

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Personal information	
Name	Gina Goedert
Student number	5377730

Studio		
Name / Theme	Complex Projects AR3CP100	
Main mentor	Henri van Bennekom	Architecture
Second Mentor	Hubert van der Meel	Building Technology
Third mentor	Jelmer van Zalingen	Research
External examiner	Silvia Naldini	
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Complex Projects focuses not only on the building itself, but rather aims to investigate the different building scales and project layers ranging from urban to building technology scale. The combination of those different parameters offers a broader view of the design process, widening the role of an architect. Besides the methodology of the studio, the possibility of dealing within the existing challenging context of Beirut creates an interesting realistic framework, which teaches how to evaluate cultural, socio-economic and humanitarian issues to which architects react in order to contribute to the restoration of a city. The combination between both individual and group work, was another factor for choosing the studio, same as the possibility to freely choose the thesis topic.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Fashion Creation Office
Goal	
Location:	Beirut

<p>The posed problem,</p>	<p>The accumulation of drastic events in Beirut resulted in current high unemployment rates, increasing poverty, business closures and humanitarian problems. The privatization after the war weakens public institutions leading together with the ignorance of the government in social interventions and the port blast, to a lack of infrastructure. These factors have caused a massive discontent in the society, causing brain drain as the talented and creative workforce increasingly emigrates. A great part of the problems in Lebanon are localized, and the government is not taking action in the socio-economic and environmental field, changes will need to occur in another way. The economic environment requires adaptation and the identification of an operative niche market that could complement the needs of Beirut, while tackling social and environmental issues as well. The fashion industry, which once played a significant role in the local Lebanese economy, showcases an example for how local industries were hit by this triple crisis and how they are willing to adapt in the future.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>How can workspace be reimaged in order to contribute to the regeneration of Beirut's fashion ecosystem?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The Fashion Creation Office functions as a centre for young fashion designers that want to enter the Beirut fashion scene and meanwhile intend to engage in social and environmental fields. Identifying the spatial needs of designers and social entrepreneurs, the building will focus on the programmatic topics of creation, social and display. The design will incorporate the architectural and sustainable answer of space optimization of the architectural office typology for a resilient, future-proof and constantly evaluating working environment. Functioning as a spatial incubator, the project aims to encourage the talented workforce to stay and work in their communities and thus contribute to Lebanon's economy while supporting innovations and generating jobs. The centre will become the centre of the Lebanese ecosystem, a place of exchange where fashion entrepreneurs stand together and revive the fashion community.</p>

Process

Method description

The conducted research includes both individual and group work. Designated to the harbour area, this research focuses on the harbour context of the city and how this influences the different urban layers. The individual research, focuses on the urban layer "office", striving towards a problem statement and project definition.

The literature research comprises data collection through digital articles, previous research papers and governmental and institutional reports. Societal behaviour, cultural traditions, economic development and political situations are all based on facts.

Mapping is used as a method to identify the different areas within the city where office buildings are clustered and located. Understanding the reason for the certain locations gives insights into the role of the office typology within the urban fabric and human user scale.

The analysis of case studies and reference buildings from existing projects in the field of office and fashion related buildings should provide a comprehension of how these kinds of typologies are designed until recently, what functions they include and what their private to public ration of spaces is.

Literature and general practical preference

Literature:

Milasi, S. Gonzales-Vasquez I. Fernandes- Macias E. *Teleworking in the EU before and after the COVID-19: where we were, where we head to*. European Commission. 2020.

Nauphal, N. *Post-War Lebanon: Women and Other War-Affected Groups* (International Labour Organization, 1997, 122 p.). September 1997. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Office.

Lebanon`s fashion design ecosystem: strength and weaknesses. Endeavor Lebanon – High impact entrepreneurship. April 2015. Ashrafieh, Lebanon.

Jaoude, H.A. *Labour Market and Employment Policy in Lebanon*. European Training Foundation. 2015.

Social Protection in Lebanon – Bridging the immediate response with long-term priorities. UNICEF and ILO under the UN Joint Programme on Social Protection and Beyond Group. November 2020.

UN-Habitat Lebanon (2021) *Beirut City Profile 2021*, Beirut: UN-Habitat Lebanon.

Oxfam Italia. *The Lebanese Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem*. November 2018.

Mulas, V. Qian, K. Henry, S. *Tech Start-Up Ecosystem in Beirut – Findings & Recommendations*. The World Bank. Washington, USA. 2017.

Case Studies:

- Vakko HQ & Power media Center by REX Architects, Istanbul (Turkey)
- Lables 2 by HHF Architects, Berlin (Germany)
- Chenfeng Group Fashion Hub Factory by Joseph Dejardin, Suzhou (China)
- Coop Interpretation Centre & Incubator by Bogdan & Van Broek, Anderlecht (Belgium)
- Googleplex by Clive Wilkinson, Silicon Valley (USA)
- Architecture Research Centre by Petros Konstantinou, (Lebanon)
- Holcom Headquarters by Lombardini 22 & DEGW, Beirut (Lebanon)
- First National Bank HQ by Raed Adillama Architects, Beirut (Lebanon)

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 AUBS (Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences) programme offers a diversity of directions from which the students can choose in order to learn a more innovative and sustainable approach within the design practice. The Master Track Architecture reflects this idea by encouraging the blending of skills from different fields of physical, social, technological and engineering in the built environment. Complex Projects as well focuses on different architectural aspects and building scales, whose different parameters should provide a broader view and skillset in the design process. The studio topic deals with Lebanon which is currently facing a triple crisis of humanitarian, socio-economic and financial issues and examines how the port explosion of Beirut not only worsened the situation but should be seen

as an incentive for change, recovery and long-term resilience. In order to develop a feasible project within this given framework, research among different urban layers and building scales is being conducted in order to understand the complexity of the architect's role in this process. The graduation project focuses on the urban layer of "office" while identifying the cultural, humanitarian and economical aspects of the fashion industry next to the spatial needs of a constantly changing working environment. This approach echoes the idea of extending the role of architects, that first need to understand the given context in order to design in a feasible and sustainable way.

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

Dealing within the existing context of Beirut, the project aims to represent an exemplary intervention that could potentially also be implemented in other cities or countries that encounter similar situations and require comparable solutions. Next to the preliminary triple-crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic also hit Lebanon as hard as the rest of the world, worsening especially the humanitarian, economic and energy crisis. However, the pandemic also causes massive changes in the hitherto habits and behaviours of people, especially concerning the working environment. Due to global lockdowns, teleworking became extremely popular, increasing the disconnection of the working activity from a centralized space. Instead of working in mass offices, employees and workers now tend to relocate their working activities into public spaces, cafés or their own homes, supported by the growing digitalization and virtual connectivity. Especially the growing digitalization already causes spatial changes for the typology of office buildings, which were not accelerated by the pandemic. The project will analyse these new spatial requirements, how they are changing and what are the changing needs of the users of an office building.