## REFLECTION PAPER

Heritage & Architecture - Rotterdam Harbour Heritage

Within the graduation studio of Heritage & Architecture, a concise framework of transformation starts with understanding the relation between its 'how' and 'why'. During a process of research and design, 'how' is often related to the chosen method, whereas the 'why' supports the result of the method applied.

However here, location and object are the starting points which make our argumentation set beforehand. Our 'why' are the specific characteristics found within the existing fabric, a constant reasoning between question and answer, which illustrates the decision making.

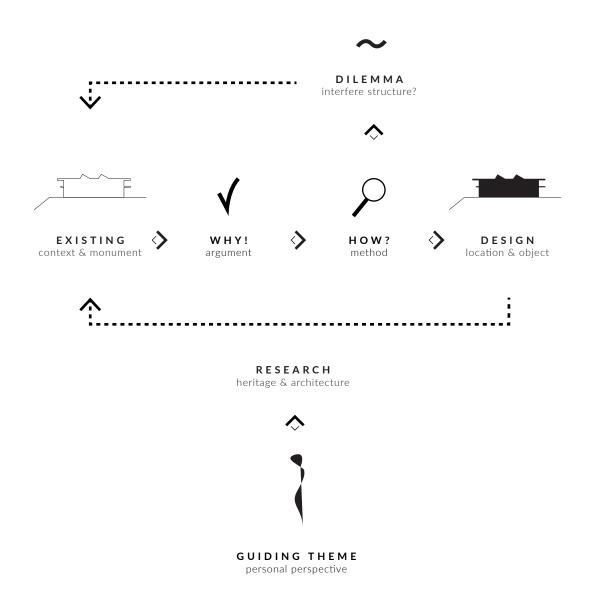


Illustration 1 Personal research and design process of graduation within the chair of Heritage & Architecture

Thus arising from 'why' we construct our method. With 'how' we seek and find answers within the existing as object and location (ill. 1). A reversed process, the argumentation of 'why we are doing this' is input for the choice of method on 'how we will achieve'. Subsequently design is guided by research; it leads us to a coherent positioning towards Heritage and its treatment. Being taught within the Chair of Heritage & Architecture provides students with the ability to gain deep knowledge and insights of existing fabrics which are input for research in order to explore their specific manifestation and how to apply them with a deep focus during transformation.

Nevertheless, my process often starts with a guiding theme which should not be confused with the application of methodology. Using a guiding theme as abstract framework it made me set guidelines on how to implement my perspective within the project, while the actual treatment within the design process is specified by the given object and location. As my perspective is *wearing architecture* it implicates the operation and functionality over time, the actual use of architecture is of great importance. By choosing the theme *moving towards* we could precisely investigate whether both the object and location have tolerance for change.

Building upon the process of interchanged argumentation and method, object and location within Heritage and Architecture refer to the 'why' and 'how' of monument and context. As the monument is anchored, I observe the existing fabric now as a physical structure and study of its characteristics show how physical elements manifest themselves towards architectural practice. Operating within architectonic design and building technology, it implicates the incorporation of the scales of the built environment; urban context, built ensemble and building.

However, as we operate in the field of Heritage & Architecture, tangible layers of the physical structures are defined as well as the intangible addition of the story. This story refers to the historic layer with the cultural essence as the existing fabrics in the past sense. These already written stories are therefore the story of context, created by the act of people with the physical structure as monument.

With this guarding insight in the intention of the monument and context, I extended the scales by adding the human being. From my perspective this allows me to address the importance of the theme *moving towards* and connected indirectly to the discourse of positioning in methodology. Questioning 'how can move of people be incorporated into movement of the built environment?' gave me insight as a thematic research and resulted in actual methods on 'how' to apply the guiding theme. It transformed the overall project from an intuative feeling at start to a factual grounded working method.

Introduction of the guiding theme aimed to incorporate the active presence of people whereof the existing fabric now is transcripted to moving versus movement. It connects simultaneously towards the actual use. Within the defined scale layers the mode of transformation represents at this stage an appropriate continuation of use rather than new use for its future. Together with the analytical results as part of the Heritage & Architecture studio we continue with the act of people. Through investigating the theoretic historic setting we have our argumentation set thematically converted to past activity. While ongoing the nesseccity of today's anchoring, translation to current energies precisely combine the origin and the current state as these embrace vital factors of keeping the existing alive. Analysis is therefore extended with the present situation to draw the relation between past and present. The matter of the Katoenveem is converted to meaning and guiding theme became tool to construct upon as continuation for future use.

