booklet

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca

2025

dissertations
1st-4th july
diplomas
15th-18th july



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The events marking the completion of our students's academic journey - both diploma and dissertation presentations - are open throughout their duration to the general public of all ages, as well as to the press, who are warmly invited to witness this special moment of the next generation of architects, in whom we place our hopes for contributing to the sustainable development of Cluj and the many other places where they will carry out their profession.

The presentations of diploma projects and dissertations marks the culmination of academic training and the final step toward obtaining the professional title of architect.

Each year, this moment serves as a true snapshot of a generation launching itself into the future.

It is a public event of high intellectual value, showcasing the creative scrutiny of the future starting from the present.

We warmly invite you to support the candidates with your presence and your applause - whether you are family, friends, colleagues, or younger students who will one day find yourselves in a similar moment.

Good luck to all the graduates!

Dean of FAU, Professor Șerban ȚIGĂNAȘ, PhD Architect

themes and research directions

Students will present their works within thematic contexts strongly anchored in contemporary challenges, including:

- **urban regeneration and adaptation of existing buildings** – conversion of industrial spaces and revitalization of historic neighborhoods;
- **sustainability and resilience** – lifelong learning centers for rural and urban communities affected by climate change;
- **cultural and social spaces** – projects for museums, galleries, multifunctional hubs for artists and youth;
- **educational infrastructure** – schools and training centers integrated into the local environment;
- **community-centered design** – solutions to improve quality of life in peri-urban and rural areas;

participants and partnerships

Approximately 60 students who are completing their projects and officially registering for these presentations.

The Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning of Cluj-Napoca, part of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, develops projects and academic exchanges within the European EUT+ program, alongside prestigious institutions such as Technical University Dublin and Hochschule Darmstadt.

foreword

diplomas committees

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4 Bariţiu Street
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casa de modă

graduation exams and exposition

dissertations

1st-4th july

diplomas

15th-18th july



dissertations

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Lecturer Rareș Drăgan, PhD
Lecturer Andrei Kiss
Lecturer Adriana Măgerușan, PhD
Lecturer Alice Oprică, PhD
Lecturer Laura Patachi, PhD
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Associate Professor Dana Julean, PhD
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Associate Professor Paul Moldovan, PhD
Associate Professor Silivan Moldovan, PhD
Associate Professor Paul Mutică, PhD
Associate Professor Octav Olănescu, PhD
Associate Professor Cristina Purcar, PhD
Associate Professor Mihai Racu, PhD
Professor Dana Vais, PhD

Thank you to our colleagues who guided
the students featured in this booklet!



15th-18th july

diplomas

diplomas

students

1	BORȘAN Radu-Alexandru
2	CHENDE Maria
3	CHIOREAN Vlad-Andrei
4	CHIRLEȘAN Cristina
5	CIOLOCA Andra-Ioana
6	COCIUBEI Manuela-Așera
7	CONDURACHI Georgiana
8	CORUȚIU Mara-Ioana
9	COSMA Cosmina Denisa
10	CREMENIȚCHI Andreea-Ioana
11	CSORTÁN Aliz-Dorottya
12	DANICU Ilinca
13	DENCO Krisztina Anett
14	DUBEI Bianca
15	FÜRJES Eliza
16	HERDELĂU Cora
17	ILOVAN Ilinca-Ioana
18	KERI Andrea-Leticia
19	KURTA-MOTTEL Klementina
20	LUCHI Macedon - Alexandru
21	MAICA-GRIMIȘTEANU Andreea
22	MOIȘ George Vlăduț Dorel
23	MOISI Cristian-Andrei
24	MOLDOVAN Dragoș-Dumitru
25	MOLDOVAN Mihai
26	MUREȘAN Alexandra
27	MUREȘAN Andrei
28	OLTEAN Cristian Vasile
29	PĂUN Rareș Ionuț
30	PÎRVU Alexandra Elena
31	POP (BOROȘ) Florina-Raluca
32	POP Diana Andra
33	POP Ioana-Emilia
34	PUȘCAȘ Carmen-Andreea
35	RUSNEAC Ronald Benyamin
36	RUSU Gabriela-Oana
37	SĂLIȘTEAN Tabita
38	SAVOȘ Andreea-Mihaela
39	SZÁNTÓ Izabella
40	SZÉKELY Dániel
41	ȘORODOC Ioana-Manuela
42	TODEA Tudor
43	TOLBAȘU Claudia - Petronela
44	TRIF Anca Maria
45	VASILESCU Luca-Ștefan

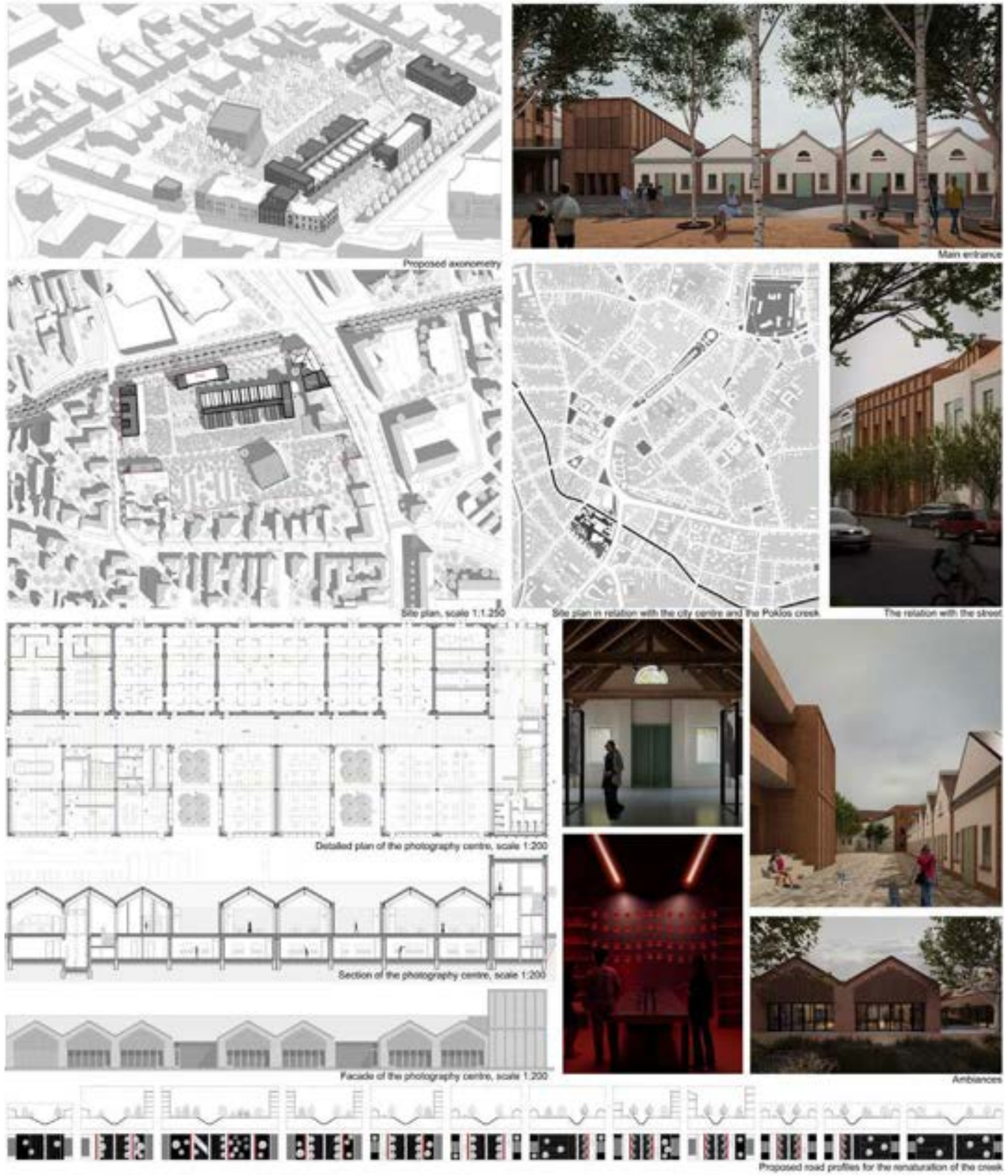
Continuous urban regeneration:

Photography Centre in Târgu-Mureș

54-56 Tudor Vladimirescu Street, Târgu Mureș, Mureș County, Romania

The aim of this proposal is to solve some of the challenges that the city faces today, starting from a larger scale and zooming in towards the end goal of the architectural program. At an urban scale, this site represents the only node that connects the Poklos creek with the historical central area. Thus, it had to be analysed as a space that has both natural and architectural values. The program itself comes from a need that the city had since the 1980's, respectively to collect, archive and exhibit the photographic heritage of the city. Despite its size, Târgu Mureș hosts the most important photoclub from Romania, active since 1953. The lack of a designated space for the works that piled up over the years caused many of them to be gradually lost. In a deeply destructured urban area, this project reactivates the fragments of the historical tissue, while also creating a new infrastructure that connects the key points of the city. The result is not only a space for the photographs, but a satellite centre that acts as a catalyst for future developments, while also highlighting the forgotten fragments of architecture.

Student:
Radu Alexandru BORȘAN
Supervisor:
lecturer Andrei KISS, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Spa Resort in Harghita County

Jigodin Băi, Miercurea-Ciuc, Harghita County, Romania

After 1989, with Romania's transition toward European democracy, balneary tourism—despite the undeniable value of its natural therapeutic resources—entered a period of significant decline. The technical and material infrastructure experienced continuous degradation, which considerably hindered the development of this sector.

This context creates an opportunity for the establishment of a balneotherapy treatment center, grounded in the local resources: mineral and mesothermal spring water, as well as mofettic gas. Such a development would generate employment opportunities in the area, both during the construction phase and throughout the operation of the facility. Moreover, this type of investment, once completed, is expected to attract both tourists and local residents. Its year-round operation would further contribute to the gradual economic development of the region.

The project also includes a landscape component that connects the site and the spa center to two mountain trails. The proposed vegetation contributes to the formation of an ecological corridor, linking the Jigodin Gorge to the Köves Ridge.

Student:

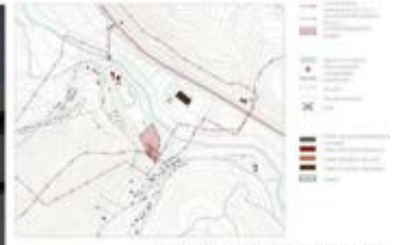
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Supervisor:

teaching assistant Alexandru SABĂU, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

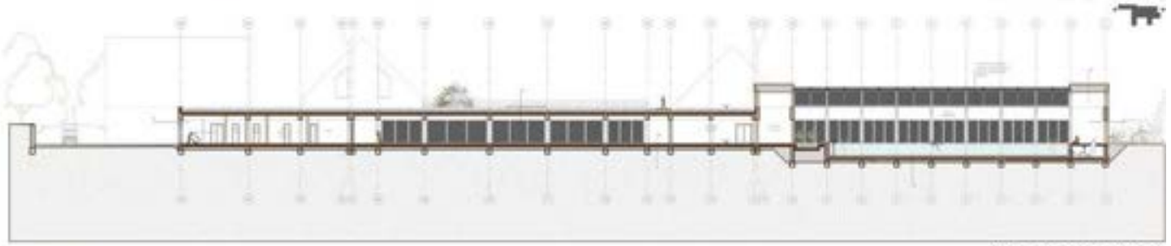




Existing Site and Road - Railway Connection



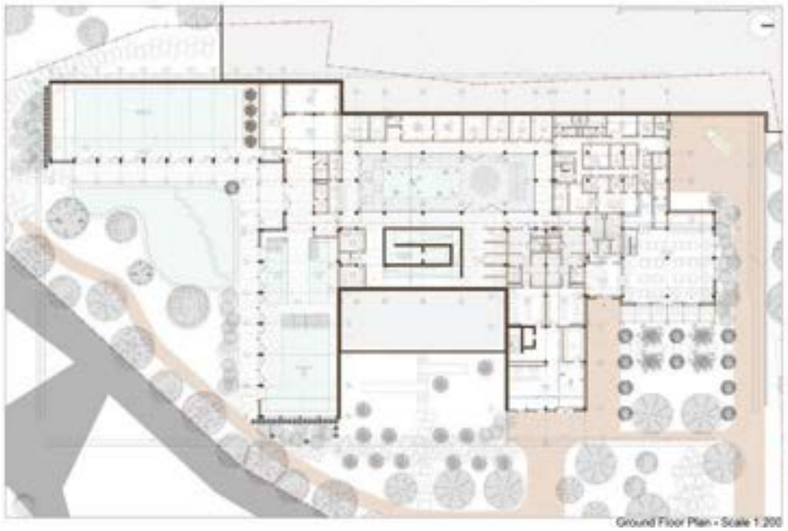
Architectural Concept Development



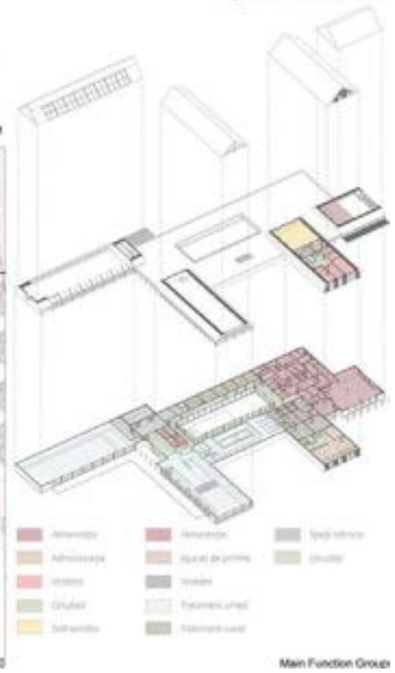
Longitudinal Section - Scale 1:200



Landscape Concept



Ground Floor Plan - Scale 1:200



Main Function Groups

CRISIS, REPOSE, COMEBACK:

Housing, Social Hub and Public Garden in Repurposing the Failed Housing Projects of Cluj

Tășnad Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The project aims at the discussion surrounding the incomplete real estate projects in the city of Cluj, from the post-decembrist period to the present day. These contemporary unfinished structures are going through what we could call a state of dormancy, or repose, mostly due to the global financial crisis of 2007-2009 and the recession that followed.
The insertion addresses a broader strategy in intervening on incomplete buildings, a problem that persists in most cities, regardless of size, but which find it easier to find a recovery scenario where demand for space is higher. In the Mănăștur neighborhood, these unfinished buildings appeared in the fabric where there was a reserve of underutilized space, but through its dormant state, it made this space unavailable. The resumption of the project questions our awareness of the incomplete and its removal from anonymity. This is made possible by gradually opening up the site, followed by the proposal of a public garden incorporating the traces of the incomplete buildings in the landscaping, a social nucleus addressing vulnerable people and housing of three types: open market housing - for the people affected by the initial project, social housing and short-term accessible housing.
The intervention strategy upon the unfinished buildings can be understood as an incubator for experimentation in dealing with incomplete sites: it ranges from allowing natural erosion to full occupancy. The proposed architecture is unpretentious, it seeks to transparently express the recent history of incompleteness of the buildings through various forms, at times assumed tautological, while the new constructions adopt architectural forms of restrained expressivity, so as not to compete with the essence of incompleteness.

Student:
Vlad Andrei CHIOREAN
Supervisor:
associate professor Cristina PURCAR, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



CENTER FOR EARLY EDUCATION

4 Ion Caianu Street, Bistrița, Bistrița-Năsăud County, Romania

The project begins with a neighborhood-scale intervention aimed at improving the urban fabric. Set in a post-industrial area where housing expanded rapidly without adequate services, the project responds to a pressing lack of educational and sports infrastructure. Although former industrial halls have recently been converted into commercial spaces, the area remains underserved in terms of facilities for early education and physical development.

To address this, the proposal introduces a restructuring that includes an early childhood education center and a sports complex, with a focus on the former. The design of the early education complex incorporates contemporary architectural principles of flexibility, adaptability, and sustainability, addressing current social and economic demands.The building integrates multiple functions to support the holistic development of children while maintaining coherence with the surrounding architectural context. The urban strategy reflects a broader vision of regeneration, tailored to the specific needs of the area.

Aligned with current trends in educational architecture, the project includes multifunctional spaces and user-centered design solutions that ensure comfort, accessibility, and psychological well-being. A strong emphasis is placed on the relationship between interior and exterior spaces.

Student:
Cristina CHIRLEȘAN
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Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Museum of Visual and Decorative Arts

56 Tudor Vladimirescu Street, Târgu Mureș, Mureș County, Romania

The diploma project envisions the creation of a County Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts in Târgu-Mureș. The chosen site features a series of single-story volumes with gabled roofs, originally built in 1907 as municipal storage facilities. The ensemble has been classified as a historical monument, though it currently lies in a state of degradation. The project aims to integrate these buildings as a fundamental component of the museum's function, housing the permanent exhibition while also serving as the spatial front of a newly created public area, which is further activated through complementary programs such as a cafe, conference hall, library, and workshops.
The design strategy seeks to establish visual perspectives—both of access and from within the defined spaces, including the street—highlighting the monument and its linear sequence of repeated volumes. Along the street front, the cafe is expressed as a transparent, single-story volume, complemented by a portico at the entrance. This gesture forms a discreet architectural insertion that does not compete with the existing buildings but rather supports a contextual balance. Through its ornamentation and architectural expression, the historical monument becomes the central figure.

Student:
Andra Ioana CIOLOCA
Supervisor:
lecturer Daniel ȘERBAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


Main entrance perspective


Main entrance perspective

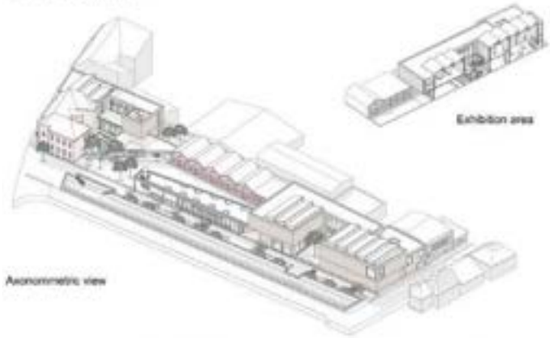

Exhibition hall perspective


Site plan

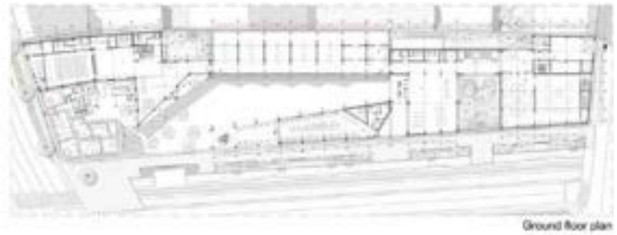

Public square perspective


Main entrance elevation


Public square perspective


Axonometric view

Exhibition area


Ground floor plan



Commercial Passage and Multifunctional Spaces in Oradea

42-46 Calea Clujului Street, Oradea, Bihor County, Romania

The chosen site is located in the central-historical area of Oradea, close to the Crișul Repede River, in an important tourist area. The project proposes to revitalize the area by building a commercial passage that will connect the pedestrian bridge to the Oradea Citadel. The goal is to create a multifunctional, dynamic urban space that will meet commercial, social and relaxation needs, integrating harmoniously into the historical context. The aim is to transform the urban landscape, which will function as a catalyst for the revitalization of the degraded area, providing public spaces for crossing and staying. By creating the commercial passage, crossing is facilitated, but in addition, functional value is added to the pedestrian paths.

Student:
Manuela Așera COCIUBEI
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view from the other side of the water


ground floor plan







axonometric views


visualisation from the bridge


coffee shop visualisation


concept drawings


facade


longitudinal section

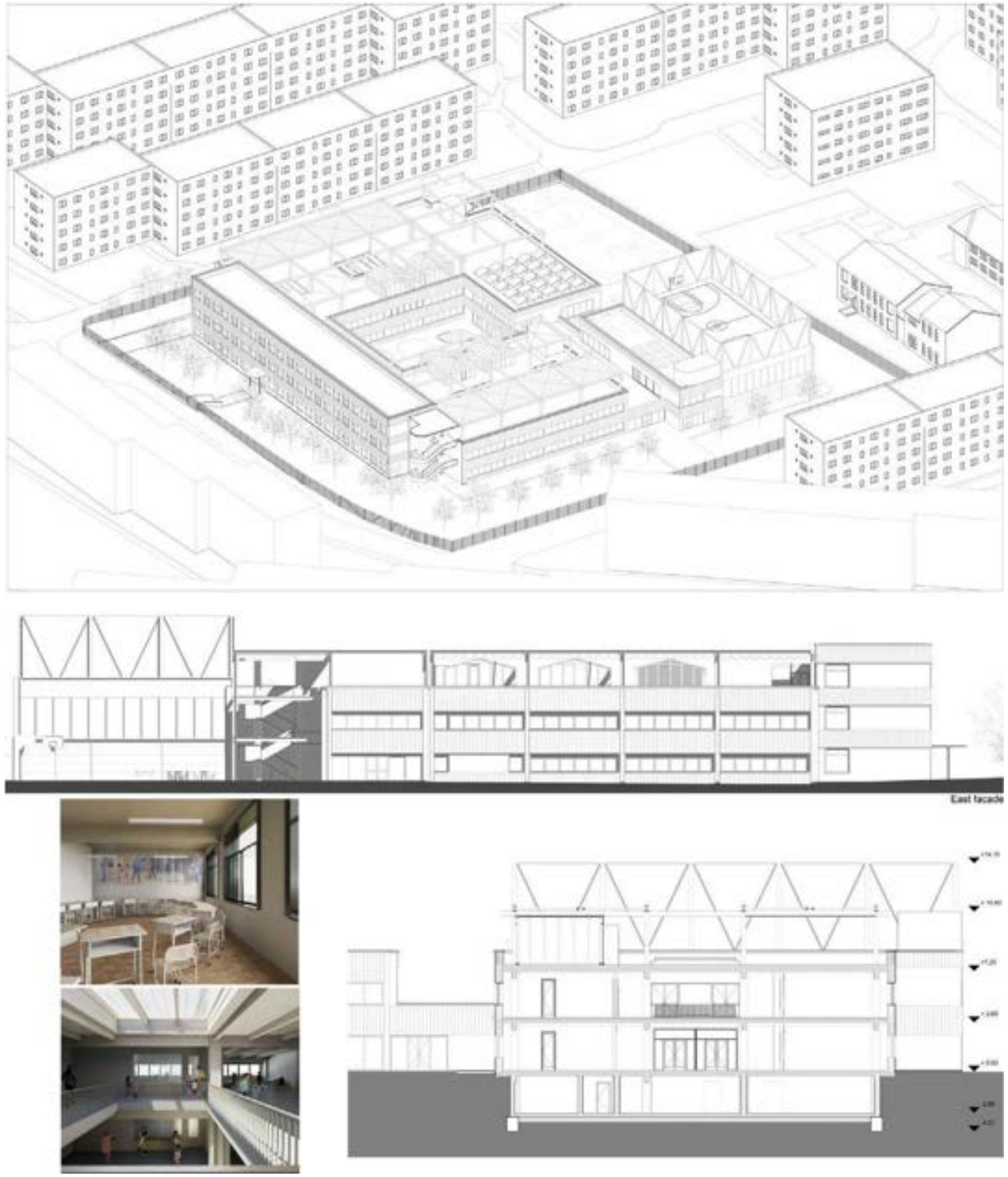

ceramic workshop visualisation

Education and Social Infrastructure in Mănăștur. Extension of the Primary School “Liviu Rebreanu”

4 Aleea Retezat, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj, Romania

The design theme focuses on educational infrastructure, land and buildings that are in public administration but have lost their relationship with the fabric of the city over time. The neighborhoods of Cluj-Napoca, developed in the 1970s and 1980s, provided schools with generous spaces and sometimes central locations in relation to the collective housing, but with the passage of time, these public institutions became isolated. Even if the need for the educational program has remained, what happens in the vicinity of the schools is in contradiction: it is recognized by the inhabitants as a place of social interaction and yet it is subordinated to the need for parking spaces becoming a point of congestion.

Student:
Georgiana CONDURACHI
Supervisor:
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Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Expansion of Octavian Goga Secondary School

16 Aleea Peana Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The proposed project focuses on adapting a standardized school design from the socialist era to contemporary standards. These schools were designed with a functionalist approach, prioritizing efficiency, repetition, and standardization, with little regard for spatial innovation or contextual integration. One such example is Școala Gimnazială Octavian Goga in Cluj-Napoca, built in 1974, based on a design by I.S.A.R.T titled "General School with 24 Classrooms, Category II."

Due to population growth and lack of investment, many specialized spaces such as labs, workshops, and libraries have been converted into undersized classrooms, compromising educational quality. Contemporary education requires flexible, stimulating spaces that support student autonomy and informal learning. The intervention aims to adapt the existing school to current educational and safety standards, while strengthening its relationship with the surrounding urban environment. Proposed measures include creating a public plaza at the entrance, prioritizing pedestrian access, and opening certain areas like the library or sports hall to the community outside school hours, thus transforming the school into a social hub.

In Cluj-Napoca, where residential growth has outpaced school infrastructure, expanding and modernizing existing schools is a sustainable and economically efficient solution. Demolition is discouraged in favor of reuse, preserving public investment while responding to evolving educational and community needs.

Student:
Mara-Ioana CORUȚIU
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the multifunctional space, connected to the existing building by means of transitional bridges

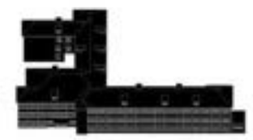

main student access with seating steps

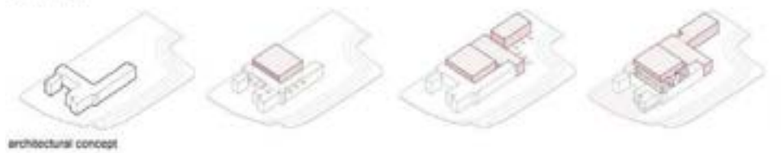

the connection between the proposed building and the existing structure

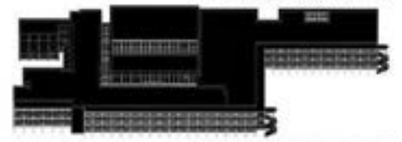

schoolyard

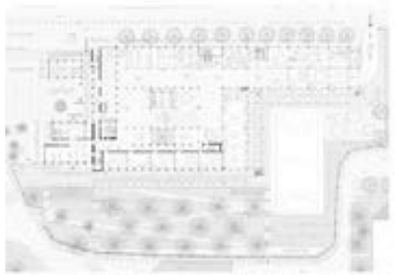

main entrance

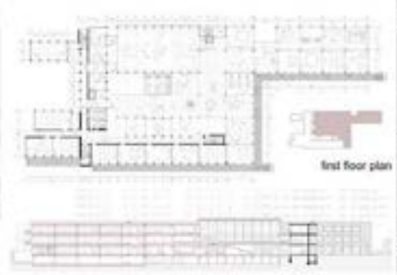

urban concept


the existing and proposed situation


architectural concept




ground floor plan


first floor plan
longitudinal section


axonometry urban insertion

Experimental Cultural Center in School Campus

Odobescu Street, Bistrița, Bistrița-Năsăud County, Romania

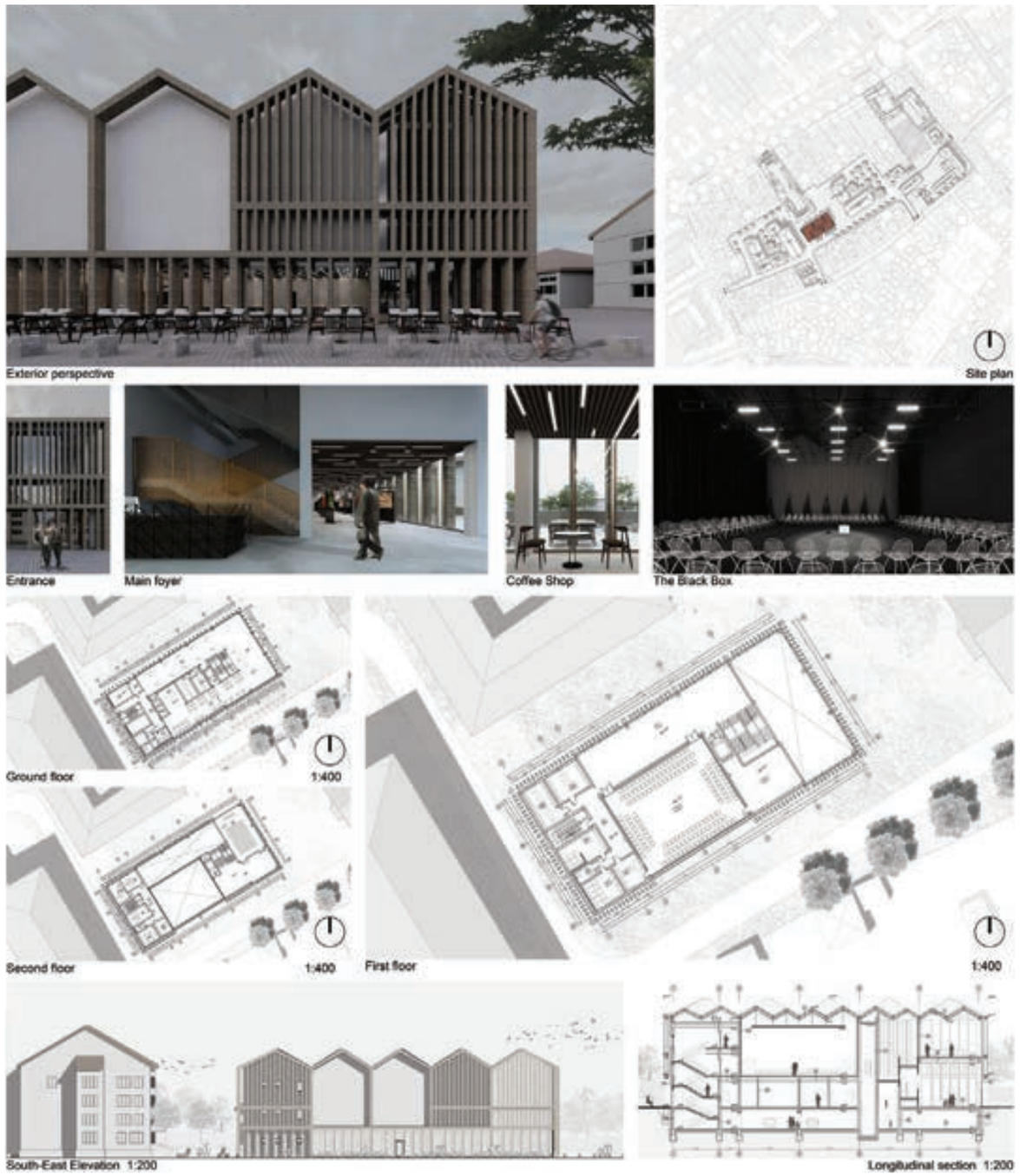
Located in the heart of Bistrița, in close proximity to the city's historic center, the Experimental Cultural Center project aims to foster community cohesion and strengthen the identity of the educational campus in which it is situated.

The choice of site is rooted in the need for urban development and regeneration of the surrounding block, where the project envisions the growth of a school campus, taking advantage of the educational character of the area. Importantly, this campus is attended by students from underprivileged backgrounds, and the insertion of the architectural object supports social inclusion and the consolidation of the local community.

Positioned at the core of the campus, the Experimental Cultural Center is a flexible structure that accommodates a diverse program: food services, exhibition areas, a black box theater capable of hosting various social and cultural events, and auxiliary spaces. All these functions are integrated within a compact volume that distinguishes itself through the contemporary reinterpretation of the traditional pitched roofs found on site, allowing for both contextual integration and architectural expression.

The campus extends outward through a community-oriented public square and shaded outdoor areas, generating an urban sequence of light and shadow that enhances the spatial experience.

