

Graduation Plan: All tracks

Personal information	
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Studio	
Name / Theme	Explore Lab
Teachers / tutors	Olindo Caso, Gregory Bracken, Hubert van der Meel
Argumentation of choice of the studio	Explore Lab gave the possibility to think and design outside of common/given frameworks, making it possible to base a project on socio-philosophical theory and giving the opportunity research this on a deeper and more meaningful level than normally possible. Since I had found a fulfilling subject in the socio-philosophical subject of public sphere in my theory thesis, but did not have the time or space to go into it as far as I liked or the subject deserved in my opinion, studying on it more within the studio of Explore Lab seemed the logical option.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Architectural Translation of Public Sphere; the Stimulation of Meaningful Encounters between Strangers
Goal	
Location:	Around Holland Spoor Train Station, The Hague, Nederland
The posed problem,	Where the public sphere in real life, as described by Jurgen Habermas and Richard Sennett, has been in decline since the nineteenth century, due to the growing amount of leisure time and the use of personality in rational discussions, the virtual public sphere/realm on the other hand, has been growing since the 1990's, making public debate, which was almost extinct since the nineteenth century, though essential in the check of governmental (mis)use of power, possible once more. Yet, Internet does not have public debate that follows the Habermasian

	<p>rules of truthfulness and rationality, destroying the way in which proper debate should take place, nor does it own the possibility to do Arendtian 'great deeds'. To overcome these shortcomings, it is essential to give a physical counterpart to the public realm/sphere of the virtual world. The next question is how architecture can be used to do this.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>What architectural elements can one use to stimulate strangers to discuss socially relevant topics in a public place?</p> <p>Subquestion 1: What architectural elements can be used to stimulate people to stay in public spaces?</p> <p>Subquestion 2: What are relevant topics for strangers to discuss in public spaces?</p> <p>Subquestion 3: Which architectural elements can be used to stimulate strangers to talk with each other?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>On guiding theme: The design will be a building complex that stimulates these meaningful encounters between strangers. For this, the building must attract a wide variety of people, offering a wide range of public functions and then stimulating encounters and conversation. The core of these functions will be a Library 2.0, since this renewed building type focuses on this subject. Many libraries that follow the Library 2.0 concept, offer a variety of functions, and are flexible, making it possible that functions change over time when public demand differs, and so must my graduation design. The essence of the building is therefore not its function, but more what the function</p>

represents, which in this case is a combination of a learning-, inspiration-, performative-, and meeting space. Since the most public places are outside, and the places which offer the most stimulation are often inside, a major theme of the building is to make the distinction between inside and outside as smooth as possible.

On location:

Since the location of the building is around Holland Spoor Train Station, here the transportation function offers an interesting ambiguity with the more staying function of public encounters. William H. Whyte calls this perfect balance the 100% location, which stimulates social contact. Study is needed for ways to implement this theory. The location of Holland Spoor momentarily lacks public functions, isolating the sort of subcentre of the Haagse Hogeschool. The building could offer a connection between the Haagse Hogeschool and the city centre of The Hague, and so in a way broadening public life.

Process

Method description

The method to answer the research question is twofold: literary research, and research by observation. The literary research is done with a basis of several architectural, philosophical, social, and anthropological based books, assisted by scientific journals in order to answer all three subquestions. The observational research is done by filming and observing three small squares in Delft (The Netherlands), The Cameretten, a square next to St. Jan's church, and the Prinsenhof. At these squares it is noted where people stay, when they stay. It is noted what the architectural elements are that stimulate people to stay. After this, an external object was placed into the square and it is noted whether this object stimulates people to talk and whether the persons that speak are strangers to each other. All observations are made during lunch hours (11.45 – 13.15), which were found to be the most crowded moments. Further, all

observations have been made during warm, sunny autumn days with temperatures ranging from 15°-18°C.

The method for the design is a combination of studying on different variants on various levels, using references both from physical projects, virtual (unbuilt) projects, and literal studies, while working alternately through different scale levels (urban physical context, social context, shape, function, and materialisation), using a variety of visualisation tools such as different computer programs, physical models, drawings in the form of schemes and sketches to research the guiding theme of meaningful public encounters. Olindo Caso will tutor the design and with him weekly or fortnightly appointments will be made, depending on the state and tempo of the design. Hubert van der Meel will tutor on building construction after the P2, and with him fortnightly meetings will be held as well. During the process I will informally mentor another student, in order to get a new perspective on my own design process and product.

