

1961

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ALDO VAN EYCK AND JOOST VAN ROOJEN

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For Aldo van Eyck's Burgerweeshuis (orphanage) and for the cooperation of both artists in the integration of color in the built-up space: the children's playground on the Amsterdam Zeedijk.

#### Social utopia

Aldo van Eyck was awarded the 1961 Sikkens Prize in the first place for the Burgerweeshuis (orphanage) in Amsterdam (1960) and secondly, together with the visual artist Joost van Roojen, for their children's playground on the Zeedijk in Amsterdam (1958). The orphanage complex used space in an exceptional way, an integration of inside-outside/open-shut, in which the colors string together the individual spaces like a chain to create a spatial cohesion. The playground is a successful example of the integration of color in space in urban planning. Van Roojen, Van Eyck's brother-in-law, did geometric abstract work related to Liga Nieuw Beelden. On a blind wall around a demolition site where the children's playground was planned, he did a mural in which the colors increase in intensity from the edges inwards. Van Eyck screened off the open side of the site with a low wall and placed a number of climbing frames there, as well as a circular sandpit. With a few long, low benches and some posts distributed to play leapfrog, the whole thing is an abstract and geometric composition; the perfect synthesis of art and everyday life. Today there are no longer children playing on the Amsterdam Zeedijk. The playground was demolished many years ago. The orphanage is used nowadays as an office building; amongst other organizations, the Berlage Institute has been in this building for many years.