1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 PERSONAL INFORMATION
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1.2 STUDIO
Theme: Public Building
Istanbul: Palazzo Encyclopedico
Tutors: N. Deboutte, J. Fokkinga, N. Marzot
External examiner: E. van den Ham
P4 Date: May 22nd 2015

2 PROJECT

2.1 PROJECT BRIEFING
This graduation studio started with the theme 'Palazzo Encyclopedico', a relatively vague and multi interpretable term. The goal of this was to set a starting point for an analysis of the city and create an encyclopedic collection that would trigger our own fascination and give a problem statement related to Istanbul.

2.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT
At the end of 2013 the conflict between governmental urban developments and the needs of the Istanbulites got global media attention when ‘Gezi Park’ was about to be replaced by a shopping mall.

The speed at which Istanbul’s urban fabric is replacing public green spaces is striking and therefor an interesting subject for a research. The questions that arose were; what qualities do the greenery give to Istanbul and how do they relate to the expanding urban fabric? Can the qualities of public green space and urban fabric be combined or is it one or the other?

2.3 GOAL
The studio goal was to design a public building with the theme in mind. In this case creating a building that in some way exhibits an encyclopedic collection. The theme of this collection was to be chosen by each individual student.
2.4 Result
The project became a combination of a public green space and a public exhibition building. The collection of the building focuses on telling the story of green space in Istanbul (and cities in general) throughout history. Starting at the ‘Bostan’, a historical Turkish, community driven, agricultural concept, and ending up at a futuristic approach of farming in buildings with LED lights. The visitors experience this chronological story by following a linear designed route through the building. The project shows the importance of the production value of open agricultural land and the different ways it can be incorporated in the current city fabric. Next to this functional aspect there is the recreational side, that is embodied in the green public space around the building.

3 Reflection

3.1 Research and Design
In the initial phase of the project, the first semester, the focus was on finding a personal interest and theme that could start the project. This period proved to be a tedious process. Because we worked in groups, we were negating the search for an individual fascination.

Eventually I ended up with a relatively general and abstract architectural theme to research: ‘framing with architecture’.

This research resulted in a more extensive knowledge of the importance of creating sequences with spaces. Looking back at the design, the influence of the research is visible in the routing through and around the building.

However, the theme did not have a strong connection with Istanbul. Therefore at a later stage, in order to incorporate the city in a design story, a second research was conducted focusing more on social issues in the city. Researching the topic of diminishing green spaces delivered an interesting historical overview of the development of it and a possible future perspective. That led directly to the design concept and thus proved more effective then the abstract architectural research on framing.

3.2 Method
Looking back at the working method the studio was clearly divided into two approaches. I experienced both. One being the more abstract research on an architectural theme and the other focusing more on site-specific possibilities. Both of these methods proved valuable, but for me the latter was more effective in terms of building up a conceptual design. I learned that I put more value on designing for a specific site and a clear function, than designing from a general, spatial idea.

3.3 Wider Social Context
As mentioned earlier the effects of urbanization on the natural landscape are not only present in Istanbul. Though one part of the design is based on a historical analysis typical for Istanbul, the other part is focusing on a more general future perspective that can relate to any other city.

Therefore, the exploration that is done through this design adds to a wider social context when it comes to designing in cities. Many solutions may be closely linked to the site, but the underlying story could be implemented in many situations and locations.