

Master studio Semester 2 Brussels
Master Dissertation studio Brussels

2022 2023 - Harold Fallon & Sophie Laenen

Craftsmanship Engagement / The Brussels Way
ADO translocal (re)conversions

Real Life

real projects
about transforming social housing in brussels
and existing single-family housing



The heritage of many social housing in Brussels has reached a tipping point: the life cycle of various materials is coming to an end, the integration of housing in the urban fabric needs reviewing, the habitability and functionality of buildings deserve broader reflection, ...

bMa Brussels Master Architect, 2021

Deze master studio is gebaseerd op een actuele vraag, gelanceerd door de Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA) Deze heeft betrekking op de toekomst van bestaande sociale woonblokken en hun locaties, die een bredere reflectie vragen over de toekomst van het ‘recente erfgoed’ in de stad. De studio werkt cross-over tussen 1e en 2de master. Verticale uitwisselingen werpen hun vruchten af. Beide studio zijn gevestigd in Brussel (MARB) Studenten van beide studio's zullen hun krachten bundelen op dezelfde sites.

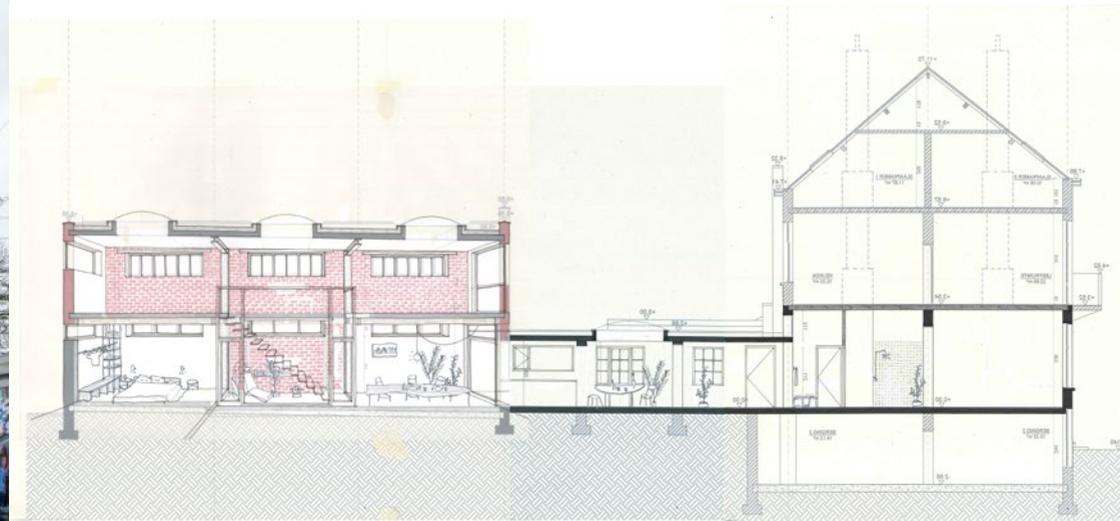
Général Jacques, Etterbeek



The refurbishment of terraced single houses, be it strictly interior or the usual cleanup of the back-façade, has become an obligatory step in every starting architecture practice in Belgium, and is a fertile ground for experimentation.

This studio is based upon real life tenders launched by the team of the Bouwmeester Maître Architecte (BMA) regarding the future of existing social housing buildings and sites, framing in a broader reflection about the future of “recent heritage” in the city, the should I stay or should I go debates and the contemporary topics of circularity and reuse. This design studio in Brussels is both a Master Dissertation Studio and a Master Studio. The two studios will collaborate in the form of small offices of two or three students. They are the kind of projects you may be confronted with after graduation.

Klimop (c) AgwA



Real Life

With the first year of Real Life (21-22), the Brussels Architecture Center (CIVA), the Brussels Master Architect (bMa) and our studio at KU Leuven decided to put the transformation of social housing built in the XXth century on the agenda. In the coming months, a series of debates with commissioners, architects and other actors from the field will tackle the challenges linked to renovation: changing buildings, changing contexts, changing tempo. The first talk, organised on site at Rue Haute, was combined with the exhibition of the students work from the studio.

