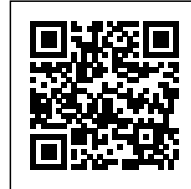




INTO THE WILD

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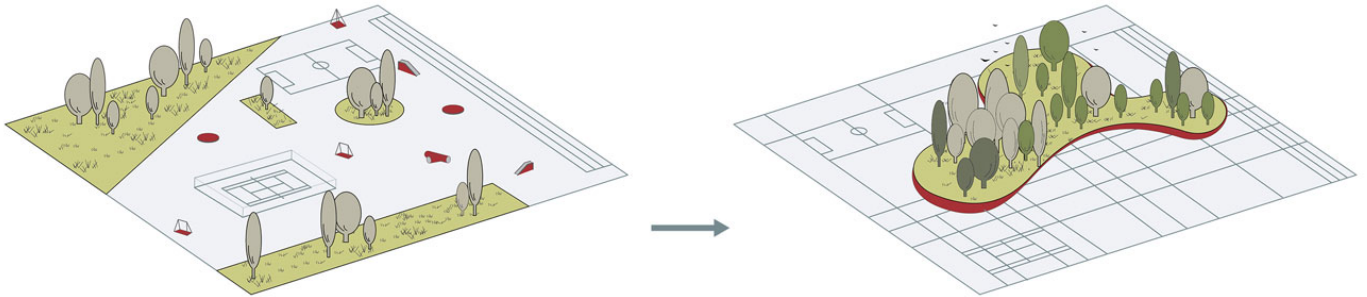


Play is about finding one's place in the world and making sense of that world. We have created a plan that seeks to juxtapose two different worlds. The man-made and the natural. The plan has an urban exterior and a wild natural interior; each space contains a different type of play. The formal exterior is a place for sports and structured ordered games, while inside the wild interior children are encouraged and free to construct and destruct their own play spaces using natural materials. A boundary "ribbon" between the two worlds wraps and protects the interior, while adapting toward the exterior to allow games and integrate traditional playground elements.





Grevelingenveld, known locally as Deltaplantsoen, is a neighbourhood square in Rivierenbuurt, The Hague. The design of the 8,100 m² space links carefully with the development of a new neighbourhood school that faces onto the square.



Diagrams



Plan





Sections

The playground concept brings three different types of play together into one ensemble: the interior is a wild natural playscape; the exterior an urban sports court; and the threshold between the two, known as "the ribbon", is a playful architectural element containing all the traditional playground equipment. This diversity of playing types, arranged as an open-ended playscape, creates a rich and dynamic world that offers children endless possibilities for play and to reinterpret and reimagine the space. It stands in contrast to the many mono-functional playgrounds with standard equipment that exist everywhere today.



The central natural playground is a space where children are free to construct and destruct their own play spaces from natural materials and fast-growing plants such as willow and reeds. Bringing a natural playscape like this into the heart of the neighbourhood will increase children's daily contact with nature, an important factor for a healthy childhood and an experience that is missing from many urban neighbourhoods. The planting selection is chosen to provide maximum visual variety throughout the year, while the biodiversity of flora and fauna will provide a rich context for environmental education offered by the school, and the continual growth of the plants and trees over the years provides an ever changing landscape.



The threshold between the urban and the natural is known as "the ribbon". It is an undulating playscape where children can navigate between the two worlds in an engaging and inviting way. The ribbon can be climbed over via the climbing wall, crawled through via the tunnels, slid over via the slides, and the edge has a steel coping for skating and scooting. It serves as a sitting element at the edge of the sandpit or a spectator stand for those watching the sports courts, and much more.



In contrast, the external space is a formal hard-surfaced square for sports and structured games. Here, patterns of lines define the courts for sports such as football and basketball while also creating abstract patterns, a playful matrix that can set boundaries for new games.



