

manifestation

De Groep van Delft

programme: various events from April to November 2010
book launch: 7th June 2010, on the centenary of the birth of Jan Albarda

In retrospect Delft's Faculty of Architecture of the 1930s is perceived as a dark and introvert period of time when the conservatism of the Delftse School movement inhibited the progressive thinking of earlier years. However, the circumstances are more nuanced; at that time an enthusiastic group of students, who later became known as De Groep (The Group), instigated and provoked discussion about the state of architecture. As well as Granpré Molière – later considered the leader of the *Delftse School* – other key figures of 'new architecture' also took part, such as; Gropius, Breuer, Le Corbusier, Lurçat, Duiker, Rietveld, Oud and Van Eesteren.



poster by J.Th. van Erp, and an image from the performance of the open air play D.16.M.M.

While the members of De Groep were still students, three events took place which motivated the discussion. In 1928 the open air play **D.16.M.M. (Mensch en Machine)** was staged in order to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the Delftsch Studenten Corps. Progressive artists who took part included the writer Mannus Franken, composer Leo Smit, director Albert Van Dalsum and the filmmaker Joris Ivens. The open air play made a big impact upon the students and formed the basis for their ensuing search for a better society. In 1930 the **Internationale Leergang voor Nieuwe Architectuur** (International Congress for New Architecture) took place on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd December, which was organised by Practische Studie, the society for architecture students in Delft at that time, with Joost Boks, Henk Jan Brusse and Jan Horatius Albarda on the committee. Although this gathering was not formally supported by the faculty of Architecture, it brought together the top architects of a recently formed CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne), who had just held their third conference in Brussels. On the 3rd of April 1933 Henk Jan Brusse gave a lecture entitled '**Wat Wij Willen**' ('What We Want') in order to honour the founding of De Groep. During this lecture he called for more scope for renewal which, according to the De Groep, remained lacking within the faculty's study programme.

Some of the members of De Groep have led a remarkable life. After graduating they began their careers by working with eminent architects such as Oud, Van Tijen and Rietveld. However, the economic crisis, followed by World War II, badly affected their promising careers as self employed architects / urban planners. The members who survived the war returned to play their part in the post war reconstruction, but until now there has been very little attention paid to their role. It is justified to say that they have paved the way for subsequent generations of architects and urban developers like Van den Broek, Bakema, Van Eyck and Hertzberger, who have become internationally prominent because of their reverence for Modernity. Some members of De Groep have asserted their influence in other parts of the world, like Jan Albarda, Huibert van Doorninck and Kees Bakker who emigrated to Canada.

Stichting Analyse van Gebouwen STAG (Foundation for Analysis of Buildings) has initiated the manifestation **De Groep van Delft**, which will take place from April until December 2010. An exhibition of the same name provides the focal point to this manifestation, not only by drawing attention to the architectural works of Jan Albarada, Henk Jan Brusse, Joost Boks, John van Erp, Jan de Ranitz, Piet Donk and others, but by also depicting these particular architects as individuals. As well as showing drawings, maquettes, paintings, sound recordings, letters, posters, documents and films, the exhibition will also include furniture, lighting and musical instruments.

The book launch for **'Modernity in a conservative environment - Jan Albarada and De Groep van Delft'**, written by Jan Molema and Suzy Leemans and published by Jap Sam Books, will take place during the official opening of the exhibition. Evening events are organised throughout the year at various locations, with themes relating specifically to the exhibition. A special programme about **Filmliga** has been compiled in collaboration with the Joris Ivens Foundation and Delfts Filmhuis Lumen, with a lecture and screenings of several of its films. The Leo Smit Foundation will contribute to the manifestation with evening recitals of musical works by **Leo Smit**, Bob Hanf and Ignace Lillien. During the Delft street theatre festival 'Mooi Weer Spelen', the open air play **D.16.M.M.** enjoys a revival, while the Delftsch Studenten Corps will stage the performance **Donogoo Tonka** in contemporary fashion. Left-wing politics have also left their impression upon the De Groep, particularly because of Jan Albarada's socialist background. In order to give an impression of the **political climate** in which De Groep emerged, a programme of lectures is planned in collaboration with the Wiardi Beckman Foundation. In spring 2010, in the run-up to the opening of the exhibition, a series of lectures on the subject of the international top members of **Internationale Leergang voor Nieuwe Architectuur** will be held in Delft and Rotterdam in collaboration with Studium Generale. And a present-day adaptation of this meeting will be organised together with A10 Media and Bureau Europa on the 4th and 5th November 2010.

