

Inside the Giant:
A Sauna Tango Dance Hall for Helsinki South Harbor

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INSIDE THE GIANT

A Sauna Tango Dance Hall for Helsinki South Harbor

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Figure 1.2: The Market Square in summer, Helsinki South Harbor (touristspots.org)

expanded globally, “the whole idea here is about a free exchange of commentary and ideas. It’s about discourse on an international scale.”⁴ Helsinki Deputy Mayor Tuula Haatainen repeated these sentiments when announcing the joint feasibility study between the Guggenheim Foundation and City of Helsinki, stating that: “As a cultural network spread across the U.S., Europe and the Middle East, the Guggenheim has unparalleled managerial and curatorial expertise to help us determine how the visual arts can contribute to Helsinki’s and Finland’s position on the global map, educationally, culturally and economically.”⁵

Despite the Guggenheim’s confirmed interest, the proposal was rejected in early May 2012 in an 8-7 vote by the Helsinki city council due mostly to the recent change in government and the incredible financial commitment that the city would have had to make to the project⁶. Though the project is considered “dead,” it raises interesting questions about what belongs on this site that is so important to Finns as a symbol of the city and the country’s place in the rest of the Baltic and world.

The trend toward unfettered globalization and the increasing role of supranational entities in everyday life would suggest that at some point in the near future the gravitas of a global art museum will lose its appeal to locals and tourists. Why go to a Guggenheim in Helsinki when you

can go to one in Spain or New York? Or the Louvre in Paris or the United Arab Emirates? Or any of the countless famous mega art museums around the world?

The Guggenheim proposal identified the need for a center within the Helsinki South Harbor, a place for community to gather and for visitors to gravitate toward in an attempt to understand Helsinki. The project was meant to present the multiplicity and richness of the country and culture through the art and iconic museum building. The proposed Guggenheim Helsinki raises the question of the nature of the museum and its role in community building. As the world continues to become smaller and the downtowns of global cities continue to be sanitized in the name of tourism, it is the messy, authentic moments that will be the biggest draw.

In his definitions of “The Slaughterhouse” and “The Museum,” Georges Bataille links the two as polar entities that together are important in forming and maintaining a stable community. In the modern sanitized city the crowd of people found at the museum on a Sunday afternoon is “without doubt the most grandiose spectacle of a humanity freed from material concerns, and devoted to contemplation.”⁷ Without the slaughterhouse as a concurrently existing opposing force, the people “exile themselves, by way of antidote, in an amorphous world, where there is no longer anything terrible, and where, enduring

⁴ “Tom Krens Appears on Charlie Rose Show,” Guggenheim Press Release, Jan 3, 2006. <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/press-room/releases/press-release-archive/2006/605-january-3-thomas-krens-appears-on-charlie-rose-show>

⁵ “Helsinki Commissions the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation to Explore the Possibility of a Guggenheim Museum in Finland”, City of Helsinki Press Release, 18.1.2011 http://www.hel2.fi/press/g-tiedote_eng.pdf

⁶ “Helsinki City Council rejects Guggenheim Project” 05.03.2012. http://yle.fi/uutiset/helsinki_city_council_rejects_guggenheim_project/6078379

⁷ Georges Bataille, “Museum” in Leach, Neil. 1997. *Rethinking architecture: a reader in cultural theory*. New York: Routledge.

⁸ Georges Bataille, “Slaughterhouse” in Leach, Neil. 1997. *Rethinking architecture: a reader in cultural theory*. New York: Routledge.

the ineradicable obsession with ignominy, they are reduced to eating cheese.”⁸ The museum is only a place for us to look in the mirror and be happy with our reflection.

Community is not built in the museum; instead, community is built upon messy transgressions between the two poles and the grotesque. For Bataille and his contemporary Mikhail Bakhtin, among others, one of the messiest and most original demonstrations of the values and identities of a people and place is during the festival. During the festival space-time the codes of society are identified, scrutinized and debunked only to emerge refreshed and redefined at the end.

The old Kanava Terminal that was investigated as the potential Guggenheim site is on the axis shift of the most important public spaces in Helsinki, Esplanadi and the Market Square, where the major festivals occur as well as daily markets and spontaneous events. Instead of another international art museum, this thesis proposes that the Kanava Terminal site be shaped using a different model of community formation - the festival. The terminal site provides a place where Finnish culture and community are shared between Finns and non-Finns alike in order to develop a stronger global community of understanding and respect. This thesis proposes, a sauna tango dance hall.

Figure 1.3: Kanava Terminal on Helsinki South Harbor (hel.fi)



Chapter 2: Festival Theory - The Crowd and The Grotesque Body

[In the Carnival Crowd] the individual feels that he is an indissoluble part of the collectivity, a member of the people's mass body.

Mikhael Bakhtin

As stated in “The Slaughterhouse” and “The Museum,” a heterogeneous community with strong diametric poles – in Batailles’ literal case, grotesque violence as the negative pole and self-reflected beauty as the positive – are necessary to maintain the balance of cosmic order and chaos. Bataille’s criticism of modern society is that the “slaughterhouse” has been removed from view so that only the “museum” remains as “the colossal mirror in which man finally contemplates himself in every aspect, finds himself literally admirable, and abandons himself to the ecstasy expressed in all the art reviews.”¹ In Bataille’s view, this homogeneity is an imbalance that privileges the individual and therefore does not lead to the forming of a larger unified community. It is heterogeneity, sacrifice, the sharing of gifts and the notion of pure loss that overcomes individualized time and space to unite a community. In Bataille’s notion of pure loss, the creation of community is achieved through the consumption – or sacrifice – of products created through work in everyday life. The loss of that wealth was the final goal that would synthesize and re-establish

the community as one. The 20th century Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin had similar notions of consumption as community-builder, but instead of focusing on the final loss or pure expenditure (*dispendse*), his theories – in which he incorporated carnival and folk humor – are based around ideas of plentitude. Community is formed by the carnival crowd and the “grotesque body” which brings everyone together as one changing, materializing and dematerializing, physical being. While most modern societies have lost these traditions of community building, some remain through traditional festivals that have adapted to still be relevant. Examples of these festivals can be seen today in Finland.

Finland – a country situated between east and west and alternately ruled by both until independence less than a century ago – is today under more economic, political and social pressures from beyond its physical borders through its roles in the Eurozone, the European Union (EU) and the general trends of globalization. The ability that Finland has to prosper in these markets



Figure 2.1: Havis Amanda in Market Square during Vappu celebrations (source unknown)

¹ Ibid.



Figure 2.2: Scene from Fellini's *8 1/2*
(www.dailymotion.com)

and networks abroad is based in part on how Finns feel at home and how they view their place in the world. Finnish culture and traditions are viewed from the outside world as unique due to their isolated northern location, difficult and unique language, particularly strong cultural identity and distinctive contemporary festivals that are representative of Finnish life and desires. Through the reading of the festival discourse of Georges Bataille and Mikhail Bakhtin, Finnish festivals and similar acts of transgression – annual, spontaneous and weekly – can be viewed as important for the continued cohesion and renewal of well-being of the Finnish community as Finland becomes more integrated into the EU and system of transnational globalization.

The Festival & Sacred Time/Place

The festival is a time of regulated transgressions – a time of excess that follows an equally important and requisite period of abstinence and containment.² The festival – an actuation of the time of creation – is acted in mythical space-time for the purification of the real world that allows for the rejuvenation of life and reorders the cosmos by acting on the edge of chaos. It is through the catharsis of the festival that the community can renegotiate, reform and renew its relationship with itself, the world and by association, cosmic time.

The festival exists in a time completely different from the one that dictates everyday life. As Bakhtin writes, “while

the carnival lasts, there is no life outside it. During carnival time life is subject only to its laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom.”³ The festival always signifies breaks in time or breaks in the natural (cosmic) cycle, such as birth and death. An alternative world is created in these moments where traditional hierarchies, laws and prohibitions are suspended and a utopian dream of “community, freedom, equality and abundance”⁴ prevails. Because it manifests dreams for a utopian future, Bakhtin refers to this as a “future” time, that for the length of the carnival “present the victory of this future, of the golden age, over the past.”⁵ Festivity is not bound to profane life and must be “sanctioned not by the world of practical conditions but by the highest aims of human existence, that is, by the world of ideals.”⁶ As Goethe writes about the Roman Carnival, it is through the carnival that “we are made aware of the most important scenes of our life.”⁷ Not only does the festival symbolize the full extent of life – from birth to death – in its regeneration of time and purification of the community, it also encompasses and represents all of hopes and desires for the community’s perfect future.

During the festival time, there is no difference between individuals and the crowd because the “carnavalesque crowd in the marketplace or in the streets is not merely a crowd. It is the people as a whole, but organized in their own way, the way of the people.”⁸ Everyone is equal in

² Georges Bataille and Denis Hollier. *The College of Sociology* (1937-39). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. Print. [“Festival” Roger Caillois].

³ M. M. Bakhtin, Pam Morris, V. N. Voloshinov, and P. N. Medvedev. 1994. *The Bakhtin reader: selected writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, and Voloshinov*. London: E. Arnold. 198.

⁴ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 199

⁵ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 226

⁶ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 198

⁷ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Thomas P. Saine, and Jeffrey L. Sammons. 1989. *Italian journey*. New York, NY: Suhrkamp Publishers New York. page 414

⁸ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 225

this second life. Time-related events of birth and death are no longer individualized, but become one – a part of the same collective body of the community that continues beyond the individual's life span. The uniqueness of the individual in the profane crowd dissolves into the unified carnival crowd during festival time. In the view of Bakhtin, the Renaissance privileging of the body and individual rendered it so that “death is only death” – “This offers no means of overcoming the cosmic terror of death or of the vast physical forces of the universe.”⁹

The overcoming of terror through the acceptance of alternate festival time builds a stronger, more resilient community that while still heterogeneous in its composition, forms a united whole in the sacred festival time. It is only as a single body that the community can overcome the terror and wear of time and rejuvenate itself through catharsis. The festival is not a space of overcoming time. Instead it is an alternate time-space for taking stock of the profane world through ritual transgressions and finding refuge and comfort in the crowd as a way to personally overcome – or at least except – fears. The unity of the people *en masse* is not viewed as static, instead “Carnival with all its images, indecencies, and curses affirms the people's immortal, indestructible character. In the world of carnival the awareness of the people's immortality is combined with the realization that established authority and truth are relative.”¹⁰ Through festival the community gains perspective about its relationship not only to itself but also with outside power. It is where kings become fools and fools become kings, as

masks and costumes are used to hide and reveal identities – and meaning – within society.

Festival time and space is considered by Bataille to be sacred in part because it is generally prohibited in the community. The festival, in embracing excess and transgressive acts, is a manifestation of the sacred by shattering the limits of the community in order to restore it. It is a space-time that is unified, and is contrasted with the “calm regularity of the profane world.”¹¹ For Bataille, the sacred festival is a process of negation and overcoming, followed by synthesis of the parts into the whole. It is “constituted by an operation of loss”¹² that attempts to reorganize the community through gifts and sacrifice that renders everyone equal. Inherent to the festival is the economic consumption of the excess products from the work done in non-festival time.

The Accursed Share/Excess/Sacrifice

In Batailles' general definition, the festival is “the cessation of work, the unrestrained consumption of its products and the deliberation of the most hallowed laws... it goes against that order only temporarily.”¹³ The festival requires excessive consumption of goods that is not seen in the profane world, and it is this transgression through expenditure that brings together members of the community and is the experience of the sacred. For one, the excess as seen in the economy

⁹ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 227

¹⁰ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 226

¹¹ Georges Bataille. *The Accursed Share, Vols. 2 and 3: The History of Eroticism and Sovereignty*. Zone, 1993. Print. page 94

¹² Georges Bataille. “The Notion of Expenditure”, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985. Print. page 119.

¹³ Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, 90.

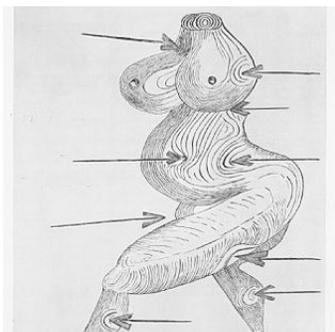


Figure 2.3: *Ste. Sebastienne*, Louis Bourgeois, 1992 (Smithsonian American Art Museum)

of gift societies and potlatch, is used to make members of society equal and restore balance and harmony. Additionally, the power in a community can be seen as “power to lose.” The more that an individual gives, the more power he or she receives while at the same time making the amount of wealth among members more equal.

