

Learning from Maggie's - healthcare architecture research by drawing - a MSc students' project

Since the first Maggie's Centre opened its doors, many people have learned how she inspired people to think beyond limitations on how to give care to people in one of the most difficult periods in life. Her wish to improve cancer care, resulted into architectural places spread around the UK where people with cancer, but also relatives and friends, find practical, emotional and societal support.

That architecture can have a positive impact, is also included in Maggie's ideas on better cancer care, appearing in the quality of the architecture and landscape design. Designing a Maggie's Centre brings architects to the core of their profession: the positive impact of architectural quality on people's lives. Similar to the historical churches and cathedrals, designed and built by the leading architects in their time, these centres are also a societal expression of how we wish to take care of each other. As such, the architecture of the Maggie's Centres can be perceived as architectural pavilions, the spatial expressions of health and care in our time.

dr ir drs Johan van der Zwart, university lector Architecture & Health
NTNU, Norwegian University of Science & Technology, Trondheim

Research by drawing

'The architectonic form of the design is inherent in the design sketches and images and concepts they call up. Drawings are therefore used to analyse and interpret interesting designs. This analysis is done by repeatedly preparing new drawings in order to single out important aspects of the architectural composition.'

The drawing and the map are critical research instruments because they are – unlike the words and concepts that are derived from other disciplines – completely native to architecture and three-dimensional design. If something cannot be drawn, in the deepest sense it cannot be considered to be architectonic design. To draw something again, critically, is therefore the only way to analyse an existing design as a composition and make it accessible for design criticism.'

(Steenbergen & Reh, 2012)

Learning from Maggie is first of all about architecture for health and care, the way architecture supports and brings relief, but it is also a search on how a new generation architects can learn from these examples. Because of the size of the buildings and the same brief as starting point, we can learn a lot about the concept and ideas of the architects on how their architecture relates to health and care. This makes it of great interest that architecture students can learn from these projects and are able to integrate this knowledge in their future design projects.

This research involves a groups of architecture students and consist of parallel analysis of the Maggie Centres. These analysis support both the learning of the students, sharing methods and tools for architectural analysis and the development of a set of drawings that is needed to understand and explain the healing aspects of architecture. These analysis connect the architecture to the concepts of a healing environment, i.e. these aspects of architecture that have a positive impact on people according to existing research on Evidence Based Design.

Basic form

the way in which the design is reduced, rationalised and activated in the floor plan of the design.

Spatial form

3-dimensional forms made by spatial patterns composed of open spaces, surfaces, screens and volumes.

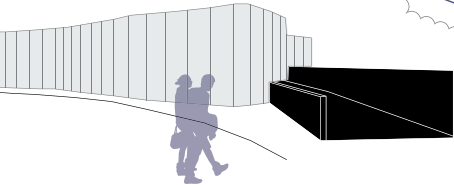
Visible form

appearance of the perceived space connected to the movement through the composition.

Purposive intention

relationship between the architectonic object and the social institutions for which they are conceived.

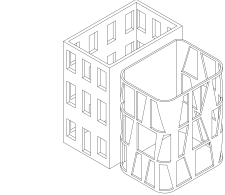
Maggie's Merseyside
architect - Carmody Groarke
research - Pietro Grignani



Maggie's Glasgow
architect - Rem Koolhaas
research - Bergdís Bjarnadóttir



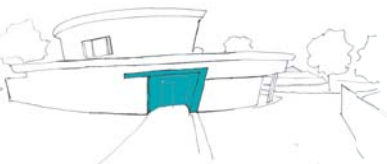
Maggie's Barts
architect - Steven Holl
research - Bjørn Johan Endresen



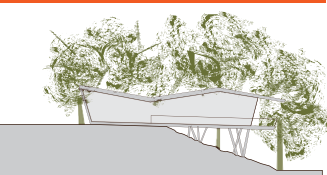
Maggie's Oldham
architect - dRMM
research - Henriette Høksaas Due



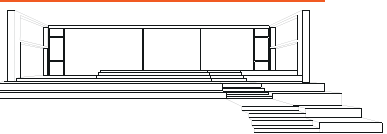
Maggie's Highlands
architect - Page and Park
research - Jananciya Arulanantham



