

# A10



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of seating?

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READY

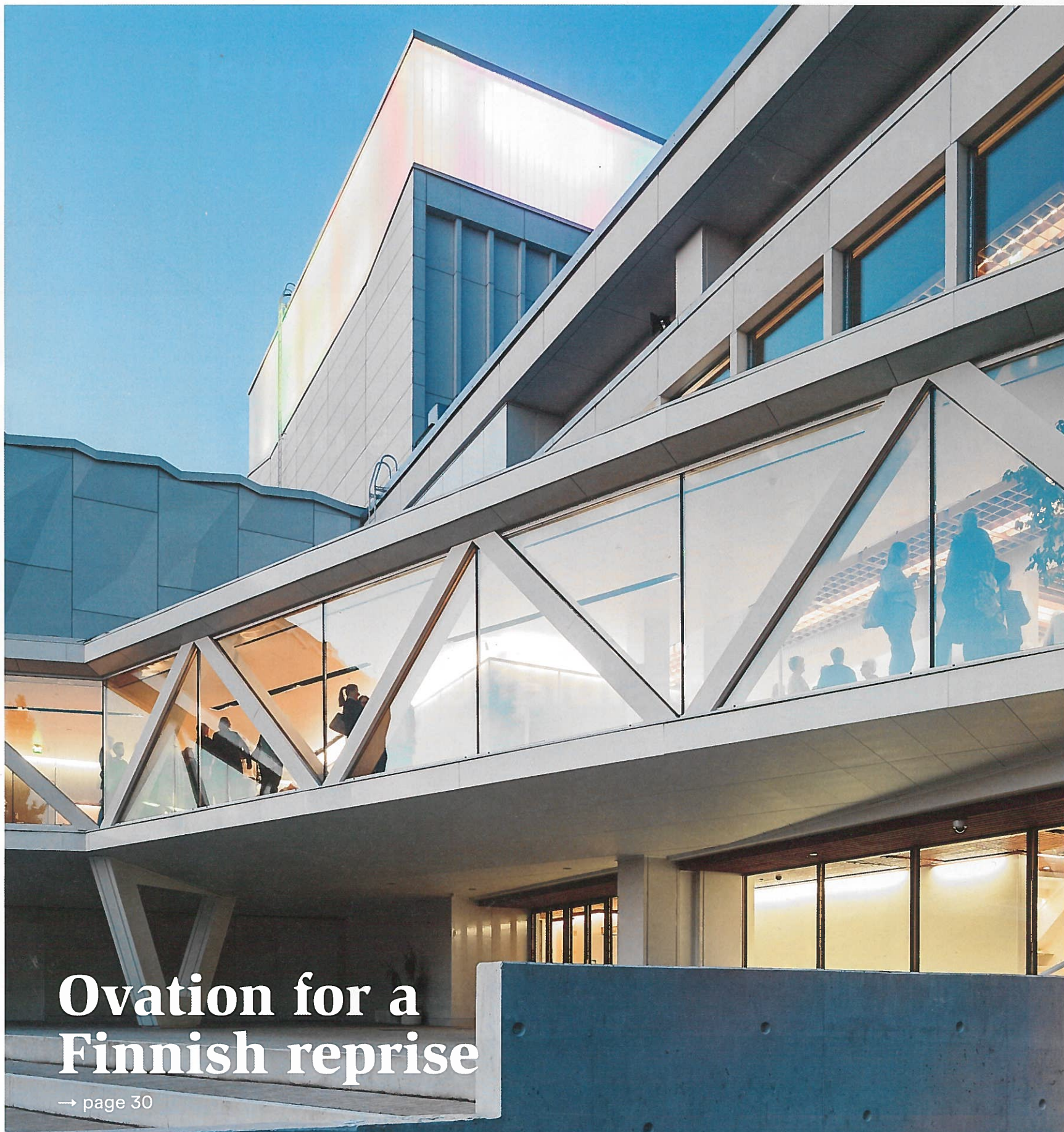
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## Rotterdam 2040 \*\*\*\*

This year, the city of Rotterdam celebrates, one after the other, the opening of new icons on its skyline: De Rotterdam by OMA, the Market Hall by MVRDV, and the Central Station by Bentheim Crouwel. That it is unusual to be unabashedly proud of Rotterdam can be seen in the film *Rotterdam 2040* (Gyz la Rivière, 2013). The film was released just before the heightened media coverage of Rotterdam began, and is viewable online (with English subtitles).

One hundred years before the year 2040, Rotterdam suffered a traumatic bombardment, the reason that La Rivière (1976) chose that year, in order to both look forward and gaze back at the city's development. The artist-filmmaker is of the generation of Rotterdammers who are not necessarily still processing the wartime trauma, but who feel confronted with the undervaluation of the reconstruction period between 1950–1975. The film is an intense, 92-minute Rotterdam experience, more video clip than documentary, a style reminiscent of the music documentaries by Julien Temple. It is a monologue

with a great deal of footage from the city archives, animations, local music, anecdotes and interviews from past and present. It is never boring, even for people who are not familiar with the city at all.

