

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	Louise Gillett
Student number	5149541

Studio		
Name / Theme	Urban Architecture- Bricolage	
Main mentor	Eireen Schreurs	Architecture
Second mentor	Lex van Deudekom	Building Technology
Third mentor	Leeke Reinders	Research Mentor
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>The studio theme of bricolage was a key motivation for enrolling in Urban Architecture graduation studio as the theme inspires a more intuitive, democratic, and creative form of architecture that is strongly grounded in the site. Throughout my design and research process, I seek to interrogate the found materials of Nijmegen trying “to discover new significances and new possibilities” within the existing conditions (Scalbert 2011, 228). This research adopts Jencks’s notion that “Bricolage was offered as a more direct way of making architecture, as a means to a ‘democratic style’ by which everybody could be the author of his own environment” (Scalbert 2011, 229).</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Common Ground
Goal	
Location:	Nijmegen, Netherlands
The posed problem,	<p>Initial fieldwork research has revealed that different subcultures and social groups are not currently interacting in Nijmegen. The city centre currently provides a limited realm to encourage this interaction, with global retail dominating the urban landscape. Ownership analysis of the city highlights the poor participation of</p>

	<p>the residents in making the city. Local organisations are instead situated on the border of the city, absent of footfall or public engagement. With the acceleration of loneliness, isolation and unemployment arising during the global pandemic, the value of the community needs to be reaffirmed in Nijmegen now more than ever. This thesis aims to provide an alternative solution by democratising the public space in Nijmegen.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Common Ground addresses the notion of social space, investigating the extent to which architectural intervention can encourage people from different walks of life to interact and engage with each other. The term ‘different walks of life’ is defined as a variety of people from different backgrounds, age ranges, genders, and cultures. Research questions explored in this thesis will include: can architecture act as a catalyst for social cohesion? How can architects create vibrant cities that strengthen the economic and social structures of the community? Is it possible to create an architecture of resilience that adapts to its environment? These questions will be explored through the lens of bricolage.</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>Common Ground will develop an approach to architecture that can harness the social potential of the city, providing a space which promotes community interaction across a wide range of social groups, age ranges and nationalities in Nijmegen. This research will explore an architecture of resilience, acting as a bricoleur who moulds to the existing environment and conditions. An ideal type of social interaction is not promoted in this thesis. Instead, it aims to discover ways in which architecture can contribute to a lively, vibrant, and inclusive public realm, where the unexpected is encouraged. As Watson asserted, public space is the “blurring of the boundaries, a permeability where differences can collide and rub up against each other” (Watson 2006, 9).</p>
<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>	
<p>Process</p>	
<p>Method description</p>	

This thesis will be conducted through a set of research methods including precedence study, observational mapping, and ethnographic fieldwork. They will provide the tool set to create a series of research catalogues analysing the social fabric and existing conditions in Nijmegen. The first catalogue 'A-Z encyclopedia of the Nijmegenaar' was completed in the first phase of research at P1 which represented 26 personal profiles of Nijmegen residents, exploring their everyday lives and connections to the city. We translated the stories of their everyday lives into quantitative demographic research by mapping where the different demographic groups live, work, and spend their leisure time. The second catalogue, exploring the socio-spatial practices in Nijmegen is being developed throughout P2 and P3, depicting observed actions within their context. This research analyses how the built environment provides the affordance for such actions. I will also explore speculative scenarios on how to accommodate these actions within my design, to inspire future design decisions. Finally, an inventory of the existing materials in the Molenpoort will be developed after P2 in tandem with the material culture workshops.

Ethnographic research and community engagement will provide a strong basis for my thesis. I aim to harness the mutual knowledge of the existing community, acting as "the bricoleur [who] uses what is at hand" (Scalbert 2011, 228). To achieve this, I will continue to engage with residents and interview them whilst on site and via email. During my research I have engaged with Nijmegen organisations such as De Smeltkroes at the Honigcomplex, to investigate their current conditions and potential desires for a new space.

This set of methods will provide the stepping stones from which my design trajectory can develop. The translation of these methods and their intersectionality will be developed further to harness this knowledge.

Literature and general practical preference

Alison and Peter Smithson, *Urban Structuring*

Amos Rapoport, *Human Aspects of Urban Form*

Charles Jencks and Nathan Silver, *Adhocism*

Claude Lichtenstein, *As Found*

Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*

Irénée Scalbert, *Bricolage*

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

John Leighton Chase, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski, *Everyday Urbanism*

Lyn Lofland, *The Public Realm*

Malcolm Miles, *The Use of Decoration Essays in the Architectural Everyday*

Marco Bruno, Minji Kim, and Simone Carena, *Borrowed City*

Michel De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*

Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till, *Spatial Agency and Other Ways of Doing Architecture*

Petra Peferdmenges, *Founding Alive Architecture*

Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*

Richard Sennett, *The Fall of the Public Man*

Sophie Watson, *City Publics : The (Dis)Enchantments Of Urban Encounters*

Urhahn Urban Design, *The Spontaneous City*

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)?

This thesis interprets the theme of bricolage as the democratisation of the design process, aiming to give more of a voice to the community and harness their mutual knowledge to inform my design process. Mutual knowledge is defined by Jeremy Till as a “means [to] abandoning the hierarchies embedded in most professional relationships and instead welcoming contributions from everyone in the spirit of shared enterprise” (Till 2011, 26). By democratising the design process, I aim empower residents to become bricoleurs of their own environments as they are “pivotal to the entire process, being at once designer, builder and inhabitant” (Scalbert 2011, 227). Also, my inventory of found materials from the Molenpoort will provide a strong basis upon which I can envisage a new possibilities.

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

Common Ground will not only contribute to the existing discourse on socio-spatial relations but aims to develop this analysis further by taking an active role in the community. Rather than positioning myself as the silent observer, I will also act as the engager and communicator to learn from residents and existing organisations. I want to develop an alternative approach to social design, exploring themes such as resourcefulness, flexibility, and resilience.