

Practices in Research

practice-based research seminar

Explorations & Cartographies

27th of October 2021
C I.II.III.IV.A - Brussels

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back cover image © Doorzon



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conference

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Organizing committee

Benoît Burquel (AgwA, ULB)

Harold Fallon (AgwA, KU Leuven)

Benoît Vandenbulcke (AgwA, ULiège)

Program

09:00 Arrival and welcome

09:30 Introduction to the research seminar
Presentation of 'Practices In Research #03 -
Explorations and Cartographies

Parallel sessions

10:00 Session 1

Virginie Pigeon - Atlas - Constructions

Stijn Cools - interlocking design positions of the
archaeologist, the scenographer and the architect

Jadd Halaj - Map Room

Mathias Elaerts - Cartography of a project-based drawing
practice - A way to conduct research ?

discutants

Annelies De Smet (KU Leuven) -chair

Wouter Van Acker (ULB)

Harold Fallon (AgwA, KU Leuven)

Session 2

Pauline Fockedeey & Valentin Bollaert - Non Demagogic Architecture - "L'unique chemin de l'architecture", 50 years later

Thibaut Barrault & Cyril Pressacco - Inductive Research - Building site as a catalyst for reflexion

Salvator-John Liotta & Fabienne Louyot - Ephemeral architecture as a tool to bridge academic research and professional practice

discutants

Rolf Hughes (RH) - chair

Sebastian Kofink (Buero Kofink Schels, Hochschule München)

Benoît Burquel (AgwA, ULB)

14:00 Session 3

Thomas Finch & Emilie Morales - Architect Designed

Yosuke Nakamoto - A shift in the inner landscape: rusty arcades, airy wooden panels and hanging textiles

Ali Ismail - References - An exploration of the project Verbiest

Floris De Bruyn - Primary Structures - Factories

discutants

Lisa De Visscher (A+ Architecture, ULiège) - chair

Simon Jüttner (Buero Kofink Schels, Hochschule München)

Harold Fallon (AgwA, KU Leuven)

Session 4

Els Van Meerbeek - The Not So Clean Desk

Johannes Berry - Paper Architecture

Nathanaëlle Baës-Cantillon - How Biodiversity can transform our living environments, the case of Evenepoel

Discussants

Ido Avissar (List, EAV&T Paris Est) - chair

Wouter Van Acker (ULB)

Benoît Vandenbulcke (AgwA, ULiège)

16:30 Plenary closing session

18:30 Book launch and Lecture

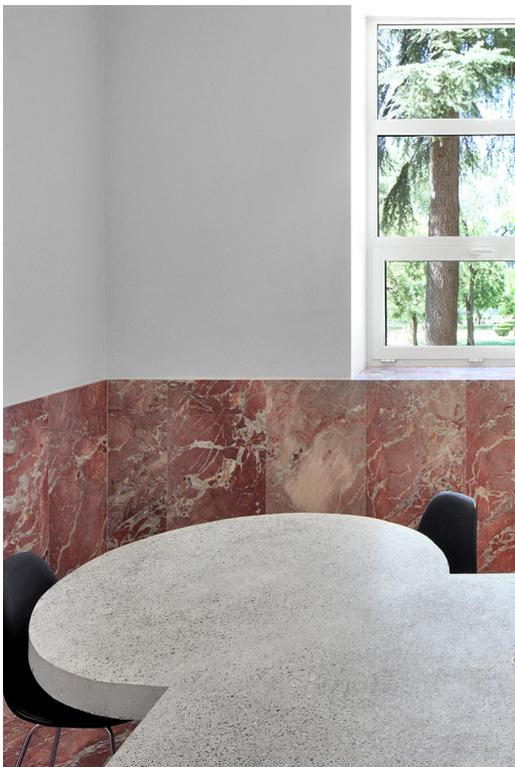
“Buero Kofink Schels in Practice, TIA house 1+2”

Buero Kofink Schels

with Sebastian Kofink & Simon Jüttner

Doorzon

Caroline Lateur & Stefanie Everaert



IN PRACTICE

BUERO KOFINK SCHELS & DOORZON

WEDNESDAY 27TH OF OCTOBER 2021

C I.II.III.IV. A

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PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03

practice-based research seminar

18:30

BUERO KOFINK SCHELS

Sebastian Kofink & Simon Jüttner

-

DOORZON

Caroline Lateur & Stefanie Everaert

-

Booklaunch - Buero Kofink Schels In Practice

CARTOGRAPHIES

Cartographies is an invitation to investigate the practices and the related research as a territory. Reflection on architectural practices is often carried from the outside: the realized works and available material are seen as an autonomous given, subject to interpretation and speculation. When considering things from the inside, however, things appear differently for several reasons.

(extract from the call for contributions)

Atlas

Constructions

Virginie Pigeon

ULiège - Faculté d'architecture
Pigeon Ochej Paysage

Based on research around cartographic practices as a tool for knowledge and sharing around inhabited territory, this contribution offers an in-depth exploration of the different graphic regimes linked in cartography throughout history from the Middle Ages.

The map is above all “a graphic representation of the spatial relationships between places, objects and phenomena.” (Dumas-Rabineau et al. (Dir.), 2019)

In this sense it does not imply precise modalities of drawing, projection of space or semiotics. In our Western societies, the graphic habits of producing territorial maps evolved gradually from the 15th century to today, marked by changes in our relationship to the world in relation to the advent of modernity and its measurement tools.

In the early Middle Ages, cartographic practices were first taken over by artists, who, far from being considered for the transmission of their creative imagination, rather held a figurative know-how from which the first styles and cartographic traditions have developed. Around the 15th century, terrain maps appeared in Europe on a scale relating to the course and to in situ observation, through which the artist depicted the state of a territory known to him finely and which was called figure or portrait, by taking the measure, by “reducing the topography in drawing” (Dumas-Rabineau J. et al. (Dir.), 2019, p.12).

With the advent of Enlightenment, the practices of scientific representations evolved into a collaborative work between the artist “illustrating” and the enlightened scientist, attempting, in the face of the diversity and complexity of the world, to bring order and to reach the truth through the production of

smooth, uncluttered and idealized images of nature, universal. It is also the time of the birth of work by type, “the type of a class capable of representing all the individual members of this class, without however embodying any.” (Daston L., Galison P., 2012 , p.424)

The notion of objectivity, as it is currently used, takes place in the nineteenth century faced with a double fear, that of the excessive reduction of the variability of nature by smoothing or idealization and that of too much influence power of the personal considerations of the scientist on the production of scientific truths. In cartography, the new possibilities granted by mathematics and mechanical measuring tools then gradually make it possible to counter these risks of subjectivity, giving rise to increasingly abstract representations.

At the same time, in the sciences, photography replaces drawing and highlights, through the automation of the process of representation, the specific, the individual, the multiple singularities of objects in nature.

This progression of the mechanical means to write the territory does not stop there. In the twentieth century, the deployment of aviation made aerial photography possible. The perfect point of view was reached and called into question the role of the cartographic discipline.

In the sciences in general, so-called “objective” representations also reach their limits and question the role of the scientist. This evolves in two directions: the highlighting of the logical relations between natural objects through a structuralist thought aiming at universality (producing in particular in cartography the codes and the

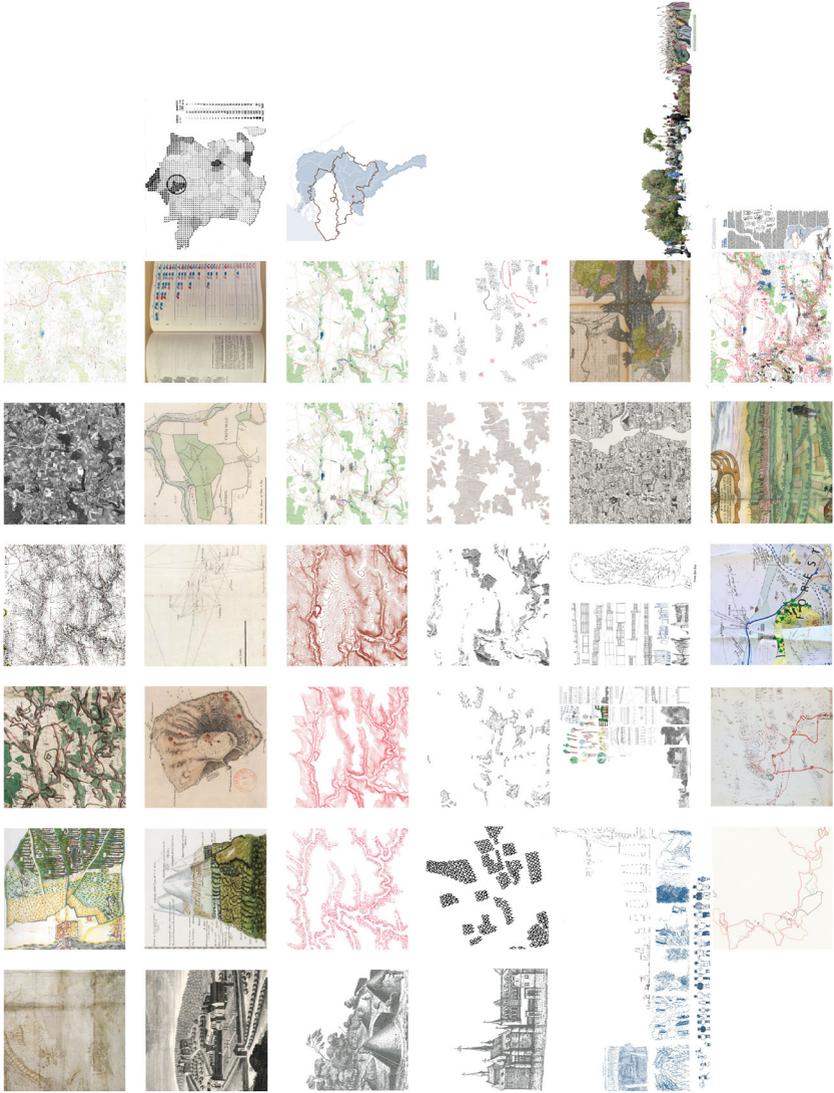
diagrams), and the birth what we will call the “Judgment exercised” or how the expert selects and highlights part of the information through representation to provide a subject enriching the knowledge acquired.

