

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022

Semester 3 & 4, Campus Sint-Lucas Ghent

Language: English

Engagement: Contested LEGACY

MAIG42 Master Dissertation Studio: arCsus Lab (architecture – Culture – sustainability)

Academic supervisor: prof.dr.arch. Marc Dujardin

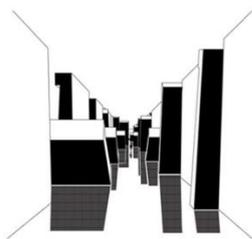
1. The arCsus Lab research theme: in close cooperation with RAAAF

DESIGNING FROM MUSEUMIZATION TO HARDCORE HERITAGE: *‘Towards spatio-cultural strategies that provide handles to rethink hopeful and seemingly hopeless vacancies from the perspective of ‘contested LEGACY’*

Statement:

“Hardcore Heritage represents a new way of thinking about monuments and cultural heritage. Through deliberate destruction, radical changes in context, and seemingly contradictory additions, a new field of tension arises between present, past and future.”

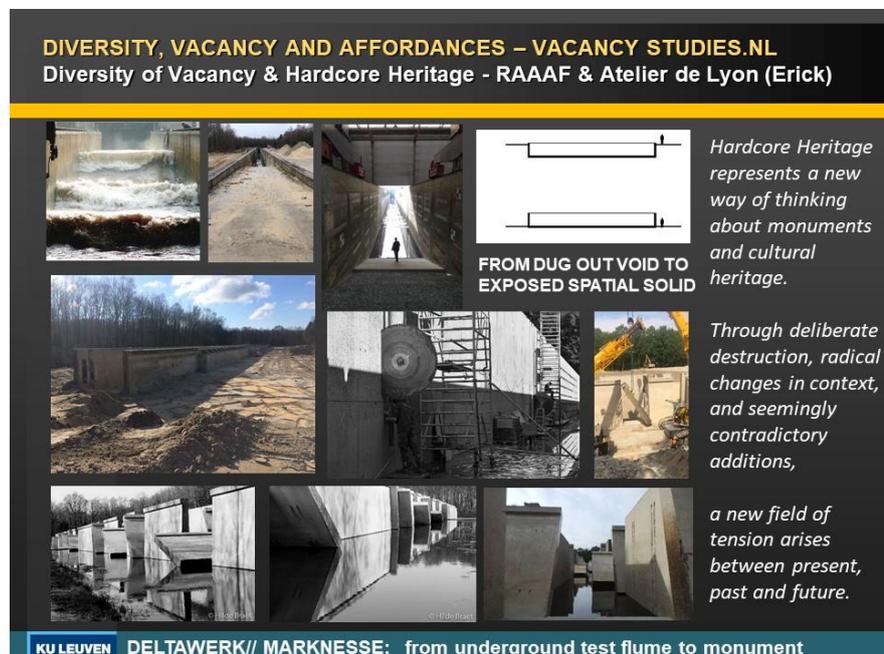
(www.RAAAF.nl)



Deltawerk //
Nederlands waterloopkundig laboratorium

Crucial concept sketch for

Deltawerk// (by RAAAF)



Making of Deltawerk// movie: https://www.raaaf.nl/nl/projects/1005_deltawerk/1261

2. The arCsus Lab research modus: our design teaching strategy

The master dissertation tracks, supervised by Marc Dujardin stem from the tutor's approach of architecture and design strategy as 'culture praxis' (Architectural Anthropology & Spatio-Cultural Sustainability) as developed within his 'arCsus Lab' (architecture-CULTURE-sustainability), and complemented by the 'out-of-the-box' thinking and acting of the innovative Amsterdam based RAAAF architects (RIETVELD Architecture-Art-AFfordances).

To shape what is envisaged by the faculty's ADO approach (Academic Design Office), arCsus Lab closely works together with the Amsterdam based design studio RAAAF (Rietveld Architecture – Art – AFfordances) since 2016. The synergy and chemistry between the supervisor's academic teaching (MAIG14 and MAIG42) and research from the perspective of Architectural Anthropology, and RAAAF's innovative art based research, centres around the shared theme entitled: "Diversity, Vacancy, Affordances and Hardcore Heritage".

Whenever the 'potential' dimension of architecture as medium of (spatial) communication and mediation is at stake, the role and meaning of culture as key dimension of sustainable development is commonly referred to as 'Cultural Sustainability', the fourth pillar of the sustainability concept (social – economic – environmental). Within this research framework, Architecture is approached as a 'cultural praxis' and draws on the young research field of 'Architectural Anthropology' (Dujardin 2000) and 'Design Anthropology' (Dujardin, Devlieger, 2021).

