

P4 Reflections

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Aspect 1 • the relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework (location/object)

The graduation studio is concerned with the theme of urban institution as space of collections. It relates to the very immediate historical/socio-cultural context of the city of Delft as well as to a much wider one embedded in the notion of City - city as an archive. I interpreted the notion of 'collections' further than just physical objects and wanted to treat the 'collection' of knowledge-output as a significant theme in the project. I imagine my project as mutual archive of intangible and physical collection of expertise offered to the public. The archive is not related anymore to the image that refers to its name, but it becomes a space offered/opened to the city, for its citizens. The project tries to find a balance between the will to be a symbolical and representative space for the city which relates to a much wider context and the will to be part of a very specific (despite very fragmented) site with cultural implications. These considerations allowed the creations of specific urban moments which become part of a smaller/ more intimate scale and interior experiences which embrace the notion of publicness and society. The urban institution is an ensemble of external/ interior rooms which become the stage for a knowledge-sharing process and the showcase of university expertise for the city.

Aspect 2 • the relationship between research and design

The research conducted in the first semester was divided into collective and individual.

COLLECTIVE

_ **Research about the imminent context of Delft.** This research was related to various scales of analysis, from the urban scale to the scale of the collections allowing us to get know the imminent surrounding of the site better and the historical/social context the project stands in. I have been interested since the very beginning from the unexpected moment that the fabric of the city hides behind its 'ordinary' facades and the quality of the notion of discovery. This became relevant for my project on a urban scale as well as on the scale of the interiors. The sequence of exterior/interior rooms of the city has been studied through mapping analysis as well as carefully observation/ research of certain precedents in Delft. The scale of the object raised through my process a series of questions. The impact/relevance of recreating a space in the centre of Delft specifically to address collections which have already a physical place was questioned, particularly related to the issue of time - an object being able to lose its relevance and become therefore obsolete. With physical artifacts that becomes very easy and therefore it became important to me to relocate this objects just when necessary. The project is thus about the exhibiting of current/topical outputs of the university, where the public interior is addressed to the offering of these products, which are in their time, most relevant to the public. The physical collections become an additional aid to understand better the background of these outputs and to implement their story. The building will provide an infrastructure located in proximity to the main exhibition space which acts as storage and display at the same time and can be filled with objects. This would raise the awareness of people about those artifacts by putting them in context to the most recent products displayed in the central interior.

The study on the architectural language and vernacular vocabulary of Delft enabled an understanding of the context that has informed specific design decisions in the plan and elevational treatment of the design.

Using a strong and unapologetic presence to establish the main body of the building in the site and to 'ground' the public interior, a secondary layer to the building bled the flow of spaces into the immediate context. Here, carefully chosen heights and more imitative fenestration strategies were employed.

_ **Study of precedents** Several projects from different locations and contexts were analyzed to the very essence. Then is when I realized that for me the notion of "context" is linked to a much wider idea than the exact location of where the project stands and that brought me later on referring to and studying the notion of the public interiors as a democratic space which embrace a ceremonial meaning: the basilica.

INDIVIDUAL

_ For the individual research I have been interested in the (lack of) relationship between the city of Delft and the University, more precisely on a social level between the different users. (see aspect 4)

Aspect 3 • the relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method chosen by the student in this framework

The choice of specific precedents and typologies to study has been very important through the design phase.

As mentioned previously the study of the precedents has been relevant to define my approach that brought me then to the choice of a specify typology to work on and study deeper: the basilica. The study of this typology informed the notion of a democratic public interior of my project and the quality of the sequences of spaces that can provide in a phenomenological sense. Spaces are experienced in different ways, scales and level of intimacy and the strength of the project is the fact that this variety of spatial experiences are brought together under one roof, emphasizing the building's institutional and ceremonial presence . The study of the typology of the basilica informed the choices of my design related to a wider context other than delft which has been then during the process adapted to the immediate context enabling therefore the creation of a more sensitive institution. The architectonic choices themselves refer very much to this choice. The main core of the building with its 'symbolic' presence steps back from its the site boundary around which a lower and more contextually sensitive hierarchy of spaces characterises the project.

Another approach in terms of urban setting has been the choice of keeping all the surrounding 'objects' of the context making them part of the design with landscape interventions and carefully treatment of their proximity to the main building. The project becomes therefore part of this existing collection of different buildings.

Aspect 4 • the relationship between the project and the wider social context

Of personal fascination has been the distinct lack of relationship between the University and the city of Delft. This is noticeable spatially and programmatically/behaviorally. This is due mostly to the

fact that the knowledge and the outputs produced by the university are not offered to the city and its residents.

Offering of tangible outputs as moment of sharing knowledge. In researching this, I visited all of the University faculties, asking what they offer and produce and 'perform' that may provide an opportunity to bridge the gap with the city and its residents. In providing an opportunity for these outputs, the design was driven to a large public interior, a flexible space able to host large artifacts as well as a wide number of people for specific events including graduation ceremonies, prototype launches, competition wins for example.

Phd graduation as ritual/traditional ceremony with a cultural-social meaning. I have been focusing for my individual research mostly on the one way of transmitting knowledge related to the celebration of the Phd graduation. This moment very much linked to the dutch university tradition represents for people an important ritual with a strong meaning, therefore the choice of introducing this part of the program in my design.

The project as a stage for socio-cultural gathering. The building wants to provide a 'shelter' for the city which brings together different users for socio-cultural purposes. Spaces for students (as working spaces) and social lounges (as café) will be provided to bring together different category of users. This individual research helped me mostly in defining the program for my design.