Finding the familiar in the unfamiliar.

Investigating the role of hospitality as a performance of togetherness and support for new arrivals in the familiar left behind.

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Arriving at a new place, the stranger finds herself/himself facing the unfamiliar. In that situation, she/he is confronted with different tasks, duties and other difficulties in order to handle one’s own needs and desires such as settling down and creating oneself a home. This thesis aims to explore processes of arriving as well as its interrelation to concepts of hospitality.

*How does hospitality as a welcoming method facilitate and support the arriving stranger?*

The first part of the thesis focuses on general aspects of hospitality and its exploration. In order to approach, understand and narrow down the wide and extensive topic, a series of literature is considered and simultaneously connected to the context of my own experience and background as a newly-arrived international student. Therefore, subjective examples, in which I am hosted in and around Umeå, by different people or institutions and during the last 2 years, are investigated.
Subsequently this thesis considers existing organizations and networks in Umeå, which operate with a welcoming approach within the realm of integration, cultural exchange, and social relations.

It becomes apparent, that spaces and moments of familiarity are significant not just as a starting point for strangers to meet, bringing together differences and similarities especially through communalities such as food, music and dance, but also to provide structures for legal and further support. As a generous act, providing hospitality has the potential for facilitating needs of newly arrived people, enabling exchange and encounter to happen. It has the ability to become a tool for coexistence.

Eventually, with concepts of hospitality, sharing and communality in mind, the proposal brings together existing organizations, forming a meeting point for new and already established inhabitants of Umeå in the town center.
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INTRODUCTION

Last semester, I became interested in playing the harmonica. While exploring the instrument and its music, the topic of improvisation, as creating a dialogue with our surroundings, attracted my attention. Playing harmonica or any other instrument, especially together with others, is taking on a challenging conversation. A dialogue in which participants listen and respond to the other, interact, exchange and cooperate for a mutual benefit, to create music.

For that to happen a shared language or knowledge, here that of music, as a common ground and skill is needed. A knowledge which is required, especially by professional musicians, when they see themselves exposed to communicate with strangers in changing situations. It is the familiar in the unfamiliar. Other people facing changing situations and new environments are migrants. Migrants frequently find themselves in the unfamiliar. Yet, musicians and migrants both have thus shared situation, but the nature of communality or common ground with migrants is more multifaceted and needs to be explored further.
What can the settings, the language, the common ground for migrants look like? Are there needed expertise like musicians have? How can this commonality become a vehicle to support integration from the familiar left behind into the unfamiliar, creating a place which in time with local interactions and building of trust can have moments of familiarity?

The city as a host to the migrant or stranger requires these spaces, where moments of familiarity become part of the city’s acts of hospitality. How can the guest-host relation also benefit from food, music, performance, entertainment? What is their role as well as the one of generosity? Furthermore, when facing the situation of arrival at a new place, how can hospitality introduce one to a local context and structures, handling unfamiliarity and offer guidance during the process of making one’s home?

Those questions seem to become even more relevant in a currently growing mobile society.
Arriving in Umeå
(invited as a student)

I am sitting in the plane, ready for landing. I have arrived Umeå, northern Sweden, for the very first time. The place I will probably spend my next two years. Waiting for the luggage, leaving the airport in search for the bus which shall bring me to the centre. I am surrounded by people and I start wondering what they be experiencing right now.

Most of them seem confident to know where to go. Some look disorientated like me. But I pretend to know where to go and follow the confident knowers. Exploring a place for the first time has its very own magic. You will never experience that place in the same way again. Every thing seems bigger and more impressive.

I am wondering, why as a newcomer, I want to pretend to be a local, to act like I am familiar, when I’m not.

After a while, I leave my “protective appearance” behind and reveal my unfamiliarity/ignorance of the place. I ask for help. People react very friendly and helpful. Why did I act in hesitation? Was I ashamed of being a stranger? Afraid to showing it, why?

Vulnerability? Protection? Fear?

I can’t predict the reaction, which results in that uncertainty, a risk.

Take a risk in unfamiliar situations. Trust the
unfamiliar. That takes courage I assume. After I reach the city centre, I head to the place I shall stay for the first week. Luckily I have found a place through Airbnb, all cheap hostels were fully booked. New students like me are overrunning the city. Following the description I got, it takes me some time to find the/my way. A Belgian woman welcomes me in her house. A couple, the parents of another student, are also staying at the apartment. They are having dinner together with the host’s boyfriend. I am invited to sit with them, getting offered coffee and dessert. A Swedish fika.

Later, my host shows me around to the room with the bed and the bathroom I should use, explaining house rules, giving a list with the closest place to buy groceries, options of transportation, orientation of what to do in the city and around. An introduction to the area. Still, I am a guest in need of information, of being taking care. I am paying for the stay, but also for these services? For what reasons is she caring, I do not know, is that even important or relevant?
PROCESS OF BEING HOSTED BY UMEÅ - as student
a personal narrative

2015 2016 2017

REGISTER
PERSONAL NUMBER ID CARD

880903-5967

CONCERT MUSEUM WINTERSPORTS MATCH BOATHOUSE PARTY

COMMUNICATION
REGISTRATION
STABILITY

buddy-program
UMA-Card
smart phone + swedish number
"introduction"

REGISTRATION START
PROGRAM LANGUAGE COURSE

LANGUAGE COURSE SFI

FIKA EXHIBITION CLEARING
BENCH- project

staying in BnB,
hosting a Fika for
inhabitants

at the boat museum

dancing

food

invitation as a thank
you for the work on
Holmön

START PROGRAM

ANNOUNCEMENT

START PROGRAM

ANNOUNCEMENT

Figure 01: Own process of being hosted by Umeå
EXPLORING HOSPITALITY

WHAT IS CONSIDERED AS HOSPITALITY?

When reading about hospitality research, I came across different understandings and definitions. In its basic meaning hospitality is considered as “the giving of food, drink and sometimes accommodation to people who are not regular members of a household”.\(^1\) An arrangement between two key participants, the host and the guest. Typically, the givers, the hosts, are providing in their own homes, sharing their own sustenance with their guest. But the task of the (good) host is concerned with more than food, drink and shelter, it means that a host must try to cheer up a miserable guest, divert a bored one, care for a sick one.\(^2\) This definition refers to a private context, which is similar to its understanding of the ancient cultures of Greece and Rome, where hospitality was a fundamental custom, offering compassion and generosity.

