



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

## The NDSM Wharf East 3.0

How the artists and creative entrepreneurs at the breeding place on the NDSM wharf in Amsterdam handle the gentrification and co-optation processes.

Author	Renée Jurriens
Student number	10534946
Contact details	reenejurriens@gmail.com
Department of study	Sociology
University affiliation	University of Amsterdam
Name of course	Thesis Seminar Cultural Sociology
Supervisors	T.P. Franssen & A.T. van Venrooij
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## 2. Introduction

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Last summer the director of Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Wim Pijbes, argues in an open letter in the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad that the city of Amsterdam is too crowded and filthy from tourists. He states that Amsterdam almost has reached its limit on how many tourists it can handle. Just last last week the city counselor Kajsa Ollongren responded to this comment stating that in some districts in the city the amount of tourists is indeed high, but she also states that the limits are not yet reached. She argues that tourists should visit the NDSM wharf in Amsterdam North for example, instead of only visiting Museum square in the city center.<sup>1</sup> In the last twenty years the NDSM wharf has gone through a major development. The wharf is known as a place where a lot of popular events take place. During summer the outdoor area is used for music festivals and the hotel and catering industry is flourishing. The NDSM might be a cultural hotspot nowadays, but this used to be a ship dock where tankers were build. When the NDSM went bankrupt the wharf has been transformed into a cultural hotspot.

Richard Florida (2005) is stating that it is the ‘creative class’ that adds value to a city and attracts even more new companies and creates new jobs. The municipality of Amsterdam has incorporated this view in their policy. The municipality has opened up to creative initiatives and beliefs the city will profit from these creative developments. In 2000 the municipality of Amsterdam has introduced the so called “breeding place policy”. Breeding places offer artists a working space or living space for an affordable price. Since the start of the breeding place policy it has been a success and the number of breeding places is still growing.

The NDSM wharf became one of those breeding places in 2002. The wharf offers working spaces for artists and other creative entrepreneurs. The breeding place doesn’t cover the whole wharf and the surrounding buildings are being renovated and developed into office spaces. Recently different organizations, such as Red Bull, have moved their headquarters to these new office spaces on the NDSM wharf. The NDSM wharf has changed from an abandoned industrial area into a cultural hotspot. The growing popularity and the new wealthier users of the wharf might change the wharf from a cultural hotspot into a popular place for commercial corporations to settle their headquarters.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.nd.nl/artikelen/2014/november/12/amsterdam-oneens-met-kritiek-pijbes>

What often happens to places like the NDSM wharf is the displacement of the original users by more affluent users. This development is explained in the literature on gentrification. Artists will move to deprived neighborhoods and value the neighborhoods in their own way. This will attract another creative class and there is money invested in these deprived neighborhoods. Eventually the rent increases and the former users are not capable of paying this new price. This is when the former users are displaced and users richer in economic capital move to these neighborhoods. This process is called gentrification.

In relation to this gentrification process also co-optation is an important process. This concept offers a theory about how the government is handling social protest (Baur & Schmitz, 2011). According to this theory the social protest will be institutionalized and become less radical. The more powerful group will align the goals of the protest group with their own goals (Trumpy, 2008). In the case of the NDSM wharf this would mean that the artists that are challenging the municipality to maintain the NDSM wharf as the cultural hotspot will be institutionalized and the municipality would adapt some of the ideas of the artists in their own policy. This results in the artists becoming less radical in their protest.

I want to know how the artists and creative entrepreneurs experience the recent development of the wharf. They might feel threatened by these new users with more economic capital. In this research I aim to discover how the gentrification and co-optation processes are taking place on the NDSM wharf east and how the artist organize themselves and respond to these processes.

## 2.1 Research question & outline

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**How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs renting working space at the breeding place on the NDSM wharf east experience the developments on the wharf concerning gentrification and co-optation processes and how do they organize themselves?**

I have formulated some sub questions that will help me find an answer to my main question:

- What gentrification processes are taking place on the NDSM wharf east?
- What co-optation processes are taking place on the NDSM wharf east?
- How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs experience the gentrification and co-optation processes on the NDSM wharf east?
- How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs organize themselves on the NDSM wharf east?

In the next paragraph I explain the theoretical concepts gentrification and co-optation. I will discuss the debates around these different concepts and how I use the concept in my analyzes. In the fourth chapter I turn to the methods I used to gather my data and analyze the data. After this I discuss my findings and present the data I gathered in the fifth chapter. This will lead to my final conclusion and the answering of my research question.

### 3. Theoretical framework

#### 3.1 Gentrification

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In 1964 the term gentrification was first used by Ruth Glass. The British sociologist introduced the term to describe the development she witnessed in London districts.

*“One by one, many of the working class quarters have been invaded by the middle class – upper and lower ... Once this process of ‘gentrification’ starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the working class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed.”* (Glass, 1964, p. 18)

In old and deprived urban neighborhoods the apartments and houses are decreasing in value and at some point these buildings are renovated. After this renovation people with a higher socio-economic status will replace the former residents. This revaluation of the real estate in a neighborhood and the shift of residents is what is considered the process of gentrification (Metaal, 2007). The people living in the neighborhoods originally are economically vulnerable and heterogeneous compared to the group of people that will replace them (Zukin, 1987). This is a phenomenon that was first sighted in London and New York in the 1960's. Since then also in other European cities this development is witnessed and investigated (Zukin, 1987; Metaal, 2007; Hamnett, 2003; Pattaroni, Kaufmann & Thomas, 2012; Franzén, 2005).

The concept has been used to analyze central districts (Ley, 2003; Hamnett, 2003; Smith, 1979) and only more recently also for peripheral districts of cities (Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Uitermark & Bosker, 2014). Clark discusses the narrowness of the definition of gentrification currently used in the scientific literature (Clark, 2005). For example the central location of a district as a requirement for identifying a process as gentrification is narrowing down the concept and making it far more complex to make use of the concept than needed. When the same process is witnessed in a peripheral district of a city then the process cannot be identified as gentrification for example, while the process is technically the same. I will use the following definition of Clark in my paper, because this definition is best applicable to my research. The definition is not restricted to the center of the city and the population of a district. The definition is also applicable to districts in the periphery of a city and it is focused on ‘land users’ and not only the residents of these districts.

*“Gentrification is a process involving a change in the population of land-users such that the new users are of a higher socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital.” (Clark, 2005, p.25)*

The focus of the research on the periphery instead of the center of the city also shifts the search for an explanation from the supply to the demand side (Cameron & Coaffee, 2005). The literature in the supply side perspective is mostly focused on a phenomenon called “rent gap” introduced by Neil Smith; *“The rent gap is the disparity between the potential ground rent level and the actual ground rent capitalized under the present land use (Smith, 1979, p.545)”*. It is the central location of the deprived neighborhood in the city that is generating a potential high value. The lowering of the value of the real estate in this neighborhood might eventually result in such a great gap that it becomes profitable to invest in the real estate. This concept is used in research on inner-city buildings and properties and focused on economic capital (Metaal, 2007; Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013).

On the other hand the demand side is focused on the new residents of these deprived neighborhoods that are making gentrification happen instead of the economic capital. These new residents often are looking for a place with history and culture. They prefer these neighborhoods instead of the commercial city structure (Metaal, 2007; Ley, 2003; Lloyd, 2004). When Metaal (2007) describes the three different stages of gentrification he also includes the artists as an important factor. He describes the first stage as the *“artistic phase (Metaal, 2007, p. 8)”*. In this stage the former industrial buildings and neglected apartments in the neighborhood are squatted or cheaply rented by *“alternative young people, artists and creative professionals (Metaal, 2007, p. 8)”*. The artists who settle here can revalue the “junk” they find in the new neighborhood, make it art and attach a symbolic value to it (Ley, 2003; Lloyd, 2004). The second phase is the *“mixed phase (Metaal, 2007, p. 10)”*. In this phase there are newcomers in the neighborhood who are less radical than the squatters and first people to live there. Ley (2003) states the following about this group:

*“The aesthetic appropriation of place, with its valuation of the commonplace and off-centre, appeals to other professionals, particularly those who are also higher in cultural capital than in economic capital and who share something of the artist’s antipathy towards commerce and convention.” (Ley, 2003, p. 2540)*



These newcomers create enough clientele for shops and restaurants to follow and settle in these neighborhoods. In this phase the artists make the neighborhood attractive. The third and last phase is the “*fashionable phase* (Metaal, 2007, p. 10)”. In this phase the consumerism is taking over. The original residents of the specific neighborhood will be displaced due to the higher rents and the wealthier new residents.

In many researches on gentrification the pioneers and their cultural capital are the focus in the research on causes of gentrification (Ley, 2003; Cole, 1987; Cameron & Coaffee, 2005; Harris, 2012; Florida, 2003; Pruijt, 2003; Cole, 1987). David Ley (2003) strongly emphasizes the role of the artists in his work. He discusses the role of the artists as pioneers of gentrification. It is the artists that take up residence in the deprived neighborhoods and start the gentrification process. The neighborhoods where the artists are located will experience a rise of the property prices as a result (Cole, 1987). It is the artists that make this neighborhood rise in value, though according to Ley it is society as a whole that is responsible for this relationship. “*It is the societal valorization of the cultural competencies of the artist that brings followers richer in economic capital* (Ley, 2003, p. 2541)”. So the artists value the characteristics of a specific neighborhood and settle there. It is society that attaches a certain value to this judgment of the artist and people richer in economic capital will invest in these neighborhoods. These investments makes the prices of housing rise and the former residents will not be able to afford living in these neighborhoods anymore. Eventually the former residents move away and a new group of people with a higher socio-economic status will move to this neighborhood.

### **3.2 Gentrification and government policy**

In the first paragraph I mentioned that gentrification was first witnessed in 1964 (Glass, 1964). In that time it was just an observation of this process. In the years following the gentrification process has been incorporated into policy documents. Kirchberg and Kagan (2013) state that the artists and the arts are “*well-applied tools by the real estate business* (Kirchberg and Kagan, 2013, p.140)” especially in the beginning of the gentrification process. Cameron and Coaffee (2005) also explain the way the art and artists are used in the strategy of the local authority to regenerate a neighborhood. This change, from gentrification as a process that is witnessed into a process that is used in policy making, is explained in the article of Hackworth and Smith in 2001. In the first paragraphs I explained the different stages of the gentrification process. Certain aspects of the process of gentrification are emphasized or changed in different periods

in time. This is due to the circumstances in different periods of time. Before 1973 the first wave of gentrification was witnessed in the United States. During this wave the government was not very involved in the gentrification process and even discouraged the process in some cases. The second wave started around 1983. During this wave the government started to assist the gentrifiers; *“in the form of increased local government assistance to gentrifiers, relaxed zoning, and reduced protection of affordable housing* (Hackworth & Smith, 2001, p. 465)”. This wave is also characterized by the resistance of the former residents that were displaced by the gentrification process. The third wave started in 1993 and the main differences with the first and second wave are the following: first of all the gentrification was also witnessed in other neighborhoods besides the inner-city neighborhoods. Secondly there is less resistance against the gentrification. In the United States these protest groups were transformed into housing service providers. And lastly the state is more involved in the gentrification process and even included this in formal policies. These differences are also described by Cameron & Coaffee (2005) and they connect the role of art to the different waves.

