

LOVISA EINARSSON

# TO COMBAT LONELINESS

- A search for urban togetherness



## MATTER SPACE STRUCTURE

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Loneliness is merely a human phenomenon that afflicts most of us at some point in life. Yet, it is strongly stigmatized and associated with shame. Man's strive for a sense of belonging is deeply rooted and tied to her evolutionary struggle for survival. (Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008). Loneliness can be experienced during moments of solitude, or when accompanied by others. Loneliness stands out especially in contrast to a busy city and is also more common among people living in cities (Brülde & Fors).

Architecture itself cannot solve this complex and multifaceted issue. The aim of this thesis is to explore and illuminate what role architecture can play in this combat, by understanding the phenomenon of loneliness and its background, investigating the linkage between architectural elements and human behavior in public, urban space and subsequently, propose a design of a public, urban space that encourages social interaction. The thesis focuses on public space, simply because that is the most including of arts (architecture), accessible to all.

The first phase of the thesis mainly focuses on understanding the phenomenon of

loneliness and simultaneously investigating how architectural elements shape behavior in public, urban space. This is conducted by studying relevant theoretical and built references, and through mapping and observational studies, analyzing design and human behavior.

The second and third phase of the thesis mainly focus on translating knowledge and observations gained in the first phase, into a design proposal with the intention to combat loneliness. The method is iterative, and the translation will therefore develop during the process.

Keywords: Loneliness, Urban, Public space, Social, Interaction