By exploring the interface of space, culture (material and immaterial) and environment (built and natural) from the perspective, skills and mediating role of the designer, one may well refer to as 'Designing for Spatio-Cultural Sustainability' (Spatio-Cultural in Dutch means 'Cultuurruimtelijk'). But above all, arCsus Lab aims at triggering, challenging and inspiring young designers to develop their micro-scale design strategies, interventions and statements from different entry points, conceptual frameworks, perspectives and modes of communication, representation and media. As such, the designer will develop his/her personalized skills to approach architecture in the broadest sense of the word and scale of intervention as a 'cultural praxis'.

Within this studio, we will never start with a prefixed program that seeks a place and/or a form. On the contrary, the contested legacy (from disused building to brownfield), within reach and limits of its various intertwining perimeters (relational, contextual, situational, design-based) seeks new narratives and affordances. No (architectural) design proposal (strategy and output) at the end of the design studio can emerge without a profound understanding of the place as an intersection of typical features that made and make up the spatio-cultural identity, content and imagery of this very rich but complex built landscape and fabric.

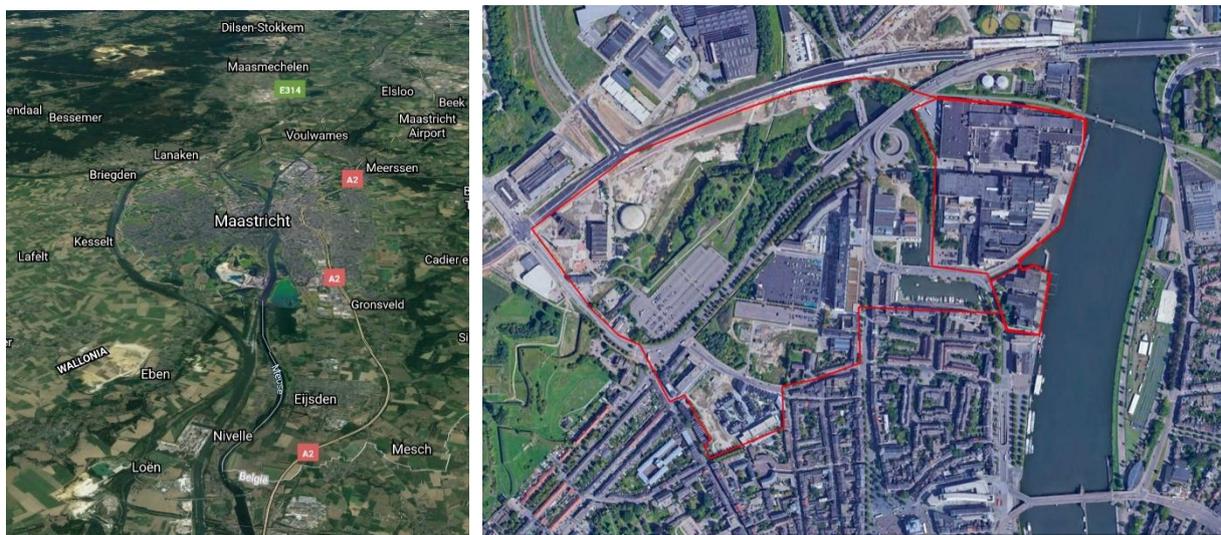
One, or a combination of international renown theory and practice-based design strategies, initiated by the academic supervisor in close co-operation with RAAAF, may well appeal to and inspire the student to upscale his/her design strategies, tools and frames of reference in relation to architecture, approached as a cultural practice.

They will facilitate the supervisor to understand what kind of designer you are, aims to be, and how you one can develop your personal 'design signature', empowering you with more confidence to play your role as engaged designers of the future: theoretical inputs include Bow-Wow's 'BEHAVIOROLOGY', Wang Shu's 'POETICS & TEACHING INSIDE RUINS', Zumthor's 'LIGHT, ARCHITECTURE & ATMOSPHERES', Marcel Smets' 'LANDSCAPE URBANISM', Alan Berger's 'DROSSCAPE', Stefano Boeri's 'MULTIPLICITY LAB', Marc Dujardin's 'CULTURE MATRIX DESIGN', etc..

Taking the student's personal interest and affinities into account, none of the above listed design strategies are compulsory, dogmatic or conventional. **None of the design strategies, mentioned above, will be enforced as a methodology to follow or adopt.** Intensive design-based consults and peer reviews will enable the student to evolve as well informed, deeply moved creative 'scenographers' in the field of architecture and spatio-cultural sustainability. However, from the vision and skills of the designer, **-the master dissertation in architecture is pre-eminently a DESIGN studio after all-**, the arCsus Lab team will focus on selective project sites in The Netherlands.

