

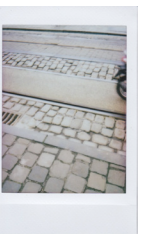
While we're young

Tant qu'on est jeunes

Studio Doorzon Fall Semester 2023

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EPFL Architecture

introduction



'We are the city'

In 2024, the city of Ghent (BE) will be European Youth Capital. The title European Youth Capital is awarded every year by the European Youth Forum, a platform of more than 100 European youth organizations. Ghent was able to convince the jury with a project based on contributions by its young inhabitants. The project is called 'We are the city' and is built around three themes: stimulating voluntary work and citizenship among young people (*engage*), creating physical and mental space for young people (*empower*) and building a city where young people feel safe (*care*). The city council wants to invest in actions, projects and ideas that will last beyond 2024.

The *Stadsbouwmeester* (the City Architect of Gent) and his team linked this to a project for and by young people. They called on 5 organizations composed of 50 young people who are the representatives of several city districts in Ghent. To find out what young people think of their own living environment, what they consider as being important and what they would like to see different about the space they use every day. A series of interviews was set up. From the conversations with these young inhabitants, a number of very specific concerns, needs and desires emerged; showing that too little space in the city is created exclusively for them.

Exclusive spaces with an inclusive character

Freeing up and preserving public space that is exclusively for young people is crucial. Youngsters need specific places in the city where their interests are represented and where they feel safe and seen. In the past decades Ghent has grown substantially and this evolution is continuing. The pressure on the city is increasing and accompanied by significant changes. Strong groups are claiming space. Unfortunately more vulnerable groups like young citizens are left behind. The city's attitude could be seen as ambiguous. Large investments are made in

favour of traffic, tourism, recreation and project development. The self-interests of these sectors seem to dominate the city's agenda and are becoming more and more visible in the urban fabric.

In our studio we question, challenge or ignore these power relations in order to begin from a different frame of mind. The starting point will be the lifeworld, daily habits and customs of young citizens themselves.

What if giving youth more freedom and space becomes a priority?

What if assumptions based on fear or ignorance give way to openness and the will to cooperate with younger generations?

What if more and especially more diverse spaces are allocated to youngsters?

What would young citizens (want to) do with them and what would these spaces look like?

What impact could a place designed specifically for young people have on the overall city life?

Could our proposals touch other complex issues or initiate change?

content

issues

sites

typologies

5 issues

In 2023 the City Architect of Ghent set up a series of interviews with various youth associations. They were questioned about the quality of their day-to-day operations. Several main themes emerged from this survey. First and foremost, young citizens of Ghent want to feel safe. They want space exclusively for them and more space to get together. Independent and unsupervised. Places that are safe, affordable, hospitable, accessible and adjusted to their needs. Space exclusive to young people. Exclusive space with an inclusive character.

Check link below for a short movie made by ‘Architectuur Platform Gent’:
‘Exclusive – Inclusive; 7 youngsters talk about space’
<https://youtu.be/XWoQG-ILCcl>

5 sites

We selected 5 locations. Each of these sites has its own character, liveliness, history, architectural features, problems and opportunities. We will explore these neighbourhoods together during the second week of the semester. (24-25-26/9). Students will be asked to make an analysis of these environments in teams of 4 to 5 students.

5 typologies

5 typologies represent possible tools to investigate the issues and explore the possibilities of the location. The typologies or architectural structures are a guideline for the design rather than a strict framework. Students are encouraged to (re)interpret these typologies, to study, learn from and transform the structures that are part of our architectural thinking. Typologies that ever since time form the basis for the design of public space, where social activities are central.

unsafe

~~dangereux~~

sécre

unaffordable

~~in~~abordable

inhospitable

~~in~~hospitalier

impassable

~~in~~frachissable

maladjusted

~~in~~adéquat

Sluiseiland

Shopping Center

Kaatsspelplein

Tolhuispark

Houtdok

kiosk

kiosque

square

place

dwelling

logement

path

voie

garden

jardin

...

