Laura Tijchon

GRADUATION
PLAN

Interiors Buildings Cities
Archiving Architecture

PERSONAL & STUDIO INFORMATION

Name: Laura Tijchon
Student number: 5058899

Master track: Architecture
Studio: Interiors Buildings Cities
Theme: Archiving Architecture
Main mentor: Sam De Vocht, Architecture
Second mentor: Matthijs Klooster, Building Technology

Argumentation of choice of the studio: I have a great interest in the interaction and synergies between people in the city and architecture. I wanted to learn more about topics such as public interiors, materiality, human perception and scale modeling. Furthermore, I took the MSc2 course by Interiors Buildings Cities ("Salon"), which exceeded my expectations and convinced me to choose this graduation project.

GRADUATION PROJECT

Title: Archiving Architecture; a new home for the Flemish Architecture institute

Goal
Location: Antwerp, Flanders

The posed problem: designing an archive depot with offices and public funtions for the Flemish Architecture institute (VAi).

Design assignment: Design a ±3000 m² archive depot as well as multiple public functions, offices and ateliers; all with proper climate circumstances.

Research question: How to create a new home for the VAi and the material they are responsible for, which provides optimal storing facilities and comfortable working spaces, while still being inviting for the public?

PROCESS

Method description
The main goal of the Interiors Buildings Cities studio is to research, design and test an intervention through all scales. Students are allowed to used their preferred way of designing, but are additionally asked to show their process and results with scale models. The scale models help both student and tutor understand the design as a physical object situated within its context. During presentations, the models are supported by drawing material.

The project started with literature research and canon project analysis in groups, in order to understand the typology of the (architecture) archive. The main assignment is to design an architecture archive in, against or around cultural center De Singel in Antwerp. The group is now analyzing this building with archival material, pictures, literature, models and more. Simultaneously, each student is designing their own intervention.

Literature and general practical references
In the Architecture track, research and design are intertwined. Because our final product is not an essay or thesis, the literature we use can be of all types. I prefer to use many reference projects, and so all written and visual information I can find is useful. Both the internet and books from the library provide this information. Furthermore, I am challenging myself to also read and reflect on articles about Flemish architecture, archiving and other topics relevant to my design proposal. Examples of sources are;

Delbeke, M., Devoldere, S., & Strauven, I. (2010). *Robbrecht en Daem Pacing through Architecture (2nd ed.).* König.

Evans, R. (1978) Figures, Doors and Passages. In *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays,* 54-91.

John Harris, 'Storehouses of Knowledge: The Origins of the Contemporary Architecture Museum' in *Larry Richards (ed.) Canadian Centre for Architecture: Buildings and Gardens.* CCA/ MIT Press: Montreal/Cambridge, MA, pp.15-32

Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. *In C. Hamilton, Refiguring the Archive* (19-26). Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Van Den Driessche, M. (Ed.). (2017). *Robbrecht en Daem : an architectural anthology.* Mercatorfonds.

VanDeVelde, T. (2003). *Claire Bataille, Paul ibens: projecten en objecten, 1968-2002.* Ludion.

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

In architecture, we see an upcoming trend of publicness and transparency. The Neth-erlands is one of the leading countries in this trend of architecture as a democratic means. Many typologies of public buildings seem to be going through this revolution, but one can imagine that archives, as a storehouse for important and sensitive infor-mation, are especially being criticized. A well-known example of this trend is the Boijmans van Beuningen depot by MVRDV in Rotterdam, the world's first publicly ac-cessible art depot. The Interiors studio, specifically with the chosen topic of archiving architecture, asks its students to learn from this typology. What does it entail, what are other examples and how to optimize or refute it?

Archive depots are often situated in urban environments, but most people know them as closed, inaccessible buildings. They are strictly regulated with a vast set of rules, and for many people even boring or irrelevant. It is, however,

the responsibility of a (state) archive to inform and serve the public, and thus its building might have to be attrac-tive. The archive might even have to compete or synergize with other cultural attrac-tions. The concept of an archive is as old as time. Storing goods and collecting knowledge are still relevant topics nowadays and can even be seen as essential to thrive in society. An archive is a place where many different people and objects come together. Each group requires specific facilities, climate conditions and other comforts.

My graduation project is centered around situating the Flemish Architecture institute within Antwerp's Culture Campus. Around Antwerp's ring road, an area containing multiple sports- and culture facilities is located. Art campus De Singel is also located within this neighborhood. The iconic modernist building by Flemish architect Léon Stynen is vast and complex, having been extended multiple times in the past. With my project, I am relocating the VAi from its too small current location in the city center to De Singel. My goal is to perpetuate the VAi as an essential part of the Culture Campus. By rethinking the VAi's policy on knowledge distribution, my architectural intervention will reflect on the current trends of transparency in archiving. Combining the identity of the VAi and De Singel is key in my project.