

# 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	Pratika Chamankar
Student number	5242924

Studio		
Name / Theme	AR3UA100 Urban Architecture Graduation Studio (Glaneurs / Glaneuses)	
Main mentor	Paul Vermeulen	Architectural Design
Second mentor	Lex van Deudekom	Building Technology
Third mentor	Leeke Reinders	Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose the Urban Architecture studio as it delves into reconfiguring existing urban tissues through architectural interventions, after a thorough reading of the place, not just the urban and architectural elements but also the social fabric. The 2021 studio, being site-specific and focusing primarily on vacant industrial fringes and its relations with the rest of the city, seemed particularly interesting to explore.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Entering the interstices
Goal	
Location:	Maastricht, The Netherlands
The posed problem,	<p>The urban fabric of cities is shaped by “spatial forms and urban compositions, built over time,” influencing the fabric of life within it. This fabric or physical texture of urban areas - cities and their fringes – comprises various natural features, built environment and voids. Voids are both the spaces deliberately left by carving out squares, piazzas in a city, or public passages, and courtyards in buildings as well as the leftover undesignated interstitial space, spaces in, around or enclosed by built forms, vacant, abandoned or derelict-defunct infrastructure. These interstices - often regarded as results of discontinuous urban plans, rapid urbanization, and simultaneous de-industrialisation – have become common sights in urban areas in process of transformation.</p> <p>To the north of Maastricht, in Boschstraatkwartier and Sphinxkwartier – a previously predominant industrial area established around the Bassin – is presently</p>

	<p>undergoing a similar phase in its urban history. This northern fringe of the city that housed factories like Sphinx and SAPPI is slowly being transformed into a second city centre for Maastricht, set within the industrial fabric. The plans for its renewal have been drawn and redrawn since the 2000s. Its implementation has been discontinuous and interrupted by several factors like the economic crisis etc, resulting in some interstices, defunct infrastructure, and abandoned buildings. While some land parcels and industrial structures in the area have been repurposed, many of the spaces remain undesignated, functionless, inaccessible, and some have been appropriated. What happens to these spaces? As these leftover spaces and industrial structures are situated in-between already active functional places, are located close to the old city centre, and are traces of the city's industrial past, they inherit value in them that can be enhanced and developed. These interstices, industrial remnants have the potential to become essential parts of the city's urban and social fabric if articulated thoughtfully.</p>
research questions and	<p><b>Thus, the project will explore,</b></p> <p><b>'How can the leftover interstices and defunct structures in Boschstraatkwartier / Sphinxkwartier in Maastricht be designed, articulated and revitalised to become valuable for the locals/neighbourhood and reintegrated into the city's urban and social fabric? How this could be accomplished while preserving traces of its industrial past?'</b></p> <p>The research will start by delving into the sub questions:</p> <p>What is the nature, urban and social fabric, and value of the current centres in Maastricht?</p> <p>Where are the interstitial and derelict/defunct spaces in Boschstraatkwartier/Sphinxkwartier?</p> <p>What is the history, nature, value, current character of these spaces?</p> <p>What potential do these spaces behold for possible interventions based on their position in the kwartier and proximity with the inner city?</p> <p>Who could be using these spaces and to what ends?</p>

design assignment in which these result.

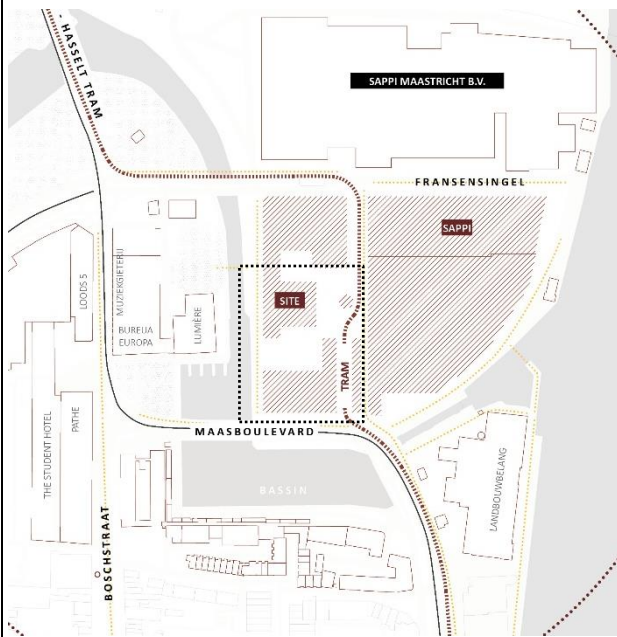


Figure: SiteLocation

From the different interstitial, derelict, and vacant sites in the Boschstraatkwartier / Sphinxkwartier, the Southern part of the Sappi factory was chosen for urban restructuring and urban plan proposal.

