

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), 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	Catherina Maria Floris
Student number	4570006

Studio	Methods
Name / Theme	Methods of Analysis and Imagination – A Matter of Scale
Main mentor	Jorge Meija Hernandez Architecture
Second mentor	Freek Speksnijder Building Technology
Third Mentor	Klaske Havik Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Over the years, I have developed a special interest in finding the extraordinary within the ordinary moments of life. I capture these moments through various media - photography, films, sketches. Often playing with contrast, framing specific areas, or capturing reflections across mediums. What I find captivating about these moments is their accessibility; they don't require a curated gallery, museum or expensive equipment to experience. They are accessible to everyone and can turn mundane interactions with our surroundings into something memorable. Often, I notice that when I stop to capture these moments, others around me pause as well, creating a small, shared experience and moment of connection.</p> <p>During my studies, I have been able to integrate this fascination with overlooked moments into my projects. These overlooked moments in my daily life, turn into overlooked possibilities on sites in architecture. Initially, this integration was more intuitive, but in the last two years I recognised the value of intentionally embedding these experiences into architectural design. Therefore, I chose Methods, due to the freedom of exploration and still within a structured way of researching and designing.</p> <p>My research, and the accompanying design brief, is therefore an exploration into how far I can lean into my personal fascinations that it can still be incorporated into architecture, particularly through the concept of thresholds in an urban context.</p>

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Discovering the Delights of the Daily: How to activate Tallinn's small-scale thresholds with simple interventions to highlight everyday interactions.
Goal	
Location:	Tallinn, Estonia; Pärnu mnt, around the Viru väljak roundabout.
The posed problem,	<p>Before arriving in Tallinn and learning anything about the city, there was already an expectation of the city. I thought it would be a very soviet dominated city, rigid and mostly quite boring.</p> <p>When researching, this expectation shifted into fascination and wonder about the architecture, urban structures and perception of the city. It turned out to be a playground for many new developments, multiple crashes of scale and new ways of weaving new with heritage.</p> <p>When arriving, the doubts I had before vanished and only walked there with wonder and fascination.</p> <p>However, when talking with people from the university, locals on the street or other Estonians, my fascination was met with confusion. The decision to pick Tallinn as a graduation location was for them quite unusual and they even suggested other cities who had, in their beliefs, a far more interesting history and architectural styles.</p> <p>However, this blend of architectural styles, lack of appreciation for their own city and the massive clash between small medieval city centre and enormous soviet projects posed for me a fruitful playground to intervene on a threshold that wasn't yet fully developed.</p>
research questions and	How can a design of the threshold mediate the tension between an individual identity and a collective

	<p>memory in order to highlight daily experienced moments.</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The proposal focuses on creating a series of small-scale design interventions along the main traffic axis that's separating Tallinn's medieval city center from its newer developments. This axis, a 20-meter-wide road dominated by cars and public transport, serves as a threshold that physically and visually divides the city's historical and modern identities.</p> <p>The objective is to bridge this division by designing moments of interaction that could connect the two sides of the city. These interventions aim to transform the axis from a mere transit space into a transitional threshold that invites engagement with daily activities. The designs are not intended to overhaul the large-scale infrastructure but rather to introduce subtle moments of wonder or curiosity during daily commutes.</p> <p>The proposal explores the role of specific urban elements—such as bus stops and kiosks—as anchors of interaction. These elements are currently underdeveloped to adequately support pedestrian engagement or provide meaningful public value. By reimagining these points, the design aims to create a sense of continuity between the public and private domains, fostering a deeper connection between the two sides of the city and potentially extending this impact to the surrounding areas.</p> <p>The ultimate goal is to transform the road from a barrier into a connector, offering moments of reflection, interaction, and surprise that enhance the experience of those who use it daily. Through this approach, the project seeks to give back to the public realm,</p>

emphasizing the significance of human-scale interventions in bridging urban thresholds.

Process

Method description

The research began with a contextual and disciplinary analysis aimed at identifying and understanding the specific challenges within Tallinn's urban fabric. This initial phase provided a foundation for investigating the division caused by the city's main traffic axis and its broader implications on public and private domains. Through photographic research, the focus was further narrowed, with key areas of interest delineated based on visual and spatial characteristics. A literature review complemented this process, offering theoretical insights and refining the scope of the study. These combined methods allowed for the identification of thematic issues that informed the initial design approach.

Moving forward, the research will shift toward physical explorations of design. The upcoming focus is on creating physical models to investigate the perception of space, particularly examining how curves and lines influence design outcomes and contribute to moments of joy within the urban environment. These models will enable a deeper understanding of spatial dynamics and user interactions, with the aim of crafting designs that offer small but meaningful interventions in daily routines. In addition to spatial research, a study on light will be conducted to explore its impact on the experience of urban thresholds. Technical investigations into materials will also be undertaken, providing a practical basis for the feasibility and adaptability of the proposed designs. This technical research will be complemented by a continued analysis of the site and its surrounding areas to define additional intervention locations. This broader site analysis will contribute to the development of a "pattern language"—a systematic framework that identifies sequences and relationships necessary for cohesive and effective design placements.

Throughout this process, literature research will remain integral, with a particular focus on anthropology and the interplay between architecture and human behavior. This theoretical grounding will ensure that the designs are not only aesthetically and functionally engaging but also deeply informed by cultural and social contexts. This comprehensive methodology—spanning contextual, technical, and theoretical dimensions—seeks to produce design interventions that connect disparate parts of the city while fostering moments of curiosity and delight for those who interact with them.

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)?

The connection between my graduation project and the studio topic lies in the focus on different scales. Often, the emphasis is on larger structures, buildings, and their plots, while the smaller connections between areas and boundaries are overlooked. In this studio, working across scales is key. Moving from the urban level to smaller details—like connecting a bus stop to its surroundings—helps to better understand how these different levels influence each other.

In relation to my master track, this project shows how architecture can have an impact in unexpected ways. Even small-scale interventions can add meaning to daily life. Focusing on the technology behind these designs is also essential to make them work effectively. The master program emphasizes understanding the environment you're designing for and the needs of the people who use it. While larger-scale solutions are often prioritized, paying attention to the small details can help tie everything together and create a more cohesive urban fabric.

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

I would like to contribute with this research to foster connections within fragmented environments. By reimagining thresholds as opportunities for bridging networks in the urban fabric, the project offers solutions to recurring issues of division and disconnection, with Tallinn as its focal point. By using thresholds as a focal point, many scales can be linked and researched to later define an overarching solution that can be implemented in other settings and environments.