In ancient Greece the concept, law or custom of hospitality is called Xenia/philoxenos (love of strangers) a host-guest relationship, where generosity and courtesy


\(^{2}\) Ibid.
is shown to those who are far from home. A relationship between guest and host arise along rituals and gives benefits to both sides, in material and non-material ways, the form of gifts, protection, shelter or favors. Hospitality is seen as a duty towards the traveler. The host accepts responsibility for the overall welfare of his or her guest. Yet, the focus in the host-guest relationship was the safety of the guest from any outside harm. The concept represents a kind of guarantee of reciprocity - one protects the stranger in order to be protected from them. The motive of doing so was reasoned by seeing the Greek god Zeus “Xenios” as a protector of the guests, which resulted in fearing his anger. He embodied the religious obligation to be hospitable to travelers. After all, one never knows who the guest will be, it might be the gods themselves.

A further developed example of the ancient concept of hospitality would be the one of the Greco-Roman “Hospitium”. A right to hospitality for strangers, involving rights of the guest and duties of the host. It comprised not just the private form of hospitality (Xenia) but expand further into public sphere as a custom of protecting foreign citizens by a representative of the same nation outside of their state. In medieval Europe the concept of Hospitium extended into a physical form, as an attached building to a monastery, which gave shelter and accommodation to pilgrims and other guests. This gives already an idea of how hospitality will develop to an industry of its own, separated from its domestic context.

As indicated, hospitality does not just stay within the domestic realm. For example the task to accommodate and provide travelers, has shifted to hotels, hostels, guesthouses (disregarding current tendencies, involving a hybrid of commercialized homes) Indeed, the concept of hospitality has become dominated by the commercial industry and realm and is seen by management scholars as a context for greater organization and control\(^3\) often with the focus on efficiency, effectivity and profitability - A business model rather than an ethical virtue. After all, the boundaries of hospitality shifted and still do within religious and cultural context, from codes of etiquette to honorable traditions and ethical treatment of strangers to commercialized provision of food and drink\(^4\). Eventually it becomes a subjective understanding of its own. But still, hospitality’s significance to the culture and society that it reflects or is located within remains and seemingly becomes even more important in questions of tolerance and integration.

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HOSPITALITY
an exploration

HOST

ENCOUNTER

GUEST

AGENTS
role and kind of the agents differ
activity performance of togetherness event manage differences

KIND
- beings
- objects
- places

SIZE
- individual
- group
- network
- institution

FAMILIARITY
- kin, friend
- in relation (official, unofficial)
- stranger

DISTINCTION DIFFERENCES

PROVISION
providing giving

EXCHANGE
receiving consuming

OUTCOME/EFFECT

LEVELS/FORMS

MOTIVE

OUTSIDE

INSIDE

GUEST

HOST

who
what
where
why

Figure 02: exploring hospitality
GENERAL ASPECTS AROUND HOSPITALITY
A JOURNEY

Sitting on a rock, half-surrounded by the sea, comforted by the sensible heat of the sunlight and the regular sound of water splashing against stones. Hosted by a friendly mind of nature.

No matter how one chooses to understand hospitality, whether as an idea, a concept, or a principle, hospitality expands into different areas and notions. When taking a closer look, it becomes a rather complex matter to understand or define due its variety in form and context, but also influences, motives, dynamics in space and ethical positions which span from the social or philosophical dimensions of hospitality to its organizational and commercial manifestations. On my journey through readings, experience and mapping notions, I came to appreciate some of its facets, which are structured and described in this thesis.
ENCOUNTER, AGENTS, THE OTHER

For hospitality to occur, an encounter is needed. An encounter of 2 agents, its key participants: the host and the guest. The one and the other. The other and the one. Both with their own point of view and perspectives. The agents can differ in size, their amount, their degree of familiarity and relation, as well as their kind: beings, objects, places, but also abstract entities like cities or interfaces of programs. Within the structure of the city for example, the municipality becomes the host to a wide array of guests: inhabitants, foreigners, visitors, migrants, expats, corporations concerning moral, political, industrial dimensions. One is left with the question when is someone or something seen as a guest and when not and what difference does it make?

Often, the guest is defined by their relation to the host. Telfer distinguishes between three kinds of guests: “those in a relationship to the host which is not simply that of guest to host, those in need, and friends proper.” Further she describes variations of relationships, from official to un-official kind, from family, friends and one’s cycle to the unknown, strangers. But not just the interrelationship describes the kind of agents also the way of their appearance, invited or uninvited. The host again reacts towards the invited/uninvited “intruder” and presents herself or himself more or less welcoming (caring/generous). Hospitality then describes an attitude, approach or treatment towards the other.

I find myself with many thoughts and questions running through my head regarding who or what is the other? - The unfamiliar, aliens, foreigners? Immigrants and refugees? Expats, strangers, (exchange) students, visitors, tourists, travelers, migrants, friends and family, city corporations, government, inhabitants, industry? - The other can be seen as the one remaining or not included (as of two or more), the different or distinct from the one mentioned, implied; The one different in nature or kind, therefore, not the same, but second. The non-identical, disparate, dissimilar, distinct, diverse, distant. Otherness is impossible without the idea of selfhood (sameness). Otherness is conceived of as that which is not “self”. In that sense, hospitality circulates around the question of identity, the self and same, as well as difference, otherness and their boundaries and tolerance.


7 Altes, Alberto
PERFORMANCE, EXCHANGE, PROVISON

The interplay of host and guest results in a performance of togetherness. A performance, choreographed by customs and cultural norms, traditions, rituals and rules of etiquette. During the performance an exchange is happening. The role of this exchange marks the mutual consideration and benefit in form of social or economic value. Hence, this exchange can be a type of social, cultural or economic. One - the host - is giving, the other - the guest - is receiving and vice versa. When a guest is sleeping in a hotel, the host is providing the accommodation in exchange for money. Economic exchange is what commercial hospitality is mainly based on. It locates hospitality as part of the capitalist economy and a concern with profit realization. Thus the host becomes a service provider, the guest turns into a customer. Hospitality is sold rather than given. Motives and context of hospitality extends towards capitalism, consumerism needs, understandings and concerns. In contrast to the exchange of material stands the concept of gift exchange in which the role of favor and returning the favor, social generosity and
sharing is valued and respected and becomes an impulse of social relations. Looking at both, a dualistic nature of hospitality seems to occur: social/economic, gift economy/capitalist economy, nostalgia/real, which again indicates its different interpretations and understandings. The role and form of provision differs corresponding to the kind of exchange (material/social/cultural) and its related activities (social/cultural/religious/political) as well as spaces where they take place (social/cultural/institutional/ethical and political). In the context of the city for example provision concerns general live-ability, safety, visitor-friendliness, support for entrepreneurs and the investment climate of the city. In the case of private hospitality, basic tenets are involved, such as sharing one’s own home with others, providing food, shelter and entertainment. Those last three elements also apply to commercial hospitality. But it concerns more than that. By giving provision, the host accepts responsibility for the overall welfare of his or her guests. The host’s task comprises protection, an element that has remained from the Greek time period, alongside showing respect and communicating a sense of belonging, comfort and inclusion, regarding what is needed or demanded by the guest. What is actually provided depends on the will

Further, the role of host and guest might not always be as clearly distinguished as I described before. As Lugosi draws attention to the importance of guest-guest relations, “it is perhaps better to conceive of multiple instances of hospitality occurring in many social situations whereby people may be both hosts and guests simultaneously”. An example of this shifting of roles is when guests of public transportation offer their seats to others as a gesture of hospitality. Or during a party a guest takes on roles of the host in relation to other guests by, among other things, serving drinks, taking care of coats, offering snacks, providing for entertainment.