Student:
Cosmina Denisa COSMA
Supervisor:
lecturer Alice OPRICĂ, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



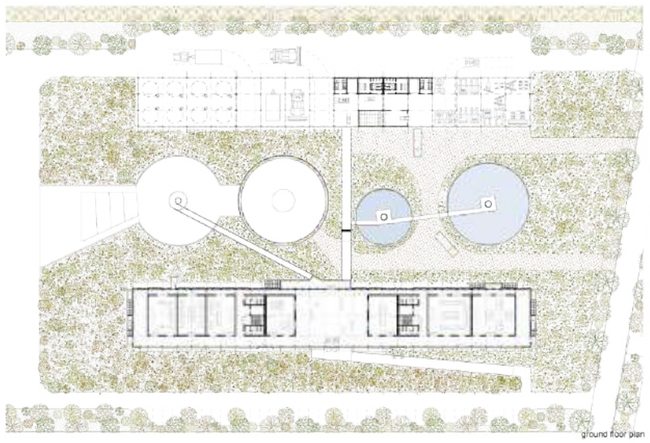
Agricultural Cooperative

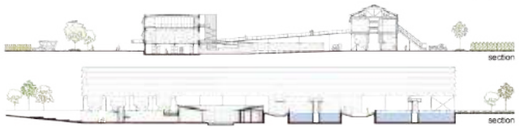
Mitocului Street, Suceava, Suceava County, Romania

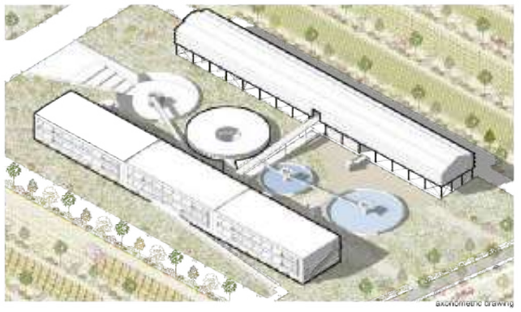
This project envisions the transformation of a former water treatment facility near Lake Lipoveni into a multifunctional agricultural cooperative that acts as a mediator between urban and rural dynamics in the peri-urban territory between Suceava and Mitocu Dragomirnei. Conceived as both a productive and educational landscape, the cooperative addresses the growing need for sustainable food systems, local knowledge, and regional self-sufficiency. It integrates organic agricultural practices, agroforestry, and ecological land management, while offering space for research, training, and public engagement.
The architectural concept is grounded in adaptive reuse and spatial complementarity. The existing structure is reactivated as a container for education, research, and temporary housing, reflecting its symbolic role as a place of knowledge exchange and continuity. These functions support human presence and dual learning, anchoring the cooperative within the community. In contrast, a new structure is dedicated to agricultural production and logistics, allowing flexibility and clear separation between human-centered and industrial processes.
Beyond production, the agricultural cooperative becomes a platform for experimentation, learning, and community resilience, promoting ecological awareness, and social inclusion. The adaptive reuse of the existing infrastructure anchors the intervention in place, while new interventions articulate a dialogue between landscape and the cooperative's evolving role as a civic and ecological agent.

Student:
Andreea-Ioana CREMENIȚCHI
Supervisor:
teaching assistant Alexandru FLEȘERIU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


exterior perspective


ground floor plan


section


axonometric drawing


existing site plan


proposed site plan


atrium perspective

Reimagining Cultural Spaces: Experimental Theatre

1 Kossúth Lajos Street, Sfântu Gheorghe, Covasna County, Romania

Sfântu Gheorghe stands out for its rich cultural life and well-preserved traditions, influenced by transylvanian, hungarian, and romanian heritage. The city's values are deeply rooted in respect for heritage and cultural diversity, promoting harmonious coexistence among different ethnic groups.

The program proposes the development of an experimental theatre, an initiative meant to redefine the cultural experience and provide the community with a modern, versatile and accessible space. This approach aims to address the various cultural, social and educational needs of the public. The experimental theatre is envisioned as a modular and multifunctional space, capable of quickly adapting to different types of events, whether they are theatre performances, experimental shows, concerts or film screenings.

The project for an experimental theatre in Sfântu Gheorghe proposes a theatre with two performance halls: one large conventional hall with 500 seats and one smaller unconventional hall with 160 seats. The smaller hall is unconventional, because one of its walls can be opened, allowing for outdoor performances. These two halls are connected by a foyer, with seating areas and experimental pathways leading to the performance halls. There pathways are colored in red, which not only indicates the route and guides the audience, but also becomes an accent element within the building.

Student:

Aliz-Dorottya CSORTÁN

Supervisor:

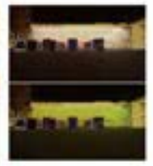
professor Dana VAIS, PhD

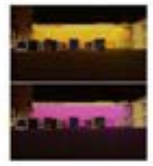
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

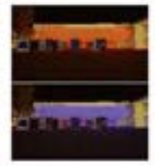










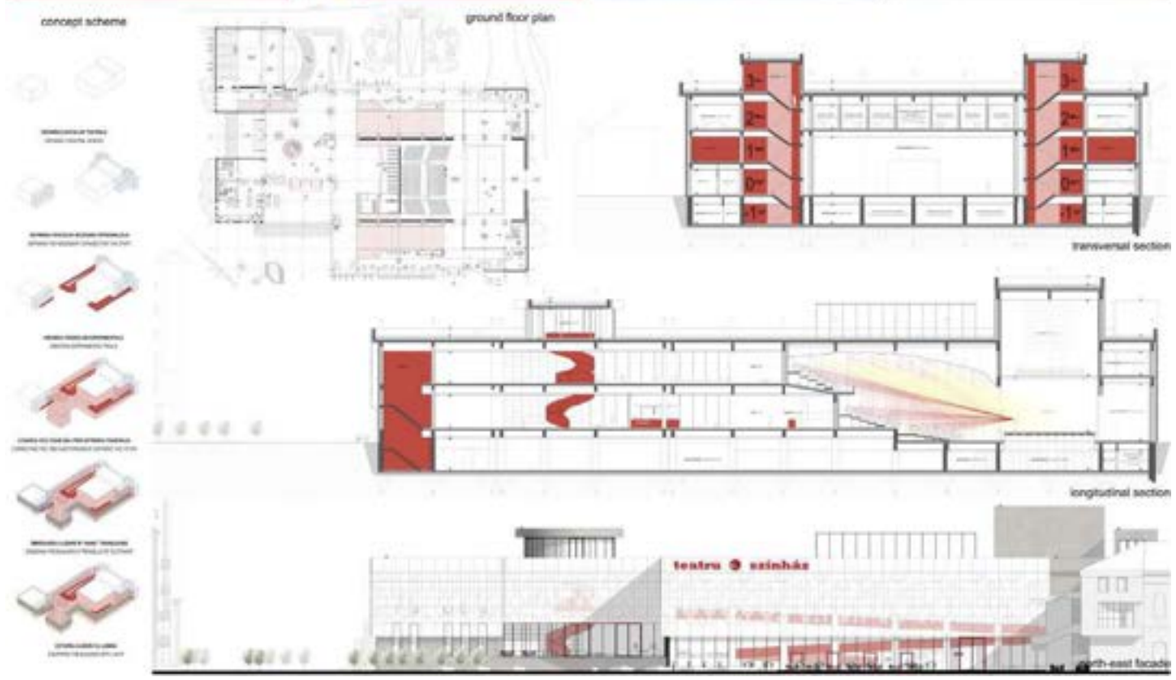












Multifunctional Social Services Center: Modern space for inclusion and social activities

40 Republicii Square, Huedin, Cluj County, Romania

My diploma project proposes a Multifunctional Social Services Center in the city of Huedin, which integrates both the rehabilitation of an existing building and a new extension through a pavilion. In the rehabilitated building, the upper floors host offices for social services and NGO offices, while the ground floor includes a flexible multifunctional hall that can accommodate various activities: job fairs, educational workshops, or community gatherings. The newly proposed pavilion is designed as a semi-open space that fosters interaction between residents and local associations. The project is part of a broader urban regeneration strategy for Huedin's town center, which includes the redevelopment of public spaces and improved urban connectivity. This approach addresses current challenges such as high unemployment, youth migration, the lack of quality social services, and the fragmentation of public spaces. The existing social services are scattered, inadequate, and often operate from small, hard-to-access offices. By consolidating these functions into a dedicated center, access becomes more efficient, vulnerable groups receive better support, and the city becomes more attractive to both residents and potential investors. Ultimately, the project aims to revitalize the city and strengthen the local community.

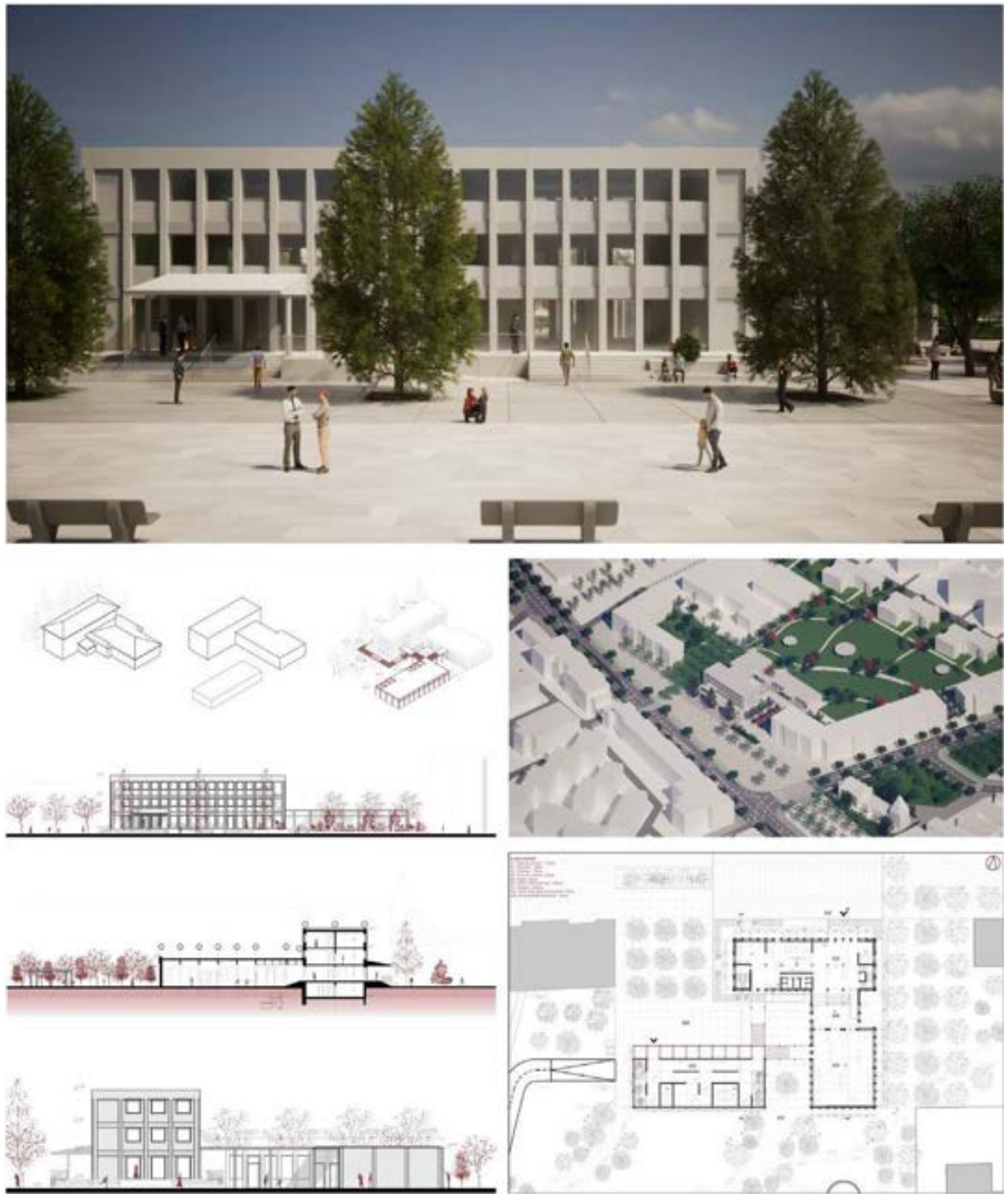
Student:

Ilinca DANCIU

Supervisor:

associate professor Dragoș DASCĂLU, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



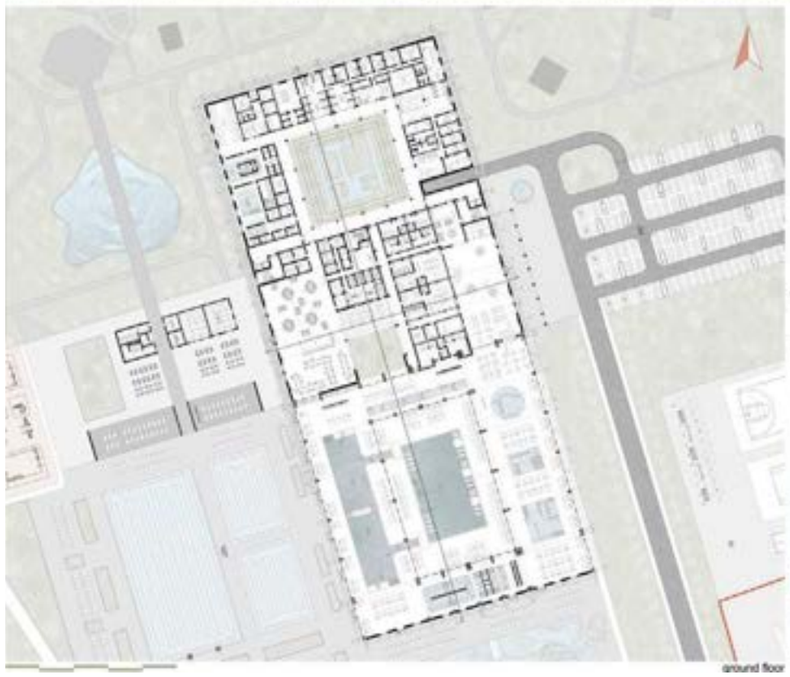
Spa and Leisure Center in the Municipality of Marghita

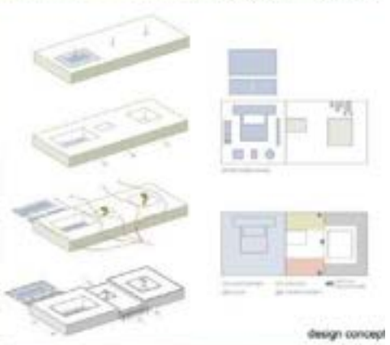
Progresului Street, Marghita, Bihor County, Romania

The premise of this project is grounded in the presence of a thermal water basin on-site, coupled with the absence of a dedicated program for harnessing this resource within a natural context that inherently necessitates its utilisation. The site positioning is logical, and the volumetric concept reflects the fundamental principles of the proposed program: a space designated for therapy and relaxation. These are articulated around a central core, generating three low-rise volumes that engage with both the exterior and interior through intermediary courtyards. These courtyards are distinctly treated suggesting a complementarity between nature and water in support of wellbeing. The site naturally adapts to the three main spaces, shaping a coherent and harmonious environment dedicated to water-based therapy. The outdoor area opens generously toward the hydrotherapy zone, emphasizing a sense of fluidity and freedom, while it gradually closes off in a more intimate and comforting manner toward the thermotherapy area, creating a warm and protective atmosphere. The facade openings reflect the functional display, adapting to the specific character of each zone. The project offers a significant contribution to the city of Marghita by sustainably valorizing the local thermal resources, establishing an integrated center for therapy and relaxation that fosters health tourism and enhances the community's quality of life in harmonious relation with the natural landscape.

Student:
Krisztina Anett DENCO
Supervisor:
professor Dana VAIS, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


exterior view of the outdoor pool area


ground floor


design concept


interior view of the thermal baths

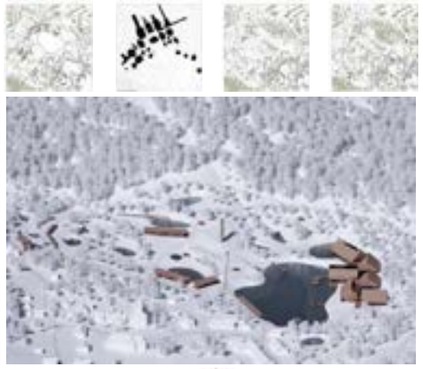
Salted baths Coștiui

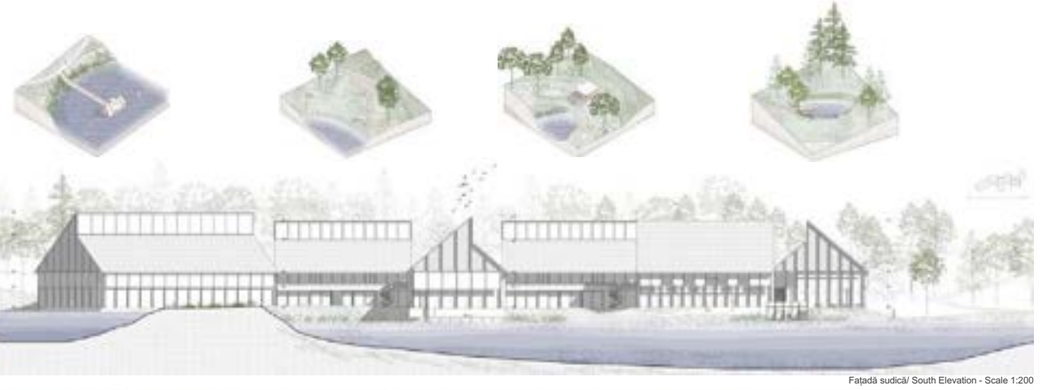
Coștiui, Rona de Sus, Maramureș County, Romania

The studied site is located on the grounds of the former salt mines in the village of Costiui, a place that has shaped both the landscape and the local community for many centuries.
After the mining activities ceased, much of the underground infrastructure was damaged by freshwater infiltration, which ultimately led to the closure of the spa center built in 1897 on the mine's premises.
The collapse of the mines gave rise to several saltwater lakes, the most well-known being Lake Francisc, formed in the cavity of the former mine bearing the same name. Over time, these lakes became a new point of attraction for the Costiui area, thanks to the therapeutic properties of the saltwater.
However, the current situation is unfavorable Lake Francisc has almost completely dried up, and the access tunnel has collapsed. The only mine that remains intact is the Apaffi Mine, which was last visited in 2013.
This project aims to revive the curative and recreational function of the site through the development of saltwater baths, along with seasonal pavilions for open-air bathing. The central element of the intervention is a main structure for indoor bathing, located near Lake Francisc. Designed in a fragmented and playful manner, this structure aligns with the rural character of the area and offers a unique spatial experience for visitors through a series of paths that encourage exploration and contemplation. The positioning of this building in proximity to Lake Francisc is deliberate, emphasizing the intention to reactivate the relationship between people and water through a network of pontoons that allow direct access to the natural environment. The proposed route across the entire site connects all the lakes formed by the collapse of former mines, symbolically reconstructing the historical industrial paths.
Thus, this project is not merely an architectural intervention with a balneary purpose, but a complex proposal with educational, cultural, and therapeutic dimensions creating what can be defined as a balneary-educational route.

Student:
Bianca Nicoleta DUBEI
Supervisor:
teaching assistant Alexandru FLEȘERIU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca







Fațadă sudică/ South Elevation - Scale 1:200





Plan parter / Ground Floor Plan - Scale 1:200





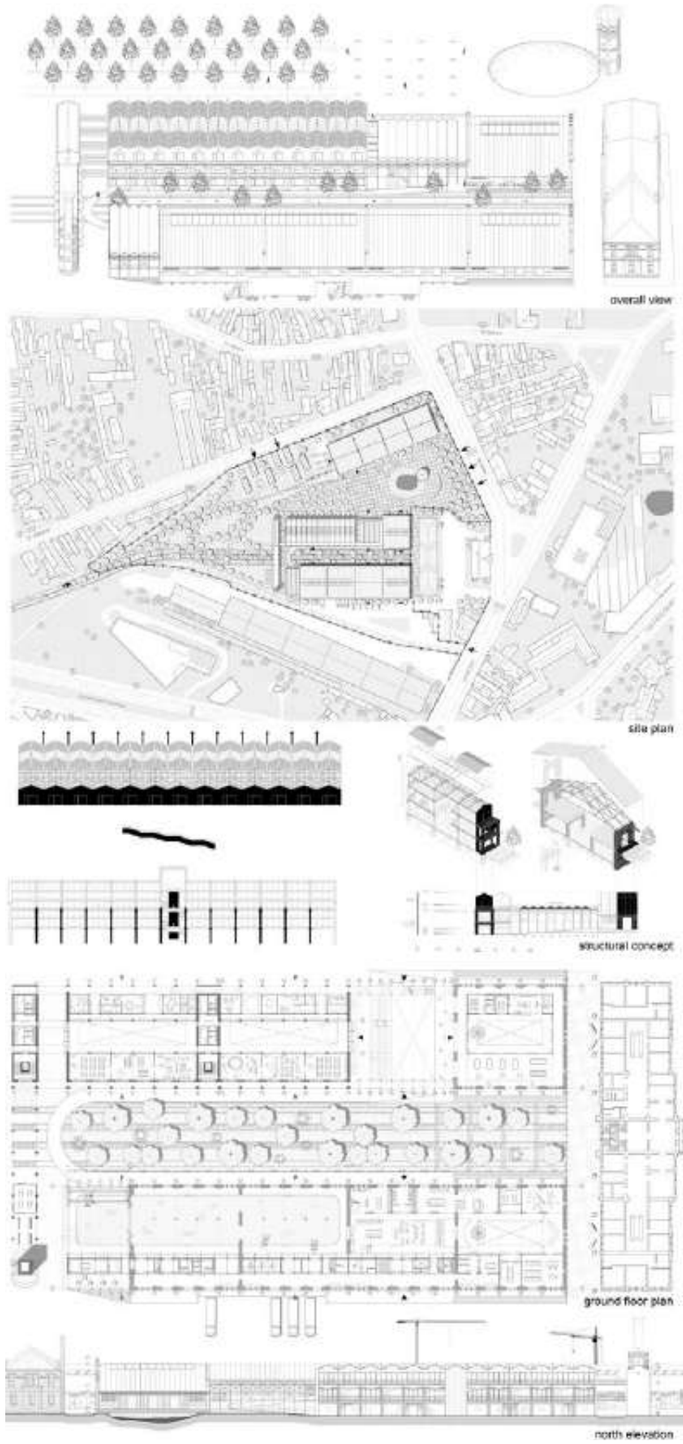


Vocational Education and Training School

196 Calea Rahovei Street, District 5,
Bucharest, Romania

As industrial architecture remains vacant across Bucharest, within the informal settlements of the 5th district of Romania's capital, the valuable site named Vama Antrepozitelor started a local reform by rehabilitating the main building on the site. Although mainly vacant, the flourishing greenery of Uranus Garden, surrounds Vama Antrepozitelor and opens for the public from time to time to hold music festivals and craftsmanship workshops. The diploma models its concept around formalizing architectural gestures by establishing the first VET (European vocational education and training school) headquarter in Romania. Although innovative education is a self-standing framework in Europe, Romania does not facilitate the initiative, as of today. Using the compelling architecture designed by the Romanian engineer Anghel Saligny, the generous spaces offered by existing warehouses provide facilities for a research centre, recreational areas, public canteen and the school as an extension of the existing. The new architecture desires a homogenous atmosphere by following the height of the existing and a rational alignment by creating spatial parallelism. Promoting usage of the built, public areas and bridges connect both tissues, while migrating surrounding functions within its boundaries. The need of historical protection and recognition is a high demand; outdoor spaces serving as intermediate atriums to protect and condone further rehabilitation of vacant industrial sites.

Student:
Eliza FÜRJES
Supervisor:
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Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca





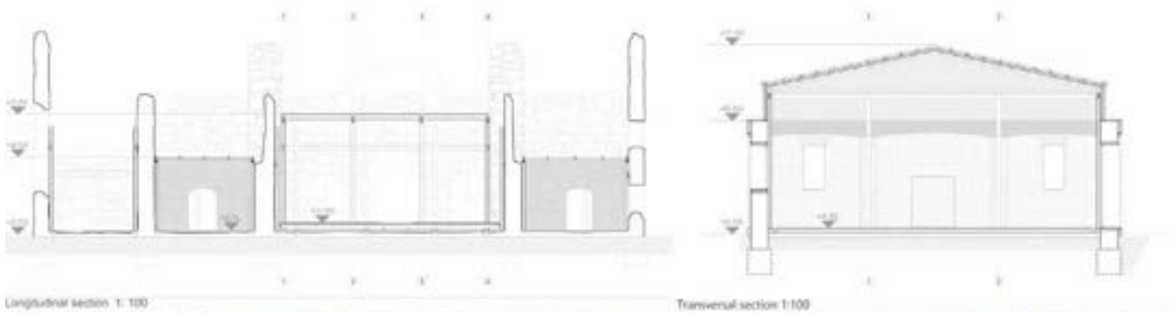
Adaptive Reuse of Military Sites in the City of Oradea Creative Center

5 Retezatului Street, Oradea, Bihor County, Romania

The project aims to convert and reintegrate built heritage into the urban fabric, supporting the preservation of historically significant architectural structures - specifically, military buildings from the second half of the 18th century that are now in a state of ruin.
The Hussars' Barracks, a classified monument of regional importance, once served as a valuable military center of the city. Through rehabilitation and functional conversion, the intervention seeks to transform the barracks into a new urban landmark, contributing meaningfully to the city's image.
At a broader scale, the project proposes the activation of the pericentral Orașul Nou neighborhood, which has often been overlooked in architectural revitalization strategies due to the nature of its urban fabric - typically characterized as an exclusively residential area lacking public amenities or services.
In recent years, the local administration has focused modernization efforts on the central area of the city, highlighting the importance of the Piața Unirii–Citadel axis. Reestablishing strong connections between the central core and its surrounding zones would bring significant benefits in terms of urban cohesion, helping to reduce the city's functional disparities and encouraging more balanced and inclusive development.

Student:
Cora HERDELĂU
Supervisor:
lecturer Adriana Măgerușan, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


Ground floor plan 1: 100


Longitudinal section 1: 100

Transversal section 1:100



Adaptive reuse of noble residences through equestrian tourism

Haller Castle, Local Road 121, Sânpaul, Mureș County, Romania

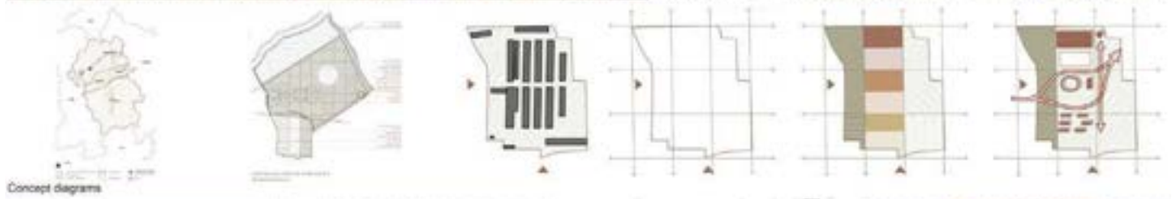
The project follows two complementary directions: the intervention on the existing historical structure—Haller Castle—and its integration into a contemporary landscape design, as well as the revitalization of the surrounding area through equestrian tourism. The intervention on the castle focuses on preserving the current degraded structure and ensuring public access through a dedicated visitor route, aimed at enhancing the historical and cultural value of the site. The landscape strategy envisions a sequence of “vegetation rooms” with distinct ecological identities, ranging from retention basins to plant areas designed for specific species. This approach also includes a contemporary reinterpretation of the former ornamental garden, based on archival documentation and the presence of surviving isolated species within the site. Parallel to this, the equestrian area is conceived as both a functional and touristic hub, comprising a riding arena, stables, and a hospitality center for visitors. The overall aim is to support the development of equestrian sports while also promoting experiential tourism through horseback riding trails and live demonstrations. The entire ensemble is grounded in a sustainable vision that merges heritage conservation with the ecological and cultural potential of the landscape, fostering a renewed identity and dynamic use of the site for both locals and visitors.

Student:
Ilinca Ioana ILOVAN
Supervisor:
teaching assistant Alexandru SABĂU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

















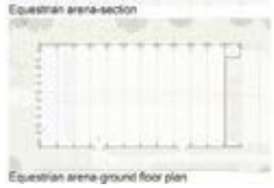
















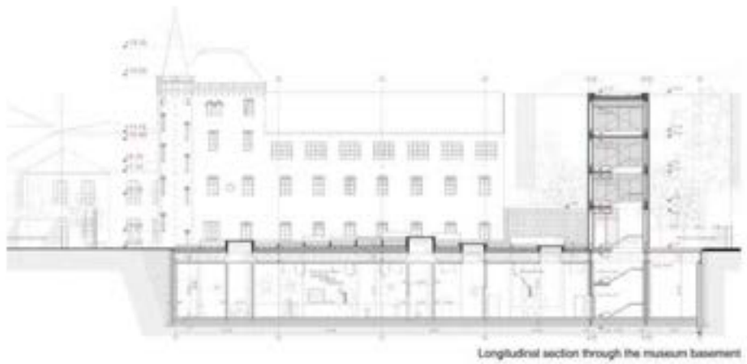
Museum of Research and Industry

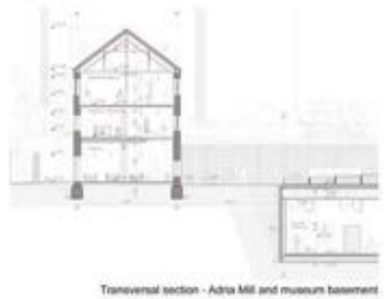
Dissection of Forgotten Materiality: The Symbiosis of Waste and Industrial Heritage in Urban Circularity

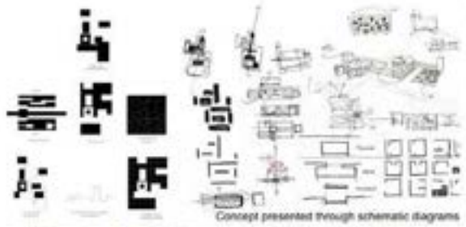
13A Evreilor Deportați Street, Oradea, Bihor County, Romania

In the heart of Oradea, a city where industrial and Jewish history has been gradually erased, this project reclaims a neglected site as a catalyst for circular urban regeneration. Focused on Moara Adria, the only preserved building of the former Adolf Moskovits & Sons distillery, and the Wișnitz Synagogue, the intervention reactivates two historic structures as anchors in a new cultural landscape rooted in adaptive reuse and ecological responsibility.
The proposal envisions a multifunctional cultural center, with the Museum of Research and Industry at its core. The museum path begins in a newly excavated underground volume, continues through a contemporary exhibition tower, and flows into Moara Adria. Complementary spaces include a makerspace, library, and the adapted synagogue for public events.
Reflecting the subtitle, the project treats waste not as residue, but as resource. Over 70% of materials from carefully disassembled, non-heritage annexes, including brick, steel, and concrete, are reintegrated into both architecture and landscape. A 10x10 m modular grid, subdivided at 2.5 m, enables flexible, low-carbon structures made from glulam, CLT, and concrete.
This layered approach creates a dialogue between past and future, a form of architectural archaeology that resists erasure, reinterpreting existing fabric as the foundation for circular transformation.

Student:
Andrea-Leticia KERI
Supervisor:
associate professor Dana JULEAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


Longitudinal section through the museum basement


Transversal section - Adria Mill and museum basement


Concept presented through schematic diagrams


Proposed ground floor plan


Interior atmosphere of the basement exhibition space


Axonometry of the proposed situation


Interior Atmosphere -Wișnitz Synagogue


Interior atmosphere of the creative reuse workshop


Exterior atmosphere of the sculpture garden made from reused materials


Urban park - exterior atmosphere

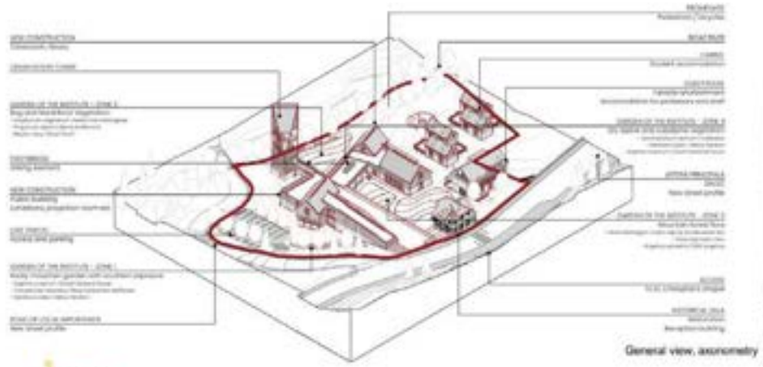

Interior atmosphere of the exhibition space in the Mill

Education Center for Mountain Ecology in the Red Lake Tourist Resort

DN12C, Red Lake Resort, Gheorgheni, Harghita County, Romania

The Red Lake tourist resort is known for its natural beauty and historic villas from the 1920-1930s. Many of these have been lost or neglected, while new constructions often ignore the area's architectural heritage. This diploma project proposes an educational centre for mountain ecology, aiming to translate elements of traditional villa architecture to a contemporary language.
The site includes an old villa to be restored and repurposed as an exhibition space and tourist information office. A nearby guesthouse, currently out of character with the surroundings, will be refurbished to better fit the local context and used for teacher accommodation. The largest new building, a public one for exhibitions, connects to a classroom and library through a shared green roof, which also links the observatory tower and aligns with the street level.
The design emphasizes sustainability and cultural continuity. Volumes are fragmented to reflect the scale of nearby villas and oriented to capture key landscape views. The spatial sequence moves from public to private, south to north: the exhibition building (including student-collected ecological samples), classroom and library, and small cabins for student housing. The project supports a sustainable form of tourism rooted in heritage, education, and environmental awareness.

