

Rotterdam

Arhitectura contemporana

KCAP, Kees Christiaanse -
CITY BLOCK

housing

KCAP drew up the development plan for a 60,000 m² site in Rotterdam. They planned the buildings at each end of the plot, other architects designed those in between. In total, 600 new apartments were built, 5,000 m² of retail and office space, a junior school and many courtyards. By variously applying a number of constant design elements, KCAP created a wide range of building types, high in quality and perfectly suited to inner-city residential use. The 16 four- and eight-storey apartment blocks each have a different ground plan and facade design, responding to the different traffic situations, orientation and needs of the residents. Yet an overall visual harmony is maintained as the facades all share the same basic design – engineering-brick facing in various colours and surface textures. This forms the background for a strong, overlaying structure of oriel elements – conservatories or projecting bays with balconies above – positioned more or less closely across the facades. Two of the apartment blocks, designed for older people, are accessed via covered external corridors, conceived as oriel-like features supported from below. One block, close to a busy junction, is almost entirely enclosed in a second skin of conservatories that filter noise and interrupt the cuboid geometry of the eight-storey volume. The buildings on the residential streets within the development are designed like terraced houses and are only four storeys high. Here the oriel element extends over two floors, lighting the single-aspect living room behind, or it appears as an entrance area in front of the typical Dutch-style staircase leading to the apartment in the upper storeys. The different treatment of a standard oriel element thus gives ample scope for individual arrangement.

