

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examenscommissie-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 | |
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| Name | Katrina Strazinska |
| Student number | 6058051 |

| Studio | |
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| Name / Theme | Methods of Analysis and Imagination / A Matter of Scale |
| Main mentor | Jorge Mejia Hernandez |
| Second mentor | Freek Speksnijder |
| Third mentor | Klaske Havik |
| Argumentation of choice of the studio | I chose the graduation studio <i>A Matter of Scale</i> because I am deeply concerned about how architecture is increasingly losing touch with the human scale, prioritizing corporate aesthetics, technical sustainability, or a pursuit of perfection over designing for the people who inhabit these spaces. I believe that architecture is fundamentally about shaping spaces for humans and, in turn, acknowledging how those spaces influence human behavior, emotions, and well-being. The studio's approach allows me to explore how architecture can become more connected to the everyday experiences of people while addressing broader urban challenges in a meaningful way. |

| Graduation project | |
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| Title of the graduation project | Beyond Generic. Designing for Meaningful Experiences. |
| Goal | |
| Location: | Vesilennuki tn 9, Tallinn, Estonia. The chosen site presents unique challenges: it is surrounded by different architectural layers, sits near natural landscapes, and is located in a city with a distinct history and cultural identity. These elements will profoundly influence the design, making it an opportunity to integrate contextual sensitivity and innovative architectural solutions. |
| Problem statement: | The global housing crisis together with gentrification has significantly influenced architecture. New residential projects frequently prioritize speed and profit over the social and cultural needs of communities, leading to impersonal and generic housing. This trend undermines |

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| | <p>the emotional well-being of residents and disrupts the social cohesion of neighborhoods.</p> |
| Research questions: | <p>Main research question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can architectural parameters that evoke emotional connections and counter generic design be identified, measured, and integrated into efficient, contextually sensitive building designs? <p>Sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What visual, spatial, and functional parameters contribute to the perception of architecture as generic, and how do they influence the mental and emotional well-being of residents? • What methods can be used to measure and quantify experiential design characteristics in architecture? • What strategies can ensure a coherent architectural identity while accommodating diverse building types, functions, and characteristics? • How can design techniques, such as computational tools or material strategies, be optimized to balance efficiency and human-centered architecture? |
| Design assignment in which these result: | <p>I hypothesize that integrating architectural parameters that resonate emotionally with people not only diminishes the perception of architecture as generic but also improves the well-being of its residents. By combining diverse public functions and housing types within a single project, I aim to create a vibrant, dynamic environment that fosters interaction and community.</p> <p>The goal is to develop a framework for a mixed-use development featuring housing that can be adapted to various urban contexts. The design will emphasize intimate, restorative spaces throughout, prioritizing human-scale interactions and experiences.</p> <p>This framework will demonstrate how housing can be efficient yet personalized, offering a model for future urban development that prioritizes community engagement, long-term livability, and an emotional connection to place.</p> <p>The ground floor will include public indoor spaces such as a food hall and retail areas, providing opportunities for commerce, dining, and social engagement. Adjacent to these spaces will be semi-public co-working areas, promoting a blend of work and leisure within the</p> |

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| | <p>community. The inner courtyard will be raised above the ground, offering residents a sense of privacy and safety while ensuring a peaceful escape from the busy urban environment.</p> <p>Above these public spaces, the housing will consist of various typologies—terraced apartments, row houses, and co-housing units—designed to accommodate different living situations and create a cohesive, village-like atmosphere. These diverse housing types will encourage interaction among residents from varied backgrounds, enhancing the sense of community and fostering connections between different generations and lifestyles. The overall design aims to create a vibrant micro-community within the urban fabric.</p> |
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Process

Method description

I will begin by conducting precedent case studies to examine what makes certain architectural designs feel generic or emotionally resonant. By analyzing a variety of built projects from diverse cultural and historical contexts, I will identify key elements that contribute to the perception of authenticity and emotional connection in architecture. This comparative approach will guide my design, highlighting strategies that have successfully engaged people emotionally, while also avoiding the pitfalls of standardized or homogenized designs.

I will also study phenomenology and typo-morphology to understand how people perceive and experience architectural spaces. Phenomenology will allow me to explore the sensory and emotional responses individuals have when interacting with their built environment, while typo-morphology will provide insights into how the form and typology of a building influence both its function and perception.

Additionally, I will investigate how algorithmic thinking can be applied to the creative design process, examining how it can enhance design flexibility and customization while maintaining contextual sensitivity.

Through 3D modeling, I will test various design strategies that strike a balance between efficiency and personalization. This iterative process will enable me to refine the design, ensuring it aligns with the emotional and functional needs of the future inhabitants. I will use human-view perspectives as a base for sketching and modeling, allowing me to test and adjust the feeling of different spaces from the perspective of those who will experience them daily.

In the next design stage, I will research sustainability and adaptability principles to ensure the design is both environmentally responsible and resilient to changes. I will also explore craftsmanship methods to integrate high-quality, hand-crafted details into the design. By researching traditional and contemporary building techniques, I aim to create a tactile and meaningful connection between people and the materials.

used in the architecture. This approach will enhance the aesthetic and sensory experience of the space, while also supporting sustainability by valuing local craftsmanship and the use of durable, natural materials.

Literature and general practical references

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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)?

The connection between my graduation project, the studio topic, the Architecture track, and the MSc AUBS program lies in their shared focus on addressing contemporary challenges in the built environment through innovative, human-centered design. My project addresses issues like gentrification, generic housing, and the diminishing human scale by proposing a mixed-use development in Tallinn that emphasizes emotional connection, contextual sensitivity, and adaptability. This resonates with the studio's goal of designing at a human scale to create meaningful urban impact.

The Architecture track further supports this ambition by encouraging creative experimentation to tackle technical, spatial, and social challenges. Its focus on exploring innovative solutions while staying rooted in the rich architectural culture of the Netherlands inspires me to critically engage with my design process and push its boundaries. Similarly, the MSc AUBS program provides the ideal framework for integrating international perspectives with localized solutions. Its multidisciplinary, collaborative approach mirrors my own belief that architecture must balance creativity, technical performance, and social relevance to shape spaces that not only serve but also inspire people. Together, these elements offer the foundation I need to explore how architecture, designed at the human scale, can influence urban life and enhance well-being.

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

The relevance of my graduation work lies in its potential to address critical challenges in the contemporary built environment and contribute to the larger social, professional, and scientific framework. By developing a mixed-use housing model that prioritizes community engagement, adaptability, and cultural resonance, my project aims to offer a blueprint for future urban development. In a time when housing is often driven by economic efficiency or technical sustainability, my work seeks to demonstrate how architecture can balance these demands while maintaining a strong human focus.

Socially, my project aspires to enhance urban well-being by creating environments that foster meaningful connections between residents and their surroundings. By incorporating diverse housing typologies and shared public spaces, I aim to encourage inclusivity, community interaction, and a sense of belonging. This

addresses broader concerns about urban alienation and the homogenization of housing developments.

Professionally, the project challenges current norms in housing design, which often prioritize profit and technical solutions over the needs of the people who inhabit these spaces. By offering an adaptable framework that integrates emotional resonance, human scale, and long-term livability, my work seeks to inspire architects and urban planners to rethink the relationship between architecture, context, and community.

Scientifically, the project contributes to the ongoing discourse on sustainable and adaptable housing by bridging research and practice. It draws on fields like phenomenology, typo-morphology, and computational design to explore how architecture can respond more effectively to cultural, social, and environmental challenges. Ultimately, my work seeks to provide a model for architecture that is not only functional and efficient but also deeply rooted in human experience and well-being.