Student:
Klementina KURTA-MOTTEL
Supervisor:
professor Dana VAIS, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


General view, axonometry


Site plan


Concept diagram


Section


Floor plan level -1







Cinema with Film Archive and Creative Workshops in Historic Center

35 Republicii Street, Bistrița, Bistrița-Năsăud County, Romania

The proposed project addresses a pressing cultural need in the city of Bistrița: the lack of an art-house cinema and dedicated spaces for film education. According to the Romanian National Film Center (CNC), by 2022 only 95 cinemas remained operational in Romania, most of them located in shopping malls and focused on commercial productions. This proposal aims to create an alternative cultural center that highlights auteur cinema and the preservation of film heritage.

The building will include a cinema hall, a film archive, and creative workshops (screenwriting, directing, production), functioning as both an educational and interactive space for young people and the general public. The choice of Bistrița is deliberate: despite its rich cultural history, the city currently offers limited cultural opportunities, making it an ideal candidate for the development of a new socio-cultural hub.

The investment is supported by the CNC and the local administration and will provide opportunities for artistic training, thematic screenings, film festivals, and other cultural events. The project will contribute to the revitalization of the city's historical center and encourage greater community engagement in local cultural life.

Student:

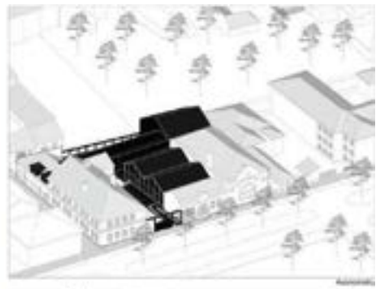
Maccedon-Alexandru LUCHI

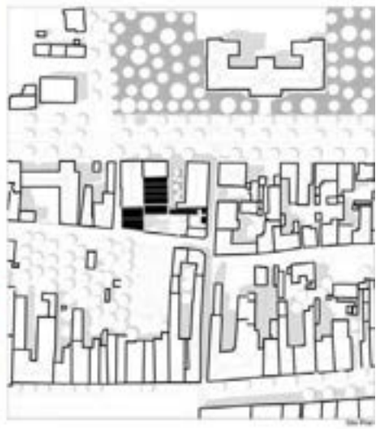
Supervisor:

lecturer Daniel ȘERBAN, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca











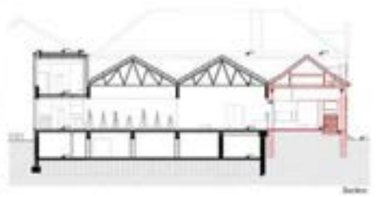












SPA - *Sanus per Aquam*
Urban Regeneration

17 Varnav Street, Botoșani, Botoșani County, Romania

Urban SPA Center
The project proposes the conversion of an unused land, the former city pool, into an integrated SPA center located in a natural setting, along a major pedestrian artery. The intervention restructures the area by opening the site on three sides and extending the existing network of green and pedestrian paths, creating new links in the city urban and offering the community a new public space for relaxation.
The fragmented volumetric approach divides the building into distinct functional bodies, carefully adapted to the human scale and the low-rise urban context. This configuration creates a peaceful inner courtyard, controlled visual perspectives, and a natural integration with the surrounding landscape. Green space dominates the composition, becoming essential both outside and inside the complex.
The entrance is marked by a dense vegetative threshold, a natural filter signaling the transition from the urban hustle to the SPA's serene atmosphere. The interior features thematic pools, diverse saunas, dedicated relaxation rooms, an outdoor pool, and a multisensory walking path.
Sustainability measures include photovoltaic panels, rainwater and greywater collection tanks, all contributing to an ecologically conscious architecture, deeply connected to its urban and natural surroundings.

Student:
Andreea MAICA-GRIMIȘTEANU
Supervisor:
associate professor Mihai RACU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

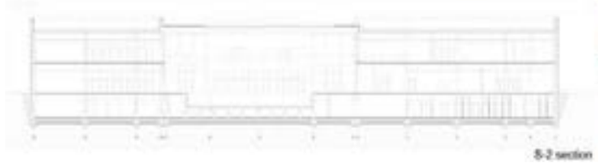

exterior view from the courtyard


street elevation


S-E elevation


axonometric aerial view


S-V elevation


S-2 section


interior views

Student HUB

72 Ceahlău Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The Student Hub represents a new identity for the UTCN campus, serving as a space that connects the campus with the Zorilor neighborhood. The building offers a "home" for both current and future students, combining functionality with a design integrated into the natural and urban context.

A defining feature is transparency, achieved through perforated aluminum panels on the façade, allowing continuous visual connection between the interior and the adjacent garden, filtering natural light and creating an open atmosphere. The outdoor garden extends the interior space, designed for relaxation, socializing, and outdoor educational activities, while respecting local biodiversity and the nearby stream.

The interior is organized around a generous atrium that facilitates vertical connections and natural light, serving as a space for informal interaction and communication among students. The building emphasizes sustainability through proper orientation, natural lighting, cross-ventilation, and durable materials, reducing its ecological footprint.

Additionally, the hub includes collaborative workspaces, multifunctional rooms, and relaxation areas, becoming a social and educational catalyst for the UTCN campus.

Student:
George Vlăduț Dorel MOIȘ
Supervisor:
lecturer Rareș DRĂGAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Armătura - Creative Industries Center

Revitalization of Zalău's Industrial Landscape

10 Fabricii Street, Zalău, Sălaj County, Romania

This diploma project explores the adaptive reuse of a former bread and milling factory in Zalău, proposing its transformation into a Creative Industries Center structured around three core pillars: education, culture, and entrepreneurship. The intervention aims to revitalize a derelict industrial site by establishing a dynamic hub for innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative production. The proposed program encompasses a range of functions, including creative workshops, prototyping studios, classrooms, a specialized library, exhibition spaces, and multifunctional halls, all intended to support local creative practitioners while expanding public access to cultural and educational resources. Guided by sustainability and heritage preservation principles, the project adopts a minimal intervention approach that emphasizes the conservation of the site's industrial character. Structural components are retained and repurposed, ensuring both material efficiency and spatial adaptability. Beyond the architectural scope, the proposal integrates an urban masterplan that seeks to restructure and reactivate a fragmented industrial district. Located on Fabricii Street, the site benefits from strategic connectivity and holds potential as a future urban and economic anchor. Through this dual architectural and urban strategy, the project addresses the need for a renewed post-industrial identity in Zalău, leveraging cultural infrastructure as a catalyst for inclusive and resilient urban regeneration.

Student:

Cristian-Andrei MOISI

Supervisor:

lecturer Iosif-Andrei KISS, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

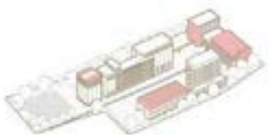


Master plan-proposed

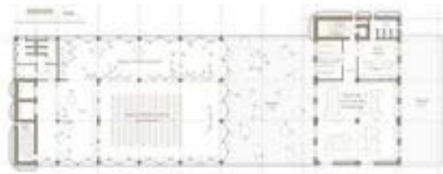








Concept diagrams



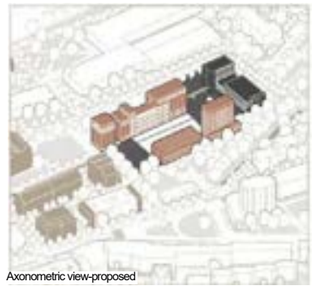
Second floor plan



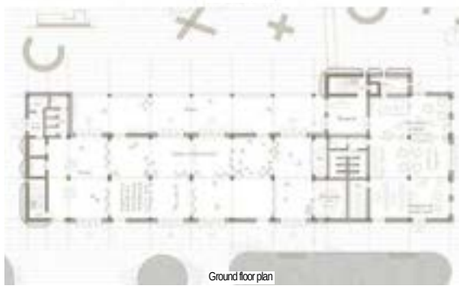
First floor plan







Axonometric view-proposed



Ground floor plan



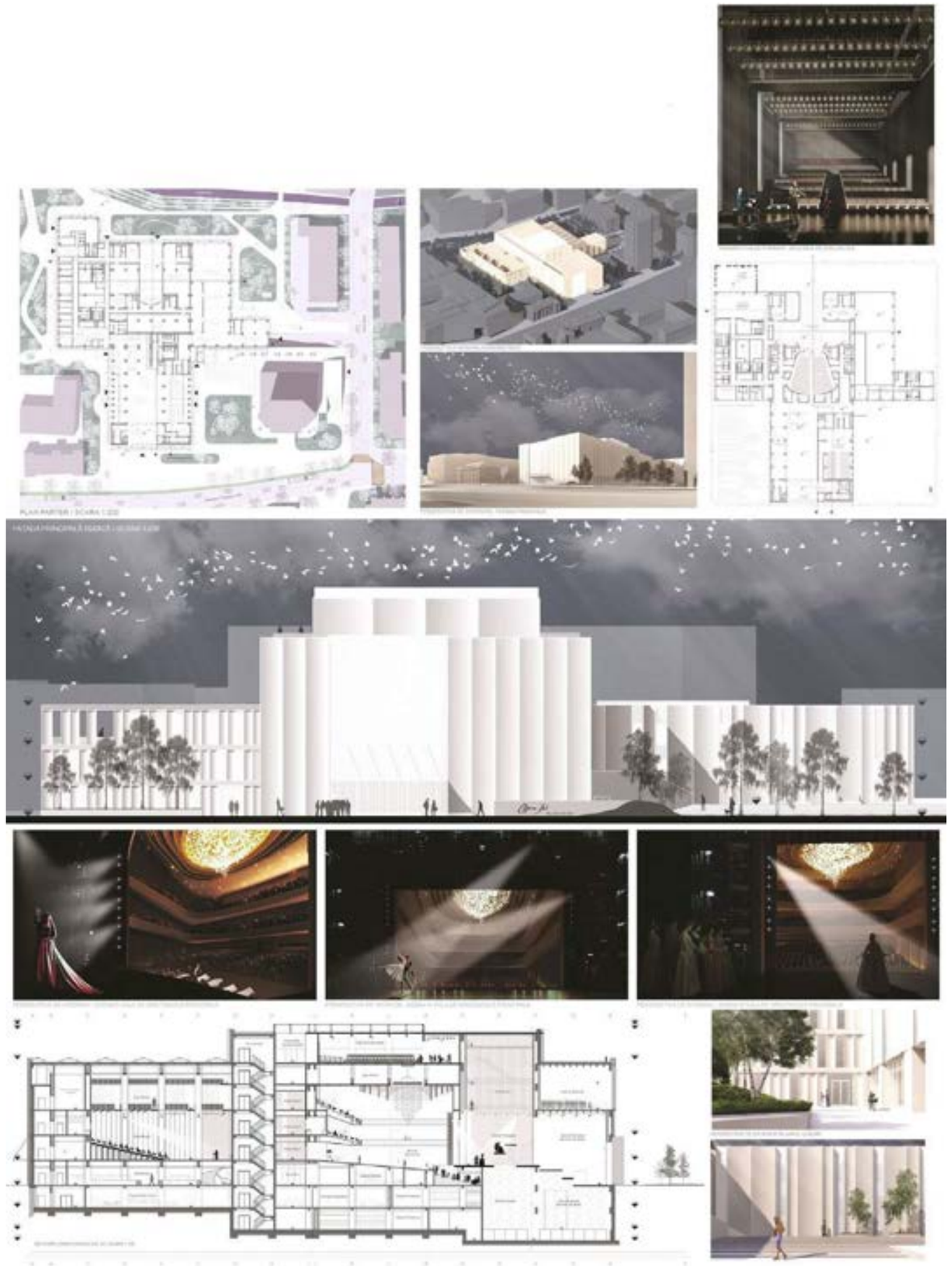
North facade

Opera Cluj-Napoca

79A 21 Decembrie 1989 Boulevard, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The project is designed to satisfy a series of needs and factors encountered in the artistic life of Cluj-Napoca, namely the lack of adequate spaces for staging opera and theater performances in the event of a renovation of the current building, the lack of professional set design workshops and a properly equipped stage, all of this, taking place in a city that produces some of the most qualitative opera personalities.
The project is created in order to satisfy a cumul of factors, including the lack.
The architectural concept underlying this project is based on the sacred nature of music, the architectural manifestation of this idea being transposed in the form of a temple dedicated to music and the arts.
The name HUB, a coworking space, describes par excellence the idea of collaboration of all art forms for the realization of the opera performance, marking the syncretic and universal character of opera music.
The natural setting strongly romanticized by a watercourse helps to outline the idea of opera in the park, or related green area dedicated to the arts.
Starting from the phrase, temple dedicated to music, this thought is materialized by transposing the elements that constituted the structure of ancient temples dedicated to deities, the motif of the grooves that adorned the column shafts is taken over and transposed on the facades of the building, giving the building a classic and sculptural aura.

Student:
Moldovan Dragoș DUMITRU
Supervisor:
architect Mihaela AGACHI, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



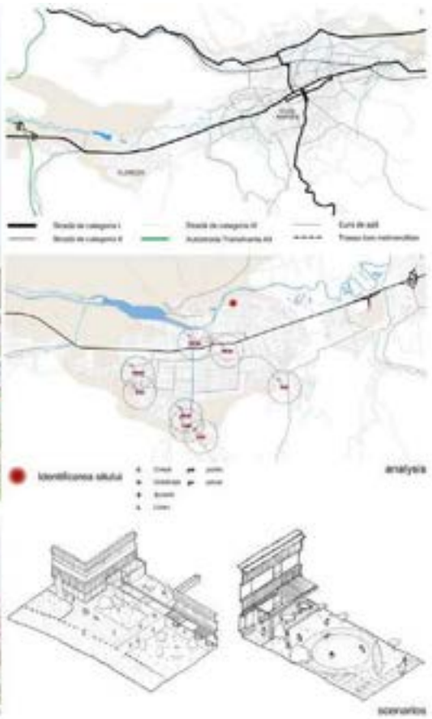
General School for Grades 0-8

Tineretului Street, Florești, Cluj County, Romania

The school I designed in my diploma project proposal focuses on developing spaces that support students' motivation and engagement in the educational process.
There are flexible, adaptable areas that allow for a variety of activities. The classrooms can be reconfigured to create spaces that encourage intergenerational collaboration.
Corridors are designed to accommodate both educational and recreational activities, functioning as accessible spaces for all students.
The second guiding principle of the project is the importance of the schoolyard in the educational process.
The outdoor space is conceived as an extension of the indoor learning environment, where students learn through play and experimentation. The layout supports socialization, inclusion, and accessibility for all students. This is reflected in the varied design of the schoolyard, tailored to different activities and age groups.
Last but not least, this school is also oriented toward the community by allowing public access to the schoolyard outside school hours and by offering flexible indoor and outdoor spaces that can host social, cultural, and sports events, as well as workshops for the entire community.

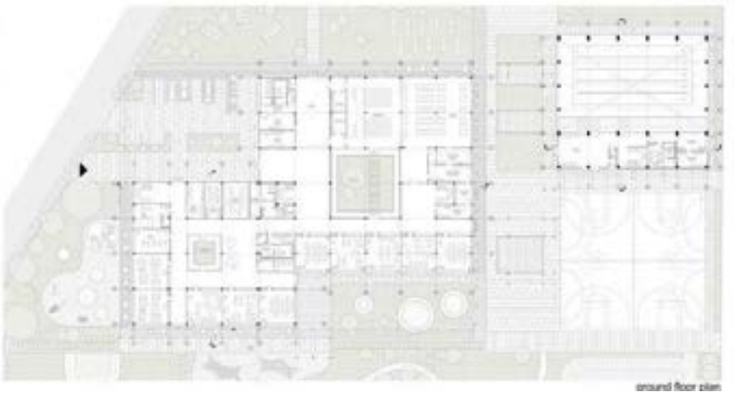
Student:
Mihai MOLDOVAN
Supervisor:
associate professor Octav OLĂNESCU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca











Sports Center in Mihai Eminescu Neighbourhood, Oradea

14 Johannes Guttenberg Street, Oradea, Bihor County, Romania

My diploma project proposes a sports center composed of a multi-sport hall and a public park, conceptualised as an urban oasis in a socially and spatially segregated area of Oradea. The site lies in a deep river meander within a low-density neighborhood, largely inhabited by marginalized communities. Long neglected by the city, the area is marked by poverty and isolation. The project aims to shift this narrative by activating the untouched meander and integrating it into a low-speed pedestrian and cycling route that reconnects the neighborhood with the broader city.

The park is designed to prioritize natural areas, fostering biodiversity and offering a place of calm and serenity. The multi-sport hall draws inspiration from the industrial heritage of the site. Its architecture is using exposed brick and green-painted steel details to blend robustness with warmth. This subtle industrial language aims to create a sense of belonging and welcome for local residents, while celebrating the site's layered identity. Together, the hall and the park offer a civic space that is inclusive, active, and nature-oriented, where the community can come together and be redefined as a part of the city. At the same time, this center aims to articulate future ecological endeavors that would open the meander itself towards the city and participate in the efforts made towards a greener city.

Student:
Alexandra MUREȘAN
Supervisor:
lecturer Adriana MĂGERUȘAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Youth Center

29-31 Simion Bărnuțiu Street, Zalău, Sălaj County, Romania

Student:

Andrei MUREȘAN

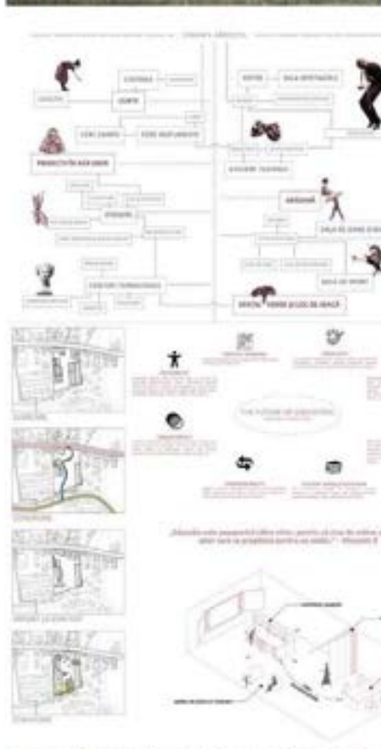
Supervisor:

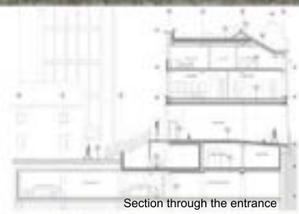
architect Silviu Claudiu BORȘ, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



View towards the main entrance





Section through the entrance

A cultural center for the youth has the potential to host various performances - musical, theatrical - art exhibitions but also other events addressed to various categories of public. Thus, a space is desired that responds to the current cultural and educational needs of the community, that instills a sense of belonging to the community, and that can host a wide range of cultural events and community activities.The main objectives of this project are the following: to centralize cultural activities, namely, to bring young people to pursue their passions under one roof

bring back to the attention of the general public and revitalize the various extra-curricular circles; and last but not least, to encourage young people to perpetuate local cultural communities.The ultimate goal is to promote culture and education through collaboration between various public institutions, non-governmental organizations in cultural, artistic, scientific fields, aiming to encourage education and culture.



Site plan



View of the painting workshop



View of the courtyard and playground



View of the workshop and exhibit building

Renovation and Extension of the Ana Ipătescu Theoretical High School in Gherla

20 1 Decembrie 1918 Street, Gherla, Cluj County, Romania

This project primarily aims to address the main challenges faced by the school, namely the lack of learning spaces that meet the requirements of contemporary education. At the same time, it seeks to use architecture as a means to catalyze and enhance the learning process. One of the project's key directions was the revaluation of circulation spaces, both inside and outside the school complex. The intention was not only to create connections between the volumes, but also to transform them into a coherent system of break areas, meeting points, and active transit spaces. The design concept is based on the idea of linking the three main buildings through a circulation system that, beyond its functional role, also serves as a space for recreation. The project emphasizes a strong connection to nature: the first two floors are directly linked to outdoor spaces through ground-level and elevated courtyards. Individual courtyards were also introduced to allow for adaptability to different educational cycles. Last but not least, the school is intended to function as a community hub. The sports hall is thus designed primarily for children's extracurricular clubs and placed adjacent to the school premises. Half of the historic northern building will be allocated for community use. The schoolyard will open toward the Morii Canal, creating together with it a green space accessible not only to the densely nearby built neighborhood but also to the whole comunity.

Student:

Cristian Vasile OLTEAN

Supervisor:

lecturer Rareș Viorel DRĂGAN, PhD

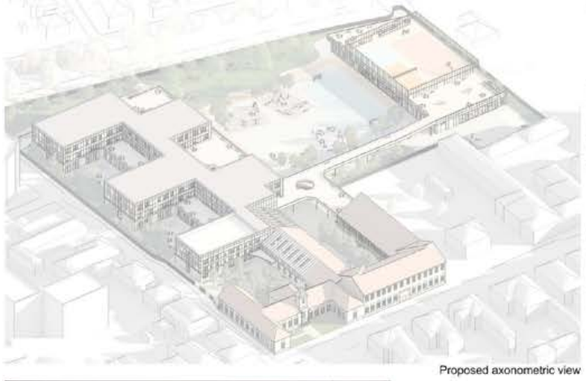
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


Proposed site plan

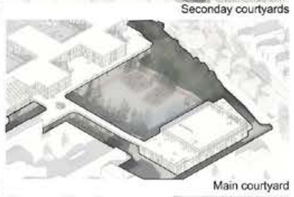

Main courtyard perspective

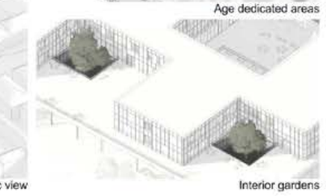

Acces area


Seconday courtyards


Proposed axonometric view


Age dedicated areas


Main courtyard

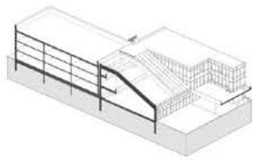

Interior gardens


Sports hall


Sports hall entrance perspective


Sectioned axonometric view - sports hall


Sectioned axonometric view - gallery


Sectioned axonometric view - atrium


Sports hall west elevation


School south elevation

Visual Arts Center

1 Uzinei Street, Târgu-Mureș, Mureș County, Romania

This project proposes a contemporary visual arts center designed around the ideas of transparency, spatial flexibility, and the fluid connection between interior and exterior. The building is not meant to be a closed, isolated museum, but an open and accessible cultural space that invites the public in both physically and visually.

The layout allows for adaptable exhibition configurations through the use of mobile partitions and open-plan gallery spaces, enabling different types of shows from large-scale installations to smaller, intimate displays. Circulation through the building is designed to be intuitive and engaging, offering visitors multiple paths and perspectives. Vertical and horizontal connections between spaces allow for a continuous visual flow, reinforcing the idea of openness and interaction.

One of the key concepts is the use of transparency not only as a material feature (glass walls and facades), but as a spatial and symbolic strategy. Visual connections between interior and exterior allow people on the street to engage with the activity inside, while natural light and views enhance the visitor experience.

Overall, the center aims to act as a cultural interface between the city and the arts creating a space that is open, adaptable, and deeply connected to its urban and human context.

Student:

Rareș-Ionuț PĂUN

Supervisor:

architect Silviu Claudiu BORȘ, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca





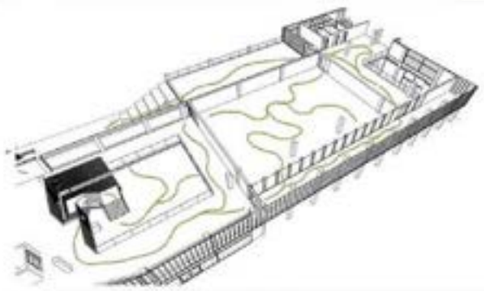












CARE - Center for Assistance and Rehabilitation for Animals

75 Alexandru Vaida Voevod Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

This project primarily aims to address the main challenges faced by the school, namely the lack of learning spaces that meet the requirements of contemporary education. At the same time, it seeks to use architecture as a means to catalyze and enhance the learning process. One of the project's key directions was the revaluation of circulation spaces, both inside and outside the school complex. The intention was not only to create connections between the volumes, but also to transform them into a coherent system of break areas, meeting points, and active transit spaces. The design concept is based on the idea of linking the three main buildings through a circulation system that, beyond its functional role, also serves as a space for recreation. The project emphasizes a strong connection to nature: the first two floors are directly linked to outdoor spaces through ground-level and elevated courtyards. Individual courtyards were also introduced to allow for adaptability to different educational cycles. Last but not least, the school is intended to function as a community hub. The sports hall is thus designed primarily for children's extracurricular clubs and placed adjacent to the school premises. Half of the historic northern building will be allocated for community use. The schoolyard will open toward the Morii Canal, creating together with it a green space accessible not only to the densely nearby built neighborhood but also to the whole comunity.

Student:

Alexandra Elena PÎRVU

Supervisor:

associate professor Silivan MOLDOVAN, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca


ground floor plan


site plan


view towards the veterinary teaching center

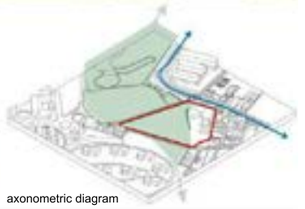

interior view facing the courtyard


lower ground floor plan


perspective from Becaș Creek


first floor plan


perspective showing the behavior rehabilitation facility


axonometric diagram


detailed section - veterinary teaching center


detailed longitudinal section



Dej Municipal Library

Contemporary Insertion in the Historic Fabric and Urban Regeneration

7 1 Mai Street, Dej, Cluj County, Romania

Located in the historic center of Dej, the contemporary intervention of the new Municipal Library becomes a catalyst for the city's urban regeneration. The Municipal Museum is also located on the site, and together with the public library, they form a significant cultural hub. The contemporary library building responds to its urban context through its volumetry and is carefully integrated into the existing built fabric. It enhances the architectural and historical heritage by creating valuable visual perspectives toward the surrounding buildings. Moreover, the proposed urban concept brings clarity and functionality to the area by introducing pedestrian pathways around the Franciscan Monastery, an important historical monument currently overwhelmed by traffic and excessive parking.

As a result, the entire site becomes an open, walkable urban garden, with the Monastery as the central feature of the composition. The intervention not only revitalizes the urban fabric but also redefines the relationship between public space and cultural heritage, with the public library embracing the concept of "urban living", a living space that is not just a place for study, but also a hub for meetings, socializing, cultural events, exhibitions, and various activities.

Student:
Florina-Raluca POP (BOROȘ)
Supervisor:
associate professor Octav OLĂNESCU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Temporary Housing and Auxiliary Functions for High School Students in Năsăud

1 Mihai Eminescu Street, Năsăud, Bistrița-Năsăud County, Romania

The diploma project proposes a housing unit for high school students in the city of Năsăud, supported by two complementary functions: an afterschool center and a canteen. These additional programs enhance the living environment, offering both educational and social support.

The afterschool center provides flexible study spaces, adaptable for various activities, while the canteen ensures access to meals, reducing the need to leave the campus. The project responds to a current issue: Năsăud lacks accommodation facilities for students attending its main educational institutions, a gap that may impact their lifestyle and academic performance.

Additionally, the proposal revitalizes a currently underused urban area by creating an educational hub for youth, integrated into the natural landscape. The nearby Valea Caselor stream will be redesigned as a shared public space for both students and local residents.

Common areas are distributed throughout the complex to encourage interaction and reduce isolation. The proposed rooms are studio-type units with private bathrooms, kitchenettes, and adaptable furniture, ensuring comfort, privacy, and personalization. All rooms open to balconies or loggias, extending the living space and connecting interior and exterior. The upper-floor common spaces open to terraces or balconies, creating additional opportunities for students to connect and socialize.

Student:
Diana Andra POP
Supervisor:
teaching assistant Miruna MOLDOVAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca







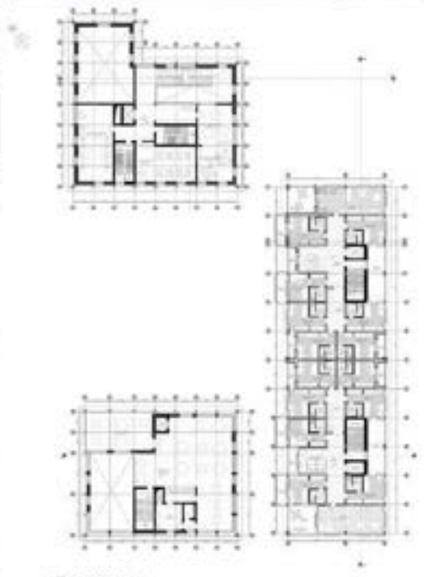












Cooperative Housing Complex in Post-Industrial Oradea

32-34 Evreilor Deportați Street, Oradea, Bihor County, Romania

Post-industrial cities like Oradea face complex challenges today regarding the regeneration of degraded spaces, the revalorization of built heritage, and the provision of accessible and equitable housing frameworks. In this context, the diploma project proposes the development of a cooperative housing ensemble on a site with an industrial past, located on Evreilor Deportați Street 32-34. The intervention focuses on two complementary directions: on one hand, the creation of a new collective residential volume, managed as a cooperative; on the other, the conversion of an existing industrial building (the former ICOMCOOP) into a neighborhood center with cultural, educational, and co-working functions.

The project aims to respond to the housing accessibility crisis, particularly affecting young people, the elderly, and middle-income families, by proposing a sustainable and inclusive alternative: cooperative living. The model builds on principles such as limited profit, collective management, and democratic participation, inspired by functional European examplesadapted to the social and urban context of Oradea. The envisioned cooperative brings together a diverse group of users (ranging from students to seniors), who contribute financially in proportion to the construction and benefit from usage or ownership rights under fair, contractually established conditions.

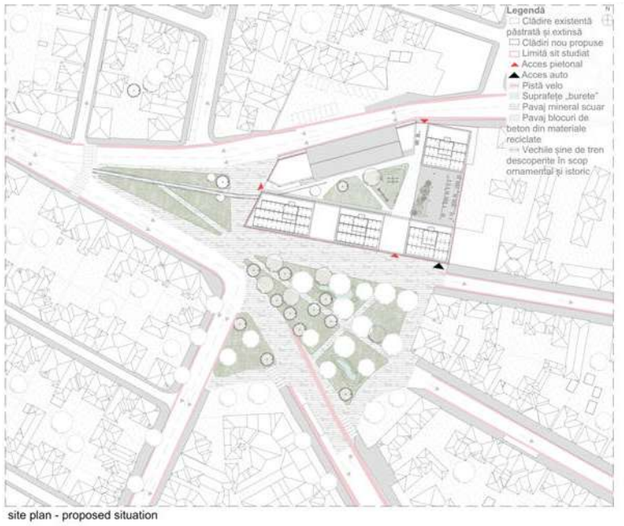
Student:

Ioana-Emilia POP

Supervisor:

associate professor Cristina PURCAR, PhD

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



site plan - proposed situation



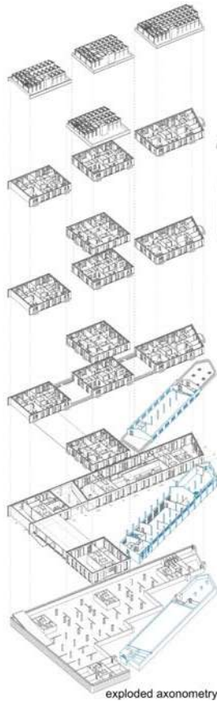
perspective section



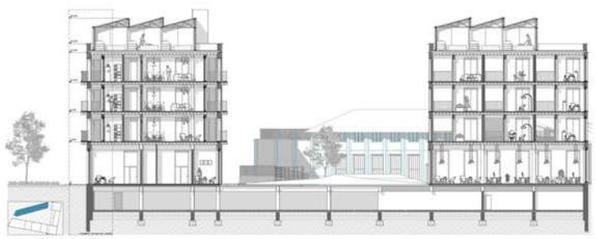
Northern facade



concept development sequence



exploded axonometry



cross-section



exterior perspective from the intersection of Evreilor Deportați Street and Horea Street



perspective from Evreilor Deportați Street



interior atmosphere of an apartment



perspective of the pedestrian passageway

Senior Living Complex

Poliției Street, Halmășd, Sălaj County, Romania

The project aims to respond both to the rural context and to the sensitivities of the program through a single-level, pavilion-type layout that encourages an active lifestyle for seniors.
The underlying concept is a return to childhood. For this reason, the connection to the past and to tradition is a strong and conscious one.
At the macro scale, the site layout draws inspiration from the idea of a "village hearth", where the central common functions are grouped around a diagonal pathway. This gesture invites the surrounding community to participate in events hosted by the center, without disrupting the residential areas. The volume of the events hall, acting as a backdrop to the small square it defines, evokes the image of a barn — behind which the gardens unfold.
At the micro scale, the housing model — which generates the overall layout — is structured into three residential clusters that form micro-communities. This is achieved by emphasizing the gradual transition from private to public space.
The desired atmosphere is a domestic one, in which seniors are free to continue their daily routines at their own pace, within a controlled environment that supports rather than isolates them.