The ways of applying this exercised judgment and of making choices on the methods of representing the land are debated. Critical Geography sheds light on what it sees as abuse of power by official cartography. It offers new modalities of action where the card is alternately a tool for activism but also a networking process, sometimes in real time, given the possibilities offered by the new paradigm of digital communication: today the image is no longer just a “performance” but a continuous process of “presentation”. (Daston L., Galison P., 2012, p.417).

Today, the production of maps can continue to mobilize several of the methods of scientific representation described here chronologically, and consciously and voluntarily use each of these regimes of the link between knowledge and representation.

The in situ cartographic experiment carried out within the framework of this research - “Atlas of an inhabited territory - Walcourt” (Pigeon V., 2021) will be analyzed and reread through historical examples of maps illustrating these different regimes of relationship between the researcher and the representations he produces of his research object: truth from nature, objectivity, structural objectivity, judgment exercised, representation - presentation.

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03



Different regimes of relationship between the researcher and the representations he produces of his research object: truth from nature, objectivity, structural objectivity, judgment exercised, representation - presentation.

The cartography of aNNo interlocking design positions of the archeaologist, the scenogra- pher and the architect

Stijn Cools

aNNo architecten

KU Leuven - Faculty of engineering sciences: department of
architecture

The practice aNNo relies on team of 21 individuals with backgrounds in architecture, interior design, scenography and preservation, under the guidance of architect associates Sofie De Ridder, Stijn Cools and Elisabeth Lehouck. The team is “committed to the preservation and renovation of historic buildings, heritage and monuments”¹. However the quote refers to the material reality in which the practice operates, it remains vague on its themes, positions, boundaries, ... The ongoing research at KU Leuven “Revalue: heritage as idea and project” wants to position aNNo’s practice in the mental space called Curated Distance²

Mapping the chronicle

In the archives of aNNo (period 2006-2020), all built and unbuilt projects were consulted. The drawings of these projects are subsequently represented (b/w) in a predefined grid of 10cm x 10cm (A0-Din format). A chronological arranged matrix with plans, sections and project names is exposed, demonstrating the built and unbuilt archive of the practice. Mapping these projects in the predefined grid is a first method to discover the chronicle³ of the practice. The deliberate b/w graphics and scaled representation of all projects increases the rigour and validity of the subsequent reflections that were conducted. By reflective thinking - combined with interviews of team members - the temporal chronological display discovered existing, yet unarticulated trajectories, of the practice.

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03

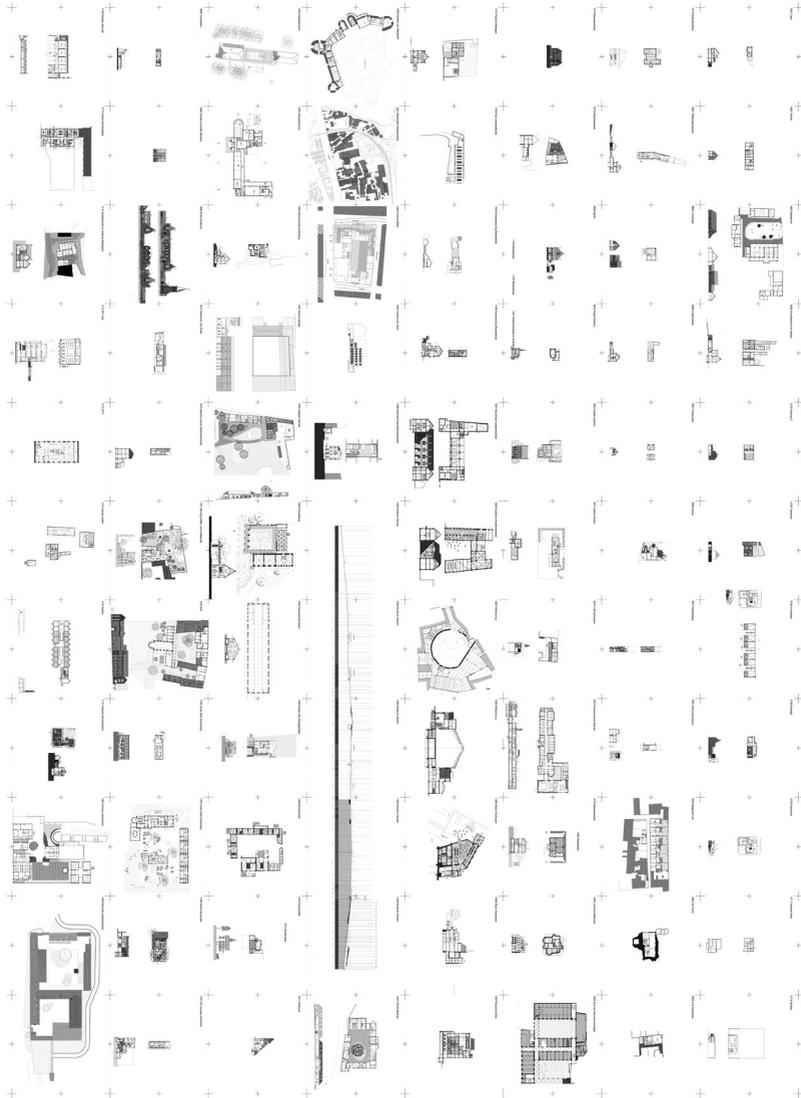


Image 1: The chronicle of the practice aNNO architeten, based on the project archives period 2006-2020. PosterDIN-A0 1 out of 2

Cartography

First, the chronicle identifies projects that triggered discursive⁴ turns in the practice. These projects question methods and attitudes or gave new insights and reference points. This process is still ongoing. Therefore the cartography is centralised around an open ended expanding spiral of discursive projects that advance the practice. Further, three interlocking design actions were discovered: “deep site learning”, “exploring” and “crafting”, that had been applied in the different projects. Each of these step can be represented (as a form of communication) by its archetype: the archaeologist, the scenographer and the architect. These positions seem to have emerged over time, and are still evolving. The triparted spiral shows de open endness and evolving practice along these design positions. The varying thickness of the blue lines, in the cartography, represents the presence (weak to strong) of these positions in the identified discursive projects. The increasing length of the segments in the triparted spiral represents the increasing knowledge and experience since the origin of the practice.

Iconography

Surrounding the expanding nucleus the iconography of the practice is defined. The iconography is not an Instagram like collection of random publication images. But instead an internal and precise collection of 3x19 important images, schemes, drawings, plans, reference books ...

These images are characterised as memorial and referential. Yet, the iconography is also a temporal hybrid: blended, impure, discontinuous, contaminated, and therefore unfinished. The iconography provides inspiration for new projects, but also provides reflective critiques in relation to realised projects. The iconography drives and questions, is constantly in transit.

Communities of practice

Surrounding the iconography the communities of practice are situated. These are defined as influential collaborations (with designers, craftsmen, historicists, certain clients or collaborators, ...). Existing, past and ongoing. It is considered influential in the sense that these communities have enforced our experience and insights in the three design positions of the practice.

Imageries of projects

The interlocking design positions can also be illustrated by the imageries of projects. The project 'Batterij Aachen' in Ostend is taken as example and represented by a similar spiral. Yet, the iteration process is moving forward in the opposite direction. The practice is expanding outward (clockwise). The project is crunching inward (counterclockwise) toward the design solution.



Image 2: The cartography of aNNo is represented as a poster. At the centre the expanding triparted spiral of discursive projects illustrates the open-ness of the practice. Projects are moving across three interlocking design positions. Together with the surrounding iconography and communities the cartography of the practice is exposed. Poster, DIN-A0.



DESIGNING BY REFERENCE

The cartography of the project Batterij Aachen
Deep site learning, Exploring and Crafting
atWNo architects

The chronicle of the practice ability identifies projects that triggered discussion turns. These projects question methods and introduce or give new insights and reference points. The process is challenging. Therefore the cartography is communicated by an open-ended expanding spiral of discussion projects that advance the practice. Further, these triggering positions: "deep site learning", "exploring" and "crafting" are identified, that have been applied in the different projects. Each step is represented, as a form of communication. In its substance, the cartography and the architect. These positions seem to have emerged and evolved over time, and are still evolving. The changing techniques of the spiral then represents the advance or presence of these positions in the identified discussion projects. The increasing length of the segments in the spiral spiral represents the increasing knowledge and experience over the length of the practice.

Surrounding the expanding nucleus a cartography of the practice was defined. The cartography is not an extensive list collection of action images, but instead an internal and precise collection of 26-39 important images, schemes, drawings, plans, reference books... These images are characterized as "repeated and relevant". The cartography is a temporal hybrid: layered, porous, discontinuous, contextualized, and therefore unfinished. The cartography provides inspiration for new projects, but also provides reference images in relation to realized projects.

Surrounding the cartography, which illustrates the collaborative team: designers, craftsmen, historians, partner-clients or collaborators... that fundamentally have influenced design-position (external influence by the community).

The iterative design positions (architect, cartographer and architect) can also be illustrated by the emergence of new project ideas. The project "Batterij Aachen" is intended to stimulate the practice in a specific context (reference). The projects are conducted in parallel (concurrent). Finding the final point or solution or proposal. Both trends enhance and influence each other like the mechanics in a clockwork. The cartography exposes these situations, yet illustrates, design positions that can also be characterized by distinct methods (design learning, exploring and crafting). In specific reference (cartography) and communities (external influences) in retrospect the process of building the cartography, assisted by the different design positions in itself. In itself the cartography is therefore both belonging to and separating itself from the identified discussion turns. The cartography deepens the understanding of the practice with the defined mental culture space of the Custom Institute, and opens up new trajectories and paths for advancing the research and exposing the practice.

Image 3: Imagery of the project Museum Batterij Aachen Ostend (Belgium) post-positioned according to the identified design positions. Poster DIN-A0.

Epilogue

The cartography exposed⁵ three articulated, yet interlocked, design positions that can also be characterised by distinct methods (deep learning, exploring and crafting), by specific references (iconography) and by a selective communities (external influences).

In retrospect the process of building the cartography, passes by the same design positions. Therefore, the cartography in itself is belonging to the identified discursive turns, and at the same time has another hierarchy. The cartography deepens the understanding of the practice within the defined mental cultural space of the Curated Distance, and opens up new trajectories and paths for advancing the research, and exposing the practice.

