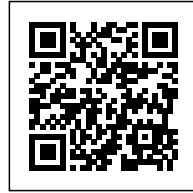


## THE SPLASH: A FUNCTIONAL ARTWORK

*Posted on June 23, 2021 by martabuges*



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**Categories:** [Arttenders](#), [No Density](#), [Project](#), [Territory and mobility](#), [Urban Paradigms](#)

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The Splash: A Functional Artwork  
<https://urbannext.net/the-splash/>

WHAT?! An outdoor pool? In Hart van Zuid, at the Annie M.G. Schmidt square in Rotterdam, a functional artwork has been launched in the shape of... a swimming pool – just before the start of the Eurovision Song Contest. Not a real one of course, but an artistic interpretation that serves as an interactive meeting place for the inhabitants of Rotterdam and visitors. The Splash, a collaboration between Arttenders and artist Cindy Bakker, is inspired by the natural appeal of paddling pools. It is a place where functionality, art, spatial development, and policy solutions come together through social design.



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The striking design of The Splash is the first in a series of designs placed in public space, entitled 'The Shape of Rotterdam'. The concept behind The Shape of Rotterdam is the result of an opportunity spotted by Rotterdam: Make it Happen and Arttenders to employ city marketing to enhance the role of local identity and needs in public development. Arttenders was commissioned by the Municipality of Rotterdam to perform extensive research on how welfare, sport, greening, climate adaptation, area development and the local needs of residents and entrepreneurs can be combined within a functional and iconic design in public space.

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The Annie M.G. Schmidt square in Rotterdam Zuid was picked and is the first to receive a 'Shape of Rotterdam' project with The Splash. The launch will take place just before the Eurovision Song Contest as part of the official city dressing for the event. The Splash will, therefore, not only function as a calling card during the event but will also be part of the long-term legacy of Rotterdam. "Thanks to Host City Rotterdam, The Shape has gained momentum. Zuidplein now has an icon which, even after the Eurovision Song Contest, provides an answer to a practical wish from the neighborhood," says Siobhan Burger of Arttenders.

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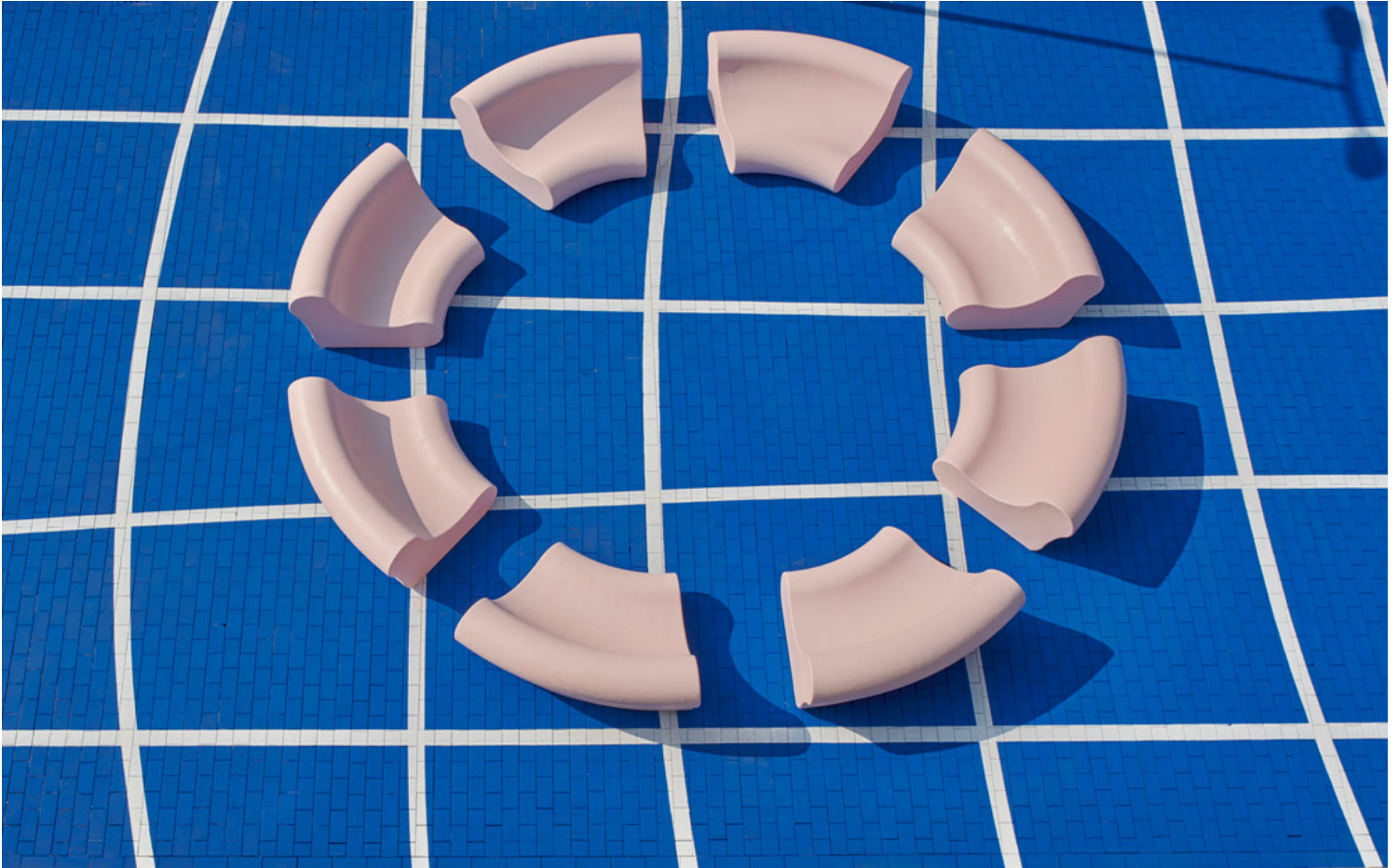
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## **For and With the City**

"The Shape of Rotterdam aims to develop attractive places in the public space where everyone feels welcome and heard, but which also address bigger challenges." says Burger. Local entrepreneurs, residents, Hart van Zuid, Rotterdam City Council and landscape architect Karres en Brands were, therefore, actively involved in the design process. Rotterdam artist Cindy Bakker submitted her portfolio to the Call for Interest. She was selected as the local artist for this project by a professional and public jury. Together with Arttenders, she created 'The Splash'.



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The Splash is a sensory experience, inspired by the paddling pools of the 1960s with a nod to the brand-new swimming pool in Zuid. The multifunctional design provides a space for encounters; a place where both younger and older generations can come together.

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Cindy Bakker: "The Splash is designed to be 'appropriated' by the neighborhood. Already during the installation we saw that people chat with each other on the seating elements, that children skateboard over the surfaces and that even the little ones climb and scramble over the diving board. It works, how cool is that!"

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