Finding the Way: Reconsidering Wayfinding and Liminal Spaces.

Maurice van Schendel

This projects considers train stations as liminal spaces, which refers to areas of transition, often perceived as places where regular rules of time and space are suspended. It approaches a possible dual function for these transport hubs: as points of transit and as refuges for marginalised individuals.

The accompanying essay analyses this dual role using ‘Perron Nul’ in Rotterdam and ‘Platzspitz’ in Zurich as case studies. It explores the duality of train stations as hubs of transit and final destinations for those with nowhere else to go.

The accompanying creative project reimagines wayfinding in train stations to reflect the directionlessness experienced by marginalized individuals who use these spaces as temporary refuges. Traditional wayfinding designs focus on guiding people efficiently from point A to point B. In contrast, this project introduces signs intended to evoke empathy and awareness. Through reconsidered iconography, abstract paths, and placement, these redesigned signs aim to capture the uncertainty and liminality faced by those on the fringes of society, transforming train stations into more inclusive and compassionate urban environments.



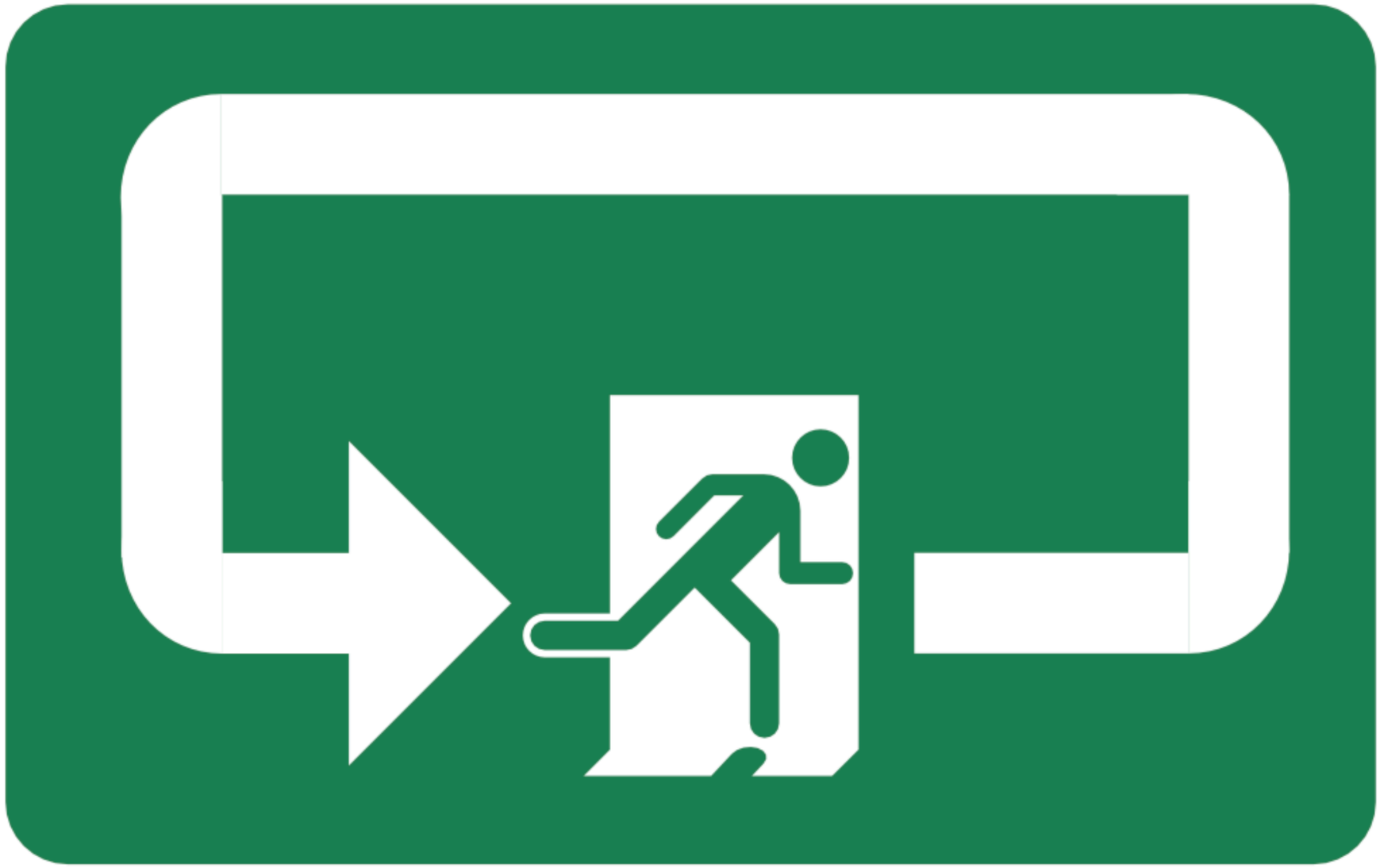
Zurich Main Station.



