

Graduation Plan

Master of Science in Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

MSc Landscape Architecture 2024 - 2025

Lise Ellens



Graduation Plan

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), your mentors and delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before the P2 date at the latest.

I Personal information

Full name	Lise Ann Ellens
Student number	5637600

II Studio / Lab information

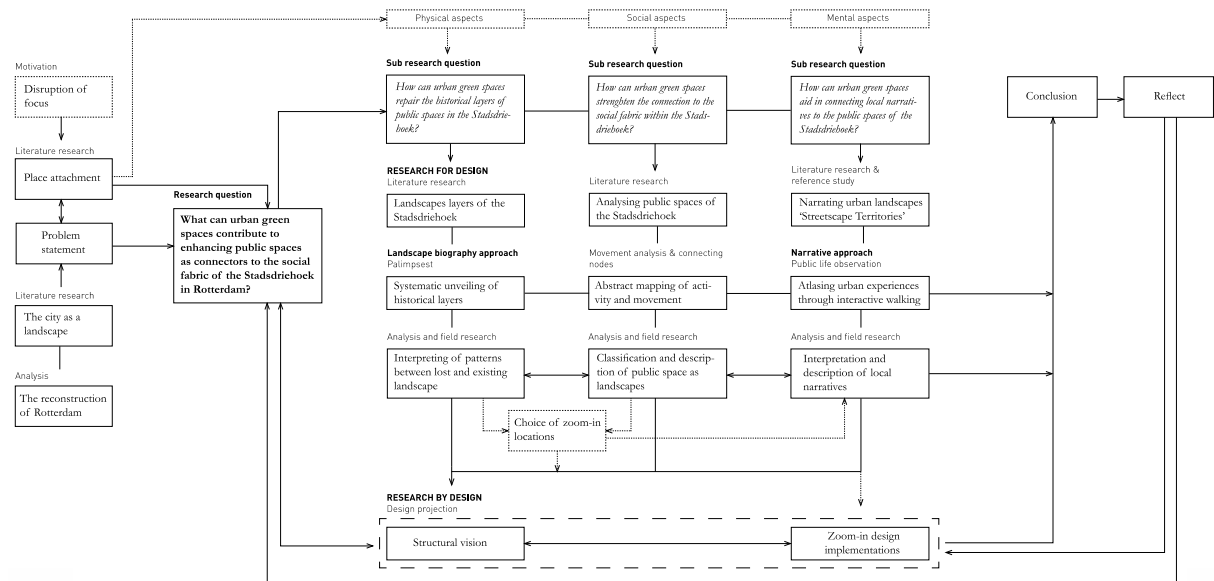
Name / Theme	FLOWSCAPES	
Main mentor	Gerdy Verschuure-Stuip	Landscape architecture
Second mentor	Maurice Hartevelde	Urbanism
Argumentation of choice of the LA graduation lab	In the field of landscape architecture our role as designers is not to focus solely on ecological issues but on the landscape as a whole (De Block et al., 2019). The complexity of a landscape, especially in the cities, are intertwined layers of the dynamic interaction between people and their environment. The socio-political aspect of landscapes interests me to look further into the connection of landscape and emotional attachment to place. In this graduation project I want to explore how landscape can be viewed from a social perspective and how this can strengthen the connection between people and place and therefore improve the quality of urban life.	

III Graduation project

Title of the project	The silenced city - reconnecting the social fabric to the layered landscape
Context and aim of the project	
Location	Stadsdriehoek, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Problem statement	The conditions caused by globalization in the public space of cities – the focus on optimization and standardization – converge in the urban fabric of the Stadsdriehoek in Rotterdam. The inner city deals with the remaining dominant spatial identity focused on functional planning, due to radical reconstruction and removal of the layered landscape after the bombing during WWII in 1940. Because of the focus on modernizing the urban fabric in the 20th century, the Stadsdriehoek has to deal with public spaces that lack historical layering. The consequences of the continuous negligence of the social fabric resulted in loss of social connection to the urban landscape of the inner city and reduced the quality of urban life. Due to the rising need

	<p>for order and control of the public space, the Stadsdriehoek is slowly turning into a homogeneous environment where perfection and control are prioritized (Boer, 2023). To strengthen the relationship between people and place, urban green spaces can provide the means to connect different layers of the urban landscape to their surrounding social context. Additionally, urban green spaces can contribute to the social fabric of cities by providing for spontaneous interactions and enhancing a dynamic public life (Whyte, 1980). Therefore, the Stadsdriehoek is a relevant case study in exploring how urban green spaces can contribute to enhancing public spaces as part of the social fabric. Since regreening the city centers in The Netherlands is often encouraged (Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit, 2024), the Stadsdriehoek can especially benefit from it due to the large closed-pavement commercial areas, lack of green public spaces and hard water fronts.</p>
Research question(s)	<p>What can urban green spaces contribute to enhancing public spaces as connectors to the social fabric in the Stadsdriehoek of Rotterdam?</p> <p>Sub-research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can urban green spaces repair the historical layers of public spaces in the Stadsdriehoek? 2. How can urban green spaces strengthen the connection to the social fabric within the Stadsdriehoek? 3. How can urban green spaces provide in connecting local narratives to the public spaces of the Stadsdriehoek?
Design assignment	
<p>The aim of this graduation project is to explore how urban green spaces can act as a lens to think about the city through the landscape. The aim is to explore the potential of enhancing the connection between the optimized urban fabric and the lost historical layers as an attempt to reconnect people with their surrounding social environment. The focus of the project is on the emotional attachment people form with the landscape, enhancing a sense of belonging and improve quality of urban life.</p>	
IV Graduation process	

