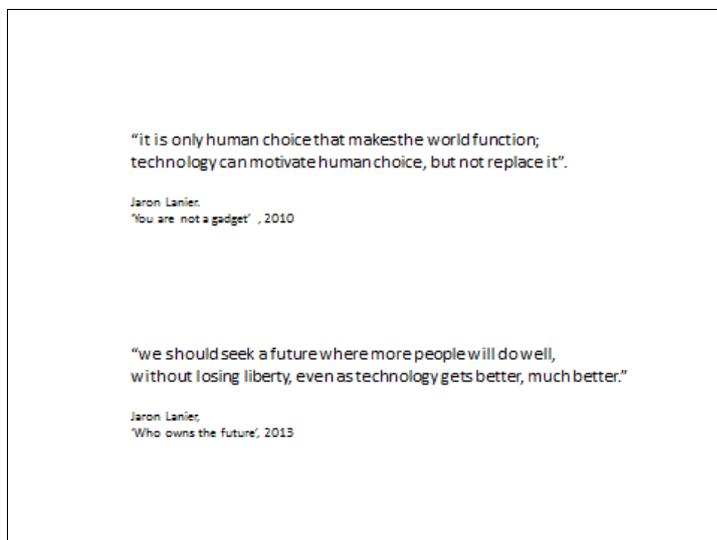


Introduction 9-4

Good morning everybody,

Welcome in Rotterdam, welcome on what five years ago was declared the WW-IoT-day: April 9.

Many thanks already to Peter van Waart for his introduction; these days would not be possible without the cooperation from HRO. The purpose of this day is to discuss the IoT all over the world, no matter if this is done by 2 people over a cup of coffee or by 200 in a conference. In 2011 the IoT-website Postscapes mentioned worldwide 4 meetings - one of which was in Rotterdam - now we have over 25 this year.



sheet 1

In my introduction at the Home-Sense conference in V2 in 2011 I referred to a statement made in 2010 by Jaron Lanier, founding father of virtual reality: *"it is only human choice that makes the world function; technology can motivate human choice, but not replace it"*. Last week I bought his latest book: *Who owns the future?*

You can imagine I have not had enough time yet to read it , but one remark in his introduction has already found a place in my memory: *"we should seek a future where more people will do well, without losing liberty, even as technology gets better, much better."* Is this advanced understanding? This, of course, is not on the internet of things as such; but it fits a development which is addressed by prof. Jan Rotmans as a society that is 'tilting'; from agriculture and energy, from politics to technology, from economy to healthcare. We see series of books dedicated to other ways of living; sometimes referring to thoughts and ideas created already decades ago. Many acknowledge we need other ways; other lives with another emphasis.

Now, to the focus of today: the internet of things and our build environment.

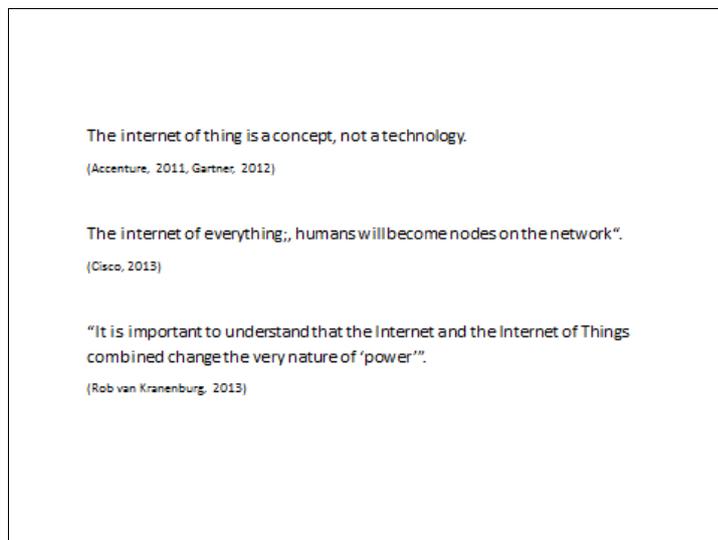
First; we speak of the internet of things: but what do we mean? Is there consensus on what the internet of things is, or is not? One thing is for sure: it is not, like many think, a technological

development that is yet to come. It is here already, it is going to stay and it will become an even greater part of our daily life.

