

MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN

*An essay written by Eda Karaböcek about her
personal experience, thoughts and analysis all about doors.*



Fig.1 - Detail door dining room house Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek

INTRODUCTION /

Entering the House Dedel, I stepped foot in the hall where I was greeted by doors. This is where the journey of the house starts and my journey wandering through the spaces. But before I could start this adventure, obstacles surrounded me like identical closed doors that lead me through to another space. But I cannot see to what kind of space, so I had to make the right choice. My imagination was going wild, creating narratives on what could be waiting for me behind the door.

The hall and the passage in a house are spaces that exist backstage, spaces where you meet behind closed doors.¹ The hall started off as a space where all living activities were done when the spaces where extended the passage came into our life.² Now these spaces are not much appreciated, while it is surrounded by other spaces, the spaces are left alone, closed off by doors. Once the beating heart, the core, the beginning of life in the house, the hall has been locked out of the interior in the building.

I opened all the doors in the hall and those in the adjacent room and kept going until I reached outside again. I tried to experience the space, a day in my life, in a different perspective, from a point of view of an object, the door. Encountering the door from a different view will make you view the door in a more valuable way.

¹ Koolhaas, Rem. Elements of Architecture, Corridor (2018), Taschen, pp. 3

² Bryson, Bill. At Home: A Short History of Private Life, The Hall, Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2010, pp. 60

In our daily life and routines, we pass through this object without thinking and noticing we call this object, a door. This object became something we use, touch, and see every day in such a way that it almost becomes invisible. But doors contain many details like the material, the size, the shape, the doorknobs, the lock, and which direction it moves. All of these details tell a story or even manipulate us in the way we behave and feel.

In the first part of this paper, I discuss my personal experience with doors in my daily life and routine. Uncovering the qualities and activities that happen in front and behind the door. In the second part, I analyse the doors that are located in the hall and passage of the House Dedel. This analysis discovers the power of the doors and unveils a new story to the house.



Fig.2 - Door bedroom house Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek



Fig.3 - Arnhem trip inside old barn, 05/09/20, Eda Karaböcek

We probably all have heard someone saying “My door is always open”. Or maybe you have even said it to someone. Just like we pass through a door in our daily life without much thinking, this saying is also something we do not think about and approach it just as something genuine and friendly. But this saying holds power and privilege. It means you have the luxury to have a door, your own space, to exclude yourself from others.³ The space becomes your territory and the power lays in your hands that controls the door.

Speaking of hands, the virus entering our lives last year we all have been washing and sanitizing our hands a lot and we are more cautious touching surfaces in public. This affected our routine of passing through doors. I personally have a feeling that because of this pandemic, we are becoming more aware of doors, looking for ways to avoid touching the doorhandle. We are rediscovering the door with our whole body instead of just touching it with our hands.

³ Reitz, M. and Higgins, J. The Problem With Saying “My Door Is Always Open”, (2017), (online) Harvard Business Review

During the lockdown we are spending more time at home and we have less interaction with new doors, but we are building a more intimate relationship with the doors that exists in our homes. The events and encounters at my front door have become something more apparent that is now part of my daily life and to look forward to throughout the day.

“Dear recipient, the delivery person is on his way and will visit you today.” When I get this notification, I get excited and nervous at the same time. I know someone will be standing at my front door today and we will have a small interaction at the door. Every now and then I will check if someone has arrived.

The front door of our homes is a space that exist in between our private home and public street so the owners of the home try to make this in between space a trusting environment. Arranging plant pots to greet our guests with a welcoming atmosphere but also acts as a barrier, placing benches to gossip or to wait when you forget your keys, which often happens to me.

Two days a week I am able to go to the Academy and interact with new doors outside my home. My route to the studio is always the same but during this journey the variety of doors that I walk through are broad. The total of fourteen doors I meet on my way, all have different features that add and reinforce to my experiences and behaviour encountering these doors. These doors guide me to my destination.

