altered perspectives
on the perception of architecture

process
prologue
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approach
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design strategy

terminology
The notion of movement is an important aspect in the perception of architecture. We move in different speeds, we perceive in different speeds, but our mind makes what we perceive understandable—what we already know.

The approach to this Border Condition graduation project is to try and alter the perspective of how we perceive the architectural space, to enhance our ability to create new designs. The approach is a research method which emphasises the movement of the apparatus, the lens of a camera that captures and maps only through certain obstruction, including a different perspective—as we would not perceive our surroundings usually.

The emphasis lies on the use of film and film techniques, to manipulate and abstract the captured moving images of the surroundings—in this case the city of Bucharest. In film we experience the movement, the environment with an emotional load, with intention by the author in a sequence of scenes.

Architecture can be experienced as a sequence of spaces, a sequence of objects or structures, in movement. Experimenting with film and montage techniques on the mappings done in the city of Bucharest, have lead to an abstraction of the city environment and convey new insights on how altered perspectives on architecture through film can become a methodology to architecture.
approach & bucharest
In terms of a bottom up view within the Border Conditions studio, my interest laid in forcing myself to investigate the city of Bucharest in a different manner than I was used to. To alter my perspective to perceive architecture and the urban space. Struggling to put my finger on what really fascinated me, from art galleries in abandoned buildings to script-writing, the movie *The Five Obstructions* by Lars von Trier was well discussed in the studio which got me thinking about creating obstructions for myself, to map the city. Discussing the notion of an apparatus and perceiving the surroundings through the lens of a camera became a large drive. The main fascination was still to capture movement or in movement.

Once in Bucharest I started experimenting with taking a photograph every so many steps with a shutter speed of 1/15s at a height of about 1,50m. At 2 different speeds: while walking and while driving, only frontal or side ways. Around 750 photographs had I shot the very first day.

These obstructions were slightly different for filming with a camera: I was only allowed to film at a height of approximately 1,50m, walking only downwards, upwards or sideways and driving only sideways and frontal, at 24 frames per second. 49 videos were shot in 6 days.

Last but not least was filming at 1 frame per second (resulting in a time lapse, when played at 24 frames per second), which could only be filmed frontal both while driving as walking. 10 time lapses had I gathered after 6 days.

During our time in Bucharest I went with as much students as possible an discovering myself by car and foot, to get as much material as diverse as possible in Bucharest.
My focus on certain elements, patterns, urban fabric, cables, vehicles, trees, leaves etc. evolved already after a couple of days. Whilst trying to keep the simpleness of filming and keeping to the obstructions, I kept the techniques of framing, composition and layers that I still wanted to capture in mind.

Still in Bucharest, I started superimposing the videos, which resulted in very captivating moving images. Turning versus straight filming, different speeds over each other, rotated footage were the first experiments I did on the footage. A way of trying to enlighten the various layers of Bucharest. The layers of pavements, green, roads, decay, vacant plots, wires, people, the amount of vehicles and many more, were captured in the videos and photographs. By applying editing techniques certain layers were positioned opposite each other, like upwards and downwards filming (image above). Incredible visuals came of these experiments - something so real to the eye but surreal because of the superimposition and movement of the apparatus.
walking or driving

photography
obstruction: 1/15s shutter speed, lens on 24, camera position at (approx.) 1.5m height, direction only front and right side.

video
obstruction: 30 frames per second film, in 1920x1080p and camera position is set at (approx.) 1.5m height: (walking) camera turned 90degrees downwards, 90degrees upwards.

timelapse
obstruction: captured at 1 frame per second, 1920x1080p, camera position is forward and set at (approx.) 1.5m height.
experiments & first manipulation

