

Insight Series #7

A dementia friendly neighbourhood

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‘Twenty years of research has still yielded no cure for Alzheimer’s disease. Where’s the holdup?’ Says *de Volkskrant* newspaper dated February 8, 2014.

‘Eighty thousand people with dementia are living by themselves’ reported the *NRC Handelsblad* on October 5, 2013. ‘The Netherlands are awaiting an explosive growth in the number of dementia patients between the age of 50 and 60. This is largely due to an unhealthy lifestyle.’ This is the expectation of four professors at the VU Medical Centre in Amsterdam.

This is the kind of messages we hear and read regularly in the media. It is only when you are intimately familiar with dementia, that it touches you. From my own experience I can say that Alzheimer’s is terrible, perhaps even degrading. Especially

since it is beyond comprehension; what goes on in the brain of a person with dementia? It must be one of the worst diseases to undergo: your head, as it were, is separated from your body.

Thus far, there is no medication that stops or reduces the disease. The pharmaceutical industry is reluctant because successful development of a working drug is not an easy grab. Dementia is second only to disability care with nearly 4 billion Euro in health care costs, the most expensive disease in our country. But soon these will swap places; the number of people with dementia will skyrocket, due to a greying population, to over half a million within forty years.

Simultaneously with this increase the Government is significantly cutting down on 24-hour care. People with dementia have to live and be cared for at home, with serious consequences. Dementia will also become increasingly visible in the public sphere. How do we deal with it? Do you help someone who doesn't know the way home anymore? And someone who doesn't know how to use

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Chairman
of the
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General
Practitioners
Organisation
(LHV) Steven
van Eijck has
said to the
NOS 21st
March 2014:
"This is
a reason
to sound
the alarm."
According
to Van
Eijck a cliff
is forming
because nurs-
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yet enough
neighbour-
hood care.

a debit card at the ATM where you've been waiting in line? My mother, who has Alzheimer's, sometimes bought a loaf of bread from the bakery up to 5 times per day while she was still living independently. Too bad that the baker did not openly wonder if that was not a lot for a single household.

Fortunately, the government has announced 32.5 million Euros in additional spending over the coming four years to improve the in-home care for people suffering from dementia. The money will go to the Deltaplan Dementia, to provide more scientific research into better treatment, cure and prevention of dementia. Secretary of State Martin van Rijn from the Health department has this to say about it: "as long as it is not possible to cure dementia, we must make the disease as bearable as possible for the patients, family and caregivers. Besides fundamental research into the causes and symptoms we can improve the care."

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The welfare state must become a participation state

Dutch society is transforming from a welfare state into a society in which citizens are expected to participate a lot more. This offers opportunities to make their own choices and thus a differentiation in solutions. But there are also dangers in this transformation. Not everyone has a social safety net on which can be depended, therefore many people who are in need of care will fall through the cracks. Developing empathy, knowledge and understanding of dementia is of great importance within a community in order to offer the growing group of those living with dementia at home a helping hand. Fortunately many positive initiatives have been taken lately to generate the necessary attention. Amsterdam-South in collaboration with the inter-architecture department at the Rietveld Academie and the Odense House have initiated a Dementia friendly neighbourhood.

Dementia friendly neighbourhood

The topic for the coming years in Amsterdam-South is going to be the “Dementia friendly neighbourhood”. The aim is to create a neighbourhood where people with dementia and their families can stay and live longer.

The starting point for this research is to investigate into ‘haptic way-finding for people with dementia’ from an architectural perspective, on the border between public and private space in relation to ‘Odense-House’.

Odense-House

‘People with dementia are normal people, active in society, but with a limitation, Odense-House gives people with dementia a place and a voice.

People with dementia and people with memory complaints are welcome throughout the day in Odense-House in

Amsterdam. Alone or with their partner, family or friends. You decide what you do: read the newspaper in the coffee corner, look up information in the library, jointly prepare and have lunch, organize or attend a lecture, organizing or participate in a creative or sporting activity. You do not have to explain that you have dementia. You can work with other people with dementia by helping them with your knowledge and experience in your own way.

The Odense House shows that people with dementia simply belong in society. We stand up for our peers and ourselves. We give our answers to questions that keep people busy with dementia. We provide information to professionals about our capabilities and our needs. We organize our own activities. We do it in our own way. We regularly give lectures and short courses for different target groups.



Way-finding and Dementia

If you suffer from dementia one of the first things that often go wrong is your orientation. Finding your way or finding your way back is often difficult. How can we contribute to a Dementia Friendly Community by focussing on sensory way-finding? The study is a collaboration with the students of the Rietveld Academie department of Inter-architecture and the Odense-house community (our client).

General information about Dementia Friendly Community

For a lot of people with dementia, a walk to the bank or doing the daily grocery shopping are rituals and examples of a high degree of autonomy. But how does a shop-keeper deal with a person with dementia who wants to pay twice or comes in to purchase the same groceries for the third time already? What do you do when you are visit-

ing a star reviewed restaurant and your partner with dementia lashes out at the waiter about the rather 'small' portion on the plate? In practice, we notice that such incidents might lead to a lack of understanding and even to defensive responses from people.

The number of people with dementia is noticeably increasing in the Netherlands. Approximately 500,000 people there are expected to suffer from dementia in 2030. Add the number of volunteer aids and this turns out to be a group with an unmistakably large impact on society. Still, people with dementia and those close to them often lead isolated lives. Their behaviour is not rational, the disease is not visible and responses to them are awkward. Prejudices and clichés are in the way of spontaneous communication while the contact with the local community crumbles away. Age is not an advantage either: while getting older, they lose good acquaintances and friends, which could lead to a more isolated life. Nevertheless, we do see that more and

more people with dementia are invited as central speakers at symposia and that they are even involved in the preparations for these events. Also with regard to policy-affecting activities people with dementia increasingly bear witness themselves. After all, an early diagnosis provides a lengthier opportunity for people to stand up for their companions in adversity and for a fitting package of services. Nonetheless, the taboo remains, and for many dementia is a disease playing in their heads, with all its disastrous consequences. As people with dementia express it themselves: “Those who feel insecure and do not really know what dementia is, have the tendency to avoid us”.

