FOLKSY SPACE

the right to belong in the cityscape?

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MSc. Thesis in Architecture & Urban Design

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till mormor,

for letting me have a piece of your creativity

thanks to,

Places tell us stories, we read them as spatial text

Dovey, 1999, p. 1

abstract

Architectural projects are often framed with an aim to create inclusive spaces, but creating such spaces is complex since visions also work excluding. The role of the architect is therefore dualistic in its nature since the profession holds the capacity to imagine a better world but doing so is to practice an elitist agency since this also always will exclude someone from this vision. Thus, there is a need to acknowledge and be transparent about who we work with matters of inclusion in practice.

The purpose of the thesis is to analyze how matters of inclusion are handled within a contemporary architectural project and to develop a theoretical tool that can be used to discuss and raise awareness of matters of inclusion and exclusion in architectural debate. The thesis seeks to answer the research questions if an inclusive architectural strategy risks becoming excluding in its target group and in the continuation how we deeper can understand and discuss the duality of our architectural role.

Social theory provides an important foundation for answering these questions, where literature studies have been the main method for creating a framework to explain the factors that set the prerequisites for inclusiveness and exclusiveness in the cityscape. To contextualize the research, a case study of the Oslo Opera House was carried out to analyze how inclusion becomes a contemporary architectural strategy, where folksiness is found as often used as a term for this ambition. The study shows how this type of planning has been used throughout the project, and how well the current situation responds to these set expectations.

The framework shows that the probability that a person resides in space is dependent on a complex mix of factors such as power structures and social capital. Thus, inclusive planning as a strategy also comes with a risk and should therefore be evaluated transparently. In order to understand and discuss these matters and reach the dualist relation between elitism and folksiness, the result of the research is a theoretical tool that can be used to frame this notion.

keywords: *folksiness, elitism, inclusion, the right to the city, oslo opera house*

foreword

One location, two realities. An autumn walk up Ramberget gives an overview of a construction site where the development of what is marketed to be Gothenburg's new city center is taking shape. Walking in the streets you would never see it, but from up here, a tent city in proximity of the site is revealed, showing the segregation of a city.

A home without walls and what are going to be luxurious penthouses, all in a 2-minute walk. A reflection of my future role and what I want to discuss within my coming thesis takes shape. In our more gentrified societies, the encounters of people of various backgrounds are becoming rarer and rarer. Where does architecture position within this debate, as in this case clearly serving the interests of those in power? The shiny icon building itself does little contribution to the debate around the problematic situation of its homeless neighbors in the city, but the architects and planners who designed the visions for this space held the power position of possibly doing so.

student background

about me

During my years of architectural studies, social sustainability has always been a distinct interest. I find myself humble, and sometimes intimidated, by the impact architecture practice on society. Whether we want or not, architecture is an entangled structure that both depends on and curates social, economic, and political interests in society. My ambition with this thesis has therefore been to untangle and form a deepened understanding of how architecture comes with a dualist power agency, as well as to discuss how this will affect who are welcome and included in the cityscape. By highlighting this position of power and responsibility, my personal goal has been to reach a deeper reflection for my future professional role. My hope is that the project raises a discussion of awareness for architecture's position in the creation of more equal spatial experiences.

work

KLARA arkitekter

Internship, Jun 2018 - oct 2018,
Summer internship 2019 and 2020

education

Master of Architecture, Architecture and Urban design

Chalmers University of Technology
Aug 2019-Jun 2021
*Matter Space Structure 1, Housing Inventions,
Nordic architecture, Theory and text; Spatial inequalities,
Thesis prep course; Critical spatial perspectives*

Bachelor of Architecture

Chalmers University of Technology
Aug 2015-Jun 2019

Art history and visual studies 30 ects

University of Gothenburg
Jan 2018 - Jun 2018

index

The first chapter of the thesis introduces the subject and states the problems that will be the focus of discussion throughout the thesis. The purpose is stated as well as the thesis framework with research questions and a presentation of the methodology and methods.

③ the Oslo opera: a folksy space

Chapter three practices a theoretical and spatial investigation of the term folksy space in a case study of the Oslo Opera house.
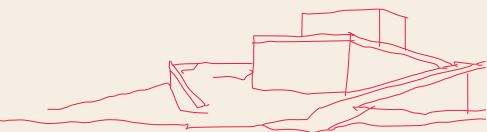
Chapter two

provides a framework with theories and concepts that will create a necessary background for understanding the following work.
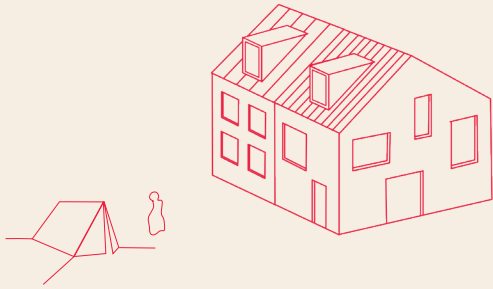
② the right to belong

The fourth chapter summarizes the research and presents a theoretical tool for how we can further discuss and highlight the architect's role and need for awareness in the planning for inclusive space. The chapter ends with an evaluation of the research and findings gained through the thesis and concludes the learning outcome.

④ the tool
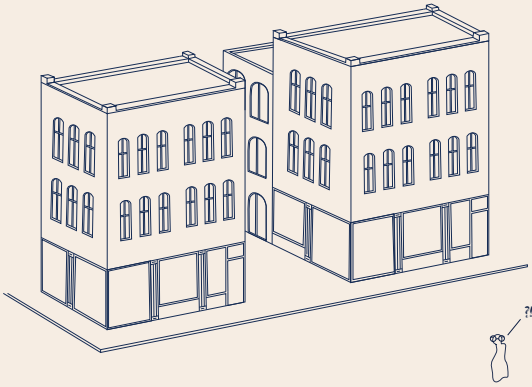
A vision of the world, is a division of the world

Bourdieu 1990, p.210

1
introduction

This chapter introduces the subject and states the problems that will be the focus of discussion throughout the thesis. The purpose of the thesis is stated as well as the thesis framework with research questions and a presentation of the methodology and methods used.

background

an inclusive city, but for whom?