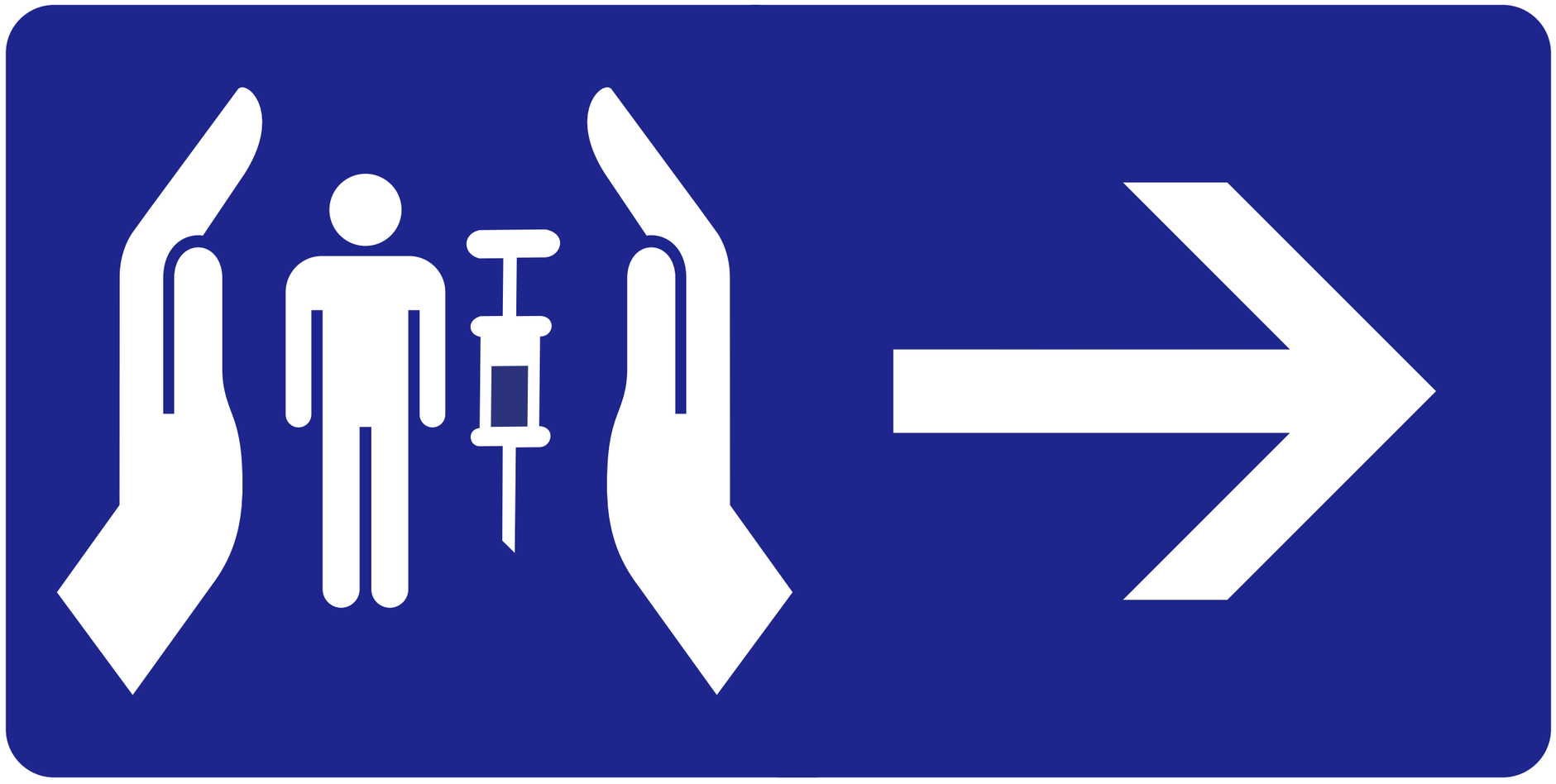
Platzspitz Park next to Zurich Main Station