In Batailles’ notion of expenditure, the consuming or giving away of goods has to be done in a specific ritualized way – as a sacrifice – in order to successfully unite a community. Sacrifice is the production of sacred things – and in the case of the festival, during a sacred time-space – so the restoration of order has to be done in an orderly prescribed fashion through ritual. The traditional tripartite structure of the sacrifice – “the labyrinthian beginning, terrifying middle, and scrupulously tidy” conclusion¹⁴ – is repeated in the festival through the consumption and operations of loss. Though by definition the festival promotes excess, and therefore engages with chaos - its underlying structure gives community-condoned license to the participants to transgress the laws of the profane world for a short time and gather together to overcome time. According to Roger Caillois, “the festival is Chaos rediscovered and shaped anew.”¹⁵ Chaos (“unbounded”) is linked to cosmos (“order” and its corollary prohibition or taboo) through ritual sacrifice or religion (“rebinding”). To restore order, there needs to be the ritualized act of negation, followed

by transgressing into the sacred festival time-space. This ritual re-establishes the center and periphery of the community at a time of change, growth and renewal.

Body and Transgressions

The body plays an integral role in festivals and carnivals – it is the unity of the body, and not necessarily the mind, in the celebratory crowd that is able to transcend time and space. The festival is embodied time. As Bakhtin clarifies, “carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people.”¹⁶ The pressing of bodies in the crowds is sensual and the “individual feels that he is an indissoluble part of the collectivity, a member of the people’s mass body.”¹⁷ Bodies can be exchanged through costumes and masks and through these carnival transgressions people “become aware of their sensual, material bodily unity and community.”¹⁸

The actions and physical desires of the human body are at the center of the festival ritual and literature. In analyzing Rabelais’ depiction of revelry in *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Bakhtin connects eating to becoming one with the world because it is “here man tastes the world, introduces it into his body, makes it a part of himself.... The limits between man and the world are erased, to man’s advantage.”¹⁹ The feasting and excessive eating during the festival is an integral part of the process. It is the moment when the confines between

¹⁴ Hersey, George L. 1988. *The lost meaning of classical architecture: speculations on ornament from Vitruvius to Venturi*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

¹⁵ Bataille, Georges, and Denis Hollier. *The College of Sociology* (1937-39). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. Print. [“Festival” Roger Caillois]. Page 291.

¹⁶ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 198

¹⁷ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 225

¹⁸ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 225

¹⁹ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 228

the literal body and the world (symbolized by its products) are literally crossed. There are no boundaries left to hold back the individual or community, as man becomes the world by, literally, eating it and therefore distributing it to society.

For Bakhtin, laughter – like food – is an important expenditure during the festival time. Carnival laughter, different from profane laughter and much like the carnival itself, is universal, free and equal. Carnival laughter overcomes fear that is prevalent in society and everyday life. It is an interior form of truth that “liberates not only from external censorship but first of all from the great interior censor”²⁰ and “degrades and materialize[s]”²¹ the profane. It is a

production of the body and for Bakhtin the body’s role in the festival is its degradation. The degradation of dichotomies – heaven and hell, above and below, face/brain and the lower parts of the body (genitals, reproductive organs, belly) – creates a unified, universal body and community. In this way the body becomes the earth, the grave and the womb.

It is through this degradation that Bakhtin distinguishes the “grotesque body” of the festival from the individual body. The engorged, grotesque body is universal and expresses duality in the world, which Bakhtin relates to the dialogic. In contrast to Hegelian dialectic, the dialogic is the idea that multiple voices and poles

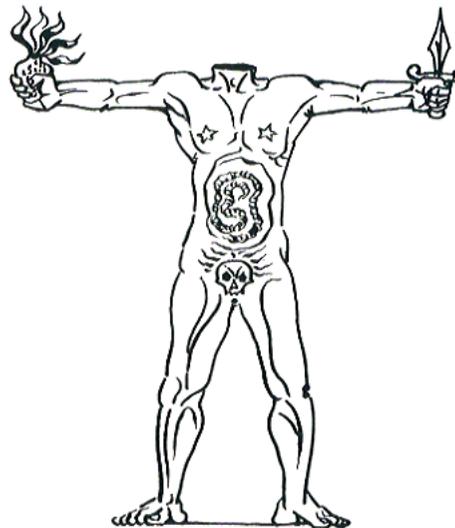


Figure 2.4: *Gargantua*, Gustave Doré 1854
(wikipedia)

Figure 2.5: André Masson's Drawing for *Acephale*
public review created by Georges Bataille, 1936
(<http://web.missouri.edu/~engjnc/bataille/conjuration.html>)

²⁰ Bakhtin, M M. *Rabelais and His World*. Cambridge, Mass: M. I. T. Press, 1968. Print. Page 94

²¹ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 206

inform and relate to one another without synthesis. It is through this heterogeneous multiplicity that communities are formed and strengthened. The grotesque is able to merge two dichotomies such as birth and death into one image, one being. The grotesque body is about plentitude and revelry in excess without shame or limits. The individualized body does not inform the larger cosmic order because it is merely one physical body that is subject to time, wear and destruction. In the work of Rabelais the human body is depicted as an exaggerated form, in “grotesque realism” that is both universal and deeply positive. In this way “... the body and the bodily life have here a cosmic and at the same time an all-people’s character; this is not the body and its physiology in the modern sense of these words, because it is not individualize. The material bodily principles are contained not in the biological individual, not in the bourgeois ego, but in the people, a people who are continually growing and renewed.”²² Unlike Bataille, for Bakhtin the emphasis on excess is about the act of consumption and its ability to unite man and the world through the acts of the grotesque body.

All of these transgressions of feasting, expenditure, excess, sensuality, sexuality and joy in the face of profane repression converts the body into a symbol where it “comes to represent the cosmos and in the hyperbolic comic images of gargantuan feats of eating, defecation, sexual exploits

and misadventures, terror is mocked, transformed and mastered.”²³ The chaos is rebound and cosmos restored until the next season when the festival repeats and frees the community again from the profane to repeat the cycle.

²² Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 205

²³ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 234

Chapter 3: The Festival in Helsinki

Finland's cultural calendar is largely festival-driven...

Concept and Developmental Study for a Guggenheim Helsinki, 2012

In Finland and in Helsinki in particular, the three biggest festivals of the year have roots in pre-Cristian religion. The New Year, Midsummer (*Juhannus*) and May 1st celebration, called *Vappu*, are the three festivals that mark the threshold of changing seasons and are times for Finns to take to the streets, consume exorbitant amounts of alcohol and live in excess in the public sphere.

The history of *Vappu* is not entirely understood, but the origins are traced to pagan rituals, the minor German Saint Walburga, May Day and the Socialist labor movement. Modern *Vappu* is devoid of much of its political and religious significance and is celebrated today as the beginning of summer (though it often snows on May 1st), the return of the daylight and the shaking off of the cold dark winter depression with expensive sparkling wine and homemade *sima*, a type of mead whose bubbles represent happiness, celebration and rebirth. Students at the University of Technology – known as *teekkari* – have taken the *Vappu* holiday as their own and start celebrating

a week in advance. On April 30th, the *teekkari* parade through the streets of Helsinki wearing their matching academic department – or “guild” – jumpsuits and white student hats¹ to the final destination of the *Havis Amanda* statue in the south harbor. Designed in 1906 by Ville Vallgren in Paris, *Havis Amanda* (in Swedish or *Haaviston Manta* in Finnish) represents the “birth of Helsinki” from the water. Though at the time considered scandalous for its perceived sexualizing and objectifying of women, *Havis Amanda* is today considered to be a symbol of Helsinki and one of the most beloved sculptures in the city.

The *Vappu* parade begins in Otaniemi, Espoo on the campus of Aalto University. At the appointed time, trucks of students make their way across the water and into downtown Helsinki, where they sing and dance their way down Esplanadi toward the statue. After *Havis Amanda* has been washed, she is given a *teekkari* hat without laying a hand on the statue as that is against the law, at 6 PM on the evening of April 30th in an elaborate ceremony that includes her – and by association, the city



Figure 3.1: *Vappu* crowning of Havis Amanda in Market Square
(wikimedia commons)

¹ The white student caps are common among high school graduates in all Nordic countries. The Finnish student caps are worn from *Vappu* until the beginning of the fall term, when another big party signifies the end of the summer. The white signifies the light of summer. The cuckolds on the caps and color of the lining is different for Swedish and Finnish students – harking back to the language dispute in the educational system in the late 19th century. *Teekkari* students also have a long tassel on their hats to set them apart.

Figure 3.2: Map of fall festivals in the greater Helsinki area



Figure 3.3: Map of winter festivals in the greater Helsinki area





Figure 3.4: Map of spring festivals in the greater Helsinki area

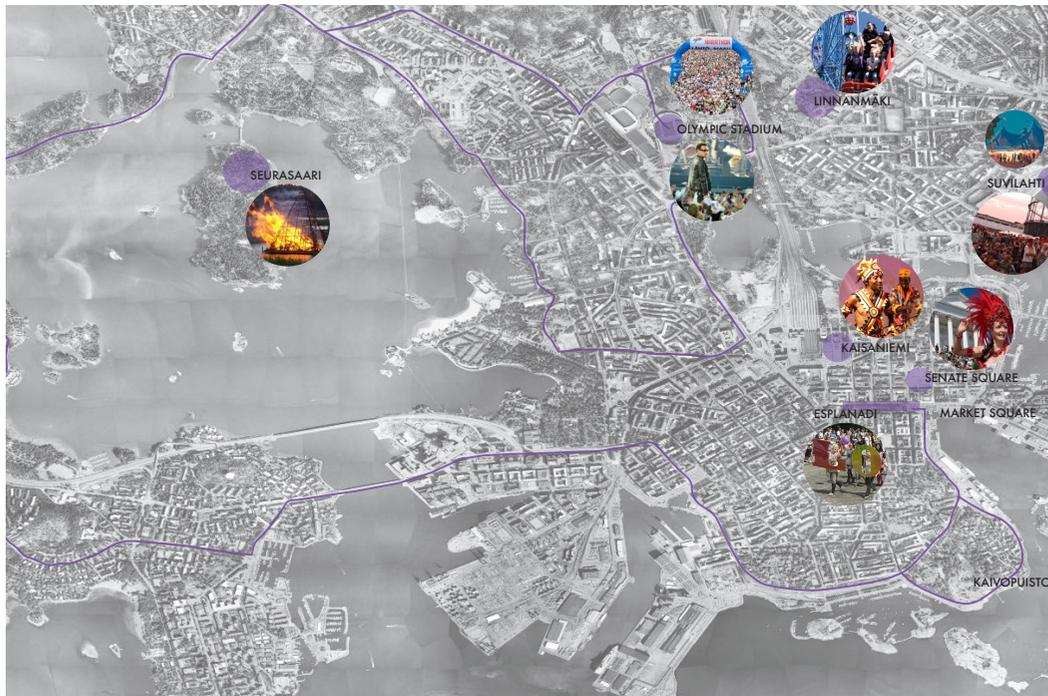


Figure 3.5: Map of summer festivals in the greater Helsinki area



Figure 3.6: Map of downtown Helsinki with important yearly festivals and spontaneous events.

– in the long history of Finnish students and the greater Finnish community. After the crowning of *Havis Amanda*, the students disperse and most walk a block north to the Senate Square, the original seat of Finnish government and religious center of the country, designed by German Architect C.L. Engel for Czar Alexander I at the establishment of Helsinki as the capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809. Here everyone sits on the steps of the National Cathedral and drinks until another party is found elsewhere in the city.

