straight to the Central Station, but it turns out there is much more to the area: Binck Eiland, Binckhorst Kasteel, Junopark and the Binckhorst Cemetery, or the former head offices of a telecom provider.

Max also talked about all the different companies in the Binckhorst. They are the reason why you can find street art in the area. It fits the vibe. She also explains to Sam that there is an organisation called I'M BINCK, an independent initiative of enthusiastic entrepreneurs, idealists, residents, makers and organisations involved in the area's surroundings, identity and transformations. They are the centre node of its vibrant community. The Binckhorst takes on a vibrant look during parties and events they host. She also explained that the municipality of The Hague is planning to build a lot of new homes in the area. Max wants to create a deeper sense of community between the area, nature and the future residents of the Binckhaven through organic waste. "That sounds intriguing, I think I would have never thought of something like this", Sam answered to the purpose of the research.



"Anyway, I will no longer bore you with my research, it is getting late... I should probably get going", Max said.

"Yes, I should go home too. I have another rehearsal next Tuesday; will you be here then? I want to know more about your research", Sam replied.

"Of course. 17:30 Tuesday evening", Max asked.

"Sounds good to me."

"Alright, I will see you next week then. It was nice talking to you Sam. Be safe."

"Bye Maxime", said Sam, his gaze following her figure disappearing in the dark.

10 SUSTAINABLE HOME TECHNOLOGIES

Sustainability has become a huge trend in the past couple of years, and we all are trying to make our own, active personal contribution. These efforts range from eating less meat to limiting air travel. But have you ever considered that your non-active choices might just have a much larger impact?

Here are seven ways on how to make your life that much more sustainable.

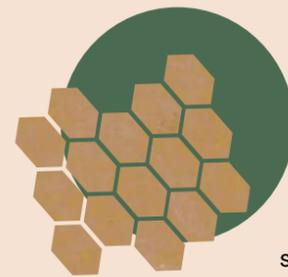
The smart house system

Connecting your house and its devices to a smart system will not only allow you to gather data on your habits but use those to prevent you from wasting energy. The system will automatically switch off unused devices, create the perfect heating schedule and create awareness on how much energy is used by the inhabitants. The best part, you can control your whole house from any place in the world, just by using an app.

Tap water nozzle

Reduce your water consumption by 98%!

This nozzle will not only save you money, it will save water too! Invented after the last drought the nozzle breaks down the water particles into million pieces and converts the wasteful jets into a more resourceful mist. Easy to install in all existing taps, without losing any water pressure.



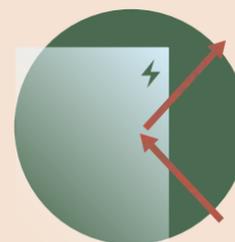
Photovoltaic roof

The photovoltaic roof is based on a nanomaterial that harvests light based on natural principles of photosynthesis. It absorbs light particles and transforms them into energy, just like chlorophyll in plants. As the material is very malleable it can be shaped in any form and is therefore ideal to lay on traditional roofs. This technology does not need direct sunlight and is therefore much more efficient than traditional solar panels.



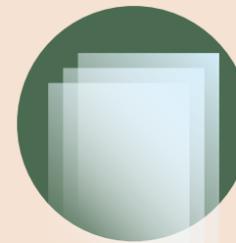
Dress your walls in green and save energy

Covering your house with moss and other plants will provide you with great insulation, protection from sun and rain, and retention of rainwater. And not only you can benefit, moss insulation can help reduce the Urban Heat Island Effect. If only 10% extra green would be applied the temperature could be lowered by six degrees. Additionally, vertical green provides us with cleaner air through CO2 absorption and stimulates biodiversity.



Solar window technology

A new class of opaque solar cell materials called perovskites, allow us to install transparent solar cells in windows. Cheaper than the traditionally used silicone, while reaching close efficiency, the new cells could have the possibility that a large office building could power itself, through optimisation of space. The cells absorb a certain frequency of the light that causes heat rising in the house and converts it into electricity.