Student:
Carmen-Andreea PUȘCAȘ
Supervisor:
architect Loana VULTUR, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Learning Center Pillar of Urban Regeneration

82-84 Bogdan Vodă Street, Sighetu Marmației, Maramureș County, Romania

The project proposes the development of a modern educational center in the new downtown area of Sighetu Marmației, on a plot previously underutilized to its full potential. The intervention aims not only to create an extracurricular educational space, but also to achieve urban regeneration by reorganizing and prioritizing automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic flows.
Pedestrian routes and streets, as well as shared space areas, have been designed to facilitate interaction between different types of urban space users. The central element of the intervention is a multifunctional park, featuring various green spaces dedicated to recreation and outdoor activities, thus contributing to the improvement of urban quality of life.The educational center addresses the needs of students and pupils in the city, providing a space for learning, socializing, and meeting, complementary to traditional educational institutions. Architecturally, the building stands out through its perforated metal shell, which visually dematerializes due to light reflection, giving the project a contemporary and innovative identity.

Student:
Ronald Benyamin RUSNEAC
Supervisor:
lecturer Rareș Viorel DRĂGAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Senior Center

Integrating the Elderly into the Urban Social Context

Eugen Ionesco Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The aging population is becoming an increasingly urgent issue, and the topic of senior care requires new spatial and social approaches. In Cluj, existing elderly centers are few, often hosted in outdated buildings, institutional in character, focused mainly on users needing constant medical care and remain isolated from the community.There is a clear lack of residential centers for independent, active seniors who seek a dignified retirement while remaining socially connected.
This project proposes a senior center for autonomous elderly people who wish to stay active and integrated within the community. The site is located in a residential area and is part of a wider urban regeneration proposal aiming to create a new neighborhood center.The center is divided into five volumes connected by corridors. The main building, oriented toward the collective housing area, contains administrative and medical spaces, common areas, and an afterschool that promotes intergenerational relationships. The other four volumes, with a more domestic scale, accommodate small clusters of rooms grouped around shared kitchens and living areas, evoking a sense of community and home.This spatial organization allows the creation of diverse planted courtyards that serve both functional needs and provide moments of quiet, connection, and everyday life outdoors.

Student:
Gabriela-Oana RUSU
Supervisor:
associate professor Octav OLĂNESCU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



Photography Museum

Conversion and Extension of a Historic Building, Târgu Mureș

18 Bolyai Street, Târgu Mureș, Mureș County, Romania

The project aims to highlight a historic building constructed in 1910 in the Secession style by converting it into a photography museum and extending it to integrate a contemporary section within the historical context. The proposal also includes the extension of the surrounding square, transforming it into a high-quality urban space for the local community. The new building, carefully positioned, respects the continuity of the street frontage while introducing a contemporary note to the city's historic center.

By adding the new construction to the existing structure, the goal is to create a spacious area that can be flexible and adapted to accommodate various community activities. The integration of modern materials, with a focus on metal, emphasizes the contrast between old and new, while maintaining a harmonious connection with the surrounding architecture. This approach ensures the preservation of the building's historical value, while simultaneously providing a functional space that can meet the evolving needs of the local population.

The combination of heritage and contemporary elements enriches the city's cultural landscape, offering a dynamic environment for both residents and visitors. The project seeks to enhance the urban experience, creating a space where history, art, and modernity converge to celebrate the cultural identity of Târgu Mureș..

Student:
Tabita SĂLIȘTEAN
Supervisor:
associate professor Dana JULEAN, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca

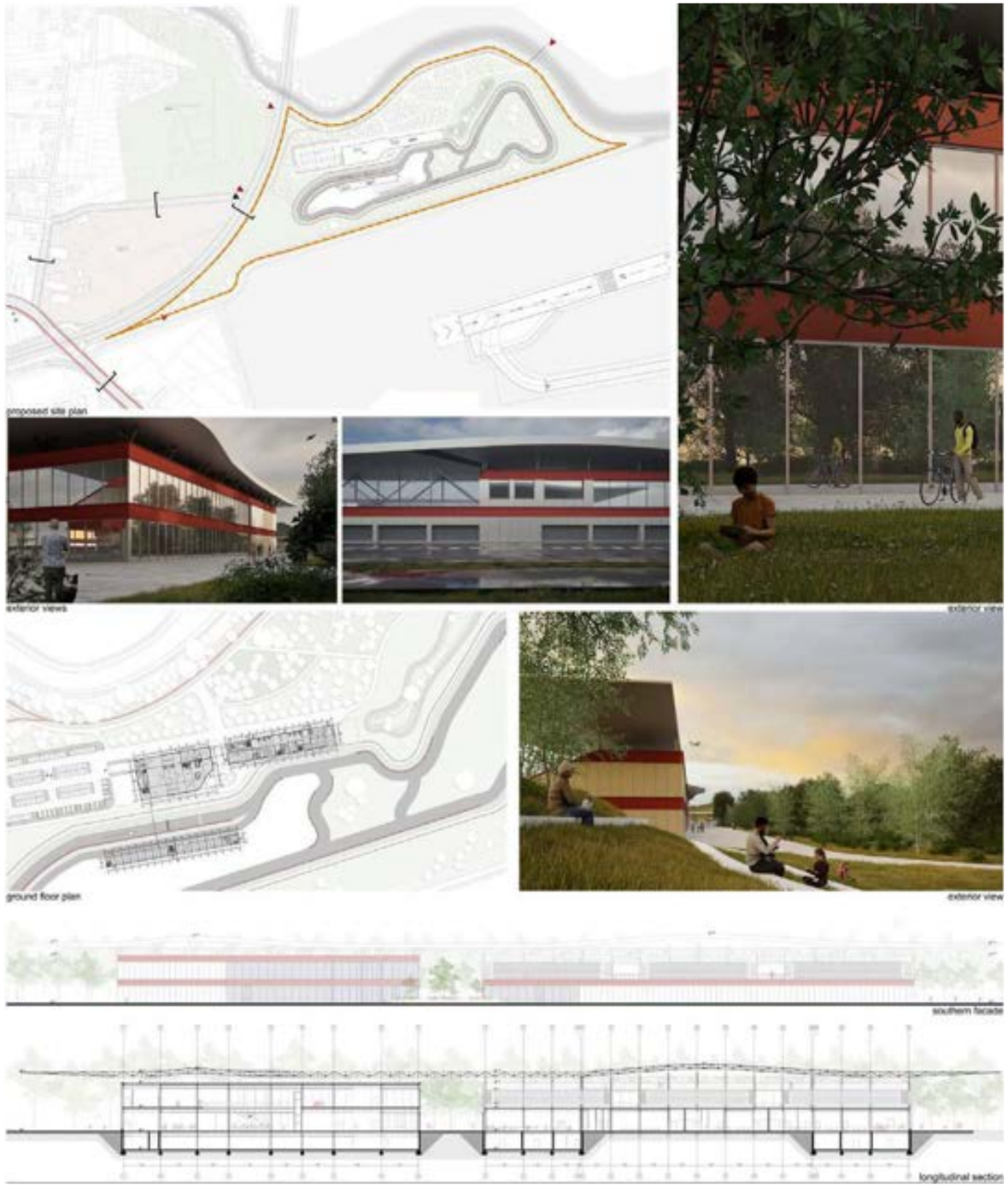


Motoclub - a Multifunctional Complex for Motor Sports and Motorcycle Education

Someșeni Area, Cluj Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The proposed project envisions a multifunctional complex dedicated to motor sports and motorcycle education. Its principal elements include a professionally designed racing circuit, an on-site museum, and spectator stands. Located in Cluj-Napoca, the development serves as both a motor sports hub and a controlled testing environment for automotive systems and vehicles. The racing circuit is complemented by technical service zones, paddocks, and timed-track facilities to enable both enthusiasts and professionals to engage in safe, precision-based driving training. A compact museum space will offer educational exhibits on the evolution of motorcycling and racing, and the grandstand will accommodate spectators during events and training sessions. This integrated facility aims to foster motorsport culture in the region while providing a secure platform for testing vehicles under monitored conditions. It is conceived as a dynamic center for athletic, educational, and leisure activities tied to motorcycles and related technologies.

Student:
Andreea-Mihaela SAVOȘ
Supervisor:
associate professor Mihai RACU, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca



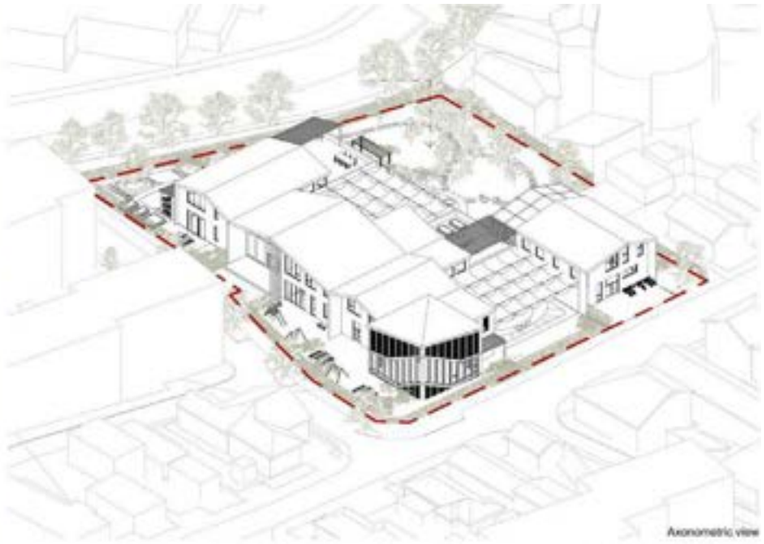
Therapy and Development Center for Children with Autism

10A Lalelelor Street, Târgu Mureș, Mureș County, Romania

This project proposes the design of a therapy and development center dedicated to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), located in Târgu Mureș, Romania. The center is intended to meet the increasing demand for therapeutic services tailored to the specific needs of neurodivergent children, offering a comprehensive and inclusive environment that supports both therapy and well-being.
The site integrates several parcels and is organized into functional zones based on activity levels - active, transitional, and quiet - ensuring sensory balance and clear spatial logic. The design is guided by the ASPECTSS™ framework, prioritizing acoustics, sensory zoning, refuge spaces, natural light, and safety. The architecture fosters predictable circulation, emotional regulation, and sensory integration.
Outdoor spaces are equally important: the project includes a multisensory garden, a therapeutic playground with motor trails, and a horticultural therapy garden. Interior functions include rooms for ABA therapy, art and music therapy, logopedics, hydrotherapy, and occupational therapy, each directly connected to exterior zones or terraces.
Constructed from CLT for its acoustic and natural material benefits, the project demonstrates how architecture can become an active therapeutic tool, not just a neutral backdrop. It aims to raise awareness for inclusive design and promote mental health through spatial quality.

Student:
Izabella SZÁNTÓ
Supervisor:
professor Dana VAIS, PhD
Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning Cluj-Napoca













Construction and Restoration Training Station

Teaca, Bistrița-Năsăud County, Romania

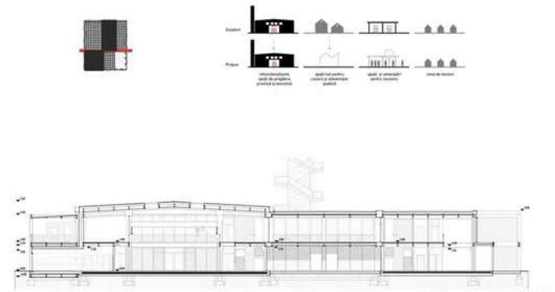
The need for spaces dedicated to vocational training is evident and their absence is often reflected in the quality of the built environment around us. The vocational training station project in Teaca, Bistrița-Năsăud County, is situated on the former site of the Agricultural Mechanization Station, a facility decommissioned in the 1990s. The project demonstrates how, in a locality with a strong tradition in technical education, an otherwise overlooked building can be repurposed with new relevance and value.

The training station is designed to educate future professionals in construction trades and periodically host summer workshops for students from architecture and engineering faculties in nearby cities such as Cluj and Târgu Mureș. The project responds to the demands of contemporary vocational education while also creating space for restoration training and hands-on experimentation.

At the heart of the project is an experimental hall equipped with an overhead crane. Preserving the original structure, the hall has been extended to include specialized workshop areas. The project comprises two main components: a practical training hall and a theoretical training building with community spaces on the ground floor. These two buildings are directly connected by a skybridge, facilitating circulation and reinforcing the integration between hands-on and classroom-based learning. What was once an informal public site has been reimagined as a structured public space—excluding only the private courtyards for student accommodations and the courtyards of the two repurposed halls.

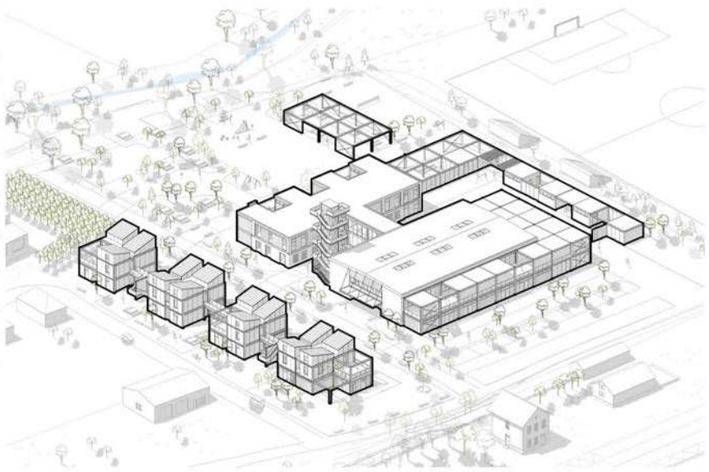
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Plan de situație / Site Plan - Scale 1:500







Comunity Center Renewal of the ANL area, Botoșani

Ludovic Daus Alley, Botoșani, Botoșani County, Romania

The proposed community center is located next to the ANL Cismea, a public collective housing complex from Botosani County.

From an urban point of view, it can be considered an intermediate space between the different housing typologies in the area: the ANL collective housing that is inserted into a fabric of individual housing.

The proposal comes with a response to the problems encountered, especially those that come from the lack of many public functions. Thus, a distribution of proposed functions are concentrated in three volumes: one that includes sports activities, one for educational activities (for workshops and courses for locals) and one for public functions and services (such as the agro-food micromarket, café and spaces for medical services).

This decision, to divide the functions of a community center, in a series of 3 volumes along the streets, was taken to preserve the scale of the place and to better frame the ANL area, thus proposing green areas that come to complement the existing ones.

Student:
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perspective of the entrance, North-West area

plan of the urban development proposal

plans of the plots development

site plan, *part of the general masterplan*

perspective of the building proposed for educational activities

perspective of the space next to the micro market place

perspective of the building proposed for sports activities

axonometry of the proposal

view along the street

European Centre for Contemporary Art and Redevelopment of Cipariu Square

Cipariu Square, Lutoasa Street, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The European Center for Contemporary Art aims to be an innovative institutional model, distinct both in scale and in its operational approach. It addresses not only the residents of Cluj-Napoca or Transylvania, but also audiences from across Romania and aims to engage a broader European public as well.

Unlike municipal, county, or national museums and art centers, the Center adopts a transnational and collaborative approach, integrating itself into a European network of reference. It will function as an active platform for research, production, and promotion of contemporary art. It is not intended to be merely an exhibition venue or a storage space for artworks, like a museum, nor a repertory institution like a theatre. Instead, it will be a dynamic place of interaction, experimentation, and collaboration. Its curatorial model will be mixed, incorporating participatory processes, while artistic production will be supported through collaborative methods.

In addition, the project includes the redevelopment of Piața Cipariu, aiming to reinforce its civic and cultural role within the city. The intervention redefines the square as a vital public space, clearly framed on all sides by new and existing buildings, while enhancing pedestrian connectivity, encouraging cultural participation, and anchoring the site as a key urban node along Cluj's cultural route.

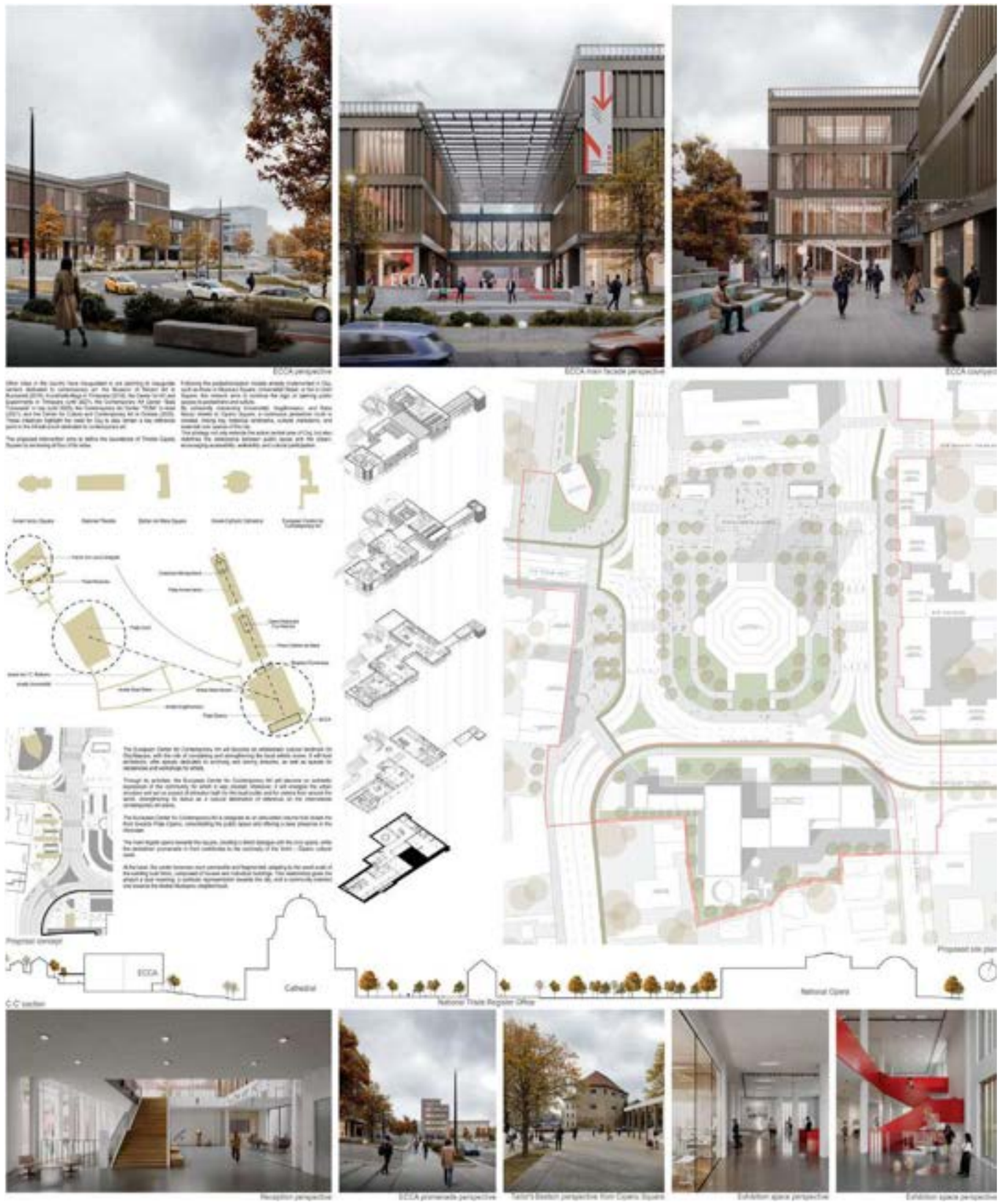
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Reconversion of Hydrotechnical Infrastructure along the Argeș River Nautical and Leisure Center

Dr. Lucian Popescu Street, Oltenița, Călărași County, Romania

Conversion of the Oltenița Lock – Nautical Center within the Argeș River Lock System
This project proposes the adaptive reuse of a former lock facility in Oltenița, transforming it into a contemporary nautical center that forms part of the broader technical and landscape ensemble of locks along the Argeș River. The site, rich in historical and environmental value, is reactivated through an intervention that merges industrial heritage with ecotourism and educational functions. The new center becomes a regional hub for water-based activities (kayaking, canoeing, leisure boating), alternative accommodation, and cultural exploration.
The project includes experimental lodging modules (glamping and micro-architecture), an on-site museum dedicated to hydrotechnical infrastructure and the Danube River, a dock for water sports, as well as areas for social interaction, nature observation, and environmental education. The conversion strategy preserves the memory of the place by reusing existing structures and complementing them.
The "Oltenița Nautical Center" stands as an example of adaptive reuse in the rural riparian context, contributing to the revitalization of peripheral areas through sustainable tourism, education, and public engagement with the natural and technical heritage of the Danube and Argeș Rivers.

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Educational Center for the Promotion of Science

Mărășești Street, Petrila, Hunedoara County, Romania

The project proposes the insertion of a Science Education Center within the premises of the former Petrila Coal Mine, as part of a broader strategy for industrial heritage regeneration. Positioned on the eastern edge of the site, the new building defines a clear urban boundary, currently missing, and contributes to the spatial coherence of the complex.

The educational function is a direct response to the site's identity—rooted in technological heritage—and to the growing interest among local youth in science, robotics, and STEM fields. By addressing the current lack of adequate infrastructure, the center becomes both a functional facility and a social catalyst.

Volumetrically, the new building maintains a low, horizontal profile, designed to harmonize with the existing industrial context without competing with the site's dominant vertical structures, such as the extraction tower or silo. Through restrained materiality and a measured architectural expression, the intervention acts as a unifying element, enabling a balanced dialogue between the historic fabric and the surrounding mountainous landscape.

Rather than pursuing passive museumification, the project advocates for an active, sustainable reuse strategy, where education becomes a means of reactivating memory and anchoring new cultural dynamics within the post-industrial context.

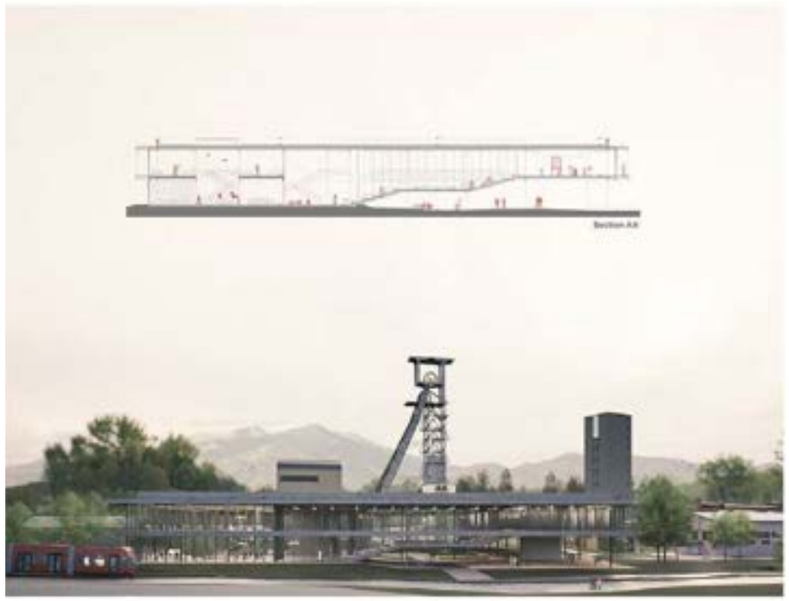
Student:

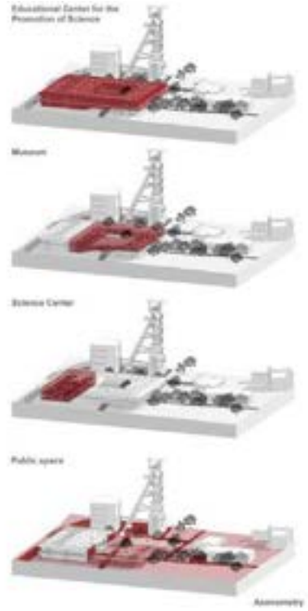
Anca Maria TRIF

Supervisor:

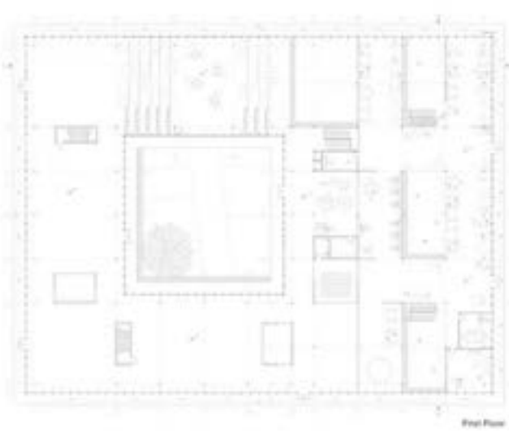
associate professor Dragoș DASCĂLU, PhD

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Form follows Nature

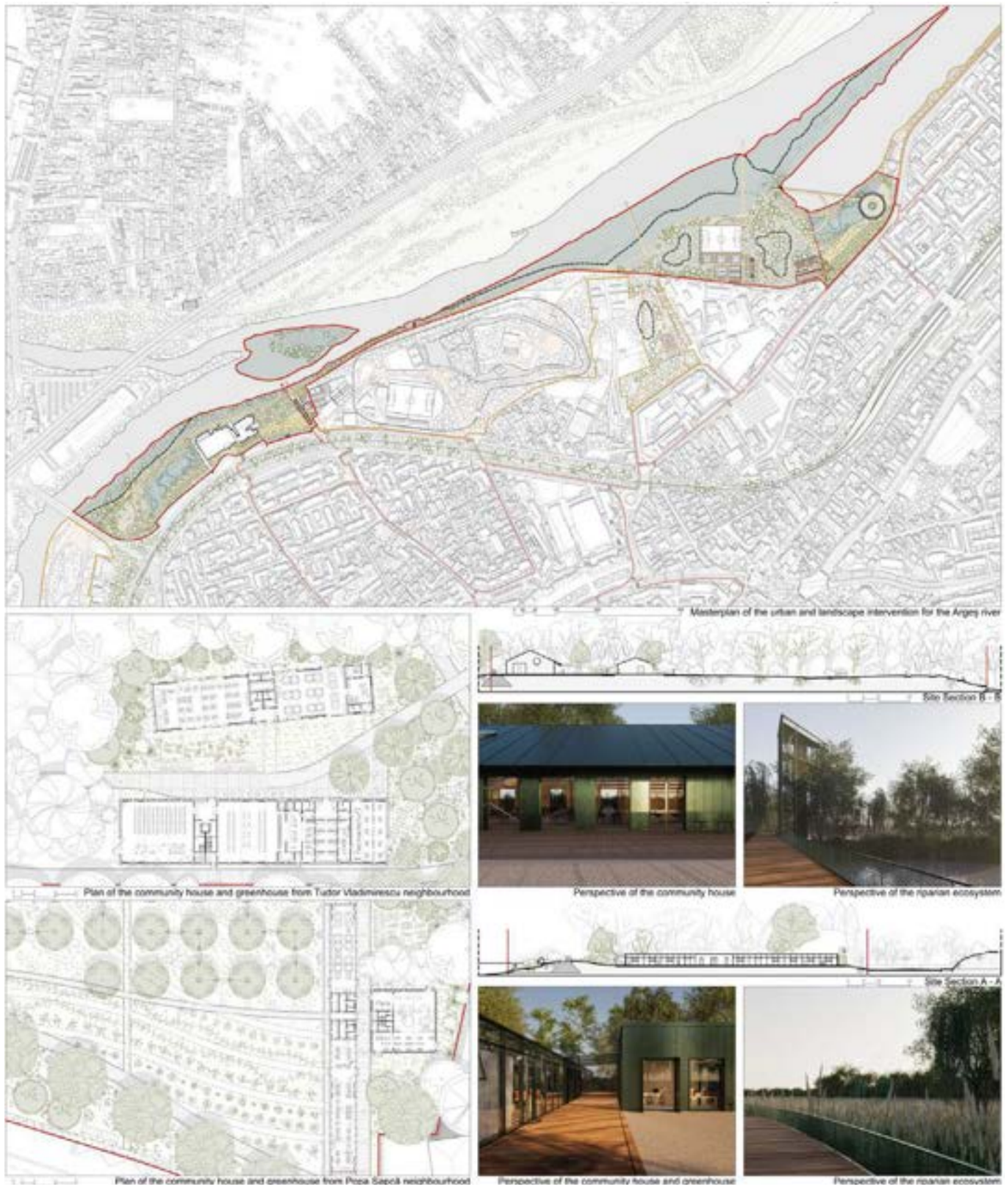
Urban and Landscape Reintegration of Habitat Patches Along the Banks of the Argeș River from Pitești

Pitești, Argeș County, Romania

The project is an urban and landscape design approach for the heterogeneous western riverbank of the Argeș river from Pitești. It is an intervention guided by the ecological dynamics of the territorial natural network with impact on three levels: the regional scale, by halting the fragmentation of the wildlife movement corridor; the local urban fabric, by mediating the amiss flux of matter and energy between the anthropic systems and the habitat patches from the peri-urban area and on zonal communities by proposing resilient and flexible social structures scattered throughout the intervention. It is aimed to attain a symbiotic relationship between the necessities of the civic groups and the biological needs of the local biodiversity.

The proposal aspires to be a horizontal and decentralized landscape infrastructure, reusing and supplementing the existing leisure facilities as an active buffer zone for the natural mosaic. Furthermore, to prevent the formation of new centers and peripheries in the existing urban network, it is proposed that the recognizable structures should be restored and repurposed as multifunctional areas, adaptable to the changing social needs. These built environment along urban gardens, greenhouses, tree nurseries, community canteens and markets form circular ecosystems, ones where humans and non-humans collaborate to develop a sustainable dynamic in the analysed urban fringe.

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1st-4th july

dissertations

students

1	ALKABARITY Yazan
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3	ARCĂLEAN Florin Adelin
4	BĂRSAN Natanael Absalon
5	BOLOG Matei Alexandru
6	BORȘAN Radu Alexandru
7	CAZACU Valeria
8	CHENDE Maria
10	CHIOREAN Vlad Andrei
9	CHIRA Anamaria Daniela
11	CHIRLEȘAN Cristina
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13	CIUNTEREI Bogdan Petru
14	COBZARU Alexia Elena
15	COCIUBEI Manuela Asera
16	CONDURACHI Georgiana
17	CORUȚIUMara - Ioana
18	COSMA Cosmina Denisa
19	CREMENITCHI Andreea Ioana
20	CSORTAN Aliz Dorottya
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23	FURJES Eliza
25	HERDELĂU Cora
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32	MAN Denisa Antonia
33	MIHĂILESCU Ioana Ariana
34	MOIS George Vladut Dorel
35	MOISI Cristian Andrei
36	MOLDOVAN Dragoș - Dumitru
37	MOLDOVAN Mihai
38	MUREȘAN Alexandra
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40	OLTEAN Cristian Vasile
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42	POP Diana Andra
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The Six Senses of Space:
Synesthetic Principles in Healing Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *multisensory design, synesthetic architecture, wellness, healing space*

Introduction:
This dissertation explores how multisensory and synesthetic design principles can transform wellness architecture into a medium for healing. The aim is to understand how spaces can engage the senses to support mental and physical well-being.
The core research question is: How can architecture enhance wellness through the integration of sensory experience?