*“In the first wave this involved the creation by artists of a milieu for the production of art, and in the second wave the commodification and private consumption of this artistic milieu. The emphasis in the third phase, with the more explicit public-policy engagement and link to regeneration, is on the public consumption of art, through public art and artistic events and particularly through the creation of landmark physical infrastructure for the arts, such as galleries, museums and concert halls.”*  
(Cameron & Coaffee, 2005, p. 46)

The article of Hackworth and Smith is mostly based on the gentrification history in the USA and especially in New York, but van Gent (2013) and Uitermark & Bosker (2014) have studied the gentrification processes in Amsterdam. Van Gent (2013) describes how Amsterdam is best described as being in the third-wave gentrification process. The local government has restructured the social housing policy and that way supported gentrification. The restructuring has reduced the percentage of social housing and stimulated the home ownership in the city. At the same time the local government tries to prevent segregation in urban neighborhoods, for example with providing housing subsidy. Uitermark and Bosker (2014) explain how these different policies together have resulted in an acceleration of gentrification in the core districts. The lower income group has been displaced from the center areas in between 2000 and 2010 to the peripheral districts of the city of Amsterdam. Though the local authorities tried to prevent

this from happening by investing money in the “*development areas* (Uitermark & Bosker, 2014, p. 223)”, which also included the NDSM area.

### **3.3 Gentrification and co-optation**

The second concept I use in relation to gentrification is the concept of co-optation. In recent literature the term is mainly used to describe how corporations cope with pressure from the outside (Trumpy, 2008; Burchell & Cook, 2012; Baur & Schmitz, 2011). For example the pressure of non-government organizations (NGO) on the business world concerning sustainability and social responsibility has changes corporations strategies. By adapting some of the ideas of the NGO's, such as corporate social responsibility, the NGO's have become less radical and the corporations managed to survive (Burchell & Cook, 2011). Originally the literature on co-optation was focused on the relationship between social movement organizations (SMO) and the state (Jaffee, 2012; Baur & Schmitz, 2011; Selznick, 1948; Coy & Hedeem, 2005; Bertocchi & Spagat, 2001). The SMO's pressure the state to change their policy concerning specific subjects. “*Social movement scholars view co-optation as a form of institutionalizing social protest that is engineered by more powerful groups to demobilize the opposition and ensure that their demands are watered down* (Baur & Schmitz, 2011, p. 11)”. The social movements are often institutionalized and partly adapted by the state (Baur & Schmitz, 2011). The squatters movement in the United States is an example of this form of co-optation. The squatters movement is pressuring the state to offer more affordable housing. This resulted, in the second wave of gentrification, in the transformation of these squatters movements into social housing service providers (Hackworth & Smith, 2001).

The involvement of the government in the gentrification process can result in co-optation of the initiators of this gentrification process. Pruijt (2003) argues that squatters can be viewed as pioneers of the gentrification process. As an example he refers to the squatters in Amsterdam taking residence in old industrial buildings, that later were turned into partly market-rate housing. At the same time he argues “*If squatters did in any way stimulate gentrification, this was contrary to their intentions* (Pruijt, 2003, p. 148)”. So he states that the squatters are not on purpose initiating the gentrification process. Uitermark (2004) discusses how segments of the squatters movement in Amsterdam are co-opted by focusing on the cultural squatters in particular and the introduction of the breeding place policy of the municipality of Amsterdam. He argues that segments of the squatters movement are in fact co-

opted, because they offer cultural services (rather than social services such as the squatters movement in the United States). They offer affordable business spaces and affordable studios for creative entrepreneurs and artists. At the same time “...*the city council became increasingly aware that the squatters could be an asset for the city and not (only) a burden* (Uitermark, 2004, p. 693)”. Creativity of the city is important because the cities are competing among each other (Uitermark, 2004). Creativity is an asset that the municipality of Amsterdam wants to emphasize. This is what Trumpy (2008) means when stating that co-optation is the ability “*to bring the interests of a challenging group into alignment with its own goals* (Trumpy, 2008, p. 480)”.

The definition I will use in this research is; *the ability of the more powerful groups “to bring the interests of a challenging group into alignment with its own goals* (Trumpy, 2008, p. 480)”. This definition is best applicable to my research, because it is about a “challenging group”. The artists and entrepreneurs on the NDSM wharf are not a social movement, but they are a group of people challenging more powerful groups to offer affordable working spaces for example. The artists are challenging a diverse more powerful groups and not just the state or corporations.

#### 4. Methodology

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The data are collected by using a qualitative field research method. I carried out interviews, observations and I analyzed several documents. First I needed the documents to get an idea of the background of the wharf. The original plan for the wharf written in 2002 was of great importance to understand the viewpoint of some of my respondents for example. Also it helped me to understand the discussions during the observations. Lastly it was helpful to discover the way the NDSM wharf has changed over the years. The documents are of different organizations that are involved in the NDSM wharf. These organizations are the following: district Amsterdam North, municipality of Amsterdam, Kinetisch Noord Foundation (KNF) and the entrepreneurs association De Toekomst. I was able to find most of these documents online and I received some documents from my respondents. I also visited the Amsterdam district North to receive information about the events that are organized on the NDSM wharf east.

Secondly I carried out qualitative interviews. The structure of the interviews were “*semi-structured* (O’Reilly, 2005, p. 120)”. I only used a topic list with some example questions during the interviews to structure the interview. This structure would help me to ask more questions on interesting topics that came up during the interview.

*“... a qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry, including the topics to be covered, but not a set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order.”* (Babbie , 2007, p306)

In the table 1 below I listed my respondents. I refer to my respondents by number and not by name, because some of my respondents preferred to stay anonymous. I have interviewed different artists that rent a work space in the ship building hall, east wing or one of the slopes. I also interviewed others that were involved in the breeding place because they work for the managing foundation for example. The interviews all took between half an hour and sometimes more than 1,5 hour. The interviews took place in the studios of the respondents at the NDSM wharf, somewhere in a café or at their home. One person was not available for an interview face to face, so this interview was done by email. I recorded every interview, except for 2, and transcribed it afterwards. I coded the different interviews in the MaxQda software program. This program helped me to analyze the interviews, because it showed me what topics and categories were most important and the relationships between categories. The interviews are all in Dutch. The quotes in this paper are freely translated by me.

I got into contact with my respondents by using the snowball method. “*“Snowball” refers to the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects.* (Babbie, 2007, p 185)”. I could reach the first two people by using my personal network. At the end of every interview I asked if the interviewee could help me find more respondents and the interviewees were generally very helpful. Also I got familiar with a few people during the general meetings of the entrepreneurs association I attended and contacted them afterwards. The advantage of the snowball method is the fact that I was able to find enough respondents in a short amount of time. However the fact that people know each other and sometimes are friends might lead to them having the same ideas. This is a disadvantage, because the diversity of the respondents might be limited.

<b>Table 1.</b>		
<b>Overview of the respondents.<sup>2</sup></b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Location on the wharf</b>
Respondent 1	Painting/ Sculpture/ Handmade	Studio in east wing
Respondent 2	Other: Organization/ Technical	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 3	Graphic/ Web/ Product design	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 4	Film/ Video/ Photography	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 5	Music/ Theater/ Performance	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 6	Painting/sculpture/handmade	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 7	Works for De Toekomst	
Respondent 8	Painting/ Sculpture/ Handmade	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 9	Works for NDSM Wharf East Foundation	NDSM Wharf East Foundation
Respondent 10	Works for Noorderlicht	Noorderlicht
Respondent 11	Architecture/ Interior/ Furniture	Studio in shipbuilding hall
Respondent 12	Works for Foundation KN	Foundation KN
Respondent 13	Music/ Theater/ Performance	Studio in east wing
Respondent 14	Other: Organization/ Technical	Studio in the X slope
Respondent 15	Works for De Toekomst	

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the NDSM Open paper.

## 4.1 Observations

I present at a two meetings of the entrepreneurs association De Toekomst and at two meetings of the foundation NDSM wharf east. I did not participate during the meetings, because *”you want to learn from the group so you have to mentally stand back and notice things, and note them down (O’Reilly 2005, p. 96)”*. The first meeting of association De Toekomst I joined was organized on May 23rd in the afternoon. I emailed the head of the board before hand to ask for permission to attend the meeting as I am not a member myself. He replied saying I should visit and the members at the meeting would then vote about this issue. So I went there and before the meeting started the chairman gave me the opportunity to introduce myself and explain the reason I wanted to be present during the meeting. After my introduction no one objected and that way me being present was accepted. I took notes during the meeting and was trying to be as much in the background as possible. The meeting took place in a studio of one of the artists and the atmosphere was very informal. In the studio was one big square table with benches around it. Everybody would just walk in and take a seat on the bench. The board members of the association also just sat down somewhere between the other attendees. In total 19 people were present at the meeting, some people would arrive later or leave earlier. I was able to join another meeting of De Toekomst on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Intentionally it was supposed to be another general membership meeting, but there were not enough members present, so it turned into a brainstorm meeting with a small group of members. That day only 9 people were present.

Besides the meetings of the association De Toekomst I also visited two meetings organized by the NDSM Wharf East Foundation. This foundation is managing the outdoor area of the wharf. I was present at the Self Made Future meetings on 4 September and 2 October 2014. The meetings are public and everybody is welcome to join, so I did not have to register beforehand. The foundation organizes these meetings on a regular basis, every first Thursday of each month. The meetings took place on the wharf outside in front of the red container. The idea of this meetings is to get input from everybody that is involved at the wharf on new plans and opportunities on particular topics. The topic of the first meeting was the *“rechargeable areas”* (outdoor areas that can be of better use) and the subject of the second meeting was the events taking place on the wharf. Each meeting started off with a few key speakers and followed up by discussions and at the end of every meeting there was room for people to pitch some ideas. The meetings were very informal and people interrupted speakers to ask questions and make remarks, but structured in a stricter way than the meetings of De Toekomst. The meetings were about 1,5 hours. At these meetings more people were present than during the

meetings of De Toekomst. The meetings of the NDSM Wharf East Foundation were both times visited by more than 30 people.



## 5. Findings

### 5.1 Background of NDSM wharf

NDSM is short for “Nederlandse Dok en Scheepsbouw Maatschappij” and roughly translates as “Dutch Dock and Shipbuilding Company”. It all started with the NSM (Nederlandse Scheepsbouw Maatschappij) “Dutch Shipbuilding Company”, which was established in 1894. This company was located on the eastern islands in Amsterdam. Here the company built many ships and tankers. The company was the first to ever built a tanker with diesel engines worldwide. The company was successful and the ships the company produced kept increasing in

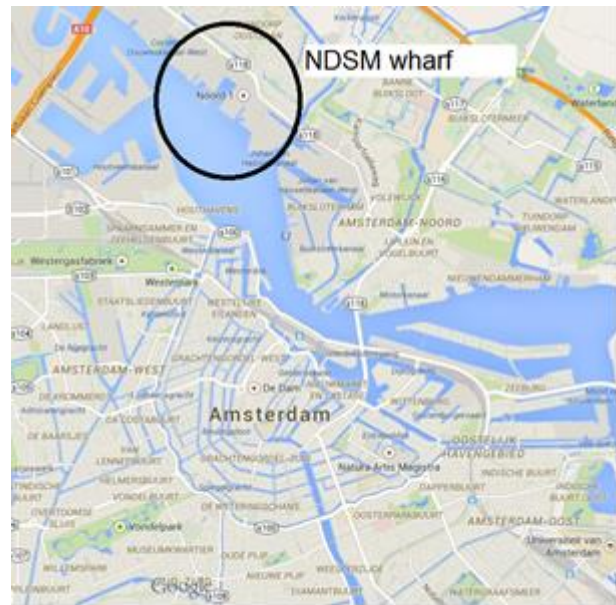


Figure 1

size. The NSM needed more space and then moved to the north part of the city, the northern riverbank of the IJ river in 1922. On the northern riverbank the NDM (Nederlandse Dok Maatschappij) “Dutch Dock Company” was already established in 1920, so the NDM and NSM were now settled next to each other. These two companies merged in 1946 and it became the NDSM.<sup>3</sup>

In the years following the foreign shipbuilding companies, especially the Japanese companies, were becoming serious competitors for the NDSM. This resulted in a financial crisis for the NDSM. In 1968 the “Verolme United Shipwharfs Company” (Verolme Verenigde Scheepswerven N.V.) from Rotterdam took over the wharf. Verolme was financially supported by the government to improve the situation of the NDSM. In the end the take-over of the NDSM by Verolme could not prevent the NDSM from bankruptcy in 1984.

