



beeld

Renovation and Interior ING Maple, Amsterdam

With the 'Maple' building on Bijlmerdreef in Amsterdam Zuidoost, atelier PRO transformed a dated office from the 1980s into a high-end workspace for ING. The redevelopment is part of the larger urban development of the area into innovation district Cumulus Park.

From cellular office to open plan

The rectangular office building, originally designed by Broekbakema, is connected to an underground parking garage, a residential block and the various levels of shopping area Amsterdamse Poort. Based on atelier PRO's design, it was demolished right down to the main load-bearing structure and given an entirely new façade - which had a positive impact on the surrounding neighbourhood. On the inside, the cellular office has given way to an open layout, offering teams the opportunity to work together extensively. Informal working areas have been created in the centre of the building and across all floors, vertically connected by generous new staircases and voids.

Geometric façade structure

The façade on Bijlmerdreef is composed of staggered glass panes encased by coloured aluminium window frames, combined with alternating bay windows; this creates the impression of a faceted surface,

giving the building a geometric, 'crystal-like' quality. The geometric structure not only serves as an eye-catcher, but also has a practical purpose, due to its mitigating effect on low-angle sunlight. On the lateral sides of the building, the strictness of the Bijlmerdreef-façade is softened, by adjusting the scale and the rhythm of the geometric structure; thus, the building is better adjusted to the smaller scale of Amsterdamse Poort shopping centre. At the same time, the façade elements make for a consistent and distinctive appearance, so that Maple is clearly recognisable within its context.

Recognisability within the context

The façades of the areas accessible to the public - both at the level of the shopping centre and on the elevated Bijlmerdreef - are smooth, inviting and largely transparent. They stand in contrast with the rest of the building and serve as a clear marker for points of entry and transition. The main entry is located on the level of Amsterdamse Poort; to make sure it is also clearly recognisable from Bijlmerdreef, the transparency has here been extended to the first floor and around the corner. By narrowing and lowering the entrance from Bijlmerdreef to the car park, it became possible to connect two originally separated halves of the building on the first floor; this resulted in a more unified outwards appearance - as well as offering opportunities for flexible use.

An open but secure office

Besides being responsible for the building's renovation, atelier PRO also developed the design of the entire fit-out and furnishings. The office created a contemporary, optimised

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ATELIER PRO

office interior that is both in keeping with ING's workplace concept but is also clearly part of the innovation district. The ground floor is accessible to the public, with a reception, a meeting centre, workshop rooms, an espresso bar and a grand café. New retail spaces were added adjacent to Amsterdamse Poort. ING's offices are located on the upper floors, which are only accessible to employees.

A new way of working

The bank previously used a standard workplace concept for all its offices. About half of the office space in Maple was designated as a pilot area for atelier PRO to develop and adjust this concept - a testing ground for the future.

Prompted by the covid lockdowns and the shift to online collaboration, ING decided to switch to a new way of working, with remote work playing a more significant role. Many employees have since returned to the office, but only partially, limiting their physical presence for meetings and collaborations. Therefore, the pilot area hosts an increased number of docking and consultation spaces - a spatial intervention which also made for a more informal atmosphere. Maple's new, more flexible concept means the building can provide a place for some 2,000 of ING's employees - which in turn also leads to increased sustainability. The office is more than just a place to work; it is also a home for ING's employees, who have enthusiastically embraced the new concept.

Art as a place maker

To emphasise the informal, home-like atmosphere, various works from ING's contemporary art collection are on display throughout the office - not in a formal or themed setting, but loosely grouped by colour and feel. In addition, the company commissioned three large, site-specific artworks: a painting by Hadassah Emerich, in her typical colourful, organic style, along the stairwell wall; a typographic mural by Said Kinos; and a photo wall with work by Curaçao-born photographer and filmmaker Kevin Ospa.

Cumulus Park

Maple's renovation is part of a larger development, the creation of the Cumulus Park innovation district

around Bijlmerdreef. Originally initiated by ING, the city campus is a joint effort of the Municipality of Amsterdam, the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, ROC MBO-college Zuidoost and ING. It is a place where companies, education and individuals can connect, and where professionals (in the making) can develop themselves. The design of the city campus is rooted in the existing urban fabric. Direct across the street from Maple, the ING has developed a new headquarters building, Cedar, designed by Benthem Crouwel Architects. This building, together with the surrounding new and renovated ING offices, serves as the focal point for the new district - making Maple much more than just a new workplace for bank employees: it is a place that connects people, buildings and ideas, stimulates creativity, innovation and flexibility, and enables sustainable solutions for a better future.

Publications

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