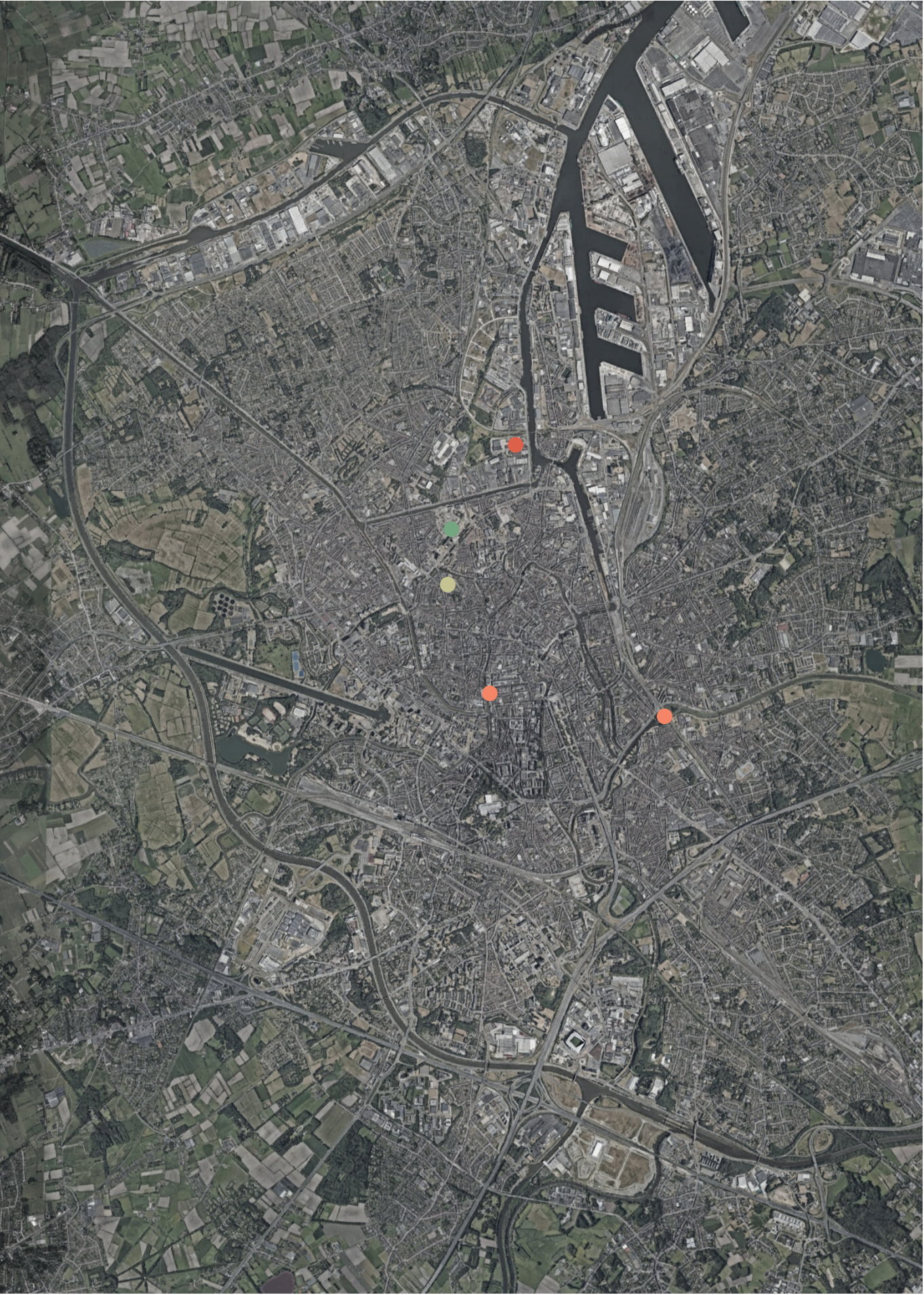
In this studio students will initiate a design research in which they question the public space of Ghent as it presents itself today.

