

Graduation Plan_{Master of Science}

Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

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	Pien Nods (Eline Dieuwertje Nods)	
Student number	4457439	
Studio		
Name / Theme	Architectural Design Crossovers / Heterogeneous City	
Main mentor	Johan van Lierop	Architecture
Second mentor	Florian Eckardt	Architectural Engineering and Technology
Third mentor	Alper Semih Alkan	Architecture and Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>From an early moment during my bachelor I have been interested in the way small gestures can have great impact and make architecture as it is. Specifically, how the architect can trigger the individual's memory: our material memory and the architect's responsibility in creating these moments or spaces. Although I have not been able to experience the work ethic of this studio before, I was drawn by the open assignment and the possibility to explore my own interests. The way this chair works and approaches an assignment starting from a very broad scope is something I had not been familiar with. A complex city such as London asks for this kind of approach in which I want to implement my research by design approach as well - obtained during my MSc 1 in the <i>Interiors, Buildings, Cities</i> design studio. Although I find it challenging to work with a more research based approach, I think that combining these two approaches: looking at architecture in a multidisciplinary way, learning from other places and on the other hand looking at it with a very narrow focus learned during <i>Interiors</i> will be extremely valuable and in the end make my work more grounded.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Who owns the city? <i>A response to privatised public spaces</i>
Goal	
Location:	Belgrove House, London (Camden). <i>As part and response to the analysed King's Cross area where five existing privatised public spaces can be found.</i>
The posed problem,	<p>Throughout history the notion of public space has always been evolving, although it is often misunderstood as being constant. Defining public space has become even more difficult, since a lot of public spaces are not even truly public or have never been. In contemporary London the grey area between public and private has become a problem and is visible in the large scale privatisation of public spaces over the past decades after Margaret Thatcher gained power. These so-called 'pops' or 'privately owned public spaces' are publicly accessible but provided and maintained by private developers, offices or residential building owners. It has changed the dynamics of public space in freedom of use since these spaces are now regulated by private investors, who can indirectly determine <i>how</i> we use public space and <i>if</i> we may use public space. The imbalance between private interests and those of the public result in places focussing mainly on consumerism, rigid, orderly and over determined spaces, often excluding and neglecting the needs of many groups in society which make these places undemocratic. Public space has become conditional instead of unconditional over the years.</p> <p>It would be naïve to think the privatisation of public spaces in London will stagnate, but the additional problems it creates should not be ignored. By understanding the change in nature of public space through history and the reasons behind these changes politically, economically and socially my research and design project aim to contribute in creating places where public, as well as private interests could benefit both. There lay possibilities in creating spaces where the imbalance between private and public will be less visible and tangible. The aim of this research is to</p>

	<p>discuss the complexity of the grey area between private and public, not necessarily to reflect on morality. The nature of public space shifts, and it is important to know why these changes occur and if these changes are still relevant in current times.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>To what extent could architecture contribute to a more symbiotic relationship – and mediate – between the public and private interests, as a response to the privatisation of public spaces in the City of London? What is the nature of public space and how is it different from privately owned public space?</p> <p>How did the nature of public space change through history and what layers of influence caused these changes?</p> <p>Which elements define <i>public space</i>?</p> <p>Which elements define <i>privately owned ‘public’ space</i>?</p> <p>If architecture could mediate: is there one architecture, or are there many minor forms of architectural practice that make the (im)balance between private and public visible? What are the characteristics and through which mechanisms do these architectural practices challenge and overturn these (un)balanced, (un)equal relations?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>Belgrove House, situated in Camden London right in front of King’s Cross station and St. Pancras International station was the former Coach station built in 1931. Along with the fact that it is just around the corner of multiple privately owned public spaces at King’s Cross, it has been part of the ongoing discussion where private developers tried to transform a building into a science centre. Ignoring the historical significance of the building by demolishing it and ignoring local people’s needs. Multiple heritage organizations have protested against the project, but new ideas for repurposing the building stay out.</p> <p>The building, now used as a warehouse by Access Storage, will lose its function and has a lot of potential in creating space <i>for</i> the public. My research proposes a <i>Public Hall: an open podium for upcoming talent</i>, where multiple functions</p>

come together and the historical character of the building remains. The hall - by definition the space right behind the door, represents in my project the grey area between public and private and functions here as an urban threshold. Small studios can be rented by local artists: music, dance, theatre, street artists, writers, poets or cabaret, but the studios can also be used by small companies or as study places. The building intends to be a place where something is asked from the public, as well as it gives back to the public: an open podium at a central location surrounded by hotels and tourism. In this way all interests might benefit from one another. Besides, it could be an indoor outdoor public space to recreate without conditions. It reaches out to different groups, brings different cultures together, young and old, it can be a career kick start, can be someone else's place to recreate and is profitable for public as well as private interests. Although the studios will be rented, the open podium should function in different ways: it can function as a podium or even a public square accessible all day.