pl stills
walking

photographs 1/15s

montage experiments
driving
video 30fps

walking
video 30fps

driving
timelapse 1fps

walking

montage experiments
timelapse 1 fps

driving
trial and error
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| Infrastructure | leaves, trees, cracks, borders, organised, maintained, speeds, movement, signs, diagonals, parked, park, river, rails, stripes, lights, arrows, architecture, fast, threshold, patterns, guides, vertical, lamps, greenery, roads, red lights, sidewalk, fragments, assemblage,  
| Front          | urban fabric, tunnel, underground, public, benches, people, wood, brick, concrete, asphalt, metal, movement, perception, details, blurred, lines,  
| Vertical       | greens, gallery, frames, windows, shops, facade, taxi, stairs, routing, material, senses, darker, touch,  
| Side           | textures, fragments,  
| Greenery       | superimposed, layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| infrastructure | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| front          | urban fabric, animals, cables, lantern,  
| vertical       | signs, lights,  
| side           | infrastructure,  
| horizontal     | infrastructure,  
| signs          | infrastructure,  
| lights         | infrastructure,  
| greenery       | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| neglect        | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| architecture   | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| closed         | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| hidden         | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| sidewalk       | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| border         | layers, colours, directions, contrast,  
| protest        |  
| street art     |  
| creation       |  
| wood           |  
| brick          |  
| concrete       |  
| asphalt        |  
| metal          |  
| movement       |  
| perception     |  
| details        |  
| blurred lines  |  
| assembly       |  

30 fps.  

1/15 s.  

30 fps.  

1 fps.  

1/15 s.  

30 fps.  

1 fps.  

22
terminology from pl stills

verticality
When driving or walking and capturing frontally, the vertical elements we see stand out. We move towards them so they do not tend to transform or distort like capturing sideways. > in Bucharest, the vertical elements are represented by the trees, the electricity poles, the high rise buildings and the stop signs or traffic lights.

horizontality
Sideways, perpendicular to frontal, the images almost seem to flow in our direction. This creates a visual that the horizontality is overruling. Even smaller elements like the benches or mail boxes may stand out more than when standing still.

movement
The movement in Bucharest is not parallel. The different flows cross each other everywhere in the city. At crossroads cars go at the same time while the tram is moving and the bus is waiting for the taxi to cross perpendicular to his lane - where there is no crossing point. How does this make Bucharest, because it works like this. The speed of the different vehicles can almost be brought back to the same level at maybe the majority of the day because they interfere with each other.

use of vacant plots
street art / protest / expression

urban fabric
(What determines the urban fabric?) Everything that is not environmental, functional, economical or sociocultural in the urban context. In this sense the fabric is a big patchwork.

ornament
"a small, fancy object that is put on something else to make it more attractive : a way to make something look more attractive and less plain"
The ornaments can be defined and pointed out by the curls they contain. The promenade along the channel Dambovita is separated from the water by a zone of green, a balustrade which makes a detour at certain points where there are benches. The ornaments continue in the lanterns that appear in a rhythm in the balustrade.

Another form of ornaments are i.e. pediments in older facades - but not only these older decorations make them ornaments of Bucharest. The fact that they are in contrast with a new and cheap window frame underneath it, which does not take the worth of the pediment in account at all - which makes the patchwork in the facades and ornament of Bucharest. Same goes for the lanterns next to the Dambovita river - they are just positioned in between the balustrades on a concrete pedestal. Not even in a rhythm.

reflections

The reflections in the water of mainly trees and buildings / roof edges make me aware of their impact on the city and how trees can either hide elements like buildings but they also accentuate them by revealing roof edges. The edge of a building is actually a very important element of the whole - especially in Bucharest.

To rotate the video of driving through the streets suddenly accentuates the roof edges of the buildings.

patterns

Patterns of street materials, patterns of cracks in the pavements, patterns in the facades of on one side the pediments and on the other side the huge apartment blocks with colour, patterns of trees, patterns of cars flowing

assemblage

"an artistic composition made from scraps, junk, and odds and ends (as of paper, cloth, wood, stone, or metal)"

" the act of assembling" - to connect or put together the parts of something"
Connecting the contrasts in the city such as the decay versus the mighty palace or even the river.

directions
The chaos of the different directions of flows as well as the directions the city is built upon - facades of boulevards in one line, the tunnel visions because of the trees next to the roads, the use of real tunnels or viaducts break the ongoing "straight forward". The different directions of the flows that cross or pass each other along side are typical for this city.

