

# VIRTUEEL MUSEUM ZUIDAS

**CONCEPT**  
FOR ART AND  
CULTURE IN  
AMSTERDAM  
ZUIDAS  
**2011 — 2014**

**“Just as art and culture are far from being a luxury for Amsterdam, but a lifeline to new perspectives and other worlds, the same goes for the Zuidas.”**

Job Cohen,  
Mayor of Amsterdam (2001-2010)  
Foreword to VMZ newspaper # 9, March 2010

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# ART AND THE GLOBAL CITY OF ZUIDAS

## **From outskirts to city centre**

The Zuidas is a prime new urban area in Amsterdam and a top international business location. The district extends along both sides of Route A10, lying between the rivers of the Amstel and the Schinkel and the districts of Buitenveldert and Amsterdam-Zuid.

The urban planning of the Zuidas is an ambitious project. In the near future, 270 hectares of land will be transformed into a bespoke city centre for international transactions and knowledge development. The public and private parties involved in this project adhere to high standards and place great importance on a large degree of mixed use. The goal is to establish an international social climate in the Zuidas in which jobs, housing, recreational facilities and services go hand-in-hand.

What makes the Zuidas different from other 'global cities' is its combination of international ambition with the goal of becoming an attractive, lively and distinctive extension of downtown Amsterdam. Liveability has high priority in this city centre of the 21st century, and the human dimension and high-quality public space are extremely important. By now, the first results of this new high-rise city are visible, but it will take several decades before the Zuidas is completed.

In the urban planning for the Zuidas, art and culture have been valued and assigned an essential role from the very beginning – not only because art helps in furthering liveability, vitality, urbanity and diversity, but also because art can provide this new city centre with a distinctive character and recognizable identity. Moreover, art contributes to the human dimension, creates an atmosphere that attracts people and makes them become attached to the area, offers them inspiration and places to meet one another.

By now, the value of art and culture for urban areas is widely recognized. In her books and lectures, Saskia Sassen, a specialist in the field of global cities and professor of sociology at Columbia University, emphasizes the essential importance of art and culture for global cities. According to her, art is 'an interesting kind of intelligence'. Art and culture enhance the quality of life in an area and offer needed diversity but also provide room for experimentation and the unknown, she says. Art stimulates ideas and the advancement of knowledge and is therefore crucial, says Sassen, for the innovation- and creativity-oriented businesses and knowledge centres in the Zuidas. To this, the American author Richard Florida adds another generally recognized factor in his book 'The Rise of the Creative Class' (2002). A creative cultural climate makes it more attractive for businesses and individuals to settle in the Zuidas. According to Florida, creativity and the economy are inseparably connected.

To make art and culture a substantial part of the development of the Zuidas, an ambitious art programme was drawn up at the request of the former Projectbureau Zuidas, now Zuidas Amsterdam, at the end of 2000. The objective of this art programme, formulated in the Zuidas Art Concept (2001), is to create an inspiring, lively, attractive, varied and enduring art climate specifically associated with the Zuidas. Just as the urban planning concept has been regularly adjusted, the Zuidas art concept has been regularly updated – in the Zuidas Art and Culture Concept (2007) and in the present Zuidas Art and Culture Concept (2011).

Today, the main objective of the Zuidas Art Concept for 2001 still remains firmly in place: to create a cultural climate that can attract people to the area, which is vitally important for the development of the Zuidas. This not only goes for the Zuidas of the future, but also for the old, already existing Zuidas and for the temporary, continually changing Zuidas in its various phases of construction.

# VIRTUAL MUSEUM ZUIDAS

## **Art Supervisor**

In order to promote high-quality, enduring art and culture that meets the desired standards for the Zuidas, the City of Amsterdam appointed an **Art Supervisor** in 2001. The Art Supervisor advises both the City and the project directors, Zuidas Amsterdam, on the establishment and advancement of an attractive and inspiring arts climate, and is also the contact person for art, culture and related matters in the Zuidas.

The Art Supervisor appoints and is assisted by a Programme Advisory Committee, which in 2003 set up the **Virtual Museum Zuidas Foundation** (VMZ). As the name implies, the Virtual Museum is not a museum in the traditional sense. The VMZ regards the entire Zuidas area as a living and continually changing museum.

Under the name 'Virtual Museum Zuidas', the Zuidas Art Programme Advisory Committee develops art policy for the Zuidas and initiates and stimulates projects in the area of art and culture. The VMZ sets the preconditions and standards of quality for art in the Zuidas district. This takes place in close collaboration with the Urban Development Supervisor, Zuidas Amsterdam and the Department of Physical Planning (DRO) as well as with partners and contractors. In doing so, the Virtual Museum Zuidas not only seeks a relation with the City of Amsterdam as a whole, but also with the international art world.

Seeing as the Virtual Museum Zuidas considers it vitally important to collaborate with the businesses and institutions in the Zuidas as well as with the art world, the board of the VMZ is comprised of prominent partners from both the business community and the Dutch art world. Zuidas Amsterdam is present at the meetings as an auditor. Please see the last page for names of members of the board.

# AMBITIONS AND PROGRAMME

## **For and from the Zuidas**

In order to promote the desired art and cultural climate, one that is inspiring, alluring, and specifically intended for the Zuidas, with an identity of its own and providing a unique experience, the VMZ has from the start organized a broad and idiosyncratic programme related to the public space of the Zuidas. That programme was put together after many discussions with experts, and, in the beginning phase, in a pioneering manner.

A decision was made to cover the district in all of its developmental phases and to create an art concept that is both for and from the Zuidas. In order to cover both the extensiveness of the area and the different phases of construction, the activities and projects are both large and small, both temporary and permanent. The idea is to find forms of art that do not yet exist, that are embedded in the DNA of the Zuidas, and to create countless connections.

## **Collaborating**

The Virtual Museum Zuidas takes the initiative in the area of art and culture, suggests possibilities, projects and artists, and facilitates a good rapport between public and private parties. In addition, the VMZ devotes itself to collaborating with businesses vested in the Zuidas and with educational and cultural institutes in the district, such as the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, the Sandberg Institute, the Professorship of Art and Public Space at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, the VU Expositorium, Art Amsterdam, as well as with knowledge centres such as the VU University, and with Amsterdam Bright City, a platform for cultural encounters.