Method description



The first part of this graduation project is devoted to explore my motivation and observed challenging conditions in the urban environment, as well as on site. An initial exploration and analysis of the site is conducted to understand the unique conditions. Additionally, literature research is conducted about the theoretical framework of place attachment and related theories. From this theory the three aspects are used to each investigating an aspect of place (physical, social and mental).

Each aspect will be explored separately through three (or four) methods described below:

- _Literature research: understanding relevant landscape architecture concepts related to the topic and/or theoretical framework and methods.
- _Site analysis: describing and interpreting the site according to the topic through maps, drawings, sections and sketches.
- _Field research: part of site analysis by visiting and experiencing the site through walking, photographing and interacting with inhabitants.
- _Reference study: exploring relevant projects related to the used theoretical framework and approaches.

Simultaneously and building on this obtained knowledge and methods, the three aspects are each investigated separately to understand and explore the different perspectives more thoroughly:

_Physical aspect: The landscape biography approach is used to explore through the method palimpsest (Van den Heuvel, 2010) the historical landscape layers of the site. Through mapping and description of these landscape layers, spatial challenges are identified. By uncovering, analyzing, and interpreting these layers will reflect how history, culture, and landscape interacted through time and inform future design

strategies (Corner, 1999). Design strategies in which urban green spaces can help with enhancing the spatial legibility and historical connection are explored.

_Social aspect: Describing and evaluating the public spaces of the Stadsdriehoek. The methods movement analysis and connecting the nodes (Jesus Balado Frias) will show an abstraction of the social activity and movement through the city. Classification and typologies of landscapes according to personal or collective attachment is explored to evaluate the connection between place attachment and the social fabric. Design strategies to enhance the social network and interweave the attachment landscape typologies with the social fabric of the site.

_Mental aspect: The narrative approach is used to describe, interpret and evaluate narrative layers of the site, through two analytical steps. The first focusses on the observation and description of everyday life practices of the inhabitants, conducting multiple informal interviews (Scheerlinck et al., 2017). The second step uses the methods narrative walking (Carole Lévesque) and atlas urban experiences (Caendia Wijnbelt) to understand and explore through direct engagement, conceptual drawings and objective representations. Through mapping and description the specific narrative conditions of the site are expressed, leading to design implementations contributing to the local identity of the physical and social environment.

The result of this analysis and exploration is a structural vision, as well as a masterplan on the scale of the site implementing the design strategies of mainly the physical and social aspects. At the same time three zoom-in site designs are worked out in greater detail, concretizing the narrative findings of the design strategies mainly of the mental aspect. These designs are visualized through drawings on eye site, sections and plans as well as diagrams related to the theoretical framework. The aim is to show what urban green spaces can contribute to a sense of place.

The last part of the graduation project is used to reflect on this process and outcomes, write findings and conclusions and improve products. Relating back to the main research question.

Literature and more applied references

Literature list

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V Reflection on the project proposal

1. What is the relation between your graduation topic, the lab topic, and your master track?

The graduation topic fits within the lab topic (Design of the Urban Fabric) by focusing on the social and historical layers of the landscape in an urban environment. The relationship between people and place is explored through different layers of the landscape.

The project will reflect on the four principles of the landscape architecture approach of the TU Delft in the landscape architecture track. The principle *palimpsest* is used as method, leading to the analysis and understanding of the layered landscape. The other three principles – *perception*, *scale-continuum* and *process* – are considered throughout the graduation project. The used approaches focusses on the *perception*, additionally the focus on social dynamics considers *process*. Small and large spaces are analysed in relation to social fabric, representing the *scale-continuum*.

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

This graduation project aims to explore an approach to landscape architecture design by focusing on the social fabric of cities. I believe this graduation topic can contribute to a better understanding of how control and standardization of inner cities can be an interesting design challenge for the field of landscape architecture, as well as an addition to an improved urban life quality. The goal is to view a site not as a problem, but as a set of unique conditions where the existing elements that are already functioning contribute to the foundation for a design. I hope this approach can contribute to the different ways of looking at landscape architectural design, not only with a natural systematic approach but from a socio-political perspective.