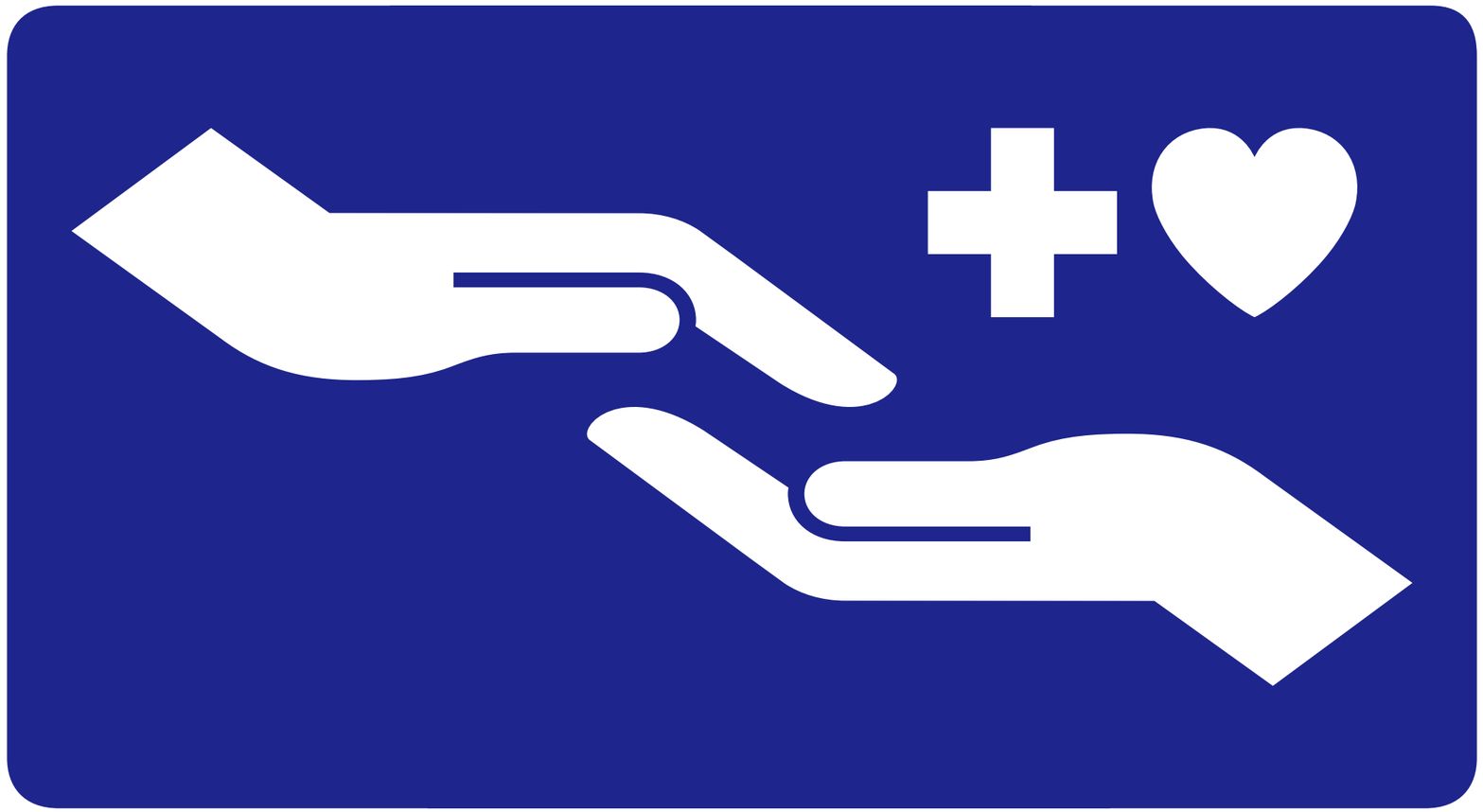
Perron Nul next to Rotterdam Central Station



No Way Out



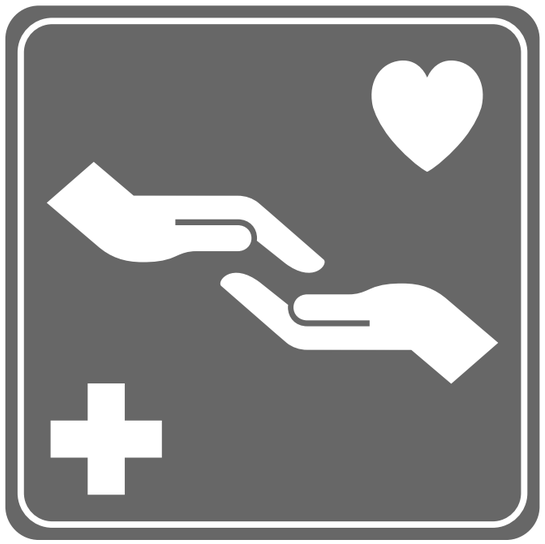
Possible design for signage pointing to a safe space for drug users.