The becoming of the case is outlined as valuation of existing fabric and hierarchy decides the starting points of the stage of design. During the process, I therefore aim to follow the guideline of a existing determined set up. As my perspective included this, I attain to choose the Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences Department as the Mastertrack, whereby my working method of both research and design fit within the graduation studio of the Chair of Heritage & Architecture.

Therefore given the studio topic 'Rotterdam Harbour Heritage' the project locations are spread along the Maasriver. By choosing either of them, exploration and investigation results in a precise understanding of contextual Rotterdam and should contribute to the decision making for continuation of the Katoenveem heritage.

Hence the argumentation to explicitly chose the 'Katoenveem' building, because found characteristics in the direct scale layers urban context, built ensemble, building and the people fit my working method and perspective to explore personal ambitions. The question of the research and design process thus arised and reads as:

## 'What incorporates moving people in the movement of Katoenveem as monument listed architecture in the harbor of Rotterdam?'

As I chose the cottonwarehouse 'Katoenveem', located at the Merwe Vierhaven, the problem statement derived after the first part of research which followed the described method and was the base of the graduation plan. Inheriting the monument with her physical elements gives status and is the deepest grounding for an integrated proposal for redevelopment. The conducted valuations set the framework of where to interfere this status and therefore mark the hierarchy of the actual intervention with its tolerance of change.

In general dealing with the existing, the continuation of operation and functionality by means of manufacturing and use intents to contribute to relevance in the broader scientific framework. The set up to achieve the redevelopment of the Katoenveem building in all its scale layers is attached to the nearby manifestations of the city of Rotterdam as Makerscity. *Moving towards* a warehouse building, the architecture proved to tell the story of its historic setting and how it was used back in the days. For such functional buildings, which are often derelict nowadays and calling for future function, their activity in terms of past activity both as moving as active element and movement as activation should be investigated and reinterpreted. Onwards they are continued in the language of the building where the fields of Architecture, Building Technology and Cultural Value merge.

By integration of production processes to the specific case, architectural layout and material knowledge are literally stored. Inclusion of traditional knowledge is significant in developing new knowledge, thus the project strives for collectivity rather than division. Workshop spaces with their material expertise and atelier setup guide towards making innovation. This could be interpret as seeing, sharing, experimenting, combining and being flexible. To accommodate a program of multi crafting, the built ensemble becomes a center where operation of people and their tools are sheltered. Alltogether, production processes could be investigated thoroughly and further on linked towards each other as current professions and their expertise by definition shifts. Workshop spaces will expire which lead to reconsideration of craftsmanship(s) and how they are seen in the light of mutual examination. Separation in planning is no longer of necessity, practices of tradition and innovation are interwoven in the continuous changing knowledge and altering production processes.

Moreover, transferability of the methodology is done in seeking for activity and rather connect to these structures to continue intangible stories and tangible use. The input for the redevelopment is the location and object as argument rather than seeking as a designer for new use and trying them to fit by seeking arguments as addition. This specific object once was part of development and manifestation, statics and dynamics, organization and functionality and tradition and innovation. Therefore combined with location, the design was founded to have a purpose in each physical element of context and monument.

Deriving from an existing fabric and the analytical research of architectonic design, building technology and cultural value defined strategies, were input on how to redevelop the area. These consists of mandatory physical actions such as as repair of damage and setting up a renovation framework in line with the monument status to prevent further decrease. They increase future use, resulting in dilemmas while decision making. As the Katoenveem building was designed from operation, any change in the highly functional building has immediate consequences conflicting with its originality. Creating inside and outside spaces either closed or openend along with the compartmentation were the main themes within the dillemas. These actions go along with conflicts in the values of cultural Heritages where in this specific case the age, history and newness contradict. Each consideration of the decision to make is a balancing of ethics in the demolition plan, as traces of changing and adding structures to the existing fabric and how they work together will be seen. Again, argumentation within this reasoning was found within the monument and context itself.

Thus due to the existing fabric, not all dilemmas could be taken away. As answers were found within the case itself, it minimized them during the design process and the overall decrease of dilemma was possible.

Looking back at the question of research and design: 'what incorporates moving people in the movement of Katoenveem as monument listed architecture in the harbor of Rotterdam?', incorporation of moving people is done by understanding the *historic setting* as well as the *present situation*. Finding the optimized continuation of the use leads to a respectful treatment in the fields of architectural practice overarching the architectural design, building technology and cultural value as one deriving from the monument status.

Thus examined through the specific case of 'Katoenveem' and her movement, this is the position I would take. Combined and elaborated with my perspective and working method and after studying within the Chair of 'Heritage and Architecture'.

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