From this date on the wharf was split into different areas. The first area is called the Cornelis Douwes terrain. This is the area between the Processorstraat and the Softwareweg (indicated in blue in figure 2). This is an industrial area where many companies and

<sup>3</sup> Information about the history: <http://www.ndsm-werfmuseum.nl/de-werven/ndsm>

organizations are settled nowadays. Also the Shipdock Amsterdam BV is located on the riverbank here.

The second part of the wharf is indicated in red in figure 2. This area is split in the NDSM wharf west and the NDSM wharf east. On the west part of the wharf the first of April in 2013 the Amsterdam Marina opened. This is a collaboration of the HISWA (Handel & Industrie op het gebied van Scheepsbouw en Watersport), short for “Trade and industry in the Shipbuilding and Watersports Sector”, and the municipality of Amsterdam. The HISWA wanted to emphasize their international image. The HISWA organizes two big events each year. One is an indoor event that is organized in the RAI and the other is an outdoor event and is taking place in the Amsterdam Marina. Secondly Loetje, a famous restaurant in Amsterdam, has opened a new restaurant in the Amsterdam Marina building. Lastly also the headquarters of the HEMA stores has moved to the NDSM wharf west.



Figure 2

On the east part of the wharf the big shipbuilding hall, welding hall and other buildings of the NDSM are still present. The empty and abandoned buildings were used by homeless people, immigrants and squatters in the period between the bankruptcy of the NDSM and the start of the breeding place. When something is written in the newspaper about the NDSM wharf it is often about this part of the wharf. I will focus on the different developments that took place on the east part of the wharf. This is where the artists and creative companies have settled and the breeding place is located.

In order to make the next paragraphs understandable I will explain the different buildings and areas on the east wharf using a map in figure 3. In my thesis I refer to these buildings and places as I named them here.

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Lasloods.         | 7. Smederij                    |
| 2. Docklands hall    | a. Brooklyn hotel              |
| 3. Shipbuilding hall | b. Puntloodsen                 |
| 4. East wing         | 8. Timmerwerkplaats            |
| 5. Y slope           | 9. Crane 13                    |
| 6. X slope           | 10. Noorderlicht               |
|                      | 11. Rhebergen Multihull Yachts |

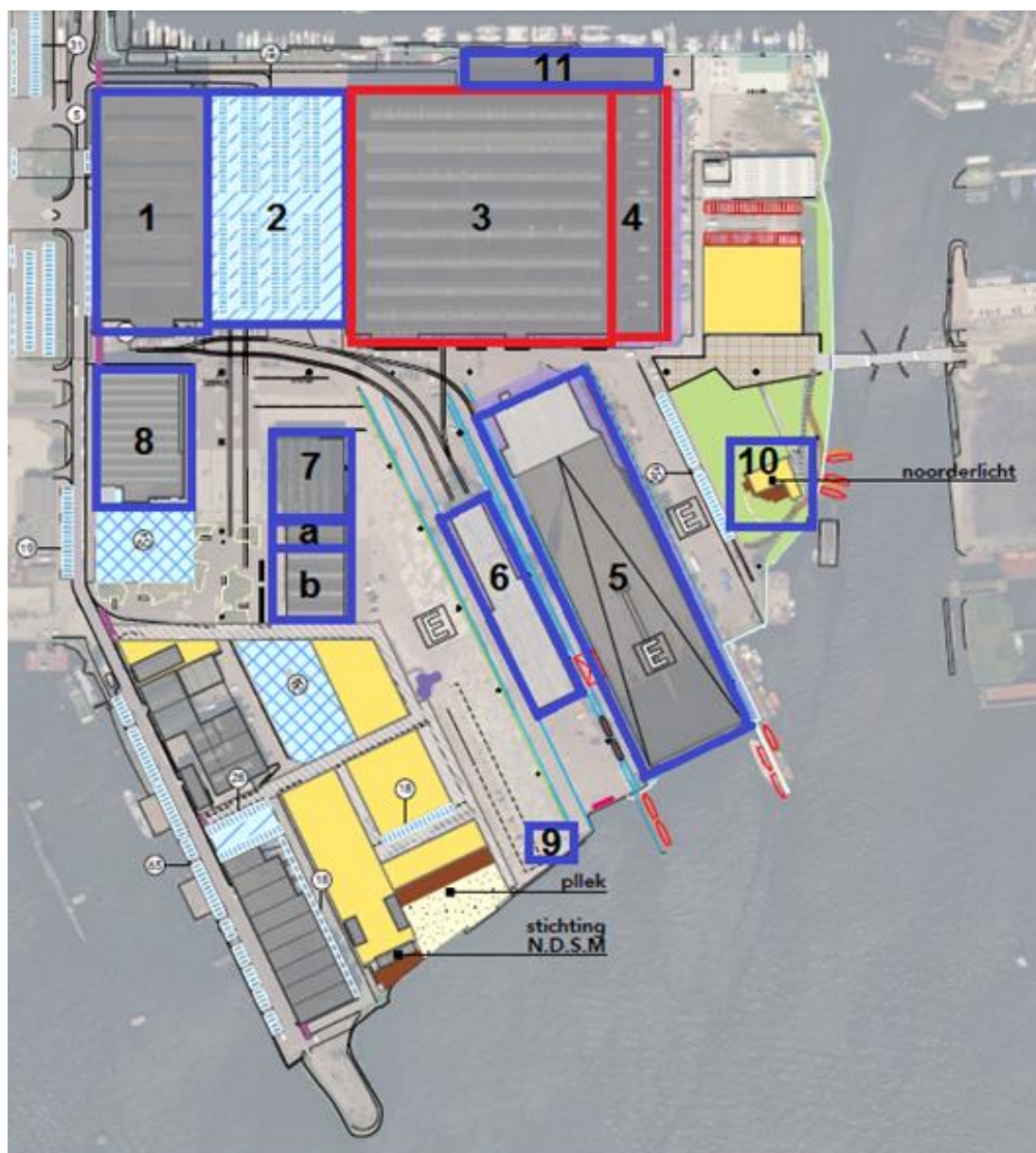


Figure 3

### **5.1.1 The start of the breeding place**

In the east wing of the shipbuilding hall and in the X and Y slopes it all started. In these rooms the first artists started their studios here. They moved their studios to these places, because at the time there were not enough affordable studios available in Amsterdam. Also a lot of artists were moving to Rotterdam at that time, because there was more affordable work space available in this city. Mister Versteeg was a majority shareholder of the NDSM company. After the company went bankrupt Versteeg was in charge of the area and the different buildings and slopes. The first renters would pay him a small amount of rent every month. A few interviewees have had previous studios in other peripheral neighborhoods. This is was the situation on the NDSM wharf east between approximately 1994 and 1999.

The municipality of Amsterdam organized a contest in 1999. The entrepreneur with the best plan for the NDSM wharf would win and this plan would then be carried out. The municipality was looking for a creative entrepreneur with a plan for a period of 5 years that would transform the NDSM wharf into a cultural hotspot. This shows the government is using creativity as a tool to make a neighborhood or area more attractive. Eva de Klerk was the initiator of making this first step and together with the help of others wrote a plan called Kinetisch Noord in 1999. This is a 23 page proposal in which different aspects, from target audience to an ideal vision, were set out. The proposal was just a broad future plan which emphasized on the vision and the possibilities of the NDSM wharf. In this proposal there were no exact financial plans stated, but a few ideas to generate income.

On the basis of this proposal the working group Kinetisch Noord got the opportunity to conduct a feasibility study with monetary help of Bureau Broedplaatsen. Bureau Broedplaatsen is an institution that was established in 2000 by the municipality of Amsterdam. In the late nineties a lot of squatters were being evicted from buildings in Amsterdam. The squatters and artists protested against these evictions, because the city was not offering enough affordable work and living spaces. Eventually they were given the chance to explain their side of the story in a public hearing and this resulted in the establishment of Bureau Broedplaatsen. The goal of this initiative is to develop more work spaces, and partly live spaces, for artists at a reasonable price in Amsterdam. The bureau is the mediator between the initiators and the real estate owners who want to establish a breeding place.<sup>4</sup> In the plan of Bureau Broedplaatsen in

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.amsterdam.nl/gemeente/organisatie-diensten/bureau-broedplaatsen/ontstaan-organisatie/>

2000 the advantages for the city are emphasized. It is stated that the policy is increasing the “*quality, diversity and image of a neighborhood* (Projectmanagementbureau Amsterdam, 2000, p. 1)”. Also the breeding places will enhance the job opportunities in the city and lastly this policy will make the city more attractive for tourists and visitors (Projectmanagementbureau Amsterdam, 2000).

The working group Kinetisch Noord changed into the Kinetisch Noord Foundation (KNF) in order to be able to receive the money from Bureau Broedplaatsen and start the feasibility study. The results of this research were published in 2000 in the paper called ‘The establishment of Kinetisch Noord. Developing the NDSM area into a business complex for culture producers.’ This study resulted in the operative plan presented in 2002.<sup>5</sup> The shipbuilding hall is the main focus of the plan, but also the plans for the slopes, Noorderlicht, docklands hall, crane 13 and the outside area are included. The main plan was to build the Art City in the shipbuilding hall. This city would offer studios, rehearsal spaces and working spaces.

The Art City is a unique plan in the sense that the project would not result in finished studios. Instead a “casco” framework would be build wherein the artists and entrepreneurs can finish their own studios. Only the steel framework and concrete were provided. So the entrepreneurs are investing labor and money in the walls, doors, windows and other necessary materials to finalize the building of their own studio. The basic features of the studios are similar, but every studio has its own color, materials, doors and windows. In the shipbuilding hall is also one strip reserved for people to build their studio completely themselves. The available spaces are called ‘free plots’ (vrije kavels). In the rest of my thesis when I talk about the Art City I also include this strip.

The operational plan was divided in different projects and for every project separately money needed to be collected. In 2003 the East wing, Art City, Skate park, Dazzleville and Noorderlicht projects received enough subsidy money to execute their plans. The money was provided by the following institutions: Bureau Broedplaatsen, the Ministry of Housing, Planning and Environmental Management (VROM), district Amsterdam North and Service Social Development of the municipality of Amsterdam.

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<sup>5</sup> Stichting Kinetisch Noord. (2002) *Plan van aanpak NDSMwerf*.

In 2003 Dazzleville was the first project to be established. This was an accommodation outside the shipbuilding hall providing the entrepreneurs and artists with temporary working spaces while the Art City was under construction. These workspaces were portable cabins with the look of a dazzled ship. Dazzleville was removed when the Art City was finished. Dazzleville is nowadays the name of a festival organized by Noorderlicht.

The docklands hall and shipbuilding hall appeared to be in a very bad state and construction work needed to be done. Secondly a large area of the ground of the wharf appeared to be polluted. Also it was difficult to get the approval of the fire department before the entrepreneurs were allowed to work in the building. All of these setbacks delayed the projects of the Kinetisch Noord Foundation (KNF). In June 2005 the fire safety plan of KNF finally got the approval of the fire department.<sup>6</sup> In 2005 the east wing was ready and a selection of the artists and entrepreneurs were able to move their studio to the new location. In 2005 also the skate park was finished and. A year later in 2006 Noorderlicht and the casco framework of the Art City were finished. The entrepreneurs and artists finished their studios and signed the contract with the KNF. This contract is signed for a period of 10 years.

