

AMSTERDAMSE SCHOOL

— GARDEN —



A garden design for the Walter Maas Huis



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Amsterdamse School Garden

a design for the Walter Maas Huis

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Preface - a personal view

Is there a garden style related to the Amsterdamse School architecture?

This question was the starting point of our investigation; the assignment to create a garden in Amsterdamse School style for the Walter Maas Huis in Bilthoven was our main aim.

If there was a known Amsterdamse School garden style, what did it look like, and who designed these gardens? Were there connections or maybe collaborations between architects and garden at the beginning of the 20th century between 1910 and 1930?

In the expressionistic magazine called "Wendingen" a lot was written down about the artistic interests of architecture and art, but nothing about garden or landscape designs. What does such a discovery mean?

Characteristically for the Amsterdamse School style was the use of a specific form language and design principles; not only in architecture but also in furniture and street furniture these special tools were used. Were these

special stylistic part thread also seen in the designs in garden architecture?

With this book we want to suggest answers for these questions.

In the course of our study we want to develop a method for designing a garden for the Walter Maas Huis.

We start with an historic overview, and form a notion of the connection between architecture and garden architecture. Also we are going to take a look at the common influences and views in both professions. In the end we want to suggest ways to understand the Amsterdamse School, and to use this understanding, together with the history of the Walter Maas Huis, in designing a garden for the Walter Maas Huis.

The production of this book is the result of an Atelier of four months study at Wageningen Universiteit in the special field of landscape architecture.

We want to thank everyone, who helped us in any possible way in our study process.

A word of thanks is owed to the Walter Maas Huis in Bilthoven for giving the opportunity to be part of such a project.

We owe special thanks to Imke van Hellemond and Erik de Jong for answering our questions and giving their view on the Amsterdamse School and our project.

We also want to thank our external mentors Joof Tummers and Frank Meijer from the MTD Landschapsarchitecten in 's-Hertogenbosch, for advising us in becoming better designers and their views and opinions on Amsterdamse School.

Special thanks are due to our tutor Paul Roncken who attends with our whole process with a good overlooking view and the knowledge for the right way.

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Introduction

This book is intended to show the way to create a new garden design for the Walter Maas Huis in Bilthoven, which was built in the Amsterdamse School style.

It gives a picture of what Amsterdamse School garden architecture was and can be, and an overall view about Amsterdamse School which is necessary to understand the Walter Maas Huis architecture. It is especially an abstract designing catalogue for creating new designs in relation to an existing style.

This research tries to give several answers to the question if there are gardens designed only for Amsterdamse School buildings or also similar to the architecture in the Amsterdamse School style. It gives an opinion of what the Amsterdamse School style was like and discusses the relation of architecture towards garden architecture in the period between 1910 and 1930.

In this research, the development of the society and its influences on architects are shown as well as the work of garden architects

in the Netherlands, in order to find out if there are common external influences and connections between both professions and between Amsterdamse School and garden architects. The view at the general historic perspective, the influences and the Zeitgeist give knowledge to make new designs for existing buildings, in this study for the Walter Maas Huis.

The scientific part of the research gives a picture in how to describe a certain style, in this case Amsterdamse School style. It shows how to look at an abstract level at a style, and how to create a method to come back to the basis, to understand the form language of architecture by deriving design principles. It also gives a solution in how to use these principles in creating new designs in relation to the basis style, but also shows that not only this abstract level is needed to make a garden design related to the time of 1910-1930. Garden architecture at the beginning of the 20th century has to be understood in its own way, not only in connection to architecture.

Finding ways to create a fitting garden belonging to an Amsterdamse School building is the main purpose of this book. While making this book it is found which design principles can be used, and how such is done. Also the mentioning of external influences and the knowledge and relations of garden architects at a certain time and atmosphere is needed. Having this knowledge makes it possible to design a new old garden.



**The
Amsterdamse
School style**



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The Amsterdamse School style

Amsterdamse School is a building style in the period between 1910 and 1930 that has its origin in Amsterdam. In that period Amsterdam was in a good economical situation and because of that there was an increase in population. All those people needed a place to live, which had to be newly built. The workers houses in that time were small and had a lack of light and fresh air which resulted in epidemics. The condition of these houses also enhanced the chance of fires. This bad living circumstances for the working-men was because the municipality did not intervene in the housing business, and the housing business did not built enough houses for the growing community. But now, because of the good economical situation, the private builders and the housing associations could build better houses, and the municipality now supervised them.

