

P4 reflection
AR3AP100 Public Building Graduation Studio 2022-23
Public Building | Public condenser | Commons

URBAN-PLAY-SCAPE

Ye Ren 5495636

Mentors:

Henk Bultstra | Design

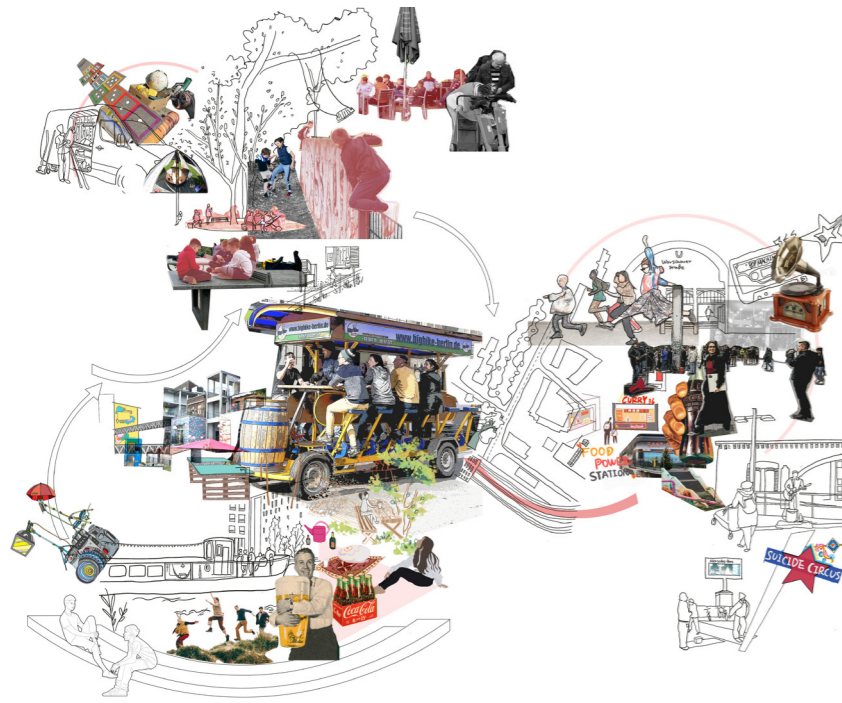
Florian Eckardt | Building Technology

Stefano Corbo | Research

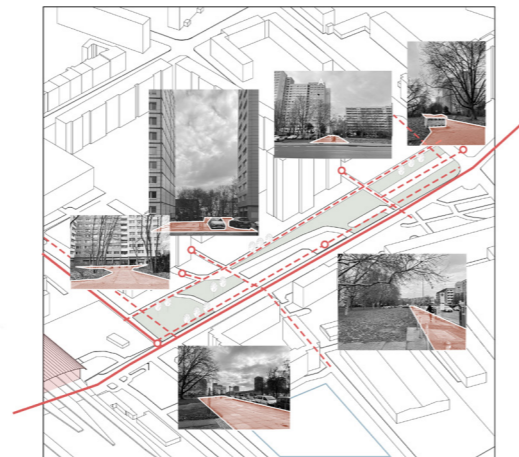
Introduction

The research for the thesis and the entire study begins with a visit to Berlin, a diverse city where you will find a surprising variety of elements appearing individually and in combination in all corners of the city. These elements consist of people from different cultural backgrounds, brightly colored graffiti, slogans, assembled furniture, cars, and temporary installations that form a complex and organic form of life. This phenomenon reflects the everyday improvisation of citizens, thus inspiring a new social sphere. It reminds me of a playground, a place where many people can freely participate in play. So I chose a long site because it has the potential to amplify the experience that people can have. The site is now an undeveloped residential park with an underground parking lot which was used as an outdoor table tennis venue in 1974, and my goal is to revitalize this green space to create an urban complex. When it comes back to play, how can architectural spaces encourage public participation and interaction? How can playfulness be realized in spatial features and architectural features?

In order to explore the proposed problem, the research is grounded in theoretical literature and case study. The methodological scheme we use in the studio is called research by design. During the theory research, I learned that the use of play as a catalyst for human dialogue in an effort to create human connections in the design environment. Designers are increasingly interested in bringing our urban environments to life through play, such as shaping irregular spatial forms, experimenting with bright colors, interactive elements, and using of texture, light and geometry to actively engage visitors and residents. Before P2, I collected cases that fit in these points and analyzed them spatially which became my learning template.