Notes:

1 Quote on the website of aNno architecten, www.annoarchitecten.be, as consulted 20-08-2021 2 The Curated Distance is defined by the author in the ongoing research 'Revalue: heritage as idea and project', KU Leuven, department of architecture. The Curated Distance is considered as the mental cultural space that is present between architecture and preservation since the beginning of the 20th century with the origins of the Cult of Monuments (1903, Alois Riegl) and the Cult of Architecture (Modernism). Both disciplines have, since then, been operating (curating) at increasing pace in separating parallel worlds (as can be found in: publications, conferences, paradigms, charters, iconography, protagonists, education ...).

3 A chronicle could be defined as story of more or less chronologically arranged realities, events, decisions and actions.

4 Grocott, Lisa (2012), 'The Discursive Practice of Figuring Diagrams'. Tracey, Drawing Knowledge: Special Issue (May).

5 Exposed is applied here in its ample definition as illustrated by prof. Rolf Huges in his lecture Introduction to artistic research / exposition & epistemology, KU Leuven, 12 march 2021, (unpublished).

References

- Grocott, Lisa (2012), 'The Discursive Practice of Figuring Diagrams'. Tracey, Drawing Knowledge: Special Issue (May).
 Hughes, Rolf (2006) The poetics of practice-based research writing, *The Journal of Architecture*, 11:3, 283-301, DOI: 10.1080/13602360600930906
 Von Schaik, Leon (2003). *The practice of practice : research in the medium of design*. Melbourne, Vic : RMIT University Press

Map Room

Creating a Territorial Map Room Through Community Lead Ac- tivities

Lucas Devolder, Elena Falomo , Jadd Hallaj

#LZSB & The Eiland Collective

In the summer of 2021, LZSB and the Eiland Collective teamed up to build and run a community driven map room in the city of Kortrijk. Our pluridisciplinary teams are composed of architects, designers and community organisers, who joined forces to generate new spatial practices. This project stemmed from common experiences in mapping hidden layers of the territory, respectively:

- Map of Secret Spots¹ : mapping & documenting more than 150 hidden spots in and around the city.
- The Eilands of Southwest Flanders² : Reviving the cultural heritage landscape of Kortrijk's Moated Homesteads through an open source database.

Not only were these maps intertwined, we also soon discovered that both of our teams shared a similar intentions behind our cartographic experiences...

We find preconceived prejudice and incompatibility of development projects with the reality on the ground to be widespread in contemporary practices. Spatial planning, much like the algorithms that run urban planners' digital tools, is increasingly inaccessible and we are losing touch with the practice of field work and in-situ explorations and inquiries.

1 Kortrijk 135 Secret Spots #LZSB. (n.d.). Google My Maps. Retrieved 9 June 2021, from <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1buTB7d8-q9TgN4yr3nzlua5KLm0q8Cyi>

2 Eiland(s). (n.d.). Retrieved 9 June 2021, from <https://eiland.design>

«All models are wrong,
but some are useful.»

George Box

HOW COULD WE DEVELOP A NEW CARTOGRAPHIC INTERFACE WITH THE CITY?

Through this process, we wanted to question the status quo in conventional spatial planning, existing urban development schemes and the mediums they are based on, to address different experiences in the territory, from local tourism and the development of heritage sites, to adventure explorations and foraging for food. We wanted to position ourselves as new spatial experts for city development, that could bring forth complementary narratives to mainstream views.

We thus set out to first define, design and implement cartographic practices that we opened to the public in what we call a “map room”, through a development scheme we called “the loop”.

The modernist dream of a programmed machine city must fade away and allow for organic processes to emerge.

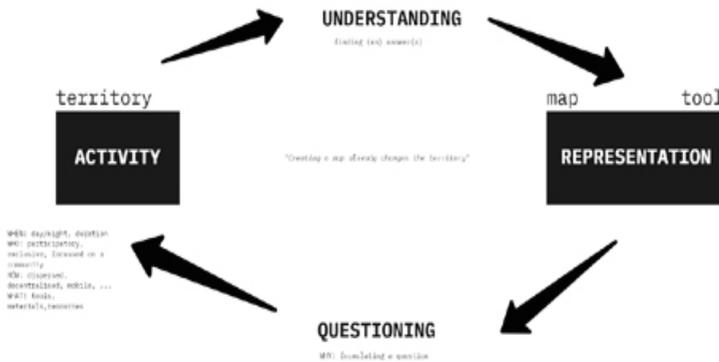
A SPACE AND A LOOP

The Map Room was set up in the heart of one of its symbolic monuments, the medieval South Broel Tower. We set up the space to make a collection of basemaps and activities accessible to passers-by who could work on and take home with them. This was complemented with a reading corner, a drawing corner and a community wall. We animated the space with punctual screenings, lectures and workshops.

Different questions emerged from the different representations. We lead several interventions in the territory to address them, amongst which were for example:

- Open Monumentendag: Design and print of 4000 tourism maps for the that were used to coordinate the main event of the region on the Open Heritage Day, the 12th of September 2021.
- “Ladder Workshop”: 15 kids joined us to build two huge ladders they used to cut through the urban center of Kortrijk and lead them to the Map Room - by climbing through its first floor window - to map out the process.
- #Audiogids (Event): Live audioguide & djset to guide citizens through the city and activate it with micro-parties.
- The Edible City, Foraging Workshop: bike tour and cooking workshop to learn how to collect and prepare foraged food

These activities allowed us to advance our knowledge on the questions raised which we could then update the initial representations, which generally brought up new, or more precise questions.



The main improvement we aspire to make through this methodology is to integrate a feedback loop in otherwise linear and non contextual development schemes.

What started out as a physical space for participative mapping, then evolved into an open online platform for local cartography. We knew that to expand on our practice we needed to integrate a digital dimension. We've thus been setting up since the end of summer an online platform, which embodies the values we've been identifying thus far.



“The Eilands of Southwest Flanders”, maps for the Open Monumentendag. Images: Jadd Hallaj and Elena Falomo 2021.



People interacting with maps on the Open Monumentendag.



“Build your own ladder workshop”. Images: Jadd Hallaj 2021.



Children Building and climbing on their 3m ladders.

Carthography of a project-based drawing practice

A way to conduct research ?

Mathias Elaerts

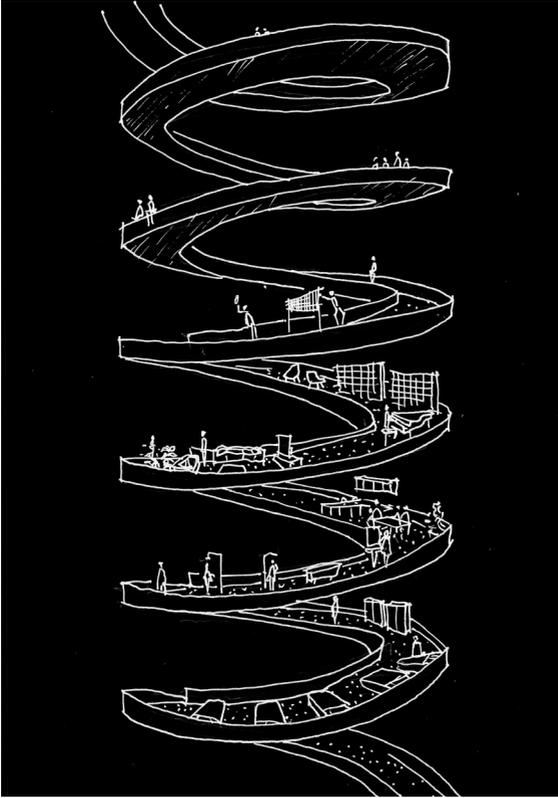
ULiège Faculté d'Architecture
AgwA

At the beginning of my life as an architect and without any hands-on experience, a key moment looms: from graduate student to workshop assistant and onto young collaborator in a studio, my architectural point of view is build through my changing roles.

As a last look back before the leap to professional practice, it is possible to identify in these multiple experiences an exploratory method of the project. With significant documents from my journey, it provides a starting point for a methodological framework. My drawing practice has been developed and has become anchored in the project's process.

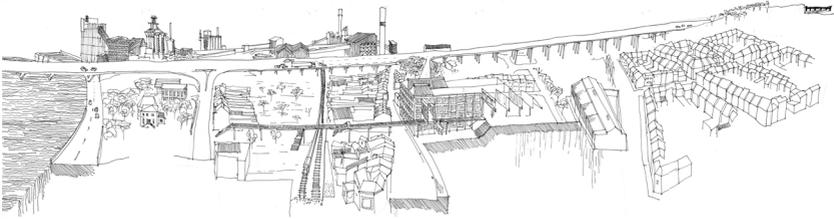
Thanks to a meticulous collation of the original documents but also of the spreads that summarized the stages of the process (an idea proposed by our teachers), this "curated whole" allows me to detail a form of exploratory procedure by mapping the typologies of these graphic documents. A knowledge emerges from what took place during the design process and can be explained trough different typologies of drawings.

I propose to dive into the key moments which revealed the potentials of the infrastructures and buildings we were studying. This approach aims to enlighten two things : to investigate and to feed the project's processes. These three drawings are insights of a larger content and are the result different contexts of development.



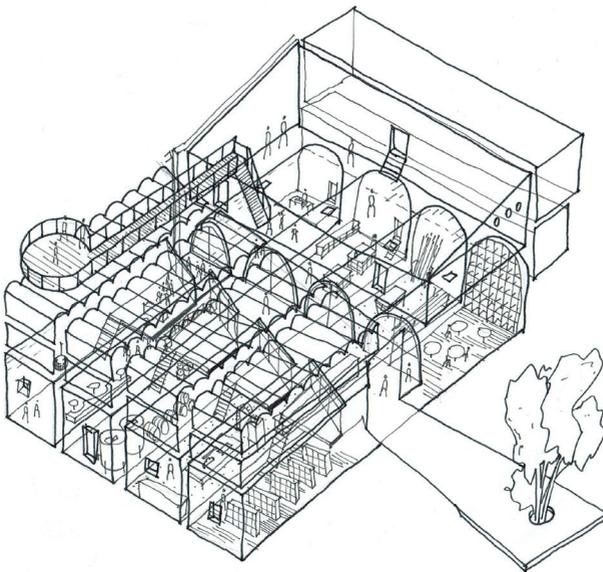
'Caution, slippery slope'
studio research drawing at
ULiège. Made as a student
(november 2019).

