Report 1: Social Position of a University Archive

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Report 1: Social Position of a University Archive

Introduction

The report is concerned on the graduate design – the TU Delft university archive in the city center. It will be a complex collection place for the accommodation and display of artefacts in various university collections.

The university is always the place for expertise exchange, discussing and debating. However, in most case, these academic activities are inaccessible for citizens. In my consideration, the design project provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen the relation between the city and university. The archive, as a satellite of university, would be situated in Delft’s historical center, suggesting the university’s physical return to the city after a hiatus of eighty years. The university should come back to the city not only in geography, but also in social aspect.

This report would focus on the question about how the university archive engages itself into the public life. Several examples would be discussed to find the proper way to involve the university in public life. The report will draw some conclusions on the social position of the university archive, which determines the university collection selection, the display mode and the extending program.

1. University as urban institution

A city is a large and permanent human settlement with complex systems for sanitation, utilities, land usage, housing, and transportation. Living in the city means the high quality physical environment – good infrastructure and transit system. More importantly, it means the benefit from a high dense cultural system consisted by schools, libraries, museums and medias. A rich and varied cultural public life is essential now for every urban inhabitant.

When we talk about the public life in a city, it inevitably leads to the pictures of museums or libraries. These public buildings, which are projected by local councils and governments as a part of public investment in the cultural attractiveness of the city, could be defined as urban institutions. They take the responsibility to organize exhibitions, lectures or workshops for the citizen, completing the spiritual and cultural life.

The urban institutions are held responsible for the public because they are mostly based on the tax revenue. City dwellers could influence how the tax money was spent and were well aware of what they got for it in return:
protection, safety and a stable climate, with relatively little social unrest.¹ Under these conditions, public engagement is necessary for all urban institutions.

A university is an institution of higher education and research. Most of the universities are based on the social investment. In this sense, university could also be defined as urban institution in public cultural system and have the responsibility to provide something in return to the society.

1.1 Presentation of expertise

The university is a place conducting researches, producing knowledge and developing expertise. However, when we turn out to the city, it seems not following the path. All the knowledge and expertise are locked in the campus fences and invisible for the citizen. So basically the university, as an urban institution, should take the responsibility for presenting knowledge and explain how the thing works. The one of the common ways for university to present the expertise for public is in the form of university museum.

Universities always have their own collections. Some of the objects were collected by university professors for teaching and researching purpose. They demonstrated the objects as example in the course so that the students could see, touch, use and therefore got a deeper understanding on certain knowledge. All the collections come into a part of the university history and some of these universities choose to open them as a museum or gallery.

The Oxford University Museum of Natural History (see fig.1.) is based on the university collections for scientific study. It now holds the University's internationally significant collections of geological and zoological specimens.² The Museum’s growing collections underpin a broad program of natural environment research, teaching and public engagement. Compared with the normal museums, the Oxford University Museum of Natural History is strongly supported by the researches from the university workers who have great deal of knowledge and expertise in them.

In the political field, the transparency of decision-making processes is necessary for the citizens to participate in governance. It is also essential for universities. The university museum is a window where the knowledge is presented and diffused to the public. It is an attempt that university transforms the expertise into an understandable way. The diffusion of education will be made easier, research results will become more accessible, the performance of the university will be more easily assessed.

1.2 Practice of expertise

In most cities where universities locate, the students and other university

¹ Lucassen and Willems 2011: 208
² http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/
workers are actually the marginal population. It is because although they help to convey the apparent image of a vibrant academic life, their knowledge and expertise have no relation with city. They are never stimulated and supported to produce something useful for the community. However, for every ivory tower professor locked in his studies and research, there was an intellectual firebrand anxious to put his knowledge at the service of the community. In this condition, practicing expertise in the city rebuilds the relation between university and citizen, hence mutual benefit. Laurence Brockliss gives some examples in his article.

*There had always been contacts between the three higher faculties and the city to the extent that their members had extrauniversity functions. Theologians served as parish priests – in Paris in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries every curé in the city was a doctor of theology and consequently a member of the governing body of the Paris faculty of theology. Similarly professors of law might act in the local courts or provide the city with legal advice, as was a commonplace in Renaissance Italy.*

In the examples, the universities were locked closely to the city by providing extrauniversity functions. University could be seen as an institution with a great deal of designers, engineers or scientists who have the reliable ability to provide consultation and assistance to the public. The citizen directly benefit from the knowledge that is once invisibly for them. By this approach, university researchers engage themselves deeper into the city residents and expertise gradually helps to shape the city life.

On the other side, the researchers who connect their work with the cities get a more practical and effective feedback loop from the users. In other words, the students and professors conduct their researches on the city as the testing field and fed back by the citizens. It is a way of integrating the researchers in the urban community and to have the community appreciating their qualities and abilities. It is also an opportunity to make researchers aware of the practical difficulties a city faces and to empower them to solve them.

1.3 Exchange of expertise

In the following two parts, university participates in the public life more or less by providing certain assistance – in education or other more practical way. In a more ideal way, university could become a refuge for free debate and expertise exchange. In the article Why People Want to Live in the City, Lucassen and Willems proposed several features for the life in a city.

