

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	Caroline Rosenzweig
Student number	

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab	
Main mentor	Roel van de Pas	Architecture
Second mentor	Georgios Karvelas	Building Technology
Third mentor	Mieke Vink	Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I chose Explore Lab for my graduation studio as it offered the freedom to explore the intersection of several personal fascinations. This encouragement to explore opened up unexamined questions and supported a meandering path of research that I would not have had the opportunity to follow had the site and topic of the studio already been set. Moreover I was interested by the opportunity to set all the parameters of a project, from the research question and methodology, to site and program selection, as well as setting limitations and values for each stage of the project.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Spaces for Stillness, Spaces for Action: Envisioning a Future for the Quakers of Brigflatts
Goal	
Location:	Brigflatts Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, UK
The posed problem,	The Friends Meeting House at Brigflatts has been a place of gathering for local quakers since 1675. It is the earliest quaker meeting house in the north of England, and was built almost entirely out of stone to protect it from arson during the turbulent establishment of Quakerism prior to the Toleration Act in 1689. Today, the meeting house sits at the bottom of a narrow country lane on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, among fields of sheep, moss covered dry-stone walls, and a quiet hamlet of stone houses and converted barns, welcoming local Quakers each Sunday morning for silent worship.

Like many rural faith groups, the local quaker community is shrinking. Unlike the larger protestant and utilitarian churches in the mile-away town of Sedbergh, Brigflatts Meeting House cannot easily be rented out to local groups to provide a revenue stream. As a grade 1 listed building, improvements in energy efficiency or changes to the program and interior are limited, restricting use and functionality. Due to its thick stone walls and few small windows, the interior is cold and dark, especially during the many rainy and grey days typical in the North-West, and is less welcoming than the taller, brighter church rooms in Sedbergh. As a result, the community is limited in how it can use the meeting house to respond to the problems of a shrinking community. Were the Friends of Brigflatts Meeting House to become unable to maintain this heritage building and the surrounding grounds, it would face closure or be turned to a trust to keep it open to the public as a heritage site. It would be a shame to lose a faith group whose history is so deeply entangled with this monumental building and local landscape, and as a destination for walkers who visit the national park.

However, the unique ethos of Quakerism offers an opportunity to add a new building on their grounds at Brigflatts that could bring financial support and future-resilience. The Quaker values of integrity, equality, simplicity, community, stewardship of the Earth, and peace manifest as a community that is continually truth-seeking and open to learn from all faiths and beliefs. They believe in a life of action and do so by organizing groups for activism, supporting their local community, and working for global peace and the protection of the earth. Quakers believe anyone can have direct access with God so they have no sermons, pastors, or religious imagery in their spaces. These values have proven fruitful in building modern meeting houses in the UK and US that serve for Quaker worship as well as multi-purpose spaces to be rented to local groups. The spaces are welcoming to all people, and serve as spaces for collective action.

This new addition to a rural country lane will reveal frictions with the Yorkshire Dales National Park. In protected rural spaces, such as the Yorkshire Dales, development is limited in quantity but also in architectural quality as the aim is to preserve the character of the park. While the park's design guide claims to value creativity, the reality is that planning permission is strict and many new buildings simply repeat old styles with cheaper, outsourced materials. There is little innovation in architectural quality, and a lowering in quality and focus on local craft and material. This restriction will result