Literature and general practical preference

- Alexander C., Ishakawa S., Silverstein M. (1977), *A Pattern Language*, (New York: Oxford University Press)
- Arendt, H. (1958), *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press)
- Carr, S., Francis, M., Rivlin, L., Stone, A. (1992), *Public Space*, (Cambridge: University Press)
- Gehl, J., Johansen Kaefer L., Reigstadt, S (2006), *Close Encounters with Buildings*, Urban Design International
- Gehl, J. (2011), *Life between Buildings*, Island Press, Washington
- Goffman, E. (1963), *Behavior in Public Places*, (New York: The Free Press)
- Habermas, J. (1991), *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge:MIT Press), translation of *Strukturwandel der Offentlichkeit* by Thomas Burger (1962))
- Hall, E (1966) *The Hidden Dimension* (Cambridge: MIT Press)
- Hampton, K. N., Livio, O. and Sessions Goulet, L. (2010), *The Social Life of Wireless Urban Spaces: Internet Use, Social Networks, and the Public Realm*. *Journal of Communication*, 60: 701–722. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2010.01510.x
- Jacobs J. (1961), *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House)
- Lofland, L. (1989, January). Morality of Urban Public Life: The Emergence and Continuation of a Debate. *Places 6 (1)*, 18-23.

- Lynch, K. (1962), *Image of the City*, (Cambridge: MIT Press)
- Lopez, T.G. (2003) *Influence of the Public–Private Border Configuration on Pedestrian Behaviour. The Case of the City of Madrid, PhD Thesis*. (Madrid: La Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid)
- Lovink, G. (2011), *Eva Ilouiz, Facebook and the Crisis of the Multiple Self*, http://www.lancelmaat.nl/site/assets/files/1060/geert_lovink.pdf (last visit: 09-11-2014)
- Morrill, C., Snow, D., White, C. (2005), *Together Alone: Personal Relationships in Public Places*, (London: University of California Press)
- Rudofsky, B. (1964) *Streets for People*, (New York: Doubleday and Company)
- Russ, M (2009) *Site Planning and Design Handbook* (New York: McGraw Hill)
- Sennett, R. (1977), *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: A. Knopf)
- Shaftoe, H. (2008), *Convivial Urban Spaces* (London: Earthscan)
- Whyte, W. (1980), *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (New York: Project for Public Spaces)
- Whyte, W. (1988), *City, Rediscovering the Center* (New York: Project for Public Spaces)

For the practical references, many designs of buildings of individual functions will be used, as well as Libraries 2.0, who combine the several. Also, many public places will be used as references, of which many will come from the used literature.

Reflection

Relevance

The project tries to find a practical reaction to questions asked by various socio-critical philosophers in the last seven decades, which is in fact a discussion on society that could be dated back to Aristotle. This subject is for instance relevant for the check on governmental (mis)use of power and with that an essential element in any democratic society. Further, the difficulties of one in contrast with the other become even more vital in our current times, where public debate is needed to deal with global problems, such as the refugee crisis. It is apparent that a decent discussion is difficult to create and that much of our ideas derive from mass media, that according to Sennett and Habermas are disastrous substitutes for real public debate. Architecture could help to stimulate these public debates between strangers, which might create understanding, but at least stops alienation from strangers a little.

The Library 2.0 is a new concept from the last decade which can be perceived as such an architectural reaction on these socio-philosophical debates, which deals with publicness in regard of information in a digitalising world. Researching this new concept, with a focus on publicness instead of digitalisation, might offer new insights on the concept, while building further on the ideas which are already used.

Time planning

1.1	Introduction to Explore Lab, first meeting with research mentor
1.2	Defining project, start research
1.3	Defining research question, site, and brief
1.4	Reading books and writing
1.5	Reading books and writing
1.6	Reading books and writing
1.7	Making P1-presentation
1.8	Pre-P1 presentation
1.9	Reading books and writing, fixing presentation
.1.10	Reading books and writing
2.1	Reading books and writing
2.2	Reading books and writing, handing in first draft
2.3	First meeting with main mentor
2.4	Defining design project, writing
2.5	Defining design project, writing
2.6	First design sketches
2.7	First design sketches
2.8	P2
2.9	Applying critique of P2
.2.10	Finishing research report
2.11	Architectural design and construction, finishing research report

3.1	Architectural design and construction general
3.2	Architectural design and construction general
3.3	Architectural design and construction climate and bearing construction
3.4	Architectural design and construction climate and bearing construction
3.5	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
3.6	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
3.7	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing, building presentation P3
3.8	P3
3.9	Applying critique of P3
.3.10	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
4.1	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
4.2	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
4.3	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing, building presentation p4
4.4	p4
4.5	Applying critique of P4
4.6	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
4.7	Architectural design and construction climate,

	bearing construction and detailing
4.8	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing
4.9	Architectural design and construction climate, bearing construction and detailing, building presentation p5 for honour and glory
.4.10	p5
4.11	rest