*City creates a natural culture, as it were, of debate and opinion, which forms the heart of civil society. In urban areas spaces are created for citizens to freely discuss issues that transcend self-interest, without direct influence from the*

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3 For the position in the German speaking parts of Europe, see McClelland, op. cit. note 9, 217–232.
4 Laurence 2000, 159
There has always been a kind of spiritual refuge.5

The free debate and discussion is the core of the public activities which contribute to the attractiveness of city life. University, as an urban institution, basically should provide the public with knowledge and education. More importantly, it should take the responsibility to provide space for the debate and discussion on knowledge, which is the key to create a more preferable cultural life. The painting the school of Athens represents the initial and ideal university space. (see fig.2.) Under the dome, Philosophy, Poetry, Music, Theology and Law are discussed freely. In the center of the fresco behind Plato and Aristotle, the school opens up to the sky, indicating it is accessible for everyone. In this sense, the university should bring education, knowledge and, the most important part, the knowledge debate, which exchanges the expertise between university and city, back to the public.

There are some potential examples in history. In the article Gown and Town: the University and the City in 1200-2000, Laurence Brockliss describes the traditional universities before 1800.

Before 1800, too, university buildings were versatile spaces that could be easily adapted to new needs. A lecture hall could be soon transformed into an anatomy theatre by erecting in a rectangular room a circular tier of raked seating around a circular well. Most Universities, then, were not just physical but visible institutions.6

The universities in that time usually fit in the urban structure and shared one space with different programs because of the funds lacking. The lecture was used for anatomy which opened to the city. In 17th Century, anatomical theater existed in Leiden University. (see fig.3.) A demonstration given by a professor in the anatomical theatre was an important event which was announced on posters, and university lectures were cancelled for the occasion. But it was certainly not coarse popular amusement. It cost fifteen five-cent pieces to get in. Only the well-to-do could afford it. The first row seated the professors from all the different faculties and the dignitaries, and behind them sat the students from the various faculties and the surgeons and their pupils.7

From the past, universities were inextricably bound up with the city, providing education and sharing expertise like the anatomical theatre, to engage more public involvement. The anatomical theatre transformed a very professional medical event into a common and daily form, like a movie or drama. Expertise became attractive and exciting. With proper and understandable interpretation, the anatomical theatre would be easily accepted by the public. Knowledge would have a large diffusion.

5 Lucassen and Willems 2011: 225
6 Laurence 2000, 163
The more important thing is that the anatomical theatre attracted the professors from different faculties, the surgeons from the city and their students. In this big space, although people had different background, all of they were interested in the same thing - anatomy and had expertise in medical science. The communication among these people attending the anatomical theatre would become the knowledge exchange. There will be more interaction among different groups of people, more comparison between different experiences, and a collective evaluation of teaching methods and research results. The university would bring knowledge and debate back, recovering its mission of creating critical minds, of elaborating original ideas, of being an open place for intellectual debate.

2. Design proposal

The selection of university collection is the center and start point for the whole project. Among the 16 collections we researched, 9 of them are concerned on the design aspects: the Sloytermen Collection and the Chair Collection concerns on the historical furniture design, the Industrial Design Collections focuses the industrial design products, the Rally Peters Collection is for reproduction of paintings and maps which values a lot in graphic and architectural design, the “Made Of...” material library presents materials and products which are used as crucial references. In the design project, the design collections would be moved into the new archive, not only because TU Delft has adequate quantity of design related objects but also because the university is specialized in technical, industrial and architectural design.

In the Delft collection research, most objects were collected by university professors for teaching purpose. Students have the opportunity to see, touch and understand the design. The design object archive is a part of the university as urban institution and it holds the responsibility to help not only students but also residents to understand the abstract design work.

2.1 Archive as viewing depot

From the previous discussion, city and university are losing their relation. Bridging the gap between gown and town means not only bringing university back to the physical city center but also in public life. In terms of the urban institution, university should enrich the public life and the city cultural value. It provides the citizens with education and helps the knowledge diffusion as the presentation of expertise.

Under this consideration, the archive should be redefined. The traditional definition of an archive is an accumulation of historical records or the physical place they are located. In general, archives consist of records that have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation on grounds of their enduring cultural, historical, or evidentiary value. Archival records are normally
unpublished and almost always unique, unlike books or magazines for which many identical copies exist. This means that archives are quite distinct from libraries with regard to their functions and organization, although archival collections can often be found within library buildings.

In most traditional archives, the collections are kept from the public because their unique cultural or historical value requires a very strict preservation environment. However, from the research, the university collections in this design project need a relatively lower keeping environment. Some of them can be touched and studied because they are not that unique and can even be replaced, such as some mass production chairs in the Chair Collection. That means the design object archive has the possibility to open to the public as a museum.