In 2001 the association Alzheimer Scotland published a first booklet with possible initiatives for creating a Dementia Friendly Community. At that time, the objective was to facilitate that people with dementia could participate as full-fledged citizens in local society as long as possible, with help of volunteers, within the large social network of

the local community. The birth of the idea of the Dementia Friendly Community.

Four years later, in 2005, the Japanese Minister of Health launched a public campaign to increase understanding about dementia and to stimulate setting up community networks. Among the main goals were the training of one million dementia supporters to provide information about the specific character of dementia, installing case management, support of the patient organisation and setting up local dementia friendly communities. One actively applied for ideas to involve citizens more closely in the daily lives of people with dementia and those surrounding them.

In the same period, the German ‘Aktion Demenz’ started a civil movement aiming to increase the quality of life for people with dementia, and people close to them, in society, with a project group on the Dementia Friendly Community. The term ‘dementia friendly’ does not express the fact that people with dementia are welcome in

that community, but aims to generate initiatives that bring about a change of behaviour in terms of social intercourse and the encouragement of integration. In the meantime, about 150 projects have been initiated and in hundreds of villages, cities and communities in Germany the first signs are now visible. People with dementia (and their volunteer aids) can find tangible possibilities to remain included in their local community and public life. Additionally, possibilities for spontaneous contact are stimulated and in clubs, local shops, supermarkets, places of public service, cafés and restaurants, ... people with dementia are treated with the respect they deserve. In this way, they can keep participating in society, just like other vulnerable groups of people.

In the German city of Arnsberg for example, the concept was worked out in three domains: providing better information, setting up a network between the various participants and raising the involvement of citizens. In practice, a circus project was set

up with a collective workshop for children and residents of a nursing home. Additionally, an Alzheimer café was furnished as a place where people with dementia can share their experiences. A pick-up service with volunteers was expanded and striking advertisements were distributed in shops, pharmacies, theatres and buses of public transportation. Meanwhile, three stations of support have become active, where up-to-date information can be found and is also actively distributed. People with dementia can go there for long-term support and advice. The combined action of professional help, volunteer work and the needs of the people with dementia and their volunteer aid are synchronised.

At the end of 2009, the King Boudewijn Foundation in Belgium felt it was time to do something with the concept of the Dementia Friendly Community in Belgium. Within the framework of a project group various involved parties in society, like pharmacists, the catering industry, touristic services,

communities, local committees, neighbour groups, ... could put forward a project. 'It was not evident, according to Magda Aelvoet, former federal Minister of Health and chairperson of the dementia study group, 'as one had to step out of the classical health care thinking and start to think about connecting actions that would be beneficial to society and the integration of people with dementia. We wanted to support good, but especially sustainable projects that would reinforce the network of the person with dementia in society. That is why during the selection we considered the chances for projects to eventually be reproducible in other regions.'

The 16 selected communities and cities, which responded to the appeal of the Foundation, are therefore facing a great challenge. The supporting projects are all very different. Like the approach in Bruges in which all sectors are requested to take initiatives. At the initiative of the regional dementia knowledge centre, the city council, the

consulting platform dementia and the collaborative initiative primary health care (SEL) Bruges now mobilizes all associations and clubs, shopkeepers, merchants, the world of education, the cultural sector and the health care sector, expressing the wish to work on breaking through the isolation and to stimulate a worthy intercourse with people with dementia. 'As urban community we can help to bear this disease', says council member Welfare Lieve Mus. A website unites all actions. Bruges worked out a five-year plan. The information and sensitization phase commenced on April 1 2010.

In Limburg, the city of Hasselt made it with their project 'pleasant walking with people with dementia in Hasselt and Zonhoven'. It is a very original project, which will be executed in cooperation with the touristic service and the heritage cell. The project aims to develop 3 specific walks for the target group of people with dementia and their volunteer aids, linked to three accompanying brochures. The 'walk down memory

lane' digs into the charming past of the city of Hasselt. For the person with dementia it is useful and pleasurable to reminisce. The memories summoned by places and buildings shortly bring back the familiar past. During the 'sensory-stimulating stroll' all senses are being addressed. The sensory development of people with dementia is longest preserved and so is best-suited as the means of communication. Tasting Limburger regional products and a visit to the Dutch gin museum, the fashion museum and the herbal garden of Herckenrode will be part of this activity. The 'natural experience' offer people with dementia who feel close to nature the possibility to relax in the green surroundings of Zonhoven. The guides, who work out and escort the walks, receive a course on dementia from the regional dementia knowledge centre together with the managers of the visited locations along the routes.

Close to the Dutch border, the borough of Essen, has been sensitizing about dementia for over 25 years. The small-scale

normalized living project of De Bijster, the local care facility, is not unfamiliar with it. De Bijster is well-known in the area and is actually still a pioneer: involved with the dementia-café, brainstorming about small scale-ness, the origination of the dementia knowledge centre, various innovating projects regarding food and quality control ... Therefore, the mayor, council member and the OCMW (Belgian public centre for social well-fare) took the 850ieth anniversary of the city as an opportunity to give dementia a formal place. An extra issue of the municipal information guide is planned, with an overview of all well-fare work and services and a bundling of all specific activities that are still being developed for, and in consultation with, people with dementia.

In Gent, in close connection with the cultural life of Sint-Amandsberg, local artists and the local history circle will involve people with dementia in the realization of various art works. In Dendermonde, the project is called 'Do disturb' and the public

centre for social well-fare, in cooperation with the local service centres, next to education for families, will underwrite the start of a buddy project. The buddy as the companion of the person with dementia while doing groceries, with hobbies, ...