Traditional pagan rituals at the turn of the seasons from winter to spring and summer are about fertility and, in the words of Callois, “fertility is born of excess.”² In a

country known for its resourcefulness, hard work and stoic, survivor mentality, *Vappu* is by definition about excess, and therefore a counter to traditional Finnish values. *Vappu* is an obligation to drink to excess, eat to excess and spend excessive amounts of money. The week of non-stop festivities and drinking involves joke newspapers and carnival-like costumes and antics. Students are taken to the edge of chaos that reaches the fury of the parade and party in Esplanadi for the labyrinthian “crowning” of *Havis Amanda* – the moment of which can be considered to be the “terrifying middle” of the sacrifice ritual. Normal laws are seemingly suspended for the day and police watch from a distance as rules are continually broken. The



Figure 3.7: *Vappu* parade down Esplanadi, 2011
(author's photo)



Figure 3.8: Crowning of *Havis Amanda*, 2011
(author's photo)



Figure 3.9: Teekari enjoying a *Vappu* picnic in Kaivopuisto, Helsinki, 2011
(author's photo)

² Callois, *Festival*, 297



Figure 3.10: Lordi after winning Eurovision, 2006 (rockandmetal.com)



Figure 3.11: Lordi "Market Square Massacre" concert crowd in Market Square, 2006 (flickr)

morning after, May 1st, is celebrated with huge picnic feasts in the local parks or at the most upscale restaurants in the city. Everyone gathers outside to commune with nature (themes of fertility and a start to the “scrupulously tidy conclusion”), share food and drink (becoming one with the world via consumption) before returning the city and community back to its original form, newly regenerated and protected from the ravages of time. In *Vappu*, like all of Bakhtin’s festivals, “abundance and the all-people’s element also determine the gay and festive character of all images of bodily life; they do not reflect the drabness of everyday existence.”³

In addition to the organized seasonal festivals, mass celebrations of – as the Situationists would call – “organized spontaneity” take place in Esplanadi and the Market Square of Helsinki around national pastimes and matters of national pride. In 2006, the heavy metal band Lordi from Rovaniemi, the capital of Lapland, was chosen to represent Finland in the Eurovision contest. Lordi, a five member group that dresses in elaborate monster costumes along the lines of 80s arena rock bands, was a controversial choice for a song competition known for bubble gum pop music and shiny disco-esque costumes. Lordi surprised the world with their politeness and media savvy during the competition and managed to become the first Finns to win the title with their song “Hard Rock Hallelujah” (all of their music is

in English), as well as receiving the highest number of points in the 50 year history of the competition. The crowd in the Market Square for the Lordi homecoming concert was estimated at 90,000 (as a reference, 1.1 million Finns live in the greater Helsinki metropolitan area) – the most people ever to gather in Helsinki.

These numbers were outdone in 2011 when the Finnish Hockey team beat Russia and Sweden – Finland’s two former colonial masters – to win the World Hockey Championships. An estimated 100,000 people gathered in Market Square to welcome the team back to the city and were greeted by an impromptu concert and presentation by the President of Finland. The night before, immediately after the game, Esplanadi was flooded with fans celebrating the victory in the emotional center of the city, and arguably of the country.

Both Lordi and hockey are representative of the dual natures of Finland – dark and polite, *sisu* and competitive. Despite the stereotypical silent reserve, organized spontaneity of national pride are accepted and encouraged in Finns and manifest themselves on the streets, in the public realm, no matter the weather. These acts of festival bring the Finnish community together through their license to transgress in the public sphere.

³ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 205



Figure 3.12: Hockey team homecoming, 2011 (author's photo)

Chapter 4: The Sauna, The Tango & The Feast

And everyone fell silent, as if overcome by reverence. Slowly our eyes grew used to the dark. The stove was glowing like an altar. The heat felt as if it were coming from a big, curled-up animal...

Mikael Niemi, *Popular Music in Vittula*

Three examples of more regular rituals common to Finns that follow the festival/sacrifice tripartite structure are sauna, tango and the cumulating feast that follows both. All three activities are deeply rooted in Finnish culture and act within varying scales of time and crowds of Finns and visitors alike. The festival, tango, sauna and feast all share similar qualities of the grotesque body, blurring the lines between individual and community, inside and outside and transgressing the boundaries of social acceptability.

The Sauna

A weekly rite for Finns is the sauna, a dark sacred space where small communities are formed and families are strengthened through ritual. The national religion of Finland is Lutheran with around 78% of Finns belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland but only 1.8% and 1.5% in Helsinki attending church services weekly.¹ In comparison, sauna, another weekly ritual, is considered to be one of the most authentic aspects about Finnic culture. In a country of roughly 5

million Finns, there are approximately 2 million saunas and 99% of the population frequents a sauna at least once a week.

Sauna is a sacred space where alcoholic beverage consumption is kept to a minimum (it is socially acceptable to only have 1 beer while in the sauna), genders are kept separate, sexuality is de-centralized, and talk is short and deep. Entering the sauna, a person, in the words of Adolf Loos, “becomes serious.”² During the sauna experience, the body transgresses the boundaries of the natural limits of heat-tolerance and purifies itself through sweat. The body is taken into an alternate time and space, similar to that of the festival, and is transformed into a sacred object through its sacrifice. Birch branches gathered during early summer, themselves symbols of fertility and renewal, are used to encourage blood circulation. The smell of the bark, in addition to the wood interior, recalls a not-so-distant past of life in the forest and summers on the lake. Being naked in the sauna makes an individual’s physical differences apparent, but through the shared experience of extreme



Figure 4.1: Scene from the documentary *Steam of Life*, 2010 (flickr, POV Docs)

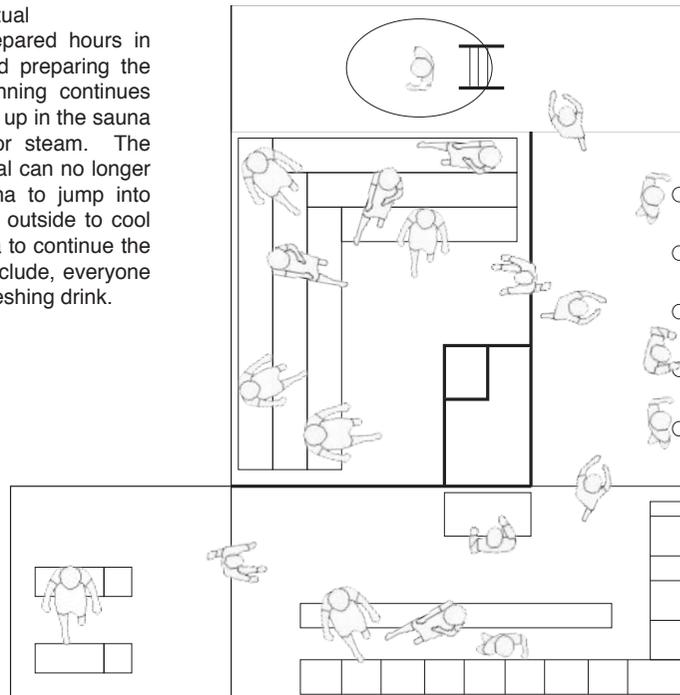


Figure 4.2: Classic image of the Finnish sauna at the edge of the forest by the lake (source unknown)

¹ Nina Mustonen. “Church Attendance Falls Religion Seen as Private”. Yleisradio/Finnish Broadcasting Company. April 4, 2010. Online. <http://www.yle.fi/uutiset/news/2010/04/church_attendance_falls_religion_seen_as_private_1581606.html>

² Adolf Loos. “Architecture,” 1910. from Schezen, Roberto. *Adolf Loos: Architecture 1903-1932*, 15

Figure 4.3: Diagram of The Sauna Ritual
 Wood burning saunas must be prepared hours in advance. After starting the fire and preparing the sauns, the rituals labyrinthian beginning continues with undressing, showering, warming up in the sauna and pouring water on the rocks for steam. The terrifying middle is when the individual can no longer take the heat and leaves the sauna to jump into the cold plunge pool or lake (or sits outside to cool down). He then returns to the sauna to continue the process several more times. To conclude, everyone celebrates with a good meal and refreshing drink.



temperatures and sweating, the bodies in the sauna become one. It is through this ritual of almost unbearable hot alternating with freezing cold showers or jumps in a lake, that small communities are formed and a person leaves feeling re-centered, able to re-enter society and accept the demands of the society and time in which he lives.

Figure 4.4: Map of Public Saunas in Greater Helsinki
 Decades ago there used to be hundreds of public saunas in Helsinki. Today, saunas can be found in almost every apartment building and many individual apartments, decreasing the need for public saunas. Only 3 year round, truly public saunas remain in Helsinki and are found in the working class neighborhood of Kallio in the northeast of the city center.



The Tango

Music is made from sorrow, molded from grief...
 Pirjo Kukkonen, *Tango Nostalgia*

An extension of the Finnish notion of politeness is the taboo of members of the opposite sex touching each other in public. While this is less true today, it is still relatively uncommon to see Finns holding hands or having their arms around each other in public. The exception is found on the tango dance floor. Tango, brought to Finland from Argentina in the 1920s and 30s, has been appropriated by the Finns to become something entirely Finnish. Where as Argentinean tango music is considered erotic, Finnish tango music instead draws upon traditional Finnish folklore such as themes of the Kalevala, to communicate emotions of nostalgia and longing. These songs of melancholy and sadness sung in Finnish are played in dance halls around Helsinki and across the country where men and women sway arm-and-arm together to the music. For the post-war generation, the tango dance floor was one of the few places where young men and women could meet and find matches. Signs tell the dancers if women or men are picking their partners for that round, all of which occurs in a safe, sacred space apart from the rest of society. Important to the tango ritual is the enjoyment of alcohol. Tangos played in the urban pub encourage dancers to be a little drunk and listening to a melancholy tune like *Satumaa* in “this setting can avoid

all the taboos of the Finnish man, who can also cry bitterly in these lyrics, hence the enormous popularity of this song...”³ Finnish men are taught at an early age the value of *sisu* (a valuable Finnish characteristic, loosely translated to “inner strength”) and silence, but it is through the repetitive tango music, alcohol, and lyrics of love and longing that he is given the social license to cry.

Though the tango was first performed in Helsinki in 1913, it quickly moved to the countryside and became a rural phenomenon with “its themes of nature combined with love and longing.”⁴ The success of the Seinäjoki Tango Festival, today, the 4th largest festival in Finland, has once again made it an urban popular mass phenomenon. Roger Connah calls the President of Finland’s residence “Tango Mäntyniemi” (1994) – a metaphor that expressly “demonstrates how the Finnish tango has become a sign to describe the soul of the Finnish people, their mentality and architecture.”⁴



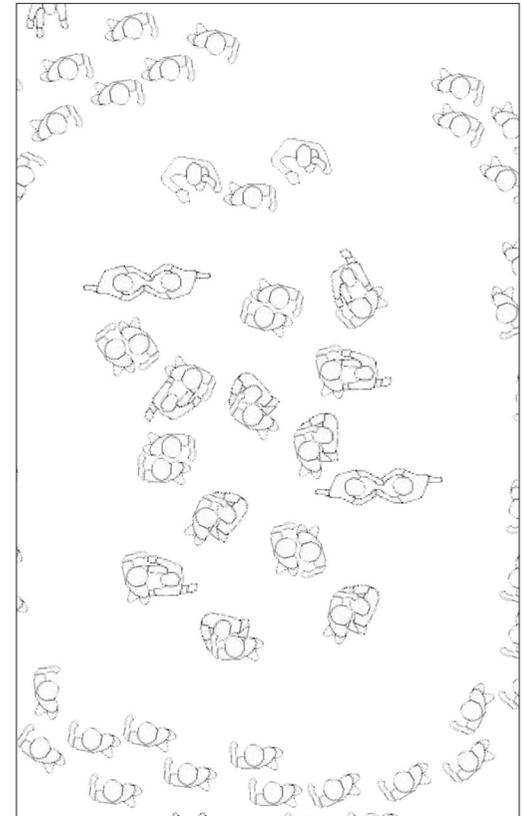
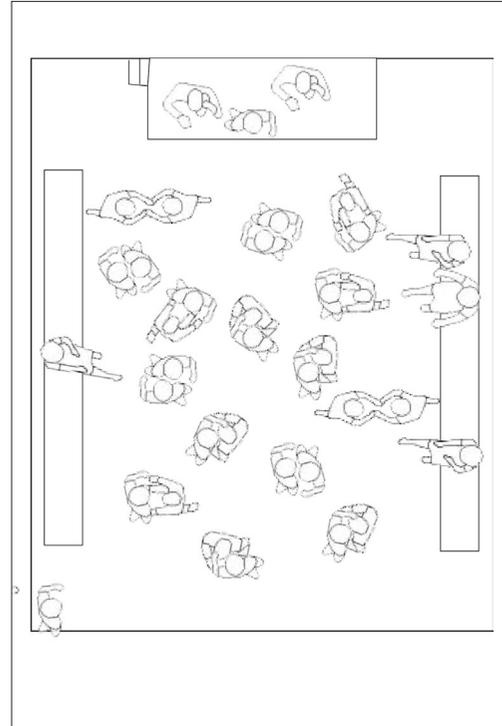
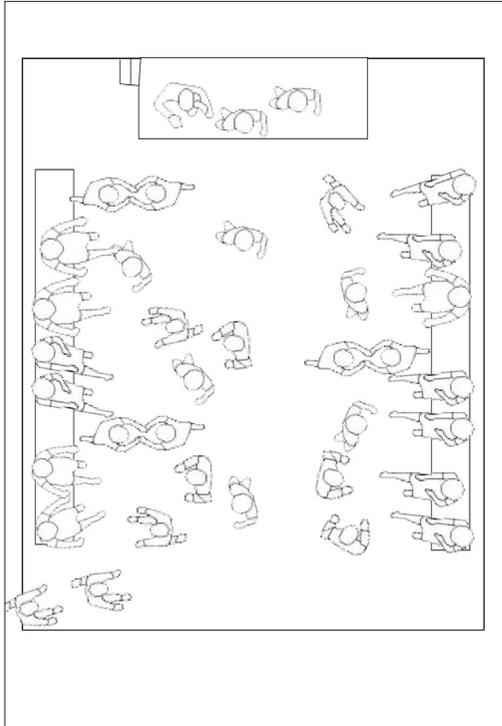
Figure 4.5: Seinäjoki Tango Festival
 (<http://www.tangomarkkinat.fi/>)



³ Kukkonen, Pirjo. 1996. *Tango nostalgia: the language of love and longing : Finnish culture in tango lyrics discourses, a contrastive semiotic and cultural approach to the tango*. (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino). Page 154

⁴ Kukkonen, Pirjo. 1996. *Tango nostalgia: the language of love and longing : Finnish culture in tango lyrics discourses, a contrastive semiotic and cultural approach to the tango*. (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino). Page 107

⁴ Ibid. P. 9



The Picking of Partners:

In many tango halls, lit signs indicate whether it is the man or woman's turn to ask someone to dance. Benches are lined up on either side to relax and wait to be chosen.

