

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	Benedetta Rizzo
Student number	6050808

Studio		
Name / Theme	City of the Future – Architectural Design Crossovers	
Main mentor	Joran Kuijper	Architecture Design
Second mentor	Florian Eckardt	Building Technology
Third mentor	Stavros Kousoulas	Research – Philosophy & Theory
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose the studio 'City of the Future', part of Architectural Design Crossovers, because of its focus on a core idea I've frequently encountered throughout my architectural studies: that we, as the next generation of architects, hold the potential to shape the cities and societies of the future. While this concept is often interpreted as the implementation of grand gestures or revolutionary technologies, I believe its true unfolding lies in the subtle, meaningful shifts, an attitude I also appreciated in the studio's approach. The studio, in fact, provided me with the opportunity to engage with this responsibility through hands-on explorations and the challenging of architectural systems. I was particularly drawn to the studio's openness to interdisciplinary exploration, which allowed me to integrate philosophy and theory into my research process. This integration was pivotal to my project, as it enabled me to delve deeply into an often-overlooked dimension of architecture: its relationship with human behaviours.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Ticking Clocks of Appropriation - Unconventional institutions of territorialisation
Goal	
Location:	Naples, Centro Storico
The posed problem,	Standardisation is foundational to communal life: shaping societies through shared frameworks, <i>standards</i>

govern collective codes of conduct, via the establishment of *institutions* or organised systems of behaviour (Portanova, 2021, p.63; Deleuze, 2004, p.19). Historically, institutions were rooted in local customs, emerging organically to address social and practical needs while responding to the unique spatio-temporal contexts in which they operated. However, with the rise of *syncolonialism*, a process marked by the synchronisation and unification of global time and standards through the mechanism of the clock, these once-local institutions have become increasingly universal and homogenised (Portanova, 2021, p.56).

This institutional transition, marked by a detachment from contextual technicities (social, environmental and technological factors), has profoundly altered the role of temporality in the built environment. Once a dynamic dimension intertwined with space and movement, temporality has been reduced to an abstract and disconnected framework instead (Eisenmann, 2009, p.242). Timekeeping, formerly used to represent and measure natural cycles and their emergent patterns, has increasingly been subordinated to arbitrary universal systems like time zones, often detached from their operational spatial contexts. Alaska exemplifies this modern temporal rupture: once characterised by six distinct temporal frameworks, the state was consolidated into a single non-representational time zone following its annexation to the United States, a shift prioritising efficiency over the nuanced temporal rhythms within the vast landscape (Eisenmann, 2009, p.242).

The modern institutional emphasis on speed and uniformity, enforced through top-down mechanisms, has generated a growing disconnect between individuals

and their lived environments, creating a clear divide between those who conform to such universality and those who resist (Portanova, 2021, p.17). In Italy, particularly in Naples, this resistance is especially pronounced. Through their daily practices and expressions, Neapolitans have long resisted the imposition of homogenised living standards, favouring their heterogeneous local spatial-temporal logics instead. This constant defiance has given rise to a phenomenon of *rebellious temporality*, an embrace of spontaneous, self-regulated rhythms (Agnew, 1997, p.37-38).

This Neapolitan temporal rejection is most evident in the streets, which serve not only as corridors of movement but also as dynamic *technologies of time*. In Naples, streets represent tangible expressions of lived temporality, acting as extensions of the home, social hubs, and sites of cultural expression. It is common to see drying racks hanging in the open air, families dining in the middle of the street, or children playing football against house doors. These unconventional uses of streets represent forms of *temporary appropriation*, where individuals assert their own sense of time and ownership in defiance of standardised temporal and spatial norms.