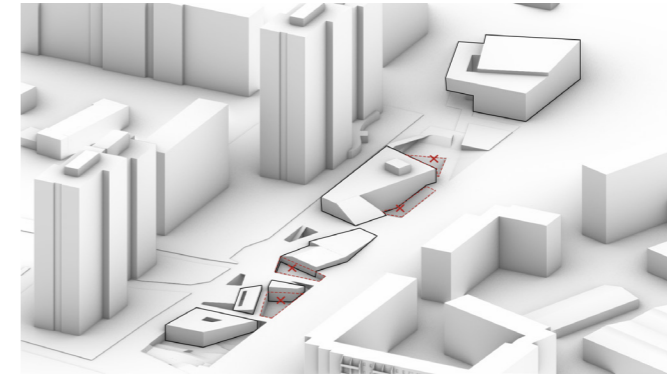
Psygeography map



Site

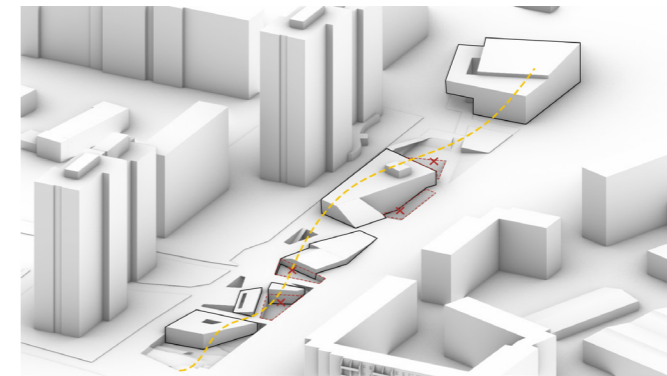
The feedback of the mentors on P3 was beneficial to develop the project, and after that, I identified three levels of flow in my project: exterior space, interior space, and roof space, all three spaces have continuity while some parts are intertwined, people can gather outside, play together inside as well as take a walk with friends on the roof. So this public condenser includes three basic functions: performance center, adventure center, and leisure center, each is individually independent, the latter two are covered by a continuous roof.