Still, initiators have to be alert to unwanted side-effects, because there is a real danger that cities and communities and their political representatives will use the dementia-friendly character of the initiatives as a probate marketing label, without there being any depth or true vision behind the projects. Another pitfall could be that the city reduces the project to one of the classic provisions in elderly care, which would maintain the classic way of thinking about the elderly. So regular evaluations, about whether or not the philosophy of the Dementia Friendly Community (the network concept of the person with dementia being central) is still upheld as the leitmotiv, are crucial.

For Flanders these initiatives are particularly important, as they specifically

connect with our culture: that of the social life and the Burundian lifestyle. Breaking through the negative conceptualization that is paired with dementia can only succeed if society makes care and supervision visible and valorizes the possibilities people with dementia still have. In this context, the idea of resilience is central. The Dementia Friendly Community is about more than just 'the community'. It is about an appeal to society as a whole, with which we should pose the existentialist question about how people with dementia want to live and what support they desire. In the meantime, all initiatives and projects were launched with enthusiasm and will be guided by the King Boudewijn Foundation and the Flemish foundation of cities and municipal authorities. It could be that what one is trying to accomplish here, is much more durable and more profound than a costly sensitizing advertising campaign. If you suffer from dementia one of the first things that often go wrong is your orientation. Finding your way or finding your way

back is often difficult. How can we contribute to a Dementia Friendly Community by focusing on sensory way-finding? The study is a collaboration with the students of the Rietveld Academie department of Inter-architecture and the Odense-house community (our client).

Empirical research

The emphasis is on gathering insights into the behaviour of people and the disease, the promotion of 'moving with dementia' and the encouragement of 'multi-sensory experience of way-finding in space'. In order to formulate more precisely how we can improve the future care for this specific group of people.

In order to almost literally wear the shoes of our research target group, we undertook various experiments in an unorthodox manner. We worked in the daily care process on a regular basis with a number of different health care institutions. As one of

2.
Ganna Poppea
Veenhuysen,
clown and
theatre
producer

3.
Prof.
Dr. Erik
Scherder,
dementia and
exercise

the participants said: "to build a bridge and get in touch with the clients, it is important to be curious and to have the desire to meet the other wherever that (mentally speaking) may be."

This has led to new insights into the physical and emotional responses of the clients. We noticed how meaningful it is to undertake activities and to stimulate the client, but not to overstimulate. Exercise was an important motive; research shows that exercise is a very good way to keep people with dementia mentally and physically in good shape.

We researched into the physical limitations that older people experience in different locations in the '(semi)-public' space. In addition, we employed the method that is widely used in the education programs for elderly care in American universities. We walked around with fogged up glasses (poor visibility), with headphones on in order to minimize sound (as if you're deaf), with a nose plug to block the smell

and we put a stone in one of the shoes in order to make walking more difficult. The effect was shocking and positive at the same time. We experienced first hand that the ears are the eyes of the back of the head. If they are closed, this affects your sense of direction and space perception in a negative sense. Vision is important for precise distance measurement and total overview. Sense of smell arouses curiosity and establishes blazingly fast connections with the past. Its absence promotes indifference.

Dementia friendly festival

At the Dementia friendly festival there was a lot of live music, an exercise workshop by Ganna Poppea Veenhuysen, which was suitable for young and old, for the neighbourhood children and their parents. A remarkable Iranian movie on dementia was screened and a new edition of the dementia friendly neighbourhood newspaper was published. During the afternoon

‘Odense house wine’ was sold with special labels, designed by participants with the assistance of students of the Inter-architecture department. The students presented their own projects during the festival. Each student made their own connection between dementia and way finding and thus provided a possible solution to the problems, which can consume the daily lives of people with dementia. It was a special day for extraordinary ordinary people.

Streetcanvas



Alzheimer is an invisible and progressive disease, but it doesn't mean that people that suffer from this disease, have to be invisible.

In the South of Amsterdam there is a place called The Odense House, this is a local meeting-point for people with Alzheimer and other forms of dementia. They are located at the end of an alley so they are not so much in sight, but they sure are there!

These people are working very hard to design activities for people with Alzheimer and dementia, they do trips, take

walks through the neighbourhood, organise cooking workshops and more.

I want to try and achieve some sort of visibility that fits with this place. A subtle element that incorporates the qualities of the Odense House and, in a playful way, makes it a nicer environment that might trigger curiosity and simply adds a layer that communicates to the outside that 'We are here'.

The basis for a way of marking your ground is chalk, this is a very common way of marking things like football fields and crime scenes. Children also like chalk, they draw imaginary floorplans on the sidewalk, tell graphic stories on the street and they even invent their own games with drawings of chalk!

The Odense House visitors can now use the street as their canvas, when someone decides to take a walk outside, they can take an apparatus with them that they drag along on the road. This apparatus will then draw a line on the road. One simple line. Together more lines will form a pathway



to and from the Odense House. These lines make clear all the above points, it's marking a territory, it's subtle, it can spark curiosity, especially children notice the street chalk. It shows that somewhere, there is someone that must make these lines. These are frequenters of the Odense House, and they show that they do still go outside, and that they still matter.

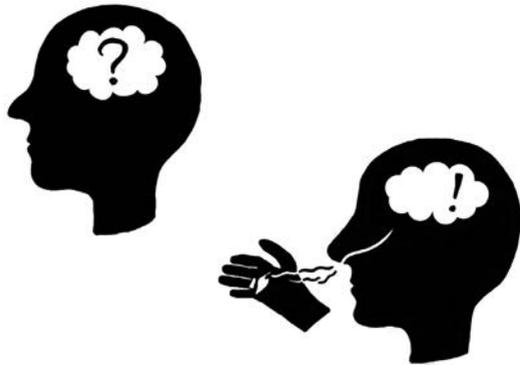
Connected to this method is a workshop. I will teach the frequenters of the Odense House to make their own chalk. They have the possibility of adding color to the chalk and to personalise it a little bit. The workshop is an element to on one side involve the Odense House more into the project and on the other side just to provide them with an activity, because I think that it is -always- good for people to make things with their hands.