A museum is an institution that cares for (conserves) a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance and some public museums make them available for public viewing through exhibits that may be permanent or temporary. In most museums, the collections are stored, researched and restored in the depots. Only the selected part would be exhibited in certain narrative. Compared with the museum, the depot or the archive which contain the entirety collections provides people opportunities to search and explore the objects fascinating them. Museum tells a story and archive helps people build up their own story.

The design object archive should be a hybrid of the museum and the depot, precisely a viewing depot which is accessible and visible for everyone. Such collection space could be found in the Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp (see fig.4.). In this space, collections are displayed in high density like a research database. Deeper research on the collections is allowed after registration. In this design project, for common residents, it is a window to see, touch and understand university collections while individual designers and students can search the tangible examples here as references to build their own design or research.

2.2 Extending programs – exhibition, presentation and debate

As an urban institution, the university archive should also provide students opportunities to practice their design and get social feedback from the Delft citizens. It is also a spiritual refuge for free debate and represents of city-university expertise exchange, which is the core of city life. Under this consideration, some extending programs are added into the project.

The center of this design project is the viewing depot, the archive where students draw their design inspiration. Some extending space are planned to organize temporary exhibitions and workshops where students can present their design work to the citizens. In this way the narrative from collection reference to design work could be easily conveyed to the public.
TU Delft has various design works from cell phone application program to furniture. In the presentation, residents can try out these initial design works and feedback their user experience to designers gathering information for the quality improvement and potential marketing proposal. By facing the realistic problem from the common residents, it helps students jump out the academic field and rethink the design work practically.

Also, the presentation could become a defense and debate on design works. From the mapping analysis, Delft has a large amount of design studios and craft workshops. Just like the anatomical theatre attracted the people with expertise in medical science, with adequate propaganda and invitation, the TU Delft design work presentation has the potential to attract art and design professionals from the city. It is hard to say the debate is bound to happen during the presentation, however, it must be admitted that the presentation provides fertile grounds for growing debate and expertise exchange.

**Conclusion**

The city Delft and the university TU Delft are losing their relation. The university as an urban institution based on tax revenue should contribute itself to the public life. The design object archive in the city center is an opportunity to intervene the university in the city.

In terms of the social position, university should enrich the public life and the city cultural value as an urban institution. As a part of the university, the archive should also hold the responsibility for public knowledge diffusion. Under this consideration, the center of this university archive should open to the public as a viewing depot. Expect for presenting the expertise to the citizens, the archive should also provide a space for presentation and debate to practice and exchange expertise, engaging university deeper in city.
fig.1. the Oxford University Museum of Natural History

fig.2. the school of Athens
fig.3. anatomical theatre

fig.4. the viewing depot in the Museum aan de Stroon
Lucassen, Leo and Wim Willems  

Furnee, Jan  

Brockliss, Laurence  
Report 2: Delft Cultural Institutions Mapping
Report 2: Delft Cultural Institutions Mapping

Introduction:
The design project is a university archive which displays the collections from TU Delft in the city center. The new design object archive would become one of the most important cultural buildings in Delft. In this report, I would analysis the existing cultural buildings including museums, galleries and libraries to find the meaningful and problematic parts. Based on the analysis result, the more detailed proposal of the design object archive would be formulated.

General information of cultural institutions
In my consideration, the university archive of this design project should be a part of the Delft function map. In the mapping analysis, we have already categorized several functions: living, hotels, retail, office, restaurant, culture, religion, education, municipality and craft. The archive, based in its original definition - a collection of documents and records that contain historical information, is sorted into the cultural buildings. This report would start with the analysis of the existing culture buildings in the city Delft to define the position of this archive.

From the Delft mapping analysis, there are 15 cultural buildings in the inner city, including theatres, museums, galleries, library and archive. (see fig.1.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre</th>
<th>Theater de Veste, Microtheater, Rietveld Theater, Floratheater</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Vermeer Centrum Delft, Galerie Terra Delft, Prinsenkwartier, Galerie Lutz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>DOK Centrum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archive</td>
<td>Archief Delft</td>
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In the following parts, the report will focus on each type of the cultural buildings distinguishing the existing cultural life and finding the missing part, especially in the museum, gallery and library aspect.

1.1 Museums & cultural life
Museum Paul Tétar van Elven (Koornmarkt 67) in the centre of delft is the home of Paul Tétar van Elven (1823-1896). He was an artist and professor at the Delft
polytechnic, now the TU Delft. The museum keeps the house with furniture, as well as his collections of porcelain and ceramics. (see fig.2.)

Medisch Farmaceutisch Museum “de Griffioen” (Koornmarkt 66) in the old center of Delft is a unique collection of old medical and nursing instruments. It combines with an historic pharmacy and a replica of the working room. The collection contains a group of pictures about the development of medicine. (see fig.3.)

Museum voor Vrede en Geweldloosheid (Vlamingstraat 82 ) is a peace museum. Here the history of the peace movement is shown by means of photographs and objects from our collection. There is also an interactive section with dilemmas, stories of peace activists, a search game for hidden peace symbols and more surprising things.

Museum Lambert van Meerten (Oude Delft 199) which was a Dutch museum housed in the former residence of the art and antiques collector Lambert van Meerten in Delft. In 2013 the museum was closed. The collection sent to the Museum Het Prinsenhof.