The Dance:

Finnish tango music is repetitive and relies heavily on the tango singer. At the Seinäjoki Tango Festival, a tango singer king and queen are crowned during the festival.

Outdoor Dancing:

Dancing moves outdoors in the summer and the physical space of the ground plane is no longer bound by the room.

Figure 4.6: Diagrams of Tango Dancing

The Feast

The feast is the inevitable conclusion of the tripartite sacrifice/festival structure. It is the scrupulously tidy conclusion after the terrifying transgressions, where the world is finally rebuilt anew by breaking bread within the community. The end of a shared sauna is traditionally marked by the sharing of sausages and beer. The end of *Vappu* is signaled by an elaborate brunch in a nearby park. Through excess and expenditure, the feast brings the community together again to master fear, bind chaos and celebrate the present.

When the question arises of how to express Finnishness and how to continually build

and rebuild Finnish and global community in an age of supranational entities as varied as the EU and Angry Birds, we can use these activities of transgression at varying scales – tango, sauna, feasting, festival – to begin to organize spaces for community building. For this exploration, the site of the Kanava Terminal is appropriately placed at the boundary between Helsinki - Finland and the Baltic Sea – Europe, a boundary that is crossed physically and electronically every hour of every day.

By putting these activities of the grotesque body back in the public sphere at the blurred edge between the city and water landscapes, a stronger community is formed from mutual experience of the body.



Figure 4.7: Aerial view of Helsinki South Harbor looking south (Helsinki South Harbor Open International Ideas Competition)

Chapter 5: The Site, The Stage

Experiencing a space or a house is a dialogue, a kind of exchange: I place myself in the space and the space settles in me.

Juhani Pallasmaa¹

Site History

The Roman carnival assembles in the Corso. This street delimits and defines the public festivities on these days. In any other place, it would be a different festival; and therefore, before all else, we must describe the Corso itself. Goethe²

The original Helsinki town plan was designed by C.L. Engel in 1812 when Czar Alexander I moved the capital of the newly created Grand Duchy of Finland from Turku to the then fishermen's village of Helsinki. The original town plan established the strong Market Square and Esplanadi axis that today extends from the Swedish Theater at the west end of Esplanadi to Alvar Aalto's Enso Gutzeit (today Stora Enso Oy) headquarters at the beginning of Katajanokka. Aalto's building is placed at a 3/4 view that helps turn the corner onto the peninsula.

The Katajanokka Peninsula, with its history of industry, transient populations and commerce between Baltic ports, is today still an active site of exchange. It is

the point of entry to the country and city for many native Finns and tourists, and home to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the old army barracks also designed by C.L. Engel. Passenger ship terminals line the south side of the peninsula and the corresponding side of the South Harbor and ships arrive and depart year round to cities around the Baltic. In recent years, new industrial ports have been opened in outlying parts of the city, such as the new port of Vuosaari which opened in the eastern part of Helsinki in 2008. The relocation of industrial port activity such as boat and ice breaker building to Vuosaari freed up parts of the South Harbor for redevelopment. The 2011 competition held by the City of Helsinki was focused on developing the public urban space on the harbor site and required that entries consider "the area's cityscape-related and cultural-historic values as well as [its] appearance to the sea"³. The Kanava Terminal has been slated for demolition for several years with architecture firms such as JKMM and Herzog & deMueron designing (unbuilt) winning competition entries for buildings to be placed on that site.



Figure 5.1: Helsinki Town Plan, 1812
(Helsinki South Harbor Open International Ideas Competition)



Figure 5.2: Map of Helsinki with South Harbor from the 2011 Open International Ideas Competition brief

¹ Juhani Pallasmaa and Peter B. MacKeith. 2005. *Encounters: architectural essays*. Helsinki, Finland: Rakennustieto Oy. Page 61

² Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, Thomas P. Saine, and Jeffrey L. Sammons. 1989. *Italian journey*. New York, NY: Suhrkamp Publishers New York.

³ *Helsinki South Harbour Open International Ideas Competition: Competition Programme*, City of Helsinki City Planning Department, 2012

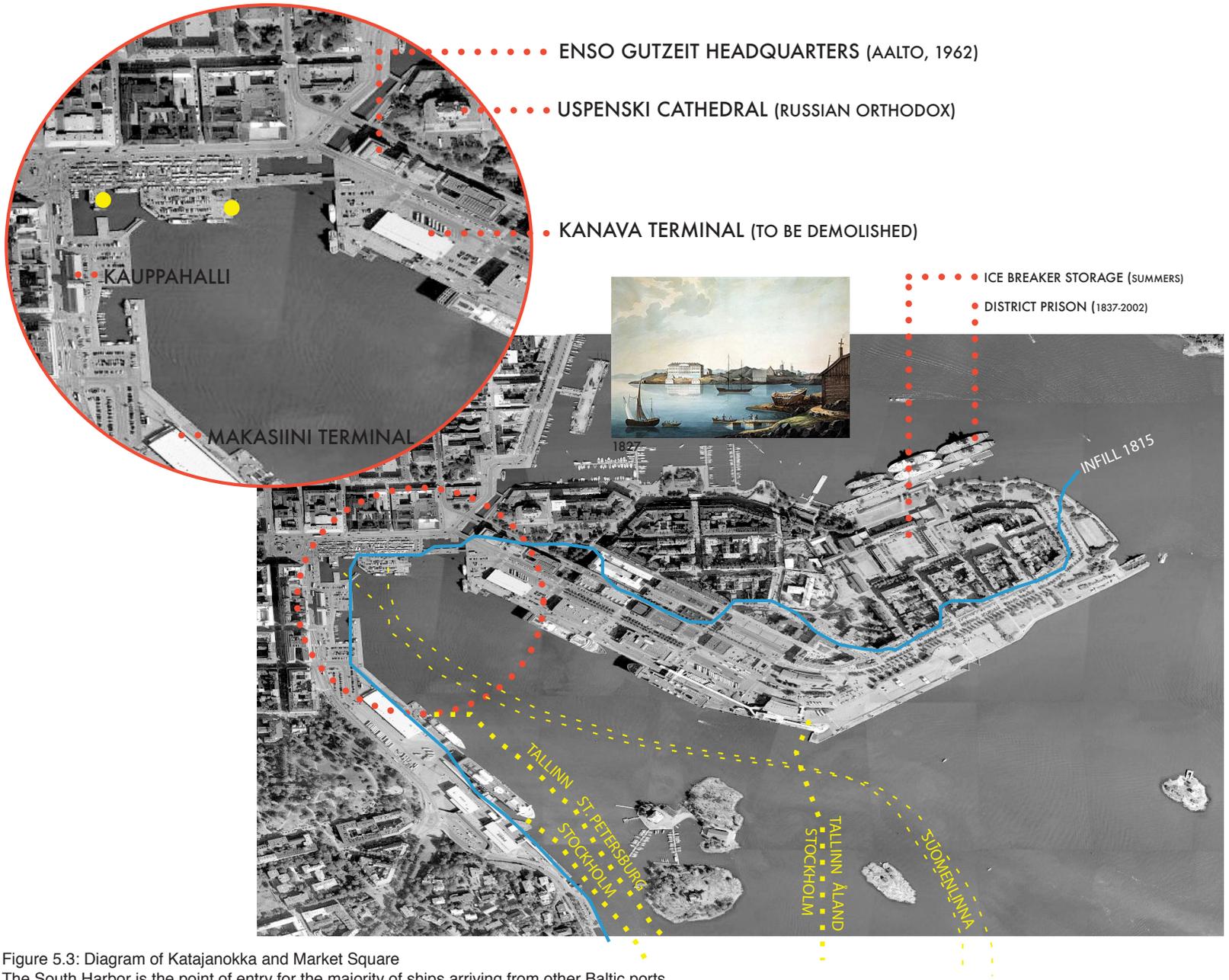


Figure 5.3: Diagram of Katajanokka and Market Square
 The South Harbor is the point of entry for the majority of ships arriving from other Baltic ports.

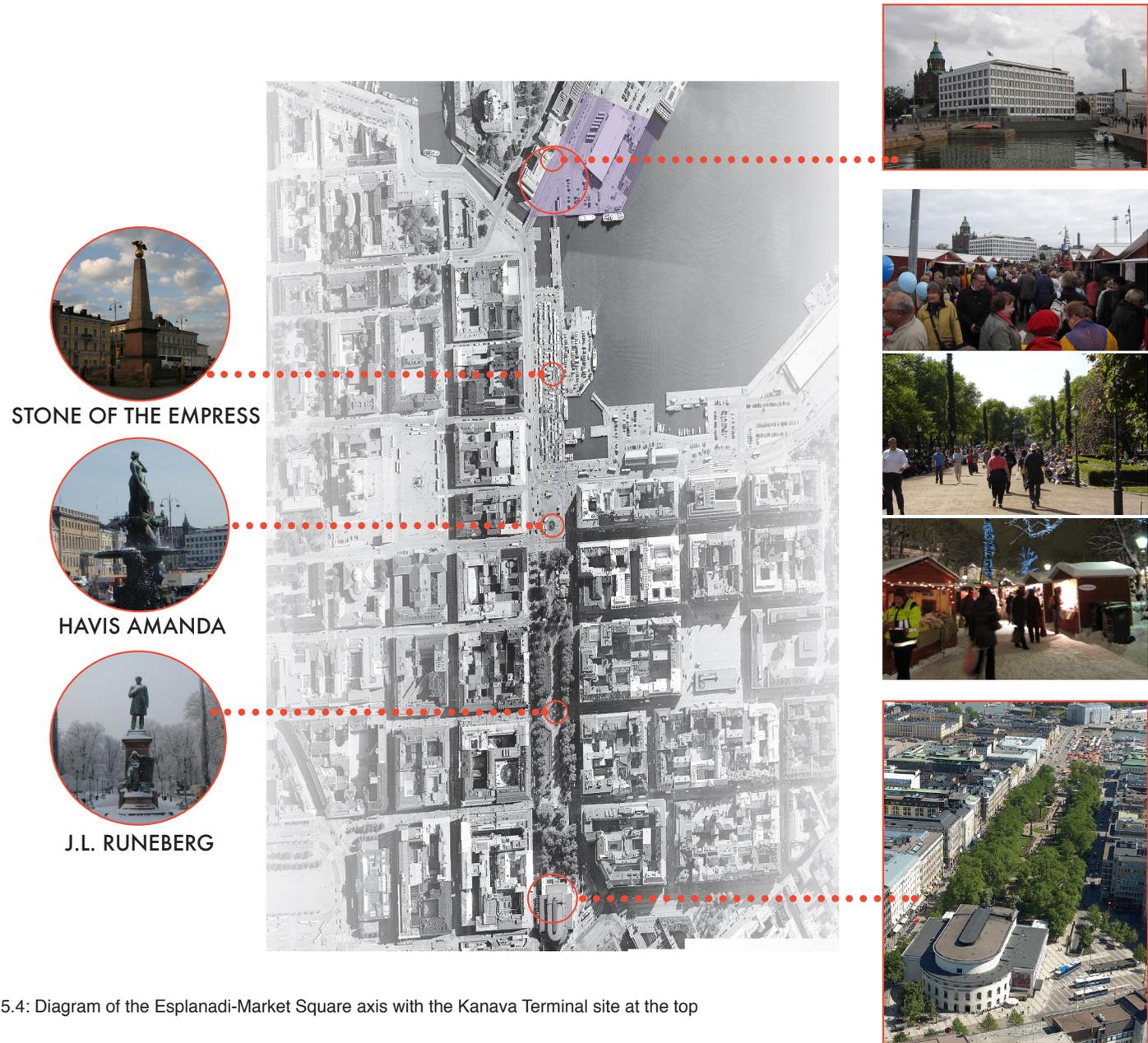


Figure 5.4: Diagram of the Esplanadi-Market Square axis with the Kanava Terminal site at the top