The interference in city-development and housing led to good results, socially and artistically. Most of the new houses were built in the Amsterdamse School style.

The Amsterdam municipality preferred this building style and gave all the building assignment to Amsterdamse School architects. That's how the style could stay on the top when it was actually already going down. The real end of Amsterdamse School was affected by the deep social-economical crisis of 1930, which led to thrift, the artistic countermovement of functionalism and town planning got a more scientific approach instead of an artistic one.

Besides the buildings and building-blocks in Amsterdam there were also villa's in Amsterdamse School style build in other parts of the country, for example Bergen NH, Bilthoven, Hilversum, Den Helder and Den Haag. It was only seen in The Netherlands.

The architects of Amsterdamse School had different motivations for their work. It was a group of architects who worked in an individualistic way. There was no preconceived way of working, neither in the way of decorative designing. But of course they also had a lot in common concerning their ideas and characteristics in their buildings.

The Amsterdamse School style is visually characterised by expressive and plastic buildings with much variation in rhythm and volumes. In contrast with Berlage, the Amsterdamse School architects put a layer around the construction, because they didn't want to show it. Often this layer was very plastic. This plasticity was often obtained by details that were not functional for the building at all, but for the overall picture

they were, for example towers and corner solutions. For this, mainly brick was used because of the possibility to create a plastic form-language and sculptures made out of very small elements.

Because Amsterdamse School architects wanted to create a building like a living organism, they were looking for forms in nature, like crystals and shells. All architects started from an overall picture to which the form is defined, but some architects used very plastic 3-dimensional design, while others used more 2-dimensional decorations on the surface.

The Amsterdamse School architects hardly bore in mind the future users of the building. The particular form-language of Amsterdamse School architecture was very determining for the use of a building.

Together with the building, a lot of architects also designed the interior with wallpaper, carpet, leaded windows, wrought iron and all the furniture. In the interior functionality was important: the kitchen was placed westwards, there were windowsills for flowers, in the bedroom was an arch like the sky, the whole was a warm, comfortable building. The furniture mediated between the occupants and the room.

The room was not just filled with furniture, but the whole interior had to create a harmonic and cosy enclosure. The right proportions in breadth, length, height of the room, softened light, and harmony in forms and colours could actualize this intimacy. Unfortunately, most rooms were too high, because of



social rules for the floors, which made the windows also too high. These high windows let a glaring light inside, so that had to be softened by curtains or leaded windows. This also resulted in the fact that the life of the inhabitants stayed more indoors.

Another minus is that most inhabitants of the social housings bought other, much cheaper, furniture, so that often the co-operation between architects and 'interior decorators' was missing. Next to interior and exterior of the building Amsterdamse School architects also paid attention to street furniture and bridges. One can see Amsterdamse School streetlights, letterboxes, benches and so on. Especially Kramer designed a lot of bridges in Amsterdam.

Influences

The Amsterdamse School style is of course defined by the time, the place and the external influences. The architects were much influenced by other architects.

Three Amsterdamse School architects, Van der Meij, Kramer and De Klerk, had their education or first working experience in the office of Eduard Cuypers. Together with De Bazel, Kromhout and Lauweriks, Cuypers can be seen as the direct inspirator of the form-revolution of Amsterdamse School.

Also Berlage had much influence. Berlage worked from the view that architecture is the art of constructing, the junction of different elements that encompass the space and create the environment for social life. He longed to "a new jointly,

that is to say non-individualistic architecture, simplified and by that adapted to the new demands and popular by its consequent purposefulness".¹⁾

The Amsterdamse School architects did not agree with his rationalistic way of designing. They thought it was the lack of spontaneity together with growing philosophical and social contemplation. They also rejected his clear theoretical way of working. In Berlage's last works the balance between rationalism and expressionism made way for a short-lived, more intensive application of the Amsterdamse School style.