Gereedschap Museum Menser (Drie Akersstraat 9) is a museum about craftsmanship and tools. This apartment sized museum contains a collection of door fittings, keys, locks, plugs, fuses and other hardware. Head out of the museum is a room full of all conceivable types of construction tools. Apart from a didactic function, the museum also has an advisory role. It gives reasonable guesswork on some unknown old hardware pieces which helps understanding the craftsmanship in Delft history. (see fig.4.)

The last museum I want to address is Museum Prinsenhof (Sint Agathaplein 1), the biggest museum and most important urban institution in the city Delft. Prinsenhof is a historical building and former court of William of Orange. It collects the objects and paintings representing the Delft history and indicating how Delft and his residents played an important role in the history of the Netherlands, as well as the Delftware which became the global brand today. (see fig.5.)

From the above information, there are in total 5 opening museums in the inner city Delft focusing on art (Museum Paul Tétar van Elven), medicine (Medisch Farmaceutisch Museum), peace (Museum voor Vrede en Geweldloosheid), craftsmanship (Gereedschap Museum Menser) and history (Museum Prinsenhof). In my consideration, Museum voor Vrede en Geweldloosheid provides a more universal policy perspective while the rest 4 museums represent the real cultural life rooting in Delft. From their collections, Delft can be defined as a city with history and expertise in science and design.

1.2 Problems – discontinuous culture, single function

When we discuss the existing museum program more deeply, the problem comes
out that all the collection programs are looking to the past: the historical paintings from 1900 in Prinsenhof. However, the expertise of science and design obviously has some relation to the TU Delft especially for the faculty Chemical Engineering and Industrial design. The culture of expertise in Delft is continues but from the existing museums, it seems stopped in the 1980s and the following parts are missing. The discontinuous culture makes it more difficult not only for tourists, but also for residents and students understanding how the city grows into the appearance we see now.

From the Delft mapping analysis, we found that the museums in Delft except Prinsenhof are located in houses or apartments. Compared with the museums in Rotterdam and Den Haag, the Delft museums are small scale in both square meters and collection amounts. And because of the limited scale, it is impossible to combine other functions like café or shop into the museums. It is common in some cities residents or students spend their weekend afternoons in multifunctional museums. But for the existing museums in Delft, it is extremely unlikely to happen because of the scale and simple function.

1.3 Viewing depot for students’ design work & workshop for design studios

In the report 1, I propose the center of the archive should be a viewing depot which accommodates the university design related objects, such as the Industrial Design Collection, the Chair Collection and the Sluyterman Collection for furniture. From the above analysis, the collections in Delft museums stopped in 1980s and missed the narrative of the present and future. The same thing happens in the TU Delft collections. So, the viewing depot should not only contain the university design collections representing the past, but also accommodate the student design work and researches which represent the present and future.

The archive should combine some other programs for the residents or students who are going to spend a period of time in it. It could contain a design bookshop which is missing now in the inner city Delft, so students and residents can easily get the design resource. Restaurant and café serving both the institution and the surrounding community are also necessary. They give an opportunity for different people meeting and communicating.

From the Delft museum research, Gereedschap Museum Menser has the expertise of craftsmanship and tools, but the apartment size and unobvious appearance makes it almost invisible for the students and residents. The archive could extend a workshop space containing the collections and the advisory office of the craft museum. It also welcomes the joining of design studios in Delft. This workshop, accommodating the experienced designers and craftsmen who could provide technical consultation, would support and assist students in their design work.
2.1 Galleries & public interaction

The Vermeer Centre (Voldersgracht 21) is an information center dedicated to the painter Johannes Vermeer and the work of his contemporaries. The center works with local archeology groups and other heritage organisations to disseminate information about Delft during the lifetime of Vermeer. The center acts as a museum, though technically it does not own the original artifacts on display and therefore has not earned the Dutch label for "Museum". Based on scale copies of known artworks by Vermeer and his contemporaries, multi-media exhibition displays beginning in the basement lead the visitor literally upwards through time during the life of Johannes Vermeer, explaining the work of contemporaries and events that occurred during his lifetime.

Galerie Terra (Nieuwstraat 7) presents a wide variety of contemporary ceramics under the leadership. It is unusual to find a permanent place in the Netherlands where such a diverse range of high-quality ceramics can be admired and purchased. In addition to a regular schedule of exhibits and participation in art fairs, Galerie Terra Delft remains a permanent sales point for approximately fifty well-known Dutch and foreign artists. The collection includes both applied and autonomous work.

Prinsenkwartier (Sint Agathaplein 4) is a center for the creative industries, exhibitions, demonstrations, lectures, debates, art showcases and workshops. (see fig.6. & fig.7.) It is a place where businesses, education, artists, designers, government and public meet to see new products and new developments, to try and discuss. It also takes the social education responsibility for organizing workshops, lectures and debates. The gallery really plays its dynamic, lively and inviting role as an urban institution in the Delft public life.