Figure 5.5: Hockey crowd in Market Square, 2011
(corbacho.info)



Figure 5.6: View of the Kanava Terminal and South Harbor during the winter (source unknown)



Figure 5.7: Serlio's Tragic Scene
(from *The Book of Architecture*)

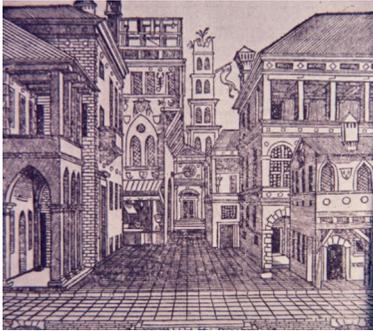


Figure 5.8: Serlio's Comic Scene
(from *The Book of Architecture*)



Figure 5.9: Serlio's Satyr Scene
(from *The Book of Architecture*)

Site Strategy

Scenes of Life

Besides the suggestions from the competition and the waterfront character of the site, approaches for site strategies were drawn from Sebastiano Serlio's depictions of Vitruvius' theater scenes.

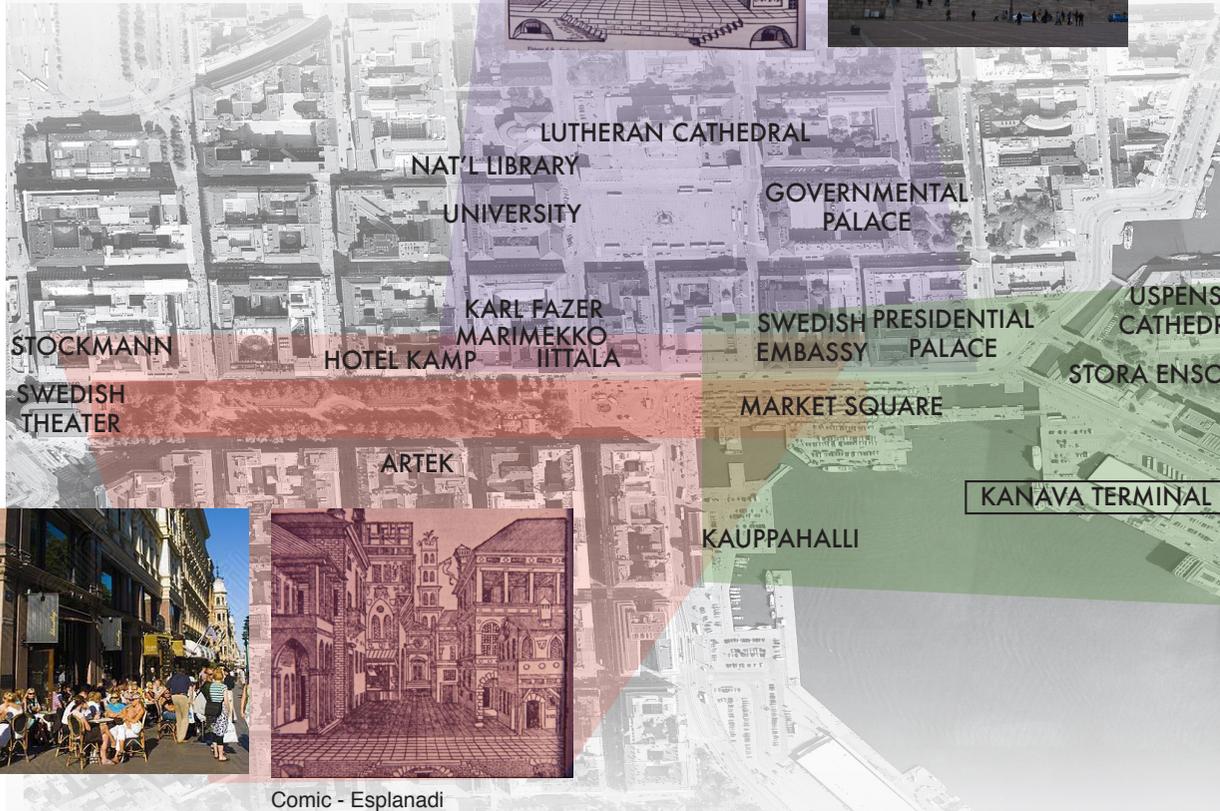
All three of the scenes – tragic, comic and satyric – can be seen in the urban fabric of Helsinki South Harbor. The tragic scene is the Senate Square, with its giant plaza, towering neoclassical cathedral and accompanying institutional buildings. The comic scene is Esplanadi and Market Square, alive with commerce and winding paths around kiosks, tents, traffic and market stalls. The trees lining Esplanadi bring the space down into a small, more intimate scale that is reflected in the pop-up kiosks that come and go with the seasonal markets.

The satyric scene is more complicated and at times can be seen throughout the entire South Harbor when the festival procession moves in and out of the tragic and comic with ease. Satire is social criticism that is subversive and has a moral dimension. Serlio's representation is pastoral, depicting the forest and field environment of the satyr. The players in this scene are outside the laws of society and subject only to those of nature. It is a scene of Arcadia – utopian, pastoral, living in harmony with nature, and unattainable. It is here that

the city dissolves to become the primordial landscape, boundaries are blurred and everything become porous and unbound.

This is the essence of the Kanava Terminal site, which is placed at the edge of the city, at the street grid shift, and at the beginning of the archipelago landscape. The surrounding buildings also reflect the dual nature of the site as city and landscape, and both reference nature in different ways. Aalto's marble clad Enso Gutzeit building has a likeness to an iceberg and the Uspenski Cathedral is build upon the only natural hill on the peninsula. With the demolition of the Kanava Terminal there is an opportunity to blur catagorical distinctions of site/landscape and city typologies, while still maintaining the layered backdrop view of the city for the arriving ferry passengers.

Tragic - Senate Square



Satyrical - Katajanokka Peninsula

Comic - Esplanadi

Figure 5.8: Diagram of Serlio's scenes placed on the Esplanadi - Market Square - Katajanokka axis (photos from top: author's photo, source unknown, theimagefile.com)

Chapter 6: Inside the Giant

*Our architecture has no physical ground plan, but a psychic one.
Walls no longer exist.
Our spaces are pulsating balloons.
Our heartbeat becomes space;
Our face is the façade.*

Design Process

The concept for the project is the festival crowd and the grotesque body. The city, and in this design, the greater Kanava terminal site, can be viewed as an amorphous body that grows and contracts over time, spreading across the landscape. It is in this way that the crowd swells and shrinks during the profane and festival times as it moves through the city, gathering forces and finally dissolving when the event draws to a close.

In the design the building and landscape become one as the ground plane lifts, wraps and buries itself into the site. Both are rendered as porous and fluid, transgressing the boundaries between interior and exterior; building and site; site and city; water, rock and trees. It becomes an exploration of the ground plane, and how it moves into, under and across the site irrespective of walls and roof.

Introduced back into the site are the three primal characteristics of the Finnish landscape – water, rocks, and trees.

Coop Himmelb(l)au

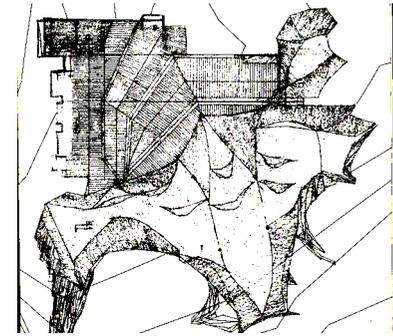


Figure 6.1: Roof Plan of Dipoli, Riema and Raili Pietilä, 1966 (*Riema Pietilä: architecture, context and modernism*)

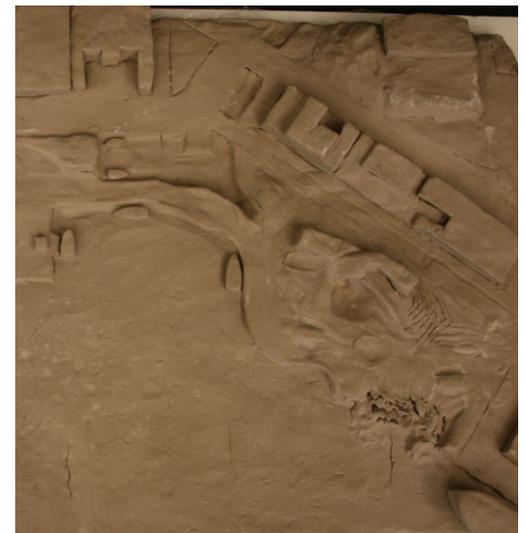


Figure 6.2 & 6.3: Clay Process Models of Helsinki South Harbor in 1:1000 (above) and 1:500 (right)



Figure 6.4: Body on the City Concept Diagram

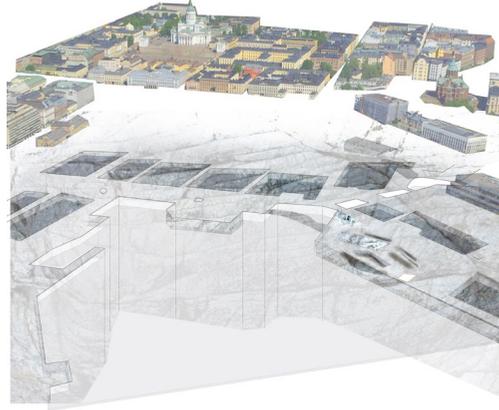


Figure 6.5: Body under the City Concept Diagram



Figure 6.6: Conceptual Waterfront Collage

Within the South Harbor, only in front of the Kauppahalli is there a place where a person can touch the water - though on the north side of Katajanokka, there are several places, including one last remaining pier for rug washing. The boundaries between the water, rocks and trees blur their relationship to the building, site and to each other, just as the satyric scene breaks down the wall of the city and lets in the forest. All is perceived as a part of the same massive body that changes with the seasons and festival times.

The forest and water infiltrate the site from all directions. The water reclaims the filled ground plane in the south end of the site and the forest buries itself deep into the center. Bridges connect across the site, over water, rocks and trees to tie the terminal site that has been separated from the city for so long back into the existing urban fabrics.

¹ Kandler-Fritsch, Martina, and Thomas Kramer. 2005. *Get off of my cloud: Wolf D. Prix : Coop Himmelblau : texts, 1968-2005*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz. 25.

Final Design:

Building as Landscape, Building as Body



Figure 6.7: Esplanadi to Katajanokka Peninsula aerial site plan

The narrow axial pedestrian bridge from Market Square is replaced with a grand, angled and expansive bridge, creating a stronger connection between Market Square and the Katajanokka Peninsula. Lifting the new bridge 3 meters above the water provides pedestrians with views of the archipelago and city from a vantage point that is currently only available at the Lutheran Cathedral, Uspenski Cathedral and from

the deck of incoming cruise ships.

The site edge along the waterfront is kept open for boats to dock year-round and for the pedestrian and bicycle paths that start to the west in Jaktasaari to continue along the water's edge. In the winter skiers, and in the summer bikers, runners and walkers will be able to travel along the water – a rare condition given the security and infrastructure at the four working ferry terminals along the South Harbor.





