

**Location**

The Netherlands

Users

Marjetica Potrč and Wilde Westen (Lucia Babina, Reinder Bakker, Hester van Dijk, Sylvain Hartenberg, Merijn Oudenampsen, Eva Pfannes, Henriette Waal), Residents of Nieuw West neighbourhood.

Maintained by

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; Far West, Amsterdam; The Netherlands Architectural Fund, Rotterdam.

Duration

2009

Category

economy, social

Nr. and Title

U 012

The Cook, the Farmer, His Wife and Their Neighbour

Initiator(s)

Marjetica Potrč and Wilde Westen

Description

The project combines visual art and social architecture to redefine the village green. Community vegetable gardens become a tool by which the residents of Amsterdam Nieuw West reclaim ownership of their neighbourhood at a time when demolition and redevelopment are causing many to feel uprooted. Together with the residents of the multicultural Geuzenveld-Slotermeer district the initiators reflect on this history and celebrate a return to local food production. Here, farming and cooking are viewed as a way for people to share knowledge and traditions, and a means for the cultural renewal and rebirth of the neighbourhood.

Goals

The project has been an example of 'redirective practice', where people from different backgrounds have come together to create a community, the purpose of which was to redefine the neighbourhood from below as well as urban and rural coexistence.

Beneficial outcomes

A community kitchen and a meeting place provides a centre around which the community can engage in the process of "building a place" – a much-needed ritual in a climate where families experience continual resettlement. Beyond the core group of residents, the community kitchen attracts other residents, too, who take part in the activities there. With its open-door policy, the community kitchen has also brought security to the street, another added value for the neighbourhood. The community vegetable garden is located behind the kitchen on land that used to be fenced off. Today, twenty-two families from seven ethnic groups take care of the garden.

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