From a carpark that is optimised for an only-car use and a structural rigidity which limits its adaptive possibilities, how to bring out an unsuspected potential ? Here the circular ramp becomes, thanks to the drawing, an inhabitable element whereas it is reduced to distribution in its classic use.



Panoramic view "myriorama" of Ougrée-Bas (Liège, BE). (may 2021) Research drawing in the making process of the BOZAR/ A+ exhibitions by AgwA. (as a collaborator).

Through abandoned wastelands in Ougrée, a few hundred meters of a straight lightweight steel footbridge floats between the old Ateliers Centraux towards the Meuse. New viewpoints and places are emitted by the footbridge, the document seeks to explore them as it tend to explore the links that can be made between landscape and the footbridge, while making it appearing as the central element.



Negative space drawing of an old brewery in Wuppertal (Germany). It comes from an intensive one week-long inter-university workshop and was made as a student (march 2021). The original drawing is an animated gif that shows a succession of typologies.

(left page) An old brewery conceived as a fortress makes an impossibility of perceiving its interiority from the outside. The compilation of the different spatial typologies in one document revealed correspondences to be defined in order to grow 'porosity' in its use.

These paths tend to value a process of continuous exploration rather than the clarification of a finitude (which in the case of the studies was impossible). It tends to push forward the experimental aspect or typological aspect of its interventions. Conditions frame the elaboration of these documents, they do not necessarily seek to represent reality nor do they show architecture as it is but as the architect with its transversal vantage point may see it. They represent subjective viewpoints that can be reinterpreted.

The importance of drawing as a tool for the architect is not in question anymore: it has been used through-out the different currents and modes of thought. It can point multiple abstract directions through the different stages of design: primary documents can reappear in the evolution and update the discourse, just as secondary documents can redraw them, be revisited and rethought. From then on, a process of back and forth, making the drawing a mechanism in its own right, opens up new correspondences and feeds the project and the research that accompanies it.

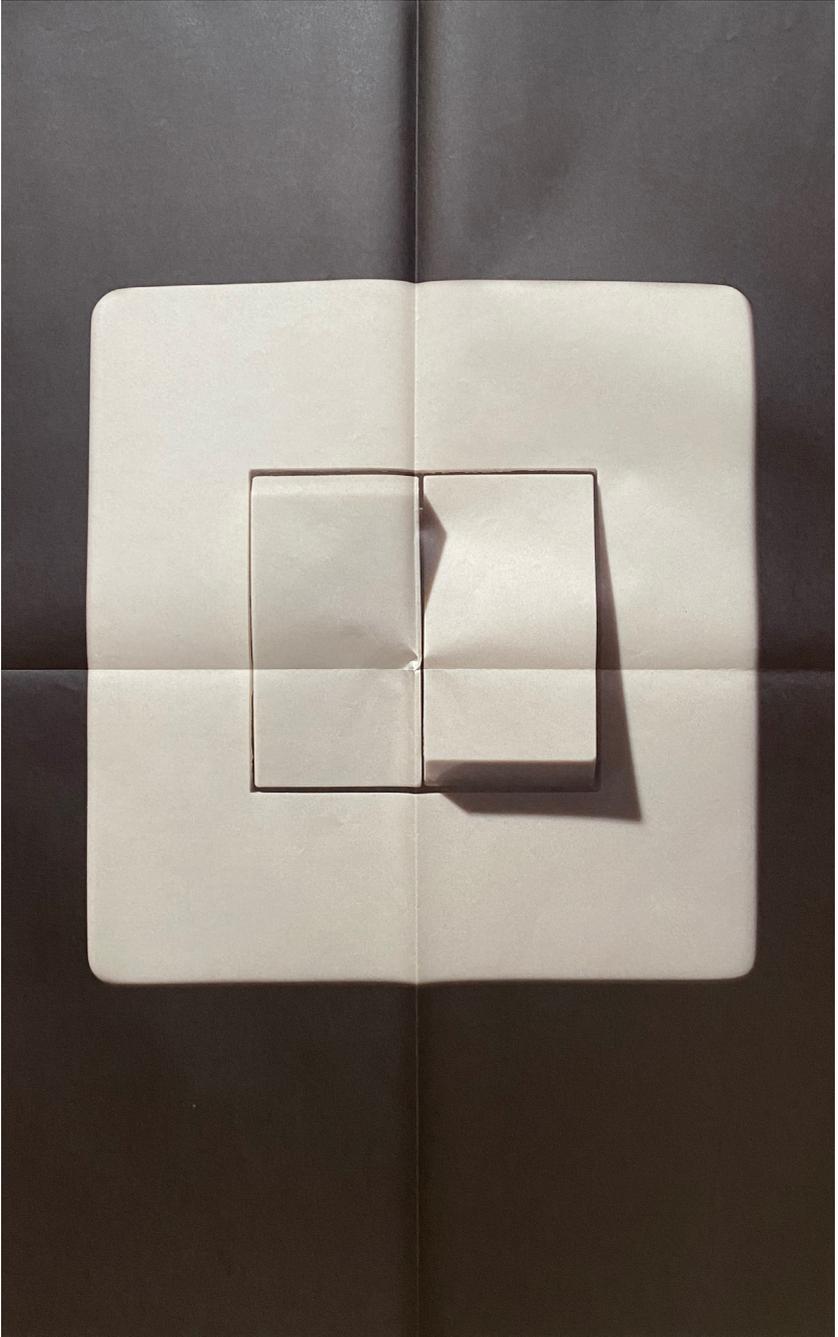
Once the methodological framework has been identified, it is now an open door to a and upcoming research subject...

Architect designed

A cartographic representation of the work and influences of
Morales Finch Architects

Emilie Morales, Tom Finch

Morales Finch Architects



‘Architect designed’

The title of this cartographic representation of our work is a nod to an often used, but confusing, phrase, that would somewhat questionably imply that the involvement of an architect elevates what would otherwise be a lower form or less refined act of building.

It is also the basis of an explanation of how we see our role as architect’s within the context of our work, ‘authorship’, and the influences that have, and continue to shape it.

As such, this is not to be confused with the idea of ‘architecture without architects’ which examines the act of building as a spontaneous act and in an ‘untutored’, vernacular, manner, but instead how the architect (us) perceives them-self in relation to builder, user and building.

To date, as is often the case with small and relatively young practices, our work has been primarily concerned with residential projects and their interiors. This is a unique typology as the spaces by their nature are private, often unseen by us in their finished inhabited state, and understandably subject to the various preferences of those who use the space more so than other types of project.

Whilst initially frustrating for these very reasons, our working methods and preoccupations have developed to respond to the reality of these arrangements, having grown to understand its potential and the ways in which it is appreciated



differently by the various parties involved.

We have grown happy at the ambiguity between what was already present and subsequently altered in projects, with the architects hand not always explicitly clear. In doing so we continue to explore;

- The idea of 'archetypal objects'. What is it that makes an object recognisably what it is, and why given the often numerous variations of it, do we select one particular version of it, and what does that reveal about it's selection.
- The reduction or adjustment of familiar forms as a means of investigating what are the characteristics that make something recognisably what it is.
- The extent to which work is considered 'finished' and by whom and how this may vary in terms of a client's needs and the architect's ambitions, and how this potential dislocation between the two is expressed.
- Formal and material consistency. How this regularity and discipline is often assumed as a measure of control and quality in architecture and in signifying the involvement of an architect
- The representation of work. How the involvement of non-architectural photographers and collaborators has shaped our own understanding and appreciation of or own work and the priorities we have within it.

Practices in Research #03

The representation of this work and working method will therefore be similarly un-hierarchical, and vitally important in expressing these intentions clearly and the links between them.

A combination of completed 'architectural' projects, non-architectural works, and frequent points of reference are to be expressed uniformly, so as to preserve an equivalence between them regardless of scale, complexity or type, and to hopefully present them collectively as a single body of work.

This will take the form of a predominantly printed display of 'A' format pages, with the various images and texts printed in their original sizes and colour formats etc, thereby intentionally avoiding the presentation of a neatened consistent display. With no specifically intended order, a smaller format, loose bound document is to be distributed to those in the audience which will be displayed within a reproduction of one of the projects discussed; an object used to display 'Kilimanjaro Magazine' that simultaneously doubled, and took aesthetic cues from packaging material, for overseas art fairs.

Page 2. 'SWITCH ON', Kilimanjaro Magazine, Issue 10 'What is Happening Now'. Published; London, 2010 . Page 4. Site photograph (Atelier for Laure Prouvost, Molenbeek, Brussels), Morales Finch Architects, September 2021. Page 6. 'Art, Love & Everyday Life', installation for Kilimanjaro Magazine at 'bstore', Morales Finch Architects, London, 2010.



A shift in the inner landscape: rusty arcades, airy wooden panels and hanging textiles

Yosuke Nakamoto

Accademia di architettura di Mendrisio
Studio Nakamoto

While on a journey of exploration, one would inevitably come across a shift of destination. Often it is caused externally as a result of feedback between action and reaction or simply due to the change in the spirit of time. At times, this shift is internally driven due to one's own change of mind. It could be seen as a result of the altered destination of one's inner landscape. What causes that shift in an inner landscape?

As part of the investigation, I aim to examine the transitioning inner landscape of my own by referring to 3 different phases of my architectural practices, that took place dominantly during my academic career.



I set off my architectural journey with the scope of chasing “beyond the unknown.” An inner landscape that was shaped by numerous internal journeys and a love for the vast, distant landscape depicted in the resonating grain of world cinema that conveyed some kind of emotion. Early academic projects entailed robust, repetition of columns, a sort of an everlasting construct that tries to build a frame capturing that feeling of vastness from without.



An interlude of the inner landscape came about, as I eventually found access to the stream of past times in my everyday life in Vienna. Sitting in a Gasthaus on a late October evening, surrounded by the porous wooden panels evoke my inner landscape of that period. I'm thinking about Grünauer, Ubl and Schilling. My academic projects of that period is charged with an analogous attitude. To take the continuously existing past as a textbook and respectfully nestling alongside.



A more current shift was facilitated by another relocation, this time to Switzerland. A landscape that was previous within started to entangle with the immediate natural landscape.

A keen eye was planted to capture the sense of moment through understanding seasonality in further precision as we do in the far-east: the 24 solar-terms and 72 pentads. The projects became reactive to conditions and food related themes were submerged. A lightness was gained both materially and in relation to the time.

