



World Monuments Fund/ Knoll **Modernism Prize**

2016 AWARD TO

**Molenaar & Co. architecten,
Hebly Theunissen architecten,
and Michael van Gessel landscapes**

For the rehabilitation of the Justus van Effen complex
in Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Designed and built by Michiel Brinkman 1919-1922

Jury Citation

The 2016 World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize is awarded to Molenaar and Co. architecten, Rotterdam; Hebly Theunissen architecten, Delft; and Michael van Gessel landscapes, Amsterdam for the restoration of the Justus van Effen Complex.

Located in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, the complex was designed by Michiel Brinkman in 1919-1921, and completed in 1922. The Justus van Effen complex is a remarkable example of early Modernism, and is emblematic of the ideals embodied in the Modern movement.

The concept and execution of these 264 dwellings in Rotterdam's new Spangen district were impressively novel in 1922. Combining typologies of the perimeter block and the row house, the complex presented by far the most radical response to the pressing post WWI housing shortage in the Netherlands. The boldly cantilevered walkway above the second floor reduced vertical circulation space and tied the complex together, while creating a careful balance between the collective and the private. The flat roofs, sparse and delicate ornamentation, careful contrast of bricks with exposed concrete, and open corner loggias tested key elements and strategies of the emerging modern movement.

In the context of Spangen, a neighborhood that has faced challenges in recent years, the choice to conserve and highlight the historic elements of the complex was fittingly radical. This is a large and monumental block, a determining urban entity. This is not discreet, capillary social housing—it is proud architecture. The restoration project re-affirms the value of collective life, one of the social principles of Modernism that holds enduring appeal. This principle also had major influence on subsequent generations of architects, in particular the founders of Team 10 in the 1950s—Jaap Bakema and the Smithsons, and this project celebrates that legacy.

Molenaar and Co. architecten, Hebly Theunissen architecten and Michael van Gessel landscapes were able to rise to the challenge of conserving public housing to meet current programmatic needs and changes over time. The project addresses all levels from the building fabric right through to the public and urban domain, and reconciles previous



interventions that were damaging to the physical fabric. It also reflects the technological innovation that founded the original design by introducing state of the art energy-saving devices for climate control. These adjustments assured a future for the complex by making it attractive to the next generation, and reflect the commitment of the owner Woonstad Rotterdam to finding an innovative solution.

This project goes beyond technical conservation by introducing new criteria and expectations within the context of social housing. The Justus van Effen Complex reminds us that in fact housing, an ongoing global issue, can be a significant architectural and civic monument and not simply a matter of providing living space for occupants. It recognizes that ascribing architectural qualities to housing is a civic act, creating urban values for residents and citizens of the city as a whole. This combination of a noble original intent, a sensitive rehabilitation, and now—we hope—international recognition of the vital role of housing in making the modern city, makes this project triply commendable.

Barry Bergdoll, Jury Chairman

World Monuments Fund is committed to building awareness of the preservation challenges facing modern architecture. We are pleased to recognize the Justus van Effen complex for its architectural significance, the quality of the conservation work performed by the winning team of architects, and the commitment to recognizing the value of social housing.

Joshua David
President, World Monuments Fund

Knoll's leadership role in the World Monuments Fund Modernism at Risk initiative reflects our unwavering 75-year commitment to modern design. We are especially pleased that the brilliantly executed restoration of the Justus van Effen complex embodies the spirit of the World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize, which was established as the first award to acknowledge threats facing modern buildings and to recognize the heroic efforts of architects and designers who help ensure their rejuvenation and long-term survival.

Andrew B. Cogan
CEO, Knoll, Inc.





