

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:

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab / Searching for Appropriate Environmental Approaches	
First mentor (Design)	Suzana Milinović	Architectural and Urban Design
Second mentor (BT)	Rufus van den Ban	Building Technology
Third mentor (Research)	Heidi Sohn	Architectural Theory, Philosophy
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I want to pursue my own fascination and find approaches that I can continue to work on even after my masters - a first step towards a personal attitude towards our environment and therefore also a professional positioning within the field of architecture and the alternation of our surroundings in general.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	On the Verge of Intellectuality A Synthesis of Science and Spirituality
Goal	
Location:	No fixed location – migrating. Multiple locations and interventions in urban, rural and “wild” areas.
The posed problem,	A felt alienation towards our environment, and as a result of this estrangement an inappropriate interaction with it. The ways we are approaching today’s pressing challenges are insufficient and unsatisfactory for environment, humans and life. In fact I’m calling for a reconsideration of the division of these realms.
research questions and	How can we deal with the disconnectedness from our environment in a way that enables us to transform our alienated view of it into an understanding and empathic relation with it, so that a more

	<p>harmonious togetherness a nature-culture continuum can be facilitated? A world ruled by respect and kinship towards all that surrounds us.</p>
design assignment in which these result.	<p>Finding a way to tackle the above mentioned problem. The project should raise awareness of the troublesome situation and at the same time be a signal for hope. A beginning of taking action for an alternative approach.</p>
<p>1. Multi-locality and species shelter (installation)</p> <p>The design of a small scale multi-locality and multi-species retreat. That can serve as a shelter for one or ideally multiple species, based on location, time and coincidence. An identical structure for different places, animals and seasons. A questioning of distinctions of human-made boundaries and a rapprochement to other-than-human actors.</p> <p>Materiality in this installation plays an important role as the object would ideally be completely compostable. Therefore, only natural materials come into consideration, e. g. wood, moss, earth, mycelium or edible materials such as hay, grass or even meat and bones. A porous basis would be best as it invites to invade and then adapt to convenience.</p> <p>The multispecies approach requires biological research for adaptation or likability and acceptance for each of the species.</p> <p>Furthermore, a monitoring of movements around and within the object is desirable to understand who interacts with it and how this interaction occurs.</p> <p>2. Wild animal guerilla (action)</p> <p>Rewilding of the urban environment, by releasing "wild" animals into the urban areas. A natural participatory design process. Monitoring of those animals' movements will serve to establish movement patterns. These movement patterns could then be used as zoning device for future planning or immediate appropriate intervention. A type of architectural determinism. Inventing a tool and inserting an instrumentality into what is already there.</p> <p>Seeing the city through an other-than-human perspective (seeing the city through the inside of a dynamic shape) to react to their behavior and facilitate a more harmonious togetherness in a wrongfully human dominated environment. Certainly, this needs to be constantly revisited and adapted. Just as any planning activity or intervention, in reality there is never a fixed point in time that can be conserved. It needs to be continuously negotiated, and as I propose amongst all species.</p>	

This necessity of ongoing assessment is due to the complexity of these systems. The larger the group of different actors gets the greater is the challenge to find adequate solution. But one thing I clear it is time for our species to find ways to give back space and power even if this means unconventional or even uncomfortable situations for us, as the foundations of our achievements in that regard are build on abuse of power.

As an intermediate step away from a sense of ownership of animals, I propose a collective ownership of domesticated animals. A step towards wilderness in people's minds and in reality. That obviously would also imply an end of breeding for individual ownership purposes.

Process

Method description

The basis of dealing with this topic is the **attitude** with which I'm approaching it I have promised myself to maintain a rigorously **optimistic** stance, taking advantage of **curiosity** as a main driver of this research.

Dealing with **spirituality** brings into play the world of believe, feelings and emotion. Being aware of this I will try to do my best in staying **sensitive** towards other peoples view on these things. Considering the before mentioned factors I also must make clear that it is also, but not only a personal matter.

However, this project is dealing with more than the spiritual dimension also involving **science** and therefore also **history**. An exploration of the roots of human alternation of environment and civilization, will help the comprehension of nowadays approaches.

After having explained the general mindset of this research/ project and the dimensions it is dealing with, I want to illustrate the **manner** in which it will be conducted.