For an active, independent cultural climate in the Zuidas, the presence of existing cultural and knowledge institutes, such as also the Premisela Foundation, is not only desirable but necessary. From the very beginning, the goal has been to bring together the three dominant worlds in the Zuidas, which are normally separate: the corporate world, the academic industry and the cultural world.

Another specific objective is to work together with artists, architects and residents, and with art foundations and other relevant specialist institutes, such as the Amsterdam Art Fund (AFK), the Foundation Art and Public Space (SKOR), the Netherlands Foundation for the Arts, Design and Architecture (Fonds BKVB), Music Center the Netherlands, the Dutch Association for Corporate Art Collections (VBCN) and Art Amsterdam.

Collaborating with a variety of parties is necessary in order for projects and activities to succeed. Numerous new contacts have been established through art. The projects by Krijn de Koning on the Nuon terrain and by Giny Vos for the telecommunications tower would not have been as successful without collaborating with the Liander energy company (formerly Nuon), the city transport authorities and the involved municipal departments and companies such as the Amsterdam Department of Physical Planning (DRO) and Zuidas Amsterdam, and the telecommunications company KPN.

Whereas in the past, the VMZ worked with the former city quarter of ZuiderAmstel, from now on it will work with the newly established city quarter of Zuid. Furthermore, international contacts will be forged more emphatically.

### **Private initiatives**

The initiatives and temporary events with which companies, the Zuid Quarter, artists, residents and other private parties come knocking on the VMZ's door are of great importance for the development of a cultural climate. The VMZ facilitates, stimulates and supports large and small cultural projects from the private sector and assumes a guiding, coordinating and communicating role in this regard. As such, the VMZ does everything it can to combine a broad viewpoint that attracts a wide public with quality that befits the ambitions of the Zuidas. A high-quality art climate in the Zuidas cannot exist without a broader base and an ample supply of galleries, bookstores, studios, theatres and facilities for artists and groups.

### **Development and ambition**

Ambitions rise and fall in tandem with swings of the economy. In the first VMZ concept, the sights were set high, including an international art biennial for the Zuidas and stimulating and supervising the creation of one or more large-scale cultural public facilities. The aspirations of the second VMZ concept were adjusted to the requirements of the times, with the emphasis being placed on co-constructing the city.

Due to the present economic climate, the emphasis over the next few years will in the first instance be placed on projects and activities that enliven and give an identity to the Zuidas in the immediate and near future. But what is a concept without ambitions? In order to look ahead, ambitious plans are also needed for the long term.

Nothing has changed regarding the programme's purpose – namely to create a rich breeding ground in which new initiatives can flourish and in which a lively art and cultural climate arises that is characteristic for the Zuidas and identifiable as such. In the meantime, many of the projects proposed in the first two concepts have been realized and put into action, as can be seen in the second part of this document. And by now, an art climate specifically tailored to the Zuidas stands firmly on its own.

### **Six mainstays of the programme**

With an eye to diversity, complexity and intricacy, the VMZ focuses its programme on six important mainstays for the short and long term, from which have come five major goals. For all of its activities, the VMZ invites top Dutch and international artists as well as promising up-and-coming talent. The VMZ sets great store by doing justice to the diversity of contemporary art practice, while the activities and projects must also appeal to the imagination of a broad public.

The mainstays of the programme are:

1. The **CASZuidas** video screen (Contemporary Art Screen Zuidas)
2. Exhibitions in the **KunstKapel**
3. **Temporary Projects**
4. **Zuidas Free Spaces AIR**, the VMZ's artist-in-residence project in the KunstKapel
5. **Co-Constructing the City**
6. The **Virtual Zoom** photography project.

The major goals are:

1. A **Video Screen Park**
2. A contemporary **World Art Center**
3. A **Zuidas Biennial** in plinth courses and halls
4. **High-Quality Studios and Accommodations for Artists and Art(ist) Initiatives**
5. Applying **Creative Thinking Processes**

# THE CASZUIDAS VIDEO SCREEN AND THE VIDEO SCREEN PARK

## **CASZuidas video screen**

The innovative, knowledge- and future-oriented character of the Zuidas is pre-eminently suited for new media and video art, and for groundbreaking presentation podiums that do not as yet exist. In 2007, the CASZuidas video screen was specifically realized for the Zuidas, next to the WTC and the Amsterdam Zuid station, as a contemporary form of art in public space.

CASZuidas shows high-quality moving images by visual artists 18 hours a day in a topical mix of video art, photography, film and new media. The programme is specifically made for and attuned to the character and dynamics of the Zuidas, and reflects and reinforces the dynamic metropolitan and international character of this urban development area.

CASZuidas, an initiative of the VMZ in collaboration with SKOR (Foundation Art and Public Space), makes an important contribution to the liveliness and identity of the Zuidas. An interim evaluation shows just how much the public appreciates the video screen: CASZ gives the Zuidas area colour, people say, it enriches public space and puts the daily grind into perspective. For the programming, an external expert was enlisted.

With its showing of at least 80% art, CASZuidas is unique in the world, thereby setting an example for other cities in the Netherlands and abroad. Since there are urban screens in a number of metropolises throughout the world, usually primarily used for advertising, the Zuidas with its urban screen is automatically part of an international network. Worldwide urban screen conferences have led to collaboration with other global cities. This international collaboration will be expanded in the future to include the exchanging of programmes. Various global cities can also be highlighted in the CASZuidas programming.

Thanks to working with numerous parties from the world of art and culture, CASZuidas provides a connection between art scenes in the Zuidas, Amsterdam and other cities, both in the Netherlands and abroad. Over the past several years, an extensive collaboration has developed with some 400 artists, and with a diversity of Dutch and foreign parties, including Park 4DTV, NIMk, Impakt Festival, OOG (the Volkskrant newspaper), Visual Foreign Correspondents (De Balie), TheOneMinutes, Holland Doc, Smart Project Space, Tijdelijk Museum Amsterdam, Holland Festival, I Amsterdam, Cinedans Festival, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Sandberg Institute, Leidseplein Theaters (Stadsdichter Amsterdam), Maria Austria Institute, Nederlands Fonds voor de Letteren/ Fonds BKVB (Digidicht), Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Tax-videoclipfonds, Platform21, Filmmuseum, Idfa, Filmbank, Argos (Brussels), tank.tv (London), Videospread (Marseille), Loop-pool (Cologne), Courtisane Festival (Ghent), Amsterdams Uitbureau, Art Zuid Sculpture Route and A-Film.

