

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

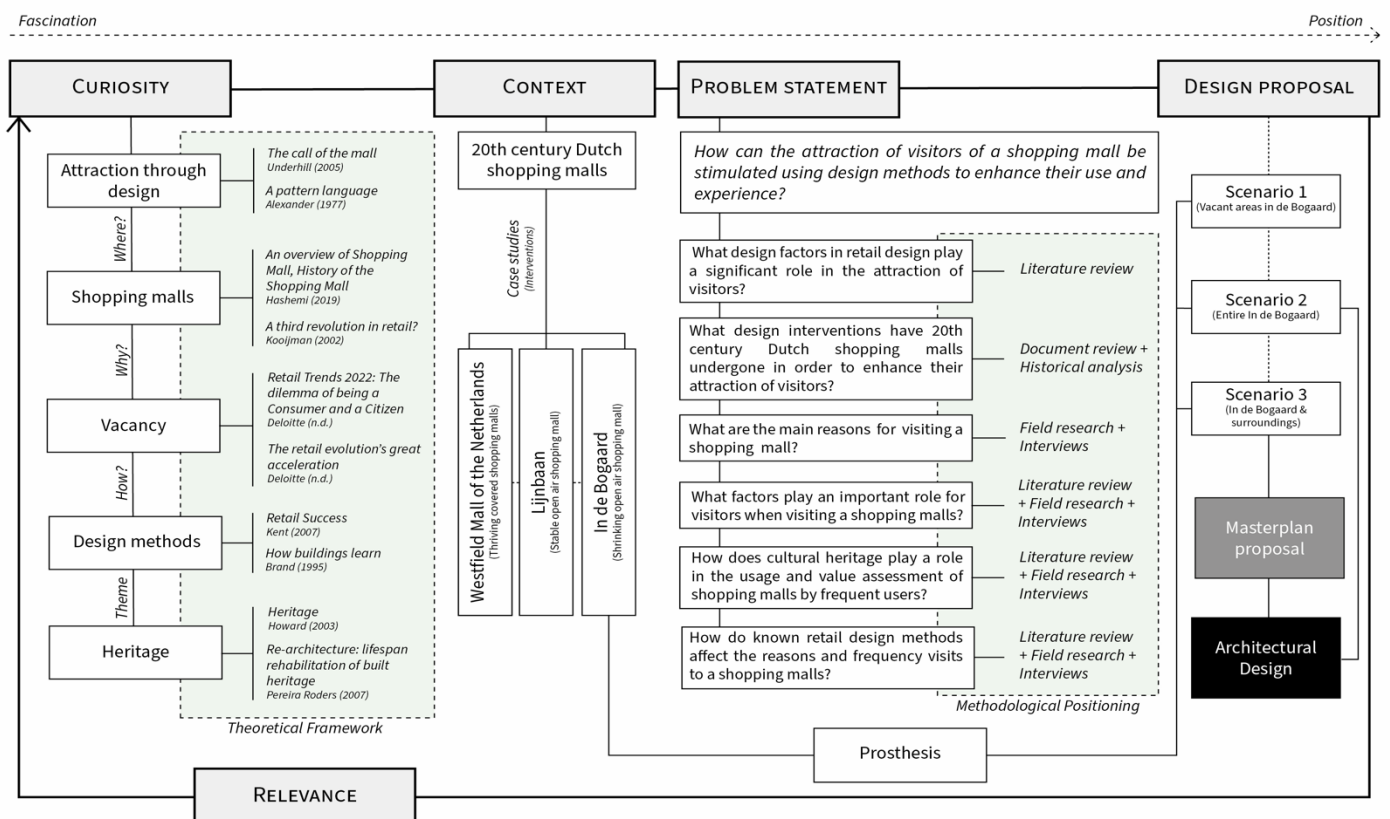


Graduation Plan: All tracks

Personal information	
Name	Rhaha Souroosh
Student number	4509374

Studio	
Name / Theme	Adapting 20 th Century Heritage/Heritage & Architecture
Main mentor	Prof. dr. ing. U. (Uta) Pottgiesser/Heritage & Technology
Second mentor	Ir. L.G.K. (Lidwine) Spoormans/Heritage & Architecture
Argumentation of choice of the studio	As the world moves towards sustainability, I find it of great importance to specialize in reusing and repurposing already existing architecture, instead of building new buildings. Additionally, I have an affinity with heritage and understanding our relationship with culture and already existing buildings. After my Msc 1 studio I realized how much I like the challenge of working with existing architecture.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	In de Bogaard: Reimagined
Goal	
Location	In de Bogaard, Rijswijk
The posed problem	Vacancy in 20 th century Dutch shopping malls/ decay of physical retail realm
Research question	How can the attraction of visitors to a shopping mall be stimulated using design methods to enhance their use and experience?
Design assignment in which the question results	Redesigning a shopping mall threatened by vacancy using design methods in order to attract (more/new) visitors and revitalize it.



