decentralized urbanity
a nomadic sense of space in the landscape of the generic city

“The biggest reason for people to move is shifts in their lives, their needs change. They are seldom dissatisfied with what they have. Pensioners have a harder time to decide. They don’t want to move.”

Different type of ownership for apartments.
- Rental apartment: You rent the apartment from a landlord.
- Co-operative flat: As a member in an apartment association you dispose an apartment.
- : You own an apartment in a bigger building complex.

In Sweden the average age for people to move from home is 20 years. The average establishment age is 29 years. SCB

“The fact that space cannot be compressed without two points is quite telling. It teaches us that space is not discernible from one fixed point, but emerges only through movement from one point to another.” Kengo Kuma Anti-object p 93

Seattle public library
OMA

“... stable spaces in between the platforms function as trading floors... where the interface between the different platforms is organized...” Seattle public library.

Dom-Ino House
Le Corbusier

Fu Berlin
Candilis, Josic, Woods, Scheidhelm

In Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, Somalia, Malmö, Helsinki, Stockholm, Almstad, Nyköping, Nordmaling, Östersund, In Sweden the average age for people to move from home is 20 years. The average establishment age is 29 years. SCB

“A B
B A
A B
B A
A B
Today we live in a world where the nations’ borders are getting vaguer and the individualistic ideas flourish. With a Swedish citizenship more than half of the globe is one online booking away. At the same time Sweden’s second vice-speaker in the parliament says that people from Sápmi is not part of the nation and those who want to become a citizen have to leave their old culture behind. So on one hand there are now more possibilities than ever to become a global citizen in tandem as political party that think that their own culture identity is under threat are growing stronger.

How can architects meet this polarized view? How can we open up for influences from the surrounding social milieu simultaneously as giving a feeling of security of local culture as a unique unit? But this there needs to be an architecture that can speak to both sides, to make possible to travel the world and also to feel at home right here.

The answer for this can be found in the old traditional nomadic Sámi culture. A culture which is without a home on a specific place but have a “village” that stretches 400km. Their connection to this area is so strong that they proudly show it as part of their identity.

The difference between the nomadic culture and the traditional citizen lays in the movement. Where the static people’s identity is equal to the culture of the place, nomads identities are the sum of a space. This gives nomads a stronger connection to traditions while being able to take in the new. Changes in one place do not compromise their cultural identity. The individual based need is what drives their movements and through that a collective identity gained. From this diversity can be celebrated, different places be used by a variety of people and a common ground be established for discussion.

Kengo Kuma states that “space is not discernible from one fixed point, but emerges only through movement from one point to another”. And in similar way a group cannot be formed without movement of individuals. “If the group is everywhere, there is no group because there is no individual.”

Cosmopolitanism is not about breaking borders and removing boundaries. Cosmopolitanism is the courage to invite new people into your group, to have the will to open your home for others, to dare leave the comfort of the familiar behind, to celebrate the diversity a new meeting creates.

That’s why architects have to stop building the city as an anonymous generic landscape and start decentralize the urban fabric and fill our cities with unique places. And for every social scale the building touches, create a border. But a border that is open with several paths to make movement conscious and the crossing of a barrier one step forward. Only then can the unique qualities of an identity/place lead to a strong cosmopolitan citizen/space.
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Current movement
Future movement from the city
Future movement in current block
Shadow at 08:00
Shadow at 12:00
Shadow at 18:00

Scale 1:1000
PLACE
Where ever you walk there will be a new place to explore. From the restaurant on the ground floor to private homes higher up at the edges. The figurations are placed to lead people into the building with a central core of common places. A big soccer field in the basement establish this center axis who then branch out in the building.

SPACE
Moving from one place to another experiencing the building, gives you the connection to the space as a whole and make it a part of your identity. Sharing facilities together and developing them over time will in a similar way increase your sense of the whole building as one unique unit that you are part of. Giving pride to you, as an individual and as part of the collective.

MOVEMENT
You can enter the building through different routes which varies in spacial qualities. From broad stairways that stretches out into the street to smaller and steeper paths which are hidden inside the building. To reach the stairwells and elevators you have to walk under the building before entering through the more private circulation.

APARTMENTS
- 34 Rental apartments
- Up to 36 Proprietary owned
- 3 Common kitchen
- One restaurant
- Soccer field
- Laundry room
- Common platform

To make dwellings for temporary, unestablished and established residents in Umeå and to give them a common ground where also the public is invited. Rental apartments are built on a grid inspired by the generic city, divided from the rest of Umeå by a common facade creating an inside space. Platforms with water and electricity will be placed throughout the inside to be bought and developed over time as proprietary owned houses. Owners of this homes participate and pay their part in the common areas and are therefore encouraged to let temporary inhabitants rent part of their homes.
MATERIAL

Aged Wood
Facade of the private homes

Corten Steel
Facade for the whole building

Glulam Beams
All Construction, flooring in public area and stairways

Glas
In first floor pathways

Concrete
First floor facade

Entrance in north corner of the building
Scale 1:75

Corridor between rental apartments

Modell of the ground floor

Present

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VISION

My expectation is that the building will be a central platform in Umeå, a common place for temporary visitors, unestablished and established individuals to develop over time. A platform that is open for the surrounding social milieu, local and global, and become a place with a strong character grounded in the present, creating a direction for the future. A building with physical presence in the city center of Umeå and a collective voice that is conscious and stands for its own beliefs. From this central space unic people can branch out, both in the building, creating their own home that sticks out from the collective facade, but also traveling the world and becoming a cosmopolitan citizen.

Possible future PLAN

When arranging future dwellings extra considerations should be put into planning, so parts can easily be rented out. For example, having two entrances creates an intermediate zone between owners and temporary visitors.

Future