Sources and Methods
The study combines theoretical research with design-based analysis. Key sources include works by Peter Zumthor, Juhani Pallasmaa, Sarah Robinson, and Esther Sternberg.
Methods used:
• Literature review on sensory and healing architecture
• Case study analysis (Therme Vals, Lanserhof Tegernsee, Ma'in Hot Springs)
• Application of findings in a design proposal for Băile Băița

Results and Discussion
The research shows that activating all senses - including balance and bodily awareness - can enhance emotional comfort and recovery.
The proposal for Băile Băița applies these findings through:
• Natural materials
• Spatial isolation for privacy
• Orientation toward green spaces
The discussion highlights how architecture can act as a therapeutic environment, not just a functional space.

Conclusion
Multisensory design enhances the emotional and healing potential of architecture. By creating spaces that stimulate, calm, and reconnect, architects can support well-being on a deeper level. This research offers a human-centered framework for future wellness design.

Another Perspective.
The Effect of Colors on the Educational Space

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abstract

Keywords: *color, empathy, energy, integration, stimulation*

The educational environment represents a child's first contact with the social world. Its psychological and developmental impact is deeply influential. Therefore, it is essential to search for and identify an appropriate approach to guide children in their journey into the adult world. This study is initiated from the desire to find a suitable use of color within the complex development of a child. Starting from the search for guiding perspectives, an architect has the responsibility to explore the impact of color in all its graphic dimensions on a child's development. In this direction, the goal is to identify methods (a framework) through which guidance and support can be provided for cognitive, physical, and psychological development. This subject is considered important due to its current relevance and the demonstrable impact on children.

Furthermore, to allow for a more focused analysis, the topic is limited to the study of both traditional and alternative educational methods (the latter represented by the most well-known approaches: Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia). The research question is: "How do colors influence the educational environment, and how can they be used in the architectural context?"

Sources and methods included historical analysis (along with current methodological approaches), theoretical studies, critical analysis of three comparative case studies (between Romania and Europe) with different approaches and research and development of a classification system for methods of color integration, based on studies of various architectural firms primarily focused on kindergartens, due to the shared foundation with the Bachelor's thesis.

After understanding the historical context, recognizing the importance of color, and identifying the appropriate perspective, the study aims to develop a relevant classification system that provides a clear direction for architects. This research lays the groundwork for creating a guide to designing educational institutions from the perspective of color use, offering architectural opportunities that support proper development. In the context of the diploma project, the scientific analysis supports the design of a kindergarten located in Florești, which accommodates a significant number of children due to urban planning deficiencies.

Regardless of the methods used or the colors chosen, the primary consideration must always be the needs and desires of the children, given the crucial role architecture plays in their lives. As the main users of the space, the approach should begin with the child and expand outward toward the world. In this regard, the use of color, for emphasis, boundaries, belonging, or guidance, supports child development, a responsibility assigned to the architect through their ability to synthesize, study, and be aware of the social context.

The Architecture of Preschool Education: The Quality and Adaptability of Kindergarten Typologies in the Municipality of Bistrița

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abstract

Keywords: *preschool education, functionality, adaptability*

The dissertation explores the complexity of the architecture of the spaces dedicated to preschool education, highlighting the essential interaction between functionality, design and the current pedagogical requirements. The theme focuses on the increasing interest of society for the harmonious development of children from the perschool cycle, in an urban context that contributes to the acceleration of the building processes generates significant pressures on the educational infrastructure. This is necessary to re-evaluate the way in which kindergartens are thought and adapted in the life of the community.

The first chapter provides a historical perspective on early education in Romania, analyzing how preschool institutions have developed over time and highlighting the architectural models adopted in various historical periods. We noticed the transition from standardized and rigid kindergartens of the socialist period to more open and flexible forms in the post-December era. We discussed the many constraints that influenced both the function and the architectural expression of these spaces: from the lack of budget allocation for this branch, to the pressures of political regulations and the limitations imposed by urbanism that developed very quickly.

The second chapter focuses on how smartly designed physical space can influence the educational act. It explores ways of functional adaptation of non-conventional spaces, such as arranged kindergartens that have developed on the ground floor of the blocks or in adapted housing, in order to obtain a framework conducive to the educational process. It emphasizes the importance of factors such as spatial flexibility, safety and ergonomics as essential factors in supporting children's cognitive and emotional development.

In the third chapter are analyzed modern trends in the field of educational architectures, with an emphasis on sustainability and community integration. Innovative and environmentally friendly solutions are presented, such as green roofs, solar panels, rainwater collection or the use of environmentally friendly materials. It also highlights the need for multifunctional and flexible spaces that can quickly respond to demographic, pedagogical or administrative changes.

The fourth chapter provides an applied component through case studies Three concrete examples of kindergartens are analyzed - one located on the ground floor of a block, one developed by adapting a historic house and one with dedicated architectural program Each case is assessed according to the criteria of functionality, architectural quality and adaptability to the specific needs of children.

In the final chapter, it describes the choice of theme and how the theoretical research influenced the approach of the personal architectural project The not-so-called lessons and how they contributed to the process of developing the final project.

In conclusion, the paper supports the idea that the architecture of the garden must go beyond the status of simple constructive function and become a space that meets the needs of the child by integrating pedagogical, social and ecological principles.

Non-Formal Educational Architecture and its Role in the Formation of the Community. Education Outside the Classroom

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abstract

Keywords: *non-formal education, community architecture, experiential learning, social cohesion, alternative educational spaces*

Introduction: Non-formal education is a key component of lifelong learning, complementing formal education through flexible, experience-based methods. In the architectural context, this implies the creation of innovative spaces that stimulate creativity, experiential learning, and collaboration. This paper investigates the relationship between non-formal education and architecture, analysing how spatial design can positively influence the educational process and foster community development.

Sources and methods: The research draws upon theoretical studies on non-formal education (authors such as Philip H. Coombs, John Dewey, Ray Oldenburg, N.F.S. Grundtvig, etc.); historical analyses of folk schools and Nordic models (e.g., folk high schools, ASTRA); contemporary case studies including Pilke House (Finland), Forest Nexus (Lithuania), and Kastelli Community Centre (Finland); as well as direct observations and personal experiences at the Children's Palace and the "Ioan Sima" Art High School in Zalău. The methodology includes comparative, socio-cultural, and functional spatial analyses.

Results and discussion: The findings show that the architecture of modern educational community centres can become a source of local identity—respecting tradition while promoting pedagogical innovation. These spaces support non-formal education through spatial flexibility, multifunctionality, and the integration of nature into the learning process. Architecture becomes an active educational framework through participatory design, adaptable furniture, and seamless transitions between interior and exterior spaces. Moreover, it fosters social cohesion, inclusion, and civic engagement. The architecture of non-formal education has a direct impact on the strengthening of communities by revitalizing the built environment and creating flexible, accessible, and multifunctional spaces. It facilitates continuous and lifelong learning within the communities it serves.

Conclusion: When integrated into educational and community-focused projects, architecture becomes a powerful tool for human and social development. Intelligently designed spaces do not merely host activities—they enhance, support, and give them deeper meaning. Therefore, architecture can make a decisive contribution to building more educated, inclusive, and supportive urban communities.

Interdisciplinary Tools for Analysis, Interpretation, and Conceptualization:

Sensory Information Mapping and Graphic Representations Applied in Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *analysis tools, conceptualization tools, sensory information, mapping, graphic representation*

This paper investigates how sensory information—particularly visual, tactile-thermal, olfactory, proprioceptive-kinesthetic, and, more rarely, auditory perception—can be translated into visual tools for analysis and conceptualization in architecture

The study draws from historical and artistic examples of sensory mapping, including psychogeographic maps and experiential drawings, which translate subjective perception into graphic formats. Through comparative analysis, the most effective tools are identified and tested in three case studies. These examples evaluate the tools' capacity to capture the sensory identity of a place and apply them to the Turda Balneoclimatic Resort, both at the territorial scale and in the design of a proposed spa center. Based on these insights, new visual instruments are developed to support both sensory analysis and the conceptual phase of design.

Historical references show a variety of sensory mapping methods, with a strong emphasis on visual data. However, interdisciplinary approaches increasingly integrate tactile, olfactory, and kinesthetic inputs to offer a more nuanced spatial understanding. Representation techniques range from annotated sketches to layered diagrams combining narrative and spatial data. In landscape contexts, elements such as scent paths, wind patterns, and textures are effectively visualized.

Applied to the Turda site, these methods uncovered key sensory traits—such as saline air, geological erosion patterns, and anthropic interventions—that informed both material strategies and spatial sequencing. The case studies demonstrated that sensory mapping is most effective when it informs not just the concept, but also circulation, materiality, and user experience. Among the tools tested, sequential sensory mapping—charting perception over time and movement—proved especially valuable, reflecting how spaces are actually experienced.

The research underscores the value of sensory information in architectural and landscape processes. Translating sensory perception into graphic tools deepens site understanding and enhances design coherence. Sequential sensory mapping, in particular, bridges subjective experience with spatial logic, offering a flexible and empathetic design approach adaptable to various contexts.

The Architecture of Process.

Construction Site Photography in Târgu Mureș during the Socialist Period

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abstract

Keywords: *architecture photography, construction site, process, participation, socialism*

In the socialist regime, the role of construction site photography was mainly propagandistic. This study aims to prove how in some cases, this particular type of photography also captured certain architectural values, specific to the process of construction. During a time characterised by censorship, photography became for many a way to freely express themselves within the working space, becoming a testimony of a way of life. Their perspective of the built environment is not only valuable, but also highly interpretable.

One of the main reasons for the rich photographic heritage of Târgu Mureș is the activity of the renowned Marx József Photoclub. Consequently, the main source of material were the archives that are currently being digitized. Construction site photography is a subgenre of architecture photography that is not often explored from a theoretical perspective. By considering it an architectural process, this study creates a framework which makes possible the interpretation of these images. Using the theories of Roland Barthes, Iain Borden and Manfredo Tafuri as a starting point, this paper proposes an original way of categorizing the cameraworks. There are 3 main types of photographs that capture the essence of the building site: the flâneur, the photoreporter and the active participant. Each type is driven by a certain set of motivations in their pursuit of understanding the built environment. Even though some theoreticians claim that photography is unclassifiable, a certain set of guidelines could help with the interpretation of this phenomenon.

In the case studies, three relevant industrial plants from Târgu Mureș were chosen and analysed based on the type of photographer that immortalized them, as well as their intrinsical motivation. Furthermore, they were compared with a set of famous architecture photographies from other countries. The strategy was based on Borden's Dialectical Imagery. The result of these comparisons proved that even under heavy censorship, there were certain artistic values that transcended space and ideology, and that were the status quo at that time.

In regards to the diploma project, the main link between it and this paper is the architectural program: a photography center. While conducting the analysis phase, photographies of transformative processes within the area were used in order to understand how a continuous urban regeneration could be achieved in a space that lost its initial character.

To conclude, the dichotomy man – built space is a theme profoundly explored and interpreted by the construction site photographs. The people who took part in these complex processes were not only driven by intrinsical motivations, but also by the need of proving their pivotal role in the architectural process itself.

The Third Element.

Connecting Space as an Architectural Principle in Nō, Kabuki and Bunraku Theatre

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abstract

Keywords: *transition, theatre, Nō, Kabuki, Bunraku*

This dissertation explores the concept of the “connecting space” as a defining architectural principle within traditional Japanese theatre—specifically Nō, Kabuki, and Bunraku. The research investigates how intermediate spatial elements such as hashigakari, hanamichi, and yuka function beyond their structural roles, mediating the relationship between actor and audience through symbolic and spatial means. The central research question asks: how can these transitional architectural components inform contemporary theatre design practices? The study was motivated by the need to identify culturally rooted spatial strategies that can enhance the relational dynamics in modern performance spaces.

The research combines architectural analysis, historical study, and case-based observation. Sources include specialized literature on Japanese theatre and architecture, original treatises such as those by Zeami, and contemporary critiques from architects like Kengo Kuma. Methods involved theoretical inquiry, visual analysis of performances, and examination of significant architectural case studies—including the National Nō Theatre (Tokyo), Kabuki-za (Ginza), and the National Bunraku Theatre (Osaka).

The study identifies the “third element”—the connecting space—as a recurring architectural constant in Japanese theatre. Rather than separating the audience from the performance, these spaces (e.g., hashigakari or hanamichi) create a dynamic interface that embodies the Japanese concept of ma, a meaningful interval that holds spatial, temporal, and symbolic significance. These findings were extended through analysis of contemporary reinterpretations by Kengo Kuma and others, revealing how traditional principles can be reimagined in open, participatory environments. In the diploma project—a proposed extension of the National Theatre in Sibiu—the concept of the connecting space was applied via a series of architectural interventions: mobile tribunes, transitional walkways, and a green urban amphitheatre, all designed to integrate the theatrical act with the life of the city.

This research concludes that connecting spaces are not only historically significant but also critically relevant to contemporary architectural practice. Their capacity to mediate ritual, movement, and perception suggests a model for rethinking theatre architecture today—not as a static typology, but as an open system of relations. By translating symbolic spatial logics into contemporary design language, architects can foster participatory, flexible, and culturally resonant performance environments.

Flowing In&Out*. Mediators in the Relationship with the Garden

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abstract

Keywords: *garden, permeability, fluidity, mediators, sequential*

The main topic of the dissertation is the relationship between buildings and gardens, but also between humans and gardens and the landscapes beyond. With this study I wanted to understand the principles of garden making in the Japanese culture throughout history, given the fact that the garden always developed alongside architecture, and at the same time, to study how we can mediate such a delicate relationship in contemporary times in Transylvania. The question that laid the foundation for this research was: how can we make sure that the buildings we design in such valuable landscapes act like a bridge between man and nature?

The research is structured in 6 chapters, based on literature review (books, articles and documents presenting the historical evolution and Kengo Kuma's mediators), case studies and analysis of the defining features of the site that I chose for the diploma project. For the last one, photographic documentation was carried out last summer when I visited my hometown.

I decided to start by describing the way the people from the Székely Region of Transylvania used to build their houses and annexes and how the garden was purely functional for them, in order to introduce the context of the diploma project and the natural landscape in which it is situated. This was followed by a presentation of the Japanese gardens evolving through time, and how they were not functional, but had a rather contemplative purpose – first, only from the inside of the house, then moving on the horizontal plane of the veranda and, in the end, by strolling through it, discovering it sequence by sequence. But I also had to analyse how certain mediators – floor plan, water bodies, light – were used in Kuma's projects in order to understand how to successfully connect the subject to the garden. In the end, the case studies show two examples, one from Sovata (a city in the Székely Region) and one from Chile, that seem to use the same principles and mediators for bathing facilities that I presented throughout my study. The sensibility of the topic and the Japanese way of thinking spaces helped me develop the architectural AND the landscape concepts for my diploma project and made it easier for me to come up with a solution that transforms the object of a bathing facility in a sensory experience that cherishes its beautiful surroundings.

I believe that, especially when it comes to rural sites where the nature is the "protagonist", it's important for architects to create designs that foster a connection between people and the landscape. To encourage the subjects to explore what lays beyond the building, even beyond the garden. To let the spaces flow into one another. And in order to achieve that, it's important to sometimes look into other cultures' way of thinking, designing and experiencing these spaces, because it might lead to a more fitting solution for certain sites.

Adaptive Reuse of Industrial Structures with Large Spans.

Perception of Large Spaces, Volumetry and Impact on Housing

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abstract

Keywords: *urban regeneration, industrial architecture, adaptive reuse, large-span structures, housing quality*

This thesis investigates the adaptive reuse of large-span industrial buildings, addressing the core question: How can the large spans of former factories be reused to create living spaces and complementary functions adapted to contemporary needs? The study emerges from the growing necessity to regenerate abandoned industrial sites in post-industrial cities and proposes strategies for integrating these structures into the contemporary urban fabric while preserving their architectural identity and cultural memory.

The research is structured in three stages. First, a comprehensive literature review on industrial architecture, adaptive reuse, and housing quality was conducted. Second, the local context of Satu Mare, Romania, was analyzed, focusing on the historical evolution and current state of the Ardeleana textile factory. Lastly, three international case studies were examined through architectural, structural, and functional lenses, to identify key design principles, typologies and strategies.

The research concluded that large-span structures offer both challenges and unique opportunities. The findings show that large-span structures present both technical challenges and valuable spatial opportunities. Their generous volumes and open configurations can be adapted into high-quality, flexible living environments through strategic architectural and structural interventions.

The study identified three major structural approaches: preserving valuable architectural elements such as façades, roofs, and original construction materials; applying selective demolition to remove deteriorated sections while reusing salvaged materials in a sustainable, circular approach; and structurally consolidating or inserting new construction systems within the existing envelope, preserving the original “shell” of the building. These principles were explored and implemented in the proposed diploma project, which envisions the mixed-use redevelopment of the former Ardeleana textile factory in Satu Mare. By integrating preserved industrial features with new architectural volumes and sustainable strategies, the project illustrates how former factories with large-span interiors can be successfully transformed into vibrant urban environments.

The thesis demonstrates that the adaptive reuse of large-span industrial buildings represents a viable strategy for sustainable urban regeneration.

The conclusions offer a methodological framework for addressing similar future projects, combining architectural sensitivity, structural reasoning, and urban vision. The transformation of such buildings not only provides new housing typologies but also reintegrates obsolete industrial heritage into contemporary life, fostering identity, continuity and urban vitality.

A Place at Ease:
Incompletness, Spatial Manifestation of a Latent Beginning and Resilient Counterpoint Within the City

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abstract

Keywords: *repose, ruins, incomplete architecture, latent beginning, resilience*

This dissertation paper undergoes in studying the concept of the ‘incomplete’ in architecture by examining, what I defined, as the state of repose it is currently in, while disjoining it from the notions of classical and modern ruin. This study aims to formulate a response to the schism that unfinished buildings constitute within today’s urban fabric by advocating for a strategy that critically reintegrates them into the city.

The research itself takes the form of a theoretical analysis of several selected texts that address the aforementioned topics, connected with three physical places, thus anchoring the discussed concepts in reality. One of the main sources of the research is Françoise Choay’s L’allégorie du patrimoine, which provides an insight into built heritage, followed by Dylan Trigg’s philosophical introspection on ruins in The Aesthetics of Decay. The anthology of texts in Incompiuto: La nascita di uno Stile provides a basis for interpreting the unique raison d’être of unfinished buildings. This is then followed by an exploration of the notion of the ‘incomplete’ in relation to Oswald Mathias Ungers’ concept of cities within the city and the autonomous architecture advocated by Pier Vittorio Aureli. Given the fact that studies regarding incomplete architecture are momentarily rather limited, personal bibliographical analogies between a few other sources were needed in crystallising a coherent incipient discourse on the matter of unfinished architecture.

After interpreting unfinished buildings in relation with classical and modern ruins, the text concludes by proposing the ‘incomplete’ as a catalyst for critically reimagining the contemporary city, using its already contained ‘latent beginning’ potential that it developed in its state of repose. The diploma project builds on the lessons of the ‘incomplete’ and acts as a potential strategic retreat within the city in times of crisis. By preserving traces of the buildings’ incomplete past and maintaining the former shape of the sites’ urban limits, the proposal establishes a critical dialogue with the city.

Ultimately, the personal optic views the ‘incomplete’ as an already existing self-contained and resilient point, that could counter the chaotic contemporary urban development by being always ready to grasp its abandoned future. The reimagination of the dysfunctional, diluted, non-hierarchical city stems from the unique architecture that itself produced: the reposed ‘incomplete’.

Adaptive Reuse of Industrial Structures with Large Spans.

Perception of Large Spaces, Volumetry and Impact on Housing

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abstract

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The conclusions offer a methodological framework for addressing similar future projects, combining architectural sensitivity, structural reasoning, and urban vision. The transformation of such buildings not only provides new housing typologies but also reintegrates obsolete industrial heritage into contemporary life, fostering identity, continuity and urban vitality.

Urban Play Pockets: The Role Of Small-Scale Interventions In Revitalizing Public Space For Children

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abstract

Keywords: *urban play pockets, informal play, participatory design, child spatial agency*

This dissertation examines the role of informal “urban play pockets” in shaping child friendly cities. Urban play pockets are small, often unprogrammed interstitial spaces—laneways, alleys, vacant lots, school streets—where children spontaneously appropriate the built environment for play. The study’s primary aim is to understand how these emergent spaces form, how they function in children’s spatial experience, and how architects and planners can integrate their logic into formal design. The central research question asks: In what ways can informal play pockets inform scalable, participatory strategies for embedding play into the urban fabric? This question emerges from the acknowledgement that conventional playgrounds frequently fail to engage children’s imaginations or occupy meaningful positions in everyday routes, thereby marginalizing play in rapidly urbanizing contexts.

A predominantly qualitative, interpretive methodology underpins this research. First, a comprehensive literature review synthesized theories of play and recent neuroscientific findings on synaptic plasticity and executive function maturation. Second, multiple case studies were investigated through document analysis, photographic and spatial surveys, and participatory workshops with children and community members. Third, feedback from users was integrated in this research by studying interviews conducted by other parties and reviews from media and academic literature.

The research identified three interrelated domains of original findings.

• Morphology and Spatial Characteristics

• Participatory and Tactical Processes

• Design Principles for Child-Centric Environments

These findings directly inform the diploma project’s design framework, which proposes integrating micro-interventions along pedestrian corridors, inside inner courtyards, enlarging sidewalk edges into play niches, and embedding child-generated graphics into paving patterns. The discussion situates these insights within broader child-friendly city policies—highlighting UNICEF guidelines and EU best practices—and underlines the need for regulatory incentives to institutionalize play as a civic program.

This study concludes that spontaneous urban play pockets are not anomalies but vital indicators of children’s spatial agency and unmet needs in contemporary cities. By foregrounding participatory, low-cost, and adaptable design strategies, architects and planners can transform marginal urban fragments into micro-labs for child-led exploration, social negotiation, and creative learning. Embedding play pockets as a formal layer in urban policy—through tactical urbanism pilot programs, inclusive planning regulations, and cross-sector partnerships—will democratize access to play, strengthen community bonds, and support holistic child development. Ultimately, reconceiving the city as a boundless playground reaffirms children’s rights as urban citizens and enriches the built environment for all.

The duality of the ground floor: between memory and contemporary functionality. Re-signification of an urban fabric with a cohesive role in the public space

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abstract

Keywords: *ground-floor, minor architecture, discreet insertion, valuable contrast, spatial behavior.*

This dissertation aims to examine the architectural role and urban implications of ground-level public buildings, with particular attention to minor architecture and the spatial register of the ground floor. The study investigates how single-storey public constructions can contribute to urban continuity, social infrastructure, and the mediation between contemporary needs and historical fabric. The research is guided by four main questions: (1) How is minor, ground-level architecture recognized or protected within central and semi-central urban areas? (2) To what extent is the ground-floor typology viable under current urban conditions? (3) In what ways can low-rise public buildings be integrated into various urban contexts, including fragmented or historically sensitive ones? (4) What are the advantages (and disadvantages) of building at this scale?

The research adopts a qualitative, case-based methodology, combining theoretical analysis, urban morphological observation, and comparative study. Six built projects were selected, prioritizing functional relevance, contextual diversity, and availability of documentation. The case studies were examined using three analytical criteria: discreet insertion, valuable contrast, and ground-floor spatial behavior. Sources include architectural documentation, photographs, project publications, and critical literature related to minor architecture, and gorund-floor theory.

The analysis indicates that ground-level public buildings, when approached through modest scale and contextual sensitivity, can support urban coherence and spatial accessibility. These interventions operate without formal dominance and function as connective tissue between past and present, building and city. While limited in terms of density and floor-area efficiency, such buildings demonstrate adaptability, openness, and proximity, qualities associated with public relevance. The case studies reflect different urban situations, ranging from historical cores to incoherent fabrics, suggesting the typology’s flexibility across diverse contexts.

These observations inform the associated diploma project, which proposes a County Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts in Târgu Mureș. The site includes five historic ground-level buildings from 1907. The project integrates these volumes within a broader museum program, introducing new low-rise insertions to structure human-scaled public access. The architectural strategy applies the concepts explored in the dissertation, particularly in relation to scale, spatial rhythm, and contrast.

The research suggests that ground-level architecture can act as a mediator within the urban fabric, through discreet presence, valuable contrast, and spatial openness. The findings point to its potential in supporting civic infrastructure beyond conventional architectural hierarchies.

The Impact of Digitalization on Art Schools. Adapting Creative Processes in Art Schools in the Context of Digitalization

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abstract

Keywords: *adaptability, technology, tools, connectivity, creativity*

This dissertation explores how digitalization reshapes art education, with a specific focus on the spatial and functional transformation of art school environments. The study aims to understand how digital tools and practices influence artistic learning and creation, and how architecture must adapt to accommodate these changes. The central research question is: How does digital transformation reshape the spatial and functional needs of contemporary art education? The topic is highly relevant as digital tools become deeply embedded in creative education, demanding new forms of space that support both traditional and digital artistic processes.

The research methodology combines theoretical investigation, typological and functional space analysis, and case studies. Historical documentation tracks the evolution of educational spaces and technologies from the 20th century to the present. A detailed typological analysis focuses on traditional studios and digital labs. Case studies of modern art schools (e.g., Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Burg Giebichenstein) highlight best practices in spatial design. The study also includes critical reflection and personal interpretation based on architectural observation. Key sources include academic literature on education, architecture, and digital media.

The findings reveal that digitalization does not radically alter the physical form of art schools but significantly transforms how spaces are used. Traditional studio models are increasingly hybridized with digital formats, requiring spaces that are flexible, modular, and technologically integrated. Essential features of contemporary art schools now include digital media labs, collaborative hubs, virtual classrooms, and adaptive furniture. The research emphasizes the importance of infrastructure readiness, spatial adaptability, and interdisciplinary compatibility. The diploma project proposes an architectural model that merges tactile, material-based learning with digital infrastructure, emphasizing continuity between traditional craft and digital expression.

Digitalization in art education demands a fundamental rethinking of spatial logic. While the artistic values and material experiences remain central, educational spaces must evolve to support digital creativity, collaboration, and personalization. Architectural design should not only accommodate but actively enhance learning by offering dynamic, hybrid, and inclusive environments. The study underscores the need for a balanced integration of technology, preserving the depth of artistic exploration while enabling access to global creative tools. These findings are crucial for future architects, educators, and policymakers aiming to align educational infrastructure with contemporary creative practices.

Formative Fragments Of Commercial Passages

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abstract

Keywords: *commercial passage, urban activator, pedestrian path, connection*

This paper explores commercial passages as urban typologies, acting as a connection between public and private space, between circulation and stationary. In the context of a city crossed daily by pedestrian flows, passages are not just simple functional corridors, but become scenographic frames that influence urban behavior and experience. The aim of the approach is to analyze how the form, context and function of a passage influence spatial navigation, but also how it can optimize the interaction of pedestrians with urban space and contribute to the revitalization of various areas of the city.

The study is based on the comparative analysis of historical passages and contemporary insertions, in order to understand their emergence, expansion, but also their continuation. For this, historical plans, sections, photographs and specialized writings from various cultural contexts are analyzed in order to have the broadest possible perspective on the subject. To these are added personal experience, site visits, which outline the particular perspective of how such a project functions and is perceived. Therefore, the work serves as a tool to investigate what defining aspects can influence the quality and success of such an implementation.

In this part of the paper an extensive range of passages from various periods and places is presented in order to be able to carry out a comparative analysis as diverse as possible focused on three main aspects: context and positioning (macro scale); path (micro scale); luminosity and proportion (micro scale). The comparative analysis at the local scale demonstrates that passages function as pedestrian micro-infrastructures that shorten routes, produce connectivity or even become generators of other passages. On the other hand, the analysis at the scale of the architectural object notes the importance of typology in the quality of the experience and economic success. The insights gained from the comparative analysis provide a valuable framework for approaching the diploma project in Oradea. The passage is capable of generating new spatial relationships and encouraging urban continuity.

By creating the passages, galleries or covered urban streets, it facilitates the crossing and connection of the city's points of interest, and in addition, aesthetic and functional value is added to the pedestrian paths. The objective of the work is to make each fragment integrated into the passage design to become part of a perceptual spatial journey. The passage becomes a connection between the past, present and future, between functionality, mobility and aesthetics. Through this type of project, the aim is to define a set of principles, in which the quality of the urban space also contains valuable elements of mobility.

From the Schoolyard.

Educational-Social Infrastructure in Relation with the City - Discussions about Mănăştur

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abstract

Keywords: *schoolyard, educational infrastructure, community school, urban regeneration, social integration*

The dissertation examines the transformative potential of schools as strategic instruments for urban regeneration, transcending their traditional purpose to become aggregators of community life. The main research question investigates how schools can function as community centres through the reconfiguration of relationships between interior school paces, schoolyards, immediate proximity areas, and the neighbourhood, resulting in an integrated system of formal and informal educational spaces. The study was undertaken to validate the hypothesis that opening the schools to the community can generate an urban ecosystem that simultaneously responds to educational and social needs, particularly in the context of Mănăștur Neighbourhood in Cluj-Napoca.

The methods combine theoretical research with direct field observations in the Mănăștur neighbourhood of Cluj-Napoca, including repeated visits between January and May 2025, analysis of historical and contemporary urban plans, as well as comparative study of international and Romanian projects. Primary sources also include discussions with residents of the Mănăștur area, while secondary sources include specialised literature (spatial theory by Herman Hertzberger and Henri Lefebvre) and case studies of contemporary planning strategies and policies. This hybrid approach makes it possible to identify problems and formulate proposals to validate the hypothesis that the school can function as a neighbourhood centre.

The research revealed that Mănăștur's well distributed school network and strong community identity represents a significant asset for urban regeneration, despite the neighbourhood's generally negative perception. Key findings demonstrate that schoolyards can function as "unprogrammed spaces" that can serve as spatial mediators, while the "invisible public spaces" surrounding schools generate daily patterns that structure the urban tissue. Case studies from European areas illustrate successful models where schools operate as "educational-social infrastructure" through participatory governance and hybrid space management. The analysis reveals that fragmentation of public space in Mănăștur caused by different barriers, privatization and lack of integrated new planning can be addressed through strategic use of educational infrastructure. These findings help to establish a framework for school extension and master-planning for the diploma project.

The study concludes with possible measures to build a strategy, here the school takes the role of the community center. The multidisciplinary analysis offers a challenge and an opportunity to rethink the role of education in society. For Mănăștur specifically, despite the urban development history, the neighbour's identity and the existent school infrastructure can establish a durable urban regeneration.

In between Typification And Experiment: The Traceability Of Ideas In The Architecture Of Education During The Socialist Period

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abstract

Keywords: *typical school architecture, socialism, type-project, mass construction, education*

This dissertation aims to investigate typical school projects developed during the socialist period and other manifestations of the architectural educational program in the contexts of former socialist states. Searching for the origin of the progressive discourse, the research extends to experimental school projects in Western states. Is there a typological evolution of typical school projects in Romania and the possibility of a theoretical analysis? Are there typological and ideological relations in the form of manifestation of architectural programs between the Eastern and Western blocs?

The research methodology encompasses the historical documentary analysis and relies on the documentation of specialty journals such as Arhitectura RPR and Analele Arhitecturii, theoretical studies conducted by ISART and IPCT, and other texts that identify parallels between the ideological and programmatic conception of typical schools in the territory of the former Eastern Bloc and Western states.

The first aim of the paper was to theorize the stages of the evolution of typical school projects in Romania. By identifying the Soviet influence in the early stage of the development of typical school projects, the study comparatively analyzes the typological evolution of typical school projects in Romania and the USSR. Subsequently, the paper continues to investigate other typical school projects from the former Eastern Bloc, focusing on Czechoslovakia, and aims to identify typological links in school architecture from Western Europe, to study the permeability of the ideological barrier in the transfer of school architecture typologies. The diploma project addresses the extension of a typical school built in the socialist period and explores ways to adapt the mundane typical school to the needs of contemporary education.

In the Romanian context, three types of attitudes defining the evolution of typical school projects can be conceptualized: an orientation towards the ideological import from the USSR of the societal architectural conception, the 1960s brought the emancipation of the institutes of the standardized design that produced remarkably efficient projects. The third type of attitude revealed, culminating in the late 1970s, is the openness towards experimentation and the late import of the structuralist current. The comparative analysis of typical school projects from the former Eastern Bloc and school architecture from Western Europe demonstrated the existence of a permeability in the barrier between the Eastern and Western Bloc in the transfer of school architecture typologies.

