



UNDERWATER BICYCLE PARKING

Posted on June 12, 2023 by martabuges



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0.003 Miles under the Sea

In the water in front of the main entrance to Amsterdam's Central Station, on the part of Prins Hendrikkade that served as a bus station until July 2018, there is the largest bicycle parking garage in Amsterdam, with approximately 7,000 bicycle parking spaces. The design emphasizes its location below the water's surface.



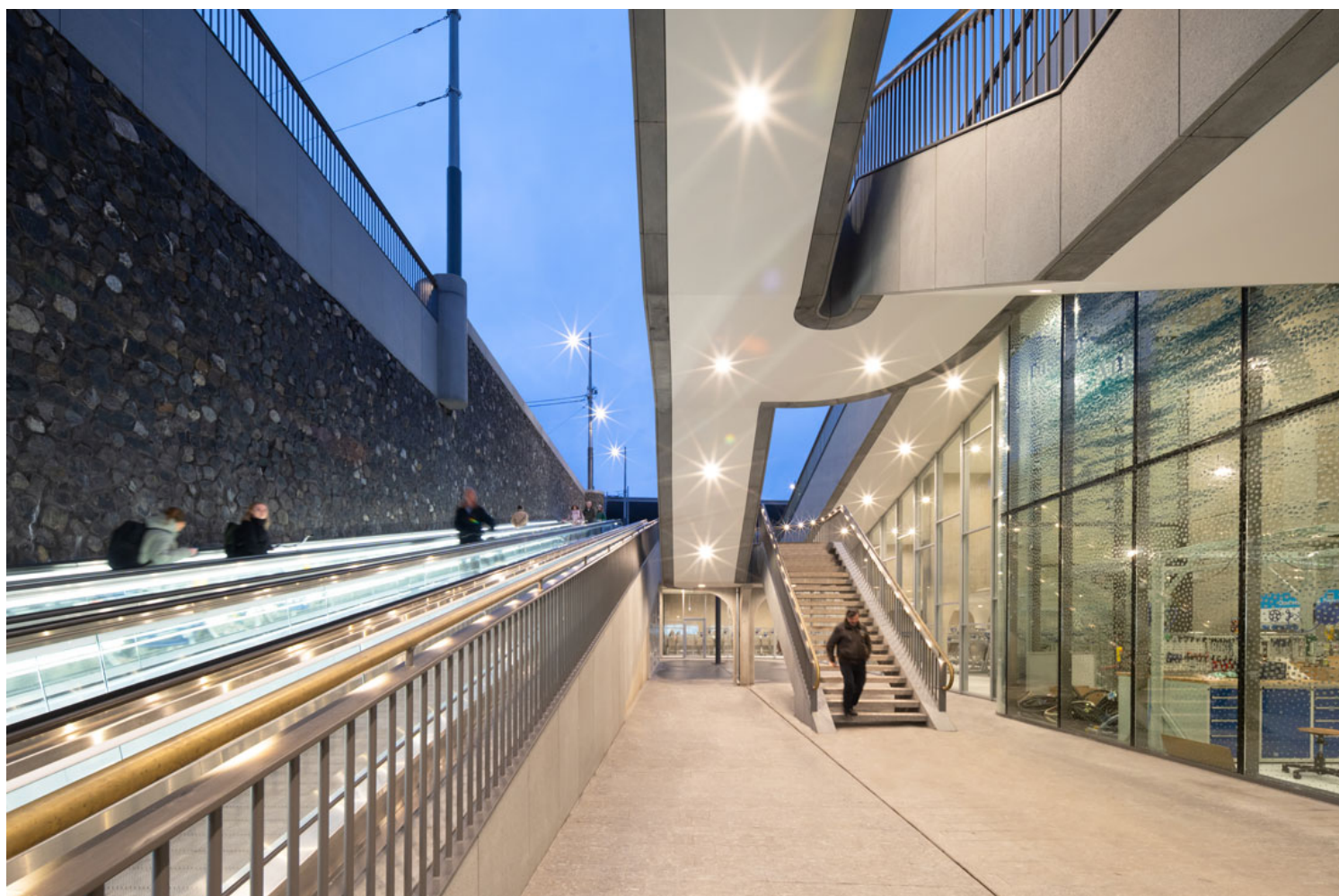
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Accessibility to the Station Area

The bicycle parking garage is part of the De Entree project, meant to renew the entire station area on the city side in the coming years. In addition to the design of the bicycle parking, wUrck is responsible for the design of the low quay and is the supervisor of all architectural components of the Entree, including bridges and jetties.