When I leave my house, I close the door behind me and always check if it is really closed, it is the door that I value the most because the people who live behind that door, I cherish the most. It is the door that I trust the most because I know what to expect behind the door. The doors that I trust the least are the ones of the tram that open automatically without touching the button. The tram driver acknowledges me which makes me feel safe to enter the tram. But I need to enter quick before the door shuts behind me and the tram drives away. With this encounter I always feel rushed, I do not have control on my own pace.

Arriving at the front entrance of the academy, the lazy stairs leads me to the door to enter the building. The transparency of the door does not make the entry so welcoming because you can see next the obstacles that are waiting for you. Trying to open the door using my elbow and feet I swing open the door getting weird looks from the people that are sitting behind the counter checking everyone's student cards.

Wandering through the bare halls of the academy I hardly notice the doors I walk through because these doors are always open. The floor in the halls are the same material and the variation of atmosphere is missing. The feeling of change when entering a new space is not active in this area.

I enter a mirrored passageway that draws all the attention to yourself. Just by yourself, you become the most powerful person walking through this space. The mirrors accentuate the length of the space creating a feeling of being it feel bigger and longer, the powerful feeling resonates long because I will need all the power I have, to open the last and heaviest door I have to interact with during my journey to the studio.



Home Front door



Tram Automatic door



Entrance door with stairs



Extra entrance door inside



Long passage with open doors



Opening to enter passage



Mirror Passage



Open doors going out



Massive opening



Long passage with open doors #2



Glass door



Heavy door

Fig. 9 - Collage route through doorways, All images by Eda Karaböcek

The House Dedel was a luxury private mansion built in 1642 for Willem Willemszoon Dedel. It is a house filled with doors. When I first toured through the House Dedel, I was overwhelmed with the number of doors it contains. Because of its luxury status in the past, the house owners had servants that lived on the attic, but under the same roof. Two different social classes that were not meant to cross their ways, were living, and working in the same house.

While exploring the house you will find hidden doors and passage-ways that were built in the walls and lead you through a new route within the house. The amount and variation of the doors in size, materiality and visibility displays this story of the past.



Fig.10 -Double sliding door to passage from dining room House Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek



Fig.11 - Hidden Cabinet in wall dining room House Dedel, 24/11/20, Caterina Tioli



Fig.12 -Hole in front door of House Dedel, 24/11/20, Eda Karaböcek



Fig.13 - Front door of the servants in House Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek

