

UNEARTHED  
Actors, Agency and Activisim at Jagtvej 69

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University of Washington  
Abstract  
UNEARTHED Actors, Agency and Activism at Jagtvej 69  
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This thesis examines the connections between social culture and the built environment by using temporary interventions as a method of site analysis. Through the experimentation with the ephemeral and temporary I hope to explore the possibility of inverting stigma associated with socially and historically loaded sites. The methodology for this process involves 2 parts; collection and experimentation. The collection entails indepth research of the social and political histories the imagined and unimagined stories of the site. Experimentation involves proposing informed interventions in the form of art installation or temporary use to investigate the social components of the site. I see this exploration as a method to open a space, “a scene of hypotheses “ in a site that has been deemed untouchable. I hope this method will inform a more permanent design solution that can mirror the artistic and elemental quality in the temporary installation.

#### Site

The site for experimentation is 69 Jagtvej in Copenhagen Denmark. The former site of Ungdomshuset (youth house) is currently a vacant lot. The building was demolished in 2007 after the inhabitants were evicted. The politics surrounding the eviction of the people of Ungdomshuset was so controversial that supporters of the house rioted and protested the demolition of the building. The events surrounding the Ungdomshuset were unprecedented in Copenhagen and remains an open wound in the social consciousness of the city. Nicknamed ‘ground 69’, the site sits across from Assistens Kirkegaard, a city cemetery and public park. A portion of the cemetery will become a metro station on the Ring line of the Copenhagen Metro, currently under construction. With the addition of the metro as another layer of this very diverse neighborhood, sites like Jagtvej 69 will not be able to remain empty. This site is a site of loss for many in the city but it cannot remain a wasteland. I see this experimentation with temporary installations as a social litmus test to gauge what could be and what should be. The embodied tension within the site can serve as a generative force to create a dynamic , layered design that can constantly change and evolve.



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**“ History never ensures the triumph pure and simple of something over its opposite: it unveils while making itself, unimaginable solutions, unforeseeable syntheses”**

-Roland Bathes  
mythologies

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# Tak til.....

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**“ Conflicts are stepping stones in the unfolding of scenarios; tools triggering interactions between actors and agents that otherwise would not meet”**

-Raoul Bunschoten  
Urban Flotsam

# Introduction

The city is endlessly fascinating; An organism that is constantly evolving; An experiment that constantly disproves the hypothesis while generating a new one. Cities have been developed under the idea of a master plan to be carried out in phase over long periods of time. Some of these plans are never realized to the detriment or benefit of the city. Others become a version of Frankenstein's monster; a conglomeration of bits and limbs of various visions; a mutant hybrid. This thesis explores a city's phantom limb. A phantom limb is created when an individual is able to feel or sense the presences of a limb that has been amputated. The idea of phantom limbs combines memory of a physical presence with a physical absence. Ungdomshuset, or "The Youth House," was located at Jagtvej 69 in the Nørrebro Neighborhood of Copenhagen, Denmark. Its musical and political scene made Ungdomshuset a symbol of youth culture in Copenhagen, as well as abroad, for over 20 years. On March 5, 2007 the building was demolished after a long and arduous battle with the municipality. Though many still lay claim to the

site, it has remained empty since its demolition.

This project explores the potential of tension to generate new typologies. The site is still mentally present within the conscious of the city and the story of site can become a generator of new synergies and typologies. Through a new undulating topography, and program elements that support collective action, the landscape constructs a dialogue between the past and the open-ended future.

To allow for an open-endedness of possibilities certain aspects must remain flexible and unplanned. Currently there is nothing physically in the site. One could say it is open and by remaining empty there exists a certain amount of possibility in the void. However, the opposite is true for the empty void of the site only becomes a monument of loss and a monument is static, it always looks to a past that no longer exists. The challenge becomes to insert something that does not ameliorate the past but draws from it to continue the discourse and dialogue within the site; the presence of which was what was worth fighting for,

worth keeping within the body of the city. Over the history of architectural discourse this idea has manifested in different ways. When Le Corbusier articulated the distinction between object and ground he relied on the production of ‘otherness’ to establish architectural legitimacy<sup>1</sup>. The radical architecture of the 1960s consummated the failure of modernist ideology advocating the ‘end of architecture’ as an instrument of political alienation and a system of representation. Thereafter, architecture would be embodied in the temporality of action, in situation and behavior. Situationism advocated approaching architecture and urbanism as “situation’ or the construction of atmosphere. Guy Dubord described the situation in terms of a simultaneity of the structural and the conjectural; an awareness of absolutes and their temporality <sup>2</sup>. Asger Jorn, Danish artist and member of the situationist movement, described in his many texts on the artistic attitude of life, describes a triolectic order in which the interaction between parts creates continuing cycles. Like a still life painting, space between he objects defines how one understands them.

The idea of atmosphere as becoming one of the vectors of an interaction between the individual and the collective, the object and the painting, is present in the work of Stephen and Theodore Spyropoulos. They see design as a force to enable the unforeseen futures of a design project. The architectural project has mutated from a building into an information interface between the private and public spheres. Architecture has given way to the reversibility of interactive processes that can be

activated by the individual. Through the atmospheric dimension, the object has been transformed into an entropic territory.<sup>3</sup>

Every figure depends on a ground against which it appears. The work of Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi takes the stance to design the ground on which the unforeseen figures appear. “Forces such as these only leave their mark when architectural surfaces stand against them. With nothing to resist them they would remain unapparent; in other words-latent.”<sup>4</sup> Through the design of the ground or surface and its sub surface, a dynamism between the layers that compose it and the networks to sustain it is created.

The story and myth of the site at Jagtvej 69 will always hold a presence in the mental conscious of the city of Copenhagen. The site and the conflict surrounding it stood for far more than the building which inhabited the space. An opportunity exists to create a ground from the story embedded in site that becomes both a figure and surface upon which to react; a layered topography that can exist as both a phantom and a living part of the city by never being one or the other.

(Endnotes)

1 Weiss, Marion, and Michael Manfredi. *Weiss/Manfredi: Surface/Subsurface*. 1st ed. Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. Print.

Pg178

2 Dubord, Guy. *The theory of moments and construction of situations. Situation*. The MIT Press, 2009. Print. Pg 113.

3 Spyropoulos, Stephen, and Theodore Spyropoulos. *Enabling: The Work of Minimaforms*. Architectural Association Publications, 2010.

Print. Pg 23

4 Leatherbarrow, David. *Weiss/Manfredi: Surface/Subsurface*. 1st ed. Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. Print. Pg 9.



Figure 1: Jagtvej 69 Photo by author



# Methodology

Incremental becoming through Comparative Vandalism

“ Design is an experiment. Continuously evolving and challenging our times, an understanding that proclamations as manifestos are obsolete. So too are the attempts to render this world singular and finite”

-Stephen Spyropoulos/Mimiaforms

## Comparative Vandalism

This thesis is the exploration of the complexity of a site, a city and a history, real and imagined. The situation surrounding Jagtvej 69 is so fragmented that a new approach must be defined to engage multiple publics. The process that results is non-linear, rather a simultaneity of disciplines, each building upon while appropriating one another. The methods of objective documentation and diagramming of spatial relationships were of the architecture discipline; Interview and ethnographic methods were of the journalist or social scientist discipline, and intuitive exploration of site drew from the discipline of art. Each discipline has its freedoms and constraints and employing multiple disciplines creates a dynamic approach that does not result in *one* answer, or *a* solution but rather a

framework for open-ended becoming. The Danish artist, Asger Jorn, coined the idea of Comparative Vandalism. Jorn wrote a series texts about what he called, “ the artistic attitude of life”. He felt that crossing disciplines and appropriating methods result in great advances; by vandalizing one discipline you find a greater understanding about another. The artist decides what is preserved and vandalized such that the process becomes a bricolage of different disciplines each appropriated or undermined to engender a new outcome.

## Designer as collector

On-site research was conducted over a six-month period in Copenhagen, Denmark. Several topics were researched simultaneously and over the course of the research period, began to overlap and intertwine. The overarching intent was to explore

temporary interventions in the urban context. More specifically how the idea of the temporary can be used for contested sites such as Jagtvej 69. The topic contained the following sub layers: Temporary interventions, Myth, and Tension. The first topic was the most straightforward to research thus served as a good starting point. Projects were documented using methods typical to case-study research: Photo-documentation, observation and diagramming. This approach quickly became limiting as the analysis tended to simplify the projects to a single perspective. It became clear that another perspective was needed, and my role is one of documenting and collecting perspectives rather than presenting a pointed view on a topic. The information then could be presented in a way that was not declarative or conclusive but read and interpreted in different ways. An ethnographic approach was adopted and interviews were conducted, recorded and transcribed. The ethnographic approach requires the involvement of the researcher in a more subjective way than that of journalism, where the reporter has

the role of telling a story and elucidating facts. The approach was neither etic (view from outside) or emic (view from inside); it hovered between the two. An appropriation of a scientific method obtained opinions and comments that could tie to the portion of research related to myth and narrative; a more nebulous topic. The dialogues allowed the opportunity to intertwine topics through natural diversions in conversation therefore resulting in information and opinions on a variety of topics within one interview.

#### Temporary Interventions

The exploration of different groups within Copenhagen working with the idea of the temporary (or midlertidige in Danish) resulted not in categories of types of interventions but rather methods of how the projects facilitate change. Questions raised in this study became:

- How does time strengthen or weaken a temporary project?
- How can you determine “success” in temporary projects?

- What are the traces left behind after the project ends?
- What potentials exist in temporary projects that are lost in a permanent?
- Can the temporary become the permanent?
- How does the temporary influence the strength of the project?

The methods of facilitation are divided into four categories: Space, Program, Dialogue and Framework. Space is defined as projects that facilitate the use of space temporarily. The projects provide space for existing groups to use without predetermined program. Program is a project that facilitates for specific activities or program to occur that otherwise would not be accessible. Dialogue is a project that facilitates people or groups to meet and exchange. Framework is a physical intervention that invites participation and engagement. Transcripts of interviews on these topics can be found in the appendix of this document.

## Myth

The topic of myth is inherently difficult to study using a research approach. It doesn't lend itself to a scientific method, it is difficult to pose a hypothesis and gather facts to support it. It is an invisible presence in the city, passed by word of mouth, or a graffiti tag. Yet myth is very influential in the case of Jagtvej 69 because it is all that is currently present in the site. It therefore must become a part of how one engages the site. It is a layer as important as any other perhaps more so because it is one of the few layers that is active; it continually creates more stories, constantly changing perspectives.

The inclusion of myth within the methodology of the project reinforces the objective to maintain simultaneity within the approach. The theoretical framework for reading myth as described in the previous section of this document uses the writing of Roland Barthes. It is important to explain how the theory is used for this project. Barthes was a critic in linguistic

theory tied to the theory of structuralism. Structuralism suggests that something cannot be described as a discrete object but must be describe in terms of its relationship to a larger system or structure. Barthes describes myth in terms of speech, but not as something that describes but rather notifies.<sup>i</sup>The relationship to a larger structure or system becomes complicated in the Ungdomshus case because the site is so layered, so contested. It could be perceived to be part of several larger systems, or systems nested within systems.(figure 2,3)Therefore the nature of the relationships between the parts, and the constant building up and breaking down of the meaning and understanding of these parts becomes the focus of interest, rather than an overall structure, as pure structuralist theory would suggest.

#### Tension as generative

An integral part of the methodology of the site at Jagtvej 69 is acknowledgement of the tension which has in many ways kept the site empty as part of the methodology to start something new on the site. Conflict is typically seen as something that needs

to be mediated. Both sides are engaged across a boundary and a new set of terms is established, a compromise (figure4) Over time conflict would be slowly dissipated. Now this is an oversimplified explanation. Conflicts are diverse, nebulous organisms of social and cultural complexity and methods to approach conflict are specific to the players involved and not a formula that can be repeated endlessly. The objective conclusion is always the same; ending conflict equates with life being better for the players involved, society as a whole.

But what if a conflict could be seen as productive? Not as something that need to be ameliorated and fixed but a dynamic force that could be mined for a discourse on societal issues. The tension on the site, the difference between groups creates an animated element that generates a dialogue, an argument, or collaboration. At present that tension is in stasis. It is present but frozen as the site can currently only be engaged through the layered process of graffiti. As seen with the Shepard Fairey mural, attempts to engage the site are seen as acts of violence.

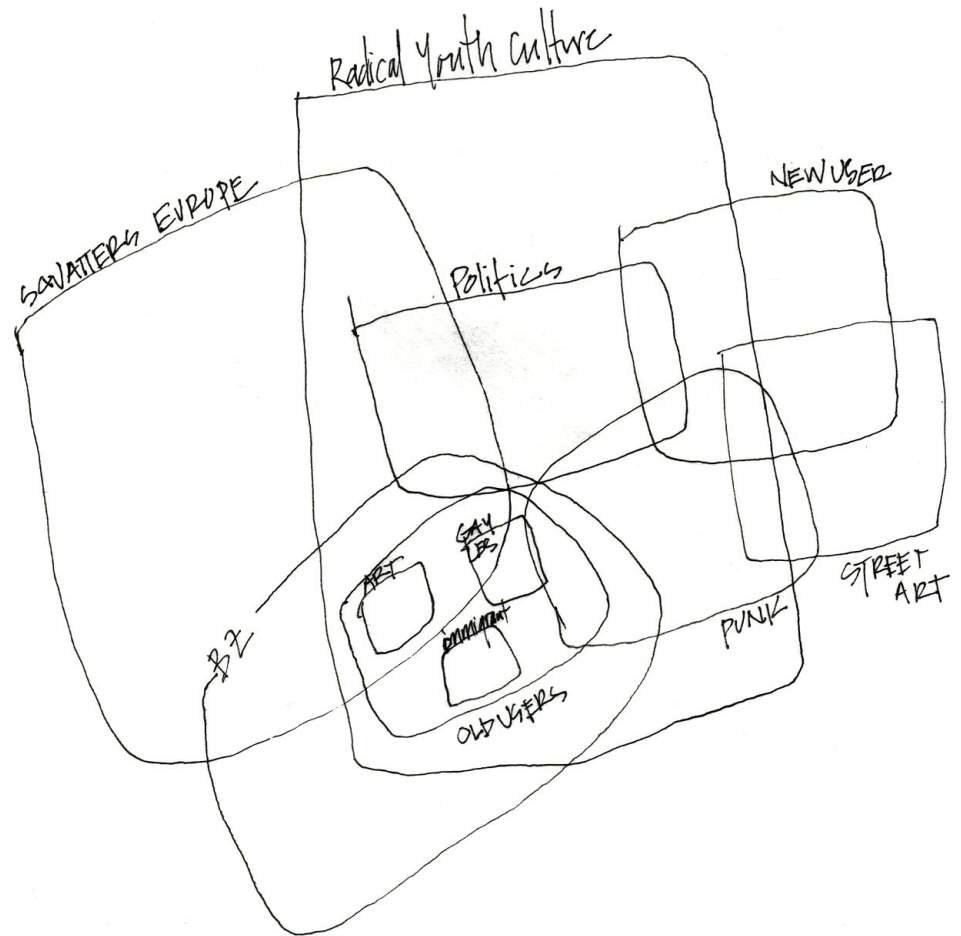


Figure 2: Semi-lattice structure in which groups become nested within or overlapped with larger groups.

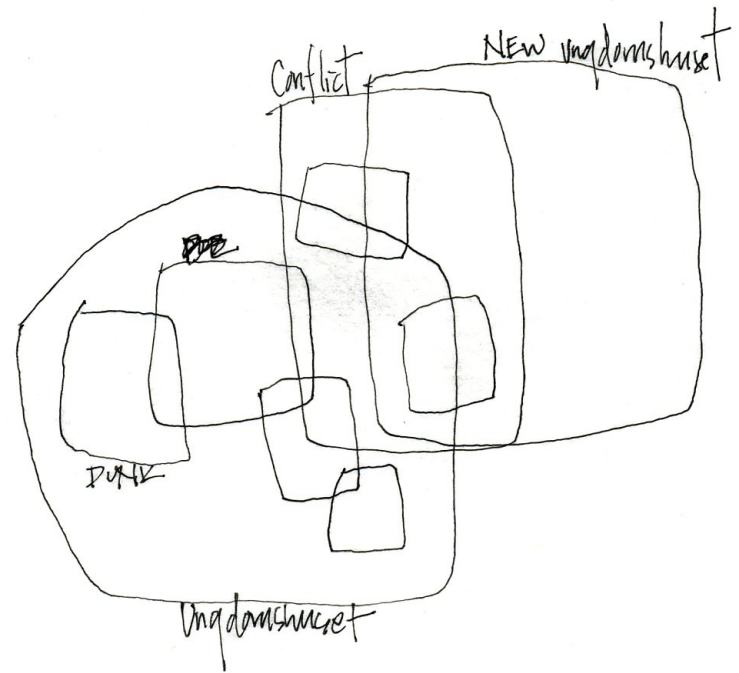


Figure 3: Conflict created zone in which new groups formed and others dissolved

This perceived act of violence is responded with another and another to be repeated endlessly. The mural was critiqued for a lack of dialogue, perceived by different groups to engage none and only assert an outside opinion. Future engagements with the site should, rather than further polarize groups, introduce an intervention that allows and invites participation in a manner that is not a revenge act.

#### Incremental becoming

The site approach involves a series of temporary interventions over the course of the next ten years. The interventions are non-linear; one does not necessarily inform the future of the next. Each engages the site in a different way spanning three spectrums: ephemeral to physical, temporary to permanent, and viewer to producer. Interventions will not be representational of a history or a past but rather consider the memory and history as fodder for a new understanding of the site (figure 5).

The intent is that these interventions will incite reactions both positive and negative, and spark other responses and actions to

build a network of projects, events, happenings, small gestures, failures, intrusions, steps forward and back over time to build a new history that can constantly re-write and undermine itself.

The idea of the temporary affords a certain amount of freedom that does not exist in the architectural process of creating a permanent structure. The idea that whatever is put in the site will only be there for a short time allows for those who may oppose it to allow it and those who design it, to go beyond the practical to push the boundaries of design ideas.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Barthes, Roland, and Annette Lavers. 1972. *Mythologies*. New York: Hill and Wang. pg 109

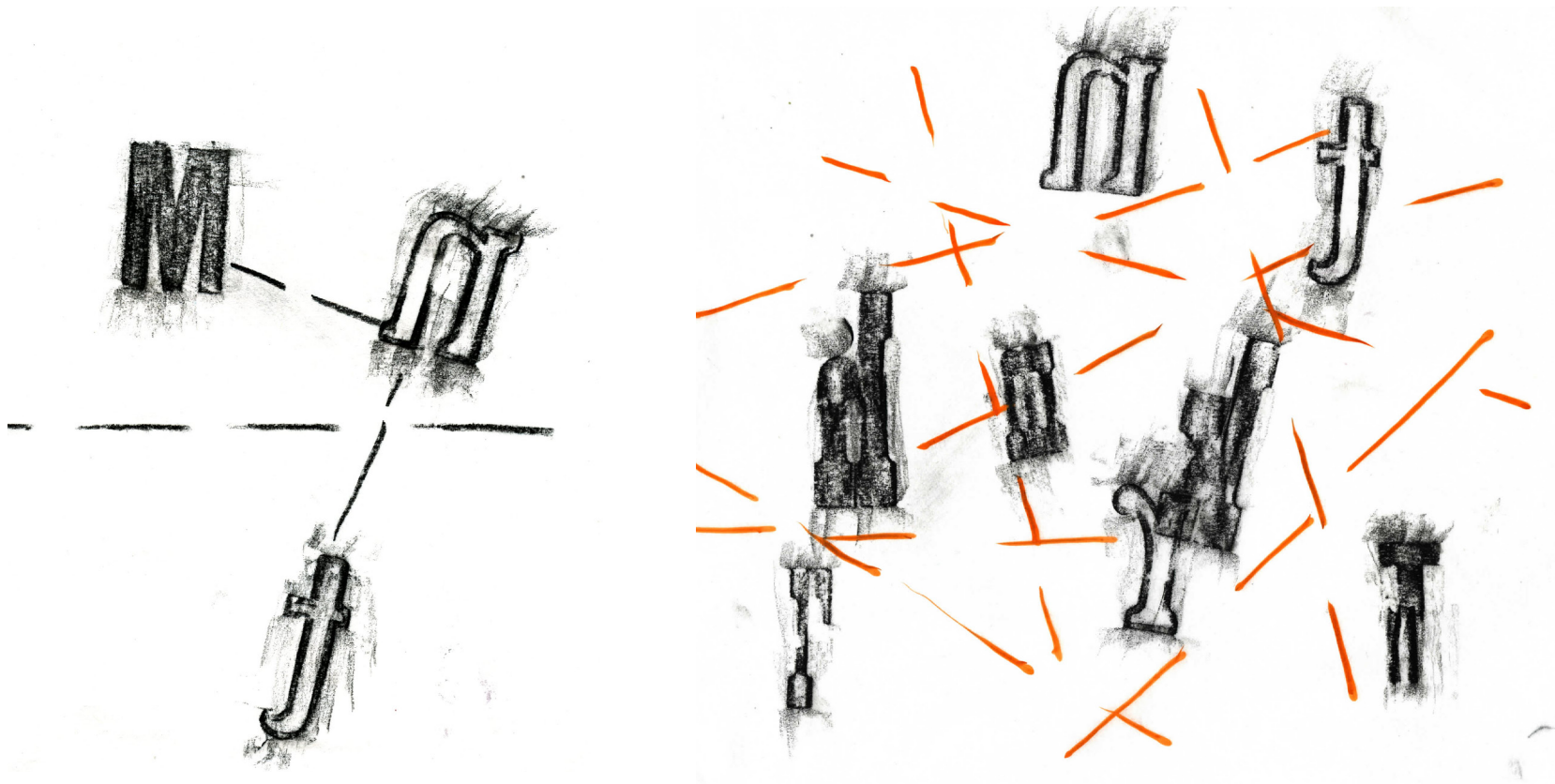


Figure 4: Typical conflict versus fragmented conflict (Ungdomshus Case)



Figure 5: Concept of blending histories for open-ended becoming

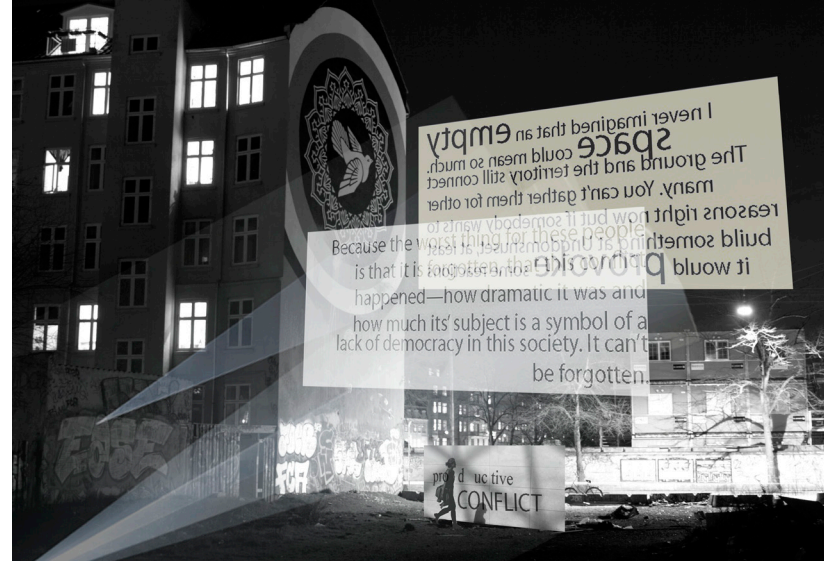


Figure 6: Projections at night



Figure 7: Longitudinal Section through site

# Incremental Becoming

Dialogue//

The intervention establishes a dialogue in a way the mural did not by creating an ephemeral presence on the site that is constantly changing. Text projections on screens and surfaces draw from current discussions about Ungdomshuset, blogs and news articles. The text constantly changes so each statement is vandalized by the next. Projections through surfaces distort and create interference to the point of illegibility. Over time the projection surfaces would become tagged or torn but the projections continue to layer on the surface. By spatializing the invisible dialogue that exists about the site a more tangible dialogue may begin to exist.

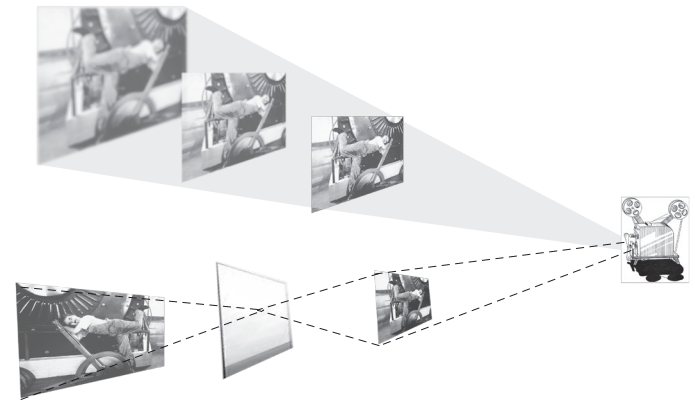


Figure 8: distortion of image as projected through multiple surfaces

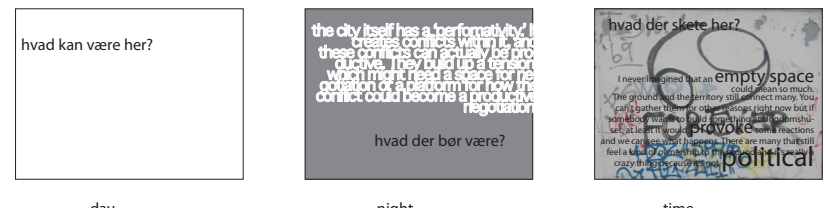


Figure 9: Surfaces become layered over time



Figure 10: Conceptual collage of intervention



Figure 11: Longitudinal Section through site

# Incremental Becoming

Space//

The intervention makes note of the void of the site by incrementally filling it. The site is currently uninhabitable because of the taboo of its past and the myth of those who lay claim to it. By creating an unaccessible space the invitation to transgress and occupy it is created. To reach this space the ground must be reconfigured. The earth from the excavation for the future metro station provides the material to create a new infrastructure to inhabit a contested space. Over time the earth would be manipulated to access the platforms. The pliable ground both shapes future uses and serves as a record of human presence in the site.



Figure 12: Space Diagram



# Incremental Becoming

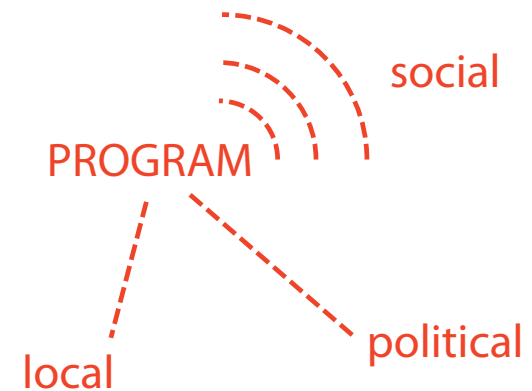
Program//

The Program intervention allows the site to be occupied with a more specific use. By providing a specific program, groups would be able to use the site because of a service it provides, therefore separating it from its history.

Research of self organized groups around the Nørrebro neighborhood and outskirts of the city showed that many groups had outfitted spaces for their own use, such as studio or workspaces but lacked facilities for larger events or productions. This intervention provides the infrastructure to support these groups. Program such as meeting spaces, music venue, event space, could occupy the intervention. It could also provide facilities for social organizations to raise awareness about current issues, such as Trampolinehuset which provides services for assylum seekers in Denmark

The intervention itself appears as an oddity, unlike its surroundings. But its contents would relate locally in a way that Udomshuset did not.

