Graduation Plan

Personal information

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Goal

Location: Brummen

The posed problem: Revitalising the estate, making it profitable whilst preserving the memory and its rich history

Research question: How can the historic layers of the site be preserved and made “experienceable”?

Design assignment: Development of a “Design Hotel” which offers the guest a unique experience related to the history of the site as well as the surrounding nature while maintaining the atmosphere and architectural qualities of the existing buildings.

Argumentation of choice of the studio

The first reason why I chose this studio is because I believe that working with existing buildings is one of the most important tasks for architects today with regards to sustainability as well as social and cultural responsibility. Secondly I am very interested in investigating the qualities of existing buildings and study their history. In addition to that I like to go on site and survey buildings in order to gain insight in how people used to design and build. In order to translate these findings into a contemporary and comprehensive design I find it very important to focus on details and materials. The Reuversweerd estate project in my view offers a very tangible study project of a scale small enough to fully comprehend in the given timeframe and work out in detail. In addition to that, I am very intrigued by the buildings special character and history.

Studio

Name/theme: Revitalising Heritage Retreat Estates Brummen & Delft
Teachers/tutors: Hielkje Zijlstra, Charlotte van Emstede, Wido Quist

Graduation project

Title of the graduation project: “The historic layers of the Reuversweerd estate in Brummen”
Process

Method description

In order to come up with a meaningful and informed design approach I conducted research on the existing context. The research is structured in three main phases namely: 1. Data collection (observation), 2. Analysis and 3. Synthesis.

For the first phase of research I did primary sources research in the form of field research on site (site visits), and a review of archive materials. I then visualized and analysed the collected data using mapping techniques, diagrams and (photo) documentations. Next I further analysed the gained insights from the architectural design, building technology and economic analysis with regards to the cultural values of the property. For the cultural value analysis I used the four-step analysis method as described in the book Designing from Heritage - Strategies for Conservation and Conversion (Kulpers, M., Jonge, W. 2017) Finally I drew conclusions from the cultural value analysis by defining design starting points.

For the next steps in my design process I will undertake case study research in relation to my main design topics. I will also consult literature about architectural theory and practice to further refine my own architectural position towards designing in a heritage context.
Literature and general practical preference

Literature


Reference projects

1. 6a architects: Raven Row gallery, London
3. Insel Hombroich
4. Lina Bo Bardi: Pompéia Factory Leisure Centre, São Paulo
5. ODIOUS: Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände
6. OMA: The Ruhr Museum in the Zollverein World Cultural Heritage, Essen
8. Studio Anne Holtrop: Fort Vechten Museum, Bunnik
9. Junya Ishigami: Vijversburg Visitor Center
10. Daan van der Have, Hans Loos and Dorine de Vos: Villa Augustus (Conversion), Dordrecht
Reflection

Relation between own project, studio topic and master track (H) and program (MScA)

In the first lecture of the lecture series Research Methods, Mejia Hernandez, J. defined a master of science (in architecture) as someone: “[...] who is skilled in the acquisition of (architectural) knowledge.” (2018). He suggested that every (upcoming) architect should aim to further grow the architectural knowledge. When it comes to the field of Heritage and Architecture the connection between architectural practice and research becomes evident since a meaningful design intervention on an existing building is impossible without preliminary research into its context. The Reuversweerd estate as studio topic gives me the chance to apply the studio’s general approach of the research based design in practice. Through the methods of field research and subsequent analysis I was able to learn from the historic site and generate detailed knowledge about its architectural qualities, building techniques and future development potential. My own project will be based on the knowledge gained in the first research phase, however, it will also initiate a second research phase by posing a more specific research question. By asking the question: “How can the rich history (historic layers) of the site be preserved and made “experienceable”? I address a core issue in heritage design: the dilemma of use value vs. historic value (the historic layers vs. a new use of the site). Based on my research I will try to find a meaningful architectural solution to this problem which should contribute to the architectural debate and the growth of architectural knowledge.

Relevance of project in the larger social, professional and scientific framework

The big challenge today for architects in Europe is mainly to redesign/ redevelop existing buildings in order to make them sustainable and give them a new life. Country estates are a perfect example for a type of building that has been developed and built all over Europe for centuries. However, as the industrialisation started, the land (farm land) lost its former value and so did the country estates. These estates are a part of our history and therefore need to be preserved. The research on a design solution that is sensitive to the cultural values on the one hand but also considers sustainable aspects as well as feasibility aims to contribute to the broadening of knowledge in the field of heritage architecture. The project is therefore relevant on a scientific as well as social level.