Making of The
CREATIVE THOUGHT PROCESS

The game **THE MAKING OF** is a method for initiating a creative thought process amongst parties affected by or interested in a process of (spatial) change. The method can be deployed to especially good effect in the second phase of such a process. Once the relevant qualities, wishes and ideas have been compiled using questionnaires, interviews and studies, the game facilitates both their examination and coherent consideration, from which, in turn, the prerequisites for the change in question can emerge. The method involves the (many) interested parties involved in the process of change by simultaneously informing the participants concerning future changes, consulting with them about those changes and letting them form part of the changes. **THE MAKING OF** is also a good way to involve residents in processes of change in their living environment.

COMPLEXITY OF SPATIAL PLANNING

Processes of (spatial) change are by definition complicated tasks, as they necessitate bringing the interests of many people, governments, companies and representatives together with the possibilities of a given context, the history of that context, as well as the rules and regulations in force there. New plans not only have to be technically feasible, and to have a sufficient support base, but must also be financially feasible. All of the tasks surrounding the spatial planning of this country are interconnected, and the question whether something is beautiful typically plays either a very small role, or even none at all. The complexity of spatial planning ensures that only a very limited number of persons have a clear picture of it, making it more and more important for these persons to know the opinions and wishes of as many people as possible, in order to be able to create better plans. But due to the complexities involved, discussions on spatial changes are frequently dominated by self-interest or the question as to whether something is beautiful or ugly. To gather information from people who are generally not involved in a professional capacity with the spatial planning of this country, it is necessary for these people to acquire the requisite knowledge for forming opinions and arriving at good proposals. This is what **THE MAKING OF** facilitates. It makes complicated situations transparent and ensures that everyone involved can contribute his/her ideas. **THE MAKING OF** prevents discussions from stranding in the 'beautiful or ugly' zone, and focuses attention on the task preceding spatial design. It stimulates participants to conceive of innovative proposals concerning issues in the area of spatial planning, and confronts them with the complexity of a design task, not by explaining it but by making them a part of it.

GAME MATRIX

As part of the game, a voluminous package of opinions, wishes, initiatives, threats and requisite interventions concerning the process of change involved is compiled and synthesized. In turn, this information is divided into two packages. The one group consists of the 'ambitions' which in the future will result in the relevant changes. They include necessary interventions, such as more houses or more roads, as well as working towards a desirable change in mentality in respect of, for example, automobile use. These ambitions set the relevant spatial changes in motion. The other group consists of the so-called phenomena. In and of themselves, these do not set a process of change in motion, but give colour, direction and guidance to such a process. Important phenomena are, for example, the country's cultural heritage or the support base required for change. Because spatial changes are subject to numerous influences, a vast number of things can be phenomena. From pride about the automobile to our expensive petrol, and from prosperity to fine particles: all of these facets exert a strong influence on the decisions which must eventually be taken concerning the spatial planning of this country. Once they are brought together in a matrix, the ambitions and phenomena form the point of departure for the game **THE MAKING OF**. The matrix provides an overall picture of the existing situation, which is about to change. As already mentioned, there is virtually no one who can encompass the entire picture. For this reason, we commence the game **THE MAKING OF**, by placing a few combinations of ambitions and phenomena in the matrix.
THE MAKING OF

Preliminary investigation
Introduction in the game setting
Making proposals

Presenting proposals
Formulating objections

Objections on the game floor
Debating the objections

The jury votes
Lobby
After the lobby there is one winning proposal

Photos: Michaela Stegerwald and Joost Maaskant
HOW THE GAME IS ORGANIZED

Reception
A round of THE MAKING OF is, by definition, played in one's own, special setting. The decor for the game is mobile and can be set up in a space near the situation under consideration. THE MAKING OF calls for a minimum of eight and a maximum of sixty participants. At their reception in the game environment, the participants are divided into five teams. An effort should be made to avoid assigning friends, colleagues and contemporaries to the same team.

The game floor
The playing field set up in the space is a large circle, 6 metres in diameter. Five tables, in the colours blue, red, yellow, purple and green are arranged at the circumference of the circle. A strip 250 cm long and 40 cm wide, with sections in the latter five colours, runs from the tables to the midpoint of the circle. The moderator has complete freedom of movement over the entire playing field. The participants sit behind the five tables.