Architectural projects are often framed with an aim to create inclusive spaces, but creating such spaces is complex since visions always also tend to work excluding. If we view architects as agents for the articulation of dreams when we imagine "better" futures, we also need to raise our awareness for who we include in these visions, and in the continuation, whose dreams we are imagining. This makes the role of the architect dualistic in its nature since the profession holds the capacity both include and exclude citizens from these visions of our future cities. To motivate a social agenda in the creation of more just and inclusive spaces, descriptions of new architecture projects often mention an aim to create a 'folksy' space, why it through the thesis will be positioned as a term aiming for inclusion.

Through the built, we read stories about the spaces we move in, but also about who are to move within these spaces. We say that the city is open to all, but when we move in the cityscape we are constantly affected by social codes and elitist structures. Architecture in this becomes a mediator of both power and social constructions in urban space. Today we experience urban struggles and inequalities on many levels. Discrimination often built on inherited attributes like class, race, and gender, causes tendencies of segregation that further divide our cities. A society where we will not encounter people of various backgrounds will continue to be a divided society. As professionals we here have a responsibility to understand and problematize how architecture can stabilize and legitimize power structures for a long time. This will both affect the equality to access these spaces

and effect as well as movements and visibility of marginalized groups in the city. A society where we will not encounter people of various backgrounds will continue to be a divided society. Ignored for its societal impact, architecture risks contributing to elitist power mediations of space and shape more unequal societies. But if acknowledged and treated transparently, it can instead take place in the debate of a more just society. Thus, there is a need to acknowledge and be transparent about who we work with matters of inclusion in practice.

The purpose of the thesis is to analyze how matters of inclusion are handled within a contemporary architectural project and to develop a theoretical tool that can be used to discuss and raise awareness of matters of inclusion and exclusion in architectural projects. Therefore, the research questions focus to investigate if there is a risk that inclusion as an architectural strategy will also become excluding in its target group and develop theoretical tools for how we can better understand the duality of the architectural role within these mechanisms. By doing so, the thesis will critically discuss the dualist role of the architectural profession, trying to frame a more transparent way talk about issues of belonging and who we invite in our architectural visions about what the city should contain.

research questions

1. How does an inclusive architectural strategy risk to become excluding in its target group?

2. How can we deeper understand and discuss the duality of our architectural role?

How has inclusion worked as an architectural strategy in the case of the Oslo Opera?

thesis framework

the right to belong

theoretichal framework
Methods: Literature studies, theory, iterations

the right to belong

"Architecture as an excluding structure?"

architecture and power
how does architecture work excluding?

the right to the city
who feels the right to be included?

constructions of space
what decides who becomes excluded?

FINDINGS

FINDINGS

case study
Methods: Literature study, mapping and empirical studies, iterations, spatial analysis

folksy space

"When architectural incusive strategy works excluding?"

the case of the Oslo opera
elitist agency meets ambition of a folksy space

folksiness as strategy
what happens when inclusion becomes an architectural strategy?

outcome & discussion
Methods: Iterations, concluding analysis, theoretical tool for deepened understanding of duality

the tool

"How can we begin to talk about the duality in our role?"

elitism-folksiness scale
understanding how we can be both

Diagram showing structure of work and how the methods have been applied and combined with eachother

methodolody

A theoretical framework based on literature studies, forms the foundation for the research. By firstly positioning architecture in relation to power and as a political instrument in the cityscape it seeks to deconstruct and explain how and in which ways our architectural toolbox directly practices spatial power in the urban context. A key reference has been the book "Framing places - mediating power in built form" architect and urban critic Kim Dovey.

Secondly, the framework will focus on the user narrative and questions about who are welcome in the cityscape and indirectly also who are excluded from this form of urban belonging. This is explained through social theory mainly by French sociologists Henri Lefebvre and Pierre Bourdieu. Lefebvre is chosen for his theories regarding social space and the concept of the right to the city, and Bourdieu for his theories about different forms of symbolic capital which enables and constrains us as we move through the cityscape and build up social constructions. The result, he states, is that all citizens will not feel the same right to be included in the cityscape. By targeting this concept that in the thesis is called 'the right to belong' and questions architecture's role as a power-mediator in relation to who gets to belong in the cityscape.

To discuss the power and effects of architectural planning for inclusive spaces of a practice-based reference, a case study of the Oslo opera house will research the ambition of creating a "folksy space", and if this itself risks becoming an excluding action. The project is chosen for its well-marketed architectural strategy to create an inclusive public space for raising the status of both the surrounding neighborhood and the city. The result was an icon building holding an elitist function but with the attraction of an accessible public space. To evaluate if this outcome has reached the inclusive strategy of a folksy space, the second part of the study focus on theoretical and spatial investigations of the term folksiness, discussing its relation to urban space. By critically discussing if the meaning of a folksy space is something that is being used for attraction value rather than being a reflection of cities demographics, it also research what we mean to achieve and who we include when we talk about creating folksy spaces.

Through the study of the opera, the tracks and research questions are woven together and the case provides a framework to conduct and summarize theoretical research findings through an iterative method, which lead up to the thesis result consisting of a theoretical tool to target and analyze the duality our role inheld between excluding and including tendencies. By iterating the findings and the tool visually, the ambition is that this work will be an addition to the debate and create a greater discussion in how we can be more aware and challenge these structures in practice.

method

a case study

To discuss the critical questions raised, a case study will follow the theoretical framework to limit the research area and to do qualitative research of a more specific selected case (Denscombe, 2014). This enables more detailed investigations where the interest lies in *how* and *why* tendencies within the asked questions happen, and the underlying causes. This type of investigation forms a base to help test and develop the questions raised in the presented theory, and the outcome is used to develop theories to gain new knowledge and understanding (Denscombe, 2014). The case study is conducted through multiple methods to enable discussion of the research questions with different analytical glasses and through this increase the validity of the research.