The research and design will therefore focus on combining these different functions and people, how to work with heritage and the translation of the grey area between private and public. Either learning from existing privately owned public spaces, or to distance itself from the privately owned public spaces as we know now. Appropriation of space and affordances will be explored in research and design as possible ways to create multifunctional, less over determined spaces in order to trigger different individuals. As a response to privately owned public spaces.

Process

Method description

The methodology used for my research essay can be divided in three domains: literature review, selective mapping and site research. This should not be seen as a linear process, but as an exploration through these different domains. It is a constant process of reflection in order to use new knowledge to reflect on previous work. The extensive literature review defined the terms and created a theoretical framework which formed the start of this research. It discusses the political, social and economical influences in relation to the changing nature of public space. The selective mapping of historical growth of the city, inventory of privately owned

public spaces and privatisation shifts, relations to railway systems and the site research will support this theoretical framework and are implemented in each chapter. The site research is documented in a series of three booklets: *Usage*, *Elements* and *Materials*. This documentation aims to help articulate the grey area of public and private into spatial dimensions and eventually can be a tool in which there can be mediated between the two in my project. The study contains photographs of 16 privately owned public spaces in London visited during my stay. 'Usage' visualises how these spaces are used by the public, how people behave in these spaces and *who* actually use the space. 'Elements' shows what role architectural elements or objects play in these spaces. What do these elements initiate, are they used as a division tool or do they frame these spaces, are they static or changeable, is there a specific function bound to this or not? '*Materials*' is the final part of the series and shows how materials can be an indication of borders, thresholds or function and can make privatisation visible or tangible. Just by looking at one patchwork of materials, it not only says something about transitioning, as well it can give an impression of the physical state of a certain object or even a part of the city. The combination of literature review which discusses the different manifestations of privately owned public spaces and the mappings and site research documentation will help to eventually see connections between different disciplines. All together it will help with positioning and create the translation towards the design project. Tony Fretton, a London based architect and former professor of the Chair of Interiors, Buildings, Cities in Delft, has been so kind to make time to meet via Zoom, once in two weeks. These conversations are part of this research' methodology to get to know the city better and have an experienced practitioner's view on the current problems in London.

After P2 I will continue to work on my research essay and start implementing my research by design approach. I am familiar with drawing and model making to explore form, space and material. Making models in different scales - 1:100, 1:50 and 1:20 - will help to make design decisions on an urban, façade and interior scale. Design decisions will be based on the theoretical findings of my research essay and particularly reflect on the studies *Usage*, *Elements* and *Materials*. In addition to the analysis of privately owned public spaces, my research essay brings forward how affordances and appropriation of space could be worked with in designing new privately owned public spaces. This could help to trigger many individuals and allow multi functionality in newly designed spaces and buildings.

Literature and general practical preference

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Reflection

The Architectural Design Crossovers studio focusses on London and aims to look at the city with a multidisciplinary approach. My graduation project tries to look at the addressed problem as a result of political, social and economical influences and what the role of architecture and the architect can be within this topic.

The problem addressed is relevant in the City of London, Great-Britain, as well on a global scale. Many metropolitan cities are dealing with this issue and should invest in creating spaces *for* the public. My research investigates the emerging issues related to the privatisation of public spaces in London, but should as well present insights for other case studies. It aims to give a different perspective in the architectural debate on the privatisation of public space in London: how it was formed, the initial intention and the role of the architect in improving these spaces. As well give a critical view on ownership, the changing nature of public space and if genuine public space still exists. In current times, - especially during the pandemic - we have become more aware of the importance of public space: public space is something we should nourish and not take for granted.

Its relevance does not only lay in this topic but also in the reuse of Belgrove House and former King's Cross Coach station in Camden. Surrounded by Georgian terraces east and west, Argyle Square on the south and the Victorian stations on the north, it forms one of the oldest conservation areas of the country which asks for careful consideration of the design and program and give new meaningful purpose to an existing historically significant structure.