

reflection

My initial design approach focussed on showcasing these structural elements adding new walls and floors in such a way the structure had space to be admired. This architectural approach raised many problems later on, as it became difficult to justify my design choices. Later, my design approach shifted towards a method based approach; working with, and analysing the existing structure to try and find ways to intervene as efficiently as possible.

During this time I was also working on a research about solitude. I made multiple drawings each focusing on a different aspect of solitude. The end result was a little booklet with an incoherent set of drawings, each drawing with a different perspective and styles. Questioning the products themselves was very valuable as it revealed drawing was not a way to do the research, but it was the research itself. Each drawing focussed on a slightly different aspect of solitude. The drawing represents the logic of the space according to that specific aspect. In the second research I drew the TU Delft Faculty of Architecture, here the act of drawing

was a way to better understand how the circulation in this particular interior street works. Drawing the building following the logic of the corridor resulted in a 2 metre long drawing where the walls of the corridor wrap around multiple open spaces with a closed wall on the other side. Both researches (solitude & circulation) are based on observing a space and/or its activities, trying to draw it in such a way to represent how I interpreted the logic of that space.

While designing I can use this reflection to better understand my sketches and drawings on a conceptual level. As I was analysing the existing building I was constantly sketching and drawing the structure from different perspectives and in different ways with different colours. The first thing I always drew before anything else was the whole structure. Using the knowledge of all the little studies about utilising the structure, I continued my design drawing around what already was on paper resulting in a building in which the structure is very present but also carefully joins with the new elements.

Generally I start drawing and things unfold naturally. This process makes it difficult to reflect and realise what it precisely is I am trying to visualise. Now I realise reflection is very important in the process of drawing. Looking at the order in which things are drawn, the colours and the type of perspective can help me with this. I think the specific focus in a drawing and reflecting on that are something I can work on in the future.

Looking back at the design process, I realise the warehouse was with the same approach I had adopted: building as efficiently as possible. By using only the necessary elements the structure is visible and optimised: heavy concrete ground floor, light steel first floor, and a thin facade. The columns and beams are optimised in such a way that the side columns are smaller than the central columns. In a sense I continued the efficiency based approach used in the original construction of the warehouse. By aligning my design approach with that of the original warehouse I think the result showcases the features of the original building while complying with the demands of

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the new programme. The beams are visible in the floor openings, the facade is punctured to make windows, eg. As a result my original vision of showcasing the structure has come to fruition but with a totally different approach.

Architecture has an important role in the climate crisis debate. Making new buildings or building parts generally have a big impact on the environment. This is not a sustainable way to move forward. A way to reduce the impact on the environment is by reusing. To normalise reuse it is important to assign a new value to the word “new”, one that regards new as a luxury and used as normal. This will influence the aesthetics of the objects and the built environment. I think trends such as vintage stores and second hand shops already show great promise to how this can change on a bigger scale. As such I think we should get used to another aesthetic, one that is not perfect, one that shows tear and wear and is maybe less comfortable but also has its own story, and its own unique texture, personally I am totally fine with that. It is up to designers and individuals to position themselves in this balance between aesthetics, functionality, energy and material.

On a more personal note I think the approach of efficiency and appreciating existing things (as I had done in my graduation project) also aligns with how I approach things in real life. Before I need something new I try to look at the things I already have at my disposal. I try to deconstruct the object to its basic properties, for example when I needed a little trash can in the bathroom; box, openable. Then I try to look in and around the house to see if I can find something that has the potential to match those properties with a simple adjustment. For example, an empty tin olive oil container which has been laying around for a while. By making a cut in the top part it opens up and it becomes a trash can. The solution is focussed on efficiency and functionality whereas the aesthetics have a low priority. (The same concept applies when I throw something away but in reverse.) By recontextualising and reusing objects they can gain value and longevity. Understanding problems this way opens up to many unexpected solutions

In this graduation project I have tried the same, except on a bigger scale. As the scale increases it becomes more difficult to recognise the properties and potentialities. By carefully examining what is there and what is needed it is possible to use the same approach. Resulting in unexpected, valuable or funny solutions that otherwise would not have been possible. In architecture I try to use the same approach, aesthetics are not the priority but a result.