Other art styles influenced the Amsterdamse School style too. The Arts & Crafts movement was one of them. The Amsterdamse School architects were much influenced by this development from England. Because of the fast technical development, mass production became common. The movement had the destination of the resuscitation and reformation of craftsmanship. The supporters of this style thought that machines made ugly objects and degraded the workers with dull labour. Art had to be hand-made, because that was the condition for beauty and labour joy.

Also Expressionism was a style that had great influence on Amsterdamse School. Expressionism was a movement of the early 20th century in literature, architecture, fine arts, performing arts and music. It was a reaction to the rigid norms of impressionism, where the artist wanted to show



corner



Building resembles a living organism



giro box

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kitchen cabinet



bridge



Amsterdamse School housenumber

reality together with personal impressions without adding symbolic elements. Expressionism was a radical increase in expression, simplification, and distortion. It wanted to realise dreams of the unreal world.

Expressionism in architecture and painting started in Germany. German architects had the possibility to indulge in fantasy-forms because they didn't have to bother about the realizability of the building. That was because of the First World War, which caused all the building activities in Germany to be at a standstill.

Expressionistic architecture had an increasing expression. Architects built houses to look at. They designed characteristic buildings; they aspired to symbolise the function of the building by the form of it. They wanted to make the impression of a realised plasticity. Architects considered themselves a designer for the general public; an artist as executor of the nation.

Expressionistic architects worked with 'total-conception' and 'form-will'. The first meant that a building can be 'decreasing', starting from a whole, a complex, like a sculptor cuts off the block further and further. The second meant that the architect started from an idea about the final form and worked that out. He was looking for a certain decorative form; the thought about this form was determining for the construction and the material. The function was no longer determining and had to adapt itself to the form. Playing with form was only possible when one determined the view he wanted to create and from this

overall picture worked out the details, so they would fit into the whole.

The forms the artists used were mostly forms from nature. Nature was considered good and original, not yet spoiled by culture. Also the Art Nouveau style, which was an architectural style before the Amsterdamse School, used nature or organic forms; harmony and unity were important motives.

Very important was the use of materials such as wood, brick, concrete, coloured glass, and decoration material. They experimented with forms like crystal and shell, mineral forms, proportion influenced also by the Egyptian primitive art. Stylistic elements had round and natural forms. Later on it were acute angles and overemphasised vertical directions. Expressionism in architecture meant more than functionalism. The functionality of the connection of house and surrounding was not so important, physical and psychic protection had priority.

A last expressionistic influence is fauvism or primitivism. The expressionistic architects were interested in Scandinavian and Dutch East Indies folk art expressions and therefore imitated it. That was shown in symbols of different nations and cultures, which were used in decorations and patterns, and also shown in building styles of other cultures which were reflected in designs. The interest in oriental art and exotic folklore was also seen in Art nouveau. That style was very interested in the primitive art of tribes all around the world and the work of children



and folk art. In the Walter Maas Huis Indonesian and Scandinavian influences are very well visible.

In the Netherlands expressionism in architecture was represented in the Amsterdamse School. Although the Amsterdamse School architects and the German expressionists appreciated each other's work, there was very little co-operation and similarity between both groups.

Important expressionistic architects were Poelzig, Mendelsohn, Taut and Finsterlin.

In the time of Amsterdamse School the Amsterdam municipality worked from the range of ideas of socialism. Socialism is a belief that human society can and should be organised along *social* lines - that is, for the benefit of all, rather than for the profit of a few. Its key ideas are *opposition to capitalism*, and a belief in *equality*, both political and economical.

The Amsterdamse School architects were not real socialist themselves, but they did owe many orders from it.



Henri Rousseau, *De slangenbezweerder*



Oriental influences

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Villa in Park Meerwijk in Bergen

Building examples

To explain the Amsterdamse School style, different buildings will be shown and explained.

Bergen, Villa's in Park Meerwijk 1917-1918

In 1917 five architects, Staal, Kropholler, Blaauw, La Croix and Kramer, got the assignment, by the Amsterdam tile merchant A.M.A. Heystee, to design a group of villa's in Park Meerwijk in Bergen. Staal became the coordinating architect and made a general design for the park. The villa's all had experimental, individualistic designs originating from modern starting points like dynamic, organic or cubistic forms and built with of traditional materials like brick, reed and wood.