lines / rhythm / sequences
contrast
route
textures
signs / lights/

continuity vs. patchwork
There are different levels of patchwork visible. The sidewalks and roads are patched up - no money to do it at ones, so just keep repairing them?
In the old town there are different patterns and materials used, is it to define different functions or other districts?
Or is it just a random patchwork?
The fences outside the city centre is another scale or level of patchwork. You could say it is a bricolage to create privacy. Is it just because people stay away from each other or are there illegal activities going on behind these fences?
Or is it just the way they like it?
Another patchwork are the housing blocks in which the owners of the apartments can decide for themselves to repair their facade part. It is also visible when all the residents in a building have no debt, because the whole facade is renovated by the government.
> when the whole facade is renovated (recently) there is more colour added to the facades. This adds at least a bit of liveliness to the big blocks. On the other hand, the patchwork
of a bit of colour or just the colour differences of the varying materials has character of Bucharest.

transition from street to building

From the street, the transition from sidewalk / ground to facade is not visible due to all the cars. What is this transition? This is actually where the pedestrians walk. But they walk between them, or avoid them by walking on the road. So a large part of the sidewalks are taken over by the cars, which puts the pedestrian in a “second-place” position.

> I felt less safe in the city because of the cars parked everywhere. There is less overview on where you are going to walk, so you can’t foresee the “danger”.

terminology from pl stills
transition
between elements - inside to outside, private to public, different zones
> transition is the movement and / or the space between two elements or spaces.
It can be an actual element or object that connects one element to the other.
It can be a movement, a flow between two spaces. This transition can be visible

sequence
- the relation between A to B to C to .. elements or objects that come one after the other. The consecutive elements form a pattern that contributes to the experience of the whole. In a sequence the order does not have to be chronological, in order to complete its endgoal.

routing
- how the order or sequence of a building is formed.

shadow
- the space that is created when an object is blocking the light source.
> when the object is blocking the sun, it is casted by natural (day) light. This shadow is never a still space - it is always in movement, changing.
> When the darker space is created by artificial light that is fixed the shadow that is created is not in movement and can be seen as a fixed space or projection on an object.

depth
- depth is created by objects in different positions related to each other. It is also created in a relief or texture of a material. Depth can be created by carving out from an object or extruding - basically by redefining the plain surface.
> what kind of depth the material has (texture), the facade, the floor, the finish all creates an enhancement or a
(doet af aan..) the affect on the observer.

>> the blur in the video takes away depth but it allows the contrast to become clearer which creates another focus on the darker spots of the moving shadows.

**contrast**
- contrast in colours, in materials, in light, in expression

**material**
nsoft / hard - is the use of the material complementary to the height - what is the height of the entrance, what does that do with the space? What does the height define?
- width - proportions - how is a building in proportion? do t

- framing
- repetition
- exposure

**scenography**
the art of perspective representation especially as applied to the design and painting of stage scenery

**cinematography**
- perspective
- interpretation
- montage

Trying to verbalise my interpretations was helpful, but it was not the right next step.
I kept on looking up terms and trying to define them in my own terms, or just to keep them in mind.
It is still a process.
After Bucharest I went on with experiments in manipulating the material, trying to discover new ideas. For P1 a collection of all these photographs, videos and timelapses was shown as well as stills taken from the videos. Analysing these videos and photographs lead me to decide to move on with the moving images, because movement captured by photo-camera seemed too thought through and focused on elements without capturing the elements in different speeds. The moving images manipulated were taken to the next step, with more possibilities to explore in the layers of Bucharest.

As I created new material with the videos, I kept on discovering new interesting editing ways, but since the abilities of the camera were not my leading drive, I started using the stills from the moving images. The stills obtained the movement, being captured in movement in a very specific and subtle way which fascinated me.

Every still had new -abstracted- elements and aspects in them, so I made a selection of still images that I wanted to investigate more closely. I tried defining what it was that attracted me to these chosen ones, but creating a terminology was a stepping stone in the process but not the next real step.

The still images conveyed an abstraction that happened by applying montage techniques - taking the layers previously mentioned out of their context. This abstraction became a red line in the way of interpreting the selection of stills I had made.
final selection of stills
final selection of stills
final selection of stills
final selection of stills
intuitive tracing
There are so many curious parts in a still image that I struggled a bit to try and understand what triggered the picture to be stimulating. I started drawing over them with colour, I started writing about them again - let us call it trial and error, I went in loops.

I had to break the idea of it as a part of a video which I already new by heart and change my vision in the images. I started tracing the “final” selection of 35 stills, in only black and white. The 5 illustrations that evolved became new images, in some of them the base layer image was still visible but others already took a leap to abstraction in the first generation.