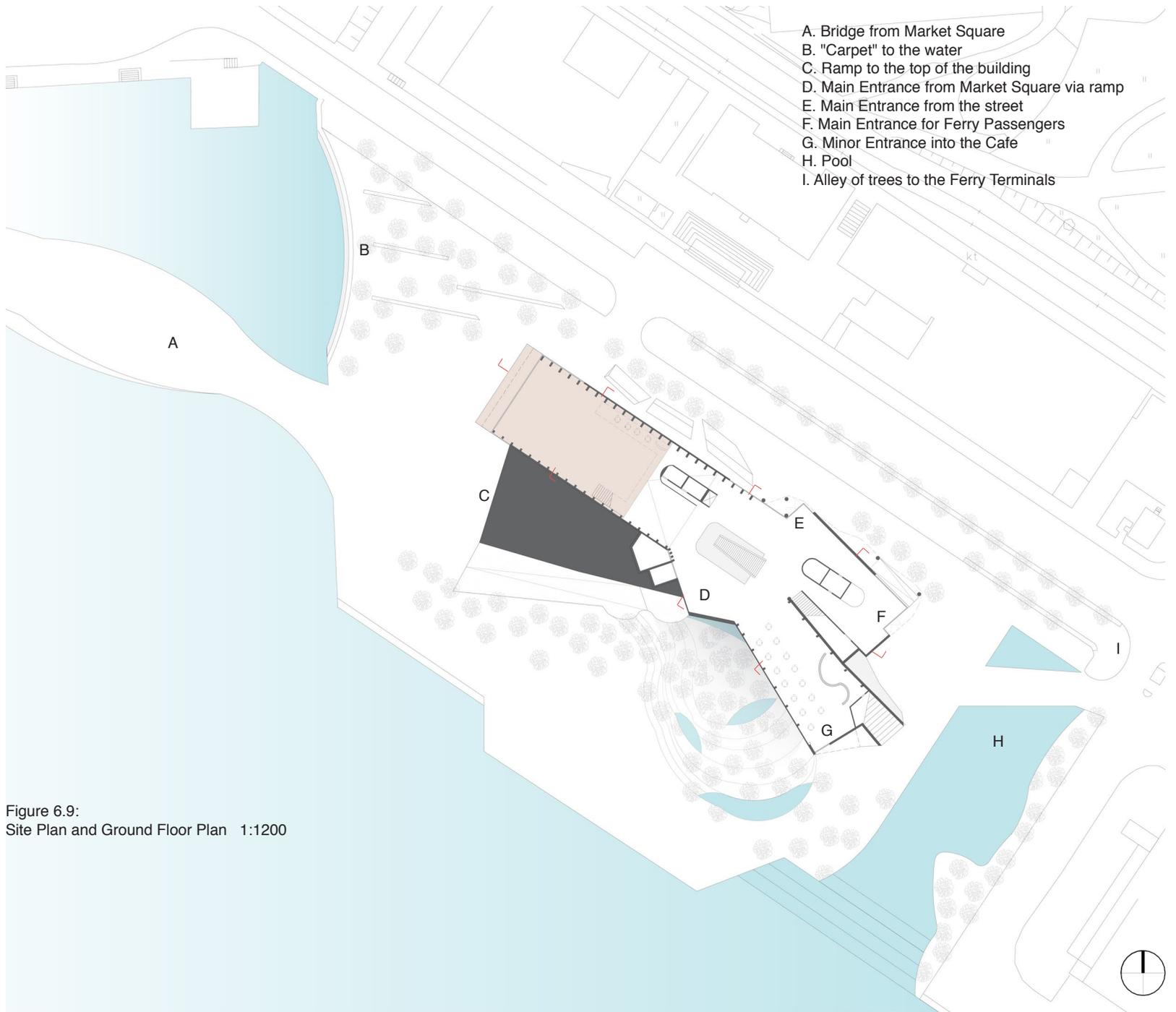
Figure 6.8: Aerial site plan of greater Kanava Terminal site

To the northeast the building is placed along the street edge to maintain the axis shift of the street grid and continue the allée of trees that guides passengers from the Viking Line terminal into downtown and vice versa. The buildings northeast entrance is placed along that edge and used mostly by visitors arriving from the Uspenski Cathedral tram stop or walking from the northern neighborhoods of the city.

On the northwest end of the site, the ground is pushed down into the water to create a “carpet” that extends to the south into a terraced, forested park and allows people to touch the edge of the water or ice.

On the southern end of the site, the water is pushed into the site in a shallow pool that extends to the street edge, then steps down, back into the Baltic. The land is built up on the southern edge of the pool, creating a natural barrier between the active site and the trucks taking goods from the ferries. The pool is

only 30-40 centimeter deep, making it a safe place to cool off during the summer and ice skate during the winter. Another bridge across the pool connects the site to the alley of trees that run southward toward the passenger ferry terminals.



- A. Bridge from Market Square
- B. "Carpet" to the water
- C. Ramp to the top of the building
- D. Main Entrance from Market Square via ramp
- E. Main Entrance from the street
- F. Main Entrance for Ferry Passengers
- G. Minor Entrance into the Cafe
- H. Pool
- I. Alley of trees to the Ferry Terminals

Figure 6.9:
Site Plan and Ground Floor Plan 1:1200

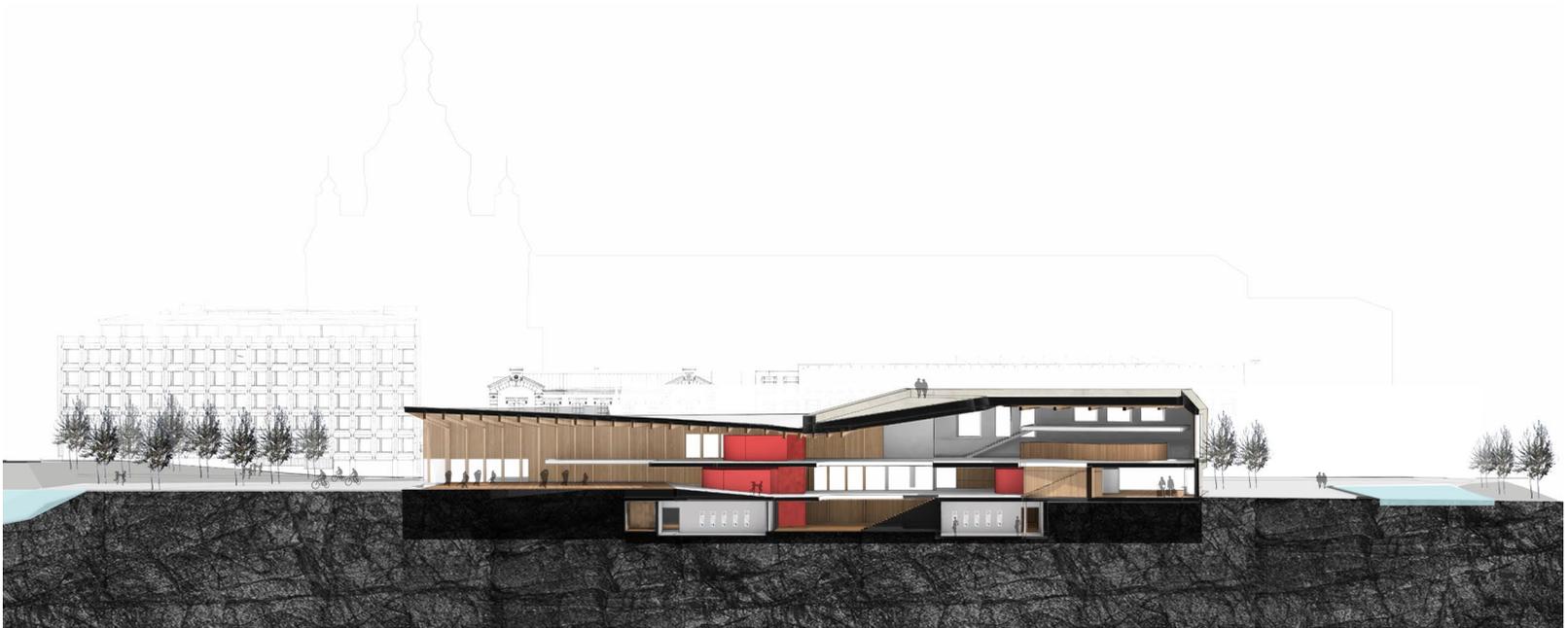


Figure 6.10: Longitudinal section through the building and site facing northeast

The building is conceived in terms of lining, skin and bones. The skeletal structure is a repeating series of CLT (cross laminated timber) frames that condense at the tango hall and spread out through the rest of the building – varying their rhythm and spacing based on structural needs and activities. The structure unifies the spaces into one whole body, leading the movement of bodies through the rituals and activities.

Some columns continue through all three levels, creating a repeating visual connection through the spaces.



Figure 6.11: Street facade looking southwest

The intersecting concrete ramp transitions from a solid ground plan to an elevated plaza, turning to become a cascading wall supported by columns before it returns to the earth on the southeast façade. The concrete columns extend beyond the building on the north side to create a portico and mark the street entrance into the building.



Figure 6.12: Transverse section through the tango hall and private saunas



Figure 6.13: Transverse section through the central circulation space



Figure 6.14: Transverse section through the feast hall, tourist information center, and cafe

The building slips into the opening below the lifted earth, and tears open both building and site, forcing them to blur together. A mixed native forest is dug into the ground and spills outward, entering the building and nearby plazas. The building is divided into three floors – the underground sauna floor; ground level with tango dance hall, café, and tourist information; and the first floor feast hall. An atrium in the center spreads the sounds and smells between the floors. Building program is divided so that people cross through the building through the course of the ritual.

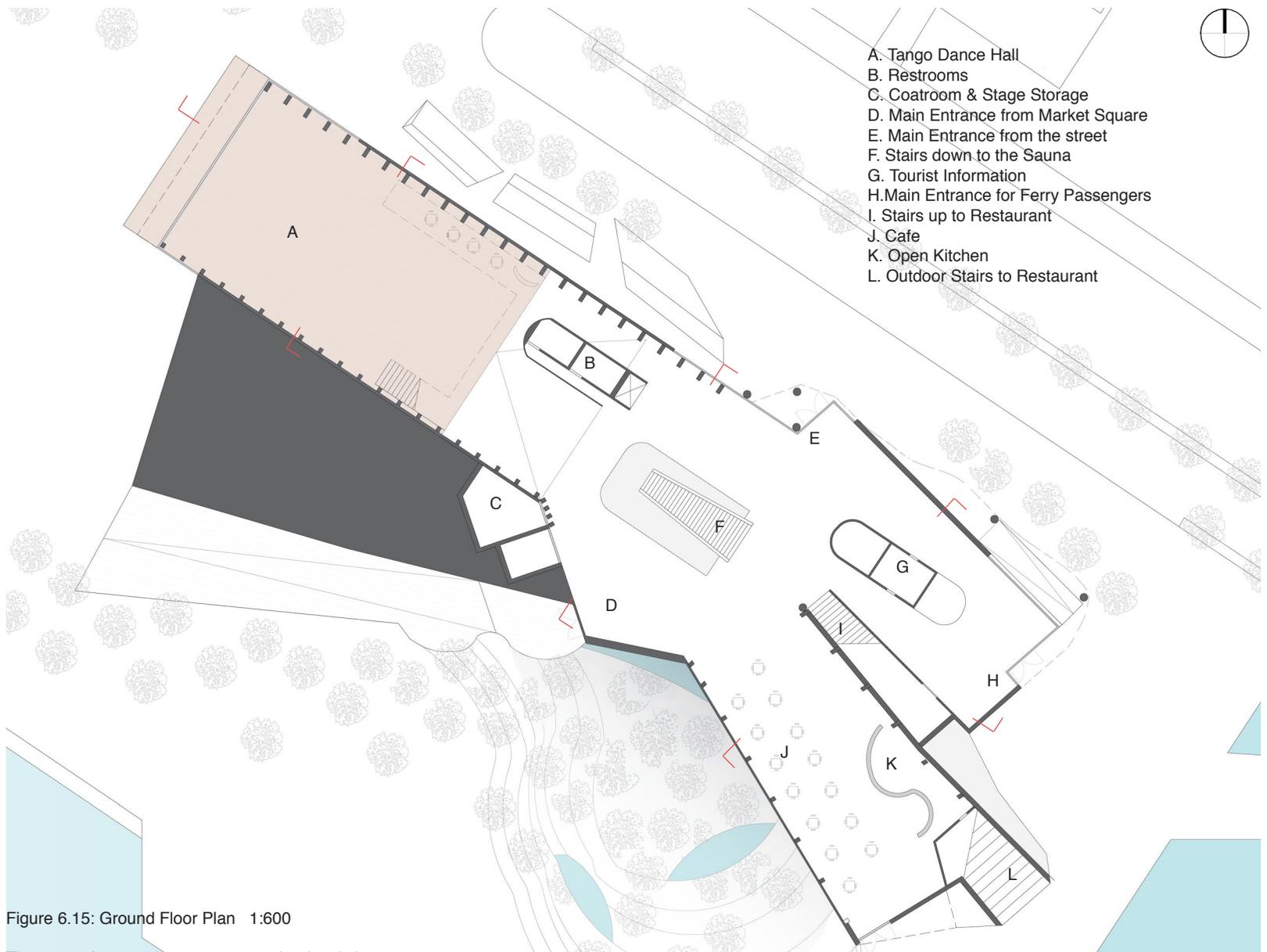


Figure 6.15: Ground Floor Plan 1:600

There are three main entrances and a fourth lesser entrance at the ground floor café. The main entrance in to the building from Market Square is along a bridge tucked behind the ramp.