Figure 14: Program diagram



**“ They drift between the shores of perception, between sign and image, without ever approaching either”**

-Sartre

# Literature + Theory

Contested sites as open systems of becoming

Violence and within the city is not a new concept. The theoretical framework for this thesis explores how violence and conflict, once represented by wars and armies, has mutated within contemporary society to form new modes, formal and informal. Larger issues of tolerance, economy and politics feed the tensions that generate these conflicts. The contemporary city and violence requires an approach that emphasizes the influence of politics, oppression, and rebellion on space. Memory, myth and the collective conscious must be included to fully understand the complexity of sites of trauma, absence and loss within the urban context as open systems for appropriation and becoming.

## Urban Violence and Revisioning Moments

Tali Hatuka, in her book, *Violent acts and Urban Space* describes a socio-political method to understanding contested sites as an essential part of the narrative about violence and urban space. Violence influences the production of space in that it generates processes of revision in order to establish a new reality<sup>1</sup>. This is contrary to the Marxist thought that violence is a rite of passage to form new regimes, this theory is based on the relationship between groups and individuals. Meaning is given to the actions based on their performative and creative qualities; Conflict is a creative force. Acts of violence cause disruptions within the everyday and these disruptions remain within the collective memory of the city. The violent act is reordered and relocated from a concrete space to an imagined interpretation of a shared narrative. The “revisioning moment” as Hatuka describes, is also a performative act in that it needs

an audience to gain social, symbolic, and mythic meaning. This revisioning moment, like the violent act, must be ‘created; it is a war on the memory of truth, order, worldviews and power’<sup>2</sup>. It is a re-presentation of history or memory in a re-invented form. The conflict and the revisioning moment are intertwined, mutually supportive elements rather than static moments within time.

The idea of temporality becomes a factor when considering this phenomena. It raises questions as to how these actions affect space beyond their existence. The actors involved with the violence that occurred and the physical space in which it occurred influence the form that the revisioning moment takes. The power of an act of violence within a physical space is that it disrupts the daily routine or planned developments and imbues a place with scared and mythical characteristics. But as in the case of Jagtvej 69, the place becomes reduced to a single moment in history thus its meaning and use remain contested. The revisioning moment is also very much influenced by the interpretation of the relationship between “us “and “them”. In the case of Jagtvej 69 if the municipality tried to initiate something it would, regardless of what the true intentions were, be perceived as an attempt to regain, power and control over the situation<sup>3</sup>. Therefore the actors and players involved in this process should be from varying groups, not just the one that were involved in the original conflict.

The idea of a dynamic model, like the revisioning moment, within the discourse of architecture breaks from the binary modernist

model in which the Utopia and the everyday life strive to co-exist. Such a model implies iteration and experiment and the inevitable gap between intention and realization where failure resides. But through failure one has the potential to stumble on the unexpected<sup>4</sup>. Contested sites become so wrought with myth and history that the social pressures of approaching such a design problem is daunting. However the embrace of failure can become and at of bravery, to go beyond normal practices to open new possibilities. These gaps between intention, expectation and realization become places to mine not for answers but to create relationships that raise more questions. Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard used irony and paradox as a method of contradicting accepted theories such that the meaning was expressed in how something was being said rather than what was being said<sup>5</sup>. Under this logic, the text of the world becomes open to this idea of re-presenting such that the meaning is created through the context rather than the words themselves.

This idea of appropriation became an integral part of the Situationist ideology as well as movements within art. Guy Dubord and Danish artist Asger Jorn worked closely in developing the idea of *Détournement* or distortion in the creation of situations. In an article written by Dubord on directions to create such *détournement* he describes two types of *détournement*: minor *détournement* which have no significance in themselves but gain meaning through their context, and deceptive *détournement* which is something of meaning that, through placement within a new context draws meaning from the difference between

object and context. Again, a dynamic system is proposed in which meaning can continually be imbued and removed. In the application of this theory in urban situations Dubord writes; “Life can never be too disorienting; at this level *détournement* would really make it beautiful”<sup>6</sup>

#### Institute for Comparative Vandalism

Asger Jorn became involved with the situationist movement in 1957 when he co-founded the *Situationniste Internationale* with Guy Dubord. The Aspect of “play’ and appropriation was already present in Jorn’s work and involvement with the Cobra group. Dubord and Jorn collaborated on a book together called, *Le Fin de Copenhague*, a collaged assemblage of paint and printed images depicting social propaganda and capitalism in Copenhagen. (figure 15)<sup>7</sup>

Jorn left the SI in 1961 because of differences with Dubord to form the Scandinavian Institute for Comparative Vandalism. The group was still based on Situationism but with a stronger focus towards what Jorn called ‘and artistic attitude toward life” rather than the political ideology the SI was beginning to embody at that time. Vandalism as Jorn was interpreting it, was a creative act of taking an object with its own signs and meanings and destroying or altering that to create a new interpretation. Jorn embarked on several projects involving documenting art but each was not documented in a manner in which would seem appropriate to the discipline. He wrote 5 books (the natural order, Value and Economy, Luck and chance, and thing and polis) on varying topics in conjunction



Figure 15: Images from Le Fin de Copenhague source: interfolk.dk

**“ Myth, on the contrary, is a language which does not want to die:  
it wrests from the meanings which give it its sustenance;  
an insidious, degraded survival;  
it provokes in them an artificial reprieve in which it settles comfortably.**

**it turns them into speaking corpses”**

- Roland Barthes  
mythologies

with the art documentation. The first *the natural order*, combined Marxism and Niels Bohr's theory of complementarity to create a trielectic system in which all things exist in threes; the third element being the difference between the two. <sup>8</sup>Each theory had an intriguing title such as Law of Contradistinction and in many cases are layered texts in which arguments circle upon themselves. However, the ideas brought forth from the volumes support the ideas of difference as generators of vandalism. He describes in the natural order that 3 pictures exists in the world; the variable entity, the process of creation and the process of liberation. In so much that there is a starting point that exists to react upon, the process involved in doing so becomes its own entity and the process breaking that creates a third entity.

An open, dynamic model for contested sites offers a process to understand the personal and collective dimension of violence and the way it influences the collective conscious of the city. By viewing the traumatic events as moments within an ongoing narrative instead of a sacred space that must be preserved, opportunity for experiment, detournment and appropriation arise.

Through these processes sites of absence can become sites of regeneration, adding to the collective text of the city.

(Endnotes)

1Hatuka, Tali. 2010. Violent acts and urban space in contemporary Tel Aviv revisioning moments. Austin: University of Texas Press. Pg 19

2 ibid. pg 23

3Or in the case of the Shepard Fairey Mural, and outsider was interpreted to represented a subcultures ideals.

4Feuvre, Lisa Le. Failure. The MIT Press, 2010. Print.pg12

5 ibid pg 15.

6 Debord and Wolman. Directions for the use of Détournement. Appropriation. The MIT Press, 2009. Print. Pg 38.

7 Henriksen, Niels. Asger Jorn and The photographic essay on Scandinavian Vandalism. Article 5, Inferno Volume III, 2003.pg3.

8 Jorn, Asger. 2002. The natural order and other texts. Aldershot: Ashgate. Pg32.

**“ The city exists in memory,  
in the desire to remember,  
in the desire to forget, in the  
simultaneous construction of  
memory and forgetting”**

-Raoul Bunschoten  
Urban Flotsam

# City// Neighborhood//Site

By//Nabolag//Site

The site for this thesis is best known by its address, Jagtvej 69 in the Nørrebro neighborhood of Copenhagen, Denmark. The site is the former location of the Ungdomshuset, or Youth House, a self-governed culture house. For over 20 years the house was a symbol of youth culture through music and politics in Copenhagen and abroad. On March 1, 2007 the building was demolished after a long arduous battle with the municipality. The conflict surrounding the demolition of the Ungdomshuset rallied many groups to come to its aid, and since its demolition the site has remained empty although many still lay claim to it. This chapter will recount the history of the site shifting scales from the city to the site. The site Jagtvej 69 is particularly layered with social histories therefore a description of the social narrative in relation to its connection to larger social movements cannot be excluded nor separated from the physical context.



Figure 16: Photo of site

# City//By

Constructed territories

The city of Copenhagen is the largest city in Scandinavia, home to 1.8 million inhabitants. Founded in 1167 the long history of the city, once the capital of the Danish Empire which spread through most of present day Scandinavia, has created an urban fabric spanning from castles to organic medieval streets, to moats and canals, ramparts to later expand to grids of worker districts. The entire history, although very rich is not the subject of this thesis but a basic framework of the city with places to orient ones self is necessary to understand the networks that have layered upon the city, socially and historically.

The oldest part of the city, called indre by (inner city) once a small island (called slotshomen housing the kings castle and fortress) is home to major monuments and public spaces that are implicated in the social narrative to follow. These places include the parliament buildings on Slotsholmen and Rådhuspladsen (city hall). The major paths through indre by are H.C Andersen's Boulevard, which is multi-modal, and Kobmargade, which is a pedestrian/bike street. The neighborhood districts that surround

indre by are, with the exception of Christianshavn and Amager, named by their cardinal direction followed by the word 'bridge' ( bro in Danish) as these districts were and in many cases still involve crossing water to reach them: Nørrebro (North Bridge), Vesterbro (West Bridge), and Østerbro (East Bridge). These three neighborhoods grew outside of the ramparts of the city quite quickly over the ten-year period of 1830 to 1840 after the city emerged from bankruptcy and needed more workers housing. (figure 17). The major thoroughfare of each neighborhood connects it back to the city center (Nørrebrogade, Vesterbrogade, Østerbrogade).

The neighborhood of Christianshavn is an artificial island created by Christian IV as a merchant town with a network of canals for commerce. The fortifications of Copenhagen were expanded to create the island of Holmen that housed military and shipbuilding functions originally but in present day are home to academic and cultural institutions. The free town of Christiania is also located in this neighborhood. Christiania is



Figure 17: Districts of Copenhagen

and area of former military buildings, barrack and ramparts which was squatted in the 1971 by a group who wished to live in an alternate society, with the principles or freedom to self-govern and organize. The community is still in existence today despite ongoing negotiations with the state and municipality. Christiania and Ungdomshuset, although founded on different principles, are considered allies in the fight to keep self-organized, decentralized spaces in the city of Copenhagen.

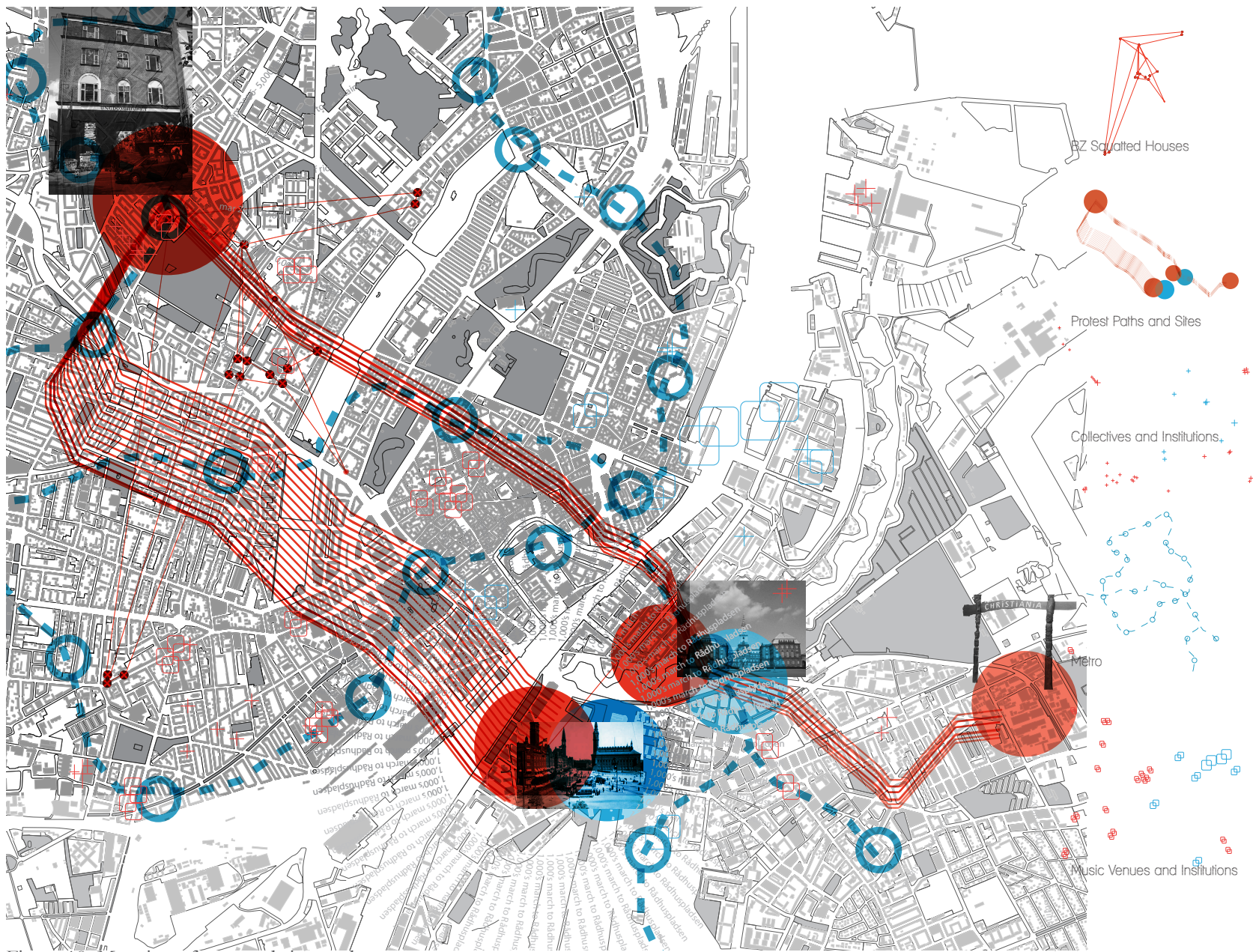


Figure 18: Mapping of squatted sites and protest routes

# Neighborhood//Nabolag

## Layered Networks

The district of Nørrebro was created after the ramparts at the then northern edge of the city (the present day lakes) were removed. In the days when the city was gated if a Copenhagener returned to the city too late they would be locked out until morning. The earliest buildings in Nørrebro provide lodging and activities for those who were locked out. This section of the city began to be developed in the 1830s. The creation of the lakes as a reservoir with a carriage track became a draw for the wealthy but the urban fabric of the neighborhood is mostly very dense worker housing. (Figure 19,20)



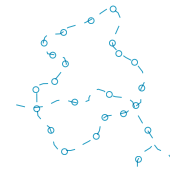
Figure 19: Copenhagen circa 1850 Source:wikimedia commons



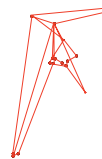
Figure 20: Mapping of Nørrebro neighborhood



Green space/ Open Space



Transportation/Metro

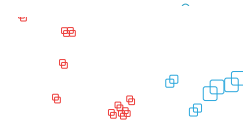


BZ Squatted houses



Layered Public Space

Collectives



Music Venues and Institutions

## Housing: Hus

The typical style of worker housing in Copenhagen consists of masonry buildings 4 to 5 stories tall (approx 20 meters) with internal courtyards to be shared by all buildings comprising the block. Many of these buildings did not have bathrooms or showers until relatively recently, those facilities were shared either in the basement of a building or a freestanding building in the courtyard. The courtyard is a very important component of the Danish housing typology. It is a semi public space in the sense that multiple buildings therefore hundreds of people per courtyard can share a single courtyard. Courtyards are often highly programmed spaces for playgrounds, gardens, picnic areas, bicycle and buggy parking<sup>1</sup> paved and green space (figure 21). Many of the courtyards in Nørrebro are smaller than other parts of the city due to the density of the area. As a result the courtyards become filled with the functions of bike storage and trash collection rather than other recreational and community activities. (figure 22)

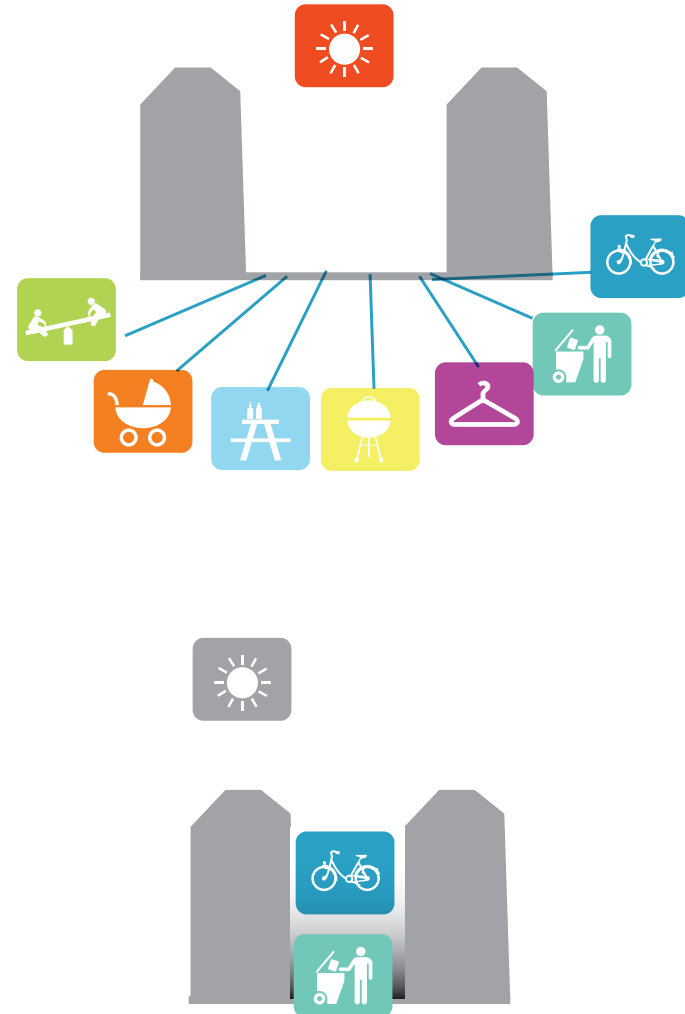


Figure 21: Program within Danish Courtyard

Analysis of Courtyards withing Copenhagen neighborhoods



Figure 22: Analysis of buiding to courtyard ratio of Copenhagen neighborhoods

## Public Space: By Rum

The open space in Nørrebro, although much less than other parts of the city, exists in a variety of forms. Squares and plazas are small and limited, either tucked within neighborhood blocks, commonly adjacent to churches, or former building sites have been turned into pocket parks or playgrounds. These spaces are often become layered, multifunctional places due to the lack space. (figure 23). Public space becomes layered with transportation modes in the Nørrebroparken a linear park connecting bike paths with open space, playgrounds, event spaces and active spaces. The park has been extended to reinvent the public square in a project called Superkilen by BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group) that attempts to weave different cultures in the neighborhood through the inclusion of features from various cultures: Moroccan fountains, Indonesian swings, and a Japanese octopus.

The largest green space in the Nørrebro neighborhood is the Assistens Kirkegård, (Assistens Cemetery). Established in 1760

when the cemeteries became too crowded within the walled city, the 25-hectare cemetery was originally for the poor but later became the resting place for nobles and other famous Danes such as philosopher Søren Kirkegaard, Neils Bohr and Hans Christian Andersen. The cemetery has always been a popular place to for picnics and gatherings, so much so that legislation was passed to forbid doing anything joyful or happy in the cemetery.<sup>2</sup> At the time this included, drinking, dancing, eating and singing. Today the cemetery is an integral part of the neighborhood, a popular bike and walking route for local as well as a tourist destination.



Figure 23: Typologies of public space

In the tradition of layering functions within public space, Assistens Cemetery is no exception. The Northeast corner of the cemetery, at the corner of Nørrebrogade and Jagtvej is currently being excavated for a new metro station. The metro station will be part of the city's ring line, which will connect outer parts of Copenhagen to the inner city. The graves in this location have been relocated to other parts of the cemetery and the buildings on the site have been relocated for construction but will be returned once excavation is complete in 2018.

(Figure 24,25)

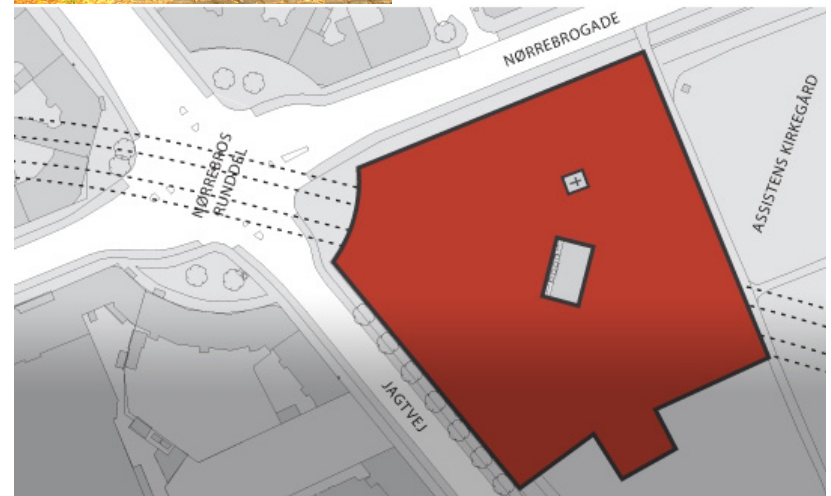


Figure 24: Site for future metro station (source: [www.m.dk/cityringen](http://www.m.dk/cityringen))



Figure 24: Rendering of completed metro station (Source: [www.m.dk/cityringen](http://www.m.dk/cityringen))

# Site//Site

## History and flows

The site is an empty lot located on Jagtvej, number 69, 30 meters from the Nørrebro Rundell (round-about) at the intersection of Jagtvej and Nørrebrogade. The Assitens Cemetery is across directly across Jagtvej, which is currently under construction for a new metro station. The site is 20 meters wide and 70 meters deep. There exists a 3-meter right of way that connects Jagtvej to the residential courtyards behind. Jagtvej 71 is a privately owned, 6 storey residential building and Jagtvej 67 is a commercial building, housing an ALDI discount grocery store on the ground floor and 4 stories of residential above. Both of the adjacent buildings are masonry with a clay tile roof, typical in style and character of buildings built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in this neighborhood (figure 28). The Northern section of the site is adjacent to the courtyards of residential buildings on the neighboring streets of Julius Bloms Gade and Søllerødgade. A Kvickly supermarket is located at the Northern edge of the site. The primary entrance to the building is on Nørrebrogade with a single storey block extending west to a 2.5 storey building that

contains a secondary entrance and service and loading docks. A parking lock adjoins this building containing approximately 65 parking spots. Observations of the area at various times of day showed that this lot was on average only 20% full.

The residential blocks adjoining the parking lot currently have fences that divide the courtyards from the lot. Based on historic maps of the area it seems that the block was originally more solid and spaces and streets were carved out later. It is possible that the adjoining blocks were once complete and sections were removed for the parking lot. Figure 29 shows the different zones and flows within the larger site in relation to Jagtvej 69.



