

Jackson Mckibbin

A selection of research &
thinking

Stage 5

Carve|Craft|Create - An exposition of masonry

This thesis is an architectural exploration into building masonry. The project seeks to provide an episodal journey of masonry.

I have an interest in how old and new can co-exist, how buildings have changed and how material is used.

My inspiration for this thesis originates from the beautiful vernacular of Antwerp, composed exquisitely in stone and brick. Further, the courtyards, the idea of discovery and routes within the city all fuel this thesis. The concept also derives from two paintings, Canaletto's stones masons' yard and Braekeleers lace maker in an Antwerp courtyard. These portray two things, one the idea of discovery within Antwerp's back courts and two, the idea that masonry was once at the forefront of the city. I want to explore the idea that masonry can and should return to the heart of the city. As time moves on and as technology and building materials advance, I question if certain building craft and masonry knowledge will be lost. This thesis seeks to explore craft down to the smallest detail. Looking at the craftsmanship and skill in this, areas such as ornamentation and material of buildings are explored.

I began this thesis by studying certain aspects of Antwerp such as its morphology and its masonry language in old buildings. My understanding of the city highlighted the following. It is a city of charm, craft, material, and journeys. It displays exemplar masonry and courtyards. It is a city of discovery, with hidden lanes, courts, and architectural moments. Recent development takes on a modern approach to craft.

My chosen site is routed in architectural heritage and charm and provides the perfect testing ground for this thesis. Upon analysis of the site I discovered a lost route, and that at one stage these buildings dissected the large city block. Many original buildings remain on the site. I believe that re-establishing a lost route will add to Antwerp's world of courtyards and discovery and allow the knowledge of masonry to withstand the test of time and remain within the city.

The project provides a 24-hour route, using crafted portico's to carefully indicate what lies within. Two buildings are proposed. The first, on Jordanstraat is about knowledge and display of work, a place to learn. The building provides a cafe bar, shop, library, and gallery spaces. It forms a connection to the existing historical school building through a core. This mediates old and new, whilst providing an extended threshold lobby as an entrance. This entrance celebrates the existing brick school gable, juxtaposed against the new stone build. The second, is about making, it is placed between two courtyards and provides workshops.

Overall, the proposal has three courtyards. The southern courtyard is intended to showcase the masonry of Antwerp, it is crafted from brick and stone and has been a part of the city since the 1800's. The route through here will allow this masonry to be appreciated and used as an educative tool. The second (middle courtyard) is intended as a stone masons yard inspired by the reference to Canaletto. It provides material to the workshops and will showcase masonry in its pure form. The last (closest to Meir) is existing, providing service for flats and shops which wrap it. Here, light touch is used, with stone wrapping the walls to create a continuous datum throughout the whole proposed route. At this point a carefully considered portico will re-open the route onto the Meir.

Architectural technology is integrated throughout. It is integral to this project, looking at craft and how elements are built/come together. Architectural technology explores materiality. How material can be used in building and on the proposed route and how old and new materials can be used together.



Conceptual Inspiration - Returning craft to the heart of the city - Canaletto



Conceptual Inspiration - Lacemaker in an Antwerp courtyard , 1860

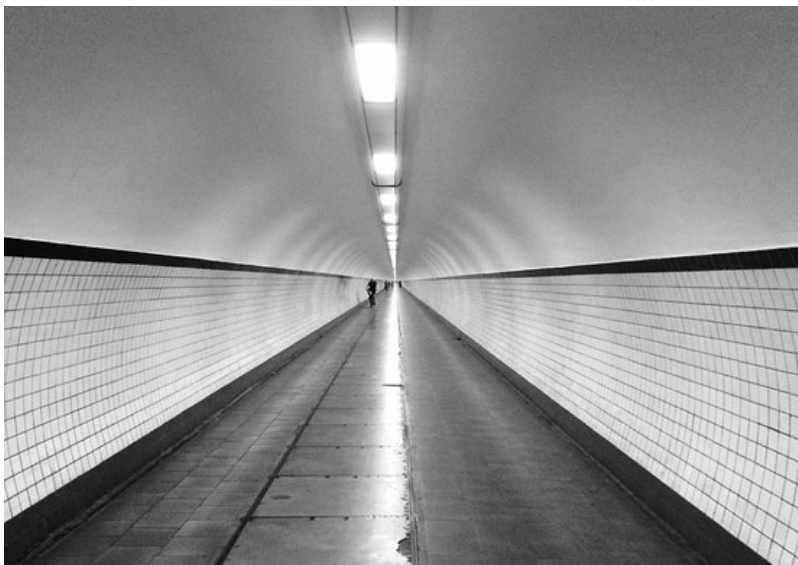














Antwerp - A city of exemplar masonry & courtyards



Antwerp - City of charm, character and masonry



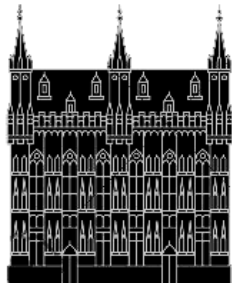
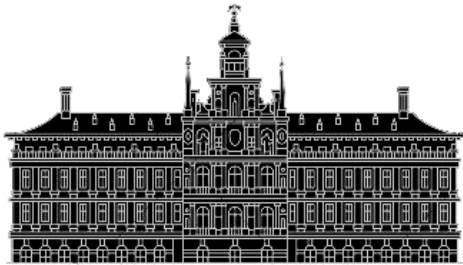
Antwerp - Niche - A city of discovery, lanes and courts



