

POST BOX FOR THE OPEN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 6 NOVEMBER 2014

Het Nieuwe Instituut launches the online and interactive Post Box for the Open Society, an invitation to the international community of architects, designers, thinkers and researchers to submit ideas and designs for an open society.

The Post Box is part of the Dutch entry to the **Biennale di Architettura** in Venice, entitled **Open: A Bakema Celebration**. It presents a critical reflection on the work and research of Jaap Bakema (1914–1981), in particular his ideas for the open society.

Each month we send out a newsletter with a compilation of submissions to the Post Box. This is the last issue, which also includes a preview of the article by Thomas Wensing in a series of reflections on the subject of the open society.

Visit the Post Box at open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl

NEW: SUBMISSIONS

43. Club Trouw: How to develop a creative neighbourhood in a part of town that was cut in two by a Modernist highway? Summer School Thinking City – Lada Hrsak, Robert Kloosterman, Michiel van Iersele.
44. Growing Green: How to fight obesity among the urban young? Summer School Thinking City – Janna Bystrykh, Han Wiskerke, Arnoud Verhoeff.
45. Bike Amsterdam: How can more bikes be possible in a car-dominated infrastructure? Summer School Thinking City – Kamil Klaasse, Oliv Klijn, Eric Frijters, Bas Driessens.
46. Museum Het Schip: How can a former working-class neighbourhood with architectural heritage improve its openness and connectedness to the world without getting gentrified? Summer School Thinking City – Arnold Reijndorp, Jacob van Rijs, Pepijn Bakker.
47. Navale Dockyard: How to maintain and develop a former naval dockyard? Summer School Thinking City – Nathan de Groot, Juha van 't Zelfde, Jerzy Gawronski, Radna Rumping.
48. Science Park: How to build a start-up ecosystem in a university campus environment? Summer School Thinking City – Annet Jantien Smit, Jos Gadet, Burton Hamfelt.
49. Bakema's blind spot. Thomas Wensing.
50. Conference 'Bakema and the Open Society' at TU Delft. Jaap Bakema Study Centre.

FEATURED: PROJECTS

Tuesday November 25th – Conference 'Bakema and the Open Society' at TU Delft
Jaap Bakema Study Centre

The Jaap Bakema Study Centre organizes a special conference on the work of Jaap Bakema (1914–1981) and his idea to build towards an open society. The conference concludes the Dutch presentation for this year's Venice Biennale **Open: A Bakema Celebration**, which can be visited until 23 November at the Rietveld pavilion in the Giardini of the Biennale.



During the conference, the many aspects in the work of Jaap Bakema and his office **Van den Broek and Bakema** will be highlighted. Researchers are invited to take a fresh look on his ideas about the open society, but also about his concept of total space, his interest in an architecture that enables a new, modern identity and emancipation of the masses, and his fascination for systems, transitions and interrelations. Another key issue in Bakema's narrative concerns the transformation of the Dutch landscape and its cities due to an all-pervasive modernization process against the background of the Cold War. Bakema's role in the international post-war avant-gardes (CIAM, Team 10, Dutch Forum), his teachings in among others Delft, St. Louis, Salzburg and Hamburg, and his practice of using competitions as a tool for experiment, provocation and innovation also deserve more attention.

Speakers include Rixt Hoekstra, Jasna Stefanovska, Alejandro Perez Duarte, Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, Carola Hein, Dirk van den Heuvel, Tom Avermaete, Mark Swenarton and Christoph Grafe.

open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/open/events

Growing Green: How to fight obesity among the urban young?