The outdoor space, designed by Staal, formed the buffer zone between the house and the surrounding nature.



countryhouses Bergen

Amsterdam, Residential block "De Dageraad" 1920-1922

De Klerk and Kramer build in assignment of the social-democratic housing association De Dageraad a residential block in Amsterdam-South. The main aim for this building was to fill the lack of houses. That resulted in 298 working-class houses.

The building was not only designed for the inhabitants, but also for the passers-by. The façade was very dynamic and monumental.



De Dageraad

Amsterdam, Residential block "Het Schip" 1917-1920

De Klerk build in assignment of the housing association 'Eigenhaard' a residential block

in the Spaarndammerbuurt in Amsterdam. The complex had a triangular form. The building had a façade that had lengthy, dynamically arranged levels and slight colour transitions. The most expressive part of the building was the point of the triangle, which existed of a little post office with living quarters upstairs. The 'base' of the triangle was a mirror symmetric façade with a striking centre. It had a steeple that had a very visible and representative, plastic form, which reminded of Indonesian art. This tower had no other use than an artistic one.

Important persons of Amsterdamse School

Michel de Klerk (1884-1923) was considered the most important figure of the Amsterdamse School style. He started his career with working and studying at the office of Ed. Cuypers. He joined several contests in which man can already see the form-language of the later Amsterdamse School style. In 1910 he made a study journey through Scandinavia. Except the housing blocks at Spaarndammerplantsoen and in the surroundings of the Takstraat and the Metsusstraat, he designed mainly buildings or villas. The most famous one was the 'Scheepvaarthuis' that was at work on between 1913 and 1916. In addition to buildings he also designed furniture and complete interiors.

Pieter Lodewijk Kramer (1881-1961) started working at the office of Ed. Cuypers. His first Amsterdamse School building was a building for marines in Den



Helder, which was destroyed in the Second World War. Between 1913 and 1916 he was at work on the 'Scheepvaarthuis'. In 1917 he co-operated in the project Park Meerwijk in Bergen. Between 1919 and 1921 he designed housing blocks in the surroundings of the Takstraat together with De Klerk. After that he mainly designed bridges for the city of Amsterdam and also the department store 'De Bijenkorf' in Den Haag.

Johan Melchior van der Meij (1878-1949) worked at the office of Ed. Cuypers together with De Klerk and Kramer. In 1906 he won the Prix de Rome which made it possible for him to travel through Italy, France, England and Scandinavia. This can be seen in his later designs. From 1912 till 1916 he designed the 'Scheepvaarthuis' together with his former colleagues. This was his major work. Later on he designed mainly housings in Amsterdam.

Jan Frederik Staal (1879-1940) based his work on Berlage and Amsterdamse School. His early designs were very rationalistic, later on, as from 1915, his designs became more expressionistic. His first and best-known Amsterdamse School designs were the villas in Park Meerwijk in Bergen of 1917; here he also designed the lay out of the park.

Cornelis Jonke Blaauw (1885-1947) created as his best known Amsterdamse School designs, the villas in Park Meerwijk in Bergen (1917) and the laboratory he designed for the then Agriculture

College in Wageningen (1921).

Margaret Kropholler (1891-1966) worked in her early years in Amsterdamse School style, for example in 1917 she co-operated in the project Park Meerwijk in Bergen. After 1930 she changed her style towards functionalism.

Hendricus Theodorus Wijdeveld (1885-1987) was mainly important for the Amsterdamse School because of his initiative to publish the magazine 'Wendingen' and because of his international contacts. He was the first chief editor of Wendingen from 1918 till 1925. Next to the magazine he spent most of his time designing futuristic projects, instead of in real executed plans.



