Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

Graduation Plan: All tracks

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Roos Koch
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Studio	
Name / Theme	Architecture of the Interior
Teachers / tutors	Mechthild Stuhlmacher, An Fonteyne, Lies Willers
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I've been able to do a few projects at Architecture of the Interior already and love the approach. For my MSc1 I've done the craft school project, which I liked very much, but with doing a similar graduation studio I would miss some variety in my masters. Last year I did an internship at 'Caro van Dijk Architectuur' which is specialized in interiors for people with dementia, I was fascinated by the way this user group experiences architecture. So this year I decided to write my history thesis on the development of nursing homes in the Netherlands. I've learned a lot and would really like to implement this in a design.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	'The Healthy Environment'

Goal	
Location:	Rotterdam
The posed problem,	With the growing number of elderly with dementia in the Netherlands, the question on how they should live an active and valued life grows to. The history of dementia care is a very short one. The history of the architecture housing this care is even shorter, with its most important changes only in the last few decades. The psychogeriatric wards in nursing homes were the first places in the Netherlands specialized in care for elderly with dementia. As the institutions grew bigger and bigger, the aversion towards their hospital-like approach grew with them. This resulted in a more small-scale variant on the existing wards, where people live in groups functioning as a family. The elderly were no longer regarded as patients, but as inhabitants, and the places they were in should be about living instead of caring. The architecture of these places took a while to adjust, but still shows many of the

	institutional aspects. Very often the small living groups are clustered in larger buildings to be able to share facilities. And only a few places allow their inhabitants to leave their own group or they will need guiding. So as their houses become more and more like actual homes, the way they are imbedded in their surroundings is nothing like a home at all.
research questions and	How can we create homes for elderly with dementia that allow them to have an active and valued life within the city of Rotterdam?
design assignment in which these result.	[Design Assignment]

One starting point for the solution can be found in tearing apart the existing clusters of small-scale living groups. There are already a few initiatives working on this concept, looking at ways to house one living group in the existing city fabric. Organization 'De Drie Notenbomen' is setting up homes called 'Herbergiers', which can best be defined as a guest house. These houses are inhabited by 15 people with different stages of dementia. Living with them are two care takers, called care entrepreneurs, often a couple and sometimes living there with children as well. They run the house within the concept of the larger organization, but are free to hire their own staff and implement the care as they want.

Regular houses in the city are often clustered in building blocks. Neighbors meet each other in the streets around the block or in the intimacy of a collective space inside the block. This clustering is an important aspect of living in the city and can be used when wanting to insert the Herbergier in the existing city fabric as a home. The design proposal for the graduation project is to add the Herbergier to a few building blocks scattered in the given area in Rotterdam. Each location has its own character, depending on the neighborhood and building block itself. Together they will form a network to support each other and share facilities.

Process

Method description

Special attention will be given to three phenomena to deeper the understanding of the architecture for elderly care. The 'Hofje' as a Dutch archetype, as a small enclave of serenity imbedded in the city. Deriving from that we will look at the effect of nature on the wellbeing of people. And as a third the housing project for elderly with dementia, the 'Hogeweyk', will be looked at as an example.

As the main goal of the project is to house elderly with dementia in the city of Rotterdam, a good understanding of the existing fabric is crucial. The city of Rotterdam has an intriguing history with the large destruction of the historic center due to the bombing in the second world war. But also because of the rigorously replacing of historical leftovers by seventies and eighties architecture. With historical maps and photographs it is possible to trace back the appearances of Rotterdam through the years.

Another way of creating a better understanding of the existing is exploring the social network of a neighborhood. Starting from more anthropological approach, investigating the way people use space, tells us a lot about their social structures. I've done a research on the way people in the city of Rotterdam dress their window, as this is the place where the domestic meets the exterior.