Firstly, a literature review was carried out. The inclusive ambition was researched by studying the use of folksiness and other inclusive terms in motivations of the opera house project from multiple sources such as the municipality of Oslo, the competition brief, the architects and constructors, but also the following marketing of the space. This was then put in relation to the current situation to analyze how well these ambitions have been implemented and received in terms of who uses the opera, and if the status of a folksy space is reached. The other part of the case study focuses on analyzing the empirical material and connecting it to the theory presented in the framework. The portrait of folksy space has been evaluated in an architectural analysis through the presented theory regarding architectural programming by Kim Dovey. By mapping how well the opera meets the folksy tendencies that the space aims for, the focus is set on the architectural aspects that shape the inclusion and belonging of the space. This will be paired with a spatial investigation that focuses on the user and asks the question of who is included to

be folksy in the construction of this folksy image. To communicate the analysis and reflections, design iterations are used to showcase critical tendencies.

The literature review is mainly based on;

The report "Operaen - symbol og strategi? conducted by Kunnskapsverket for the 10th anniversary of the opera in 2018. The focus of the study was to evaluate the cultural effects the opera had gained both as a symbol and a strategy, and how this has affected the crowd who use this public space and their affection for the opera as a symbol for Oslo.

Heidi Bergslis doctoral thesis; Urban attractiveness and competitive policies in Oslo and Marseille - the waterfront as object of restructuring, culture-led redevelopment and negotiation processes, published in 2015 at the University of Oslo, Institute of Sociology and Human Geography.

The article "Oslo's new Opera House: Cultural flagship, regeneration tool or destination icon?" is written by European and Urban Regional Studies from 2011 who evaluates the motivations and justifications for the building examined through interviews with individuals who played an important role in the project.

The chapter The Public Sphere as an Arena for Legitimation Work: The Case of Cultural Organizations written by Håkon Larsen in 2017 , published in the book 'Institutional Change in the Public Sphere: Views on the Nordic Model' who examines how the image of an inclusive public sphere becomes a strategy for legitimations of elitist cultural institutions.

The report Oslo waterfront regeneration: governing quality urban design written by Heidi Bergsli for the Norweigan Institute of Urban and Regional Research who follows the development of the area Bjørvika where the opera is situated, as a part of a bigger design strategy for Oslo municipality, the branding of "the fjord city".

The podcast Staden, episode #38 'Oslo - kluven stad', a collaboration between Arkitektur förlag and Sveriges arkitekter with Dan Hallemar and Håkan Forsell. The podcast takes its standpoint in the area of Bjørvika and the opera to tell the story of a divided city, great socio-economic gaps are existing side by side in neighborhood areas.

theory

FINDINGS

case study

iterations
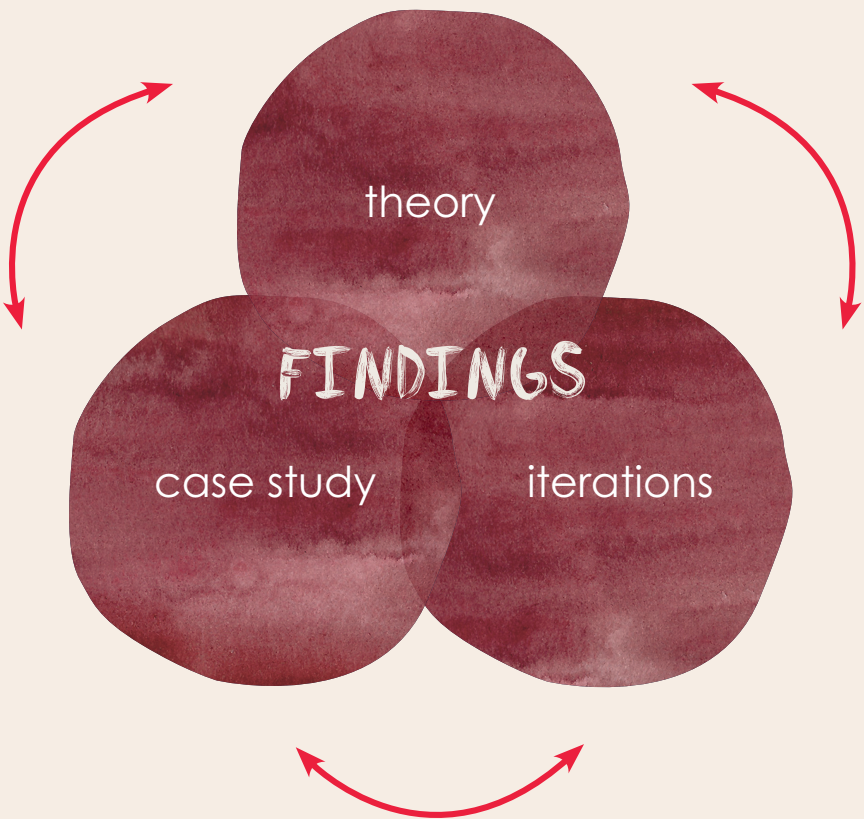
delimitations

The focus of the thesis is to critically discuss architecture's impact on society and how it affect matters of exclusion, but it does not attempt to solve the segregation of a city. Nor is it about figuring out who is ultimately held socially responsible in architectural projects. Instead, it strives to be an open discussion for how we as architects can deepen our understanding of our power in this and search for theoretical tools to position and begin to talk about our role in this complexity. Hence, the focus is to highlight and discuss how architecture may increase inequalities rather than present a general counter-strategy.

Rather than focusing on a specific excluded group and its potential inclusion, the thesis will use social theory to explain how social structures are built up and continue to reproduce through architecture and built form. Theories around how we interpret different citizens seen as more or less socially cohesive in the cityscape and thereby also produce figures of strangers are used to form a narrative around who are considered less wanted.

In the case study of the Oslo Opera, the research area has been limited to spaces with public access since the exterior and entrance space is open for public access day and night. To gain a better understanding of the project as a part of a bigger urban renewal project by Oslo municipality, the context is in some parts broadened, but will focus on the area of Bjørvika where the opera is situated and its direct proximity to other surrounding functions.

