



## Portrait of the Welcoming 1-to-5 Star Hotel

The Lloyd Hotel and Cultural Embassy in Amsterdam is an all-accommodating establishment that is rich with history as it is with quirkiness. Guests have the liberty to choose from 117 rooms, each fitted out by Dutch artists and designers and classed between one to five stars based on their size. The Lloyd Hotel invites guests to make themselves at home and with their laidback persona and unique concept, it's likely no guests will leave the charming invitation unanswered. Here's a sliver of the story behind the hotel's intrinsic beauty.

**STORY BY** Natasha Gan **PHOTO BY** Lloyd Hotel Doc.

*WHEN THE SHIPPING COMPANY ROYAL DUTCH LLOYD COMMISSIONED EVERT BREMAN TO DESIGN A HOTEL FOR IMMIGRANTS IN 1916,*

it resulted in the most impressive building among other similar facilities. The hotel became a checkpoint for Eastern Europeans who were travelling to South America, until Royal Dutch Lloyd filed for bankruptcy as World War II rolled in. Just like that, Lloyd hotel became a home for 320 prisoners before serving as a juvenile detention. The sorrow streak halted when, in 1990, the Dutch government handed the historical building to Spinoza Foundation, who rented the rooms as studios for artists.

However, as the years continued to wear down the Lloyd Hotel, a competition was commenced to give it a facelift. The winners Suzanne Oxenaar and



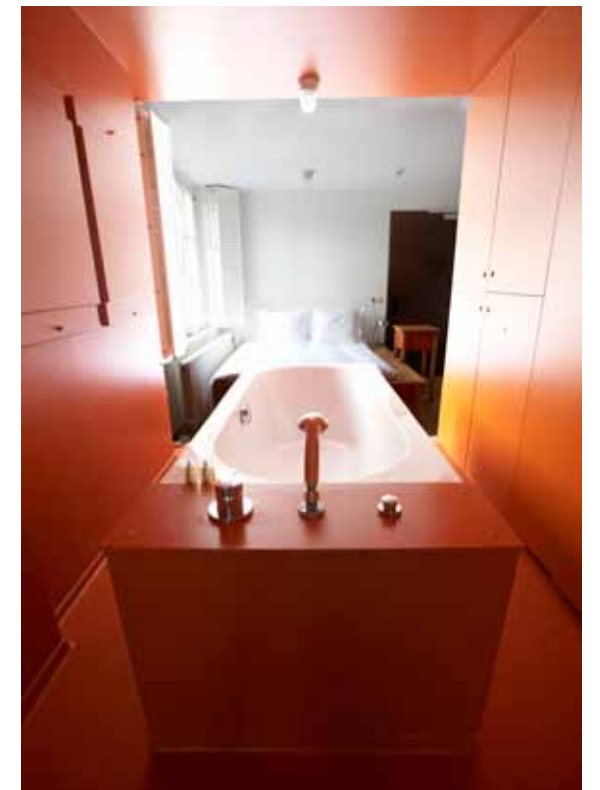
Otto Nan, had the brilliant idea of an operating hotel for everyone with all kinds of budget; lo and behold, with the help of MVRDV architects and over 40 designers and artists, the Lloyd Hotel & Cultural Embassy has now been revived and reopened in 2004 as the world's first one-to-five star hotel.

Reflecting the diverse identities the building had ported throughout the century, Lloyd Hotel embodies the concept of diversity. Whether one is a backpacker looking for a modest hostel-level room, or an acclaimed businessman seeking to indulge in a luxurious room, the hospitable Lloyd Hotel welcomes both to their doorsteps. Bands will appreciate the two rooms equipped with acoustic (soundproof) interior ideal for musical practice.

**PORTRAIT OF THE WELCOMING 1-TO-5 STAR HOTEL**  
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT  
—  
xxx  
—  
xxx  
—  
xxx  
—  
xxxxx



main feature LLOYD HOTEL



**PORTRAIT OF THE  
 WELCOMING 1-TO-5 STAR  
 HOTEL**  
 CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT  
 —  
 XXX  
 —  
 XXX  
 —  
 XXX  
 —  
 XXXXX



Every room is designed to carry a distinct interior and layout from the neighbouring rooms. What is a room today may be refurbished into a meeting room tomorrow and vice versa. That explains the random furniture lining up the corridors; guests are welcome to escort any piece into their rooms shall they need another chair or end table. Treated the same way are the thousands of books scattered around the premises for guests to read anywhere at anytime.

Soaked with history, the Amsterdam hotel isn't garnered the 'cultural embassy' title for naught. One of Lloyd's Hotel's staircases is dedicated to the multitude of noteworthy memories. It screens a documentary 'Lloyd Hotel, portrait of a building' free for those interested. Along the walls are black-and-white pictures that bring onlookers a glimpse of the past. The fourth floor of Lloyd is a library that started with a gift of 1721 art monographs back in 2004. It has tripled in size ever since and serves as a venue for book readings, exhibitions and lectures.

The plethora of stories could go on but if we were to live in the moment, Lloyd Hotel & Cultural Embassy could stand as the most welcoming, historically rich and thought-provoking hotel the world has ever seen. To say the least, certainly its journey from being an immigrant hotel, to a juvenile centre, a prison and concluding as a hotel and cultural centre sets the bar high. <sup>10</sup>