Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences
Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencoمنحmissie-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:

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<th><strong>Personal information</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Argumentation of choice of the studio</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Graduation project</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Title of the graduation project</strong></td>
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The posed problem, The city of Almere is the youngest city in Netherlands. The city is still growing, while big changes have already occurred in the last half century, and the first batch of heritage appears. Therefore, the main problem of this graduation studio is to find a way to deal with the young heritages in young cities.

The issues of the target heritage and its environment will be illustrated in three scales: urban, site and building scales.

**Urban scale:**
1. The way of urban planning, which makes each neighborhood surrounded by vast greenery and high-speed roads with monotonous programs inside, leads to a quiet but isolated and tedious atmosphere in neighborhoods. Public open space in neighborhoods is empty and boring.
2. Except for their own homes, citizens’ social and cultural activities mostly happen in the city center delivered around 2004. But investigation reports show that people still feel unsatisfied with this compact and specifically designed city center, and something interesting and local is expected.

**Site scale:**
1. Similar with the isolated situation of neighborhoods, the site of De Beurs is closely surrounded with high-speed urban main roads and rail way on two sides, while a big open green and an abandoned building on the others. The site is an island on the congestion spot of city.
2. The site is near the Almere central station and main roads on east side, but the fact is that De Beurs is more connected with residential zone on west side. So the building is possible to serve for local residents with regular outsider visitors by train or car.

**Building scale:**
1. The building is an integration tailored for office use. So, each aspect of the building, such as the height, depth, service arrangement and floor layout, is perfect for working space at its time but not easily adaptive for other functions.
2. In the original idea of De Beurs, the inside and outside of the building are disconnected in terms of spatial quality and programs. The building itself is private and introverted, however the outside entrance part is the urban social and traffic hub as designed. The combination of such a private and a public function, as well as the mixing such a complex outdoor area with flexible indoor space are unique and difficult.

3. The most iconic parts of De Beurs are the entrance part as mentioned, the symbolic outlook of heating wheel machine on the roof and massive concrete block with delicate sculpture-shape windows. The former two elements haven't not performed as they were designed already. The problem is to find a way to deal with them.

**Main research question:**

How to improve Almere’s urban vitality by enriching people’s social and cultural life outside of city center?

**Sub research question:**

1. What programs based on De Beurs in Almere could help to build connection among people, especially the old and young who need sense of connection mostly?
2. What kinds of outdoor spaces could bring people together in the context of Almere where enormous natural open areas are easily accessible?
3. How to rebuild connection between De Beurs and its context?
4. How to transfer the tailor-made office space into a public function?
5. How to keep and reuse the iconic elements of the building and give it a new life?

The design assignment is also explained in three scales.

**Urban scale:**

The program of De Beurs, together with its close neighbor former ABN Amro bank building, would be “amateur art center” that brings citizens sharing same hobbies and interests together. Certain recreational facilities could be in the building to fulfill
people’s needs for diverse entertainment venues as compensation for the city center programs.

Site scale:
A lively and casual outdoor public square on the site could be another attractive spot for citizens who do not have a well-organized open space except for city center. De Beurs was meant to be a traffic and social hub, and it’s never achieved because of the previously planned bicycle lane was changed to north side of the site. The idea of a public square would locate next to the new bicycle lane to achieve original concept in another way.

Building scale:
1. Revitalize the original intention to make De Beurs a hub of traffic and social life:
   1) Rebuild relation between the in- and outside by opening up the ground floors for public and create public interior space. So that it becomes permeable and continuous.
   2) The whole amateur art center would be passed through by another bicycle lane.

2. Reorganize and upgrade indoor space plan to:
   1) Strengthen (social, visual and physical) connection among floors
   2) Create a focal space where central circulation and social space are located

3. Renovate and preserve the three most iconic parts
   1) Heating wheel machine could be transferred into part of another means of energy-saving strategy, keeping its showing off gesture which is an important common memory.
   2) Original entrance area could be transferred into a social hub of the building itself to make use of its special space quality.
   3) The massive façade appearance would be preserved by small interventions to enhance its performance without disturbing the existing sense.
## Process

### Method description

Architectural intervention on De Beurs building will be conducted on the base of cultural value assessment and building technology knowledge.

A specific and clear cultural value assessment of De Beurs would be delivered in an early stage, with additional revise and adjustment in the following process. This assessment matrix or drawing would be an important guidance for further decisions, and to establish such a base, following methods would be taken:

1. Using original drawings and documents from the archive. Always return back to these materials when questions arise to avoid overlooking the thinking behind original design decisions.
2. Talking with local residents to get more information and their attitudes to the building. Because De Beurs is not a well-known building by famous architects, the archive documents are limited. While it is the oldest one around the district, people could have more information to share with us.
3. Media information from local newspaper and magazine are other sources to refer to.
4. Goal-directed site visiting from time to time would often be helpful.
5. Reasonable speculation based on visiting and interview experience is applicable if information source is not enough.