The video screen can be readily called into action for a wide variety of occasions and collaborative efforts. CASZuidas is also extremely suitable for neighbourhood events or incidents with a broader impact – important global occurrences such as the live broadcasting of President Obama's inauguration in January 2009 and large sports

events such as the Olympic Winter Games, the Giro d'Italia and the World Cup in South Africa, programmed in collaboration with Zuidas Amsterdam. In this manner, CASZ can contribute to the development and formation of a Zuidas community. It can also function as a crowd puller.

In the summer of 2009, CASZuidas played the pivotal role in the first CASZuidas Urban Screen Festival, featuring the world premiere of art works especially made for urban screens, an international competition, a symposium streamed live by xs4all, and countless related events.

Since the autumn of 2010, sound has been permanently available for the programme, affording new possibilities. CASZ will also soon be part of a new communications network in which new and old ways of communicating such as Skype, the Internet, WebCams and radio will be used for special programmes and events, in a live broadcasting network between, for instance, Amsterdam Bright City, CASZ, the Netherlands Institute for Media Art and FM3. This network will not only make activities visible in the Zuidas, but also beyond that, and even abroad. This event-like use of CASZ will be further expanded in the future, along with collaboration and involvement in socially and culturally relevant live events and festivals.

In order to strengthen ties with the city, CASZ will participate more often in large cultural and sports events occurring in Amsterdam. Besides the general art programme, special programmes will also be made.

### **Video screen park**

The modern, urban, innovative and dynamic character of the CASZuidas video screen, and of the area itself, will be reinforced with the arrival of more urban screens in the Zuidas. On these video screens, the full scope of what is happening in the arts can be shown: from video art to ballet, design, architecture and fashion; from items on the cultural agenda to advertisements and interviews; from films and film trailers to concerts, contributions from international museums; and so forth.

The Zuidas will thus have a unique museum, without walls, in the open air, freely accessible to everyone and, just like the CASZuidas screen, open from six in the morning to midnight: a museum that people purposely go to see, or walk past every day as neighbourhood residents; a museum that is a welcome addition to those in Amsterdam's culturally rich Zuid Quarter, and that expands the museum function of the Zuid Quarter with a museum of the 21st century.

A new museum such as this is in keeping with the futuristic, municipal character of the Zuidas and creates a natural link-up with the city of Amsterdam as a whole and with its future North-South axis, marked by the Film Museum at the Northern end and the Video Screen Park at the Southern end of the Zuidas. The video screen park will additionally turn the Zuidas into a home base for events and festivals, which will increase the liveliness of the area.

# EXHIBITIONS IN THE KUNSTKAPEL AND A WORLD ART CENTER

## **Exhibitions in the KunstKapel**

In the former St. Nicolaas Chapel, now the KunstKapel, next door to the St. Nicolaas Monastery where the VMZ is housed, the Virtual Museum Zuidas organizes four to five exhibitions a year. With this programming, the VMZ attempts to transmit the identity of the Zuidas by presenting exhibitions that reflect a connection with this urban development area.

The KunstKapel (art chapel) first of all functions as a showcase for the VMZ's treasures, with the point of departure being the VMZ's own art projects in public space and the work produced by the artists in residency at the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR (more on that later). The central focus is visual art, and along with it, the human dimension. Attention is also given to current and imperative topics ensuing from the diversity of the area in terms of art, architecture and urban planning as well as related themes such as nature and greenery, the business world and the student population. Thus the KunstKapel moves within the circulatory system of the Zuidas.

For the programming, the VMZ specifically strives to communicate and collaborate with diverse populations in the Zuidas, including corporate art collections, other municipal art initiatives, and users of the Zuidas. For example, it organizes guided tours and lunches in collaboration with the restaurant AS.

The idea is for the KunstKapel to grow into a dynamic cultural meeting place where Zuidas residents, users and visitors can mingle, and an information centre on art in the Zuidas area, which in addition to the VMZ includes the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, the Sandberg Institute, Art Amsterdam and corporate collections. The activities in the KunstKapel throw another light on the Zuidas area for users, residents, neighbouring districts and outsiders.

The VMZ sees the KunstKapel as a base, with various satellites in the greater area. An exhibition space is momentarily being readied in the plinth course of the New Amsterdam residential building, where the VMZ will play a stimulating and coordinating role.

## **World Art Center**

The Virtual Museum Zuidas sees the KunstKapel as the prelude to a contemporary, art-hall type of exhibition centre in the Zuidas. In keeping with the makeup of this district, which is comprised of a collection of institutions and businesses, a World Art Center can be set up, an ambitious multitenant art building that is oriented to the 21st century and accommodates different forms of art under one roof. The World Art Center could consist of approximately 12 high-quality art institutes, with the best that the Netherlands has to offer in the field of culture, including the VMZ, which reinforce one another and collectively provide an attractive atmosphere – a meeting place where surprises and unexpected combinations are always to be found.

The variety of changing exhibitions and activities will guarantee continual liveliness and always something new to see. It will appeal to a broad and diverse public and bring

them to the Zuidas. For both Dutch and foreign people spending a little time in the area between Schiphol and the RAI, the World Art Center will be well worth a visit.

In the short term, the World Art Center can get started on a modest scale in one of the spaces that are available now. That way, this museum formula that is new to the Netherlands can develop organically and, when the time is ripe, find a permanent home in a newly built cultural cluster in the Beethoven sector.