Het Schip



Het Scheepvaarthuis



The magazine Wendingen

¹⁾ G.Fanelli, *Moderne Architectuur in Nederland 1900-1940*, p.58



**Garden
architecture**



AMSTERDAMSE SCHOOL GARDENS

Garden architecture

To get a view of garden- and landscape architecture connected with Amsterdamse School architecture in the period between 1910 and 1930 one has to look at garden- and landscape architecture in Europe in general. It is important to get to know how gardens were designed in this period, which styles were developed and what kind of external influences were significant for the designs. Without this knowledge about designing gardens in that period it is not possible to design the requested garden for the Walter Maas Huis in Amsterdamse School style. The past influences and tendency of garden architecture have to be mentioned to frame this design which is to be developed in this former time.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning 20th century, garden architecture was in motion. Influences from England and Germany brought a style, more regular and straight lined than the romantic Landscape Style, to the Netherlands. Nevertheless the Landscape Style continued to exist, in a smaller scale or in combination with older and newer styles. In that time different garden styles existed parallel. Inspiration for all the different styles were the fast technical developments and the whole new way of thinking that came from books like the 'Traumdeutung' of Freud. Every landscape architect had his principles. It was a time of experiments and new creations. The most influential designers who worked in the Netherlands between 1870 and 1940 were H. Copijn, H.A.C. Poortman, L.A. Springer and D.F. Tersteeg.

Relation to art and architecture

In the late 19th century different influences and styles in architecture existed side by side in Europe.

It was the first time that people started wondering about the pollution of the natural resources. Nature was considered as good and original, not yet spoiled by culture. The organic form of nature was part of architecture; the building was seen as an organism from inside to outside.

In the same time the functional school of architects like Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Louis Sullivan developed the theory 'form follows function' in 1895. Different movements influenced

the designing of gardens. Some architects worked together with garden architects. For example the British garden architect Gertrude Jekyll worked together with the architect Edwin L. Lutyens (see below) and also it is known that the garden architect Tersteeg collaborated with architects (compare chapter Amsterdamse School Gardens).

Above all, the influence of the Functionalism was strong. The rooms of houses continued in the garden, like kitchen - vegetable garden, livingroom - flower garden, entrance - in front square. The influence of Art Nouveau increased the use of decoration and flowers in garden architecture.

Primitivism was one of the biggest themes; it also involved the writing and reading of historical tales. Everything that was more or less old, naïve, and primitive was good. It is known that some gardens at that time were full of foreign species of plants and little theme-gardens inspired by other cultures.

Situation in the Netherlands

Garden styles in the Netherlands at the end of the 19th century were combined under the name of 'Jonge Tuinkunst'. There were also Arts & Crafts style gardens, and gardens designed under influence of Art Nouveau, but most gardens were eclectic, which means that they contained elements of a lot of different styles.

Dutch garden architecture was influenced by the physical structure. The flatness of the countryside, where the gardens were mainly formed in renaissance



style, was a long time the reason for the laying out of terraces, the designing of different levels and the building of cascades. Also the small size of gardens, caused by the density of agriculture, is the reason why Dutch gardens had an own face.

There was no urgent search for a new style. The landscape style was the main direction in garden art till 1850 although the influence of this landscape style lasted no longer in the designs of larger parks. Up to the 20th century villa parks and country houses were built for the nouveaux riches. This was the starting point for a new style between formal and natural trends.

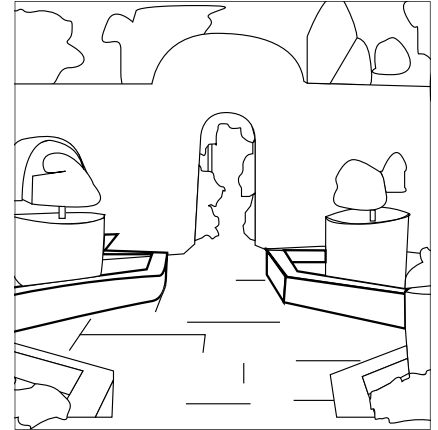
In the course of the changing situation, were smaller gardens were wanted, two thoughts developed, which laid the foundation for a new modern architectural style. On one hand there was the formal architectural thought with restriction in luxurious vegetation, a visible border and also the connection of the garden to the house and on the other hand there were the natural trends with interests in the special quality of individual plants.