Joris Molenaar



Arjan Hebly



Michael van Gessel



The Winning Team

Molenaar & Co. architecten and Hebly Theunissen architecten formed the core design team behind the rehabilitation of the Justus van Effen complex. In 2000, the two architecture and design firms submitted the winning entry that laid out a new vision for the complex. In 2006, Woonstad Rotterdam, the largest social housing provider in the city, decided to restore the complex for new use, at which point the team was also assisted by Han Michel concepts and Evert Jan Nusselder Monumental. Michael van Gessel landscapes was invited by Woonstad to develop a new courtyard design. Technical support came from W/E consultancy, Van Dijke, and Bureau Bouwkunde. The project manager was Marc Bezem, and the contractor was Juriens, a firm from Utrecht.

The Jury

Barry Bergdoll, Chairman

Meyer Schapiro Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University, Curator of Architecture & Design at the Museum of Modern Art

Jean-Louis Cohen

Sheldon H. Solow Professor in the History of Architecture at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

Kenneth Frampton

Ware Professor of Architecture, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at Columbia University

Dietrich Neumann

Professor of the History of Modern Architecture and the Director of Urban Studies, Department of the History of Art and Architecture at Brown University

Susan Macdonald

Head of Buildings and Sites at the Getty Conservation Institute

Theo Prudon

President of DOCOMOMO/US, Architect at Prudon & Partners LLP, and Adjunct Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University

Karen Stein

Architectural critic, advisor, and Executive Director of the George Nelson Foundation

In the early days of modernism, Brinkman's design presented a radical response to the pressing post-WWI housing shortage in the Netherlands.





Rehabilitation of the Justus van Effen complex

Commissioned by Rotterdam's municipal housing department in 1919, architect Michiel Brinkman designed the Justus van Effen complex to be built in the Spangen neighborhood of Rotterdam. At the time, Rotterdam was experiencing rapid growth as a port city. Gradually, neighborhoods surrounding the center of the city, including Spangen, developed as residential areas for the port workers. Although Brinkman's plan was initially met with resistance because of its modern design, it was approved by the city council in 1920. Construction was completed in 1922.

With 264 dwellings and a boldly cantilevered walkway designed around a central courtyard, the complex presented a radical response to the pressing need for housing in the Netherlands following World War I. Additionally, the provision of areas for bathing, laundry, and communal gatherings for children and adults reflected the emerging modernist principle of the social value of collective life.



Changes over time

In the decades following its construction, the complex received international attention and recognition for its innovative design and structure, and influenced subsequent generations of architects, including the founders of Team 10 in the 1950s. Despite this, the complex, and the neighborhood as a whole, fell into a period of disrepair beginning in the 1970s. Many units were not maintained, the collective services areas became outdated, and a series of inappropriate alterations to the complex detracted significantly from the original cohesive design.

The rear façade of the bathhouse, shown here before restoration in 2010.



Renovations in the 1980s included the addition of acoustic ceilings and tiling in the original staircases.





“The qualities of the elevated street are inextricably connected to the architectural beauty of the whole complex,” say the prize recipients.

Revitalizing an Icon

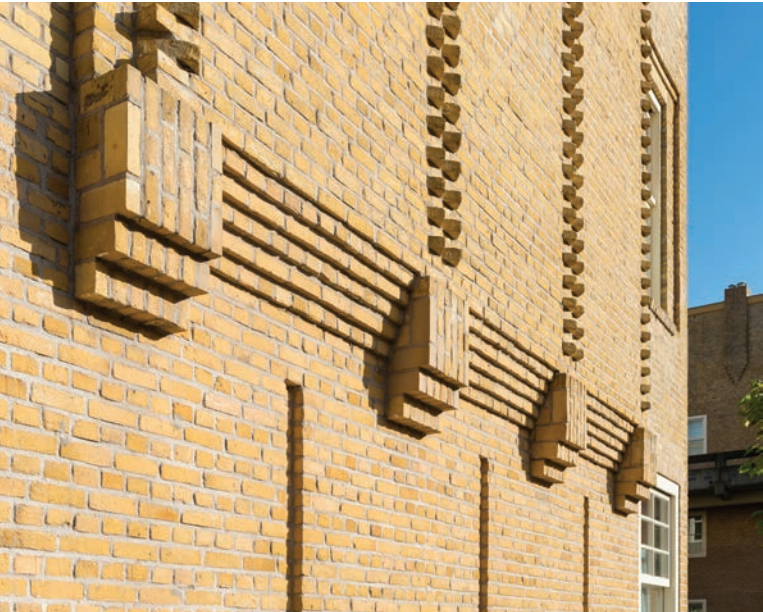
In 2000, a competition proposal submitted by Molenaar & Co. architecten and Hebly Theunissen architecten to restore the project to its original architectural brilliance was awarded a first prize, but not executed. The 2006 decision by the owner, Woonstad Rotterdam, to start a massive restoration and renovation project made it possible to break out of the negative spiral the complex was experiencing. The completed project aligns with the revitalization of Rotterdam’s Spangen neighborhood—an area that had become run-down and dangerous in the 1980s and 1990s and is now enjoying a resurgence—while still conveying the values of affordable housing.