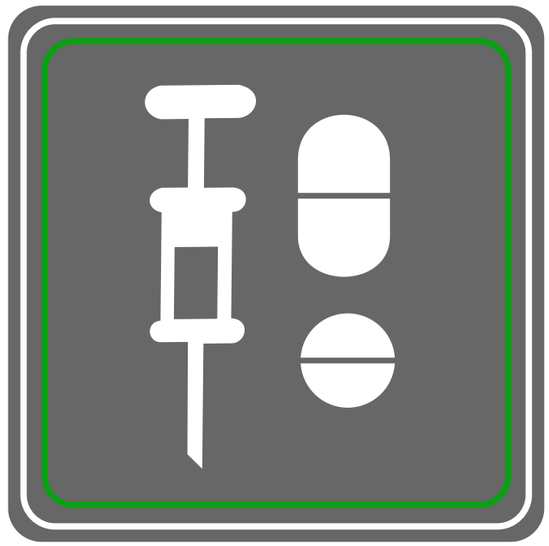
Social support.



Colours for different domains.



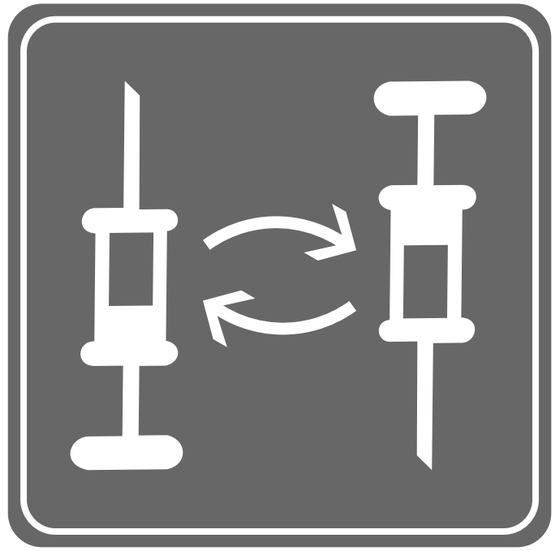
Social support.



Drug use permitted.



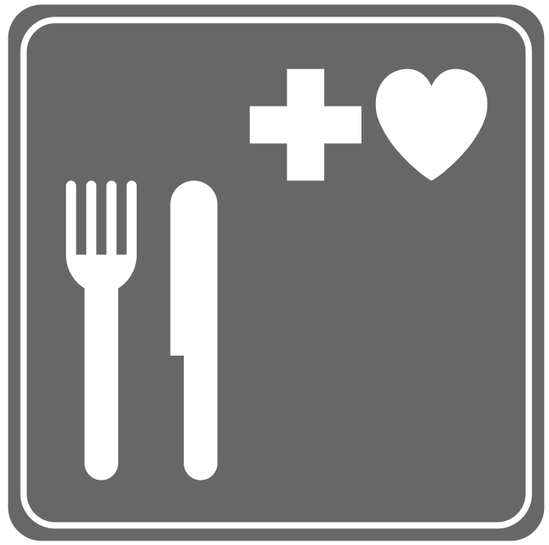
Consumption room.



Needle exchange.



Drug safety check.



Social support, food and beverage.



Social support, showers.



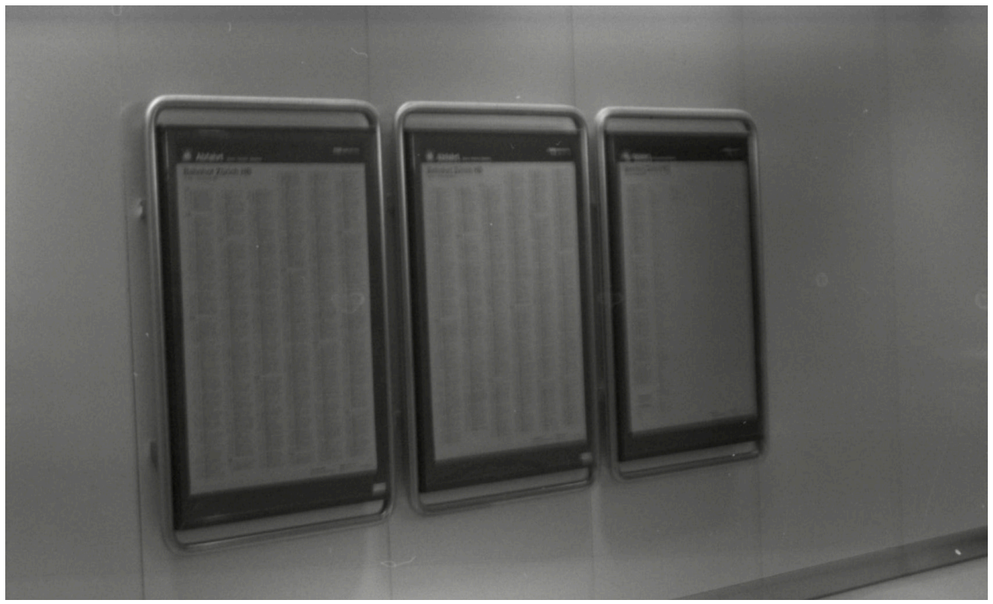
Social support, sleeping facilities.


