

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:

Personal information	
Name	Maartje Frencken
Student number	5073456

Studio		
Name / Theme	Design of the Urban Fabric	
Main mentor	Gerdy Verschuure-Stuip	Landschape architecture
Second mentor	Tess Broekmans	Urban Design
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My graduation thesis is part of the Design of the Urban Fabric studio, I choose this studio because I was interested in how people use the space around them and observe these interactions through fieldwork. I knew early in the process that I wanted to look into how places change, and how this change affects the people living in those places. These topics are well suited to this studio as the theme for this year 'Embracing Plurality – Growing Porosity' looks into the plurality of places, functions and people .	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Redesigning Rhythms: Exploring a changing sense of place in times of urban expansion.
Key words	sense of place, rhythms, time, Herten, urban expansion
Goal	
Location:	Herten, Roermond (NL) Herten is a neighborhood that is part of Roermond, a city in Limburg in the southeast of the Netherlands. The location was chosen as it has changed a lot in the past 20 years through urban expansions.
The posed problem,	Herten has changed completely over the past century; through multiple expansions, it has

become unrecognizable from the collection of villages it was a hundred years ago and has now become a residential neighborhood part of the city of Roermond. The inhabitants keep to their own homes while in Herten and instead travel to the nearby city for work or to spend their free time.

The public spaces in Herten often feel deserted: few activities take place and the activities that do happen are not very diverse in program. This is one of the reasons people must travel elsewhere for many aspects of life and why the place feels abandoned. With a lack of activities and people partaking in them, it is difficult to notice rhythms in Herten beyond the basic cycles such as the sun setting and rising, and the change in seasons. Without noticeable rhythms in public spaces, the place feels static and impersonal: it becomes clear that the sense of place in Herten is lacking.

An absence of sense of place means that people do not feel connected to a place: they will not be motivated to improve the place and it becomes more difficult to build a strong community. In Herten, especially in the newly built residential areas, it is difficult to enhance this sense of place. The neighborhoods were practically finished when people came to live in them- people had little influence over what the place would look like- which is another reason the place feels impersonal.

Because the residential areas are already finished, they are difficult to transform when for example a change in function is needed or when demographics change.

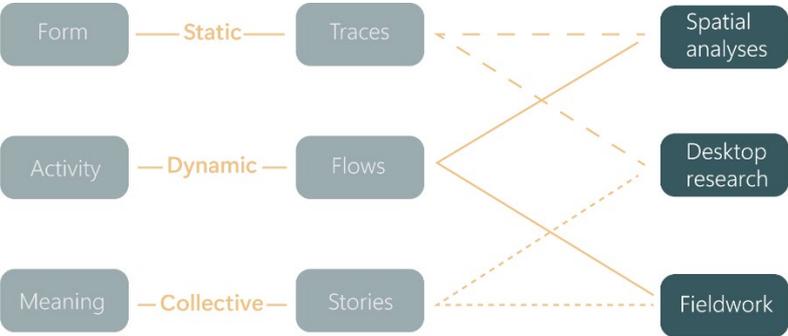
The lack of sense of place is not unique to Herten: many of the recently built vinex neighborhoods share a similar lack of connection to the place. Like Herten, these neighborhoods are often finished when people move in, they are often difficult to transform, and rhythms are difficult to notice.

<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Main question:</p> <p>How can <i>rhythms</i> be used in an <i>urban design</i> for the <i>expansion</i> of <i>Herten</i> to enhance the <i>sense of place</i>?</p> <p>Subquestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the sense of place in Herten changed due to previous expansions? • What rhythms currently characterize Herten? • How do rhythms shape the sense of place of Herten? • How can rhythms be translated into design interventions?
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>For this project I want to create a strategy on the scale of Herten to see how emphasizing rhythms can enhance the sense of place in an already existing urban area. I will then zoom in to a smaller design location where I will test how rhythms can be part of the design process for future expansions.</p>

Process

Method description

Diagram of methods used based on theoretical framework:



Multiple methods are used in this thesis to answer the research questions and analyse the relation between the concepts of sense of place and time. To understand the static elements of sense of place and time: the form and the traces from the past it contains, desktop research is used, this desktop research consists of research using maps and newspaper clippings of the municipal archives of Roermond. Spatial analyses is used to analyse the current situation.

To better understand the dynamic elements which consists of the activities and flows, fieldwork is used. During the fieldwork several location will be observed to see how many people use the place and how these people use the place. Spatial analyses is used to determine which locations are best selected for fieldwork.

The collective element is also documented using fieldwork, however the fieldwork for this element takes a more active approach as it uses interviews to understand what inhabitants think of the place they live in. Desktop research is used to see what has been written down about places and if this matches with the outcome of interviews.

After the analysis phase is finished, existing and desired rhythms will be translated into design interventions which are then tested in both a larger scale strategy and a small scale design.

Literature and general practical references

Main literature used:

Lynch, K. (1976). *What time is this place*. The MIT Press.

Nio, I. (2006). *Vinex tussen identificatie en onthechting*. Het Nederlandse Architectuurinstituut.

Shamai, S. (1991). Sense of place: an empirical measurement. *Geoforum*, 22(3), 347–358.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185\(91\)90017-K](https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185(91)90017-K)

Wunderlich, F. M. (2013). Place-Temporality and Urban Place-Rhythms in Urban Analysis and Design: An Aesthetic Akin to Music. *Journal of Urban Design*, 18(3), 383–408.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2013.772882>

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)?

My thesis combines the concepts of sense of place and time, it looks at how places change in time at what influence this has on the form and use of the place, this is closely related to the topic of the studio which is 'Embracing Plurality – Growing Porosity' as both look into how places can be differentiated from each other and transformed for the future.

The focus on urban spaces and how they are used by people forms the relation between my thesis and the master track Urbanism and the master programme. For me this master track and programme is about learning about the relation that people have with the space around them, a theme which is strongly present in my thesis.

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

My thesis looks at areas where expansions have taken place recently to see how these places could be improved, and how future expansions should be shaped. This topic is also widely discussed in national news as the Netherlands is dealing with the next housing crisis. The new expansions that are needed make the thesis socially relevant.

The scientific relevance of this thesis lies in combining theory about sense of place with theories about time, both have been explored as part of urban design before but there are few projects that combine the two, especially the practical application of using these theories in a design is still lacking.