

SCHOOL OR RE-CONSTRUCTION

Team Leaders: Nicole Maurer and Mark Oldengarm

Group F – Material Flows Pitch

For the 2021 School of Re-Construction, Nicole Maurer and Mark Oldengarm combine their backgrounds and perspectives into a cooperation as team leaders. Nicole is educated as architect and urbanist and has been active as creative director of Maurer United Architects since 1998. She expanded her expertise through developing projects and teaching students in Europe and China. Next to that she is also active in several cultural and social organisations. Mark is educated in history and history of arts and from worked – amongst other functions – as program manager sustainability at the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects. Since 2014 he is also a city council member in Zwolle. Both are severely interested in and have worked according to the principles of a circular economy.

In addition to the 'lenses' that participants use throughout the Summer School, we will focus on elements that integrate these lenses in a broader perspective which can be described as beneficial 'circular architecture'. It is our aim that the collected elements, products or raw materials will not only be investigated on their own merits, but will be thoroughly discussed through notions such as aesthetic quality, contextual value, occupational purposes and the possibility of utilizing the elements by embedding them in storytelling. An essential aspect of circular architecture is working with existing local social structures and participation of experienced end-users. The aspect of 'meaning' (relations) is sometimes more important than that of 'function' (target).

Having said that, we need to explicate the notions mentioned above. To start with beneficial circular architecture; that is an architecture doing good to the environment and is able to be repaired, re-used or regrown when needed. No harmful raw materials will be used or it will re-use already produced elements in its design.

The aesthetics of such architecture will be different than what most participants have been taught during education or working as a professional. Public and politics will also experience such an aesthetic as different and most likely as something they did not wish for. Therefore the topic of a sustainable / circular aesthetic is relevant in asking the right questions within the lenses.

Following out of aesthetics is contextual value. The appreciation of certain aesthetics is depending on its surroundings, local culture and traditions. Therefore the value that you can address to elements or materials used, will largely depend on the knowledge and understanding of (local) context.

Finally, it is not just practicing other formats in designing and constructing. It is in the way you are able to engage occupants, public and politics in these new forms of architecture and the use of materials. So beneficial does also mean that it is being experienced as an 'added value' in all regards.