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Arriving at Holmön
(invited as a group of students)

We are asked to do our University projects on the islands of Holmön, 40 km from Umeå, the city we study. The inhabitants of the island are told we, as architect students, will be involved in the municipality funded “bench-project” and expect us to design seating-objects for visitors and the inhabitants around the village and its surrounding area. We, on the other side, are told to roam and trace (for us) interesting issues concerning the island and its inhabitants, to investigate, explore and map them. Thus, we show more interest in the island than building benches. We are partly wanted and expected but also sceptically looked at. An attitude, we shared. Invited as strangers, tolerated and welcomed as guest, we encounter islanders at their homes or at a neutral, common setting of the Fika place in the grocery store. After some time passed and few encounter converged our attitude and relation changed. Crucial for that became an event, in which we, the guests, hosted the residents. By having the opportunity inviting our hosts, our role and perspectives inverted. Our student group suddenly became guests hosting our hosts. We could return the generous gestures of being welcomed by exchanging ideas inspired by the islanders themselves.
The FIKA-Table

Especially at Holmön, the principal of FIKA - a concept in Swedish culture with the basic meaning “to have coffee” - offered a simple way of meeting people. Coming together at the fika-table establishes a comforting act of hospitality and allowed us as guest and host to get in touch with locals over a cup of coffee and pastries, cookies or pie.
Figure 03 : The process of being hosted by Holmön
Hospitable encounters take place in relation to and reaction to their surrounding and therefore are woven into their specific context. Hence, the nature of hospitality differs in each situation. So do the attempts of their categorization by various theorists. Van den Broek Chávez for example mentions 3 dimensions of hospitality: domestic, commercial and civic,\(^\text{12}\) (also presented in the work of Lashley and Morrison). Here, domestic describes private hospitality, commercial describes the hospitality industry, mainly concerning food, drink and accommodation. The civic dimension describes the public sphere within institutional, ethical, cultural but also political space.

In addition, hospitality operates on several scales, from macro to micro. It reveals from the large-scale organization of welcoming (and excluding) others at the institutional or state level to the everyday experience of living with difference at the private/individual level.\(^\text{13}\)

The context, in which the act of hospitably takes place, plays a major role and is therefore highly influencing the kind and way of the encounter. Context in this matter illustrates a meshwork of influences concerning the given set, conditions and conventions, for example those of norms, customs, believes or laws, resulting in obligations and manners of any kind, for example: moral, ethical, legal, expected. These codes are reasoned by local culture, authorities and history as well as geographical and climatic peculiarities. Eventually the personal interpretation and performance becomes crucial.

Related to the site, materiality and spatiality becomes relevant, as hospitality is constructed, mediated and experienced through material objects like walls, roads, streets, buildings, blocks, doors, light, chair table, cutlery and clothing. Objects might even become the reason for meeting up, as a boat in a boat club. Hence, these are all things, which have agency\(^\text{14}\) and contribute to the experience and setting in one way or the other. In that sense, hospitality does not just take place in a certain environment, but it also produces a certain environment, which can be more or less welcoming, more or less hospitable.


\(^{14}\) Ibid.
Hospitality is driven by compound motives of both of its actors, the host and the guest, and varies in its form. Telfer categorizes three general types of a host’s motive, which she calls “hospitable motives” or “possible motives of offering hospitality”. One type describes a generous or selflessly other-regarding attitude, for example the desire to please others, benevolence, concern, compassion, being dutiful and welfare. A second type reasons the hospitable acting by the approach to achieve a reciprocal benefit, for example giving and getting pleasure. The last form is expressed by pure self-regarding intentions, like vanity, self expression, showing off, gaining profit. It considers a one side benefit only. The described motives by Telfer can also be adopted to the perspective of the guest. Both, the host and the guest are likely to act according to their immediate needs, which becomes particularly apparent in the case of the guest, who enters the host’s sphere, potentially looking for: safety, shelter, food, stability, pleasure, education, friendship, love; remedy: solitude, loneliness, a state of uncertainty, fear, boredom; following: passion, interest, financial gain; fulfilling needs or desires.

In that context it is interesting to look more closely at Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. This hierarchy suggests that people are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other, more advanced needs. Needs at the bottom of the pyramid/hierarchy are basic physical requirements including the need for food, water, sleep, and warmth. Once these lower-level needs have been met, people can move on to the next level of needs, which are for safety and security. As people progress up the pyramid, needs become increasingly psychological, and social. Soon, the need for love, friendship, and intimacy become important. Further up the pyramid, the need for personal esteem and feelings of accomplishment take priority.

From the basic upwards:

(see diagram)

**Physiological needs:** air, food, water, shelter, clothing, sleep

**Safety and security needs:** health, employment, property, family, stability

**Love and belongingness needs:** friendship, family, intimacy, connections

**Self-esteem needs:** confidence, achievements, respect of others, connections, need for individuality

**Self-actualisation:** morality, creativity, spontaneity, acceptance, experience purpose, meaning in inner potential
The needs’ order and ranking might be questioned in some way or the other as there was relatively little research supporting his theory, especially in relation to their hierarchical order. In a study published in 2011, researchers from the University of Illinois discovered, that self-actualization and social needs were important even when many of the most basic needs were unfulfilled. At least, Maslow’s pyramid gives an overview to orientate on and helps one understanding variety and types of needs.

As needs blend in practice, also motives tend to be mixed, influenced by whether cultural expectations, physical or psychological conditions but also other (material) capabilities. Motives are therefore very personal and highly affected by one’s own beliefs and sense of moral values, virtues of community, compassion, solidarity, generosity, duty, honor, benevolence, public-spiritedness or will itself.