Triple Glazed Windows

Cool in the summer and warm in the winter, isn't that the dream for any house owner? If it is yours consider replacing your windows with new, triple glazed ones. To be even more sustainable and to prevent a sauna effect during the summer, the outer layer of the windows have a solar cell layer. These cells are transparent and block out heat by absorbing invisible UV and Infrared lights. Therefore, no heat will build up in the house.



Floor Heating

Building a new house? Install floor heating, to heat your house more efficiently, and save at least 25% on your energy consumption. Plus, you will never be bothered by ugly radiators again.

18 A DOWN AND DUSKY BLONDE

Another Tuesday, another rehearsal. But what Sam is really excited about is meeting Max afterwards. Over the last week, Maxime has been on his mind quite a lot. He has never met anyone like her before.

After the band is done, Sam picks up his violin and heads out waving goodbye to his bandmates. Outside the rain quickly turns his hair from an aqua blue to a midnight shade. Sam takes a deep breath and enjoys how dark and quiet the streets are since the COVID crises. The absence of traffic left the city noise and smell free. Sam thinks about how serene it feels and before he realises, he is walking into the Binckhaven.

Suddenly, the light of a bike starts to appear a few metres from him. It was Max.

"I'm sorry I'm late, I hoped the rain would stop", she shouted at him apologetically from a distance. Sam was quick to run towards her and tell her that he had been late as well. He got distracted composing a new song.

"You should play me one of these songs one day," Max enthusiastically replied, but the weather was poor and would damage the instrument, so it couldn't happen today.

Max locks up her bike when Sam asks about the building that was being constructed right in front of them.

"Apartments", Max curtly said. "With the ongoing

redevelopment plan, the Municipality of The Hague wants to transform the area in a multipurpose neighbourhood, kind of a city centre 2.0. The expensive dwellings will include co-working spaces, hospitality and a flexible residential concept. It sounds great, but we'll see."

"You are talking as if this would be something negative", said Sam, surprised of Max's tone.

"I don't know, but I am worried about the Binckhorst losing its identity. Irmgard, a board member of I'M BINCK, told me that the identity isn't just determined by the industry. It is the combination of people, location and facilities such as the ships in the harbour and the cranes. The functions of the area and its infrastructure give identity to the place."

"I can imagine, but we have a big housing crisis...also, what does it have to do with your waste research?", Sam asked.

"Well, the fact that new residents will arrive raises questions and potential problems for the area. Currently, the waste separation process in The Hague is complicated and inconvenient. Especially for new, uninformed residents. Large distances among selective collection bins that are only available in some neighbourhoods make it especially difficult."

"Tell me about it, I have to walk 10 minutes to throw away my glass waste", Sam said.

"Yes, and besides that the added difficulty of many residents living in apartment buildings rather than individual houses will lead to problems if waste management will not be developed and implemented. Especially when the population increases and the amount of waste with it. Another immediate consequence

of this redevelopment is the uncertainty of existing businesses. The new possible uses of the land plots increased the real estate value drastically, and because many of the current occupants don't own their spaces, they might be forced to move. So before making decisions we have to be aware of the current interactions in the area and how they work together."

"So, you studied these interactions", Sam asks.

"Exactly, and I also looked at elements independent of the Binckhorst, so the map could also be used for other places."

"If you are doing your project here, why did you look at that", Sam argues.

"This way you can also include possible future developments and identify potential points of action. Do you mind if we walk? I'm starting to get cold", Max says.

While the two walk into the harbour, Sam sees it suddenly getting busier.



< Listen to the Binckhorst getting busy

"What are those" Sam asks, looking at the two buildings in front of them.

Max pointed at the right one. "That's the Asfaltcentrale, it will change its location soon because the Municipality financed their way out of here. The other building is the Caballero Fabriek, a former cigar factory, that is now a co-working space for individuals and companies."

"That's so cool", Sam replies. "They managed to give the building a new purpose and make it a place of connection."

"Yes, definitely. This is a good start towards the future. The identity of the Binckhorst is a

great example of how different stakeholders are. At Mission Impact we identified a struggle between keeping the identity of the area intact and the aspiration to be a new city centre."

Max proceeds to explain another case about waste. "Finally, that's about her research" Sam thought.