Between 2006 and 2008 there were no new studios build or other projects started. In the operative plan it is stated that the foundation aims at a diverse group of users. This means that also work spaces should be developed for people with a little bigger budget compared to that of the artists. Definite plans for these work spaces were never made and the potential square meters in the shipbuilding hall were not fully used for exploitation. The aim of the plan in 2002 is to have 100% of the square meters, 20.000m<sup>2</sup>, exploited in 2006. Though in 2006 only the Art City and the east wing were build and this was about half of the potential (around 8000 m<sup>2</sup>). Another source of income was the exploitation of the docklands hall. This hall was mainly used as a place to organize events and the KNF received money for renting it out to these organizations. Though it appeared in 2005 that the number of events were not as many as expected and the income was less than calculated.<sup>7</sup> Two years later, in 2008, the KNF almost sold the shipbuilding hall to Principaal B.V., which is a part of the housing corporation De Key. The reason for this potential deal was the debt of the KNF to the district Amsterdam North.

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<sup>6</sup> Subsidieverslag 2006

<sup>7</sup> Doc documentjeazaarweerkn



The renters were not aware of this debt of the KNF and the negotiations between the KNF and De Key. When the news came out the entrepreneurs and artists were frustrated and afraid that the breeding place would disappear. They united in the association De Toekomst and took action. They made a plan to prevent the hall being sold to de Key and instead made plan to buy it themselves. Eventually the deal was cancelled by De Key at the last moment and also the plan of De Toekomst was cancelled. From that moment on the KNF was solely focused on the shipbuilding hall. The foundation terminated the contracts with the entrepreneurs in the X and Y slopes and Noorderlicht. The breeding place is at this moment only the shipbuilding hall.

### **5.1.2 Recent developments**

In 2011 the district Amsterdam North assigned a new board to the KNF. The goal of this new board was to solve the financial problems of Kinetisch Noord. Still in 2013 the foundation, at this point only managing the shipbuilding hall, was still not capable of paying the total amount of rent. In 2013 KN had a debt of about €826.863,- to the district Amsterdam North. The NDSM wharf has always been managed by the local district Amsterdam North but this changed in 2013. In 2013 the district traded the shipbuilding hall for the X and Y slopes, that were managed by the central municipality of Amsterdam at that time. The municipality remitted the debt of KN as part of the deal with the intention to sell the shipbuilding hall to the KNF on a leasehold basis in the future. This trade made it possible for KN to come one step closer to ownership of the shipbuilding hall and the financial problems were partly solved.

October 2013 the “Maakstad” plan was introduced by the Kinetisch Noord Foundation. In this plan the foundation explained that the it doesn’t have a debt anymore and can pay the rent. However the foundation explains also that the shipbuilding hall needs a new long-term plan to survive. At this moment there is no money left to invest in the building for the much needed maintenance work. If this doesn’t happen the future of the breeding place will still be uncertain even when KNF is the owner of the shipbuilding hall.<sup>8</sup> The new plan sets out the different steps to develop the potential square meters into working spaces for commercial parties. On the first of July this year the KNF became the owner of the shipbuilding hall for a

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<sup>8</sup> [www.ndsmloads.nl](http://www.ndsmloads.nl)

period of 50 years. The foundation and the central city of Amsterdam came to an agreement and signed the lease.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> [www.ndsmloods.nl](http://www.ndsmloods.nl)



## 5.2 Gentrification of the NDSM wharf east

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### 5.2.1 Prices of the studios

The artists and creative entrepreneurs renting work space in the Art City, the east wing and the commercial studios have different rental agreements with the KNF. The contracts don't differ much except for the amount of rent. Over the years the prices of the studios in the Art City increased 3% per year, except when the inflation was higher, then that percentage was applied. The price of the studios in the east wing increased with the inflation percentage every year. The renters in the commercial studios pay a market-rate price. In the Art City the renters paid 35 euros per m<sup>2</sup> in 2006. This is significantly less than the 53 euros per m<sup>2</sup> the breeding place policy required in 2007. The difference is explained as a compensation for the investments of the renters in the Art City. In other breeding places the renters don't have to build their own studio. The Art City is unique in this sense. In 10 years the investments of the renters in the Art City will be written-off.<sup>10</sup>

The slopes are not a part of the breeding place anymore since 2008. The prices of the studios in the X and Y slopes are going to rise in the near future. The slopes are being renovated right now. The *former* renters will have the opportunity to return, but for a higher rent. After this contract ends, in about 5 years, they will have to sign a new contract and pay market-rate rent. All the *new* renters of the slopes will have to pay the market-rate rent from the start. This will lead to the displacement of the original users of the work spaces, because these artists are not able to suddenly pay double the price.<sup>11</sup> This reflects the theory of gentrification in the last phase, the fashionable phase. In this phase the original residents are replaced by the wealthier residents (Metaal, 2007).

### 5.2.2 Overview of the renters

In table 2 below I counted the companies, individual artists and entrepreneurs that were named in the operational plan of 2002 and the number of actual entrepreneurs in 2014 stated in the

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<sup>10</sup> Based on Bureau Broepplaatsen. (2007). Werkplan 2007 / Jaarverslag 2006 and Stichting Kinetisch Noord (2006) Kunststad NDSM-werf Projectverslag IPSV 22409.

<sup>11</sup> Based on interview with respondent 14 and blogs on the website [www.ndsm.nl](http://www.ndsm.nl)

NDSM Open newspaper.<sup>12</sup> The Y slope is being renovated at this moment. This will at least continue for another year, so I only counted the renters in the Art City, the East wing and the X slope. The overall number of renters has increased. In 2002 the Art City was not build yet and the numbers stated in the operative plan were partially renters of the wharf at that moment and partially potential new renters. When in 2006 the Art City and the east wing were finished this offered many square meters of work space and all those interested could apply for a work space. Certain studios host more than just 1 company or individual artist and subtenants are tolerated.

<b>Table 2.</b>			
<b>Overview of the number of renters in 2002 and 2014.</b>			
<b>Location</b>	<b>Number potential renters 2002</b>	<b>Number actual renters 2014</b>	<b>Original</b>
Art City	32	118	9
X slope	9	9	4
East wing	9	27	0
<b>Total</b>	50	154	13

In the Art City 8 companies are there from the beginning in 2002, including two of the artists who have moved from the X slope to the east wing in the hall. And including one company moving from the east wing to the Art City. In the X slope 4 of the original renters are still have their work space here.

The next tables (3 & 4) show the difference in occupation.<sup>13</sup> The plan in 2002 included a lot of theater performance and production companies. Respondent 13 explained to me that the theater companies loved the NDSM wharf because it was an interesting place to perform. The abandoned location offered an interesting vibe, materials and room for imagination. The artists are revaluing the wharf as a whole and the “junk” on the wharf as is described in the article of Ley (2003) and Lloyd (2005). However the majority of these companies did not rent a work space on the wharf eventually, due to the availability of other locations and financial

<sup>12</sup> Open NDSM is an open day organized annually. On this day the breeding place is open to the public. On this day the artists show visitors around and show their art work and work space.

<sup>13</sup> I used the criteria of the industries that the artists and entrepreneurs themselves used in the NDSM Open newspaper and also applied these categories to the renters in 2002.

admission requirements. For example the DOGTroep theater organization was not accepted by the KNF to rent a work place in the Art City, because they were too dependent on subsidies and could not support itself.<sup>14</sup>

<b>Table 3.</b>				
<b>Occupations of the renters in 2002 in the Art City, east wing and x slope.</b>				
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>X slope</b>	<b>Art City</b>	<b>East wing</b>	<b>Total</b>
Architect/interior/furniture	1	1	1	<b>3</b>
Film/video/photography	1	4	-	<b>5</b>
Painting/sculpture/handmade	7	7	1	<b>15</b>
Music/theater/performance	-	12	6	<b>18</b>
Other: organization/technical	-	6	1	<b>7</b>
Graphic/web/product design	-	1	-	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>50</b>

<b>Table 4.</b>				
<b>Occupations of the renters in 2014 in the Art City, east wing and x slope.</b>				
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>X slope</b>	<b>Art City</b>	<b>East wing</b>	<b>Total</b>
Architect/interior/furniture	2	23	5	<b>30</b>
Film/video/photography	-	19	2	<b>21</b>
Painting/sculpture/handmade	4	28	5	<b>37</b>
Music/theater/performance	2	6	13	<b>21</b>
Other: organization/technical	1	6	2	<b>9</b>
Graphic/web/product design	-	36	-	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>154</b>

In 2002 the majority of the renters is working in the music/theater/performance industry and secondly in the painting/sculpture/handmade industry. In 2014 the majority of the renters are working in the painting/sculpture/handmade industry and secondly in the graphic/web/product

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<sup>14</sup> Based on the interview with Respondent 2

design industry. This is a remarkable shift in occupations. This reflects the shift in residents as the theory of gentrification explains. The artists are followed by professionals that also higher is cultural capital than economic capital (Ley, 2003; Metaal, 2007; Zukin, 1987).

The times are changing and the KNF is implementing a stricter policy than before. The foundation is very eager to solve the financial problems and this leads to a stricter policy towards using the outdoor areas. Nowadays it is not allowed for the renters to use the “streets” in the Art City or the outdoor area for storage. *“when I place my bike outside of my studio I need to pay for it, so to speak!” (Respondent 1)*. As a web designer the need for more space and storage space is less, so people with this profession can more easily adjust to the new policies. Respondent 11 told me that *“especially the most talented and fun troublemakers have moved away. They didn’t want all that bullshit”*. This hints at another reason for artists to leave a neighborhood when it becomes more organized and neat during the gentrification process. Opposed to the displacement due to their lack of economic capital (Clark, 2005). The artists that have left might have already formed an antipathy towards the Art City that is becoming more commoditized (Ley, 2003).

### 5.2.3 Events on the wharf

Table 5 shows an overview of the number of events held on the outdoor terrain of the NDSM wharf east together with the corresponding number of visitors. The events vary from the small open days to big dance events, like DGTL Festival. In 2002 the majority of the events were small events with a maximum of 500 visitors. In 2014 the majority is still the group of small events, but there is an increase of the bigger events. A remarkable difference is the increase of the number of events in total and especially the events with a larger number of visitors. Specifically the number of dance events has explosively been increasing in recent years.<sup>15</sup> The district Amsterdam North is responsible for licensing the events that take place on the outdoor area of the wharf. The district is able to license a maximum number of 67 ‘event days’ per year, because some events may take up several days. This maximum number of events has so far never been reached. In table 5 the column on the right shows the maximum of 67 licenses spread over the categories. Since 30 October 2014 a new license is available, the so called

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<sup>15</sup> Based on my visit to the district Amsterdam North.

‘TRUST license’. This new license offers the artists and entrepreneurs the opportunity to organize a small event with a maximum of 500 visitors. The license can be applied for at a short notice and has some restrictions concerning noise for example.<sup>16</sup>

The increasing number of outdoor events taking place on the wharf reflects the idea of Cameron and Coaffee (2005) on the linkage between art and gentrification. As they state that in the third wave “*the more explicit public-policy engagement and link to regeneration, is on the public consumption of art.*” (Cameron & Coaffee, 2005, p. 46).

<b>Table 5.</b> <b>Overview of the event days on the outdoor terrain on the wharf with corresponding number of visitors in 2002 and 2014.</b>			
<b>Number of visitors</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<15.000	-	5	12
<10.000	-	6	10
<5000	-	15	15
<2.000	-	15	20
<500	58	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>67</b>

#### 5.2.4 Buildings surrounding the breeding place

In the abandoned buildings on the wharf mostly immigrants, homeless people, craftsmen, former employees of the NDSM and artists found a place to stay and/or work. The breeding place was the first step to make the wharf a cultural hotspot. Following this first step in 2002 other buildings on the NDSM wharf east were also transformed by the real estate developer Biesterbos (part of Mediawharf B.V.). This developer renovated the Lasloods, Docklands hall, Smederij, Timmerwerkplaats and Crane 13. On May 25<sup>th</sup> in 2007 the minister of Education, Culture and Science (Onderwijs Cultuur Wetenschap) appointed the shipbuilding hall, the “Lasloods”, the “Timmerwerkplaats”, the “Smederij”, the X & Y slopes and the crane 13 as

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<sup>16</sup> Based on observation of the Self Made Future meeting on October 2, 2014 and my visit to the district Amsterdam North.

monuments. This means that the main features of the monumental buildings have to be maintained, but the buildings may be used for other purposes. The real estate developer mostly transformed these buildings into office spaces.