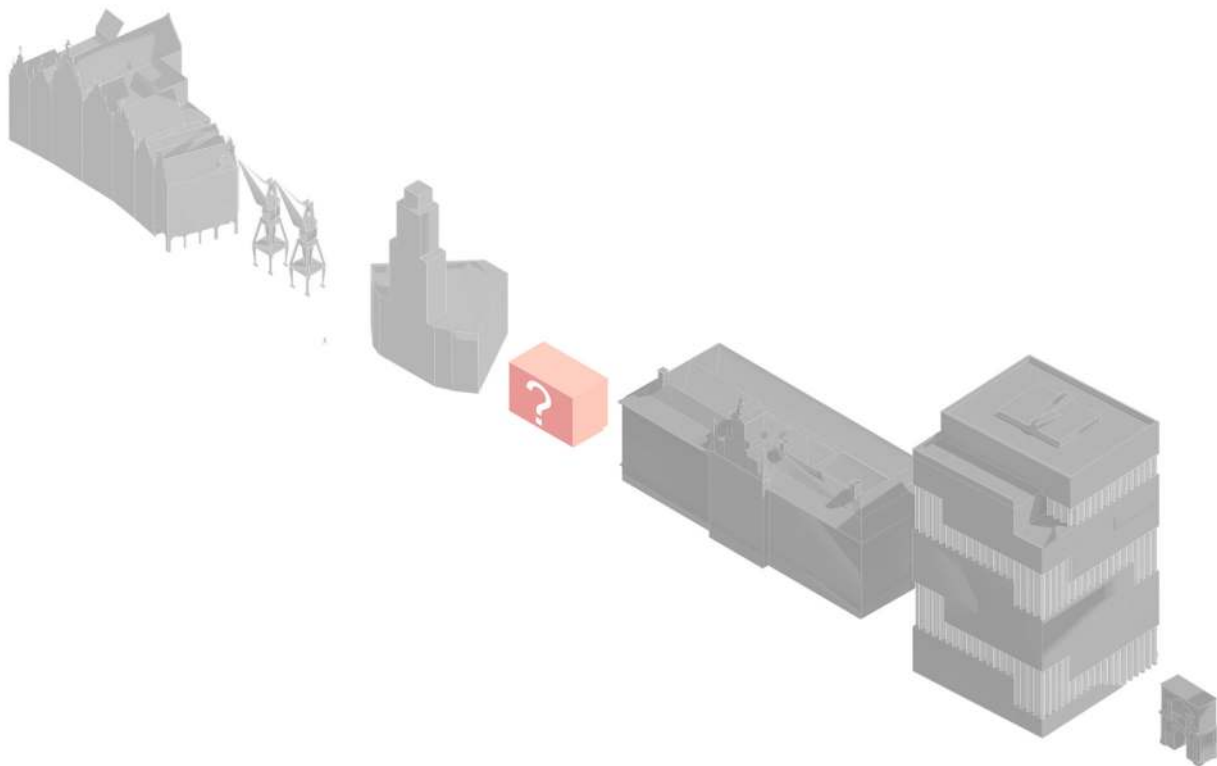
Antwerp - A contemporary approach to craft



Antwerp - A contemporary approach to craft



Antwerp - A city of charm - The city is crafted from brick and stone



Concept - The loss of craft? Whats next?