The focus will be on the interaction and relationship of the human being with the site. We seek to understand the implications of the built public space on the use of the space, and more specifically how this built environment affects the daily activities of young adults.

Young people, autonomous and independent enough to claim their place in public space, are all too often criticized; they are considered annoying, noisy or even marginal. To participate in certain activities or to access certain facilities, they are either too young or too old. Prejudice or lack of interest mean that a large group of young adults have little or no space (or place) in the city. They are simply not heard, ignored or excluded.

While we're young allows students – young people but also future architects and designers – to delve into this topic and search for opportunities within the problem statement. They will explore and analyse the given sites in such a way as to gain new insights into what these places could be; the moment they are approached from the needs, desires and dreams of young people. Based on the belief that an exclusive approach can result in an inclusive and sustainable narrative.

Most of this research and analyses will be done while drawing. Ideas are tested in design sketches. The focus of the design process is on the use of the space. We investigate in what ways public space can be more inviting. How we architects intervene in structures that are already built and how these interventions activate certain behaviours. How they translate a dreamed situation, in which young people stand central.



2 Km

Ghent, Belgium



Sluiseiland



Shopping Center



Kaatsspelplein



Tolhuispark



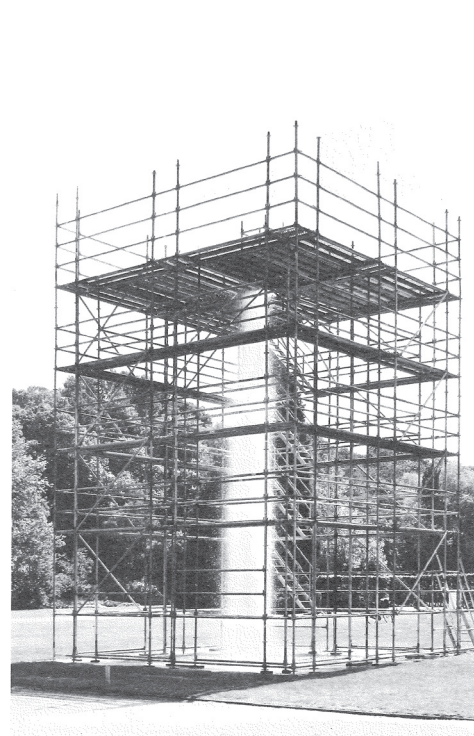
Houtdok

typologies



Molenwest square, 1010, Brussels , 2020

Kiosk



Study of a Vertical Line, Leon Vranken, Antwerp, 2013

Square



Malibran, Carton123 architecten, Ixelles, 2020

Dwelling



Corridoio Vasariano, Giorgio Vasari, Florence, 1565

Path



Derek Jerman's Garden, Derek Jerman, Dungeness , 1990

Garden

summary

‘While we’re young’ studies the possibilities within the city of Ghent to create places exclusively for young people. Exclusive but with an inclusive character. The starting point is the investigation of a number of specific locations in the city. Students will explore the terrain, the specific issues or needs. Based on the study of different typologies studies will discover new possibilities and opportunities, in order to create a new or dreamed reality.

Instead of trying to solve problems or giving a technical or purely functional solution to a specific problem, students will be challenged to use their imagination as a way to open up and broaden the way of thinking and thus the design process.

We will shift from traditional ways of designing the public space – often limited to refurbishing, organizing the surrounding streets and traffic lines, focusing on one-dimensional appropriation, to a new paradigm, starting from the world of young people, in order to open the debate around a topic that is currently underexposed.

‘While we’re young’ also refers to a defining period in one’s life, often accompanied by major changes and intense experiences. In other words, it is a call to seize the moment. So let’s have fun!

methodology

Starting point (introduction)

Students will draw (blind) 1 issue/1 site/ 1 typology. This will be their starting point. We create 3x 5 groups of students; according to the 5 sites, the 5 issues, the 5 typologies. Each individual student is part of three teams. The team they share their issue with, the team they share their site with, and the team they share their typology with.