For those students taking up an internship or exchange program abroad (European or Trans-European) in semester one, and willing to finalize their locally initiated master dissertation within the arCsusLab research modus, **we welcome 'personalized' project topics and case studies, derived from local debates on vacancies and heritage issues.**

Essential to and shared by arCsusLab and RAAAF is the possibility and approval to conduct 'fieldwork' at the project sites selected. In these unreal times of Covid-19, rapidly changing measures and restrictions of national and international mobility, socializing and bubbling impact both the final choice of site location and the operational framework of our design studio. From our side, we propose the following case in the Netherlands, more precisely the chain of vacancies along the docklands of the Meuse in Maastricht and the front park -The Netherlands.



Overall relational design perimeter (landscape urbanism) (50 Ha)



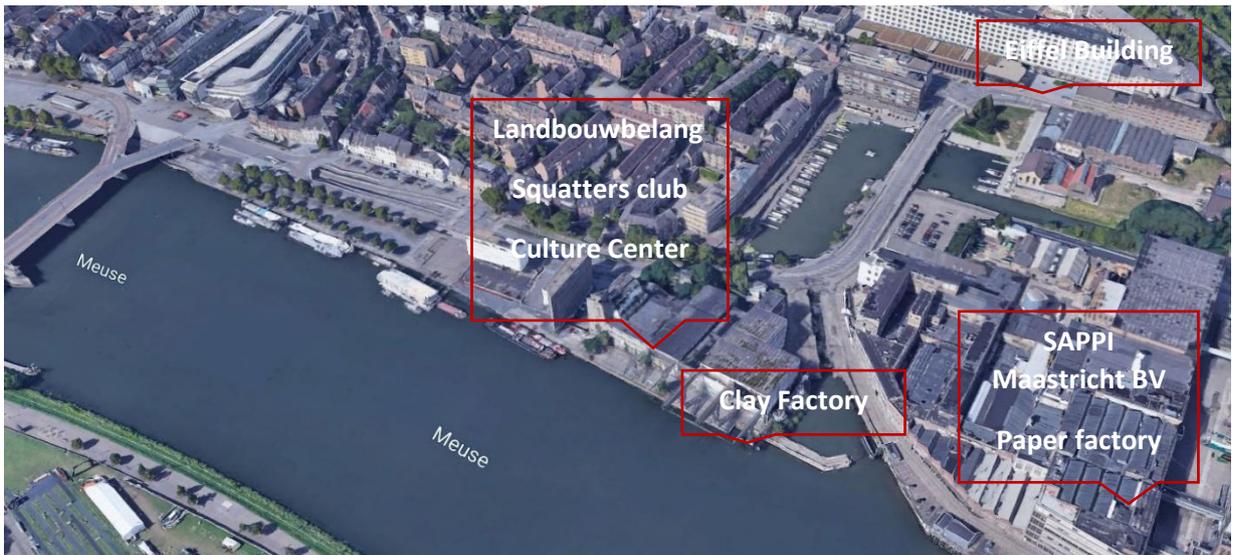
Landbouwbelang + Clay Factory + Sappi (11.5 Ha)



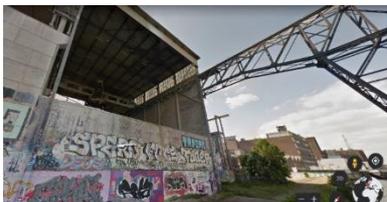
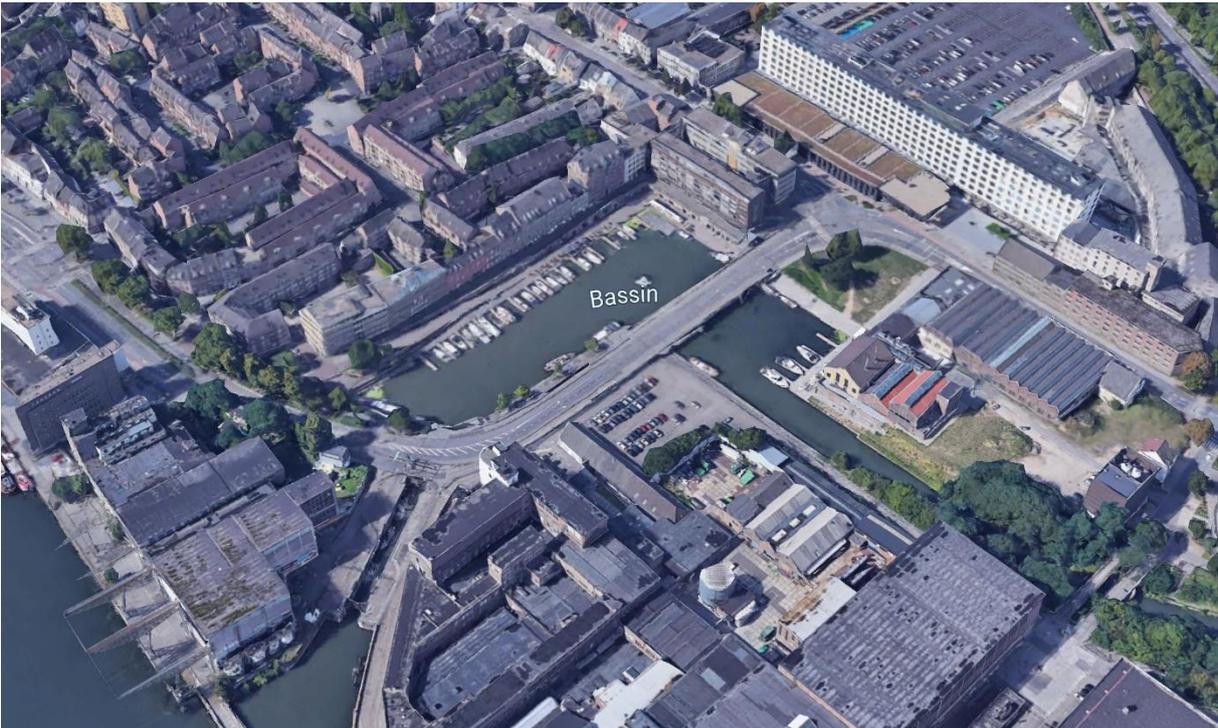
Landbouwbelang + Clay Factory (1.2 Ha)