### **Cultural heritage**

The Zuid Quarter of Amsterdam places great value on architecture of different periods and styles in its planning because that is what makes this part of town so special, and its Zuidas district also comprises a variety of building complexes from different periods. A few examples of valuable cultural heritage in the Zuidas district are the Gerrit Rietveld Academy designed by architect Gerrit Rietveld; the St. Nicolaas complex with its monastery, chapel and school building by architect Lau Peters; and the so-called Turmac building by architect Hein Salomonson on the Antonio Vivaldistraat 2-8, built as a combined office and accommodation for the famous Peter Stuyvesant Corporate Collection, with a large garden designed by landscape architect Mien Ruys (currently rented to NIVRA).

The VMZ attaches great importance to preserving special architecture in the Zuidas and combining these cultural-historic jewels with new, top-quality architecture. This not only allows the Zuidas to fit in with the varied architectural character of the Zuid Quarter, but adds a new dimension. The St. Nicolaas complex is an example of postwar modernist architecture that the Virtual Museum Zuidas believes should become part of the urban web developed for the Zuidas, with a new cultural allocation.

It is advisable to chart the new and previously existing architecture and cultural heritage in the Zuidas area and to have the architectural atmosphere of the Zuidas become an organic part of the Amsterdam Zuid Quarter with its rich architectural stockpile.

# TEMPORARY PROJECTS AND THE ZUIDAS BIENNIAL

## Temporary projects

Besides exhibitions, the VMZ initiates temporary art projects and events in the public space of the Zuidas, individually or in collaboration with partner institutes. Temporary art projects always have a connection with the surroundings, the users of the area or the partner institutes of Zuidas Amsterdam and the Virtual Museum Zuidas. The Temporary Projects provide liveliness, inspiration, a human dimension and diversion during the developmental phase. They lead to other ideas and offer people the possibility of identifying with the wide-spread area of the Zuidas. In the first instance they are intended for the people who already populate the Zuidas, but they can also draw others from outside the area.

The VMZ's first Temporary Project was 'Landfall', a billboard project by artists Sjoerd van Oevelen and Elodie Hiryczuk about the birth of the newest piece of land in the world, the island of Surtsey. The photographs of the island, whose surface area is equal to that of the Zuidas, not only brought nature but also measure and scale into what was then still an unknown, empty area. In addition, 'Landfall' contributed greatly to the identity of the Zuidas. The photographs turn up in countless places as the alter ego of the area.

Now that the development of the Zuidas is taking longer than was originally expected, the importance of temporary art and cultural projects has become greater than ever: to stir things up, liven up the district and make it more pleasant, attract people from outside the Zuidas and make it a lively part of Amsterdam at all times of the day. Possibilities include a variety of art and cultural initiatives, and temporary events at different cultural levels and with different cultural circuits, short or long-term, not only in outdoor public areas but also in available plinth courses and buildings and on vacant lots. Temporary art initiatives can also be developed with the business community. The collaboration between the Port of Rotterdam Authority and the Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum is an outstanding example that warrants emulating. Through their joint efforts, an empty submarine shed in Rotterdam was transformed during the summer months into a gigantic exhibition space offering a high-quality programme with international allure.

The VMZ takes the lead in developing initiatives. When it comes to the initiatives of other parties, the VMZ fulfils a stimulating, co-initiating, supportive and coordinating role.

## Zuidas Biennial

In the first VMZ concept there were already aspirations for a biennial, as an important incentive and platform for a stimulating art climate. With its big new buildings and plinth courses, the Zuidas offers suitable quarters for such a large-scale event. Working in collaboration with the business community, art institutes and galleries, art presentations can be held in these plinths and in available halls and sections of buildings, which will create contacts between business circles, the cultural world and visitors, between buildings and users. This will greatly improve the accessibility and vitality of the area. Worth considering are themes that emphasize the specific identity of the Zuidas, in which knowledge, culture and economic activity go hand-in-hand.

In the meantime, a specific form of collaboration has arisen with neighbourhood residents, who took the initiative of setting up 'Art Zuid', a biannual cultural event and sculpture route. The first edition took place in 2009. With the collaboration of the VMZ and Zuidas Amsterdam, the second edition of Art Zuid, in 2011, is extended to the Zuidas.

# ZUIDAS FREE SPACES ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE AND HIGH-QUALITY STUDIOS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ARTISTS AND ART(IST) INITIATIVES

## **Zuidas Free Spaces Artists in Residence**

The Zuidas Free Spaces Artists in Residence (AIR) is a project and think tank organized by the Virtual Museum Zuidas in the former St. Nicolaas Monastery, where the VMZ has two floors at its disposal as residencies for five to six artists at a time.

For the Zuidas Free Spaces, the VMZ and its partner institutes invite artists from different disciplines to collectively stay for an extended period of time in these artists' residencies, where they carry out on-site, independent research on the Zuidas. They pose questions about, think along with, reflect on and give their personal views of the developments and ambitions of the Zuidas. With this annually recurring project, the results – visions based on concrete experience, inventive and alternative perspectives and artworks specifically made for the location and context – are presented in an exhibition and a catalogue.

The Zuidas Free Spaces AIR makes an explicit relation between visual art, urban design and the public domain. With this, the VMZ wants to encourage thinking about large-scale urban planning from the point of view of the arts, and to give the artist's vision of urban design and the public domain a more prominent place within the policy framework of the Zuidas. With contributions from artists, the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR moreover offers an opening for debate and for the further development of relations with involved neighbourhood residents, users and policymakers in order to collectively create a Zuidas with different neighbourhoods and atmospheres, with a history and identity, with a human dimension and space for everyone.

For the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR, the VMZ works with the Amsterdam Art Fund (AFK), the Netherlands Foundation for the Visual Arts, Design and Architecture (Fonds BKVB), the Professorship of Art and Public Space at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy/Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, the Music Center the Netherlands and the Netherlands Fund for Performing Arts (NFPK+), Prensela/Platform21, the Sandberg Institute, Stroom Den Haag, the VU University Amsterdam and the VU University Brussels.

In addition to the regular annual edition of AIR lasting six months, in 2009 a short edition of three months was held. The VMZ wants to make short editions a permanent part of its annual programming in order to capitalize on current topics and further stimulate and expand mutual collaboration between the art and knowledge institutes of the Zuidas. A special partnership between the VMZ and the VU University Faculty of Arts and the Sandberg Institute has been started within the programme. The Zuidas Free Spaces AIR also wants to function as an (international) intermediary for individual artists and organizations seeking involvement with the Zuidas on the basis of shared objectives and ideas.