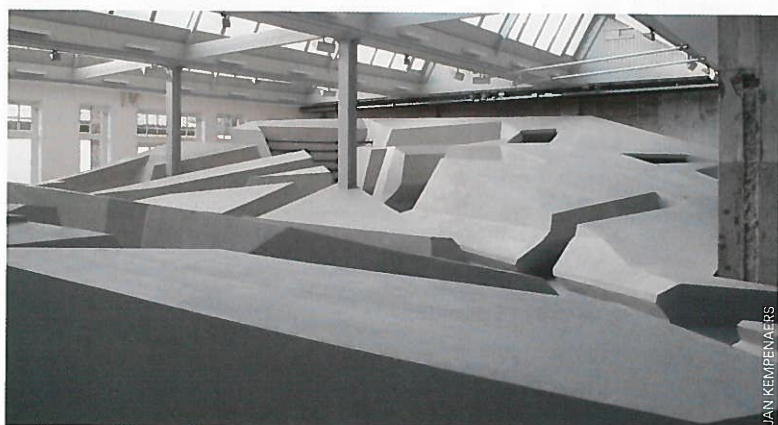
The moral of the film is that, since the bombing, Rotterdam has been far too focused on building a future, causing it to forget its own history, and overwriting it too rapidly. La Rivière shows this plausibly through embarrassing examples of urban development that exchange the good for the new and the beautiful for the many. This results in a chaotic city without structure, and with a diminished quality of living – perhaps why it has such strong subcultures.

The memory of a city is essential for the development of that city, and La Rivière's cinematic plea therefore touches both the Rotterdam developer or architect who too seldom cares about the history, and the resident who watches as his/her city is incoherently broken down, built up and again demolished. In addition to the urban appearance, the film also shows how the city is utilized culturally, also by its subcultures. One of the acts that Gyz performed as an artist was the temporary reopening of the famous grand café Pschorr, which he renamed Pschorri.

But the memory of a city is a dynamic and subjective whole. And it is there where the filmmaker loses his way. At the end of the film, a selection of

only ten random buildings is given that, according to him, should not have been demolished and must be rebuilt. But with this simplistic conclusion, he undermines his own mantra. The years 1975–2014 are now part of history, and not necessarily worse than the period that came before. Even the times themselves are changing: a reconstructed ancient theatre (among the list of desired resurrections) would today become a total fiasco. It takes away from the power of the film. If you have viewers captivated, then deliver a serious end, making it more than just a farcical movie. Then the film would have made history. (WIES SANDERS)

Info [www.rotterdam2040.nl](http://www.rotterdam2040.nl)



## Please don't be seated

**AMSTERDAM (NL)** — We do it at home at the table, in the office, when we watch television, in the car and train, on the toilet – actually almost all day. People are addicted to sitting, and for that reason it's also been called 'the new smoking'. A product of modern society, which is based on a service economy, sitting is as deadly as puffing away a pack per day, according to some. After all, our bodies are not built to continuously remain in the same passive posture. It results in a variety of complaints and illnesses, and therefore also ends up costing society a significant amount of money.

How do you get people out of their too-comfortable chairs? Studio RAAAF (Rietveld Architecture Art Affordances) and artist Barbara Visser, commissioned by the Dutch State Architect, set about pondering the question. Their answer: a spatial installation that looks like a huge, rocky

feature at a zoological park, on which you can stand, hang, lounge, pivot, lean, walk around... in short, anything but sit still. 'The End of Seating', as the project is called, is not a prototype for a new ergonomic workplace. Like the widely discussed installation VACANT NL (concerning vacant government buildings), which they designed for the Dutch Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2010, The End of Seating is primarily a project that aims to stimulate shaking up current mindsets.

Simultaneously, researchers of movement at the University of Groningen performed comparative studies on the installation's effects on well-being, with subjects either working on a standard office chair or on/in the 'rock'. What the white topography demonstrates, in any case, is how cool it is to *not* be sitting, and what kind of image that can produce – far more interesting than the average office. (KIRSTEN HANNEMA)

The End of Seating, 2014 Installation RAAAF Client RAAAF together with Looiersgracht 60 Production Landstra & de Vries supported by Schaart Adventures Info [www.raaf.nl](http://www.raaf.nl)

## SoundCloud headquarters

**BERLIN (DE)** — SoundCloud recently opened its new, lofty office space designed by Berlin architects KINZO. Since this young start-up has such a unique identity – with over 40 million users, it's the new MySpace – the creative space reflects the online world of their emoji-commenting, beat-friendly users.

Situated in an old brewery near the Berlin Wall Memorial, SoundCloud is a key player in the Berlin tech scene. The company has 180 employees in the city (who work on couches made of hemp), though the space accommodates up to 350 workers. This triple-level, 4000-square-metre building is meant to reflect the spatial identity of the online music community: one that encourages innovation and creativity. 'We want to redefine this office design as a built reality of their virtual community,' comments Karim El-Ishawi of KINZO.

Built in collaboration with Kelly Robinson, there is a recording studio for employees who want to make music. Each conference room is themed after a Berlin neighbourhood (the centre district of Mitte, the bohemian Kreuzberg), while some rooms are named after districts in London, New York and San Francisco (the locations other SoundCloud headquarters). The architects also designed the ceiling to look like sound waves. Look up to find abstract bent lines built into light diffusers. Down below are drop lights, hammocks, and even cubby holes in which employees can sit.

In true Berlin style, the space maintains the former brewery's raw accents, like exposing the concrete beams and industrial brickwork. It contains open-concept work spaces, a hybrid café-reception lobby used for film screenings, panel discussions, and as a bar, plus a yoga room, indoor garden, library and a nap room for jet-lagged employees. The room with a fireplace has a no-tech rule, according to community manager David Noel, so colleagues can have the kind of relaxed conversations that are not always possible when sitting behind a desk. (NADJA SAYEJ)

Info [www.kinzo-berlin.de](http://www.kinzo-berlin.de)

