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A world full of water

An interview with water-architect Koen Olthuis

Cities, water, and the upcoming Olympics, subjects that describes an architect who is not afraid to look at what is coming. Second Sight interviewed Koen Olthuis of [Waterstudio](#) to get an insight in the future of architecture.

'Water is something most architects ignored all these years, all they did was replacing water for land creating it in the same way as they did for many years. But the needs of people change constantly and won't become fulfilled by the old ways of building.' With the subject water left open Olthuis saw new opportunities that also connect to the dynamics of the city. Full of enthusiasm he told us about the diversity water can offer the overcrowded cities, which are in need of change and development.

Koen Olthuis describes his architecture thoughts as young and inspired by the flexibility of the city. He will never settle for the old ways of building and only cares for willing changes of people and places. So the dynamic and the need for innovation always will be answered.

We wondered, what is the answer to the lack of space in cities. 'Floating apps', he said. He explained: 'One of our ideas is the [Floating Games](#), the Olympics on water. What if we transformed the stadium in a floating island that can be re-used every 4 years in different countries. You won't lose any scarce space on land that becomes useless when the games have finished.' Thus, a new form of recycling on a larger scale, recycling an Olympic islands by moving it overseas to another place.

'But', he immediately interrupts. 'This is just one of the aspects of this concept. There is so much more to achieve. These Floating apps could be the answer to the climate change and urbanization.' Even more excited he told us about wet-slums. 'The slums in India increase enormously and they make the cities more and more crowded. Those homes aren't safe and the places aren't secure. So how can we upgrade their prosperity; by making slums on water. An easy way to increase the wealth and also an answer to the need of flexibility in this city. By beginning with the basic needs, which means building a floating water-filter to improve the quality of the water, the upgrade begins.'

A progress for humans and their crowded land, but probably a decadency for life underwater. 'Actually not at all, before we build we have researched the possibilities of creating an floating app that will not have an impact on the environment underwater. These floating buildings even help develop the habitats of fish and water plants.' Besides, Waterstudio also created a [Sea Tree](#), which has an positive green effect on the living environment of aquatic animals and creatures in the air. (as seen in the picture)

What is the next step, we asked? 'The innovative ideas are there, but now we have to convince the authorities and political parties. If they are willing to invest in the future we can elaborate the ideas in something that could make a difference on a larger scale.' Are you talking about the future of floating cities? 'I don't believe in complete cities on water, I do believe in responding to the flexibility of a city. Thus the future of architecture will be having small hybrid cities as an addition to the huge cities on land. So we can constantly answer to the innovative desires of urbanization.'

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Sea Tree by WaterstudioNL