CREATIVE CHANGE
An investigation of how creative places can strengthen the schools and communities in socio-economically challenged areas
CREATIVE CHANGE
Master Thesis 2018
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ABSTRACT

To be creative or innovative is a highly praised trait within the labor market of today. Though it has often been seen as a talent only granted to a chosen few, most evidence imply that it is something that we all possess and can develop. Creativity within education also appears to have positive impacts on school-results, attendance and confidence among students. Yet creativity has a low status within the current education system, making the opportunities to develop our creative ability insufficient.

Architectural projects and development strategies focused around creativity have occurred frequently on the agenda since the release of Richard Florida’s book “The Rise of the Creative Class” in 2002. An increase of creative activity has been linked to growth but lately also to gentrification, as if this was an inevitable result. The focus has been on economic growth and increased tourism, instead of what creativity can bring to the individual and the community.

This thesis aims to answer two main questions: First, how can creative places benefit the schools and communities in socio-economically challenged areas? Second, how can these creative places best be designed to achieve these benefits? Creative places refer in this thesis to public spaces that encourages creativity, which can be places for creative production but also places for experiencing creative works of others. The aim is also to implement the learnings into a design proposal, where the area Vivalla in Örebro is chosen as the site for implementation.

In order to answer the first question, the paper examines the existing conditions of vulnerable areas in Sweden and some of the available research on creativity in relation to education. To gain knowledge about design aspects four existing projects that aims to be places for creativity are analyzed. The local conditions of Vivalla are mainly researched through qualitative methods of observation, interviews and a workshop with students from the local school. Finally, the ideas and findings are implemented into a design-proposal, which is a vision for a new creative platform. Rather than a finished project, the proposal should be seen as a vision showing the potentials of the site that can be used as a basis for discussion with the local actors.

This paper provides some useful arguments to why creative places in socio-economically challenged areas are worth investing in and highlights the importance of an inclusive development process. Finally, it also provides a diverse view of one of Sweden’s most segregated areas.
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When I moved to Vivalla in 2009 I had little knowledge about the place. As I was in urgent need of accommodation because I was going to study in Örebro, my only motivation to move there was the ridiculously low real-estate prices compared to other areas in the same city. This made a bit suspicious of what this place could be, but I soon came to appreciate it. I enjoyed the nature and surrounding recreational areas, the closeness to service and the people I met there were generally friendly towards me.

But what soon became apparent was that most people had a completely different idea about this place. I could see their slightly shocked faces when I told them in which area I lived, and it wasn’t long until I became tired of answering the concerned questions about if I was scared to go out, if I had been exposed to crimes and so on. They probably did not mean any harm with these questions, they were sincerely scared of this place, even though most of them had never actually been to Vivalla.

This was my first own experience of segregation, living in one of the so called particularly vulnerable areas in Sweden. It is a very brief experience, as I only lived in Vivalla for two years. I did not grow up there and since I have Scandinavian parents I have never experienced racism directed towards me. To say that I have really experienced segregation would be a lie. Yet this short experience has stuck with me and I have continued reflecting on this topic. How can an area become this isolated and where does all the prejudice come from? How could it go so wrong? And what can we do about it?

My thesis became a great opportunity for me to delve deeper into these questions. It was also a possibility for me to revisit Vivalla with an architectural education behind me and hopefully some new tools to find solutions where I previously saw problems. Segregation is a complex issue and has to be worked with on several levels, where the physical environment is only one aspect. But there is reasonably no coincidence that most of the segregated areas are from the same historical period and have similar spatial conditions. Architects and planners should thereby have an important role to play in this context.

With this as my background, I also chose to focus on another interest of mine, creativity and its role within education. Creative activities are something I strongly believe in when it comes to strengthening communities and individuals, deriving from my own development through artistic studies and my experience of working with children at KomTek - a municipal technology school with a creative approach.

In this study I will describe the problems occurring in segregated areas and in what ways creative places can address these. But it is worth to remember that the problems and discouraging statistic never gives the full image of a place. There are a great amount of good initiatives and engagement as well, which I will also include. To sum up: there are problems, but in my experience the prejudices from the general public towards these areas are deeply exaggerated and the positive aspects need to be highlighted.
VIVALLA HILL - ONE OF MY FAVORITE PLACES IN ÖREBRO, JUST OUTSIDE VIVALLA
INTRODUCTION:
SEGREGATION IN SWEDEN
We have today an increasing amount of segregated areas in Sweden. More people are economically vulnerable and the differences between areas within the same city are increasing considering experienced safety, unemployment, school-results and participation. The Swedish police have pointed out 61 so called vulnerable areas, of which 23 are categorized as particularly vulnerable. Besides the criminal influence, which is the main concern of the police, these areas also struggle with the other socio-economic problems.

These lists of the most vulnerable areas have gained a great deal of media-attention since the release of the first list by the Police in 2014. Although it is positive that the problems are discussed, the attention has unfortunately also lead to exaggerated fear and prejudices and the areas are often referred to as "no-go-zones", which the police mean is a misleading and exaggerated term.

As is also written in the report by the Police authority “Vulnerable areas- Social risks, collective ability and undesirable events” (English title translated by author) the low opinions of segregated areas do not only come from the outside, the trust among residents is also lower compared to other neighborhoods. There is little belief in the collective ability of the own community and the trust towards public authority and society at large is low. The current debate is often focusing on the need for increased control and tougher punishments. Although more policemen may be needed, it could be argued that this is only dealing with the effects of segregation, not the core of the problems.
Another issue to discuss is where the Police need reinforcement the most. According to an article in Magasinet Paragraf from 2017, based on statistics from BRÅ (The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention) from the last ten years, the most dangerous areas in Stockholm are not any of the so called vulnerable areas, but Norrmalm followed by Södermalm - the most central parts of Stockholm where the real-estate prizes are the highest. They looked at assault, rape, aggravated violation of a woman's integrity, illegal persecution, violence against official, robbery, attempted murder and manslaughter and the amount of reported crimes were by far highest in Norrmalm, about three times more cases of lethal violence in Norrmalm (so-called vulnerable areas). In a follow-up article they also included murder and manslaughter after the critique for the previous exclusion of these, which was due the insignificant effect it would have on the statistics as there are very few crimes occurring within this category. But the results were similar, with over three times more cases of lethal violence in Norrmalm compared to for example Tensta or Rinkeby. It could be argued that the number of unrecorded cases is higher in vulnerable areas but considering the large statistic differences between the areas this could not possibly be the only reason for the result.

On the other hand, the experienced safety during the evening is the lowest in the vulnerable areas Rinkeby and Botkyrka. The same is seen among women in other vulnerable areas where in average 53% of the women in vulnerable areas feel very or moderately unsafe compared to 30% in other urban areas. But considering the reported crime statistics there should be no more reason to be afraid of going out in these areas compared to the (according to the real-estate market) most desirable areas in central Stockholm.