	<p>in several design challenges, such as how to create bright interiors without using publicly viewable glass facades.</p> <p>Additional frictions with the local residents will influence the design, as obstructing views, increasing light pollution, and increasing traffic and parking would be challenged at the planning office. Taking this into consideration, while making the project more realistic, will introduce additional problems such as site selection and accessibility.</p> <p>Lastly, this project responds to the call for meaningful architecture by architectural theorist Alberto Perez-Gomez. Concerned with the trend of increasingly neutral and decontextualized architecture that contributes to a disorienting environment devoid of meaning, Perez calls for an architecture that is attuned to its location and inhabitants, and has an affective quality that evokes interiority.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>How do the quaker testimonies of integrity, equality, simplicity, community, stewardship of the Earth, and peace manifest in aesthetic and spatial qualities?</p> <p>How can new architectural qualities be introduced to the Yorkshire Dales National Park envisioning a new style for the park while protecting the existing character?</p> <p>How can the needs of a faith group, a national park, and the local residents be balanced in a new building that aims to attract visitors while maintaining the peaceful character of a country lane?</p> <p>How can spatial design and technical solutions create warm, dry, and light spaces in a dim, cold, and rainy environment?</p> <p>How can material and spatial qualities support social gathering, whether for silent worship, stillness and spirituality, or for education and activism?</p> <p>How can we best deal with listed buildings in protected rural areas, when minimal alterations can be made to existing structures but new builds require extensive planning permission and have the potential to disrupt a peaceful area?</p> <p>How can a new public building in a rural location be accessible to visitors while limiting the need for parking and bringing increased traffic to the area?</p> <p>How can I remain attuned to the project location throughout</p>

	the design process despite designing from a different location?
design assignment in which these result.	<p>This project imagines a new building on the quaker-owned grounds on Brigflatts Lane that could support a wider range of functions as well as offer a brighter and warmer interior than the existing, listed meeting house.</p> <p>In order to support a future for the Friends of Brigflatts Meeting House, the space will be designed for multiple groups to rent, such as local clubs, walking tourists, and quaker or activist groups from afar. The program will include a space for meeting, whether silent worship or for discussion and activism, as well as a space and functions for short-term residencies.</p> <p>Given the rich history of the existing meeting house and its grade 1 heritage status, the location is already attractive to tourists and quakers. Adding a new space that has an inviting architectural quality, especially in the rainy climate of the area, could further attract visitors and offer a refuge for wet walkers, a picturesque residency for activist groups, and a desirable meeting spot for local clubs.</p> <p>In line with one of the Quaker testimonies, stewardship of the earth, the design will be informed by sustainable principles, such as local material use, green transportation options, and working with the local climate to reduce energy usage. In doing so, the building could itself be an educational tool for environmental stewardship.</p> <p>This design assignment takes into consideration the needs of the quaker community, as well as the building restrictions of the national park and concerns of local residents, all the while employing a design methodology that is sensitive to the surroundings and existing character of Brigflatts Lane. The intention is to produce a building attuned to the place and the people, to the local bodies, affective qualities, human activities and natural conditions.</p>
Process	
Method description	
<p>To establish the needs of various stakeholders, I will analyze the Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide, the Quaker Faith ethos and meeting house design reports, as well as develop my own design guide based on my research materials.</p>	

To work within the national park restrictions, I will use site models to establish the lines of site from public trails and private residencies to select a unobstructive building location.

To produce a warm, light, and dry interior climate, I will conduct a climate analysis to understand how to design with environmental factors such as the sun orientation, prevailing wind and rain direction, and soil type and drainage conditions.

Following on from my research into attunement and dynamic imagination, studies into material states, weathering, and human activity will influence design decisions concerning material selection, orientation to exterior conditions, and the embodied experience.

To produce a sustainable building, I will conduct a material analysis of local materials and map them together with local craftsman and contractors, ensuring the building is a product of local labour, knowledge, and materials.

Models will be used to experiment with spatial qualities of 'meeting houses', as well as testing lighting and material qualities that influence the experience of a space.

Lastly, the collection of large format paintings 'Life at Brigflatts' which resulted from my research project will remain part of the design process as thinking tools and embodiments of my attunement to the area and resulting dynamic imagination. They will be placed on the walls of my studio space continually projecting the experience of Brigflatts as I imagine a new building for the area and am reminded of affective bodies and atmospheres to consider. Additionally, I intend to explore how painting can be used in the design process for exploring light, texture and composition.

