

Birkhäuser

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**Positions
Projects
Potentials**

**Thinking
Color
in Space**

Color islands

Color islands are places in space that are defined on the strength of the color, without clear spatial delimitation. There is no clear-cut distinction between a niche and an island. Color islands can be created in a number of ways—using colored areas, with a combination of colored areas and colored solids, or by highlighting a shape using color. Maat architettura defined the dining area within a large, multifunctionally used main room of a Wilhelminian-style apartment using a lemon-yellow color. By coating just two wall surfaces and a defined area of floor, they created a chromatic space that has the power to take precedence over the multicolored, ornamental tiled floor.

At the seniors' care home in Pont-sur-Yonne, France, the architect Dominique Coulon has designed the circulation routes as an inviting con-course in which to take a stroll. At the corner points, colored areas on walls and ceilings, with a spectrum ranging from bright pink to a strong red, create places for communication and casual encounters. Colored volumes shaped as objects for sitting on or leaning against supplement the areas.

Even without involving walls, clearly defined spaces can be created that develop a high recognition value, for example in the Combiwerk in Delft, the Netherlands, a social training center for people with psychological or mental disabilities. The uniform gray of the office carpet tiles across the large hall floor is interrupted by numerous monochrome islands in different colors. These are formed by carpet tiles in variations of red, green, blue, and yellow color shades that combine like pixels in a picture. The furnishing replicates the color nuances in the floor finish. With this concept, the interior designers of i29 have succeeded in enlivening the economically constructed area with its monochrome gray hall. The design can also be read as a symbol of the diversity and individuality of the users. In order to create extra height for a mezzanine floor in the conversion of a former garage to create a residence, DoepelStrijkers sank the kitchen to a level below the floor. Seating steps leading down to this level were finished with a bright-orange polyurethane coating, thus creating a place for rest and conversation. The shiny surface of the polycarbonate light box fitted above generates strong color reflections and spreads the color in the space. The lower floor level is part of a three-dimensional space sequence that leads from the road, also somewhat lower, to the private garden.

The color island in the library of the Nordstjerneskolen School in Frederikshavn, Denmark, appears as a sculptural object projecting into the space. The multistory color landmark is located in the center of the star-shaped layout plan and, owing to its volume and conspicuous color—orange—can be seen from all areas of the school. The stepped, pyramid-shaped form invites you to sit and develops a strong presence and identity in the large hall.



i29 interior architects,
Combiwerk Delft, social workspace,
Delft, The Netherlands, 2012



Arkitema Architects,
 Nordstjerneskolen, Frederikshavn, Denmark, 2012.
 Color: Red, s1580-Y90R,
 high-gloss paint on sanded drywall construction



maat architettura, Apartment,
 Turin, Italy, 2006.
 Epoxy resin coating on floor and wall, satin finish,
 color code: SIKKENS G8.30.85 (4041 color concept)



Dominique Coulon & associés,
 Seniors' care home, Pont-sur-Yonne, France, 2014,
 Color shades walls and ceiling: white RAL 9003;
 color shades walls and ceiling of island:
 light pink Sikkens F8.11.75 or dark pink Sikkens A8.20.60

Following pages:
 Duzan Doepel, Eline Strijkers with Stefan Meyer,
 Arjan Pit in cooperation with Lex Architects,
 Parksite, apartment, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 2008,
 Paint: epoxy resin coating, color shade orange

