

# 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](mailto: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:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	P Thijssen
Student number	
Telephone number	
Private e-mail address	

<b>Studio</b>	
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture 'Spolia'
Main mentor	Paul Vermeulen
Second mentor	Aurélie Hachez
Architecture / Urbanism	Architecture
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The constantly changing urban context has always attracted me. The urban context offers a lot of opportunities. One example is the shortage of space. This challenges me to push the boundaries within the existing space and to use the existing context and add new functionalities or value to a place. The needs of cities are always changing, that's why it keeps a sharp eye on me to design for the future. This studio focusses on how architecture is functioning within a city as a bigger picture. My challenge is to create architecture within an existing context and to connect it to the landscape. The main theme of the studio is spolia. I see spolia as the possibility of re-using architectural pieces. What can we do with the historical facts of places? What is the value of reusing these historical elements? This historical aspect of the urban environment within this studio fits my interests as a future architect.

<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	Shaped by the river.
<b>Goal</b>	
Location:	Rue de Goujons, Anderlecht, Brussels, Belgium.
The posed problem,	The site used to be the bedding of the river Senne. The river has been covered and the area that stayed behind has no clear identity. It consists loose elements, a high social housing flat, a park, some local businesses and the creative company Rotor. It does have an interesting historical value, because the Senne River used to flow here. The architecture at the site looks random. The site has some

	buildings with shapes which make no sense, if you don't know the history. Brussels once originated on the river Senne. This was an industrial river that used to flow through Brussels but was covered in 1865/1931-1955 because the river was too heavily polluted and had lost its function. This terrain needs interventions to bring life and new functionalities into it and make it attractive to residents and guests.
research questions and	How can the traces of the Senne be used within the architecture and the urban landscape? And how can a new architectural volume in relation to this urban landscape be an addition to this neighborhood in a commercial, cultural and/or leisure way?
design assignment in which these result.	<p>The design assignment challenges me to highlight existing historical architectural elements and add new forms and elements that reinforce this.</p> <p>The Senne will come back to life in another condition. Where once the river Senne was flowing, there will be a park, so it will become a public space. The building next to this urban landscape will be formed in the shape of the river Senne. It is orientated towards the inside of the site where once the river flowed and brings back the memory of the river. The building which will be located next to the park will be multifunctional and based on the needs of the neighborhood. This is a place to stay, to relax or just the opposite to exercise (sports), and meet the neighbors. The main program will consist of collective living. Other programs will be public functions with a mix of social and commercial functions, for example a swimming pool and a supermarket with local products.</p> <p>The design assignment will be a building that is connected to the urban landscape as a memory of the Senne and supports the neighborhood, which creates an identity for this site.</p>

## Process

### Method description

The methods I've used to come up with this design assignment are mainly:

- Casestudies by fieldresearch to see how the river is still visible and what it's possibilities are.
- The casestudy The High Line was used as a reference project. This was analyzed by literature studies, drawings and model making.
- Also research by designing (for the masterplan) has been applied to the process.

The methods which are going to be utilized are:

- Casestudies.
- Drawings.
- Model making.
- Theoretic studies.

The research will mainly consist of case studies which will be analyzed by drawings and model making. The research will mainly focus on how urban landscapes and architecture can be integrated with each other. In addition, research will also be done into how mixed-use buildings in an urban context can function as a support for a neighborhood.

### **Literature and general practical preference**

Literature studies will be done on the relationship between urban landscapes and architecture. Literature studies which already has been important but still will be important is:

- James Corner Field Operations, et al. *The High Line: Foreseen, Unforeseen*. Phaidon, 2015.

References of offices which works with the combination of urban landscape and architecture are BIG architects. An example of a projects where landscape and architecture become one, is: Copenhill. Another inspiration is the Dutch ZUS architects. For example with their project Smakkelaarsveld they merge the park and the building as one.

Literature studies on how the building will function within the neighborhood will be done on:

- Hildner, Claudia. *Future Living: Collective Housing in Japan*. De Gruyter, 2013.
- Webb, Michael. *Building Community: New Apartment Architecture*. Thames & Hudson, 2017.
- Lapuerta José María de. *Collective Housing: A Manual*. Actar, 2007.

Within this subject Mei Architects is an inspiration for me, with their just built Fenix 1 building in Rotterdam. It has mixed used program with apartments on top.

### **Reflection**

The main theme of the studio is Spolia: the possibility of re-using (historical) architectural pieces. The reuse of historical elements is something I consider important for the future use of urban environments. It's not only commercially interesting, because it can create an identity and attracts investors. It is also sustainable, because the past is not thrown away. What's also important is the emotional connection that generations have with the past. There is always history in our environment, relevant knowledge about the past can be used as a resource for architecture. The desire to go back to the past is a theme that plays a role in society. Reevaluating the past and emphasizing history is important because heritage gives identity, contributes to social cohesion and psychological well-being. That's why I want to bring back the river to which the city of Brussels once originated and let architecture relate to it. The architect has the power and responsibility to determine how to deal with history.