She says that, for the future, experts dreamt of a streamlined waste system; household and industry waste collection is done on a complexity basis and the simplest elements as some plastics and organic waste or cardboards get processed on-site through recycling or up-cycling. Then, other waste gets moved to different parties that can use it as source material; furniture, appliances or electronic devices could be repaired or upgraded in community workshops.

"Some of what you explained reminded me of the book 'The Giver' by Lois Lowry. It's the idea of a dystopian and utopian world. Everything works fine on the surface, people are self-sufficient equals, but the requirement for all of it to happen is that identity and emotions are suppressed, which kind of transforms all characters into machines. Don't you think these visions of locals and the communities, everyone playing their role would also mean having a dystopian side of it?"

"I think the first part is considering everyone's dreams. What could it look like if we put everyone's dreams together and create a new one they all can be part of? That would already differ from 'The Giver's' dystopia where people don't have an individual agenda. What if some people in my building were responsible for making the food for everyone, for example in the building's green terraces? What would it be like if I could just go to another part of the building and have someone help me repair my stuff, make the products I need? What would it look like to have all the neighbours teaching



each other, looking after each other, and enjoying meals together? What if we would allow wild nature to be in the buildings? For life to have safe spaces where it is nourished? It doesn't have to be about playing a role but contributing what we can do best."

"Asking the 'what if' questions", Sam continues, "doing experiments to see what can happen, what works and what doesn't. That's very much like art. Speculative art starts at the 'what if' question, and so does fictive literature. The art piece is eventually just a sensorial experiment of that starting point: the words in a book are the transcription of a thought experiment, a painting or a sculpture is the visual representation of the artist's experiment, and a musical album can be the auditive representation of a musician.

"Exactly", Max affirms. "Asking questions just to experiment and construct the future together." It was getting late and they begin feeling the cold. They split apart but agreed to see each other once more on Thursday.

• • •

Thursday came. The rehearsal was over, and Max is already waiting for Sam.

"So, what else have you discovered about waste", Sam asks after some small talk.

Max explains to him that organic waste in a multipurpose and residential Binckhorst could account for 30% of the total waste, with the number of new apartments being built. That would be quite a bit of waste every day! Having separate waste streams would allow waste to be deployed for specific purposes.

"That sounds interesting. It looks like there are a lot of things that could be done with organic waste. I wonder how it can be used to create

change," Sam comments.

"At times one just feels lost. In fact, it has been difficult to navigate this project so far, there are a lot of uncertainties and many stakeholders. Besides, not everyone is willing to talk to me", Max explains.

"I think it is natural to feel lost. We don't have to force everything around us, instead we should let ourselves be led by whatever emerges", Sam replies.

"Yeah, I guess we don't really have to try to solve all problems but instead create dialogue and awareness. We must nurture 'what if' conversations and let people play with potential futures. You used the example of a book; a book is the experiment of an author. Our purpose as researchers is to turn people's dreams and aspirations into experimental spaces. This way we can make the process radically democratic and participative. So that they can decide for themselves which direction they want to move and put their action into making it reality."

"So, it is not necessary to make big changes but instead help the movement to gain popularity? That's a huge chess game", Sam says.

"It is indeed. Cultural change takes time, but we can be part of them through the work we do. Spreading the word, making people more conscious and helping them to make changes, too. Small contributions that can have a domino effect."

"I think you have to listen to people's dreams and show them it can become reality if we work together. Have you thought about bringing those stakeholders together", Sam proposes.

"And then what", Max asks.

He did not reply. Instead, he looked out on the water in silence. After a while Sam says: "What if you use dystopias to oppose them to the world you envision. They might awaken critique. If you already know what people do not want, you could use that as a starting point." Sam left it there. It is getting cold, which isn't good for the violin, so he has to leave. "See you around", he finally announces before disappearing in the dark. The last visible thing is a small red light disappearing in the distance.

• • •

After the conversation with Sam, Max hosts a workshop where different stakeholders came together. They are shown images of dystopian and utopian futures, to create a discussion about how we want to live, what it means to thrive and what it meant to have a positive impact on the planet, as well as community building and organic waste.