With that said I do not mean that there is no need for extra resources for the police in vulnerable areas, but that it may be more important to focus on the other social issues which distinguish them from other places, such as the low educational-level and the unemployment. There is also work being done on other levels, which may have more impact when it comes to counteracting segregation and building a better ground for future generations. For example, in a recent reform-program from the government for the years 2017-2025 a lot of investments are made in strengthening the schools in segregated areas and also in sports associations and cultural activities. But as has recently been seen with the closing of KTH architecture school in Tensta and Design-Lab S in Skärholmen, both focusing on creative development in vulnerable areas and to reach out to groups that today are underrepresented within the architecture and design-field, it appears that the current public financial support for these kind of initiatives is not enough. But what I found when investigating Vivalla was also great deal of local engagement among residents and organizations (Folkets Hus Vivalla for example) working for a positive development of the area.
LOCAL CONTEXT:

VIVALLA
Vivalla is, like the vast majority of the vulnerable areas, built as a part of the so called “Million Programme” which was implemented between 1965 and 1975 when Sweden had a large housing-shortage. The planning of these areas was made in collaboration with Chalmers University of Technology who developed the so called SCAF-plan, which was used extensively during this period. The plan is based on a separation between different types of traffic (cars from pedestrians and bicycles) and has an inner car-free green and residential zone with a local center providing services. The areas are often perceived as isolated and unsafe. As is also seen in the case of Vivalla, they are usually surrounded by a ring-road which creates a sharp boundary and disconnects the area from the surrounding.

Vivalla is located about 5 km from the city centre of Örebro. The planning of the area began in the 1960’s and it was built between 1967 and 1970 on what was previously mainly farmland. Through the use of effective production methods and standardisations the aim was to achieve an economical housing-area with low rents. This resulted in long, straight houses on a completely flattened surface. The typical house in Vivalla is a two-story apartment or row house with red brick façade. The lower scale was chosen for easier access to nature.

The main public buildings are the school and Vivalla Centrum. The Centrum has grocery store, dentist, health centre, library, folk high-school, shops, restaurant and a café. Behind the centrum building there is a green pedestrian path in north-south direction.

In the 90s the 14-story high tower was built by Vivalla Centrum along with two 2-3 story houses by HSB. These are the only privately-owned apartment houses in the area, the rest (96%) are rental apartments mainly owned by ÖBO, the municipal housing company.

The dominant apartment-size is two rooms (44%) and although some have been merged or extended, there is still a shortage of both smaller and larger apartment sizes. Vivalla has today around 7000 registered inhabitants, but according to ÖBOs estimations there can be as many as 1000-1500 unregistered persons also living in the area. With the approximate areal of 1 km² the density is high. The latest 15 years the population has increased with 1400 persons even though the building of new housing has been at a minimum. According to estimations the population will continue to grow due to high birth numbers and influx. About 40% of the inhabitants are children, which is almost twice as high as the Örebro average.

The overcrowding is a problem recognized from other vulnerable areas. This lack of private space is for example linked to low school-results. As the apartments do not provide enough space the main meeting places are often outdoors, making safe and attractive public meeting places of high importance.

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid, 39-41.
LOCAL CONTEXT: VIVALLA

ÖREBRO

VIVALLA

Ring road
Dead-end streets
Main pedestrian/bicycle-path

Main public buildings
Parking space

INHABITANTS
CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
APARTMENTS RENTAL
APARTMENTS
POPULATION HOUSING

40% 77%
7000*
96%
2400

INHABITANTS CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
APARTMENTS RENTAL
APARTMENTS
POPULATION HOUSING

40% 77%
7000*
96%
2400

INHABITANTS (WHOLE MUNICIPALITY)
CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
POPULATION

40% 77%
7000*

BUILDING START OF VIVALLA
APPROXIMATE AREAL
1 km²
1967

LOCAL CONTEXT: VIVALLA

ÖREBRO

VIVALLA

Ring road
Dead-end streets
Main pedestrian/bicycle-path

Main public buildings
Parking space

INHABITANTS
CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
APARTMENTS RENTAL
APARTMENTS
POPULATION HOUSING

40% 77%
7000*
96%
2400

INHABITANTS CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
APARTMENTS RENTAL
APARTMENTS
POPULATION HOUSING

40% 77%
7000*
96%
2400

INHABITANTS (WHOLE MUNICIPALITY)
CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS)
FOREIGN BACKGROUND
POPULATION

40% 77%
7000*
The education-level in vulnerable areas is lower than average and consequently the unemployment rate is high. In Vivalla 38.9% do only have primary education, compared to the average of 12% in Sweden. This group with only primary education is the one with the highest risk of being economically inactive today—meaning neither working nor studying.

Unfortunately, this does also affect future generations as educational level often is inherited. Among children with two parents having only primary education, only 25% continue to higher studies, compared to 80% of those with parents with higher education.

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OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL IN VIVALLA

LOCAL CONTEXT: VIVALLA
TYPICAL HOUSING IN VIVALLA
DEFINITION

ILLUSTRATION SHOWING PROFESSIONAL FIELDS WHERE CREATIVITY IS NEEDED
How can creativity be defined? While create generally means simply to bring (something) into existence, the noun creativity usually needs further definition. The Oxford dictionary defines it as “The use of imagination or original ideas to create something: inventiveness.” The definition from the Cambridge dictionary is similar: “The ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative.” It appears like the criteria new and original are important here. This would mean that to replicate an existing painting may for example not be creative in itself, even though it can help us to learn techniques that we can use to be creative. But to create something entirely new or original can sound almost insurmountable and needs to be developed.

Sir Ken Robinson, author and educator focusing on creativity in education, means that a creative outcome can be original on different levels. Although some are original for humanity as a whole or a community, it is enough that it is new for the person involved – personal originality. This brings creativity or to be creative within reach for a considerably larger number of people.

He also includes the criteria of value in the definition of creativity, which relates to Richard Floridas definition of creativity as the ability to create meaningful new forms. This implies that the creative outcome should not only be new, but also valuable, meaningful or useful, to differentiate it from complete nonsense, that may be new but has no meaning or use. Value is however very difficult to determine, as Ken Robinson also notes, as our values are not constant. Many historical persons today considered creative geniuses were never recognized in their own time (for example Galileo or Van Gogh). Dadaism was an entire movement based on what appeared nonsense, but it was a reaction to the established art-scene and thereby contained meaning.

My own definition would be to bring something (physical or intangible) into existence, that is new and meaningful at least for the person(s) who creates it. It has to do with the breaking of conventions and is related to imagination - the bringing of something imagined into reality.

Creativity is often mystified and seen as a talent that only a chosen few are gifted with. The creative people are not a different species or a special class. It is something all of us as humans are born with and it has been vital for our survival. But our possibility to develop our creativity differs, as creative ideas and expressions do not appear in a vacuum but are influenced by the social, cultural, economic and spatial context, which can encourage or obstruct the creative development. However, most researchers mean that creativity is something we all have, and that everyone can do something to develop it further.

Although creativity is often associated with the cultural sphere, the creative professions of today appear in a wide range of fields: scientific, technological and commercial for example. These fields may be particularly focused around creativity, but the amount of professions that involve some degree of creativity is an even larger group. All occupations surrounding people should for example by their unpredictable nature require some degree of creativity to deal with all the situations that may occur.

So why should we work creatively? Why is it relevant for this project and the context of segregated areas? That creativity is highly valued by employers today is one aspect, in areas struggling with high unemployment. Working together with a creative project is also an opportunity to practice collaboration in an area with divisions between groups and could hopefully strengthen the sense of community. Creativity also appear to have positive effects on health, another area where the segregation is visible. But what I find to be the most interesting benefit of creative activities is their potential to improve education and school-results, as strengthening the schools may be the most effective way out of segregation for future generations.

