

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Danil Oort
Student number	4586433

Studio		
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture – Last Green in Town	
Main mentor	Elsbeth Ronner	Architecture Tutor
Second mentor	Leeke Reinders	Research Tutor
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose the studio because of the site-specific research and design approach, the mid sized scale of the project and previous good experience with the tutoring approach of the chair.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Places of Edification
Goal	
Location:	Friche Josaphat, Brussels
The posed problem,	<p>The Friche Josaphat is a heavily contested site in the city of Brussels. It used to be a marshalling yard but after becoming redundant it was closed down and demolished. One railway line still remains, cutting the site in two parts. While being a marshalling yard, the city slowly grew around it, turning its back towards the site. It became a hidden place in the city, facing the back sides of housing all around it.</p> <p>Since the demolishing, half of the site is used by a mix of large and small scale industries. The other half was sanitized and ready to be developed as a new housing district, but after the economical crisis of 2008 the plans were stopped, this part of the site was left unattended and a rich biodiverse nature got the chance to flourish. In recent years the Friche Josaphat has become a heavily contested site with parties advocating for its protection as a key link in urban biodiversity and others advocating for using it as grounds for urban densification.</p> <p>With biodiversity dwindling and the climate rapidly changing our environment, the need to protect one of the last open green spaces in Brussels is crucial. But as a hidden and fenced off site, this voice is only supported by a limited group of the inhabitants of Brussels.</p> <p>The Friche Josaphat being a landscape disconnected from the city can be seen as a metaphor for the disconnect</p>

	<p>between humans and nature. In the current western society, there is little to no awareness about our dependency on nature for our survival, both in terms of providing us with basic needs like food and water, as well as in terms of creating a healthy living environment. As tipping points in climate change are coming closer, finding a new balance between human life and nature becomes ever more urgent.</p>
research questions and	<p>How can the Friche Josaphat be deployed to reestablish a faded connection between humans and nature? How can it make us more aware of our dependencies on nature that we don't seem to realize? Which planning and architectural means can be deployed to achieve the above stated goals? The hard barriers with which the Friche Josaphat is closed off can be interpreted as the current hard divide between humans and nature, between city and landscape. How can this hard barrier be transformed into a connecting element, a place where elements from both sides are interwoven, where both sides can benefit from each other? The typology of the enclosed garden can be seen as a moment of interweaving between city and landscape. The Friche Josaphat shares characteristics with these gardens, such as a partially hidden location, which leads to an exiting world of unexpected secrecy and intimacy. Can elements be derived from this typology that inform the development of a much needed transitional architecture? How to reestablish the connection between city and nature on a multitude of levels by developing a new type of architectural program?</p>
design assignment in which these result.	<p>The aim is to design a proposal that can form a new connection between city and nature. The proposal should overcome the hard physical barrier between The Friche and the city by creating a new entrance. The entrance should become a soft transition where elements of the Friche and the city can melt together. This should happen on multiple levels, such as in spatial elements, material expression, ways to deal with changes in terrain and expressions of (in)formality in architecture. The theme of learning can become a key element in the new connection between city and nature, both in terms of nature education as well as in terms of learning about the Friche Josaphat specifically. A program consisting of a nature school and learning center allows users to receive education on nature preservation, food production and preparing, climate adaptation and biodiversity. Part of the Friche will become a garden supporting the educational program of the school and learning center.</p>

	<p>The educational program should be rooted in the neighborhood, with students offering workshops to local residents, preparing food for a small restaurant and selling local produce in a small shop.</p> <p>For visitors the project should function as a information center, offering the possibility to enjoy the Friche as a leisure space while learning about its importance as a biodiverse urban nature.</p>
Process	
Method description	
<p>The collective research from the P1 forms a basis creating an understanding of the site. The site was explored through different themes and perspectives. Our group 'Void, Friche, Vedute' explored the conceptual meaning of the site as a void space from different perspectives and through different media. We concluded that the site has a specific heterotopian quality that allows it to be a place of multiple identities and imaginations at the same time. We researched the conditions that allow for this quality and the history that lead to this condition. For the exhibition at P1 we created a film showing the multiple imaginations on the Friche. We concluded that we can consider the Friche as a film set, a site with the potential to host many imagined futures.</p> <p>Following the P1 presentation we continued with the group to develop an urban vision for a small part of the site. Our site was the middle, because the research was based on the conceptual notion of the site as found. The vision was building further on the themes of our research, defining multiple zones in the Friche as a reflection of the multiple identities that we found in the research.</p> <p>After the presentation of the visions we formed a smaller group to design a masterplan for the entire site. We combined solution from multiple visions together with our own concepts to form a masterplan that offers space for urban densification in the existing industrial area as well as preserving and strengthening the area of biodiverse nature by turning it into a nature and water reservoir. We chose a specific part of the masterplan to zoom into further to develop an architectural project. After defining my ambitions for my project I selected a site in the zoomed in area as a project location.</p> <p>Parallel to the masterplan I did research on the typology of the enclosed garden. I visited multiple cases in Brussels to identify moments and qualities that I can learn from in my design process. Next to this I researched the topic as a conceptual framework and a possible typology that I can integrate in a design.</p> <p>Moving forward I will developing a design incorporating the different layers I defined in my project definition. I will continue the research on the enclosed garden typology as an ongoing growing source of inspiration for the design.</p>	
Literature and general practical references	
<p>The three cases of hidden gardens in Brussels that will be explored are Parc du Viaduc, Parc d'Egmond and Parc Jean-Félix Hap.</p> <p>Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. (1977). A pattern language: towns, buildings, construction. Oxford University Press.</p>	

Cullen, G. (1961). The Concise Townscape. Routledge/Architectural Press.

Devolder, A. (2002). De Openbare Stadstuin. NAI.

Aben, RAAJ., & de Wit, SI. (1999). The Enclosed Garden. 010.

Baker, K. (2018). Captured Landscape: Architecture and the Enclosed Garden (2nd ed.). Routledge.

de Wit, S. (2013). Metropolitan Gardens – gardens in the interstices of the metropolitan tissue. SPOOL, 1(1).

Kincaid, J et al. (2023) Garden Futures: Designing with Nature. NAI.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

In the project I found maybe unexpected connections to the project I did in the MSc 1, which was about the future of food in Rotterdam. In the project I developed a new typology combining the production and processing of a local alternative to coffee, as coffee is a highly unsustainable product. The themes of awareness about our impact on nature, sustainable food production and education were also key elements in that project.

There are also strong connections to my MSc2 project, that was about designing a new entrance to a school, about the process of entering a building and about finding a language of material expressions in the transition between building and city.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

The larger question that the project tries to answer is one about where to build in ever densifying cities in relation to the rapid changing climate. It showcases the importance of the educational value of urban nature spaces and offers a framework for an approach on how to they can be deployed to reestablish a link between humans and nature.