

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), 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	Ana Carolina de Souza Mello
Student number	5722039

Studio		
Name / Theme	Methods Analysis and Imagination A matter of scale	
Main mentor	Jorge Mejía Hernandez	Architecture
Second mentor	Freek Speksnijder	Building Technology
Third mentor	Willie Vogel	Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>The choice for "A Matter of Scale" as a Graduation Studio was driven by my own interest in exploring different scales as a means to develop more intricate discussions and, as a consequence, a more cohesive design. In particular, the studio's focus on human scale, explored through various methods of analysis, aligns with my own perspective on the field of architecture. This course offers the opportunity to dive deep into the ethical and aesthetic aspects of scaling designs in relation to human proportions, a critical factor in creating spaces for people.</p> <p>The studio was also an opportunity to explore Tallinn, a city extremely different from my own background. Tallinn, with its rich history and diverse cultural scene, provided a fruitful starting point for various discussions. Mastering how to analyze and extract valuable and precise information about a certain context is a vital skill for developing well-informed architectural solutions.</p> <p>Finally, the course's commitment to integrating analysis and imagination in practice is crucial for developing well-rounded skills as a future architect. The ability to use instruments and methods from the architectural discipline and related professions will be instrumental in creating well-situated, human-scale architectures. The studio's emphasis on questioning architectural methods creates a provocative starting point for discussion, ensuring that no decision is taken for granted.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Reimagining Kopli: A multifaceted strategy to urban revitalization in Tallinn.
Goal	
Location:	Tallinn, Estonia
The posed problem,	<p>This study focuses on the Kopli neighborhood in Tallinn, an area with a rich historical background, originating from the establishment of the Russo-Baltic shipyard. Kopli, once an area comprised of 66 buildings, combining residential and essential community facilities such as a hospital, sauna, retail stores, a post office, cinema, community center, church, and a bakery, has faced a gradual decline since World War II, exacerbated by the Soviet occupation and a subsequent lack of investment.</p> <p>The neighborhood's turning point happened in 2018 when the area was purchased by a new developer. Plans for Kopli are mostly still in the design phase, primarily addressing quantitative matters, yet often overlooking the finer nuances of everyday life.</p> <p>This study proposes to critically analyze and refine these masterplans, ensuring a holistic approach that encompasses a spectrum of scales – from the broader urban context to individual human experiences, and down to the minutiae of construction details. The objective is not to overhaul the existing housing proposals but to enhance them by integrating considerations at every level of living. The anticipated outcome is a series of small scale, yet impactful interventions, aimed at fostering a high-quality urban future for Tallinn. This approach seeks to create a more balanced, walkable, and vibrant Kopli neighborhood.</p>
research questions and design assignment in which these result.	<p>In a general aspect, this research is concerned with a critical reflection on architectural practices and on the architect's ethical position within society. It employs architectural ethnography as a tool to examine design methodologies that resonate more closely with human scale.</p> <p>The core investigation of this study is to understand how ethnographic research and detailed observation of daily</p>

	<p>life – including culture, habits, traditions, architectural patterns, and structures – can inform and refine architectural strategies that are more attuned with human-scale interactions.</p> <p>Besides that, this research extends to specific contextual inquiries within Tallinn, offering critiques of the current state and imagining new future scenarios. For that, a key question explored is: What is the impact of small-scale interventions in Tallinn's urban landscape, and how do they contrast with larger-scale projects?</p> <p>To assist in addressing the central question, the following sub-questions are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What shortcomings are present in the existing design plans for the Kopli neighborhood? - How can a human-scale perspective be effectively integrated into the development of master plans, and what specific elements translate a master plan to a human-scale dimension? - What methodologies can be employed to gather and analyze information on human behaviors, traditions, and culture, and how can this data be effectively incorporated into design? - Are there any cultural practices or traditions at risk, and is there a need for their revitalization? If so, what strategies can be employed to achieve this? <p>Through these lines of inquiry, the study aims to offer a nuanced understanding of the interplay between architectural design and human experience, particularly within the unique urban context of Tallinn.</p>
	<p>The design strategy developed for the revitalization of the Kopli neighborhood articulates both human and urban scales, with a nuanced approach that extends beyond traditional master planning.</p> <p>At the urban scale, the strategy involves not just a singular project but a series of interconnected interventions. This approach is rooted in the idea of creating a cluster within the neighborhood, bridging the gap between the expansive urban scale and the intimate human scale. By eschewing a conventional, comprehensive master plan—often limited in fostering a human-centric experience—this strategy focuses on</p>

