Exhibits that matter.
Material gestures with theoretical stakes in *Behind the Green Door* and *1:1 Stijlkamers*.

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This paper engages with theory in architectural exhibitions and with hybrid architectural practices that combine design and building with research and curating.

In 2013 and 2015 respectively, research and design collective Rotor and architect-curator Andreas Angelidakis presented architecture exhibitions in which *material fragments* were mobilized to develop a critical position. Rotor’s exhibition for the fifth Oslo Architecture Triennale, *Behind the Green Door*, investigated notions of sustainability in recent design and building practices. An ‘archive’ of 600 objects, from façade study models to software packages, was assembled and sorted to discuss the various ways architecture is today mobilized as a lever to induce the sustainable society. At Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam, Angelidakis was asked to work with a collection of period rooms that once belonged to the Stedelijk Museum but were dismantled and stored away since the 1970s. *1:1 Stijlkamers* featured six unconventional period room installations addressing the period room as a questionable display format for historical interiors and the format’s entanglement in processes of urban and museological modernization and historical preservation.

Both exhibitions defy any simple distinction between critical theory and the so-called material turn. I argue that they not only engage with theory when they take a critical position on sustainability or the (historical) interior – their very handling of the material on display negotiates a legacy of theory which this paper aims to unpack. Angelidakis’s conceptual gestures in displaying the period rooms will be related to institutional critical artworks and to the Institutional Theory and the poststructuralist analysis of exhibition contexts that go with them. Rotor’s selection, ordering, and layered interpretation of exhibits will be discussed as a conscientious employment of the archive as exhibition format, where the overt negotiation of the tension between open-ended document and exhibition argument can be analysed along the lines of archival theory.