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The Entrance

The parking between Prins Hendrikkade and Stationsplein is located below the surface of the water, more than nine meters below ground level. Above it is the domain of the tour boats. To bridge the difference in height, a monumental entrance was designed using high-quality materials. Escalators lead users down along a wall that is designed as a continuation of the quay wall, with a flowing shape of rugged basalt. The escalators are part of a rise point that fills the imposing space like a natural stone sculpture. A high glass wall on the inside of the entrance ensures that the deep-seated parking garage is still provided with daylight.



Oyster

While the materials used for the main entrance are robust and rough, the parking garage inside is a smooth, light world, with a coated cast concrete floor and a seamless, white ceiling. It is a contrast reminiscent of an oyster, with its rough shell and smooth interior. Within this metaphor, the volume with the administrator's room and the bicycle service point can be seen as the pearl. This volume is in a central, strategic position, next to the reception area and with an overview of the entire parking garage. The 'pearl' takes the form of a slanted glass rectangle with rounded corners, made of curved glass with a wavy pattern.

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Colonnade

The spacious reception area serves as the hinge between the main entrance and the colonnade: the wide central path that crosses the parking garage diagonally and is marked by a double row of white drop columns. Upon entering the parking garage from the reception area, the other exit – the connecting tunnel that leads to the metro and the station – is immediately visible at the end of the colonnade. The rise point in this connecting tunnel is flanked and distinguished by two sgraffiti by the artist Lex Hoorn. The aisles with bicycle racks are located on either side of the wide, curved colonnade. To reinforce the orienting function of the colonnade, the drop columns are illuminated from below.

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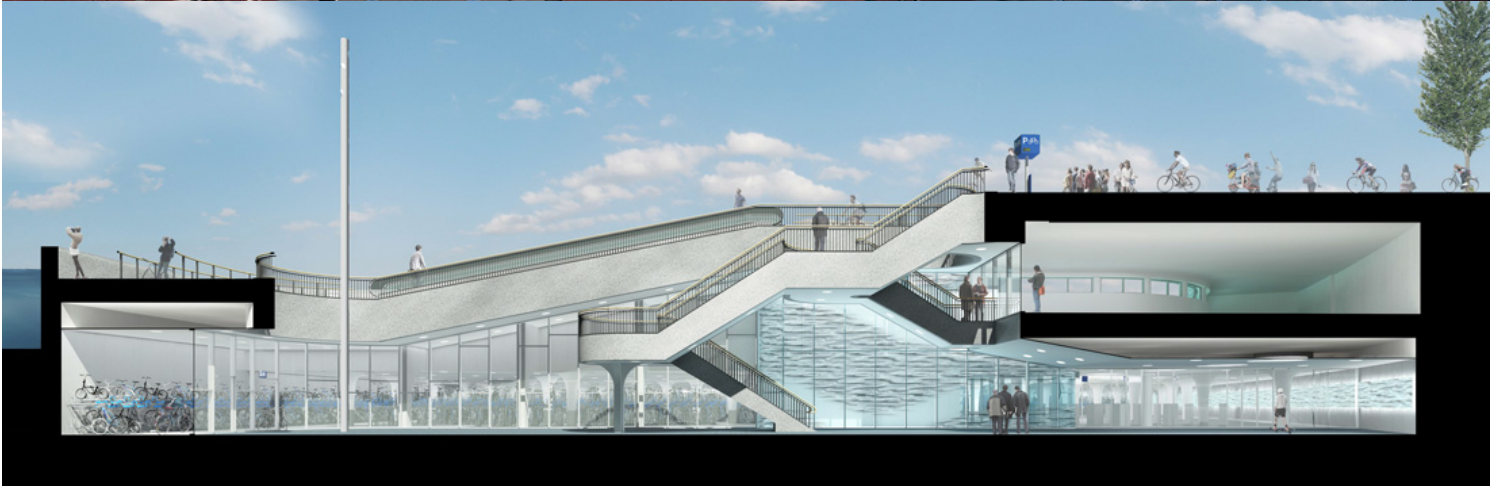
Underwater Art World

What is special about the parking garage is its location under the water. Water has therefore been made the identity carrier of the parking garage. This is evident not only from the quay wall at the entrance, the drop columns in the parking area, and the metaphor of the oyster, but also from the design of three special elements: the horizon, the oculi, and the pearl. The entire right wall (the horizon) is equipped with a glass façade showing city maps from the creation of the city through to the 21st century. These city maps consist of many small images: photos and paintings that emphasize the connection between Amsterdam and the water. This theme is also reflected in the oculi, the round light fixtures in the ceiling of the main path (the colonnade). The administrator's

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room and the bicycle service point play the role of the pearl in the oyster.



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