When they go out for a walk, they can then take that chalk block and go outside to draw their route with the tools I provide them with.



At the time of writing I have three prototypes of drawing machines, one better than the other, but all with their own approach. One more technical, one more playful and another one that is mostly functional.”

Smell will hold your hand



A big problem for people with dementia is, that they sometimes have black-out moments. When this happens they forget everything for a few seconds, and can't remember anymore what they were doing or where they were going to. They often feel anxious and don't dare to ask anyone for help. At this moment they start wondering around in the hope to remember it again. From doing this they often get lost. During this the Alzheimer project I created a tool that could help people with dementia to



remember their thoughts again after a black-out moment, to keep their independency as long as possible.

During the Alzheimer research I found out that our brain connects smells to memories, and this connection stays in the brain for a very long time even with Alzheimer's patients who are losing their capability to smell. The smell itself might then be indefinable but the memory that is connected to this smell still comes back. And it is even possible to connect new smells to new memories by training.

In this way, I tried to design a tool that could help people with dementia in the first stage in finding their way. My first plan was, to create smell routes, so people could follow a smell. But from a conversation with



two people from the Odense-house I learned that the routing is not a problem at all. People with dementia often exactly know the way. But when they are on their way, they sometimes forget their destination.

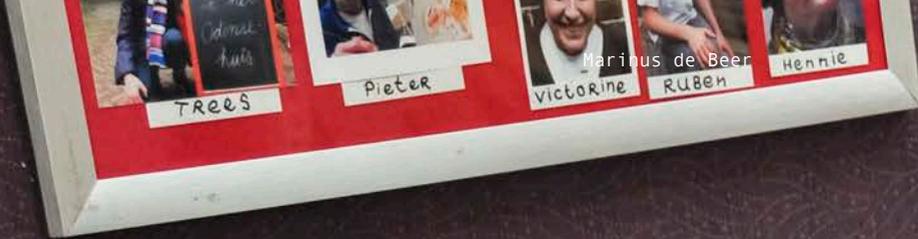
The Scent compass is a tool that you can take with you when you go outside. It is made specifically for your hand and gives the calming feeling of someone who holds your hand. Before you leave home you should make a plan about where you want to go to. For example: first to the supermarket,

then to fishmonger and then back home. Every location is connected to a smell. So you take the supermarket smell, the fishmonger smell and the home smell. The smells can be plugged into the scent compass easily. Every time you walk to a new destination you plug in the new smell. In case of a black out moment the feeling of the slightly heavy soft shape in your hand will give a calming feeling. When you realize that this tool is there in your hand, you might have a moment to calm down and smell the tool. This smell will tell you again where you were going. In this way, it prevents you from wondering around and getting lost.











Odensehuis
Hygiestraat 4
Tel. 020 - 337 42 44
www.odensehuis.nl

programma // de mens-zie festival // 12 April // 13.00 tot 17.00 uur

hoofdprogramma

Tijd	Activiteit
13.00 - 13.30	Welkom bij Odensehuis
13.30 - 14.00	Stichting Langs de Stroomtoerprojecten
14.00 - 14.30	Handicapping Langs de Stroomtoerprojecten
14.30 - 15.00	Her Amok!
15.00 - 15.30	Workshop met Gertjan Pijnen
15.30 - 16.00	Virtuele reis
16.00 - 16.30	de mens-zie festival
16.30 - 17.00	Sluis & Buiten

speciaal voor kinderen-programma

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16.00 - 16.30	de mens-zie festival
16.30 - 17.00	Sluis & Buiten







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COLUMN

**Loze
praat**

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The smell will hold
your hand

Merel Bernhardt

p 32





Museum of present memories

It seems that the easiest way of approaching an Alzheimer patient is by starting a conversation about art, while looking at art or actively being involved in creating art.

My research focuses on art used as therapy for dementia patients. Nowadays it has become a part of the program of most of day-care centers and it proves to be very successful. From my research I came to the conclusion that people suffering from dementia still hold a very strong aesthetic taste and they are perfectly able to make decisions regarding shape, color or form. I think that art is a very effective tool to raise awareness towards the presence of people with dementia in the specific neighbourhood and facilitate communication between them and others (family, friends, neighbors).

I find it important to trigger the neighbourhood to be more tolerant and aware that dementia is not dangerous but



part of our modern world. In order to create a dementia friendly neighbourhood, first we have to think of a possibility to help people suffering from dementia to find their way and get to places of treatment and care easily, in the most effective way. And in the same time, inform the community of what Alzheimer's actually is and make the people aware of the future perspectives. It is already a fact that Alzheimer's is no longer a rare disease but it will soon become very common in the future generations.

I am working on a solution for people suffering from dementia to mark their steps and actions but also be able to recognize them the next time. That is why, I started from the idea of a walking stick that can function as a pen stamp. This particular stick will work as a supporting device that would help the user move and support oneself but also be able to create "art" in public or private space. The Odensehvis organizes art related workshops regularly which visited and took part in in order to introduce my



intentions. I started doing my research using the creative workshops as a medium. The dementia patients design their own pictures which later on will be printed on the streets of Amsterdam, while they using the stick to move from one place to another. And in the same time it is crucial to make it obvious to the outside world that people suffering from dementia are present and should be treated with respect. They are part of the society just like everybody else, however the neighbors of the Odensehuis had a bad response to their presence there.