12:09 St. Gallen
12:12 Ahrwil
12:14 Zürich Flughafen
12:19 Effretikon
33
34


18
41 - 44


SOS
WC


IR75 12:35 Luzern
Thalwil Baar Zug Rotkreuz
EC 12:33 Milano Centrale
Zug Arth-Goldau Bellinzona Lugano
Gleis 8
Gleis 9




IC 5 12:30 Lausanne
Olten Biel/Bienne
Ohne Halt in Oensingen


18
43
44


41 - 44


Bahnhofquai
Landesmuseum
Bahnhofstrasse



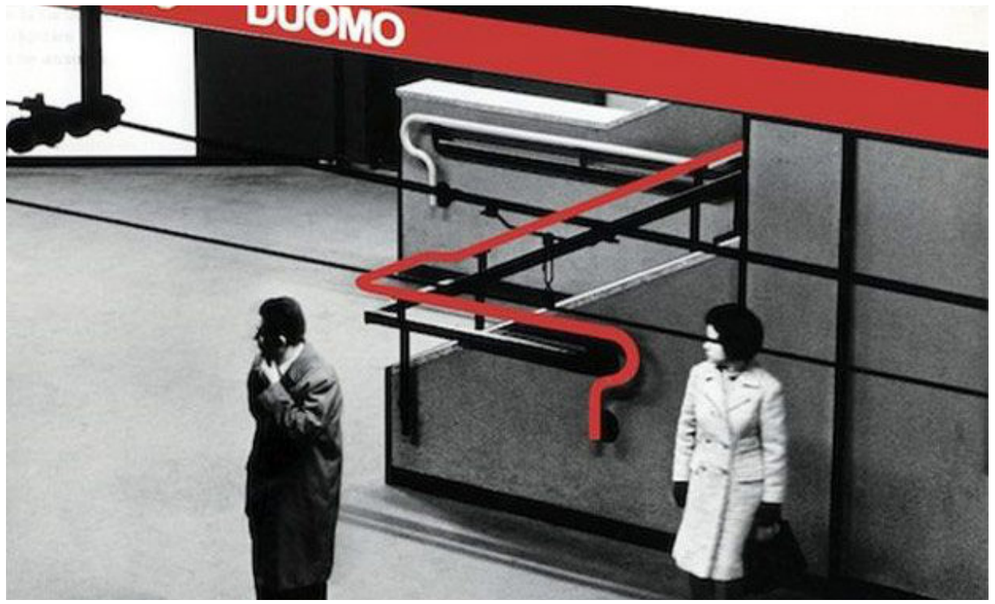

Gleis 41 – 44
Sihlquai
Bus Station
Gleis 21 22


Abfahrt Départ Partenza Departure
Abfahrt Départ Partenza Departure
Abfahrt Dé


Gleis 4 – 18
Gleis 21 – 44
Sihlquai


SBB CFF FFS
Eine Produktsuite.
Nahtloses Arbeiten.
VERANTWORTUNG
SBB CFF FFS

The Following pages contain various sources of inspiration.