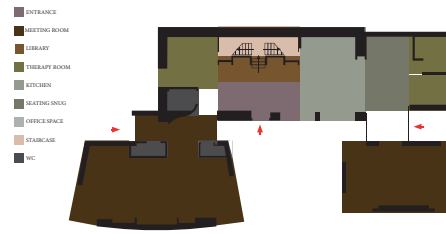
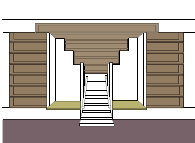
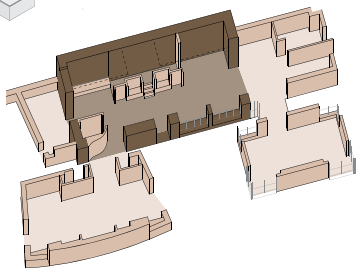
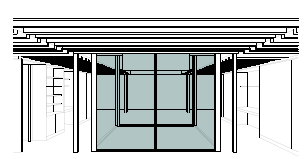
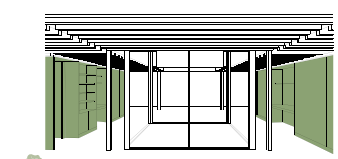
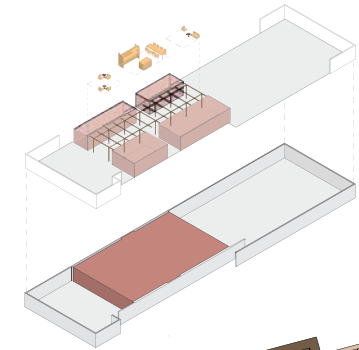
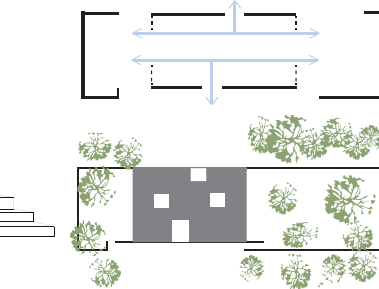
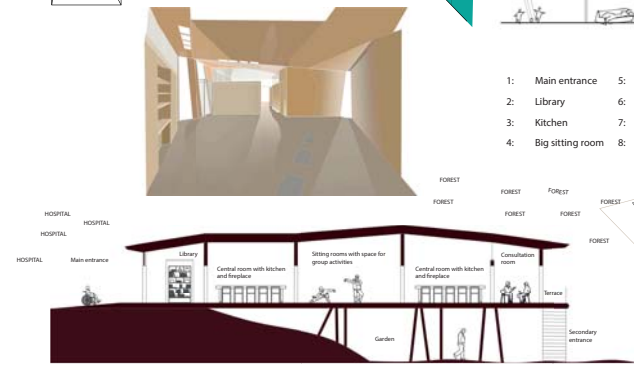
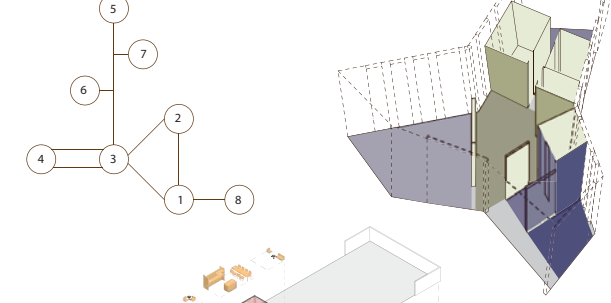
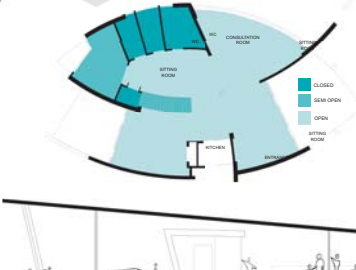
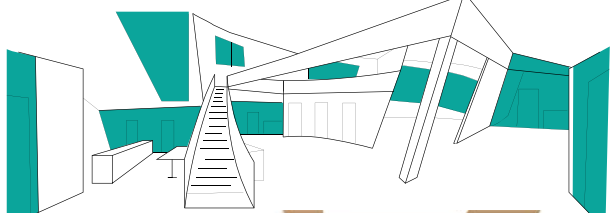
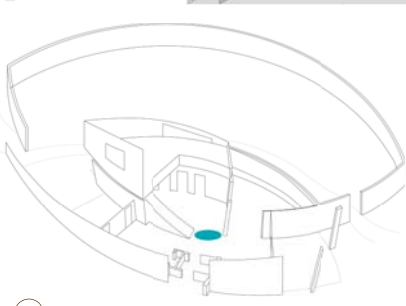
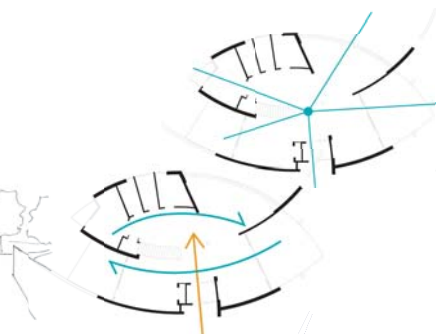
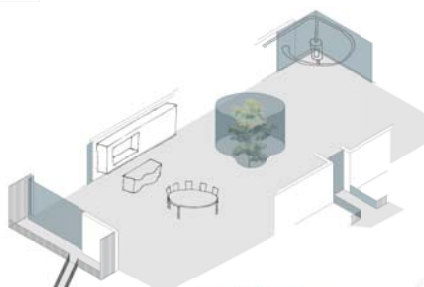
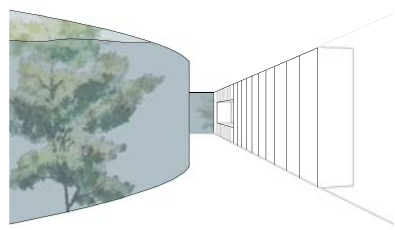
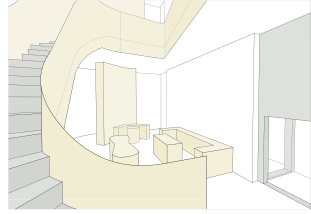
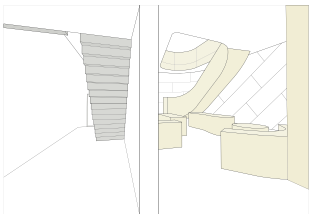
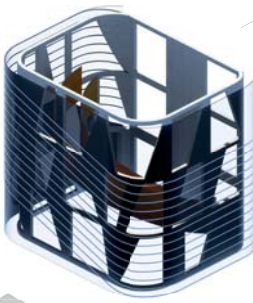
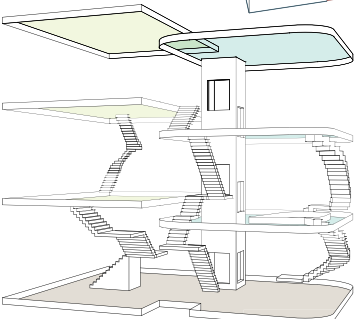
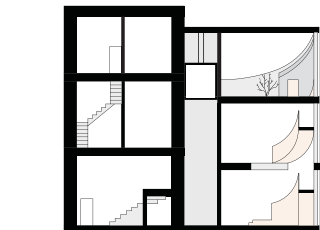
