**From shelf to slide**

The basement of a former school building, a windy parking garage, was designated to be transferred into a day care centre for 80 children and 2 playgroups. Besides the client asked for a professional kitchen since the children would get a warm meal every day. The day care centre is part of the new Community School at the Nieuwstraat in the heart of Rotterdam.

A dark and low-height parking garage containing many solid columns would not be the ideal place to develop a day care centre. The traditional way of designing separate group rooms did not satisfy the demands. The squared room of more than 600 sq m required an open design in order to let the light shine deep into the space. The main idea of the interior design was to divide the room into various areas for activities. A sinuous furniture object was placed in the room, dividing it into a great number of areas. In this way the dark parking space was magically transformed into a stimulating and light playing area. In order to bring in as much daylight as possible the existing fencing in the facades were replaced by transparent glass. Energy saving lighting and a white ceiling are adding up to get the desired lightness. The ceiling has a high ability to absorb sound so that the total room is quiet. The playgroups are openly connected to the great room but can be separated by doors. The great room is divided into various areas of activities. When entering the children will gather at their group tables: this is the base for each child. After sharing a meal everyone can go to his or her favorite place to build, read, paint or listen to music. There is a place to do homework, to draw or to cook in a separate kitchen for children with a restaurant. Rising stars can show their talents at the stage with awatching audience. Indeed there is a place to game and maybe the most popular element, a slide! The shelves and furniture objects are designed in detail and custom made to meet their specific function.

**Accents of colour**

Each main group has its specific identity. This identity is emphasised by a colour that is adopted in the shelves. The colours add to a feeling of security and peace and show the character of the group. We chose for a pallet of blue and green. The two playgroups share the lighter variants of the colour pallets. In the great room the use of both dark and light colours results in a layered view. The colours can be recognised as lines that playfully move along the shelves. Sometimes at the door, sometimes at the back inside a shelf. From one main group you can particularly see blue, from the other green dominates.