

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Yuqing Zhang

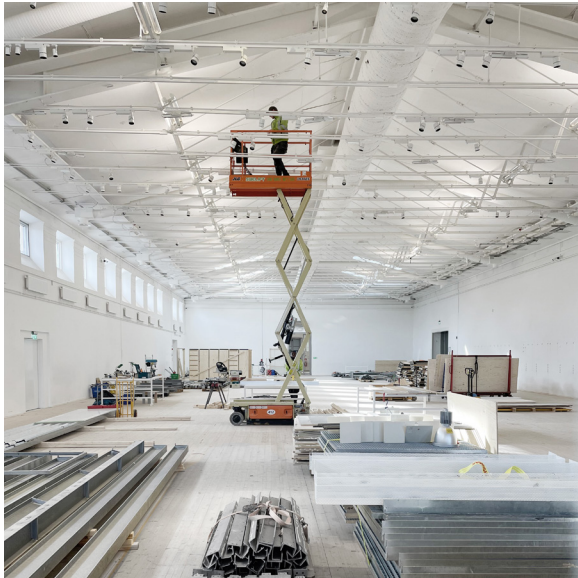


Fig.1 Interior of ArkDes

Through a combination of case studies, discussions, field research, and personal experiences, I have gradually engaged with the course content related to interiors, buildings, and cities. This journey has enriched my understanding significantly. As I navigated this process, I aimed to organize various threads of thought, allowing once-chaotic ideas to connect and coalesce into a clearer comprehension. This understanding extends beyond archives to encompass site context, exhibition spaces, urban design, and perspectives on architectural heritage. I outline key themes that encapsulate my observations, reflections, and insights in the following.

ArkDes

Our team's historical research into ArkDes reveals that this institution, dedicated to architecture and design, initially lacked a specific site. Its vision appeared less about occupying a physical space and more about engaging with the broader development of Stockholm, particularly the transformation of Skeppsholmen from a military enclave to a public space. This transition signifies a commitment to the city's evolution and its social fabric.

Additionally, by examining the evolution of the architectural space within Exercishuset, we observe the respect that architects and managers have had for historical artifacts and cultural contexts over different periods. Through adaptive reuse strategies, they have extended the building's lifespan while achieving economic sustainability. In this process, the challenges faced by architects, engineers, institutions and governments are diverse. Technically, the renovated old building has a modern indoor temperature and humidity environment. Management-wise, new functional modules are added and effectively organized. Urban-wise, a cultural community is gradually formed and open to the public. ArkDes still faces these challenges in its current and future development.

Fig.1 Interior of ArkDes, 2024, <https://arkdes.se>



Fig.2 Rendering | Interior of ArkDes

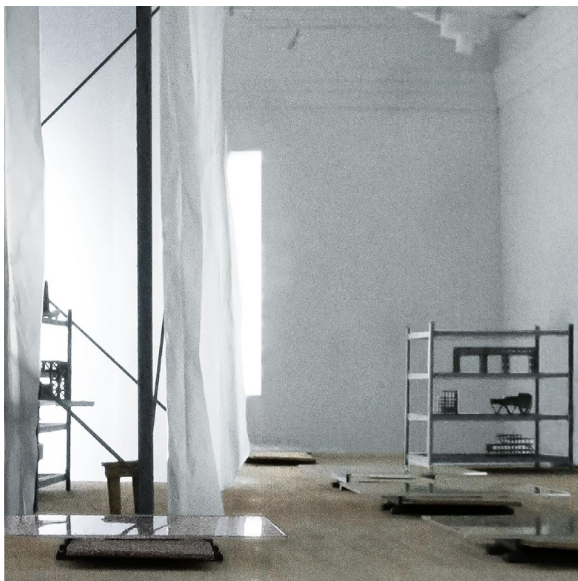


Fig.3 Model photo | Interior of ArkDes

Model Making

The practice of creating handmade models to replicate realistic photographs represents a traditional yet distinctive research method. This hands-on process guided me through various considerations, such as structure, materials, and construction, while also prompting exploration of light, shadow, temperature, and atmosphere.

