Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

**Personal information**
Name
Student number 4099850
Telephone number
Private e-mail address

**Studio**
Name / Theme Positions in Practice: The Commons
Teachers / tutors
Prof. Dr. Ir. Tom Avermaete
Dr. Ir. Klaske Havik
Jorge Mejia Hernandez

**Argumentation of choice of the studio**
- The location in Colombia with a culture and context which wasn’t familiar to me.
- The theme of the commons, which introduces a focus on people and communities, a smaller scale than ‘the public realm’ and addresses the complexity of stakeholders and processes in life.
- The tutors, whom I knew are interesting, capable and passionate about their work.

**Graduation project**
Title of the graduation project Introversion | Extroversion
Opening up the enclave

**Goal**
Location Center of Bogotá, Colombia

The posed problem
Private properties in Bogotá are disconnected from the public domain by blind walls, fences and barb-wire, often with guards and dogs. All these enclaves actively contribute to a fragmented city, where ‘others’ / strangers are not welcome which stimulates dualism in society. In result the public realm loses its qualities of ‘a place to be’, which in turn leads to enclaves.
research questions

How to connect different social, economic and cultural ‘landscapes’?
What can be the contribution of (semi) private and/or common places to the public domain in the city?

design assignment

This project intervenes on different scales at once. On the urban scale the walking area on Carrera 7 is linked with the Parque de la Independencia, an existing idea which led to the realization of a pedestrian bridge. The parking lots in-between, will be transformed into a privately owned but freely accessible area which should raise the quality of the public realm in the center of Bogotá, adding a common realm in-between the ‘world of mass with its focus on leisure and shopping’ and the park, a place for seclusion of the self into the green. With an extension of the Mambo Museum, an art school and student housing, the center of Bogotá will enlarge its area of modern and contemporary art. This will result in an urban intervention and the assignment of designing the museum and / with school in further detail.

Process

Method description
The start of the studio was mainly an exploration of the topic ‘The Commons’ and getting familiar with Bogota and Colombia. First research was done on the use and perception of the ‘less obvious’ places of the public realm, like at entrances of buildings and car parks and the locations of people working on the street, like street vendors and shoe shiners. This topic of rejection and openness that could be experienced when standing on the street led to the question if there is something like ‘urban intimacy’. During the visit to Bogotá a study of the use of communal places was done, mapping where people walk, sit and stand in and around public buildings with a focus on squares and courtyards. The interest in the ‘other world’ behind the gates and walls, inside the enclave, together with both the notion that they rejected the passers-by as well as the enclaves often afforded shelter or seclusion.

An historical and literature study on introversion and extroversion in architecture and in Bogota as well as continuing research of center of Bogotá, understanding the area better and looking for an interesting site. To find other ways of research I attended a lecture of K. Havik about writing and atmospheres, which a used to explore ‘grasping the atmosphere’ of the center of Bogotá. The tension between the public realm (the mass) and seclusion from it (being alone) became important as topic for the project, which was partly the result of writing the position paper on the ‘capsular civilization’. Based on sketches and references the architectural topic Tectonics (the definition of Semper) was chosen, which was studied further. Mass studies for the urban scale intervention / master plan on the chosen site and research on the contemporary ideas and developments of this site resulted in a solid program for the project as presented during the P2.
To design the urban scale intervention / masterplan, a deeper understanding of the location is needed. The course ‘Probing into Precedents’ allows me to wonder and study how buildings could be open and having a courtyard or atrium at the same time. A precedent study and research into the specific building types of the museum, the school and student housing should give a better understanding, knowledge and inspiration for the design task. Using models and drawings the urban intervention will be improved and is allowed to change when the building is being designed into further detail. This will be done with a focus on an architectural ‘problem’ that is supposed to raise the architectural quality of the project. The topic of tectonic versus stereotomic (Semper’s definition about the essence of architecture), goes well with the main theme of the project ‘Introversion - Extroversion’ and will be studied more through the use of precedents. Because of the importance of the human/social aspect in the studio and this project, research as well as products (drawings, etc.) should illustrate this as well, considering and showing the use and experience of places and buildings on the scale of the urban intervention, the building.

Literature and general practical preference

- Theory of Tectonics according to Semper
- Results ‘Probing into Precedents – Centro Gaitan + Fau
- Precedent study – Program
- Precedent study – Tectonics
- De Openbare stadstuin – Nai Uitgevers

Reflection

Relevance
The project aims to explore and play with the tension of introversion and extroversion. For people this means for instance hiding inside, away from others, versus being exposed in the open together with a lot of others and strangers. Hannah Arendt considers the tension and choice between being on private domain and in the public domain, essential for the individual to function well. About the recent development in the world like the amount of dissatisfied citizens, the Brexit, the ‘Trump-effect’, fear of immigrants and right wing populism the German historian Philipp Blom (2016) notes that there is a role for the public realm, because democracy depends on it to allow people to have debates, which is possible when one meets others with different
thoughts and opinions. But we now live in a world which public realm is fragmented into social networks. People don’t meet or talk others with different ideas, opinions and cultures. This is also the result of the increase of mono-functional and often cultural and social homogeneous enclaves, in form of residential areas, office parks, gated communities, shopping malls and amusement parks, where people go to rather than the public realm. Dualism in society, rapid changes in technology and suburbanization make that we are hiding in enclaves instead of contributing to and participating in the public domain. Due to the evacuation of the public realm, all people being ‘cocooned’, outside is more often just the space in-between those capsules and becomes a trans-it zone rather than a ‘place-to-be’. The focus on safety measurements leads to the militarization of the public realm and global capitalism including the corporate identities make that every product, interior or building is the same and the whole city loses a sense of identity and history. The behavior in our society, our values and norms, become visible through architecture and the built environment, which in turn contributes to the realization of this scenario of doom, which is known as the capsular civilization. The public realm has lost its openness for all citizens, which is now the domain of only the middle class instead. Because of the focus on mass consumption, mass recreation and cultural experiences the city is seen more and more as an amusement park, a theory Sorkin introduced. Koolhaas argued once that the third millennium would become ‘an experiment in soullessness’, which is something to prevent according to the Lieven de Cauter. In order to restore a certain quality of our cities, Hajer & Reijndorp (2001) mention the importance of in-between spaces, the less obvious places that connect homogeneous and specialized ‘islands’ in the city, at those places where different social, economic and cultural ‘landscapes’ meet. Considering architectural projects to be a common enterprise and a public effort, like within the topic of The Commons’, one should also wonder how far the ‘freedom’ of individuality in a city reaches within an architectural project, in order to ‘protect’ others. Not all borders of the enclaves should be dissolved and not all barriers need to be took away. It is the tension and choice between being on private or public domain which is essential for the (every) individual to function well.

**Time planning**

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| Literature study |
| Position paper |
| Exploratory research |
| Preparation site visit |
| Site visit |
| Research project topic |
| Site research |
| Probing into Precedents |
| Tectonics study |
| Precedent study: Program |
| Urban design |
| Building design |
| Polish drawings |
| model |
| Presentation preparation |

P1

11-15

P2

01-31

P3

P4

P5