3. arCsus Lab design studio sub-theme: MAIG42 MD – 2021-2022

From unintentional monument to spatio-cultural crossover: re-designing the squatted Landbouwbelang & clay factory site confronting it in a radical way with the earth of the river Meuse.



Pictorial reconnaissance via Google Earth & Streetview



Source Pictures above from 1 to 15 (courtesy and photo credit Google Earth).



Source Pictures above from 16 to 20 (courtesy and photo credit David Habets - RAAAF).

With an temporary installation at the deserted Eiffel building in Maastricht, entitled 'Fireman Walk', RAAAF intended to literally throw some light on the fire safety risks of the many disused properties in Maastricht and beyond. A movie shows how RAAAF placed rows of flaming torches inside the abandoned building so that it would appear to be on fire, before inviting visitors inside. https://www.raaf.nl/nl/projects/575_firemen/648

Relationally connected to the Eiffel building, being 'temporary' used as hotel and movie complex prior to its dismantling, the focus of this design studio comprises three interconnecting perimeters to reflect and intervene from a 'designer's' point of view and skills, each comprising (industrial) vacancies, addressing present-day spatio-cultural needs of a variety of subcultures.

A series of three interdependent design perimeters, -from the overall relational design perimeter embracing the lower and higher front park (50Ha), narrowing down to the extended site of the 'Sappi paper Mill Factory' (11.5Ha)-, serves to build up a multi-layered and more complex spatio-cultural context, against which we can frame our ultimate architectural design perimeter comprising of the squatted 'Landbouwbelaang' building and the abandoned 'Clay Factory', bordering the river Meuse (1.2Ha) – see picture 2-4.

From a designer and maker's point of view this peculiar industrial vacancy invites to reinvent the 'clay industry', using loam in more experimental ways and modes, and in so doing confront the former clay factory in a radical way with the earth of the river Meuse. For instance, we are very curious how existing construction techniques can be confronted in radical ways with a new way of using the material loam.

From a more sustainable perspective (social-economic-environmental and cultural), dealing with 'chasing away' a squatters' movement that has been around for decades, and developing spatio-cultural cross-over strategies and scenographies for a "frayed edge" that is subversive to the luxury apartment production out there today, represents yet another way into the complexity of vacancy studies from the perspective of hardcore heritage.

Similar to the former NDSM-Shipyard in Amsterdam (arCsus Lab master dissertation site 2016-2017 and 2018-2019) and the dismantled Sugar Union factory at Groningen (arCsus Lab master dissertation site 2017-2018), an entire subculture of activities, exhibits, and festivities is about to be wiped out for the benefit of financially strong capital investment developments wiping out entire phases of Maastricht's built history. Once again:

"Hardcore Heritage represents a new way of thinking about monuments and cultural heritage. Through deliberate destruction, radical changes in context, and seemingly contradictory additions, a new field of tension arises between present, past and future."

4. The arCsus Lab deliverables and evaluation format:

Evaluation format & timing:

The evaluation will assess the aspects as formulated above, i.e. the process and the final production. The outputs will be presented on a weekly basis by the student, and in intermediary reviews in the presence of the whole group (reviews) and evaluated. The teaching and coaching of design studio will be a combination of campus related and online teaching.

Criteria: see ECTS file and competence matrix.

Deliverables:

The project will be presented in mixed media. The reflection Paper and the video presentation are compulsory. All other representations by means of 3D scale modelling and more than recommendable.

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NOTE: We have opted not to make a video presentation of the design studio. An updated self-explanatory PPT presentation will be made available online soon.