Parallels maybe drawn to other models of exploration in the work of art. Other shifts of inner landscapes are evident, while reviewing works of Giorgio Morandi. Through painting of repeated motives, the line and surface suddenly transcends to reveal a condition of reality. Andrei Tarkovsky's search of his internal homeland, while taking on a journey to shoot *Nostalgia* in Italy.

The inner landscape is a constantly evolving matter. Components will be added onto what is already molded and the entirety reconfigures itself after the addition just as T. S. Eliot wrote on the nature of works of art: the existing order is a complete matter only until the moment the new work arrives. The whole existing order is altered and „the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted.“

There are two purposes on unfolding the issue of inner landscape. One is to clarify my own path in a semi-biographical manner while being a journey man. Somewhat comparable to different styles of Shinohara or the different academic phases of Wittgenstein. With the hope that this exploration will generate certain strength, a product of congruency and intentionality, which will help me anticipate for the next

shift. Architectural arguments could be often validation seeking, following the direction of the blowing wind. I wish to convey, that an integrity from within, a rootedness to one's own landscape helps for embodying a sense of independence.

Paper Architecture

Johannes Berry

KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture
Sugiberry

We propose a series of drawings (4 drawings) as a cartography of our practice.

We approach the construction of these drawings as a project, in other words, in the same way we would make architecture. We want to make paper architecture with the same approach we use to make physical architecture.

Usually we start with coincidental material combinations, and in this meaningless relationship, we explore their meaningful connections that could lead to architecture.

In this case, the materials are for making a drawing, and not for making a building.

A pen and paper.

We had some Japanese Vegetable Washi Paper lying around from a previous project.

We chose a pen for the specific papers with a colour matching that of the paper.

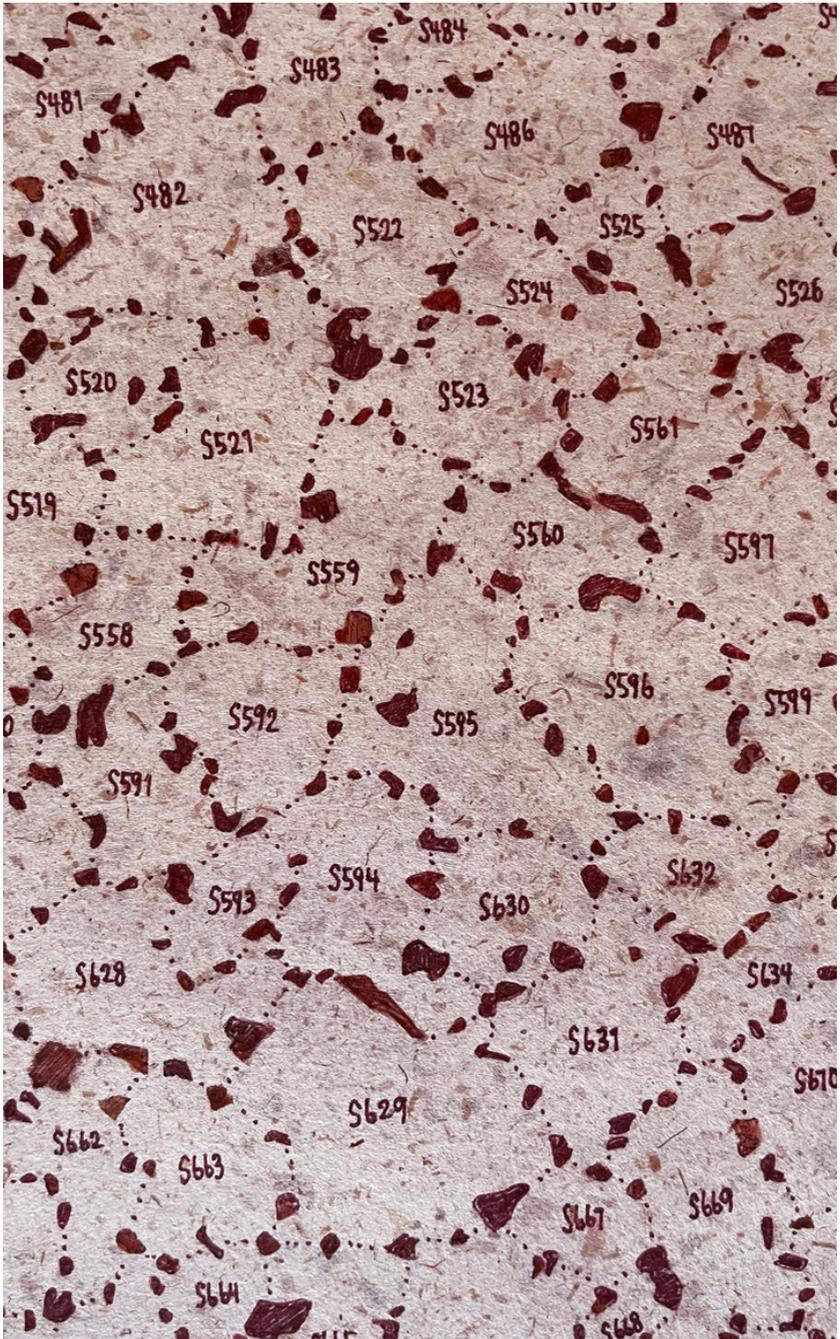
Green paper - green pen, red paper - red pen, yellow paper - yellow pen etc.

The vegetable remains form darker speckles on the paper, which creates a certain depth and spatial quality.

By colouring them in they become even darker which accentuates the spatial quality.

The drawing starts to look like a plan, an architecture of random sized and shaped vertical members, forming a fast landscape of spaces.

As you would with a plan, we coded the individual spaces, and so on.



EXPLORATIONS

As the etymology suggests, explorations are a process of discovery which is fueled by expression (plorare), addressing the inquiry of forms of communication. Explorations are maybe also about the unveiling of inner dispositions and mechanics (pluere). This is about close observation, articulations, and in-depth reflection.

(extract from the call for contributions)

Non Demagogic Architecture

L'unique chemin de l'architecture, 50 years later

Pauline Fockedey, Valentin Bollaert

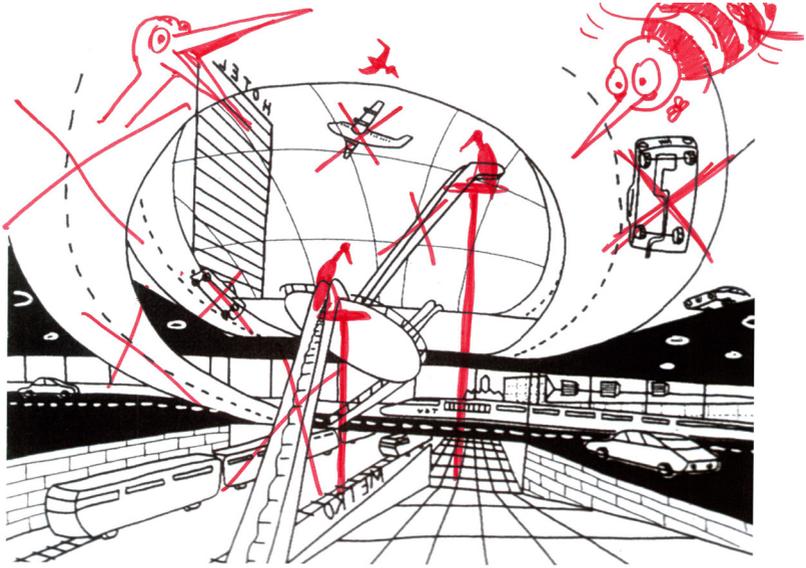
UCLouvain, ENSAV La Cambre
Nord

Architecture, by its implicit presence in society, is a public matter. It is because of this public dimension, even in the private sphere, that the practice of the field involves a negotiation between broader issues. Architecture as a disciplinary playground is not enough to produce a project, it is not enough in itself. It must propose forms as a means of expressing societal considerations and must precisely embrace this complexity. Through the prism of architectural heritage, participation, ecology as an aspect of our practice, but also as very trendy topics at the moment, how can we consider the proposal of engaged forms as a response in a wider framework than the project itself?

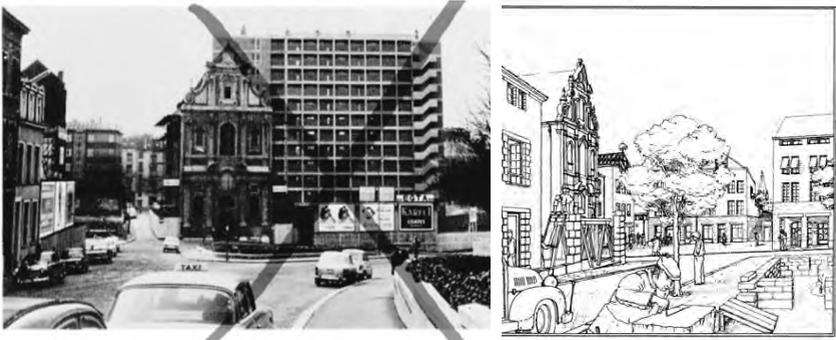
As architects, our responsibility is to introduce contemporary themes into our field that address questions, and to propose interpretations that will address these issues in a non-superficial way, seeing experimentation as a way to contribute to the production of knowledge. Our goal is to engage radically with a practice of architecture, not as activists, but rather as a matter of engagement, and to allow ourselves to invest these issues with an alternative attitude, one that summons sensitivity, narrative, expertise and involvement. With a triptych of projects, each considering one of these aspects, we wish to analyze and experiment how political conviction can be heard in our field. We believe that it is through proposals that we can try to implement these questions in our practice. Through our projects, we try to raise and offer forms and meanings that contain the essence of a political commitment. Architecture is political.

In the 1970s, this statement had become a point of reference for many architects. The critique of modernism was accompanied by an invitation to (re)consider a discipline that had lost sight of its social and political responsibility. Pauline, co-founder of Nord, is conducting a doctoral research on the theme of architectural education in Belgium at that time and it seems obvious that the subject studied resonates with Nord's practice. The "Bataille des Marolles" in 1969 is a notable success of the "urban struggles" and one of the many actions carried out by the ARAU (Atelier de Recherche et d'Action Urbaine) co-founded by Maurice Culot. The objective of the association was to make Brussels' urban issues public by giving meaning, vitality and visibility to the democratic processes.

