

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

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## Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto: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:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	Francesca Crotti
Student number	5395429

  

<b>Studio</b>		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab 33	
Main mentor	Stefano Milani	Department of Architecture, Borders & Territories
Second mentor	Jan van de Voort	Architecture and the Built Environment, Architectural Engineering
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose Explore Lab because of the possibility it offered to focus my investigation -both in research and design terms- on a specific site and on a critical condition of personal interest, adopting a broader approach in terms of methods and media.	

  

<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	Rehabilitation in/of Laguna Vere. Healing space through bodies, healing bodies through space.
<b>Goal</b>	
Location:	Tbilisi, Georgia

<p>The posed problem,</p>	<p>The late Soviet aquatic complex “Laguna Vere” was for the city of Tbilisi, other than an aquatic sports complex hosting local and international competitions, a space open to public enjoyment.</p> <p>During the years, its condition degenerated to a state of abandonment and neglect, worsened by the most recent processes of privatization currently affecting the city.</p> <p>At the moment, the architectural object, within its transformation dynamics and life cycle, looks static, inaccessible, impermeable to exterior influences, and deprived of any relationship with the (public) context.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Nevertheless, Laguna Vere’s original planning, together with its strategic location, and remarkable design features, evokes different potentialities and a possible, more dynamic future; how could this space be rehabilitated and how could people benefit from it? How could the bodily experience, as a tool of perception and method of analysis, problematize the condition of an abandoned space, and anticipate a possible future?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>While implementing an on-site process of investigation focused on this specific case, further criticalities relating to the broader context are delineated. These are socio-political issues, current matters of debate that could be ‘spatially’ addressed through an enhancing of the ruin’s potential and a rethinking of its function; rehabilitate it connecting it back to the city, its inhabitants, and their needs. Focusing on the theme of ‘rehabilitation’, I envision design interventions in Laguna Vere able to create a space that is at the service of its community and evolving following and interpreting the community’s evolving needs in a fully ecological way. A community center, a healing place that offers the possibility to be modified according to people’s imminent needs, that empowers private agency and connects different individuals (with special attention to the most marginalized ones) creating a system of diverse relationships that will eventually contribute to a reciprocal evolution and growth out of some critical condition. A continuous workshop, a rehabilitative, creative, and cultural center, a house, a space for those who need some.</p>

## **Process**

### **Method description**

My research is primarily based on in-situ observations and direct interaction with the space (both within the boundaries of Laguna Vere's complex and in the broader context of Tbilisi). To further broaden my understanding I engaged in an artistic collaboration with the local artist Gio Sumbadze.

During the time spent on-site, we made extensive use of the photographic media to quite literally frame our perception of the place at its current state and challenge it via the introduction of our bodies (external bodies performing external habit), ultimately reporting the environment's response. Framing the actual to express the potential (looking at the camera as an extended bodily organ, the eye of the virtual, enhancing the power of the body). I later combined the resulting photographs with graphic production: a record of actions, mapping of routes, encounters, and observations carried out during site visits became a tool to retrospectively reflect and construct an image of the architectural object and its context. Just like the camera enhances the power of the body, written memory records enhance the power of the mind. Putting on paper, mind, and body become the same. The memory of precise movements in combination with the blurred understanding of the general contextual situation (perceived from an outside perspective) inform one-another building a total, although dynamic, image of the space.

The products of this analysis and collaboration resulted in an exhibition entitled "Maps of Nowhere", currently being held in Tbilisi. Photographic material and written records have been combined, in the setup, with Sumbadze's graphic works. Overall, the material displaced aimed to arouse a critical reflection over socio-political issues affecting the Georgian context; from the theme of public spaces' privatization to that of narcotic drugs' consumption. Combining and confronting my analysis with what my local colleague detected as 'critical', provoked in me, especially under a design perspective, the definition of new possible developments and architectural scenarios for Laguna Vere.

Having my understanding of the architectural object and its context been informed (for the moment) by such events, the definition of design solutions will follow the same dynamic approach. Further investigations will focus on socio-political issues (such as the above-mentioned drug policy and the broader concept of rehabilitation) and the definition of design strategies for the ruins' rehabilitation, so to make it responsive to the ever-changing community's needs.