In terms of the studio, 5 illustrations were redone in a second generation, using the first generation as a base layer instead of the still image. The drawings took on their own life, since they were approached using again certain montage techniques I had researched in the essays and during studio. Using the existing objects in the illustrations, I applied repetition, superimposition, transparencies, contrast, the notion of depth and distance, the negative of certain elements and many more. The abstraction turned them into montages and assemblages of elements in 2D, not to relate with their first generation any more.

After a couple of drawings, 6-8 hours per drawing, I noticed that I already had a palette of ways I approached the illustration. I wanted to keep the fresh open minded way of approaching and experimenting just as with the videos in Bucharest, so I created a 1,5 generation that hovers between the intuitive tracing and the intuitive abstracted montage. In my opinion there is a definitive difference between these 3 generations of drawings, that actually result in 15 complete different drawings with all their own qualities.
One common factor would be that they all have scenographic and filmic qualities; the depth, repetition, the patterns, the objects could be read as a set for a stage or a film - or put in a sequence when suggesting movement. Which brings us to my next step; the filmic characteristics of the drawings bring back the notion of movement and transformation.

The foundation of this research method is the use of film and film techniques and how it can visualise a new perspective to the public space. The stage of abstraction and taking the layers of the investigated city out of their context have led to great intuitive fascinating images that can be interpreted completely different by every soul who sees them. The step of spatial translation of this methodology needs to be made into a design strategy.
first generation
intuitive tracing
connections. seismograph. maps. open and closed boxes. waves. above and below sea level. foundations.

bird-eye view. depth. distance. circles. metal wire. road. electricity. water. harbour. rails. cranes.

almost symmetrical. mirrored. copied. repetition. grid. ant lines. entrance. port. arch. section. monumental. connection lines, cross reference.

forms. negative. mirrored. bubbles. elements. sequence. scales. all on its own. only connection might be same shape or overlapping. flatness and contrast together.

sandwich panel. floor. waffle. tent roof. fishing lines. chopsticks. vertical emptiness. bridge. canvas. boat. spatial structure.

collection of elements. gradients. contrast. details. depth. monumental in perspective. rocks. objects. incision. grid. scale.

diagonal. incorrect perspective. forms. objects. form sequences. focus. corner. steps. entrance.

façade. textures. playful. dashed connections. doubled. pattern. division. steps. interlocked. frames. slanted.

movement. lines. perspective. inside outside. directions. sitting. steady. framed. wiggly.

collage. elements. repetition. seismograph. transparency. human form. planes. marionette. vagueness.

curtains. depth. inlay. boat. windows. connected lines. forms. routing. disappearing point. end of a story. dots move away. sci-fi because of the lines repeated. layers. rounded.

superimposition. repetition. movement. all in connection. shades. fence. curves. cuts. alignment. marionettes.

trees. flags. art sculpture. composition. beach. water. roof edges.

books. movement. rolling. folding. illusion. shadows. steps. sloped. overlap. connected. weaved dashed lines. open versus closed. grids in scales.

art installation. light beams. movement. rotating. kinked. framed. repetition. depth. kinked perspective. formal. outlines. folded. base. foundation.
spatial translation
Using Modi Operandi to make the transition from 2dimensional drawings to 2,5 dimensional flat models, new insights were evolved by the transformation of the surface. Cutting and folding in cardboard or soft plastic, tracing the illustrations and connecting the new found depths with metal pins, created a tension between the materials that was not visible in the drawings. Especially the cardboard was manipulated in such a way that the differences in height that occurred added a new dimension to the drawing; 2,5D.

A mix between an assemblage and a flat model emerged when trying to translate the thickness of the lines and plane, together with the blackness of the elements into the thickness of wooden parts (previous page). The loose elements mounted on top of each other, in the order of thickness, visualises one of many ways how the drawing can be interpreted. It could be the landscape or a structure of a building are only 2 interpretations.

The material used for another model was too flat, too 2D, and was in my opinion translated to literally in terms of layering. Giving the translucent / transparent material more thickness might have been more interesting to work with.

A real assemblage is the last model in which the goal was gathering objects that subjectively resembled the elements in the drawing, to create a spatial constellation that resemble something entirely different.
2.5D flat model of cardboard and metal
2,5D flat model of wood, aluminium, and plastic.