The current Covid-19 situation made a site visit in Oslo impossible, which itself generated a delimitation for the case study. Naturally, a site visit would have been beneficial for the research, but the current situation also makes the site less representative of its ordinary state. Still, a useful contribution to the study is that I have previously lived in Oslo, why I can refer to my personal experiences. I have spent a lot of time in the area and on the roof of the opera house. This has enabled me to further contextualize and understand the tendencies of the space

To fit the limits of the master thesis in terms of extent and time, the discussion and analyzes have been developed from the theoretical framework and the iterations and reflections of the author. When discussing folksiness and the meaning of folksy space, this is done through a Nordic geographical context and the discussion is directed to matters where inclusion becomes as a strategy of projecting the values of folksiness on a space, rather than a discussion about matters of style or what can be interpreted as typically seen as folksy design attributes.

glossary

folksiness
term describing something sociable, friendly, familiar, casual, informal and unpretentious in manner and style. Built upon exterior circumstances as cultural values or geographic location why the definition becomes more of an ambient term and not a set structure (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012; Merriam-Webster, 2021).

social structures
patterns of social constructed relationships between individuals produced over time, lasting longer than the average lifetime of an individual (Stevens, 1998).

topological power
a view of power where it becomes a complex combination of forces that are produced in every moment, i.e. power is everywhere since it arises from everything, not specifically positioned in space but instead shapes the space it takes part in (Fredriksson, 2014).

habitus
theory proposed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu where social practice is a form of a game, and our habitus easiest described as a 'feel for the game', meaning knowing the rules of the game. These rules are not written down but rather gained through social practice, operating beneath consciousness, as social codes you are assumed to just hold.(Dovey, 1999).

social capital
theory proposed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu for how we are positioned in society depending on how much assets we have in what you can call socially gained capital, divided into four sub-categories; economic, social, cultural, and symbolic(Dovey, 1999).

the right to the city
concept launched by French sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre stating that the right to the city raises over the concrete dimension of demand for social, political, and economic rights, arguing that the right to the city is not fully reached until you also have the right to appropriate the city, i.e. there is also an inclusion of your type of interests and desires in the spaces you move in (Spatial Justice, 2021).

governance
a shift from the traditional government management or steering towards more "entrepreneurial" approach regarding regulations in urban space. Serving as a new form of public management, where the private sector cooperates or lends different responsibilities and tasks to private companies (Bergsli, 2015).

gentrification
the process where typically historical working class and more cheap neighbourhoods are reevaluated as hip and attractive to a cultural class with higher incomes, causing the neighbourhood to be gradually more valuated and driving up rents and living costs to a point who forces the original inhabitants to move, losing a part of what made the neighbourhood attractive from a start (Hauge, 2018).

social cohesion
the ways in which an inclusive society is to become justified and theorized. A policy that both refers to the social forces and public actions that are needed for the inclusion of all groups in an urban society (Bergsli, 2015).

legitimation work
the case were stately financed institutions need to balance between the inclusive and exclusive ambitions in their communication, needing the publics' support for remaining relevant and get political funding, but also assurance that the art world finds their work credible(Larsen et al, 2017).

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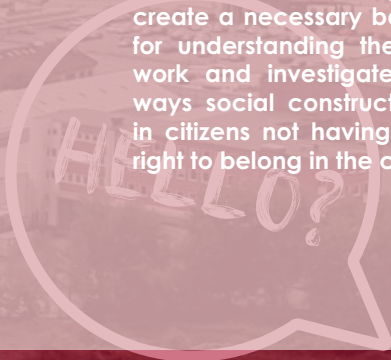
the right to belong

This chapter provides a framework of theories and concepts that will create a necessary background for understanding the following work and investigate in which ways social constructions result in citizens not having the same right to belong in the city.

architecture
& power

architecture depends

Architecture affects us at all times and not only when we choose to pay attention to it. Shaping the narratives of our lives and choices, its entanglement in society makes it impossible for built form to claim autonomy from such as politics or societal change. Furthermore, architecture is a dependant practice and this inevitable relationship with society will affect both the practice as well as us as professionals. This raises the importance of awareness for how different power structures are related to the profession.

"The most successful ideological effects are those that have no words, and ask more than complicitous silence" (Framing places, p.19) Kim Dovey writes in the introduction of his book 'Framing Places-mediating power in built form'. He uses this quote by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to position architecture's relation to power, arguing that architecture and urban design always frame spaces, both literally and discursively. Showing off agencies of the state, private corporate interests, and people with the privilege of empowerment, it becomes a reflection of social, political, and economic structures and tells us stories about who governs the spaces we move in (Dovey, 1999).

Because of this, architecture can never claim autonomy from the politics of social change and Dovey argues that any proposed illusion of architecture's autonomy from mediations of power should be disturbed, for architects will always cope with being connected to the meaning of places. Inevitable, we don't come around those issues so what is left is acceptance (Dovey, 1999). Jeremy

Till (2009) takes this provocative approach one step further in his "Architecture depends" which deconstructs architecture as a dependent discipline in every stage of the architectural process, from the initial sketch to the future affect on the inhabitants of the space. Therefore, it simply can never, with all its occupation in society, be torn from its social context. Depending on whose argument you then follow, architects can be seen as a player in an overwhelming regime of power and control, or, you can challenge this by saying architects can be seen as active agents in this regime. With these arguments, Till claims architecture's *purity is a myth*(Architecture depends, p.18).

Despite these strong arguments claiming architecture's direct relation to social change, the built environment is mostly something that we all take for granted. By not reflecting over why spaces are planned in the way they are and whose agencies they are planned after, it leads the way for elitist structures and power representations to be integrated in the framework of our everyday lives. By driving power underground like this, architecture helps to prevail and legitimize social orders, which risk becoming dangerous in our lack of questioning structures that for us seem to be natural. The strongest and most effective form of power will so become the silent one (Dovey, 1999).

defining power

Power in itself is not lodged inertly in built form, but since it is impossible for architecture to claim autonomy from societal impact, it is important to highlight and understand how architecture becomes a structure that mediates power in the cityscape. The term power can in itself mean a variety of things, and for the following understanding of the thesis, a definition is necessary for positioning the power perspective the thesis will form its discussions and conclusions on throughout the work.

Power is a product of relations between people, not inherent in them, and power often concealed in the unquestioned ways of seeing and describing the world (Stevens, 1998). Dovey (1999) defines the concept of power firstly in the meaning of 'to be able', which he explains as the capacity to achieve some end. Yet, in society, this generally also involves control 'over' others. In everyday life, often can notice power over, while 'power to' becomes a power taken for granted. This creates the illusion that 'power over' as the prior power structure.