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32 Robinson. Out of our minds: Learning to be creative. 116-118
35 Read for example Gerd Blendl. “Nonsense against nonsense” Goethe Institut (2015)
37 Ibid.
38 Robinson. Out of our minds: Learning to be creative. 11.
39 Meusburger, Funke and Wunder. (ed.) Milieus of creativity : An interdisciplinary approach to spatiality of creativity., 19
CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION

How can a more creative approach contribute to learning? In the attempt to answer this question, I have studied some of the available research on artistic education. Although creativity in education is not limited to the aesthetic subjects, they arguably tend to be some of the most creative within the curricula of today. I have used “The Wow Factor”, a global UNESCO study summarized by professor Anne Bamford as a base, which uses the term ‘art-rich’ education programs to define the field of study. This can refer both to education in the arts and education through the arts, the former referring to the learning of the skills, ways of thinking and presentation of the different art forms (dance, music, visual art and drama) while the latter refers to when creative and artistic pedagogies are used to teach other subjects. Positive impacts were found in both of these categories such as enhanced attainment, improved attitudes to school and learning, enhanced cultural identity and personal satisfaction.43

But in order to achieve these benefits the quality of the creative and artistic education is crucial. According to Bamford the benefits of artistic education only occur within high-quality programs and that the education provided in schools is often insufficient. Although over 60 countries were studied the idea of what high-quality artistic education means turned out to be very uniform. One of the most important aspects was a strong partnership between schools and the outside arts and community organizations.44 This indicates a need for an education extending beyond the classroom and new forums for collaboration.

The OECD-report “Art for Art’s Sake” is a recent study of the impact of arts education in school.45 Through reviewing available data, they found evidence for positive impacts on attendance, commitment and attitude towards academic work for students enrolled in arts education. The individual skills developed within this kind of education also appear to be useful in the learning of other subjects. Theatre and drama is for example related to verbal skills and visual arts is related to geometrical reasoning. But they call for more studies on the topic as non-causal connections cannot be excluded in a great deal of the available material today. The higher engagement of students undertaking arts classes could for example be explained through that engaged students are more interested in art. To strengthen the role of arts education more precise studies are needed. But the report highlights that the artistic subjects are important in their own rights for education, regardless of how they influence the learning of other subjects, as artistic expressions are and has always been a major part of our culture. They offer different ways of understanding our reality and give room for exploration and experimentation.

Currently the artistic subjects have a down-prioritized role and is considered being of less importance compared to other subjects.46 At the same time OECD define innovation as one of the most critical competences we will need to learn in the future in an increasingly knowledge-based society. They have also defined what basic skills are required for being innovative. Technical, behavioral or social and creative skills are needed, but the focus of our schools is mostly on the technical aspects.47 Though the arts may be very useful when it comes to the other skills it is still often considered being an unimportant group of subjects.

47 Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, Art for Art’s Sake?: The Impact of Arts Education, 3-4.
HIGH-QUALITY CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL-PROGRAMS - CHARACTERISTICS

STRUCTURE

- COMMUNITY
- ARTISTS/ CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS
- ORGANISATIONS/ GROUPS (ART-ORGANISATIONS OR OTHER CREATIVE FIELDS)
- INSTITUTIONS
- GALLERIES
- PARTNERS

METHOD

- COMBINATION OF EDUCATION THROUGH THE ARTS AND EDUCATION BY THE ARTS
- POSSIBILITIES FOR PERFORMANCE/ EXHIBITION/ PRESENTATION
- INITIATES RESEARCH
- PROVISIONS FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION, PROBLEM SOLVING AND RISK TAKING

POSSIBILITIES FOR PERFORMANCE/ EXHIBITION/ PRESENTATION

COMBINATION OF EDUCATION THROUGH THE ARTS AND EDUCATION BY THE ARTS

INITIATES RESEARCH

POSSIBILITIES FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION, PROBLEM SOLVING AND RISK TAKING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY AUTHOR BASED ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-QUALITY CREATIVE EDUCATION FROM "THE WOW FACTOR" - ANNE BAMFORD
CASE STUDIES:
CREATIVE PLACES
What is a creative place? Although creativity can arguably occur anywhere, the focus of this thesis is on public spaces that aim to encourage, allow for or inspire to creativity. This includes both spaces for creative production, where own initiatives and ideas can be realized and developed, but also spaces where creative works of others can be experienced.

With the benefits of creative activities described in the previous chapter, with impacts on health, school results and quality of life, places of this kind should arguably have great potential in strengthening individuals and communities. But the focus often tends to be on the potential for economic growth, especially since the release of Richard Florida’s book “The Creative Class” in 2002. His suggested link between culture, creativity and economic growth has almost created an obsession among municipalities to attract creative professionals. But he has also gained a lot of critique on his ideas meaning that this development leads to gentrification and larger class differences, which he also admits in his new book “The New Urban Crisis”.

It may be the case that projects of this kind can sometimes contribute to gentrification through increasing the attractiveness of an area. But displacement caused by increased rents and real estate prices should be possible to control with political decisions. A majority of the housing stock in vulnerable areas belong to the public sector, where the municipality have control over the rents and could thereby make a conscious choice to keep them on a reasonable level, even if an area is being considered more attractive than before. Also, the risk for gentrification within the foreseeable future should reasonably be low in the most socio-economically challenged areas disconnected from the city center.

In terms of the risk of causing gentrification, I also believe that not all types of projects should be equated. There are creative development projects at all scales with different approaches, goals and target audiences. The urban planning professors Carl Grodach and Anastasia Lokaitou-Sideris divide these strategies into three main categories: entrepreneurial, creative class and progressive (see fig 2). Based on a survey sent out to the Department of Cultural Affairs in all US cities with over 250,000 inhabitants, the entrepreneurial type was prioritized over the other two. This category of projects is directed towards major events and facilities with a central location and is linked to city-branding and the aim to attract tourists. More economic resources were put into these types of projects and they were considered to achieve the most benefits. But is trying to attract more tourists to the already most visited parts of the city really the best use of resources?
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<th>TARGET AUDIENCES</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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<td>- Economic growth through quality of life amenities</td>
<td>- Arts and entertainment districts</td>
<td>- Central city</td>
<td>- Prospective and existing residents</td>
<td>“Googleplex” - headquarters of google</td>
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<td>- Attract new residents/employees in the “creative economy”</td>
<td>- Collaboration between arts and private sector</td>
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<td>- Flagship cultural projects</td>
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51 Ibid.

FIG. 2 Illustration showing the idea of gentrification caused by the influx of creative professionals, who attracted to an area by for example low real-estate prices and a diverse environment. The increase of creative activity then attracts more affluent residents and the previous inhabitants may be displaced as they no longer can afford their housing. Illustration by author. Icons from https://www.freekp.com/ and https://www.flaticon.com/
One example of a project of this kind is Väven, a cultural house in central Umeå. It was opened in 2014 in connection to Umeå’s year as The European Capital of Culture. The 24,000 m² building contains for example the new city library, a women’s history museum, a conference center, a blackbox, an indoor square with restaurants and two hotels owned by the private real estate company Balticgruppen, who together with the municipality ordered the project. The development process has faced a great deal of critique for the rushed decision-making and high costs at expense of the cultural workers who was part of the reason why Umeå was designated The European Capital of Culture in the first place. One of the criterions to receive this title is an already existing rich local cultural life. In the first application to EU the municipality, under the headline “Creativity as a Way of Life” bring up the “encouragement of diversity and alternative movements” as one of the reasons that Umeå have enabled and established an “environment that encourages imagination and inventiveness.” This encouragement was however not something representatives from the alternative scene experienced, but rather a feeling about being used and down-prioritized.

