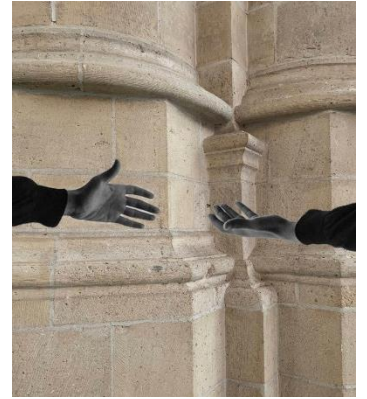


Reflection

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Heritage & Architecture
AR3AH105 Modern Malls Studio

Developed by
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The field of preserving and designing historical buildings and sites, including those of modern times, is expanding. Thus, it is crucial to analyse our current built environment to determine which elements should be recognized as historically significant. As architecture continues to evolve, it presents new challenges in identifying and safeguarding modern sites and structures with historical value. As a result, ongoing efforts are necessary to understand and deal with heritage in a changing world. This was the focus of my graduation project, which aimed to foster a thorough understanding of the layers composing the history of our built environment so that historical layers can be preserved, and sensitive interventions can occur. My project specifically focused on the revitalization of post-war shopping malls in the Netherlands, which are considered 20th century heritage that need to be revitalized based on the increasing vacancy these present.

This topic was closely aligned with the main scope of the master program, which focused on blending skills with knowledge, from research to design, while exploring innovative ways towards a more sustainable development. As such, my project involved both research and design, with a strong emphasis on the interaction between the two. Through the combination of the tabula scripta approach and the specific link to materiality and atmosphere, I was able to comprehend and create continuity in a historic multi-ethnic and multi-layered area.

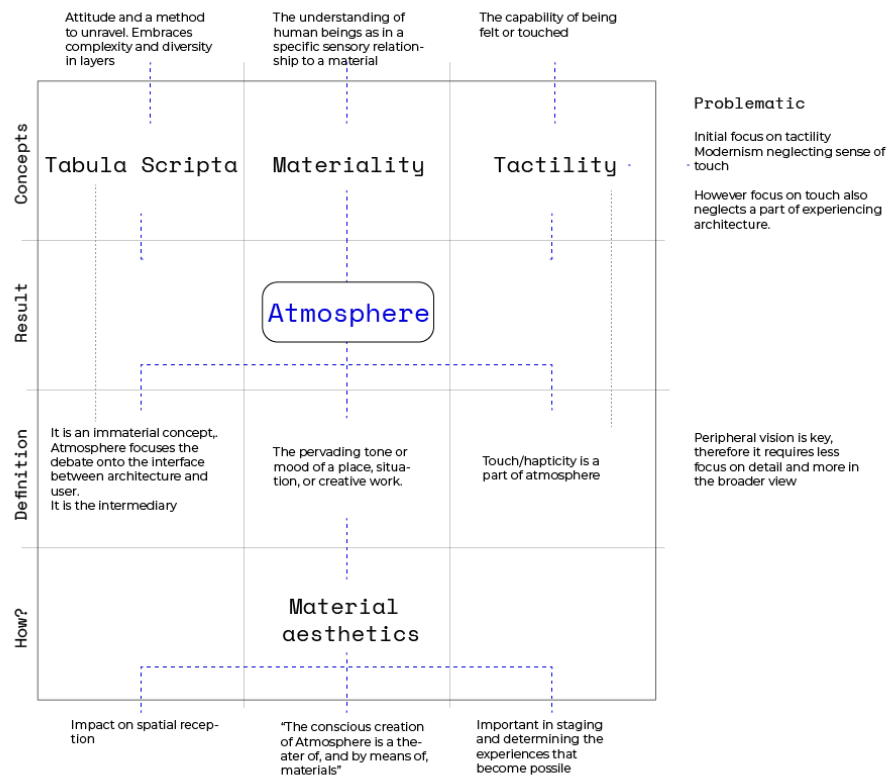


Figure 1 Progress and development of the terms used in the research process.