## **High-quality studios and accommodations for artists and art(ist) initiatives**

The special programming of the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR in the former St. Nicolaas

Monastery, through which visual artists, designers, architects and writers immerse themselves in the Zuidas district, is the first step in the establishment of studios and working spaces in the Zuidas for Dutch and international artists – high-quality spaces for artists that not only function as gathering points and places to stay, but also ensure high-quality art specifically related to the Zuidas area.

In order to create a permanent art scene and the vitality necessary to attract Dutch and foreign artists to the Zuidas, it is very important to establish high-quality studio facilities and accommodations for artists in the near future. In this regard, the VMZ strongly recommends working with existing institutes whose character befits the Zuidas, such as the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and the Sandberg Institute, where there is an international population of artists. Both of these internationally highly reputed art academies are suffering from a shortage of space and not only have worldwide networks but also a specifically Amsterdam flavour. The idea of keeping these artists with their creativity- and knowledge-directed practice in the Zuidas after they graduate is attractive. The same goes for the researchers at the VU University knowledge centre. Such high-quality studios and accommodations for artists and researchers should also include space for top-level art(ist) initiatives. The Zuidas Free Spaces AIR would also benefit from (temporary) satellites in the area: large studio facilities and/or workplaces and project spaces.

The St. Nicolaaslyceum school building is extremely suitable for reallocation as temporary artists' studios/residencies and multitenant art building. The University of Amsterdam's soon-to-be empty sports accommodation can also be allocated for art and culture. In order to realize all of this, the VMZ recommends the conducting of a thorough investigation into suitable locations and the drawing up of contracts between Zuidas Amsterdam and the parties involved.

# CO-CONSTRUCTING THE CITY AND USING CREATIVE THINKING PROCESSES

## **Co-constructing the city**

Original, typically Amsterdam, rooted in the local and regional culture, idiosyncratic, not copyable, enduring, inspiring, experimental, innovative – that is the character desired for the Zuidas district and for art applications in its public space.

Just as Barcelona places value on continuing the tradition of monumental sculptures on its corners and squares in today's urban development in a contemporary manner, in Amsterdam the tradition of Berlage is gradually being re-established. In the eastern harbour area of Amsterdam, the Oostelijk Havengebied, planners have already started to make art an inseparable part of the urban design – a concept that is being elaborated upon and refined in the Zuidas. All too often, art in public space is the proverbial icing on the cake, and artists are brought in at such a late stage that they can only function as decorators. In the Zuidas, there is an ambition to inseparably and structurally integrate art and culture in the urban design, architecture and public space. Artists are involved in the planning from the start, so that they can make a real and original contribution to the development of the area. The arts are striving to create a unique identity which is inseparably connected with the Zuidas, and in which there is a place for the past, future and present of this area undergoing transformation.

With an eye to integrating art with urban design, architecture and public space, the VMZ participates whenever possible in workshops and in the planning for the various sectors of the Zuidas, so as to work with the involved parties in seeking possibilities, opportunities and conditions for art. These are written down in a separate art section in policy orders such as the Urban Design Brief and the Implementing Order. The art must be of high quality and have international allure, but other than that, there are hardly any fixed rules or regulations. For each location and situation, the idea is to come up with idiosyncratic and unexpected solutions. The range of possibilities includes the placing of a sculpture on a square, as long as it is created for that particular spot. But it is also possible to consider parts of the city as artworks, such as squares, services, parking garages and sections of buildings. The goal is to realize 100 works of art over the next 30 years.

Zuidas Amsterdam is responsible for the coordination of projects in the sphere of art in public space. As delegated commissioner, the VMZ is responsible for the artistic and substantive side of these projects. For the moment, the VMZ is primarily focusing on the flanks of the Zuidas area. As soon as the construction of the dock model gets underway, the VMZ will broaden its focus to include the dock area. In general, budgets are appointed and reserved for new art applications as soon as a sector of the Zuidas starts being developed.

In order to respond to the gradual development of the Zuidas and liven up the area in the short term, the focus will be on art in public space that is given the right to be there from 5 to 15 years. Because of the shorter timeframe, these artworks have a different character, enabling a greater degree of topicality.

**Creative thinking processes**

The planning for the Zuidas is developed at an early stage in workshops, lectures and debates, in which various disciplines, each with their own responsibility, are represented. In order to create a better and more natural city, it is important for the discipline of art to also be represented in this thinking process. Artists and designers can also be invited to contribute to the development of the Zuidas concept separately.

## VIRTUAL ZOOM

### **Photography project**

The Virtual Zoom photography project zeroes in on the growth of the Zuidas as an urban development area. Each year, a photographer-artist is invited to take this new part of Amsterdam as source of inspiration. An external expert advises the VMZ on which photographer-artists to approach. Hardly any restrictions are placed on the commission: the photographer is free to zoom in on residents and users, buildings, construction sites or the surrounding nature. The collection thus accumulated is a documentation of the area and not only gives an artist's personal vision but also a picture of the current state of affairs in photography.

Since 2008, the photographic results of the project are handed over each year to the photography museum FOAM Amsterdam, which consequently is building up a unique collection.

# COMMUNICATION

## **Informing the public**

Publicity is vitally important in order to structurally increase the support and involvement of the general public in the activities of the VMZ. This public ranges from people interested in art and culture to laypeople, from residents and users to casual passersby, from ordinary tourists to Amsterdammers and people from outside the city, or even from across the Dutch borders who specifically come to the area for reasons of their own.

In today's information society, a variety of communication possibilities are available. With an eye to lasting visibility, the VMZ publishes a printed newspaper. This comes out three times a year, meticulously and distinctively designed, very legible, including an agenda of upcoming events, current and general information as well as background articles and debates on cultural activities in the Zuidas. The newspaper strives to offer insight and oversight on art and culture in connection with developments in terms of architecture, urban design and public space. Because of the international character of the Zuidas, the VMZ newspaper is published in both Dutch and English.

