

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



## Graduation Plan:

Personal information	
Name	Jiacheng Xu
Student number	5582881

Studio		
Name / Theme	Complex projects / Bodies & Buildings Berlin	
Main mentor	Hrvoje Smidihen Jelmer van Zalingen	Architecture Architecture
Second mentor	TBD	Building Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Choosing Complex Projects Studio is a new attempt for me. The concept of the studio is very much in line with my design thinking. From the urban scale to the architectural scale to the specific human scale, this cross-scale research and design process allows me to think more deeply about architectural problems while maintaining a broad perspective. This fits well with the logic of design thinking that I was trying to establish in graduation period.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	New Cemetery: A Museum of Memories
Goal	
Location:	Ausgrabungen, Berlin-Mitte, Germany
The posed problem,	<p>Garden cemetery is the common form of cemeteries in European cities. With the concept of garden cemetery, cemeteries exist in the urban fabric as a public space represented by nature and landscape attributes.</p> <p>However, according to the research of cemetery development plan of Berlin in 2006, since the end of the 20th century, the cemeteries (mainly garden cemetery) in Berlin have produced a large amount of vacancy. On the contrary, the demand for cemeteries in Berlin is still increasing.</p> <p>The reason for this inconsistency lies in the transformation of the form of burials. As cremation has grown in popularity, people have increasingly</p>

	<p>turned to other forms of burial. According to statistics, the proportion of cremation in Germany has reached more than 75%. Compared with the traditional form of burying coffins, the land area required for the new burial form represented by cremation is greatly reduced. This huge change has led to a continuous reduction in the core space actually used in the cemetery. Therefore, more and more cemeteries can no longer assume the role of urban public green space due to the reduction of the core use area.</p> <p>Although this phenomenon of quantitative change has not accumulated to produce qualitative change, we can still see the urgent need for the transformation of the cemetery. So how can the cemetery provide a new value as an urban public space?</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>What kind of cemetery space is able to allow visitors to experience a moment of the life of the deceased, by adopting the way of operating a museum?</p> <p>To understand the building type of museum from an architectural point of view, space is the focus of all issues. From an architectural point of view, it is always how to deal with the relationship between behavior and space. In this project, it is clear that the space dominates the activities within it. Memory, as the core theme of this new type of cemetery, Memory Museum, can be influenced and reshaped by architectural space. This reshaping process will bring different emotions and emotional experiences to users.</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>A typical modern cemetery usually represents the theme of death with serious physics, such as tombstones, urns, etc. Meanwhile, modern death-related rituals are largely based on the physical aspects of death. The core value of the existence of the cemetery is</p>

	<p>not that the dead need a space to store the bones. In fact, it is because the living need a space to commemorate the dead and seek spiritual comfort. In essence, what the cemetery provides is a medium to place people's thoughts.</p> <p>Therefore, a new possibility is proposed. A new cemetery, its essence is a museum of memory. It pays more attention to the living thoughts and relationships of the deceased, and links rituals and memories more closely and diversely. Thereby creating a brand new entity for people to experience under the theme of the cemetery.</p> <p>One way of thinking is to completely deconstruct the cemetery, sort out and reorganize the elements in the cemetery with the idea of a museum, and propose a new form of cemetery. In this perspective the process can be divided into three parts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To respond and create new funeral needs.</li> <li>2. To guide new funeral and memorial behavior.</li> <li>3. To design a new memory space.</li> </ol>
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## **Process**

### **Method description**

The research design task is divided into three basic parts: program, site and client

On the program side, an integrated approach combining literature reviews, case studies, benchmarking and 3D volumes will be adopted. Specifically, through the analogy between cemeteries and museums, we seek and summarize a way to translate museums into cemeteries. Through this method, the area, function, partition, circulation and core space of the entire project can be obtained.

Site selection will combine quantitative data collection, mapping, site visits and online research. Combined with the positioning of the program of the project, the project location with the greatest advantages can be obtained.

For the client, a literature review will be carried out to scrutinize the German cemetery ownership structure, taking into account the museum organization as an additional co-stakeholder.

## Literature and general practical preference

Valentijn, V., Verhoeven, K., Cramwinckel, L., Davies, D. J., Coenegrachts, K., & Studio Pekka. (2018). Goodbye architecture : the architecture of crematoria in europe. (D. L. Camp, M. van Tol, & In Other Words (Agency), Trans., J. Visschers, Ed.). Nai010.

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<https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/funerals/germany-burial-regulations.htm#pt1>

Straka, T. M., Mischo, M., Petrick, K. J. S., & Kowarik, I. (2022). Urban Cemeteries as Shared Habitats for People and Nature: Reasons for Visit, Comforting Experiences of Nature, and Preferences for Cultural and Natural Features. *Land*, 11(8), 1237. MDPI AG. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/land11081237>

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Patricia, R. Kathrin, G. Für das Institut für Museumsforschung Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. (2022). Heft 76: Statistische Gesamterhebung an den Museen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 2020. <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/ifmzm/issue/view/6264/1098>

Vermeeren, A., Calvi, L., & Sabiescu, A. (Eds.). (2018). Museum experience design : crowds, ecosystems and novel technologies (Ser. Springer series on cultural computing). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58550-5>

Lindsay, G. (Ed.). (2020). Contemporary museum architecture and design : theory and practice of place. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Krauss, R. (1990). The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum. *October*, 54, 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.2307/778666>

Austin, K. (2021). David Eagleman's Sum: Forty Tales from the Afterlives.  
<https://austinkleon.com/2021/02/13/david-eaglemans-sum-forty-tales-from-the-afterlives/>

Hala, M. (2019). The Museum of Life Cemetery. <https://www.archistart.net/portfolio-item/the-museum-of-life-cemetery/>

## 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 topic of my graduation project fits very well with Complex Projects Studio. I try to think about how to re-understand the architectural type of the cemetery from different scales. These scales range from the human scale to that of the urban fabric and the built environment. This allows thinking not to be limited to a specific angle, but at the same time, the core of these thinking is nothing more than focusing on the relation between people and space. In this process, architecture, as the most direct research and design object, is the best combination point of different scales and angles.

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

My graduation project is to shape a cemetery with the idea of a memory museum. The idea is based on the problems that cemeteries, especially those in Berlin, are and will be facing. This kind of problem is not a single case, but is universal, that is, how the cemetery seeks transformation and evolution in the context of European cities. Generally, I am trying to explore and propose a new architectural type and design idea with universal value, which would be a possible solution for future cemeteries.