One of the challenges I encountered in my research and design process was the need to account for the unique materiality of a multi-cultural neighbourhood. As I worked to develop interventions for the post-war shopping malls in the Dutch context, it became clear that a generic approach to materiality would not be effective. Instead, the materiality of any intervention needed to be site-bound and responsive to the specific cultural context of the neighbourhood. This required further research and exploration to understand the unique materiality of the area and develop interventions that were appropriate and effective for its diverse population. By accounting for the specific materiality of the neighbourhood, I developed interventions that were not only sustainable and functional, but also culturally sensitive and appropriate.

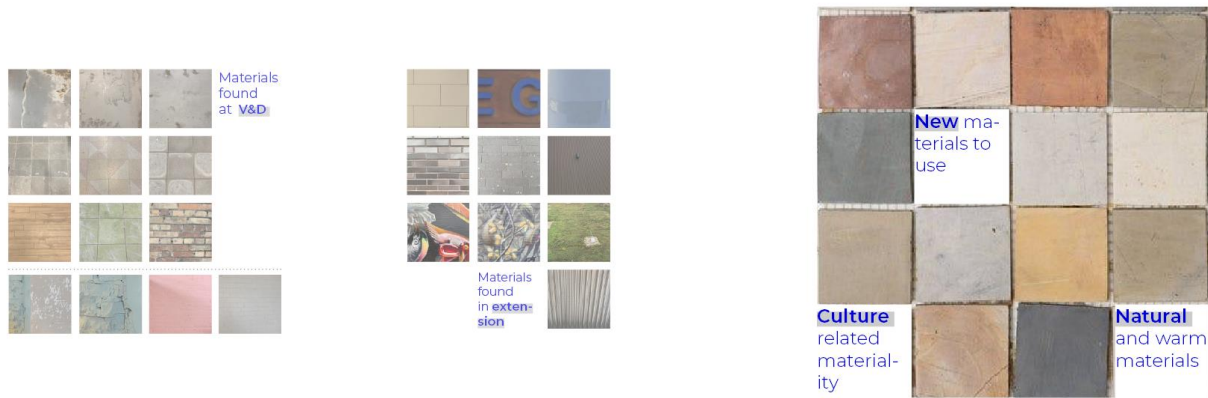


Figure 2 Integration of existing materiality with the more cultural oriented materiality

My methodology involved the tabula scripta approach and the decoding of the actions stated in *Rewriting Architecture*, which served as a design guideline on how to apply these actions into our complex, layered built environment. Through careful consideration of the cultural context of the neighbourhood and the unique materiality of the site, I was able to develop interventions that created a sense of place and fostered a sense of community among the diverse population. This ongoing design process allowed me to integrate the layers of history present in the shopping mall and create a space that was both functional and aesthetically pleasing, while also being responsive to the needs and experiences of the users.

My project was driven by both academic and social values. From an academic perspective, my focus was on comprehending the historical layers of the built environment and preserving its heritage value. Meanwhile, the social value of my project was to create sustainable, functional, and culturally sensitive interventions that would better serve the diverse population in the area. To achieve these goals, I developed a methodology that integrated research and design, with each element informing and influencing the other. The research process provided me with a better understanding of the layers of history present in the shopping malls, which in turn informed my design interventions. In addition, the design process led to further research and exploration, as I sought to develop interventions that were appropriate and effective for the unique cultural context of the neighbourhood. This iterative process of research and design allowed me to develop interventions that not only preserved the heritage value of the shopping malls but also created a sense of place and fostered a sense of community among the diverse

population. The redesign was both aesthetically pleasing and responsive to the needs and experiences of the users, making them sustainable and functional for current needs.

Overall, my graduation project allowed me to develop a methodology that integrated research and design, and which was responsive to the unique cultural context and materiality of the site. As I refined my methodology and incorporated feedback, I am excited to develop innovative solutions that preserve the historical value of these buildings while making them sustainable and functional for current needs.