French philosopher Michel Foucault is famous for his theories where he challenges the classical conception of power by introducing a more liberal definition. The authoritarian power exercised by the state can be seen as misleading in how it helps mask other forms of power to a point where people uncritically start to accept them. These are the most effective forms of power we should raise our consciousness before (Dovey, 1999). Traditional power can be described in the same terms as earlier definition of power over, i.e. A makes B do something that B would not have done if she/he was not manipulated by A. But instead,

Foucault states that power is not something external, or something that could be connected to or "held" by a particular person. Because of its impossibility to separate from society, it constitutes all social orders, and would so not exist without the power relations that give them its order and shape (Fredriksson, 2014; Stevens, 1998).

Seeing through the critical glasses of Foucault, power becomes a complex combination of forces that are produced in every moment, i.e power is everywhere since it arises from everything. Therefore power never goes away, it is just distributed in different ways (Fredriksson, 2014). This can be defined as a topological view on power, where power is not specifically positioned in space, but instead shapes the space it takes part in. This type of power becomes both a productive and restrained force, forming space and constructing spatial hierarchies while excluding others (Dovey, 1999).

The nexus of power mediated in built form or the "will to power" does not have to be wrong per se, but, the ignorance for this relationship can seem to be. Foucault even argues that to abolish practices of power in built form is to abolish built form (Dovey, 1999). To instead understand that these power mediations have as much opportunity for positive as negative and problematic effects becomes vital in the understanding of our view of the cityscape as a whole and the primary discussion within this thesis.
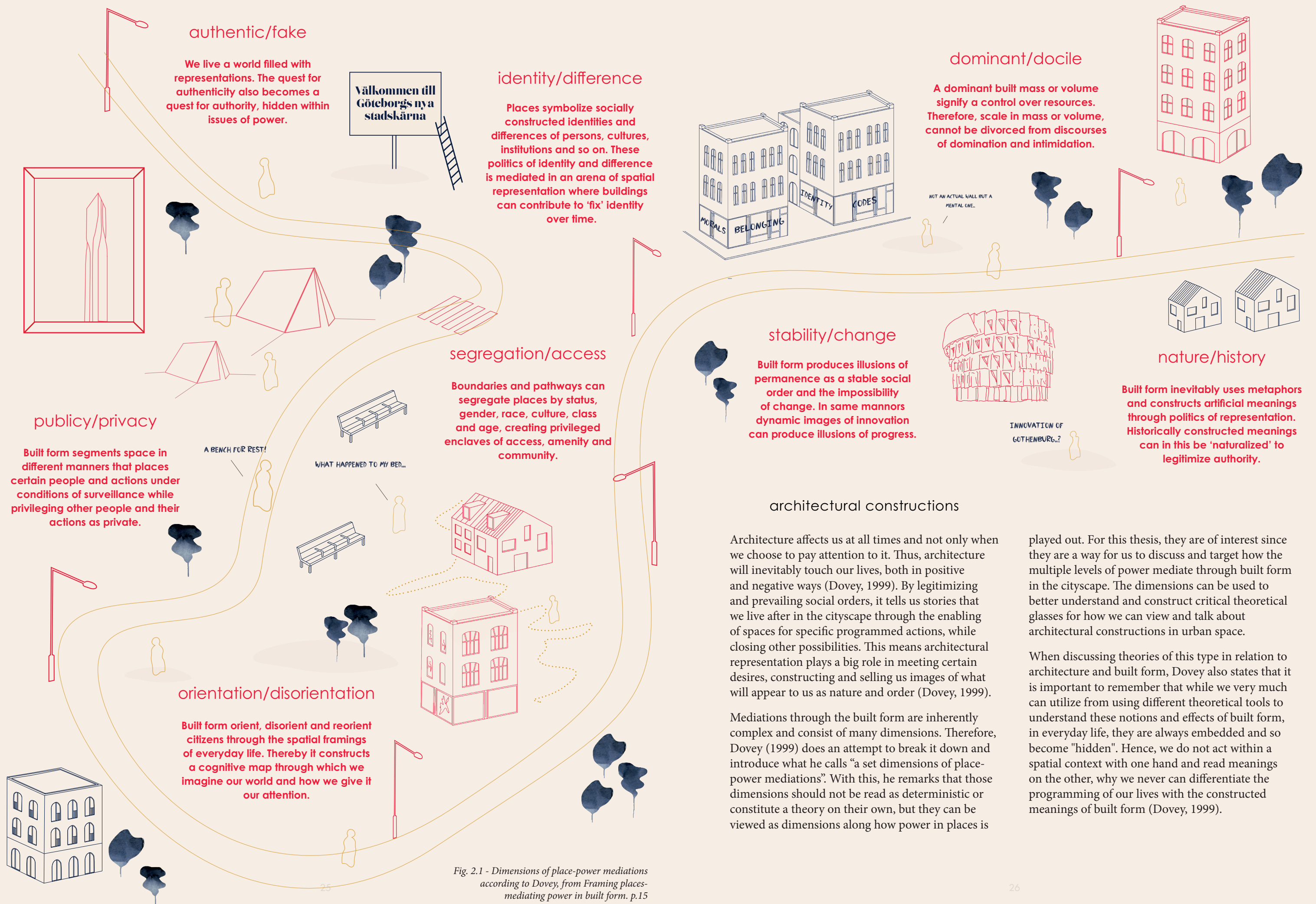
authentic/fake

We live a world filled with representations. The quest for authenticity also becomes a quest for authority, hidden within issues of power.

Välkommen till Göteborgs nya stadskärna

identity/difference

Places symbolize socially constructed identities and differences of persons, cultures, institutions and so on. These politics of identity and difference is mediated in an arena of spatial representation where buildings can contribute to 'fix' identity over time.

dominant/docile

A dominant built mass or volume signify a control over resources. Therefore, scale in mass or volume, cannot be divorced from discourses of domination and intimidation.

MORALS BELONGING IDENTITY KODES

NOT AN ACTUAL WALL BUT A MENTAL ONE...

stability/change

Built form produces illusions of permanence as a stable social order and the impossibility of change. In same mannors dynamic images of innovation can produce illusions of progress.