Far from merely chaotic, these self-regulated urban dynamics emerge from intricate systems of behaviours, shaped by the variation of Neapolitan desires, habits and rituals, as I will examine through my research. What may initially appear as disorder, reveals instead a nuanced negotiation of temporality and spatiality, a new perspective on the relationality of these two elements within the built environment, particularly in a world increasingly dominated by

	homogenisation. Just as the clock attempts to domesticate the elusive nature of time, architecture has historically sought to impose order on space, regulating movements and compartmentalising activities into rigid frameworks (Harries, 1982, p.59). Countering this impulse to domesticate time and space, the theoretical framework of immanence offers an alternative approach for generating lived environments. Challenging the hierarchical and imposed systems characteristic of modern institutions, immanence emphasises emergent and self-regulated rhythms, a perspective shift to be explored through the addressing of the following question: <i>What would happen if architecture stopped trying to domesticate time, rhythm and space and embraced immanence instead ?</i> Exploring this perspective requires a rethinking of both architecture and the architect's role. Rather than imposing order, architects within an immanent framework get repositioned as enablers and facilitators of emergent processes, a new perspective to be delved into through the addressing of a following enquiry: <i>In what ways can architects foster immanent architecture and facilitate the emergence of users' desires, habits, and rituals ?</i>
research questions and	What would happen if architecture stopped trying to domesticate time and space and embraced immanence instead ?
design assignment in which these result.	My design project seeks to draw inspiration from Neapolitan behaviours, using them as both a guiding logic and a

	framework for a user-centric approach to the built environment, a concept I term <i>ritornello of appropriation</i>. As Ronald Bogue explains in his analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's work, the ritornello arises from the interplay of rhythmic patterns, establishing an operational style that evolves through contrapuntal expressive elements (Bogue, 2003, p. 17). By identifying this ritornello as the thread connecting various Neapolitan acts of appropriation and applying it in a deliberate designed manner, my project wishes to facilitate and act as a catalyst for new user-driven spatial appropriations. To achieve this, the project will consist of a series of interventions within a designated plot. Each intervention will span across various scales and levels of permeability (interior, exterior, and liminal spaces), exploring different ways to foster appropriation within the built environment. This approach will be framed around exploring the following design question: In what ways can architects foster immanent architecture and facilitate the emergence of users' desires, habits, and rituals ?
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Process

Method description

To understand and investigate human habits and experiential patterns, it is essential first to grasp their broader processes and inherent systems. The work of theorists and philosophers offers valuable insights into these hidden logics, opening up explorations that enhance, or at the very least, respect their complexities. For this reason, my project will draw on extensive theoretical foundations as tools for tracing the genealogy behind appropriation reasoning and uncovering its virtual potentials. While theoretical works provide valuable insights into human behaviours and the rhythms of life, concretising these sometimes challenging notions with strong visual components is equally crucial. To this end, my research will incorporate a collection

of photographs, both personal and external to avoid bias, capturing the unconventional expressions of Neapolitan life. Specifically, I will focus on the works of Ciro Pipoli, Martin Parr, Sam Gregg, and Robbie McIntosh, whose images resonate with the scope of my research.

Though Naples is the central focus of my study, it should not be considered an isolated case of uncoded and spontaneous daily life. Moments of rebellious temporality against over-structured environments lie imperceptibly in many cities, often concealed by the rigidity of their settings. Works such as Beka and Lemoine's documentary series *Homos Urbanus* (2017-2022), with their candid framing of urban life, serve as powerful tools for identifying such instances of uncoded life, even in major metropolises such as Seoul and Shanghai, or more precisely in their 'backstages'. By consulting their work both in Naples and elsewhere, I aim to highlight the importance of legitimising these unconventional logics in urban contexts, and to emphasise Naples' role not as a marginalised entity but rather as a testbed for their visibility and showcasing.

The photographs and documentary stills, alongside their respective theoretical 'lines of flights', will form the basis of the initial phase of my methodology. This preliminary stage will culminate in the realisation of a catalogue of appropriation, subdividing these seemingly chaotic practices into identifiable patterns, flow systems, and logics. By isolating these behaviours as catalogue entries, I aim to first understand their singular machinic processes and intensities, creating the premises for a later analysis of their collective ritornello and overlapping dynamics.

To ensure that these catalogue entries function not only representatively but also spatially and operatively, I will adopt choreographic transcripts and chorographic mapping in the second phase of my research to organise the previously isolated components into rhythmic clusters.

Choreographic transcripts offer a tool for understanding the spatiality of appropriation and, in the context of this research, they will serve as a device for interpreting behavioural patterns within spaces based on their spatial unfolding and movement rather than action and intent. To achieve this, the choreography will be used to abstract the behaviours from their immediate settings and conditions, allowing them to be viewed purely in terms of motion. As a precedent for this method, I will consult *The Manhattan Transcripts* by Bernard Tschumi (1994).