The VMZ also places value on printed catalogues and books, including publications about the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR and art in public space, with a view to making reports for the long term and contributing to the debate.

The website of the VMZ provides information on the latest state of affairs with regard to various projects and activities, and also functions as an archive. The CASZ website lists the programme of the urban screen from day to day and minute to minute, offering information about both the video works and the artists.

To initiate a speedy, dynamic stream of up-to-date information, other modern means of communication such as a digital newsletter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs will also be increasingly used. For clear and ambiguous communications with the outside world, it is desirable for Zuidas and the VMZ to act together, both as regards the cultural information provided on each website and joint press releases on cultural activities. More attention will also be given to placing links to the VMZ on relevant websites of corporations, institutes and cultural organizations in and outside the Zuidas.

To further stimulate the debate on art and culture in the Zuidas, the VMZ will annually organize a roundtable discussion with some 30 invited participants. The results of these gatherings will be communicated on many fronts.

# WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE

## General

**1** A home in the former St. Nicolaas Monastery. As of September of 2006, the VMZ has been housed in the former St. Nicolaas Monastery, where six artist-in-residence spaces were created for its programme. In combination with the KunstKapel situated next door, where the VMZ presents the results of Zuidas Free Spaces AIR and organizes exhibitions, a unique cultural complex has been established at the edge of the Beatrix Park. This cultural cluster is the trailblazer for the future art and cultural climate of the Beethoven sector.

**2** The Professorship of Art and Public Space was established in collaboration with the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, the Sandberg Institute, the University of Amsterdam and the Foundation Art and Public Space on 1 January 2003. The Professorship conducts independent research on the phenomenon of art/design in public space. This Professorship is institutionally connected with the Gerrit Rietveld Academy.

## CASZuidas

Since 5 October 2007, the CASZuidas urban screen has been in operation 365 days a year, from six o'clock in the morning until midnight. The CASZuidas programme is specifically attuned to the uses and functions of the surrounding area, as well as to the course of the seasons and the times of the day. The screened artworks are intended for a broad and heterogeneous audience. Thus far, the works of some 400 artists from the Netherlands and abroad have been shown. For the programming, CASZuidas works with a great number of parties, partly on a project basis, partly on a prolonged basis. For the advertisements, CASZ works with two commercial partners.

CASZuidas has also been put into service for a succession of neighbourhood-related or more universal events, including the opening of the ex-pat centre in 2008, the inauguration of President Obama in January of 2009 (watched by hundreds of people), the Art Zuid sculpture route in the summer of 2009 and large sports events such as the Olympic Winter Games, the Giro d'Italia and the football World Cup in South Africa in 2010, programmed in collaboration with Zuidas Amsterdam.

The two organs publicizing the activities of CASZ are the CASZ website, which lists the programme from minute to minute and provides extensive information on the artworks and artists, and the CASZ newsletter.

## KunstKapel

From 2006 to 2009, two exhibitions per year were presented in the KunstKapel (Dutch for 'art chapel'), organized by the Virtual Museum Zuidas. Besides the exhibitions annually devoted to Zuidas Free Spaces AIR, these included a solo exhibition by Krijn de Koning (November–December 2006); 'Living the City', a group exhibition by CASZ curator Jan Schuijren (October–November 2007); 'Perspective of Disappearance', a solo exhibition by Hiryczuk/Van Oevelen (April–May 2008); the group exhibition 'Checking Reality' with artworks in the Beatrix Park in collaboration with Platform21 (May–August 2008); 'Faces of Moral Sentiment', an exhibition of drawings by Meinbert Gozewijn van Soest (October–November 2009);

and 'Domesticated Wilderness', a group exhibition about glass, greenness and sustainability in collaboration with Caroline Prisse and the Gerrit Rietveld Academy (November–December 2009).

As of January 2010, the VMZ has worked on a yearly programme for the KunstKapel. From February through April, the results of the fourth edition of the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR were shown there. In May–June 2010, with the cooperation of the Dutch Association for Corporate Art Collections (VBCN), an exhibition dedicated to the diversity of the images of people in the corporate collections was held in the KunstKapel. After that, there were exhibitions of Isabelle Wenzel's photographs, the architecture of the Zuidas ('Skyscraper City'), and, in collaboration with the Sandburg Institute, the work of the alumni of the Sandberg ('Double Work'). Preparations for a solo exhibition by Giny Vos are currently underway.

### Temporary Projects

From 2005 to 2010, the outdoor exhibition 'Landfall', supported by the Amsterdam Art Fund (AFK), was shown in the Zuidas, featuring ten photographic panels or billboards of the island of Surtsey made by the artists Sjoerd van Oevelen and Elodie Hiryczuk. The project is now being rounded off with a book and is featured in countless publications and compilations of photographs about the Zuidas.

In November 2007, the Enegeia sculpture route on the Mahlerplein and in the Claude Debussylaan kicked off with a spectacular opening attended by over 1000 enthusiastic Zuidas residents. The sculpture route was organized by VMZ in collaboration with the Dutch Association for Corporate Art Collections (VBCN), and is to be continued. In May 2007, the exhibition 'Ballad of Caution' by Sachi Miyachi was organized in collaboration with the Sandberg Institute in the hall of the WTC.

In June 2009, the VMZ collaborated with the Professorship of Art and Public Space at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam on the opening conference of Amsterdam Bright City, 'Cosmopolis 2025'. On this occasion, an exhibition was presented in the hall of the ABN-Amro building, and there was a special screening on CASZuidas. The VMZ also collaborated on the presentation of the book 'Highrise-Common Ground, Art and the Amsterdam Zuidas Area' by the Professorship of Art and Public Space at the Rietveld. Various collaborative efforts have also been organized with the Sandberg Institute.

The summer of 2009 saw the first CASZuidas Urban Screen Festival, where the world premiere took place of works especially made for urban screens by Roel Wouters/Luna Maurer, Sema Bekirovic and the British artist duo John Wood & Paul Harrison. The festival also featured an international competition, with over 200 entries from 31 countries, and a symposium that was streamed live on the Internet by provider xs4all. There were countless side events, including the presentation of a feature film by the Nederlands Filmmuseum with a live DJ.