Figure 25: Existing site





Figure 26: Jagtvej street elevation





Figure 27: View from parking lot

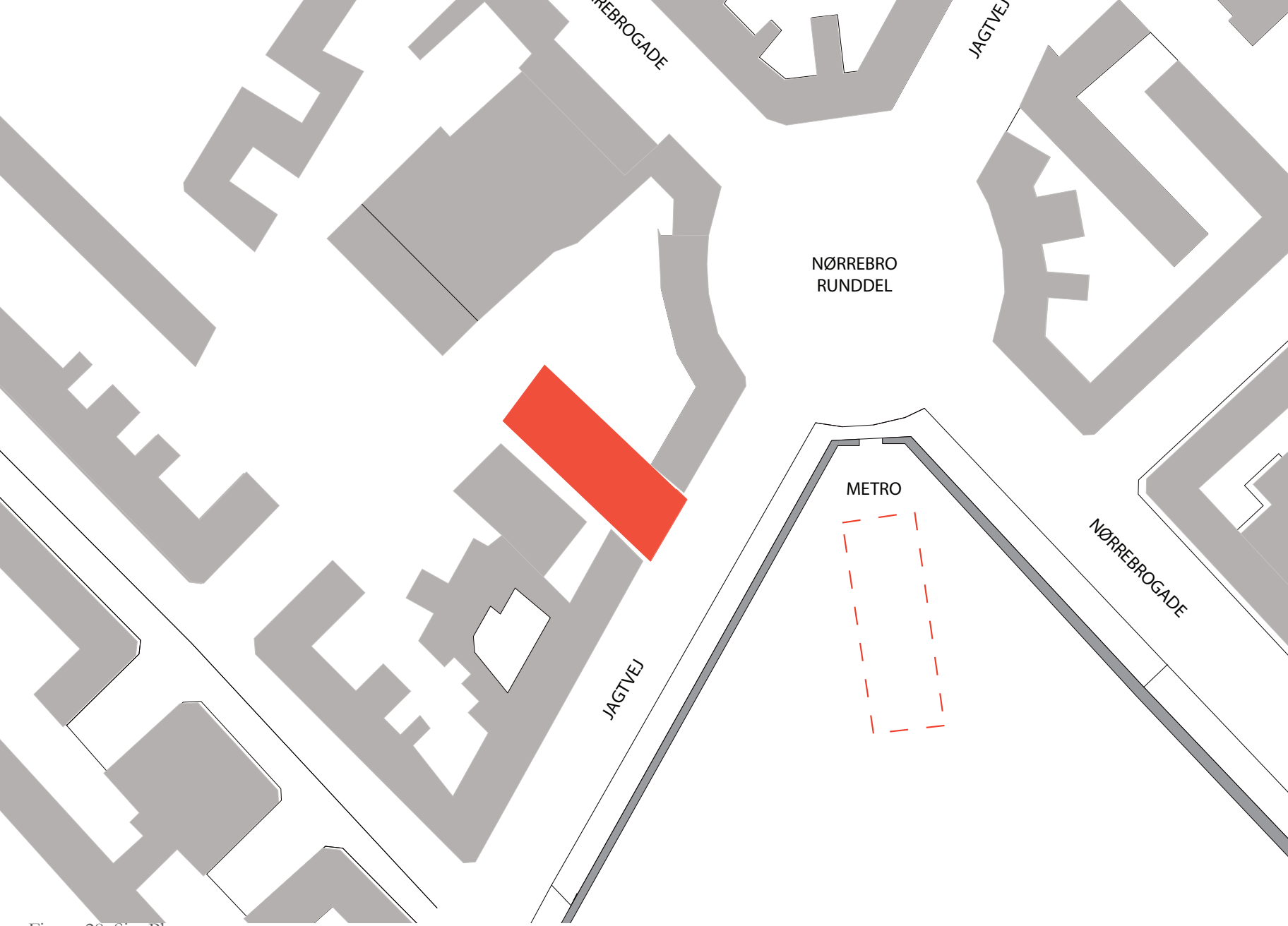


Figure 28: Site Plan

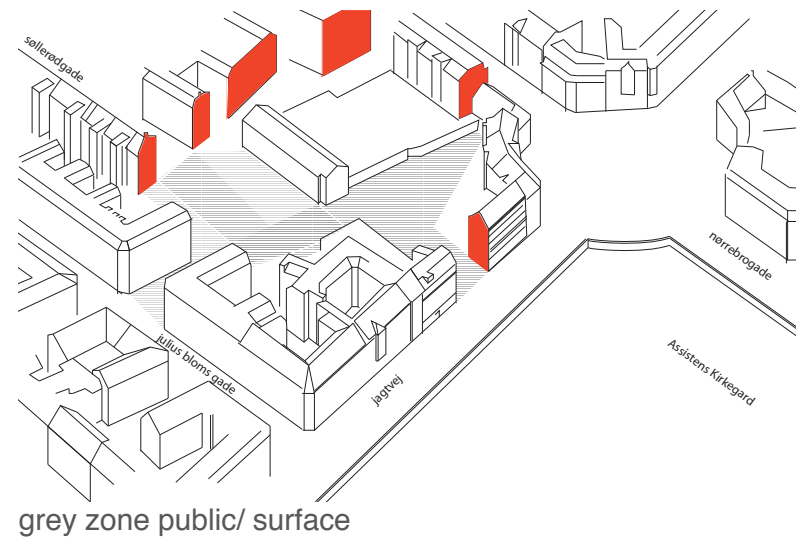
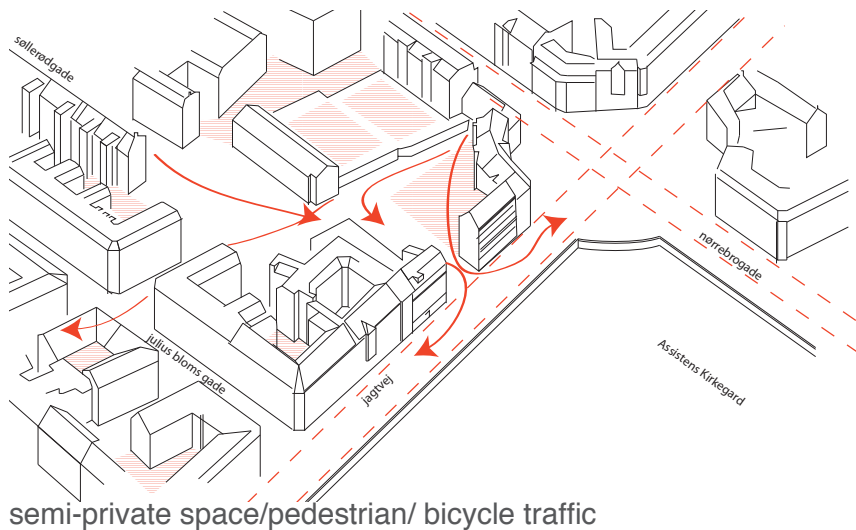
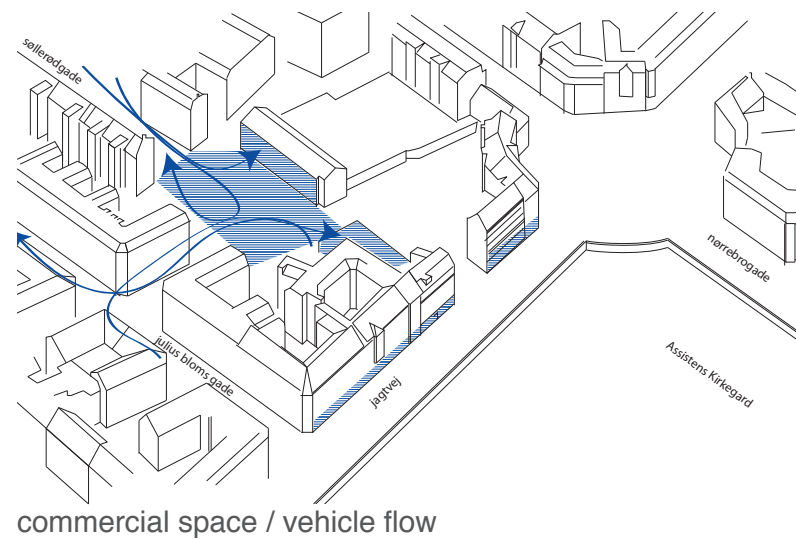
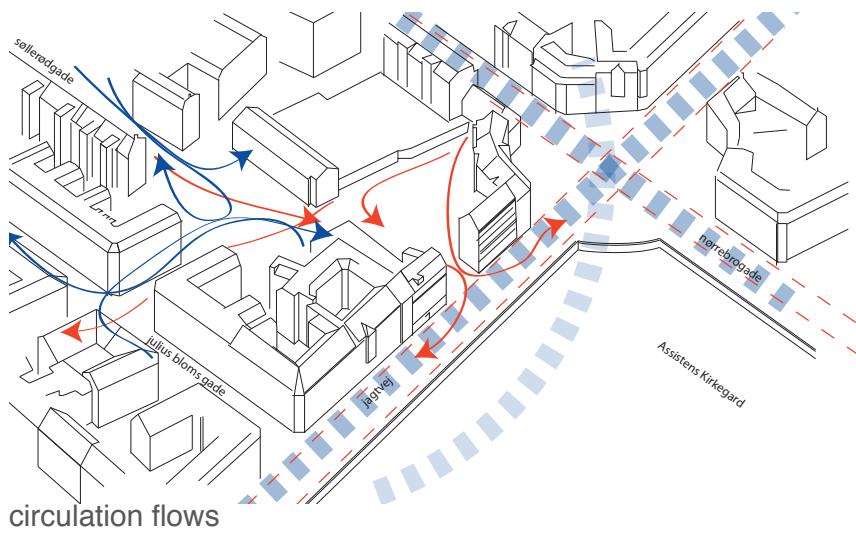


Figure 29: Flows through site

# Historie//Historie

Folketshus til Ungdomshuset

Jagtvej 69 has a complex history surrounding the building that once existed there and the ground that has remained untouched since 2007. The building that once stood in this spot was built in 1897 as a Folketshus (peoples house) a place where the working class would meet for community gatherings such as dances, bingo, boxing matches and dinners but also for political talks about labor rights and unions. Political leaders such as Vladimir Lenin have visited the house. It is also the birthplace of the women's movement in Copenhagen; the women's international day of action was organized from the building<sup>3</sup>

In 1958 the Folketshus moved to a new building on Enghavevej in the Vesterbro neighborhood. The building had fallen under disrepair and remained empty until 1968 when the organization Coop wanted to buy the building to demolish it and build a grocery store. Coop is a national initiative to have local grocery stores that involved members of the neighborhood. The idea of the cooperative existed in housing as Scandinavian countries

pioneered this concept that was later brought to the US.<sup>4</sup>

The municipality ultimately did not allow Coop to purchase the property because of their intent to demolish it. The building was deemed to have historic character and therefore must be preserved.

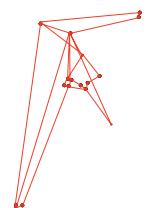
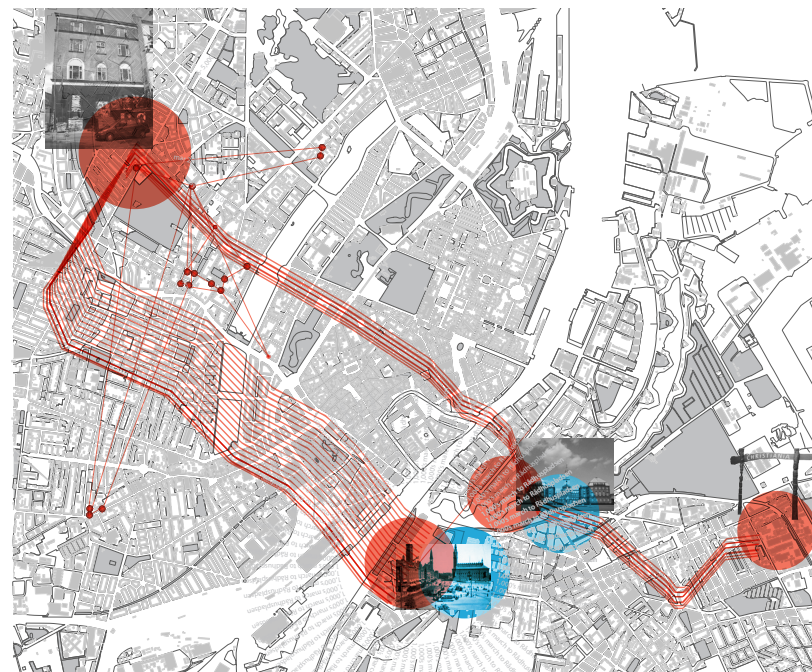
Folketshus til Ungdomshuset

The building remained empty and neglected for next ten years. A group of young people had petitioned the municipality for a space to hold a user-driven culture house on the platform of left wing politics and advocating for subcultures. The group had become aligned with a larger movement know as the BZ movement in Copenhagen<sup>5</sup>. The empty building was squatted by the group but in 1982, but through negotiations with Lord mayor Egon Weidekamp, the group was given the keys to the building.

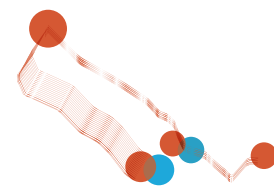
The Ungdomshus (youth house) served as a center for music and culture for the BZ movement. The BZ movement consisted

of groups of people that sought alternative means of governing and organization. They rebelled against oppression by the state and capitalist regimes. They fought against these forces through radical and militant means and occupied vacant buildings in the city to have places to organize cultural and political activities. A broader history of the BZ movement in Copenhagen is described in the following section of this document.

The house at Jagtvej 69 existed as the Ungdomshuset for over 20 years, which is a significant period, as most houses existed for 5 years or less, some only occupied for a few months before being cleared. Figure 31 shows a time line of the BZ movement in Copenhagen and the series of events leading up to the demolition of the Youth House. Figure 30 maps the locations of the squatted houses within the city as well as other public spaces implicated in protests, rallies and demonstrations.



BZ Squatted Houses

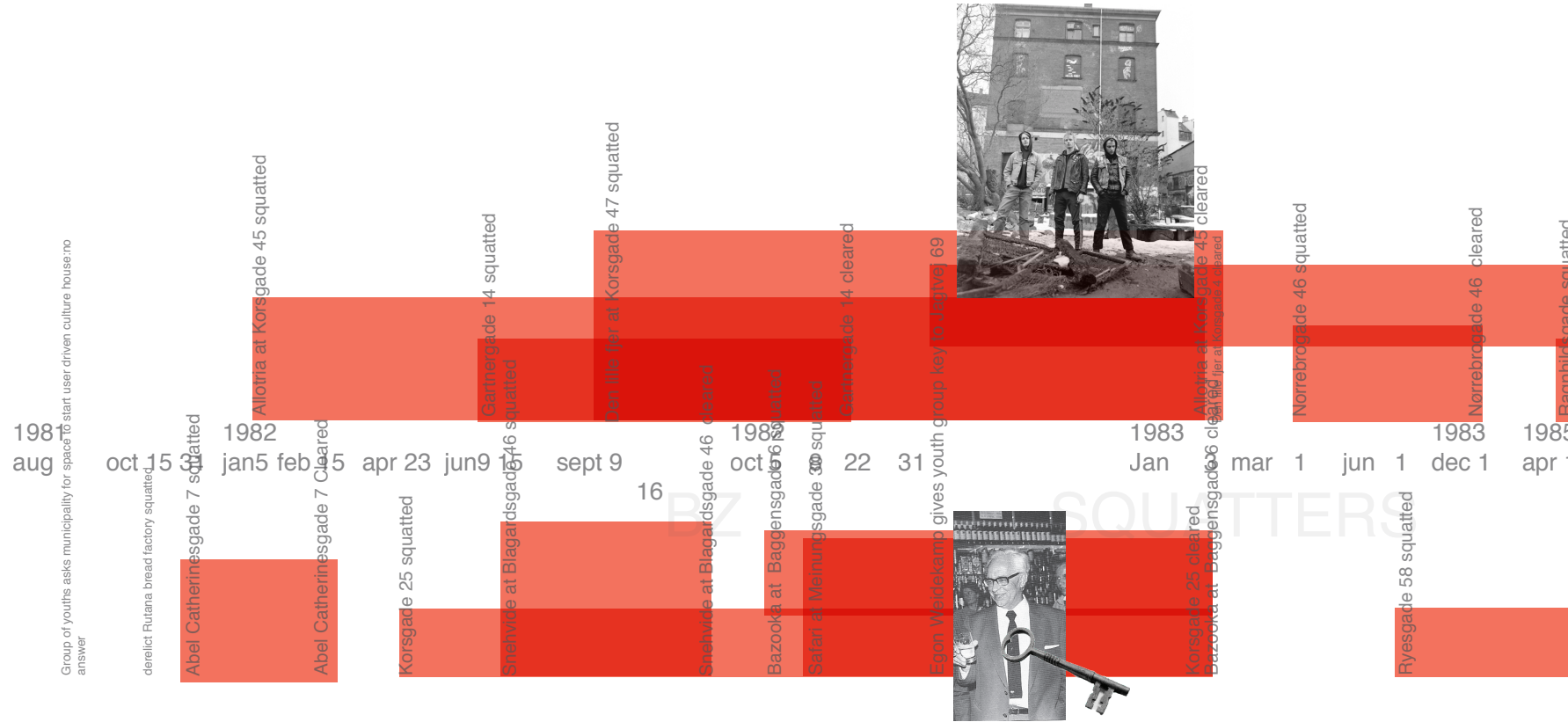


Protest Paths and Sites

Figure 30: Map of squatter networks and protest paths

# Timeline of BZ Movement and Ungdomshuset

Tidslinje



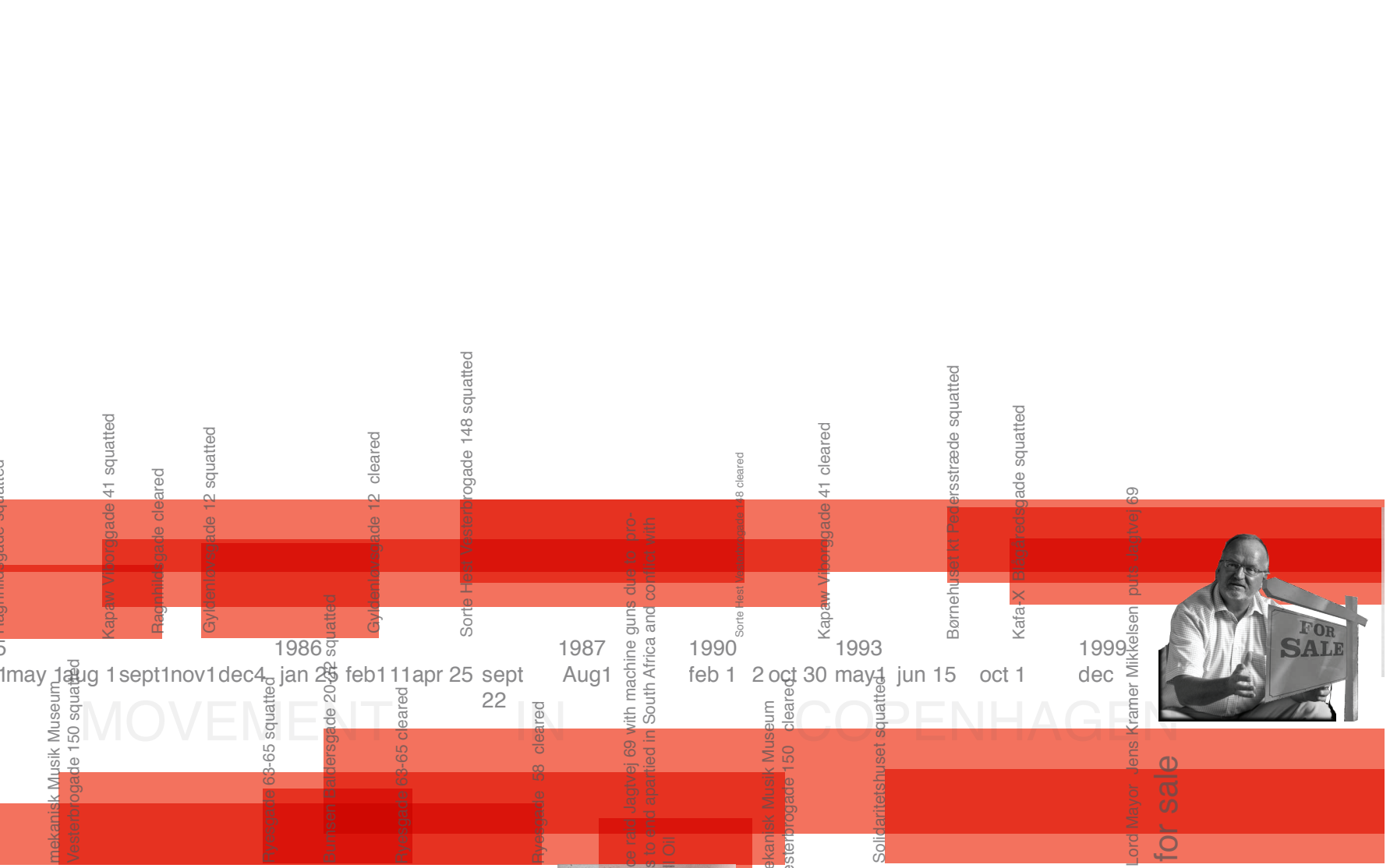


Figure 31: Timeline





Knud Foldschack, lawyer and advocat for the youth house creates a foundation and attempts to buy the Ungdomshuset the city refuses to sell



2000



The Municipality instead sells the building to Human A/S breaking the 1982 agreement.

2001

Human A/S sells Ungdomshuset to Faderhuset a right wing Christian sect. youth refuse to



protests

2002

legal battles

2004

youth refuse to leave Ungdomshu-

2003

2005

2006  
aug



High Court rules in favor of faderhuset

sep  
23

march fro Jagtvej to Christiani . . . peaceful protest turns violent

263 arrested

2006  
oct



Knud Foldschack offers to buy The ungdomshus again

Faderhuset refuses

2006  
nov

Municipality postpones dec 14 clearance

of the Ungdomshuset due to fear of riots in the city of copenha-

dec 14

5,000 demonstrators assemble at Jagtvej

69

including shop owners, actors, writers musicians for final battle for the Youth House

2007  
jan

advocates for youth house meet with

Ritt Bjerregaard no resolution

2007  
feb



2007  
mar 1

Ungdomshuset Cleared

mar 2

mar 3

mar 4

mar 5

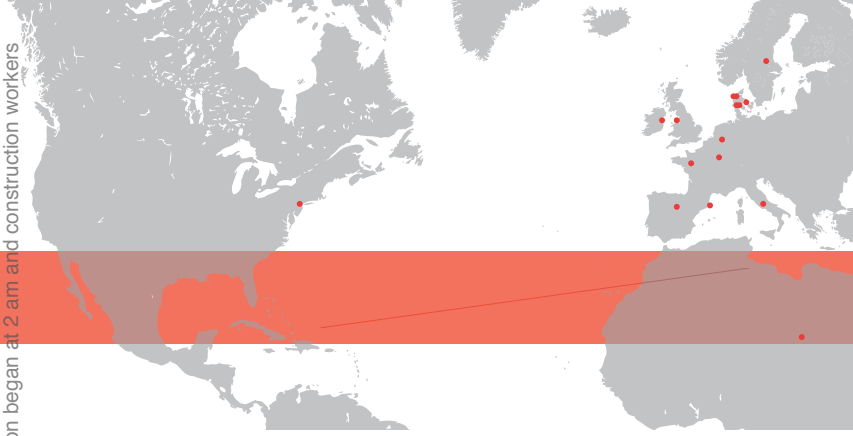




mar 5

# Ungdomshuset Demolished

demolition began at 2 am and construction workers



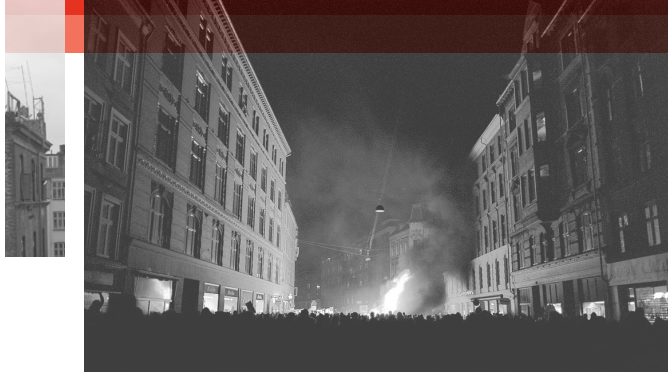
mar 9

police leave Nørrebro neighborhood  
850 arrested 29 wounded  
200 detained

mar 31

10,000 demonstrators  
Demonstrations also held in 13 danish towns, 46 cities

march from Jagtvej 69 to Christiansia.



Sept 6

“Summer of 69”

Rådhuspladsen

3,000 people protest at

2007

attempted squat at Grøndalsstrøge 13

8,000 people, 436 arrested

mar 1 Oct 7



ground 69



manu chao performs

begins negotiations for new Youth house with Ritt Bjerregaard

3,000 demonstrators at Rådhuspladsen

Dec 2008  
Jan

Plan BLOKR announced - politicians incarcerated until they provide a new location for the youth house

one year since demolition of youth house  
3000 demonstrators

Mar 5

city approves new youth house at Dorteavej 61

Jun 11

24 hour demonstration for 69th Thursday Demonstration

Jun 2

1000<sup>0</sup> march

to Rådhuspladsen for 70th and final Thursday demonstration

Youth move into new house at Dorteavej 61

2008 July  
2011 Aug

Shepard Fairey, american street artist, is invited by V1 gallery to paint a mural on the wal at the Jagtvej site. Painting takes 2-3 days and Shepard's work is met with support from members of the old house.

less than 24 hours after completion the mural is vandalized

gallery begins dialogue with members of the new house. The word

“peace” is removed from the mural and a more violent scene re-places it.

less than 24 hours after completion the mural is vandalized

The legal battle to save the house began in 1999 when Lord Mayor Jens Kramer Mikkelsen put Jagtvej 69 up for sale, breaking the 1982 agreement with the Youth house. The decision was part of the social democratic initiative to put an end to the BZ movement. There had been increased police effort to raid and clear squatted houses between 1990-1996. In 1996 there was a fire in the house at Jagtvej 69 and the municipality claimed that the damage was too severe and costly to repair and the house had to be closed. Members of the house made the repairs themselves and received approval from the fire department that the repairs were adequate. The municipality informs the house members that they have violated the rent contract and owe back rent for the property and lists the building for sale to the highest bidder. As a warning to potential buyers the members of the house hang a banner across the façade of the house reading *“For sale along with 500 autonome, stone throwing, violent psychopaths from hell.”* (Figure X) The members of the house attempt to purchase the property with

the aid of lawyer and advocate Knud Foldschack. A foundation was created in the hopes of purchasing the property and giving it to the youth house. The city refused to sell to the foundation or Knud Foldschack outright. The municipality instead sells the property to Human A/S, a company that is soon after bought out by Faderhuset, a right wing conservative Christian sect. (a group that had made a bid for the building months before, but was declined by the municipality)<sup>6</sup>.

Upon the sale of the building to Faderhuset the members vow never to leave. Thus begins a 5-year court battle resulting in a high court ruling in favor of Faderhuset in August 2006. In protest of the ruling a march from Jagtvej 69 to Christiania ends in violence and 263 arrests. As a last resort, Knud Foldschack again offers to purchase the building. Faderhuset declines the offer and a clearance date of December 14<sup>th</sup> is announced. As the clearance date approaches protests and marches in front of parliament and the town hall square (Rådhuspladsen) become



Figure 32: Images of Ungdomshuset (source: wikipedia)

more frequent resulting in postponement of the December 14<sup>th</sup> clearance date. Members of the house see this as their 'final battle' and send a call to arms in the form of an 'open letter to the trouble makers of the world' calling attention to the injustice. As a result over 5,000 demonstrators show up at Jagtvej 69 to protect the house<sup>7</sup>. Negotiations begin with now mayor Ritt Bjerregaard but no agreement is made and on March 1, 2007 police in riot gear on the ground and in helicopters clear the house (Figure X). Riots in the streets of Nørrebro continue for the next four days. On the morning of March 5<sup>th</sup> a demolition crew arrives at the site at 2 am. Company logos on the equipment are covered and workers wear masks so they cannot be identified. This event sparks 4 days of rioting resulting in 850 arrests, 200 people detained and 29 wounded. On March 31 a worldwide demonstration is held in 13 Danish towns, 46 cities in 22 countries. 10,000 demonstrators march from Jagtvej to Christania.

### Fight for a new Ungdomshuset

The demonstration on March 31 began the Thursday Demonstrations (Torsdag Demonstrationer) a weekly march from Jagtvej to Rådhuspladsen to petition for a new Ungdomshuset. Seventy Torsdag demonstrationer along with countless other rallies and protests occur before the members of Ungeren (youth house) and the municipality agree on a location for the new house. On July 1, 2008 the group moves into a new house on Dortheavej 71 in Nørrebro NordVest. (figureX)

### Dormant but Not Forgotten

In the days after demolition, the site at Jagtvej 69 was filled with candles, flowers and messages mourning the loss. The debris of the building was crushed, recycled and sold and the site has since remained empty. Rumors circulated about what might be built on the site ranging from a Christian church to a mosque. Faderhuset eventually sold the property to another developer. In August 2011, American street artist,

Shepard Fairey was invited to paint several murals in Copenhagen as part of a collective work on global issues. One of the murals was painted on the wall at Jagtvej 69. The painting sparked a strong reaction around the site that had been untouched since the demolition. As part of the research of the site and this incident<sup>8</sup>, several interviews were conducted to understand how this site is perceived five years later.



Figure 33: Wall at Jagtvej 69 after the mural was vandalized

# Dialogue

the open end to jagtvej 69

The following dialogue is constructed from interviews with 3 Danes: a social scientist and former member of the BZ squatter movement, an architect and writer, and a gallery owner. The interviews were conducted over a 6-month period. The segments have been compiled and juxtaposed into a simulated dialogue to show the different perspectives on the present climate of the site and the potential of a dialogue as a generator for negotiation. Full transcripts of these conversations can be found in the appendix of this document.

Rene Karpantschhof is a social scientist at the University of Copenhagen and former member of the BZ squatter movement. He has written extensively on the topic of squatter movements in Copenhagen and abroad. He co-authored the book, Kampen om Ungdomshuset, a detailed account of the history and social implications of the Ungdomshuset and the conflict surrounding its demolition.

Neils Grønbæk is an Architect, Assistant Professor, Ph.D at Kunstakademiets Arkitektskole (Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts - School of Architecture). He has written extensively on the history and conflict surrounding the neighboring street of Jægersborggade, and is a resident of the Nørrebro neighborhood.

Jesper Elg is the co-founder of the V1 Gallery that invited Shepard Fairey to paint a series of mural in Copenhagen. The gallery sees art as a profound and competent media for social and political engagement; The gallery has a desire to challenge both the viewers, the norms and itself and aspires to create a space with no limitations other than quality and nerve. –V1 Gallery.com

RK: Ungdomshuset was so important for some people's lives and for so many people in Copenhagen. It was not only that you could go to a cheap concert; it was a must, a need in their

life. It meant so much for people that they did not just get angry [by the house being demolished] but there was a core of people were prepared to die for it. If you would attack it, it will rise and people will mobilize.

In 2001, when they wanted to clear the house [the municipality of KBH] thought the movement was weakened or over, but it turned out even bigger than I had imagined. I was one of the people warning the authorities in the hope, that they would preserve it. But they wouldn't listen and in Danish we have a saying; Hvis du ikke vil lytte må man mærke eller føle, If you wont listen you must feel or sense', so they did.

LK: Four years after the demolition of Ungdomshuset the space at Jagtvej 69 still remains empty. Do you think that the people that have this attachment to this place want it to remain empty? And by remaining empty it still lives? Or do you think that there's a possibility for the site to generate something again?

RK: I never imagined that an empty space could mean so much. The ground and the territory still connects many you can't gather them for other reasons right now but if somebody wants to build something at Ungdomshuset at least it would provoke some reactions and we can see what happens.

There are many that still feel a kind of ownership to the ground and its really a crazy thing because its not political anymore its something with identity and feelings. It would even make me sad, if there was a something built there that was directly against the values and the ideas that the Ungdomshuset was carrying with it.

There have been attempts to use the ground for other reasons; for a garden or something by activists, but the police intervene very quickly because they don't want anything to establish there;

it could be dangerous. For the moment its more of this revenge culture, which of course is very conservative and you don't move on, but its also a very a strong feeling, an acknowledgement to an identity and a to a past, a worship of something. You'll find people with tattoos-69 nothing forgotten nothing forgiven- it is a really, really hardcore feeling about that place.

LK: The site at Jagtvej 69 carries very strong sentiments, not just with the members of the youth house but other groups as well. How do you begin to heal a site like this?

NG: Time will heal the wounds in the next 10-15 years probably.... but then it will be forgotten.