INNOVATION OF GOTHENBURG...?

nature/history

Built form inevitably uses metaphors and constructs artificial meanings through politics of representation. Historically constructed meanings can in this be 'naturalized' to legitimize authority.

segregation/access

Boundaries and pathways can segregate places by status, gender, race, culture, class and age, creating privileged enclaves of access, amenity and community.

publicy/privacy

Built form segments space in different manners that places certain people and actions under conditions of surveillance while privileging other people and their actions as private.

A BENCH FOR REST!

WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BED...

architectural constructions

Architecture affects us at all times and not only when we choose to pay attention to it. Thus, architecture will inevitably touch our lives, both in positive and negative ways (Dovey, 1999). By legitimizing and prevailing social orders, it tells us stories that we live after in the cityscape through the enabling of spaces for specific programmed actions, while closing other possibilities. This means architectural representation plays a big role in meeting certain desires, constructing and selling us images of what will appear to us as nature and order (Dovey, 1999).

Mediations through the built form are inherently complex and consist of many dimensions. Therefore, Dovey (1999) does an attempt to break it down and introduce what he calls "a set dimensions of place-power mediations". With this, he remarks that those dimensions should not be read as deterministic or constitute a theory on their own, but they can be viewed as dimensions along how power in places is

played out. For this thesis, they are of interest since they are a way for us to discuss and target how the multiple levels of power mediate through built form in the cityscape. The dimensions can be used to better understand and construct critical theoretical glasses for how we can view and talk about architectural constructions in urban space.

When discussing theories of this type in relation to architecture and built form, Dovey also states that it is important to remember that while we very much can utilize from using different theoretical tools to understand these notions and effects of built form, in everyday life, they are always embedded and so become "hidden". Hence, we do not act within a spatial context with one hand and read meanings on the other, why we never can differentiate the programming of our lives with the constructed meanings of built form (Dovey, 1999).

orientation/disorientation

Built form orient, disorient and reorient citizens through the spatial framings of everyday life. Thereby it constructs a cognitive map through which we imagine our world and how we give it our attention.

Fig. 2.1 - Dimensions of place-power mediations according to Dovey, from Framing places-mediating power in built form. p.15

the right to the city?

are you welcome in the cityscape?

As architects, we are educated to see beyond what not yet is and to visualize how the future society will look like. In this, the architectural profession has a great responsibility for the awareness in who we include in these visions, before the power to shape space is also the power to shape social constructions and values in these spaces. Through this view, the architect becomes a sort of "imaginative agent", who produces these programs and structures and affects their meanings. This means a power position of both disempowerment and empowerment. Therefore it is important to understand that when we as architects visualize the world, we automatically also visualize a division of the world (Dovey, 1999).

Both the buildings we inhabit and the spatial constructions we move whitin will produce and reproduce our social world. Stating that architecture becomes a framework for our lives in constructing the experience of a place, built form will therefore also reflect social constructions and governance in urban space (Dovey, 1999). Through this, architecture can be seen as a social curator that tells us what values and manners are to be accepted in and are part of our visions and planning of urban space. This raises the question of who has the privilege to feel welcome and included within these visions. Whose interests are served and how are we imagining the everyday to be socio-spatially framed? What regimes of normalization do we contribute to and in whose interest? And who are left excluded from feeling the right to belong in urban space?

Today, we are constantly filled with visions of the future city through renderings of scenarios that a large number of people have no opportunity of ever participating in. This whilst tendencies as segregation and gentrification become more and more common and prevent encounters with people of other backgrounds than our own, which in a longer perspective risks xenophobia to increase.

To try to identify who becomes excluded from these scenarios, and to identify who is seen as less legitimate to belong through these tendencies, social and cultural researcher Sara Ahmed (2000) proposes the narrative of the stranger in her book 'Strange encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality'. Here she challenges the view of the stranger as not being what we assume to be any-body, but that in fact this failure of recognition instead becomes a recognition in itself. The stranger is in fact somebody who we have already identified as a stranger. This makes the stranger far from being strange. Instead, it becomes an embodiment of what we perceive as strange within the idea we produce of the city. Simply put, strangers are not those who are not known within the dwelling, they are those who are already recognized as not belonging, i.e. being out of place (Ahmed, 2000).

Through this construction of imagined spaces, the framework for urban belonging also takes place through producing figures of the good citizen who will contribute to create mental conceptions and boundaries of what urban space should and should not contain for the type of groups. By producing the image of who "we" are, the groups we find strange will find themselves to "fit less" within this moral or aesthetic vision, rather than being outspoken "the people who do not fit" (Ahmed, 2000). We also have established ways to deal with these 'strangers' in public space. These do not only include differentiating strange from familiar but also types of "standardized situations" which allow us to negotiate our way past them and continue to live through our imagined image of the world (Ahmed, 2000). This determination of social space, and imagined forms of belonging through the differentiation between strangers and the groups who fit in the moral or aesthetic vision, therefore continue to risk increasing inequalities through our planning visions for future societies.

the right to belong

Within the 'right to the city' movement, several ideologists and philosophers have repeatedly stated that the right to the city is not only the right to access the city but also to appropriate it. Still, social constructions in urban spaces many times exclude us from accessing them, which constrain us from appropriation even if the possibility is provided. This reasoning implies that we could benefit from an additional right, one that also frames the ability to feel belonging to a space. Therefore, the thesis will position this notion in the following work called "the right to belong". This will help to contextualize and discuss how architecture influences and shapes societal belonging of space, and thereby also indirectly who are to be felt included in this image.

By normalizing and hiding forms of control through its design architecture mold the city through dominating power relations (Stavrides, 2016). Creating and legitimating what can be seen as the correct social world it constitutes boundaries and decides which people are allowed to share their identities, habits, and values. These tendencies will strongly influence a sense of belonging and the possibilities for participation in shaping rules of common space (Stavrides, 2016) More directly, by enabling and disabling access through our architectural tools, built form will directly affect who has access where, and the architecture profession also have an opportunity to influence what type of appropriation and for which groups we offer urban spaces.

