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	Tov Frencken
Student number	4669622

Studio	
Name / Theme	Methods of Analysis and Imagination, *A Matter of Scale*
Main mentor	Klaske Havik	Architecture
Second mentor	Willie Vogel	Theory
Third Mentor	Pierre Jennen	Building Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The case in the physical and ideological context of Tallinn seemed interesting to me, concerning a topic in which the human scale seemed to get extra attention. This studio appeared to me as one of the more open graduation studios, providing more room for theoretical background and free exploration of new topics. With other studios, I got a feeling that by redoing design practices from before I would get through the course, with methods I got a bit of an uncomfortable feeling as I didn't know what the final project would look like. Because of this, I thought I might learn more new things during this graduation studio.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Work in Progress

Goal	
Location:	Admiralty Basin, Tallinn, Estonia The Porto Franco development, an unsuccessful construction project of a mall and office spaces at the Admiralty Basin over which a government fell and the prime minister had to step down after a corruption scandal. Resulting in a years-long standstill of the construction, a still and open structure of several thousands of square meters.
Statement:	Agency in sociology and psychology refers to the ability of people to actively steer and intervene in their own lives and living conditions. Treating people as actors capable of self-regulation and reflection, of thinking- and acting proactively.

| | One's ability to act independently is determined by the limitations of one's free will and a broader social structure, while at the same time, this social structure is constructed of a multitude of individual actions.

With the 1991 Declaration of Independence and the departure of the Soviets from Estonia, a change happened from totalitarian communism to liberal capitalism. The open market economy became guiding and was associated with the newly found freedom. Within the built environment focus shifted towards economy and profit, with development still happening in a top-down fashion (government replaced by economy) and often resulting in physical rigidity/inflexibility that doesn't allow for adequate adaptation as life evolves over time.

By denying people and communities agency within the built environment we miss out on their problem-solving potential and inventiveness. Empowering people to play a proactive role in reshaping their physical environment could lead to iterative-, fluid- and resilient buildings. A living environment that can evolve and sustainably accommodate the future needs and desires of people and communities. |
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| Research questions | Main Research question:
• How to redevelop the unused Porto Franco project in a way that provides people with more agency?

Sub Research questions:
• What is spatial agency?
• What social- and organizational structures allow for a bottom-up development of the Porto Franco building?
• How to keep the development financially affordable without much need for initial capital?
• What functions does the adaptive redevelopment of the Porto Franco structure allow for?
• How to design a flexible system that allows for incrementality, adaptation and iteration over time?
• What materiality, technique and manufacturing processes fit with a bottom-up redevelopment of the Porto Franco project?
• How to utilize participatory design processes to engage people and embed the project in the local context and culture?
• How to maintain esthetic quality and overall coherent appearance while at the same time leaving room for individual/collective creativity? |

| Design assignment in which these result. | [In short] A mixed-use infill of the Porto Franco structure with a wooden flexible building system.

An adaptive transformation of the unfinished structure Porto Franco project at the Admiralty Basin in Tallinn into a living environment that provides the people and communities with agency in their lives through their physical environment. A bottom-up cooperative way of developing is made feasible by incremental development of the whole in financially manageable parts.

Mixed-use development incorporates productivity, living and leisure and should establish a productive local economy that is self-sustaining and generous within a broader social- and economic context. An economic double plinth that houses a wide variety of businesses from a woodworking factory, ateliers and offices to bars, restaurants and tourist shops. Offering income, products and services to the block and to the city. Initially, the underground parking and the -supermarket could be finished and exploited following the original Porto Franco plan, though in the long run, the parking could prove to become obsolete and be replaced by e.g. datacenters that produce central heating and income.

The three upper floors consist of eight cohousing communities with shared facilities like gardens and daycare in between. This housing should be composed of a flexible building system to allow for adaptation, iteration, expansion and mutation in the composition of the house (-hold). Preferably locally produced in the productive core of the building as much as possible, in an accessible and sustainable manner. Consisting of workable-, lightweight- and affordable parts this could provide agency and a more organic living environment for the people and their communities. |
| | |

Process

Method description

To come to a final design proposal a variety of methods should be alternately:

- Foundational theoretical research through the reading of scientific articles and books.
- Research through studying relevant projects concerning agency and adaptive reuse.
- Applied research by designing, testing different approaches and reflecting on what works best.

- Interviewing people to inquire on how to ultimately establish the participation of relevant actors within the design process, as well as on how to integrate the design in a broader social context.
- Possibly writing as a way to distil theory and concepts into a more vivid impression of what the project and the interactions within should look like.
- Modelling is a way to test concepts in a physical three-dimensional space, possibly to engage people in a participatory process in the shape of e.g. a game or a DIY kit.
- Shifting the scale frequently in an attempt to integrate theory and weave concepts throughout many scales from the building system to the masterplan to the broader social structures.

Literature and general practical references

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Precedents:

Building systems:
The Segal Method by Walter Segal
Support-Infill, John Habraken
Sears houses by Sears, Roebuck and Co.
WikiHouse, open source
U-Build by Studio Bark, London, UK
Superlofts, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
The New Makers, Ridderkerk, The Netherlands

Cooperatives and cohousing:
Schoonschip, Amstedam, The Netherlands
De warren, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
De grote Pyr, Den Haag, The Netherlands
Sectie C, Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Flexible housing:
Next21 by Urban Design Studio, Osaka, Japan
Dom-Ino House by Le Corbusier
Domino.21 by ETSAM, Jose Miguel Reyes, Madrid, Spain
Elemental by Quinta Monroy, Iquique, Chile

Adaptive reuse and transformation:
Lacaton and Vassal, Paris, France

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)?

Concerning the matter of scales, combining agency and architecture already asks for research on a multitude of different scales from individual free will and broader social structures. How different lenses should be applied to the design to have the concept work from the technical- and individual in the building system to the community and economy at the scale of the building and broader context, till the cultural ideological context in which such a building would be situated. Adaptations on for example the materiality of the building block immediately influence a broader social and economic

scale as we talk about e.g. manufacturing, accessibility or scarcity. As it is all part of the same story looked at through different lenses. Relevant for architecture as not only an aesthetic but also a technical- and social practice.

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

Research concerning agency within the built environment is not necessarily a new field of research, yet it has not taken off to the practice of architecture to its full extent. More often the projects or studios are the odd man out. Combining this research and applying this to a project of this scale, giving special attention to the practicalities of how it is made workable, can lift the presumption that these projects of this nature are reserved for just the idealists and made more accessible to the realists. Helping to draw attention to the topic again, engage people in discussion, expose unsolved issues and establish broader societal support. In a time where it becomes clear that the open market does not necessarily provide us with the best, sometimes not even sufficient, living environments, this project can hopefully inspire further research and action on rearranging the way we live and interact with our environments.