Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

Graduation Plan: All tracks

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Anton Dobrevski
Student number	4539265

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab	
Main mentor	Roel van de Pas	Explore Lab
Second mentor	Jan van de Voort	Architectural Engineering
Third mentor (Research)	Peter Koorstra	Form & Modelling Studies
Argumentation of choice of the studio	Steven Holl, Zaha Hadid, Pezo von Ellrichshausen – they all have something in common. Not only that they are all great architects – they are also painters. Working on paintings has been a crucial part of their professional career as architects. They have been using painting as a tool to generate architectural ideas and solve design challenges in their projects. And painting is something that we are starting to lose from architectural practices. Despite this, I firmly believe that there is a huge potential in it as a tool for architectural exploration which is also the reason why I decided to choose Explore Lab as graduation studio. Explore Lab gives students the opportunity to work beyond the boundaries of a typical design studio. The freedom provided by the studio allowed me to have a rather artistic approach towards architecture and to do research on architectural paintings as a design tool.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	A manifesto for a new age. 'Rebuilding' the communist's former mausoleum in Bulgaria.

Goal	
Location:	The former site of Georgi Dimitrov's mausoleum in Sofia, Bulgaria
The posed problem,	The mausoleum was built to house the embalmed body of Georgi Dimitrov, the first leader of Communist Bulgaria. After the fall of Communism in 1989, the leading party claimed that it was inappropriate to retain the mausoleum because it represented Bulgaria's repressive past which is why they wanted to demolish it. Despite the opposition within the government and that two-thirds of the population opposed the demolition, the mausoleum was destroyed in 1999. Even nowadays there are still controversies around this topic - whether the mausoleum had to be destroyed or retained.
research questions and	How can painting be used as a design tool to generate architectural ideas?

	• What are the different ways in which painting can be used in the design process? • How are sketches and drawings similar to architectural paintings? • What is the process ahead of making architectural paintings for a project? • How is the architectural design process, in which painting is used as a tool, similar to the creative process of an abstract artist? • In which part of the design process is used which painting style?
design assignment in which these result.	'Rebuilding' the communist's former mausoleum in Bulgaria with an awareness and remembrance of the past and embracing a glowing new future. The site has a 'burden' and paintings will not only be used during the design process but they will contribute to the better understanding of the project by addressing the complexity of the socio-cultural and historical problems and in this way stimulate discussion.

The site of the communist's former mausoleum in Sofia causes controversy even nowadays. Burdened with its historical, social, economic and political background, the site is the perfect testing ground for a project that embraces the multidimensionality of architecture. The new building should be designed with an awareness of the past and at the same time embracing the new socio-political and environmental challenges. The challenge would be to create a whole out of these conflicting elements, to create architecture that addresses each of these elements and merges them together. Aiming to find the balance between these otherwise contradicting elements, painting will be a central tool within the design process.

Process

Method description

The framework of the research is constructed around the analysis of architectural paintings made by architects for whom painting is an integral part of the design process.
The question of what the different ways are in which painting can be used in the design process is going to be answered by analyzing how five architects use painting in their design processes. The process ahead of making architectural paintings for architectural projects will be also analyzed from an artistic and architectural point of view, by looking at the composition, the various elements and forms in the drawing and the choice of color. Moreover, to get deeper understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the medium, the architectural paintings will be compared to architectural drawings and sketches. The analysis is going to be done by conducting a literature review. The aim of this analysis is to develop categories for the various painting styles depending on how the paintings are made, when they are made in the design process, why they are used, and what is achieved with them. To get a full understanding of how paintings can be used in the design process and understand the role of abstraction in it, the way painting is used as a tool within the architectural design process will be compared to the creative process of an abstract painter. Based on the conclusions, the different ways of using paintings, will be implemented during the design phase of the graduation project, aiming to practically implement the outcomes and explore how this tool fits within my personal creative process.

Literature and general practical preference

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Reflection

In the last years of my architecture study, I realized my architectural design process lacked a proper tool for exploration that stimulates my creativity and allows me to explore the multidimensionality of architecture and not only its visual aspect.

The utilization of the contemporary, or I might even call them trendy, digital tools often results in architecture that is too literal, too visual, that can be explained with a simple diagram, architecture that is empty of meaning. One of the reasons for this is that the digital production is so accelerated that, as Pezo von Ellrichshausen would describe it, the translation of ideas happens before one even has a proper idea to be translated and the digital creation goes ahead of the mental processing.

In search of new means of representation and exploration, I stumbled upon painting - a tool used by many renowned architects allowing them to tackle the complexity and form a whole out of the many and often conflicting elements (function, material, social, economic) which are contributary determinants in architecture.