

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



## Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto:Examencommissie-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	Megha Balraj Menon
Student number	5583160

Studio		
Name / Theme	AR3UA100 Urban Architecture Graduation Studio/Black Hill City	
Main mentor	Elsbeth Ronner	Architectural Design
Second mentor	Sam Stalker	Architectural Design
Third mentor	Leeke Reinders	Anthropology/research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	As an architect, I have always leaned towards architecture that is more intimate not only spatially but also on its influence in a larger framework. Urban Architecture studio offered an option to try and assimilate my previous learning on an urban context. The studio's approach gives the opportunity of designing urban spaces in a smaller scale, but always in relationship to the surrounding fabric, thus enabling a refreshing and constant zoom in –zoom out in both research and design.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	The Collective Memory of Rue du Moulin
Goal	
Location:	Rue du Moulin, Liege, Belgium
The posed problem	The street is perhaps the most prosaic of the city's public realm, allowing us to view the very ordinary practices of life and livelihood – a space to move or pause, to meet friends, post a letter, to buy goods and is composed of an amalgamation of rooms from its edges. Thus making a street a three dimensional entity. The study of street delves into achieving and intimate understanding of man and his environment. Due to the possibility of maneuvering, it tends to reflect a particular view of self and exhibits the measures of spatial reinforcements taken to mark their position. This makes a street not a linear study but a system of social and spatial labyrinths. Thus it is not only a part of an urban texture but also indicates the human experiences embedded within it. Aldo Rossi considered architecture inseparable from life and

	<p>society. As cities grow upon itself; it acquires a consciousness and memory. The research investigates the collective memory, with scrutiny on the ordinary practices of Rue du Moulin in Bressoux.</p> <p><i>The cities are allowed to change But you are not allowed to change (Brecht,1928).</i></p> <p>Brecht’s poems in the Handbook for City-Dwellers (1928) are widely seen as stories of political expressions that compel his audiences to contemplate on the human and social relations surrounding them. These relations are forged from ordinary routines and practices that occur in the stage set of society. Rue du Moulin resonated, on a personal note, to these lines of Brecht. Despite the mild seepage, in the form of symbols and objects, that allows a reader to see the narratives of the interior rooms from its facades, the current ethnically rich memories were masked by its historic boundaries – with different people living behind the same facades. The morphology of Rue du Moulin gives a peek at not only what was and what is, but also of the lived realities of allegiance, participation and belonging in Bressoux through understanding the social and cultural formations of a diversifying city within the shared terrain of a street.</p> <p>As the streets of the city morph to accommodate the latter’s infrastructural ambitions, Rue du Moulin finds itself being no stranger to these conquests. With the growing unplanned demands for production, housing and livelihood, the streets are developed to be pragmatic links that are less integral to urban lives. As the many dictionary variations advocates, streets have the potential to enrich both individual activities and the shared urban surroundings. As architects, is it possible to create an <i>artifact</i> within the post carbon street of Bressoux that links its future developments and its traces of collective memory in both the past and present?</p>
<p><b>Research questions</b></p>	<p>How can we read the street as a collective memory of urban transformation?</p> <p>Sub questions: **Taking Rue du Moulin as the investigative site**</p> <p>How have the ordinary scenes/narratives of Bressoux changed over time?</p> <p>What do these reconstructed scenes say about Bressoux’s development in a post-industrial landscape?</p> <p>What are the cultural appropriations of space reflected in the urban form of the street? (investigating the changes in the</p>

	<p>urban form with its historic narrative)</p> <p>How are the exterior and interior of the 'rooms of the street' treated/perceived?</p> <p>How ethnic and cultural differences are rendered visible/invisible in the shared terrain of the street?</p> <p>What are the local expressions of social adaptations?</p>
<p><b>Design assignment in which these result</b></p>	<p>The design assignment starts with developing an urban proposal for a potentially unidentified industrial complex that links Rue to Moulin to its neighbouring street through a series of alley networks. The site will be visualized keeping in mind the collective memory of Rue du Moulin and to target reinterpretation and emphasize on the concept of street as an urban artifact. The latter notion will also be used to tackle the network of alleys that run through the site and the 'scarred objects' attached to it The project aims at re-thinking the connection between Rue du Moulin and Av. de la Croix Rouge by accessing the potentials of the small corridors that make up the network system in the urban fabric.</p>

## **Process**

### **Method description**

1. Photograph, postcards and newspaper clippings from archives to find traces of the past memories of the street (three dimensional/visual).
2. Creating a conceptual spatial montage of Rue du Moulin that shows the exterior and interior "rooms" through the lens of time. This helps in analyzing how the architecture of the rooms have changed based on its narratives.
3. Components of activity: Social mapping, to deduce the current usage of the street, infrastructural, social and ordinary.
4. Components of form: This includes evaluating parameters such as permeability of facades, physical boundaries and territories, building density, materiality etc. This also includes observing and mapping the different spatial appropriations in the street and deducing its reasons.
5. Components of meaning: Documenting the enclosures, symbolism and beliefs exhibited on the street front, places of familiarity and community etc.
6. Methods of drawing and making are not only used to translate the intangible findings to the physical world but also to understand and experiment with architectural and spatial qualities in the design process.

### **Literature and general practical preference**

1. Anderson, Stanford (1978) On Streets, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
2. Back, Les (2009) The Art of Listening, London: Berg.
3. Hall, Suzanne (2012) City, Street and Citizen, London: Routledge.

4. Lucas, Ray (2020) Anthropology for Architects, London: Bloomsbury Pvt Ltd.
5. Tang, Z., Lu, A., & Yang, Y. (2020, 20 juni). Design research in the practice of memory place-making. ResearchGate.
6. Shamai, S., & Ilatov, Z. (2004). Measuring Sense of Place: Methodological Aspects. ResearchGate.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4920776\\_Measuring\\_Sense\\_of\\_Place\\_Methodological\\_Aspects](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4920776_Measuring_Sense_of_Place_Methodological_Aspects)
7. Montgomery, J. (1998) Making a City: Urbanity, Vitality and Urban Design. Journal of Urban Design, 3: 1, 93-116.
8. Najafi, M., Shariff, M., & Bin, M. (2011, 1 August). The concept of place and sense of place in architectural studies. ResearchGate.
9. Jackson, J. (1994). A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time, Yale University Press: London.
10. McGuire, R. (2014). Here, Pantheon Books: United States.

## 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)?

The studio focuses on the exploration of traces of potential in a post-carbon landscape of Liege. Rue du Moulin is a street that currently possesses fragmentation through culture, morphology and history; from a multicultural commercial entrance to a dense residential/industrial end. The site, a mixed industrial complex, is located along the street and is a part of an elongated and delicate urban fabric that hosts a labyrinth of unassuming corridors. The design proposal involves not only reanimating these potential traces but also form a corridor through the usage of the city's industrial heritage such that it hosts a sense of the collective memory of Rue du Moulin. Combining both re-use of existing built structure and new buildings on a rich historically rooted site, the approach of 'scars in a city' comes into play: how can we work with the remains of what we find on site, and how do we incorporate the history of a built location with a specific function. In that sense it fits in with the Urban Architecture studio theme.

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

The 'Collective Memory of Rue du Moulin' aims to create a corridor of the latter that adapts to the current needs of cities imbuing it with its context and history while consisting of an example of a co-existence between living and working. At the same time, it proposes a balanced relationship between the private domain (home) and the public space (city) through the shared terrain of the street. This is done by re-use of remnants of abandoned structures to re-invigorate the urban fabric. The project is a take on tackling delicate urban tissue and the importance of connectivity. It aims at making a street into a social artifact once again.

