

# 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](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:

Personal information		
Name	Tristan Deckers	
Student number	5312213	
Studio		
Name / Theme	Methods of Analysis and	Imagination – A matter of Scale
Main mentor	Jorge Meija Hernandez	Architectural Design
Second mentor	Willie Vogel	Architectural Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My reasons for choosing this studio are related to the relative extensive freedom in specifying a design project but having a solid organizational foundation. I knew I could push my personal boundaries when starting an architectural project in a part of Europe that I have never experienced before.	
Graduation project		
Title of the graduation project	Confronting Tallinn	
Goal		
Location:	Tallinn, Estonia	
The posed problem,	<p>1 Contextual analysis – Arrival in Tallinn</p> <p>Together with a peer, a contextual analysis has been conducted to analyse arrival in the capital of Estonia, since it would be the first time we were visiting Tallinn and first time experiences often play a big role in how we understand a city. During the two weeks of the field trip, we studied movement in the city in different ways. Series of sketches (serial vision) were made from within different forms of public transport arriving in the city (bus, train, ferry). Besides that, the endpoints of those journeys with public transport were studied using timelapses of human activity at 'transport hubs'. These studies have shown us what happens to architecture at a certain speed, or series of different speeds. Only through various use of differentiation in urban tissue, architecture and locations can remain recognizable at different speeds.</p> <p>As our fieldwork in Tallinn took place around the harbour area a lot, since part of our analysis regards the ferry terminal, I found</p>	

that the journey towards the harbour area from the city centre and vice versa were disorientating. Not only our own experience of the existing urban fabric bridging the gap between the harbour and the city centre was monolithic and thus unrecognizable, but we have also seen groups of users of the ferries and cruises being disorientated when arriving in the city from the water. This is why the area the Porto Franco development makes part of, needs to change into an area which respects the historical importance of this connection and helps people to orientate. Here, it is also important to note that Tallinn already is a mosaic of different types and styles of architecture mixed to even higher contrasts than what European cities are used to. Finally, it is important to address that from different perspectives from different parties and from different personal experiences, a conclusion can be drawn that Tallinn is still a city next to the sea, and not a city along the sea and coastline.

## 2 Capitalism after Communism in Estonia

At the time of my P2, in January 2025, Estonia has been an independent country for 33 years, before that, it was part of the communist Soviet Union. During the soviet era, the land of Estonia was governed centrally from Moscow which meant that there was no bottom up influence or local organization in place. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the lives of Estonia's residents have changed drastically in various ways. The market Estonian residents were dependent on for jobs, amenities and products and services was suddenly able to expand rapidly. The first part of this expansion took place in a time where there was an abundance of local and international individuals to act upon this entrepreneurial freedom but also a lack of top-down organization. One part of the architectural spectrum this has resulted in, is the construction and planning of various architectures focused on consumerism e.g. shopping malls and -centres.

## 3 A failed commercial project on a prominent site

In its harbour area, the residents of Tallinn are being confronted by a colossal bare concrete structure which was originally planned to be a rather large shopping centre, combining shops, a hotel and office spaces. This building is part of the Porto Franco development of which only two out of three buildings have been properly finished.

The completion of this last 'to be building' of the Porto Franco development has been postponed several times and it has been at the heart of several accusations of corruption in the Estonian

	<p>government. Prime minister Jüri Ratas was forced to resign which has lead his coalition to fall in the beginning of 2021.</p> <p>The Porto Franco development was to be one of the largest undertakings and constructions in the area between the Admiralty Bay and the ring around the Medieval city centre of Tallinn. What is left on the site, as of this moment, is a bare concrete structure which can support a set of functions of a large footprint/floor area and which was originally meant for a public function.</p> <p>4 A lack of proper public buildings</p> <p>The beforementioned shopping malls and -centres contribute to a large part of the public indoor areas. The Estonians have to deal with a harsh climate and a large part of the year, it is not comfortable to stay outside for a considerable amount of time. Many Tallinn residents have therefore resorted to spending their precious free time with friends and family in the large supply of shopping malls/areas. These buildings or areas do not function as proper public spaces for numerous reasons. One of them is the very strict and limited schedules on which these buildings function and operate. Another is related to the overstimulation of information used to prompt users to consume.</p>
research questions and	<p>'How can a public landmark help orientation in Tallinn?'</p> <p>Subordinate questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'How does the way of arrival affect the perceived orientation of a (city / composition / building)?'</li> <li>- 'How does a landmark help city users to orientate in and understand a city?'</li> <li>- 'What does it take to design a landmark and how can a public building become a landmark?'</li> <li>- 'What is a public building and what kind of public functions can be beneficial for the residents of Tallinn?'</li> <li>- 'How can a building serve as a place to develop and calm down at the same time?'</li> <li>- 'How is Estonian capitalism reflected in the (use of) architecture in Tallinn?'</li> <li>- 'How can an existing concrete structure be reused to reflect a different narrative?'</li> </ul>