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Hospitality concerns ethical and moral virtues and qualities in relation to the treatment of the stranger, to social relation, to the concept of sharing and togetherness, humanity rights and citizenship. Through hospitality we show our moral, ethical approach towards the other. It directs us in which way we respond to and encounter the other as our guest, familiar or not, welcome or not. Which “quality” the tasks of hospitality have been performed are not necessarily depending just on the interpretation of compassion, solidarity and generosity, but also on skill and will, effort and engagement, participation, commitment and available resources. It becomes a complex network of conditions which can be seen as duty, virtue or something else.
ACCESSIBILITY
(openness/closeness)

Boundaries and territories govern our environment, creating an inside, an outside. Acts of hospitality are positioned as crossing those boundaries, creating thresholds of the interplay between inclusion and exclusion, welcome and estrangement, hospitality and hostility. It inhabits the possibly of opening those boundaries, loosens up distinctions between stranger and friend, self and other, host and guest as well as the opposite, keeping them closed, entailing acts of exclusion and violence, eventually opposed by given power structures, as treatment towards unwanted guest. Conditional and non-conditional hospitality indicates how closed or open it acts toward the guest or the other. The French philosopher Jacques Derrida wrote extensively on the ethics of hospitality and advocates its unconditional form.

“There is the law of unlimited hospitality that ordains the unconditional reception of the other, whoever he or she is: that is, the provision of hospitality to a stranger without conditions, restrictions and returns. […] It asks us to say ‘yes’ to the newcomer before any determination, before any prevention, before any

identification, whether or not it is to do with a foreigner, an immigrant, an uninvited guest, or an unexpected visitor, whether or not the new arrival is the citizen of another country, a human, animal or divine creature, a living or dead thing, male or female. […] without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names.”19 – J. Derrida

Unconditional hospitality is rarely offered, if at all possible. Instead, individuals find themselves enmeshed in rules, norms, codes of etiquette and further conditions structuring boundaries around who is included, valued and excluded from that space.20 Indeed, every empirical act of hospitality is, in practice, conditional. Our welcome to actual foreigners is bound by law and finitude, therefore always limited. Hospitality establishes a right to and a duty in hospitality. They simultaneously place terms and conditions on hospitality (political, juridical, moral) ordaining that this right should be given always under certain conditions.

In the context of the city as hospitality spaces the concepts of Agora and Fortress are expressing those ideas of openness/closeness.21 The term Agora refers to the main squares of the ancient Greek city states, open spaces where economic, political, religious and social activities took place.22 Similar to the unconditional/absolute hospitality of Derrida the concept of Agora understands it as an attitude towards the new and the strange, openness to the other and to the democratic exchange of ideas. It welcomes the stranger, accepts diversity and integrates it in different measures and ways. Then, hospitality demands an openness to the other that in its extreme, not restricted form, dissolves the relation between host and guest, as the host gives himself absolutely and without demanding anything from the guest.23 The concept of Fortress expresses the opposite. It indicates how closed cites behave towards strangers. In its conditional form, hospitality imposes duties on the guest and implies a certain level of violence, obliging the guest to remain as such. It avoids the presence of strangers and limits the behavior of the citizens. It rises fortresses and walled as protection, security. It closes its gates to any possible guest, seen as a potential enemy or limits its contacts with the other.24 One recognizes, hospitality entails its opposite: hostility. In practice, like conditional and unconditional forms of hospitality, cities are never purely open to the other, or completely closed, but something in between.

24 Ibid.
It becomes apparent that the decision of to whom to give access or not, whom to include or exclude creates structures of power and control and are thus closely linked to a hierarchy and status impact. But not just social exclusion and social distinction, also the act of hospitality itself can establish spaces of power, control and domination. These spaces are regulated by chosen or imposed structures and concepts such as cultural rules, norms, rituals, codes of etiquette and expectations (of being a guest or a host) as well as laws. Hospitality does not just govern social relations through and outside these structures, the process of providing hospitality also facilitates the development of relationships as Selwyn argues: “hospitality converts strangers into familiars, enemies into friends, friends into better friends, outsiders into insiders, non-kin into kin.”

Putting this influence on the other to an extreme, the act of hospitality conceals an oppressive aspect, allowing “forces” to change the other by imposing one owns’ sense of order upon them, turning the other into the same or something else. Then, hospitality can be considered instead as management of
strangers and difference and become a powerful mediating social control mechanism. Instead of becoming the same and letting go differences, the question remains, how differences could be kept and be turned into a strength or advantage, what can be learned or gained from it. Regarding the relation between state and its treatment toward migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, hospitality becomes also a question of humanity power and control, extending into political questions of citizenship and human rights.

In contrast to this rule-constructed and restricted perspective of looking at hospitality, a more open one is that of trust. When facing the stranger, representing a potential danger, does one open the door or close it? Does one reach for a weapon or extend a hand? Does one trust or not? By opening the door of one’s house to the other as the stranger, one allows the “unknown” into one’s private space, exposing one’s own vulnerabilities. Simultaneously the guest is entering uncertain territory as well. A demand for controlling the situation in favor to reduce risks is understandable but also may close further possibilities of new experiences. Instead, trust becomes crucial. A gesture, which involves taking risks, due the ethos of hospitality is never guaranteed. A gesture, which meets insecurity with openness and respect, enabling further acts of generosity and develops social dimensions. Especially for the philosopher Derrida and his notion of an unlimited form of hospitality, trust becomes a core subject. According to him, only who trust without any questioning the guest can provide hospitality in its absolute, pure form. Trust seems to be deeply rooted in giving hospitality but certainly is also context-dependent. But without the characteristics of trust, hospitality becomes a power play (and control mechanism).

ACTIVITY, PROCESS

Ben Jelloun suggests that the act of hospitality involves “an action (a welcome), an attitude (the opening of oneself to the face of another [...] and the opening of one’s door and the offering of the space of one’s house to a stranger), and a principle (disinterestedness)”.