LK: I have heard a similar reply from many people, but my question is how can you memorialize and move forward instead of-now we remember but eventually we will forget. How you can move on and still recognize the memory and conflict?

NG: So what you are talking about how it could still be a positive dynamism how it could be productive in some sense rather than something that would routinely be celebrated on certain occasions once a year or whatever, but that the tension related to that space rather than simply either be destructive or simply be slowly slowly vanishing, can be used to create culture.

I think what I'm fascinated by is how all those feelings that this whole sort of mental set of relations to this particular place. You can find those kinds of places here and there in the city but this particular one; its just.... there is so much feeling and tension related to this air...in a sense.

LK: Its physically empty but its so full, its very much not empty, it is mentally very present.

NG: How can you use that mental energy as a possible driver of something? How could it actually be put to use?

NG: The actual physical presence of the city space as a sort of a stage or rather a well defined space there's this mental presence that is there still in the Ungdomshus case. I don't think its easy but it would be interesting to find a way to use that tension rather than

LK: Just wait for it to disappear

In August 2011, American street artist Shepard Fairey painted several murals in Copenhagen as part of a collective work on global issues. One of the murals was painted on the wall at Jagtvej 69.

The painting sparked a strong reaction around the site that had been untouched since the demolition of the Ungdomshus in 2007.

NG: My question to the gallery would be whether their ambition was to use the tension of the site, making it creative

or whether is was to lower tension? Would it be to get rid of tension? Or to neutralize tension? Or would it be to use the tension?

JE: We knew that it inviting him [Shepard Fairey] wouldn't go unnoticed but we didn't expect what to happen to happen. We tried to explain to him what the site was about but he had an impression from being here in 2004 so he had a good idea about it and I think he felt that it was a significant place to put a politically charged piece. That is what most people didn't actually get. It's a peace symbol, it's a dove but in a target. I think he meant it as a way of saying that peace is a fragile thing and you should be aware of what you do to obtain peace.

I think what the good thing about doing something there was to break the ice, to initiate a discussion to say you can't just leave a place like that empty.

If you have fought really hard for that place and you saw it

get destroyed then I understand that feelings are running deep there. What I personally don't understand is why you don't feel a need to do some kind of manifest there; something that has some kind of positive energy.

I have spoken to people after the mural was vandalized and everybody seems to be more afraid to do something there while I'm of the belief that well, now we have paved the way for something new to happen there

It is about public space and who owns public space, who has the right to public space, do we all have the right to it? And how does that pan out basically in a democracy? What happened with Shepard's mural was that a democratic thing?

Some of the former users told us "but why didn't you come and ask us if you could paint something on the wall?" and I replied, "Would you ask us? Before you painted on our wall?"

JE: In terms of the mural being vandalized, if you paint something there it only takes....it only takes one person actually to damage it before its seems like there's a whole movement behind it you know, which I think is really interesting and I think some the most interesting kind of discussion about it is definitely at this website called Modkraft. Many of the users from the youth house both old an new are using Modkraft as a debate forum and I thought some of the most interesting discussions about what was happening, was happening right there because there was so many conflicting interests and sentiment.

LK: It seems that the conflict in 2007 has splintered the group into different factions. How can these fractured groups negotiate this territory they all claim?

In this case, the dialogue. That you could actually start it out as an argument but end up doing something together which

definitely shows that as soon as they understood saw where Shepard was coming from you know they were also like “oh he’s not just a rich artist with a following” his whole thing is founded in what we are doing.

...To come to an understanding then you have come a long, long way right?

Rene Karpantschov: Shepard Fairey violated several laws in the subcultures and he was punished with violence for it. This was not good but expected to some extent.

His mistake was first of all that he is a successful, public, well known person from subcultures that now claims to represent subcultures. Already that makes the real subculture people very skeptical –no one can speak for us- they would say.

Then he made his first painting claiming that the peace agenda was to some how be a voice for the street and that communication and dialogue is important. But he never asked

the people that had emotions and ideas and relations to this place, he never asked them- what do you think we should do?

If we should make a painting there how should it be? Lets have a dialogue. No, he just came in from the side and made his idea claiming it was dialogue with words from the street which it was not and his message or his statement in the painting was peace and understanding which was not at all what this ground symbolized for the Ungdomshuset. The site is a symbol of failed dialogue, of violence, and of repression by the state: not at all peace and dialog. He made the wrong statement in his painting claiming he was a spokesman for the street without asking the street or talking to the street.

Of course that provokes reactions that were symbolic like destroying the painting or changing it. In the end he got his dialogue and made a painting in cooperation with some activists. The story could’ve ended there but then there was no consensus or big decisions made, there was no decision

structure in the milieu that could legitimize such a painting so another faction that didn't agree with the first painting made with the activists, another more radical faction, came and destroyed that too. The conflict was: these people do not want others to represent them.

Because the worst thing for these people is that it is forgotten; that this conflict happened and how dramatic it was and how much its' subject is a symbol of a lack of democracy in this society. It can't be forgotten.

And he [Shepard Fairey] never saw that coming I think, he had good intentions sure, peace and dialogue is all really good stuff but (laughs) but its also how this ground meant so much for these people; they became angry because of the painting. But it is also about identity, these groups are marginalized and sometimes its hard to keep that identity; the necessity to be radical or militant. It's a small marginalized identity and one of the biggest threats to that identity is when people that are seemingly connected in ideals, claim that militancy and

radicalism is not necessary. They are a big danger to that identity. People can get really angry with almost like-minded people because they are a danger to the strategy of the identity you have created for yourself.

LK: What can be the future of a site so loaded? Can the wound be healed without being forgotten? How does a conflict create a space for negotiation?

Neils Grønbæk: In a broader perspective of transformation processes one can rather than use a modernist artificial amnesia where we just clear the ground, we can understand a past not in, a traditional or a conservative way but rather considering the residue as a memory that can be re-actualized and create something completely new which was never there before. You can create something that is completely new from a memory embedded in a particular site.

It seems that the idea of facilitating, of bringing together, of

creating platforms seems one which its used much more. It seems that many of those transformation processes are described much better in those terms: in terms of facilitating transformation. Instead to think in terms of how the city in its self has a performativity, it creates conflicts within it, and these conflicts can actually be productive. They build up a tension, which might need a space for negotiation or a platform for how the conflict could become productive negotiations.

I think that is so super interesting, it seems to be an extreme change from a paradigm of mastering space, mastering development, mastering the future into saying that facilitation can actually be what DeLanda would call, the open-ended becoming of the world.

# BZ Squatter Movement and the city

latent forces within an enduring public

The BZ squatter movement was unique because of its ability to rally vast numbers of youth in an urban setting to join a movement that had transnational and international ties within Europe. Flemming Mikkelsen and Rene Karpantschov have done extensive research on this topic and their research argues that the success of the movement was not a result of postmodernism or social marginalization but instead related to concepts of place, interaction, organization and political opportunity. The social interactions between members, the collective act of squatting and in many cases defending the squats, as well as the layers of communication, signs and symbols within the culture, created a manner of contentious actions that created sites of creation and change.<sup>9</sup>

The movement in Copenhagen began with the occupation of several buildings within the center of the city. The most pronounced part of the movement occurred between the years of 1981 and 1994. Several houses, including Jagtvej 69, remained and established a new identity with weakened ties

to the movement. The dissolution of the movement resulted through the creation of other groups with varying interests which in turn weakened the movement and caused it to disperse into smaller decentralized groups.

## Community

Analysis of the Bz squatter movement shows a strong tie to the squatted houses as places of community. The network of houses around the city created a “cell structure” of collective action. The members of each house could identify problems with one another, share in the defense of the house and interact daily with one another and therefore became a tight knit community<sup>10</sup>.

Time was a factor in the development of the movement as these small-scale networks take time to grow. Often houses were cleared within a few months but the act of being cleared from a house only strengthened this solidarity between members. It also strengthened their resolve to occupy another house. The members were united by a shared injustice. Involvement

in the group offered friendship, security, confidence and status if incoming members were willing to participate in the transgressive actions of the group.

Structure within the house changed as the movement became more popular. The early squats such as Abel Catherinesgade were abandoned within months not because of police interference but because there was no rule structure and house quickly became overcrowded and was attracting too much attention. The no-rule approach was replaced by a weekly meeting in which all members were required to attend. All members shared tasks such as cooking, night watch and defense of the house.

#### National and international interests

Beginning in 1984 certain groups tried to negotiate with the city to gain legal rights to certain houses. These negotiations took the form of peaceful weekly meetings with city council members. However the discussions often lead to stalemates and the BZ members would react by forcibly squatting more buildings. In

the case of Ryesgade, several buildings were squatted for 2 weeks. The group received favorable media coverage which they were then able to leverage in further discussions with the city. In the late 80's the movements' activities within the city had weakened and members sought international support, reaching out to similar groups in Germany and the Netherlands. The subjects of protests turned to more global topics such as apartheid in South Africa, the politic of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher as well as other countries that were proponents of capitalism. The actions of the groups were less focused on squatting for political reasons and more directed towards larger demonstrations and acts of sabotage.<sup>11</sup>

The nature of police response to the actions of the BZ movement also shifted. Instead of large-scale raids to clear houses. Attacks were smaller and more pointed, often arresting people on exaggerated charges as a tactic to scare off people from joining the movement. In 1988 a new law required owners to make unoccupied buildings unfit for occupancy. They organized one

more large-scale raid to clear the most active squats in 1990. Despite efforts of the BZ movement to recapture the houses, without the central places within the network, the movement could not continue. The police demolished the cleared houses and maintained a policy of no negotiation and extreme methods of tear-gassing and riot equipped forces. Without places to assemble the movement collapsed. Members joined other groups and maintained a low profile as many groups that were for socialism and collective action did after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989.

Certain houses such as Jagtvej 69, distanced themselves from association with the BZ movement to avoid police conflict. Ungdomshuset had a strong focus towards youth culture and punk music, although they maintained international ties to other politically active autonomous groups within Europe. When the municipality targeted the house, it was assumed that the movement was over and the force that rose to defend former houses no longer existed. The municipality grossly

underestimated the presence of the movement and the conflict surrounding the demolition of Ungdomshuset became a lightning rod for many other causes such as immigration, gay rights, and social democratic agenda, among others (figure 34) Thousands of people rallied not because they supported the Ungdomshus in particular but they supported the right of people to organize themselves freely within a social democratic society. Many feel there should be “free spaces” within the city and the magnitude of the conflict surrounding Ungdomshuset has greatly influenced the dialogue between Christiania and the municipality. The BZ movement is over but what it has left behind is a latent force that exists, and when provoked has an overwhelming ability to rally disparate groups around the rights of one small group that resonates with a larger public.



**“ A concept is a brick.  
It can be used to build a  
courthouse of reason.  
Or it can be thrown through a  
window”**

Giles Deleuze

# Unearthed

The nature of the conflict and tension surrounding the site at Jagtvej 69 lead to methods of research tangent to a typical architectural site analysis. The history and myth around the site became a focus in the design problem. Physically it was invisible but it was the non-tangible presence that was keeping the site from becoming anything but a space of loss. The history exists as a written record; Newspaper articles, books and blog posts exists to recount the facts of the events that occurred. But as time passes it is the oral history that continues to live, perpetuated through myth and word of mouth. Any Copenhagener knows of this site and each has their version to tell. This type of history is one of face value- anything anyone says can be perceived to be true. The history is no longer a recount of facts but a story, a myth, that constantly mutates and evolves as it is passed from one audience to the next.

The myth of the site was the only active agent within the site. How could this history become fodder for something new? This idea was explored conceptually through two media: film and the book.

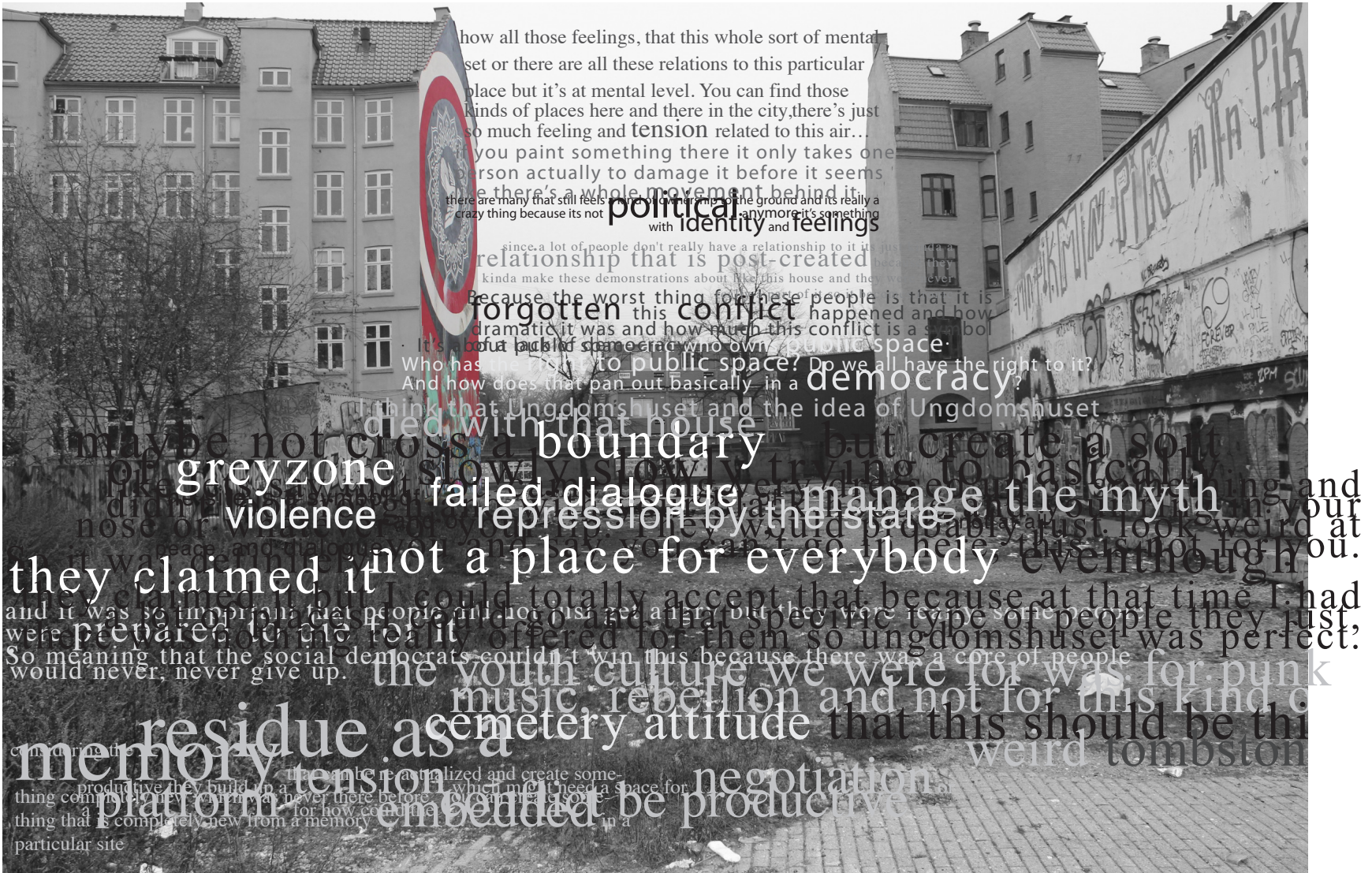


Figure 35: Film still from short film explaining the dialogue around the site

## Film

### Conceptual study

Several interviews about the site's past and future were conducted over a six-month period in Copenhagen, Denmark. The audio from the interviews was transcribed and cut to create a constructed dialogue; a conversation that never existed, between people that have never met. As each person speaks, the transcript of their conversation appears on the screen. As the conversation becomes more layered, as does the text, such that by the end of the conversation the text is so layered that it is illegible. The purpose of such a construction was to convey two things. Presenting separate conversations simultaneously speaks to the idea that the site is a poignant topic of conversation but lacks a dialogue. Layering the text with the audio further illustrates the fact that the site may be a void physically but is filled with a story. Figure 35 is a still from the film showing the layered conversation.

Full transcripts can be found in the appendix of this document.

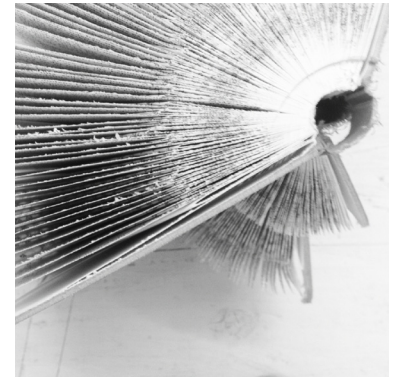
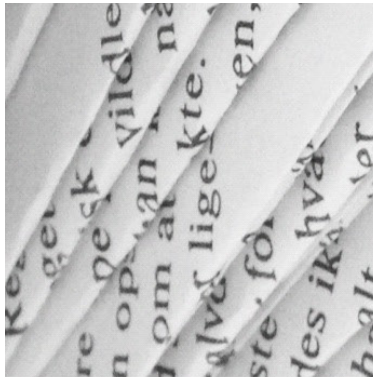
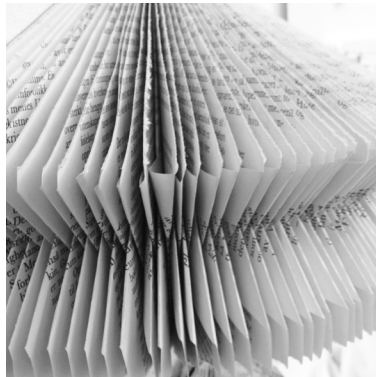
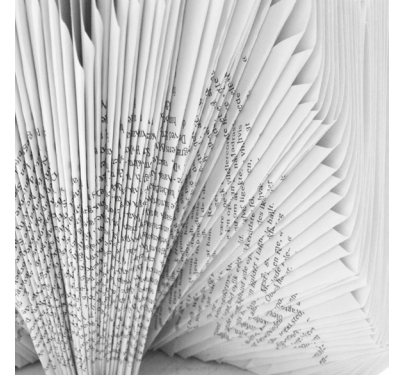
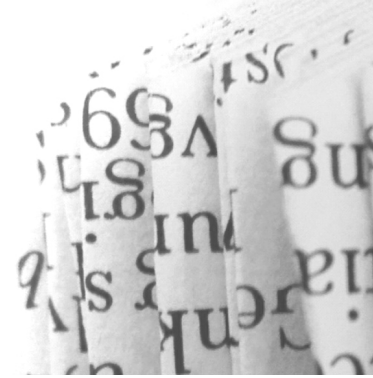
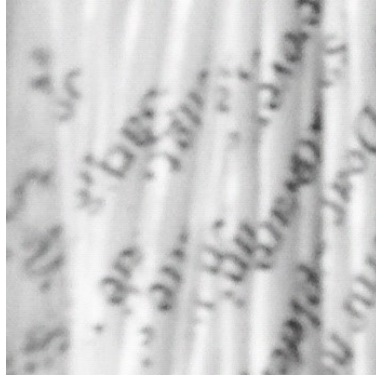
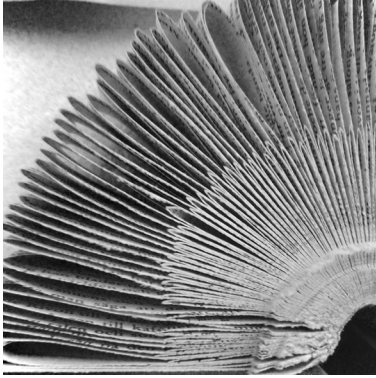


Figure 36: Folded book experiments

# Book

Conceptual study

Experimentation with books began as an intuitive exercise to understand the story of the site not as something that must be preserved but a medium that could be manipulated into something completely new. Books were folded, cut on the band saw, dipped in glycerin, and carved. A book is a well-understood object. It is meant to be read in a particular way, from front to back. Its story is linear from beginning to end. By folding or cutting, the function of the book is destroyed. It is no longer possible to read the story, the text has become folded upon itself or removed entirely such that book becomes something that is perceived rather than something that can be read. The repetition of letters within the text, although still recognizable have lost their context. The letter fragments remain ordered by the lines of the page and these fragmented lines create patterns and threads throughout the folded construction. The book constructions often created landscapes, whose threshold became the edge of the page and capacity became the weight of the paper. (figure 37)



Figure 37: Folded book



Figure 38: Book experiments.

**“....Remembering well  
requires reopening wounds  
in a particular way;  
one which people cannot do  
themselves.  
Remembering well requires  
a social structure in which  
people can address others  
across boundaries of  
difference”**

-Richard Sennet  
disturbing memories

## Site Approach

The conceptual explorations raised critical questions about the site. The opinions expressed in the film described criticism towards the veneration of the site. Within the window of time of the conflict as described in diagrams in the Methodology section of this document, groups were created that were never a part of the original house. This can be explained using the framework set forth by Roland Barthes in regards to the structure of myth. Before the conflict the house existed a counter culture youth house. It had close networks to other counter culture movements in Europe including punk music. As a result of these interests the house was a producer of culture in the form of rallies, concerts, performances and publications (figure 39a). In relation to the Barthes model of myth, the house at this point would be the signifier. The idea of the house became imbued with another meaning as a result of the conflict. The original group becomes fragmented and members join that had no relation to the idea of the original house but rather attracted by the conflict and the other political and social issues that became polarized because

of these events (figure 39b). The signifier loses meaning and becomes distorted. In the 5 years after the demolition of the building, the empty site, although filled with a story that is constantly cycled to produce new myths, generates nothing (figure 40a). This state, in relation to Barthes theory, becomes a signified concept, an appropriated version of a distorted original. Full of tension and potential of a new history, the site awaits the cycle of distortion to remove meaning to be replaced with a new situation. The intent of this thesis is to initiate this cycle, to create a situation in which myths and histories remain nebulous.( Figure 40b) The site can again generate culture; not in a way that mimics the past but perpetuates an open-ended future.

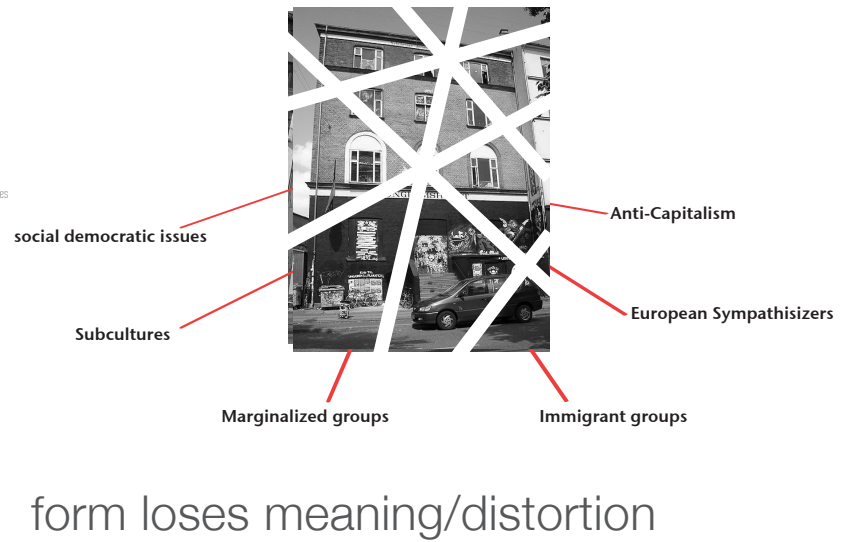
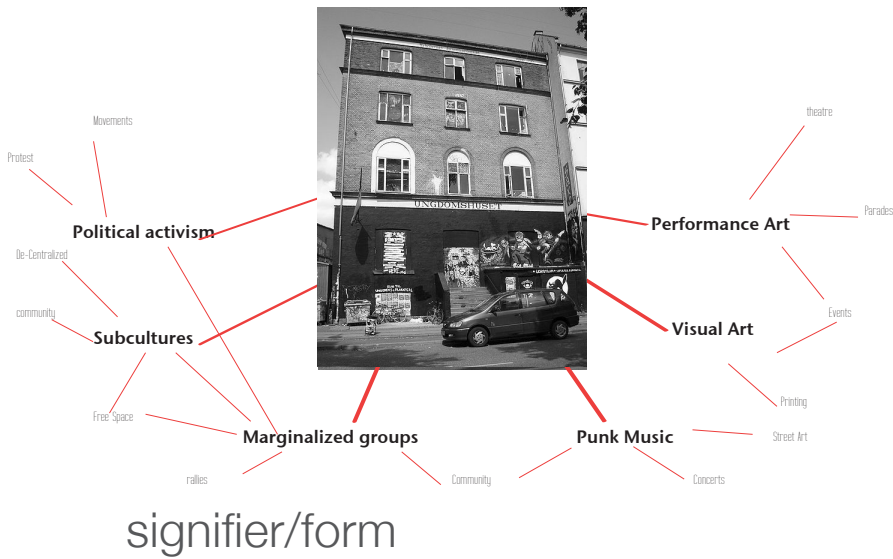
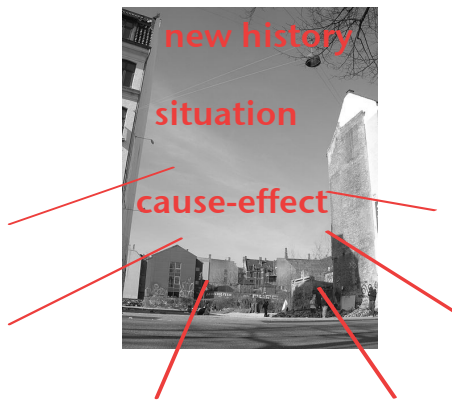
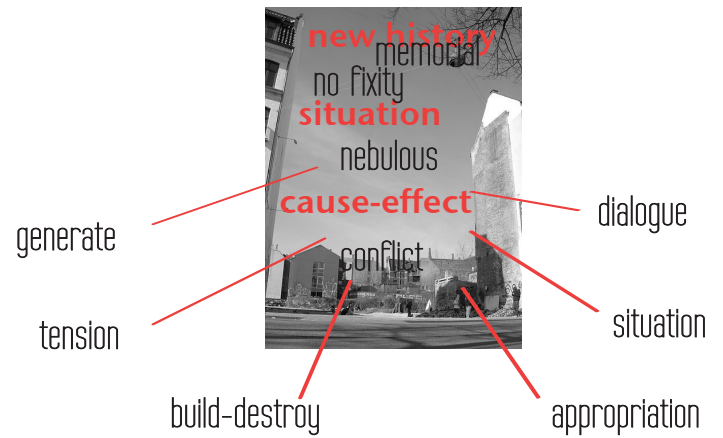


Figure 39a,b: Analysis of site through framework of Roland Barthes concept of myth



signified concept/appropriation



signification/motivation

Figure 40a,b: Analysis of site through framework of Roland Barthes concept of myth



## Open-ness is Multi-Centric

The potential of “openness” is created through an approach of dispersal. The site can be understood an object, like a book is an object, its history and story has filed the site. If a building were to fill the site, it would contain program and the relationship of the programmatic elements in conjunction with how the building expresses itself structurally and tectonically could support a feeling on “openness”. (figure 42a) But the building that once existed in the site was not as open as it was perceived to be and how could a new building escape from the same fate?

Through an expanded view of the site to include the parking lot behind and the edges of adjacent courtyards, the tension is dispersed from the site of loss where the building once stood. (Figure 42b) Dispersal of the program to the edges allows the field between them to develop according to the program (figure 43). The programmatic elements are positioned such that they can relate to each other but also overlap with the adjacent courtyards blurring the threshold between the semi public space

of the courtyard and the interface of the site. The new landscape interface creates a connection to the Nørrebro Parken to the north and Assistens Kirkegård to the South. The new metro station will bring new flows of people to the neighborhood will inevitably change the currently eclectic dynamic of Nørrebro. The establishment of infrastructure to support collectives and self-organized groups within the center of the city can help preserve the spirit of preserving civil liberties that has always been a quality of working class Nørrebro. Activities generated within the site can connect to other parts of the city to form cyclical relationships of occupation, creation, and dialogue (figure 44).