As for building technology aspects, a deep understanding of how existing structure, service and interior climate perform is needed. To gain this basic knowledge and make proper decision for further intervention, following methods would be taken:

1. Goal-directed site visiting.
2. Relevant cases and references study.
3. Experimenting with physical models to test performance, especially for structure ability.
4. Discussion with tutors and experts.

Based on former research, architectural intervention would be carried out simultaneously.

1. Literature materials would be important source to learn more about the context, public urban life theories, heritage architecture and other relevant aspects.
2. Personal interview with citizens and observation of public life in Almere is necessary to know the real living condition and to get a first-hand material of what is good and what is still needed.
3. Interpretation means, such as mapping, writing, making diagrams, drawings and physical models, would be applied to shape the idea during the process.
4. Cases study is also to be used to clarify the idea.

### Literature and general practical preference

Practical preference:

There are some precedent amateur art center projects in Europe, two relevant cases of which are SKVR in Rotterdam, the Brewery Arts Center and New Brewery Arts in UK. These three projects have similar programs with my proposal, and I would study the way these programs work. Since SKVR is recently suffering from financial issues, the lessons should be learned from its mode of operation and target groups. The latter two Brewery Arts institutes are financially and socially successful, I will take it as a good example to promote arts and social connection. Other relevant projects would be found and studied further.

**Literature:**

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<th>Method, Amsterdam: Ios Press</th>
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Public life in urban context:

Other relevant resources:
Documentary: The Human Scale (2012) by Andreas Dalsgaard

**Reflection**

**Relevance**
The new town phenomenon is worldwide, and the issue of lack of vitality could always be a consequence after the construction from scratch. Everything is new, facilities are complete, transportation is convenient, but sometimes people still miss a sense of belonging and connection, at least in early years.

This project is trying to find a way to strengthen urban coziness and connection in Almere under background of its urban planning structure, demographic structure, newly established city identity and so on. And the project is also trying to preserve one of the few city growth witnesses, this is new in Almere with short history, and the building would be an example for future heritage. The project uses amateur art as a tool to bridge gaps between neighborhoods, people and the city center. The interaction among visitors of various age group and background could really happen and a relatively stable and long-term relation could be established in this way.

**Time planning**

**Quarter 1: Study of 6 reference cases**

Week 1.1-1.3: guided excursion by groups, work o studio booklet with documentation and axo of 6 reference cases.

Week 1.4-1.10: analysis studio-book of the project with the results of collective analysis (structured by research tool), axonometric drawing(s) per building, collective presentation of the research (P1)

**Quarter 2: Program proposals/ scenarios/ Defining dilemmas and opportunities**

Week 2.1-2.2: collective presentation of scenarios, pitch 5 minutes of individual brief (P1)

Week 2.3-2.7: individual presentation of concept design, based on a precise selection of scenario’s a promising concept for redesign is developed.

Week 2.8 - P2 Presentation: This presentation contains a preliminary design that shows coherence and correctness, and a meaningful translation of intervention strategy in the spatial, functional, urban, material and technical domain. It combines heritage protection, area requirements, design concept, intervention strategy, materialization and preliminary detailing.

Week 2.9-2.10: Finalizing research and design proposal. Finalizing report on analysis, research question, dilemma’s, statement and concept.

**Quarter 3: Design developments**

Week 3.1-3.2: Fragments design will be done these weeks. At the same time further urban,
architectural, cultural value analysis based on my program will be under process during these weeks.

Week 3.3-3.4: The façade fragments design will begin. The preliminary ideas of façade fragment and other technical aspects will be delivered. At the same time further urban, architectural, cultural value analysis based on my program will be under process during these weeks.

Week 3.5-3.7: During these weeks, spatial and the technical designs will be undertaken. Culture value assessment will be more precise and clearer.

Week 3.8 – P3 Presentation: preparation and produce for P3 presentation, products include
- Plans, facades, cross-cuts, 1:200/1:100
- Part of the building, plan and cross-cut 1:50
- Façade fragment with horizontal and vertical cross-cut 1:20
- Details 1:5
- Physical model

Week 3.9-3.10: Excursion and finalizing research and design proposal. To document a collective reflection and comment on the final stage of the graduation studio in P4.

Quarter 4: Development of meaningful elaborated design

Week 4.1-4.3: Finalizing research and design proposal with some theoretical supports.

Week 4.4-4.5: P4 Presentation

Week 4.6-4.9: Production for P5 Presentation. This includes the following
- Theoretic supports
- Mater plan 1:5000/1:100
- Floor plans 1:200
- Sections 1:200
- Elevations 1:200
- Structural design
- Fragment detailing 1:50/1:20
- Detailing 1:5
- Climate design
- Physical Model 1:200

Week 4.10-4.11: P5 Presentation