

REBECCA BOLT

ROOTS

- a reminder of memories in times of urban renewal



DESIGN FOR ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

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Cities are in continuous transition. Dwellers come and go, cultures meet, innovation thrives, and the built environment is constantly transforming. But what happens to our heritage when the cityscape changes? This thesis is a response to future needs and a reminder of the potential in the existing. It studies how architecture, that is grounded in collective memories and identity, can enable heritage to adapt yet flourish in an urban and historic context – namely the slaughterhouse in Gamlestadens. The area has roots that reaches deep in the history of Gothenburg, but it also faces extensive development plans due to urbanisation and population growth.

Paying attention to old buildings is important for two major reasons. Firstly, for our feeling of rootedness in time and space. And secondly, because reuse of the existing building stock is the sustainable option. By considering history as dynamic and alive, one can care for the future by caring for, and learning from, the past and present. Heritage and sustainability are hence related, and the slaughterhouse has a story to tell, about memories as well as development. Moreover, it is available space that awaits a new purpose.

In order to unfold collective memories of the place, transdisciplinary theoretical studies form the base of the thesis. Point of departure is architectural theory and phenomenology, enabling a deep dive in architecture and its connection to remembrance and meaning. Whilst relying on theoretical research, the practical exploration departs from context-based design and a small-scale approach to further strengthen connectedness to heritage. The result is a speculative vision for the slaughterhouse, and a transformation proposal for one of the buildings on site. Food remains the main theme within the area, but a circular system makes the old slaughterhouse into a pioneer once again. The idea is a business model based on pedagogy and experience, where a network of actors shares a common goal. The outcome is local and sustainable cultivation, production, and consumption, and not the least, revived memories.

Keywords: collective memory, phenomenology, heritage, transformation, slaughterhouse.