Emma Swanström, musician, arranger and one of the founders of the alternative concert scene Verket and the feministic music organization “She’s got the beat” writes about her experiences surrounding the cultural year in the article “The dirty truth about the Cultural Capital” (English title translated by author). In the application process practitioners and professionals from different creative fields were invited to brainstorm program ideas for 2014. Many of the ideas were first positively met but once the title was won the interest from the municipality declined. The invitations to meetings stopped and the ideas were denied project support. At the same time vast amounts of money was poured into the municipality’s and Balticgruppen’s new prestige project. The cost for Väven including the interior landed on 987 million...
Swedish Crowns and the municipality will pay a yearly rent of 64.3 million to Balticgruppen who owns half the project.58

To go back to the paragraph “Creativity as a Way of Life” in the application to EU, the municipality also talks about a need to reassess what creativity is and where it takes place. The argument is difficult to follow; why would something just described as rich and well-functioning need to be reassessed and relocated? Was Väven the result of this reassessment and how is it an improvement compared to previous sites?

Through the project several local actors were relocated; the library, Sagateatern (Umeå theatre association) and Folkets Bio (The People’s Cinema). The arguments for the relocations were vague, contributing to the feeling that the idea of Väven began from the idea of the flagship building, a shell that then had to be filled with content.59–60

The moving of the library lead to much discussion. The old library was one of the most visited in Sweden, with a highly accessible location close to Vasaplan – the main local bus node in Umeå.61 Located on the commercial pedestrian street Rådhusesplanaden the library served the function of a non-commercial public space available for all economical groups. The old library was both bigger and had lower rent compared to the new one.62

The architects of Väven – Snöhetta together with White architects, were rewarded with the Kasper Salin-prize; the most prestigious architecture award in Sweden.59 But a Cultural House despised by a great deal of the local cultural practitioners along with vast public skepticism cannot, despite any reward, be called a successful project. We do not know what the opinions of Väven will be in the future, but its history may be difficult to wash away. Väven has in the eyes of many become a symbol for when local creativity is used as a mere tool for growth. Journalist and former artistic leader at Kulturverket describes it as the biggest memorial monument raised in the history of the city, in memory of the cultural workers in Umeå.64

This example proves the importance of the reasons behind a project and the need for a transparent and inclusive development process. Cultural and creative places are often considered to be dynamic and interesting locations to visit, which may contribute to increased tourism and growth. Although this may not be negative in itself, having it as the main focus do not appear to be a successful strategy for a project and it is unlikely to achieve the desired qualities of a truly creative and dynamic place.

64 Patrik Brännberg. “Kampen mot Kulturhus och flytt av stadsbiblioteket inledd” Nya Arbetsdagen (2011)
65 Emma Lundström. “Folkviljan är uppdragen med rötterna i Umeå”. Internationalen (2017)
67 Ibid.
CREATIVE PLACES/ TENSTA KONSTHALL

TENSTA KONSTHALL, TENSTA
SIZE: 700 M²
These tendencies can be seen in Tensta konsthall, a fine arts museum located in the vulnerable area Tensta northwest of Stockholm. It was opened in 1998 during Stockholm’s year as the European Capital of Culture. The project was also a part of a venture attempting to break the evolving segregation seen in the outer areas of Stockholm, Ytterstadssatsningen. The idea of the exhibition hall came from the Tensta resident Gregor Wroblewski who also became the first manager of Tensta konsthall and recommended the site; an old storage warehouse under a mall. Tensta konsthall is since 2000 a private foundation mainly funded by the state and Stockholm Municipality.

According to Jan Ekman’s text “Historien om Tensta konsthall” (the history about Tensta konsthall), the ambitions were to attract the established art-audience from other parts of the city and to reach out to a new audience; the local inhabitants of Tensta. Although the project was successful in attracting the first category with several critically acclaimed exhibitions, they appear to have struggled with reaching out to the locals. In this project, a conscious choice was made in focusing on high quality international and national contemporary art with renown artists. The clear profile has probably contributed to the at least partly success of Tensta konsthall as it has become a well-known art scene, although mostly experienced by an elite consisting of the white middle-class.

During the years several attempts has been made to reach the local audience. Under the leadership of the art group Konst2, a trio who took over as managers after Wroblewski in 2004, several alterations were made. The entrance was redesigned together with the design group Front and a café was added to the program. Konst2 worked for a broader definition of art and for blurred borders between producers and William Easton who took over the leadership 2008 also strived to increase the local bonds. Through a collaboration with Tensta Gymnasium (the local high school) an art club and an art camp were established. The exhibition hall was divided in three parts; one to be curated by Tensta konsthall, the second by external curators and the third was open for local ideas. The initiatives did generate an increase in local visitors, but according to a previous employee mentioned Ekman’s text the necessary local relationships were still missing for the exhibition hall to really be the meeting place they aimed to be. The example of Tensta konsthall shows that locating an art institution in a vulnerable area do not automatically create meetings between groups. The impression is still that, despite the initiatives to reach out to the locals, the mission of Tensta konsthall is to learn the inhabitants of Tensta about art, rather than a mutual exchange. Nobody is asking what we could learn from the inhabitants of Tensta. The wish to involve the locals collide with a fear of letting go of control. The division of the exhibition space could for example have been reversed with two thirds of the exhibition space open for local initiatives and a third for inputs from the outside. The aim has been to show art that is relevant for the local inhabitants, but it is always someone else deciding what they are supposed to appreciate. The actual interests and needs of the local residents were apparently never discussed and the predetermined conception was that, whatever these interests may be, could not attract visitors from outside Tensta.

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65 Jan Ekman. Historien Om Tensta Konsthall, 2.
68 Ibid.
69 Ekman. Historien Om Tensta Konsthall, 4-5.
CYKLOPEN, HÖGDALEN
SIZE: 200 M²
CONSTRUCTION COST: 3,000,000 KR
With a similar context of a vulnerable area outside Stockholm, the cultural house Cyklopen is in many ways an opposite to Tensta konsthall. Being self-initiated, self-built and explicitly open for own initiatives and ideas it is truly a bottom-up project. As it gives the possibility for the users to form the content themselves it could definitely be called a creative place.

Cyklopen is a result of many years of struggle. It all started 15 years ago in 2003 when the organization then named Kulturmassakern (the cultural massacre) occupied a large empty premise in Östermalm in central Stockholm. This first attempt ended with sentences for trespassing and the building was torn down. After another attempt of occupation where the building burned down, they started a conversation with the municipality, demanding a place. The suggestion to rent land and build something new in a suburb came up. A site was found in the suburb Högdalen and they received a 5-year temporary building permit. After two years the first version of Cyklopen was finished, but it burned down the year after in 2008.\textsuperscript{26}

Despite the setbacks the group did not give up. Three years of applications for grants, demonstrations and meetings with the municipality resulted in a new temporary building permit at a site close to the previous one in Högdalen. The new building is called Cyklopen 2.0 and was opened in 2013 after a three year long building workshop where volunteers did the construction work.\textsuperscript{21}

The colorful channel plastic façade with a scheme inspired by the game Tetris brings some landmark qualities and the semi-transparency allows light to spread to the surrounding. The building was rewarded with the SA-price (Stockholms architect’s associations) 2013 and was also nominated to the Mies van der Rohe awards 2015.\textsuperscript{23} In 2017 Cyklopen finally received a permanent building permit. There are new plans for the development of outdoor areas with a playground, basketball field, outdoor gym and a stage along with some smaller complementary buildings.\textsuperscript{24}

Cyklopen is run by the nonprofit organization now named Kulturkampanjen (the cultural campaign). The organization has made a conscious choice not to take continuous grants in fear of a dictation of the usage, making them completely dependent on volunteers and supporting members.\textsuperscript{26} Currently the organization have debts of about 500 000 kr and the continuous plans for the surrounding areas are not fully financed. They have today about 15 active members but asks for more support. Due to other obligations they are not able to have open to the extent that they would like.\textsuperscript{26} Cyklopen has no fixed opening hours, but there is a pub every Wednesday for members and a library that is open approximately once a month. The frequency of other events varies as it depends on the interest from arrangers, but according to their calendar it appears to be something happening at least once a week.