The exhibition is located in the exhibition space of 38CC, in the former office building at 13 Hooikade, in Delft. This building, completed in 1931 for the company Braat and designed by Jan de Bie Leuveling Tjeenk, advocates the kind of architecture that De Groep so highly respected; modern in form and use of space, while paying attention to detail and modest/unpretentious ornament. It also houses two impressive leaded glass windows by Vilmos Huszár. The building is well situated for tourists who visit Delft by boat during the summer months, with a place for mooring nearby, and is within walking distance from the university, train station and city centre.

Realisation of the manifestation and book, together with collaborations mentioned above, has been made possible by: Stichting Analyse van Gebouwen STAG, the D3A Foundation, Faculty of Architecture at TU Delft, the VSB fund, the Architecture Fund, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund, SNSReaal fund, the J.E. Jurriaanse Foundation and the EFL Foundation, furthermore, the assistance of archive staff, and especially the valuable commitment and enthusiasm from friends and family of the members of De Groep. Plans are in progress for organising a tour of the exhibition.

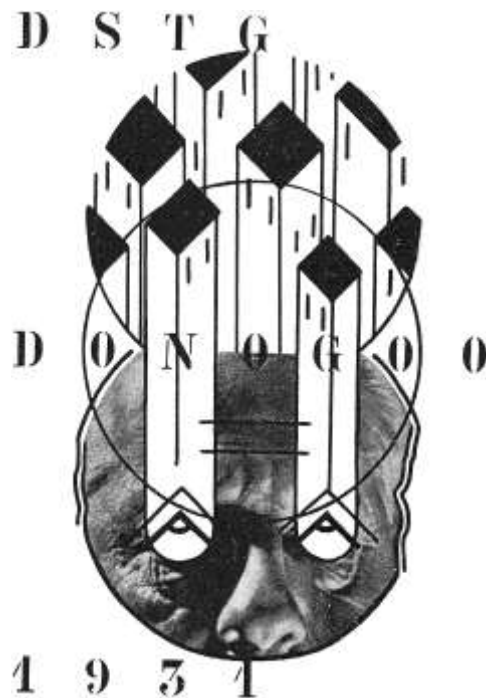
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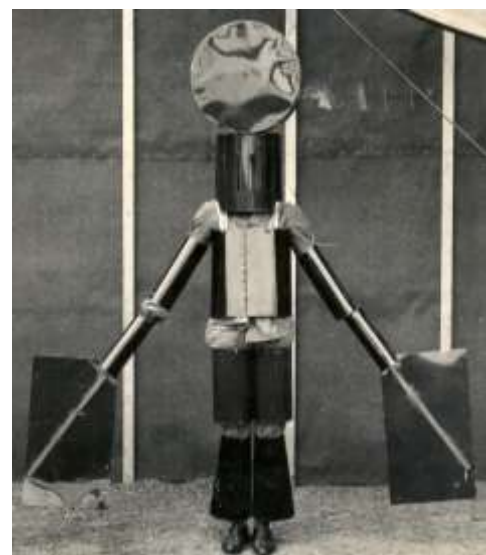
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Poster by J.H. Albarada, 1929



Poster by J.H. Albarada for stage play DSTG



Costume for D.16.M.M. by P. Donk