

Study Plan

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Studio	
Theme	BC&T
Teachers	Henriette Bier, Oscar Rommens
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>I believe that 'Border Conditions' graduation studio deals with experimentation and original research in architecture. Therefore it is the most fascinating and essential studio. My personal ambition is to work as an architect who is constantly experimenting and inventing or so to say re-interpreting spatial and social conditions. I believe that an architect operating on public space has to be aware of the fact that it is a field that changes following social changes and he/she should be capable of reflecting on these transformations and act in a consciously innovative way. Finally, from my experience so far, I am convinced that the poetic, liberating and experimenting aspect of architecture that this studio develops in a methodical and scientific way, is in harmony with my own understanding of architecture and designing methods.</p>
Title	
Title of the graduation project	Collision Territory
Product	
Problem Statement	
<p>By investigating the urban conditions of Brussels we came to the conclusion as a group that it is a significantly fragmented city. My interest is focused on the colliding relations between different fragments that constitute the city and the impact on spatial experience. 'Collision territory' is a term used to describe areas of juxtaposition between spacial elements that contradict each other while coexisting, radically influencing the way in which the user perceives space.</p> <p>By investigating public space in Brussels, in a bottom-up approach, I found out that collision between the fragments of Brussels is not negative, requiring solution, but an existing urban phenomenon with potentials, often poetic and rich in original spatial conditions, arousing exploration. In this complex of conflicting spaces, navigation becomes dynamic, leading to an interactive spacial experience constructed by fragments interweaving while colliding.</p>	

Goal
<p>In a collision territory control is pushed to the edge and order is replaced by an assembly of multiple autonomous orders related to each other. As a consequence the way the user experiences space is interactive and multi-directional rather than linear and strictly guided. Instead of regular rhythm of sequences and views, moving is based on a variety of unexpected sequences that cause deviation and change in speed, change in the way of looking and approaching or moving away. As opposed to a hierarchical organising of space, in collision territory hierarchy is made to be transgressed. What is located in the center of focus becomes a peripheral element when a new element in space claims to catch attention. This is mainly created by the juxtaposition of different depths in focus, by the coexistence of different distances and depth of views. An alternation from extreme close view to extreme far, creates the reconstruction of the same space, provokes interactive movement guided by sequence of moment, deviation and a constant rearrangement of hierarchies, questioning their prevalence, establishing interchangeable hierarchies. Therefore movement and spatial experience becomes dynamic. It is not processional but based on constant mental or physical relocation, re orientation, , a field of changing views. Every spatial element is reintroduced by its context depending also in the way the user decides to develop his walk. In the end the walk is a composition of visual clashes, movement is a choreography made of colliding fragments and territory is experienced as an unexpected sequence of conflicting spaces.</p> <p>The principals found in the collision territory together with the conclusions and spatial qualities derived from mapping them, are the tools of design. The main goal is to incorporate in my design the spatial conditions and relations that the collision territory implies. Therefore a strong relation between the spatial investigation and the constructed product will be present in every step of design. The findings from the exploration of collision territory will lead to the design. The intention is that spacial investigation will generate the spacial configuration, the program, the spatial condition, the atmosphere, the materials and the constructional details after a series of translations and interpretations. In a later stage the spatial research will be crystallized in a proposal for a public space thoroughly designed. A complete and coherent architectural design will be the latest and most essential product, in this process of architectural exploration through theory and practice.</p>

Process
Method description
<p>An investigation of Brussels from a bottom-up approach, specifying its periphery and my personal interest is the point of departure. A collection of collision territories found between fragments of Brussels and a first attempt of mapping their characteristics, as well as relating spacial phenomena with fields outside architecture, such as choreography, is the next step. A series of theoretical reading informed the research suggesting ways of looking at the urban environment. Extensive trip to Brussels and experiencing space was an essential step not only to prove on site my assumption about collision territories but also to pick up one of them as my site for further investigation. In the next stage I develop a series of maps. Maps, an assembly of products using different media, aimed to a critical insight in the collision territory and an exploration of its principals through means of representation. The results from these phase are the tools I use to design. Practical experimentation is accompanied by</p>

theoretical references on methods of mapping, representation and ways of reading maps but also theoretical approaches that frame 'collision territory'. Next step is the translation of the mapping into space. The translation of the distance and view exploration from the field of collision territory done in mapping is now generating space. The translation, currently on process, will be held in stages, mostly by making physical models combined with other media such as drawing, photography and digital 3d representation, always in relation to the principals of my maps, undergoing interpretations. In my project intuition guided production is being and will be used followed by a second reading of the resulting product so that it becomes a conscious gesture. The translations will smoothly formulate my architectural proposal will be presented by a series of plans, section, perspective drawings but also 3d physical models.

Theoretical and practical references

The idea of multi-dimensional spatial experience , dynamic movement and conflicting spatial elements which my project deals with is relative to past studies such as the theory of 'promenade architectural' introduced by Le Corbusier (Samuel Flora, 'Le Corbusier and the promenade architecturale') where spatial configuration '*draws the user on a pleasurable journey*'. Another relative approach is the definition of the *derive* by Guy Debord as a '*playful-constructive behavior linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances*' (Guy Debord, '*Theory of the derive*'), (Francesco Careri, '*Walkscapes, walking as an aesthetic practice*'). The idea of fragmentation and the relation between architectural fragments is included in the book Collage City by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter where a balancing act is suggested. Finally some of the readings that supported the methodology of my research are Stefano Boeri, 'Eclectic Atlases', Robin Evans, 'Traces that leave nothing behind', in: K Michael Hays (ed.), Architecture Theory since 1968 and -James Corner, 'The agency of mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention' that deal with bottom-up ways of understanding the urban environment as well as design exploration through maps.

Reflection

Relevance and output

In my graduation project I develop new tools for design based on spatial experience and space composition through the mapping of aspects of the later. It intends to take an advantage from the fragmented way the world reaches us, the potentials of the colliding relations between fragments in spatial sense, and the emerging experience. Driven by conditions of collision territory, I intent to incorporate in my design routes that alters through a sequential variety from far view to close view, from the distant to the close by, from the extroverted to the introverted, from the apparent to the subtle. I suggest that a derive can be interactive and that space can be re-discovered through navigation under conflicting circumstances and re-constructed by mutual interruptions resulting a multi-stimulus experience.

Time planning

P1

- conclusions about urban conditions in Brussels, first definition of the periphery
- topic of interest for further explorations

P2

a. group work

- draft version of the booklet containing the general and collective investigation of Brussels with the conclusions, as well as summary of all individual projects and their relation to the collective work

b. individual work

- study plan
- developed theoretical position
- urban analysis/mapping including explanation of method and results of the analysis
- statement of intentions regarding the next phase of the graduation project
- design strategy, clarification of the theoretical frame and the relation to the spatial proposal
- draft design: site and site analysis, program and program analysis, site model (1:500), schematic design (1:200)
- physical models allowing insight into spatial characteristics

P3

- advanced design (plans, sections, facades, 1: 100/1:200, perspective drawings, physical models)
- fragment of the building , plan and section in 1:50
- detail 1:5

P4

- relation between theoretical and practical researched
- reflection on the design and its spatial relevance
- site plan 1:1000
- design -plans, facades, sections 1/200/1: 100, model
- fragment of the building , plan and section in 1:20
- detail 1:5

P5

- results from spatial research and method description
- relation between theoretical and practical researched
- reflection on the design and its spatial relevance
- site plan 1:1000
- final plans, facades, sections 1/200/1: 100
- fragment of the building , plan and section in 1:20
- detail 1:5
- final physical model