Galerie Lutz (Oude Delft 195) is a private gallery with a varied program. Attention is paid to various facets of contemporary art with an emphasis on painting. On average, eight exhibitions annually organized by every five weeks. It also works with some local artists with different styles.

Overall, the four galleries in the inner city Delft are all about the art and design. Similar with the museums, they exhibit the art and design which represents the Delft cultural life. However, in the galleries some other related programs are introduced to engage more public attention, such as the workshop in Vermeer Centrum Delft, the lecture in Prinsenkwartier and the shop in Galerie Terra. It helps the residents and students understanding Delft and strengthens the feeling of living in the city. Museums are aimed to show the culture and history to the public while galleries more focus on the public interaction.

2.2 Problems – unobvious appearance, inadequate quantity

In the Delft mapping analysis, our group did a thorough and deep research on the existing program in the inner city Delft. After this one-week group work, the galleries then become clear to us. However, for the tourist, residents and
students who are not live nearby, it is almost impossible to find them. One reason is the unobvious appearance in the urban fabric. All the galleries are located in the buildings which look similar with the surrounding dwelling buildings. (see fig.8. & fig.9.) The private house looking is always failed to attract the passerby and it makes these important cultural buildings almost invisible in the city. Another reason is the language. When I was doing the research works, I found half of the galleries do not have any English information both on their street-front façade and website. That means the foreign tourists and students are hard to get informed by the galleries.

Another problem is the inadequate quantity which exists in both museums and galleries. Delft has 5 opening museums and 4 galleries. When we look into the population, the quantity is obvious small. From the official website, Den Haag has 72 museums and galleries.8 In 2016, the population is 525,160.9 That means one museum or gallery serves 7,293 people. The population in Delft is 102,88410 while one museum or gallery serves 11,431 people. Compared with Den Haag, Delft still needs more cultural facilities to engage the social life.

2.3 Transformable space for temporary events

From the foregoing parts, unobvious appearance and the inadequate quantity are the problems existing in both the museums and galleries. In terms of the square meters, the new design object archive takes the essential role in the cultural building system, so it must be accessible and visible for the tourists, residents and students.

From the report 1, the extending programs like exhibition, presentation and debate are important to engage the university in public life. The gallery Prinsenkwartier gives an example for a place organizing these extending programs: a transformable free space that can hold any temporary events. It is a meeting and discussing place for businesses, education, artists, designers, government and public.

In the design object archive, such space could be used for students’ presentation and defense or the research exhibition. The people with design expertise can be invited to organize lectures and debates for residents and students. Hearing the voice from different groups provides them with the perspectives in both social and academic aspects.

3.1 Library & study

DOK Library Center (Vesteplein 100) is the biggest study space in the inner city Delft. It is more than just a library. In addition to reading and borrowing books

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8 https://denhaag.com/nl/musea
9 http://population.city/netherlands/the-hague/
10 http://population.city/netherlands/delft/
for youth and adults, people can also go for example, e-books, audio books apps, digital picture books, play objects and sheet music. The youth department DOK Centre is a lovely place to go with kids. Children can include fun with all kinds of toys, costumes, play kitchen, a games console and movies. Drinks and snacks can be bought at the present coffee corner in the youth department. DOK Library Center also organizes activities for children. Fixed activities are reading to babies and toddlers. As an urban institution, DOK Library Center provides a study space for the city residents as well as an education center which provides different kinds of study media. Combined with some educational programs, it creates an atmosphere of inviting and friendliness.

Because students are a very important user group in the design project, in my consideration, the TU Delft library which serves the students’ academic study should also be discussed. TU Delft library locates in the middle of the campus and is totally separated from the city Delft. It provides a place for reading and borrowing books. Also, there are some study and discussion space for academic use. The users are only students who are doing their work or preparing the exams, creating a very strong academic atmosphere.

3.2 Problems – the total separation, the lack of specialty

The DOK Library Center and the TU Delft library provide the most essential study space in Delft. The DOK Library Center with more public and inviting atmosphere serves the residents while the TU Delft library which is more academic serves the students. In this condition, the two libraries are totally separated in terms of the user groups. It seems that the residents are kept in the city and all the students are in the campus.

The DOK Library Center and the TU Delft library collect the books and materials from all aspects including literature, science, technology and design. The knowledge mixture would weaken the professional atmosphere of a study space. It is no problem at all for the DOK Library Center and the TU Delft library because they are defined a study center for all people. However, it is not applicable in the design archive.

3.3 Study with specialty

From the above problem, the university archive should have study space accommodating both students and residents. In the design project, the viewing depot contains the design objects collection such as chairs, and some map collection which requires a more specific protecting condition. Some study space could be planned in the mapping and painting collection space, creating a strong professional atmosphere. And in the book collection space, because of the specific protecting requirement, the building cannot open too much to the public. So the study space is similar to an academic library.
Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the cultural buildings - museums, galleries and libraries, the university archive should be a hybrid knowledge center of students and residents. The viewing depot should house not only the university collection but also the student works, completing the narrative from the past to the future. It also combines other programs like shop, café and restaurant to provide an attractive and comfortable environment for long time stay.

