

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	Anna Zita Leutgeb
Student number	5862965

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab	
Main mentor	Suzana Milinovic	Architect and Urbanist, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment
Research mentor	Georg Vrachliotis	Architect, Professor Theory of Architecture and Digital Culture - Department of Architecture
Second mentor	Rufus van den Ban	Architect and Engineer, Building Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I am fascinated by moving bodies and their relationship to space and architecture. As a designer, I perceive our bodies as intertwined actors within the spheres of art, architecture, and urbanism. As a former classical and contemporary dancer in the Vienna State Opera Academy, having performed in theatres in Europe and the U.S, I bring a certain sensibility to surrounding spaces with a high resonance towards rhythms, materialities and interventions in the built environment. Assembling both aspects, I use my body as a tool to research and design. For me, Explore Lab gave me the freedom to initiate an experimental, physical research method and to open an interdisciplinary dialogue between two fields I am truly passionate about: Moving Bodies and Space.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Bodies, Movement & Architecture: Towards Physical Resonances
Goal	
Location:	Rotterdam's waterways and piers - between Noordereiland and Kop van Zuid

<p>The posed problem:</p>	<p>The reciprocity between the body, movement, and architecture is historically solidified in well-established systems of power by the <i>repressive state apparatus</i>. (Wark, McKenzie. 2019. Capital is Dead.p.154). Until this day, certain bodies do not have access to (human) rights over their bodies, because of their national, sexual, or religious identity. Differences in power, entitlement, and access to being accepted as human (bodies) make us all different from each other. The project liberates the body from the state of oppression of social, political, and reproductive regulative systems. Essentially, we are made of the same flesh – we are all bodies that can express how we feel through actions and emissions of our physical energy.</p> <p>In overcoming the solidified idea of the body as a political and economic construct – a measured, situated consequential architectural tool, the project aims to offer a space for bodily engagement, love, play, sovereignty, recognition, entitleness, and access for anyBody, thus creating <i>new alliances between all moving actors</i>. By embracing new perspectives of spatial embodiment, we discover our natural talent as space-makers and choreographers of our own surroundings. The Architecture Practice must regard the body and space as interdependent constructs, each of them constantly shaping the world we inhabit.</p>
<p>Research questions:</p>	<p>How can an open relationship between bodies, movement and architecture lead to new ways of bodily attunement in space?</p> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <p>How can choreographic practices and motion studies intensify embodied</p>

	<p>experiences in space and act as a manual informing the discipline of design?</p> <p>How does my body attune to particular spaces, and what can I learn from this bodily resonance?</p> <p>How can I integrate my corporal awareness towards space into the design process?</p>
Design assignment in which these result:	<p>My project invites anyBody to be part of a spatial, embodied choreography in a performative space. It is not only a shelter and residency for dancers and performers but initiates anyBody to dive into a new spatial dialogue between spectators and actors, all within a spatial theatrical machinery of the future. The project transgresses the boundaries between those who shape space and those who navigate through it. Human bodies become natural choreographers of their own surroundings. The desired design will allow new encounters between water and land, body and space, spectator and actor. The design idea of a floating stage element which can interlock with various docking settings at the piers of Rotterdam, addresses the ambiguity of permanence and temporality in motion studies and moving architecture.</p>
Process	
Method description	
<p><u>Part 1 – Three Acts of Body Terminologies in History & Theory</u></p> <p>The literature research aims to unfold the history of body terminologies in political, social, and artistic discursive spheres. The reflection on history and theory is crucial for understanding the ubiquity of the perception of the body as a measured architectural tool in the present day. This part is composed as a paper of three chapters (acts) – criss-crossing the work of theorists, artists, architects, dancers, choreographers, and performers.</p> <p>The three acts are the following: The Measured, the Performative, and the Open Body, each unfolding a world on their own – situating the body terminology in history and theory. Eventually embarking on contemporary critical and queer theory, the boundaries of what</p>	

'Bodies situated in Space' means today will be challenged. Paul B. Preciado mentions this constant situating and categorizing of Bodies in his book *An Apartment on Uranus: Science, technology, and the market are today re-drawing the limits of what is now, and what will be tomorrow, a living human body.*' (13 Preciado, Paul Beatriz. 2020. *An Apartment on Uranus*. p. 48.)

Part 2 – Experimentation & Exploration of my own (bodily) resonance

In Part 2 my body and mind are set free to explore moments of bodily attunement in space intuitively. Through that, I discover a guiding motivation, an inner light, a beating heart, a pulse of curiosity. The experimental research is a composition of poems, drawings, collages, chrono-photographic snapshots, and models. My body in space acts as a dancer, designer, writer, observer, explorer, and photographer. The curiosity to physically discover new things in space, sparks joy in my body to explore the space surrounding it – discovering new things while moving. The experimentation as a free and playful part of the research results in a reflective research outcome and visual results of eight experiments.

The reader can jump forth and back between historical precedents, theoretical concepts, and physical, visual, and photographic experiments. Connecting threads between disciplines and exercises helps to unfold an imaginary world and allows one 'to fantasize about something that isn't there yet, namely the piece you'd like to make.' (Peeters, Jeroen. 2022. *And then it got legs*. p.13.) Instead of designing a measured environment constraining human movement, the research outcome emphasizes the somatic and tactile potential of the moving body material responding constantly to its framing space.

Part 3 – Design Goal

The envisioned design outcome seeks to create a space that celebrates the individuality of bodies and embraces the personal ways in which we move through space. Rather than imposing predefined architectural constraints on the body's movement, the design aims to empower individuals to directly interact with the surrounding built environment and other bodies – forming a diverse, moving collective as part of a performance.