With the rise of e-commerce, the recession caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and the intensified trends culture, the physical retail realm experienced a high rise in vacancy, a shift in the use of physical stores and a decay of retail culture as we know it. This has forced stores to close their doors and some brands into bankruptcy. However, retail has existed for thousands of years and has gone through many changes to become the retail as we know it, therefore it can be described as a resilient and ever-changing branch. Understanding why we need, want and like retail and how we make use of it will aid in creating a survival strategy that will be able to adapt to many scenarios. This project aims to create a strategy to fight the problems the physical retail realm has been experiencing, however to come up with such a strategy there is not only a need for understanding retail, but mostly there is a need for understanding the visitors and the attraction of visitors to the physical retail realm. Retail is a branch whereby the visitor plays the most important role, making a visitor's perspective the most important perspective to be taken into consideration. This perspective integrates heritage into the subject, because as Peter Howard puts it: "Not everything is heritage, but anything could become heritage" (2003, p.4). If something is worth preserving to someone, it could be described as heritage to that person. Therefore, when addressing the existing physical retail realm, it is of importance to consider the value it has to the people.

This project's focus is on 20th century Dutch shopping malls, when researching how retail works and how it is used. It will investigate multiple Dutch shopping malls that have undergone changes over the years and research how the visitors react to these changes and what they value most in each of the case studies. As this is an architectural project, the main focus is how design aids in creating a strategy of attraction and survival for the physical retail realm. The main question to be answered in this project will be 'how can the attraction of visitors of a shopping mall be stimulated using design methods to enhance their use and experience?'. This question can be answered by dividing it into a theoretical, an architectural and a conceptual part, whereby the conceptual part will focus on the heritage and values aspect of the research, the theoretical part focuses on the existing design methods that could be applied in order to enhance the visitors' use and experience and the architectural part will focus on creating a design that fights the current problems and aids in attracting visitors to a dying realm. The subject of this redesign will be In de Bogaard in Rijswijk, as it has one of the highest level of vacancy in the Netherlands and has faced a lot of challenges over the years.

The goal of this research and redesign project is to create a new physical retail realm that takes the needs and wants of the visitors into consideration. It focuses on how successful shopping malls are being used now and how the changes in the use of shopping malls can be adapted to in the future by the retail branch. Serving needs other than just the economical need of the visitors will ensure the attraction and return of visitors to the shopping mall, when other platforms are able to fulfill the economical need more conveniently. Taking the current value of the existing architecture, artifacts and culture into consideration will ensure a higher satisfaction rate in the new designs and strategies.

Process

Method description

The research performed in this project can be divided into three strategies. Firstly, literature review is performed in order to create groundwork and form a foundation for the to be applied research and design methods. Secondly, existing 20th century Dutch shopping malls are analyzed historically and architecturally in case studies, in order to understand successful (design) strategies and methods. Lastly, field studies and interviews are executed to get a close look into the needs and wants of the visitors and discover the values and the existing heritage in the case studies, especially in that of the design subject, In de Bogaard. The field study will exist of behavioral mapping, whereby patterns can be discovered. The interviews will exist out of qualitative interviews, whereby the focus will be on uncovering the values of the visitors and their relationship with various shopping malls, and quantitative interviews, whereby the focus will be on the opinions of visitors on design strategies and methods.

Literature and general practical preference

- Alexander, C., Ishikawa & S., Silverstein, M. (1978) A pattern language. Towns - Buildings - Construction. Oxford Press Inc.
- Brand, S. (1995). How Buildings learn. What happens after they're built. Penguin Books.
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- Petermans, A., & Kent, A. (Eds.). (2016). *Retail design: Theoretical perspectives*. Taylor & Francis.
- Skoura, A. (2017). The protection of shopping streets as cultural heritage. Queen's University Belfast. 10.13140/RG.2.2.35096.85767.
- Underhill, P. (2005). Call of the mall: The geography of shopping by the author of why we buy. Simon and Schuster.

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)?

My graduation topic focuses on In the Bogaard, which is a 20th century Dutch shopping mall, which relates to the studio topic; Adapting 20th Century Heritage. The only catch is that in the case of shopping malls, especially in the Netherlands, their heritage and cultural value of most shopping mall is not defined by specialists. This ought to be discovered through research performed during the course of the project. In the greater sense, this project aims to come up with a masterplan proposal for In de Bogaard and its surroundings, as well as a detailed architectural design for the shopping mall. It will focus on the architectural design and its use, however, the technology behind the new designs, as well as their urban positioning will be taken into consideration.

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

As the physical retail realm threatens to become obsolete, the research performed in this project can aid to come up with important adaptivity strategies that can be adopted in order to survive. Additionally, this project aims to research the effectivity of known design methods in order to come up with a design tool, that can be utilized by interested parties in the future. In the scientific framework, it would encourage the retail branch and designers to shift their focus on the experience based changes, whereby the visitors' perspective is considered centrally, instead of the economic interest of the retailers. Additionally, existing design methods and strategies will be challenged, forcing new research to be performed in the search to effective design methods and strategies.