Different Styles in the Netherlands

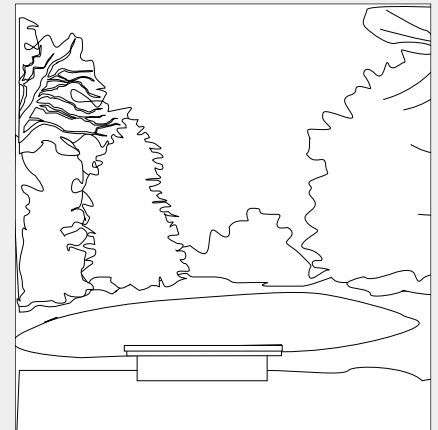
'Gemengde Stijl'

On a result of the industrialisation, that developed in the Netherlands very late, from 1870 till 1900, in comparison to other European countries, a large group of middle class arose. The demand

for smaller gardens than the Landscape Style gardens grew in that time. From 1870 on, the increasingly prosperous merchants built new villas in towns and in rural places accessible by rail. Villa building was the changing point for garden architecture in the last 30 years of the 19th century. The combination of the small surface area with the Landscape Style was the first try in the 'Gemengde Stijl' (mixed style). But the small dimension of the gardens decreased more and more, so the romantic garden style was no longer used. In 1899 new ideas, influenced by Berlage, shaped the Dutch garden architecture. Garden architects kept their own styling and morphology with the before used style but with a changing in the size of gardens; the Gemengde Stijl was born. The mixed style incorporated both landscape and formal elements. It showed a more rectangular style close to the house and a flowing, landscape influenced, part out of it. Romantic landscape locations were made more perfect. The garden was seen as the continuation of the building. Architectural lines and forms of the outward appearance were used for parts in the garden design close to the house. The living space was extended into the garden. Sometimes architects worked very close to garden architects, but it was not typical for this time. Architects acknowledged the building as a unity with the garden, but wanted to improve the house over the garden. Inspirations of the past were mentioned. Renaissance or baroque elements were copied



architectonic influences



landscape influences

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Landscape style by H. Copijn, 1879



Mixed Style by L.A. Springer



Architectonic style by H. Copijn, 1919

to create new designs. While the house was standing in a rectangle on a small groundplan of the garden, the romantic Landscape Style would ruin the aesthetic of the house, because it did no longer fit together. This was the reason that surroundings had to be one with the architecture and more architectural gardens were planned.

Romantically curved gardens gave more and more way for rectangular laying outs.

The mixed style can be found in designs of H. Copijn, L.W. Copijn and L.A Springer.

Henri Copijn (1842-1923) was at first more a gardener, who knew a lot about planting great trees, than a garden architect. He worked with geometric garden parts close to the house, which he placed in a more landscape surrounding. Later on he started designing parks by drawing the groundplan only.

Lodewijk Wilhelmus Copijn (1878-1945) worked together with his father. He used several styles for his designs and even copied a Renaissance and Baroque layout. He wanted to form gardens as a unit to the buildings, but seldom worked with walls or hedges to form the boundary. He neither used architectonic elements like pergolas, places to sit or summerhouses. Copijn worked also in the Modern Architectonic Style.

Leonard Anthony Springer (1855-1940) was the key figure of the Dutch landscape architecture

of the 19th and 20th century. In his opinion a garden architect must have the knowledge of both the historical development of the garden art and the use of material. After 1907 only worked in the Gemengde Stijl. His designs were very functionalistic. He was influenced by Tersteeg and followed the fashion that the independent landscape architect has to work in co-operation with the architect to form something that fits to the surrounding.

'Architectonische Stijl'

Later on, from the beginning of the 20th century, the garden design was made of formal groundplans with geometric and rectangular elements; the building and the garden as a whole.

This style was introduced into the Netherlands by the German architect H.H.A. Wentzel who designed the flower garden at the Prinsessestuint at De Paauw (1853), and by the Frenchman E.F. André, assisted by the Dutch landscape architect H.A.C. Poortman at Weldam and Twickel. These gardens were generally hedged or walled to give them some protection from the wider landscape and were sometimes sunken. In the garden itself there were lots of architectonic elements like little brick walls, pergolas, stairs and brick vases and pots. This new style was called 'architectural style'. Formal elements were plants in a natural context, wild plants as well as exotic and winterhard ones as a reaction against mosaicedbeds. The natural need for plants was the starting point of the designing



with plants. This natural thinking in combination with the formal design and the grouping of plants was the basis of the new designing. The meaning of colour grew and colour-combinations and one-colour beds developed. Differences in height of the terrain were not softened by terraces or stairs like during the renaissance. It was not the aim to copy an older style, but a new kind of gardening was found. The function of the garden, belonging to a building, was no longer to go into nature, but to enjoy art. People, having their own garden, saw a need for beauty, a continuation of atmosphere in the gardens, the garden as a special outdoor room.

