

Continuity and change

Adaptive re-use of Modern heritage: another avenue in contemporary architecture

Wessel de Jonge will reflect on the Dutch national policy to advance the adaptive re-use of architecturally significant buildings, most of them dating to the 20th Century. The economic crisis makes the building industry develop a greater interest in investing in existing buildings rather than new ones, which may provide new opportunities for architects today. Sustainability and economic viability appear increasingly relevant when it comes to preserving our recent past, including the post-war period.

Wessel de Jonge will elaborate on his long-term experience with adaptive re-use of Modern architectural heritage, addressing among others his innovative and ground-breaking projects for the Van Nelle Design Factory in Rotterdam (1928-31) and the former Sanatorium 'Zonnestraal' in Hilversum (1928), that will both be nominated for the UNESCO World Heritage List. He will deal with a variety of relevant themes in a wide perspective, touching on some of the particularities that makes the preservation of modern architecture stand out from the regular practice of conservation. Addressing the vital importance of recognizing 20th century architecture as a part of historic continuity, he will explain how the architects of both buildings represent quite different philosophies in modern design in response to the great social and cultural challenges of the 20th Century. To grant such buildings a new lease of life requires a fresh and innovative design approach that is reflected by Wessel de Jonge's oeuvre.

Wessel de Jonge (1957), the 2008 Grand Prix Laureate, will be the key note speaker for the **European Heritage Congress 2012 to be held in Lisboa in the afternoon of May 31, 2012.**

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