Recently MIT's Technology Review has coined 2013 as the year of the Internet of Things. At the recent CES-show in Las Vegas the Internet of Things was predicted to be "all the rage."

Does that mean that we have to lay back and let it all happen? In a more scientific phrasing: are we determinists or instrumentalists? If I see the many meetings, symposia and conferences on the IoT, I cannot escape from the conclusion that the emphasis still is on the technology, with the questions focused on business-cases. If, however, we do not understand the role of technology in its context we face the danger of implementing the equivalent of a Trojan horse. Where it concerns our build environment it concerns matters of public space vs. private space; therefore matters of privacy.

That means also rising the question whether the internet of things is a technology or something else.



sheet 2

On Feb. 8th. of this year I was present at the European Commission's Onlife-Initiative conference in Brussels. (I will not go into more detail on this meeting, since our first speaker is far more capable of doing that.) Subtitle of the guiding Manifesto is "Concept Reengineering Exercise: rethinking public spaces in the digital transition".

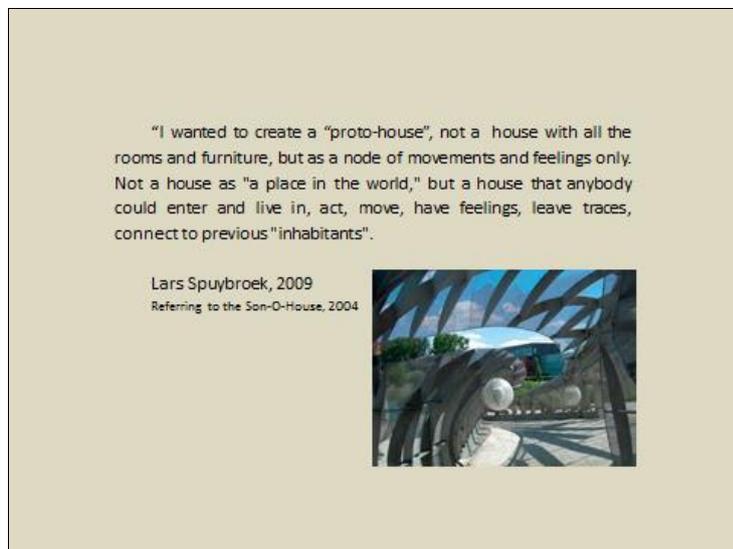


sheet 3

Since our environment, be it public or private, is an important element with regard to the human condition we cannot escape the discussion about the consequences for our build environment : architecture and everything that has an influence on it.

The emphasis of our approach for this week is the human aspect of the internet of things; this has been the focus of Council a well since 2009. We *do* acknowledge that the technology is there, we can identify possible applications. But as long as man is not the most important element in shaping this environment we cannot speak of a sphere – to use Sloterdijk’s term – that is more than just a build structure. We need to stay in touch; literally.

Our build environment is raised from a physical, an analogue if you wish, surface: in the words of the late architect/monk Dom van der Laan: “we extract architectural space as an emptiness out of natural space”. From that moment on we build, we articulate space, we erect a structure which houses us, which facilitates the framework for lived space and ultimately serves as an interface. But our lived space is so much more than just the sum of build structures. The Internet of Things provides objects (‘things’) with an identity, making them identifiable, recognisable, connectable and therefore potentially to be influenced. We do not create an overall connected environment: we provide the possibility of being connected, being adaptable. Instead of an architecture which serves as an passive environment we provide the means to create a sphere beyond things which serves as a personalised entity at a certain place and time; we facilitate the boundaries of privacy connected to that place and time. I believe our time needs a build environment that reflects its time; where it concerns technology *and* human needs.