It is inspiring for Max to talk to all these different people, but it also confuses her. Some participants share her opinions, but others have a completely different point of view. It shows her how many different opinions, but also awareness levels, existed regarding the waste problem and coming up with a regenerative solution for that.

Analysing the conversation was helping to put some structure into the mess of the workshop. Max realises people indirectly talk about the value of humans and when doing so they do it equally from an anthropocentric and a life positive perspective. Additionally, when people talk about thriving on earth, what they mean is mainly human life. In a way, by researching waste Max identifies that a level of change is required at a deeper level.

One participant in particular opens Max' eyes. This person talks about how the actions we take have big consequences for other places. The global north is not where people are suffering. Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand or the Philippines, these are the places already affected by climate change. Max realises that therefore climate change can sometimes feel unrelatable for some people. The conversation is necessary because everyone deserves to be heard, maybe that is indeed the goal: creating plural discussions so we can move on together.



22 THE TWO TALES OF THE BINCKHORST

The Two Tales of The Binckhorst consists of two storylines. One where we continue with our business, as usual, depleting the planet of its resources in the pursuit of enriching ourselves as individuals, and one where we live in harmonic unison like we see circularity in nature. In nature, one process creates resources for other processes without creating waste or using more resources than is being renewed.

The simplicity of the two stories makes them accessible to both young and old readers. The younger reader can use this book to start to understand circularity and its importance while the older reader can use the stories to reflect on their behaviour. The consequences of our everyday choices are not to be ignored, and these books help us discover why.



The king that ruled the Binckhorst was a greedy man. Even though his fortune was already too large to spend it in one lifetime, the king decided to make a deal with some sneaky tradesmen. He gave them part of the land in his village so they could build new houses on the grounds. He thought to himself, that the more people would live in his kingdom, the more tax money he could make and therefore he could be even richer than he already was.

In this tale, the king's fortune grows larger and his lifestyle more lavish at the cost of the wellbeing of the inhabitants and businesses in the Binckhorst. Everything is made to be luxurious and convenient; sustainability is not considered.

His kingdom was not prepared for the change that had come and even though the technology had once been the best and brightest of the world, there were no more materials left that could bring them forward. The mines of the kingdom were depleted, and the food was eaten faster than the time it took to reproduce. The king's lavish lifestyle had robbed the planet and people of their future.



The king declared that the Binckhorst was to be the first region in the country that had to be circular: running our economy as nature does with its own business. In nature, plants use carbon dioxide and nutrients to grow and then produce oxygen. The oxygen is what animals need and in return they exhale carbon dioxide. Additionally, plants are a source of food for most animals and decomposing animals contain nutrients for the plants. A circular economy is adapting to a behaviour, opposed to linear economy, where at the end resources go to waste.

The tale describes the changes the king makes during his reign. He is focused on circularity, making use of sustainable technologies, and integrating nature to the neighbourhood and inhabitants' lifestyles.

The day the king had stepped down, and his daughter was crowned Queen, the people knew how good of a king he had been. He had created a future, for many generations to come, which they would not have had without him. It was because of him, that the people had realized, how important it was to make sacrifices for their community and how they would be nothing without the planet they lived on.

24 MENTAL SEEDS

A part of any sustainable and futureproof society is for humans to be in sync with nature. We need nature to sustain our urban lives. As we all know, nature produces oxygen and food. But it does more than that. In these times of corona, we have all seen how people are drawn to nature and the fresh air. Nature helps preserve our mental health; studies have shown this to be true.

In the transition of areas like the Binckhorst nature must be considered, actively giving it a space in the surroundings of the area. This allows people to enjoy nature in the vicinity of their living area. This enhances the liveability of the area, as greenery is known to absorb heat and rain, decreasing temperatures and flooding issues. It also helps attract and sustain bee cultures that can't be missed in the pollination of gardens and balconies. These are all well-known facts. It will also benefit the wellbeing of people living in the area.

In a workshop, the online tool "Mentimeter" has been used to help people prioritize various modules that can be implied in a park. This helps gain insights in the interests of future users of a green area like a park.

As the workshop only involved little participants, a larger survey has been used. This survey attracted 77 participants and thus gives a more representative view of people's interests in a park.