Arriving at Holmön’s boat association party - exploring Swedish hospitality
(invited as a group of students)

An invitation arrived. It is signed by Monica and Thomas. Who is Monica and Thomas? I can’t find any connection to anyone or thing in my head. The email explains, they want to invite us to their yearly meeting of the Holmön boat association as a thank you for our work within the Holmön community a few months ago. Surprised but happy about the unexpected appreciation of strangers, we decide to accept the invitation. A few weeks later, 7 of the invited group are sitting in a car driving through the darkness to a small village, 20 km outside of Umeå. We arrive after a 40 min ride, stop the engine and remain in the car. Looking at each other indecisively we hesitate. What will we expect? Who are these people anyway? Nervousness and tension spread. Slowly we leave the car, first shuffling, then walking more confident up to the houses passing a welcoming fire, which leads us the way. Children are playing. A door opens. We enter the hut. Inside we find ourselves in a boat-building-workshop lit by candles. People chat lively, walk around, prepare a buffet and greet each other. Not knowing where to go and what to do we assemble in the center, looking puzzled. Then, a couple, who appears to be Monica and Thomas, our hosts, welcome us. We take of our coats and drinks are served. Later all the guests are invited to sit down and Monica declares the buffet open. A cheerful, Swedish dinner starts. After the dessert and a few more classes of wine, the host gives a storytelling presentation about him building his boat and further boat related adventures. The sociability of the evening reaches its climax when some guests unpack their instruments and start playing songs everyone seems to know. The crowd join in with sinning and few open the dancefloor until most of the guests join. Others remain in their seats, some talking some apparently fully absorbed by the tunes and atmosphere. We sit relaxed together far into the night and leave eventually back into the darkness on the road towards Umeå.
Figure 05: Process of being hosted by Monica and Thomas (Holmön boat association)

**BACKGROUND**
- involved with a university project on Holmön
- architects: Lisa, Julie, Simeon, Daniella, Mirjam, Anurpee, Sofia

**CONTEXT**
- boat museum club
  - Monica, Thomas

**INVITATION**
- from the boat museum club as a thank you for the work on Holmön without directly knowing the hosts.

**ARRIVING**
- WELCOMING
  - at Monica’s and Thomas’s house/boat workshop

**SHELTER**
- in the boat workshop of Thomas, bathroom can be find in the residence house, which is not used otherwise.

**HOST**
- Monica & Thomas

**GUEST**
- UNFAMILIAR GUEST

**PROCESS OF BEING HOSTED BY MONICA & THOMAS**
- as students of the architecture school
PROCESS OF BEING HOSTED BY MONICA & THOMAS
- as students of the architecture school

ARRIVING
STORYTELLING MUSIC DANCING
COMMUNICAITON ORIENTATION

COMMUNICAITON ORIENTATION
WORKSHOP

LEAVING WELCOMING
ENTERTAINMENT

SHELTER FOOD
FOOD at Monica’s and Thomas’s house/boat workshop
welcoming drink guests bring different food quiche, soup, bread and butter, different salads,
in the boat workshop of Thomas, bathroom can be find in the residence house, which is not used otherwise.

performance from the boat museum club as a thank you for the work on Holmön without directly knowing the hosts.

BACKGROUND CONTEXT INVITATION
involved with an architect university project on Holmön
traveling to the unknown swede
nummer
umeå kassjö holmön 2016 september

university-project architects students lisa julie simeon daniella mirjam arusree sofia

HOST GUEST UNFAMILIAR
meeting other guests
directions @
acceptance @
invitation @!

SKÅL ! SKÅL ! SKÅL !
The act of hospitality involves an action (that of welcoming) and may lead to a performance of togetherness. This performance is a process. A process of sequences, creating experience out of the everyday. This process may follow rituals or rules, creating a certain choreography. With the help of readings and exploring my own experience as a new-arriving student in Umeå, and other hospitable situations, I try to identify and illustrate basic sequences of the rough process of hospitality (see drawing/diagram):

First, every encounter occurs in relation to a certain background, due to a motive, initiated by an idea, a plan, a decision, an invitation or by chance. For thus encounter to happen, a journey is needed, which describes the time and way between the decision taking and the actual encounter - a state of threshold. At the end of that journey the arrival and the crossing of threshold occur. It will be followed by an encounter with its reception and greeting in one way or the other and merge into an exchange of cultural or material nature, sharing property and experience, giving provision, comfort and entertainment, according to what is needed or wished for and in the realm of the possible, until their paths go separate ways. The encounter will create and impact experience, possibly gain effects like mutual recognition. The gesture of hospitality might be returned by the participants.
FOOD, ENTERTAINMENT, LEISURE

As part of hospitable provision, food entertainment and activities play an important part of hospitality. Not only do food and entertainment add to and provide pleasure, they also involve people and offer a starting point for conversations and cultural exchange among them. The facilities create a platform for telling stories and listening to other experiences and notions. In addition to food, as a basic need, music is part of every culture and something most of the people can relate to. It particularly becomes powerful as a universal language, mediating emotions, creating moments of familiarity and togetherness.

MOBILITY, IMMOBILITY

As mentioned, hospitality can be seen as a process or sequence of activities involving encounters and exchange. It is also identified as an event, happening out of the everyday. This event to take place is premised on the mobility, the movement of the migrant, the visitor or stranger, the exchange student, the tourist or the asylum seeker, who is because of given hospitality slowing down (their movement) at the initial moment of arrival and for the period of the stay. Receiving hospitality implies a pause in the movement in that sense and entails immobility. It becomes a break from the frequent ordinary life, or at the same time the familiar after an unsettling journey.

Of course, not all travelers are mobile under similar condition, neither are they hosted with the same degree of embodied comfort. It offers a perspective on the way social life is patterned through intersecting mobility and immobility.29

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OUTCOME, EFFECT

“While hostable encounters foster trust, mutual learning and ‘personal growth’, closeness is not always altruistic and technologies of hospitality also allow people involved to exert their status and power during interaction, creating moments of tension, awkwardness or distrust.” – P. Lynch

The outcome of the act of hospitality is an interplay of its process and diverse components, which can become both, positive or negative. Hospitality may give the guest, but also the host, what she or he is looking for and fulfil their needs or desires. It becomes concerned with provision of the social, cultural, institutional, ethical and political space where participants can learn to engage with and learn from one another. It also embodies the opportunity to open boundaries: By giving space to the stranger, experience can be shared, a sense of belonging be created, relations be fostered. It can strengthen the skill for

living together, supporting mutual recognition, unlocking opportunities for social change and become a key to human compassion. It may decrease differences, but on the other hand it also implicates strangeness, possibly resulting in violence and exclusion, generating incomprehension, discrimination, as well as dependence, and sense of obligation and dept. Instead of an enclosed thinking, the encounter could offer reflection, activating a discussion or discourse. Indeed, hospitality space should facilitate not just recognition but also enable disagreement and conflict to occur, in order to grow, change and reflect on oneself, otherness, current (social) situations and perceptions. As Selwyn states: “hospitality carries the possibility to change, grow, renew and reproduce society.” Additionally, an encouragement to return the favor of hospitality may strengthen relations by initiating a gift economy - a tool for coexistence.

Occasionally guests transform to become permanent members of the local community or household. The other becomes the same or the familiar. Then the question remains if hospitality towards the familiar other ends or transfers into something else.