Figure 41: Site connections to green space network



Figure 42a,b: Diagram of site as object to site as interface

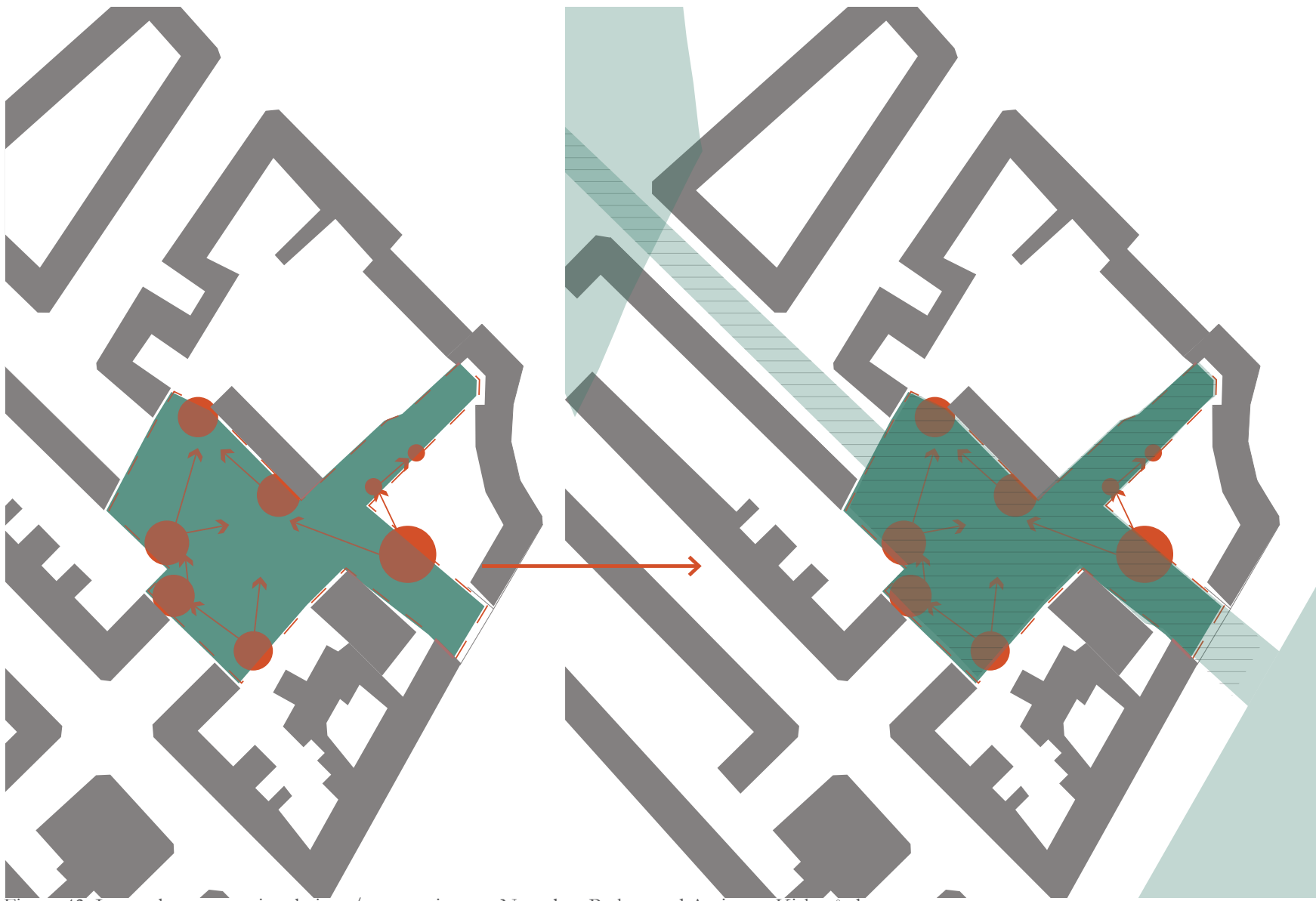


Figure 43: Internal programmatic relations/ connections to Nørrebro Parken and Assistens Kirkegård

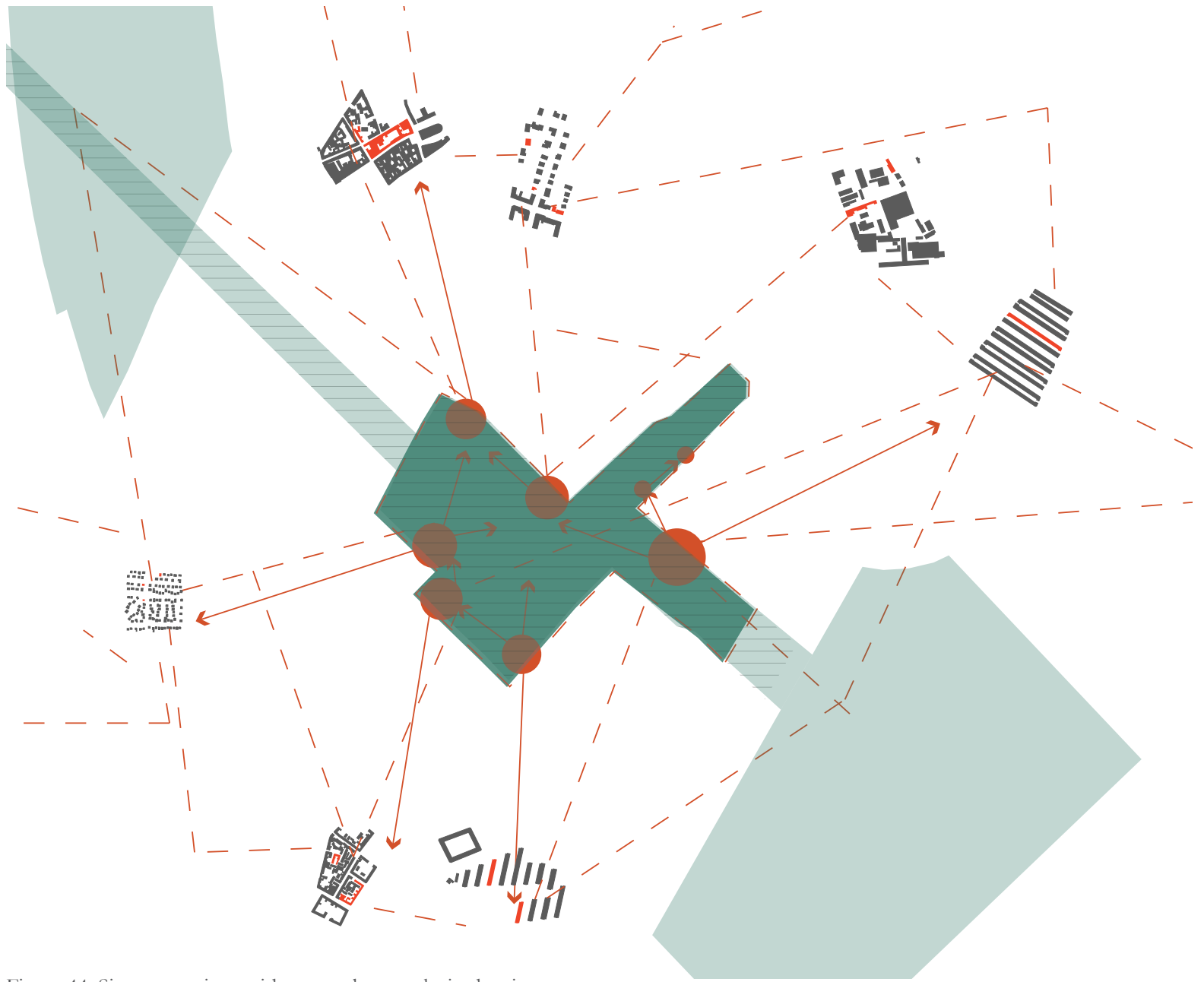


Figure 44: Site connections with external networks in the city



# Program

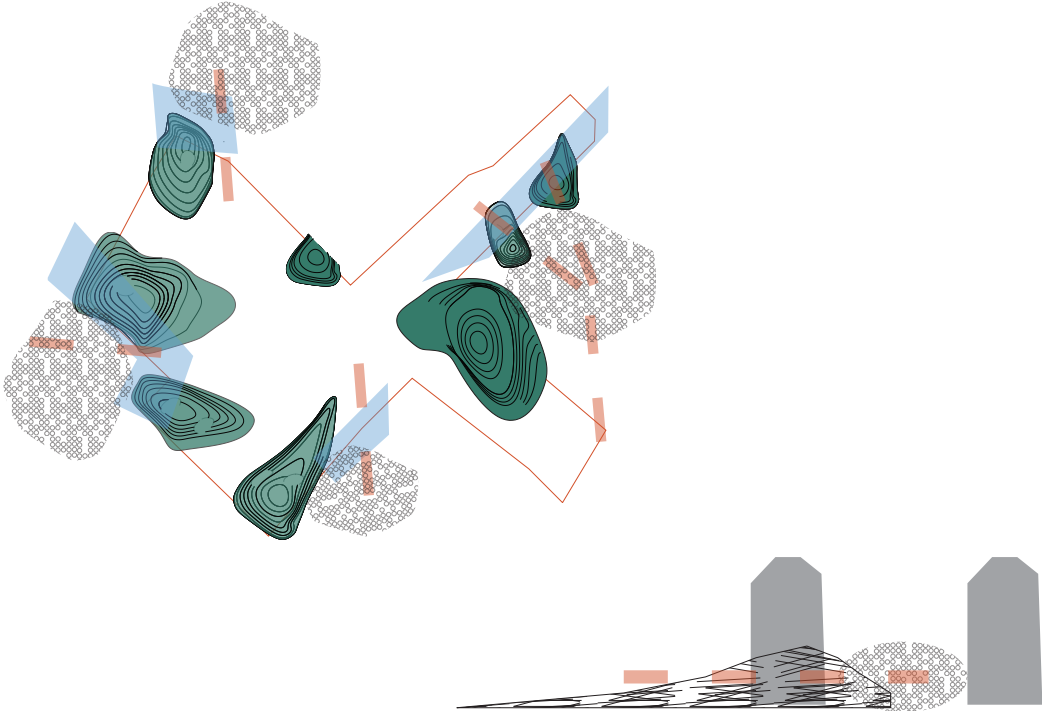
Institute for Comparative Vandalism

Architecture is entangled in a world of constant exchange. The concept of displacement transfers actions to new spaces where groups and cultures can meet and merge. Through a hybrid terrain the project moves outside the realm of the architectural object to a dynamic surface where the permanent and the temporary can expand and collapse. The excavation of the metro provides the situation to employ the concept of blending histories through displacement. The earth from the metro becomes the substrate form which space is created and consumed. The earth serves as the formwork to create the mounds. Concrete is poured over the earth and then excavated through openings. Where the mound cross the threshold to adjacent courtyards a cut is created to provide inhabitants of the courtyard access to the mounds. The excavated earth becomes the landscape between the mounds; an undulating interface molded such that the angles of repose invite different uses and activities.

The void of the site is left in tact and becomes a physical representation of the traumatic memory; a record of a past that begins to construct a new narrative. The new topography is manipulated so it begins to establish sectional relationships between the site and adjacent courtyards and as mounds establish relationships as objects in plan. The topography creates varied public and programmatic spaces simply through a difference in elevation. The undulating landscape steps back from Jagtvej to allow space for markets and events; cycles of activity that fill and empty. A new topography lifts to create a venue space that can house interior events or open to the interior of the site for outdoor events and shows. Many collectives within the city have established space for themselves in the periphery of the city but these spaces are often makeshift without amenities or access. Providing program that could be used by these groups within a center of the city allows an opportunity for access and exchange that wouldn't otherwise be possible. The program of the mounds is flexible such that the

# Blurring Thresholds to create a hybrid public

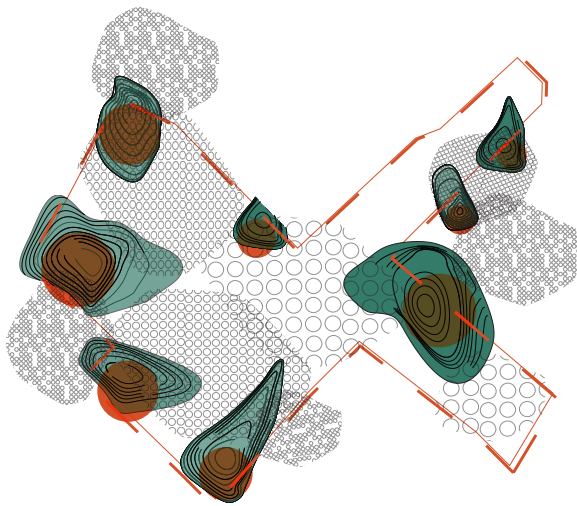
gradation of private to public



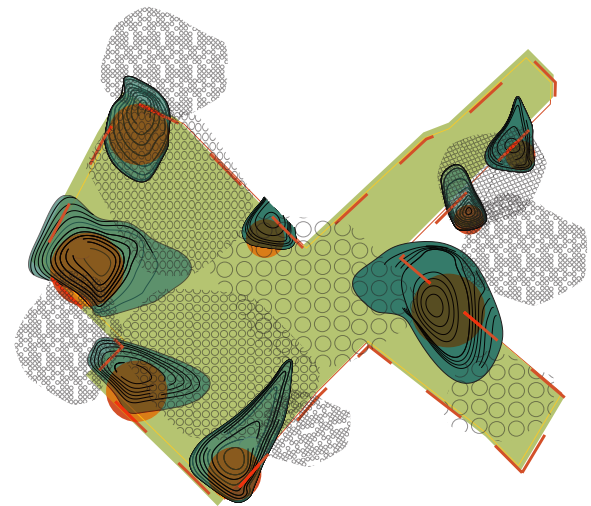
topography blurs boundary of semi private/public

mounds create threshold to adjacent courtyards

Figure 45: Site diagram



program creates layered zones of collectivity



Landscape as an interface

Figure 46: Site diagram

# Flows/Networks

Existing/Proposed

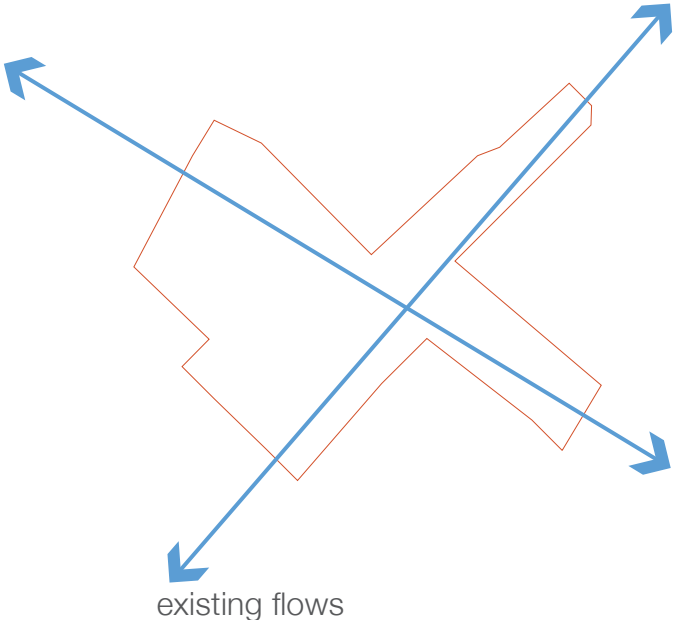
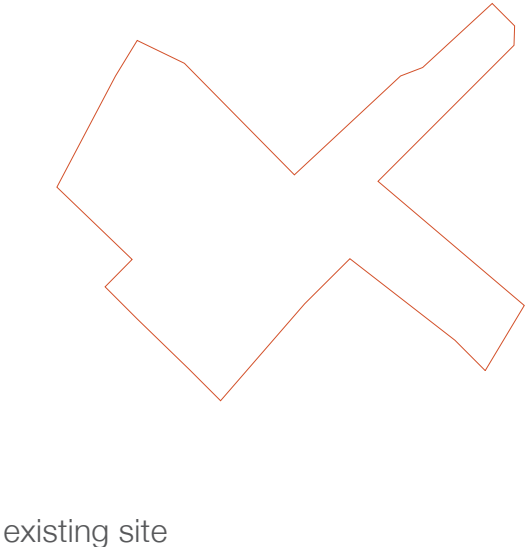
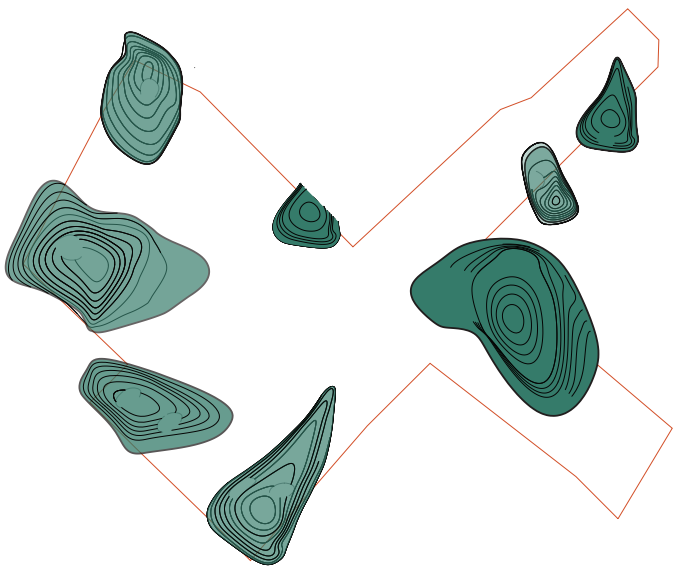
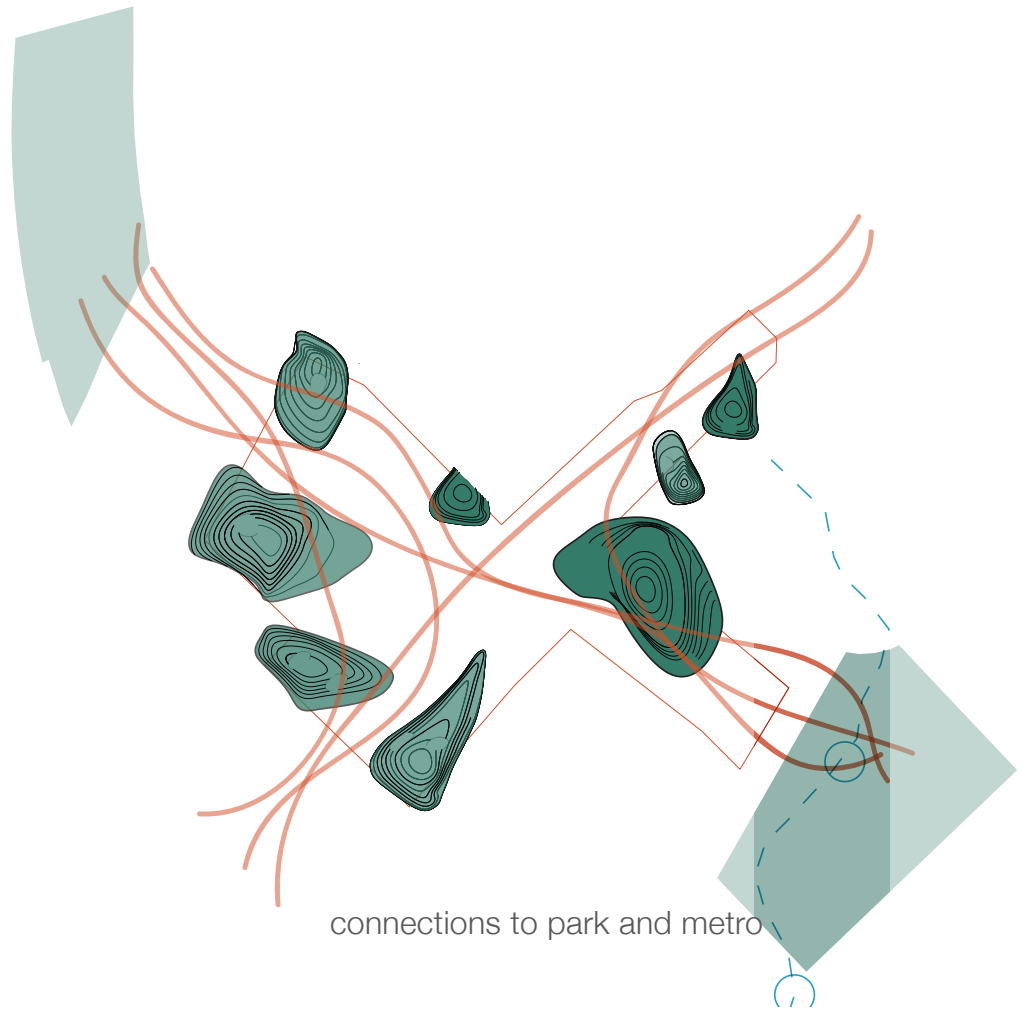


Figure 47:Flows/Networks Diagram



mounds deviate path



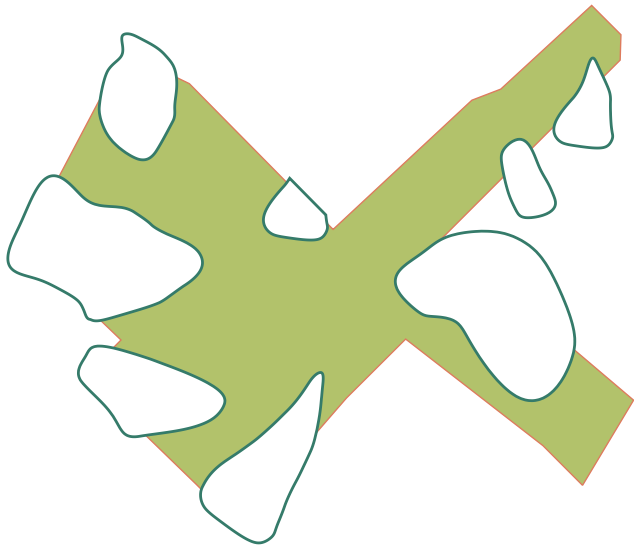
connections to park and metro

Figure 48: Flows/Networks Diagram

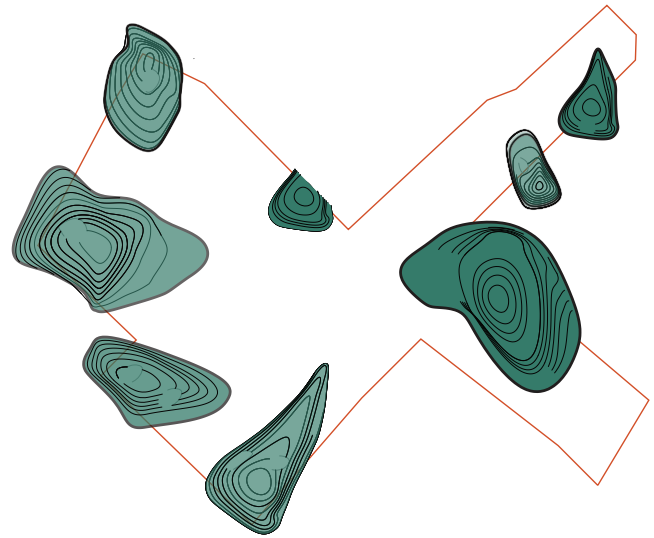


users can decide how to use the space. The current program is suggested based on infrastructure that current collectives lack such as facilities for film and print media, archives to catalog and exchange information, and spaces for studios or pop-up retail. The idea of an institute of comparative vandalism is that the interaction between users and groups would “vandalize” each other in Jorn’s definition of the term such that new uses, new hybrids and new groups would be created. The institute would evolve based on the actors and players that become involved, it would not be overseen like the institute of the museum but rather the institute of the factory created by Andy Warhol, if the factory continued after he died. The inhabitants of the courtyards become actors within the institute as the mounds can be occupied for overflow uses such as community events that the current narrow, dark courtyards don’t allow for.