1 Study Trip

During the second week, we plan a study trip to Ghent, Belgium in order to visit the proposed locations. Time will be provided in which you and your fellow students will be able to explore and visualize your location (in team). Additionally we’ll visit some interesting projects and invite you to cook and dine with us on a fantastic location. This study trip is – in addition to the need to explore the terrain – a way to get to know each other; it marks the start of a promising and very exciting semester!

6 Table talks

A table talk is a moment in which we discuss with a student or student group around a desk. Other students are free to participate. We may organise table discussions by issue, by site or by typology. This way, the discussions can be dynamic. Students learn from each other as they operate in the same domain, conduct research on the same topic or work with the same typology.

5 Moments or Reviews

The table talks will alternate with 5 Moments in which students present their work. Every of the Moments is a time in which we discuss and evaluate the individual design process of each student. The student will give a presentation of their work ‘so far’ to the other students and teachers. It is a moment of discussion and evaluation with the entire studio. Sometimes visited by external critics from inside or outside the school.

For each Moment, students use a specific presentation technique as listed below.

At the end of each Moment, the student will not only be asked whether everything was clear in the talk and debate, whether other aspects are expected in the talk or debate, or whether the debate has not overruled or misunderstood the student’s ambitions and direction or goals at all. More importantly, the student is asked to briefly reformulate the criticism and if possible already formulate a certain direction the student would like to take after the criticism.

The table talks and the Moments are general training methods which will be the format of education on an altering basis. These talks and debates are considered to be oral and not the subject of a written report or any other method of reporting. It is recommended that the students help each other to repeat the talks as eventually required.

1 Midterm Review (One of the 5 Moments)

The format of the mid-term evaluation is similar to the format and conduct of the other Moments, except that one or more external guest critics will participate. The format involves students gaining new insights and different perspectives through additional input from one or more experts.

1 Final Review (Last of the 5 Moments)

The format of the final assessment is similar to the format and implementation of the Midterm Review. At the Final Review, several external guest critics will be invited to participate in the debate and discussions, in the presence of all students and teachers. Students are encouraged to reflect on the past semester, expressing what they learned, how they want to move forward, and how they intend to approach future projects.



Alioth Lucie, *universum carousel journey*,
drawings, Studio Jan De Vylder, ETH, 2020



Bastien Ung, drawing class, ENSA Paris
Malaquais

#1 Location, location, location

9-10 October (Teamwork)

1 plan
+
5 photos
+
50 drawings
+
1 movie

The base for a good design lies in a smart analysis of the existing context. Examining its history, the socio-cultural aspects, the architectural qualities or the disturbing elements - any relevant part or aspect that has made the site what it is today - is a first step in understanding or reading it.

Learning objectives:

/ Reading the existing situation and processing this observation.

/ Mastering the scale of the site.

/ Understanding the organization of the site (traffic, circulation, infrastructure ...).

/ Detecting the interconnectedness with the immediate surroundings or neighbourhood.

/ Identifying the (architectural) qualities or defects of the site.

/ Exploring the possible (design) opportunities that could change or improve the use of the site.

Deliverables:

/ 1 plan on a scale adapted to the size of the site. (Panel)

/ 5 high-quality photos, printed and presented on the same format.

/ 50 hand drawings, presented on the same format (A4).

/ 1 movie of max 2 minutes.



Alioth Lucie, *universum carousel journey*,
drawing, Studio Jan De Vylder, ETH, 2020



Universum carousel journey, drawing, Studio
Jan De Vylder, ETH, 2022

#2 God is in the detail

23–24 October (Individually)

1 (or 1 series of) detail(s)
1 drawing OR 1 model OR 1 axonometry

Rather than seeing the conception or development of a detail of a structure as the last step of the design process, for this exercise we will shift the focus to the starting point of the design. The design process will be directed, starting from the development of the detail.