Cyklopen is in many ways an admirable project showing what a dedicated group of people can achieve. Despite the relatively small scale and cheap construction costs it still brings a lot of opportunities for its users. Their choice not to compromise on the self-determination and receive any continuous economic support from companies or public grants has however led to private individuals having to take economic risks. As they are completely dependent on volunteers who have other sources of income they cannot have open to the extent that they would like, making it a space for events rather than an always accessible meeting place. With the strong engagement of the group this strategy may still function in the specific case of Cyklopen, but this time-consuming process and economic risk-taking is not for everyone. In socio-economically challenged areas where many are economically vulnerable it may be difficult for a project to survive without any kind of public funding.

\begin{itemize}
\item Cyklopen. Om oss. https://cyklopen.se/detta-ar-cyklopen/om-oss/
\item Ibid.
\item Marx arkitektur AB. Cyklopen nr.2. http://www.vima-archi.se/cyklopen2.html
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\item Cyklopen. Bli stödmedlem. https://cyklopen.se/stodmedlem/
\item Cyklopen. Om oss. https://cyklopen.se/detta-ar-cyklopen/om-oss/
\end{itemize}
The Cultural House Klossen in Ålidhem, Umeå is an example of a publicly funded project that appear to have achieved a strong local connection. Klossen reaches out to a wide audience with a large variety of activities suitable for different interests and age groups. The possibilities to realize own ideas and initiatives are big.

Ålidhem is not considered a vulnerable area, but is a Million Programme area built between 1966-1973, with a mixed population where students are a large group and about 1/3 have foreign background. The building is highly accessible between the local center and the old school, currently used as replacement premises when other schools are being renovated.

Klossen is a result of a campaign arranged by the municipal real estate company Bostaden in 2009. The moving of the Ålidhem school opened up for new usage of the old youth recreation center and the residents were asked what they wanted the place to become. A cultural house was the proposal that received the most support, with the possibility for music, dance, theatre and art.

The idea was realized under the responsibility of Studjefrämjandet, which is one of the largest study associations in Sweden. The organization is politically and religiously unbound and run on a non-profit basis. It is based on the concept of the study circle - A small group (normally 5-12 persons) that on their own initiative choose to study a subject or common interest and meet on a regular basis. The study circle has had an important role within the non-formal Swedish education since the late 19th century. Studjefrämjandet is funded via government grants, counties and municipalities and fees paid by the participants, which are generally low and can also be free if the circle for example is run in collaboration with clubs or societies.

Today Klossen offers study spaces, rentable organization premises, café, workshop and music studios. Two theatre groups have their base here; Skuggteatern and Grotteatern. Studjefrämjandet also have their offices in the building. The aim with
Klossen has from the beginning been that the local inhabitants should be able to have continuous influence on the content. The possibility for own initiatives is seen through the variety of events occurring at Klossen. One example is the fika and clothing commons arranged by the group “Allt åt alla” (Everything for everyone). The commons are based on the idea of sharing. For the fika commons everyone who wants brings fika do so, but there are no requirements, so anyone is allowed to pass by for a free fika. The clothing commons work the same way; anyone who has clothes they don’t want brings them and anyone is free to take garments with them home.

There is currently a great amount of activity at Klossen due to the project ‘Ålidhem Åger’. This is a three-year project founded by ‘Kreativa plaster’ (Creative places) - a government initiative by the Swedish Arts Council with the aim to encourage cultural activities in areas with socioeconomic challenges or low voter turnout. The aim with Creative Places is that more people should be able to take part in cultural and creative activities close to where they live. Ålidhem Åger consists of a network of organizations that aims to help the local residents to start projects by providing premises, experienced leaders and help with marketing and financing. The idea is that people should be able to create meaningful activities themselves and thereby strengthen the identity of the area and create new social bonds. “After school” is a part of Ålidhem Åger that offers free activities for residents from 13 years. Youths are free to send in ideas of things they would like to do. Currently they offer dance classes, gaming nights and moviemaking.

REFLECTION

Out of the examples my impression is that the most successful ones are those that are grounded in the community and reflect the local culture. Through giving room for own ideas they establish a feeling of ownership. To achieve this the reasons behind the project and the development process are of high importance. The idea of a landmark is not negative in itself but should not be the core of and the sole justification for a building project. In the best-case scenario, a landmark can be a symbol that brings pride to an area, but if it is a result of a top-down process it is more likely to become a symbol associated with negative experiences.

To achieve a locally grounded project a deep local knowledge is necessary. An understanding of how existing places function, what their role is and what their needs are can help avoiding rushed and expensive decisions such as the relocation of the library in Umeå. An awareness that the local residents knows their area the best is important and to always be ready to listen and adjust the plans if they are met with critique. If the project is to be a place for the people, they are also the rightful judges to decide which ideas are worth realizing.

These thoughts led me to carry out a closer investigation of existing places and actors in Vivalla, with a focus on public spaces where creative activity and local initiatives can take place.
FIELD STUDY
CREATIVE PLACES, ACTORS & AGENTS IN VIVALLA
FOLKETS HUS AND KULTURARENAN

Vivalla is an active area with a great deal of local engagement. Over 70 organizations are active in here, which is an impressive amount for an area of this size. Many of them work for a positive development with questions like integration, women’s issues and activities for youths. There are also several organizations focusing on cultural identity, such as the Somali music and cultural center. The umbrella organization Folkets Hus (translated to Peoples House) is becoming a node for many of the local organizations and provides support and knowledge. Today 25 of the local organizations in Vivalla are members in Folkets Hus, a number that may increase.

Folkets Hus was founded in collaboration with Västerporten - a municipal real estate company. Västerporten started in 2012 and is now a part of ÖBO (previously Örebroporten). Their main focus is on Vivalla and they have their offices in Vivalla Centrum. Their mission is to create new working opportunities and meeting places and thereby strengthen the area. The school and Vivalla Centrum are part of their property.

Västerporten initially made a mapping of the local organizations and realized the vast amount existing in Vivalla but also found a huge shortage of facilities for organizational activity. Due to the need of networks and support for organizations the idea of creating a Folkets Hus in Vivalla came up. Folkets Hus och Parker (Peoples House and Parks) is a national association which is politically and religiously unbound, with over 100 years of history in Sweden and more than 500 member-organizations in the country.

The need for spaces for organizational activities is also something that Västerporten is gradually trying to solve. As the owners of the Vivalla School, they have given leasing right to Folkets Hus for parts of the school during the evening, the large scene which is called Kulturarenan - which is used for larger events like concerts or theatres, the canteen, a conference room and a domestic science room for cooking. Kulturarenan has recently been renovated with financial support from Boverket and is now equipped with a 4K projector, which is the best cinema technology available in Örebro. Currently there is about one screening per month, but according to Ted Hällmark they have not been as well visited as they had wished for. The cinema had premier less than a year ago, in May 2017, so it may be the case many of the residents are not yet aware that it exists.

Folkets Hus has been given a part of an old preschool at Poesigatan 10 where they have their offices and the resource center. It is also the base for six member organizations and some rentable spaces for smaller events. Västerporten aim to acquire more old preschools to be used by organizations when new pre-schools are built.

I met with Martin Mestanza, one of the employed managers at Folkets Hus, and Abdulkadir Hassan who is a volunteer active in the organization. They confirm that, even though Kulturarenan and the leasing right to the school facilities has helped in this aspect, there is still a distinct need for more spaces for organizations and local engagement. They point out that there are several organizations with the word “center” in their description (such as Romani Culture Center) indicating that it should be a physical place, though it in reality is not much more than a name on a paper.

