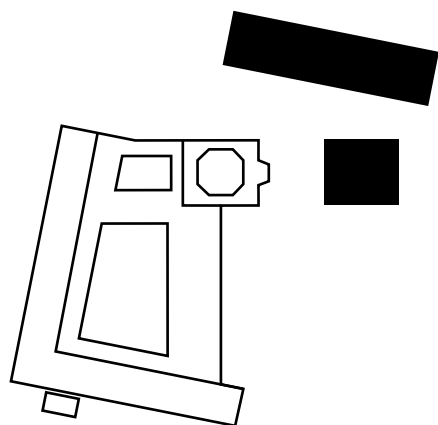
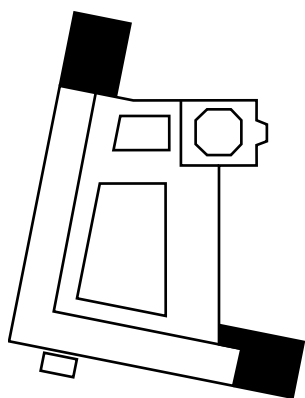
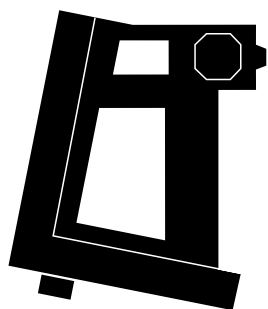


P4- REFLECTION

RE-imagining the Roosenberg Abbey
as a Congress- and Study centre for Architecture,
Arts and Religious studies.

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For the chair of Interiors, Buildings, Cities on
the graduation studio: 'Rethinking Roosenberg'. By
the tutors: Mechthild Stuhlmacher, Ann Fonteyne,
Phillipe vierin, Tom Thys, Mauro Parravicini. Exam-
inator: Mariette Overschie.



RE-imagining the Roosenberg Abbey

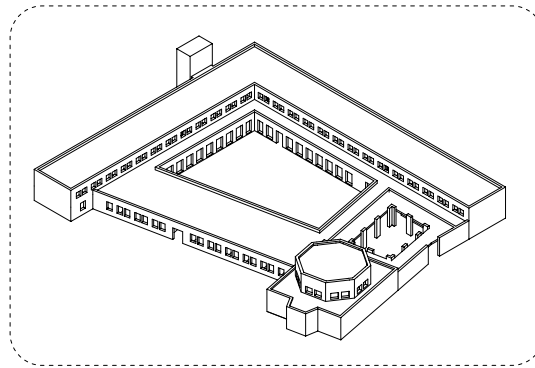
as a Congress- and Study centre for Architecture,
Arts and Religious studies.

Assignment.

The project had a clear starting point, as it focused on the change of programme for an existing building and location. Namely, A congress- and study centre for the KU-Leuven.

The challenge was to create a sensible strategy on the approach of the change. Considering adaptation, extending or adding to the existing for the new purpose metaphorically and physically, as we were dealing with a building designed according to the strictly rules of van der Laan.

In addition, the exact programme was not set. This meant that the assignment required the development of a vision on what a congress- study centre could be.



Defining the proposal.

Having a design project with an existing structure will ask to not only look at the place as context, but also the background of the existing structure. In this case the history of the monastery and the particular designer: Dom Hans van der Laan, his theories and the style in which the building was created.

I struggled with this consideration of the existing, both metaphorical as physical. The abbey is a design, part of a small oeuvre, by Dom Hans van der Laan. In addition, it could be seen as a build evidence of his theories on the architectonic space. But, also the connection and experience of the old and new programme, as universities and their origin are closely connected with monasteries and religion in general.

Although we use an architecture faculty on a daily base, it was not as easy as I expected to create a vision on how we should perceive a study centre as an outpost for multiple faculties.

Methodology.

I think that in architecture there is never one true specific method to find the answer to questions at hand. Thus resulting in different methods simultaneously resulting in a fragments of information put together by the design. For me, this leads to a combination of theory and practice.

The literary background research of the monastic typology¹ and the value determination² of the building made it clear for me that the abbey should be kept as is. This research method developed by Paul Meurs³ showed me how to approach specific buildings with monumental values as it identifies the monumental key-aspects that could be used to enforce the strong points in this project, namely the designer: Dom Hans van der Laan and his theories about architecture and his approach to design.

This resulted in a design decision that the project should be realized in the form of an addition that translates and fits the theories from van der Laan in the programme of a study centre. This would on one hand respect the monumental values, whilst creating a clear connection with the existing, creating a coherent whole in the form of a small campus.

The interpretation and exact shape of the program had to be determined in the project, as there were no specific guidelines given by the KU-Leuven. Beside a case-study on a close related programme (NHI)⁴, my own experience at Delft and especially the Tokyo University of Technology gave me grip on how the exact programme should include and be organized.

A field trip to Oxford as a study on the English college typology gave a good impression on how a small campus focused on study and accommodation could be designed and function as an outpost for university students and researchers.