Affective Destinations. The Cultural Space as an Architectural Promenade

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abstract

Keywords: *immersive, perception, experience, revelations, sugestion*

The role of the theatre extends beyond its function as a venue for artistic expression, serving as a space dedicated community gatherings and the embodyment of collective emotions, while simultaneously reflecting the human condition within a specific cultural and territorial context, as well as being designed as immersive environments. The study aims to find answers to the following issues:

1. What is the impact of the path through a cultural space?
2. What is the suggestive role of the entryway depending on how it’s treated?
3. How can expression of transparencies and opacities invite or repel?
4. What is the impact of the reception area as an arhitectual threshold?

Among the research methods used in this study are the following techniques: content analysys of theoretical literature, case studies and correlational research. The criteria of the selection of case studies includes relevance to international, national and local contexts as well as the resonance with personal experience, the similarity of climatic conditions and the diversity in terms of built surface and scale.

This chapter of the research presents 10 case studies analyzed in depth, based on the analytical criteria outlined in the paper. These cases will be examined in order to understand how routes, entrance areas, transparencies and opacities, as well as the architectural treshold can evoke various emotional states and what their suggestive qualities are. The analysys will be concluded and discussed through comparative observations.

The study demonstrates the applicability and importance of physically and emotionally engaging the user in architecture, thus the impact on urban life and interactions between people and built space. It explores how well-designed architecture can evoke a wide range ofdeep emotions as well as immerse the perceiver in a new sensory and affective universe.

The Control Of Nature Or The Nature Of Control?

Architecture, Territory and Symbol. Between Order, Domination and Regeneration

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abstract

Keywords: *control, nature, territory, simbol, ecological discourse*

Using the perspectives of control, symbolic, architectural, territorial, this dissertation examines the changing interaction between people, nature, and territory. The study, which is organized around three historical eras (premodernity, modernity, and contemporaneity), investigates how architecture has influenced and mirrored prevailing views on nature. The work interrogates whether contemporary sustainability discourses, particularly in architecture, represent a true paradigm shift or merely replicate historical patterns of dominance under new aesthetics, rather than supposing a linear ecological consciousness.

The theoretical framework draws from environmental humanities, critical architecture theory, and cultural geography. Key sources include works by Carolyn Merchant, James C. Scott, Rem Koolhaas, and Reinier de Graaf, among others. The methodology combines critical discourse analysis with spatial and symbolic interpretation, tracing how built environments have encoded shifting notions of “nature”. In addition to theoretical framing, the dissertation includes a symbolic case study of three paintings, used as lenses through which to reflect the dominant ecological imaginaries of their time.

The findings show that in premodern contexts, architecture operated as a symbolic apparatus of cosmic and social order, where nature was sanctified only when enclosed, cultivated, or ritually purified. In modernity, control shifted toward abstraction: the natural world was reduced to a set of spatial and hygienic parameters to be optimized. While some modernist works superficially embraced natural forms, these gestures often served to reinforce human authority over the environment. In the contemporary period, discourses of ecological sensitivity and sustainable architecture appear widespread, but the work argues that many of these are performative or symbolic in nature. Nature reappears as aesthetic, as “green infrastructure,” or as marketing rhetoric, rather than as an autonomous subject. The resurgence of vernacular references and regenerative strategies (e.g., agroforestry) does signal a shift, but one not free of contradictions.

The dissertation concludes that contemporary architecture’s ecological turn is not simply a rupture from past paradigms, but often a rebranding of control, less visible, more benevolent in language, but structurally persistent. While certain practices reflect genuine attempts at coexistence, much of the so-called sustainable design remains embedded in systems that continue to commodify and regulate nature. Ultimately, this research calls for a more honest and self-reflective architectural discourse, one that resists romanticization, embraces complexity, and critically confronts its role in shaping both real and symbolic ecologies.

Experimental Theatre. The Metamorphosis of Spatial Experience through Flexibility, Color and Lighting

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abstract

Keywords: *theatre, experimental, color, lighting, sensorial*

The dissertation explores the metamorphosis of spatial experience in experimental theatre through the integration of flexibility, color and lighting, with a focus on how these elements contribute to the transformation of experimental theatre spaces. The study aims to analyze how architectural flexibility, color and lighting influence the perception and function of experimental theatre spaces, to examine the redefinition of relationships between stage, actors and audience within dynamic theatrical environments, and to investigate the role of architecture in enhancing artistic expression and audience engagement in contemporary experimental theatre. The research question is: How do flexibility, color and lighting influence the design and experience of contemporary experimental theatre, and in what ways do they contribute to the redefinition of spatial and dramatic conventions?

The study is directly linked to the diploma project, which involves designing an experimental theatre in Sfântu Gheorghe.

The research was carried out using a qualitative research approach, combining several methods to gather and analyze the relevant information. A foundation for the research was built by reviewing key texts related to architecture, theatrical space design, and lighting techniques, which offered insight into the development of modern performance environments. The study also included an analysis of practical examples, focusing on how they are designed, how their spaces are organized and how elements like color and lighting are used to shape the theatrical experience.

The research revealed that flexibility, color and lighting are active agents in shaping audience perception and artistic expression. One of the main findings is that flexible architectural spaces allow for continuous adaptation to various performance styles, additionally, color and lighting were shown to play a critical role in influencing the emotional tone of a space. The thesis is related to the diploma project, which proposes an experimental theatre in Sfântu Gheorghe. The project incorporates the key principles identified in the research – adaptability of space, dynamic use of light and expressive color schemes.

The research concludes that flexibility, color and lighting are essential components in redefining the spatial and experiential qualities of contemporary experimental theatre. These elements act as tools of transformation, allowing theatre spaces to adapt, communicate, and emotionally resonate with audiences. These findings are significant because they highlight the evolving demands placed on cultural architecture and the increasing need for spaces that are not only functional, but also emotionally and creatively responsive. In the context of the diploma project, the research provides a strong conceptual and practical foundation. It supports the design of a theatre that goes beyond tradition norms, a flexible, engaging and future-oriented space that responds to both the cultural identity of the city and the artistic ambitions of its creators.

Shrinking Small Cities. Public Policies And Strategies For Managing Urban Shrinkage

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abstract

Keywords: *small towns, shrinking cities, public policy, urban regeneration, development*

The main topic of the dissertation is the analysis of the phenomenon of urban shrinkage in small towns and the identification of urban regeneration strategies that can help reverse this process, starting from the case of my hometown, Huedin. The study highlights the impact of demographic, economic, and spatial transformations on small towns and explores how public policies and integrated projects can guide them toward balanced development. The main objectives of the research are to understand this phenomenon and its causes in small towns and to analyze good practice examples from Romania and European countries. Direct observations of interventions carried out in Reșița, Leinefelde and Cahors were also included. The main research question is: How can small towns overcome decline through public policies and integrated strategies? The study aimed to understand the growing decline of small towns in Romania and to propose concrete measures for their revitalization and territorial reintegration.

The research used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to evaluate urban regeneration as a viable solution for declining towns. The qualitative research analyzed recurring themes in academic literature, subjective interpretations regarding perceptions of small towns and the causes of urban shrinkage, as well as relevant case studies from Romania and Europe. European urban regeneration programs such as Just Transition, Action Cœur de Ville and Stadtumbau Ost were examined as models for the regeneration of small towns. The quantitative part analyzed data on small town transformation, interpreting charts and trends.

The original findings of the research show that declining small towns can benefit from urban regeneration only through a strategic, integrated approach tailored to the local context. The analysis of case studies, demonstrated that successful interventions combine rehabilitation of the built environment, functional reuse of underutilized spaces, community involvement, and the attraction of local investment. The main point of discussion is how small towns can overcome shrinkage, a theme that is also addressed by the diploma project, which proposes a Social Services Center in Huedin as an example of urban regeneration. The conclusion is that urban decline is not irreversible, it can become an opportunity for reinvention through integrated public policies adapted to the local context.

The conclusions show that urban regeneration is also possible in small towns through a sustainable, context-sensitive approach. International programs provide useful models, and collaboration between authorities and the community is essential. Towns must rediscover their identity and functions based on their own resources. These conclusions are important as they offer a practical framework for declining small towns like Huedin in Romania. These towns can benefit from urban regeneration by stimulating the local economy and attracting residents and investment, within a process coordinated by coherent policies and supported by specialized national assistance.

Reclaiming Entropic Landscapes Trough Land Art

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abstract

Keywords: entropy, land art, post-industrial landscape

Although at first glance this dissertation appears to address the general issue of post-industrial landscapes, its actual research focus is more specific and complex: the transformation of abandoned mining sites into territories of artistic expression through Land Art.

The dissertation aims not only to analyze spaces degraded by an extractive past, but also to explore their metamorphosis into meaningful landscapes, where art becomes a medium for symbolic, ecological, and cultural regeneration.

The main questions addressed in the dissertation are formulated as follows:

Can Land Art practices outline a valid working model for architects intervening in landscapes marked by scars such as abandoned mines, chaotic spaces, and entropic territories?

How might we harness entropy as a conceptual tool to address the specific concerns of Land Art design in post-industrial contexts?

How can we redefine and valorize the abandoned spaces within former mining areas so that they may become symbols of a new, non-extractive paradigm?

The research was conducted with the support of several theoretical frameworks, namely Entropy and the New Monuments by Robert Smithson, Rudolf Arnheim: Entropy and Art: An Essay on Disorder and Order, as well as Non-Referential Architecture by Valerio Olgiati. In addition, various scholarly articles served as a basis for identifying three major modalities of Land Art.

The division of Land Art into these three modalities represents the interpretive filter through which we will analyze Land Art interventions applied to post-industrial landscapes degraded by extractivism.

These modalities have been studied through several examples of Land Art. The subjective component was explored through works such as Effigy Tumuli by Michael Heizer. The genealogical component was defined with the help of the book Non-Referential Architecture by Valerio Olgiati and examined through two projects by Robert Smithson: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill and the Bingham Mining Pit—Utah Reclamation Project. And the ecological component was examined through the works of Agnes Denes, particularly Wheatfield – A Confrontation and Tree Mountain – A Living Time Capsule.

The main subject of discussion in this project is how Land Art can serve as a means of reclaiming territories degraded by extractivist practices. The diploma project is situated on the site of former salt mines, which were exploited for centuries. Over time, freshwater infiltration led to the collapse of these mines, resulting in a landscape that Robert Smithson might describe as entropic.

The project aims to revitalize these degraded lands while also valuing the natural resources of the area by proposing the development of a saltwater spa and wellness center.

The recovery of entropic landscapes through Land Art becomes a tool of critique. Without resorting to conventional forms of reconversion, Land Art offers a poetic alternative for redefining these spaces through aesthetics and ephemerality. Equally important is the awareness of the issues we face as a result of surface mining, as well as the urgent need to restore lands degraded by extractivist activities.

From Parasitic To Proclamation.

Recalibration of Architectural Narratives on Informal Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *informal, discourse, activism, justice, alternative*

Under the narrative of spatial justice and ”commoning” of the underprivileged classes, the main objective surrounds the idea of reactive discourses. Therefore, following the research question of „How does architectural morphology influence the discourse on informality?”, the paper debates interdisciplinary ways in which particular morphologies reshape the importance of the unconventional. Pointing out five distinctive criteria, the dissertation allows an active comprehensive connection between pragmatic architectural morphologies and academic critical analysis on how architects view, interact on the cause. On the other hand, the dual approach allows a raw interpretation of the non-architects shaping both spaces and perspectives. This study is a crucial mirroring on today’s societal individualist detachment, beholding a call for action under the limitative state of natural resource and hesitant architectural practices.

As consistency is a core value, both sources and methods materialize in a formal and informal way. As followed, sources regard critical perspective of textual academic research pieces particular examples/places, by urbanists, architects, sociologists. In parallel, interviews are meant to reflect the reality of living under alternative circumstances. Furthermore, duality of speech extracts personal experiences applied on most cases, while comparing the result within the topic of informality.

The main discussion points suggest a progressive development of informality as an autonomous subject, spreading innovation on the realistic role of architects in today’s society. The perspective fluctuates from stagnant communities disregarded by governmental systems to voluntary informal action as protest. Crafted by context, often avoiding the informal nomenclature, international architects tend to romanticize the momentum while locally, appropriation might be considered a constructive ‘malxpraxis’. Various systems have been implemented as of today, to combat alternative infrastructures, yet missing the essentiality of justice over architecture as a monetary product.

In conclusion, informality surrounds and dominates urban ruptures, a form of social innovation anticipation. Under the fragile state of today’s changing relation between human condition and nature, informality enhances up-cycling practiced for instant needs. This appraisal dynamics dominate and reshape architectural narratives around the decriminalization of outer norms. While research is essential to understand roots, the instant applicability allows the interdisciplinary cooperation for the proclamation of the future.

Intermediate Spaces: Between Urbanity And Refuge. Exploring Intermediate Spaces as an Essential Element in the Architecture of Urban Spas

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abstract

Keywords: *architecture, transition, balance, urban relaxation.*

This paper explores how intermediate spaces can facilitate the transition from city to relaxation, with a special focus on SPA architecture. This paper starts from the premise that SPA architecture can be improved by a careful design of these intermediate spaces. The study aims to answer the central question: Can intermediate spaces be designed to facilitate the transition from city to relaxation?. In an urban context marked by a fast pace and an increasingly accentuated fragmentation of everyday experience, the need for spaces that mediate the transition from the hustle and bustle of the city to functions dedicated to relaxation becomes increasingly necessary.

Contemporary SPA architecture often focuses on creating luxurious interiors and integrating functions designed to provide both physical and psychological comfort. However, the areas that prepare the user for the relaxation experience are less analyzed in the specialized literature.

The research will include a theoretical and historical analysis of the concept of intermediate space and a comparative study of relevant examples from contemporary architecture. The sources used are diverse, consisting of books, articles and web pages. The method used consists of a comparative study, ultimately analyzing four international SPAs and an analysis of the Romanian urban SPA.

The analysis of the four international case studies (Les Bains des Docks, QC Terme Milano, Caldea Spa, Gellert Thermal Bath), highlighted a variety of strategies through which intermediate spaces can facilitate the transition between the city and relaxation. Although each example has its own cultural, geographical and architectural specificity, a series of recurring themes emerge that can fundamentally apply principles for the design of urban SPAs: spatial transition as a gradual process, diversity in expression, unity in intention and interaction with the city and public space. Observations on the Romanian examples show that the situation of SPAs is achieved through physical distance from the city and although the context of relaxation is achieved through nature, the dimension of the urban intermediate space is missing and excludes the pedestrian as a daily user. Given that the diploma project is an urban SPA, the connections and conclusions are direct.

This paper has demonstrated that intermediate spaces can be designed with the clear purpose of facilitating the transition between the city and relaxation, offering users not just a moment of passage, but a meaningful experience. These spaces can act as architectural filters, breathing spaces, liminal environments in which the body and mind prepare for a different rhythm.

In an increasingly dense and accelerated urban world, intermediate spaces become a critical resource for balance in architecture – a bridge between function and emotion, between the city and intimacy, between the everyday and the exceptional. These conclusions are important because the local context highlights the acute need for urban SPAs in Romania.

Valorification of Oradea's Military Heritage: Constraints and Opportunities.

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abstract

Keywords: *military heritage, adaptive reuse, community, conservation and restoration*

This study investigates the challenges and opportunities associated with the regeneration and adaptive reuse of underappreciated built heritage in the city of Oradea, Romania, focusing particularly on former military sites. Rooted in a personal and sustained observation of urban transformations, the research critically analyzes current urban development strategies that tend to prioritize high-visibility heritage sites, while neglecting other significant yet marginalized categories of the built environment, with great potential for adaptive reuse.

The main study area is in Oradea, which has historically been a key city within the region. Thus, it has developed over time as a multicultural and multifunctional urban center, shaped by its strategic location and rich architectural heritage. During the Habsburg era and into the 20th century, several military complexes were built on the city's periphery. Over time, especially during the communist period, rapid urban expansion absorbed these areas, turning them into underused enclaves. After 1989, the military withdrew, but without clear strategies for reuse, many former barracks were abandoned. This study explores the evolution and current state of these sites, highlighting the need for adaptive reuse to reintegrate them into the urban fabric.

This study combines academic research with personal interpretations of two case studies, that focus on the reuse of two former military sites in the city of Rome, the Guido Reni barracks and the Porto Fluviale complex. The two serve as guidlines in the interpretation of adaptive reuse approaches, applied to abandoned military sites in the city of Oradea, the Hussar Barracks, the complex from Calea Aradului and the Red Barracks military site, built in the 19th and 20th centuries. Due to limited specialized literature on these sites, the research was divided into two parts:

1. Historical analysis of military urbanism and the evolution of the selected sites, tracing their original strategic roles and current urban condition.

2. Comparative analysis with two adaptive reuse examples from Rome—Guido Reni Barracks and Porto Fluviale—to identify key factors in successful conversions.

All sites were evaluated based on criteria such as land use, building condition, integration within the urban fabric, socio-economic context, land ownership conflicts, conservation approach, natural elements, investor intent, and community involvement. This framework supports the final diploma proposal focused on the Husarilor Barracks.

The study aimed to present a well-rounded perspective on the practices of conservation and restoration of former military heritage buildings, with the research process reaffirming the complexity of the issues surrounding the analyzed ensembles.

An Architectural Journey into the Heart of Childhood:

How Space Shapes Our Destiny

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abstract

Keywords: *child protection, architectural empathy, independent living centers, residential care, child-centered design*

This thesis, called “An Architectural Journey into the Heart of Childhood: How Space Shapes Our Destiny,” talks about the important, but often overlooked, connection between the buildings around us and how people grow up, especially kids in the social care system. The main idea is that “home” is much more than just a house; it’s a very important place where a child first learns about the world, how to feel safe, how to belong, and eventually how to be independent. By looking at buildings, this study shows how, over time, the way spaces are designed has both reflected and, more importantly, changed how kids feel and what they experience as they look for a place to belong. While “home” is often regarded as a physical shelter, this research expands its meaning to include emotional safety, identity formation, and the capacity for independence. The central question guiding the study is: How can architecture actively support vulnerable children in their process of becoming autonomous individuals?

The research employs a multidisciplinary approach, combining architectural analysis with psychological and sociological theory. Case studies were selected to examine various residential typologies: large-scale institutional orphanages, family-type homes, independent living units, and foster arrangements. The study carefully checks how things like the size of a place, how much privacy it offers, and how shared areas are set up affect how kids feel about themselves, how independent they become, and their overall well-being. Emphasis is placed on how spatial qualities—such as privacy, flexibility, material warmth, and scale—affect well-being and emotional regulation.

The study reveals a significant evolution in residential care architecture: from rigid, depersonalized institutions to more intimate and human-centered environments. Historical models often prioritized control and efficiency, but neglected children’s emotional and developmental needs. More recent residential models demonstrate that well-designed spaces can foster identity, trust, autonomy, and a sense of belonging.

The core proposal of the diploma project is a Center for Transition to Independent Life, designed for young adults aged 18–26 who are exiting the protection system. The center is conceived as a flexible, empathic, and inclusive environment. It includes private living spaces, common learning areas, domestic facilities, and therapeutic green zones. The spatial strategy is based on promoting gradual autonomy, privacy, and community engagement. It aims to replace institutional rigidity with architectural care, transforming the building itself into an instrument of support and development.

The dissertation demonstrates that architecture plays a decisive role in supporting the emotional and social growth of vulnerable youth. Rather than acting merely as a shelter, space becomes a mediator of identity, connection, and empowerment. The proposed center reflects the need for environments that heal, educate, and empower—particularly at the sensitive threshold between childhood care and adult independence. Ultimately, the research advocates for architecture as a partner in social justice: a tool capable of restoring dignity and providing hope to those who need it most.

The Nature Of The Ruin. The Perception of Ruins in Relation to the Natural Landscape. The Case of Abandoned Noble Residences in Transylvania.

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abstract

Keywords: *ruin, vegetation, symbiosis, authenticity, time*

The nature of the ruin presents a dual approach: on the one hand, the physical condition of the building and its path toward decay; on the other, the symbiosis between vegetation and architecture, as an inevitable outcome of temporal evolution. The concept of “curated decay” refers to a critical re-evaluation of conventional intervention practices applied to ruins, and proposes a rethinking of preservation strategies through the lenses of ecology and uncertainty, advocating for an ethical approach based on collaboration with nature rather than opposition to it. This research aims to investigate the degradation process of some noble residences in Transylvania and explore the potential of the ”green ruin”, both from a pragmatic and theoretical perspective. The subject raises questions about the causes of deterioration, current attitudes toward intervention, and the transformation of the ruin into a controlled ecosystem. Where is the boundary between neglect and poetic decay?

The research was based on the study and synthesis of historical literature related to cultural heritage, restoration, and noble residences, along with the analysis of archival materials concerning selected case studies and the production of photographic documentation. Furthermore, the examination of theoretical frameworks regarding the perception of ruins in relation to nature, as well as the study of restoration principles, provided a foundation for shaping the research topic.

The analysis highlighted key aspects that may inform potential future interventions or non-interventions regarding the ruin, such as: the necessity of maintenance measures to protect the structure regardless of its state of degradation, in order to transmit the identity of the place to future generations; the recognition of the ruin as a direct witness to the passage of time; the importance of contextual analysis and the acceptance of uncertainty regarding its future. The diploma project explores the adaptive reuse of an abandoned former noble residence through its integration within a broader landscape framework. The intervention foregrounds the spatial and symbolic value of areas shaped by processes of material decay and the spontaneous emergence of living organisms. The proposed strategy advocates for the activation of the ruin through a series of minimal and reversible architectural gestures, aimed at ensuring functional accessibility while simultaneously stimulating reflection and engagement on the part of the user.

The conceptual approach departs from the pursuit of formal reconstruction. Instead, it seeks to valorize the ruin in its current state, embracing its fragmentary identity as a historical witness and facilitating a deeper understanding of the natural, cultural, and social symbioses that emerge between the architectural remnant and its environment. Regardless of the conservation path chosen, the project asserts the necessity of maintaining a critical respect for the material authenticity of the object, avoiding any reconstruction that would compromise its scale, context, or legibility. By allowing the ruin to remain open-ended in its evolution, its ongoing relevance is asserted as both a cultural artifact and a fragment embedded within the landscape.

Monography Architect Erika Maria Irene Paulas (Married Name: Schuller). 150 Years of Pioneering Work (10 January 1875 – 28 April 1961)

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abstract

Keywords: *paulas, dualism, Transylvania, heritage, reuse.*

This dissertation traces the professional and civic trajectory of Erika Paulas, the first woman officially certified as an architect and master builder during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Active in Transylvania from the late 19th century to the early decades of the 20th, Erika Paulas played a formative role in establishing a professional path for women in a traditionally male-dominated field. Her education and professional ascent took shape within the broader context of dualist-era urban modernization and the early stages of the women's emancipation movement in Transylvania. The study proposes an integrated reading of her work, connecting architectural practice with civic and educational engagement.

The research was grounded in the analysis of period newspapers, administrative records, technical publications, archival plans, and visual sources. Five buildings were selected for analysis, not only for their architectural value but also for their relevance in understanding the mechanisms of professional affirmation in a restrictive institutional environment. Three of these – the Forest Directorate Palace in Bistrița, the new Reformed College in Cluj, and Pavilion 1 of the Municipal Hospital in Mediaș – were awarded through design competitions and were studied in detail through fieldwork, graphic documentation, and historical plan reconstructions. Two additional residences in Sibiu – Villa Schuller-Paulas and Villa Schuster – were analyzed through photographic documentation, in order to contextualize the architect's later residential activity.

The selected projects reveal an architectural approach marked by functional clarity, symmetrical composition, and carefully integrated ornamentation, aligned with the Central European eclecticism of the 1900s. Spatial organization, plan legibility, and sensitivity to urban integration indicate a rational and balanced approach, attuned to the demands of modernization. Beyond her professional work, Erika Paulas was actively involved in civic life, contributing to the establishment of child welfare institutions and supporting the professional education of women. This civic dimension is reflected in the very nature of several projects, which responded to real social needs in a society undergoing structural transformation.

The principles identified throughout the research – clear functionality, balanced proportions, restrained decorative intervention – have been applied in the diploma project, which proposes the revitalization of the former Forest Directorate Palace in Bistrița. The intervention aims to preserve the historically significant structures and to integrate them within a new cultural complex featuring educational, exhibition, and performance functions. The design strategy is rooted in a critical reading of Erika Paulas's architectural work and proposes a compatible relationship between built heritage and contemporary architecture.

This study offers an applied perspective in which the biography of a pioneering female architect becomes a tool for critical reflection on the value and adaptive reuse of historical architecture in present-day design practice.

Dissection of Forgotten Materiality.

Metamorphosed Legacies: The Symbiosis of Waste and Heritage in Urban Circularity

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abstract

Keywords: *industrial heritage, circular architecture, adaptive reuse, material memory, carbon footprint.*

This research explores the transformative potential of abandoned industrial heritage, reconceptualising these sites not as urban problems but as opportunities for circular regeneration. The thesis proposes a theoretical and practical model of “material symbiosis” between decaying structures and contemporary interventions, moving beyond the traditional dichotomy of demolition and preservation. The study aims to answer the following question: How can post-industrial ruins be reintegrated into the city through circular architectural practices that preserve memory, materiality, and ecological responsibility without demolition?

The research combines theoretical analysis with practical implementation. The proposed methodology is structured into two phases: a theoretical phase, which includes historical analysis of materiality, case studies, legislative comparisons, and other relevant studies; and a practical phase, focused on mapping existing materials and documenting the intangible dimension of industrial heritage. The diploma project applies these principles through a demonstrative intervention on a former industrial site, emphasising adaptive reuse and design for disassembly.

The findings confirm that reclaimed materials, when tested, documented, and creatively reinterpreted, can meet contemporary performance standards while preserving the site’s specific identity. Significant barriers remain in legislative gaps, economic discouragements, and limited material traceability. Nevertheless, models such as material passports, real-time LCA platforms, and European circular architecture policies offer scalable solutions. The project’s design phase demonstrated the viability of material symbiosis, a regenerative relationship between old and new, through spatial strategies anchored in memory and transformation, rather than erasure.

The study validates its initial hypotheses: that carbon footprint reduction, material reuse, and narrative continuity are achievable within a circular architectural model. By reframing industrial ruins as dynamic layers within the urban palimpsest, the research encourages a responsible, situated, and forward-looking design culture. Further research could expand this methodology to other building typologies, support public policy frameworks, and develop tools for cataloguing reusable materials.

Villa Architecture.
Secondary Residential Architecture in the Red Lake Resort

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abstract

Keywords: *villa, resort, tradition, architecture, revitalization*

The Red Lake touristic resort is fascinating not only due to the surrounding nature and its tourist routes, but also the old villas, built around the years 1920-1930. Many of these unfortunately disappeared, the ones that still exist are abandoned or in a bad condition. The new buildings most of the time don’t respect the old villas architectural tradition. The research explores the specific characteristics of these and studies how they can stay relevant in the XXIth century, in the context of contemporary architecture.

Since there weren’t enough bibliographical sources for the topic in discussion, the method of this research was an extensive field study, the sources being some of the propriety owners from the Red Lake tourist resort; additionally, old touristic maps, postcards and photographs were also useful.

First, I identified the causes of the deterioration of the villas – which are not only economic, but also political. Second, during the study there were identified certain elements that give the specific of the villas, such as: the tower, the shape of windows and doors, railings, construction systems and materials used and so on, while giving examples of new buildings that exist in the area that do not take these specific elements into consideration. The diploma project, which is an educational centre, tries to reinterpret these elements and place it in a contemporary context. On the site there is an old villa that will be restored and a guesthouse planned for a façade refurbishment.

Saving such a touristic resorts’ old buildings and constructing new ones that reflect the old ones’ architectural traditions is essential in keeping the cultural identity of the area, which leads to a more durable tourism that is based not only on economy but also learning and culture.

Modernist Architecture In Post-War Cinema.

(1950-1970) Symbol Of Power, Alienation, Or Emancipation?

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abstract

Keywords: *modernism, film space, alienation, vissual narrative, architectural identity*

This disertation investigates how modernist architecture is represented and used in post-war cinema between 1950 and 1970. The study explores how built space becomes a symbolic and narrative device in films, often reflecting themes such as progress, alienation, or emancipation. It compares international and Romanian cinema, highlighting the cultural and ideological contrasts between the Western and Eastern Bloc. The research aims to understand how film interprets and critiques modernity through architecture.

The methodology combines visual film analysis (framing, space, mise-en-scène) with architectural theory and historical context. Sources include films by Jacques Tati, Jean-Luc Godard, Michelangelo Antonioni, Ion Popescu-Gopo, and Mircea Săucan. Secondary literature from architectural theory, film studies, and cultural criticism supported the analysis. Key concepts included modernism as functional, geometric, and ideologically charged architecture, as well as its use in shaping collective imagination.

The research reveals that modernist architecture in cinema is never neutral: it often functions as a symbol of societal control, alienation, or utopian promise. In Western cinema, modernism is frequently critiqued as dehumanizing („Playtime”, „Alphaville”, „La Notte”), while in Eastern Bloc films, Romania also, it reflects ideological optimism or, later, disillusionment („S-a furat o bombă”, „Meandre”). In both contexts, architecture shapes human behavior, emotions, and relationships. Romanian films adopt modernist backdrops to reflect socialist transformation, yet also hint at isolation and depersonalization. The study also explores how these cinematic spaces relate to the diploma project as tools of narrative expression and spatial critique.

The dissertation demonstrates that modernist architecture plays a crucial role in post-war cinematic meaning-making. The films analyzed provide critical, ironic, or nostalgic perspectives on modernity, revealing how built space can shape both human behavior and inner emotional states. Ultimately, the research highlights the need to view architecture not just as form, but as a medium for expressing ideas, emotions, and ideologies.

In Search Of The Japanese Essence:

Japanese Gardens In The Contemporary West

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abstract

Keywords: *japanese gardens, symbolism, cultural translation, spatial perception, landscape design*

This dissertation explores the reinterpretation of Japanese gardens in contemporary Western contexts, driven by a personal fascination with Japanese aesthetics and the sense of disconnection I experienced when visiting such gardens in Romania. Although these gardens often replicate traditional elements—like lanterns, bridges, or pagodas—they frequently fail to convey the depth and authenticity associated with their original models. This observation led to a central research question: what truly defines an authentic Japanese garden, and can its symbolic and spiritual essence be meaningfully translated into different cultural environments?

To answer this, the research combines historical and theoretical documentation with case studies and on-site observations. The primary sources include classical Japanese texts, landscaping treatises, contemporary architectural examples, and direct visits to gardens, particularly in Romania. The methodology is descriptive-comparative, grounded in both landscape and sociological analysis. It focuses on elements such as symbolism, spatial logic, user perception, and the garden's integration within its broader architectural or urban context.

The findings reveal that the authenticity of a Japanese garden lies not in its recognizable features, but in the subtle interplay between nature, space, and human experience. In Japan, even contemporary gardens—such as those designed by Shunmyo Masuno or Kengo Kuma—preserve symbolic meaning while embracing abstraction and adapting to urban realities. In contrast, Western interpretations, although sometimes sincere—like the Portland Japanese Garden or the one in Hasselt, Belgium—often emphasize visual representation over symbolic integrity. In Romania, many such gardens are reduced to decorative arrangements, lacking the contemplative atmosphere and philosophical grounding of the originals. This reflects a shift from introspection and ritual to aesthetic display, prompting reflection on the line between cultural appreciation and appropriation.

Ultimately, the Japanese garden is not just a visual composition—it is a living philosophy, a spatial and symbolic tradition shaped over centuries. When transposed to the West, it risks becoming a superficial imitation unless interpreted with depth, respect, and contextual understanding. This dissertation does not claim to uncover the essence of Japanese culture, but rather to have encountered it through comparative study. It argues for a more thoughtful and informed approach to designing Japanese-inspired gardens in other cultural contexts—one that preserves their deeper purpose: creating harmony between nature, space, and human presence.


CONFERENCE ROOM 3

Lightning and psychological barriers in underground space

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abstract

Keywords: *light, barriers, underground, psychology, design*

The certainty and universality of accounts of the descent into the underground suggest that the opposition between surface and depth is deeply ingrained in the human mind throughout all times.

In mythology, the built cavern is strongly linked to the cave, the primordial form of an enclosed, protective and delimited space – the place where the gods were born and the first dwelling of vulnerable human beings. Therefore, underground constructions received a strong symbolic charge, which persists to this day. We are therefore faced with the metaphor of the underworld, marked by profound contradictions.