They also experience an absence of an art scene in the area, as the possibilities to exhibit are few. Folkets Hus have contributed to arranging exhibitions at the library and in Vivalla Centrum, but the available spaces are limited. They think that there are potential for amazingly interesting exhibitions in Vivalla with the wide range of different nationalities and cultural expressions that are present in the area.

They think that the role of cultural events is of high importance as this is something that contribute to bringing people together. As Vivalla has a great number of different nationalities and religions, some of them in conflict with each other, there are also tensions between different groups. Experiencing different kinds of cultural and creative expressions together helps creating understanding and unity.

References:
1. Michael Blixt; Director of Administration and development, Västerporten. Phone-interview 2018-01-16
2. Martin Mestanza, Co-manager, Folkets Hus Vivalla. Interview 2018-02-08
3. Michael Blixt, phone interview 2018-01-16
4. Abdulkadir Hassan, volunteer, Folkets Hus Vivalla. Interview 2018-02-09
LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIVALLA (CURRENTLY 25)

- ÖREBRO
  - Hem för dig
- ÖBO
- VÄSTERPORTEN
  - Folkets Hus och Parker
  - Folkets Hus Vivalla

LOCAL IN VIVALLA (EXAMPLES)

- M.A.D. MAKING A DIFFERENCE
- SOMALISK MUSIK OCH KULTURCENTER
- PERUANSKA FÖRENINGEN
- ROMSK KULTURCENTER
- AQQON KAAL FÖRENING
- LINDANDA SVERIGE

NATIONAL

- ÖBO

MUNICIPAL

- VÄSTERPORTEN
- ÖREBRO
A TABLE READY LAID FOR FESTIVITY IN FOLKETS HUS PREMISES AT POESIGATAN (PHOTO MARTIN MESTANZA)
VIVALLA TORG AND THE LIBRARY

Vivalla torg is an interior square with glass roof inside Vivalla Centrum with the possibility for public events such as markets or fairs. Next to the square is the library, which is a frequently used place in the area. According to librarian Katarina Möller about 400 persons pass in and out every day. When I visited all of the three computers and the available reading-rooms were being used. Katarina believes that there is a need for more study spaces.

The library has different kinds of events about two times a week, mainly directed towards children, for example drama, arts and crafts and visits by authors. The number of visitors on the events varies greatly. Katarina tells me about an event that was planned with the organization Afrikas Horn where about 25 people showed up. But sometimes it can be as few as 2-3, probably because they have not managed to reach out with information.

One of the small rooms in the library is now being transformed into a pod-studio where “Vivalla-podden” is created – a podcast by bus driver Abdullahi Abukar who wants to talk about the positive sides of Vivalla that he thinks that regular media forgets.

Footnote: Katarina Möller, librarian. Vivalla bibliotek. Interview 2018-02-18
VIVALLA TRAINSTATION

Vivalla Trainstation is a new initiative in Vivalla opened in February this year. It will be a meeting place for age 10-25 focusing on digital production such as movie- and music making, programming, robotics and game design. The courses will be net-based but there will be supervisors there for guidance.96

The concept has been developed in collaboration with the company Brightn who have tested it in smaller scale in another youth recreation center in Mosås. The idea is to make use of the fact that previously expensive digital tools are becoming increasingly accessible. Smartphones, laptops and tablets that many has at home contain advanced technology. The students often know these tools better than the teachers and parents and there is a need for guidance to help them develop and expand their skills. Together with the right programs and peripheral equipment such as digital pens, microscopes, drones, 3d glasses and 3d printers – that are also becoming more affordable at a fast pace, these tools can be used to achieve high-quality results for almost any kind of digital production.97

Students are able bring their own smartphones, tablets or laptops to Trainstation, or borrow if they don’t have one of their own. Inspiring peripheral equipment should be available. This concept can help youths finding and developing their interests, which potentially could also lead to a career.97

Trainstation have been given a classroom in connection to the youth recreational center, which is located in the school building. Depending on how big the interest will be they may need more spaces in the future. They are also considering testing the concept on other age-groups later on. According to Ted Hällmark at Västerporten finding more available spaces in the school-building would be a challenge.98

96 Johan Cedermark, manager, Brightn. E-mail 2018-01-24 and meeting 2018-02-09
97 Ibid.
98 Ted Hällmark; Administrative Coordinator, Västerporten. Meeting 2018-02-09
PHOTOS SHOWING THE PATH FROM POESIGATAN (THE MAIN STREET) TO FOLKETS HUS PREMISES
REFLECTION

Vivalla is an area with a great deal of engagement, creativity and positive initiatives, but with the high density there is a lack of spaces. Considering the design project, I see no apparent risk that new facilities would stand unused. Existing actors such as Vivalla Folkets Hus and Trainstation could be interesting project partners and help develop the program together with the community.

Some of the existing spaces are well functioning and have an adequate location. The library contributes to the activation of the interior square in the centrum building and is appreciated, although there may be need for some additional spaces. Kulturarenan in the school is well suited for larger events. But what is common for the existing creative places is a lacking visual and physical connection to the exterior. It is difficult to see the activity from the outside and the places may sometimes be difficult to find. Folkets Hus which has a very important role in the area is almost invisible from the main street and disconnected from the school where most of their bookable facilities are. This invisibility in the area might be linked to the indications I got from Västerporten and the library - that it is sometimes difficult to reach out with information to the community about the events.

Many of the creative places are located in the school building. This is an efficient use of space as it is facilities that otherwise stand empty during the evening and it is positive in a sustainability aspect to make use of these vast premises instead of building new. But the community needs to be aware that the spaces exist and are available. The school should thereby benefit from a stronger connection to the public.

This also goes well with the ideas mentioned in the chapter on creativity within education, that a collaboration with external actors and the community is highly beneficial for the artistic and creative education in schools. The new creative platform that I aim to design could be a forum for this kind of collaboration, with the school as one of the main users. As a public place in connection to the school it would, unlike the regular school-environment, have a mixture of people from the community, external visitors, artistic organizations and creative professionals. This could be developed into an inspiring environment suitable for creative education.
WORKSHOP IN THE VIVALLA SCHOOL

SPACES FOR THE WORKSHOP

DRAWING AND PHOTOS OF THE SPACES THAT WERE USED DURING THE WORKSHOP
With the school as one of the intended main actors in the project, I wanted better insight in the current school-environment and an opportunity to get input from the children at the Vivalla school. With these aims, as a test of a methodology, I held a workshop with a class at the school where we worked with a model-making assignment with the theme creative places. The workshop was held during their scheduled art-class together with their art and Swedish teacher Junia Bergdahl\(^{100}\) and divided on two lectures. The students were in grade 5 (11-12 years old). There were 20 students in total, although not all of them were present in both of the lectures.

The first lecture I held a short introduction about the architect profession and the different questions we work with. A specific focus was put on spatial qualities, showing examples of various spaces and discussing how aspects as light, colour and scale creates different feelings and are suitable for different types of activities. I shortly described what my project is about and discussed the meaning of creativity and what a creative activity could be.

The students were then asked to imagine a creative activity that they enjoyed doing or would like to learn. Next step was to imagine a place where they would like to do this activity (existing or invented) and to also consider how it feels to be at this place and try to describe it through spatial qualities. The first task was to build a model of this place and later they also received the task to describe it in text in their Swedish class.

