

# 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	Raf van Oosterhout
Student number	4878159

Studio		
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture, Low Town Downtown	
Main mentor	Sam Stalker	Design
Second mentor	Eireen Schreurs	Research
Third mentor	Anet Meijer	Building technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose the Urban Architecture Graduation studio because of its engaged, transdisciplinary and non-dogmatic approach of an architectural design. I'd like to learn how highly receptive, sometimes overwhelming research can lead to an appealing design. One which is very buildable because of its tight connection to the existing fabric.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Reconfiguring embodied culture
Goal	
Location:	Blikfabriek, Velgenfabriek and immediate surrounding (Hoboken, Antwerp)
The posed problem,	Blikfabriek, a periphery within a periphery, is a protected stage. Here, large quantities of waste materials are transformed by a caretaking community into reusable materials. Therefore it could be seen as an enclosed centre for reconfiguration. Blikfabriek is full of cultural agents like artists, but is not frequently visited by residents from the neighbourhood. This results in an estranged relationship between residents, the old factories and the waste materials they contain. The urban landscape of Antwerp offers a lot of waste materials that can be

	<p>harvested for reuse. Coming from a specific context, the materials carry embodied culture: information about their structural quality, previous role and cultural narratives. In the processes of collecting, processing, storing and reconfiguring, the materials inevitably get altered. In this alteration certain qualities fade away, while others are amplified and added. Informing stories get lost, while new stories arise.</p>
research questions and	<p>To what extent do the origins of reused materials matter? How to increase the contact surface between materials and agents?</p>
design assignment in which these result.	<p>The aim is to create an architectural proposal that centralizes the act of reconfiguration of reused material and the existing situation, treating the materials' embodied culture with care, while finding additional qualities by new compositions and an adequate programme. A connected aim is to make the existing situation more porous, increasing the contact surface between materials and agents.</p> <p>The design proposal will result in a centre for reconfiguration. The programme will be a mix of education, ateliers and dwelling. Special attention goes to the relation between this centre and the various flows and public infrastructures in and around it.</p>

**Process**

**Method description**

My methodology consists of fieldwork, precedent/reference studies (literature, artworks and building projects) and constructing stories.

Main parts in my research:

The origins of materials

Reading materials on embodied culture, integrity and potential

Reconfigurations of reused materials

Through visiting reuse companies I try to get an understanding of different narratives about and approaches to leftover materials.

By following and working together with reuse architect Bruno Vermeersch I investigate how leftover materials are harvested, stored and reconfigured into new projects.

The documentation of model making, by for example stop motion, shows the intuitive and improvisational act of building with the limits of using reused materials.

### **Literature and general practical references**

Hutton, Jane. *Reciprocal Landscapes: Stories of Material Movements*. Routledge, 2020.

Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. Translated by William Weaver. Harcourt Brace & Company, 1974.

Otero-Pailos, Jorge. *The Ethics of Dust*. Commissioned and produced by Thyssen-Bornemisza ArtNContemporary for the 53rd International Art Exhibition / Biennale di Venezia, 2009.

Alongside this shortlist, there will be many practical references, as case studies, reports, articles, etc.

### **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 addresses the role of 'the architect', stating that architects function as mediators between materials and agents, reading histories and reconfiguring stories. The studio topic 'Low Town Downtown' invites us to think about the relation between periphery and centre and envision our peripheral site as a new centre. This narrative asks for a transdisciplinary approach that works through various scales in order to get a grasp on the position of our site in relation to the rest of the city of Antwerp. Ultimately, the architecture of a 'centre for reconfiguration' involves more than just the physical structures in a given context. It will transfer a deeper understanding of waste cycles, material culture and city dynamics.

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

My graduation project has the potential to contribute to reuse practice and our approach to industrial heritage. It could demonstrate how a careful reading of existing context and reused materials results in an adequate architectural intervention, with minimal emissions and maximum societal impact. Additionally, this project brings attention to the significance of considering pollution as our world heritage.