Introduction
By way of an introduction, an overview of the rules is presented using PowerPoint. The rules are explained in some detail. Further, the ambitions and phenomena which have been formulated are given a brief introduction. In this way, the participants become familiar with the different facets of the situation.

Devising proposals
From the matrix, each group receives two combinations of an ambition and phenomenon as an assignment. The groups withdraw into different corners of the room to devise proposals in order to compete to see which group can come up with the most successful ambition/phenomenon combination. They devise proposals based on the questions on the proposal form. The teams must opt for a proposal and work it out as best they can within the time allotted to them. Materials for writing, drawing, building and taking photos are provided to all the teams.

Proposal form
A proposal form has been developed for the purpose of introducing the task, and calling the attention of the participants to its different facets. On it, they can describe their proposal and add a drawing and catchy slogan (see pp 176-177).

Presenting the proposal
After having produced their proposals, the teams again come together in the arena, take their seats behind their respective tables and present their proposals to one another. In addition to having a convincing proposal, the strength of one’s argumentation and the attractiveness of one’s presentation are of great importance. The moderator and any experts who may be present may ask questions of the teams, but there is no debating at this point in the game.

Submitting objections
Rather than entering directly into a debate on a given proposal, the other teams indicate on a special form as many objections as possible to the proposal under discussion. After the presentations have all been given, the teams indicate how many objections they have listed concerning the other proposals. The number of objections the teams may direct to each other is limited, and can change from situation to situation.

Debate
The objections are displayed on the game floor, between the different teams, by placing ‘objection pawns’ on the coloured areas corresponding to the teams registering objections. The order of the coloured areas in the ‘circuit’ which each team has before it determines the order in which the teams will debate with one another. A given objected team formulates its objections; in turn, the team to which these objections have been addressed has an opportunity to defend itself.

Lobbies
In reality, one’s lobby plays a central role in such decisions: who your friends are and what their position is are the deciding factors when it comes to which proposal wins. If the objections of one or more teams have been rejected and their pawn has reached the middle, lobby tickets are distributed to all jury members. Through how they distribute these, the members express their preference for one or more proposals. Provided they have sufficient lobbyists, the teams can neutralize objections without the need to present argumentation.

Jury
The moderator ensures that the debate is carried on in a proper manner, and lets each team formulate its objections and answers, respectively. If the teams fail to reach agreement, the jury decides. The jury can be changed from situation to situation. It can consist of one member: a judge. Having heard all of the different arguments, the judge can render a wise decision as to whether the relevant objections are justified or not. The jury can also be comprised of a number of experts in the area in question, or of all of the ‘experience experts’ present, in other words, the public. In the case of a jury made up of the public, it will be determined by a majority of the votes cast whether the objections will be maintained or rejected. The moderator can first ask the opinions of the experts present, or poll the opinion of the public, after which the jury votes by a show of hands.

Winner
Ultimately, one team will succeed in becoming the first to shed all of the objections against it, and to keep the most lobby influence. This team is the winner of THE MAKING OF, and receives a prize chosen especially for this occasion, which can range from an award cup or trophy to a book or simply a hearty handshake.

Results
It is not always the best proposal that emerges as winner; the proposal to which the other teams have the fewest objections is not always the one which best captures the imagination. In addition, argumentation and debating skills, successful manipulation of the jury and luck in accumulating lobby support are, as discussed above, very important factors.

