

//Reflection P4

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//How did the research influence the design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence the research?

The healing environment as a design approach has been researched and elaborated with new elements to enhance and empower the strength of the already existing design elements of the healing environment. The results of the performed research delivered the design principles for the case project in Leiden. Especially in which way the defined 'atmospheres' can be used for what type of function and how this related to the user's experience of the space. The chosen casus building in Leiden provided the envelope for this design research which also brought up the challenge of how this can be fitted in.

The design of the rehabilitation centre in Leiden can be seen as an example of how these design principles could be translated into an elaborated overall architectural design of a healing environment with use of the existing (urban) building stock. Furthermore, how this healing environment can be designed in order to as well give value to the surrounding context.

//What is the relation between the graduation project topic, the master track (Ar, Ur, BT, LA, MBE), and the master programme (MSc AUBS)?

The graduation project relates to the main theme of the studio topic (SecondLife), which researches the possibilities of the existing building stock and what it can offer as a more circular design approach to new building projects, by analysing the potentials of creating a healthcare type building within an existing building context. The technical challenges that have been occurred with this approach are researched within the Architectural Engineering studio. Redefining the architecture of existing buildings within this project can be seen as the connection to the main master track (Architecture). All this together with researching the healing possibilities of architecture which embraces the current trend of redefining the architecture of healthcare buildings. It is the latter trend which can be seen as an ongoing development in itself, which this graduation project wants to contribute to.

//How do I assess the value of my way of working (my approach, my used methods, used methodology)?

Qualitative research can be a difficult method approach to defining certain parameters for a design project. Especially with the method I have chosen, testing and researching human experiences, it is complex to bring

up solid numbers or data. Although the used scale of wellbeing already provided some form of direction, the presented results are still surrounded with discussion. To encounter this, more time could be invested into the exact parameters of the research and the amount of test persons and expertises involved in the research. However, I do embrace the method of testing with VR as integral part of researching human experience as this is close to what can become reality. As well as taking the user's experience as a parameter within architectural design. Combining this with researching existing projects and combining the aspects of these projects have brought up an elaborate view of design ideas for the project.

To conclude, combining an existing method and introducing a new method gave much value to how to approach the design phase however this brought up new questions to the method itself which could not be immediately answered but where strong enough to provide new input for future elaboration of this research type.

//How do I assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of my graduation project, including ethical aspects?

The 'trend' of creating healing environments is already going for decades and still under research into the application of it. The design project was meant to contribute to this research and especially deal with the question of how to enhance it with focusing more on the user-centered approach as well as tackling the challenge of implementing such relatively new design strategies into existing buildings. Keeping in mind the already contemporary zeitgeist of applying the important themes of sustainability and circularity within new design projects.

The COVID pandemic has brought new focus to healthcare and how environments influence the health of people, specifically within dense urban areas. This all tends to illustrate the large societal scope the design project is intervening on, giving it large value. Still, the focus have been eventually situated on a smaller scale (neighborhood) to make the elaboration possible in the given time frame of the graduation project. The value of this smaller scale could eventually function as an example of the larger whole and contributing to healthcare architecture in the greater spectrum.

//How do I assess the value of the transferability of my project results?

As the design project shows a possible design approach which could be used for future projects, there is still some discussion that needs some clarification. The project shows how the introduced design principles can be implemented into existing buildings, still it is maybe not clearly shown in an step-by-step way how this for example could be done within a completely different context. As well as that this is now focusing and intervening on the Dutch healthcare developments rather than an overall picture. Moreover, relationship to and anchoring the building within the context has been shown as an important design aspect. This is something which can also differ greatly within different contexts and maybe this could have been shown in extreme ways in this design project. As well as clarifying more step-by-step guides of implementing principles of the healing environment into existing buildings. Although the researched aspects of creating certain atmospheres and how that might influence the experience of users is something that can be more easily transferred than the design itself.

//What were examples of design challenges that came up during the design phase?

The implementation of the researched design principles and atmospheres can already be seen as the main challenge of the design project itself. Especially implementing the atmospheres could eventually be done in a more elaborate way however the fact that the overall design and architecture should as well be complete compressed the time frame available for this. Another important element for me was inclusiveness, creating a rehabilitation centre requires a thought out structure which is easily accessible for disabled people and especially people in wheelchairs. Almost all spaces in the building should be accessible in this way which was complex to apply on every part of the building. Furthermore, the application of 'activating hallway spaces'. Keeping in mind the already defined atmospheres and inclusiveness of the spaces, creating more playful and activating void spaces within the building has been done in a certain way but was not easily accomplished. Therefore compromises have been made, focusing the most on making the building inclusive and practical in terms of providing exercise possibilities, sadly leaving some of the playfulness out.

//What to achieve for the P5?

It is aimed for the P5 to show more detail of the different created atmospheres within the building translated into impressions and renders. Maybe even creating a VR experience thus to experience the building itself as this has been integral part of the research phase. Lastly, the explanation of the design principles in a step-by-step style like guide is an element which will be tried to elaborate as much as possible.

//How do you look back at the overall process of the graduation project so far?

Essentially, I am really proud of the end result of the graduation project. The research phase introduced a new research method for me which was challenging to develop but also contributed to my process of becoming architectural designer as well as using the sketching technique to test and taste different design elements which was widely used during the design phase. Overcoming some of the design challenges could unfortunately not be achieved but this was also due to the fact that the overall design had many elements which could be detailed out more. The decisions taken of what to eventually elaborate on have been done in such a way that it shows a fragment of every applied design principle. In this way I tried to keep the value and relationship of the design project to the research as strong as possible. Hopefully with this project, I have provided input for future healthcare projects and seeing more of the existing building stock getting used for this type of projects.

Working with the tutors but also external experts such as practitioners and architects from the healthcare field was a great way for me to explore the cooperating world of architecture. Getting in touch with this people was really helpful and provided a lot of insight and input for the project. Especially interviewing people from the specific work field, in this case healthcare, brought up new elements that could be translated into architectural concepts. It is this part I think that I liked the most about the project as this was also very informative. For me this could have eventually be concluded within a 'manual' that would have brought up all the different design principles and research outcomes into an IKEA-like simple styled way, unfortunately the time was not left to actually perform this. Although what is achieved personally for me is the creation of a design principle incorporated within an elaborated design project which hopefully showed how future healthcare architecture could look like. At least in my experience.