What was most helpful for my project was the experience and analysis of the current school-environment that contributed to the development of ideas about how the design-project could be beneficial for the school and the students. It was also an overall great experience, seeing the students interest and engagement in the assignment and during the lecture. For me this contributed to validate the idea that the school benefits from inputs from the outside.

The spaces we had available for the workshop were the students home classroom, a part of the common area and one group room. The three types of rooms had various levels of stimuli; the common area being the ‘messiest’ with children from other classes passing by, the group-room the calmest and the classroom somewhere in between. Several students wished to sit in the smaller group-room, but this was only intended for 2-3 students.

As it appears the education would benefit from having more flexibility when it comes to choosing work places. The children had very different processes; some preferred to work with others, some worked alone. Some thought a lot before they started building and some were right at it. It could be assumed that these different processes also benefit from different work environments. There was an obvious need for calmer spaces and although some students preferred sitting in a livelier environment the common areas available lacked natural light. The design-project could offer alternative spaces for workshops like this with more flexibility for the students to choose and adapt their workplace.

When we talked about the task of combining the texts with the images of the models the teacher Junia expressed that she thought it was a pity that they didn’t have more accessible computers that the students could have used for doing this themselves (combining a digital photo of the model with the text). This indicated a need for a more up to date art-education in schools, where the children can also make use of digital tools and combine different medias.

Another aspect making it difficult to work creatively was the timeframe, which in my opinion was too short for this type of assignment. To bring together the material for the workshop and cleaning up afterwards took a lot of time, leaving very little time for the assignment itself and it felt as we had to interrupt the children in the middle of a process, as several of them did not want to stop building. Longer blocks of the same subject would probably be beneficial, with breaks in between if needed (these kinds of longer more flexible blocks are for example seen in the Montessori schools).\(^{100}\)

In order to get more time and space to work with creative projects, the design-project could offer bookable studios for students. This could also be connected to an equipment library, with the possibility to lend tools for creative projects such as cameras, easels or sewing machines. As many of the students may also have little personal space at home these kinds of spaces could be of high value for their creative development.

\(^{100}\) Junia Bergdahl, art and Swedish teacher. Vivalla school. Meetings and lectures where held during week 6, 2018.

SOME OF THE MODELS MADE BY THE STUDENTS IN CLASS 5D AT THE VIVALLA SCHOOL. COLOR AND SOFT MATERIALS WERE POPULAR THEMES FOR THE MODELS.
1. LECTURE WHERE I SHOWED THE STUDENTS EXAMPLES OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS AND MODELS.

2. THREE STUDENTS MAKING MODELS DURING THE WORKSHOP
CONCLUSION

Creativity is both praised and neglected in our society. It is highly valued on the labor market and often seen as a gift given to a selected few, when evidence suggests that it is something we all have and can develop. At the same time creativity has a down prioritized role within the education system, despite studies linking a creative approach to education to enhanced attainment, increased confidence and wellbeing among students.

Creative places, which in this thesis refer to public spaces that encourage, allow for or inspire to creative activity, may have an undeserved bad reputation at the moment due to misuse and are accused of causing gentrification, as if this was an inevitable result. But my belief is that, with the right ambitions and methods, creative places can potentially be an important tool in the fight against segregation and in the strengthening of schools struggling with low school-results.

Based on the study of existing conditions in vulnerable areas in Sweden I have summarized some of the issues that creative places could address within this context. Thereby I aim to give answer to the first part of the research-question;

How can creative places benefit the schools and communities in segregated areas?

• Through being a meeting-place
Due to cramped living conditions the need for public meeting places is generally high in vulnerable areas. Establishing more meeting places could also contribute to populating outdoor areas for an increased perceived safety.

• Through breaking boundaries
The vulnerable areas are surrounded by strong borders, both physical and mental. Creative places could be attraction-points and a reason for people from outside the area to visit. More people would then form their own idea of the area which would hopefully decrease prejudices.

• Through strengthening the community confidence
The belief in the collective ability of the own community is lower in vulnerable areas and so is the trust among residents. Working creatively can contribute to increased confidence and collaborating through a creative project might strengthen the bonds between different groups within the community.

• Through strengthening education
As a creative approach to education is connected to several positive impacts, especially in collaboration with external actors, creative places can together with the schools contribute to strengthening the education in socio-economically challenged areas.
How can these creative places best be designed to achieve these benefits?

Through the case studies of places that aim to be places for creativity, my interpretation is that the most successful ones are those that are grounded in the community and reflect the local culture. To achieve this an inclusive development process and a deep local knowledge is necessary. The aims for the design project are thereby specific for Vivalla and based on the study of the local actors and exiting spaces which gave me ideas about what role the intervention could serve within the area:

AIMS FOR THE INTERVENTION

• Increase the visibility of and be a complement to the existing places

There is a great deal of local engagement and positive initiatives in Vivalla, but a general lack of spaces and the activities are not visible enough. Existing spaces lack visual and physical connection to the outside. To establish a public space where this connection is stronger could also increase the perceived safety. The aim is not to relocate all of the existing places, but to be a complement to these and increase their visibility.

• Strengthen education through enhancing the connection between the school and the public

The project aims be a forum for collaboration and provide educational spaces that have a mixture of people from the community, external visitors, organizations and creative professionals.

The public activities occurring in the school building could also be strengthened and made visible through an intervention acting as a link between the school and the public.

• Provide spaces for creative projects initiated by the local residents

The lack of personal space in the area makes it difficult to find places to focus on a project. The intervention aims to offer various kinds of bookable spaces along with the possibility to borrow equipment for various forms of creative production.

These aims are what I take with me to the design process, based on my analysis of the current situation. If the project were to be realized this interpretation would need to be verified and adapted by the community, whose voice should carry the most weight in the development process. The aims are based on the belief in the capacity of the residents in Vivalla, to create a positive development of the area themselves, if they are only given the opportunity and the spaces.
Illustration showing the aim to increase the visibility of existing activities and activate outdoor areas.
ILLUSTRATION SHOWING INITIAL CONCEPTUAL IDEAS ABOUT THE INTERVENTION, WHERE IT IS A NODE LINKING THE SCHOOL TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE LOCAL ACTORS.
IMPLEMENTATION
SITE AND URBAN CONTEXT

With the aim to be a link between the local school and the public, the intervention is located between the Centrum Building and the school at the end of Poesigatan, which is the main connection to the City Center and the local bus street. The site is chosen for its accessibility and high visibility. It would be a suitable location to create a node in the network of existing actors. As a base for Folkets Hus it would be a more central location in the area and more related to the bookable facilities in the school building, compared to their current premises at Poesigatan 10.

The site is owned by Västerporten and the future plans is to turn it into parking space, which is already the dominant function in front of the centrum building.