To not only have quantitative data but also qualitative data, two residents of the Binckhorst have been interviewed. This supported the idea that the Binckhorst is indeed in need of recreational green areas. Taking all this gathered knowledge into account, a design inclusive to the expressed desires has been made but raises some interesting questions to think about.

Can the current generation decide on the needs of the next generation?

Will today's technology fit into a new wave of the industrial revolution?

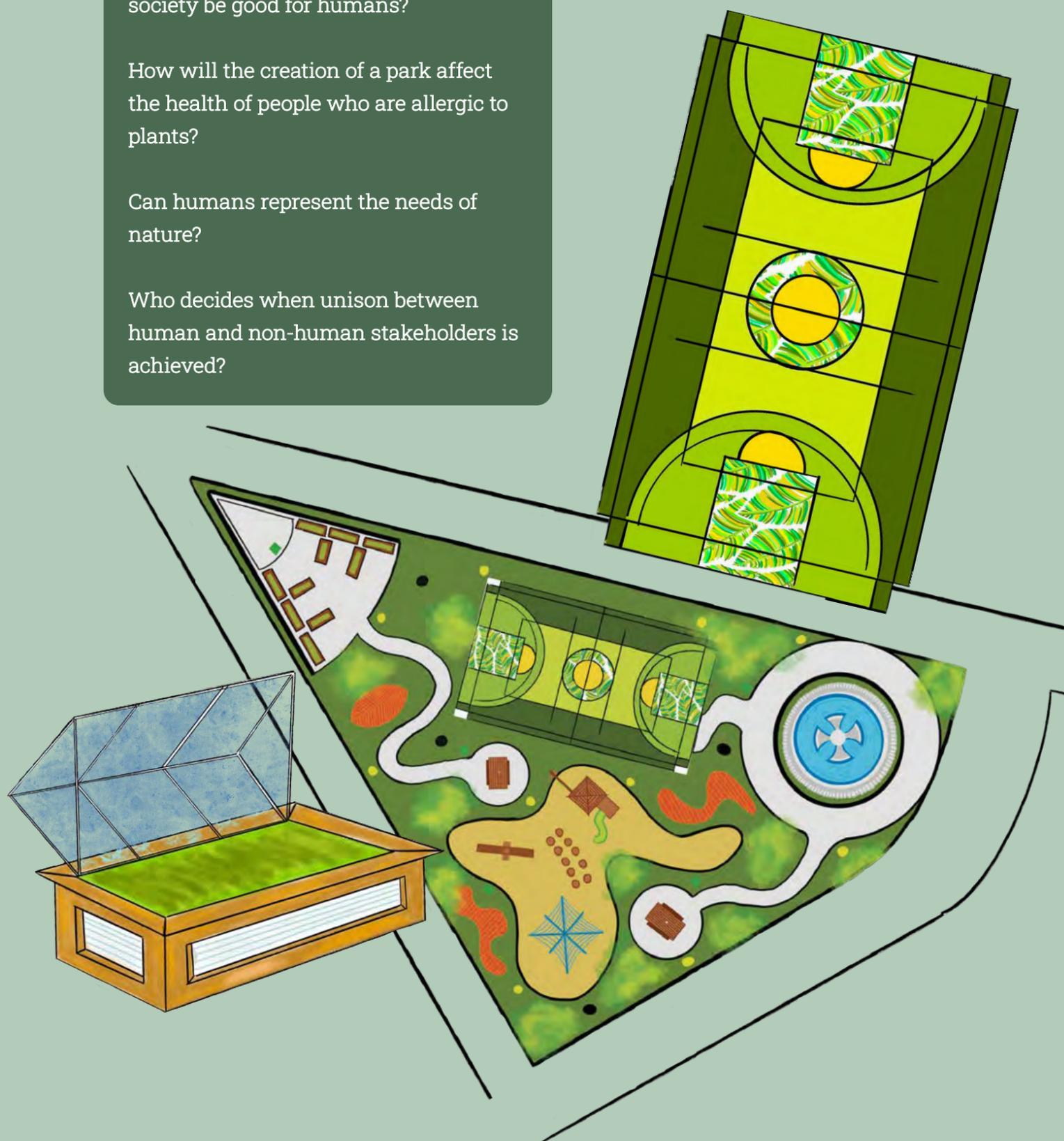
Will the promotion of individualistic society be good for humans?

