

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	Prajwal Shivaji Gaikwad
Student number	5711681

Studio		
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture Studio - Last Green in Town	
Main mentor	Elsbeth Ronner	Design Mentor
Second mentor	Jos Lafeber	Building Technology Mentor
Third mentor	Leeke Reinders	Research Mentor
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The studio's sensitive approach towards situating architecture in a complex urban environment and its site-specific theme of exploring the 'Last green in town' encouraged me to choose Urban Architecture for my graduation thesis.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Being In Chaos _ negotiating an urban culture of nature
Goal	
Location:	La Friche Josaphat, Schaerbeek, Brussels
The posed problem,	<p>The studio theme of 'Last Green in Town' encouraged us to engage with La Friche Josaphat, an urban wasteland that has grown into a greenfield in the middle of the city. The lack of human engagement has allowed biodiversity to naturally take over the wasteland, creating a wilderness, unknown to the city beyond its borders. Around the Friche, nature exists mostly in conventional forms (parks, gardens, sports fields etc.) which are products of narrow utilitarian approaches, with few exceptions of human-nature synergies (communal, allotment gardens, commons farms and kitchens).</p> <p>These make it evident that different perceptions of urban nature have produced diverse urban cultures of nature, few of which validate the interdependence of nature and humans while most treat nature as a distinct entity in need of a functional purpose. The newer visions of urban development on the friche take the latter approach by invalidating the</p>

	<p>existing biodiversity and replacing it with tokenistic conventional forms of 'nature' with little to no ecological and cultural significance.</p>
research questions and	<p>The research aims to explore the patterns of human-nature interactions that produce site-specific cultural practices in and around the Friche Josaphat. The 'cultural practices' involve the private, communal, social, political, and ecological relationships between humans and non-humans that produce diverse spaces in and around urban nature.</p> <p>A few questions that the research intends to seek answers to are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What are the existing forms of associations between humans and nature?</i> - <i>How have these associations developed through time in and around the Friche?</i> - <i>How can the historical evolution of the 'urban culture of nature' help in developing intimate strategies for sensitive urban engagements?</i> - <i>What formal programs can help catalyze and promote the co-existence of human-non-human entities?</i>
design assignment in which these result.	<p>The Friche Josaphat can be considered what Lefebvre would call a differential space, which nurtures differences and particularities and helps restore the relationship between body and space. Such a space must be participated in rather than just used for gathering to be properly appropriated.</p> <p>The aim is thus to extract strategies from the research which help synthesize a newer and more intimate approach to observing, understanding and engaging with urban green environments. In the case of La Friche, this will happen when the borders become porous and allow the ecologies from both sides to intermingle, creating a new culture of human-nature co-existence. The belief that 'People protect what they understand' lies at the core of the thesis.</p> <p>The design aims to develop mediator spaces, on the fringes between the urban and the wild, that produce, collaborate, negotiate and share knowledge of co-existing with nature. The idea is to provide a platform for professionals of the scientific and academic communities to produce and share</p>

	<p>knowledge of the emerging biodiversity within the Friche in active collaboration with the general public. The commons can make use of this mediator space to involve people in diverse acts of nurturing and maintaining different forms of urban nature (from manicured to wild).</p> <p>The intent is to systematically shift the discourse from 'controlling and managing nature for human comforts' to 'understanding, conserving and protecting nature for human-nature well-being'.</p>
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Process

Method description

To search for answers to the questions posed before, the research carries out systematic operations to intimately unearth hidden layers of information from the site, just like an archaeologist who excavates through layers of history. The following steps would be undertaken:

- Study of the historical development of the urban cultures around the friche and its evolving relationship with nature. (analyze historical datasets like maps, images and works of literature)
- Document human-nature interaction patterns in and around the site and understand them as a corollary of specific historical urban cultural developments. (observational ethnographic study)
- Studying the different visions for the friche and the neighbourhood. Understanding the future urban intentions of different stakeholders.

To evolve the design from this research

- The above actions will be used to develop programmatic inserts that promote ecologically sensitive public realms that enhance urban environmental discourse.
- A precedent study of similar programmatic forms will be undertaken

Literature and general practical references

Gandy, M. (2018). Urban nature and the ecological imaginary. In *The Routledge Companion to Urban Imaginaries* (1st edition).

G. CLEMENT, *Manifesto of the third landscape*, Quodlibet, 2016

Ibañez Daniel, & Katsikis, N. (Eds.). (2014). *Grounding metabolism* (Ser. New geographies, 06). Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Gandy, M. (2013). Entropy by design: Gilles Clément, parc Henri Matisse and the limits to avant-garde urbanism. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(1), 259–278.

Clément, G. (2015). "The Planetary Garden" and other writings. In University of Pennsylvania Press eBooks.

Anthony Acciavatti, *Ganges Water Machine: Designing New India's Ancient River*, Ora Editions, 2015

Erik Revellé and Giovanni Bellotti, *The Wild City*, TU Delft, Amsterdam, Academic Project, 2011

Anuradha Mathur and Dilip da Cunha, *Soak: Mumbai in an Estuary*, Rupa Publications India, 2009

Deutscher Spurbuchverlag. (2016). *Garden state. cinematic space and choreographic time* (Ser. Sac journal, 3).

Gandy, M. (2022). *Natura Urbana: ecological constellations in urban space*. MIT Press.

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)?

The graduation topic builds over the theme of the studio 'Last green in town' by sensitively looking at the 'last green' of La Friche Josaphat as a cultural product of the historic urban development in and around its borders. It aims to introduce new cultures or perceptions towards these remnants of 'last' urban nature and develop a more ecologically sensitive lens of understanding and engaging with urban nature. The topic and the studio theme align perfectly with the expectations of the track and the program which are constantly questioning the role of an architect in today's society and seek to find answers through sensitive collaborations in practice.

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

With climate change's irreversible effects looming over the existence of the planet, an immediate sustainable mode of engagement with the environment has become one of the very few ways to ensure survival. The graduation topic takes a clear stand and engages with this situation by tackling the root of this issue – human perception of nature. It aims to develop a collaborative environment that creates awareness through understanding and engagement, which eventually supplements the production of a renewed culture(perception) around urban nature (and nature in general). It also seeks to bridge the gap between the social and natural sciences by providing them with a singular platform to interact and negotiate a new discourse for a sensitive urban culture of nature.