old version



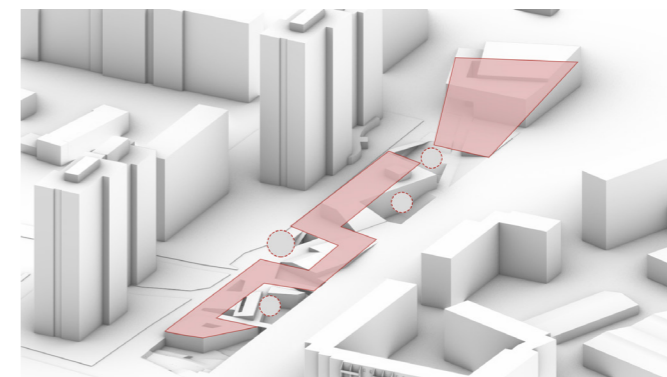
Before P3

old version



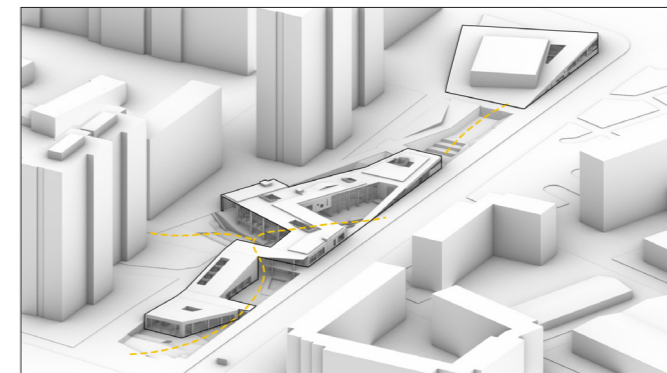
open the underground space

new version



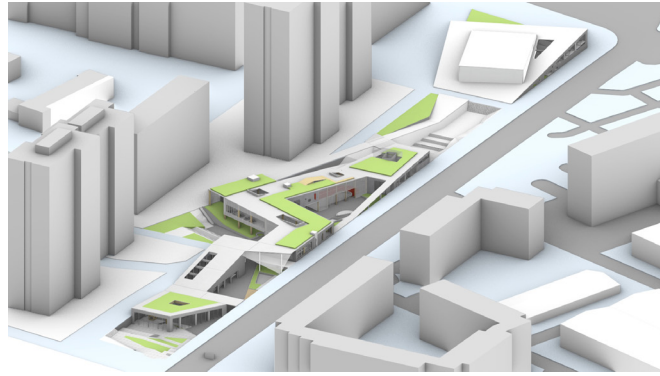
make the space continuous

final version

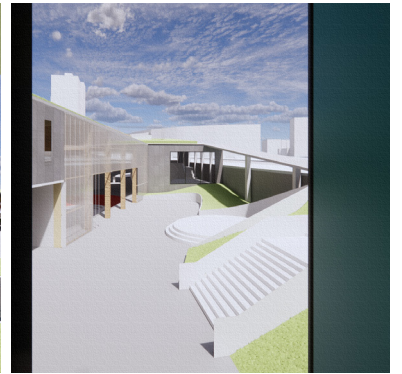
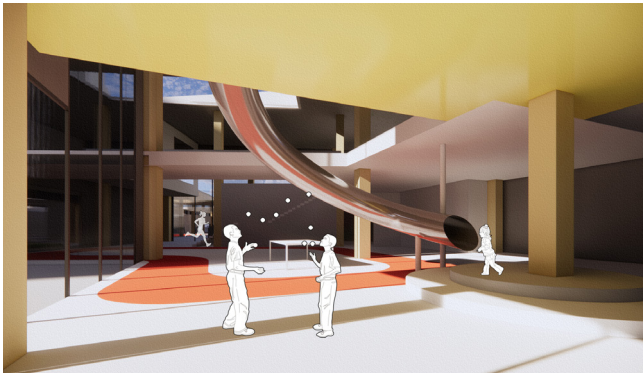


Reflection

After P2, I started to design the space based on the analysis of the previous cases and incorporated my own ideas, but in the results of P3, they were not connected as a whole because they were thought of separately. My mentors also pointed out that my current project did not reflect the playfulness more prominently, and Nathalie de Vries told me that I might have been thinking from an overhead perspective before, if people stand on the street and the functions are hidden underground, how to give pedestrians recognition and encourage them to enter the building. This made me realize that my design after P2 lacked a control of the whole, I always thought of different functional spaces first, and then after connecting them, the remaining spaces automatically became outdoor spaces, which also led to the outdoor spaces being fragmented, making the experience of walking lack of continuity.



After I have identified these three different layers of flow, I kept thinking about how to make the building playful, excluding the function of rock climbing, skateboarding and other adventurous types of sports, my tutor Henk told me that I can start from the element and think about the many possibilities that can be triggered by one element. So I decided that the undulating ground not only could become an interface for skateboarding, but also can be included in the library, forming a step-like reading space. The rock climbing column could become a small space for people to eat indoors, and the outdoor greenery could be planted or placed indoors as part of the environmental design.



In addition to this, the routes inside the building encourage multiple forms and movement, with weaving nets across the floors that allow people to move freely, slides that provide fun and fast routes, and climbing surfaces that provide the type of activity that people crawl on. The fun of space not only revolves around functions, routes, but also relating to materials. I choose polycarbonate and fiber cement boards as the main facade materials, because polycarbonate have an industrial vibe that fits the atmosphere of Berlin. When an interior is filled with color, it can reflect to a certain extent and blur the boundaries between the interior space and the exterior. Another thing that needs to be designed in this project is the outdoor space. Henk told me that you need to design it from the perspective of an interior space, imagining that the walls surrounding it are actually the facade of the building, which also made me reflect on the outdoor space of the building is equally important as interior spaces.

I know that Multiplicity is an important keyword for public condenser, and for its realization, my strategy is that some specific spaces have a clear and definite organization, while there are some public spaces that are given a higher degree of flexibility and be dominated by users. By combining all these results, I eventually arrived at my design, which is a linear complex containing both architectural and urban scales. The special feature of this site is the presence of sunken spaces. How to design a public building that unites people at the underground and ground levels is the breakthrough point of this project. In many places, it is not difficult to find abandoned and neglected green spaces. By mixing and matching functions, social gathering spaces are integrated into various projects for collective cultural interaction and development, and these areas have great potential to become centers of activity for people to gather and interact. My research has been conducted by introducing play as a medium for residents to engage in shared activities. Play can integrate theater, sports and leisure into a space that activates the mind and body to promote a healthier life for everyone, regardless of age, ability or interest. Because of its multiplicity of possibilities, it allows connections to be made between people who would not otherwise be in contact with each other.