	<p>cultivating a network of hubs that collectively enhance the urban fabric.</p> <p>The key interventions proposed are the establishment of a bakery, a sauna, and a cinema. These choices are deliberate, aimed at invigorating everyday life and encouraging walkability within the neighborhood, thereby reducing its perceived scale. These ordinary yet vital establishments serve as anchors for community interaction and engagement.</p> <p>Additionally, this study challenges the conventional boundaries of architectural design by emphasizing the importance of the 'in-between' spaces. It recognizes that the essence of a city is not solely defined by its buildings but equally by the quality of its public spaces, the voids, and the intricacies of the connections and streetscapes. This comprehensive approach to urban design aspires to create a seamless blend of structure and space.</p> <p>In summary, the proposed design envisions a series of small-scale but impactful interventions in the Kopli neighborhood. This strategy aims to foster walkability and human-scale interaction while cultivating a multifunctional and dynamic urban landscape.</p>
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Process

Method description

1. Precedent Study of Relevant Architectural Programs:

The first method involves conducting a precedent study of existing buildings that share the same functional programs as my proposed interventions: cinema, bakery, and sauna. The objective is to categorize and systematize the current “state of art” in order to create a database library. Such a method will work as a tool in providing the foundational knowledge necessary for proposing improved and informed designs. Besides that, an examination of specific architectural types and philosophies that align with my vision will be conducted. For instance, the works of Lina Bo Bardi and Atelier Bow-Wow. This is intended to provide a deeper understanding of architectural

approaches and methodologies that resonate with my conceptual framework and design ethos.

2. Analysis of Heritage and Building Technology:

This aspect of the research will delve into both the technical aspects of building technology and the cultural significance of heritage. The goal is to discern elements that should be preserved or modified. For that matter, the combination of a literature review and the examination of precedents that address the challenge of adaptive reuse will work as fundamental research tools.

3. Comprehensive Literature Review:

The research will include an extensive review of literature spanning urban theory, ethnographic methods, and architectural theory. This will ensure a robust theoretical foundation for the practical and creative aspects of the study.

Overall, these diverse yet interconnected research methods will provide a holistic foundation for the design process, ensuring that the interventions are not only architecturally sophisticated but also culturally relevant, technically informed, and intimately connected to human experiences.

Literature and general practical references

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Reflection

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)?

This graduation project is based on the need for a multidisciplinary approach due to its unique fusion of various scales, as explored in the final design. In this regard, the study closely aligns with the theme of the studio, "A Matter of Scale," where the concept of scale occupies a central role in architectural discourse.

While primarily anchored in architecture, this research extends its reach, intertwining with themes from urban planning, landscape design, and building technology. It is a study that transcends disciplinary boundaries, combining theoretical frameworks from diverse fields of knowledge. This interconnection enriches the research, ensuring a comprehensive and multifaceted exploration of the project's themes.

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

The significance of this research primarily resides in its persistent commitment to aligning architecture with the human scale, encompassing aspects such as proportions but also adequate correspondence with the studied context. It emphasizes an ethical consideration of the architect's role in society, a theme that is intricately woven throughout the study, particularly during the design phase. This stage highlights the need for coherence in the proposed design, underscoring the precision and thoughtful analysis essential in architectural practice.

Furthermore, this research challenges the traditional emphasis on monumental structures and large-scale gestures, arguing instead for a deeper focus on ordinary uses and its necessary details to enhance the quality of life. This approach celebrates smaller-scale interventions that are more intimately connected with their users.

A humanistic perspective, especially informed by the established field of architectural ethnography, is pivotal in this study's final articulation. This approach underscores the importance of understanding human behaviors, traditions, cultures, and habits. Recognizing that architecture is ultimately created for people, the study posits that a genuine comprehension of these elements is essential for designing spaces that truly resonate with and fulfill human needs. This research, therefore, stands as a testament to the importance of a more empathetic, human-centered approach in architectural design.