The archive would extend a workshop space accommodating the design studios in Delft. So the experienced designers and craftsmen from the city could help students in their design work. Also, a transformable space for temporary events such as presentation, lecture and debate is essential to engage more public attention. And finally, a study space with specialty would be planned to provide a common place for both students and residents interested in design.
Fig.1. Delft mapping of cultural institutions
Fig. 2. Interior of Gereedschap Museum Mensert
Fig. 3. Exhibition in Prinsenkwartier

Fig. 4. Lecture in Prinsenkwartier
Fig. 5. Exterior of Prinsenkwartier

Fig. 6. Exterior of Galerie Lutz
Report 3: Chair Collection Research

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Report 3: Chair Collection Research

Introduction

In the report 1, the social position of the university archive is discussed to determine the university collection selection, the display mode and the extending programs. The report 2 analyzes the existing cultural buildings such as museums, galleries and libraries in Delft. The analysis helps to form a more detailed design proposal for project. From the report 1 and 2, the center of the design project is the viewing depot which accommodates the design related collections, such as the Chair Collection, as well as the students’ design work. The viewing depot reorganizes and continues the narrative of university collections from the past to the future and opens it to the public. Based on the center viewing depot, some programs are extended to engage the archive deeper into the public life. A transformable free space is planned for temporary events like exhibition, presentation, lecture and debate. And there is a workshop and specialized study space for both students and the designers or craftsmen from the city. The archive also contains bookstore, restaurant and café serving the institution itself and the surrounding communities.

To my point of view, the university design archive in this design project aims to serve both the academic research on design and the general public. The report 1 and 2 has emphatically discussed the programs and the possible design proposal from social and cultural angle. In the report 3, I prefer to focus on the academic meaning of this design archive. The research, reinterpretation and reproduce on collections emphasize their value and make them alive. So the report would concern on the research and design work on these collections. In other words, how the students use the collections as reference or inspiration and how they study the collections would be discussed in this report.

The design archive hosts various university collections - the Sluyterman Collection, the Chair Collection, Industrial design Collection and the Rally Peters Collection. I would like to concentrate on the Chair Collection because it is displayed in the BK city, which is more accessible than the other collections stored in the basement of the TU Delft library and the Industrial Design Engineering faculty. It is also because that some collection related courses are organized, allowing students to research and study the chairs in the collection. In the following parts of the report, the Chair Collections would be used as a clue to analysis how students use them to conduct research and design work, then determine the required program and space as design proposal.

Research method

1. Interview
- Drs.Ir. Charlotte van Wijk

Charlotte van Wijk is the curator of the chair collection. Also she is in charge of the Chair Collection related design education courses in the cooperation with Form & Modelling Studies and Architecture of the Interior.

Her focus is on the questions generated from the management of the Chair and Rietveld collection; the history of objects in the collection and the development of the designers are central themes. The task involves providing information to interested laymen, collaboration with researchers in the field of design and the realization of publications.

- Jules Schoonman

Jules Schoonman has done an extensive research on the plaster casts and now helps to organize a master course focusing on the tradition of plaster casts and their architectural presentation.

2. Observation

- Display space for the Chair Collection on the first floor of architecture faculty.
- Exhibition space for the Chair Collection design course results in the model hall.

1. The educational idea for the Chair Collection

The Chair Collection consists of over 300 chairs, most of them present in the faculty building. It has been part of the Faculty’s educational facilities since a number of students started collecting in 1957. As the collection was initiated to support design education, it reflects a special interest in material use and construction, which makes it a ready source of inspiration for designers.

In contrast to most of TU Delft’s heritage collection, the Chair Collection is a living collection, in the sense that it is still growing, mostly by donations. In the past year donators have contributed a small collection of mostly anonymous working chairs, and several chairs by well known-designers.

The Chair collection in the TU Delft architecture faculty is more focus on the 19th and 20th century. The other older chairs, together with the furniture collected by Sluyterman, are stored in the basement of the TU Delft library. In the past, they were used to practice students’ sketch in architecture education. Nowadays, multiple items of the Chair Collection are used for educational programs and the result exhibitions.

2. The display

The Chair Collection is visible on the first floor of the faculty of Architecture. The collection is displayed in a big shelving unit. (see fig.1.) Touch screens provide the visitor with information on the chairs displayed. Very unique and fragile
pieces of the collection are stored in the basement of the library.

2.1 Touchable or not

We keep the chairs in this building because we want to use them in the educational program as teaching collection. Teaching collection is quite different from the museum collections. Teaching collection is intended to be handled. By touching the objects, the design becomes materialized to the students. That’s why we try to keep the collection properly but still open them to people. The collection they have in the basement of the TU Delft library is museum collections so they want to preserve them. They need strict guard and stable keep condition. ¹¹

For the Chair Collection, we do restoration but not very often because actually the chairs here do not need much restoration work. Most chairs in the collection are produced in large series. So if one of them should go missing or be damaged, it is not very difficult to buy another one. That’s the reason we allow them to be used and displayed like this. We have a couple of valuable prototypes or unique chairs, and we don’t put them in this condition. We make different display modes for the collection: for the A level chairs, we keep them in the depot and for B level collection exposure is allowed. ¹²

From the interview with Charlotte van Wijk, the chairs in the architecture faculty are a part of teaching collection which is touchable and replaceable. They can be displayed on open shelves in an approachable mode. While the objects in the library basement, such as the furniture in Sluyterman Collection and the paintings in Rally Peters Collection, are museum collections which require strict protection. In this case, the display mode should keep the visitors a proper distance from the collection.