The CASZuidas Urban Screen Festival was the overture to the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam's Construction Cabin, which was brought to the Zuidas by the VMZ and stood on the Gustav Mahlerplein with a specially designed programme in the month of September. Also held in the surrounding area and organized in collaboration with the VMZ was the third edition of 'Visibly Absent', a project of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Here, participants of the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and of the Sandberg

Institute translated the icons of the Stedelijk collection into new, temporary artworks in public space (September–October 2009).

The VMZ additionally helped organize the Art Zuid sculpture route (August–October 2009); and in the spring of 2010 the exhibition ‘Paris Street View’, with billboard photographs by Michael Wolf, was presented in the heart of the Zuidas, organized by FOAM in collaboration with the VMZ. The VMZ also collaborated on the organization of the Zuidas Symphony, a sound walk created by the artist Justin Bennett for Soundtrackcity. The Zuidas sound walk evolved out of Bennet’s residency in the third edition of the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR. For this walk – a search for the sounds of the Zuidas – a preloaded audio player plus headphones can be borrowed from Zuidas Amsterdam’s information centre (you can also download the sound walk on [www.soundtrackcity.nl](http://www.soundtrackcity.nl)).

From 2010 onwards, the VMZ, working together with other parties in the Zuidas, will be bringing art and culture to vacant terrains in the Zuidas. For the Akzo terrain, the VMZ is working with the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and the Sandberg Institute. For cluster IV in Gershwin, the VMZ is working in collaboration with Zuidas Amsterdam and the Sandberg Institute, among others.

### **Zuidas Free Spaces AIR**

Since the first Zuidas Free Spaces AIR in 2004, four editions of the regular Free Spaces have taken place, which were rounded off with exhibitions and catalogues. A ‘Free Spaces Writers’ was also organized, resulting in the book ‘Vanuit de Zuidas’, with renowned Dutch and international writers like K. Schippers, Dirk van Weelden, Jan Rothuizen, Mileta Prodanovi, K. Michel and Melle Hammer. Finally, a graphic edition was organized in partnership with the VU University and the Sandberg Institute. Among those participating in the regular editions for artists were Rob Schröder, Robbert Dijkgraaf, Fischer el Sani, André van Bergen, Yael Davids, Bik Van der Pol, Justin Bennett, 2012Architecten, Sachi Miyachi, Shinji Otani, Lieven de Boeck, Tom Tlalim and Frank Havermans.

Partner institutes include the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture (Fonds BKVB); VU University Amsterdam/VU University Brussels; the Music Center the Netherlands and the Netherlands Fund for Performing Arts (NFPK+); the Professorship of Art and Public Space; the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam; and Stroom Den Haag. The Free Spaces has chosen to work with partner institutes in order to increase the involvement of these institutes with the Zuidas and to guarantee the quality of the participating artists.

Some of the artworks resulting from the Free Spaces have directly or indirectly found their way to the outside world, such as to the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (‘The Rise’ by Fischer-El Sani, March–May 2007); the Gemeentemuseum Den Haag (work by Justin Bennett on the occasion of the awarding of the Ouborg Prize, November 2009–February 2010); Stroom Den Haag (‘Walking Through Walls, the New Model City’ by Tom Tlalim, May–July 2010, also shown in Huize Frankendael, Amsterdam in July 2010); and the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (‘Shotgun Architecture’ by Justin Bennett, October 2009, and also an article in ‘Damn Magazine’, summer of 2010).

For the future, also slated as a structural part of the programme are short editions for specific projects and publications, in which the mutual collaboration between the art

and knowledge institutes of the Zuidas will be extended further. In addition, the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR wants to create a more international profile. One idea is to set up master classes in collaboration with the VU University and the Sandberg Institute, and with other knowledge centres. The first one, 'Life After Planning', has already been held together with the VU University and the Sandberg Institute, featuring a symposium, a publication and an exhibition. The master classes, with international artists as key figures, will stimulate the involvement of international art and culture in the Zuidas and increase awareness of the district in other countries.

### Co-Constructing the City

**1** A separate section on art has been included in all planning sectors under development.

**2 Krijn de Koning** made a total design for the ground level of the so-called Nuon terrain, behind the RAI station. De Koning conceived this eastern entrance area to the Zuidas as a large square upon which the previously existing and new buildings function as sculptures. Liander's colourful 10 KV electricity station with ProRail's Amsterdam RAI substation on top of it, designed by Krijn de Koning, marks the area as a life-sized sculpture. The substation not only provides electricity for the trains but also for thousands of households in Amsterdam. For the square on which tram 4 has its final stop, De Koning also has a 'folly' in the works. Such is the original manner in which the artist De Koning is co-constructing this part of the city. For this project, the VMZ is collaborating with Liander (formerly Nuon), the G.V.B. (Amsterdam's municipal transport company) and the involved departments and companies of the City of Amsterdam, such as the Department of Physical Planning (DRO) and Zuidas Amsterdam.

**3 Giny Vos** made a spectacular light-artwork for the newly heightened telecommunications tower along Route A10. 'White Noise: The Signature of the Universe' is the title of this twinkling starry constellation of LEDs, which is on permanent display at all hours of the night. The work gives an image of a dynamic universe in which the planets and stars vary in the intensity of their light and sometimes disappear from sight. Every once in a while, a verification code flashes by, as a symbol of personal and contemporary communications, with which the spectator can identify. The broadcasting tower is a design by Christof Schwencke (AGS Schwencke Rosbach Architects). The light-artwork is a collaborative project of the telecommunications company KPN, Zuidas Amsterdam and the Virtual Museum Zuidas, and has turned out to be a beacon for the Zuidas and for Amsterdam.

**4 Jennifer Tee** created a design for the area around Symphony, a multifunctional building complex bordering on the Mahlerplein in the heart of the Zuidas. Inspired by the visual idiom of Berlage, she came up with a unique and cosmopolitan design for the public space of Mahlerplein-Zuid and the Gershwinplein.

**5** Due to the VU University's expansion plans, the Dr. L. Alma Schooltuin will be moved in 2011 to the Kalfjeslaan. For this school garden, **Frank Tjepkema** of Tjep. bureau has created a lively design for the two entrance gates at its new location.