The approach is:

Posthumanist as it implies a notion that shifts away from the anthropocentric Weltanschauung and facilitates a production of knowledge involving the non-human, it fights the ideology of dualism in questioning divisions like mind and body or living and inanimate. A posthumanist methodology has to be adaptable and sensitive. Furthermore, applying such a method means consciously thinking of the multilayered effects of something.

Genealogical as firstly it represents a different form of analysis. Secondly it constitutes a more powerful mode of critique. Thirdly it allows a way to confront different bodies of knowledge in a suspicious manner in my case that would be the bodies of science and spirituality which promote seemingly different worldviews and ways of perceiving.

By making use of **analogical reasoning**, meaning that I will try to see communalities between two different systems. I'm expecting a multitude of diverse outcomes.

Ethico-aesthetic as an alternative view to the neo-liberal ideology opening up to new modes and potentialities of thinking and living. This refers to a processual and event-centered reconstruction of the human subject. Seeing the human as equal part of the environment and speculate with the consequences of this scenario, resulting in limitation and vulnerability.

Eclectic. Through selecting within a diverse range of practices and ideologies an appropriate system and understanding is ensured. The challenge lays in navigating through this sheer quantity of possibilities.

Metaphors can help to transform an elusive concern into something more graspable, without becoming too concrete. The layer of interpretation leaves room for creativity. A translation of our imagination and understanding of those metaphors can become a basis for creation, an architectural act. Inspirations for this process can be found in the making of art or composition of music. Traces of this artistic aspect are also found in architecture and need to gain attention and have to be taken care of.

Literature and general practical references

Main literature:

Taylor, Bron R. (2010). *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future*. University of California Press, Berkeley/ San Francisco/ London

Harrison, Ariane L. (2013). *Architectural Theories of the Environment Posthuman Territory*. Routledge, New York/ Oxon

Wilson, Edward O. (1984). *Biophilia*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge/ London

Tuan, Yi-Fu (1984). *Dominance & Affection – The Making of Pets*. Yale University Press, New Haven/ London

Botkin, Daniel B. (2012). *The Moon in the Nautilus Shell*. Oxford University Press, New York

Suzuki, David (2022). *The Sacred Balance, 25th anniversary edition: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature*. Greystone Books, Vancouver

Topa and Narvaez, Wahinkpe (Four Arrows) and Darcia (2022). *Restoring the Kinship Worldview: Indigenous Voices Introduce 28 Precepts for Rebalancing Life on Planet Earth*. North Atlantic Books, Berkeley

Precedents:

Harrison Atelier – Feral Surface, Pollinators Pavilion

Ensamble Studio - The Truffle

Joseph Beuys – I Like America and America Likes Me

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)?

Architecture principally is an alteration of our environment to accommodate human needs. With my approach I try to question this statement. I try to look beyond the human. For this purpose, I continue the work done during my theory thesis in the second semester and try to explore the grounds that I discovered and saw potentials in. Namely, posthumanism and spirituality. More generally speaking as in relation to the master's degree. I see this period of my life as crucial as it gives me the opportunity to deepen my previous knowledge, that I gain during my bachelor's degree and during my work in an architectural office. Nevertheless, and in my opinion more importantly I get the chance to question the previously learned on an academic, but also personal level. This allows me to dig deeper than I would have imagined, when starting this degree. The graduation project is facilitating and will facilitate me to generate my professional stance with confidence when it comes to architecture, urbanism and building technology/science, but also generally the way we interact with our environment.

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

There is no doubt, that we are currently affected by multiple urgent matters. Such as the most prominent the climate change, as well as the 6th extinction, the increase in pace in technological advancement, the 4th industrial revolution and the mental health crisis just to name a few. These pressing issues must be addressed now and as I suppose in a different manner. To fighting ideologies of greed and exploitation by abuse of power and domination of what is considered as trivial is necessary. The goal is to promote an intellectual milieu in which the fundamental value of life and its diverse forms is evident. This is as I suggest feasible through a reconciliation of the spiritual dimension, whatever that means for each of us. It is part of us and can be consulted and serve as motivator or be used as a mere tool to represent heartfelt values. A sincere approach liberated from other suppressive powers, reduced to the essentialities of life.