In the end, one never knows for sure, what the outcome of that encounter will be. It is always a certain risk-taking. Like Derrida says, the stranger who arrives into your home could be a murderer or a messiah. Or sometimes, a bit of both.
By Investigating the encounter of the other as the unknown, I became interested in exploring the situation of arriving and orientation, finding one’s way into or along, as the case may be, an existing society and their structure. Throughout the semester I tried to illustrate and understand the experience of hospitality in relation to that process within an unfamiliar place, in my case, the town of Umeå and its environment. The moment of arriving at a new place, a new situation which is unknown, unfamiliar can be scary, exciting and emotional. One may be frightened but also intrigued by the difference. In this state of uncertainty one may look for familiarity and orientation. Hospitality can be a supportive process, which destabilize that uncertainty, helping to understand and manage the difference. It introduces one to the world of the other and gives the other the opportunity to get to know a part of oneself. It means initiating a dialogue but also an exchange. An exchange, which is happening in a preferable friendly setting which ideally then leads to mutual recognition, or even more than that. This is a highly optimistic and idealized perspective and is considered under the conditions of both sides willing to do so. It is an uncertain process in itself, involving risk and willing to engagement.
It is influenced by many different aspects, which makes it complex and multi layered, but worth trying for the sake of coexistence. How hospitality is translated into the situation of arriving, especially in the context to the city leads to the question of how one is taken care of in this particular situation. From the perspective of the arriving stranger, hospitality becomes then about fulfilling needs, such as stability, security, but also of finding a way into given structures, understanding them and eventually establishing a sense of belonging. I tried to identify and illustrate this process throughout the semester and roughly categorized a set of steps, needs and duties such as housing, work/education with financial support and social integration (the community around work or educational training can become supportive actors), communication (learning local language and social/bureaucratic structures), civil services and duties (for example registration with tax agency) as well as entertainment/leisure/social interaction and network. How those needs are taken care of or by whom, how one may succeed, the way one arrives as well as one’s (legal) treatment/handling and possibilities are not equally the same and therefore highly various. The official care-taking instances and involving state/communal apparatuses in charge differ according to one’s background and motives, for example of that of being a student, migrant, refugee, expats. Yet, some duties remain shared.

I will focus on social exchange through communication, leisure, entertainment, and activities, creating moments of familiarity, while sharing experience.
ARRIVING IN UMEÅ
the attempt to draw out the rough process of settling down and involved actors/institutions

Figure 06: Process of arriving at Umeå
ARRIVING IN UMEÅ -
PROCESS OF SETTLING DOWN AND INVOLVED ACTORS

The municipality's responsibilities include housing, income support in some situations, teaching in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), civic orientation, school, preschool, child care and the assistance of social services.

EU/EEA students

The International Housing Office (IHO)
Private & public housing
student housing
municipally owned public housing company

STATE swedish gouvernment ageny
MUNICIPALITY
UNIVERSITY
ORGANISATION
ASSOCIATION

FINDING A JOB

Sweden's Migration Agency
Flyktingmottagningen
Viva kompetenscentrum

Sweden's Migration Agency
Viva komvux/SFI
Swedish tax agency

adult education

Viva vägledning
fee-paying students from outside the EU/EEA

online platforms
...
THE CONTEXT OF UMEÅ

My context of interest is Umeå, a town in northern Sweden, located at the Ume river. It is the capital of Västerbotten County, the biggest city in Norrland and the twelfth biggest in Sweden. The municipality’s population counts over 121,000 people, most of them born somewhere else (off such 12 000 outside of Sweden). Umeå municipality has experienced a strong growth over the last years. At the turn of 2016/2017 Umeå municipality reached 122 892 inhabitants. The population increased by 2115 people in 2016. Over the past five years, Umeå municipality had an average population growth of around 1 100 people a year. An important part in such plays Umeå University. Since it was inaugurated in 1965 Umeå’s population has doubled. In 2016, 31 500 students studied at Umeå University. Umeå’s population varies during the year, which is a common pattern in the larger university towns. In the beginning of each semester (August-September/ January-February) the population usually increases and decreases in spring and summer when the school year ends and many students move out. The average age in Umeå is 38 years. Along with the University, businesses including companies in the fields of biotechnology, medicine, the environment, energy and IT attract people to come to Umeå. As it is shown the population rises and so does the number of new arrivals in the town, like students, migrants, expats and refugees. Among them, many are of foreign nationalities and different cultures, potentially unfamiliar to the place they reached.

http://www.umea.se/umeakommun/kommunochpolitik/kommunfakta/befolkning.4.73474df7141ec1b19d11557.html
diagram/pictures
Viva kompetenscentrum
Viva kompetenscentrum is a municipal organization responsible for guidance and counseling for adults, refugee introduction/integration, adult education and arbetsmarknadsföring in Umeå.

Swedish For Immigrants (svenska för invandrare in Swedish) is an education for adult immigrants who wish to acquire basic skills in the Swedish language and about Swedish everyday, society- and worklife.

NORRLANDSOPERA UMEÅ FOLKETS HUS
youth cultural centre

CULTURAL CENTRE

Viva komvux/SFI
Library

Hamnmagasinet

MUNICIPALITY
UMEÅ KOMMUN

ORGANISATIONS
NETWORK
ASSOCIATION

Vän i Umeå
Creating friends through culture. Lunch and informal meetings with established Swedes. The project is open to everyone who is interested. Through this network one can be matched with a person or family that you will get to know or attend activities like film night, yoga, kung fu classes, games, etc.

Buddie Programme
The Buddy programme was established on the initiative of several student organizations and companies to introduce international students to Umeå and Sweden. It is also a unique opportunity for you, who is already a student at the university, to meet new people, to discover new cultures and to develop your language skills.

Friend in Umeå
Friend in Umeå is an initiative for establishing contacts between Swedes and immigrants. The network is open to anyone who is interested. Through this network one can be matched with a person or family that you will get to know or attend activities like film night, yoga, kung fu classes, games, etc.

Kulturkompis
Creating friends through culture. Lunch and informal meetings with established Swedes. The project is open to everyone who is interested. Through this network one can be matched with a person or family that you will get to know or attend activities like film night, yoga, kung fu classes, games, etc.

Umeå Folkmusikförening
Umeå Folk Music Association is supporting national and international folk music in Umeå. Through dance evenings, concerts, music training courses and contacts with other organizations we aim to create interest in heritage issues. Umeå folk music organization hosts and actively part in the development of cultural life in Northern Norrland.

