

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 Maria Suso
Student number	5608228

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab 37	
Main mentor	Wing Yung	Architecture
Second mentor	Erik Hehenkamp	Building Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	I have a strong fascination towards the history of textiles - specifically as seen through a feminist lens - which I wanted to explore in relation to architecture. Because of the very personal and specific nature of the topic, I chose to do it under the Explore Lab studio as it is the only studio that allows the individual exploration into a topic of individual choice. No other studio offered a topic that brought together this intersection between architecture, textiles, and women's history.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Weaving new architectural narratives: an exploration into the convergence of female agency, textile storytelling, and architecture.
Goal	
Location:	Momentarily undefined
The posed problem,	The division between the male/public/art domains and the female/domestic/craft domains has resulted in the oppression of important narratives. The history of textiles is undeniably a history of women authorship. It is unfortunate that the importance that this craft used to hold within culture in the past seems to now go unacknowledged. Disparaging it also means disparaging a whole medium for female expression and empowerment. Furthermore, this erasure occurred hand in hand with the division and of the public and private spheres, limiting

	women's participation in the former by confining them to the latter.
research questions and	<p>Main question: How can textiles be used as a form of storytelling in architecture through which to reclaim female authorship and agency?</p> <p>Sub-questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do present day women act as storytellers through the making of textiles? - How do their stories echo those of the women before them? - What is the relation between texts (storytelling), textiles (material), and space (architecture) in current times?
design assignment in which these result.	Memorial for women in which the users can interact with the space through the making of textiles in which to tell their stories.
<p>The creation of a space that disrupts the binaries and in which the female domestic comes to infiltrate the public male dominated space. Making use of textiles as a medium for expressing/transmitting stories of otherwise silenced or overlooked voices. This new space is informed by the needs of women and surrounding communities and is an adaptable space in which stories of female agency can be told, recorded, and shared. It is a space to pay homage to and highlight the contributions, sacrifices, and work of women.</p> <p>As of the time this document is being submitted (P2), the preliminary design assignment idea is an anti-monumental memorial dedicated to women and their history. The concept of memorial is yet to be specifically defined but it is essentially understood in this context as a place in which to remember, honor, and highlight the contributions, sacrifices, and histories of women. More importantly, it is a space in which the users can (continuously) redefine the space and engage with the atmosphere and program. Through textile making, the space lends itself as a canvas in which visitors can physically craft their intentions and messages, as well as share knowledge of the craft with their community. This also allows it to highlight the history of textiles and helps keep the craft alive as an activity that has historically been practiced in community.</p>	
Process	
Method description	
My research calls for a method that is equally personal and diverse, and that allows for qualitative research that can span across multiple contexts, temporalities, and disciplines. For all that, this research will use Participatory Narrative Inquiry as its primary method, supplemented by literature review.	

Participatory Narrative Inquiry (PNI) is a research approach that emphasizes collaboration and active involvement of participants in the exploration and understanding of personal and collective stories. In the context of this research, I will combine PNI with craft circles to gather personal stories from a diverse group of women who are involved with textile making, and then as a community interpret these stories together to unearth the connections between this craft, our voices, and the spaces we inhabit.

In addition to participatory narrative inquiry, I will use literature review as a way to enrich the discussions carried out in the main research method. The word "literature" here is used loosely, encompassing all forms of text from poems to paintings to folklore.

I find it incredibly important to understand the (hi)stories of the women in the past to understand the (hi)stories of the women in the present. It is particularly insightful to draw connections and parallels between all the stories, transcending cultures, disciplines, and temporalities.

Parallel to the research portion of the project, I will also do research for the design portion in the form of textile model experiments. Building a series of atmospheres created with different textile making techniques will allow me to research the physical expression of the material.

Literature and general practical references

The primary data this project deals with during its research stage is the collection of interviews with women that take part in textile making, or that are active in the crafting community. The secondary portion is a supplementation of stories gathered from a mix of different media including books, art (paintings, installations, sculptures), poetry, folklore, mythology, etc.

Besides the collection of stories, I will consult books, journals, and scientific papers regarding feminist history, textile history, and feminist spatial practices. The latter is the theoretical framework with which the research is carried out.

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)?

Though my graduation topic deals with other topics outside that of the study track, it is my intention to explore different approaches to architectural design. My graduation project brings my fascination for textiles and the meaning they carry for female expression and empowerment and attempts to use them to inform architectural decisions.

Though not departing from architecture itself, the end goal of this project is a form of architectural design achieved through the exploration of adjacent topics regarding how gender and crafts engage with space, the social systems that dictate its use and characteristics, and the diverse craftsmanship possibilities we have to create with.

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

This graduation project opens multiple discussions on how architecture relates to other disciplines beyond its own, and how it both influences and can be influenced by them. It specifically brings up the importance of gender, and how the systems under which the discipline of architecture acts has perpetuated binaries (with underlying hierarchies) of gender and craftsmanship. The topic and approach of this project calls for an approach to architecture that is more diverse, innovative, and inclusive, using the specific context of textile history and female agency as an example.