Drawings and diagrams helped me to form an interpretation on the theories of van der Laan, which in turn helped to create a design that would connect the ideas of van der Laan. This helped to form the principles for design (5), whilst a combination of drawings and models created the exact shape and experience of all the information fragments into the re-imagination of the Roosenberg Abbey as a study centre for architecture arts and religious studies.

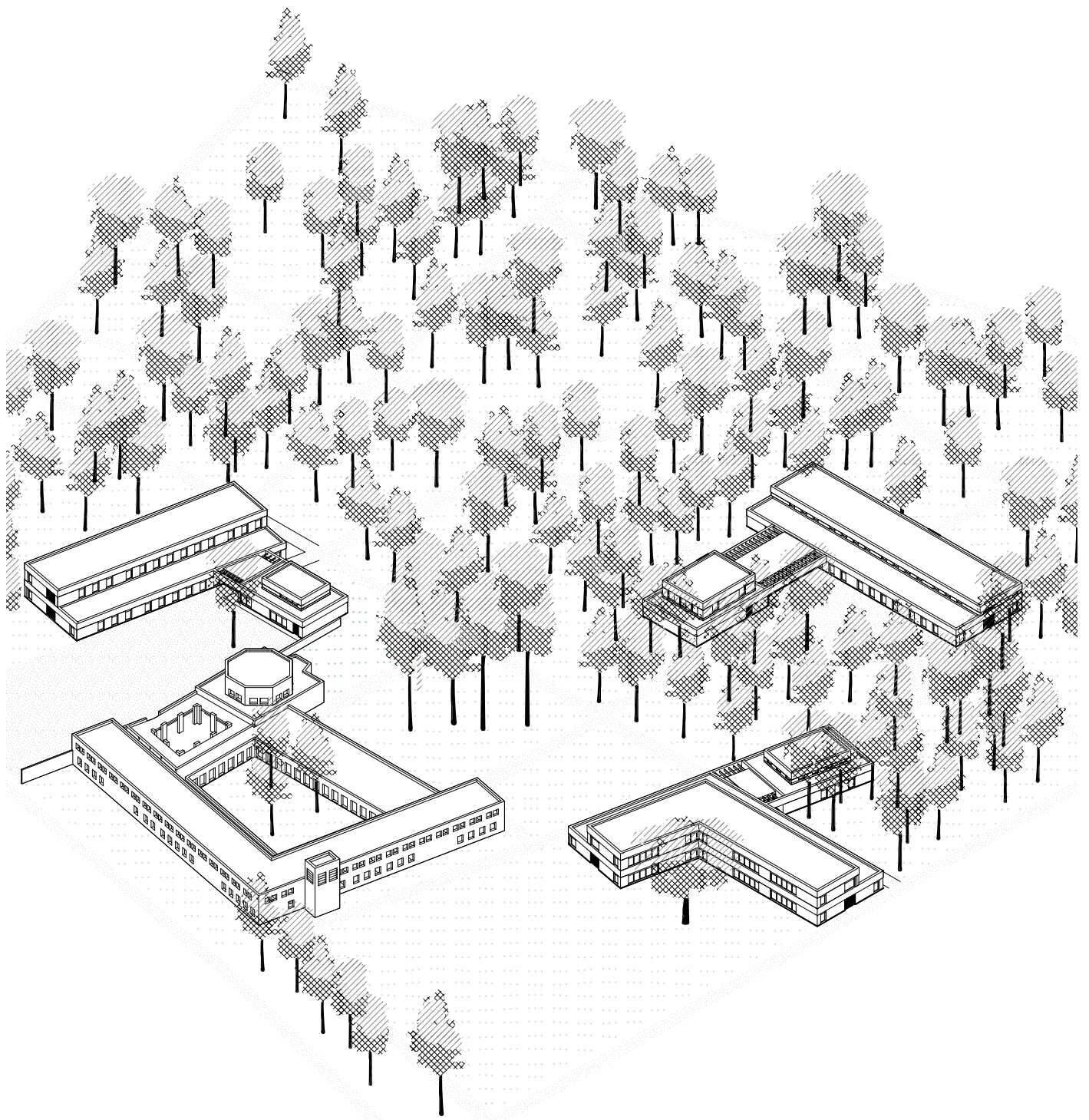
1) appendix 01:
The monastic orders and their built environment.

2) appendix 02:
Considering the intervention at the Roosenberg Abbey in Waasmunster.

3) Idem.

4) appendix 03:
Elaboration on the programme at hand.

5) appendix 04:
Principles of design.



Post-project.

When looking back, I could say to be proud with the results I've made at this point. From time to time, it has been a struggle to keep a clear vision on the goals that I wanted to achieve with the project. It has taught me that the vision on a project is just as important as the elements on which it is build.

It has been a good experience to create a project in which the total control has been my own responsibility. Keeping a time frame, deciding what kind of products help at certain moments in the design process to gain either understanding or representation of the project.

The studio has been a joy, and realizing this is the last project that's created in the true environment saddens me a bit. Although, the experience of the practice, which I already gained in the last period, makes me look positively at the challenges that are ahead of me. With this, I would like to conclude this process and project and thank my Tutors in past and present projects.