

Apartment Block at Sarphatistraat

The University of Amsterdam commissioned the re-development of their property on Sarphatistraat in the centre of Amsterdam. The site is on a sensitive, historical street. The master plan proposed three new buildings: an office building, an apartment block and student housing. VMX Architects were commissioned to design the apartment block. All three buildings have been constructed with rental space and mixed functions on the ground level. The building's depths and heights conform to the original building lines of the Sarphatistraat. The student housing was financed from the revenue created by the apartments, the office block and the commercial ground floor space.

Given the fact that the apartments were supposed to be rented to visiting scholars, VMX designed them as in-between space: between hotel room and house.

The units are conceived as one large open space with an enclosed bathroom and open kitchen. The service ducts are the only fixed elements in this 100m²

open space and allow for five possible configurations, giving the inhabitant maximum freedom in the arrangement of the space. The open character of the floor plan is translated in the façade by substituting the traditional arrangement of one window per function for one huge oval window.

Access to the apartments was restricted by the commercial space at ground floor and an existing single-storey building. Gallery access was the most suitable method. The gallery side is extensively glazed to allow as much light in as possible. Private balcony boxes off the gallery provide outdoor space. Steel sections, cables and transparent mesh give a lightweight functional appearance to this façade.

The street façade is made in dark basalt concrete panels, making a link to the existing façades. With this building, not only have the historical building lines been restored, also the character of the street with its many brick warehouses has been restored in an up to date manner.

PROJECT:

Apartment Block at Sarphatistraat

LOCATION: Sarphatistraat, Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

CLIENT: University of Amsterdam

DATES: Design: 1998-1999,
Construction: 2001-2002

AREA: 65.000 sqft (6.000 sqmt)

COST: 8.500.000 €

ARCHITECTS: VMX Architects

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Contributed by the architects