2.2 Different display mode in the viewing depot

In the design project, the center viewing depot accommodates two different sorts of collections: the university collections representing the past and the students’ design work collection representing the present and future. The university collections contain furniture in the Sluyterman Collection and the Chair Collection, products in the Industrial Design Collection, paintings and maps in the Rally Peters Collection and materials in the "Made Of..." material library.

In order to display these collections in a proper way, the design related objects should be classified by approachability. The students’ design work collection and the Chair Collection should be the most accessible part because of the relatively short history and the possibility for replacement. Then it should be the products in the Industrial Design Collection and the “Made Of...” material library. Furniture in the Sluyterman Collection and paintings and maps in the Rally Peters Collection preserved in the library basement now should maintain a proper

¹¹ Interview with Charlotte van Wijk
¹² Interview with Charlotte van Wijk
distance from visitors because of the unique historical and academic research value.

With this category, collections with different approachability should be planned in display modes with different security level and places with different publicness level. The students’ design work collection and the Chair Collection can be planned in a more public area like the ground floor. The objects can be displayed on open shelves so the visitors touch or even use them. They can sit on the chairs in the Chair Collection or try the products design by students. The products in the Industrial Design Collection and the “Made Of...” material library would be placed in a less public place, on a higher floor. Touching is forbidden but people can take down and research them with permission. Furniture in the Sluyterman Collection and paintings and maps in the Rally Peters Collection with least approachability should be in the place with strict security and stable condition. Visitors can see them locked behind the showcase. Research is still allowed but under monitor.

3. The courses and work spaces

From the interview, Charlotte mentioned that the teaching collection and the museum collection should have different display mode. In my speculation, students may also work differently in the courses based on the teaching collection and museum collection. After searching the courses organized by architecture faculty, I found two educational programs: furniture design minor course based on the Chair Collection and cast court design Msc2 master course based on the plaster casts collected by the museums.

3.1 Courses on the Chair Collection

From the introduction website, the design courses challenged students to start a dialogue with a chair, and design a lamp, table or set inspired by it. This initiative aimed at promoting design through collections led to remarkable results. 13

Students are asked to design a piece of furniture, such as a table or a lamp, in the dialogue of the Chair Collections. Teachers will pick up 5 different chairs and require a design response to these chairs. Students are allowed to touch and measure the chairs. They also look into the background of the chairs, the designer’s life, the approach, the context, the technology and the fashion in that era. Based on the background information, students could take diverse inspiration and approaches, and then they make their own design as a reflection. 14

The course is for the minor students under the chair Form & Modelling Studies and usually takes place in the model hall of the TU Delft faculty. In most case, the course opens every semester and we are planning to use different collections in the future.

13 http://www.stoelencollectiedelft.nl/stoelen.php
14 Interview with Charlotte van Wijk
The students’ design work will exhibited in the model hall as an education result. For the students working in the course, the work space is the model hall. (see fig.2.) And we also cooperate with the chair of Architecture of the Interior for the course named ‘Take a seat, make a set’. But the master course does not open every semester.  

3.2 Library and workshop

From the interview, basically the students’ work in furniture design course can be divided into two parts: the literature research and the model research. In the literature research period, students use the architecture faculty library and the central library to search the background information from history, technology and design approach aspects.

In the next stage, they make models to replicate the joints and construction of chairs, trying to understand the materialization of design concepts. This stage requires the support of model making facilitates, such as sawing or drilling machine, which makes a relatively noisy and chaotic environment. (see fig.3.) Paper work seems hard to be conducted in this place. So, the students’ workspace should also be divided into two parts, one for reading and writing while one for making.

According to the two stages of students’ work on teaching collection, a library providing with research information and a workshop with modeling facilitates are necessary in the design archive design.

3.3 Course on plaster casts as an example of museum collection

In the design object archive, a large portion of the collections can be defined as museum collections which require proper preservation. Now, there is no course related to this kind of TU Delft university collections but the Msc2 master design course on plaster casts would be an example for the future organization of university museum collection.

The plaster casts collections, which are housed in Art Academy in Den Haag, Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and Archaeological Museum of the Amsterdam University, actually have no direct relation to the Delft collections. However, the educational course on these museum collections will help to understand how students conduct their research on them.

Jules Schoonman has done an extensive research on the plaster casts and now helps to organize a master course focusing on the tradition of plaster casts and their architectural presentation. In 19th century, plaster casts of sculptures were used a lot in architecture education. Students used them to practice their drawing and train the appreciation of the beauty.  

