

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 | |
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| Name | Daan Kok |
| Student number | 4716744 |

| Studio | | |
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| Name / Theme | AR3UA100 Urban Architecture Graduation Studio – Black Hill City | |
| Main mentor | Paul Vermeulen | Design Tutor, Urban Architecture |
| Second mentor | Eireen Schreurs | Research Tutor, Urban Architecture |
| Argumentation of choice of the studio | The positive mindset of the studio in combination with a lot of creative freedom is what attracted me most to the studio. | |

| Graduation project | |
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| Title of the graduation project | The ghost of 'les Murlais' |
| Goal | |
| Location: | Former elderly/disabled residence 'Les Murlais' situated in the neighbourhood of Droixhe, Liege |
| The posed problem, | Les Murlais was a residence for the elderly and people with polio, disabilities or other illnesses. It revolved around healing and maintaining a good quality of everyday life. Each resident had its independent space although monitored by the staff. A sanatorium allowed daylight to perform a healing ritual. Even the balconies on higher levels for the sick were dimensioned so the patient could enter without leaving the bed. Les Murlais functioned as a caretaker who helped people that were dealing with their illnesses. The building was infused with memories of daily life. These |

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| | <p>memories can be personal or collective and were formed by everyday events, interactions and associations.</p> <p>Eventually, the sickness of polio disappeared, and the elderly had to move to a new building. Nowadays, the empty shoes of 'Les Murlais' serve as the last physical memory. The caretaker has been demolished just like its neighbours, 'Les tours de Droixhe' (the towers of Droixhe). The demolitions disrupted the urban fabric and left a scarred area behind. The remains of the shoes, the remembrance and the ghostly presence of 'Les Murlais' are what is currently left on the site.</p> <p>In recent developments in the modernist neighbourhood of Droixhe, it appears that these memories, experiences and feeling towards Les Murlais and the Tours de Droixhe are disregarded. New additions have shown little sympathy for the lives lived in these buildings and the memories created. Three new building complexes have arisen and temp to introduce a new urban fabric. The shoes of Les Murlais, a concrete pit, mark a distinct imprint of the recently demolished building which borders these new developments. A visit to the remains of this peculiar site sparked my interest to investigate the ghostly presence of 'Les Murlais' further. How can the shoes be filled again?</p> |
| <p>research questions and</p> | <p>Can the memory of Les Murlais serve as a base for a building that supports health?</p> <p>How could 'Les Murlais' residence be reconstructed through memory and imagination?</p> <p>What was the historical narrative of 'Les Murlais' and why was it built in Droixhe?</p> |

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| | <p>How did a day in the life of a resident or worker look like?</p> <p>What kind of moments are of value to the experience of 'Les Murlais' and how could they be expressed in the architecture?</p> |
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| <p>design assignment in which these result.</p> | <p>The design assignment aims to relate to healthcare progressively. The design should respond to the recent developments that tend to neglect the previously, often, difficult everyday life and introduce a more thoughtful approach. The relationship with health and care is therefore of high importance to the program. A place where in addition to sick people, healthy people can go and achieve or maintain a healthy lifestyle through physical exercise. As the ghost carried a variety of functions regarding living, healing and family, the function of the new program seeks a similar diversity.</p> |
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Process

Method description

The collective research from P1 forms a basis for establishing an understanding of the site. The group of 'Invisible cities' aimed to map various social entities and territories within Bressoux through a field research method and interviewing. This has led to a great network of contacts that are available for interviews and references regarding Droixhe and 'Les Murlais'. The research of the 'Mining and Making' group seeks the potential of material reuse and readaptation. This method of experimenting with the making of materials and capturing the essence of the site aids the design assignment.

The research seeks to visualize and reconstruct the 'Les Murlais' building using memory/experiences, narratives and imagination. Reconstructing memory is not necessarily a copy or a literal translation of the physical but can also follow the intention. Furthermore, the memory can be retrieved from the stories of the people that used to live and work there through interviewing. Archival consultation, photography, interviewing, sketching/drawing and modelmaking will assist in the reconstruction of 'Les Murlais'.