What I learned the most out of the research is that designing for such a specific group of users is difficult because they don't feel comfortable being told they need any sort of special design. And above all, I was not focused only on designing for them but for everybody around them too. The concept of tagging is familiar nowadays, we are all doing it. That is why, I came to the stamps as medium of reproducing Alzheimer's sufferers' visual language into an universal

symbol. I wanted everybody that visited the Odensehus to take with them a temporary print that stands for the people suffering of Alzheimer's, as a reminder, a token.

House of Dementia



Our society is obsessed by youth. The only focus on aging, is not aging. We bury the less pleasant parts of life because they're problematic to deal with, and brain diseases are something which is discussed within the walls of the elderly homes. Indirect we're saying that this stage of life is something to be ashamed of, and we talk about "aging with dignity"; which in this matter does not include dementia. What kind of society does not allow us to age?



Facing these aspects, my ambition lies within getting people talk to talk about the phenomena of aging with a change of attitude. It's about giving the elderly and people dealing with age-related brain diseases some space in society, for at this point their voices are not being heard or listened to. If we can learn to understand the disease and accept it, we will realize that we are wasting people which can be useful assets in society and in return, give them meaningfulness.

When I look at my grandfather who had alzheimer's disease since 2007, I don't see a man who is miserable. What I see is him, reflecting the energy of the people around him; the caregiver and the relatives. It is hard for me to watch how one man has the capacity of transforming another man



into becoming something lesser; by the way he addresses or looks at the person. My personal experience is by talking to demented people with the same dignity as you would talk to any person around you, they pick up on that what you emit. You project a feeling. My goal therefore is to get my message spread so that people will meet Alzheimer's and dementia with a different attitude.

To get my message out, I decided to work with a comic strip. It's a good way of getting people's attention, making it fun

to read and to learn. My characters all have different characteristics and ways of dealing with dementia, but they all have two things in common. They're not ashamed and they've learned to enjoy themselves in the world they're in. Seeing it this way can really be an eye-opener for many people; that there are nice things about being old and more positive ways of dealing with dementia. Life is not over when you get dementia. It's a transformation that we need to adjust to.

The Pink Path

In the perspective of Alzheimer's that need to find their way to the Odensehøi, the architecture of the Stadionbuurt may cause problems. The neighbourhood has a clear structure, but the repetitive architectural style and symmetrical structure may easily resemble a maze. For a person with Alzheimer's it gets difficult to distinguish information especially when crossing a road, since a pedestrian and a car can have the same importance in their judgment of fear.

A lack of information is creating a distance between the Odensehøi and the neighbourhood. It seems that they do not pay attention to the innerlife world of someone with Alzheimer's and there is little understanding of the problems one encounter when walking through the area.

Therefore our project is a route from the Albert Heijn at the Stadionweg to the patio of the Odensehøi and with

its character it has a tendency to not only provide guidance from A to B in a pleasant manner, but make the problematic of the Alzheimer`s visible in the public space. As being part of the existing built environment it can be used by everyone in the area.

The Pink Path started as three individual researches on wayfinding and Alzheimer`s with a focus on different senses: Visual (Julia), Tactile (Stefan), Audible (Anastasija) and our individual starting points with common interest of breaking the repetitive architecture of the neighbourhood. The visual research was about how to create a clear guidance with simple language, the tactile research departed from translating the feeling of being at the beach with different materials and the audible research transformed from a guiding tool with sound only into something which creates a transition between spaces. Only together, they are able to constitute a valuable design since we all perceive with our whole being, grasping what is in front of us with all our senses at once.



The Path goes through a calm street from the Odensehuis to the supermarket. In the middle of the route one resting point has been designed for recovery. A sound collage of classical music combined with recordings of sea waves is played in the corridor space where you will find foam that you can lean on and enjoy for a moment. At the entrance of the Odensehuis the sound appears again, as well as the pink beams on the ceiling with which a gentle transition from the outside to the inside has been cre-



ated. The path is connected with pink marks of colored rainpipes which are enforcing the visibility. The turning point and the traffic light are marked with a pink railing to lean on.

Pink became the color for our project after we researched all the colors that could be found in the neighbourhood. It proved to be the most notable color within the environment. Working with neon pink creates big effect on the surroundings and it is a pleasant color which is often associated with happiness.

The design of The Pink Path has very simple language that has been stripped from any add-ons in order to make the user less stressed and tends to motivate the user to keep on moving.





Dementia friendly newspaper



I think the most striking thing about dementia is the disability to speak because you lose language over time. Words get mixed up in your head, or you don't know anymore what they mean. Vocabulary will get less and less and people with dementia have to improvise with the words they still know. I started this project with a little help of my French friend, who I try to learn Dutch already for some time. I let him translate a French text (without any help or dictionary) in Dutch, what he wrote down I translated



back to French, and again let him translate it back to Dutch. Also my friend had to improvise with the language because he doesn't know that much words yet. For me this improvising with language is the same as people with Alzheimer have to deal with all the time. My second starting point was the book 1984 by George Orwell. In this book there is a dictator who radically wants to minimize language and get rid of all the nuances in grammar and words. So not 20 words with more or less the same meaning but only one word, which means the same as this whole spectrum of words.

So I came up with the idea of making a dementia friendly newspaper. Often people with dementia are disconnected from society and easily forgotten, so we created a newspaper, to keep them connected to their environment. A newspaper specifically made for them, but also to make the neighbourhood more aware of their situation. This newspaper contains stories close to them, about Alzheimer, the neighbourhood around

REDACTIE

Mensen met dementie worden snel vergeten, om ze betrokken te laten blijven bij de samenleving hebben we een krant gemaakt. ZODAT ook zij weten wat er in hun omgeving gebeurt en zij beter hun weg kunnen vinden. Voor ons was het OOK een zoektocht hoe we dit moesten doen, DOOR MIDDEL VAN duidelijk gekleurde kaders, dik gedrukte woorden, simpele titels leiden we ze door deze krant. HOPELIJK komen herinneringen van vroeger terug, en leidt deze krant tot gespreksstof, en een duidelijkere toekomst.