How will the creation of a park affect the health of people who are allergic to plants?

Can humans represent the needs of nature?

Who decides when unison between human and non-human stakeholders is achieved?

Asking the right questions helps us understand the problem. The more we know about what we want, the better we are at getting what we want. Asking people with different points of view for input in workshops, surveys and interviews guides us in our design of the "ideal" park.



26 BEAUTIFULLY UNCONVENTIONAL

A few days later a text message appears on Sam's phone. It's from Max, asking if he was interested to join her for an experiment and if so to meet her at 3 at the grocery store. When Sam approached, he saw Max already waiting and waving at him.

"Hey, you made it! I am really excited for today, it is going to be so much fun", Max said.

"Yeah, about that, what are we doing exactly", asks Sam.

"You'll find out soon enough. Come on, let's go" Max put on her mask and walked in.

The supermarket was crowded, and the two were struggling to get everything they needed. When they finally made it out, the white flour gave Sam an idea on what they would be doing today.

"Are we baking something", Sam curiously asked.

"Very sharp. We'll bake sourdough bread today."

"Hopefully that won't be too hard" Sam worries. He never baked and isn't great at cooking either.

"No worries, I already made a starter in my fridge, so there isn't much that can go wrong", Max assured him.

They took a short walk through a neighbourhood Sam hadn't been in before and arrived at Max's apartment five minutes later.

When they entered, Sam saw her character represented



everywhere: the furniture was built out of scraps, but not in a bad way. He could see different materials in every piece of furniture, making them look rustic and unique. When Sam looked around the apartment, he could see a compost as well as different waste separation bins. All the walls had different colours, and lots of prints with food or regenerative designs on them. It made the space look bright and colourful, just like her personality. His fascination was quickly disrupted. He could hear Max rumble around in the kitchen and decided to walk over. “Your place is amazing”, Sam said. “Ah thanks, that’s nice of you”, Max was beaming. “Shall I explain what exactly we are doing today?” “Yes, please tell me”. “Alright. So, I was thinking of a way to explain my project, and then I realised that the process of getting knowledge during a project is like making sourdough bread. You begin with a starter, a mix of water and flour, that you must feed and take care over days until it is fermented enough to make bread out of it. The result is much more than just the ingredients combined. It is kind of the same with a project. There is so much that goes into it, if you feed it enough, something spectacular can be made of it. I am not there yet, but hopefully, one day I will”, Max said, whilst pouring the starter in a bowl and gradually adding flour to it. “That is actually a cool way of looking at it because you are only adding flour, water and salt, right?” “Exactly, and if you do it right, all ingredients will turn into a delicious bread with the help of this living dough”, Max explained. “So, how did your workshop go? Did it help ferment your project”, Sam asked.

Max explained the difficulties she had been dealing with and everything she learned because of the workshop. “Look”, she said whilst pointing to a big print hanging on the wall. “I realised the future Binckhorst can be flexible and resilient while keeping parts of its identity alive. Places like the Asfaltcentrale could become markets and this way, heritage spaces could become nests for a new vibrant community and catalysers for the value of life. Local and existing businesses would have to renew to fit within the new regenerative paradigm of the neighbourhood, adapting their obtention of raw material to the area’s material streams, and they are taken and managed by residents that get to learn, experiment and develop new skills. In summary, we give more value to materials and we treat them fairly transforming them into something that can be used by someone else”. “That sounds great, but still pretty general to me. In this scenario, waste would be treated by who creates it at their homes, correct”, Sam asked. “Yes.” “That is a good idea, but how can we make sure people do it correctly, or even at all? Before meeting you, I didn’t even think about composting waste.” “That’s a good point. It all starts with knowledge”, Max answered. “Can you think of a way to inform people”, Sam was curious. “I mean, I gain knowledge through reading books”, she walked around her apartment with her hand covered in dough and picked a random book from one of her shelves. “This one is about waste. It taught me about composting, which is actually a connection we make with life. It is a fermentation process

at the very end. It requires specific conditions, that we take care of without knowing what it will become”, Max explained. “That could be a start.” Sam took the book out of her hands and flicked through the first pages. Max was kneading the bread, with a set of movements that made the dough take consistency. Outside it was deep dark, and the only light coming through the window was from the buildings on the other side of the street. It made the kitchen feel warm and cosy.