Summer School Thinking City 2014 – Janna Bystrykh, Han Wiskerke, Arnoud Verhoeff

A city where the Dutch social playground movement began, where the creation of public and neighborhood-oriented playgrounds became a key priority after the war, and where Aldo van Eyck built more than 700 playgrounds, Amsterdam is now facing a new challenge – an epidemic of child obesity. More than 23% – when the national average is 15% – of the city's young population between the age of five and nineteen is overweight. Since the 1980s, much of the city's utopian playground infrastructure has been dismantled, some due to safety measures, others due to maintenance costs and alternative development opportunities. Only some 20 van Eyck playgrounds still exist today... In September 2013 the city of Amsterdam – in collaboration with primary schools and through the organization of public and educational events for children and parents – has launched the **Amsterdam's Approach to Healthy Weight** program aiming to reduce and prevent the number of overweight children.



Amsterdam has the highest national density of supermarkets per square kilometer where in four of its eight neighborhoods there are more than 100 supermarkets within a distance of 1 km – an incredibly high density of stores, supermarkets and snack-bars – each with their own branding and advertisement strategy promoting consumption. What is the visual language of food advertisement in a city today? How is it perceived by children? How does it differ across the city? What is the educational value of advertisement today?

A number of Amsterdam schools are trying to balance the growing over-accessibility of food by serving only water and milk during school hours and promoting sugar-free morning snacks. Other city initiatives include **Water from the Tap**, a city wide program aiming to stimulate children to drink water instead of sugary refreshments. The popularity of school gardens to educate young children about growing food is once again on the rise. What are the other possible tools and (spatial) mechanisms that can be developed to educate children and their parents about the culture and production of food while living in the city? How do the various initiatives impact, affect local communities?

There are 209 primary schools in Amsterdam today. During the first week of the team worked together to create a **Food and Play Atlas** of the city using the location of the primary schools as focal points, a 500m radius conceptually defines children's key environments in the city. The atlas is a critical juxtaposition of observations and conclusions on spatial, social, and cultural topics related to food and exercise in the city, including: playground infrastructure (quality, quantity, typology and intensity of use); educational efficacy (on food production, consumption, school and community programs); food advertisements campaigns (what is for sale? what is for children?). During the second week of the summer school in direct dialogue with a neighborhood representative, the team worked on a campaign to promote health and wellbeing among children – a mix of educational, promotional and spatial possibilities.

[open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/
content/growing-green-how-fight-obesity-among-urban-young](http://open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/content/growing-green-how-fight-obesity-among-urban-young)

Science Park: How to build a start-up ecosystem in a university campus environment?