Mees van Rijckevorsel

Een roze pad

Wij hebben met verschillende elementen een route gemarkeerd. VANAF de Albert Heijn TOT AAN het Odensehuis. De route is te herkennen AAN de roze kleur. Op bepaalde plekken is er ook muziek te horen. We willen op deze manier het Odensehuis meer zichtbaar maken voor andere buurtbewoners.

Stefan Voets, Julia Vrajer, Anastasija Pandilovska



LIVE MUZIEK FILM DANS
STUDENTEN PROJECTEN
VAN DE GERRIT RIETVELD ACADEMIE JAZZ
WORKSHOPS TANGO VIRTUOOS FLAJO
EXPRESSIE & BEWEGING MET GANNA
POPPEA VEENHUYSEN
SPECIAAL KINDERPROGRAMMA

de-mens-zie festival

12 APRIL 13.00 tot 17.00 UUR
ODENSEHUIS, HYGIËSTRAAT 4 AMSTERDAM



VOOR EEN DEMENTIEVRIENDELIJKE WIK

HET WEER

Dit jaar is het amper winter geweest, het heeft misschien maar 2 keer gevoren! De lente is dit jaar heel vroeg in maart begonnen. Het tuintje van het Odensehuis staat weer helemaal in bloei. Nu is het alweer boven de 15 graden en alweer bijna kunnen de korte broeken uit de kast gehaald worden. Hopelijk wordt het een hele warme zomer!



ADVERTENTIE



Albert Heijn

Het alledaagse betaalbaar
Het bijzondere bereikbaar
Albert Heijn
Stadionweg 159
Amsterdam

wat heeft u onthouden uit de krant?



COLOFON

Eindredactie: Mees van Rijckevorsel, student inter-architecture, Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Henri Snel, architect, onderzoeker 'Alzheimer en Architectuur' en hoofd inter-architecture, Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Jeroen Wilhelmus (adviseur publiciteit, Odensehuis), Corline van Es

Correspondenten

Nina Janssen, Robert, Leo, Pieter, Nita Bergisch, Barry Sap, Shannon Peek, Bep van Oostrom, Paulien Luimes, Katrien Mulder, Karin Simon, Laura, Leen, Anneke, Henk, Trees, Klaas, Leon, Josien Wallast, Riet van Wees (Olympisch Kwartier)

Vormgeving

Mees van Rijckevorsel, student inter-architecture, Gerrit Rietveld Academie
André Chapatte, student VAV, Gerrit Rietveld Academie

De Krant is een initiatief van

Het Odensehuis, Afdeling inter-architecture / Gerrit Rietveld Academie

"De Krant" wil graag bedanken

Alle deelnemende participanten, vrijwilligers en coördinatoren van het Odensehuis, alle deelnemende studenten van de afdeling inter-architecture van de Gerrit Rietveld Academie, alle gastredacteuren, alle adverteerders (Het Odensehuis, inter-architecture / Rietveld Academie, Albert Heijn, Groente- en Fruitspecialist Jan Leegwater, Marathon Kleermaker, Restaurant Marathonweg).

Oplagen en drukker

2000 exemplaren door drukkerij Rodi, Broek op Langedijk

them and some more regular news items. The texts are minimized so only the necessary is told. Hard words are filtered out or if they are necessary for the text they are printed bold, just as words which leads the text, think of words as: for example, first, second, therefore, because, yes, no, also etc. by marking these the turning points in a text are clear and are easy to find back and so there is less chance of confusion. Also to have a clear overview we made colored frames to make a clear separation between the different texts. Simple titles lead them through this newspaper. Hopefully memories from the past and today's topics will stimulate them to have a conversation and an updated present.

Melody



Albert Einstein says that “The memory is deceptive because is colored by today 's events”

I have used these words in order to understand what could overpower or overcome dementia. It means that we might not remember something correctly depending on where we are at our present moment in time. I could pose a question to myself of where I am now and what I think.



During my research about dementia, the first process was to have knowledge about this illness. It brings changes in the brain due to the death of brain cells and causes inability to express the needs of oneself. Actually the memory becomes inactive and difficult to remember something.

According to Alzheimer's foundation of America, repetitive behavior is a means to acquire comfort and control. So it is advised for the people with dementia to keep routines consistent, Identifying their patterns and looking for what trigger their behavior. New knowledge and new beliefs have the power to change memories and in essence change the condition of the mind.

For example playing the music that can be calming for repetitive actions, having a walk in the same area, using the same dishes, eating or going to bed at the same time etc...

Gaston Bachelard explains in his book: The poetics of space, how the house we were born in is very important." it is a

group of organic habits". We have build up the real being of our childhood which help our senses across the years. A person with dementia always comes back in his childhood time. He steaks on what he learned for the first time. Something that made him to be contented or fulfill his desires.

I have used an example, as a common sound we all know of utensils which is produced while eating or having tea and coffee. I have called it a Melody because it is rhythmically organized by sequence of single tones so related to one another as to make up a particular phrase or Idea.

Finally I was able to produce a clock without compasses that will remind a person with dementia everything concerned with the time for meal and drinks I mean breakfast or lunch. The aim is that every one responds to this sound equipment which is made of cups painted on by some clients in Odense house and combined with utensils, they produce a common melody that we all know.

Utensils are hanging on a plate under which the cups are placed. There is a cylinder in the middle on which a sheet of wood is attached that hits the threads holding the utensils when the cylinder turns, producing a melody. This melody is set up on deferent time, one in the morning eight o' clock calling for breakfast and another, one o' clock for lunch. It is also possible to change the setting whenever needed.

The world vs. dementia



The number of people suffering from dementia increases disproportionately faster than the population growth. More and more people are therefore dealing with dementia. This may also be the case because someone in your immediate vicinity suffers from a form of dementia. Moreover, in public space, sooner or later everyone will be confronted with people who suffer from this disease. The awareness and understanding among civilians is poor. Many know little about this disease and do not know how

Dementia vs. the world

to deal with it. Before this will happen, the public awareness for this decease has to increase otherwise people with dementia will be put away in homes, not to be seen, like animals in a cage, simply because people don't know how to intercommunicate with these patients.