For the architectural design intervention, the part of the site that lies along the Bassin and framed by the Maasboulevard and proposed tram line will be designed and detailed. The existing structures on site, their extensions and the spaces between the buildings will be designed as public and collective spaces, serving as a link and transition between the new developments on the factory site, the Bassin and beyond. The emphasis will be on repurposing the existing, connections between the existing and new structures, design of the different open space pockets and on the thresholds between the built and the open spaces.

Architectural program:

Cluster 1: Public building with Space for performance arts, rehearsals, workshops, small library

Cluster 2: Coworking spaces, Ateliers, Studios

## Process

### Method description

During the first phase of research (P1), archival research was conducted to study the architectural histories of urban renewal in Maastricht. In addition, site visits were undertaken to view the current situation in Maastricht, especially in the areas that have been renewed, and to examine the consequences of the renewals on both the urban fabric and social dynamics. Interviews were also conducted to find out the creator's perspective on the city and its renewals, which was presented by means of a short film, models.

In the next stage, the research will focus on Mapping, Morphology (form) and social-spatial relations, literature and precedents study.

Reading the city as a composition and configuration of spaces through Urban form – Morphological analysis with emphasis on the composition of voids like the Squares, Plazas, Streets, Alleys, Passages, Parks, Courtyards as well as the residual, interstitial spaces, Vacant lots, abandoned structures, Decaying ruins, nooks and crannies.

To understand the nature of these different spaces, their spatial characteristics, and the activities that take place at such spaces, current centres/squares in Maastricht – the Markt / Stadhuis square, the Vrijthof, Plein 1992 – and the area around the Bassin will be mapped and analysed through the layers: a. Figure Ground, b. Nolli Maps (Public, Private, Extension of Public), c. Composition of void/open spaces/squares, d. Activities, Functions, f. Facades and thresholds

Furthermore, the vision documents/renewal plans for the area and the city will also be reviewed to find out whether any specific functions or users have been assigned for these leftover spaces and to understand the overarching vision the authorities have for the area and city.

## Literature and general practical preference

[The literature (theories or research data) and general practical experience/precedent you intend to consult.]

The theoretical framework and literature review will focus around

- a. understanding the phenomenon of Urban interstices and the studio theme (Gleaning) using the texts:

***Urban Interstices: The Aesthetics and the Politics of the In-between.***

Essays: Trajectories of Interstitial Landscapeness: A Conceptual Framework for Territorial Imagination and Action, The Urban Fringe as a Territorial Interstice.

***'Out of frame': The (in)visible life of urban interstices.***

*The Gleaners and I. A Film by Agnes Varda.*

*Gleaning in the 21st Century. An Article by Mark Gunderman*

- b. the regeneration of such left-over spaces and defunct/derelict structures using the texts:

***Second Hand Spaces: Recycling Sites Undergoing Urban Transformation.***

***Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality.***

- c. References that give insight into the inhabitation of (shared)urban spaces:

***The Spaces between Buildings.***

***Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space.***

***The Social Life of Small Urban Places.***

## Practical Precedents / Case studies

Some of these will include:

Projects that vitalised Interstices: **Aldo van Eyck's Playgrounds, Paley Park (New York), Strijp-S Eindhoven**

Projects that revitalised derelict (industrial) structures: **Daoíz y Velarde Center, Kulturbahnhof Aalen, Wagenhallen Stuttgart**

Transformation projects recently completed in Sphinx: **The Timmerfabriek, The Eiffel, The Lumiere.**

## 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)?

The graduation project delves into the theme of interstitial spaces, defunct infrastructure prevalent in urban areas which are in the process of transformation and de-industrialisation and tries to identify the potentials of such spaces for intervention while preserving traces of their past. Designing and repurposing of such leftovers of the urban fabric into spaces that can become meaningful for the neighbourhood/urban area also resonates with the studio's theme of Gleaning (Glaneurs, Glaneuses), a term traditionally associated with gathering leftover crops, which is now more loosely interpreted and associated with collecting, picking up and revaluing all kinds of objects – forgotten, unused, left out, imperfects or seconds.

The research also explores urban morphology, the relation between the built and unbuilt spaces, composition of the open spaces, public squares, and centers, in order to inform the design decisions for repurposing the existing structures and the spaces between them.

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

Like Maastricht, several cities are undergoing similar urban transformations with simultaneous deindustrialization, leading to the formation of interstitial spaces, unused industrial structures, undesignated plots that lie vacant in close proximity of city centres and everyday life. The research and design project can contribute to understanding the value and potential of these spaces – in terms of their architectural, social, and material aspects.