Apollonian ages, characterized by an appreciation of proportion and light, tend to ignore the concept of the crypt. In contrast, in Dionysian ages, this idea is reborn. Whenever architecture seeks to be empathetic and to evoke deep emotions, it returns to subterranean spaces and to darkness with suggestive value. Does architecture succeed in becoming the luminous point at the end of the tunnel?

This paper aims to document solutions that can contribute to improving living conditions underground in the first part, subsequently understanding the essence and analyzing in depth the philosophical side of the psychological barriers associated with underground spaces, investigating how they influence human perception and adaptation to such a habitat.

This research was conducted through an interdisciplinary approach, combining methods from architecture, environmental psychology, spatial philosophy, and art history. The study is based on a critical review of specialized literature, encompassing both classical and contemporary sources related to underground architecture, lighting design, spatial perception, and phenomenology.

The theoretical framework draws upon seminal works by authors such as Juhani Pallasmaa, Peter Zumthor, Christian Norberg-Schulz, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and James J. Gibson, alongside applied research in the field of lighting (e.g., Boyce, Schivelbusch, Descottes) and environmental psychology (e.g., Küller, Wetterberg, Hollon, Carmody). Mythological and philosophical texts (including those by Ovid, Derrida, Freud, and Jung) offered symbolic and interpretative insight into the underground realm as a psychological and archetypal space.

Methodologically, the research integrates several strategies: a comparative analysis of contemporary architectural projects (such as the Chichu Art Museum, Therme Vals, and Lascaux IV); the study of traditional and technologically assisted daylighting techniques in underground environments; and a phenomenological interpretation of the relationship between light, materiality, and psychological perception. The project also critically examines psychological barriers commonly associated with underground spaces, such as isolation, perceived lack of control, negative cultural associations, and perceived safety.

Additionally, the thesis explores the conceptual dimension of subterranean space, transitioning from a purely technical reading to one that considers its introspective and artistic potential. The findings are structured to reflect the evolving perception of underground architecture- from utilitarian infrastructure to a layered environment rich in symbolism, emotion, and spatial complexity.

The overall aim of this paper is to provide ideas for implementing lighting design for future use of underground workspaces. It also sets the terms of reference for future research tests in underground workspace lighting. Finally, the role of lighting in zero daylight workspaces is re-evaluated, where functional and aesthetic aspects have been addressed in a balanced manner

Student Center.
Evolution And Development In Recent History

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abstract

Keywords: *development, interconnection, multidisciplinarity, ecosystem, flexibility.*

The chosen subject, “Student Center. Evolution and Developmentt of a Student Center In Recent History” and the spaces within this program have a direct impact on shaping and developing student communities, and implicitly, future generations. The motivation behind this topic was to better understand how such programs emerged and evolved over the years, as well as to analyze the process through which the architecture of these spaces influences the users’ lifestyles. Can the architecture of a building dedicated to the educational environment serve as a tool for shaping future generations?

The research is based on the theory developed by John Dewey in his book Experience and Education (1938), where he argues that truly meaningful education must organically integrate theory and practice. In addition to bibliographic research, using books, journals, and academic articles, —this paper presents three case studies, aiming to further explore Dewey’s theory by concretely illustrating the ways in which architecture supports these hypotheses.

Throughout the course of this study, it has been observed that the core of this program is represented by the university library space—a solid foundation from which a variety of spaces have been developed and added over the past three decades. Initially, information stood at the center, followed by spaces for production and consumption that generated experience through the practice of in-depth knowledge. Over time, these laboratories have formed an entire ecosystem, which continues to this day, testing and implementing new directions and technologies at the intersection between physical and virtual spaces.

Today, we are witnessing a reciprocal exchange of information between education, archi-tecture, and technology—a dynamic relationship in which all participants continuously learn from one another, and where all activities take place under the roof of a single entity: the stu-dent center.

In the process of conducting this research and shaping this paper, the documentation was also carried out practically through the development of an architectural project within this educational program. The information gathered formed the basis for the design brief, while the diploma project concept represents more than just a simple building housing a student center. It embodies an entire ecosystem of diverse spaces and developmental environments, where the proposed architecture, together with future technologies, actively supports and positively influences the development, interconnection, and advancement of future generations.

Beyond the traditional role of socialization and learning that such an architectural pro-gram fulfills, it is important to emphasize that this space becomes an active tool for shaping the professional and personal identity of students. It is a place where the built environment supports development and active learning through practice, as well as a medium through which generations are shaped to understand the world, contribute actively to it, preserve it for future generations, and improve it.

Cartographies of instability. An Analysis of Demolitions in the Post-Industrial Landscape

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abstract

Keywords: *demolition, post-industrial, instability, identity, memory*

This dissertation critically investigates how post-socialist cities in Romania, particularly in Transylvania, have undergone major transformations in their industrial landscape, with a focus on the phenomenon of demolition, both visible and “invisible”. The main objective of the paper is not to oppose to demolition, but to interrogate how it can contribute to the future of cities and under what conditions it can be a justified and productive strategy. The study explores the effects and implications of demolition on both physical structures and psychological levels. The central research question is: How does demolition contribute to generating socio-economic, cultural, symbolic, and identity related instabilities in Romania’s post-industrial cities?

The research was carried out through a thorough analysis of primary and secondary sources, including specialized literature and relevant legislation, and was complemented by a comparative study of the cities of Zalău and Târgu Mureș. This dual approach provided insight into processes of destruction, abandonment, and reuse within industrial contexts, while the comparison offered a coherent framework to examine the consequences of past transformations with differing intensities and trajectories.

The thesis identified three major historical phases (interwar, socialist, and post-socialist), each leaving a distinct imprint on urban fabric. The interwar period preserved coherence in the city, socialism imposed a destructive vision driven by ideological goals, while the post-socialist era was marked by economic collapse and a reconfiguration driven by profit. The “invisible demolitions” proved to be just as harmful as physical ones, contributing to a loss of identity and collective memory. The comparative analysis revealed significant differences: while Zalău was heavily impacted by large-scale demolitions and suffers from a lack of plural planning strategies, Târgu Mureș demonstrates a stronger tendency to preserve industrial heritage and maintains a more diverse and resilient economy

In the absence of a coherent political and administrative framework, cities are aimlessly reshaped by private interests, resulting in fragmented or erased collective identities. Ultimately, the paper argues that demolition, whether visible or invisible, is the symptom of a deep urban crisis, characterized by the absence of a culture of preservation, of long-term planning, and of meaningful community involvement. It is the crisis of a fragile urban culture that no longer knows what is worth preserving, and more importantly, why.

A City Inside of a Building, A Building in a City. The Relationship between Stage Design Practices of the Opera Show and Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *architecture meets arts, multidisciplinary, storytelling, mutual advencement, stage design*

The topic of the dissertation brings in the spotlight the architectural nature of the stage design domain, and also the scenographic character of architecture, showing thus the incontestable connection between the two domains, and more than this, emphasising the importance of architecture in the domain of the performative arts.

The research done for this dissertation includes written articles and books, video sources consisting of documentaries and video clips, and also a part that includes documentation on my personal implication in stage design projects, done in the last years.

The main discussion points of this research present the techniques used in the domain of architecture and stage design, and the way the two of them influence each other and help each other, advancing thus in creativity and engineering, and contouring the idea of architecture as an essential part in the domain of performative arts.

The topic is extremely relevant for the diploma project because the project consists in proposing a building which would house opera shows and also would help in advancing the technology of stage design practices on a local plan.

The conclusion of this study reaffirms the topic of the research, shining a light once again on the relationship between architecture and stage design, and reaffirming the importance of architecture for the domain of performative arts.

Redefining of School Countryard as an Extention of an Educational Space. Design Directions for the Integrated Development of Students

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abstract

Keywords: *school countryard, spaces, education, participatory design, nature*

The project aims to revitalize the school countryard, transforming it into a defining space within the conemporary educational process, by approaching it as an extention of the classroom, with an active role in the students' psycho-social development. It hilights the importance of schoolyard design through the lens of universal design, community participation and the educational use of green spaces.

The research offers a multidisciplinary analysis of school countryards, addressing current issues and showcasing best practices from national and international case studies. It proposes key design principles – such as functional zoning, diverse activity areas, and the use of natural and local elements, while emphasizing the importance of involving students and teachers to create meaningful, participatory spaces.

Through a gistorical-typological analysis, the exporation of the relationship between child-nature-education, and the formulation if a coherent design framework, the work contributes to the redefinition of schoolyard paradigm. It emphasizes that the design of the countryard is not a secondary gesture in school architecture, but an essential architectural act that supports modern and incusive education, proposing a sustainable vision that is sensitive to the real needs of its users.

By analyzing this subject – which mau seem trivial at first – I discovered how much attention and involvement is required to design such a space, and how importnat it is for the development of younger generations as well as for the community. Nevertheless, the work aims to answer the following questions:

How does the school countryard influence students' educational performance, well-being, and social behaviors?

How does the school countryard provide an inclusive and accessible environment for all students?

How does the entire educational complex engage with the local community?

This research paper is based on the documentation of specialized books, written articles, guides, and applied case studies. The original findings of this research highlight the key factors for designing schoool countryards that are oriented toward the needs and activities of students, emphasizing the multifunctional potential of the space and the need to revalue it within a contemporary educational context. The entire discussion focuses on educational performance, social inclusion, and the improvement of quality of life for people in the local community.

The strong connnection between the dissertation topic and the diploma project, witch focuses on a grades 0-8 school, highlights the need to reimagine school countryards. Often overlooked and minimally designed, these spaces should become integral to educational projects, supporting diverse outdoor activities, fostering both formal and informal learning, and encouraging social interaction.

One of the most important insights gained from the research ist hat the design of the school countryard should not be merely a residual outcome of the building's design, but rather an international process guided by pedagogical, susstainability, and inclusion priciples. Involving students, teachers, and the local community in the creation of these spaces can lead to better functional and aestethic outcomes, as well as foster a sense of belonging and collective responsability.

River Restoration from an Ecocentric Perspective.

Possibilities and Limitations

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abstract

Keywords: *ecocentrism, anthropocentrism, river restoration, damming, floodplains.*

The renaturation of rivers in urban environments is a topic of increasing relevance in the context of climate change and ecological degradation. Historically, rivers have played a central role in the development of civilisations, percieved as spiritual symbols of nature, valued as sources of sustenance and ultimately domesticated to fit the frameworks for urban development. However, their inherent dynamic nature and unpredictability has become an obstacle to the stability and control sought by the rapidly-expanding urban areas.

This dissertation seeks to explore the shift from an ecocentric view towards an anthropocentric one and back, considering the recent movements seeking to balance human activity and river ecosystems. The main research questions that this paper strives to answer are:

How should river restoration be approached from an ecocentric perspective?

And what, fundamentally, does an ecocentric approach entail?

This research adopts a multi-disciplinary approach, combining literature reviews, case study analyses and theories from environmental philosophy to urban planning. The primary theoretical framework is drawn from Finding the Voice of the River, by Gary J. Brierley, which advocates for the importance of a biocentric approach to river regeneration. Historical sources are also used to analyse hydraulic societies, such as Karl Wittfogel and Michael Mann, whose different opinions on water management and political despotism are discussed. Case studies show different approaches on river regeneration used in contemporary projects such as Cârțișoara, Aire river in Geneva, Someș river in Cluj-Napoca and the case of Dâmbovița river in Bucharest.

Following the intense degradation of human-river relationship during the Industrial and post-war eras, a gradual shift towards ecological restauration emerged. Contemporary approaches balance ecological recovery with urban safety, using green-blue infrastructure and nature-based solutions. We can see an ecocentric restoration For the Aire and Cârțișoara River, a more technocratic-administrative implementation for the Someș-Mic river and an edilitarian approach for Dâmbovița, focused more on the traffic mobility than the river. The latter example shows the importance of this discussion. My diploma project is focused on a neighbourhood in Oradea, Romania, defined by a meander of Crișul Repede river. I focused on creating a sports facility placed in the center of this neighbourhood, addressing the needs of movement, recreation and belonging. The northern area of the multisport hall includes sports fields and landscaped zones planted with native wild species, creating an urban meadow appearance. These natural spaces form a network with a promenade that extends along the meander surrounding the neighborhood.

River renaturation requires more than technical intervention. It demands a fundamental shift of humanity’s relationship with nature. An ecocentric approach recognizes rivers as living systems with inherent rights and roles within landscapes. Successful renaturation must integrate scientific knowledge, historical and cultural identity, and active community participation. The ecocentric view percieves humans as part of nature and not above it, fact proved by the benefits we would gain from healthier ecosystems.

The School after School. The Role Of Non-Formal Education In Comunity Edification

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abstract

Keywords: *non-formal, education, STEM, exodus, community*

The study is trying to answer question of how the space for non-formal education looks like, what is its role in community consolidation, how could we adapt former spaces through adaptive reuse and how can we design better new spaces for pupils, the youth, and in some cases for a wider community.

Trying to identify the exact definition of such a space might sometimes be hard, but through study cases I hope that I can uncover the way such spaces operate, what are their activities and what is their financial model and how it can influence the community.

The methodology includes study cases in which I compare based on set of criteria different spaces, both contemporary build and adaptively reused. This study also focuses on bibliographic study to form its structure.

The study cases and research undertaken point to the same conclusion: non-formal educational spaces need to be more inclusive for the community, more inclusive towards girls, it should focus on transparency and the multifunctionality of space and it should provide a form of accreditation nationwide. This is most apparent in smaller communities where the activity curriculum should be updated to contain a wider palette of interesting and engaging activities such as: workshops, cultural activities, debating and logical games and sports activities. The main challenge in small communities is talent and youth retention due to the great exodus of felt in the past 3 decades, and non-formal activities come as a great coagulant between the wider population and the state.

As to the diploma, it focuses on transforming a former industrial platform and former mill, now abandoned site into a “Children Palace”, a space dedicated to non-formal education composed of cultural spaces, technological and sports spaces.

Through the research we can see that other European nations such as the Nordic countries which are known for their education have got a good non-formal educational system in place, continuously evolving and building new schools. Taking this example, Romania too can rescue this most valuable form of education, by offering contemporary places to study, for both the young and the not-so-young. Developing both technical, cultural, sports and social skills and critical thinking it’s detrimental in the development of pupils. The continuous investment in quality spaces is the only way to stop the brain drain that the society suffered among our east European neighbours.

Transition & Break. Circulation and Recreation Spaces in School Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *break, circulation, informal, adaptability, community*

This dissertation explores the role of circulation and pause spaces within contemporary school architecture, focusing on their capacity to support both physical transitions and informal learning processes. Traditionally treated as residual or purely functional areas, these spaces are re-evaluated as vital for the everyday educational experience, social interaction, and spatial legibility of school buildings. The study originates from the need to rethink how architecture can enhance the psychological, social, and cognitive well-being of students through the quality of interstitial environments.

The research combines theoretical approaches with case study analysis and design-based investigation. Primary sources include architectural theory on school design, contemporary pedagogical models, and concepts such as biofilia, spatial adaptability, and inclusivity. Several relevant case studies both international and local were analysed in terms of spatial articulation, light quality, flexibility, and the integration of natural elements.

The study reveals that circulation spaces, when designed with intention and openness, can become active layers of the educational environment rather than inert transit areas. They allow for informal interaction, temporary isolation, autonomous learning, and socialization. The presence of natural light, integrated furniture, visual connectivity with the exterior, and acoustic comfort significantly enhance these experiences. The diploma project offered a testing ground for these principles, proposing generous connecting corridors, green and social nodes, and flexible interior transitions that support learning beyond the classroom. The results demonstrate that circulation spaces are fundamental to educational sustainability, especially in dense school sites.

The dissertation concludes that circulation and pause spaces should no longer be treated as peripheral or secondary in school design. Their strategic architectural development contributes directly to the physical and emotional well-being of students and to the richness of their educational experience. Future school architecture must integrate these areas as multifunctional environments where pedagogy, rest, nature, and movement coexist. This research provides a framework for redefining interstitial spaces as core components of educational architecture and reinforces the relevance of such approaches in both design practice and policymaking.

Redefining the Built Environment beyond Anthropocentrism.

Between Critical Theory and Architectural Practice

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abstract

Keywords: *multispecies architecture, ecocentrism, posthumanism, non-just-humans, interspecies cohabitation*

In the context of intensifying ecological crises and the exhaustion of traditional urban models, architecture is being called to reassess its stance toward the other forms of life that share urban space with us. For far too long, the built environment has been designed almost exclusively for humans, ignoring or marginalizing non-human beings. To describe these presences – animals, plants, insects, ecosystems – I have proposed the term non-just-humans, a term intended to circumvent the hierarchical and possessive language typically used to refer to non-humans. This concept becomes a critical tool for imagining an architecture capable of including, protecting and negotiating interspecies cohabitation in an inclusive and sustainable way.

The research is structured into three main stages: (1) a theoretical and critical analysis of the concepts of anthropocentrism, ecocentrism, posthumanism and multispecies urbanism, based on a review of interdisciplinary academic literature; (2) the selection and analysis of four international case studies that explicitly integrate non-human beings into architectural or urban projects; (3) the formulation of a set of design principles applicable to the diploma project – a proposal for a Companion Animal Center. The study adopts a qualitative, critically reflexive methodology, emphasizing the translation of theoretical insights into practical tools for architectural practice.

The findings of this study indicate that truly sustainable and ethical architecture requires recognizing non-human beings as legitimate users of built space. The case study analysis highlights solutions such as ecological prosthetics, synanthropic infrastructures and biophilic design, all of wich have the potential to generate functional interspecies spaces. The outcomes of this research have been integrated into the concept for the diploma project, where architecture becomes a space of negotiation between species, not merely a human-centered aesthetic expression. The project thus serves as an applied exercise in implementing the principles of just habitat within a real design context.

Multispecies architecture is not a utopian exercise, but a necessary response to the limitations of a system that ignores ecological interdependencies. This research proposes a rethinking of architecture as a multispecies practice, capable of mediating relationships between humans and other forms of life. The introduction of the non-just-humans concept offers a theoretical framework attuned to contemporary realities and contributes to expanding the ethical scope of architectural practice. The study's conclusions emphasize the importance of extending the right to the city beyond the human species, advocating for an inclusive and ecologically responsible architecture as a foundation for genuine urban sustainability.

Temporary Housing for Pupils: Exploring the Sense of “Home” in Boarding School Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *boarding school, temporary housing, pupils, sense of home*

This paper explores how boarding school housing for high school pupils can foster a genuine sense of “home” in what is typically considered a transitional environment. In today’s educational context many students live away from their families during the school year. These dormitories thus become more than accommodation and they act as emotional and social environments with significant influence on pupil well-being and educational outcomes.The study asks: can a transitional living space truly support emotional attachment and a sense of belonging?

The research combines a theoretical framework with architectural analysis and case studies. It includes a brief historical overview of boarding school development in Europe, analysis of spatial typologies, and perspectives from contemporary architectural practice. The empirical part is based on three case studies: the 1975 dormitory at High School Silvic “Transylvania” in Năsăud, Romania; the 2024 Kronstadt German Vocational High School dormitory in Brașov, Romania; and the 2014 boarding school of Nelson Mandela High School in Nantes, France.For the Năsăud case study, field research involved direct observation, informal discussions with pupils, and photographic documentation of the dormitory space. The other examples were analyzed using architectural plans and published documentation.These findings were then correlated with architectural and psychological theories regarding the creation of “home” in temporary spaces.

The analysis reveals that certain architectural features - such as room typology, personalization potential, privacy, and the quality of shared spaces - significantly impact how pupils perceive their boarding environment. The outdated and overcrowded dormitory in Năsăud fails to provide comfort or support community life, reinforcing its status as a purely functional shelter. In contrast, the Brașov and Nantes examples illustrate how well-designed spaces can promote comfort, social interaction, and identity-building among high school pupils. Features like private bathrooms, natural light, inviting common areas, and room flexibility all contribute to a stronger emotional attachment. The dissertation argues that when boarding school housing supports daily routines, privacy, and social connection, it begins to fulfill the emotional function of “home.”

The study concludes that thoughtful architectural design can transform boarding school housing from impersonal shelters into supportive environments. For high school pupils living away from home, this transformation is essential to their academic, emotional, and social development. The findings offer a set of design principles - such as allowing personalization, enhancing comfort, and integrating shared spaces - that can improve boarding facilities and promote a sense of belonging. These conclusions directly inform the associated diploma project, which proposes a contemporary boarding school design tailored to pupils’ needs.

Greenhouses:
Language and Spatial Experience

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abstract

Keywords: *Greenhouses, Materials, Technology, Expression, Light*

The study explores the evolution and architectural characteristics of contemporary greenhouses, highlighting how materials, form, and technology influence their functionality, expressiveness, and spatial experience. It analyzes distinct greenhouse typologies—romantic, engineering-driven, and production-oriented—demonstrating how these typologies shape the coherence between nature, technology, and architecture. Romantic greenhouses are often found in botanical gardens and public spaces, emphasizing experience and symbolism. Engineering greenhouses dominate in research facilities, balancing performance and spatial clarity, while production greenhouses, common in agricultural centers such as those in the Netherlands, prioritize efficiency and innovation over architectural language or public engagement.

Special attention is given to the impact of high-performance transparent materials and modern technologies, such as advanced climate control, automated ventilation, and light modulation systems, on the form, function, and architectural expression of greenhouses. Projects such as the Global Flora Conservatory illustrate how structure and envelope become expressive elements in themselves, integrating thermal mass walls and semi-circular forms that enhance both environmental performance and spatial experience. Likewise, The Leaf in Winnipeg exemplifies how architectural detailing, immersive spatial sequencing, and integrated systems produce emotionally resonant environments within a high-tech framework.

The methodology relies on in-depth theoretical research, case studies, and a qualitative, interpretative approach focused on the interplay between technical aspects and architectural expression. Information was synthesized through document analysis, typological comparisons, and direct observation. Sources include academic works and specialized publications, as well as contemporary articles from platforms like ArchDaily and Architizer, which offer insight into emerging architectural trends.

Key themes include: the evolution of greenhouse typologies and their impact on spatial and architectural language; the influence of materials and technologies on performance and identity; the critical role of daylight and natural ventilation in shaping coherent spatial atmospheres; the diversification of greenhouse purposes—from agriculture and research to education and leisure—and how these functions dictate form and structure; and the tension between high-efficiency construction and long-term sustainability, especially when considering recyclable materials, passive strategies, and maintenance.

The study concludes that the contemporary greenhouse has evolved far beyond its utilitarian origins. It is no longer perceived merely as a space for cultivation but as a sophisticated architectural typology that embodies the evolving relationship between humans, technology, and the natural environment. In contemporary contexts, greenhouses become multidimensional instruments where revolutionary materials, smart technologies, and innovative roof typologies collaborate to create integrated, sustainable, and architecturally expressive spaces. As such, they serve as active agents in shaping new narratives about ecological awareness, research, education, and architectural identity in the modern built environment.

Fragile Balances.
Contemporary Insertions of Public Libraries in Historic Urban Fabrics

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abstract

Keywords: *contemporary insertion, public library, historic urban fabric, contextualism*

Throughout its historical evolution, the library has gone through various stages, and changes along with the transformations and needs of society, changes that have influenced the architectural practice, the library having to keep pace with them, to readapt to the current needs of society. The urban fabric of a city also readapts, allowing each era to leave its mark on built environment and the urban landscape. Many European cities steeped in history are faced with the challenge of integrating contemporary architecture into the historic urban fabric, with contemporary insertions being a real necessity for revitalising historic areas and adapting to the current needs of society and the city. The insertion of a contemporary library in historical context becomes an exercise of a fragile balance between memory and innovations, between conservation and evolution, between old and new. The present work aims to identify how a contemporary public library can be inserted and function in historical urban fabrics without altering their identity or value, avoiding pastiches, becoming socially and urbanistically relevant, identifying the criteria for the most balanced architectural insertion. The dissertation will serve as an aid and documentation in the realisation of the diploma project that deals with the same type of intervention. The research methodology involves a documentary and theoretical analysis of the subject, first by researching bibliographical sources on the chosen theme, including the writings of the architect Gheorhe Curinschi-Vorona but also other books and articles that intersect with the subject of this paper, then by analysing some examples from the European space through case studies, making a critical and comparative analysis between them taking into account the typology of insertion, architectural language, the degree of integration in the context, social and urban impact, and drawing some conclusions that will help to complete the diploma project. During the analysis of the case studies, both schwartzplans and situation plans were made in order to understand and represent the insertions. So the contemporary insertions of public libraries in historic centres are very important at both social and urban level, being the answer to current needs from a cultural and social point of view, but it is important the way in which the historical context is intervened, being a fragile relationship between old and new.

Without Barriers.
From Accessibility To Inclusion In University Spaces

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abstract

Keywords: *accessibility, university, inclusive design, students, education.*

How can architecture contribute to the creation of university campuses that not only eliminate physical barriers, but also foster the conditions for full and dignified participation of students with disabilities? For many students, the campus represents a gateway to knowledge, but for those with disabilities, this gateway can be blocked by physical and social barriers invisible to the rest. This paper explores to what extent the university infrastructure in Cluj-Napoca responds to the needs of people with disabilities and how universal design can become a real tool for inclusion, but also a means of cultivating empathy through education.

The methodology combines theoretical research with fieldwork, focusing on the quality of university infrastructure in the Observator campus of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, evaluated through the lens of inclusive design principles. The first part of the research establishes a theoretical foundation by consulting relevant academic literature, studies, books, and accessibility guidelines, as well as by exploring the historical context of disability in higher education. This is followed by an analysis of case studies and best practices - both in terms of integrating universal design into architectural curricula to educate better and sensitize future architects, and in terms of real-life implementation of inclusive strategies in university spaces.

The second part focuses on local context analysis through on-site research, conducted in collaboration with a user expert familiar with the studied environment. The goal was to identify key barriers and opportunities, and to propose low-intervention, practical solutions for improving accessibility.

The research findings are not merely a record of shortcomings, but a step toward a more empathetic, open, and inclusive campus - one prepared to welcome every student without discrimination. These open the door to awareness and genuine conversations that, over time, can lead to meaningful change.

Inclusion and empathy do not begin with a project or a budget. They begin with a sincere question: Who is this space for? When we design with that question in mind - and are willing to listen to answers beyond our comfort zone - we begin to truly build spaces without barriers. Not only physical ones, but also mental, cultural, and institutional.

Space As An Educational Resource: A Study On Children's Clubs And Palaces In Romania And Their Contemporary Potential

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abstract

Keywords: *revitalization, non-formal education, urban context, community identity, sustainability*

Spaces allocated to non-formal education are a rare topic in contemporary urban analysis and design practice. Children's Clubs and Palaces are a special category in the infrastructure dedicated to the extra-curricular development of children and young people outside the formal education system. Although they play a significant role in the growth and development of this group, at present they often operate in buildings that are not adapted to the requirements and needs of today's generation or are underutilized or deteriorated. This paper investigates how the architecture of Romanian Children's Clubs and Palaces responds to the needs of extracurricular activities organized in their dedicated spaces. The paper focuses on the relationship between the built space, its functionality and the needs of the users, namely children and teachers. The research aims at a critical analysis of case studies, complemented with a theoretical documentation of models from other European countries, concerning non-formal educational spaces. The research also focuses exclusively on spaces under Romanian state administration.

The aim of the paper is to provide a theoretical and argumentative basis for the extraction of a set of design principles that can be applied and further developed in the diploma project. The research method is case study based. These are specifically directed on the Children's Club in Câmpulung Moldovenesc, Carei and Dej. The research also aims to indicate the potential of architecture in supporting and developing education through space, in an active, inclusive and adapted to the general needs and requirements.

The dissertation highlighted the importance of designing an educational infrastructure that focuses not only on meeting functional needs, but also on revitalizing buildings that are part of the historical tissue of these cities. This study is relevant to the diploma project in terms of the importance of multifunctional spaces, the connection between new and old, and community accessibility and participation.

The conclusions showed the importance of the spatial configuration, which directly influences the activities. The circles of activities that the case study analyses revealed fall into a variety of areas, ranging from the creative and artistic to the technical, ecological and recreational. A number of architectural issues were also identified, such as reduced accessibility for people with disabilities in the buildings, fragmented configuration and unclear circulation in the spaces, and the relocation of the premises of these clubs which resulted in lower visibility. At the same time, a number of needs have been identified in terms of activities, accessibility, facilities and links between indoor and outdoor space.

This paper highlights a dimension of non-formal education that is often ignored in the Romanian context, namely the space in which the activities take place. The conclusions of the paper indicate how space influences the community's relationship with built environments and beyond.

Between Tradition And Modernity: The Role Of Nostalgia In The Design Of Rural Senior Centers

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abstract

Keywords: *nostalgia, seniors, tradition, identity, home*

This study focuses on nostalgia as a phenomenon emerging from the interaction with vernacular architecture in the Romanian rural context. It aims to highlight the means through which this emotional and cultural memory can be preserved and translated into contemporary architectural practice. More specifically, the research explores how a senior center program may be integrated into a rural setting and how such a spatial context influences both the architectural language and the mental well-being of its elderly users.

Nostalgia becomes the central element that connects the built environment, traditional values, and emotional needs of the elderly. Rural architecture inherently evokes a certain nostalgic sensibility, and any discussion of Romanian architectural identity must acknowledge the profound contribution of the village as a foundational cultural source.

Starting from the psychological impact of nostalgia and its emotional significance in the lives of the elderly, the study raises a key question: how can a rural senior center be transformed into a meaningful “home”?

The methodological framework is a mixed one, combining interpretative approaches (symbolic and emotional analysis of space), historical-documentary perspective (contextualizing vernacular architecture and nostalgia), and qualitative methods (case study analysis). This interdisciplinary strategy allows for a comprehensive understanding of nostalgia as a generative principle in designing elderly-oriented architecture in rural areas. The thesis is structured into three main parts: nostalgia and its psychological dimension (focusing on seniors), the rural environment as an affective and identity-bearing space (linking nostalgia to the village), senior centers as the architectural expression of this intersection (highlighting the interdependence between nostalgia, rurality, and aging).

The study emphasizes the positive role of nostalgia for vulnerable individuals experiencing major life changes, such as aging. Nostalgia operates as an emotional regulator by reinforcing personal identity, bridging past and present, and providing a deeper sense of meaning. It helps mitigate feelings of loneliness and alienation, offering emotional comfort during a period often marked by loss and transformation. Additional key concepts such as sensory experiences, the space-time relationship, the idea of home, and childhood memories all point back to the rural world – a universe defined by stability, simplicity, and a certain spiritual resonance. The diploma project – a rural senior center – concretizes these ideas by exploring how elderly individuals perceive architecture through memory and how shared recollections can contribute to shaping a home-like environment.

In conclusion, architecture for the elderly must transcend purely functional or medical approaches to include symbolic, narrative, and ritual dimensions – all essential to personal well-being and community revitalization. This research proposes an integrative vision of architecture for elderly: not merely a care facility, but a rediscovered home – a place where architecture embraces rather than imposes, and where tradition is not frozen in time, but emotionally reinterpreted.

The Art Gallery As A Contemporary Public Space

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abstract

Keywords: *art gallery, public space, community engagement, contemporary architecture, cultural infrastructure*

This dissertation explores the transformation of the contemporary art gallery into a form of public space, analyzing how such cultural venues can support civic interaction, artistic experimentation, and urban regeneration. The study investigates the spatial, social, and architectural principles that make art galleries accessible, inclusive, and community-oriented. The research is motivated by the increasing role of cultural infrastructure in shaping democratic urban environments and by the need to reconceptualize the gallery as a space for both art and public life.

The research is based on an interdisciplinary methodology combining architectural theory, urban sociology, and contemporary art studies. Key concepts such as public space, accessibility, interactivity, and visibility are explored through literature review and comparative analysis. Three international case studies – Plan B Gallery (Cluj), The Shed (New York), and Palais de Tokyo (Paris) – are critically examined in terms of their spatial typologies, community engagement, and curatorial models. The study also reflects on the Romanian context and includes a practical application in the form of a diploma project for a public art gallery in Bistrița.

The dissertation reveals that contemporary art galleries increasingly function as hybrid spaces that go beyond traditional exhibition roles, acting as open platforms for dialogue, co-creation, and civic participation. The selected case studies demonstrate diverse approaches to transparency, flexibility, and cultural inclusion, offering transferable principles for future architectural interventions. The research also highlights the structural challenges faced by independent cultural spaces in Romania, such as financial instability and lack of institutional support. These insights have been directly applied in the design of the diploma project, which proposes an accessible and community-centered art gallery integrated into the urban fabric of Bistrița.