“I’ve been thinking, I could introduce people to methods they can use to compost their organic waste. Even to ferment food to preserve it and this way avoid waste. But how could I do that”, Max asks. “What would you suggest?” “Do you know Banksy?” “The street artist? Yes, what about him”, Max replied. “He creates things that are visible, a message in a public place that evokes reaction, mainly with poetry”, Sam said. “So, you would suggest a wall painting on the streets? “ Sam points at the print on the wall: “If I’M BINCK, and local business make a case out of this fermentation process, maybe through the Asfalt Markt...” “People could compost their waste and give the result to farmers to use it for their fields. The relationship between farmers and consumers would be direct, making sure the compost is of good quality so the produced food will be of high quality as well.”



< Listen to the sound of the New Binckhorst



They continued to talk about sustainability, circularity, education, creative expression, societal issues, the corona crisis and everything else that occupies the mind of a young adult in 2021. Probably the most transformational year of their lives, so there was a lot to talk about. It was sometime later they would realise it was already dead of night. “I have really liked spending time together, thank you”, Sam said hesitantly. Being open about his feelings is not something he does very regularly. “I enjoyed it as well”, Max answers while kissing his cheek. “Will I see you again” Sam asked. “Undoubtedly.”

30 OVERCOMING COLLECTIVE LIMITS

One of the original assignments that we had to carry out within our subgroups was to host our own workshops with the stakeholders of the Binckhorst. We were to use Creative Research Methods that engage participants to co-create insights around our unique focus. We found, however, that engaging with the relevant stakeholders during a pandemic was near to impossible when after weeks, we hardly received any replies to our invitations. And the few times we did, they were declined.

During one of the Collective Reflective Sessions, a solution emerged in the form of a collective endeavour. With enormous help from our tutors and their network of colleagues, the whole minor chose to focus their resources to create one conjoined workshop. Relief and anxious-excitement simultaneously filled the class as we had to immediately work out the details for this to come to fruition on time. This would be the first project we would pursue as a whole class, and everyone was really excited.

The “Regenerative Chat” was a collective effort to make the best we can against the limitations we faced. A way to generate

insights on our project through other means – specifically, through facilitating an online warm data lab - to gather rich qualitative data on our unique focus points of regenerative futures.

It was amazing at the initiative that people took and the whole event that was about to unfold. We recognized that this was not part of the initial planning of the minor. It was an improvised collaboration between the students and teachers, but most of all, it was a form of co-creation on the minor ourselves. We were faced with a dead-end, but we found a way to creatively overcome it, collectively.



Illustration based on a photograph from University of Georgia's website.

We would very warmly like to thank you for taking the time to read, learn and hopefully enjoy the work of the students in the first semester of this academic year. They have done a tremendous amount of (personal) development, of which only a small part can be captured in these pages. As educators and researchers it has helped us grow enormously, in directions we could not have imagined going into this. The greatest privilege of an educator is felt when you can help your students learn to transform themselves. We think we have done so.

For a variety of reasons, this journey has been one crazy ride. In a way, this magazine now represents the closing of one door... the ending of this pilot. But in closure there is also opportunity for new beginnings. The next months we will take all that was learned from this collective experience. To continue our experiment towards ecological approaches of higher education that connect to and co-create sustainability

transformations. In ourselves, our students, and the rest of society. As we continue our travels, and prepare to set sail again, we invite you to the learnings in this magazine and reflect on them in your own setting. Perhaps more importantly, we invite you along on this ride and welcome anyone who would like to contribute or learn with us.

This is only the first issue of IMPACT, the next issue will be published in August 2021 and will highlight work from the centre of expertise Mission Zero student-research community. Where sixty students are engaged with internships and or graduation projects in a variety of transformative sustainability topics. This journey would not have been possible without the generosity and kindness of the following people and organizations.

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