

Reflection P4

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



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Personal information	
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What is the relation between your graduation project topic, your master track (A, U, BT, LA, MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

My graduation focuses on the redesign of a bunker park in the Hague. The project is searching for a way to reactivate the park and the bunkers (currently closed and overgrown) into an area for civic, cultural, recreational, and residential activity. The focus of the project lies in the field of architecture and design, corresponding to my Architecture master track. By creating a public space for people to be in, meet and interact, the project intrinsically carries importance for the city of the Hague. And vice versa the redesign needs to be aware of and effectively respond to its urban surroundings. Through careful materialization and detailing, a desired atmosphere for the redesign is achieved.

How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?

The conclusions of my research served as a solid foundation and established guiding principles for my design. By conducting a variety of case studies and comparing them, I could establish a set of tools that I could directly implement in my design. I would also often look back to the research and more specifically to the research question, to make sure that the design project remains close to my intent and my initial fascination.

Through my design, I also needed to conduct more site-specific research. This is a more iterative approach where the design and design-specific research constantly informed each other.

How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?

I find myself quite an independent worker, so I was happy that I had the opportunity to pursue my fascination and determine my methodology for the graduation project. I found the feedback given by my mentors very grounding and helpful for positioning myself in the timeline of the graduation project. They helped me push my ideas further and helped me keep the project focused.

How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

As a part of my research, I conducted several field trips to various bunker redevelopment projects. They all approached the issue of the contested heritage of the Atlantikwall in their own way, offering alternatives to what is possible to do with these "ruins": from sculptural objects to museums and hotels. Through my graduation project I hope to have offered yet another, new, way to look at these structures and what is possible to become of them. Due to the nature of the project, ethical considerations were an important aspect for me. Namely, how to work with

contested heritage in a respectful yet provocative way, pushing for new opportunities while acclaiming the value of what is already there and what has been.

How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?

I believe that the results of my research could be transferred to another project of the same nature. They provide a general framework and tools that could be used as a starting point for design. However, my design results are quite context specific. I assume that they could serve as a reference for other similar projects. However, they could not be regarded as solutions that would fit everywhere.

How have I learnt from my own work?

Having spent a whole year on the graduation project meant I had the opportunity to dive into a topic that interests me. The time allowed me to experiment with techniques of research and design that I hadn't had the time to try before. Although not all of these explorations yielded useful results or are incorporated in the final project, through them I had the chance to learn a lot and also be certain regarding the design decisions I am taking for my project, something that would have been difficult had I not had the time to try such a variety of possibilities.

How do I assess the graduation process?

Looking back on the graduation process, I must say I found the design semester more challenging than the research semester. For my graduation project I had the opportunity to pursue a topic that I am personally very interested in. Starting the graduation project, I already had a theoretical framework in which I wanted to position myself. The research that came afterwards was for me a very logical continuation of the work I have been interested in. However, I was not so well prepared about the design phase. My project is connected to the legacy of the Atlantikwall in the Hague. However, I did not know a lot about it before starting the project. This meant I had to spend a lot of time learning about the historical context. This was of great interest to me, but it postponed the start of my design. Thus, I felt a certain time pressure when working on the design, which was not present during the research phase. However, I believe to have managed my time well and have learnt from this experience for the future.