But, there is still hope! And it's called the Odensehuis. The Odensehuis is a day care centre in the south of Amsterdam, where people with dementia and their relatives can meet, talk about their illness but also do fun stuff together to forget about their daily problems. They are preferably referred to as the participants of the Odensehuis, as they organise the whole place themselves with little help. The sad thing is though, that the people living in the immediate vicinity of the Odensehuis have insufficient knowledge of the disease. This results in unnecessary tension between the neighbourhood and the Odensehuis.

Here comes an idea to mind. To increase the social awareness of the consequences of dementia, I will organize a festival. This festival is focused on the immediate surroundings of the Odensehuis to give them an insight in dementia. Also this festival aims to help participants and their relatives of the Odensehuis and people who suffer from dementia by giving them a fantastic day. The festival will include music, film, dance & workshops. On this day my classmates will also show their projects related to dementia. The festival will be organised on location in the Odensehuis with an estimated amount of visitors of 150 people.

And thus, a festival was born. The de-mens-zie festival.



De-mens-zie festival

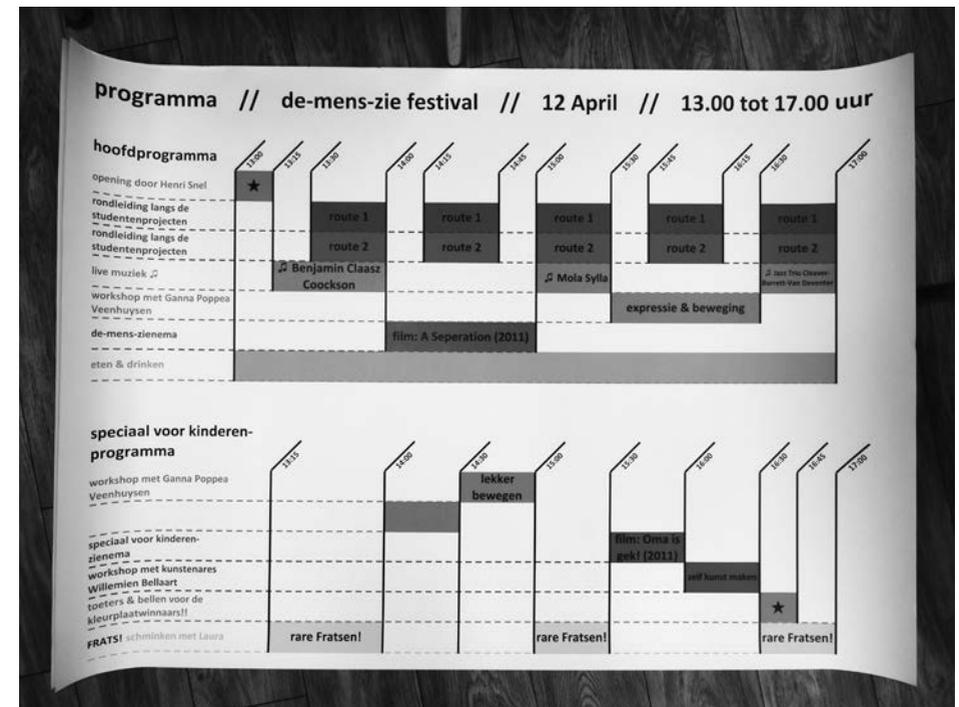
(Dementie is meer dan vergeten)

(Dementia is more than forgetting)

To be able to organise this festival of course there was a need for money, which I gathered with funding. The organisation “Voor de Kunst” (for art) helped me with the funding, which turned out to be very successful. Hard work pays off, in this case literally.

During the process I also organised a workshop at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy for the participants to give them a short tour around school and to design their own wine labels. We used this as a tool to gather extra funding with the selling of bottles of wine during the festival. It was great to see them having a blast with making their own personal wine label! They are very proud of it, and they should be as they are all a lust for the eye!

I also had to think of a different system for the routing since people with dementia have a hard time reading. I had to make



an easy to read system so every visitor would find his way around equally easy. I decided to work with colours. Every room was decorated in a specific colour. And every act was on the timetable was in the corresponding colour of the room in which it took place. The rooms and the timetable were connected with wires in the corresponding colour of the act taking place. The only thing people had to do is follow the line and they would end up in the right room.

Een sleutelbegrip – A key concept

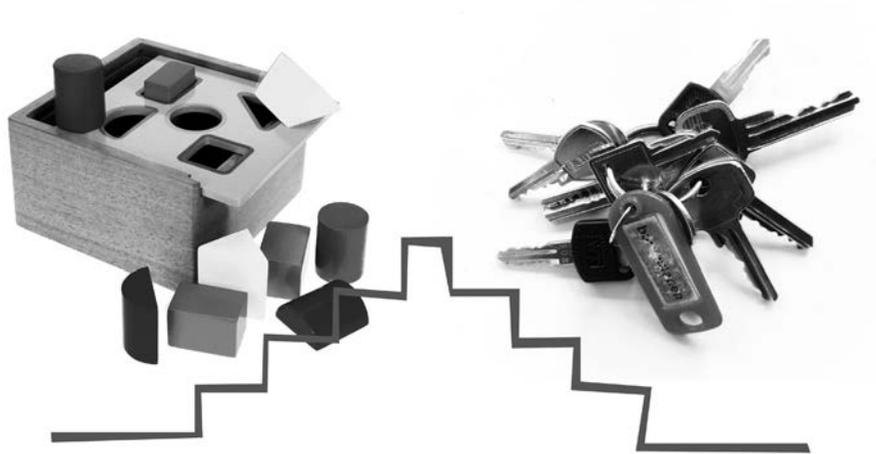
The day was great! I saw a lot of smiling faces and people from all over were interacting with each other. Visitors were participating in workshops, listening and dancing to music, enjoying the delicious food, or having a drink and talking about the projects of my fellow students, the film, the face painting or the beautiful weather...

