

**Nelson Mota**

Arq. OASRN, PhD  
Associate Professor TU Delft

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To Whom it May Concern,

From September 2021 until June 2022, I had the privilege of working in close contact with Olivia Dolan as one of the supervisors of her graduation project "Maker Housing Navi Mumbai", which was developed under the auspices of the graduation studio "Global Housing: Mixing Navi Mumbai". Throughout this educational program, Olivia excelled as one of the brightest members of the group, showing an outstanding combination of research and design skills. Olivia's skills, combined with her commitment to work and team spirit contributed to make her graduation project, presented in June 2022, a brilliant contribution to re-think alternative approaches to the design and production of affordable housing in the Global South. Her graduation project was selected to represent the Global Housing studio in the pre-selection for the prestigious Archiprix Netherlands Prize.

In her graduation project, Olivia explored a thoughtful approach to the design of affordable housing in the urban villages of Navi Mumbai, Mumbai's satellite new town, which is currently undergoing a project of rapid urban growth. To set the base for her design, Olivia developed a thorough research to vernacular construction materials and methods to promote sustainable architecture and traditional craftsmanship to reignite to usage of original techniques in mass housing projects. The outcome of this analysis was convincingly used to formulate a design hypothesis for an alternative approach to the redevelopment of the urban villages of Navi Mumbai. Her project is based on a design toolkit aimed to accommodate all urban conditions of the village and surrounding area, resulting from a careful investigation of craftsmanship in every scale from the single brick to the urban the project. This holistic design approach stimulated the preservation of the identity and collective memory of the villages while protecting its urban future.

Olivia proved to be able to use multiple media supports to express her ideas. From axonometric perspectives to digital illustrations, to models, to diagrams, to analytical reports, she revealed a wide range of skills, including outstanding graphic skills that were instrumental to deliver high-quality analytical and conceptual outputs. During the time I tutored Olivia, I witnessed her relentless dedication to work and her constant attention on, and critical assessment of, the relationship between the architecture discipline and the societal issues that framed the context of the assignments she was working on. I could thus testify to the growth of her ability to tackle complex problems combining a solid theoretical background with proficient design skills to deliver an outstanding architectural project. I thus recommend Olivia to be part of a design team where I am sure she will be unconditionally committed to deliver high quality results.

Sincerely,



Nelson Mota

**Nelson Mota**

TU Delft | Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment | Julianalaan 134, 2628BL Delft | The Netherlands  
email: n.j.a.mota@tudelft.nl | mobile: +31643264398

**shedkm**

**liverpool**

tempest  
12 tithebarn street  
liverpool L2 2DT

+44 (0) 151 709 8211

design@shedkm.co.uk

**london**

london house  
115 golden lane  
london EC1Y 0TJ

+44 (0) 207 253 8881

shedkm.co.uk

# reference

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## a professional and academic reference for olivia dolan

I have known olivia both as a student and also working as an architectural assistant in shedkm's london studio.

### 1 - as a student

olivia was one of a group of year 3 students from the Liverpool school of architecture (university of Liverpool) who opted to join an experimental course in the university's 'liverpool in london' operation under johanna muszbek helped by pietro pezzani with myself as visiting professor.

the risk involved in moving away from the main school to london was real – olivia coped extremely well, producing work on 2 extremely challenging housing projects to a standard which generally exceeded that of her peers back in liverpool. she is extremely imaginative and not afraid to experiment both artistically and functionally - she was leader in group activities, in particular the end of the year show which was well up to london standards.

### 2 - as an architectural assistant

after some persuasion olivia came to work in shedkm's london studio. persuasion because we thought she would be an ideal addition to our workforce which is 15 strong with an almost equal distribution of EU & british architects and a 50% gender division.

olivia has been to date an ideal member of staff – quick to learn and socially active within the team. she lives locally and has taken to london life with enthusiasm. we have regular experience of employing year out RIBA part 1 students, so in making any comparison we would say the she is definitely up to our high standards.

I have no hesitation in recommending olivia for any further academic course, or indeed for professional work...

**dave king FRIBA FRSA**

**daveking-architect.com**