15 Interview with Charlotte van Wijk
16 Interview with Jules Schoonman
Actually in most case, the plaster casts do not allow touching, but only careful measuring and drawing works. Some unique plaster casts are in the depot of the museums. (see fig.4.) People cannot actually visit them without special permission. Students are working in the architecture faculty now but in the excursion they spend a lot of time in the museums. It is great to work in the place you can really approach the objects. It adds a historical layer to the design process, which is easily missing when you work in a separation place from the collections. Students would be actively engaged in the technology and history by working with the plaster casts.  

Nowadays, 3D printing is wildly used in the sculpture and cast research. The value of the plaster casts is on the shape rather than the material. With the help of 3D printing, the touchable copies are produced easily. Some artists in Berlin concern on the scan and digitalization collections. On their website, the files of plaster sculptures and architectural ornaments could be downloaded and printed. Digitalizing and reproducing the museum collections maybe would be a proper way to make them approachable.  

3.4 Digitalization workshop

The design studio for this course is named ‘cast court’. Students would trace the genealogy of casts, take on the process of making and replicating casts, study the history of their collection and presentation, and finally propose a new ‘cast court’ for an existing collection in the Netherlands. In this design studio, students are asked to write thesis papers on the history research of plaster casts in the museum, followed with a series of measurement and replication work. In next stage, students use the elements from plaster casts to design a space accommodating them. The students’ work flow in the cast court design studio is similar to the furniture design course: literature research plus model research. So, the library-workshop format workspace for teaching collection is still applicable on museum collection research.

However, the plaster casts are less accessible compared with the Chair Collection because as museum collections, they require a strict keeping environment. According to Jules Schoonman, working with the collection can give students a better understanding for its history. But unlike the chairs, it is impossible to take the plaster casts outside the museums to the working place.

In the interview with Charlotte van Wijk and Jules Schoonman, they mentioned that in the plaster cast research, digitalization and reproduction give the students a chance to touch the copies of the precious collection. So in the workspace for museum collection, this kind of technology should also be included to make the collections accessible. Also, by digitalizing the unapproachable university collections, the design archive actually obtains a

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17 Interview with Jules Schoonman
18 Interview with Charlotte van Wijk and with Jules Schoonman
database of design objects which could be shared to the public.

4. The exhibition

According to Charlotte, the exhibition of the education results, which provides information to interested laymen, is of great significance.

*This semester we have a small scale exhibition in the model hall. (see fig.5.) In the exhibition, the chairs and the students’ works are displayed together so people can easily see the connection between them. If you exhibit a chair, people always want to sit on it. So in this case, we put them on the platform but anyway it is necessary to lift the chairs from the floor. All the students’ works are stored on the interlayer and the teachers select some of them to put into exhibition. The next semester would be another edition. In the summer we will have an exhibition in the central library and again in Prinsenkwartier in September. Combining the students’ presentation in the exhibition is a good idea because with the explanation there would be less work for other people to involve.*  

The exhibition requires a low hardware environment according to the interview and observation. However, sometimes the result exhibition would contain presentations or lectures, as well as a small scale opening reception or party. In this case, the exhibition space should have the potential to accommodate different events.

In most case, the course result exhibition takes place in the middle platform of the model hall. Because of the limited space, only the selected students would be displayed. There are usually 20 – 30 student works in the furniture design course every semester but only parts of them could be exhibited. Another problem is that both TU delft library and architecture faculty are almost inaccessible to the public, which goes somewhat against the intension for providing information to interested laymen.

Under this consideration, Prinsenkwartier is a relatively ideal exhibition place because of the central location and enough public engagement. However, closing to the city means distancing the university. In Prinsenkwartier, people can only see the fine design works in a well-organized exhibition, how students study and research the collection becomes invisibly. In the design project, the collection depot, the workspace and the exhibition are planned in the same building so visitors can easily understand the relation between collection and students work.

**Conclusion**

The research, reinterpretation and reproduce on collections emphasize their value and make them alive. Except the social meaning discussed in the report 1

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19 Interview with Charlotte van Wijk
and 2, the archive in this design project should also have some academic meaning and help the collection related educational program in a more proper organization.

From the research on Chair Collection, the display mode, related courses, workspace and the exhibition are discussed and analyzed. In the central viewing depot, museum collection and teaching collection should be displayed in different way. From the collection related courses, the students’ work can be divided into two parts: the literature research and the model research. A library and a workshop are planned according to the two research period. For the museum collection which is unapproachable for students, the workshop should also have the function of digitalization. Finally, an exhibition space is necessary to hold the final presentation, lecture or party.

In this archive, students take a collection object from the depot as reference or inspiration, do the literature and model research to form a design, then the design result come to an exhibition and finally the result is collected into the depot as a part of TU Delft university collection.
Fig. 1. the Chair Collection
Fig. 2. the workspace in model hall

Fig. 3. a workshop for chair replication
Fig. 4. depot for plaster casts
Fig. 5. Result exhibition in model hall

Fig. 6. Result exhibition in TU Delft library