The same year AAM (Archives de l'Architecture Moderne) was created. This archive is intended to collect the architectural production of the modern period not to promote it but to provoke a critical revision. This organization also served as a publishing house, disseminating Culot's work through periodical reviews and monographs. It is important to note that Culot also taught at La Cambre during this period. The school, founded by Henry Van de Velde in 1926, is known as the "Belgian Bauhaus. Throughout the 1970s, the workshop Culot directed at La Cambre was an essential part of his work at ARAU, as he relied heavily on the work of his students. He asked them to draw "counter-projects" that embodied the urban and architectural opposites of what was then being planned and built in Brussels. This historical context will allow us to understand how Nord's practice pursues similar objectives but also, and more importantly, how it differs from the strategies of the time.



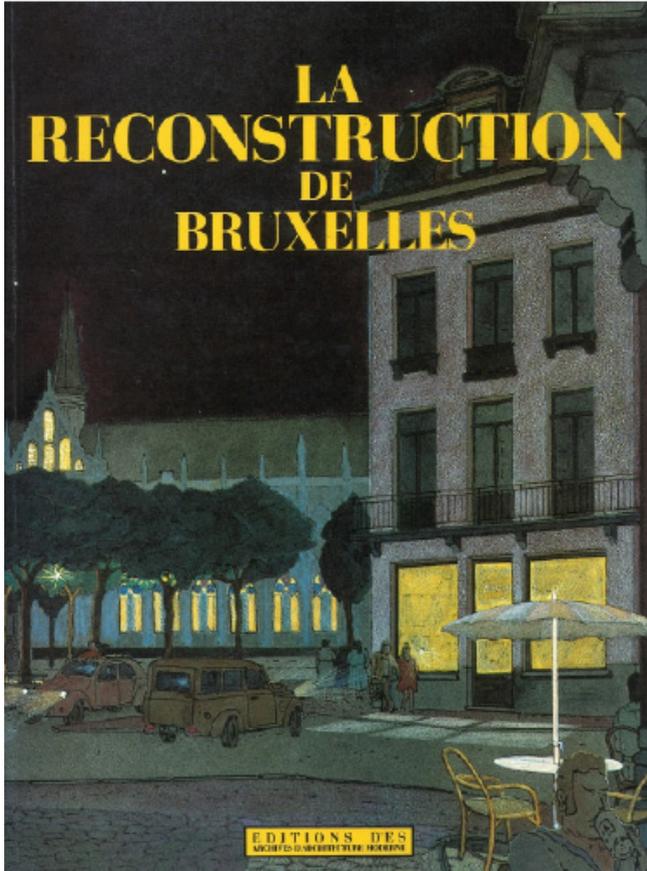
Nord / Denicolai & Provoost, Valladolid: Rehabilitation of a suspended public space adjacent to the Lille-Europe train station in the perimeter of the Euralille masterplan (O.M.A.), 2018, Lille (F) - lost competition



Sefik Birkye and Gilbert Busieau, Reconstruction project for Marolles, student work in La Cambre, Brussels, 1975



Nord / Charlotte Marchal, *Vue sur*: Research and realization of an audio-visual installation around the personal house of the Belgian modernist architect Roger Bastin, 2021, Namur (BE)



Maurice Culot, René Schoonbrodt, Leon Krier, La reconstruction de Bruxelles: recueil de projets publiés dans la Revues des Archives d'Architecture MODerne de 1977 à 1982. AAM, Bruxelles, 1982



Installation by Jean Glibert at La Bourse for the exhibition La Couleur et la ville curated by ISELP, 1978, Bruxelles. Photo: Jean Glibert

 Itinéraire salubre entre Louis Vuitton et Prada
 Inouï saga  exclusive libre de production
 Interdiction de siffler entre les ponts 
 Intégration sans équivoque  largement plurielle
 Insertion souple en lieu palpable Curiosité et jeunesse
d'après - nouveauté
et d'été - iselp
 ISELP Inscription subliminale de lierre plastique
 Innovation synchronisée en lieu de prestige
 Interrogation  surprise écoeurante lâche et privée
 Immigration scene extended to lesbian paradox
 Inbetween strategy  embedding lazy parties
 Illusion system emphazing love  pool productions
 Illegal subtitles  excluding lower pulsions
 International Society of Equine  Locomotor Pathology
 → <https://iselp.org/>

Nord / Denicolai & Provoost / OSP, ISELP : Redefinition of the graphic and spatial identity of the Institut Supérieur pour l'étude du langage plastique, 2020, Brussels (BE) - ongoing

Inductive Research

Building site as a catalyst for re- flexion

Thibaut Barrault, Cyril Pressacco

ENSA Paris Est, ENSA Normandie
Barrault Pressacco architecture

TRAJECTORY

The act of building today extends to considerations that surpass the building itself. The shape - of all or of a part of the building - is conceived as much through the precision of an architectural and spatial language, as through questions related to territory, energy and the carbon intensity of construction.

RESOURCE

To build is to identify, transform and move a natural resource. Architecture is thus the art of manipulating matter, and of giving it order and form through gesture and thought. Initially meaningless, the matter traverses many stages and becomes architecture. The natural resource, after extraction, transformation, displacement, becomes a cultural element. It is belonging to a controlled assembly that charges the resource with meaning. And, conversely, it is its belonging to an identified territory that charges the assembly with place.

CONSTRUCTION

We are developing a strong appetite for construction. From the early stages of design and through the various stages of construction, the project seeks to express the architectural and constructive potential of materials and to reveal, through assembly, their intrinsic nature. The manipulation of natural resources, and the considerations linked to their transformation and displacement, are thus an opportunity to confront certain theoretical canons with an unprecedented relevance.

ULTIMATE CONDITIONS

Execution time allows for an immediate and pragmatic confrontation with objects and materials. The construction phase is considered a period of experimentation, where constructive systems are placed in a situation of maximum complexity. Placing the material in this borderline state constitutes a condition where “the technique becomes project.”

TRIGGER

Thus, beyond a finality, we consider the worksite as the trigger for theoretical considerations capable of becoming the subject of specific research. Each project develops the particular conditions of its associated research.



Ground fragment

Saint Pierre d'Aigle, France, 2018

GROUND FRAGMENT

Through working with limestone in the construction of Rue Oberkampf in Paris 11, we realized that architecture was a transformation and a displacement of fragments issued from the ground. We then measured and represented the quantity of material available, the geological deposits, evaluated the carbon footprint of the extraction and transformation of the matter into material, the energy, and took measure of contemporary projects built with this material, the relevance of stone. This survey, mainly focused on the resource and the sector, led to a public exhibition allowing us to share and widely diffuse this acquired knowledge.

ASSEMBLAGE

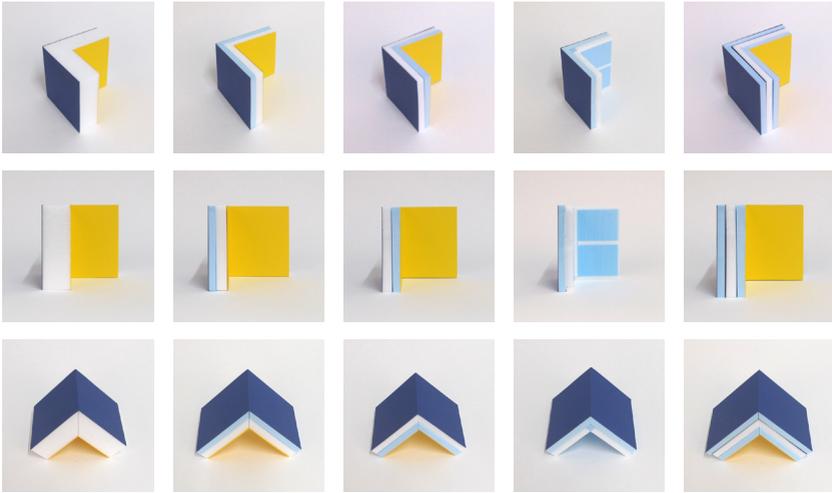
This same project was also an opportunity to consider the necessary complementarity of materials within a complex construction. The assembly methods between materials of different natures were explored as part of an installation for the Ile de France Biennale of Architecture and Landscape. We produced an artefact featuring three joinery details characteristic of the constructive tradition of Japanese timber framing, between two materials, stone and wood. The dialectic engaged between exogenous techniques and craftsmanship, and a local, indigenous material, has made it possible to highlight the means and devices by which we act on the world and their implications on issues of architectural theory.

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03



Assemblage

Biennale d'architecture et de paysage d'île de France, 2019



Fullness studies, 2021

NECESSARY FULNESS

Through the use of projected hempcrete in the construction of Rue Marx Dormoy in Paris 18, we plan to define insulation as an architectural element that generates specific forms, writing and spatiality. The means of implementing the material by accumulation, the relative position of the structure and the insulation, the constitution of the lime-hemp pair as a natural composite material, are all site experiences that motivate the pursuit of further explorations. A call for projects within a more academic research framework is the opportunity to prolong the investigation.

The publication of an upcoming book will report on this research which explores the formal potentials of natural insulators with regard to theoretical issues. It also questions the place of the architectural project as an area for experimentation specific to its field, at the limit between fundamental research and industrial prototyping.

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03



Ultimate limit conditions

Prototype for laboratory tests, 2021

PROTOTYPE

The housing development for the Olympic Athletes' Village is the subject of substantial funding to support the development of an innovative constructive process. This applied research project aims to characterize and normalize a prefabricated timber frame wall structure insulated with hempcrete. An exhaustive test protocol aims to validate this constructive mode and to constitute an immaterial heritage for the Olympic Village. It is a booster for the sectors involved. By being placed in this borderline state within a real and complex project situation, this construction method must prove its maturity and therefore its reproducibility. This research is thus applied to the realisation of a building and will be the subject of a publication giving an account of this unique approach. It will also allow us to question the place of architecture as a driver of innovation.

RECIPROCITY

This articulation between research and project within the agency involves collaborators in a reflective and not just productive process. It re-situates the architect in his or her collective and cultural mission. It reciprocally nourishes both the projects within the firm and the educational projects of our teaching. In this sense, it constantly questions the universal discipline to which it belongs. Finally, it investigates without restraint the means and devices by which we act on the world.