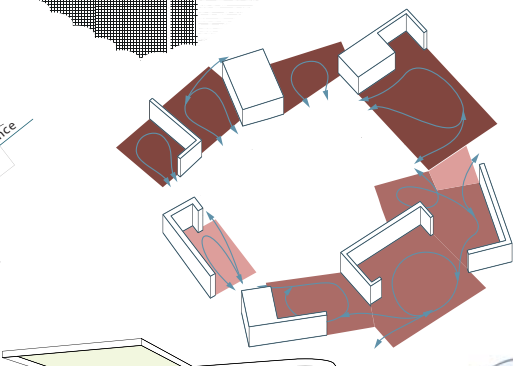
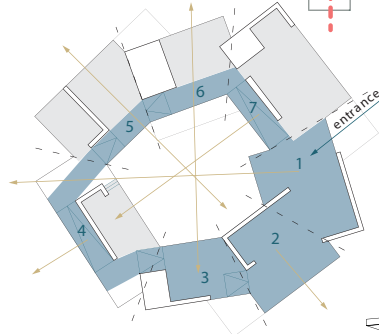
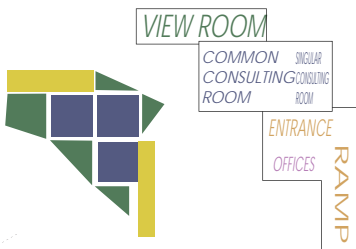
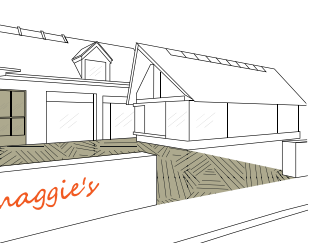
Maggie's Oxford
architect - Wilkinson Eyre
research - Guro Eek



Maggie's Lanarkshire
architect - Richard and Hall
research - Tuva Marie J. Verpe



Maggie's Edinburgh
architect - Richard Murphy
research - Lidia Nagelhus



The domestic scale of Maggie's Centre is the antithesis of the hospital's environment

A welcome/sitting/information/library area, from which the layout of the rest of the building is clear.

Clear relation between inside and outside : views out to nature and the sky.

Spaces where it is possible to sit on the periphery but not feel excluded, so that patients can take their time deciding when to participate.