Chorographic mapping, in contrast, will emphasise the eventuality of appropriation. Unlike choreography, this tool will abstract behavioural patterns from their spatiality and movement, organising them by action, intent and event progression instead. As a precedent, I will focus on William Hole's *Poly-Olbion Maps* (Dayton, 1613), which depict various British counties according to their social and cultural identities and events, rather than geography and topography. Initially, choreography and chorography will be treated as separate exercises, later to be analysed in conjunction and within their areas of intersection.

Altogether, this methodology is designed to provide an exhaustive understanding of unconventional urban behaviours both objectively and subjectively, and across both temporal and spatial dimensions. The theoretical foundations, along with external photographs and documentary stills, aim to establish an objective basis of my studies, while choreography and chorography are intended as guides for subjective interpretations and operative insights for the research and project. Ultimately, I think this methodology will enable me to achieve my research goal: refine the inherent chaos of Naples into an operational ritornello, a permeable guiding logic of overlapping rhythms and desires encapsulated in an encyclopaedic collection of unconventional rhythms.

Literature and general practical references

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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 initial fascination as I began my graduation year centred on spontaneous human behaviours and the study of the unexpected side of architecture, an interest I briefly explored during my Msc2 studies but wanted to develop further. I chose to focus on

this topic as I have often believed architects are overly preoccupied with producing spectacular results or controlling every detail of designs, that often fall short of noticing these spontaneities hidden within the people who inhabit the spaces they design. All too often, we take for granted that we know best what people need or want, without truly engaging with all sides of human behaviours, even the ones less comfortable for our 'paper architecture'.

Yet, there is so much to be gained by simply observing how people interact with spaces and objects, how they navigate through them, adapt them, and manipulate them to suit their needs. Even something as seemingly simple as placing a chair down in a specific spot can reveal a network of systems, rhythms and logics, often hidden in plain sight. The city of Naples, with its seemingly chaotic state, exemplifies these hidden dynamics, and the need to look further than the actions and the people themselves, but the logics guiding them. Understanding these behaviours or at least being sensitive to them, in my view, is the closest we, as designers, can come to truly understanding what it means to experience time and space in the built environment, in an almost agnostic approach. This conviction is why I chose to focus on this topic for my graduation project, and why I believe it is relevant to both my MSc AUBS studies and Architecture track.

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

The contemporary state of architectural practice has increasingly been marked by conventionality and homogenization. The proliferation of international institutions and global cultural systems has steered the profession toward standardised, problem-solving exercises, often at the expense of critical and context-sensitive modes of action (Erando, 2022). This ingrained mindset, with its focus on efficiency and timely solutions, has led many architects to refrain from engaging with complex settings and dynamics. For instance, phenomena like temporary appropriation, characterised by the deliberate reclamation of designed spaces, struggle to gain legitimacy in modern urban environments. These practices often get dismissed as disruptions to urban livability, prompting an instinctive impulse to 'fix' rather than understand.

Even within discourses on social inclusivity, a flawed tendency towards one-size-fits-all solutions has emerged. While the ongoing ambition to design environments suitable for a global population may seem optimistic in theory, it often proves utopian in reality. True inclusivity, I argue, lies not in negating individuality for universal conformity, but in acknowledging frictions and heterogeneities between different agents as mechanisms, rather than obstacles. This principle forms the foundation of my research.

My work challenges generalising architectural tendencies, by advocating for a framework that embraces overlapping and manipulated experiences of the built environment. Using Naples as the testbed, a place where multifaceted experiences manifest organically, I aim to position instinctive and extemporal rhythms as legitimate elements of architectural discourse. However, I do not intend for this

research to over-romanticize life in Naples; I recognize that many of the behaviours I examine stem from conditions of poverty and social distress. My goal is to understand and present these practices as alternative thinking modalities rather than as problems.

By moving beyond conventional and standardised architectural mindsets, I aim to promote a needed, more anthropological, and human-centric approach to the built environment, one that prioritises the needs and desires of the individuals and communities it serves. This following research, therefore, focuses on the human processes at play within designed environments, rather than on the architectural object itself.