The first building, the **Lasloods**, is still empty. The hall is rented out for events and activities. Once a month a big and popular flea market takes place in the hall. There is not a permanent destination for this building yet. Though the 'area' developer Mediawharf B.V. is planning on renovating the hall and create space for offices, leisure, culture and catering industry. A ship building company called Aarding was located in the Lasloods on the NDSM wharf. The company rented the place and had a contract with Amsterdam-Noord. This contract expired at the end of 2006. In the last phase of gentrification the former users get displaced by the new users, because the former cannot effort the price of the work space anymore. In this case the former user of the hall was not displaced by new users with a higher social-economic status. The company was successful and was perfectly able to pay the rent. Instead the user was intentionally displaced by the local government with the intention to transform the hall into something else.

The **Docklands hall** is demolished in 2010. The contract was terminated by the local government in 2008, due to asbestos containing materials. This hall was used by the Kinetisch Noord Foundation as a place for festivals and cultural events. The hall was demolished 2 years earlier than planned. The space in between the Lasloods and the shipbuilding hall is now empty and used as a space for outdoor events. Biesterbos is planning to build 15.000m<sup>2</sup> of office space and a parking garage with 1600 spots.

The **Smederij** building has been renovated. The building now offers office space for different companies. In the front the 'puntloodsen' offer new office spaces for companies, such as Pernod Ricard and Fronteer Strategy. This is where the headquarters of Red bull opened in April 2011. In the tower the Brooklyn Hotel is situated. The main hall of the Smederij was finished in June 2014 and the working space in this building is rented by Foundation Greenpeace Netherlands and Emolife Campaigning Group.

The **Timmerwerkplaats** is renovated and turned into an office building. VIACOM Media Networks Northern Europe, formerly known as MTV, moved his headquarter to the NDSM wharf in 2007.

**Crane 13** is the eye catcher of the wharf, but also this crane has been through a transformation. On the wharf the crane was used to move heavy materials. The crane has not been used for its initial purpose for over 20 years and due to deferred maintenance the crane had to be renovated. On April 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 the crane returned to the wharf after renovation. Not only has the crane been renovated, it is now containing 3 luxury hotel suites. This is called the Faralda Crane Hotel. If you're interested in spending the night then you have to be willing to pay €400,- a night.

The **X and Y slopes** are the place where the gentrification process is best observed. Some of the artists were renting a studio in the slope already since 1994. The slopes were involved in the plans of the Kinetsich Noord Foundation. When the KNF had financial troubles in 2008 the foundation focused solely on the development of the shipbuilding hall. Since then the breeding place technically only involves the shipbuilding hall with the ateliers. Both slopes are now in the hands of the local district Amsterdam North. The **Y slope** is being renovated right now. District North has initiated the renovation and this started in February 2014.

**Noorderlicht** was part of the original plan of KN, but like the slopes not anymore since 2008. The restaurant on the wharf is very popular among the artists as well as among the tourists. The restaurant often works together with artists to organize cultural activities. Noorderlicht also organizes its own festival called Hemeltjelijf which takes place every year in spring.

The investments of the real estate developers in the buildings surrounding the breeding place show the way the breeding place has influenced the whole wharf. The artists started the breeding place in 2002 and the users richer in economic capital are following the artists to the new wharf. In 2007 MTV was the first to move their headquarters to the wharf and soon other companies and foundations followed. The artists are the initiators of the gentrification process (Ley, 2003). The buildings were used by a very diverse group of people including illegal immigrants, artists, former employees of the NDSM. This group is replaced by a more homogenous group of users, corporations, foundations and hotels (Zukin, 1987). In these developments the gentrification process has displaced the original users of the buildings. In the near future the artists in the slopes will be displaced as a consequence of the increasing rent.

## 5.3 Co-optation processes on the wharf

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### 5.3.1 Kinetisch Noord Foundation

The role of the KNF at this moment is not its intentional role. The goal, according to the statutes of the foundation, was to obtain the NDSM wharf east (buildings and outdoor area) as their own property based on a tenancy or leasehold agreement. The ideology of the foundation KN has its origin in another organisation. The foundation KN started with a few members of the “Guild of Industrial Buildings along the river IJ” (Gilde van Werkgebouwen aan het IJ)<sup>17</sup>. This guild was established in 1993 as a response to the new plans of the municipality concerning the development of the areas along the river IJ. The ideology was based on the experience and ideals of other squatter buildings in Amsterdam, for example OT301 and Pakhuis Wilhelmina. The association of users of OT301 is now the owner of the building. The ultimate goal was for all the artists and entrepreneurs renting a work space on the NDSM wharf east to unite in an association and become the owner of the NDSM wharf east. To reach this goal the renters firstly have to be clustered in smaller groups, for example a cluster of musicians with their own association. These smaller associations would become members of an overarching association, called the “*Association of NDSMers*” (Stichting Kinetisch Noord, 2002). The goal was to make this overarching association replace the board members of the foundation KN and manage the NDSM wharf east themselves. In 2000 the KNF solely established to make a quick start with the project. The foundation itself would stay the legal entity, but the board members were supposed to be replaced by the people renting a working space on the wharf. With the ultimate goal to own the wharf collectively as renters.

When the Kinetisch Noord Foundation was established in 2000 Fonds Bureau Broedplaatsen required the foundation to have a few board members from “outside”. This resulted in a few board members who were formerly working in the business world.<sup>18</sup> The local government and the entrepreneurs together appointed the first director of the KNF. One of my respondents explained to me that they wanted a director that had good leadership qualities and was experienced in politics, but also shared the same goals of the users on the wharf. So the initiators handed over the plan to a trustworthy director to take care of the foundation and the

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.evadeklerk.com/het-gilde-van-werkgebouwen-aan-het-ij/> & Werkgroep Kinetisch Noord. (1999).

<sup>18</sup> Stichting Kinetisch Noord (2006) Kunststad NDSM-werf Projectverslag .



board members. This was the ideal situation at that time. The potential renters were active in committees of the foundation that executed the plans of the different projects, such as building the Art City. When the projects were finished and the renters were moving into their studios in 2006 the next step was to cluster the renters and establish their small associations. This step was never executed and the renters never established their own associations per cluster. Also the overarching “Association of the NDSMers” was never established.

Over the years the directors and board members were replaced by new candidates assigned by the district Amsterdam North. These new board members were mostly people with a political background. The artists feel like every new director is even more deviating from the original plan. The fact that the artists and entrepreneurs were not on the board of the foundation made it difficult to influence the policy of the foundation.

In 2010 the authorities wanted more influence on the management of the breeding place.<sup>19</sup> They felt the developing of the shipbuilding hall was taking too much time and needed to speed up. Main reason for their concern were financial problems of the foundation, these problems just kept on growing. In 2011 the present director of the KNF was assigned together with new board members. In the meantime all the entrepreneurs on the wharf had united themselves in the Association De Toekomst (the name translates as “The Future”). In 2011 KN offered a place on the board of the foundation for a representative of De Toekomst. The association responded positively to this offer and since this moment there has been a person representing the interests of the entrepreneurs and artists on the board of the foundation. However it is hard for this person to represent all the entrepreneurs and artists, since he has to represent all the different parts of the wharf altogether. Moreover one representative is not enough to change the policy of the KNF significantly.

This story shows how the district Amsterdam North has taken over the management of the breeding place. It is assigning new board members and directors with a political background and the entrepreneurs and artists are not involved. Only since 2011 a representative of the entrepreneurs and artists is on the board of the foundation. In the original plan ‘self-management’ is an important value, but the entrepreneurs and artists have not gotten any closer to this goal.

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<sup>19</sup> Ondernemersvereniging De Toekomst NDSM (2010)

### 5.3.2 NDSM Wharf East Foundation

In 2002 the outside area of the NDSM wharf east was managed by district Amsterdam North and KNF together. The responsibilities were divided between the two institutions. The district was responsible for the sewage system, the paving and emptying the trashcans. KNF was responsible for the industrial waste, street furniture for example. Besides these responsibilities the KNF also had a person managing all the events that take place on the wharf on the outdoor area, the programmer. Since 2010 the NDSM Wharf East Foundation has taken over these tasks and is managing the outside area of the NDSM wharf east. This foundation was established as an initiative of district Amsterdam North, association De Toekomst and area developer Mediawharf. The management of events and maintenance of the terrain are the core tasks of this foundation.

The NDSM Wharf East Foundation also manages the website [www.ndsm.nl](http://www.ndsm.nl). The Kinetisch Noord Foundation was the owner of the URL [www.ndsm.nl](http://www.ndsm.nl), but in 2011 the URL was also made available for district Amsterdam North and the NDSM Wharf East Foundation. The website is now hosted by the NDSM Wharf East Foundation for 10 % and for 90% by ‘Gebiedspromotie NDSM’ (roughly translates as ‘Area Promotion NDSM’). This is a part of Mediawharf B.V., the project developer on the wharf. The website is built as a portal. The organizations, artists and also people from outside can all create a profile on the website and post blogs on the website. At this moment creating a profile doesn’t cost any money. However in the near future this is going to change and every profile has to sign a membership agreement and start paying a membership fee.<sup>20</sup>

This shows the way the management of the outdoor area on the breeding place is also taken over by other institutions instead of the users of the wharf themselves, which is their goal. The fact that the website is now managed by an organization that is called ‘area promotion NDSM’ is very typical in my opinion. Public consumerism of art is becoming more important as Coaffee and Cameron (2005) describe. The website offers a clear overview of all the events taking place on the wharf for the general public. Every ‘profile’ on the website can post blogs and also blogs that are negative about the wharf or the organizations are allowed. However the fact that every profile has to start paying a membership fee in the future might limit the amount

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<sup>20</sup> Based on the interview with respondent 9 and information on <http://www.ndsm.nl/en/2012/11/21/lancering-ndsm-nl/>

of people making an online profile on the website and criticizing the Kinetisch Noord Foundation for example.

### **5.3.3 CAWA Committee**

The goal of self-management also included the right of the current renters of the breeding place to select the new renters. In 2002 working group Kinetisch Noord was the first group of renters on the breeding place. They developed the operational plan and this group of people would select the renters who became involved in the project in 2006. This is the group that build their own studio in the “casco framework”. At that time the KNF had an ‘artistic-program team’ to select the new renters. This team would meet the potential new renters and make a selection. The selection was based on: the involvement in the whole project and the ideals that are inherent to it, what the renters would add to the diversity of the place and how independent the renter is. After this first selection the board of the foundation KN checked if the new renters were able to pay the rent. When the potential renter met all these requirements this person or company would be accepted.

In 2008 the CAWA committee was introduced as the tool for the municipality of Amsterdam to determine whether or not a person is an artist. This committee is a part of the breeding place policy. The CAWA committee evaluates all the requests candidates for a studio on the basis of an online filled out form. They might ask the applicant for additional information. The committee evaluates different topics such as annual income and the education. Though the emphasis lies on the artistic work of an individual from the past three years.<sup>21</sup> The shipbuilding hall is a breeding place and therefore at least 40% of the renters have to be an artist according to the breeding place policy of the municipality of Amsterdam (CAWA approved).

In 2014 the studios in the shipbuilding hall are mostly rented by the entrepreneurs and artists who became involved in the development of the Art City in 2006. During the last couple of years some renters moved out, but only about 3 studios become available per year. Many renters are also subletting their studio. This practice is tolerated by the KNF. The older generation of renters is concerned about the subtenants and the way they influence the breeding

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<sup>21</sup> I called CAWA for more information.

place, because this group might not be familiar with the history of the place and the ideological ideas. The entrepreneurs association De Toekomst therefore set up the balloting committee that would select new renters and introduce the new renters to the current renters in a newsletter. The goal is to increase the cohesion of the renters in the breeding place. This committee is actually a replacement of the former ‘artistic program team’ of the KNF. The fact that the committee is not a part of the KNF anymore, but became a part of the association De Toekomst is pointing out the way that the KNF becomes more disconnected from the original ideology and the renters. It is the association of the entrepreneurs and artists that are guarding the initial ideological ideas.