In the Tango Hall the wooden dance floor acts as a separate, floating surface placed upon the ground. The entire site has a 1 meter slope from north to south, and you walk up slightly to the dance floor from

the entrance space. The glass façade and windows of the hall open up to allow dancers to spill out into the site. The dance floor extends beyond the glass façade and creates a threshold with the roof extension. The repeating, twisting bays of CLT are wide enough for a couple to dance through and reminiscent of the repetitive tango tune.

The tourist information is placed close to the allée of

trees bringing people in from the ferries. Facing the forest is the café. Finns consume an average of 5 cups of coffee a day, making them the largest coffee consumers per capita in the world. Year round, this is a space that will be used by visitors and locals alike during all hours of the day and evening. As in the other spaces, the windows toward the forest slide up during the warm summer months.

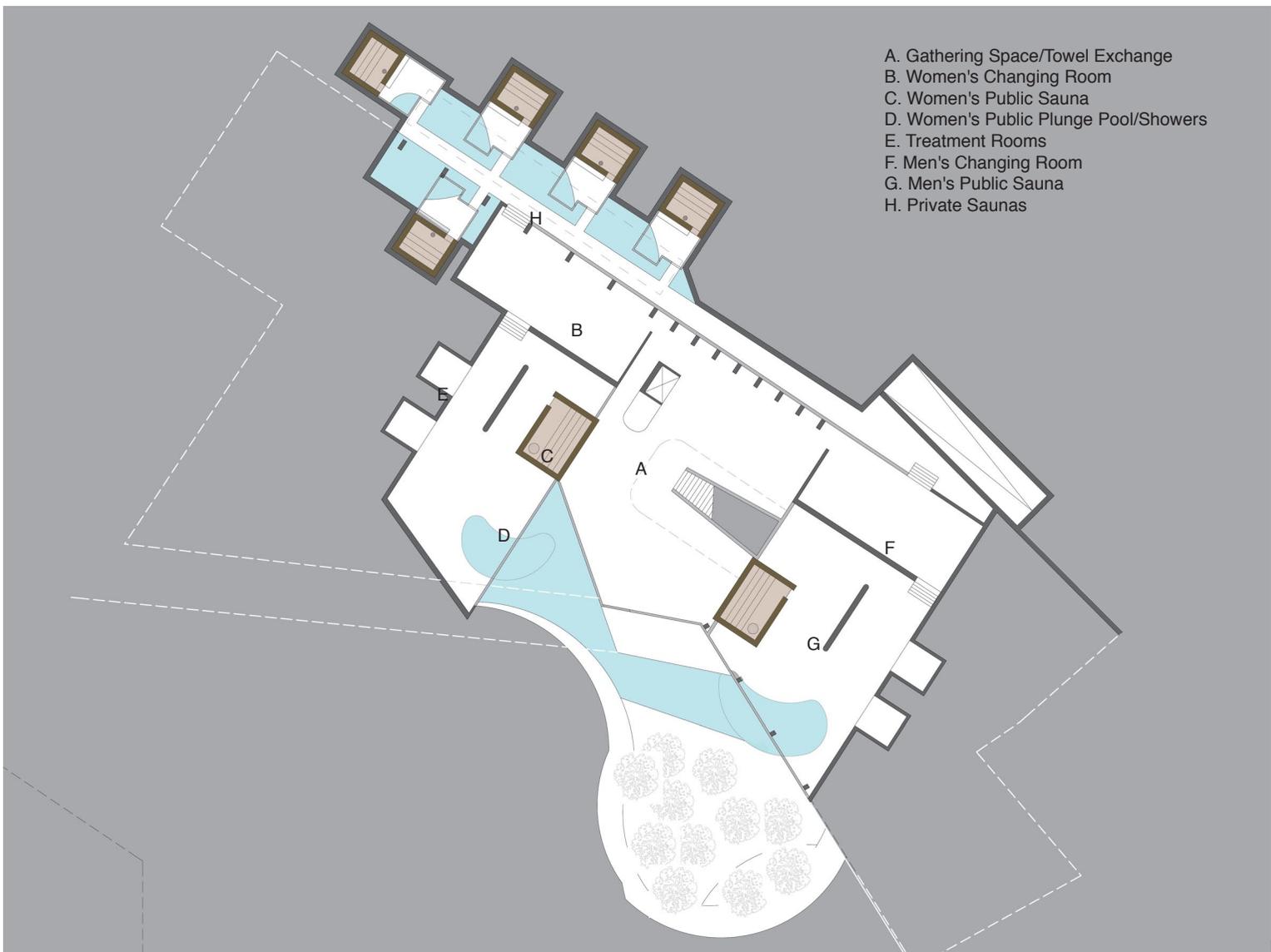


Figure 6.16:
Sauna Plan: Forging the Sampo 1:600

Upon arriving down into the sauna floor, men and women separate into their own dressing room that open into the public saunas. The saunas and corresponding spaces of showers and the pools are sunken even deeper into the bowels of the earth, opening up to the forest at the plunge pool - the ritualistic "terrifying middle" in the sacrifice/festival cycle. Only a half glass wall separates the pool

from the forest floor. Individual treatment rooms for massage was dug into the wall in each public sauna.

The private saunas are located on the other side, away from the forest and toward the city. Patrons of both sexes cross an elevated wooden walkway - reminiscent of the planks that traverse the marshy forests in the countryside - above the water and into individual sauna cells. A skylight in the outdoor plaza

above brings in natural light that is reflected off of the water and onto the glass in and around the saunas.

All of the water is treated from the Baltic, recycled throughout the building and returned back in to the sea, cleaner than when it was taken. The saunas are wood burning and fed from a furnace below the ground and accessed by the elevator and exterior truck entry along the first floor southeast entrance.

- A. Bar
- B. Restrooms
- C. Stairs to Mezzazine Dining
- D. Restaurant
- E. Kitchen
- F. Outdoor Fire Pit
- G. Stairs to the plaza below

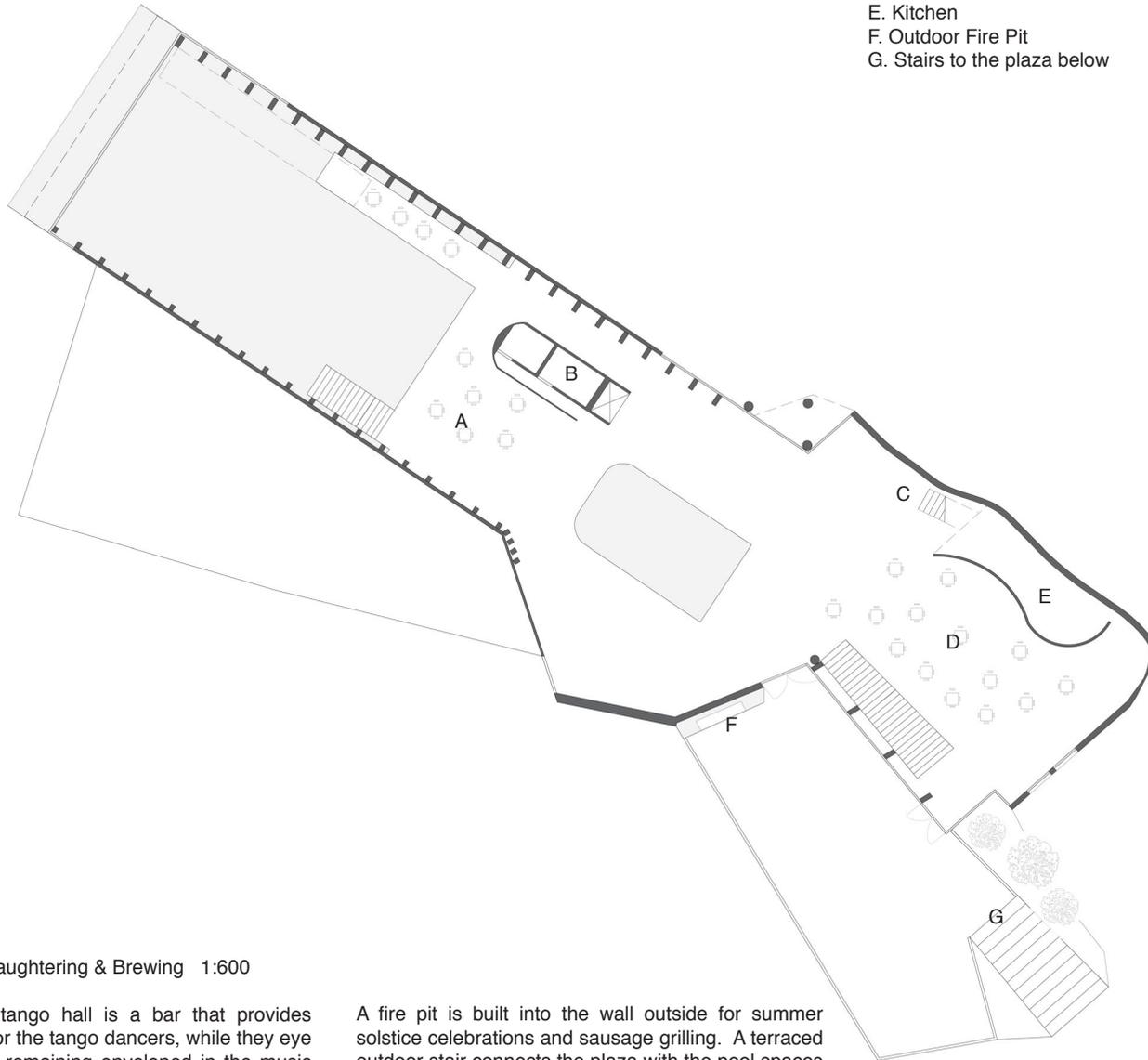


Figure 6.17:
1st Floor Plan: Slaughtering & Brewing 1:600

Overlooking the tango hall is a bar that provides "liquid courage" for the tango dancers, while they eye the action below, remaining enveloped in the music and melancholy. The double height feasting hall on the southeast end is the space that fluctuates the most based on seasonal weather and activity. The window/doors open up on the southwest to the roof of the ground floor café and the harbor beyond.

A fire pit is built into the wall outside for summer solstice celebrations and sausage grilling. A terraced outdoor stair connects the plaza with the pool spaces below. The porosity and blurring of exterior and interior happens from *Vappu* in May to the Baltic Herring Festival in September, while the cold winter months turn the focus inward on the food, drink and company.



