

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), 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	Jantine Maria van Halsema	
Student number	4559886	
Studio		
Name / Theme	Place and Memory	
Main mentor	Saskia de Wit	Landscape Architecture
Second mentor	Aleksandar Staničić	Architecture, Methods of Analysis and Imagination
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>The lab of Place and Memory is very site specific. It is organized in a way in which the students participating in this lab get inspired for their research by immersing themselves in the site. I feel this site specificness will allow me to get more into detail and work with meaning, personal experience and sensory experience in my graduation project. Furthermore, this lab allows for more experimental ways of working and analyzing, giving me more freedom in my last design project.</p>	
Graduation project		
Title of the graduation project	<p>The Things we have in Common How landscape commons in Den Helder contribute to stronger human and non-human communities</p>	
Goal		
Location:	Den Helder, Zuid Holland, the Netherlands	
The posed problem,	<p>Den Helder is a small city in the North-West end of the mainland of the Netherlands. Being situated on lands-end, the city is surrounded by water on three sides; with the North sea on the West and the Wadden sea on the North and East side of the city. This unique location brings numerous qualities to the city that are related to the surrounding landscape of the both seas. Throughout time, the city of Den Helder has been closely related to, and influenced by the sea; through human-practices bringing prosperity and culture, but also through disasters such as war and floods (Gemeente Den Helder et al., 2021).</p> <p>Due to various reasons, the relation of Den Helder to the sea has changed, bringing with it also changes to the coastline. This has resulted in a land-water edge that has been commodified and occupied by the city in ways that prevent or limit the use of its</p>	

	<p>resources by both people and animals and ways that pay little attention to the ecological and social values of the landscape. People are being limited to access the coast and have no influence on what happens to the landscape. In this way, singular interests outbalance other values, causing people to lose grip on the landscape, leading to further social and ecological neglect.</p> <p>However, the places that can be accessed, such as the dike and the beach, seem popular places to recreate. Any time of the year people can be found walking and cycling there, enjoying the landscape. This shows that the citizens of Den Helder are looking for a connection to the landscape and have a great appreciation for it.</p> <p>Because of the value of the land-water edge for the people of Den Helder, and the degrading ecological quality of the coastal landscape (Lotze et al., 2005), there is a need and potential to strengthen its social and ecological value.</p> <p>This thesis proposes to look at the landscape through the lens of the <i>commons</i> to enrich the social and ecological value of the land-water edge. Commons are tangible or intangible resources available for all members of society, managed by a community for individual and collective benefit. By revisiting <i>the commons</i> through a landscape architectural lens, a new approach can be taken towards its different values and resources, ensuring accessibility, and safeguarding of its social and ecological qualities. The act of <i>commoning</i>, the participatory process that makes the resources accessible, as well as maintaining sharing, or spreading it (Dellenbaugh-Losse et al., 2020, p. 21), could strengthen human communities through social interaction and organization, and strengthen non-human communities by engagement with, and care for the landscape.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>This thesis aims to answer the following question: How can commons in the land-water edge enrich the ecological and social value of the landscape?</p> <p>The main question will be answered through the help of a set of sub-questions. Firstly, a greater understanding of the commons has to be achieved. This will be done by answering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the commons? - How can the notion of commons be used in landscape (architecture)? And why? - What is commoning and how does it contribute to community building and social resilience? - What could be the role of the landscape architect in the designing of the commons?

	<p>Next to that, the focus on the land-water edge will be explained by answering the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the social and ecological significance and potential of the land-water edge of Den Helder? <p>To envision the possibilities for the commons, more knowledge is needed on the resources and values of the landscape, therefore the following questions will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the tangible and intangible resources that can be central in the commons of the land-water edge of Den Helder, looking from both a human and non-human perspective? - How can landscape architectural design enable the use of tangible and intangible resources? - How does the landscape architectural design respond to the wants and needs of the users in time? - What design interventions can be made to make the landscape accessible as a commons?
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The design assignment will be to design the land-water edge in such a way that the landscape functions again as a commons. The east-coast of Den Helder bordering the Wadden sea will be the focal point of the design.</p> <p>Firstly, on a larger scale of the whole east-coast bordering the city, the intrinsic-value, use-value, and existence-value as described by Jean-David Gerber and Gérald Hess (2017), have to be in balance. This entails creating more intertidal areas or wet nature as habitat for multiple animal and plant species, better access for people with the ability to use and appropriate the landscape to their wants and needs, and design that allows for better aesthetic, contemplative and affective appreciation of the singular landscape. Thereafter, (some of) the elements that are discussed on a larger scale can be designed in detail (1:10 – 1:100). This can be paths and lookouts that are part of a routing, art installations and coastal transformations.</p> <p>Secondly, on a smaller scale, a different approach will be taken to design ‘commons in the landscape’. The design assignment here is to design a commons, which can function as a gathering place to organize commoning activities. In this way the commons will offer room for human community building through landscape engagement and social interaction, and non-human community building through biodiversity strengthening and habitat creation.</p>
<p>[This should be formulated in such a way that the graduation project can answer these questions. The definition of the problem has to be significant to a clearly defined area of research and design.]</p>	