Engaging in model-making feels akin to interpreting a building through an architect's lens. This process is steeped in artistic expression, and it excites me to further investigate this art-oriented approach within architectural design. The tactile experience of crafting models enriches my understanding of spatial relationships and invites a deeper exploration of how form and function interact.

Fig.2 Rendering | Interior of ArkDes, 2023, Arrhov Frick Arkitektkontor

Fig.3 Model photo | Interior of ArkDes, 2024, made by Maksymilian, Bruno, Yuqing

Fig.4 Interior of VAI Archive, 2024, photo by Yuqing



Fig.4 Interior of VAI Archive

VAI Archive

My visit to the VAI Archive in Antwerp marked my first genuine encounter with the workings of an architectural archive. It was an extraordinary experience to handle precious drawings, models, films, and historical documents firsthand. This encounter sparked reflections on the cultural significance of architectural archives for cities and nations.

As the central entity of the VAI Archive, I pondered the challenges and opportunities that architectural archives face today. What role should they play in balancing the needs of the public with the preservation of artifacts? How can they evolve to remain relevant in an increasingly digital age? These questions will guide my exploration of the future development and purpose of archives.



Fig.5 De Singel

De Singel

My site research in Antwerp, particularly at De Singel, was a profoundly rewarding experience. This art center serves a diverse range of functions - music, dance, drama, and architecture - through its various stages, concert halls, and exhibition spaces. The construction of this complex has unfolded over more than fifty years, showcasing a rich tapestry of architectural styles, including modernism, brutalism, postmodernism, ecologism, and high technology.

This complexity raises important questions: How can one organize such diverse architectural elements cohesively? What criteria are essential for placing, renovating, or constructing a new archive within this framework? Furthermore, how can this complex fulfill its responsibilities within the urban context? Between architecture that serves people versus that which serves artifacts, addressing their relationship is crucial.

Fig.5 De Singel, 2024, photo by Yuqing

Fig.6 Available Archive of Claire Bastille and Paul Ibens in AVi Archive, 2024, organized by Yuqing

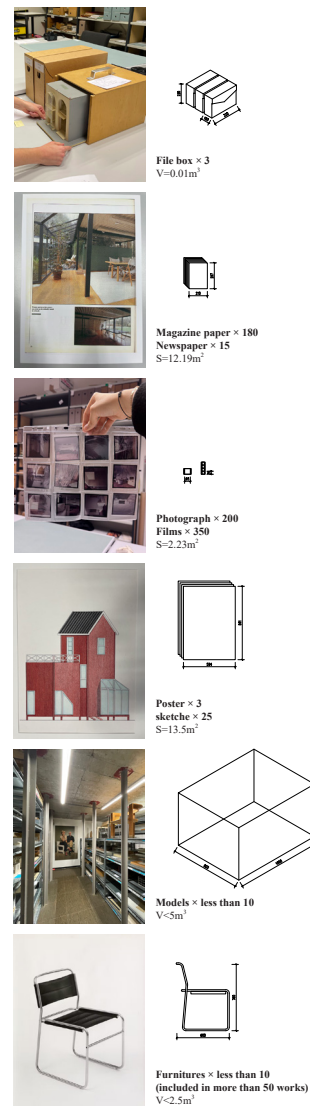


Fig.6 Available Archive of Claire Bastille and Paul Ibens in AVi Archive

About archive

From the above visits, discussions and model practices, I found some common characteristics and problems, which may become the focus of my next study and exploration. Archives (VAi Archive) and public centers (ArkDes & De Singel) have undergone evolution in the past and in the future. What are the causes and future directions of these evolutions? How can archive buildings better serve and connect with other functions? How can archive buildings better assume spatial responsibilities in the city?

I think the next design course may be a renovation project about De Singel. From the perspective of interiors, buildings and cities, archive space needs to be effectively integrated and serve other spaces. It is necessary to find some common principles and unique methods to make archive buildings have flexibility and adaptability to meet the challenges of this evolution.