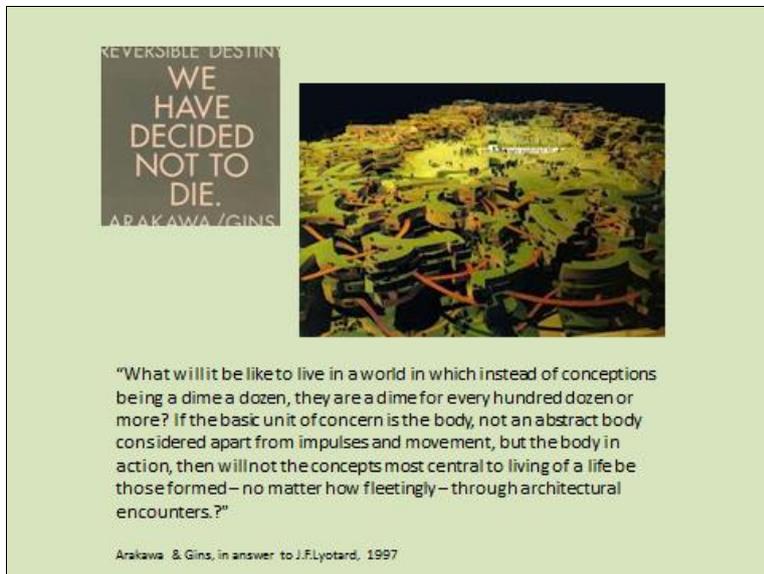


sheet 4

rethinking on a concept, I like to refer to certain projects some 50 years ago: Kiesler’s Endless House, Constant’s New Babylon, Cook’s Computer City, Kurokawa’s Capsular City and others. Many of them were considered un-livable, utopian. But let us not forget that these projects too were thinking-projects in the first place; so the rethinking of a concept: the city, its inhabitants and their dwelling. In the words of Anthony Vidler: it was vagabond architecture. Now, we are maybe more nomads than ever before.

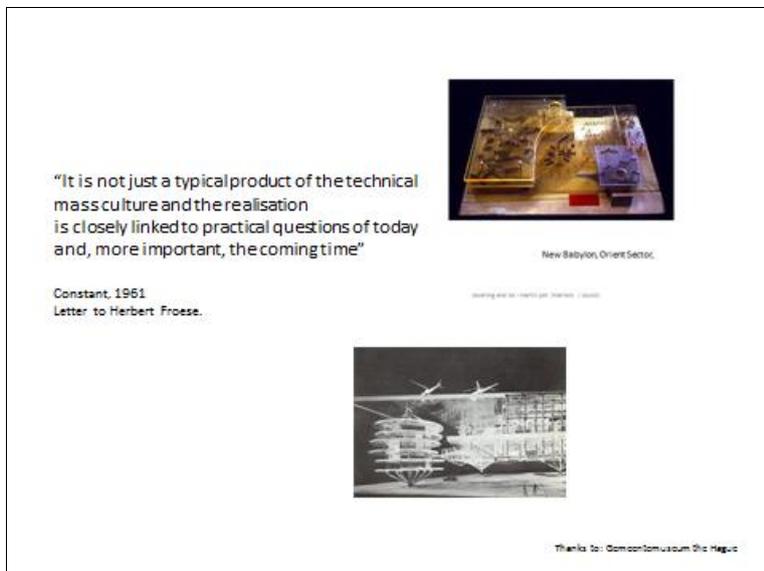
In 1998 Kevin Ashton coined the term Internet of Things. The year before, in 1997, the same year that Mark Weiser and John Seeley Brown wrote their famous text - the Coming Age of Calm Computing - there were two exhibitions:

one in the Guggenheim Museum in New York on the works of architects/artists Arakawa and Gins: Reversible Destiny.



sheet 5

the other in Witte de With on the works of Constant's New Babylon; called the Hyper-architecture of Desire.



sheet 6

Both, like many more before them, re-thought the concept of building and lived space. I will leave it up to you to decide the actual value of these projects.

Over the last 50 years we have witnessed a variety of projects that emphasised other elements that influence our lived space, elements beyond technology without disregarding just that.

"Together, let us desire, conceive and create the new structure of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting – in one unity."

Architect Walter Gropius, 1919

"Along side the universal need for the survival of the human species, the global project of the Third paradise is conceived, which consists in leading everything that is artificial; that is science and technology together with art; to give back life to Earth."

The Third Paradise, Michelangelo Pistoletto, 2003.
<http://www.pistoletto.it/eng/crono26.htm>

sheet 7

If we read these two texts, written over 80 years after each other, we cannot escape the similarities. If I look at our program for today, guided by Martin Spindler, I expect a day to remember. Thank you.