Together the CAWA committee, the balloting committee will advise KN whether or not to accept the new person or company. However the KNF has the ability to ignore the advice of CAWA. So far the advice of the balloting committee has not been ignored by the foundation. The foundation makes the final decision whether a person is accepted.

*“When a person is not considered an artist according to CAWA (but does have a low income) then we are able to deviate from this decision. When the balloting committee and KN think that it does fit in, so also craftsmen, who I think perfectly fit in the Art City then there is room for them also”* (Respondent 12)

The introduction of the CAWA committee shows the way the municipality wants more control over the management of the breeding places. The municipality is offering an institution for the artists to achieve their goal, which is the breeding place policy. At the same time the municipality wants to control the way acceptance of individuals to these breeding places. In the case of the breeding place on the wharf this committee doesn’t have much power, because the KNF still makes the final decision whether to accept a new renter.

#### **5.3.4 Future plans**

As I explained earlier the KN foundation is planning to use all the potential square meters available in the shipbuilding hall at this moment for commercial exploitation. First of all KN terminated the contract of the skate park and the park closed its doors on the first of January 2014. The director of the KNF is defending this decision by pointing out the financial crisis of the foundation and stating that the skate park was causing too much noise. He believes that the

regained available space is of better use for work spaces, because it will generate more money. In 2013 the KNF build a new studio called the Cube, this was the first building that was finished and for 100% for a market-rate rented out. At this moment only 150m<sup>2</sup> is commercially rented out. The maximum amount of square meters to be developed is 27.000, of which a minimum of 8416 m<sup>2</sup> breeding place, which is the case at this moment. In figure 4 is shown which parts are considered CAWA ateliers and which are available for commercial exploitation.

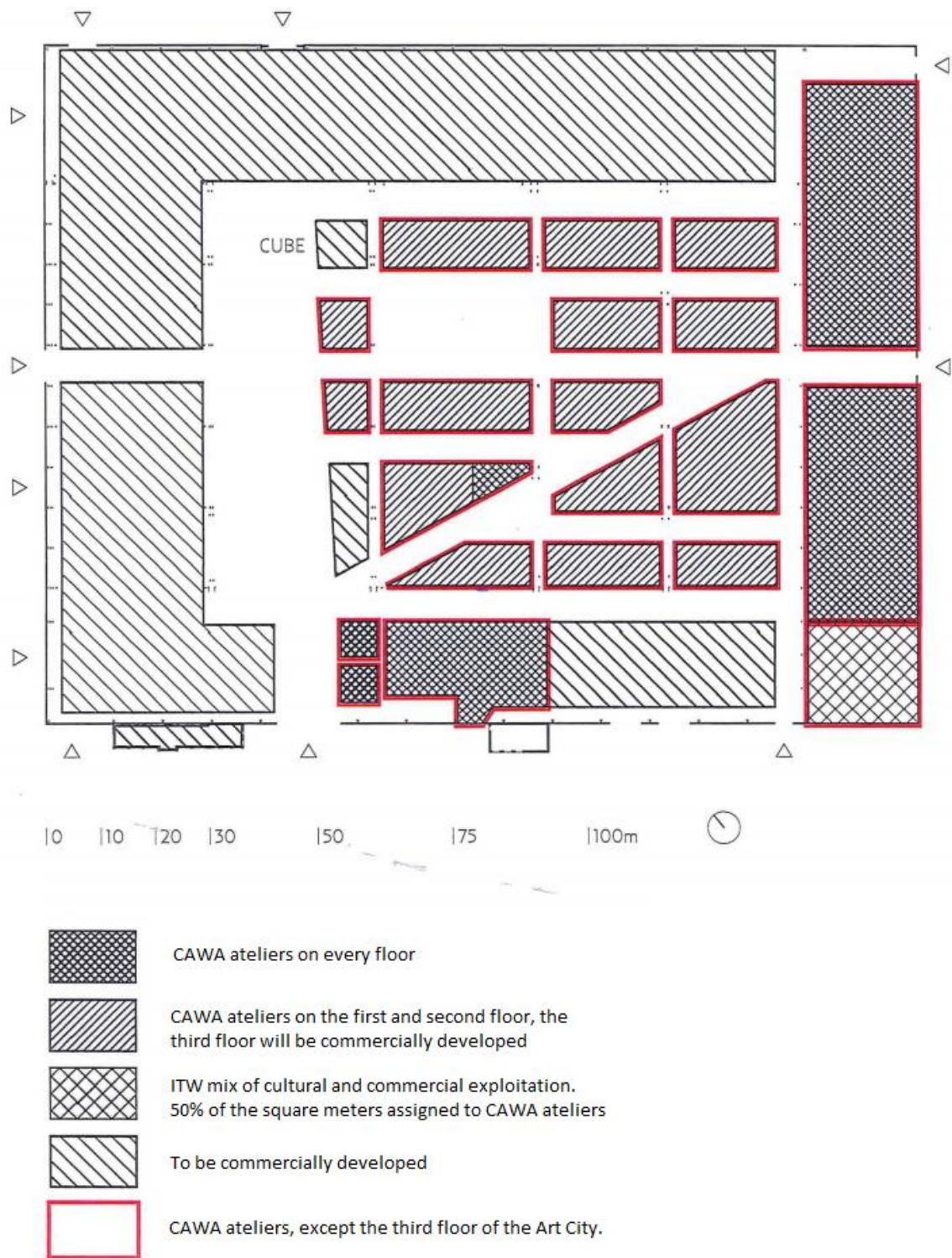
All the workspaces that are rented at this moment, so all the work spaces in the Art City and the east wing, will be maintained. These studios will from now be considered 100% CAWA ateliers, with the corresponding requirements<sup>22</sup>. However at this moment also non-CAWA approved people are renting an atelier that is considered CAWA ateliers. In the leasehold agreement, is stated that the foundation needs to take this into account. Meaning that the KNF is allowed to deviate from this policy and still has the final say in approving a new renter.

*“The breeding place is rented and will be rented by CAWA tested artists and alongside, taking into account the historically grown situation, a variety of craftsmen without a positive result to the CAWA-test on the “artist” part but with a positive result on the “income” part.”* (leasehold agreement, available on [www.ndsmloods.nl](http://www.ndsmloods.nl))

The KNF is investing a lot of money into the new working spaces and making the breeding place available for more affluent renters. The current renters in the shipbuilding hall are not automatically displaced when the foundation is carrying out the new plan. Firstly because the new work spaces are going to be build next to the studios that are already built. The studios that are present now will be maintained. Secondly the procedure for new renters for the CAWA ateliers is still the same. The KN foundation is still allowed to accept people that are not CAWA approved. The new plan of KNF is not taking into account the original plan. In this plan there was a part reserved for youth activities and the skate park. The foundation is solely focused on creating working space for commercial organizations and corporations.

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<sup>22</sup>Newsletter KNF April 7,2014.



Totaal 8416 m2 VVO CAWA-ateliers

Figure 4. This figure is an appendix of the lease hold agreement between the KNF and the district Amsterdam North. Available on [www.ndsmloods.nl](http://www.ndsmloods.nl).

## 5.4 How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs experience the developments on the NDSM wharf east?

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### 5.4.1 Gentrification

Every respondent described the changes on the wharf in different ways. Some actually use the term gentrification during the interview:

*“We have to defend the legitimacy of the breeding place. So we don’t, after a few generations, let just anything happen, but emphasize that such a breeding place nearby the center in 10 years still is important. That we then didn’t let the famous gentrification happen. We don’t want this to turn into a business complex.”* (Respondent 7)

Others describe actually what the term entails in their description of the developments they witness. This respondent was very angry about this development;

*“all fun this temporality. See there is urban decay, “we settle some creative people there. They will “pimp” the place.” It’s becoming nice, it’s becoming new, cafés are appearing, its alive again. It is not a deprived neighborhood anymore and then they can get the fuck out. And then the big boys are welcome. So all this temporality... and you also see this happening on the NDSM itself.”* (Respondent 11)

Others are more understandable about the gentrification taking place. Knowing that it might happen and comparing it to other developments:

*“because the artists are absolutely being used, I don’t say abused, but used to “yup up” the neighborhood. To make an area more attractive. And there is nothing wrong with that, that is also very good. I mean it is a choice between criminality or fun artists, so this is fantastic.”* (Respondent 13)

Many respondents indicate a business complex as the last stage of this gentrification process on the NDSM wharf east. When talking to the respondents they claimed that the Art City is something different than a business complex and they are afraid that it will in the future transform to a business complex. They argue that the main difference is the interaction between the artists and entrepreneurs on the wharf. Also the interaction with the visitors on the wharf is of importance. Lastly the outdoor area that, at this moment still, has its characteristic industrial atmosphere is important to set the breeding place apart from a business complex. On the title

page of the feasibility study of KN in 2000 is stated: *“The start of Kinetisch Noord. Development of the NDSM area into a business complex of culture producers”*. So actually what is stated there is not what the artists actually mean when they explain the term business complex. They emphasize that the wharf is really a breeding place where a lot of interaction is creating something more than just work spaces next to each other. Almost all the respondents told me they collaborate with others on the breeding place. The artists are not collaborating with the new users on the wharf.

*“Because the nice thing here was that the different functions combined would strengthen each other, also in a spacious way. That way, when there was a cultural event taking place outside and there was an exhibition inside, then what happens is the visitors, one goes to see the exhibition and another one goes to another thing when there is a flea market. That synergy, that interaction between different things will become less. [...] that is why it was never just a business complex, because there were events, art exhibitions, the trams.”* (Respondent 14)

Overall the artists and creative entrepreneurs are not very happy with the development of the wharf. Respondents fear the NDSM wharf will turn into something similar as the Westerpark (referred to by 3 people) and become less artistic; *“the Westerpark is also such a story, all very beautiful and nice but just a little too smooth if you ask me, you know..., they kind of rip the soul out of it* (Respondent 5)”.

The fear of the artists is the opposite of the idea of the authorities. In the investment report of the municipality of Amsterdam in 2010 the development is not viewed as a negative one. It is stated that what the NDSM wharf means for the cultural world is comparable to what the ‘Zuidas’ is for the business world. The wharf is named in the same category of the ‘Westergasfabriek’, located in the Westerpark, and Museum square. I also discovered the current director of the NDSM Wharf East Foundation has worked for the district Amsterdam West and has been involved in the development of the Westergasfabriek.

Some respondents argue that the gentrification doesn’t necessarily have to take place if the authorities value the wharf in other terms than money. They argue that the breeding place is valuable in another sense and it should not be a problem that this place costs money instead of generating money.



*“and of course things change, the world changes. But I believe that the intention, the intention should be... or well... I believe that a city benefits from a few of these places, the outskirts of the city, where things can happen, avant garde, there are so many words for it. Where things are just aloud to happen and exist and is not measured in terms of money.”* (Respondent 8)

#### **5.4.2 Tourism**

In recent years the tourists have found their way to the wharf. Some visit the wharf to get inspired by this unique project and other just to enjoy the view and have a drink at the Noorderlicht Restaurant. The respondents described these developments in different ways. Some are more positive about this increase of tourists.

*“I traveled a lot myself and when I found myself in a place like this, which didn’t know of, but was told about by others, and when you arrive there and it is, it has a very unique atmosphere, than you want to have visited that place.”* (Respondent 10)

Others are worried about the type of tourist the NDSM will attract in the future. The buildings surrounding the breeding place on the wharf have an effect on the type of visitors. The recently opened Faralda Crane Hotel, where the price for a night is 400 euros, will attract visitors with more economic capital than the people visiting Noorderlicht for example.