Landscape architect
Michael van Gessel
partnered with Molenaar
& Co. architecten and
Hebly Theunissen
architecten on the
award-winning project.



The team worked to restore the original beauty—delicate but moving—of Brinkman’s design.



Traditionally-produced brick made especially for the project was used to restore damaged surfaces throughout the complex.



Van Gessel’s designs maintain accessibility and management of the courtyard.

The comprehensive project addressed all levels, from the building fabric to the public domain and wider urban context, of the Justus van Effen complex.



Brinkman's original design included a bathhouse for residents of the complex. The bathhouse, which had lost function in the 1970s, is now a gallery and reception space, shown here in 2016.

Staircases which had been totally changed in the 1980s were redesigned in a new modern style, with a historic photograph integrated on the wall (below, left). Staircases which retained some of their original fabric were restored (below, right).



The current designs of the building's residences—now totaling 154 units—were inspired by the original floor plans, with much of the living space returned to the street façade and the service spaces returned to the court façade.

World Monuments Fund is the leading private, nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the world's architectural heritage.

Since its founding in 1965, World Monuments Fund has worked with local communities and partners at more than 600 sites in over 100 countries. Through fieldwork, advocacy, education and training, the organization helps to preserve important monuments, buildings, and sites around the globe. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide.

The World Monuments Fund Modernism at Risk initiative was launched in 2006 to bring international attention and resources to address the key threats and challenges facing many modern buildings only decades after their design and construction: demolition, inappropriate alteration, perceived obsolescence, and public apathy, as well as the technical problems associated with conserving innovative designs and materials.

The World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize was established as part of the larger advocacy mission of the World Monuments Fund Modernism at Risk Initiative to acknowledge the specific and growing threats—neglect, deterioration, and demolition—facing significant modern buildings, and to recognize the architects and designers who help ensure their rejuvenation and long-term survival through new design solutions. The prize is awarded biennially to an individual or firm in recognition of a completed project or a body of work. The award is a \$10,000 honorarium and a limited-edition Knoll Barcelona® Chair.



Previous prizes were awarded to

2014: Viipuri Library, Vyborg, the Russian Federation

2012: Hizuchi Elementary School, Yawatahama City, Ehime Prefecture, Japan

2010: Zonnestraal Sanatorium, Hilversum, the Netherlands

2008: ADGB Trade Union School, Bernau, Germany

For more information on previous winners, visit www.wmf.org/world-monuments-fund-knoll-modernism-prize

Knoll is the founding sponsor of the World Monuments Fund Modernism at Risk initiative and the World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize.

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Page 6, top: Anne Marie Hazenberg; middle: Cees Boekraad; bottom: Emilio Troncoso

Pages 8,9,10: Molenaar & Co. architecten

Pages 11,12,13: Hebly Theunissen architecten

Page 14: David Adams

Page 15: Bas Kooij

Page 23: Sketch by Michiel Brinkman.

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