The placement of the mounds not only creates blurred thresholds and surfaces for multiple activities, but also creates new flows within the site (fig 47,48). Currently the site exists as a cut through from the busy streets of Jagtvej and Nørrebrogade. The Mounds diverts the path so that future flows from Nørrebro Parken and adjacent neighborhoods to the metro become a path of possible encounters. The form of the mounds creates zones such that the programs can interact on an individual level but also participate in larger group as necessary. These clusters can develop individually and become collective as a situation or opportunity necessitates.



interface



mounds

Figure 50: Site Layers

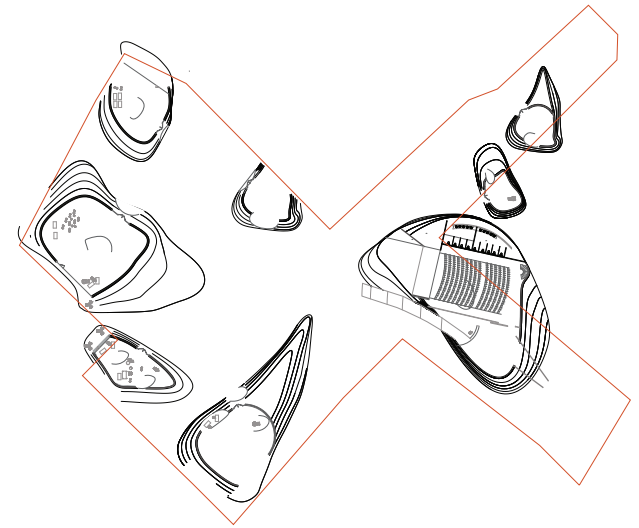
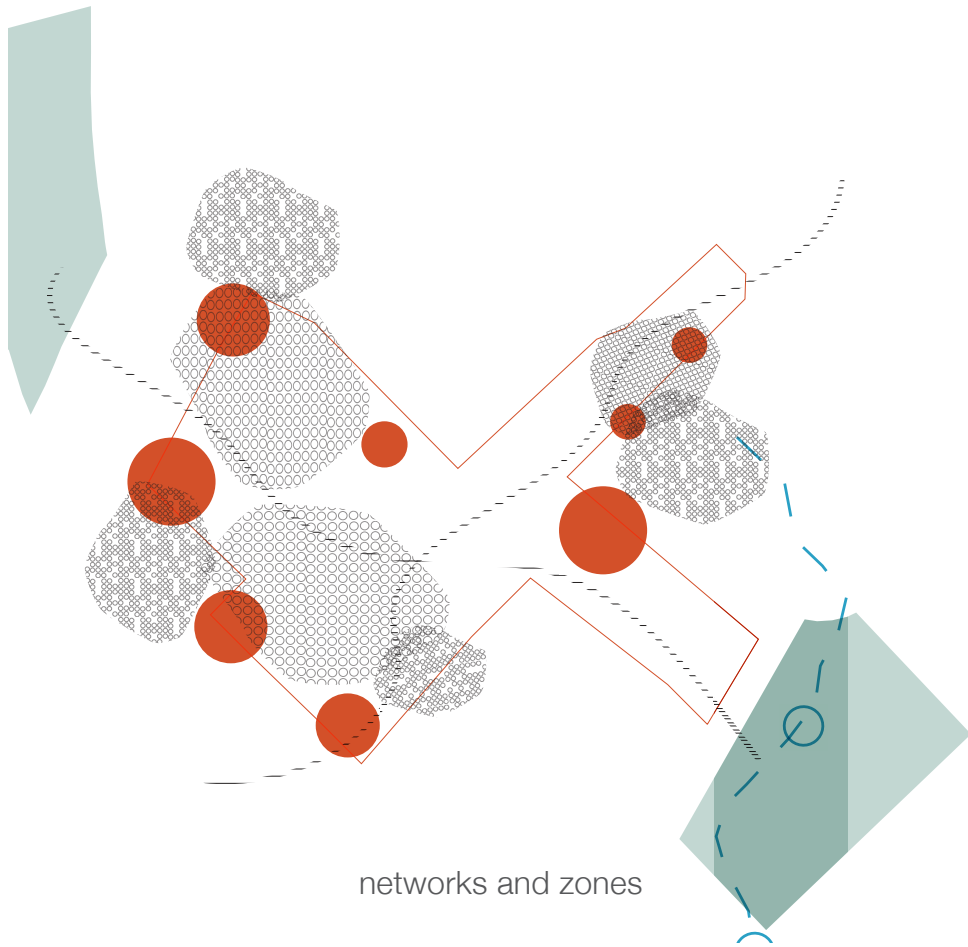




Figure 51: Mound Plan

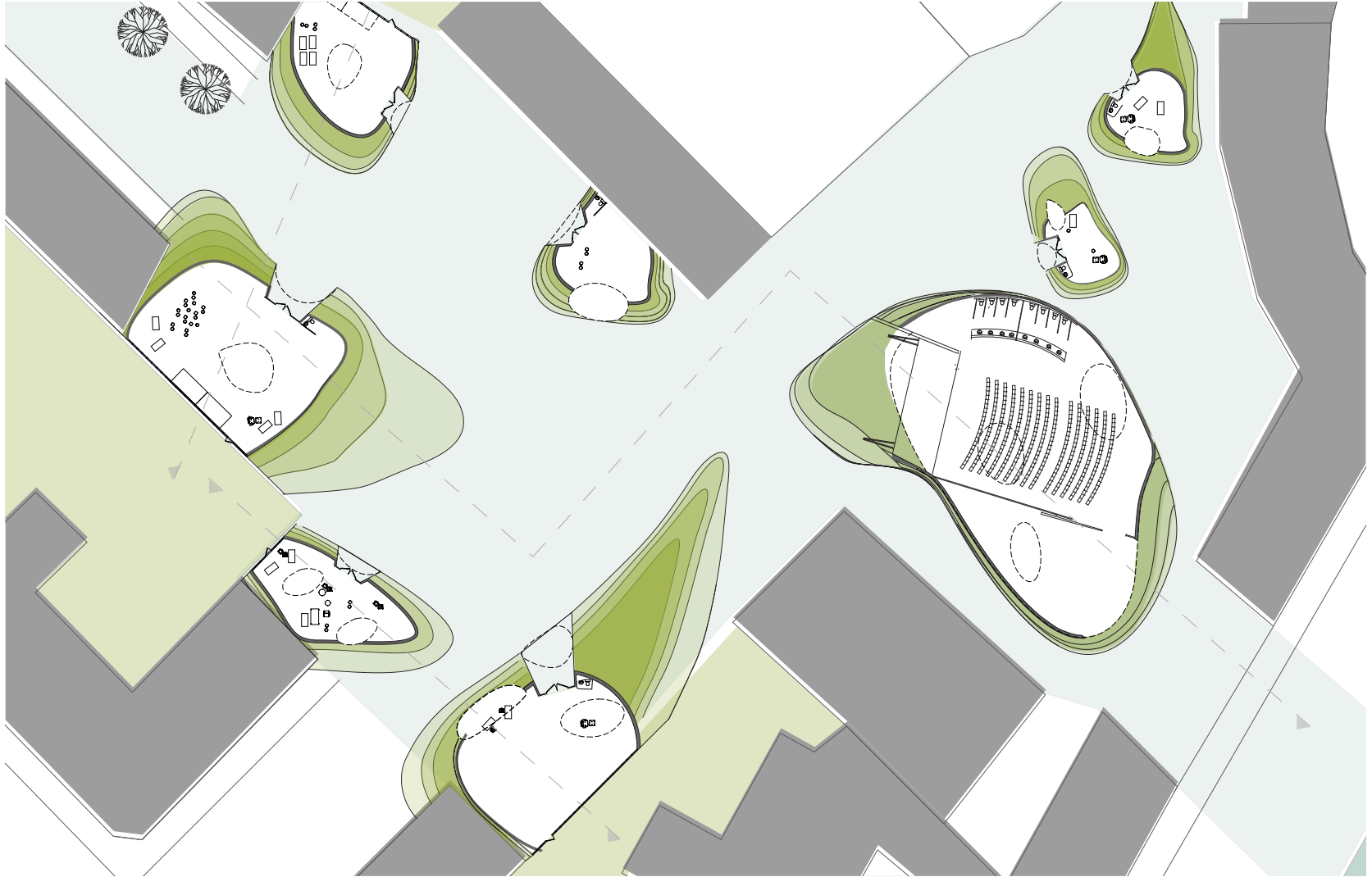


Figure 52: Plan 1:1000

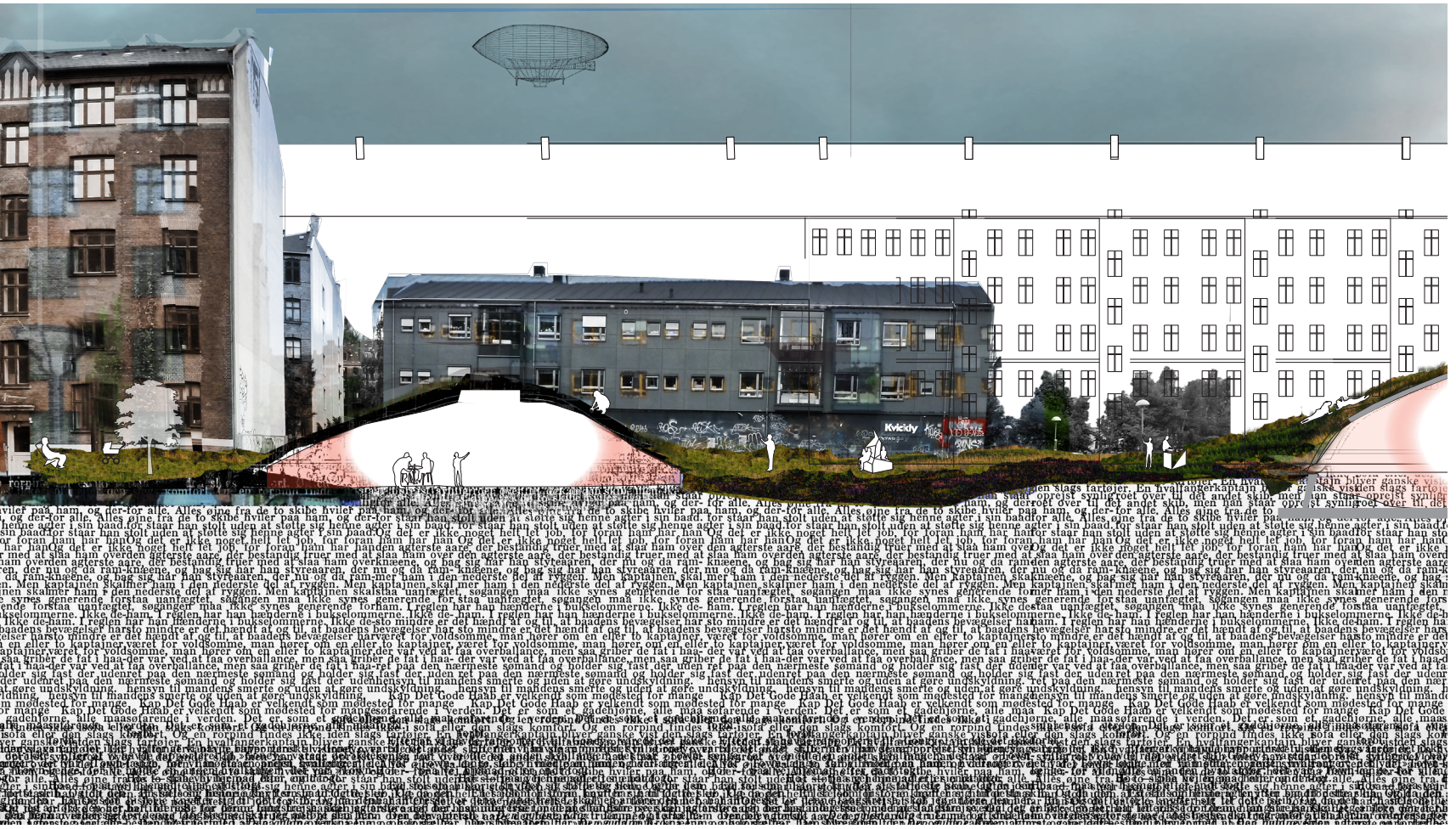


Figure 53: Longitudinal section through site



Figure 53: Longitudinal section through site



Figure 54: Transverse Section through site



rorpind findes  
 komfort. Og en  
 otajn bliver  
 n hvalfang  
 an staar o  
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 henne agter i sin baad for staar han stolt uden at støtte sig henne agter i sin baad for staar han stolt uden at stø  
 den at støtte sig henne agter i sin baad for staar han stolt uden at støtte sig henne agter i sin baad for staar han  
 or foran ham har hanOg det er ikke noget helt let job, for foran ham har hanOg det er ikke noget helt let  
 t helt let job, for foran ham har hanOg det er ikke noget helt let job, for foran ham har hanOg det er ik  
 r med at slaa ham over den agterste aare, der bestandig truer med at slaa ham over den agterste aare, der bestand  
 r bestandig truer med at slaa ham over den agterste aare, der bestandig truer med at slaa ham over den agterste a  
 ren, der nu og da ram-knæene, og bag sig har han styreaaren, der nu og da ram-knæene, og bag sig har han s  
 har han styreaaren, der nu og da ram-knæene, og bag sig har han styreaaren, der nu og da ram-knæene, og h

Figure 54: Transverse Section through site

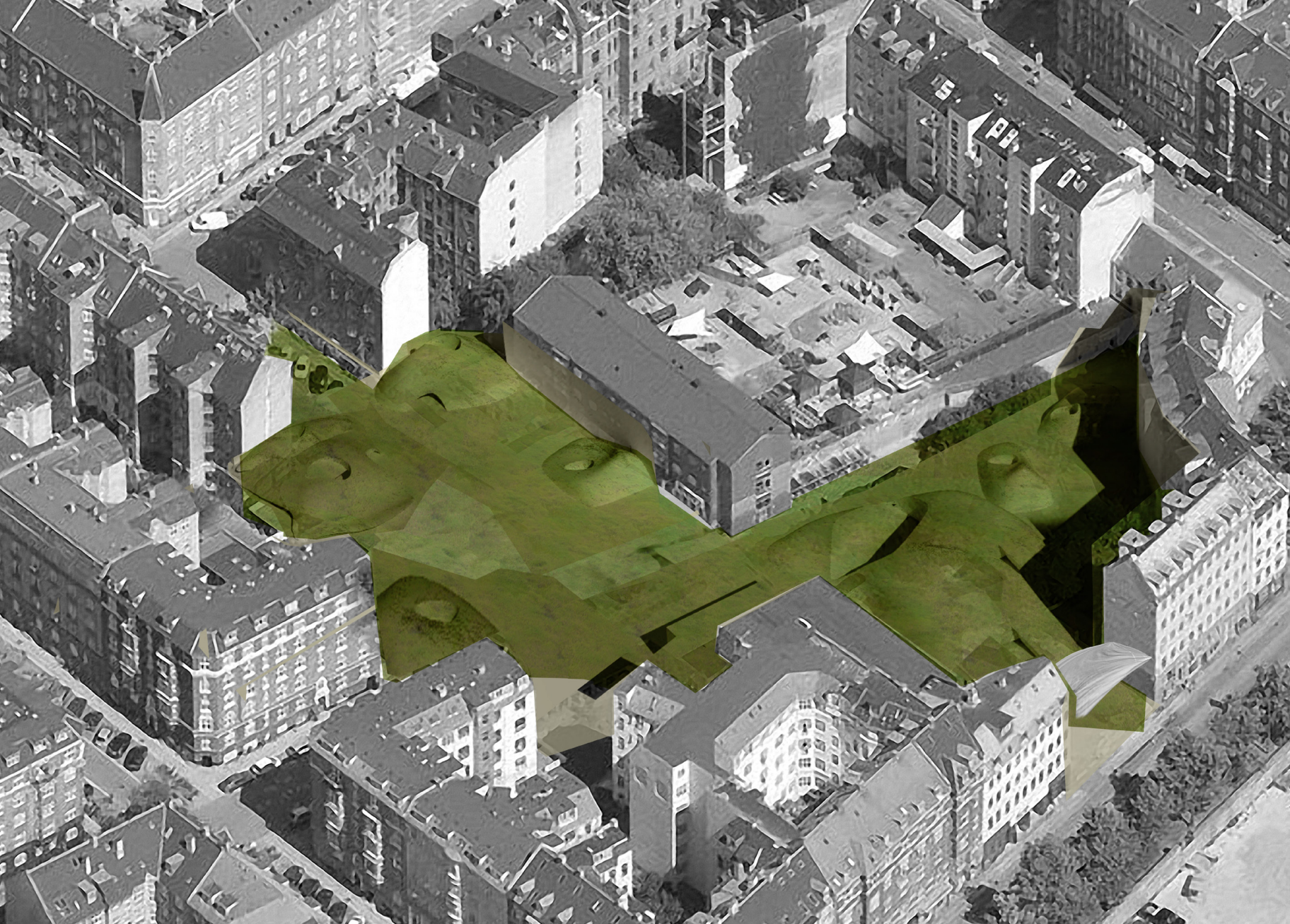


Figure 55: Aerial view of site



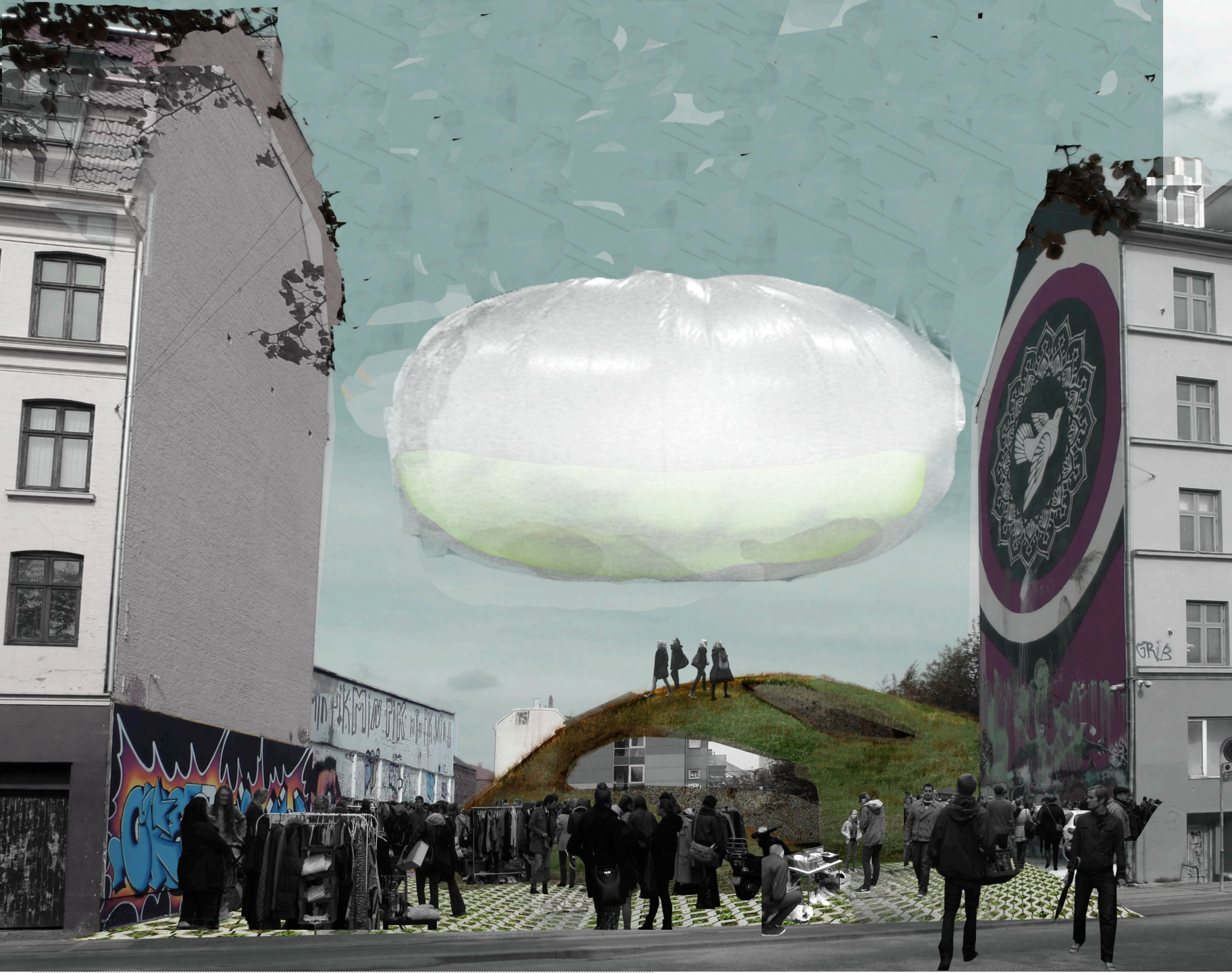




Figure 56: Rendered view from Jagtvej



Figure 57: View of courtyard looking north

# Layers of Ephemerality to create open-ended becoming

## Conclusion

The landscape of the institute of comparative vandalism is a layered surface. The manipulation of the surface to create voids beneath it and zones within it creates a framework to be used and appropriated. By blurring thresholds and typologies the project is never one thing or the other but hovers in between depending on the perspective. It cannot be understood as an object but rather perceived through the experiences and activities it engenders. The earth becomes the permanent layer. Groups and programs, the influence of which inform and transfer through to the surface, occupy voids beneath the surface. The ground becomes a field for more temporary interventions the ground upon which figures can appear and dissolve in the composition of the situation. The layers of ephemerality allow for the project to embed itself within the site rather than impose itself upon it. Its identity constantly shifting as the city evolves around it.



Figure 58: Photos of site model



Figure 59: Detail of mounds



Figure 60: Photos of site model



Figure 61: Photos of site model



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**“He also makes new who  
smashes the old”**

-Asger Jorn

## Appendix.

# Conversations



**neils grønbæk**



**christain fumz**



**anne larsen**



**saskia peinow**



**rené karpantschov**



**jesper elg**



## Places discussed

in order of appearance



**Jægersborggade**  
entire street cooperative in  
Nørrebro. Controlled by  
Hells Angels Drug Gang



**Bolsjefabrikken  
candy factory**  
arts collective in  
Nørrebro NV



**New Ungdomshuset  
new youth house**  
located at Dorthea Vej 61  
in Nørrebro NV



**Ungdomshuset ,  
Youth House  
Ungdomshuset,  
Old Youth house**  
squatted house in cph  
and center for youth culture  
demolished in 2007



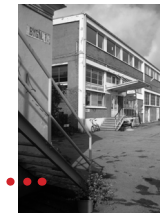
**Jagtvej 69 ,  
Site of former Youth House  
Ungdomshuset site,  
Ground 69**  
Location of former Ungdomshuset  
Site has remained vacant since  
demolition of house in 2007



**KBH Projekthus**  
incubator for culturally  
projects in Cph



**V1 Gallery**  
located in Kødbyen (meat packing district)  
in Vesterbro Copenhagen  
Curated Shepard Fairey Mural at Jagtvej 69



**Prags Blvd 43**  
collective in Amager  
founded by Giv Rum Nu



**Christiania**  
Free town in old  
military barracks  
on Christianshavn



*Neils Grønboek is an Architect, Assistant Professor, Ph.D at Kunstakademiets Arkitektskole (Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts - School of Architecture). He has written extensively on the history and conflict surrounding the street of Jægersborggade. He collaborated with Saskia Peinow on the Gaden Finder Vej project and has been a resident of Jægersborggade for 15 years.*

**LK: In my research I am looking at temporary interventions within the urban context and how they can influence future development or mediate conflict. In Copenhagen, this phenomenon has manifested its self in various forms from the informal bottom up approach as well as top down. How do you see the notion of the temporary in the development of the city?**

I have to write this article<sup>1</sup> and I will relate these ideas of facilitation, not just with the mediation of conflict but with starting the idea of an alternative approach or alternative city development and it seems that somehow in that report [municipal report<sup>2</sup> of temporary architecture in city planning] which was made by a landscape architect that they are not facilitating the alternative they are rather creating in a much more literal direct way. They are designing the alternative rather than waiting or seeing how the city itself, the performativity, or agency of the city can actually create alternatives. In 1840, in Paris, one could say the performativity of the city could generate revolutions so all the boulevards were created to manipulate the display of materiality of the city so the physicality of the city will not be an incubator of revolution or a machine producing revolution. By entering the physical aspect of the city we can change and design the space in order to not provoke, not produce the densities, which will drive revolutions. So what I'm talking about there is only that it seems that the city can create public space that was not there before 1850. Its really a quite a fantastic feature, quite a significant and a super important space; the public space created by the metropolis. But its not created based on an idea, but rather it's the city which produces this idea. In the Aalborg<sup>3</sup> case, what this professional landscape architect studio is doing is that they see a great big resource on the harbor area of Aalborg,- How could we start a really productive growth development in this

part of the city?- and then the idea in the first discussion would be to bring in the Ngos, bring in the underground. But maybe we should facilitate that a little, so they start to scan the mass of buildings finding the buildings which would best serve the purpose, which they could best give over to grassroots, independent, creative people. I don't want to say there is a cynicism embedded in it but they are talking about how it should be temporary it's a mental city development but its also a temporary city development. They are there for sometime and then they have done their job. They have been drivers and facilitated that mental change and how everybody would approach that area and then suddenly the shops and the districts will take over and drive them out. So I think that there's a very fine threshold in my mind between how givrumnu<sup>4</sup> is facilitating such development and how a municipality can have this very intended intention of redesigning an understanding or an approach or a myth of a particular space.

**LK: On one hand I think that it is interesting that the municipality is supporting these types of projects but I see your point in terms of how you understand the word temporary because a lot of these projects began as acts of transgression and to facilitate that inherently takes away a certain quality. But I think what is most interesting about what Givrumnu is doing**

**there seems to be an extreme change  
from a paradigm of mastering space,  
mastering development,  
mastering the future,  
into saying that facilitation can  
actually be what DeLanda would call,  
the open-ended becoming of the world.**

**is the connections between the people that collect in those space.**

NG: And also what is happening in relation to anybody who was already there the existing community, which, in this case, is an industrial facility and might be again. First of all I would say that it seems to me to be an issue in Copenhagen, as in so many other cities, that the idea of transforming the existing or building based on something which is existing rather than just tabula rasa strategies, which not so long ago would develop mostly on its perimeter( like London from 1830 to 1950 it would just keep on expanding on its periphery) it seems that its developments are going on within the tissue, or the flesh of the city. There's a development of a number of different approaches to those transformation processes. Sometimes it is just taking down a building and building something new and there can be another type of transformation of the physical residue of former industrial development but a development based on use, on occupying, new ways of occupying these spaces that maybe will go away in a few years but until then we can make a more organic development, something can be created there which might only survive at a mental level but it will never the less survive. So I think there is a whole catalog of quite interesting transformation processed at Carlsberg, Prags blvd, Jægersborggade.

**LK: In the case of Bolsjefabrikken<sup>5</sup> and Prags Blvd 43, a collection of people that otherwise wouldn't have met brought out certain aspects in people that otherwise might not have existed. Christian Fumz began Bolsjefabrikken, but he's not part of it anymore, so I think it's interesting how the facilitator can be part of something and leave and have it still continue and involve into something else as others take on those roles.**

NG: this idea of creating institutions or the idea of establishing institution as a design task can be something which becomes a culture rather than it only surviving through curation. If it has the framework of an institution then the institution can give it permanence. Suddenly Andy Warhol could leave the factory because the institution has become independent. That is not what happened because it never got to that point, but it becomes the Andy Warhol test- would this cultural space die with certain key persons leaving the project? or will an institution be established that could take it further?

There is very specific idea about exploiting the potential of certain small, little

already established alternative cultures how can we actually use those for drivers for a new development, which is very much a development at a narrative level.

That is also one of the reasons why Christiania is still there because it is an institution in many ways. I think it has been important in Jægersborggade as well too, the presence of the institution.

So may be the Givrumnu strategy is developing a sort of a grey zone which is very very far from Ungdomshus and its even farther from Christiania or a classic BZ movement<sup>6</sup> but that has been created, the conflict, has certainly been created. Givrumnu, in a sense, they seem to be yet another instance of this much bigger movement. They are giving up certain aspects of the sovereignty and ideals of former movements and everything is sort of getting blurry in a super interesting ways; blurring these lines between things. In these terms the idea of conflict seems to be one of the past in all of these grey zones of new negotiations between ngo's and alternative cultures and municipality, private business.

One of my points would be that it seems that productivity creates creative potential in conflict. It seems that the idea of facilitating, of bringing together, of creating platforms seems one which its used much more. It seems that many of those transformation processes are described much better in those terms; in terms of facilitating transformation. Rather than thinking in terms in how the city in its self has a sort of performativity, it creates conflicts within it, and these conflicts can actually be productive. They build up a tension which might need a space for negotiation or a platform for how the conflict could be productive negotiations between ngo's and alternative cultures and municipality, private business.

**LK: That is where my interest in the temporary comes in; the idea of experiment and the potentials with in it. The potential to succeed and to fail and that's an important aspect in these projects, how do you define success? How do you qualify it?**

**The aspect of experiment. That it's not all planned out and this is how it will be. It is very much up in the air what will happen....**

**considering the residue as a memory that can be re-actualized and create something completely new which was never there before. You can create something that is completely new from a memory embedded in a particular site.**

**NG:** I think that is so super interesting this, it seems to be an extreme change from a paradigm of mastering space, mastering development, mastering the future into saying that facilitation can actually be what DeLanda would call, the open-ended becoming of the world.

The temporal and the permanent. It seems that there's a flavor there in the temporal development which suggests where this is an exception or this is an alternative but I think there are tendencies toward the alternative and temporary as the permanent condition in a sense.

Could we create culture based on the potentials in a particular neighborhood? In that way you can take some of the experiences from one to another.

But I would agree it would be much more interesting to develop a sensitivity for the potentials in a specific neighborhood and then use them and then find the possibilities within those potentials so the neighborhood streets don't develop into a Jægersborggade too, that they develop into something completely different.

In a broader perspective of transformation processes one can rather than use a modernist artificial amnesia where we just clear the ground then understand a past not in as you know tradition or a conservative way but rather considering the residue as a memory that can be re-actualized and create something completely new which was never there before. You can create something that is

completely new from a memory embedded in a particular site.

**LK: Going back to the grey zone you mentioned earlier, the grey zone is the place where you can work outside of the established systems mental paradigms or political, that inhibits change.**

**NG:** the idea of ad hoc is embedded in how the city has developed so there must be a refined culture of ad hoc ness to keep the path of investigation of open, more rhizomatic thinking where the physicality of what is now at this state the city is a sort of potential that could develop in all sort of kinds of directions.

I am fascinated by Paris in the 1840's the idea of the city being able to create culture. There are those sets of canonized examples like Baudelaire, and of course Walter Benjamin, talking about how the city is creating the dandy and the flaneur, it wasn't like somebody found out in his or her study that, - "well I want to be a flaneur, let me go to Paris", - it was rather something that the city and its physicality generated. So I think at that level if the city is actually maintained or if there is a sensitivity to the city, even at that extreme natural level, it can be productive. That would be really interesting rather than anything that is already, in a sense, motivated. Well it sounds like a good thing that you can't that easily decide on criteria of success. That sounds to me like another word for ethics. Its sort of an unethical thing that the development of the city has suddenly arrived at a level where we already have a toolbox, we already have a set of images, we already have a set of ideas, of the successful city development and lets repeat that endlessly.

It is great having this conversation because I have to write this article in a week's time and now I know what my points will be. My point shall be whether all that facilitating is actually yet again creating repetition just for production or whether is genuinely creating new culture that I think would be a matter of whether the ad hoc-ness would be an ad-hoc ness of ethics rather than maybe the ad-hoc ness of mirror-growth or something like that.

endnotes

1The article is for a how to guide published by PB43 (pb43.dk)

2City planning report produced by the city of Aalborg, Denmark. The report suggests how temporary projects should be used as part of the process of neighborhood revitalization and post industrial areas.