Urbanization has always been a class phenomenon at some level since it always extracts from somewhere and from somebody, typically a concentrated elitist group (Spatial Justice, 2021). As stated through Ahmed's (2000) theories, it is those who have the power to influence urban space who will control and produce the values and moral codes we adapt and live after. This will produce a stranger's figure through recognition and encounters whitin public life, where 'public life' refers to activities generated by face-to-face interactions. In continuation, this stranger becomes apart from us because they 'have no purpose', that is, they have no legitimate function within the space which could justify their subsistence in the specific area (Ahmed, 2000). Simply, we question their legitimate right to be in these spaces.

Equal access to the city is a long-running discussion in architectural discourse. Perhaps the most famous concept in the contemporary architectural debate is 'the right to the city'. This was first launched by the Marxist-oriented, French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre in 1968, in French called 'Le droit à la Ville'. It springs from utopian Marxist visions and includes both a more concrete

dimension and what can be seen as a more abstract one (Spatial Justice, 2021). The more tangible one is a concrete demand for social, political, and economic rights, as well as the right to education, work, health, accommodation in urban space and so on. But by adding and introducing a more abstract form Lefebvre means that the right to the city is not fully reached until you also have the right to appropriate the city, i.e. there is also an inclusion of your type of interests and desires in the spaces you move in. Simply put, for you to feel 'the right not to be alienated from the spaces of everyday life' (Spatial justice, n.d). With this, he means that the right to the city is not reached only by having physical access to a space, you must also have the ability to appropriate it (Dovey, 1999). During recent years, urban researcher David Harvey has also picked up the concept and added to it by redefining the means of appropriation, saying this is also the right to change ourselves by changing the city, stating that this freedom is one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights (Harvey, 2011).

As discussed earlier in the chapter, architectural constructions in the cityscape will result in architecture becoming a both a curator of power and social codes. Hence, the relation between the right to the city concept and social constructions manifested through built form becomes relevant for understanding tendencies of architecture as excluding structure. Heidi Bergsli (2015) further contextualize the Lefevbrian claim for appropiation as "the right to stay put" in the metropolitan centers of the city and to not be expelled to more remote areas. Only when allowed to uphold in these spaces this will allow inhabitants to fully engage in and contribute to the production of their societies. Therefore, to have the capacity and influence to shape the politics in urban space also means shaping the political and social constructions of who is the right type of individuals and groups to move in these spaces, as well as who becomes different (Bergsli, 2015).

Sometimes this right to appropriate, or right to stay put, is also equated as the right to belong, i.e. the right to reflect yourself in your surroundings and feel that you have a right to move in these spaces. Though, here I argue that these two concepts hold

the possibility to imply two different meanings, therefore if not feeling the right to belong, the right to appropriation is expelled even if the possibility is provided within the space. Relating back to the analogy of Karlastaden, the inhabitants of the tent city in the future will have full physical access to the area, and, if an equal planning strategy will be attempted, perhaps also the right to appropriate the space such as the function of a park or a playground. But here, the moral codes produced through the exclusive architecture helps to communicate what types of groups that are to be included and belong in the vision of the area.

As a speculation, the right to belong will therefore instead be positioned as a necessary step *between* the right to access and the right to appropriate. To appropriate urban space, your social attributes must first be allowed and accepted, i.e. the socially produced moral codes must allow you to do so. Through this production of strange embodiments, built form becomes a mediator of the approved codes and a direct excluding structure affecting who will have the right to belong and risk to increase division. To take control and challenge this redefinition of the right to the city architecture and architects therefore need to be aware of how good intentions and planning of inclusive space with abilities of appropriation, still risk producing structures of excluding large groups from this intended appropriation. If we do not also include the sociological aspects of feeling the right to belong in a place, we miss the types of excluding scenarios in urban spaces that do not involve the ability to appropriate the space or not but to feel that your attributes and person are allowed in the space. To define urban belonging we need to include a great acceptance for the multiple ways in which one can belong whitin a place and to the city. Instances of social injustice and the ways in which they can be spatially patterned becomes crucial in doing so (Bergsli, 2015).
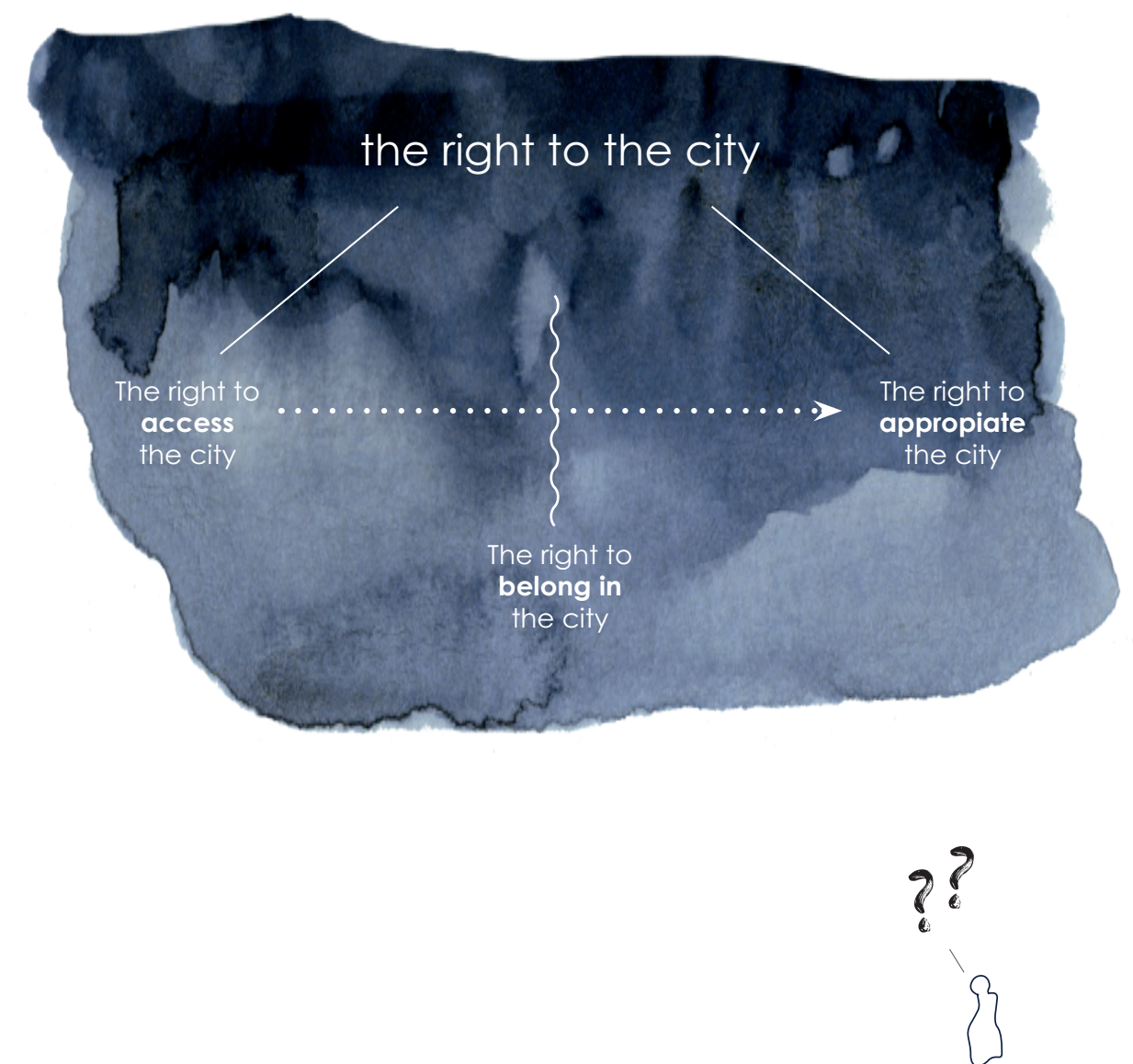