Excerpt from a paper on the design philosophy behind the Milan Metro:

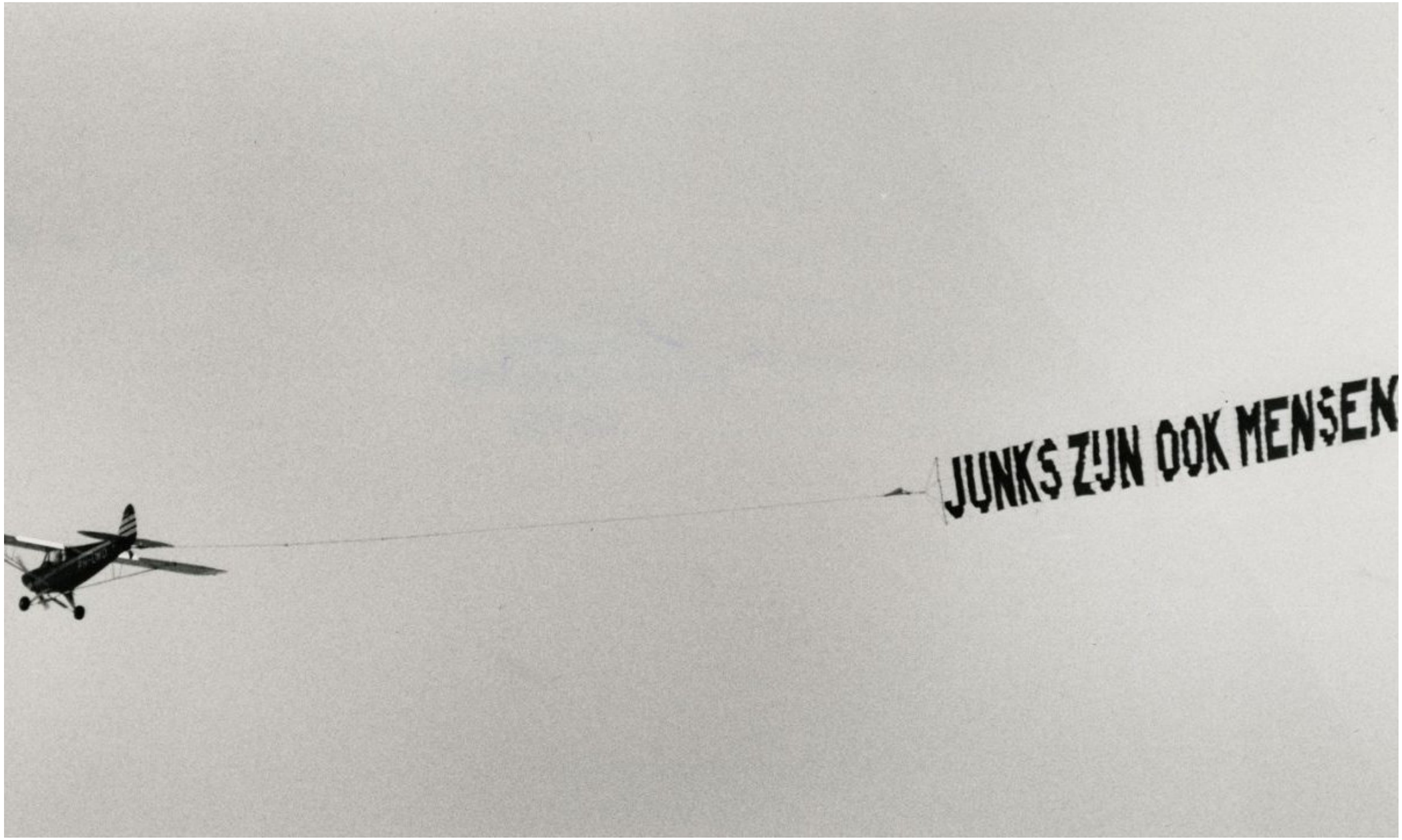
“Albini ‘tied’ the entire structure with a tubular element painted in red enamel as the most characteristic feature of the project, which serves both as the handrail and a partition of the
spaces. It has a diameter of 47.5mm with standard curves welded in the terminal laps so, it was described as a strand of Ariadne that facilitates descents and ascents. He gave a sense of aesthetics to the functions as registration of tickets, flow management and passenger counting by his turnstile design that was made of metal and colored red as the rest of the architecture.”



Typography and Signage of the Milan Metro


بوابة
Gate
53
بوابة
Gate
54




JUNK$ ZIJN OOK MEN$EN




Jelmoli
Das Beste für Sie.