By detecting, observing and studying details at the given site, working them into a series of drawings, students will be encouraged to develop their own set of details or design language. The concept of detail does not only include the notion of the constructive detail. It is about the encounter between different materials, the way a (structural) element is deployed in the concept or the extent to which an artistic detail or ornament can form the basis of the design.

Learning objectives:

/ Identifying & representing 5 to 10 details of the plot that are unusual, surprising or (un)conventional in the construction method, the historical features or interventions that contribute to the use and appropriation of the space.

/ Proposing a new program for the site, addressing the issue.

/ Launching the design process of the typology.

/ Creating a new detail resulting from the above-mentioned study, that can be deployed in the design of the specified typology.

Deliverables:

/ 5 to 10 details hand drawings, presented on the same format (A4).

/ 1 (or 1 series of) detail(s) represented in 1 drawing, 1 model or 1 axonometry, in which the students expresses the concept of the design.



#3 Topmodel – Midterm Review

13-14 November (Individually)

1 model

The purpose of making a model is twofold. On the one hand, the model is a means of presenting the design in the 3rd dimension in such a way that a viewer can immediately imagine themselves in the proposed or dreamed new reality. On the other hand, building a model directs the design process in a way that several aspects of the design process come together: stability, assigning materials and colours, testing spatial qualities, exploring the boundaries of where to intervene in the existing and where not to, etc.

Learning objectives:

/ Converting the design drawings into the 3rd dimension focusing on the spatial aspect of the design, feasibility (stability and construction) and expression.

/ Defining an appropriate scale that can represent the intended in the model, in a sharp and precise way.

/ Choosing the appropriate materials and colours, focusing on the expressiveness of the design rather than the faithful reproduction of the materials. (*)

/ Making a model, in which the students expresses the concept of the design.

/ Photographing the model in such a way as to reveal the use of the site.

Deliverables:

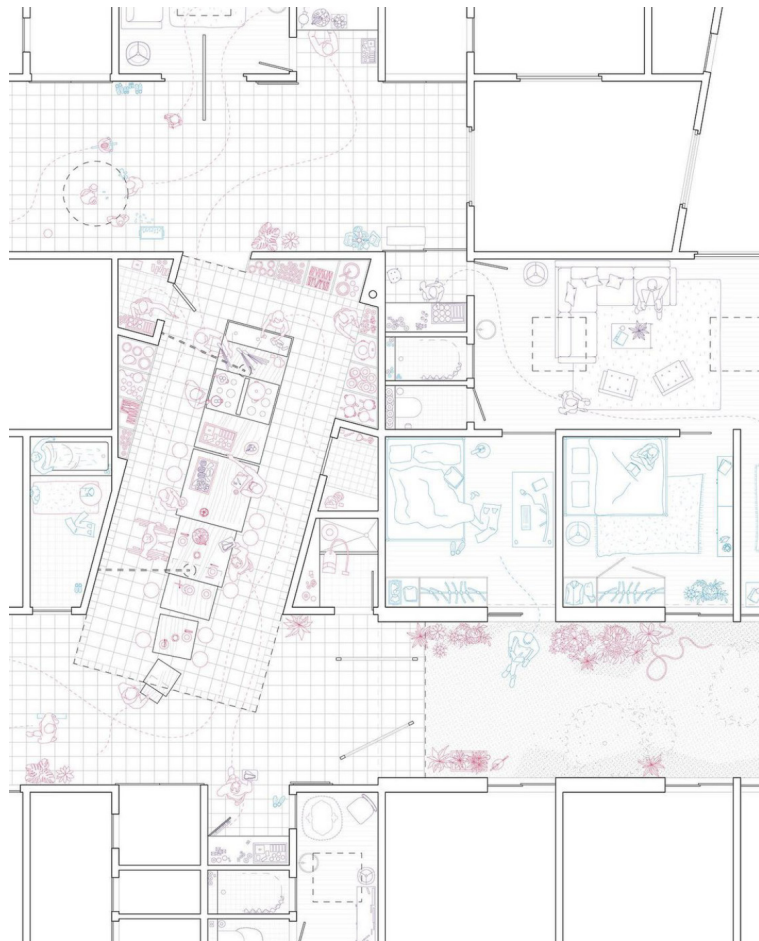
/ 1 model on a scale adapted to the size of the intervention or plot. Scale is determined by the student.