- A. Tango Hall
- B. Bar
- C. Sauna Treatment Room
- D. Showers in Public Sauna
- F. Restaurant
- G. Tourist Information

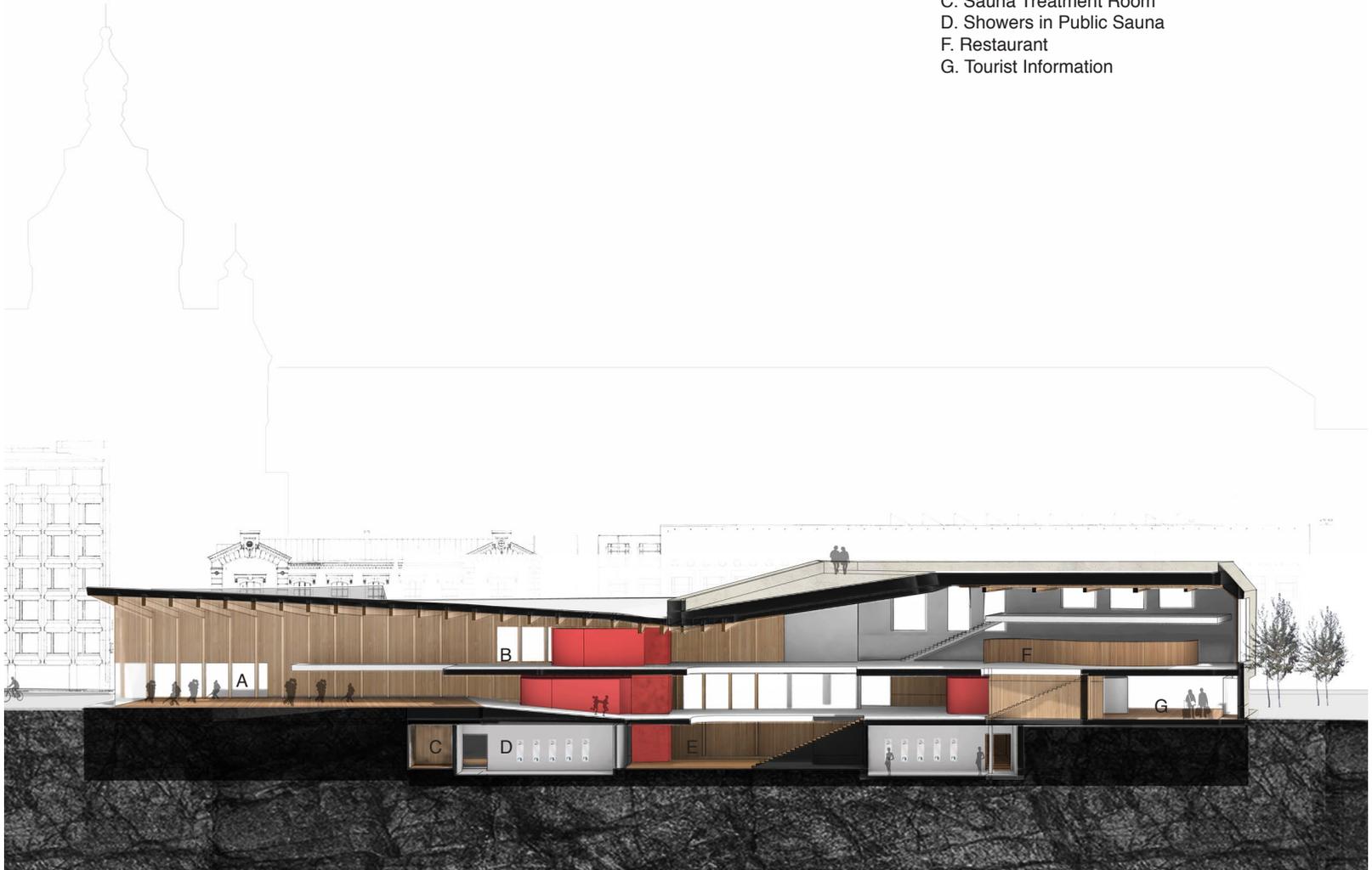


Figure 6.18:
Longitudinal Section through building

The lining and skin of the building flow into one another as you move between the spaces and activities, as every part of the building becomes one. Wood is used as a lining in places where the body stays for the most time – the tango dance floor, inside the saunas, the floor of the feast hall, floors of the café and bar.

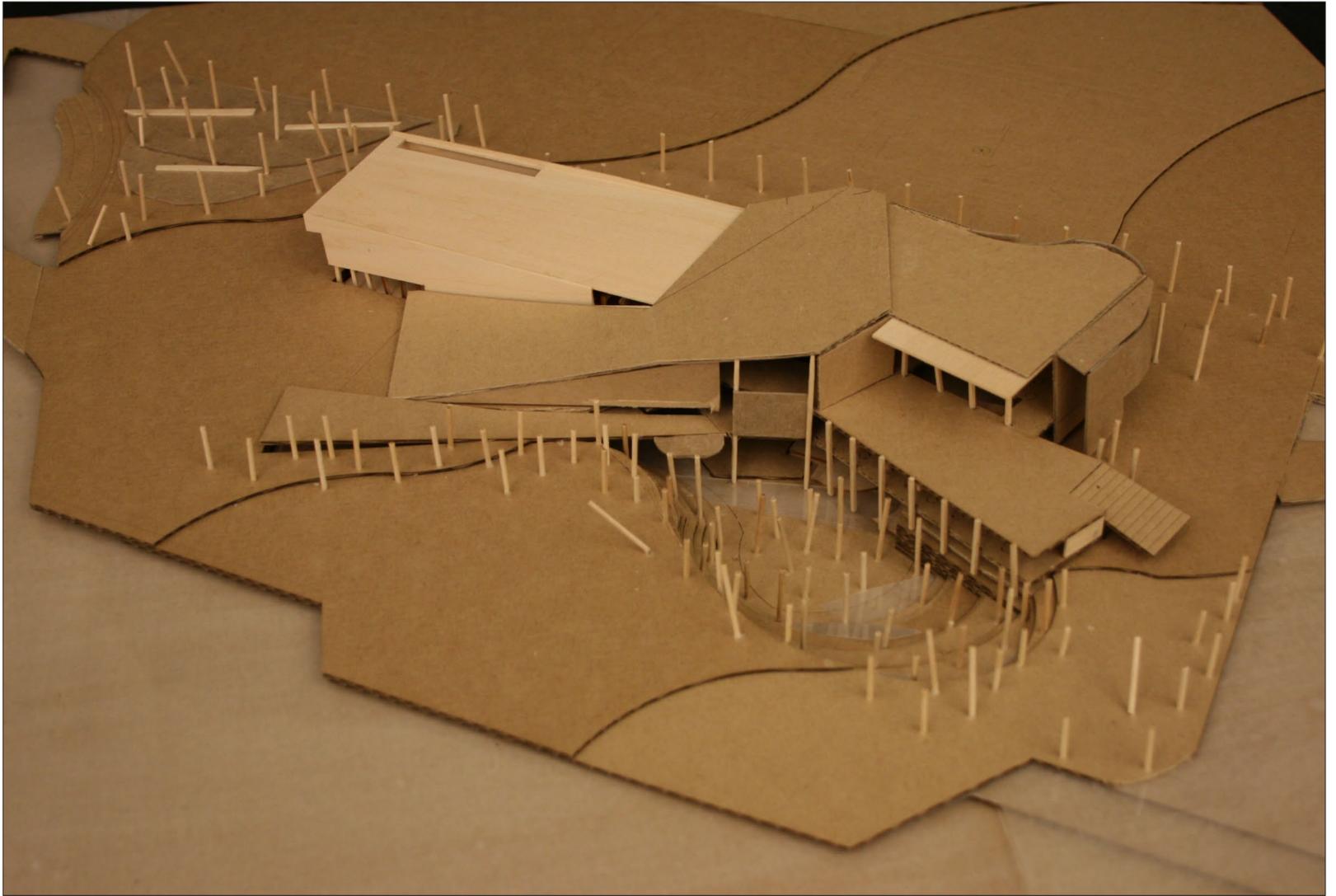


Figure 6.19: Photo of working site and building model, 1:300





Figure 6.20: *Forging the Sampo*, Akseli Galle-Kallela (Ateneum Art Museum)

Narrative

Each ground plane of the building was thought of in terms of a chapter of the *Kalevala*, the Finnish epic poem compiled by Elias Lönnrot in 1849. The underground floor is “Forging the Sampo”, ground floor “Inside the Giant” and first floor “Slaughtering and Brewing”. The titles relate to the activities that would happen on each floor as well as the general character that is conveyed in the design.



Figure 6.21: View from the bridge during winter

The Tango Dance Hall acts as a beacon during the long, dark winter months, drawing visitors to it from around the South Harbor. Spinning couples cast shadows on the glass and ground. The radiant heating in the ramp keeps the path upward clear of ice and snow. The path that leads inside is marked by bare birch tree columns.

The entire world is blue except for the glow of the dance hall.



Figure 6.22: Inside the Tango Dance Hall

For the summer afternoon dances, the walls open up and the dancers swirl out into the city. The repetitive twisting beams and roof structure mimic the swirling dancers, keeping them inside until the last possible moment. Reijo Taipale is singing "Satumaa" and when the light hits the glass and breaks across the floor, it is as if the fairyland in question is in fact found here.

She has never looked more beautiful. Helsinki has never looked more beautiful.



Figure 6.23: Inside the Public Sauna

The first saunas were dug into hills, dark quiet spaces for contemplation and serious whispers. Leaving the oppressive heat, the view opens into the forest and cool, inviting water.

She jumps in. The body contracts, every cell in a state of shock. When the body adjusts, the forest comes back into view. The dappled sunlight reflected by the water.



Figure 6.24: Inside the Feast Hall during *Vappu*

Though the weather is unpredictable, during Vappu everyone is outside. Students wear down coats and clothes from the night before under their guild uniforms. They have already attached plastic champagne glasses to their jumpsuits, ready to be filled with champagne or cider from a stranger.

In the restaurants, older families are eating five course meals, toasting the return of the sun and life outside. It's only a few more months until they can leave the city for their summer cottage on the lake.



Figure 6.25: View of the Southeast Plaza from the street

At the southern end of the site the relationship between city and landscape breaks down, becoming the most dissolved and ambiguous. The pool is an introduction back to a water landscape for ferry passengers, and toward the archipelago landscape as Finns walk to the ferry terminals to ships bound for Stockholm or Tallin.

The park is enjoyed during all seasons. It's a gentle return of the grotesque body into the ground plane and peninsulas urban fabric.



Figure 6.26: Postcard waterfront view of Helsinki
South Harbor with Sauna Tango Dance Hall

Chapter 7: Concluding Remarks or Finnish has no Future Tense

In every case, one must achieve a simultaneous solution of opposites.

No Spectators, Only Participants

Instead of a “solution,” this thesis explores the a dialogical relationship between site and building, global and local, community and individual that informs and evolves over time. In the case of the Kanava Terminal site, instead another polite museum, the Helsinki South Harbor should consider presenting the messier, transgressive side of Finnish culture to endear visitors to the duality of the Finnish mental and physical landscape while building a stronger Finnish community in the post-national age.

Ultimately, all of these characteristics of the festival can be found as part of Bakhtin’s theory of the dialogic and closely related to Bataille’s dichotomy of the slaughterhouse and the museum. The dialogic brings together the many voices of the community and incorporates the action and reaction of their responses to one another. The importance of the “slaughterhouse” and “museum” is “not, however, the conjunction of these two poles but the space between them. One does not exist without the other, but it does not exist with the other either.”¹ The poles of heaven and hell, upward and downward, mind and body are established

so that life exists between them, moving back and forth and incorporating both extremes without diluting either or rendering them homogenous. Important in the dialogic is metamorphosis, which can be seen in the festival costumes, use of masks, and community transgressions of social norms.

In the work of Bataille and Bakhtin, it is heterogeneity that forms a community and in this thinking, the European Union is a perfect candidate for community-hood. But the modern political state and delicate supra-entity does not and cannot sanction having the metaphorical slaughterhouse at the center of the community. There is very little to do with primordial origins and shared myths in the EU, an entity based on shared economic systems in a globalized world. If anything, the emphasis has been to create at least the impression of a homogeneous Europe in an attempt to have buy-in from all of the disparate, and very heterogeneous, nations and populations. In terms of the festival and using the festival to unify, this attempt to force a homogeneous community is misguided.²

Alvar Aalto

Burning Man Festival ethos



Figure 7.1: *Three Blacksmiths*, a symbol of Finnish work ethic and endurance, the morning after Vappu (author’s photo)

¹ Denis Hollier. 1989. *Against architecture: the writings of Georges Bataille*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. Introduction: *Bloody Sundays*, xiii.

In an increasingly globalized world of supranational systems and postnational identities, the relationship of an individual to a community with a shared past, collective memory and corresponding physical rituals is becoming more and more important. It is in the exploration of these festivals of the body and the sacred where the possibility for new, broader definitions and feelings of community is embraced. This occurs when the local community is newly re-established and centered not only in its relationship to itself, but also its relationship to the larger system of networks to which it is a part. Power structures and authorities are questioned, rejected and ultimately accepted anew. Chaos that has developed from the wear of time is embraced and then rejected as the cosmos is restored with the community at the center, surrounded by the periphery. The definition of periphery may have changed, but the importance of the dialogic has not. The community needs to be united in order for it to survive.

*The victory of the future is ensured by the people's immortality... the better turns the worse into ridicule and kills it. For fear can only enter a part that has been separated from the whole, the dying link torn from the link that is born. The whole of the people and of the world is triumphantly gay and fearless.*³

Mikhael Bakhtin

² Europe Day is May 9th and/or May 5th – does anyone know that? And how do we celebrate Europe Day anyway?

³ Bakhtin, *The Bakhtin Reader*, 226



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