Process

Method description

The research that will be done to answer the main question of this thesis, ‘*How can commons in the land-water edge enrich the ecological and social value of the landscape?*’, consists of two approaches; design by research and research by design.

The design by research part will firstly consists of establishing a theoretical framework on the commons. A general understanding on the commons will be gained through literature studies and case studies, whereafter the scope can be narrowed down and a distinction can be made between *Landscape as commons*, and *Commons in the landscape*. The first will focus on the larger scale of the land-water edge as commons, and the latter will focus on commons spaces that allow for commoning as a practice. *Landscape as commons* will be further researched through literature studies on commons. *Commons in the landscape* will be elaborated on through literature studies on community building, and case studies on (spatial) commoning organization. This will result in goals and principles for the commons and the practice of commoning in the second phase.

Parallel to this, the focus on the land-water edge as a location for commons will be elaborated on. Mainly by analyzing the properties of the land-water edge in Den Helder and defining its qualities and faults. Additionally, literature studies will be done on ecological edges and gradients, and social theory on edges in public space, to define the further social and ecological significance and potential of the land-water edge.

After the theoretical framework is defined, the research will continue in research by design. Parallel design experiments will be done on *Landscape as commons* and *Commons in the landscape*.

For *Landscape as commons*, different scenarios will be set up to explore the values and resources that are essential to make the landscape function as commons. For these scenarios, the *intrinsic value*, *use value*, and *existence value* by Gerber and Hess (2017), will be used as a basis. The input for these scenarios will consists of site analysis on ecological, social and experiential aspects through desk studies, immersive analysis and imaginary interviews, as well as input from citizens of Den Helder through surveys and/or interviews. From these explorations a final scenario can be made in which the commons work on all three values, enriching the social and ecological value of the landscape.

On a smaller scale, for *Commons in the landscape*, case studies will be used to define a set of elements that contribute to community building and help to organize the acts of commoning. These will be used in design experiments for the creation of a gathering place with possible other elements.

Literature and general practical precedents

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Case studies:

Stadsboerderij Osdorp, Amsterdam

de Lacerda Arpini, E. (2022). Urban commons as a driver for inclusion: A socio-spatial analysis of the accessibility to Urban Commons in Amsterdam [MSc thesis]. TU Delft.)

Düsselgrün, Dusseldorf

Dellenbaugh-Losse, M., Zimmermann, N. E., & Vries, N. de. (2020). *The Urban Commons Cookbook: Strategies and Insights for Creating and Maintaining Urban Commons*. Dellenbaugh-Losse, Mary.

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Lichtenrader Volkspark, Berlin

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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)?

My graduation project focusses on strengthening human and non-human communities, respectively the social and ecological value, through engagement with and care for the landscape through commoning. The focus on the interaction between human and non-human communities connects to the idea of a multispecies world which is one of the themes within the Place and Memory lab. Moreover, the importance of place and site specificness plays a big role in my goal to make meaningful places in the landscape for local residents and enhance experiences related to the local landscape.

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

Firstly, this thesis adds onto research on the commons by adding a landscape architectural perspective. For commons theory it means to see more varieties of land-based commons related to nature, beyond community-garden projects.

Secondly, For the landscape architectural practice, this project helps to see different approaches on how we design and use landscapes, taking different values into account. In this way we can move away from 'consuming' landscapes, towards a relationship of giving and taking, and engagement with the landscape.

On a larger societal scale this thesis contributes to new ways of looking at land ownership and management, in order to create a balance between the different values of the landscape and prevent (further) commodification and exhaustion of resources. It explores new ways of conservation of the landscape to fight current issues as the biodiversity crisis. Additionally, it proposes ways to create stronger local communities, enhancing social capital and social resilience.