Antwerp - Beginning to map selected masonry within the city



Inspiration - Carving a route, textures, material and way-finding



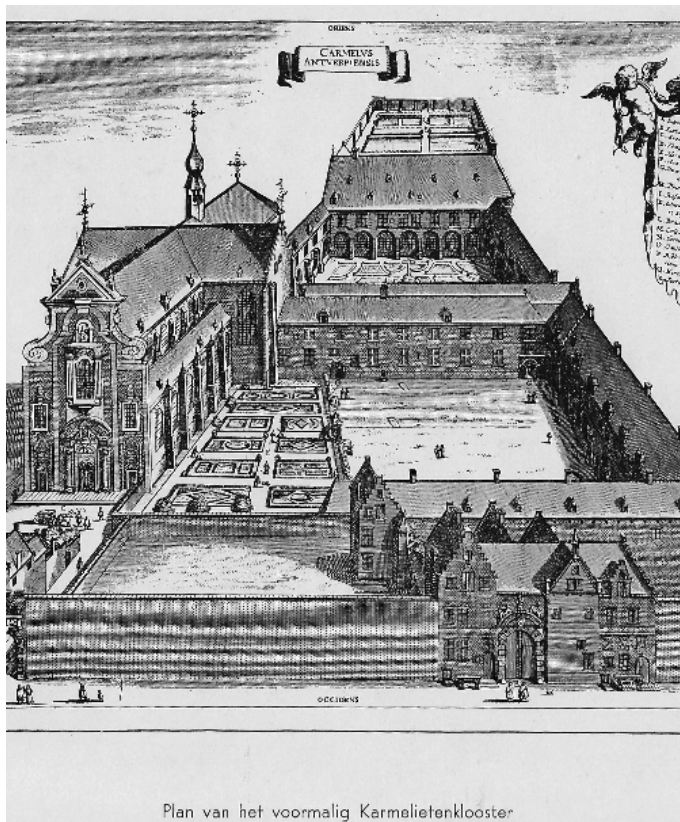
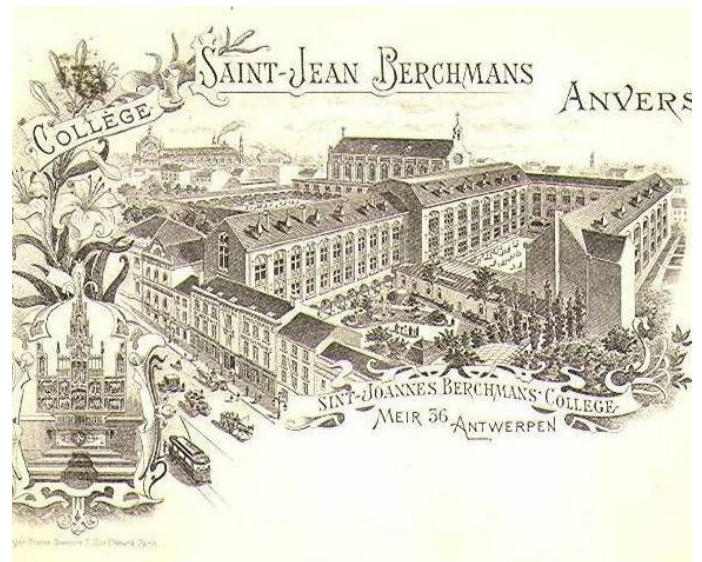
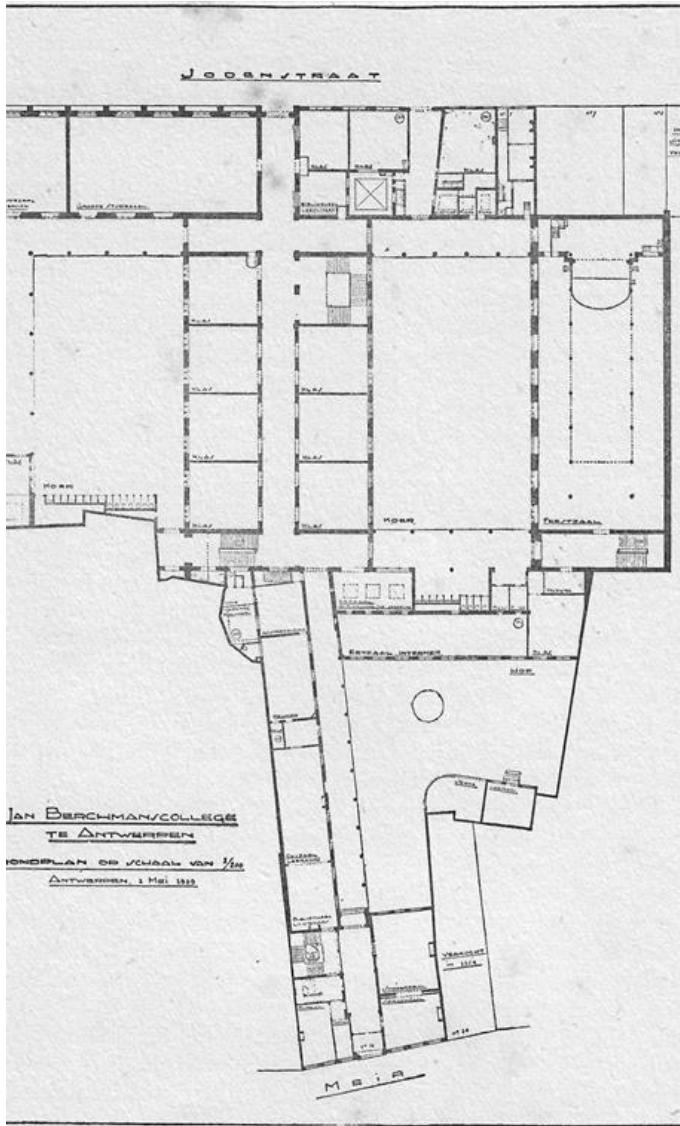
Inspiration - **display of masonry in court**



Inspiration - **Scarpa, material and detail**



Site - Photos of existing



Plan van het voormalig Karmelietenklooster







Site - In context of Antwerp 1:10000



Site - Exploring a wider route, between masonry buildings 1:10000