When going into more detail on the user group, the interior is a very important part of their experience of daily life. When we perceive the world and its physical appearance we link all the information arriving in our brains to the things we know. We look at the world through this frame of references and with that comprehend what it is telling us. People with dementia more and more lose this frame of reference as they progress in their disease. The information they get from the environment around them is no longer linked to what they know, but is processed directly. Their actions upon this information are therefore of a direct character as well. It can be described as acting very intuitively, as through basic instincts, almost childlike. When designing homes for this specific user group, we can use this knowledge to create an interior that responses to this intuitive behavior.
With the use of physical models, the experience of a space is best recreated and can therefore tell us a lot about the potential evoked behavior.

Literature and general practical preference

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Hauge, B. (2015). "Window Stories: The significance of windows to Germans - a qualitative, anthropological investigation of the qualities of a window." DTU Management Engineering.

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Lifchez, R. (1987). Rethinking architecture: Design students and physically disabled people. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Marcus, C. C. (1995). House as a mirror of self: Exploring the deeper meaning of home. Berkeley, Calif: Conari Press.

Mens, N., & Wagenaar, C. (2009). De architectuur van de ouderenhuisvesting: Bouwen voor wonen en zorg. Rotterdam: NAi Uitgevers.

Perec, G. (1974). Espèces d'espaces. [Paris] (32, rue du Fer-à-Moulin): Editions Galilée.

Thiel, P. (1997). People, paths, and purposes: Notations for a participatory envirotecture. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

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Reflection

Relevance

With the fast growing group of elderly with dementia and the political changes in the Netherlands causing care institutions to specialize more, the demand for a more human approach on the architecture of these places rises.

Time planning

Week 1.1 Getting to know the design assignment and visiting location in Rotterdam

Week 1.2 Researching the 'Hofje' as archetype and reading about the subject of the assignment

Week 1.3 Investigating references to compare them in a group debate

Week 1.4 Building a 1:20 model for one of the MSc4 students with a similar project, to help them investigating a certain piece of their P2 design proposal, while gaining knowledge on problems we will face on our own.

Week 1.5 Testing mass models on the location and looking at first design proposals, researching the design location through a special exercise inspired by George Perec's book 'Species of Spaces'

Week 1.6 Excursion to 'Hofjes' in Haarlem and the 'Hogeweyk' in Weesp, first steps into individual designs, researching collective gardens in Rotterdam

Week 1.7 Choosing a specific location within the given area in Rotterdam, trying design concept on this location

Week 1.8 - 1.9
Choosing a specific design direction and defining its character, determining subject for Studio Specific Research

Week 1.10 Prepare P1 presentation + actual P1 presentation

Week 2.1 Start first part of Studio Specific Research, developing an understanding of the subject through theory

Week 2.2 - 2.5
    Defining a more specific design proposal, based on research material
    gathered in the previous weeks, testing different designs on location,
    looking more closely at the user group.
Week 2.6 Writing first texts of Studio Specific Research, and doing fieldwork to gain
    research material
Week 2.7 Test 1:500 and 1:200 designs on chosen locations
Week 2.8 Finish studio specific research, final adjustments, layout, binding
Week 2.9 Prepare P2 presentation + actual P2 presentation
Week 2.10 Retake AR0014 Building history and technology, visiting the 'Herbergier'
    location in Delft
Week 3.1 – 3.4
    Developing design further, process P2 comments, research living
    experience of designs in physical models
Week 3.5 – 3.6
    Thinking about structure and detail to support design ideas
Week 3.7 P3 presentation
Week 3.8 Process P3 comments
Week 3.9 – 3.10
    Start detailing the design, investigating the building on a 1:20 level
Week 4.1 – 4.2
    Exploring details 1:5
Week 4.3 Finalizing design on all scale levels, preparing for P4 presentation
Week 4.4 Potential P4 presentation
Week 4.5 Potential P4 presentation
Week 4.6 Processing P4 comments
Week 4.7 Model building
Week 4.8 Model building
Week 4.9 Model building
Week 4.10 Potential P5 presentation