**6** An artwork designed by **Anouk Vogel** is being constructed for the large glass main entrance to the St. Nicolaaslyceum's new school building on the Beethovenstraat and the corner of the Prinses Irenestraat.

**7** Together with SKOR, the VMZ is working on contemporary monumental sculptures for the new, low wall around the RAI terrain, designed by the well-known Belgian artist **Guillaume Bijl**.

**8** By now, the planning for the Kenniskwartier sector has also begun. Opportunities and possibilities for art have been established in the Urban Design Brief. There is an Implementing Order. On the basis of this, a detailed art programme is being worked out.

### **Virtual Zoom**

As of April 2008, the photographic results of the Virtual Zoom project have been handed to FOAM, the Amsterdam photography museum, which consequently is building up a unique collection. Artists represented in the collection include, among others, Tudor Bratu, Popel Coumou, Risk Hazekamp, Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky, Katja Mater, Gabor Ösz, Gerco de Ruijter, Isabelle Wenzel and Vincent Zedelius. In May and June 2008, the photo collection of the Virtual Zoom was exhibited in the FOAM under the title 'Expanding the City'. The exhibition drew some 25,000 people.

### **Communications**

Since May 2006, ten editions of the VMZ newspaper have been published, featuring a diversity of subjects in the sphere of art, architecture and urban design. Regular sections of the paper include a column devoted to corporate collections, a poster from Virtual Zoom, an agenda with an overview of important activities in the Zuidas, and 'five questions for' major players in the Zuidas (Marry de Gaay Fortman, Jan Doets, bOb van Reeth, Elco Brinkman, Chair of VU University Board of Governors René Smit, Martijn Sanders, Jan Stoutenbeek, Malcolm Smith, Klaas de Boer, and Robin Fransman of the Holland Financial Centre. The foreword is written by heavyweights like Robert Dijckmeester, government architect Mels Crouwel, Chair of Akzo Nobel Board Hans Wijers, Carolien Gehrels and Mayor Job Cohen.

Six publications on the Zuidas Free Spaces AIR have been brought out, including a literary version and a graphic edition.

# FUTURE

## **Finances**

The policy initiated by the VMZ is guaranteed financially until 2014. It is obviously important for the character and atmosphere of the Zuidas that the course upon which the city has embarked with regard to art and culture be continued and supported.

## CONCLUSION

### Art and the Global City of Zuidas

In the planning of the Zuidas district in Amsterdam, a central role has been reserved for art and culture from the very start. Not only because art helps in furthering liveability, vitality, urbanity and diversity, but also because art can give this new city centre a unique character and a recognizable identity. Art contributes to the human dimension, creates an atmosphere that makes people feel attached to an area and offers inspiration and places for them to meet one another.

The Virtual Museum Zuidas Foundation (VMZ), founded in 2003, devotes itself to art and culture in the Zuidas and advises and assists the Art Supervisor. In order to create the desired lively cultural climate and make art and culture a real element of the urban planning for the Zuidas, the VMZ organizes a programme based on six important mainstays.

The dynamic, modern and metropolitan **CASZuidas** video screen shows high-quality moving images 18 hours a day in a topical mix of video art, photography, film and new media, making it unique in the world. The screen is now accompanied by sound and is excellently suited for use in temporary events. In the **KunstKapel**, the former St. Nicolaas Monastery, the VMZ organizes 4 to 5 exhibitions a year that reflect the identity of the Zuidas. For the programming of the KunstKapel, the VMZ expressly strives to reach the various populations in the Zuidas and to work together with existing businesses and art institutions. In addition, the VMZ initiates **Temporary Projects**, which provide liveliness, inspiration, a human dimension and diversion. The **Zuidas Free Spaces AIR** is an artist-in-residence project and think tank, where artists from various disciplines conduct on-site, independent research, pose questions, think along with city planners and make personal, autonomous contributions to the ambitions and developments of the Zuidas. **Co-Constructing the City** is about integrating permanent artworks in the urban design, architecture and public space of the Zuidas. Here, it is important to involve artists at an early stage. To guarantee this, the VMZ works with involved public and private parties in seeking opportunities and possibilities during the planning stage. These are established in a separate art section of the Urban Design Brief. Finally, **Virtual Zoom** ensures that photographers/artists annually portray the transformation of the Zuidas. As of 2008, the collection of Virtual Zoom is the property of FOAM, the Amsterdam photography museum.

These mainstays have led to five goals for the future: a Video Screen Park, a contemporary Multitenant Art Building, a Zuidas Biennial, High-Quality Studios and Accommodations for Artists and Art(ist) Initiatives, and the application of creative thinking processes in the urban planning of the Zuidas.

As far as co-constructing is concerned, artworks are currently being prepared for the new school building of the St. Nicolaaslyceum, for the RAI terrain, and for the new location of the Dr. L. Alma Schooltuin. New initiatives are constantly being developed for the other projects, including artworks and cultural initiatives on vacant building lots and in available plinths. By means of the 'Virtual Museum Zuidas Newspaper', the digital newsletter and other publications, the VMZ brings these activities to the attention of a broad public and contributes to debate and discussion. In addition to its own activities, the VMZ promotes the artistic initiatives of third parties.

**BOARD**

Hester Alberdingk Thijm	Akzo Nobel, chair
Jurgen Bey	Sandberg Institute (as of March 2011)
Lex ter Braak	Fonds BKVB (as of March 2011)
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Sander van 't Noordende	Accenture (until March 2011)
Rob van Schaik	Independent Capital Partners

**auditor**

Robert Dijckmeester	Zuidas Amsterdam
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**Programme Advisory Committee**

Simon den Hartog	Zuidas Art Supervisor (through May 2011)
Meinke Horn	Zuidas Free Spaces AIR and cultural facilities
Harry J. Kraaij	finances and exhibitions
Marina de Vries	communications
Henk de Vroom	art in public space

**Secretariat and Project Support**

Nathanja van Dijk (through February 2011)
Lotje Pasteuning

**COLOPHON**

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[www.virtueel-museum.nl](http://www.virtueel-museum.nl)