Ephemeral Architecture as a tool to bridge academic research and professional practice

Salvator-John A. Liotta, Fabienne Louyot

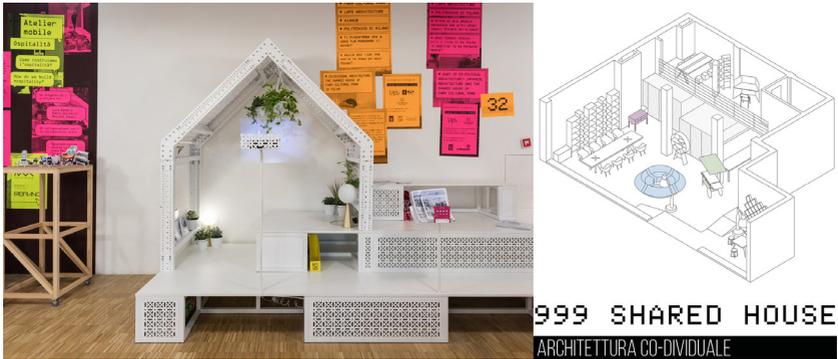
ULB, Faculté d'Architecture La Cambre Horta
ENSA Paris-Belleville
laps architecture

This text focuses on a specific part of our architecture concerning temporary pavilions. Since the beginning, we reflected on what aesthetic-epistemological-programmatic-material approach to have as driver for developing our practice.

As part of a broader strategy to keep practice connected to research we aimed at designing and building temporary constructions and exhibition spaces as a research tool.



Designed in a collaborative process, this pavilion was conceived in academic setting. After that, the completion of the drawings and the construction were followed by professionals.



Conceived as part of the exhibition 999 questions on contemporary living, this installation was conceived in academic setting. The installation was paired with an off-site Share house where the architects involved

The fact that both partners are both practitioners and involved in academic teaching and research create favorable conditions for maintaining a research-based approach in professional practice. Established in 2012, we have realized that the older our practice grows the more conventional our architecture tends to become. Often, the reason is linked to the ideas of “playing it safe” in order “not to scare a client or jury”. To escape this risk of conforming and obey to the will of clients or even worse to the dictatorship of the budget, we integrated in our design strategy the recurrent practice of making ephemeral architecture for freeing our needs of experimenting. This activity is seen a fruitful experimentation field in order to explore topics, details, strategies, materials in a less constrained context than traditional building commissions. A small pavilion, as a tool to test new solutions, is functional to rethink and trace the limits and perspectives of architecture. Since, pavilions are quicker to materialize and are not submitted to building regulation, building permit or other type of construction constraints, they prove to be an invaluable tool to advance our understanding of architecture and

to test ideas otherwise not appropriate for standard and certified construction. The design and construction of pavilions too present a certain set of constraints which however are different from real construction.

Giuseppe Pagano, director of Casabella magazine from 1931 to 1943, was one of the first to indicate the theoretical and experimental function of this type of «temporary» architecture. For Pagano, the architecture of pavilions is a container for the ephemeral, a playground for staging architecture, operating as a sort of link between production and creation, construction and experimentation. The temporary architecture we have realized in general does not require significant economic investment (often a private sponsor or a research fund covers the costs) but it is an invaluable tool to advance our research and integrate it in our practice.



Humans Forest is a temporary experiment conceived with a multi-disciplinary team composed of architects, sociologists and botanical experts. The project invests the interior space of an art gallery and is conceived as a space of reflection within the chaos of urban life.

It is precisely in this way that we have chosen, since the creation of our agency, to design and build pavilions. They have progressively become for us a tool for bringing design closer

to the act of building, offering us the opportunity to experiment new «conception-visions», to test out proposals which would be impossible to put in practice because too risky for a real project, to put forward ideas and to produce an accumulation of new knowledge on the making of our architecture. The recurrence of this practice has become very significant for our practice. The design and construction of a pavilion is part of a global approach to applied research in architecture aimed at examining new principles, original solutions in terms of material, program, form, performances, recycling or assembly techniques.

Thus, constructing an exhibition pavilion is in no way comparable to constructing a building intended to last. It is a fundamentally different activity from that of our daily work as architects. The project itself is of a completely different nature. Thinking, designing and implementing a pavilion allows for more freedom; the constraints are fewer and less severe, and this on several levels. In the case of an exhibition pavilion, it is mainly a question of focusing on its materiality and tectonics, as well as its plasticity and ergonomics. The architectures we imagine are never the mere reflection or translation of concepts, they regularly bring into play new relationships and interactions between its constituents: programs, materialities, components and structure.

Over the last ten years, our agency has designed several ephemeral architecture including the Sea, Islands and Food Pavilion for the 2015 Milan Expo, What is co-dividuality? at the Farm Cultural Park in Favara in 2017, a Pavilion installation for the «999 Questions on Contemporary Living» exhibi-

tion at the Milan Triennial in 2018 and, in 2020, the Human Nature Pavilion, a kind of trees sanctuary inside of a ruined aristocratic building of the XIX century in Favara. In addition to these large-scale Pavilions, we have also developed an ongoing activity of producing «small Pavilions» in academic settings, such as teahouses, shelters for archaeologists, «Pop-up» Pavilions. These small creations allow us to continue testing different materials: paper, wood, recycled plastic, etc. The construction of these «small Pavilions» is therefore of major importance in our working process; they have become an experimental tool that serves us to anticipate reflections and building choices used for other larger-scale constructions: it is a way to accumulate knowledge which serve for future intellectual speculations. For us the practice of designing a pavilion acts as a kind of bridge between the research/academic activities and the architecture practice. On both a small and large scale, the exhibition pavilions we have built on a «real scale» are entirely devoted to experimentation.

References

An exploration from the project

Verbiest

Ali Ismail

AgwA

Throughout the project, references are made by those discussing the project. Images are printed and pasted on the wall next to project documents, sent in an email or message, simply saved in an ad hoc repository, or so to speak chosen about the project at a conference. But, in the end, there is little point in matching references to the temporality of the project. It would be reductive, as if a reference only fed into formal aspects of a project, or as if establishing a collection of references was an attempt to constitute an imaginary reference point for the «design method».

If one decides to put aside the association of images to the origin, to the development of a project, it is interesting to ask ourselves the question of the role of feeding the process with images and other historical representations? In his thesis on the project method, the researcher Jean-Pierre Chupin encouraged to find in the reference an exercise of critical distance towards the project, where “it is on the contrary a question of encouraging the representations which will be likely to incite the designers to implement a capacity of reflexivity towards their own step. In this ethical perspective, it is not impossible to take advantage of the benefits of several reference models. If, of course, that they have the same characteristics, and that they can play the role of both descriptive and prescriptive guidelines.”¹ From the association of images and the architectural project arises the hypothesis that the references could, to this day, be more than mere formal allusions to the project.

1 CHUPIN, Jean-Pierre, *Le projet analogue : les phases analogiques de projet d'architecture en situation pédagogique*, Thèse de doctorat, Faculté de l'aménagement, Université de Montréal, 1998, p.131

This analogical approach is no longer so much a substitution of ideas as a displacement of meaning, a displacement of meaning that has the merit of situating the project and its concerns in a much broader temporality. This is both comforting, in the sense that the production seems to be inscribed in the history of architecture, but it is also disappointing in some respects. It appears like there is no inventions in architecture, ... It seems that these themes have always existed, and that these themes are repeated.

In a project like Verbiest, the architecture firm AgwA seems to revisit and adapt several fields of architecture, both through its major themes (urbanity, spatiality, light, ...), as well as in its more situated affinities (materiality, assembly and garden). Simultaneously, one thinks of Le Corbusier who transformed his roof terrace into a vegetal cluster in the middle of a dense Paris. There is Matta Clark who plays with the formal demolition in a city in constant transformation, and Souto de Moura who makes of this same demolition the reason of a rebirth. The urban jungle. The transformation of a roof and its social reading. The spatial sequence. So many musical tunes that evoke in us a singular familiarity. The "ritournelle" of the architecture.

Suddenly, architecture loses its sense of novelty. And if we can ask ourselves what it means to lose its sense of novelty, we might as well ask ourselves what it means to repeat ourselves, to do it again? How do you start again? And are beginnings always a source or a synonym of novelty? Doing again, what

do we do when we do and do again? Do we do something new, or do we repeat ourselves but differently? To do otherwise, therefore. Repetition offers infinite possibilities. In the words of Louis Kahn, history is what reveals the nature of man. «What is has always been. What was has always been. What will be has always been. (...) New availabilities arise when one discovers that nature has secrets, secrets and secrets, that they are still to appear which will free new availabilities of expression.»²

From this association of images and Verbiest, the project appears in regard of its past and contemporary productions, and suddenly, these references still nourish the questions that the project brought to ask, if not, open new ones.

The Not So Clean Desk

Els Van Meerbeek

KU Leuven, Faculty of Engineering Science
Carton123 architecten

It is a liberating exercise to not only look at others but also to scrutinise your work. Change your glasses for a moment, shift focus. Perhaps even change the character, like in the movie 'Kitchen Stories'¹, where the subject of observation becomes the observer himself. This exercise does not necessarily have to become a nostalgic celebration nor glorification of your oeuvre.

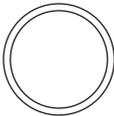
But how to evoke an architecture practice, from within, by tools of cartography ?

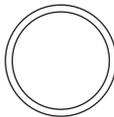
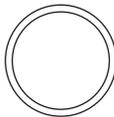
What exactly will be represented ? Is it the knowledge that lies hidden, like an almost invisible reservoir? Is it the memory that is contained or traces of the built oeuvre ?

Where to begin,
or more accurately,
where to stop ?

How far do you go, how far do you lift the skirt ? Because living and working are combined here, in our rowhouse on the Avenue Carton de Wiart n°123 in Brussels.

I 2 3

CART  N 123

RAES 
VAN MEERBEEK 

Doorbell of an architectural practice.
Bronze, 2008, scale 1:1

How to represent the genius loci or even modus operandi of an office ?

We believe in the power of drawing and would like to explore how far we can go in stretching its evocative powers.

There is nothing obvious about representing an office, especially your own. Drawing or representing, in general, remains a decidedly subjective exercise.

Will we like the gathered field data ?

What if we want to change the outcome ?

Will that be allowed ? A little 'lie for the best' or should we stick to the truth ? But why should we care about this notion of honesty in the first place ?