The project could contribute to the activation of surrounding outdoor areas and create a more interesting experience when entering the core of Vivalla.
1. POESIGATAN (MAIN CONNECTION TO CITY CENTER)
2. FOLKETS HUS (ORGANIZATION PREMISES)
3. VIVALLA CENTRUM (LOCAL CENTER)
4. VIVALLA TORG
5. VIVALLA LIBRARY
6. VIVALLA SCHOOL
7. FOLKETS HUS BOOKABLE PREMISES
8. VIVALLA FRITIDSGÅRD (YOUTH RECREATION CENTER)
9. VIVALLA TRAINSTATION
10. OUTDOOR STAGE
11. GREEN PEDESTRIAN PATH
12. VIVALLA IP FOOTBALL FIELD
SITE - VIEW WALKING FROM VIVALLA CENTRUM
IMPLEMENTATION / SITE AND URBAN CONTEXT

SITE - VIEW WALKING FROM SCHOOL YARD
LAND OWNERSHIP

PUBLICLY OWNED

- ÖREBRO MUNIPALITY
- ÖREBROBOSTÄDER AB
- VÄSTERPORTEN FASTIGHETER I ÖREBRO AB
- FUTURUM FASTIGHETER I ÖREBRO AB

PRIVATELY OWNED

- HSB BRF PUNKTEN 2
POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

SWEDISH STATE → Boverket

KULTURRÅDET

Creative Europe

OTHER FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

SPONSORS - FUNDING

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

OTHER FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

ACTORS IN OTHER PARTS OF ÖREBRO

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL

(EXAMPLES OF FOLKETS HUS MEMBER ORGANISATIONS)

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIVALLA

KULTURENS

Folkmunumentet

FIDU: ÖREBRO

COLLABORATORS - CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

AFGHANSKA FÖRENING ÖREBRO

ROMSK KULTURCENTER

PERUANSKA FÖRENINGEN

SAMADON SOMALISKA KVINNOR

ERITRIANSKA KVINNOFÖRENINGEN

SAMALILAND FÖRENING ÖREBRO

M.A.D. MAKING A DIFFERENCE

SOMALISK MUSIK OCH KULTURCENTRE

AFGHANSKA FÖRENING ÖREBRO
PROGRAM AND MAIN ACTORS

1. FACADE - SECOND LAYER
A second layer of wood slats with various density and different colors to bring character and playfulness to the building.

2. FACADE - FIRST LAYER
Walls of solid wood and glazed curtain walls.

3. MEETING-ROOM AND PROJECT-SPACES
On the third floor are additional spaces that can be used by Folkets Hus or the users of the studio. The meeting-room could also be rented for conferences.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Folkets Hus, students, residents in Vivalla, artists/ creative professionals, rentable for external actors.

4. OFFICE
Open plan office that could be used by the staff at Folkets Hus to give them a more central location in the area. The office has 12 seats, which is about twice of what they have today, giving them potential to grow or to lend or rent out seats to other organisations or companies.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Folkets Hus
STUDIOS
As an answer to the lack of personal space that is seen in the area and in the school, the studios offer space for projects for individuals or groups. Students and residents in the area could book them for a project during a certain period but some of them can also be used by creative professionals (from Vivalla or other parts of Örebro) to enable meetings between different groups. A longer usage could for example be given as a grant to promising artists. The users of the studios could also borrow various kind of equipment at the material-library. The studios have flexible walls to be able to shrink and grow depending on the needs for each project.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Students, residents in Vivalla, artists and creative professionals, local organizations.

STUDY-SPACE
A room that for example could be used for studying, as the studyspaces in the library are limited. The room should have soft materials (carpet, acoustic panels etc.) to create a good acoustic climate and a calm atmosphere.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Public - for everyone.

WORKSHOP
The workshop space can be used as an extra resource for the school and can also be used for spare-time activities and courses. Actors like KomTek the municipal technology school and Örebro Kulturskola (municipal cultural school that occasionally hosts workshops in the library could here be given more space for their activities.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Vivalla school, Vivalla fritidsgård, KomTek, Trainstation, Örebro Kulturskola

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPACE
Open space with double floor-height. The connection to the circulation creates a lively atmosphere. It can for example be used for socializing, lunch/ fika or studying.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Public - for everyone.

DIGITAL LAB
A place for digital production that can be used as a resource for the school and Trainstation, or for classes for adults. One of the smaller spaces could be a printing room equipped with 3d printer. The digital lab is in direct connection to the workshop to easily be able to combine different medias, which appears to be difficult in the current school-environment. The space could also be used for individual studies/ projects when it is not used for workshops or lectures.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Vivalla school, Vivalla fritidsgård, KomTek, Trainstation, Örebro Kulturskola

TERRACE
A terrace with view over the school-yard and great sun-potential.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Public - for everyone.

EXHIBITION SPACES
Exhibition spaces are lacking in the area. The possibility for exhibition and presentation is described as an ingredient for a successful creative educational program by Anne Bamford in the Wow-factor.

The spaces could be used both for exhibiting professional works as a source of inspiration and work produced by students at the center.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Public - for everyone.

INFORMATION CENTER+
SHOP & EQUIPMENT LIBRARY
An information center that could be used as a reception for Folkets Hus. The information center could inform about events and available activities in Vivalla and it should be possible to buy tickets for events at Kulturarenan.

The shop could sell artistic material and products produced in the workshop (for example digital prints). In the connected equipment library it should be possible to loan various kind of equipment for creative projects (such as cameras or sewing machines) to bring home or to use in the studios at the center. As Trainstation already have ideas of a similar concept, the library could be run in collaboration with them.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Folkets Hus, Trainstation

CAFÉ
A café with a patio close to the schoolyard to strengthen the connection to the outside.

POTENTIAL ACTORS: Public - for everyone.

OUTDOOR PUBLIC SPACE
The spaces around the building could be developed into public spaces with seating. The space to the south east has good potential for this and connects to the path leading to the football-field, which is an important meeting-place in the area.

PATH TO THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE
The connection to the school could be strengthened through working with the ground material along the path leading to the schools main entrance.
FLOOR PLANS

1:200

GROUND FLOOR

EXHIBITION

STORAGE

CHANGING

KITCHEN

INFO-CENTER

CAFÉ

PATIO

STORAGE

N

IMPLEMENTATION / FLOOR PLANS
FIRST FLOOR

STUDY-SPACE

DIGITAL LAB

WORKSHOP

TERRACE
THIRD FLOOR

PROJECT-SPACE / BREAK

MEETING

N
SECTION

1:100
On each floor are meeting places in connection to the circulation to stimulate interaction between the different user groups - view from first floor.
VIEW FROM FIRST FLOOR
MATERIALITY AND FACADE

DOMINANT MATERIALS IN VIVALLA

- RED BRICK
- WHITE PAINTED WOOD PANEL
- PINK PLASTER
- OCHER PAINTED WOOD PANEL
- RED PAINTED WOOD PANEL

FACADE MATERIALS

- CURTAIN WALLS WITH WOOD FRAMES
- WOOD SLATS

COLOR SCHEME

REFERENCE IMAGES

- Colorful vertical facade elements
  ALBION LIBRARY, TORONTO
  (PERKINS + WILL CANADA)
- Wooden slats - solid to translucent
  CULTURAL CENTER, NEVERS
  (ATELIERS O-S ARCHITECTES)
- Spreading light to the surrounding
  CULTURAL HOUSE CYKLOPEN,
  HÖGDALEN STOCKHOLM
  (MARX ARKITEKTUR)

The materials and colors of the facade are chosen to harmonize with the existing materials in the area, but still bring something new to the otherwise monotonous surrounding and be an eye-catcher.

There are glazed parts of the facade in all directions to achieve a strong visual connection with the surrounding and also for the building to be able to spread light during the evening, which could increase the feeling of safety.

The walls that are not glazed could be made out of solid wood, which would be a sustainable choice.

The facade is designed for the possibility of placing billboards or digital screens above the entrances. This is to be able to increase the visibility of available activities in Vivalla and advertise events. It could also be a way for students to show their work produced in the digital lab.

The upper floors of the building are angled to increase the visibility of the billboards towards the schoolyard and the main pedestrian path.
FIRST ENTRANCE WITH BILLBOARD - VIEW FROM PEDESTRIAN PATH

SECOND ENTRANCE WITH BILLBOARD - VIEW FROM SCHOOL YARD
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


ARTICLES


WEBPAGES


REPORTS & OTHER PUBLICATIONS


TED TALKS


IMAGES AND ICONS


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