Literature and general practical references

Practical Experience and Research Data:

Conversation with local architect Barbara Hartley at Garsdale Design

Artefacts from attunement research of Brigflatts Lane. (large format paintings, sound recordings, photographs and videos, sketches)

Quotes and photographs from neighbours on Brigflatts Lane.

Precedents:

James Turrell - The Live Oak Meeting House

James Turrell - Deer Shelter Skyspace at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Peter Zumthor - Saint Benedict Chapel

Carlo Scarpa - Aula Baratto, Università Ca' Foscari, Venice

Literature:

Abbott, Margery Post and Abbott, Carl (2008) "Redefining Quaker Simplicity: The Friends Committee on National Legislation Building, 2005," *Quaker Studies: Vol. 12: Iss. 2, Article 6*. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/quakerstudies/vol12/iss2/6>

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press, 2010.

Friends Meeting House, Brigflatts. Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project. <https://heritage.quaker.org.uk/>

Ingold, Tim. "Foreword." *Architectural Anthropology: Exploring Lived Space*, edited by Marie Stender, et al., Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2022, pp. xiiv-xvii.

Lavoie, Catherine C. "Reunified, Rebuilt, Enlarged, or Rehabilitated: Deciphering Friends' Complex Attitudes toward Their Meeting Houses" *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*, Fall 2012, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 2012), pp. 20-52. University of Minnesota Press

Pallasmaa, Juhani. *Empathic and Embodied Imagination: Intuiting life and Experience in Architecture*. conference presentation abstract. Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture Annual Conference, 2014, https://www.brikbase.org/sites/default/files/ANFA2014_ExtendedAbstracts_36_0.pdf.

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Perez-Gomez, Alberto. *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science*. MIT Press, 1983.

Perez-Gomez, Alberto. *Attunement: Architectural Meaning after the Crisis of Modern Science*, MIT Press, 2016.

Perez-Gomez, Alberto. "The Compass of Architecture" conference presentation. *Moving Boundaries*, 2023.

Proietti, Tiziana, and Sergei Gepshtein. "Locating Architectural Atmosphere." *Generators of Architectural Atmosphere*, edited by Elisabetta Canepa and Bob Condia, New Prairie Press, 2022.

Robinson, Sarah. Architecture is a Verb. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021.

Robinson, Sarah, and Juhani Pallasmaa, editors. Mind in Architecture: Neuroscience, Embodiment, and the Future of Design. MIT Press, 2015.

Sumartojo, Shanti. "Researching atmospheres." Consuming Atmospheres: Designing, Experiencing, and Researching Atmospheres in Consumption Spaces, edited by Chloe Steadman and Jack Coffin, Routledge, 2023, pp. 159-173.

Quakers in Britain. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/>

Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide. <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2019/06/Yorkshire-Dales-Design-Guide.pdf>

Zumthor, Peter. Atmospheres: Architectural Environments - Surrounding Objects. Birkhäuser, 2006.

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)?

This graduation topic explores the intersection of a faith group's ethos, the conservation goals of a national park service, and the preservation of a local neighbourhood's 'sense of place', presenting the challenge to balance various needs while imagining a creative, spatial solution to the posed problem. The project looks at social, environmental, and economic forces as well as material and experiential conditions – topics that have been discussed throughout the MSc AUBS and Architecture master track. Furthermore, the argumentation for the design will refer to positions I have taken within the topics of temporality and monumentality, and a referral to the history of the area and people, building upon the lecture series during MSc1. Inspired by my studios and electives, this project continues the investigation into methods of imagination, architectural ethnography, and form studies.

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

Following from my research into methods for attuning to familiar places, this graduation project focusses on translating this awareness and developed empathic imagination into meaningful, used, and cared for architecture that is attuned to its location and inhabitants. It challenges the current state of architecture practice that produces neutral and decontextualized environments and experiences by positioning locality and embodied experience at the center. Through this lens, issues of sustainability, community, and spirituality will be addressed.