Confessing always goes along with the idea of a certain confusion. Why not draw it as well ?

Which precise moment is there to capture ?

An office is almost like a living organism, constantly changing and ready to adapt. Maybe a series of drawings are needed. Can a drawing incorporate the notion of time ?

Genius loci, 'the spirit of a place. The genius loci has become a construct, in which the knowledge, memory, perception and interpretation by people merge all together.



Map of the world in 3D, 'Relief-Technik'.
Hanging in the office of Carton123

Address. People. Objects.

Can our office be considered as a Wunderkammer ? Students from UHasselt² examined our practice back in 2018 and very often the word 'Wunderkammer' came up.

The objects that linger around in the office are part of a bigger story, they help us write new stories, build new buildings. Printed letters to fellow architects, a collection of stones, some of them cut in half, a magnifying glass, a stamp, an ever growing cactus.

Strangely enough, these little treasures, that at first sight have nothing to do with architecture, mean more to us than a photo of our work. Pictures of the built oeuvre happen to be completely absent.

What does it say about the practice ? Could it be that these objects represent important themes, values being crystallised ? Like an insight, that has grown during or after a building process, incarnated in one object.

So, yes !

Let's 'cartograph' our office, as we know it. With the elements of 'wonder and surprise and 'living-working that define it so profoundly.

Let us draw.

Nature & Dwelling

How biodiversity can transform
our living environments, the
case of Evenepoel, Schaerbeek

Nathanaëlle Baës-Cantillon

UCLouvain - LOCI

grue. office for architecture, urban & landscape design

Biodiversity refers to all living beings (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms) and the ecosystems in which they live. The term also includes the interactions of species with each other and with their environment.

Landscape structures, at different scale, play a key role for species diversity as their main habitat. If biodiversity loss is at stake globally, it also applies to urban environments with a weakening of the landscape structures, the decrease of natural habitats, the decline of species, soil erosion, all linked to anthropogenic factors.

For more than fifty years now, scientists have been calling for a collective action to save biodiversity as “we are living in a growing state of ecological poverty”.¹

The measures taken to maintain biodiversity have been mostly linked to conservation and restauration policies, focusing on open spaces with high biological value. Natural reserves have been delimited within cities and are taking part of the natural heritage of our cities. Nevertheless, despite their absolute necessity, they are no longer sufficient to cope with the scale of the disaster.

What is needed is more symbiotic approach, by reclaiming a vast range of open space devalued so far for not being ecologically valuable enough and where project of reconciliation (Rosenzweig) could take place to overcome the polarization between human and nature.

Our work within *grue*.², complemented by a doctoral research, operates within this context and focuses on biodiversity as a leverage for rethinking our inhabited urban landscapes.

The discussion will focus on a particular project won by

grue together with Matador, an architecture office based in Brussels. The project consists in the requalification of the open spaces and densification of Evenepoel housing estate in Schaerbeek, Brussels, in the vicinity of the Mediapark site and the E40.

At the crossing of the academic research, the work of grue engages here with the same interest for repairing the site through a strong approach to biodiversity: how can biodiversity influence the new conception of this specific environment? What are the actual limits of the project process, defined by very clear stages of work, when it comes to make more room for nature?

In Evenepoel neighborhood, the difficulty lies in the high artificiality of the site and soil, the lack of porosity and connection to its surroundings. The competition proposal departs from the existing conditions of the site such as the existing trees, the wider ecological corridors. It proposes to develop a new common ground around the housing blocks, where diverse biotopes could be implemented together with a more virtuous water management. But the room to maneuver seems very low.

We will see how the parallel tracks of research and practice can lead to contradictions but also how they could set higher ambitions. By proposing a re-reading of the project through the main structures that support biodiversity: the soil, the trees, the water and the bigger ecological structures, we will try to understand where are the limits but

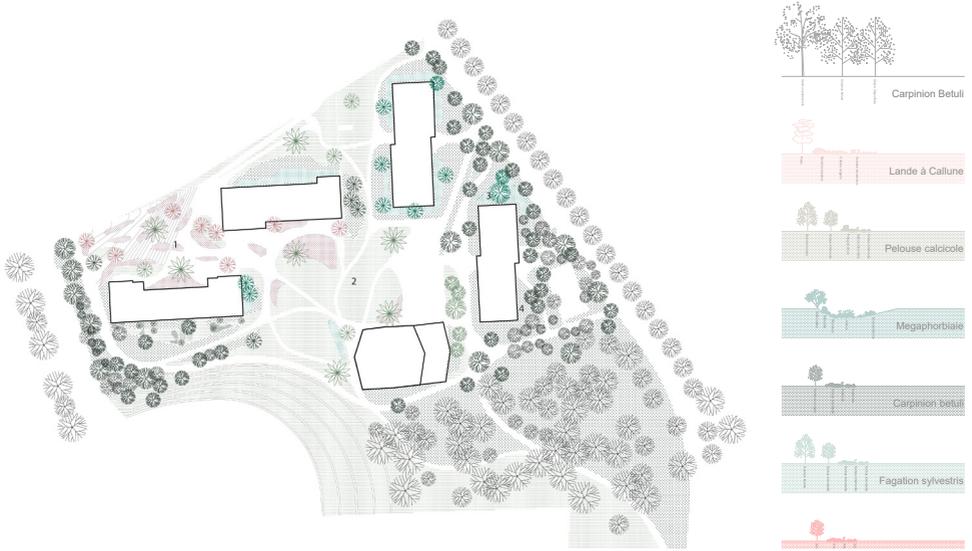
PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03



Plan of the existing situation: open ground as leftover.



Existing tree condition on site



Plan of the new continuities proposed and planting strategy

also the possibilities for experiment.

The project of Evenepoel could be a starting point to discuss the potential of a wider ecological network linked to the public domain, that could reinforce the existing natural heritage of Brussels metropolis.

1. Muratet A, Chiron F, Muratet M, Manuel d'écologie urbaine, Editions les presses du réel (2019)

2. Grue is an office for architecture, urban and landscape design founded together with Marie Alléaume and Rodolphe Raguccia and based between Brussels and Paris.

Primary Structures Factories

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(masterstudio Primary Structure icw Olivier Goethals)

Within the office GAFPA has always been fascinated by straightforward architecture. We are triggered to understand what makes a purely functional construction into what we call architecture. We like the contrast between the almost anonymous quality of the raw built form and the human qualities it generates. We spend a lot of time analyzing what is already there. Until you understand it to a degree that you can take it apart and put it back together again. We see our practice as rearranging found 'ready-made' elements, both historical, contextual and material and composing them in a new meaningful way. Sometimes it's the specific atmosphere of a site, the constructive logic applied, or a building material that triggers the initial concept. It's the thrill of finding new ways of expression, easier and faster ways to build, and the beauty of the space produced by the result, almost as a side effect. The naked structure, the most essential part of a building, is our main focus, to be



G1812 Industrial building, Gent (BE), 2021, GAFFA

inhabited or used in the way people feel like. The program is an excuse to create space which can only exist in that place, and at the same time is universal in it's nature.

In the masterstudio Primary Structure we have been archiving for the past years different types of built structures. Using the methods of Giorgio Grassi, Venturi Scott Brown or Bernd and Hilla Becher we examine anonymous buildings, industrial artefacts, historic factories, barns and supermarkets.

The existing structure is analyzed to the point it becomes inspiration for the second part, an adaptation or new design depending on the situation. The final result is presented as a standalone primary structure. With the deliberate postponing of the design act and trough the method of radical deconstruction we want to find a research method which generates continuity devoid of stylistic restrictions or a fixed formal language. We want to find a way to generate meaningful space which is specific and flexible at the same time without being generic or isotropic.

This year we analysed factories. We specifically looked for recent 'non architectural' industrial structures. In these examples every solution is generated by a contextual economic or pragmatic reasoning. In the studio we examine without judgement until we understand them and find out what determines their anonymous quality.

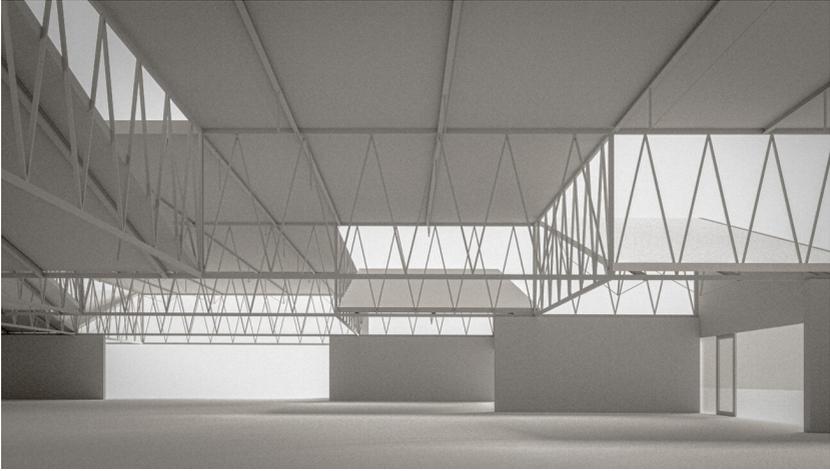
To make room for expansion in a transport depot an existing column was simply cut and held up by means of an improvised red painted truss. This resulted in a sort of gravity point as the intervention was clearly felt. In the student design this exception was used as the engine for the main solution of the



Detail cut off column

Transport van Caudenberg, Maxim Lannaux
and Corentin Lefebvre

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #03



Art Frame manufacturing warehouse, Maxim Lannaux and Corentin Lefebvre

roof construction.

We found pleasure in observing these slight deviations, the small deformations. The system is somehow humanized and made contextual by these imperfections. The clear resistance towards them happening results in a strong enigmatic presence.

In the lab15 project we used the standard elements from which most of the industrial neighbors were constructed. A standard wooden beam was used upside down. This choice resulted in a slight angled roof. The theme of the concrete panels was used in three walls. The fourth wall was made of panels in wood, prefabricated and identical in size. For the protection of the wood a metal canopy is introduced which almost feels like a vernacular solution. As in the transport factory the columns facing the covered space are cut and replaced by a giant wooden vierendeel truss. Although almost impossible to attain we are continuously inspired in making an architecture with the quality and the generosity of a good factory.

An architecture without qualities. An architecture in which the architect is almost absent.



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