

THE KOLLEKTIV

The official news letter with the latest news and updates



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A COLLECTION OF MEMORIES

COPENHAGEN, HAMBURG, VENICE

The Kollektiv is an initiative of the staff of the History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism section. As we speak, more than 20 students – masters, premasters, bachelors – have joined the Kollektiv, all of them lovers of iconic cities, beautiful buildings and intriguing histories. After a successful trip to Budapest and Antwerp in 2022, we are quite confident many more interesting cities will be discovered in this initiative.

Goodbye Antwerp, hello Copenhagen...

Dear members of the Kollektiv, we proudly present the eighth newsletter, a brief recollection of our visit to – no, not Korea, Madagascar or Paraguay, but to an even stranger place: Flanders. Time flies and more than a month has passed since we walked around in Antwerp, de facto the capital city of this exotic region and in the sixteenth century the predecessor of Amsterdam as the world's leading commercial and cultural metropolis (probably more of a cultural metropolis than Amsterdam has ever been). By now, the Dutch participants should have



recovered from the cultural shock that is inevitable when crossing the border with Flanders. The Flemish people always loved to express their wealth, cultural finesse, exquisite taste and a general love of the good life in their buildings – whereas the Dutch organized Amsterdam as a semi-circular polder with standardized plots lined with an endless repetition of similar houses, the citizens of Antwerp didn't do much to address the pleasant chaos of the medieval city, but saturated it with beautiful houses and lots of public buildings – nothing could be farther away from the sober practicality of Dutch cities from the Golden Age, which hid the overwhelming wealth it accumulated behind facades that lack the grandezza of their Antwerp counterpart, and where apart from a number of brilliant town halls, very little money was invested in public buildings. We will not speculate about the causes of the monumental differences between the Netherlands and Flanders and refrain from references to Catholicism, Protestantism, a Habsburg longing for exuberance and a Calvinist obsession with sin...

In this newsletter, you will find images of several of the highlights we visited – among them the Central Station, a cathedral for the railways, according to many polls the most beautiful of its kind, and surely the most extravagant. Since we could not visit it together, please allow us a few words of elucidation – if you would be so kind. Whereas as most terminus stations are at the end of railway line that leads straight to the city center but cannot penetrate the urban core deeper out of fear that it would destroy its destination, the Antwerp terminus .

misses the city center – as if the engineers who built the line aimed in the wrong direction. They didn't: starting in Brussels, the original line extended to the north and the predecessor of today's poshest terminus of all times was located on this line – it wasn't a terminus. That only happened when the city decided to give up the direct connection between this station and the Netherlands. The removal of the tracks allowed the city to transform the area north of the station into a living quarter that isn't cut in half by a highway for trains. The first part of Antwerp Central that was built was not the terminus, but the huge, shed covering the tracks. Clément van Bogaert designed it for the Compagnie Centrale de Construction, and it was put together between 1895 and 1899. Its size is impressive: 186 meters long, 66 meters wide and 43 meters high – spacious enough for the locomotives to



was finally restored to its former glory, another daring project started: the transformation of the terminus into a through station, which became necessary because of the introduction of highspeed trains (notably the Thalys from Amsterdam via Brussels to Paris). This required the construction of a tunnel underneath the existing tracks and the historical terminus. This 1,6-billion-euro project was completed in 2007. Today, Antwerp Central accommodates trains at three levels. Soon after it was opened, the station was again showered with praise...