Folkkläde Umeå
Serving good vegan food for 25 SEK in Hamnmagasinet in Umeå. Runs on a voluntary basis in order to give a positive impression of vegan food.

The EAT project
is an exploration and a study in understanding that food goes beyond just providing sustenance. Under it run different projects which use food as a tool to research and grasp complex topics such as migration, nostalgia, cultural identities and social interactions.

Kulturhuset Kolossum
is a place managed in relation to Studiefrämjandet. It offers several kinds of cultural and business premises, which can be used for shorter and longer periods by other association in relation to Studiefrämjandet.

Studiefrämjandet
One of Sweden’s largest student associations with a wide range of study circles, education, cultural events and lectures.

Figure 08: Actors in Umeå
After the arrival at a new place, with the intention to stay for a longer period of time, one is confronted with several duties to accomplish: registration at the Skatteverekt (tax agency) for example, seeking residency at the Migrationsverket (The Swedish Migration Agency), finding a job with Arbetsförmedlingen (The Swedish Public Employment Service) or register with the University. Further, there are different institutions like the Viva kompetenscentrum. In particular cases, they offer guidance during this process. They are responsible for issues related to adult education, vocational education, immigration, integration and labor markets within the municipality of Umeå. A specific group of its own, of which I am part of, forms the huge amount of students in Umeå. They are taken care of by the University itself and attached initiatives and organizations.  

Along the major needs of finding accommodation, a way of income, education, reporting arrival (registration), getting a personal identity number, insurance and tracing further basic (daily life) provisions, social and cultural exchange becomes crucial as part of fostering a sense of belonging. To interact, communication and communalities in some way or the other, are needed. That can be facilitated in different ways: through language, music, food, or other shared interests. In fact, it becomes curical as a starting point for new encuentraurs.

Therefor, I investigate and locate initiatives with qualities of hospitality and aspects of commonalities such as food or music, which are recognizing and welcoming the stranger, accepting diversity and longing for integration and cultural exchange in different ways.
One place people meet and come together with such similar background is by learning the local language, Swedish. Learning the language is relevant not just for making oneself understandable or for job requirements (almost everyone speaks English). In fact, being able or at least showing effort to communicate in the local language may reduce the sense of being a stranger (marks/makes one less as a stranger) It may encourages participation.

SFI - svenska för invandrare/ Swedish for immigrants - is such a place. It is an educational offer for adult immigrants who wish to acquire basic skills in the Swedish language and want to learn more about Swedish everyday, society, and work life. The goal of the SFI-education, from the student’s point of view, is to communicate spoken and written knowledge in Swedish that provides a solid foundation for work or further studies. One must be registered with Umeå Municipality (Umeå kommun) and have a residence permit. SFI-education is free of charge.

Aside form getting to know cultural characteristics of the inhabited country as well as its language it also becomes a gathering place of newly arrived people, seeing themselves in similar situations. It embodies the opportunity to become a platform and starting point for new arrivals, creating a social network.

33 http://www.skola.umea.se/komvux/sfi.4.722cda1f-139592141ce6b3.html
The opportunity of meeting new people through the common attending of Sfi, is the idea, which “Vän i Umeå” is based on and initiated by. “Vän i Umeå” is a network with several cooperation and collaborations (Kyrkan på Campus, Rädda Barnen, Röda Korset, KFUM, Studieförbundet Bilda, Kyrkor i Umeå, Ögonblicksteatern, Sensus, Humanisterna, Unbound, Bokcaféet Pilgatan och Rotary). It is an initiative for establishing contacts between Swedes and immigrants as well as organizing meet ups of any kind to gather, learn language and culture. It is open to anyone who is interested and organized by a Vän I Umeå facebook group. Through this network, one can be matched with a person or family that one will get to know or join different meeting groups, the “youth” and the 30+ for example. The group decides what kind of activities they want to do. It can be anything from cooking, baking, watching movies, hiking, playing games, playing volleyball, painting, singing or anything else. New groups can be created by anyone. There are also joint activities happening for everyone who is in Vän i Umeå, like dinners, excursions, parties and activities that members take initiative of. An important activity is FIKA-cafes as a kind of introduction to the network, where everyone meets and socialize. Most of the activities take place weekly and in cooperation with other initiatives, mainly around the area of Ålidhem and Ersboda but also in Väven (central Umeå) and next to the lake Nydala. It is not financially supported by grants, the municipality or any other funding but purely based on volunteer work. Around 600 people have been connected, 2000 have been involved. The community is growing fast.

KULTURKOMPIS

Also “Kulturkompis” which exists all around Sweden gives newcomers and established Swedes the opportunity to meet, with the aim to strengthen the knowledge of Swedish society and promote participation in society. Their focus lies on going together to cultural activities such as concert, cinema and museum. The activities are free of charge. The initiative understands culture as a universal language. They believe, that through common cultural experiences interesting meetings, conversations and relationships can occur. The project is part of the Student Association Formed working with newly arrived asylum seekers.
**FOOD**

**EAT UMEÅ**

Aside from language, food is an accessible starting point for communication and social interaction, everyone can relate to. An example for that would be EAT Umeå, which is a public, food based participatory project working towards bringing people of different nationalities, languages and cultures together over food.

“the EAT project is an exploration and a study in understanding that food goes beyond just providing sustenance. Under it run different projects which use food and design as an aid to research and grasp complex topics such as migration, nostalgia, cultural identities and social interactions.”

**FOLKKÖK**

Not orientated on food from different cultures but on the concept of bringing people together through food is the Vegan kitchen concept of Folkkök in Hamnmagasinet in Umeå a non profit organization. It is run on a voluntary basis in order to give a positive impression of vegan food. It demonstrates how people with same interest can work together and display their concern/passion/interest to a broader audience. Enabling their passion to become part of the cities texture.

35 https://www.theatproject.com/

**MUSIC**

As a third communication tool I would like to put attention to the subject of music. Music can have a great impact on us. It is an emotional language and does not necessarily need spoken language to be understood or relate to. It has the ability to connect people through all nationalities and can be shared and exchanged by musicians and audience.

**UMEÅ FOLK MUSIC ASSOCIATION**

Umeå Folk Music Association is supporting national and international folk music (world music) and folk dance in Umeå area. Through dance evenings, concert events, training courses and contacts with other organizations with an interest in heritage issues, Umeå folk music association becomes and active part in the development of cultural life in Northern Norrland.

The association cooperates among others with the Studieförbundet Bilda, the Norrlandsoperan and the Umeå Theater Association, with the purpose of strengthening folk and world music as well as dance in the Umeå region.