The research concludes that art galleries can serve as active public spaces capable of fostering social cohesion, urban regeneration, and cultural democracy. Through architectural design, curatorial openness, and civic engagement, galleries become more than cultural containers—they become catalysts for inclusive urban life. The findings contribute both theoretically and practically to the understanding of cultural spaces as drivers of contemporary publicness. The diploma project serves as a design-based validation of the research, proposing a model that can be adapted to medium-sized cities across Romania and beyond.

Educational Infrastructure. Pillar for Urban Regeneration

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abstract

Keywords: *education, urban regeneration, mobility, multifunctional*

Cities are not merely clusters of buildings and infrastructure, they are intricate systems shaped by social, economic, and ecological relationships. Urban resilience depends fundamentally on the interconnectedness between people and their environment. Historical example such as Rome, Hiroshima, or the favela of Brazil illustrates that urban sustainability is driven not solely by architectural planning, but primarily by community adaptability. Successful cities are those that foster strong bonds with their residents, the natural environmental, and the global challenges they face, such as climate changes and social segregation.

Education plays a pivot role in transforming urban communities, an educational center, when thoughtfully integrated, services not only as a physical structure but as a catalyst for social and cultural change. In disadvantage areas, educational infrastructure can significantly improve residents` lives by expanding access to resources and equipping future generations to address challenges. Thus, education becomes a cornerstone of sustainable urban development.

This paper explores how collaborating with contemporary educational spaces can enhance community quality of life, focusing on institutions that nurture young people`s skills, by improving access and fostering equal opportunities. Such spaces act as multifunctional urban nuclei, driving community transformation, innovation, and adaptability in the face of contemporary urban challenges.

How can the architectural design of educational centres influence the regeneration of urban spaces?

In what ways do multifunctional urban nuclei, contribute to the self-regeneration of contemporary cities?

How does education contribute to the sustainable development of urban communities?

This research paper draws from extensive documentation, including specialized books, written articles, guides, and practical case studies. These divers sources provide a solid theoretical foundation ensuring an in-depth exploration of the subject matter.

The finding of the original research underscores the principal factors essential for the design of an educational center, with a particular focus on addressing the needs and activities of the whole community. The research emphasizes the multifunctional potential of such spaces, advocating for environmental that can accommodate diverse educational, social, and cultural functions.

Moreover, the study reveals that the implementation of an educational center exerts a significant influence on urban regeneration strategies, particularly in relation to adjacent public spaces. These neighbouring areas require careful and deliberate planning to foster a strong relationship with the new educational facility. By integrating the educational center thoughtfully within its urban context, the project not only revitalizes underutilized zones but also facilitates the creation of meaningful connections of the urban environment, enhancing both the social fabric and the functional urban quality.

Educational centres represent a new form of alternative education, completing traditional curricula through access to divers disciplines and services like libraries, workshops, and exhibition spaces. Their flexible, social approach makes them hubs for discovery. As Herzberger notes, learning extended beyond classroom into social spaces, supporting the need for multifunctional areas. Best practices show these centres can transform communities, but limited investments slow their implementation. This topic is very important for education, aligning with sustainable development and community well-being.

Towards an Architecture of Continuity.

Conceptual and Spatial Landmarks for Senior Centers

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abstract

Keywords: *community, social inclusion, multifunctionality, active ageing*

In the context of the global ageing phenomenon, the issue of elderly care centers is becoming very important and relevant. Over time, this architectural program has evolved from annexes to specialized, monofunctional centers, as ageing was perceived until recently as a process of gradual degradation of the individual. This perception is being changed by the new generation of seniors, bringing forth the need of rethinking care programs in order to support active ageing and social inclusion. Thus, the main objectives of this thesis are the deep understanding of the main users and their needs, and the identification of new principles for designing senior centers. The fundamental question of the dissertation is: How can we rethink senior centers to ensure social inclusion and active participation in community life?

This thesis is based on a combination of theoretical research, analysis and case studies. For this theoretical research were used official sources, books, academic papers and articles addressing the subject of elderly care centers. For the case studies, six examples were selected and analysed according to the criteria stated in the theoretical research. The first three case studies are care homes located in Cluj, which offers a better understanding of the current situation, while the remaining three are examples of good practice from Europe.

Following the theoretical analysis, several main discussion points were outlined, forming a logical and gradual development. The first part presents the evolution of the architectural program, followed by outlining the new principles of designing senior centers and case studies that illustrates this new approach. These principles and conclusions were the basis of the diploma project “Senior center in the social urban context”, realized in Cluj.

New senior centers should reflect a deep understanding of the architectural program and the needs of present and future generations. They need to be redefined with the aim of ensuring social inclusion, supporting an active lifestyle and at the same time bringing their own contribution to the community, by integrating spaces that engage with the community and complementary functions within the care centers. This hybridization of the program seeks to transform monofunctional, isolated centers, perceived as an ultimate solution for ageing, into social cores, perceived as spaces of dignified and natural continuity of life. These principles and hybridization of the program can not guarantee social inclusion, but they sure can ensure a suitable context for interaction.

Space As Speed.

Exploring Dynamism In Architecture Through The Interpretation Of Movement

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abstract

Keywords: *movement, perception, fluid form, spatial experience.*

This dissertation explores how contemporary architecture evokes the sensation of movement without relying on physical displacement. It investigates the relationship between form, perception, and technology, aiming to understand how architectural design can stimulate dynamic spatial experiences. The central research question is: To what extent can architecture simulate movement through formal and perceptual strategies, and what impact does this have on spatial experience? The study was undertaken to deepen understanding of how architecture can engage the senses and body, transforming static environments into dynamic narratives.

The research is qualitative and follows an exploratory methodology. It includes a critical analysis of architectural theory, case studies, and visual analysis. Key projects by Zaha Hadid, Santiago Calatrava, and Frank Gehry are examined through academic literature, architectural drawings, and photographs. The study also integrates concepts from cinematic theory and cognitive perception to analyze spatial experience.

The research shows that through non-linear geometry, fluid forms, and technological integration, architecture can generate a sense of dynamism. Elements such as asymmetry, curvature, and spatial sequencing contribute to the perception of movement. These insights inform the diploma project by emphasizing a user-centered, experiential approach to spatial design.

The findings underscore the potential of architecture to function as an active participant in shaping human perception. By simulating movement, architecture becomes more than a container of activities—it becomes a catalyst for sensory and emotional engagement. This understanding is essential in the design of contemporary spaces that resonate with the rhythms of modern life.

Conversion of Historic Buildings into Public-Cultural Spaces. An Adaptive Reuse Approach

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abstract

Keywords: *adaptive reuse, conversion, social, economic, revitalization*

The paper aims to analyze the usefuiness of converting historic building into public-cultural spaces and the economic and social impact generated by this transformation through concrete examples of adaptive reuse. Can architectural heritage de preserved through adaptive reuse? What is the social impact of converting historic building into public cultural space? What is the economic impact of converting historic buildings into public cultural spaces? To what extent does the conversion of historic buildings into public cultural spaces contribute to the valorization of architectural heritage? How can the conversion of historic buildings be used as a strategy to bring them out of obscurity? To what exten does the reuse of architectural heritage through conversion into cultural spaces contribute to urban revitalization?

Literature Review: An analysis of the specialized literature will de conducted to understand the theoretical foundation and current practices in conversion buildings. Relevant case studies will be selected and analyzed. Empirical research will be carried out through interviews or content analysis.

Results and discussion: The diploma project presents the creation of Photography Museum in Targu Mures. The conection to this paper is made by the conversion pf the historical building into a museum, serving as a good example to support the subject of the study.

By analyzing this topic, we can conclude that the adaptive reuse of historic heritage through conversion into cultural space is both necessary and beneficial. The finding of this study clearly highlight the positive economic and social impact on urban communities. Therefore, it is essential to revitalize historic areas and bring them banck to life by reintegrating them into the community.

The Last Architecture:

Exploring Attitudes in the Context of Palliative Care Architecture

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abstract

Keywords: *humanizing, palliative care, sensible architecture, attitude, quality of life.*

The main purpose of this research is to identify and understand the proper attitudes in designing a qualitative palliative care centre, by discussing specific theories and trying to understand the complexity of this matter, and why architects should create more humanized and sensitive solutions, instead of the typical, average medical institution, that could only increase the insecurity on this already sensitive subject.

The research was conducted using different theoretical sources, either books or articles related to this multidisciplinary matter. Because the study is centred around the right approaches in designing a palliative care centre, and the focuses are on contemporary issues, a selection of study cases was the research method, in order to present the theoretical framework in a more real and explanatory perspective.

Each case study was selected because of its sensible approach to the principles and the discovered attitudes. All the examples revealed a special attention to humanizing the space and creating a place in which the patient is the main focus, and its quality of life is put first. Aspects such as connection to nature, social interaction, overall design and materiality, contribute to the overall well-being of the patient, and could be an end to the stigma around this topic, therefore making architecture a tool in this whole process of end-of-life care.

The correlation between research and the diploma project is based on applying these attitudes in the designing process of a palliative care centre in Cluj-Napoca, in order to achieve a qualitative care centre, that not only excels in the medical field, but also creates a safe and familiar space, similar to the findings in the case studies.

Palliative care institutions are still an ignored or unseen matter in present times, due to multiple factors that contribute to a certain doubt about them. It is possible that through a sensible architecture, the right attitudes and the increased interest, this topic will no longer be stigmatized, and people might be open to see it as a solution rather than abandonment and therefore proving that sometimes taking a step back and creating a more human environment could be better than checking a very technical list of requirements.

Stadiums Between Ruin and Urban Reintegration

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abstract

Keywords: *stadium regeneration , adaptive reuse, urban identity, public space, architectural heritage*

Stadiums have long served as iconic spaces of social gathering, sports, and collective identity. However, many of these structures have become obsolete and abandoned due to changing urban dynamics, functional demands, and socio-economic factors. This research addresses the growing issue of abandoned stadiums and explores how they can be sustainably reintegrated into the urban fabric through adaptive reuse. The study investigates the architectural and emotional value of these spaces and proposes strategies for their transformation into multifunctional urban assets that serve contemporary needs. By focusing on both global case studies and the local example of the Jean Pădureanu Stadium in Bistrița, the work aims to highlight how architecture can reconnect such forgotten places with their communities.

The research combines theoretical analysis, case studies, and personal observation. Key sources include architectural theory texts, urban regeneration literature, and examples of stadium reuse from cities like London, Bordeaux, and Christchurch. The study uses comparative analysis to examine international best practices and applies these insights to the local context of Bistrița. Field visits and visual documentation of the Jean Pădureanu Stadium provided practical grounding for the design proposal.

The research highlights that abandoned stadiums hold significant urban, social, and symbolic value, making them ideal for adaptive reuse. Successful transformations require context-sensitive interventions that balance historic preservation with modern needs. Case studies show stadiums can become residential areas, cultural centers, or parks if their collective memory and identity are honored. Stadiums also act as urban landmarks and memory containers, with their decline reflecting social and spatial disconnection. In Bistrița, Romania, the Jean Pădureanu Stadium exemplifies this, shifting from a community hub to decay. The diploma project proposes sustainably converting it into a multifunctional sports hall and urban park to revitalize the area, preserve local identity, and enhance public life, embodying responsible urban regeneration through architectural reuse and community engagement.

The study concludes that abandoned stadiums hold strong architectural, social, and symbolic value. With thoughtful adaptive reuse, they can become vibrant public spaces once again. The proposed reconversion of the Jean Pădureanu Stadium shows how such spaces can be reimagined to serve modern community needs while preserving local identity and memory.

School and Neighborhood Center in Socialist Urbanism: Between Functionality and Ideological Instrument

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abstract

Keywords: *socialist urbanism, school, neighborhood center, ideological instrument, social cohesin*

This dissertation explores the role of schools and neighborhood centers within socialist urban panning in Romania, examining how these structures served both practical functions and ideological purposes. The research investigates how urbanism under socialism reshaped cities, prioritizing collective living and ideological conformity. The primary research question is how urbanistic practices under socialism impacted the development of educational institutions and neighborhood centers.

The research involved historical and theoretical analysis, case studies from Romanian cities including Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, and Baia Mare, cand comparative studies with socialist and western modernist urban developments. Primary sources included official urban planning documents, architectural journals from the socialist era, and archival imagery. Secondary sources encompassed scholarly literature on socialist ideology, urbanism theories, and comparative international examples.

The analysis reveals how schools and neighborhood centers were strategically positioned to serve both educational and ideological objectives. Initially conceived as community hubs promoting social cohesion, these spaces became increasingly politicized. Schools were integrated near green spaces within microraions to enhance community life, while neighborhood centers combined administrative, commercial, and cultural functions, reflecting socialist principles of efficiency and collectivism. Over time, ideological priorities overshadowed functional and spatial quality, leading to dense, uniform urban landscapes. Case studies showed significant variations; for instance, the Gheorgheni neighborhood in Cluj-Napoca initially balanced quality and ideological demand, while Rogerius neighborhood in Oradea exhibited clearer integration of multifunctional spaces. Conversely, Baia Mares's Vasile Alecsandri district demonstrated extreme densification and minimal communal amenities. These outcomes indicated a complex interplay between socialist ideology, urban planning practices, and their practical implementation.

The dissertation concludes that schools and neighborhood centers were pivotal instruments of socialist urbanism, designed not only for practical functionality but significantly for ideological reinforcement. Although the initial intentions emphasized social cohesion and community support, rigid political frameworks increasingly compromised spatial quality and community support, rigid political frameworks increasingly compromised spatial quality and community functionality.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial, as the legacies of socialist urban planning continue to shape contemporary urban environments, highlighting the need for balanced and community-focused urban design practices in the future.

Neighborhood ANL Between Houses: Neighborhood Interactions In The Peri-Urban Area Of Botosani Municipality

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abstract

Keywords: *neighborhood, peri-urban, ANL, individual housing*

The present study aims to analyze the neighborhood interactions between ANL collective housing and individual housing, in the context of the urban developments expansions, which have begun to be noticed in the peri-urban areas of the Botosani Municipality.

In order to understand the embedded aspects, a brief history of the collective housing situation in Romania was carried out, subsequently insisting on the ANL buildings and the moment of their emergence. Following a deeper analysis of the targeted issue, it was considered necessary to present three case studies from the same city, Botosani, respectively: the ANL Cismea area, the ANL Bucovina area, the ANL Soseaua Iasului area. The information was collected following field visits, supplemented by other online and offline sources, resulting in their categorization into: landmark spaces = interaction points, spatial communication models and practices encountered.

Following these analyses, it was observed that the ANL collective housing present an openness towards the neighborhoods, unlike the individual housing and their residents who follow a rather closed communication model. At the same time, it was understood that this type of urban planning approach is insufficiently developed and implemented for a successful integration of these structures in a fabric that contains individual housing. Moreover, since the Diploma project was carried out on a site part of the ANL Cismea area, we could percieve this work as an extension of the study begun in the Pre-Diploma phase of the project.

Finally, although this type of urban planning is not desirable, areas with real potential can be identified, spaces that can activate these neighborhoods and support interactions between different social groups. In this study, they are being called ”transitional spaces” and, by their integration, a mediation can be achieved between different types of architecture, functions, and users, offering coherence and harmony to these areas. This is only one approach that was found and presented in this study, but other similar ones can also be developed and applied to future projects.

From Architecture to Healing. The Impact of Spatial Design on the Therapeutic Progress of Children with Autism

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abstract

Keywords: *autism, inclusion, sensory, therapy, neurodiversity*

This thesis examines how the built environment influences the development and therapeutic progress of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It aims to explore whether architecture can do more than simply provide a functional space and whether it can also play an active role in therapy. The study was motivated by the continuously increasing number of autism diagnoses and the lack of dedicated therapy centers in Romania.

The dissertation is primarily based on theoretical research and is complemented by the analysis of existing architectural examples, both successful and problematic. For my research, I relied mainly on two books. First, NeuroTribes by Steve Silberman helped me gain a better understanding of the mindset and needs of individuals with ASD. In addition, Designing for Autism Spectrum Disorders, written by Kristi Gaines, Angela Bourne, Michelle Pearson, and Mesha Kleibrink, provided a solid foundation for understanding how spaces should be designed to accommodate neurodivergent individuals. I also used the ASPECTSS™ design framework developed by Magda Mostafa to analyze both international and Romanian case studies.

My research highlighted that spatial qualities such as acoustics, lighting, colors, sensory zones, and retreat spaces can significantly influence the well-being, emotional regulation, and development of individuals with autism. While international examples demonstrate that autism-friendly environments are already implemented in practice, domestic cases often do not meet the basic needs of people with ASD. In addition, several key design strategies that are essential for inclusive design have emerged. These include predictable spatial sequencing, clearly separated sensory zones, flexible spaces, and the benefits of proximity to nature. All these observations were incorporated into my diploma project, which proposes a therapeutic center for autistic children in Târgu Mureș. The project was designed to actively support children's therapeutic activities, minimize the risk of overstimulation, and contribute to healing. The main considerations during the design process were the sensory separation of different functions, a strong connection to nature, the inclusion of retreat spaces, and the professional and functional design of rooms intended for therapeutic activities.

The findings confirm that the built environment plays a vital role in actively supporting children with autism. When design is thoughtful, it can ease sensory overload, reduce stress, promote emotional regulation, and create a sense of safety and independence in children. The aim of this thesis was to contribute to greater awareness of neurodiversity within architectural practice, especially in countries like Romania, where purpose-built solutions are still very rare.

From Department Store to Mall:

Transformations of Consumer Infrastructure in Post-Communist Romania

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abstract

Keywords: *department store, mall, post-comunism, urbanism, consumption*

This thesis investigates the transformations of consumer architecture in Romania, with a focus on the trajectory of the department store from the communist period to the present day. The main objective is to understand how this type of commercial infrastructure has been reshaped in the context of the transition to capitalism, and how these transformations relate to the emergence of the shopping mall. The central research question is: what transformation typologies can be identified in the case of department stores, and how do they influence the contemporary city?

The research was carried out through a qualitative approach, combining bibliographic analysis with case study methodology. Theoretical sources from the fields of urbanism, consumer sociology, and architecture were studied, complemented by opinion surveys, visual analyses, and specific case studies on department stores in Romania and Eastern Europe.

The findings outline three main post-communist trajectories: continuity through successful urban integration (Luxor), mallification (Trivale), and complete disappearance (Supersam). These reflect urbanistic, socio-economic, and perceptual influences, which vary depending on context. These conclusions provide the theoretical foundation for the diploma project, which proposes the revitalization of the Bistrița Agro-Food Market, including the Decebal Hall, in a way that respects the historical, social, and functional values of the place.

The research shows that there is no universal formula for transforming commercial infrastructure inherited from socialism, as its evolution depends on a complex interplay of local factors. While mallification is the most widespread form of conversion, viable solutions require urban integration, functional adaptation, and symbolic valorization. This study offers a solid theoretical basis for the practical approach of the personal diploma project and for exploring new directions in urban revitalization.

Who Shapes the City? Urban Commons and the Co-Production of Urban Space.

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abstract

Keywords: *urban commons. participatory governance. co-production. right to the city.*

In recent decades, cities have become arenas of negotiation between public, private, and collective interests. As top-down governance and profit driven development face growing criticism, the concept of urban commons emerges as an alternative, promoting the city as a collectively produced and shared space.

This dissertation explores the question: “Who has the right to shape the city, and under what conditions?”. It examines how citizens, local authorities, and organizations can co-govern urban spaces, shifting power and redefining space as a common resource.

The research adopts a qualitative and interpretive approach, grounded in critical urban theory and participatory planning frameworks. It draws on a diverse set of sources, including academic literature, policy documents, legal texts, community reports, online platforms, press coverage, and public interviews with civic actors and project initiators. Special attention is given to materials that reflect on how participation, conflict, negotiation, and co-design are enacted in urban contexts.

Rather than offering a purely theoretical inquiry, the study engages directly with real-world experiments in collective space making, both in Romania and internationally. Through a close examination of several emblematic initiatives, the research investigates how practices of urban commoning take shape over time, how they challenge or adapt to institutional logics, and how they generate new forms of civic agency. These case studies serve not only as empirical ground, but also as lenses for understanding the broader dynamics of inclusion, power, and spatial justice in contemporary cities.

The dissertation identifies common patterns of tension between civic initiatives and public authorities, highlighting both moments of institutionalization and risks of co-optation. Case studies show how civic actors have temporarily reactivated public spaces, generated collective imaginaries, and influenced planning agendas. However, these forms of urban commons often remain fragile, lacking legal recognition and structural support. The work reflects on the ambivalence of commoning practices, both as acts of resistance and as objects of institutional appropriation.

The research demonstrates that while urban commons can influence urban development in Romania, their sustainability depends on the creation of supportive frameworks and long-term civic infrastructures. The right to shape the city, rather than being universal or given, emerges through struggle, negotiation, and situated practices. The dissertation calls for a rethinking of participatory mechanisms and institutional openness to civic co-production in Romanian cities.

The Hospital Garden. The Relationship Between Natural Setting and Medical Environment in Facilitating Patient Recovery

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abstract

Keywords: *healing garden, psychological recovery, promoting patient rehabilitation, green spaces, tipologia-tipe | scale-proportions.*

The central focus of this study is the Hospital Garden. From this perspective, the research examines the relationship between the natural landscape and the functional architectural elements of the hospital in supporting the patient's clinical recovery. The study investigates the significance of integrating nature within the healthcare environment, the ways in which it is spatially articulated through the master planning of the medical campus, and the sensory and psychological experience it offers throughout the entire hospitalization period.

The study is grounded in a review of books and scholarly articles that emphasize and explore the importance of green spaces — more specifically, the Hospital Garden — in patient recovery, highlighting its role as psychological support. The sources are multidisciplinary, ranging from medicine to landscape architecture, yet consistently foreground the role of architecture.

The materials consulted address both general aspects related to human well-being and urban formation, as well as more specific psychological factors involved in medical recovery.

In the final part of the paper, case studies were conducted on various healthcare architecture programs, including facilities specialized in Obstetrics and Gynecology — the focus of the diploma project. In essence, most medical specialties have repercussions on the human psyche, underlining the need for therapeutic environments.

Studies have shown that, in order to ensure human well-being in everyday environments, individuals need regular contact with the natural world. Nature thus becomes a form of psychological support. In this context, the relationship between people and natural elements becomes even more meaningful within a hospital setting, where individuals face a range of emotional and physical challenges during the healing process.

The findings of this research present various strategies for integrating green space within healthcare facilities, and emphasize that such environments contribute significantly to patient recovery — not only medically, but also psychologically and spiritually. The paper is closely linked to the Diploma Project through the proposal of green spaces that play an essential psychological role while also occupying key positions in the urban layout of the medical site.

The main conclusion is that, depending on the specific challenges of a healthcare architectural project, green space can serve as a valuable tool and must be carefully adapted to serve the needs of its users.

Thus, following the conducted study, we recognize the beneficial role and essential nature of the natural environment in supporting the patient's recovery and psychological well-being throughout the healing process. The research also highlights the evolution of this green space — this "therapeutic garden" — within the hospital complex. It has progressed from merely being adjacent to the hospital or having the hospital placed within a landscaped setting, to becoming a true network of gardens interwoven with the hospital's functional components.

The aim of these findings is to create a patient-centered experience, providing a supportive environment while also fostering a social setting that encourages communication and physical activity. The natural environment contributes to this through typology, scale, and proportion — all of which are tailored according to various factors such as age group, type of illness, and even external elements beyond the traditional scope of healthcare architecture.

Architecture, Art And City. The Contemporary Art Scene in the Urban Space of Cluj-Napoca

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abstract

Keywords: *urban regeneration, adaptive reuse, artist-run spaces, community, reactivation.*

This dissertation explores the intersection between architecture, independent art, and urban transformation, with a focus on the contemporary art scene in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The study investigates how abandoned or underused buildings, often former industrial or religious spaces, are reclaimed and reimagined by artistic communities. The central research question asks: how can architecture support emerging, non-institutional forms of cultural expression? The study was motivated by the increasing importance of informal cultural spaces in cities where traditional institutions often fail to accommodate contemporary needs for flexibility, autonomy, and experimentation. The dissertation aims to understand how built environments can facilitate symbolic, cultural, and social regeneration by analyzing how artistic practices adapt and redefine urban space.

The research combines multiple qualitative methods to create a comprehensive and context-sensitive analysis. A literature review on urban regeneration, adaptive reuse, and artist-run initiatives provided the theoretical foundation. Additional sources included architectural documents, cultural policy reports (such as Cluj's Cultural Strategy 2014–2020), press articles, and archival materials. The empirical component of the research is based on site visits, photographic documentation, and informal interviews with local actors involved in the art scene. A strong autoethnographic element adds insight into the lived realities of working in independent cultural spaces. The core of the study consists of case studies from Cluj-Napoca: Casa Tranzit, Fabrica de Pensule, Centrul de Interes, and others. These examples were selected for their spatial diversity, historical layers, and relevance in the evolution of the local cultural ecosystem.

The study finds that independent artistic spaces function as catalysts for both symbolic and physical regeneration. Casa Tranzit is a symbolic reconversion of a former synagogue, demonstrating how heritage buildings can acquire new cultural meanings. Fabrica de Pensule represents the adaptive reuse of an industrial space into a shared, multi-functional cultural hub. Centrul de Interes illustrates a newer model of private yet collective cultural infrastructure. Across all examples, architecture plays an enabling role, providing spatial flexibility, openness, and possibilities for reconfiguration. These spaces support diverse artistic practices including visual arts, performance, education, and civic activism. They also foster community engagement and social interaction, offering alternative models of cultural production outside traditional frameworks. The findings reveal a consistent pattern: the architectural layout, accessibility, and adaptability of a space greatly influence its success as an artistic platform. The diploma project builds upon these insights by proposing a typological framework for designing future independent art spaces, using principles derived from the case studies.

This research demonstrates that independent artistic spaces are essential actors in the urban transformation process, offering inclusive alternatives to mainstream cultural infrastructure. Their ability to reclaim, reinterpret, and reactivate forgotten urban areas represents not only a form of spatial innovation, but also a powerful tool for symbolic regeneration and community engagement. Architecture, when approached through a lens of flexibility and participation, becomes a mediator between art, city, and society. These insights contribute to a growing discourse on the value of culture in urban development and offer practical guidance for architects, planners, and cultural policymakers interested in supporting resilient and inclusive urban environments.

Innovation and Continuity in Rural Architecture.

Examples of Good Practices from Harghita

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abstract

Keywords: *tradition, innovation, continuity, integration, materiality*

It is always a controversial topic how we should build in a traditional environment, how much we should respect the characteristics and values of the traditional architecture. In the context of globalization and technological advancement, the major challenge is to integrate innovative solutions in the rural landscape without compromising the authenticity and continuity of local traditions. The aim of this dissertation is to study how rural architectural values can be preserved and adapted through modern design solutions, especially using wood as sustainable local building material.The combination of traditional and contemporary is an interesting and up-to-date topic, it is what captured my interest and the reason why I chose it as the theme for my study.

The research is based on theoretical and historical context analysis combined with case studies from Harghita county. The sources include architectural guides, local monographs, written strategies for the protection of the built heritage and recent professional initiatives. The methodology also involves site-based examples from Harghita as a reference and comparative analysis of traditional construction methods and their contemporary reinterpretations. The diploma project is also discussed as an applied response to these observations.

According to the study, rural architecture is deeply connected to the landscape, tradition and community. In this context, wood is not just a building material, but a cultural expression. The dissertation also showed that tradition does not mean stagnation and that innovation does not necessarily mean rupture. It demonstrated that continuity and seamless integration can be achieved through materiality, proportion and placement. The diploma project attempts to address one of the general challenges of constructing in a rural environment by applying these methods and techniques.

The conclusions emphasize that innovation rooted in local traditions leads to sustainable and context sensitive design. The research supports the development of precise rural building guidelines and the promotion of successfully integrated buildings, or even design models, that provide positive aesthetics and functionality. In this way, rural architecture has the potential to become economic and cultural resource, not only to be preserved, but developed.

The Last Ton of Coal. The End?

Musealization of Mining Complexes in The Jiu Valley

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abstract

Keywords: *industrial heritage, industrial conversion, shrinking city, urban memory*

This dissertation explores the musealization of former mining infrastructure in Romania's Jiu Valley as a strategic tool for urban and cultural regeneration. It aims to evaluate how transforming industrial heritage can revitalize shrinking mining towns with a particular focus on Petrila, following the collapse of the coal industry. The research is initiated by a fundamental question: What becomes of a city when the foundational activity that shaped it vanishes? This question emerges from the reality of mono-industrial cities like those in the Jiu Valley, deeply impacted by deindustrialization. From this, two further questions guide the investigation: Can industrial heritage become a resource for urban and cultural regeneration? and Is musealization a viable strategy for social and urban revitalization in post-mining towns? This study is motivated by local socio-economic decline following deindustrialization, seeking heritage-based renewal solutions.

The research is based on historical and socio-economic documentation of the Jiu Valley, complemented by theoretical analyses on industrial heritage and urban memory. Primary sources include academic studies, legislation, and interviews with architects, historians, and former miners. A comparative analysis of three major international case studies—Zollverein (Germany), Nord-Pas-de-Calais (France), and Serbariu (Italy)—illustrates possible frameworks and challenges. These were further complemented by direct, personal analysis conducted as part of the diploma project developed at the Petrila Mine.

The analysis shows that musealization alone does not guarantee the sustainability of post-industrial regeneration projects. International case studies, while offering examples of best practices, also reveal structural limitations—particularly the ongoing reliance on public subsidies and the difficulty of maintaining long-term public interest. In the case of the Petrila Mine, civic activism and cultural initiatives have played a crucial role in preserving memory and raising awareness, but sustainable revitalization requires more than symbolic transformation. Musealization becomes truly effective only when combined with complementary functions—such as science education, cultural tourism, artistic interventions, and community-driven events—that generate both social engagement and financial support. The personal diploma project reflects this integrated approach by proposing a Science Education Center that works in synergy with heritage preservation to support long-term regeneration.

Musealization is an important but insufficient strategy for post-industrial regeneration. For projects like the Petrila Mine to have lasting impact, musealization must be embedded within a broader framework that includes adaptive reuse, contemporary functions, and strong community involvement. The findings of this dissertation affirm that industrial heritage can serve as a catalyst for renewal only when it is reinterpreted through educational, cultural, and social functions that activate public interest and ensure operational sustainability. In the context of the Jiu Valley, such a hybrid model—where memory preservation is integrated with forward-looking programming—offers a viable path for meaningful regeneration.

No Man’s Land:
Thematising the Ecological Urban Edge in the Anthropocene

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abstract

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“It’s time, time to change now, the way we think about, organize and develop our environment!” The social, economic and most importantly, the climate crises that are presently confronted require urbanists, architects, ecologists and landscape designers to embrace a different mindset, one which dismisses enclaves of virgin nature and does not act on biodiversity, but with it. Thus, Territorial Urbanism proposes a new paradigm shift, which challenges the binary framework of programmed and empirical planning, advocating a horizontal, decentralized and epistemological design. The experimental playground for this theoretical transition is the ecological urban edge of the Western city.

This paper does not aim to define the peri-urban areas as an established term but rather seeks to critically examine them throughout recent academic literature. Hence the main research question: Is the ecological urban edge a model of resilience amid today’s climatic and social imbalances, or is it merely a utopian construct rooted in slogans, manifestos, and idealised visions of nature and urbanity?

The paper attempts an objective bibliographic study of academic articles and inquiries about urbanism, architecture and ecology from the post-covid era, completed by historical visions from the 20th century and recent case studies. The main part of the dissertation addresses the subject throughout two complementary chapters: the first establishes the spatial and structural foundation, while the second builds upon the former through ecological theories of sustainability and resilience.

Following this structure, the thesis first aspires to illustrate the dimensional configuration of the peri-urban fringe. Its boundaries, internal heterogeneity and the blend between natural ecosystems and the anthropic environment are being delineated. The liminal area is further characterized as a mix of both compact planning paradigms and diffuse spatial design perspectives.

On this tangible foreground, the “revolutionary, radical and urgent” ecological theories are being projected. Notions such as natural aesthetics, regenerative and circular functionalities and urban commons are being questioned and critically analysed. As a result, a seemingly new set of planning rules and values is shown to emerge from a plethora of multidisciplinary discourses, suggesting a solution to the imaginary crisis that the urbanism practice is currently facing.

These highlighted sustainable processes are crucial for my diploma project since the proposed site is part of the ecological urban edge of Pitești city.

The main conclusion of the study is that, although the ecological urban edge is not a fully developed concept, still contradictory and doubtful, it seems to frame the beginning of a looming planning perspective, one that anticipates the post-Anthropocene society, the introduction of a new sustainability discourse.




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