In contrast with all the other styles, this opinion and the mostly symmetric, straight and bend forms had a lot in common with Amsterdamse School.

This new garden style was probably inspired by the building-principles of Frank Lloyd Wright. Frank Lloyd Wright was an American architect. He made organic architecture that had a strong bond with the surrounding landscape. He wanted the building and the surroundings to be a whole, and not all separate units.

Both the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his Dutch colleague Versteegh drew designs with a free, independent ground plan and a strong relationship between in- and outside.

Dirk Frederik Tersteeg (1876-1942) was the only man who worked only in the modern Architectural Style. He also was one of the first

garden architects who worked in this new style. He was really active in his profession and was chairman of many commissions. He followed the English architects in designing architectonic gardens for villas and cottages. The garden was intended as a lengthening of the house. The building was the starting point and model for the new garden. The garden was divided into several spaces like an apartment into different rooms. All of the garden parts had their own function and could be seen from the inside of the apartment. A special creation for parts of the garden were obtained by the deeper differentiation in the ground level or hedges and walls.

Hugo Anne Cornelius Poortman (1858-1953) worked mostly in the Gemengde Stijl. Later he designed gardens in a more architectonic way by using formed trees like taxus and buxus. Most of his principals were owners of estates.

Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942) was a garden architect who worked in the formal Architectural Style. He held the opinion that the house was the basis reference for the garden design. He thought that there had to be only one new garden style. His interests in designing are clearly stated in the following quote: "the object of formal gardening is to bring the two (the house and surrounding grounds) in harmony, to make the house grow out of its surroundings and to prevent its being expressed of the face of nature".¹⁾ His reaction to the natural garden was that he said that one could



L.A. Springer, 1880



L.A. Springer, 1916



Poortman, 1926

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Bergman, 1926



Tersteeg, Remmerstein 1912



Lutyens, Folly Farm 1912

be a good garden designer without knowledge of plants. His designs for smaller gardens consisted of formal lines and architectonic elements like pergolas, metalwork, walls and hedges.

Natural Style

In general the house was placed on a higher level than the surrounding. In the Natural Style the natural relief was basis for the laying out. Higher hedges or walls formed the border of the garden. Special for the modern Natural Style was the importance of very small details. Ornaments were worked out, paths with a special function were made out of brick, these were the ones round the house or terraces and stairs. The other paths consisted of grass. Elements were pergolas, places to sit, balustrades and steps, walls, pergolas as connecting element of the house and garden.

Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) brought the Natural Style to Holland. She was a British artist, landscape gardener and crafts artist.

After 1900 grew the interest in local plants. Architects worked in the architectonic style but plants played an important role. Natural use of plants with wild ones was included in the diversity of gardens. Swamp-, alpine- and watergardens with decorative gardenplants were built. First Gertrude Jekyll was advocate of the wild garden just as W. Robinson (1838-1935). William Robinson was an Irish gardener and he became a prolific writer and one of the most influential

voices in garden design of the Victorian age.

Jekyll interpreted and refined his ideas. Wild plant borders and use of colour were special elements of these designs.

At the beginning of the 20th Century Gertrude Jekyll worked together with the architect Edwin L. Lutyens (1869-1944). He was one of the most important English architects of the early 20th century and designed gardens for country-houses. In the co-operation they worked in a style consisting of formal architectonic groundplans orientated at the house and an informal natural pattern in relation to the surrounding. With this work the natural and the formal style flowed together, especially in designs for cottage houses.

The overview of garden- and landscape architecture is helpful when looking at the garden design of the Walter Maas Huis. The knowledge of the appearance of gardens in the time that the Walter Maas Huis was built and the different styles belonging to private gardens stimulate new ideas for a new design connected to these former styles.

¹⁾ C Polson, The park and the town, chapter Victoria Park by G.F. Chadwick