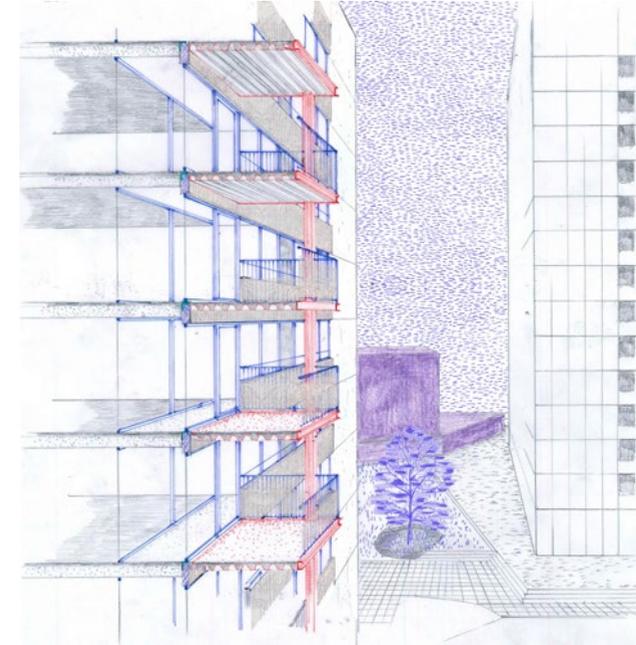
exhibition, 23/06/22, Changing Buildings



CHANGING BUILDINGS (23/06/2022)

Transforming buildings of the recent past implies taking position. They are unexpected architectural opportunities and force us to address challenging realities. Markedly in the social housing sector, they were built in a momentum of optimism and generosity departing from a kind of Tabula Rasa. Today, the economy of means in considering the Tabula Scripta is becoming the rule, be it in terms of budget, environment or human context. The constructive reality of these buildings poses new technical, normative, typological and spatial questions. The love-hate relation to this young heritage is slowly shifting too : not yet considered as monuments, there is a real margin of negotiation between their simplistic replacement and their identical preservation.

Brunfaut, AgwA+ZED, competition proposal, 2021



CHANGING CONTEXTS (sept 2022)

The existing social housing sites are marked by their lack of articulation to their context. The typology of the block or tower are but the morphologic expression of this deconnexion. Inhabitants are stigmatized as social tenants of large scale developments. Exterior spaces are often reduced to vast stretches of supposedly functional emptiness. Not to speak about the insufficiency of services, complementing programs and appropriable spaces. At the same time, the need of social housing is a strong argument against the reprogramming of existing dwellings and budget is systematically short to provide significant change and multifunctionality. An impossible equation?

Ghandi



CHANGING TEMPO (october 2022)

Some would say, time is of the essence. There is urgency in the renovation of these buildings and site, and there is urgency in expanding the numbers of social housing too. The point is not to mistake speed for haste, but also distinguish between prudence and procrastination. This is about feasibility studies, participation and competitive processes. Moreover, unlike demolition and reconstruction projects, existing buildings come with existing residents. This is about phasing works and moving plans. Could it also come together with a different approach on budget management? Change with a sense of continuity comes with additional and broader complexity: hopefully the condition of a more grounded architectural approach?

Rue Haute II



Small offices

This design studio in Brussels is both a Master Dissertation Studio and a Master Studio. The two studios will collaborate in the form of small offices of two or three students.

You will be confronted with real projects, sites and assignments regarding housing. It is about real assignments, real competitions, real people and real houses, with available documents. They are the kind of projects you may be confronted with after graduation.

Two scales

You will make two projects in parallel, exploring two different scales. On the one hand, collective social housing. On the other hand, the small scale refurbishment of houses.

(c)ZED



Brunfaut



Exchange and guests

The studies on these recent tenders and projects are currently ongoing, which means that the studios can contribute to ongoing reflections and that interaction with real stakeholders are possible.

For the intermediate reviews, architects working on these (or similar) projects will be invited during the studio to discuss their projects and your work.

In 2021, we invited BC architects, Zampone, Matador, Label, Carton 123 and Lava.

Dubrucq, Molenbeek



General planning

In september and october, two talks were organised with CIVA and bMa.

In the first semester, the Master Dissertation students will prepare the work, from site visits and contacts with inhabitants to documentation, from observation to the definition of an attitude.

In the second semester, small offices are formed.

The first day of the second semester is a presentation day by the Master Dissertation students, with guests. Offices are formed. In April, a second moment of exchange with guests is foreseen.

The final Jury of the master studio is the end of the group phase and the start of the final production for the Master Dissertation students.

Ketelstraat, Laeken



Real Life

2022 2023

extract of some sites and tenders
texts extracted from <https://bma.brussels/>
note that the final selection may differ
These tenders are from last year. The final selection
may differ. This will be discussed with the bMa.