/ 5 high-quality photographs, printed and presented on the same format.

(*) The use of colour and materials in the model is well thought out and not accidental. The spatial interventions or design decisions should be clearly visible in the model. A certain degree of detail of the interventions should be deducible from the model (scale should be adapted to the legibility of the interventions).



Bossuyt Jarno, *Refuge*, Master Projet, Prof.
Everaert & Lateur, KU Leuven, 2022



Simone Mauro – Camyl Vigneault – Arla
Williams, *Nappe pour 100 personnes*, Studio
Sophie Delhay EPFL, 2022

#4 Welcome to the second dimension 4-5 December (Individually)

1 plan AND 1 section

Horizontal and vertical section go hand in hand. They evolve simultaneously. To comprehend and get familiar with the third dimension thinking and drawing in the 2nd dimension is crucial to develop the understanding of scale, dimensions, proportions and atmosphere of a space. Plan and section therefore are not just a tool to understand the way something should be build.

The student is able to represent the spatial qualities – both tangible and non-tangible, such as atmosphere and light – through horizontal and vertical section.

Learning objectives:

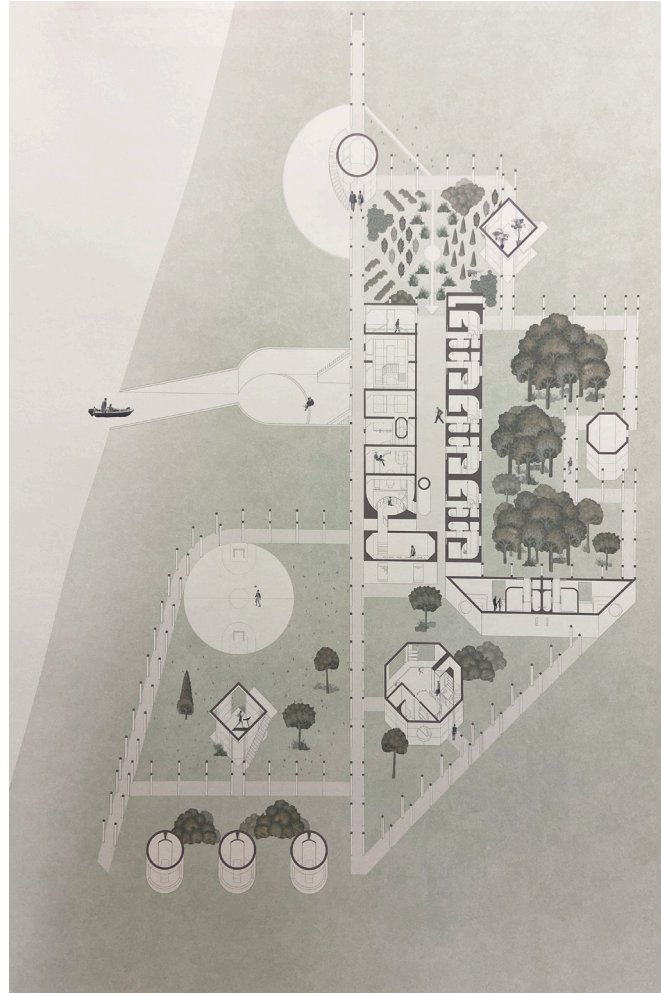
/ Converting the design into two 2-dimensional drawings – 1 horizontal and 1 vertical section – focusing on the spatial aspect of the design, feasibility (stability and construction) and expression.

/ Defining an appropriate scale that can represent the intended in the drawings in a 'sharp' and precise way.