After one or more rounds have been played, Bureau Venhuizen is able to process all of the proposals and objections into a coherent design brief, which can now serve as a motor for the process of change. This plan for change (i.e., the design brief) can in turn be recognized and supported by numerous interested parties.
Presentation of the proposals made during the THE MAKING OF for the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and ‘Maak Plaats’

Illustrations by the participants in THE MAKING OF
Game form to elaborate the combination between ambition and phenomenon into a proposal.  
Design version by Bureau Venhuizen based on an original design by Design Bureau 75B, Rotterdam

**AMBITION**

**PHENOMENON**

1. What does the ambition make you think of?
2. Do you recognize the phenomenon?
3. Write down a few ideas that connect the ambition to the phenomenon.
4. Do you know of comparable situations that have worked well?
5. Indicate how feasible your proposal is and how long it will take to realize it.
6. What objections do you expect from others?
7. Think of a catchy slogan for your proposal.
8. Make a drawing of your proposal.
9. Elaborate your proposal and describe it in ten sentences.
10. Write down a few ideas that connect the ambition to the phenomenon.
First game décor THE MAKING OF in Beuningen, 2000. Photo: Inge Hoonte


THE MAKING OF in the Beemster, September 2005. Photo: Dieuwertje Komen

THE MAKING OF for 'Maak Plaats', Netherlands Architecture Institute, Rotterdam, April 2009. Photo: Michaela Stegerwaal and Joost Maaskant

THE MAKING OF at 'Maak ons Land', Netherlands Architecture Institute, Rotterdam, October 2008. Photo: Maarten Laupman
THE MAKING OF

BACKGROUND

THE MAKING OF was developed in 2000 as part of the INVENTION OF THE FLOOD PLAIN MODEL, a project commissioned by the Municipality of Beuningen (Gelderland). In early 2000, the From-Weurt-to-Deest Foundation invited Bureau Venhuizen to organize a project with the aim of creating a connection between art and the flood plain landscape. For this purpose, Hans Venhuizen distilled from the flood plain landscape its essential aspects, and integrated them in the Flood Plain Model. The Flood Plain Model is based on a flexible alliance with the elements. As such, it is a worthy successor to the obsolete, consultation model from the world of politics known as the Polder Model, or ‘the third way’. Both of these models developed in connection with human interaction with water, but whereas the Polder Model is based on a struggle against water and the complete subduing of nature, the Flood Plain Model treats nature as a fertile ground with which to build. This model is not based on the form which the landscape has been given, but rather, how this form has developed.

The man-made landscape behind the dike, the area from Weurt to Deest, has been flooded by such large-scale spatial developments as residential construction projects, infrastructural projects and sand excavations. The Flood Plain Model set in motion a sedimentation process resulting in the distilling out of (current) cultural-heritage qualities suited to play a leading role regarding current interventions in the area. These qualities are developed and communicated in such a manner that they are able to contribute to the cultural continuity of this constantly changing landscape. To investigate what qualities have been able to generate this continuity, Hans Venhuizen developed the game THE MAKING OF. Under the title, THE MAKING OF: FROM WEURT TO DEEST, we, together with residents and interested parties, first played the game in the historic windmill of Beuningen, Gelderland. The first version of the game’s decor consisted of a literal translation of the matrix on the floor of the windmill. The participants placed their proposals, and their respective opponents their objections, on this matrix. The game was played using a matrix composed of the results from the Flood Plain Project.

THE MAKING OF

Following its premiere in Beuningen, THE MAKING OF was used as a method for involving residents in the planning of a large-scale sand excavation near the village of Winssen. The game underwent further development, and was given a second decor, made from rubber mats and featuring circuits consisting of colour areas, produced by the KRILL firm of architects. On these colour areas, opponents placed their objections against the proposals made by the teams.

For the rounds of the game played around Mheen Park in Apeldoorn, a new decor, representing a further development of the rubber version, but featuring practical improvements for both moderator and participants, was produced by Chris Koens. The decor for this version, which, after Apeldoorn, was deployed in such locations as Berlin Marzahn, the Beemster, the Wieringermeer, Breda-Noordoost and Rotterdam-Hoogvliet, was, in addition, both easy to use and to transport.

In 2009, THE MAKING OF formed part of the event and exhibition ‘Maak ons Land’ (‘Make our Country’), at the Netherlands Architecture Institute. Here, in the course of six months, some forty rounds involving current spatial planning themes were played, in a decor designed by the artists’ group, Observatorium.

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The first version of THE MAKING OF was created in 2000–2002 as part of the project THE INVENTION OF THE FLOOD PLAIN MODEL, commissioned by the From Weurt to Deest Foundation, Beuningen. Concept management: Hans Venhuizen.

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