

Title: **An Urban Apartment Building**

Institute: Architecture

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This document presents the framework for my diploma project; the task and theme that interests me.

Attached: 1. brief presentation of site, 2. assumed work process, 3. final material.

Task and theme

For my diploma project I will make a proposal for an urban apartment building in the city of Oslo. The proposal will be a synopsis of my thoughts and built upon the values that I find the most important regarding life in the city and architecture.

It is my understanding that the quality of life in a city context is closely related to the quality of architecture. It is the building's presence that make up the character of our cities which in the end affects us and our everyday life. Therefore, the quality of the buildings; their façade, their identity and contribution to the city is something I believe need to be addressed with great importance.

My diploma project builds upon my two main architectural interests: *the plan for living* and *the role of the façade*, in relation to the program *urban apartments*. I will explore issues within these two architectural tools, as well as look at how the façade and the floor plan relate to each other on equal terms.

The façade is the wall between the privacy of an apartment and the public space outside. A wall with two sides, a two-way monologue; the mediator between public and private. In other terms a matter of negotiation between the inside and outside. It has to add to the quality of the city as well as providing comfort of life within the home of an apartment.

A pivotal moment in the history of the façade was the launch of Maison Domino by Le Corbusier in 1914. This housing prototype also known as the Domino Structure, was a structural skeleton consisting of horizontal slabs and pilotis. The consequence was the elimination of both the walls and the façade as fundamental agents of the architectural space. Architecture was reduced to a structure and mere framework. The walls and the façade became relative and lost with this their «weight» and spatial significance. The Maison Domino made the generic possible; light partition walls and «hanging» façades.¹

I believe there is a great potential in addressing the façade in the design process, especially in relation with the program urban apartment. Giving the façade spatial significance will favor both on the city and the residents.

*My main interest within the façade:
the relation between the public and the private; how the
apartment building relates to the city as well as the comfort of
its resident*

My diploma project revolves around the basic theme of living in the city and the quality of architecture. It is an essential, ordinary and important theme that allows me to reflect upon my values and ultimately explain my position as an architect.

The floor plan is an architectural tool and representation. It is a concrete abstraction; the orthogonal view of a horizontal section of a building. When drawing a plan, the architecture is imagined and illustrated. It's a readable medium showing a structure and a way of life.

The permanency of a building and the temporality of contemporary household preferences should be taken into consideration when designing an apartment building. In today's housing market there is an increase of apartments only suitable for a limited group; the small households. The options and variations of apartment are few. Within apartments there is also a tendency that the configuration of the plan and the measures of the rooms is solely based upon functional specificity. Often there is only one space suitable for daytime living, while the rest of the rooms are mono functional and reduced to a minimal size. The movement between the rooms tend to make the way of life within the apartment fixed. The lack of general rooms and an overall generality within the plan of the apartment makes the apartments unable to keep up with the ever-changing housing preference of society.²

I believe that a renewed concern for apartments ability to withstand time is sustainable and will increase the quality of architecture in our cities.

My main interest within the floor plan

- *the durability and the long-term quality of an apartment.*

¹ Aureli, P. V., *The Thickness of The Facade. Notes on the work of Caruso St John.* (2013)

² Manum, B. *Apartment layouts and domestic life: the interior space and its usability: a study of Norwegian apartments built in the period 1930-2005.* (2006)

The Site



Parkveien 74,
0254 Oslo.

My project will take place on a site in Oslo in the western part of town, Frogner. It is an urban residential area in close proximity to the city center, a ten minutes walk to The City Hall. Today the site is used as a court for ball sports

The site is rectangular shaped, measuring 48 x 32m, in total 1 536 m²

I chose the site because I find the surrounding conditions interesting and think they will contribute to the task of my diploma;

- A whole block, with four sides and with four different conditions: one public and one private, one oriented north facing a park another one with a view to the sea oriented south.
- A situation where two typologies meet, the block structure from the city center meets the urban villa in the west.

I see a potential in the site:

The site is situated at the south-west corner of the Ankerhagen Park. As the ball court creates an open space within the block structure, the park is not properly enclosed. I believe that a building would complete the framing, preventing the park to leak and make the park more defined as a public space.

Assumed Schedule

phase 1	1 week definition of idea what kind of urbanity and apartments casestudies
phase 2	1 week situation footprint volume understanding of situation, footprint and typology, volume studies.
phase 3	1 week ground floor from street to apartment/internal communication) idea of ground floor (a brief idea. will come back to the ground floor later)
phase 4	5 weeks apartment partition of plan, how many apartments pr. floor, consider size of apartments idea/character of apartment, how to live.
phase 5	2 weeks facade idea of the facade, studies in model thoughts on detailing
phase 6	4 weeks the consequence of the facade (the consequence of the plan) resolving the building detailing and finalization
note:	Study trip to Milan in January to see urban facades, and projects by Asnago Vender, Luigi Caccia Dominioni ++

Assumed Delivered Material

drawings

typical floor plan	1:100
ground floor plan	1:100
facade elevation x 2/4	1:100
section	1:100

this will be line drawings, not furnished. seen as a structure, with detailed doors and windows

situation plan; roof plan, showing the building in the urban texture 1:500

one apartment; showing construction, material, windows etc. 1:50
 facade elevation + section 1:50

illustrations

interior photos of model made in 1:20
 of the building's lobby/entrance situation
 interior of apartments, spatial character

models

model of complete building 1:50; showing façade, maybe spatial

site model 1:500, showing volume on site

text

one page with text explaining the project