Summer School Thinking City 2014 – Annet Jantien Smit, Jos Gadet, Burton Hamfelt

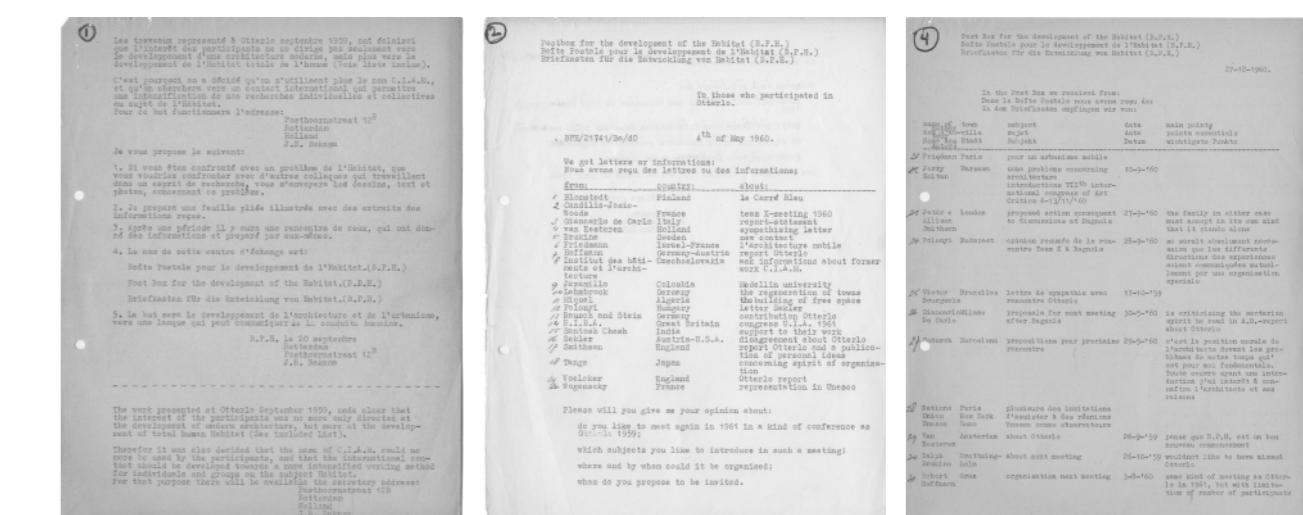


Start-up ecosystem is a relatively new concept that emphasizes the socio-economic context of tacit knowledge sharing. The components of a startup ecosystem are both the people interacting with each other (e.g. start-up and grown-up entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, angel investors, mentors, university professors and students) and the events where their interactions take place (e.g. meet-ups, hackathons, start-up weekends, open coffees, accelerator programs, etc.). Yet, most literature on start-up ecosystems ultimately treats 'place' as a spatially abstracted concept rather than as a location with specific qualitative attributes and programmatic features. During **Summer School Thinking City 2014**, the group worked on this topic. Watch the video online.

[open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/
content/science-park-how-build-startup-ecosystem-university-campus-environment](http://open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/content/science-park-how-build-startup-ecosystem-university-campus-environment)

OPEN: ARCHIVE

In every newsletter from the Post Box for the Open Society, we refer to Jaap Bakema's historic **Post Box for the Development of the Habitat**.



On the website we have published all original newsletters that Jaap Bakema compiled between 1959 and 1971. All documents can be viewed and investigated online:

open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl/open/texts

NOW: ARCHINED

During the Biennale, ArchiNed is taking the discussion about the open society out of the Dutch pavilion and into the present on the World Wide Web. In six articles designers and academics will critically reflect on the idea of the open society. Readers are expressly invited to take part in this debate. See also www.archined.nl

Bakema's blind spot Thomas Wensing

While political leaders have managed to destroy the European social model in both word and deed in recent decades, a retrospective of Bakema's vision for architecture and society presents an ode to a direction that was not pursued further. It is a direction that leads towards an open society in which income gaps diminish, more free time becomes available, and democratic participation increases. In this vision, the Netherlands is modern and completely urbanized, and of course designed in a modernist manner down to the last detail. Bakema's politically tinged rhetoric is rarely a shining example of clarity. And the legitimacy of the social democratic and capitalist welfare state that he allied himself with is not questioned in any depth. The increased standard of living and social progress of the post-war period blinded Bakema to the possibility of a reactionary backlash against the liberating impulses of the 1960s. As a result, he and many with him didn't envisage the dismantling of the welfare state. Today's neo-liberal economic and political consensus is based on a profound intertwining of global financial markets, multinational companies and politics. This forms an obstacle to more direct democracy, openness and social change. At least two of these three groups avoid almost all democratic influence, and the response to the economic crisis of 2008 is proof of a further erosion of democracy.

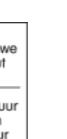
Acknowledging that recent decades have seen little progress towards an open society is, however, not the same as abandoning belief in progress. The article concludes with an ode to direct action on the street, a place where democratic changes usually start.

Thomas Wensing is an architect who lives and works in New York.

archined.nl/en/forum/2014/eng/bakemas-blind-spot

OPEN: POST BOX

The Post Box for the Open Society and Open: A Bakema Celebration both originated as a collaboration between Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, TU Delft and their shared research initiative the Jaap Bakema Study Centre. The Post Box is supported by ArchiNed, NWO and Mecanoo Architecten.



The newsletter is distributed by Het Nieuwe Instituut. Editors: Dirk van den Heuvel and Katia Truijen.

For subscriptions, more information and questions, please visit the website: open.jaapkemastudycentre.nl