

# 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	Gianluca Angeli
Student number	5690986

Studio		
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture Graduation studio/ "Last green in town"	
Main mentor	Elsbeth Ronner	Design Tutor
Second mentor	Leeke Reinders	Research Tutor
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The ecological, social, political and architectural challenges embedded in leftovers spaces of our cities are crucial aspects to deal with in the development of the urban environment. Having the chance to design and analyze the "Friche" and the post-industrial city gives us the opportunity to explore the history and the context of Schaerbeek, work on the neglected areas and develop visions for residual areas of the industrial city and ways to include them in the developing process.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Going beyond the fast-paced Schaerbeek  Unveiling Post-Industrial Urban Leftovers to Enhance Community Connectivity and Suburban Lifestyles through Walking in Brussels' Friches
Goal	
Location:	Friche Josaphat/Schaerbeek/Brussels
The posed problem,	Preserve the intimacy of the Friche but at the same time "open" it to the people of Schaerbeek, working on the edges/accesses of the site
research questions and	How does walking influence both the walkers and their perceptions of space? In today's fast paced capitalist society how beneficial is walking as an escape? Considering the Friche Josaphat as a residual space of the post-industrial city, what could those spaces generate and

	<p>host to accommodate the moving and always transforming communities of Schaerbeek?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The design, located in the south-western side of the Friche wants to create a "gate/portal" to preserve the inner intimacy and biodiversity but, at the same time, invite Schaerbeek inhabitants to see and know what is happening in the site.</p> <p>The result would be a livable public space on the edge between the city and the nature, widening the trespassing moment and creating an experience of the space that evolves while going inside the "last green in town".</p> <p>The walking act is going to be the leading thread for the project and, through a sequence of spaces the visitors could experiment the edge and what the division element could generate. From a gathering open-air area to a series of indoor spaces, from a series of semi-public functions in the higher floors, visible from Josaphat park, to the inner path developed to guide the people inside the Friche, guiding the people in a spiritual and collaborative process, where the intimacy of the site and the distance from the city is creating a democratic space partially accessible that reacts against the fast paced capitalist society that is surrounding it.</p> <p>The new building should rethink the role of the gate, playing and changing its function, instead of protecting the city from the surrounding, defending the residual post-industrial green from the surrounding chaotic capitalist city.</p>
<p><b>Process</b></p>	
<p><b>Method description</b></p>	
<p>The research although aims to give architectural answers to the proposed research questions, it's still deeply based on what the site told us during the site visits in</p>	

Brussels. The whole analysis is useful to get information about the past of the site and propose a project that reflects the needs of the area. This part of the research is going to be combined with an extensive theoretical background and research about themes that are relevant for the Friche, such as the connection between humans and nature, the transitional space of the border, the walking act as a research and design method and the redevelopment of the leftover's spaces in our cities.

To apply these concepts and to re-imagine the architectural typology of the gate, trying to collect an historical list of drawings and examples of gates and accesses points. Then, following the theory of Kevin Lynch proposed in the book "Image of the city" I would like to categorize the moment of passing the border between city and nature and identify five different elements: nodes, paths, districts, edges and landmarks.

In order to integrate people and their actions in the gate typology, following Bernard Tschumi's approach used in the "Manhattan's Transcript" project, the design process is going to consider the events, the action and what happens in the space, grounding the design on these elements.

### **Literature and general practical references**

To answer the research plan questions and to better react to the challenges that the site is offering I started to analyze and study the idea of the "space's temporality" introduced by Bruno Zevi in his book "The modern language of Architecture" in the Italian architecture critic present time as a fundamental architectural element to consider in the design process.

Furthermore, to better understand how the time element and the walking act, in the exploration of a space, works I'm trying to deepen into the "theory of the derive" by Guy Debord. The idea of psychogeography improves the awareness on spaces and is a perfect starting point to study and develop a project, for the entrance, for the whole Friche, that considers the image that the inhabitants have of that space, tracing the psychogeographical contour of the project area.

Lastly, I'm going to study the approach used by Bernard Tschumi on projects like parc la Villette or in the Manhattan Transcript where architecture is not only about space and form, but also about event, action, and what happens in space, to transform the analysis of people's motion in a concrete space.

Main references:

F. CARERI, Walkscapes: walking as an aesthetic practice, Culicidae Architectural Press, 2017

A. LADENBURG, A. TWEMLOW, Walking: a research method in art and design, Royal Academy of Art (KABK) The Hague, 2020

P. ROBERT, Architrek, walking to savour spaces, In the city, architecture and landscape, Éditions La Découverte, Paris, 2015

B. LATOUR, Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory, Oxford University Press, 2005

H. D. THOREAU, Walking, 1862

B. ZEVI, The modern language of architecture, University of Washington Press, 1978

## **Reflection**

The topic of this research is a fundamental and a key aspect of any architect's approach and practice. Every project developed throughout the history of our cities deals with political, societal and ecological problems.

The society is continuously changing and evolving and, therefore, the cities are shifting towards new ways of living, including new social challenges. The post-industrial cities left behind some of the production areas, infrastructural nodes, and some complete districts, reflecting the change in the productive and working system. Those leftover spaces are strategical and fundamental areas to rethink and redevelop collectively, to avoid that the ruling class takes advantage over and choose the urban inhabitants. Those areas create for this reason new ecological, political and social challenges for architects but in general for the population, and they offer the chance to create biodiverse and self-managed artistic production center.

Furthermore, our cities are facing every year new changes in the population and integration challenges, that are enlarging the multiculturalism of our cities and creating a dynamic and even changing environment. Those mass movements of people bring to the attention of people the theme of migration and architecture of movements. How those leftovers spaces in our cities could be taken from the hand of the capitalistic society ruling the cities and accommodate the needs of the newly coming people thanks to the act of walking and cultural creation.

I truly believe that as architects we should think deeply about those topics and try to give alternative answers and options able to create or rethink the spaces in our cities. Architecture needs to criticize and propose alternative way of thinking about the society through architectural means and needs to stand on the side of people, being provocative and rebel.

The critic approach about the surrounding world and the polite and gentle touch of architecture are the two main elements that I'm trying to implement in this thesis and that's what I would like to pursue in my life, either as an architect and as a citizen.