*“If more catering organizations are settling on the wharf, and in combination with the hotels. Then the visitors that will come here are the ones that will just sit in a chair. And they come here to drink white wine or sleep in a hotel, but all the activity is gone.”* (Respondent 14)

The number of tourists visiting the NDSM wharf is growing and so are the facilities. The restaurant Noorderlicht was the first on the wharf east. Restaurant Pilek, Brooklyn Hotel and Faralda Hotel followed shortly after. Again, this development shows the linkage between art and gentrification. In the third wave the *“public consumption”* is emphasized and this is also witnessed on the NDSM wharf (Cameron & Coaffee, 2005).

### 5.4.3 Co-optation

The artists feel that the wharf is being taken over by a foundation that is not representing their interests anymore. Specifically the renters are turning against the director of this foundation. In the interviews the respondents often talked about a *fight* between the artists and the authorities or between the artists and the Kinetisch Noord Foundation. This instead of just stating that they would ‘negotiate’ with other parties or ‘discuss’ problems with them. Terms like ‘battle’ ‘fight’ ‘endless arguing’ were used by many respondents to identify the communication and relationship between the different parties. *“It is unfortunate that the energy is now not focused inside on the Art City, but everything surrounding it. At this moment it is a fight. (Respondent 6)”*. The renters fight about the contract, service costs and agreements between them, the KNF and the municipality. Multiple respondents explained that they get very unhappy when they get involved in the political fight the association is in. The next citation is the response to the question whether the respondent considers being a board member of the association De Toekomst; *“No, that’s really not something for me. It will make me very unhappy. I am actually already involved a little bit too much. ... I prefer doing something else, organize something positive. (Respondent 4)”* While another respondent, who is experienced as a board member of De Toekomst, told me that he does enjoy working for the association. Although it does take a lot of time the respondent also told me, *“writing a letter like that is actually an art piece in itself. Yes, I do enjoy it in some way (Respondent 6).”*

The pictures on the next page (figure 5 & 6) are pictures that I made with my cell phone when I was visiting the Art City. These are pictures of the ground floor in the shipbuilding hall. The words written in figure 5 mean ‘Olij Liar’ and the words in figure 6 state ‘Bouwe = Fraud’. Bouwe Olij is the present director of Kinetisch Noord since 2011. Artists expressed their worries about how these slogans would influence the image of the Art City and the NDSM wharf.<sup>23</sup> Whenever they have costumers visiting the wharf they are afraid of the impression this makes on their customers. However nobody knows who wrote these slogans, so nobody can be held accountable for it.

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<sup>23</sup> Based on notes observation May 23, 2014.



Figure 5



Figure 6

The reverse side of fighting is that it unites the entrepreneurs to some level, they unite against one enemy and at this point the enemy is the KNF and its director. This is how the current board members of association De Toekomst are dealing with the foundation, but this is not the way every artists feels about the relationship between the artist and the KNF. Some respondents explained that it is exactly the new policy of the board members that they find too aggressive and don't support their actions. A number of respondents have had enough of the fighting over the last couple of years. They told me they want to invest their time in activities they like and focus on new plans and ideas.

*“well, I have always been actively involved (in the association) [...] but I am not going to spend so much time on meetings anymore. And in eh.. but it doesn't mean that I won't give any opinion. But actually I solely want to put effort in, and that is what I am doing, I am always putting effort into the open days, I solely want to put effort into things that I like.”* (Respondent 11)

## **5.5 How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs organize themselves on the NDSM wharf east?**

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In the original plan of KN all the renters would establish their own association per cluster, for example the skate park and every other part on the NDSM wharf east. This plan failed and there were no associations established at all. In 2008 the whole situation changed. This is the year that suddenly the news came out that the foundation KN was trying to sell the shipbuilding hall to the real estate developer De Key. The deal was cancelled at the very last moment. The renters were unpleasantly surprised to hear about this and got very worried about the future of the wharf. This resulted in a movement towards one association for all the artists and entrepreneurs located on the wharf. The association De Toekomst became the association for the Y slope, X slope, East wing, Art City, Noorderlicht and Rhebergen.

### **5.5.1 Association De Toekomst**

The association was already established in 2000. The association represents the interests of the entrepreneurs on the NDSM wharf as they state on the website (freely translated):

*“The goal of the association is to be an independent association of and for the entrepreneurs on the NDSM wharf and represent the interests of the communal and individual interests regarding the development of this area and the maintenance of the specific character of the NDSM wharf.”* (stated on the website [www.toekomst-ndsm.nl](http://www.toekomst-ndsm.nl))

Originally the association was founded by the users of the NDSM wharf who were renting a studio before the plans for the breeding place even existed. When they found out about the plans of the KNF they established the association to be an opponent and to stand up for the rights of the original users of the wharf. These were the people already renting a studio in the slopes and the corporation Rhebergen Multihull Yachts. In the end the initial users were able to stay and got involved in the new plans of KN. After this first period the association was not very active for a long time.

When in 2008 the news about the negotiations between KN and De Key came out the artists and entrepreneurs were very surprised, worried and frustrated. They were afraid that the sale of the shipbuilding hall to De Key would endanger the future of the breeding place. The

renters in the Art City decided to united in the Art City association. This association came with their own offer to buy the shipbuilding hall themselves competing against the offer of De Key. The renters in the slopes and the east wing were not involved in this Art City association and wanted to be involved as well, because they also were part of the breeding place. In this uncertain situation all the renters eventually united in association De Toekomst. From that moment on the association represents all the artists and entrepreneurs on the NDSM wharf. The deal between De Key and the local district in the end did not proceed, but the situation did change in another way. From 2008 on the foundation KN was solely managing the Art City and the east wing as the breeding place.

After this hectic period the association focused on itself. The organization was restructured, so every part of the wharf would be represented. The association also started thinking about the future of the breeding place and wrote a new plan. In 2010 the association handed over their proposal to the district Amsterdam North with their ideas about the way the breeding place should be managed and exploited in the future starting on January 1, 2011. In this plan the association proposed to manage the breeding place themselves together with district Amsterdam north in the form of a new foundation called “Foundation Toekomst NDSM”. De Toekomst still refers back to the plan of 2002 and the fact that self-management of the renters is the best way to make this breeding place a success. The board members of the KNF would be replaced by people from association DT and Amsterdam district North. In the plan the different parts of the breeding place and the interaction between them is emphasized and ownership of the different buildings is still also a goal of this plan. This is very similar to what the initial plan was in 2002, ownership and self-management by the renters is still the ultimate goal. In the initial plan the ideas were based on “Guild of Industrial Buildings along the river IJ”. This time the association based their ideas on the experiences of other breeding places, such as Bonte Zwaan and Loods 6.

A few of the goals stated in the new plan of De Toekomst are achieved, but not in the way the association planned it. The district introduced a new board of KN in 2011. Together with this change of board members a representative of De Toekomst became a board member. This was the first step to let the KNF and the artists and entrepreneurs grow towards each other. At this point still one representative is on the board of the Kinetisch Noord Foundation, but the foundation has stopped the negotiations and meetings with association De Toekomst. The foundation is explaining this decision by stating that the new board of De Toekomst is the

problem. The relationship between the two organizations have worsened to such a level that KN considers meetings with DT to be impossible.<sup>24</sup> The plan to replace the board members of the foundation with members of the association De Toekomst seems like an unrealistic plan at this point.

Another goal that is achieved is the ownership of the shipbuilding hall by the Kinetisch Noord Foundation. However there is no support from the renters for the leasehold agreement that has recently been signed.<sup>25</sup> The renters were actually against the foundation signing the leasehold agreement with the municipality of Amsterdam. They don't think that the new director has the right cultural vision and goals for the breeding place. They didn't want the foundation to become the owner of the shipbuilding hall because they are very unsatisfied about the way the shipbuilding hall is managed by the KNF. Also they are afraid that the new plans of the foundation will result in people being evicted. They are afraid that now the leasehold is signed and the ateliers all have to be CAWA approved that the foundation will evict non-CAWA approved renters.

### **5.5.2 Inside Association De Toekomst**

In the previous paragraphs I explained the history of the association and its actions, but the association itself is also struggling with different issues. The involvement of members is not very high and it is difficult for the association to represent every artists' interest. This is due to the fact that the group of renters of the breeding place is very diverse. It is a difficult group to organize, which many respondents acknowledged during interviews. First of all the group of entrepreneurs is spread over the different buildings and all with different interests. The association is still representing the artists in the X and Y slopes and Noorderlicht while they technically are not a part of the breeding place anymore. This division results in different interests of the members. Secondly the members of the association all have their own history. The first group is the group that is involved since 2000 when KN won the contest. They were very involved in developing the operational plan and the ideology behind it. This first group selected the second group, which became involved in 2006 when "casco framework" was

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<sup>24</sup> Newsletter KNF 30 September 2014. Received the newsletter by email while corresponding with respondent 12.

<sup>25</sup> Based on notes of observations of the meetings of association De Toekomst.

finished. This group were the first to sign the rental agreements with Foundation Kinetisch Noord. And the last group is people who after this period got involved (also subtenants). These groups all have their own experience, ideals and history. This leads to one group holding on to the original plan, though another group is ready to move on. Thirdly the group can also be divided in occupation and dependence on the work space. A person working as a graphic designer might also be able to do some work at home, while a sculptor needs his studio to work in. So one is more bothered with the festivals for example than the other one. As shown in the tables 3 & 4 groups of renters working in graphic/web/product design industry has increased over the years in comparison to renters working in music/theater/performance industry.

The fact that the group size was going to be a problem was known from the start and in the plan of 2002 the associations of the different clusters should have prevented this. At this moment the supervisory board is representing all the different locations of the wharf. The association introduced contact persons to improve the communication between the artists and the association in the Art City. The Art City is divided in different groups and every contact person is the mediator between their group and the general meeting of the association De Toekomst.

Another reason for making it difficult to organize is the fact that the members of the association consists of a majority of artists. Artists are defined by the respondents as autonomous people and easily offended in terms of protecting their autonomy. Other words the respondents used were: individualistic and functioning on their own little island. This is making it hard to make compromises. This makes it also hard to make decisions during meetings. My respondents told me that the meetings sometimes resulted in a more chaotic situation and less clarity than before the meeting had started. Also they told me the members might yell at each other and things could get very personal. During the general meeting I was present at the atmosphere was indeed very personal and you could easily sense which people didn't like each other. There was however no yelling or name calling involved.

Thirdly the members don't want to get very involved in the association. Time, or actually the lack of it, is an important reason for people not to get very involved in the association. In almost every interview 'time' was stated as a reason not to play an active role in the association or to stop being actively involved. The respondents legitimize this decision by explaining that they need this time to work. *"and certainly when you are an artist without*

*a client then you really have to fight hard to manage everything. So then you don't have any time to do something for the community. (Respondent 3)*". Another reason not to get involved is the lack of knowledge about the subjects that are discussed, such as lease agreements. On the one hand some artists state that they know a lot about the history of the wharf and the political developments and that's the reason for their involvement in the association. On the other hand I spoke to respondents who feel like they don't know enough and don't feel confident enough to give their opinion during meetings of the association and that's the reason they are not very involved.

Lastly the association is struggling to achieve legitimacy. The artists who are member of the association are not experienced in the "political game". This lack of feeling for the political game seems to be a problem. The Kinetisch Noord Foundation is not negotiating with the association, because according to the foundation this is impossible since the new board members of the association were appointed.



## 6. Conclusion

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### 6.1 Findings

#### **What gentrification processes are taking place on the NDSM wharf east?**

On the NDSM wharf east the gentrification process is taking place. On the NDSM wharf the gentrification process fits the theory of the third wave as Hackworth & Smith (2001) described in their article. Firstly because the NDSM wharf is not an area in the city center. Secondly the government was specifically searching for a cultural entrepreneur to regenerate the area when they organized the contest in 1999. The authorities have been very involved during the whole development of the wharf. Recent developments also start to focus more on the public consumption of art (Cameron & Coaffee, 2005). The number of new restaurants, cafés and festivals are increasing. As is the number of outdoor events with a large number of visitors.