36 http://umeafolkmusik.se/folkmusik-och-dans/
UNIVERSITY

BUDDY-GROUP

Group specific acts the Buddy-group for newly arrived students, which provides a helping hand for settling down and getting to know student-, but also the Swedish way of life. The International Office at Umeå University organizes the Buddy Programme as a service for international students. It provides the possibility to participate in social activities, for example sports, parties and travel in (8-10) groups of 25-30 people. A volunteer student of the University coordinates each group.

These are some of several examples of cultural integration and offering ways for creating belonging, connecting and fostering community among new arrivals and different cultures. As shown, language, music and food are major parts of finding communalities and play a comforting role within hospitable practices.
Arriving and settling down at a new, unfamiliar place requires patience and endurance. There are many steps and tasks which need to be done and thought of. Hospitality can be seen as an act and tool to assist and facilitate that path. As shown, several existing organisations and networks in different parts of Umeå are supportive during that process and offer further structures and initiatives around cultural exchange and socializing, bringing together newcomers and locals in different ways.
VISION

As mentioned before, I am interested in the act of hospitality as crossing thresholds between strangers and its potential of creating a dialogue between new arrivals, established newcomers and locals through finding and exploring communalities in different ways. The proposal shall involve, connect and extend the shown ideas and organisations to the centre of Umeå, where otherwise commercial interests (besides park benches and green areas) dominate and establish a permanent instance. The city as a host to the migrant or stranger provides these spaces, where moments of familiarity become part of the city’s acts of hospitality, offering ways and support into unfamiliar local structures. It benefits from food, music, performance, entertainment and other activities as common interests and serves as starting point for encounter and interaction. Thereby, it seems important to establish coexistence without denying but exploring differences. By giving space to the other, the opportunity to engage and a sense of togetherness may emerge. The place follows no commercial interest. It becomes a civic/citizen house, a more or less neutral ground for shared social interests, making Umeå’s diverse cultural facets visible and letting it become part of the town centre’s texture.
THE SITE

The citizen house will be situated in a drawn-out pedestrian zone in the center of Umeå, aside but connected to the main shopping area. One end shares a busy square with the main pedestrian street, creating a “plaza” atmosphere. In summer, the surrounded restaurants and bars open up outside seating and few food trucks create a separation/barrier to the remaining, calmer area of the space, which becomes mainly a transit zone for pedestrians and cyclist. Close to the open square, a speaker’s desk can be found, which allows gatherings and demonstrations. On the other side of the passage the former tourist center (occasionally used by the municipality) shelters the open space from a passing street. In between, with birches arranged, a small playground, a public toilette and parking space for bikes is offered. A small take away bistro closed down recently. Few shop entrances are facing the area. In winter, at the empty parts of the area, children are play on top of snow mountains and snow sculptures, while parents are watching. Occasionally the remaining open space is used for public events.
diagram/pictures
PROGRAM, PRINCIPALS

The area will be roughly divided in 3 sections. The “Plaza”, connected to the main central pedestrian road, the meet-up building at the other end of the area and an open space in-between, visually connected/adjoined to the citizen house. The described area is surrounded by walkways and reachable by food or bicycle.

PLAZA, AGORA

To preserve the current use of the “plaza”, adjoined to the main shopping road, the space keeps its former functions and is accessible for street food supply/food trucks. It offers a possible assembly space with additional seating area, corresponding to the Greek model of Agora, which was a central public space in ancient Greece. The literal meaning of the word is “gathering place” or “assembly”. The agora was the center of the athletic, artistic, spiritual and political life of the city.

THE HOSTING AREA

... 

THRESHOLD

COMMON OPEN SPACE
**THE HOUSE**

The existing building of the former Tourist center at the other end will become the main drop-in center for citizens (halfway house/hotel de ville) facilitating meeting area, a small stage, a kitchen to cook, bake or for other preparations as well as workshop space and group rooms. Further outdoor space, as well as space for performances and audience will grow in between.
USES, ACTIVITIES
diagram/pictures
DESIGN
CONCLUSION

It is hard to imagine, that there is a culture, a society or a form of social connection without a principle of hospitality. Hospitality is deeply rooted in society, as it is constructed by it. Ideally it is a welcoming action or given environment towards the (unfamiliar) arriving other, offering protection and shelter, providing food, comfort, often embracing the likelihood of reciprocal benefit. With conditions toward the guest and duties of the host hospitality concerns more than a localized activity. It facilitates a relation between familiar and unfamiliar, a setting for interaction, an exchange of material, social or cultural kind, honor or potentially in form of gifts (resulting in a gift-economy). It promotes a performance of togetherness and may initiate a dialogue to occur, choreographed by norms, expectations, values, a set of behaviors and other conditions.

This thesis has been an attempt to explore the approach of hospitality, especially seen from the perspective of the arriving (invited) guest and its potential of softening and questioning boundaries between the other and the same. It eventually challenges the
openness/closeness of communities and cities, by giving space to the stranger in the very center of the town of Umeå, identified as a duty of the city and a right towards the stranger. Thereby, the role of uninvited guests needs to be explored further.

In respond to the growing migration (a process of the rising global mobility and other forced or voluntarily-taken decisions influenced by current events) a resulting desire and need to establishing a home and belonging in the familiar left behind occurs. The proposal aims to benefit from the qualities of given hospitality as a tool for encounter confronted unfamiliarity, foster belonging and encourage coexistence. With the focus on communalities such as food and music the proposal aims to find the familiar in mutual interest, encourages to share space, experience and interests and offers a starting point for interaction and finding ways into given structures.

As shown the spirit of hospitality is created by will and engagement of people and its success is highly depending on participation and often voluntary work as well as open spaces/structures/cooperation. These are just some of many unpredictable conditions which accompanies the act of hospitality with tensions of uncertainty, vulnerability and risk, as an uncertain process in itself, confronted/ opposed with trust and willing to engage. An individual role also plays the ethical attitude/understanding, tolerance to otherness.

In the end there are already a lot of attempts to approach this topic in Umeå.

Even though it becomes difficult, or impossible to include everyone, due divers situations, handling/treatment and opportunities, the proposal aims to bring together different groups. It aims to broaden up the community to everyone who is interested.

In this projects the fixed role of host and guest is questioned. By the attempt of mixing them and bluer their tasks. Structers/roles of host and guest change and are not clearly set.

Hospitality in architecture is not necessarily how welcoming walls windows, spaces are. but it contributes to its possibilities of use. hospitality is the soul of those spaces which architecture can help/ support.

By allowing the practice of hospitality to facilitate the experience of the unknown/unfamiliar, one get introduces to the world of the other and gives the other the opportunity to get to know a part of oneself.


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