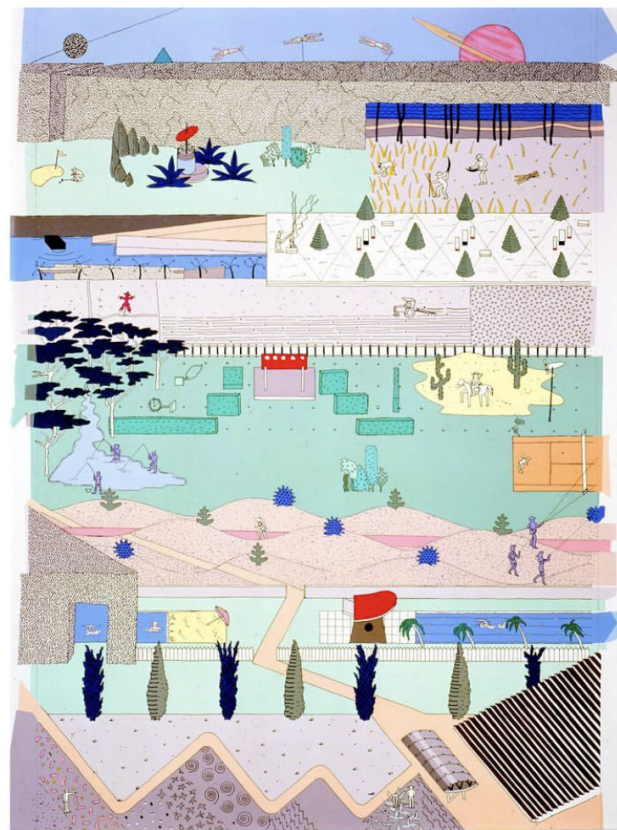
/ Expressing the new interventions that could change or improve the use of the site, through the plan and the section.

Deliverables:

/ 1 horizontal and 1 vertical section of the design 'so far'.



Bossuyt Jarno, *Refuge*, Master Projet, Prof. Everaert & Lateur, KU Leuven, 2022



OMA, *Parc de la Villette*, drawing, 1982

#5 From a distance – Final Review 18–19 December (Individually)

1 axonometry

M#1 + M#2 + M#3 + M#4 + M#5 = Final presentation

For the last Moment or Final Review, students will produce a 2D drawing that represents the third dimension. The axonometry allows the design to be viewed from a distance, which is typical of this type of drawing. The drawing is both informative and artistic.

In addition, for this Moment, students will synthesize the work they have done throughout the semester. The 4 preceding Moments can be used to visualize the design process and the evolution or progress made by the student. The Final Review is therefore both a moment of synthesis and reflection. It's about looking back at what has been, leaving behind what is no longer considered relevant, and moving forward with what is of value.

Learning objectives:

/ Making an axonometry representing the final stage of the design process.

/ Presenting the 5 moments in such a way that the student demonstrates the ability to give a clear explanation, both verbally and non-verbally ("let the drawings do the talking").

/ Demonstrating through the design that there is a clear link and coherent connection between the findings arising from the site investigation, understanding the issues and deploying and knowing how to develop the typology.

/ Reflecting on the past semester, articulating what the strengths of the design are and what could possibly be improved.

Deliverables:

/ 1 axonometry

/ Presentation of the 5 Moments.

assessement methods

The work of the student will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Design

- / The quality of both the design and its graphic representation in the 5 moments.
- / The extent to which the student knows how to formulate a clear concept and relevant narrative.

/ The extent to which the student can bring a design in which the research of location, issue and typology come together.

/ The extent to which the student knows how to translate the needs, desires and aspirations of young citizens into a spatial design that appeals strongly to the imagination.

The evaluation process will also take into account:

Research

/ The extent to which the student can adopt an inquisitive, curious and critical attitude.

Evolution

/ The extent to which the student has built their design skills.

Presentation

/ The extent to which the student knows how to express themselves both verbally and non-verbally.

Reflection

/ The extent to which the student knows how to implement feedback and information into the work.

collective charter

for a non-oppressive and caring working and learning environment.

fundamentals

The project studio is based on a spirit of solidarity and mutual respect in order to create and defend a safe space where everyone is free to express, or not, their identity, share their experiences and their work.