3Reference to document previously mentioned

4Giv Rum Nu (give room now) is an organization that facilitates the use of empty buildings. More information can be found on pg \_ of this document.

5Bolsjefabrikken is a user driven collective in Nørrebro started by Christian Fumz, founder of Giv Rum Nu.

6The BZ movement is a squatter movement in Copenhagen during the 1980 s

7Gaden Finder Vej (the street finds its way) is a site specific project on Jægersborggade.



## methods of facilitation

### 3 case studies

**Space** Christian Fumz

**Program** Anne Katrine Heje Larsen

**Dialogue** Saskia Peinow

# space.

*Christian Fumz is co-founder of Giv Rum Nu (give room now) a group that facilitates artists and entrepreneurs to use vacant underutilized buildings. Through establishing and facilitating user-controlled, operated and maintained environments, in empty buildings, they seek to create a new and more democratic way of thinking about organizing culture and urban planning. –givrum.nu*

**LK: If we may begin by recounting the chain of events: you began the bolsje fabriikken and then wanted to move on to something larger so you started Giv rum nu (give room now) and started up Prags blvd 43?**

CF: Yeah now I'm teamed up with a guy called Jesper and we spent half a year defining a business model. We knew that we needed pay to do it because we wanted to do it so much and I think that's very important if you would like to do something like this that you decide that you need money to do it because you want to do it so much that you wouldn't have time to work another job. I think that's a reasonable decision that you make for yourself. Then we spent half a year trying to work out how to build this model. At the same time I started this place up in 2010 and we got the keys for this place after I met with the owner who's axel nobel, a big dutch multi-national laquer company. This is also an old laquer factory. They have actually had a lot of land here and I met with them and they said well give it a go and we got the keys.

**LK: You are paying rent to use the space or are they are just letting you use the space?**

CF: We are not paying rent per se at Prags blvd 43. We finalized everything in November and we don't pay rent but we do pay a deposit which is certain number of euros a month. This was because we didn't have any money to begin with. The guy I talked with asked if we could pay just a bit of it and as the activity increases you will have more and more money in stock for when you have to leave. If you don't take all your things with you we will have money to take it away. That's their security. We felt this was a great, you know, savings account. I don't think we will get much interest but still at the end of the 2 years that we have on the contract we will have 200,000 euros or so to make a foundation.

**LK: At the end of the contract you will move to a new place?**

CF: Of course we are working to be here permanently so we hope that the time period will be prolonged. But we have no say in this other than just trying to make as good a project as we can. That goes back to our starting point-that we want to involve the people in making it the best project possible for the people involved; In terms of organization and output to the neighborhood in this way.

Now there are 21 different user groups here, and 130 on the mailing list and we made an association. We were planning to make a cooperative from the association but we are going to wait on this because it's a bit expensive with all the fees etc, and at the moment we don't need it.

**LK: Giv Rum nu acts as the facilitator in providing space?**

CF: Giv rum nu is the contract holder with the owner. It's a borrowing contract so the rights are written out of it so we don't have the rights we would if we were renting. If you rent a space you get tenants rights but that's fine we just want to use the space and they don't have any plans they just waiting for the market price to come up. They hope that it will be decided that the land will be rezoned for residential because now its industrial but I have been talking to the authorities and they said the area will not be re-zoned until 2017 so there is no big payout until that time. Hopefully this project will be established enough that we might be able to buy the place. Right now is just a dream but its not unreasonable to think that we can do this, not all by our selves but finding other funding based on culture.

**LK: How involved is Giv Rum Nu in what happens at places like Prags Blvd 43?**

CF: We in Giv rum nu are in charge of the economics and the organization making the association, and getting a budget together to fix water etc. Everyone here pays from 13-35 kr (3-7 US dollars) per square meter which is less than half of what it would cost to rent in Copenhagen at the moment. And we don't take any money from this – going back to the business model- we are very much focused on creating this as a model, not a rigid model but just a good

example of what you can do with these kinds of buildings; in terms of innovation, in terms of creating new forms of organization. For instance, this place is a user driven garden and I think there are 9 people running it and a lot of locals come here and tend the garden and they eat together every weds so in that way it creates a community and in a larger scale this is food and this idea is emerging in a lot of places right now: urban gardens urban farming.

We got funding 1.1 million kroner from Real Dania, a foundation that funds these types of project. So that helps offset the costs. But we have given ourselves a lot of work to fulfill the contract that we signed, I have learned a lot about financing and consulting so currently Jesper and I are employed part-time through Giv Rum Nu but eventually we hope to be fulltime, money-wise; Time-wise it feels full time.

But on different levels we are trying to start up more places and speak to more owners. There are 3 levels: the practical level where we start things up because we feel that there's a need for the good examples. We need to show people what we are talking about and we need to make it as organized and as easy to grasp for people. That's why we felt it was good to do this at the same time. We are lucky that we already have an example. The second level is the consultancy level where we help other people start stuff up. We went to an island south of Copenhagen and we had a lot of people at the conference. We also consult for culture houses we just consulted with a Latin American group that wanted to find a space so we can help push this project as a pilot project because it involves a temporary strategy. We also work with a larger developer called Skanska and they have asked us to make a project description about an old 17<sup>th</sup> century factory and here they needed a formal project description so we took the building and looked at it to see who would be interested in using the spaces and we made a budget for the next 5 years and a budget for us to continue with the project. It was a bit different than how we did this place because here we just opened the doors and people decided what they wanted to do but in this new project there are themes and we have to present things more formally and present to CEOs of companies and stuff like that. The third level is creating the foundation but this is still a long way in the future but we are laying the bricks to build it with the work on the other levels

**LK: Are these spaces that you find? Or do people approach you?**

## **“the time that we are here is temporary but the relations that we create are permanent”**

CF: Skanska came to us after we did a presentation and told us that they had a building that we would want to do. It is very transparent in terms of how they can earn money while a building would otherwise be empty, and having people there can improve the neighborhood, which would otherwise just stand still. It's just, in my point of view, it's a change of view on resources and acknowledging that maybe it's not money that's the biggest resource at the moment but its space and its time and its people. And if we give people space over time it can generate a big resource.

This is the argument that we made with the thinkspace conference. We don't have to program space we just provide it and people will program it themselves. I think this is a great way to look at resources because the people put it up to the standard that they want. Some people go all out and put a lot into it and others just made a workshop that works. And if a developer came in before and outfitted it they would've spent tons of money getting it ready and maybe it wouldn't have worked anyway so to just provide the space people will make it what they want.

So in conclusion we are trying to change the way you deal with resources and also to find new resources for instance this building had been standing here for 5 years but to look at it as a resource for community work and small business; and to look at the people that wouldn't have had the opportunity to do the things that they have done here

**it's a change of view on resources and acknowledging that maybe its not money that's the biggest resource at the moment but its space and its time and its people. And if we give people space over time it can generate a big resource.**

**LK: And to meet in the first place...**

CF: Yeah and to meet at all. There was a party this past Friday and I was there and I looked around at all these people and I realized –I put them together- and maybe they wouldn't have met otherwise and that's very significant point that the time that we are here is temporary but the relations that we create are permanent. Its very important so that also for the bolsje fabrikken they have their relations...its just bricks its just space... they like the process but they could just start a new approach to finding a new place and showcase what they have done and what they have done for the community.

I also feel that you shouldn't invest more of yourself in a place than you are willing to take out because at the first place I might have used too much of my own energy in terms of this role.

**LK: Do you have a design background? Or business background? It seems this project is merging these two disciplines.**

CF: Its funny I'm educated as a school teacher and I think teaching is still what I do now, maybe not in a classroom but it's the same principles. I think you can organize society in a much better way than it is now and find spaces where you can actually move things and paint the wall everything is so programmed here in Copenhagen and I really don't think it lets people take part in their own life so that's a more philosophical view on what I do.



Figure 62: Prags Boulevard 43

# program.

*Anne Katrine Heje Larsen is the director of KPH Projekthus. KPH offers advice on starting a project, process support in developing the project idea, as well as shared facilities to assist in making the project a reality. Over 40 diverse projects share the space at Enghavevej 80 in the vesterbro neighborhood in Copenhagen – [www.kph-projects.dk/](http://www.kph-projects.dk/)*

## **LK: Could you begin by explaining how KPH Projekthus got started?**

AL: What would you like to know? Shall I start from the beginning?

We started in May 2009; 5 different organizations of people went together and made an application to the city council. We wanted to make a place for young entrepreneurs and project people in Copenhagen to put them in the same place so that experiences and know how could be shared.

It took a long time I think we worked on it from 2007.

## **LK: And who were the groups that started it?**

AL: It was game, they have Street Mekka<sup>1</sup> over here its an integration project with outdoor basketball. And then its Copenhagen art fair, I had a lot of events in the skatepark with fashion fairs with music art design and film. Something called Supertaenker<sup>2</sup> a social entrepreneurship organization and Republikken<sup>3</sup> on Vesterbrogade, and Bureau Detours<sup>4</sup>. BD is from all over but one of the main forces was Mads Peter who was living in Copenhagen at that time.

The idea is that we are giving free spaces and free counseling and we are working together with Copenhagen business center and the project counseling under the city counsel as well so some people we send there if are not good enough to give them counsel we can tell them where to go. If they are under the age of 30 if it's a non profit project which is social or cultural, but it must be open, its not like for organizations groups with members. It has to be something that's open for the whole city. Then they can have a free space here. If they are supported or if they are paid or if they have money then they can rent the space if they are over 30 they can also be here and rent a space cheap as long as they have the same purpose and that we can tell them if there is a young group that is doing the same thing and doesn't know a lot about it then that established group has to tell the young guys -ok you have to

## **We are trying to be more than just this physical place we want to have collaborations with other organizations within Copenhagen which is relevant for what we are doing.**

look out for this, this and this, and this the way to do it. So it has to be an open door principle so if you are established then you have to give something back. Its all about networking and its all about learning and the synergy is important as well so if it was only projects that were at the beginner level then there wouldn't be enough to learn, there would be something of course but not the mentor experience. And that's important.

There is around 40 different groups here and they are all very different and I think its actually split very evenly half of them are having a social goal and the other half is strictly cultural and some of them are mixed of course. And it's the same in KBH Volume5, where the though is a little bit the same we are splitting the rent up. You can use it for free if you don't have any income, if its like a theater or a project group that wants to try and make an exhibition and have never done it before then they can use the space for free and we can help them as much as we have time for as much as we can. If the same group has an income from the bar or the entrance fee then it's a small amount of money. And then we have a fee that's the same as a similar place would cost in Copenhagen for more established groups that know how to run these events. So we are trying to put every thing into these different categories to make it accessible to a lot of different types of people. But the important thing is that all the people who want to do something who work ambitiously and professionally with the things that they are doing but don't have any money yet but they have to have some help with doing it. And that's the whole idea about it. Its also important for us that if you are under the age of 30 and you come here with your project it has to have a certain amount of maturity- you have to be serious about what you are doing. That is very important.

**it has to be an open door principle so if you are established then you have to give something back. Its all about networking and its all about learning and its about the synergy**

**LK: What is the process to be able to use the space in the Projeckhus?**

AL: We ask people to send an email where they describe in one page what the project is, who they are how old they are and how long they have working on this. And if it seem like that it's a good match and its sometimes very easy to see but almost all the time we are setting up a meeting after that to help guide them. And sometime we need to tell people to develop their ideas a little more and come back again. So we make screening with everyone.

**LK: Is there a limit to how many groups you can have here?**

AL: It fluctuates a lot we had only 30 just a month ago and then we got a bunch of people but it is good to have new faces all the time. But we haven't made a limit yet because so many people work in the nighttime or in the weekend so until now it has been groups figuring out what time suits them to work. So it hasn't been a problem yet. And all the spaces are shared so no one can claim a space. So I think there is always a space to sit and work.

Some of the rooms you have to reserve but the others are first come first serve

If you are over thirty or have income then there are flex space you can rent for cheap, either pay for a drawer to keep your stuff but no table or a bit more for your own desk that you can mess up all you want.

There are 5 or 6 groups that have been here from the beginning. And the people that rent space are usually steady and stay a long time because they have more long-term projects. Some are only here for a few months because they have a deadline. So there are lots of different time scales working here.

## **LK: Does the projekthus collaborate with other festivals and organizations?**

We were involved in the strom festival<sup>6</sup> and we have collaborated with Click festival in Helsingør<sup>7</sup> and last year we were part of Cph docs<sup>8</sup> the film festival. We are trying to be more than just this physical place we want to have collaborations with other organizations within Copenhagen, which is relevant for what we are doing. Sometimes we find people to do projects with and sometimes people find us. But our network is growing bigger and bigger.

We didn't even have a website until Dec 2010, so its funny we didn't do any marketing for ourselves, Groups were just here and it just spread word of mouth but it was funny because it spread through different networks, it wasn't just one group of friends.

And it's the same with Volume the hall down there we were thinking of having a big opening of the place but we decided against it and just opened it and thought it would be better to just let it fill up with different projects in it. And actually I think it works better that way because it's not our hall it's everyone's place and space.

1 Street Mekka is an indoor venue for street sports and culture <http://streetmekka.dk/>

2 <http://supertanker.info/>

3 Republikken is a shared office collective of freelance architects and designers. The space is shared by 70 people including facilities for laser printing, plotting, and event space. <http://republikken.net/>

4 Bureau Detours is a creative organization with great interest in creating social environments in public spaces. They operate on various platforms in a mix of art, design, architecture and cityplanning. The key is, inspiring young and old to relate and bond with their city and neighborhood. [www.detours.biz](http://www.detours.biz)

5 KBH Volume is a 700 sq meter event hall located next to the projekthus art exhibitions, film screenings, concerts, exhibitions, dance performances, carnivals, fashion shows, festivals, etc. and the hall can be designed to suit each event.

6 Str m is a festival in Copenhagen for electronic music. [www.stromcph.dk](http://www.stromcph.dk)

7 CLICK FESTIVAL is the first of a series of events that cultivates and reinforces the relationship between sound and image in the concert context. <http://clickfestival.dk>

8 International documentary film festival in Copenhagen. <http://cphdox.dk>



Figure 63: KBH Projektthus



# dialogue.

*Saskia Peinow is an architect and co-curator of Gaden Finder Vej, a temporary installation project on Jægersborggade in the Nørrebro neighborhood of Copenhagen. Jægersborggade is in many ways in an economic and social tension. The 2 year initiative was reflected in a series of exhibitions ,along the street's length, between the houses, on the shop signs, in cellars, in store windows and along the street wall, to invite dialogue on critical issues and propose another method for how to develop urban space.*

**LK: What was the process behind 36 windows, as you first called it, and how did the project evolve to become Gaden Finder Vej?**

SP: It has always been about having this monthly gallery and all the time filling the space but some would stay longer so each had traces of the one from before and we gave the press the new exhibits. There were ten window boxes and then 3 or 4 basements that were the fantasages for performances or concerts and then the signs ,which there were 15 of them. The signs only had 4 different exhibitions. Niels first, and then another architect, and then a poet.

We weren't so strict about it but made a show every month on the same day as the late night hunting<sup>1</sup>. It has been mostly architects also and it has been we have known people personally 90% of the time. But we started by counting 36 empty windows and then we called the project 36 windows, and then we had this poster on all the windows and we made this email where we described where we had this opportunity and we needed to seize it and we just made a call for artists and architects to come take a walk on the street, choose a

## GADEN FINDER VEJ

Som alle mulige andre gader, har også denne forandret sig siden i går – endda inden for den sidste time, det sidste minut og i løbet af de sekunder det tager at læse dette, lige ind til foranderligheden trækker sig endeligt sammen hen imod sammenfaldet med næste punktum.

Men også dette punktum befinder sig på en linie - for det fortsætter selvfølgelig – gaden gør sig allerede klar til i morgen at blive en anden end den lige var. Men lige netop denne gade forandrer sig hurtigere end mange andre gader - og også hurtigere end de fleste af dem der bo i den. **Jægersborggade har en høj Forvandlingskoefficient.** Men bare fordi den har det, kan den godt være i **skæbnens vold.** Den kan endda på samme tid være i **mange skæbners vold.**

Lige nu er livet i gaden imidlertid særligt i to skæbners vold; det balancerer mellem to skæbner, to truende tilstande, hvor forvandlingen vil være hørt op (Forvandlingskoefficienten  $F = 0$ ): I den ene tilstand vil livet i gaden være gået i **spåner af frygt.** I den anden vil den gå i stammesamfund af middelklassen. I begge disse tilfælde kommer skæbnens vold **udefra.**

Gaden må prøve at finde en tredje vej – **sikre sig en uvis skæbne: "reddet af en uvis skæbne".** Den må skabe sig en åben og uvis skæbne **indefra.** Den må bruge sine potentialer. Der må systematisk eksperimenteres med hvad disse potentialer kan bruges til. I hvert enkelt tilfælde må det observeres hvad der sker, hvad eksperimenterne fører til – og der må skelnes mellem hvad der fungerer godt og hvad dårligt. Det er **en god tid på året at høste erfaringer.** Høsten må bruges; der må bygges på den – ellers **erfarer man for gråspunde,** og vil hele tiden komme til at begynde forfra. Det kommer der ikke meget skæbne ud af.

Ved derimod at bygge på erfaringerne med potentialerne, **kan gaden bygge sig en skæbne indefra.** På den måde kan den måske undgå de truende voldelige skæbner, der lige for tiden endnu hænger over den i en **kritisk spændingstilstand i et for gaden historisk øjeblik.** Men hellere end at lade sig forføre af historien, **må man holde øjeblikket historisk** (Forvandlingskoefficienten  $F = 0$ ). Så længe denne spænding opretholdes er gadens skæbne ikke skjort. I stedet for at afvente at afskælsen vælter ind i gaden udenfra, må den udarbejde sig selv. Lære sig til en skæbne **indefra.**  
/Niels Grønbech

Udstillingen "Casalingo 2011" er en del af GADENS BYTUMSPROJEKT, hvor Jægersborggade er blevet omgjort til en række udstillingsrum. Det får du at vide på [www.gadensbytumspot.com](http://www.gadensbytumspot.com).  
GADEN FINDER VEJ er en del af projektet og skal ses på [www.gadensbytumspot.com](http://www.gadensbytumspot.com).  
Læs flere historier om GADENS BYTUMSPROJEKT på [www.gadensbytumspot.com](http://www.gadensbytumspot.com).  
Du kan følge projektet på [www.gadensbytumspot.com](http://www.gadensbytumspot.com).

GADEN  
FINDER  
VEJ

Figure 64: Gaden Finder Vej

window and put something in it. And nothing happened...at all. I think maybe one person contacted us back that would be interested so we realized had to curate it more so we contacted people we knew and contacted a group and made an exhibition with 10 people. After that exhibition we established these spaces with plywood boxes within the windows, we made 10 as it would be too difficult to make all 36. The first call was asking the artists to establish a space for themselves and that was too naive of us to think that people had time for that. So we said we would establish the spaces and then we contacted the craftsman of the street that are renovating things and asked them to give us the extra plywood that they weren't using.

**LK: Did you feel that you needed to curate the project more than you had originally intended?**

SP: We wanted to make an exhibition that would go from A to Z ,the whole street, so for the first show we invited this architect called Stine Gundale she had been in Rome where she had studied at the Danish institute there. We knew she had a lot prints she had made there and we just asked her to fill it up instead of asking 10 different people. We then asked Neils Grønbæk, another architect who lives on the street, (It's his text that was on some of the windows) to write about Stine's project in order to connect to Jægersborggade because it was, initially about Rome. He saw this link about using what was at hand. When we started the project the façades were unpainted and it was really a mess in

## **the project is about using the tensions ,and experimenting with the potential in order to see what is working and what is not working, to find out-where do we go from here?**

the street. You had plywood filling the street all over because of the construction and there were holes everywhere because of the drainage projects that had gone wrong. People would sometimes fall through because there was just the plywood! And then we had had this shooting episode where 29 gunshots happened on the street in one night -so we thought everything was just going to hell- so we invited Neils to elaborate on Stine's work and then we printed his text on windows and on the shop signs ( that was actually his own idea) He also made this text called Gaden Finder Vej [the street finds its way] and that became the title of the project and many of his thoughts became a manifest for the project; about using the tensions and finding the potential, and using the potential ,and experimenting with the potential in order to see what is working and what is not working, to find out-where do we go from here?

That was actually quite an eye opener for us, we were naïve. We just decided to do something because the street really needed it and then with his text in mind we wanted to use this tension and incorporate that with the artists that we invited next. So it started with just filling up the spaces but then the aim became more nuanced to work with this idea of tension.

**LK :What has been most important as the project continued from a few months to almost 2 years?**

SP:I would say that the question of curating has been really important. Some artists have just walked in that we knew but brought things they had made and just showed a film or whatever and others we have worked with for over half a year to decide what they would show and why, so it became more site specific. But we were deliberate in making a start date and an end date because if it was suddenly an art gallery it would much more demanding for the curating and for the whole organizational level and the quality of the art in the spaces, I think the quality has been quite high but maybe 60% has had a really high quality and maybe 40% has just been a part of the project and I really liked that it has been ok to have a window that was just..ok. Instead of all the windows being high-end. But personally if I said its not an art project in itself, it's a gallery now, I would have much higher standards to the curating and to the whole communication about the art gallery and I would feel a complete different, it would have a very different goal. The pressure to be an art gallery would be there and we would be compared to other art galleries in the city. But I really think it was a the right decision to say ok this was a project of one year and then it turned into being almost 2 years. It was intensively one year to experiment and to also to have some really great projects. And the people we communicated with the most had the best projects in how they communicated something about the street.

**LK: What about Jægersborggade in particular, do you think, influenced your project and the success of the street?**

SP: I think that's a really really huge difference that it's a co-op. I think when you hear the media talking about Jægersborggade as this successful example of city planning or changing a street they fail to mention the coop. As I see it that's the main reason that you can have this. On one hand it looks really ad-hoc; like people can do whatever they feel like because it's a private street and signs and flowers and whatever you want to do. You can have these different events with laid back hunting and late night hunting so it seems really dynamic and really impulsive and driven by young forces and a really creative environment. But then on the other hand it's really planned and it really has a strong strategy behind it. Our project has been done before in a much smaller scale, with just a coop that is one house where somebody uses the shop for a temporary use. But here we had 20 spaces because the whole street is connected we only had to talk to one person to get the keys. The coop made it easier to involve the whole street. You don't have the typical courtyard setup on Jægersborggade you instead have a very linear street and it becomes very difficult to have that dialog. We had to make everybody go into the street so everyone can see each other and say hi and make people more calm and also make them express what they think about the hells angels and drug dealers and so on. I think we are there now. You can definitely be critical about things because it's so obvious now that there such a big group that wants something else.

## One of our intentions with this project was to try and make it visible for the people living here that we were actually quite a large group that wanted something else

**LK: Did the co-op mediate this tension or influence generating a dialogue?**

SP: One of our intentions with this project was to try and make it visible for the people living here that we were actually quite a large group that wanted something else because its such a huge coop and we don't really know each other because there is a 1000 people living here. Maybe you know 10 or 2 people and so if you have something critical to say about the drug dealers and the hells angels you had to do it at the meetings .I felt at these huge meetings you didn't actually know whether it was ok to say how you felt because when you go up you say your name and your number, where you are living. I felt that I have often wanted to talk about the way you can lock yourself into the courtyard and all of these little things but then on the other hand I don't want to say my name and where I live ,I have a kid so one of the intentions with the project was when we are at a meeting and you want to talk about something then maybe it would make it better if you had through the gallery, you met the street and you could see that there are 50 or whatever that also feel the same way.

**LK: How has the tension of the street affected the project?**

It is because of the whole chaotic background; with the drug dealers, is the reason why we've had so much support for the project. Financially we have gotten more or less all the funds that we have applied for and all press from the newspapers and so on, its because it is this street, it is because of the contrast, as you say, of chocolate and hash<sup>2</sup>, it is this contrast. If we had a gallery in the street nearby you would have a much smaller notice because it was a nice idea but our project has had lots of coverage in the papers because it is this environment. So to us it has been the thing fueling it. It has this crime issue and I think that is influencing many of the shops; that it has this tension.

(Endnotes)

1 Monthly event on the street where shops stay open late and concerts or performances are held.

2 Reference to an interview with chocolate maker on the street who said he came to the street partly because the presence of the pushers. Normally with what I do it would be in a very ritzy place and I didn't want that. I liked the combination of hash and chocolate.



*Rene Karpantschov is a social scientist at the University of Copenhagen and former member of the BZ squatter movement. He has written extensively on the topic of squatter movements in Copenhagen and abroad . He co-authored the book, Kampen om Ungdomshuset, a detailed account of the history and social implications of Ungdomshuset and the conflict surrounding its demolition*

**LK: Ungdomshuset was part of a larger network of squatted houses. As former member of the BZ Movement, could you speak about the movement and the role of the house within that network?**

**RK:** I am a scientist of social movements although I was involved with the squatter movements; I now study political, historical, developments of these various squatter movements in Copenhagen; their changing forms of action and identities, and how they mobilized and demobilized and the political dimensions of these movements.

First of all, we are talking about the 1980's squatters movement, which is after the phase of hippie squatting, which started in the 60's and include places like Christiania<sup>1</sup>. After that first wave of squatting in Copenhagen, the 1980's squatters continued with some of the same ideas about self-governing, and collectives, and consensus democracy and so forth but in harder more pessimistic environment. The 1980's were not optimistic times internationally; no more world peace and there was the nuclear component of the cold war. The authorities were much harder against squatters in Denmark in the 1980's because of the economic crisis. Politics were much more conservative, Thatcher in England and the democrat conservative right wing government in Demark. Therefore it produced more pessimistic, militant, radicalized groups in the 1980's.

The situations of the [squatted] houses in the 1980s were accidental, and opportunistic, it was not part of a plan. In many places in Copenhagen there were empty houses because of problems in city planning and sometimes the movement succeeded to capture some of these houses and keep them, after

battles with the police. The Ungdomshuset was part of that; it was the first big victory in that movement. They succeeded to get the keys to the building. Ungdomshuset was not just a place for music it was the political, cultural center for the whole BZ movement, different to the other houses because nobody lived in Ungdomshuset. That building had a long history of uses that involved peoples rights: It was a social house for worker unions, as well as for the women's movement so the building was always a place or a platform for the people in a way.

**LK: What is your perspective of the conflict surrounding Ungdomshuset and its demolition?**

**RK:** The issue of Ungdomshuset was existential to some people. I mean, Ungdomshuset was so important for some peoples lives and for so many people in Copenhagen it was not only that you could go to a cheap concert it was a must, a need in their lives. And it was so important that people did not just get angry but they were really, some people (that) were prepared to die for it. Meaning the social democrats couldn't win this because there was a core of people who would never give up. It was not a political struggle that the social democrats are use to. Normally they can win a battle using a negotiation tactic but here they could never win because these people would never give up, even though the situation was totally bad. So that was the special thing about this situation. If they [the municipality] had known that from the start then they would've known that if it looks like this movement is down, (because that's what they thought, they thought the movement was weakened or over) if you attack it, it will rise and people will mobilize. It turned out even bigger than I had imagined. I was one of the people warning the authorities in the hope, because I like the old place too, that they would preserve it. But they wouldn't listen and in Danish we have a saying, Hvis du ikke vil lytte må man mærke eller føle maybe in English too; if you wont listen you must feel or sense', so they did.

