

# 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:

Personal information	
Name	Sem Verwey
Student number	4883470

Studio		
Name / Theme	Interiors Buildings Cities / Palace	
Main mentor	Jurjen Zeinstra	Architecture
Second mentor	Elina Karanastasi	Architectural Engineering
Third mentor	Sereh Mandias	Architectural Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The studio offers a complex assignment for a public building. Situating the project in an urban context brings forward historical, social and political problems. Designing a building brings forward problems concerning aesthetics, construction, climate, and organization. Giving shape to the interior of a building brings forward problems about expression and impression. All of the things listed above are fundamental architectural matters. Having understanding of these matters is of great significance.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	A matter of: fact and figure
Goal	
Location:	Antwerp, Belgium
The posed problem,	While the archive of the Flemish Architecture Institute (VAi) has the power to retain certain memories, to preserve certain knowledge, it does not have the capacity to retain all memory and preserve all objective knowledge. The design of an archive – its architecture, its collection, its processes – presupposes certain goals, intentions, motifs, norms and values. When individuals are unaware of these presuppositions – an unawareness that is, perhaps, aimed for in our contemporary society – they may be

	unaware of what memory an archive is actually preserving. This, in turn, may lead to the danger to regression of knowledge as opposed to the possibility to evolve knowledge together with the world around.
research questions and	<p>How does the acquisition of archival material into the VAI work? Which changes to this process could eventually result in a more carefully curated architectural canon?</p> <p>Who does the VAI reach with its public program? How does the VAI sensitize its knowledge towards the wider public?</p> <p>How could the VAI increase its connection to the wider public?</p> <p>How could the design proposal deal with its opposition; its covert (archive) and overt (public program) counterparts?</p> <p>How should different materials be conserved/preserved/restored?</p> <p>How could commoning practices be introduced to and be of value for a project for the VAI</p>
design assignment in which these result.	A new place for the VAI that attempts to address the acquisition of 'important' architectural heritage (architectural history), the conservation of this heritage (climate/sustainability), and the sensitization of this heritage in order to provoke a careful and common production of new knowledge (public architecture/politics).
<b>Process</b>	
<b>Method description</b>	
<p><b>Research Seminars</b></p> <p>In a series of seminars the notion of <i>the architecture archive</i> is investigated. Reading thematical articles and reflecting on these articles formed the basis for a collective discussion about archiving culture during the weekly seminars.</p> <p>Invited guests, people who work in architecture archives and/or institutes, have given lectures on their experiences an particular challenges they had to deal with.</p>	

Presentations about precedent projects have been prepared in groups, to further investigate/critique the archiving culture and identifying elements that could be of interest for individual projects.

### **Looking carefully**

In groups of 4, we have made a series of physical models representing 8 precedent projects. Working in scales, ranging from 1:10 to 1:20, an understanding of spatiality, content, light, shadow, and colour was gained. This understanding has been deepened further by redrawing and analyzing drawings and images of the project. The aim was to recreate a photograph of the real space, which meant that a great emphasis on detail and integrality was necessary in order to achieve desirable results

### **Precedent Research Book**

A collective research book on precedent architecture archives contains written and drawn research on 8 precedent architecture archives. Having produced this in parallel to the physical model resulted in in-depth conclusions and reflections on the references.

### **Excursions**

Several excursions have been organized. A three-day excursion to Antwerp introduced our studio group to the site, its people and the wider context of the project. We have done a tour through Antwerp along several buildings and had conversations with architects from different offices. We have visited the architecture archive and the cultural campus where the VAI resides and were allowed to see the inner processes of the institute. We have had a lecture from Sofie de Caigny, former director of the VAI and were allowed access inside the architecture archive to get our hands on some of the material from its collection.

### **A Place to Archive**

A physical model has been made (scale 1:12,5) of an interior space for archiving. Since there was no context provided to embed the space in, focus was mainly put on the interior spatiality and conditioning of a space for archiving artefacts. It allowed to experiment with certain preliminary ideas concerning the graduation project.

### **Project for an Architecture Archive**

A beginning has been made to design a proposal for a new home for the VAI. This proposal will be developed throughout the remainder of the year (Msc4). Besides the methods described above, a variety of methods and exercised will be used in order to reiterate and evolve the project.