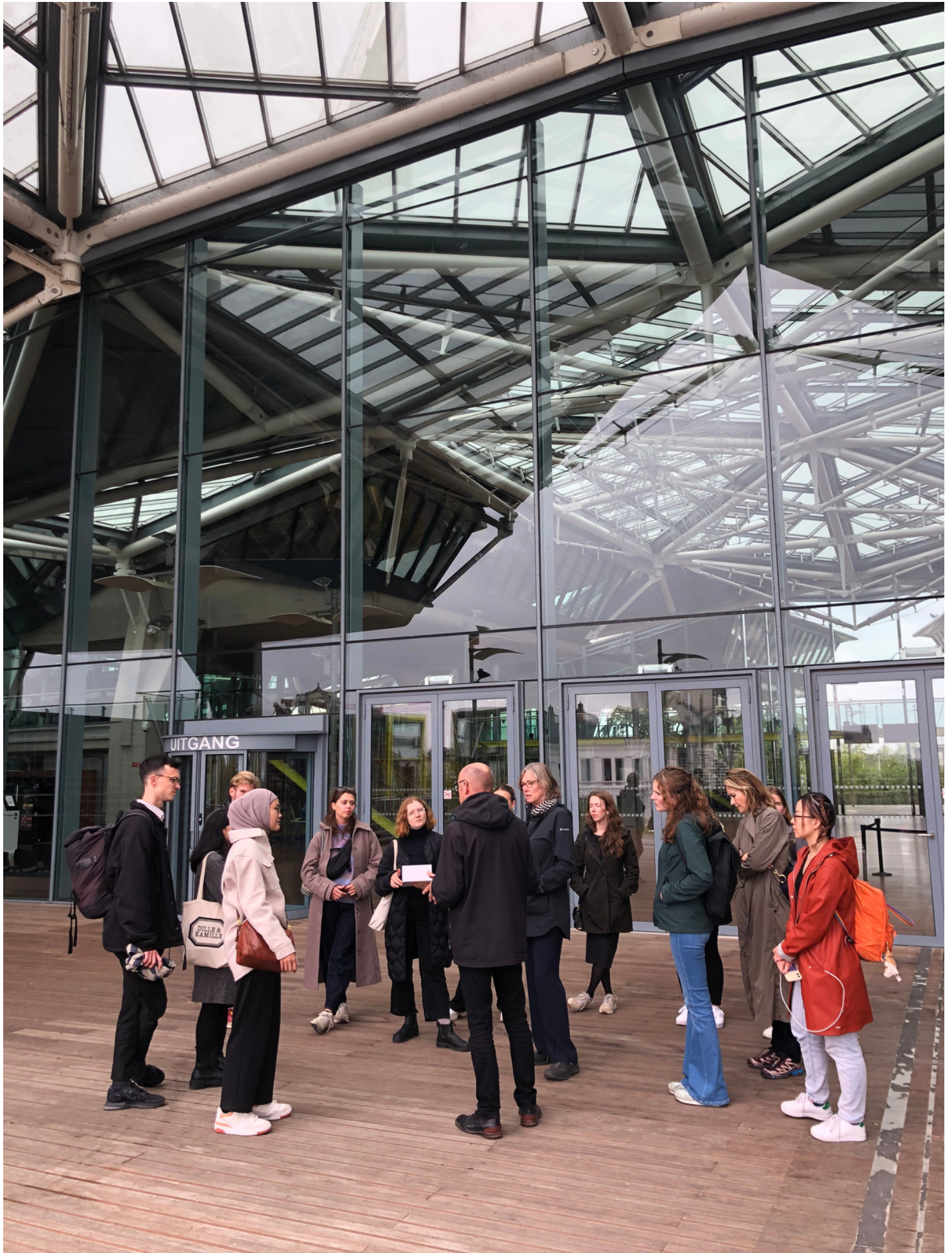
All of us entered and left Antwerp by way of this terminus – so now you may wonder where we will go next? The Kollektiv intends to organize two trips journeys abroad each year – a week excursion, and a weekend trip. As things stand now, our next week trip will go to **Copenhagen**, in June next year. And in September we might go to **Hamburg** – or to the **Venice architectural biennale**.

But before all this moving around, we hope to organize a short trip, or at least a drink, in the Netherlands. **And for now.... Enjoy last months recap of the beautiful Antwerp!**









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...an initiative of the staff of the History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism section. As we speak, more than 20 students – masters, premasters, bachelors – have joined the Kollektiv, all of them lovers of iconic cities, beautiful buildings and intriguing histories. We are quite confident that the next trip will take place to Copenhagen. We are absolutely sure that the program of social gatherings and literary entertainment leading up to this seminal event will be filled with movies, lectures, fine food and vodka.

Only members of the Kollektiv can participate in its events. Membership is open for architecturally minded students of the Department of History of Art, Architecture and Landscape (bachelors as well as masters, including exchange students and visiting students), PhD-candidates, staff members and invitees. Membership is free of charge. The costs for participation in the Kollektiv's events need to be paid by the members themselves. Interested in joining? Send a mail the Kollektiv's Secretary-General, Jenny van Calsbeek: j.van.calsbeek@student.rug.nl