**LK: Do you think that this incident has influenced negotiations with the municipality to keep Christiania?**

**RK:** It certainly did. Christiania and Ungdomshuset, the movements are allied or were allied because it's dynamic. Right now there is no ungdomshuset movement but the squatter movements around the city and Christiania were

always related. It helped Christiania a lot because Christiania was threatened too by not social democrats but by the national government that came in office in 2001. This right wing government supported by the Danish people's party were very hostile to Christiania so when that government attacked Christiania and wanted to normalize it. And when they would send in police groups to force this conversation through Christiania could capitalize on the Ungdomshuset revolt because the balance of power in the city between authorities and people sympathetic to the squatters, including squatters like Christiania, that balance of power had become advantageous to Christiania. If the state would ever imagine clearing the whole of Christiania it would be like Ungdomshuset times 100. I can't imagine. I mean they wouldn't be able to do it in fact; the state was in that sense powerless it couldn't use its force to threaten Christiania enough. If there was that much trouble with just one house in Nørrebro what couldn't happen if they would clear Christiania. For sure, Ungdomshuset influenced the position of Christiania. For sure.

**LK: Do you think that the focus of the new Ungdomshuset on Dortheavej is the same?**

**RK:** There are differences. As a representative of the former squatter movement, I think there were more people of varied age using the old Ungdomshuset because of its long history and its position in the city. On weekends, people could just accidentally pass by and see if something was going on. At the new house you have to be determined to go there.

**LK: Did the course the conflict influence how user-driven groups are organizing themselves?**

**RK:** It caused a revival of ideas about establishing alternative spaces around the city. I've noticed that there are more groups now that, in various ways, try to find spaces and use them, not in radical ways but through negotiation.

**LK: Does the egalitarian structure of the Ungdomshuset group inhibit the possibility for dialogue?**

**RK:** Its true, the tradition in Ungdomshuset was formed back in the 1980's by a militant movement that would never negotiate and would even mask itself

**“there are many that still feels a kind of ownership to the ground and its really a crazy thing because its not political anymore its more something with identity and feelings”**

so they wouldn't be identified. And would of course not accept any leader of any kind. But on the other hand, that movement was my own movement; we did have groups responsible for handling the press and the media in certain conflicts. We were all equal in that sense, and Ungdomshuset carried that with it, a lot of that culture. Even to the end when it was not as militant as when it started.

**LK: This site is obviously considered the territory of Ungdomshuset, it's a very territorial place even given that there is a new Ungdomshuset.**

**RK:** I never imagined that an empty space could mean so much. The other houses in the 1980's when they were evicted there would be feelings for some time. For strategic reasons sometimes the new buildings would be destroyed to teach the next owners of squatted houses that they should not buy a squatted house because it could be dangerous. When companies would buy a squatted house and evict it and use the house or the site for something else they had to be punished so that it would scare future companies from doing the same. But it would always be forgotten.

Ungdomshuset is something different, and I think that people have feelings for the ground still; it doesn't at all have to be only people from the new Ungdomshuset it can be many that you would find around here.

**LK: Do the people that have this attachment to this place want it to remain empty? And by remaining empty it still lives? Or do you think that there's a possibility for the site to generate something again?**

**RK:** The ground and the territory still connect many you can't gather them for

## “The ground and the territory still connects many. You can’t gather them for other reasons right now”

other reasons right now. If somebody wants to build something at ungdomshuset at least it would provoke some reactions and we can see what happens. There are many that still feels a kind of ownership to the ground and its really a crazy thing because its not political anymore, its more something with identity and feelings. It would even make me said if there was a something built there that was directly against the values and the ideas that Ungdomshuset was carrying with it. It’s crazy but it’s still, .....but there are some invisible people around this city that still can influence what will happen. I think people are very divided about how to use this otherwise very attractive ground just next to a future metro station and so forth. It’s a very special situation.

**LK: Memory and loss and memorial are very poignant topics in regards to this site. Do you think the site can be used without forever being a space of loss?**

**RK:** I mean there have been attempts to use the ground for other reasons; for a garden or something by activists, but the police intervene very quickly because they don’t want anything to establish there; it could be dangerous. But you never know what could happen. For the moment its more of this revenge culture, which is of course is very conservative and you don’t move on, but it’s also a very a strong feeling an acknowledgement to an identity, and a to a past; a worship of something. You’ll find people with tattoos you know- 69 nothing forgotten nothing forgiven- it a really, really hardcore feeling about that place.

<sup>1</sup> Christiania is a free town squatted settlement in Copenhagen.



**Christian Fumz is the founder of Bolsjefabrikken (the candy factory) a user-driven collective in Nørrebro. He is also the co founder of Giv Rum Nu.**

**LK: Would you mind speaking a little about the bolsjefabrikken**

**CF:** This is our exam for ourselves its an experiment but in a scientific way where we start a project and we don't know the end result is and this is our grand exam for ourselves this is way we treat it so we get more knowledge as we go along and this way we can always incorporate the different user in the process and what do you think will be the nesxt step and what do you think will be best?

Before that I did something called bolsje fabrikken, the candy factory. I started that in 2006 and it was in making this I felt that I needed someone something to guide me in terms of how do you organize it howdo finance how do you deal with the authorities and all these things

And since there was nothing like this I after 3 years after being out on bolsje fabrikken I thought that this was the time in 2009

**CF:** I was the head of that place for 3 years when it was situated in another place, you can go there and see it now its quite rundown its on klindervej number 8-12 and the new places in laerkevej. I used it initially to present a concept film that I was doing at that time, therefore I needed a space and I sort of ran my bikepast it and thought this could be nice. And I got the keys afterwards

## **“I wanted the bolsjefabrikken to make an example of how you could organize culture”**

**LK: Just like that.....its that easy**

**CF:** Yeah the owner was very, he just gave carte blanche and I could just do what I wanted, he had complete faith in me and my judgement so this is a peculiar place to be because I had just opened the doors and was planning that it was supposed to be a place for everybody and in that way it was a strange form of anarchy but still I had the responsibility towards the owner and towards a friend of mine (he became a friend of mine) this was quite demanding to be in this situation where you wanted to just let everybody do their own thing and still in terms of what the authorities I met with all time about different aspects about building authorities and all these things that you need to consult when you want to do something new inside a building for instance if we wanted to make this a culture house we had to apply to change the use and that's what I was dealing with in bolsje fabrikken so if one side I had to talk to authorities and be very responsible and the other side I was dealing with people who just built for fun and yeah we want a glass pyramid for a green house on the roof! And I have to talk to talk to them and tell them we cant build any major structures and it was an association which is still running although now they are based on consensus

**“I feel that it’s very shallow,  
it’s very non constructive to be opposed  
to something, because that’s all you can  
be.”**

democracy

But when we moved I was also quite done with it I wanted to get on with givrum I hadn’t started anything at that point and I let it go and they found a new place and now its working in the way they like it best and I think that’s so cool. I think they are now trying to finance buying the building, brick by brick.

**LK: When I had first heard about it people were telling me that the bolsje fabrikken was the ‘new ungdomshuset’**

**CF:** Yeah its funny with this because I was the intitiator of bolsje fabrikken and I had nothing to do with the youth house and I too had heard this from other people and at first I was like NO that wasn’t a fact it wasn’t how it went but I can see like now that of course there was some sort of unreleased tension within me also , for my sake, there was all these demonstration towards getting anew youth house and I was thinking well it can be done much more smoothly and much more efficiently byt contacting an owner and getting a deal it wasn’t that present but I can sort of see that the thoughts were in me but it was not like a

direct connection at the time. But still talking about the youth house I felt in that way doing it more smoothly and I wanted to stress the fact that you could be not opposed to society but like in dansih we have the millspiller mulspiller the one who's playing against and the one whos playing alongside and this playing alongside was a team meamber .This is what I wanted with boljefabrikken to make it an example of how you could also organize culture and how you could also do things in opposition because I reado some books about the era and things and that we were moving out the teenage era where sort of oppose

**“I know of a guy that came there a lot and still does. He invented the term ‘loose but tight’ in English actually, so the tight thing is that it’s very loose and I like that a lot.”**

things and I felt that this was quite right that its very shallow it s very non constructive to be opposed to something because that’s all you can be then and I thought it would be much more fun to be a team member.

Its all volunteers of course non professionals just finding things and using it and its very low-key and very nice and also when there is a festival is always planned I know of a guy that came there a lot and still does he invented the term loose but tight’ in English actually so the tight thing is that its very loose and I

like that a lot.

**LK: That's a hard balance to keep. It's a fragile thing. These places start out as a place for everyone but groups form and it becomes exclusive and its hard to make a place for everyone**

CF: Exactly, Yeah it is that's also what I realized that eventhought the initial purpose of the place was to make it for everybody I mean you quickly, grafitti was ok at the first place and I mean the asthetics trigger some people and shove other away and the people that have the time for bolsje fabrikken I would say is also an exclusive group and I the funny thing is its homeless artists and the people just scrimmaging around who has the time and the motivation to be there, be part of it and the normal working studying family person wouldn't have time wouldn't have enough resources to put into it in order for it to thrive there so there's a funny exclusivity. Its an exclusive group the people that have the time who don't have to go to jobs and finance and apt that can take part. I'm so glad to have been an initial part of this and I'm happy that its still running and they are trying to buy the place, I can understand that they like their place now but they also liked the former place so they will also like the next place.



*Jesper Elg is the co-founder of the V1 Gallery. The gallery sees art as a profound and competent media for social and political engagement, the gallery has a desire to challenge both the viewers, the norms and itself and aspires to create a space with no limitations other than quality and nerve.* - V1 gallery.com

**LK: The site is still the territory of Ungdomshuset even though the youth have been given a new house at Dortheavej 61. Do you think the group wants it to remain empty?**

**JE:** I think it's very, very fragmented. I think a lot of people would like something to happen there also because from a communal viewpoint its like you have all these people, the youth have a new youth house so how much can you claim? I think its also that question.

It's also about ownership of course. If you have fought really hard for that place and you saw it get destroyed I understand their feelings are running deep there. What I personally don't understand is why you don't feel like need to do some kind of manifest there something that has some kind of positive energy.

**LK: There is great amount of tension and embodied energy in that space currently it is always met with violence. Do you think that conflict and that tension have the potential to generate something else?**

**JE:** I think definitely. I definitely think so and I really hope someone will take up the challenge and do something with the place.

**LK: When you ask anyone in Copenhagen about the Ungdomshuset event everyone knows that space whether they were involved or not. How do you think the youth house conflict has changed the dynamic in the city in terms of the informal and the city, politics and the people, and the police and the people?**

**JE:** I think it was such a fo-pah that it got torn down in the first place I mean it was such a, it was really a glitch from the Kommune basically. I mean they

made a mistake and that mistake ended up causing so many problems. Of course I think there should be a place for progressive youth culture. But I think what happened was unfortunate in that a lot of people that had been supportive of the youth house were, when it got torn down, and all the fights came afterwards, they felt they had their neighborhood destroyed. People that

**If you have fought really hard for that place and you saw it get destroyed I understand feelings are running deep there. What I personally don't understand is why you don't feel the need to do some kind of manifest there; something that has some kind of positive energy.**

were for it were all of a sudden; we understand your anger but you don't trash your neighbors, you take it somewhere else where it can matter, you trash city hall. So I think so many things shifted. It's the same with Christiania, I think by and large that most people in Denmark are for Christiania but sometimes the way they behave about their rights, the Christianities, or the former users of the youth house, it disrupts the moral balance in a way because people feel like "wait a second, we are helping you and standing up for your rights but then you have to respect society around you as well"

**LK: Do you think the conflict surrounding Ungdomshuset being torn has influenced alternative groups and how they organize themselves and negotiate with the city and culture?**

I think that the people from Bolsjefabrikken, in a way, are more strategic, and in a way that I really like, they are trying to take their own fate into their hands; and not just relying on the Kommune to give them a space or giving them

**it disrupts the moral balance in a way because people feel like “wait a second, we are helping you and standing up for your rights but then you have to respect society around you as well”**

money for a space. I really think it is a really good way to do things because then you also obtain the maximum autonomy. They are trying to save money so they can buy it (their building). I think its really interesting and in that way Bolsjefabrikken is also much more akin to how our gallery [V1 Gallery] is run; you just find out you want to do something and then you work at it until you make it into something that is viable. So I think in that way, at least how I perceive Bolsejefabrikken it has taken the function of the old youth house for everything that has to do with the creative outlet.

**LK: The youth house was a positive producer of culture in terms of the punk music scene. The conflict and the clearing of the house gave it a negative, violent aspect that it never had before. Do you think the new youth house has carried with it the violent, defensive aspect the old youth house ended with?**

**JE:** I think they new youth house is more like a political platform, more than it is a youth movement. It served the purpose of being the headquarters for the activities surrounding that so its definitely more political platform for many people working in small decentralized groups. I think its great that we have a place for young people who want to express themselves politically can meet and so forth. But I think the progressiveness of the old youth house its seems like that has gone to Bolsjefabrikken. There are people who are involved in music and art and all different things that are meeting there are creating their own terms of doing things. I think in the long run that will prove very, very interesting to see how that develops. Also because I think that its interesting culture where you producing all these things for the benefit of the community to make, so there's a space where you can make these things happen.

In August 2011, American street artist, Shepard Fairey painted several murals in Copenhagen as part of a collective work on global issues. One of the murals was painted on the wall at Jagtvej 69. The painting sparked a strong reaction around the site that had been untouched since 2007.



Figure 65: Shepard Fairey painting mural Credit: glans galore/flickr.com

*Jesper Elg is the co-founder of the V1 Gallery.*

**LK: The mural that was painted by Shepard Fairey at Jagtvej 69 has been interpreted through various media resulting in a myriad of reactions. As director of the gallery that organized this piece, could you explain the gallery's role in the process?**

JE: The gallery show had been planned for, I think, 3 years and approximately a year ago we started talking to Shepard about doing something in public space while he was here. We contacted the city of Copenhagen, the Kommune, to see if they had any buildings available that would be suitable for murals and it turned out that they didn't. So we contacted private owners. We wanted the project to spread out over the city and maybe work in some areas where it would make sense in a communal way, you know. We ended up doing 8 murals but I think we sent around 15 to 16 locations to Shepard, with a little explanation about each location. So the project is became trying to spread it around Copenhagen so you would meet in a different kind of urban context.

**LK: The Jagtvej 69 site was within that group of proposed sites?**

JE: Yeah it was. We were in contact with the owner of the building and he was very keen on us doing something there because I think he had this opinion that he was kind of sad that there was nothing on this spot; that there was nothing happening there. It has all become derelict and nobody was really using it anymore because it is really such a mess.

Once in a while, in the summer, when the weather was nice people might go there but otherwise it was just like this weird missing tooth or gap in the city. Of course me and Mikkel, (Mikkel is my partner in the gallery) we knew that it was a sore spot but we also felt that it was a spot that would be really interesting to have a piece because it could turn out in many different ways. We knew that it wouldn't go unnoticed but we didn't expect what to happen to happen.

Mikkel, who use to be a user of the former youth house, was in contact, not in any formal way, but he discussed it with a couple of people that had been more connect to the youth house than he had been. They thought it was nice that something would happen there, they were supportive.

One of the reasons we had chosen the spot was because when Shepard Fairey

was here in 2004, he did a big misfits painting right on the front of the youth house so there was this connection already. The last time he was here we did everything illegally around the city, we didn't ask anybody to be able to do them and we did a lot around the city and one of the spots was the old youth house.

**LK: The wall is owned by the building next door but that space is owned by? The church group, Faderhuset?**

JE: Not anymore. It's a private group of investors that owns the site now. They bought it from the church quite a while back and I know there's been different discussions since then. At one point this group of investors was interested in creating a new youth house that would be a building more suitable with rehearsal rooms for bands and so forth. But right now I don't think anybody wants to build anything there because they are too afraid of the repercussions of building something there.

**LK: How did you go about explaining the context of this particular site, which seems to be the most loaded location, to Shepard?**

JE: We tried to explain to him what it was about but he had an impression from being here in 2004 so he had a good idea about what it had been about and I think he felt that it was a significant place to put up a political charged piece. That is what most people didn't actually get. It's a peace symbol but it's a dove but in this target so its meant as a commentary about us being involved in the same two wars that America was in involved in: Afghanistan and Iraq. I think he meant it as a way of saying that peace is a fragile thing and you should be aware of what you do to obtain peace. There is more than one way of reading it basically. It was meant as a series of work that interacts. So it wasn't a specific piece in that way regarding the old history ungdomshuset.

**LK: But you understand how it was misinterpreted? Do you think if that particular piece had been on another wall do you think it would've made a difference?**

JE: Yes I can, but I don't think it would've made much of a difference. It became very clear to us, because after somebody painted on it the first time we started a dialogue with the users of the new youth house. A lot of the old users of the

**“it’s a wall.....its for anyone to negotiate.”**

old youth house had been there for the 2 days, it took him 48 hours or more to paint it, and they had been there and they had all been excited about it basically.

**LK: So they were more involved that it seemed, given what happened?**

JE: Yeah they were coming down there everyday and talking to Shepard and some of them had t-shirts and books and stuff signed by him so there was definitely a lot of interest in having the piece there from the people around that is, neighbors and also from the old users from the old youth house.

[After the mural was vandalized] We started a dialogue with some of the new users because they came to the site and we had a big argument with them, or, Shepard had a big argument with them. We decided that they should do the bottom part of the piece so that it would be a collaboration .They came to the gallery and had some talks about how they could do it together .They didn’t want to put anything on top of Shepard’s that Shepard didn’t like so there was really a good dialogue about it. Basically, what happened was that they painted, for 3 days, and then that got destroyed as soon as they were finished. And these are the people who are heavily involved the new youth house. There’s so much interest in specific walls so it wouldn’t matter what you put up there, somebody would negotiate it. So in that sense I don’t think it would have mattered what you put up there.

**LK: what was Shepard Fairey’s reaction to the vandalism to the mural?**

JE: First of all I think it could have any artist and there would have been some kind of vandalism involved. It could’ve been Banksy it could have been, any

other Danish artist, no matter what there would've been vandalism. Shepard, he's so use to it because its part of the graffiti urban art thing. Some people, if they think they can get some fame out of going over somebody who is more famous, they will do it. Others don't because they have too much respect but I think on that ground its like, it was just too interesting. We expected that something would happen but we didn't know what would happen and we didn't know when it would happen. I think we all thought it would be there for a month before some thing happened or 14 days but Shepard went out the next day, I was like," ok Shepard what do you want to do? Should we go?" And he said "As long as I'm here, I'm gonna go out, and I'm going to retouch it . That's what I would do in LA; I would go back everyday". Shepard wasn't scared, he said to me. " I wanna send this message that you can't, if you write Yankee hipster go home, I'll go back and paint over it . And you can paint it again and I'll come back and paint it again." . It's a struggle about public space; Who has the right to utilize space?. I think that was his epiphany when he did the collaborative piece, and even *that* was destroyed the night it was finished. And we did it with new users of the youth house! It was then that he understood what I said the first day " I didn't expect it to happen this fast but now, that it did Shepard , no matter what we do it's gonna be, somebody is gonna , basically fuck with it."

**LK: Despite the conflict surrounding the vandalism, do you think it became productive?**

JE: This thing between Shepard and these kids from the youth house; that we could come through everything that had happened up to that point where it was actually like they agreed on something and they agreed on doing something together; the fact that it got destroyed for me had nothing to do with anything, you know? The dialogue is more important.

Shepard finds these dialogs super necessary, so do I. I think what the good thing about doing something there was kind of to break the ice, to initiate a discussion that you can't just leave a place like that .When we met them [new users] down there before deciding to do the collaborative piece they said to us "but why didn't you come and ask us if you could paint something on the wall?" and I was just like " would you ask us? Before you painted on our wall?" and they were like "ah ok we can see that it doesn't work like that. This issue of autonomy coming from a group which should be the carrier, the supporters. They we like, ok we can get your point, of course can't ask us before you come and do something like this".

And I think that was really realization for them : 'oh yeah of course you can't do it that way" And I responded, " Ok, had we come and asked you, who would've answered me?" And they were like, 'ok yeah nobody could've answered'. They ended up having this really funny name for this group that they created to deal with the issue; A decentralized group of young vandals working in compilation with Shepard Fairey, that was what the committee called themselves that made the giant press statement with us.

That night when the media was starting to write about it we just knew we had to put out a joint statement with them otherwise it would be bad for them. We were receiving a lot of bad sentiments and people were very angry with the new youth house and we had to control that because that would .... We didn't want it to backfire on the youth house.

**LK: People were angry with the youth?**

JE: Yeah they catch a lot of shit already so it would be very unfortunate that some thing that was meant as a celebration of the whole culture ended up damaging the culture it was meant to celebrate. Then it would've been a total failure. It was super important for us to go out right away and make sure that didn't happen. We were sitting and writing until 2 o clock ;having phone conferences so they knew exactly what we were saying. Of course we couldn't do it together we had to send out two separate ones but just so we knew exactly what the other part was doing. That was a lot of fun and hard work and it was nice to have this collaboration. They were so supportive of each other and we just wanted it to be clear . What happened to the mural, it wasn't sanctioned from the youth house, that it wasn't something that they agreed on in a meeting- that we should trash this new mural.

**LK: It was done on individuals' own accord....**

JE: Exactly. And I actually think that the people or that the person that ended up destroying the piece that the youth house did was somebody from the graffiti environment and had nothing to do with the youth house at all. So again, it's a wall.....its for anyone to negotiate.

**LK: From what I've read, and from conversations with others it seems that it's a very fragmented group now; there are people from the old house that might not use the new house and then people from the new house that might have been involved in the conflict but not the everyday happenings of the old house.**

**Do you think there are fractions within the new group?**

JE: I don't think anybody there quite knows who's in charge, if anyone is in charge. I mean, we did a joint press statement just to make sure that the media understood that we were working together and that was a hugely complicated thing. They can't say, they can never say because it's so fragmented within the users of the youth house. They can maybe say, ok, there has been a majority vote, but that only includes people that were present when it was voted on. I think some of the users are very radical politically but some of them are more radical in an artistic way. It's such a big mix of users and they all have different viewpoints on a lot of things. Some of the new users want something new to happen on the ground and a lot of the users want it to be left as like a tombstone for the old youth house. Which I think some of the users think is not

**“if you paint something there it only takes one person to damage it before its seems like there's a whole movement behind it”**

very progressive. They are supposed to be about progressive youth culture so I think they really have this dilemma about how to treat that spot.

**LK: They are not as united as the old house?**

JE: Exactly. And at the same time I spoke to a couple of old members of the youth house, some of the founders of the old house that were like in the days afterwards (the mural vandalism) they were, “this has nothing to do with what we started” they were embarrassed. The youth culture we were for was for punk music and rebellion and not for this kind of cemetery attitude; that this should

**“it’s about public space,  
and who owns public space,  
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**What happened with Shepard’s mural,  
was that a democratic thing?”**

be this weird tombstone. I could much better understand it if there wasn’t a new youth house. Then I could much better understand the dilemma. It’s like the structure of the youth house has hindered it to a certain extent. There is a certain amount of myth involved in all of this and it seems like it gets appropriated

**LK: Do you think the mural will influence future use of the site?**

JE: Yeah definitely and its funny when I speak to people now after this happened everybody seems like more afraid to do something there while I’m of the belief that well now we have paved the way for something new to happen there. It was the intention with Shepard’s pieces, like all the other pieces we did with him in Copenhagen, that they were all meant to be temporary. None of them were meant to stay.

**LK: In one of the articles I read they quoted Husk Mit Navn, the Danish street artist, and he was quoted that he would never paint on that wall, that I believe the quote was “its an open would that you cannot pour paint on”. Have you found this reaction from the people you have contacted?**

JE: Its like 50 50. I have talked with a lot of artists like Husk Mit Navn that just can’t be bothered ; it’s just too much of a hassle and then I’ve been talking to people that think that it’s super important because it’s about public space and who owns public space, who has the right to public space, do we all have the right to it? And how does that pan out, basically, in a democracy? What

happened with Shepard's mural, was that a democratic thing? Or was it a fascist thing happening there? So I think a lot of people are now interested in working with that wall and a lot of people will stay away from it.

**LK: Do you think the owners of the site will be open to future interventions after this conflict?**

JE: Right now we are talking with the owner and he is still up for something to happen there. I was really happy that the owner wasn't really scared. He thought it was good and the people living his building thought it was great. I was out there only one day while Shepard was painting but I mean the response he met while working out there was amazing. If you go on the internet there are so many blog entries -'I cant believe Shepard Fairey is painting a wall in my neighborhood " and that was the sense of community that was there.

I think some the most interesting kind of discussion about it is definitely at this website called Modkraft. Many of the users from the youth house both old and new are using Modkraft as this debate forum and I thought some of the most interesting discussions about what was happening, was happening right there because there was so many conflicting interests and sentiment.

**LK: It's an interesting shift considering the history of these movements going back to the 80's and how the advent of technology plays a role in the dialog and development of networks. The conflict around the youth house garnered global attention, as there were riots in other cities in Europe. So it has created a new type of public space,**

JE: And now people who are not involved also can go in and have their say in this debate. I find it really interesting, that a very little group of people, and by little group I mean like maybe 5 or 6 people get to define what happens there. Like if you paint something there it only takes....it only takes one person actually, to damage it before its seems like there's a whole movement behind it you know?

**LK: What do you feel is the most important outcome of the whole situation?**

The dialogue. that you could actually start it out as an argument but end up doing something together which definitely showed as soon as they understood where Shepard was coming from. They were also like “oh he’s not just a rich artist with a following” his whole thing is founded in what we are doing. We are actually the same, but at two different.... the one is forty something and we are 19 -20 you know but we want the same. That was.... I mean I didn’t in the first days, I didn’t expect we would get that far.

...to come to an understanding then you have come a long, long way right?



**“He made the wrong statement in his painting, claiming he was a spokesman for the street without asking the street, or talking to the street,”**

*Rene Karpantschof, social scientists and former member of BZ movement on the Jagtvej mural*

**LK:** From the perspective of a social scientist how did you interpret the situation surrounding the Shepard Fairey mural at Jagtvej 69.

**RK:** He violated several laws in the subcultures and he was punished with violence for it. This was not good but expected to some extent.

His mistake was first of all he is a successful public well know person from subcultures that now claims to represent subcultures. Already that makes the real subculture people very skeptical –no one can speak for us- they would say. Then he made his first painting claiming that the peace agenda was to some how speak, be a voice for the street and that communication and dialogue is important and so on...but he never asked the people that had emotions and ideas and relations to this problem, he never asked them,

what do you think we should do?- if we should make a painting there how should it be? and lets have a dialogue- no he just came in from the side and made his idea claiming it was dialogue with words from the street, which it was not, and his message or his statement in the painting was something peace and understanding which was not at all what this ground symbolized for the Ungdomshuset. It's a symbol for failed dialogue, for violence and repression by the state not at all peace and dialog so he made the wrong statement in his painting, and in a kind of arrogant way claiming he was a spokesman for the street without asking the street, or talking to the street, so he made a lot of mistakes of course that provokes reactions that in the first place were symbolic like destroying the painting or changing it and then in the end he got his dialogue and made painting in cooperation with some activists and the story could've ended there but then there was no consensus or big decisions made by the youth. There was no structure, decision structure in the milieu

that could legitimize such painting so another faction that didn't agree in the first painting made with other activists, another more radical faction, came and destroyed that too. And then he got beaten up I heard but the conflict was these people do not want others to represent them.

**“People can get really angry at almost like-minded persons because they are a danger to the strategy of the identity you have created for yourself.”**

**LK: do think it was the content of the painting of the fact that somebody painted anything there at all?**

**RK:** I think it was a combination because it was that somebody that came from outside painted something. That's already is a little provoking then of course what do they paint then? - He painted something that is the worst thing you could paint. Because the worst thing for these people is that it is forgotten; that this conflict happened and how dramatic it was and how much its subject is a symbol of a lack of democracy in this society; so the worst thing you can do is to say to like a in Danish, its called a skønmaleri; If you put something sweet on something bad tasting.

So the worst thing you can do is to try to create a false imagination of the reality and try to make it more good looking than it is.

And he [Shepard Fairey] never saw that coming I think, he had good intentions sure, but peace and dialogue is all really good stuff but (laughs) but its also how this ground meant so much for these people; they became angry because of the painting.