Verrerie, Forest

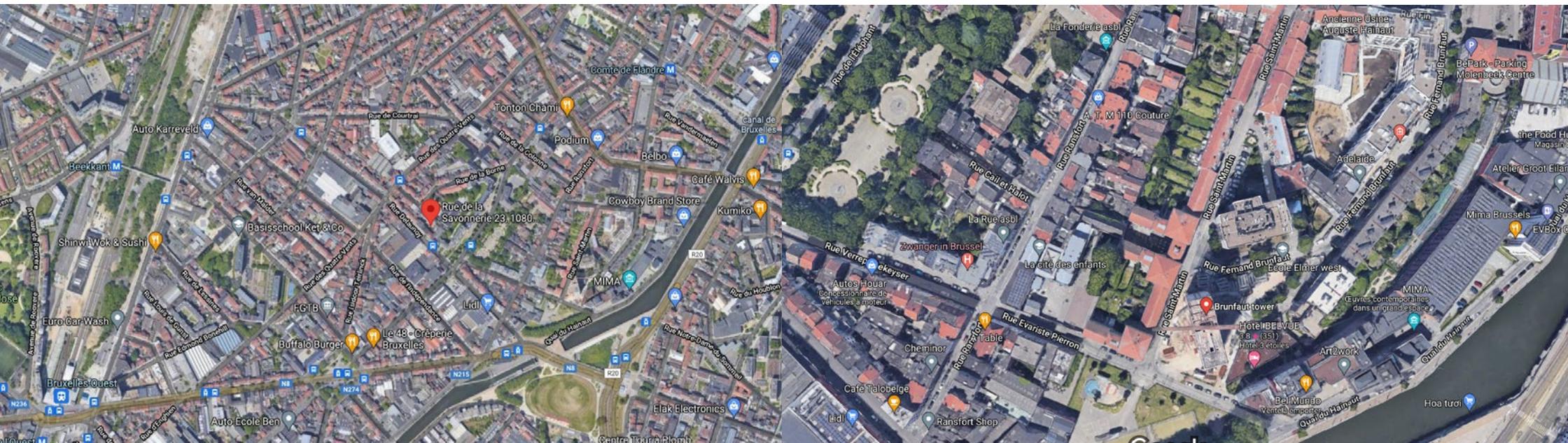


Savonnerie

At number 23, rue de la Savonnerie, is a building with 18 dwellings in a dilapidated state, evidencing weakness in terms of techniques and the building envelope. In addition, a large number of one-bedroom units no longer meet the current needs of Le Logement Molenbeekois . The challenge is therefore the review and improvement of the roof and façades, the complete renovation of the techniques, the total reorganisation of the dwellings, and finally, the development of the communal outdoor space. As with the other assignments, it is essential to approach the project according to the principles of the circular economy.

Brunfaut

Next to the Brunfaut Tower which is currently undergoing a complete renovation, there is a second, slightly newer social housing block with 14 floors. The supporting structure and the flats themselves are in relatively good condition. However, the technical installations and the façade are in urgent need of renovation. Le Logement Molenbeekois therefore wishes to renovate the tower in order to limit the inconvenience for the 93 residents to the minimum. This is an opportunity to remedy the difficult relationship between the base and the immediate surroundings of the building.