Located along the piers of Maas River, the Maaskade of Noordereiland is a starting point for the design and an anchor for inspiration. The site comes along with powerful external elements such as wind, waves, currents, tides, and sounds of splashing water from passing boats, which all have the potential to dynamically shape the architecture. I image a design that moves with the water and tides, architectural elements and levels becoming invisible at a certain time of the day, responding to the seasons and the external weather conditions.

The design introduces a floating stage element that has potential to interlock with various docks at the piers of Rotterdam. The stage frames the city's historical center as a backdrop for performances on the water. The goal is to enable physical actions of bodies to influence the positioning and movement of architectural elements, fostering a non-verbal, physical collaboration among individuals. Pivoting, Rotating, and Moving elements can be monitored

through physical actions. The Bodies navigating and playfully interacting with the stage automatically become part of the performance. The aim is to create a space that encourages individuals to explore their bodily potential to climb, rise, hide, run, scream, and dream.

The project explores the relationship between my body as a research tool and the insights gained in the experimentation part, aiming to translate this knowledge into a design that allows individual, physical contribution of anyBody. I imagine the design as a collective performance where individual bodies contribute in their own way, depending on physical possibilities, and with that influencing the architecture's position and movement in the water. Through this physical interaction, the design outcome opens the dialogue between bodies and space, creating moments for individual bodily attunement.

Literature and general practical references

Print

- Diller, Elisabeth. Scofidio, Ricardo. (1994). *Flesh – Architectural Probes*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press
- Dreyfuss, Henri. (1960). *The Measure of Man: Human Factors in Design*, New York: Whitney Library of Design
- Foucault, Michel. (1978). *The History of Sexuality. Right of Death and Power over Life*. New York: Pantheon Books
- Haraway, Donna. (1991). *Simians, Cyborgs, and Woman: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge
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- Peeters, Jeroen. (2022). *And then it got legs*. Brussels/Oslo: Varamo Press
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- Brouwer, J. Mulder, A. (2008) *Dick Raaymakers. A Monograph*. Rotterdam: V2 Institute for the Unstable Media.
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- Schlemmer, O. (1990) *Idealist der Form. Briefe. Tagebücher. Schriften. 1912-1943*. Leipzig: Reclam Leipzig
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- Wark, McKenzie. (2023). *Raving*. Durham / London: Duke University Press
- Wark, McKenzie. (2019). *Capital is Dead*. London / New York: Verso Books

Workshop With McKenzie Wark

McKenzie Wark (20.10.2023) *Desire & Capital*. at Mono Rotterdam. Organized by Team of Articulations of Desire. Erasmus School of Philosophy

Lectures

- Braidotti, R. (13.10. 2023) *An Embodied Soundtrack of the City*. Rotterdam, Het Nieuwe Instituut.
- Haraway, D., Braidotti, R., Clarke, B. (07.12.2023) *An Evening With: Donna Haraway, Bruno Clarke and Rosi Braidotti*. Rotterdam, Het Nieuwe Instituut.
- Haraway, D., Braidotti, R., (08.12.2023) *Posthuman Symbioses Masterclass*. TU Delft. Co-organised by Robert A. Gorny, Andrej Radman, Ecologies of Architecture Research Group

Exhibitions

- Mari Katayama. (2023) *Mine and Yours*. Curated by Felix Hoffmann, Foto Arsenal Wien
- Louise Bourgeois: *Unbeirrbarer Widerstand* (2024). Curated by Sabine Fellner and Johanna Hofer. Belvedere Wien

Performances

- Opstal van. Imre & Marne (2023) *The Point Being*. Nederlands Dans Theater^{SEP} Choreography / Direction: Imre & Marne van Opstal Scenography: Lonneke Gordijn (DRIFT) Music: Amos Ben-Tal
- Tessarini, Luca Andrea. (14.12.2023) *Performance 0.5 AEON*. DeSchool Amsterdam

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)?

By diving into the social and political implications of body terminologies and experimenting with the liberation of the body through physical experiments in space, my project engages with broader societal and urban challenges. The historical and theoretical foundations of Part 1, and the practical applications of Part 2, together demonstrate the interconnectedness between bodies, architecture, and urbanism.

Rooted in the interdisciplinary dialogue between bodies, movement, and space, my project naturally resonates with the various scales of design practices, reaching from the urban scale of Rotterdam's waterways all the way to the scenographic Interiority of a stage. The experimental research addresses an ongoing testing of scales through the medium of my body and chrono-photographic explorations, drawings, collages, model making and writing. I navigate forth and back between the widest shot of space, the city, the water, and the sky, all the way to the smallest scale, the centre of the body itself, with our beating heart and senses.

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

My graduation work addresses the importance of the body as a physical matter in the broader social, political, and scientific context. Combining my personal background in classical and contemporary dance with design, I work with my body as a tool to design and explore at the intersection between bodies, movement, and space. The literature research traces the history of body terminologies, revealing their political and social implications within architecture. Contemporary theoretical contributions challenge the idea of the body as a regulated object confined by architectural norms. My project aims to free the body from spatial limitations, allowing natural bodily attunement in space.

After the theoretical research a new legibility of the body terminology became apparent, which I want to discover in the physical, experimental research and in the design phase. The body and the surrounding space start a playful conversation to discover new ways of building and perceiving architecture of today and the future. If we allow our bodies to be curious and free, they will organically respond to spatial constructs, and a newfound sense of joy within us becomes apparent.

As we craft our paths and proximities, we are internally intertwined in an urban, spatial dialogue. This research approach proposed an experimental research method and scientific framework at the intersection of two practices – bodily movement and design – enhancing our understanding of the connections between bodies, movement, and the built environment.