In the last stage of this process the former users of an area are being displaced by more affluent users (Clark, 2005). On the NDSM wharf east the breeding place policy is preventing the former users to be displaced, but only partially. The breeding place has during the years been limited to the shipbuilding hall. The breeding place used to include the shipbuilding hall, docklands hall, the X and Y slopes, Noorderlicht and the outdoor area. This changed in 2008 when the Kinetisch Noord Foundation changed the breeding place to only the shipbuilding hall, due to financial problems. This means that the artists in the slopes are indeed in danger to be displaced. The slopes are being renovated at this moment. The initial renters are able to return to their studio and pay the breeding place price of rent per m<sup>2</sup>. When this new contract ends in 5 years they also will have to start paying market-rate. All new renters have to pay a market-rate rent from the start. In the buildings surrounding the breeding place on the NDSM wharf the former users are in fact displaced. These buildings were used by immigrants, homeless people, craftsmen, former employees of the NDSM and artists. These users were displaced by the new foundations, companies and organizations turning these buildings into their work space.

### **What co-optation processes are taking place on the NDSM wharf east?**

In 1999 the working group Kinetisch Noord participated in the contest held by the municipality of Amsterdam. In the time that Kinetisch Noord wrote their initial plan the squatters movement was fighting the municipality of Amsterdam. They fought for more affordable working and living spaces for artists and creative entrepreneurs. The municipality in the end acknowledged the value of the creative class and introduced the breeding place policy in 2000. The Kinetisch Noord Foundation won the contest and the NDSM wharf became one of the breeding places. This is already a co-optation process. The challenging group, in this case the squatters, were fighting for more affordable work and living spaces. In the end the municipality aligned the goal of the squatters movement with their own goal (Trumpy, 2008). They acknowledged the fact that the city could benefit from this creative class and in the end offered more working and living spaces for this particular group.

The initiators wanted the project to be very bottom-up and in the end the aim was to manage the breeding place themselves. This goal has not yet been reached. From the start the KNF was required by the district Amsterdam North to have political figures on the board of the foundation. The board members were replaced over the course of the years by other political figures assigned by the district Amsterdam North. The foundation has grown much apart from the entrepreneurs and artists. The foundation is a more powerful group and in 2010 the artists want the KNF to change into a foundation managed by partially renters and partially people working for the district Amsterdam North. This plan is partially executed by the KNF. In 2011 one representative for association De Toekomst was able to join the board of the Kinetisch Noord Foundation. In the three years that have past the artists have not gained any more power than that. This reflects the theory of co-optation and social movements. The challenging group is institutionalized. The artists and entrepreneurs are a part of the breeding place policy. The more powerful group that is managing the breeding place on the NDSM wharf is the Kinetisch Noord Foundation. This way the demands of the challenging group have watered down (Baur & Schmitz, 2011).

The district Amsterdam North wants to maintain the NDSM wharf as a cultural hotspot and welcomes larger dance festivals on the wharf. The artists and entrepreneurs want the breeding place to also offer freedom to spontaneously organize events or activities. The district Amsterdam North has recently introduced the 'Trust license'. The artists and entrepreneurs on

the breeding place can organize events on a short term and with less restrictions with permission of the district based on this permit. So the artists are now in the position to organize the activities spontaneously, but it first has to be approved by the NDSM Wharf East Foundation and district Amsterdam North.

### **How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs experience the gentrification and co-optation processes on the NDSM wharf east?**

The artists and entrepreneurs fear that they will at some point have to leave the NDSM wharf because it is becoming too expensive. There is a lot of fear for the “big money” replacing them, as many labeled also the new users on the wharf. This is a fear that is legitimate when compared to the gentrification theory. The last phase of this theory is the phase wherein the artists and original users of the neighborhood are being displaced by the wealthy new residents. The renters in the X and Y slopes already experience the increased rent. Though the breeding place policy of the municipality of Amsterdam is preventing the displacement of the artists and entrepreneurs in the shipbuilding hall. Besides their this concern about their own studio, they also worry about the future of the wharf itself. The artists and entrepreneurs have a great affinity with the wharf and get inspired by it. The worst case scenario of most artists is the breeding place transforming into a business complex where the inspiration and spontaneity is gone. Some respondents feel like the breeding place is offering more than can be measured in terms of money and it should not be the main goal to generate money. Others think it is a good thing that the available space in the shipbuilding hall will be developed into market-rate studios. They think this is necessary to maintain the shipbuilding hall in the future.

The co-optation process is experienced in the way the relationships between the artists and the more powerful groups are worsened. Especially the relationship between the artists has worsened and they have grown apart. Even as far that the majority of the artists and entrepreneurs view the foundation as an enemy and don't trust the director and his policy.

## **How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs organize themselves on the NDSM wharf east?**

The artists and entrepreneurs united themselves in the association De Toekomst. The association is established in 2000 as a response to the plans of KN. When the original users of the wharf were involved in the plan and were able to stay there the association was not very active in the years following. The moment the association became active again was when the shipbuilding hall was almost sold to a housing corporation in 2008. This means that threat is an important factor for the artists and entrepreneurs to organize. Threat has been a stimulant for the entrepreneurs to all become member of one association as a front against the outside world and at this moment foremost against the Kinetisch Noord Foundation.

The association has problems organizing in such a way that it represents all the different interests of the members. The association is representing the shipbuilding hall, east wing, the X and Y slopes, Noorderlicht and Rhebergen. The members of the association are very diverse and this makes it hard sometimes to come to agreements. Besides that the artists are themselves a difficult group to organize. As many respondents acknowledged the board members of the association are often not experienced in the political world.

In the eyes of the KNF the association has lost its legitimacy as a partner for negotiations. The director of the KNF has stated that the relationship with the association has worsened since the new board members of association were appointed. In 2010 the plan of the association was to replace all the board members of the Kinetisch Noord Foundation by members of the association De Toekomst and district Amsterdam North. This recent development of the foundation not negotiating with the association will make it even harder for the association to reach their ultimate goal of self-management.

## 6.2 Final conclusion

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**How do the artists and creative entrepreneurs renting working space at the breeding place on the NDSM wharf experience the developments on the wharf concerning gentrification and co-optation processes and how do they organize themselves?**

What started off as an ideological project build on the foundations of the squatters movement has turned into a flagship of Amsterdam for the creative city. The NDSM wharf east is a unique place and the Art City is a unique project. The wharf is attracting more visitors and tourists every day. The gentrification is taking place on the wharf and this process is starting to displace some of the original users. The artists were the first to move to the wharf and start their studios there. After they settled the real estate developers started investing in the surrounding buildings and most of these buildings are now in use as office space for corporations. The artists experience the processes of gentrification and co-optation as threatening and were not prepared for this to happen. At the very beginning the board members of the managing Kinetisch Noord Foundation were people other than the artists themselves. This turned out to be an important mistake for the initiators. The foundation and the artists have been growing apart. In 2008 all the artists and creative entrepreneurs of the different parts of the wharf are united in the association de Toekomst. This association has trouble to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the policy makers. The association is representing a large group of diverse members with different interests and is not experienced in the political world.

## 7. Executive Summary

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In 1999 the story of the breeding place on the NDSM wharf began. On the wharf already some artists were using the abandoned buildings as their ateliers to work in. The municipality of Amsterdam wanted to make the NDSM wharf a cultural hotspot and the Kinetisch Noord Foundation won the contest. I have researched the developments of the wharf since the start of the breeding place until now. My main focus was on the gentrification and co-optation processes and the way the artists and creative entrepreneurs were dealing with these processes. Gentrification process is the mechanism of the regeneration of deprived neighborhoods in cities. Often the squatters and artists are the first users of the neighborhood. This group will make the neighborhood a creative place and attract users with more economic capital that will invest in the neighborhood and eventually the former users will be displaced by these users with a higher socio-economic status (Clark, 2005). The second concept of co-optation. I used the following definition: *the ability of the more powerful groups “to bring the interests of a challenging group into alignment with its own goals* (Trumpy, 2008, p. 480)”. On the NDSM wharf the artists have invested money and time in building their own studios. The artists are very involved in the working space and the development of the NDSM wharf and don’t want to be displaced, so I wanted to find out how they organize themselves in order to prevent this.

What started off as an ideological project build on the foundations of the squatters movement has turned into a flagship of Amsterdam for the creative city. The NDSM wharf east is a unique place and the Art City is a unique project. The wharf is attracting more visitors and tourists every day. The gentrification is taking place on the wharf and this process is starting to displace some of the original users. The artists were the first to move to the wharf and start their studios there. After they settled the real estate developers started investing in the surrounding buildings and most of these buildings are now in use as office space for corporations. The artists experience the processes of gentrification and co-optation as threatening and were not prepared for this to happen. At the very beginning the board members of the managing Kinetisch Noord Foundation were people other than the artists themselves. This turned out to be an important mistake. The foundation and the artists have been growing apart and it is hard to get them back together. In 2008 all the artists and creative entrepreneurs of the different parts of the wharf are united in the association de Toekomst. This association has trouble to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the policy makers.

## 8. Literature

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## 9. Appendix

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### Topic list for interviews with the artists and creative entrepreneurs.

#### Persoon

- Naam, leeftijd, beroep
- Wat betekent deze studio voor u?
- Vind u uzelf een kunstenaar? Waarom?
- Wat is uw definitie van een kunstenaar?

#### Kunststad/hellingen

- Hoe bent u hier terecht gekomen?
- Wat trekt u aan aan de kunststad/helling?
- Wat vindt u de meerwaarde van de NDSM?
- Hoelang zou u hier nog willen blijven? Waarom?
- Hoe zou u de huurders willen omschrijven?
- Heeft u veel verloop gezien?
- Heeft u vrienden op de werf?
- Werkt u samen met mensen op de werf? Waarom? Hoe vaak?
- Is de kern die het heeft helpen opbouwen nu nog steeds actief? Waarom wel niet denkt u?
- Is in de loop van de jaren er een hechte groep ontstaan van kunstenaars/ afgenomen of toegenomen? Waarom?
- Met wie hebben de hellingen een contract?
- Hoe ziet het contract eruit? tot wanneer geldig?

- Zijn er vaak huurverhogingen geweest?
- Waar zijn de mensen die in de y helling zaten die nu wordt gerenoveerd?

#### Ontwikkelingen op de werf

- Hoe heeft u de werf zien veranderen de afgelopen jaren?

Horeca

Festivals

- Wat denkt u daarover?

#### De Toekomst

- Vanaf wanneer actief lid?
- Waarom actief?
- Welke commissies gedaan?
- Waarom bestuur?
- Hoeveel mensen in de cie? Verandert dit? Vaak?
- Hoe is de relatie met KN?
- Hoe vaak is er contact met KN?
- Zijn er vaak conflicten met KN? Hoe wordt daar mee omgegaan?
- Hoe groot is de groep relatief gezien die actief is bij de Toekomst?
- Wordt er vanuit de vereniging geprobeerd mensen meer actief te maken? Waarom wel/niet?

- Heeft u het gevoel dat de kunstenaars in de toekomst zijn georganiseerd? Waarom wel/niet?
- Zijn het vaak dezelfde mensen die actief zijn? Waarom denkt u? wat voor type mens is dat dan?
- Strategie?
- Expres mensen met politieke ervaring nu in het bestuur?
- Voelt u zich vertegenwoordigd door het bestuur?
- Hoe heeft u de organisatie zien veranderen in de jaren?

#### Self made future

- Bent u daar aanwezig geweest?
- Wat vindt u van dit initiatief?
- Heeft u wel eens ideeën voorgesteld en wat is daarmee gebeurd?