

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examcommissie-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	Alina da Porciuncula Paias
Student number	5368723

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab	
Main mentor	Vanessa Grossman	Dwelling
Second mentor	Hubert van der Meel	Architectural Engineering
Third mentor	Stavros Kousoulas	Architecture Philosophy and Theory
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I had been developing the same topic since my Theory Thesis and had a strong interest in continuing my exploration. I am usually guided by very particular interests, I attempt to constantly develop my own personal research and I felt I had to take the opportunity to pursue my own interests at a graduate level in order to benefit the most from the MSc programme.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Minas, as in mines: a hauntological approach to the site of disaster
Goal	
Location:	Rio Doce valley, Minas Gerais, Brazil
The posed problem,	The design concerns the site of disaster—in this case, the Rio Doce valley after its contamination by a sediment wave caused by a tailings dam rupture in 2015. Looking to understand how architecture serves to approach such a site, I would like to define a hauntological practice of architecture as response-ability. Working within a hauntological framework means being concerned with what is presently there, what is not, and what lies in between. That is formed through the action-acknowledgement of how things become entangled across space and

	time, which is also the basis for response-ability.
research questions and	<p>What would define a hauntological investigation that is characteristic to the discipline?</p> <p>Does archive manipulation with a focus on animating connections between images, stories, lives, places and events result in relevant and distinct contributions to the exercise of architecture?</p> <p>How does architecture enmesh itself within existing entanglements in the Rio Doce area?</p> <p>Can architecture, by means of response-ability, aid in achieving an an-economic justice for 'the ones not there'?</p>
design assignment in which these result.	The design itself must be an acknowledgement of the connections between images, stories, lives, places and events entangled across the Rio Doce valley. It must enmesh itself within and animate entanglements sometimes not immediately accessible, as they stretch across vastly different extensions of space and time. In that way, it will take on a hauntological form of co-constitution with its environment, in this case the site of disaster, providing a justice that is not about retribution, being thus more akin to the gift.

Process

Method description

The research began with establishing a theoretical framework concerning the main definitions that guide the project, such as hauntology, response-ability and justice. This was done mainly by writing and it was through this exercise that I arrived at the conclusion that mapping out the entanglements across space and time throughout the Rio Doce valley would be the beginning of a hauntological practice of architecture. That was the main exercise until this point, and it is translated in what I call entanglement map: a textile made to be manipulated in which connections are visible through coexistence, proximity and distance on the spatial plane of the map. I have concluded this period by travelling to the Rio Doce valley itself, completing a 700 kilometer journey from Mariana, the starting point of the disaster, to Regência, at the sea. I have translated my findings into a travelogue and I have used photography as the main means to register my visits. For the coming months, I intend to continue to read and write in order to organize the theory and better translate the ideas that ground this project. Thus, besides the

entanglement map that is already done, I will also finalize a text that will serve as a theoretical backdrop of the ways in which I have spatially organized the connections I have mapped.

A hauntological approach also presupposes the understanding of action-acknowledgement as indissociable. This means that the architectural design itself will not only take the entanglements traced into consideration, but elevate some of them and act upon them, willingly or not, making them more or less present. This will be the guiding principle of the design, meaning that the way it connects to existing networks and flows, the way in which it responds to the extractive economy in terms of its materiality and building technology and the activities it facilitates will be central to the exercise.

Literature and general practical preference

The literature that has based and will continue to inform the decisions of the project is a combination of theoretical texts from various backgrounds. The main texts are:

Al-Saji, Alia. "The memory of another past: Bergson, Deleuze and a new theory of time." *Continental Philosophy Review* 37 (June 2004): 203–239.

Barad, Karen. "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come." *Derrida Today* 3, no. 2 (2010): 240–268. DOI: 10.3366/E1754850010000813.

Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007.

Barad, Karen. "Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-memembering, and facing the incalculable." *new formations: a journal of culture/theory/politics* 92 (2018): 56- 86. muse.jhu.edu/article/689858.

Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf. New York: Routledge Classics, 1994.

Ferreira da Silva, Denise. "Speculations on a Transformative Theory of Justice." *Hearings: The Online Journal of Contour Biennale* (April 2017). <http://hearings.contour8.be/2017/04/11/speculations-transformative-theory-justice/>

Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016.

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. "On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept." *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 (March/May 2007): 155-167. DOI: 10.1080/09502380601162498

Marston, Sallie A, John Paul Jones III and Keith Woodward. "Human geography without scale." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers New Series* 30, no. 4 (December 2005): 416-432. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3804505>

Meillassoux, Quentin. "Subtraction and Contraction: Deleuze, Immanence, and Matter and Memory." In *Collapse Volume III*, edited by Robin Mackay, 63-107. London: Urbanomic, 2007.

Yusoff, Kathryn. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

Yusoff, Kathryn. "Mine as Paradigm." *e-flux Journal: Survivance* (2021). <https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/survivance/381867/mine-as-paradigm/>

For the development of the entanglement map, a vast range of sources was consulted and compiled, including but not limited to:

- Reports by national and local newspapers
- Official reports made by government agencies, NGOs and academic institutions
- Scientific articles about the history of the region, discoveries on the levels of contamination of the water and animals, the outcomes of the disaster and other topics of interest
- Books about the disaster itself, especially Zonta, Marcio, Charles Trocate (organizers). *Antes fosse mais leve a carga: reflexões sobre o desastre da Samarco/Vale/BHP Billiton*. Marabá: iGuana, 2016.
- Historical documents such as laws and royal decrees
- Historical maps, drawings and paintings
- Georeferenced data made available by the national and state governments

Concerning the project as a whole, there are certain methodological references within the field of architecture that involve archive manipulation, translating information and experimenting with media that are particularly relevant. They are:

- Material Histories: Sands, soils, recipes and other archives* and *Ingesting Architectures: On Atmospheric Violences* by Counterspace/Sumayya Vally
- Oil and Gas Pollution in Vaca Muerta* by Forensic Architecture
- Being Silica* by Office for Political Innovation/Andres Jaque

Besides that, the references that have been guiding the architecture project so far are:

- Oficina Brennand, Recife, Brazil, by Francisco Brennand

- Design for a concrete block factory headquarters, Avaré, Brazil, by v&ao
- Floating University, Berlin, Germany, by raumlabor
- SESCs, Brazil, by architects such as Lina Bo Bardi and Paulo Mendes da Rocha
- The Meerpal, Dronten, Netherlands, by Frank van Klingeren

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 graduation topic relates to the master track Architecture in the sense that it is a critical experience in approaching the built environment, understanding architecture as a particular way to act-acknowledge the world. The theme I am dealing with is a conjunction of topics not usually explored within architecture education, both in terms of theory and site. That is why it is being studied at a graduate level and within an MSc programme, with the support for questioning the conventions of the discipline and for developing entirely original research.

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

This graduation project is oriented towards a site and a set of happenings still overlooked in European architecture research and history. It proves that excellent theory and innovative practice can be elaborated through the study and interaction with a mostly non-urban setting in the hinterland of a country in the Global South. It also results in a design that is aware of the complexity of existing relationships, without exoticizing the ways in which the built environment is organized and the local architecture has developed.

It is a revision of the conventions of the discipline, proving that the skills acquired in architecture education are useful in investigations of the built environment beyond a design-oriented site analysis, especially if these investigations involve archive, data and media manipulation.

Finally, it incorporates innovative and diverse theory that is not traditionally considered architectural, establishing thus entirely new connections between ideas across disciplines and attempting to expand the ways in which architecture can be studied and practiced.