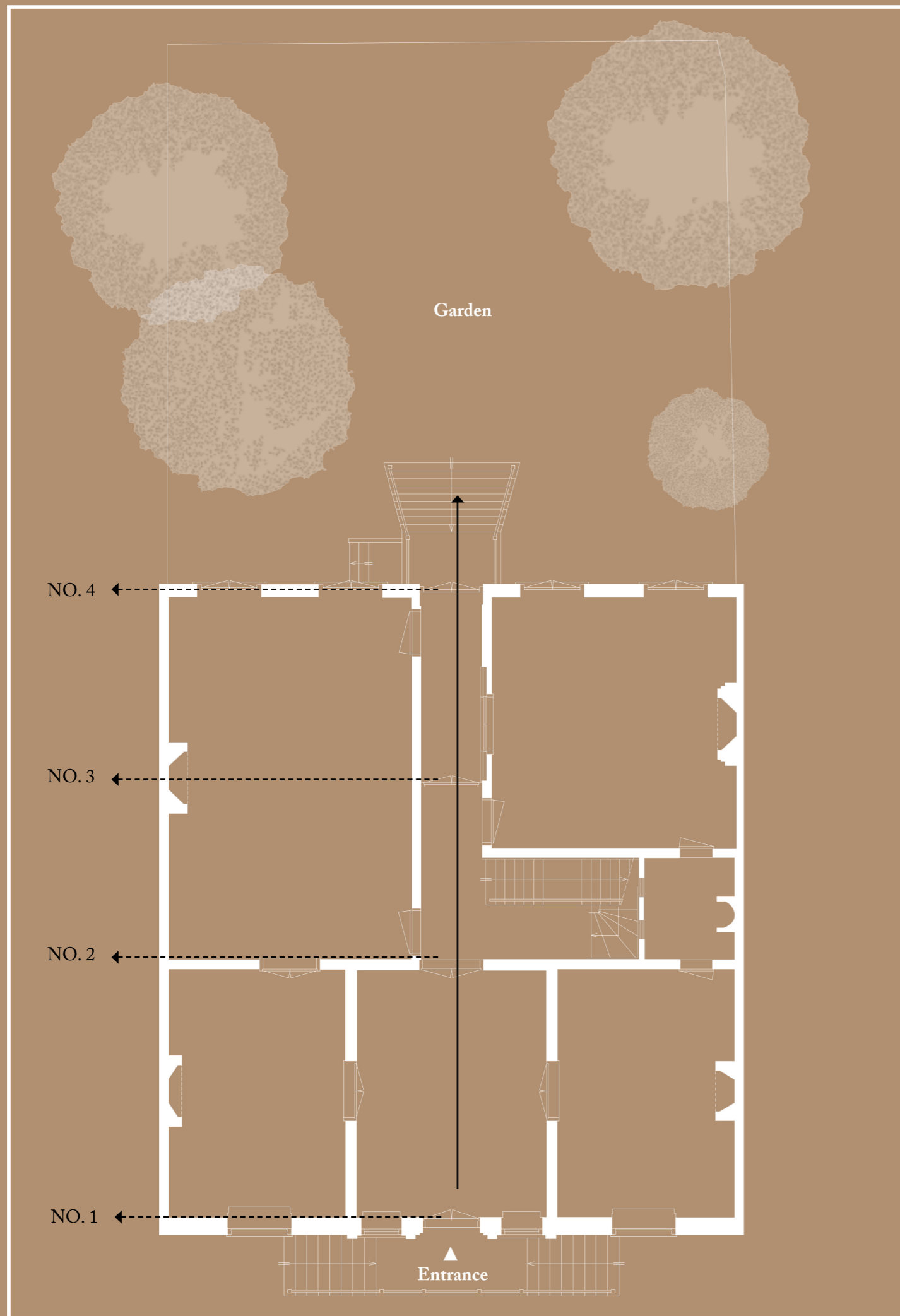


Fig.14 - Floorplan Main Floor House Dedel

Walking through all the doors starting from the entrance, inside through the hall and passage you will reach outside again, you will find yourself in the garden of House Dedel. You find yourself in a new scene where the sky is visible but feeling separated from the world. With every door you go from light to dark and from dark to light again, your eyes have to adjust to the new atmosphere surrounding you.⁴

This route through this space is truly an incredible experience. Every door you go through, the atmosphere changes. With every blink you will find yourself in a new encounter. What magical elements do these powerful doors in the hall and passage of the House Dedel consist?

Let's find out.

⁴ Simon Unwin, Doorway (2007), Taylor and Francis, p.77



Fig. 15- Door NO 1 Front Door House Dedel, Chen Liu



Fig. 16- Details door NO1

DOOR NO 1 /

Color:	Outside: Dark green, Inside: Pale yellow
Doorhandle:	Doorknocker, Lion
Opening direction:	Opens outwards
Window:	At the top (for natural light)
Lock:	Yes
Other details:	Mailbox

A strong door and heavy duty door to protect the people inside the house. The lion represents the loyalty of the people and protects the house. Inside the door is more friendly looking compared to the outside. Once your inside you are safe.