It was a beautiful day and I want to thank everybody for making this festival a great success! And maybe even a day never to forget...



“From a ladder of life back to a life stage vision in society.”

During my research about Alzheimer’s disease there was one point what’s grasp me, the vision of the today’s society. Everything has to be bigger, better or quicker. There’s no time for going back. I would term this as a ladder society. You climb till you reach the summit, and forget the whole life after your summit, till you reach your summit. People do not pay attention to what is not on the way to the summit. This could



be an explanation there is too little attention to the upward trend seen in the number of people who suffer from dementia and specifically Alzheimer's disease.

"In past centuries hung in many a bourgeois living a life stage. Signed, printed, embroidered or as a cake board did not reach the people on this stage their 9down again, as in the steps of City Hall. So fresh and powerful as he ascends his life stage, so rickety man staggered him again, until he succumbs."

"The way of all flesh", Midas Dekkers

I think that life after your "summit" earned just as much attention as the life before. We have to get back to a life stage vision in society.

Like every stairs you can use the same banister up as you use down. I started to compare utensils used to work for people who climbing the stairs like children. With the utensils used by descend people like elderly people and especially people who suffering from dementia. Utensils of children. Specifically toys what's helps in the development of motor skills and recognition.

I developed a key with a visual and tactile connection to the slot where it belongs. A key what do not look like al other keys. A bigger end and a nice colour what's related to the same form attach to the door. Including a little identification tag in it.

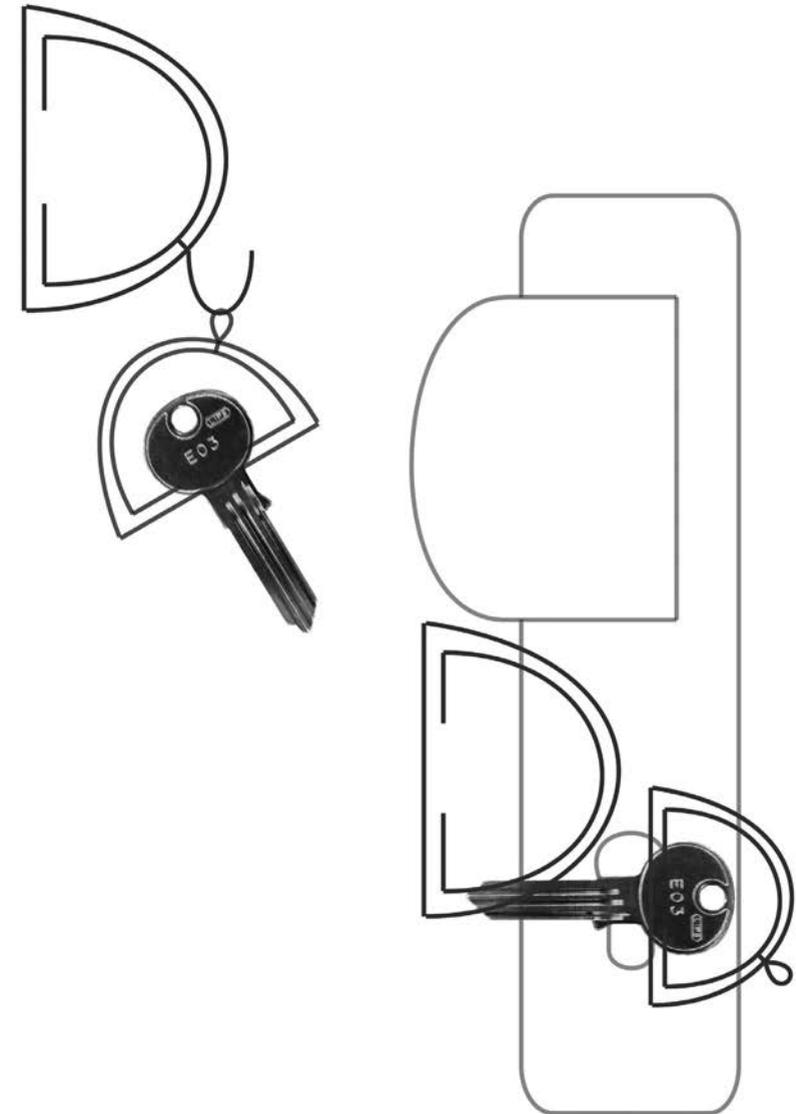
When I was presented to various individuals including the Alzheimer's suffering people, there opinion where a little surprising, but afterwards expected when you related to today's society. But really an eye opener.

The people who are suffering from Alzheimer's suggested were that it was a good idea, but not they themselves because they were not crazy. I offend these people by provide them a tool! They do not want to face the fact that they have "something" and they could use some help. But they are convinced however that more attention should be paid to Alzheimer's disease.

This changed my perspective on my project. I started with developing with a tool for people who are suffering from Alzheimer's and ended by a tool what they can use in everyday life to create awareness around this disease.

Imagine yourself that people who have this also have attention to dementia and Alzheimer's disease seen through a key that they always carry with them, and a mark on the door. Like a pink ribbon for cancer, so it becomes visible in a subtle way.

And yes, it could help people when there is a visible connection between key and keyhole. But it helps even more when





for example the taxi driver has a little bit attention if people arrive safely in their homes.

And when these people get lost there's an opportunity to help them. Because they carry a tag with them.

Research is important, but this makes the suffering from this disease not less hard. But with a little bit attention, a bit patient or help you could start yourself with making there life's a little bit nicer. And yours as well.

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Colophon

Insight Series #7

A dementia friendly
neighbourhood

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