As 'Les Murlais' was a unique concept within Liege, it followed an ongoing trend that involved architecture, medicine and engineering (Colomina, B.,2019). Around 1930 healthcare buildings called sanatoriums arose that were specifically designed for maximizing daylight intake for the patient suffering from tuberculosis. Buildings in this fashion such as 'De Zonnestraal' in Hilversum by Jan Duiker (1928) and Paimio Sanatorium in Finland by Alvar Aalto (1933) were exemplary in design for people in the weakest position. 'Les Murlais', where mainly patients suffering from polio and heavily disabled people were treated, shares an interesting resemblance to the sanatoriums. Although built in 1971, it even had a sanatorium. Both Polio and tuberculosis cases have drastically declined and form no threat to most humans in Europe. Comparing these patient-focused buildings through modelling and drawing methods assists in the understanding of 'Les Murlais' and the everyday life of the patient.

The research will elaborate on past situations and events, as well as the status quo. The untangled information will then be showcased as layers with each a certain visualization method that supports the content and sought-after expression. The design assignment will get on this untangled palimpsest and form a future narrative. This process will take place during the entirety of the track as it touches upon various scales and details.

Documentation forms an important part of the research as little information on this site is available. During P1 the group research of the 'Mining and Making' group focused on this issue by highlighting and mapping unidentifiable potential industrial complexes. This method will extend with a focus on 'Les Murlais' and also Droixhe as a group effort, as multiple students work in and around the same location. Mapping the surroundings gives an understanding of the possible experiences the residents of 'Les Murlais' could have had. For residents of Bressoux and Droixhe, the parc, especially the trees, is seen as one of the best assets of the neighbourhood. Using photography and mapping analysis may provide an understanding of the quality and importance of this urban space and serve the design assignment.

The final result will contain booklets containing documentation, such as maps, photographs and analysis. Reference models made of 'De Zonnestraal', 'Paimio Sanatorium' and 'Les Murlais'. The reconstruction of the ghost of 'Les Murlais' could be seen as a bricolage piece containing multiple visualization methods regarding memory and imagination. This is displayed in a series of drawings of which one exemplary will be shown during the P2 presentation.

Literature and general practical preference

Aalto, A. (1994). Paimio Tuberculosis Sanatorium, City of Turku 700th Anniversary Exhibition, First Standard Furniture, and Other. Routledge.

Colomina, B. (2019). X-Ray Architecture. Macmillan Publishers.

Melbourne School of Design. (2019, 8 mei). BE—150 Dean's Lecture - Beatriz Colomina: X-Ray Architecture [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EcbsttGmr0>

Meurs, P., & Thoor, V. M. (2011). Zonnestraal Sanatorium: The History and Restoration of a Modern Monument. nai010 publishers.

La commission d'assistance publique de Liege. (1971). Les Murlais, Centre medico-familial pour handicapes moteurs. L'hospital Belge, 92.

Rossi, A. (1982). Architettura Della Città. Graham Foundation for Advance studies in the fine arts, institute for Architecture and Urban Studies.

Stumm, A. (2017). Architektonische Konzepte der Rekonstruktion. Bauverlag.

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)?

My graduation project relates to the architecture master track as it seeks to provide an approach towards designing for a challenging site. It aims to relate to the former functions and intentions of the healthcare residence of 'Les Murlais' and create a new solution regarding these themes.

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

Can the memory of Les Murlais serve as a base for a building that supports health? This question is urging, regarding the pandemic and the sudden realization of the lack of care space. It also relates to the change in healthcare policy, which is that healthcare has been centralized and privatized. So what happened to the demolished or abandoned healthcare structure? Can it be used differently, but still follows the drive of the healthy caretaker that helps the sick? The project addresses a serious note of designing for the sick and the healthy. Analyzing and designing buildings that relate to this way of design can aid in the further humification of architecture.