



## **Prix de Rome 2022 Architecture – Jury Report**

**12 April 2022**

In selecting the shortlist for the Prix de Rome Architecture 2022, the jury assessed the 53 anonymous proposals submitted during the Open Call: Healing Sites. Candidates were asked to freely interpret the use of a 30x30x30cm container to represent their: positioning in relation to the theme put forward by the jury, spatialisation of a self-identified issue (or issues) and framing for a site of architectural operation.

The jury was impressed by the quality of the spatial statements and the accompanying writings, which, as a whole, gave a wide cross-section of the current preoccupations of a young generation of Dutch spatial practitioners, whilst at the same time critically evaluating the position of the architects, urbanists, interior architects, and landscape architects.

In general, the jury very much appreciated the wide variety of meaningful sites that together form a collective Healing Site of the spatial legacy of the Netherlands. Many of the proposals focused on dealing with large narratives, like: the relation between human and nonhuman, nature and technology, economic and social conditions. However, the received proposals also pointed to a number of blind spots, which are deemed of major relevance by the jury for the field but were hardly addressed, like: the need for advancement in the more technical aspects of spatial practices, and reflections on the increased role digital realms play as a site of spatial practice. Nevertheless, the jury appreciated the urgent questions posed and the speculations on ways in which architects can be part of designing Healing Sites. It was also identified by the jury that proposals often proposed new approaches using tools or methods currently found beyond the usually trained capabilities of architects, which are needed to gain new insights of complex situations and approach those situations differently than how architects have done in the past.

After a careful deliberation of all the anonymized entries, the jury selected four entries, who will be given the chance to further develop their proposals in the second round.

What made the chosen candidates stand out was their ability to construct a cohesive proposal; merging a relevant and urgent response to the theme with a structured design methodology into a thought provoking site of spatial operation, whilst expressing this in a highly articulate manner in both the written and spatial statement. With their proposal they show how spatial practices can design narratives to be critiques of our time. The jury also is of the opinion that the four proposals show an interesting variety in scale, topic and experimentation, which widen and deepen the scopes of the design field. All in all, the jury is looking forward to the further development of the four healing practices and the results of the final round. Below, in no particular order, the jury's findings:

**Arna Mačkić** calls, with her proposal 'International Centre for Architectural Disaster', on the responsibility of architects to heal the wounds of architectural disasters. The building of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague is redesigned to host a new institution that will heal through restorative justice, a process that focuses on mediation instead of trial. This is done in order to expose the systems behind architectural disasters, to give voice to those affected, to repair the damage, and to generate spatial knowledge resulting in a new architectural movement. The jury praised the original approach where multiple sites could be dealt with through the redesign of a symbolic building. The spatial statement provided a clear proposition and the text was, in the opinion of the jury, beautifully composed, giving a serious critique of where we stand as a profession. The jury reflects that all disasters could potentially be seen as 'architectural' disasters. What would be needed to establish this new healing legal structure and how does this translate in an architectural intervention that dynamically engages different stakeholders?

**Lesia Topolnyk** states with the proposal 'No Innocent Landscape' that the current man-made struggle is inevitably embedded in the landscape. The small mining village of Hrabove is a very apparent site for this, which all of a sudden became of national importance to the Dutch, irrespective of geographical borders, due to the MH17 tragedy. The jury was very much impressed by the choice of a site that holds extreme relevance to the central topic of 'guilty landscapes' and how it is gathering traces and fragments of the different forces at play: from the downing of the aeroplane to the illegal mining activities in the region. This strong conceptual approach is reflected in the spatial statement, that shows equally artistic quality, through layered use of audio and video, and a sensitivity to historical events. The jury underlines that design can act as a spatial language revealing invisible processes and questioning a healing way forward. How can the proposal go beyond an autonomous artistic intervention and activate the forensic research to heal all those connected to the site?

**Studio KIWI**, a collaboration between **Kim Kool** and **Willemijn van Manen**, addresses the mistrust by the people of the Dutch government in the aftermath of the toeslagenaffaire. In the face of climate change, which can only be tackled if "we stand together", the project 'Grounds of [In]justice' identifies the need for a restoration of trust. As a gesture of reconciliation by the government, Studio KIWI proposes to start a healing process by reconsidering the design of the twenty-one counters of the Belastingdienst. The jury appreciated the layered approach in which social issues were carefully connected to physical architecture and where the healing is sought on both a material and systematic level. In addition, the jury praised the imaginary expression of the proposal in the images and the spatial statement, showing the artistic capabilities of the candidates. How can the proposed sites become part of a healing process beyond being spaces of contemplation, but as spatially performative and activating in restoring trust in our fiscal services?

**Dividual**, consisting of **Andrea Bit** and **Maciej Wiczorkowski**, focuses on the topic of colonialism on our home turf centred around the so called 'Colonies of Benevolence',

specifically in the case of Veenhuizen. Its complex history provides a current day reflection on the relation between labour and nature, showing that healing is not always an innocent process. The jury praises the analytic premise that led to the choice for a location filled with historical tensions. The spatial statement showed an artistic precision that carried through in the written work tying Dutch colonialism, the beginnings of Dutch welfare, and a celebration of the unproductive. How can the historical significance of the site become actively healing in our times?

The jury of the Prix de Rome 2022 Architecture consists of:

- Afaina de Jong (founder and director AFARA)
- Alessandra Covini (co-founder and co-director Studio Ossidiana, winner of Prix de Rome 2018)
- Carson Chan (director Emilio Ambasz Institute at MoMA)
- Dirk Sijmons (founder H+N+S Landschapsarchitecten)
- Jan Jongert (founding partner Superuse Studios)
- Syb Groeneveld (excecutive director Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie, technical chairman)