## Literature and general practical preference

To delineate an answer to my research question, theoretical and philosophical concepts have been regarded as tools of analysis and interpretation.

Framing theoretically helped defining my method in practice: an active, in-situ approach aiming at obtaining an image of the architectural object and its context through direct, bodily engagement and perception.

To name some of my reference sources:

- M. DeLanda, A New Philosophy of Society.
- S. Stavrides, Communities of crisis.
- P. Chabot, Philosophy of Simondon.
- B. Massumi, Histories of Violence: Affect, Power, Violence . The Political Is Not Personal.
- G. Deleuze, Postscript on control societies.
- H. Bergson, Matter and Memory.
- R. Bogue, Deleuze on Music, Painting and the Arts.
- M. Lazzarato, Life Societies of Control.
- A. De Boever, Gilbert Simondon. Being and Technology.
- A. Sauvagnargues, Artmachines-Deleuze, Guattari, Simondon.
- Q. Meillassoux, Subtraction and Contraction.
- M.T. Turvey, The Muddle of Anticipation.
- C. Colebrook, Futures.

A further, deeper archival research is still to be implemented as support to later design phases, although being aware of the documentation's limited availability. To respond to this constraint, also in graphic terms, drawings based on experiential perception will be favored; sensorial translations of the space, in accordance with the envisioned program based on architectural interventions addressing the bodily (and mind) sphere, its activation, and rehabilitation. Some remains of original material are to be found in the family's archives and information is to be obtained via direct sources in a nearly anecdotal way. Nevertheless, there is a growing effort towards the collection of architectural documents of historic relevance. Some material concerning the original design of Laguna Vere has been collected by the TAA platform (Tbilisi Architectural Archive). The available drawings have been recovered from the architects' (Ramaz Kiknadze and Shota Kavlashvili) personal archives. Some historical photos are saved in The National Archives of Georgia.

Finally, concerning the theme of "rehabilitation" both in theoretical and design term, precedents such as La Borde psychiatric clinic will be regarded as models in the field of institutional psychotherapy. The clinic was founded on anti-bureaucratic premises; citizens were participating in running the facility, and division of labor was implemented on a rotating basis (actively involving the patients).

## 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)?

As Explore Lab is meant to give the opportunity to develop a research and design based on a strong personal fascination, I am focusing my project primarily on a personal ongoing experience. In such a way, I structured my research in terms of the topic of interest and methods, in such a way, I intend to continue during the design phase. I am experiencing the space of a city and the space of a building in particular. By doing so, I am in the process of constructing an ever-evolving, multilayered understanding of it, enabling me to better inform possible answers to its (ever-evolving and multilayered) problematics.

My aim is, of course, to make an investigation at an architectural and urban scale, problematize a specific critical condition and eventually propose an answer in design terms. Nevertheless, this answer, in order to be suitable to the in-situ condition, has to be obtained by continuously reading in retrospect and interpreting whatever I experience. Only then, from the specific condition, one could abstract more general concepts in terms of modus operandi and design solutions. In other words; addressing macro-scalar problems (such as the global tendency towards privatization, standardization of spaces and practices) and envisioning a response not by means of a general tactic, but settling it into the micro-scalar specificities of the situation.

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

My graduation work will address the abandonment of a historically and architecturally noteworthy building trapped in an apparent sterile, privatized, and unaccessible condition, but filled with potential for new forms of appropriation and re-activation for the common good. A condition that is currently affecting many architectural objects globally and that is oftentimes not being tackled in favor of more standardized approaches that disregard the problem of modern 'ruins'. The aim is to reconnect the ruined object to its milieu by opening it up to new relations: new bodies, objects, and habits, to make it permeable and mobilize new fluid determinations, to project it into the virtual, to enhance a continuous cycle of abandonment and reworking. I believe that this approach, in order to be relevant, effective, and ecological, not only has to concern the rehabilitation of a building but also of people interacting with it, taking an active part in its rehabilitation.