design assignment in which these result.	The design assignment for my graduation studio, the tool, is the design of a mediatheque. A large public building bridging the gap between the harbour and the city centre, offering punctuation in a commercially centred area all inside of an existing concrete structure.
<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>	
<b>Process</b>	
<b>Method description</b>	
<p>[A description of the methods and techniques of research and design, which are going to be utilized.]</p> <p>For the process of graduating in the design studio of 'A matter of Scale', multiple methods of design and research will be utilized and combined in order to feed the architectural project.</p> <p>1 Literature</p> <p>Even though the process of graduating until the P2 presentation has already involved a lot of theory in order to ground the conducted studies and design iterations, theory will keep its role in providing 'nutrition' for the entirety of the project. I have already studied and tried to incorporate theories about for example: public live in cities in the form of 'Life between buildings' by Jan Gehl. Some parts of the theoretical framework I have been building up will focus on target functional and organizational processes, of which the work of Jan Gehl is a good example. Other parts, like the work of Gordon Cullen regarding serial vision and relations between parts of cities/towns will maintain to play its role in the process of designing internal divisions, wall openings and the envelope connecting the building to its surroundings. Also the readings of Rem Koolhaas, such as 'Delirious New York' and 'The function of the Oblique' by Paul Virilio and Claude Parent will help to configure internal connections, separations and continuations of spaces. Finally, literature will be searched for and used regarding architectural detailing and construction with (existing) (concrete) structures</p> <p>2 Architectural precedent studies</p> <p>An in depth study into a precedent in Tallinn has already been carried out, the project that has been studied here is the Ferry Terminal D, designed by Irina Raud of R-Konsult, the former city architect around the fall of the Soviet Union. From this study, I have gained insight about how architecture can benefit the act of staying (waiting) and passing in a building that has one core function: bridging the gap between land and vessel for human travel/movement. Besides that, numerous precedents can and</p>	

will be analysed based on specific characteristics. Some chosen precedents are related to the function of the building and will be analysed, among other thing, based on how architecture can stimulate interaction with different forms of media. This list of buildings include: Beaubourg Centre Pompidou, Sendai Mediatheque, Waalse Krook (Ghent), Oodi Library (Helsinki), Dokk1 (Aarhus), Deusto University Library (Bilbao) and Biblioteca Vasconcelos.

Other precedent studies refer to the use of certain design principles/concepts such as the beforementioned oblique function, namely: Gallery of Culture house Eemhuis (Neutelings Riedijk Architects), Kunsthal (OMA), Casa da Musica, Embassy of the Netherlands in Berlin, Rolex Learning Centre (SANAA), Zentrum fur Kunst und Medientechnologie and Sainte-Bernadette-du-Banlay Church (Claude Parent & Paul Virilio).

Some remaining precedents are: FRAC Bretagne museum (Odile Decq), GL Events Headquarters, London's Lloyd (Richard Rogers), 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum of Contemporary Art (SANAA), Johnson Wax Headquarters (Frank Lloyd Wright – regarding detailing), Fun Palace (Cedric Price), ITC UT Enschede (Civic Architects – regarding existing concrete structures) and LoHal library (Civic Architects – also regarding reuse of existing concrete structures).

### 3 Design iteration

Using several techniques, the design of the mediatheque will be iterated upon. Using photos made during the fieldtrip and the gained knowledge about orientation and serial vision, a better understanding for the design of the perimeter (facades) of the building can be created. Here I could also make use of the interactive spinning model developed originally for P1 to see how my interventions behave in an elongated elevation of the urban fabric surrounding it. A further study into the function of the oblique on other scales, such as furniture, could be beneficial to further incorporate this theory into the design.

## Literature and general practical references

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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)?

From my research question – which is steering and guiding my graduation process – it is clear that the topic of the process is the design of a public landmark. So far in my masters programme, I have mostly focused on residential

architecture. For the Msc1 studio, I have designed a housing project in Amsterdam with the Dwelling Studio and for Msc2 I participated in the Delta Shelter studio where I have designed temporary working and living cabins for researchers in the dunes of Zeeland. Although at the start of the studio I was curious if I could broaden that spectrum with the design of a public building, it was my research and experience in Tallinn that has resulted in the goal of designing a public building.

During my bachelors, I have also developed an interest for landscape architecture and I was considering choosing the masters track of landscape architecture for a long time. Fortunately, I was able to follow the Delta shelter course which is heavily influenced by landscape architecture. Unfortunately, it is likely that landscape architecture will not take up a big part of my graduation studio but I think it is beneficial for my architectural development to expose myself to as many different design tasks as possible.

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

I believe that with my graduation work, I could add to the list of work regarding specific design principles like the function of the oblique. This theory about inclined and experienceable walls was highlighted thoroughly during the active years of Architecture Principe by Paul Virilio and Claude Parent and in recent decades, several projects have been completed with this principle in mind. Lastly, I hope that with the final exhibition of our work at the Tallinn Architecture Biennale, other students and I can show Tallinn residents and others what we, as students, think could be possible and would be beneficial for the city to progress.