Fig. 17- Door NO 2 Hall House Dedel, Tjitske Hartstra

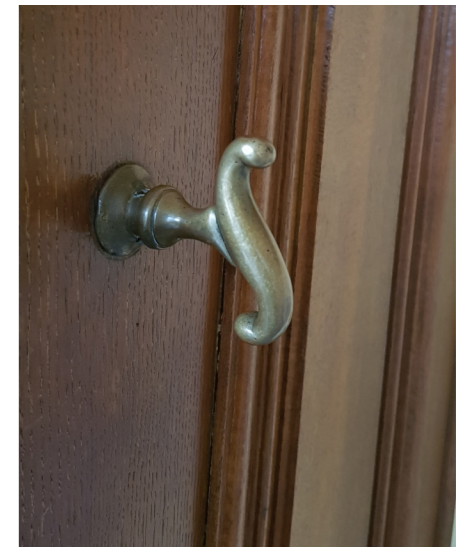
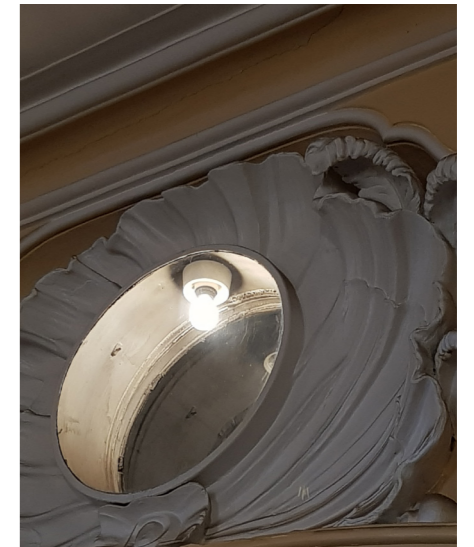


Fig. 18-Details door NO2

DOOR NO 2 /

Color:	Wood, Warm/Orange color
Doorhandle:	Twist, Classical
Opening direction:	Opens outwards
Window:	At the top (for natural light), extra artificial light
Lock:	Yes
Other details:	2 more identical door in Hal

A solid wooden door that opens the way to the passage and next doors. The eyecatching window at the top lets natural light through and at night the lightbulb turns on to light up the dark passage.



Fig. 19- Door NO 3 Passage House Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek

DOOR NO 3/

Color:	Glass (Transparent), wood ornaments
Doorhandle:	Twist, Playful
Opening direction:	Opens inward
Window:	No, door is mostly transparent
Lock:	Yes
Other details:	Most transparent and decorated door in House Dedel.

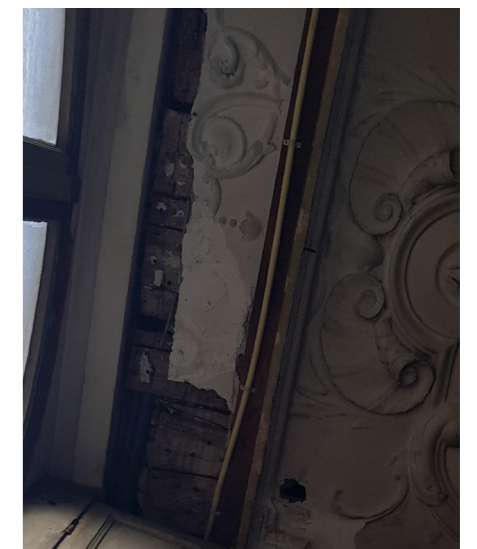
From here the doors become transparent and playful. This part of the house is located at the north, the transparency of the doors lets as much light through.



Fig. 20- Details door NO3



Fig. 21- Door NO 4 Passage to garden House Dedel, 18/11/20, Eda Karaböcek



DOOR NO 4 /

Color:	Glass (Transparant)
Doorhandle:	Locking doorhandle
Opening direction:	Opens outwards
Window:	No, door is mostly transparant
Lock:	Yes, is also doorhandle

Fig. 22- Details door NO4

CONCLUSION /

During this personal journey encountering and interacting with doors, I become one with the door. Experiencing the space filled with doors from a different perspective, from a point of view of an object, the door. I learned to be more aware of the door during this pandemic, using and exploring the door with my whole body.

The door is so much more than just an object that you walk through. Doors can already tell something about the journey you are going to take. In some ways different type of doors, for example automatic doors can manipulate the way you move and behave when you walk through the door.

The doors in House Dedel represents the luxury of the house that is still noticeable today. It still tells the story of two different social classes living together, hence why the number of doors in only the hall and passage alone. Now I can enter through the doors that were surrounding me in the hall of House Dedel. The doors are no longer obstacles but an advantage, an extra guide that will lead me through the story of the spaces in the house.

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⁴ Simon Unwin, Doorway (2007), Taylor and Francis, p.77

Koolhaas, Rem. Elements of Architecture, Doors (2018), Taschen, pp 91-97