uitgang
exit
bagage
baggage claim area
D 49

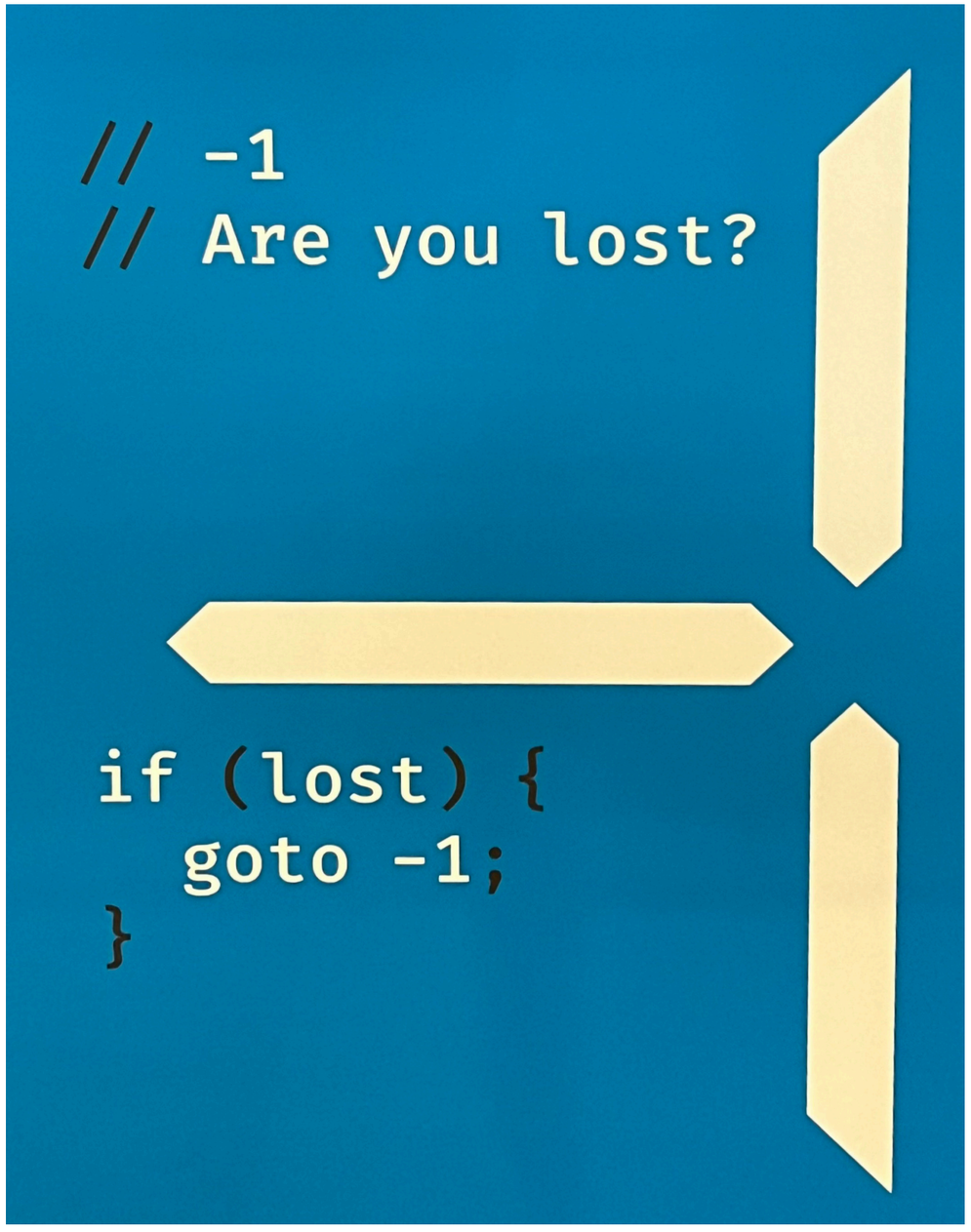


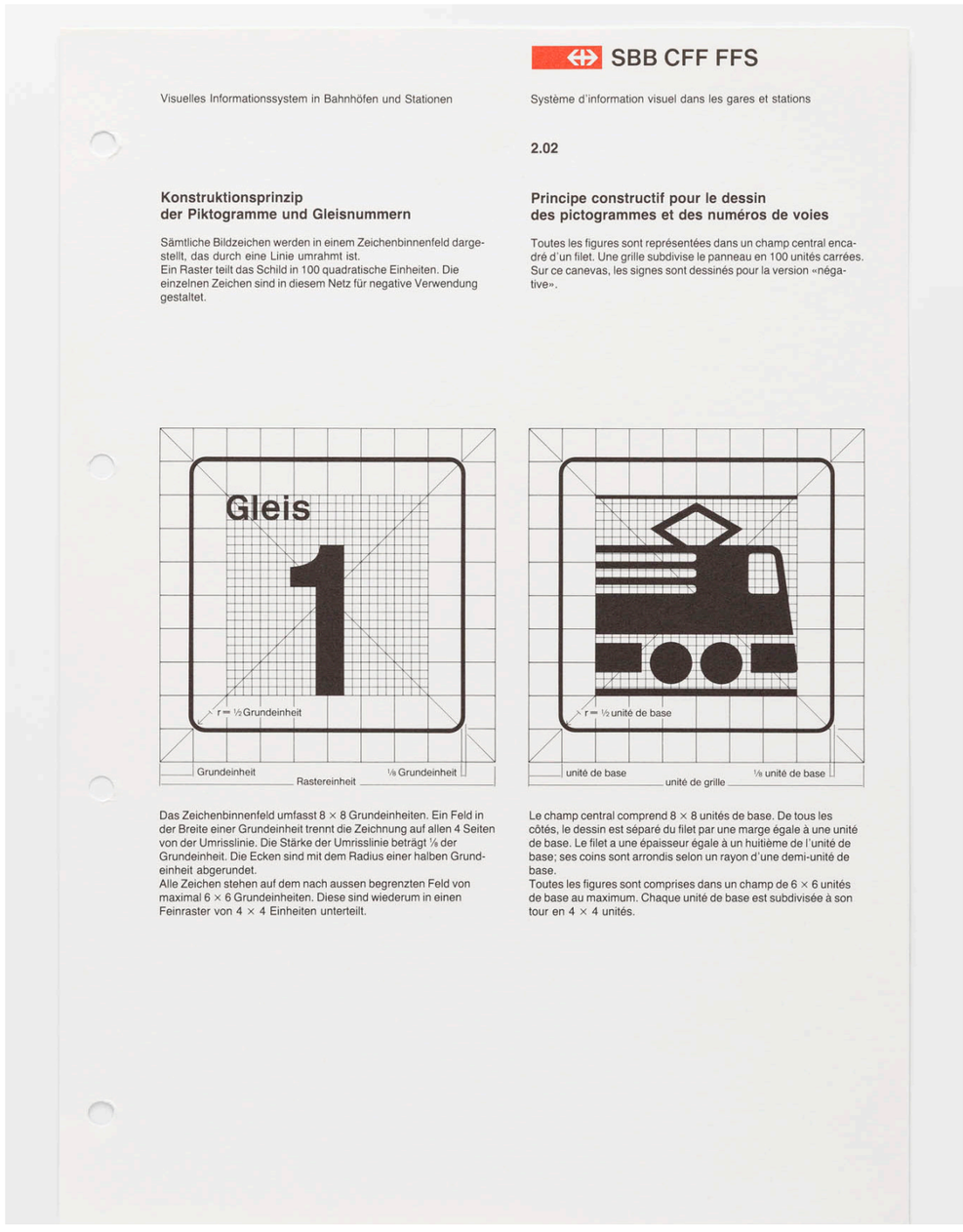












SBB CFF FFS

Visuelles Informationssystem in Bahnhöfen und Stationen

Système d'information visuel dans les gares et stations

2.02

Konstruktionsprinzip der Piktogramme und Gleisnummern

Sämtliche Bildzeichen werden in einem Zeichenbinnenfeld dargestellt, das durch eine Linie umrahmt ist.
Ein Raster teilt das Schild in 100 quadratische Einheiten. Die einzelnen Zeichen sind in diesem Netz für negative Verwendung gestaltet.

Principe constructif pour le dessin des pictogrammes et des numéros de voies

Toutes les figures sont représentées dans un champ central encadré d'un filet. Une grille subdivise le panneau en 100 unités carrées. Sur ce canevas, les signes sont dessinés pour la version «négative».

Das Zeichenbinnenfeld umfasst 8 × 8 Grundeinheiten. Ein Feld in der Breite einer Grundeinheit trennt die Zeichnung auf allen 4 Seiten von der Umrisslinie. Die Stärke der Umrisslinie beträgt ⅛ der Grundeinheit. Die Ecken sind mit dem Radius einer halben Grundeinheit abgerundet.
Alle Zeichen stehen auf dem nach aussen begrenzten Feld von maximal 6 × 6 Grundeinheiten. Diese sind wiederum in einen Feinraster von 4 × 4 Einheiten unterteilt.

Le champ central comprend 8 × 8 unités de base. De tous les côtés, le dessin est séparé du filet par une marge égale à une unité de base. Le filet a une épaisseur égale à un huitième de l'unité de base; ses coins sont arrondis selon un rayon d'une demi-unité de base.
Toutes les figures sont comprises dans un champ de 6 × 6 unités de base au maximum. Chaque unité de base est subdivisée à son tour en 4 × 4 unités.