Important methods are:

- Keeping up a project journal that consists of shorter and longer writings that reflect on processes or digress on certain topics that need further investigation. Drawings and images will also be included to end up with a collection of material that represents the year-long process.
- Producing drawings that visualize architectural concepts. These drawings range from quick sketches, to projection drawings (plans, sections, elevations), and perspective drawings

- Producing 3D models in order to create a high-res, digital representation of the project, which could be used for experimentation, investigation and visualization.
- Producing physical models in various scales to provide artefacts that can be judged in real life, from different angles and placed within different context.

As the year progresses, material will turn from conceptual and diagrammatic to technical and visualizing. Meetings with fellow students, my first and second tutor, and my research tutor, will help to shape this process.

## **Literature and general practical references**

### **Literature**

Derrida, J., & Prenowitz, E. (1995). Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression. *Diacritics*, 25(2), 9. <https://doi.org/10.2307/465144>

Gorny, R. A., & Radman, A. (2022). From epiphylogenesis to general organology. *FOOTPRINT*. <https://doi.org/10.59490/footprint.16.1.6291>

Harris, J. (1989). Storehouses of Knowledge: The Origins of the Contemporary Architectural Museum. In L. Richards (Ed.), *Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture: Building and Gardens* (pp. 15–32). The MIT Press. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA08028674>

Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. In C. Hamilton, V. Harris, J. Taylor, M. Pickover, G. Reid, & R. Saleh (Eds.), *Refiguring the archive* (pp. 19–26). Springer Science & Business Media.

TU Delft & Nieuwe Instituut. (2023). *Architecture Archive of the Future*. TU Delft and Nieuwe Instituut. <https://nieuweinstituut.nl/en/articles/proceedings-architecture-archives-future>

Ursprung, P. (Ed.). (2003). *Herzog & de Meuron: Natural History*. Lars Müller Publishers. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA61108194>

Willkens, D. (2019). Clouds and Cataracts: Optical experiments at Sir John Soane's Museum. *Technology/Architecture + Design*, 3(2), 211–220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24751448.2019.1640539>

Willkens, D. S. (2016). Reading Words and Images in the Description(s) of Sir John Soane's Museum. *Architectural Histories*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.204>

Yaneva, A. (2020). *Crafting history*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501751837>

### **Precedents**

deSingel. Leon Stynen. (1958-2006).

Depot Boijmans van Beuningen. MVRDV. (2020).  
Nieuwe Instituut. Jo Coenen. (1993).

Archives de Bordeaux Métropole. Robbrecht en Daem architecten. (2015).

ArkDes. Per-Olof Olsson. (1958)

Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Gordon Bunshaft. (1963).

Canadian Centre for Architecture. Peter Rose. (1989).

Drawing Matter Archive. Hugh Strange Architects. (2014).

Helsinki Dreispitz. Herzog & de Meuron. (2014).

Ungers Archiv für Architekturwissenschaft Bibliothek. (1990).

Sir John Soane's Museum. Sir John Soane. (1792-1825).

## **Lectures**

Mark Pimlott on the archive as changing typology

Drs. Danielle S. Willkens on Sir John Soane's Museum and Monticello

Catja Edens on gender and the archive

Dr. Irina Davidovici on contemporary practices and the gta Archive

Sofie de Caigny on the Flemish Architecture Institute

Petteri Kummala on the Museum of Finnish Architecture

Drs. Alejandra Celedon on the Microcosmos project in Santiago de Chile

## **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 graduation project attempts to investigate the archiving culture of the VAI. More specifically it attempts to problematize its public function and questions if it, through architectural means, could become a public institute that provokes knowledge-production for a wide public.

As such, this project tries to relate with the topic of the Interiors Buildings Cities studio, which is *Palace*. A palace, today, is a building that have a representative quality and have a great value for both its direct and indirect context. In short, a palace is a building that has meaning for a large group of people. My graduation project specifically tries to address this.

The technical operations that go hand in hand with the process, the ones that in the end cause the design of the project to emerge, locate the project within the Architecture master track. Specific architectural questions will be investigated. Furthermore, academic research on broader architectural topics is conducted. Findings about architectural history, climate and sustainability, and public architecture and politics assure that a strong connection with the master programme of Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences and the broader academic field is maintained.

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

In contemporary society, major factors – capitalism, amongst others – cause for great socio-economic inequalities for specific groups of people, with them

becoming minorities and losing individual power. Investigating whether commoning practices could be integrated within this project, ties in with this problem within the social, professional and scientific framework.

Besides this, questions of space and reuse is addressed in this project. These are topics that become increasingly significant within the professional field of architecture, since space is becoming ever more scarce and reuse is becoming more and more a necessity/norm.