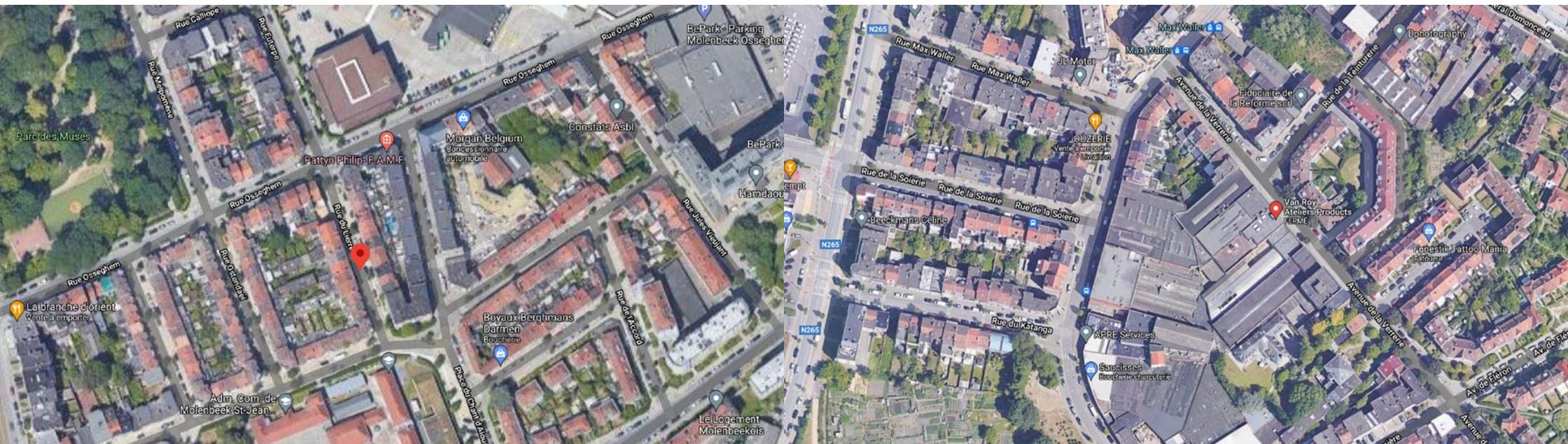


Demessmaecker

The 68 social housing units located along Rue Demessemaecker and Rue du Lierre require a complete renovation and a rearrangement of the interior spaces. Located just a stone's throw from the Delhaize site, which is currently under study, and the Van Meulecom housing estate, which is currently being worked on, the buildings targeted by this project boast a profound heritage value and are of average size, providing a perception of a very human scale from the street. One of the goals of the project is to better adapt to the life and composition of the residents' households by creating, in particular, dwellings with three or more bedrooms. In addition, the interior of the blocks will be enhanced and connected to the neighbourhood in order to create better encounters between residents. The identity of the site will be maintained and will enter into dialogue with the new interventions. Finally, the conversion of one of the corner buildings into a PRM-accessible building, with a focus on modularity and adaptability, will be one of the major challenges of this project.

Verrerie

The old industrial site of Van Roy interior decorators is located in lower Forest, between Bempt park and Forest abbey. Foyer du Sud wishes to turn this densely built-up site into one hundred social housing units, together with shared facilities, and a garden or outdoor area. There are various challenges in this mission. The project must promote a positive image of social housing with quality accommodation, open up the neighborhood by proposing facilities and pleasant outdoor spaces for locals and residents, improve the clarity of the urban block, while respecting the site's industrial past. Foyer du Sud wishes to appoint a multidisciplinary team (architect, engineer, landscaper, etc.) capable of developing a common vision based on conservation and urban mix, and consideration of activities linked to its temporary occupation. In fact, Foyer du Sud is negotiating with a site administrator in order to allow temporary occupation of the locations while waiting for completion of the project. (...)



Général Jacques

While the former barracks of Ixelles are being converted into an international university complex and a new district, the time has come to upcycle the former Federal Police housing units and unlock their potential. This residential building, currently used for temporary occupancy, is located at Boulevard Général Jacques 202 and extends along rue Wytzman to rue Toussaint. Only half of the site is part of the mission, which involves the major renovation of 61 dwellings without modifying the existing typologies. Based on an inventory of reused materials and a deconstruction test, the SLRB is determined to favour a project that opts for an exemplary circular economy approach. That is why the multidisciplinary team we are looking for, including a consultant in circular economy, can prioritise the following: the maintenance of materials, the reuse of materials on site and the supply of reuse materials as well as the valorisation of existing materials in the reuse channels. In addition, during the phase of the competition design, a TOTEM simulation of one or more apartments will be requested from the selected teams. With sustainability at the centre throughout the project's development, the teams will organise their reflection by following the 9 sustainability themes developed by the SLRB. (...)

Ghandi

Mahatma Ghandi Avenue has five residential buildings built between 1960 and 1973. Several problems arise: the complex creates a break in scale with the surrounding relatively dense residential area, the open space has no clear hierarchy and lacks quality, and the complex is in very poor condition and no longer meets current requirements in terms of habitability and accessibility. Le Logement Molenbeekois would like to study the possibility of densifying , which would create a greater mix of functions and types of housing. The scenario for redevelopment of the site will be decided on the basis of the study launched here and on the basis of which it should be possible to decide on the best option to be developed.



De Roovere – Machtens

Dating from the early 1960s, the De Roovere – Machtens building complex, located just around the corner from the Gare de l'Ouest station, represents a real challenge for its renovation. Composed of about ten buildings and with a little less than 500 homes, this part of the city has a number of qualities but also defects for which different approaches must be devised in order to prioritise future actions. In fact, there is a break between the front of the building, which is of reasonable quality, and the rear, which is mainly made up of car parks and leads to the wasteland of the Gare de l'Ouest station. In addition, these projects are mostly composed of small housing units in a context where larger units would be desirable. Finally, many water infiltration problems are currently being studied and will need to be addressed in future redevelopment scenarios. The whole renovation strategy will have to be designed in consultation with the inhabitants of the complex.

Moulin 41

Due to its location and its atypical size in the neighborhood, the building appears as a signal in its environment and has a strong presence. The complex has a certain architectural interest which deserves at least a reflection in relation to its future renovation. While some elements, mainly technical, have been replaced and/or renovated in recent years or will be replaced or renovated in the near future, the building envelope is now outdated and the energy performance is very low or even non-existent. Moreover, the base of the building, surrounded by railings, is out of touch with its environment, the garage entrances are located at the back and the immediate environment is very mineral, not doing justice to the building's potential. In addition, the roof could be used for the resident's benefit. Here again, the aim is therefore to develop a series of scenarios setting out the priorities for actions to be taken.



KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture
Campus Sint Lucas Brussels

Real Life

reinventing existing social housing in Brussels

2022 - 2023

Harold Fallon & Sophie Laenen

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Craftsmanship Engagement / The Brussels Way