Respect and mutual attention guarantee the possibility of disagreements between each other. Each participant in the studio is expected to engage in self-moderation and to report problematic and/or oppressive behaviors, so that we can learn from our mistakes together.

Everyone taking part in the studio activities is committed to being aware of and reporting oppressive behaviors, which can manifest as: sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, classism, validism, psychophobia, ageism, judgments on clothing, origin or religion, as well as all other forms of oppression. This list is of course non-exhaustive.

The different points of the chart will be discussed, accepted, changed or added from a collective discussion between the teaching staff and the students. The charter is evolutive and can be built up over time. It aims to raise awareness of problematic situations in the context of a project studio in order to legitimize the use of dialogue to discuss these situations, and to all emerge from them stronger.

Each student is responsible for announcing, and as far as possible, justifying to the teachers and to their colleagues their absences and/or delays in order to maintain a collective dynamic and mutual support.

Teachers and assistants undertake to produce summary of instructions everytime there is new information given in order to homogenize and clarify the work to be done.
Each student undertakes to tidy up their work space and to maintain the workshop in a state that allows collective and individual work in good conditions.

Everyone agrees to consider collective values as well as their own individual interests in order to contribute to a healthy working space based on mutual support and respect.

The project studio is a place of collective learning where everyone owes each other the same respect, regardless of their administrative or hierarchical status.

Criticism and feedback from both teachers and students should be respectful, honest and constructive. Everyone is committed to questioning and discussing their ideas freely in order to maintain a healthy and collaborative working atmosphere.

Have fun!

study trip



Theo De Meyer & Olivier Goethals, *Sheela's*, Ghent 2022



Theo De Meyer, *Labath*, Ghent, 2022



advvt & doorzon, *Kavel Houses*, Ghent, 2013



Xaveer De Geyter Architects, *Melopee School*, Ghent, 2020



Stefanie Everaert & Theo De Meyer, *Serra - Un Soggiorno Segreto*, Ghent, 2020

During the second week, we plan a study trip to Ghent, Belgium in order to visit the proposed locations. Time will be provided in which you and your fellow students will be able to explore and visualize your location (in team). Additionally we'll visit some interesting projects and invite you to cook and dine with us on a fantastic location. This study trip is - in addition to the need to explore the terrain - a way to get to know each other; it marks the start of a promising and very exciting semester!

SUNDAY 24/9

Serra, Theo De Meyer & Stefanie Everaert, Landegem (BE) 2020

/ Gathering in the greenhouse.

/ Cooking and dining with the students and teachers.

/ There is the possibility for students who wish to do so to stay overnight in the greenhouse.

/ There is an hourly train connection between Landegem and Ghent.

MONDAY 25/9

/ Walk through the city of Ghent, visiting the 5 sites. (All students and teachers)

/ During the walk, we will visit some inspiring projects. Following locations are programmed (subject to possible changes):

Melopee School, Xavier De Geyter, Gent (BE) 2015-2020

Kavel M, architecten devyllder vinck taillieu i.c.w. doorzon interieur architecten, Gent (BE), 2012

Kunsthall, 019, Ghent (BE)

TUESDAY 26/9

/ Students will have time to re-visit and map their site by hand-drawing, photography, measuring, ...

calendar

week 01	19 september	studio start
week 02	25-26 september	study trip to Ghent
week 03	2-3 october	table talk
week 04	9-10 october	#1 Location, location, location
week 05	16-17 october	table talk
week 06	23-24 october	#2 God is in the detail
week 07	30-31 october	table talk
week 08	6-7 november	table talk
week 09	13-14 november	#3 Topmodel - Midterm Review
week 10	20-21 november	table talk
week 11	27-28 november	table talk
week 12	4-5 december	#4 Welcome to the second dimension
week 13	11-12 december	...
week 14	18-19 december	#5 From a distance - Final Review