Spatial translation.
2,5D flat model of cardboard and tracing paper
spatial translation

assemblage of objectives in objects
spatial translation

assemblage of thickness in layers
design strategy
The 2.5D models and the assemblage attempts are used as a foundation for my design strategy is only a part of the next step. The research on film and architecture is emphasises on the notion of the scenographic qualities and the movement that it implies. The formal or surface transformations by varying materials lead to the concept of a design. Transformation implies movement, a sequence of happenings so bringing the drawings and the flat models together can be the base of a new experience of our architectural sequence.

Montage techniques used to evolve the creation experience of architecture, play a large role in this. A quick preview of this will be a drawing coming to life in a stop motion (or on paper a flip book).

Creating a sequence with the elements in the drawings as experience of the architecture and the transformation of the drawings into another dimension will become the concept of the design strategy.

The methodology researches the urban and architectural characteristics and layers of the subject, any city or object, which is taken out of its context, abstracted and allowed new abstracted qualities.

The eventual design is in that case site specific to where the research is based.

movement, sequence, scenography, abstraction, experience.

movement and scenography come together to form a concept for a programme, a site location, the design.
stop motion of sequence
terminology
ad-hocism

‘ad-hoc’ literally means “for this”.
“formed or used for a special purpose”
“made or done without planning because of an immediate need”

bricolage

“construction (as of a sculpture or a structure of ideas)
achieved by using whatever comes to hand;
also: something constructed in this way.
> being creative with the materials available to you

erosion

“the gradual destruction of something by natural forces (such as water, wind or ice):
the process by which something is eroded or worn away”

derelict

“no longer cared for or used by anyone: failing to do what should be done”

discourse

“a mode of organizing knowledge, ideas, or experience that is rooted in language and its concrete contexts (as history or institutions) <critical discourse>
> redevoering, rationality, vertoog, iemand’s overtuiging van iets?

episteme

Michel Foucault: “I would define the episteme retrospectively as the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the epistemes which are possible those that will be acceptable within, I won’t say a scientific theory, but a field of scientificity, and which it is possible to say are true or false.”

typology / phenomenology / semiotics / praxeology

patina

“a thin usually green layer that forms naturally on the metals copper and bronze when they are exposed to the air for a long time: a shiny or dark surface that forms naturally on something (such as wood or leather) that is used for a long time: a thin layer”

entropy

“the degradation of the matter and energy in the universe to an ultimate state of inert uniformity”

“a process of degradation or running down or a trend to disorder”
stratification
"the state of being divided into social classes"
"the state of having many layers"

super(im)position
"to place or lay over or above whether in or not in contact; superimpose"
"to lay (as a geometric figure) upon another so as to make all like parts coincide"

imprint
"to create a mark by pressing against a surface"
"to cause (something) to stay in your mind or memory"

stitch / seam (juxtaposition)
"the act or an instance of placing two or more things side by side; also: the state of being so placed"

trajectories
"the curve that a body describes in space"
"a path, progression, or line of development resembling a physical trajectory"

oligoptic
"(..) opposite of panoptica: they see much too little to feed the megalomania of the inspector or the paranoia of the inspected, but what they see, they see it well... From the oligoptica, sturdy but extremely narrow views of the (connected) whole are made possible—as long as connections hold."
Latour, p.181

notion
"an individual’s conception or impression of something known, experienced, or imagined"
"an inclusive general concept"
"a theory or belief held by a person or group"

dystopia
"an imaginary place where people lead dehumanized and often fearful lives"

appropriation
"to take or use (something) especially in a way that is
illegal, unfair, etc."

contestation

> controversy, debate (???) (an act of control or claim?)

domain

"an area of knowledge or activity"

ontology

"a branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature and
relations of being” > the being of things

teleology

"the use of design or purpose as an explanation of natural
phenomena” > interpretable things

state of the art

"the level of development (as of a device, procedure, process,
technique, or science) reached at any particular time usually
as a result of modern methods”

constellation

"an assemblage, collection, or group of usually related
persons, qualities, or things”

<a constellation of relatives><a constellation of architectural
elements>

inflection

"change in curvature of an arc or curve from concave to convex
or conversely” > inflections can form a whole in architecture
as well

Gestalt psychology

montage theory

literary means

oblique

"neither perpendicular nor parallel”
nezza barendse