

BENTHEMPLEIN WATER SQUARE – A place for storm water

Designed by De Urbanisten



Waterdrain via specially designed gutters.

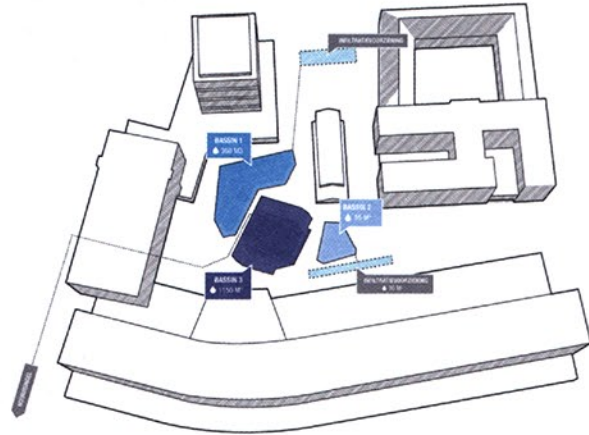


About 15 times a year the excess runoff will flow onto the square.

It became clear during the selection procedure that the architectural design by De Urbanisten for the ‘water square’ in Benthemplein in Rotterdam is somewhat controversial. Some members of the jury considered the design language and materials to be too busy, while others found the design to be ‘dated’. Nevertheless, the committee was impressed by the fact that the design practice has succeeded in combining an engineering task – the retention of storm water – with the redesign of an urban open space. The sewers in the vicinity of Benthemplein cannot cope with heavy rainfall. About fifteen times a year the excess runoff will now flow into the sunken area in the square through a slit in one of the concrete walls, creating all sorts of possibilities, for play and sports for example, as well as being quite a spectacle in itself.

Designing the ‘flows’ in the city – not only of water but also of energy, waste and heat – is highly topical. In the light of climate change, the jury argues that the idea behind the water square deserves to be widely adopted elsewhere. [mh]

Programme Reconstruction of a city square for storage of storm water Designer De Urbanisten Commissioned by City of Rotterdam (Rotterdam Climate Initiative), Schieland & Krimpenerwaard Water Authority Area 9000 m² Design 2011-2012 Implementation 2012-2013 Budget € 4 million



Excess rainwater drains into basins on Benthemplein.



Benthemplein is an attractive urban space even without storm water.