

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

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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	Jonas Althuis	
Student number	4559398	

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab / Independent Research	
Main mentor	Elise van Dooren	Form & Modelling Studies
Second mentor	Lianne Klitsie	Form & Modelling Studies
Argumentation of choice of the studio	Unique fascination for experimenting with video as research and design technique that would not have been possible to explore in other studios.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	The Untapped Potential of Video in Architectural Design
Goal	
Location:	Research: N/A (multiple locations) Design: Port of Rotterdam
The posed problem,	Video is a medium that enables the communication of qualities such as time, movement, sequence, sound, and more. These are qualities that are important in architectural design, but are not intrinsic to traditional methods of architectural representation such as drawings and physical models. Because of this limitation, I want to explore the possibilities of using video in architectural design, as supplement to standard methods of researching, designing and representing architecture.

research questions and	Primary question: In which ways can the medium of video be used as a tool throughout the architectural design process? Secondary question: How does the use of video at different stages of the design process affect design outcomes?
design assignment in which these result.	In my project, my method- and technique-focussed research has a different relationship to my design direction than is standard. The design project I'm now pursuing is inspired by my fascinations and hasn't directly come forth out of my research.
<u>Elaboration Design Direction:</u> Having lived in Rotterdam for a number of years and done various bits of research on the harbour, it's become a fascinating topic to me. The sheer scale of the industry and logistic operations necessary to sustain our lifestyles is mind-boggling. But is it really necessary? With my project, I want to explore a scenario for the future of the port of Rotterdam where it is possible to deindustrialise the harbour area and restore it to its former function as nature reserve, in the process reversing decades of damage to local and global ecosystems. Such a sequence of landscapes would be unique in the Netherlands and would offer habitats to a huge variety of wildlife that has in the current situation been marginalised. Beyond that, a landscape that can function as water collection buffer during extreme weather events would be key to a water-safe city in the future. To answer the need for access to nature of the citizens of Rotterdam, a walking trail from the city center to the seaside will be established, with several stations along the way where hikers can spend the night and get a good meal. These stations could also function as visitor centre and as base camp for activities, workshops, events and more. Architecturally, these stations are what I will design in the continuation of my project, but I also find the different scales, from regional, to landscape(s), to walking trail interesting; and I would like to design a coherent plan across all of these scales. In doing so, I want to continue experimenting with video in the design process, and I will try to use video as primary form of communication for my project, in this way my research will continue as I design.	
Process	
Method description	

[A description of the methods and techniques of research and design, which are going to be utilized.]

My method for the research phase of my project is an applied and experimental one; my ambition over the course of the past months (currently end of Jan/2023), has been to create a variety of different videos that explore different methods for applying the medium in the context of architectural projects. In doing so, I wanted to try out techniques at different stages of the design process, such as initial research, site analysis, sketch design and final representation. The process from conceptualising a video until completion was never a linear one, and unfolded differently for the different videos I've ended up creating. A number of videos were done in collaboration with my peers and took on a longer format, others were short experiments in a shorter format. In most cases, my approach entailed searching for a parallel to a standard/traditional architectural method and asking myself the question; how can this be done in a video-based format? And; what can a video-based format add to this method?

I plan to continue my research as I progress with my design process; I want to keep using video as a form of communication and representation for my architectural process; in that way my research can become broader than it currently is. Regarding this, I noticed during the creation of a few videos that it felt difficult at times because I was not necessarily familiar with the contents, for example, the site-location was randomly picked for the Weekend proof of concept video, and the building sketched in the Lineation video is also randomly thought of and drawn. I think that videos made for my own project have a strong potential as I will have all the relevant knowledge to set them up in a meaningful way and get the most out of them for the communication of my own ideas.

Links to currently published videos (in order of production):

Weekend:

https://youtu.be/2YWjIIX_Y4

First Encounter:

<https://youtu.be/GszkkCUm6Lo>

Fieldwork (3 parts, in order):

<https://youtu.be/Y8g9kv5MPiI>

<https://youtu.be/3HFngiBlxOs>

https://youtu.be/FrgTxaUad_w

Lineation:

https://youtu.be/33W_KQWm5A4

Design Phase Teaser:

<https://youtu.be/m8g06Id-A>

Literature and general practical preference

[The literature (theories or research data) and general practical experience/precedent you intend to consult.]

While cinema and scenography in relationship to architecture have been studied in literature, the topic of video **applied** as tool in the architectural design process and architectural design education is not well studied or documented in academic literature. This may be partly due to the relatively new (last decade or two) development of technology (e.g. smartphones, free video editing software, cheaper consumer cameras) that have put the tools to film and edit videos at a high level in the general consumer's hands and in turn made it more accessible to apply such tools in architectural education.

Even then, it remains a niche area that can have quite a steep learning curve for intermediate and advanced techniques to those who have no prior knowledge or experience with filming and editing. This is partially why I was fascinated by the topic and keen to explore it. However, my research has therefore been very much applied, practical and experimental (in the sense of trying things and seeing what comes out; trial and error), and generally not based on existing peer-reviewed academic literature.

In terms of practical experience I've made a number of short films over the last couple of years that have allowed me to build practical skills with using cameras and editing. There are a number of interesting examples that inspired me as I was initially researching my topic. These cover a range of varying techniques and styles and can be found, with links, in my research plan.

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

My project is an attempt to bring together two of my great fascinations; film, and architecture (the built environment in general). Throughout my architectural education, both in my Bachelor and Master program at the TU Delft Faculty of Architecture, I have at times found it difficult to fully connect with the methods of researching and designing that I was being taught; to fully connect with topics I was researching and the designs I was trying to conceptualise. The methods, which could be described as standard or traditional in the architectural context, worked, but I always felt there could be more; more depth, more immersion, more idiosyncrasy. The projects came to feel formulaic at times; I would make the same analyses, same mappings and later the same set of drawings to represent the building I had designed.

It's for this reason that I wanted to pursue a different method of architectural research and design, to see what else is possible. Maybe just for myself and my own projects and methods, but perhaps my research can be interesting to more people, perhaps it can change what the architectural process and in turn architectural education looks like in the future. I think that the tools for architectural research, design, and representation have for many centuries stayed the same, and only now, in the digital age we live in, do we have a huge depth of new technologies that have opened up new possibilities. Many of these possibilities are already being explored at our faculty and beyond, but I feel that film/video is one that has had limited attention, despite having huge potential. It's a medium that can carry a huge amount of information, and can engage our most important senses (visual, auditory) in ways that traditional methods aren't capable of. This makes it a topic that is worth looking into.