the right to the city

The right to **access** the city

The right to **appropiate** the city

The right to **belong in** the city

Fig. 2.2 - The right to the city?

constructions of space

STRANGER?

NEIGHBOUR?

COMMON CITIZEN?

social space as a social product

When we move in space, we do not do so as free citizens. Our different inherent experiences and various backgrounds shape us and give us different opportunities and rights to be more or less desired in society, and therefore also different rights to belong in the cityscape. In our everyday lives, we are constrained by structures that are not by our own choices, which influence how freely we move and our social belonging in urban spaces. To question what is less desired is to also question and raise awareness for the production of these structures.

There is a strong relationship between the moral and aesthetic social codes in space and the formation of public space, where architecture and built form plays a crucial role. By affecting our perceptions and interpretations of what space is and who controls it, it also constructs who we are and how we perceive ourselves. Hence, social relations become spatial because they also shape the spaces we move in, why we can constitute that we shape spaces and are so made by them (Håkansson, 2009; Till, 2009).

In society, we both take place as individuals and agents, i.e. as ourselves with our personal intentions and reflections as our desires and needs. But, since we are always moving in space alongside other agents, every society therefore always builds up constructed relationships between these. Patterns of those are produced over time, lasting longer than the average lifetime of an individual. Therefore, there are other entities than just the individual, which we traditionally know as social structures (Stevens, 1998). There is always diversity in what we see and

experience in urban space because the room is a changing product based on its users and thus the room will form a variety of meanings.

Society will always be formed and defined by its users. The view of space as a social product is a theory again constituted by Henri Lefebvre. He proposes that we move in time and space with different individual views and conceptions that will shape our perception of space and how we approach the space, according to our built-up conceptions. Therefore, he argues that social space always becomes a social product where space is produced through different overlapping societal agencies (Håkansson, 2009; Till, 2009).
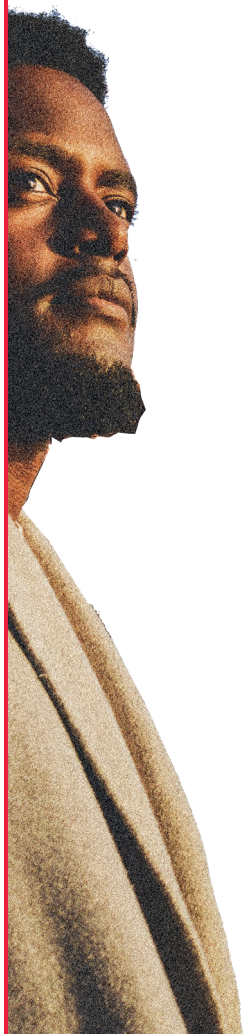
habitus and social capital

In our everyday life we are constrained by structures that are not by our own choice. To have the opportunity of feeling the right to belong in the cityscape today requires assets that can be described as socially gained capital. This is a theory constituted by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu who is well-known for his social research with an aim to attack structures in society. He has with this exerted a great influence on theories about why and how individuals act as they do, and how these actions are closely related to social structures and in extension how culture and society interact (Stevens, 1998).

To try to explain the constraints which we are all attached to in our everyday lives, Bourdieu introduces a term called habitus with which he proposes a theory about how we are all part of a bigger structure of predispositions that we become socially engaged within from early age (Dovey, 1999). From his point of view, social practice is a form of a game, and the habitus is easiest described as a 'feel for the game', which also means knowing the rules of the game. These rules are not written down but rather gained through social practice, i.e. by acting correctly at a meeting, a party, the playground, and so on. In continuation, this becomes a dimension of power in how it operates beneath consciousness and through thoughtlessness, as social codes you are assumed to just hold.

The habitus is in that sense both the condition for having possibilities in society and at the same time also the site for this reproduction where norms and structures are shaped and become legitimized (Dovey, 1999). This will also, as stated in previous theory, affect our access and inclusion in urban

space. When built form seem to work through elitist and excluding manners, this will also foster easier movements in these spaces for people who have enough of habitus to feel free to move within these settings. This risk of creating gaps and amplify segregation between the people of the "right" feel for the game and those who are left out, which risk continuing to build up unjust societies (Dovey, 1999). In his later research, Bourdieu sets one's habitus in relation to the introduction of what he calls 'fields' of cultural production and 'symbolic capital'. Where habitus becomes 'a feel for the game', the theory of 'fields' instead turn to the social practices where we take place in relation to each other and are positioned in society depending on how much assets we have in a what you best describe as socially gained capital.

In continuation, Bourdieu divides this type of capital into four sub-categories: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic. Economic capital includes our material assets and knowledge for the economic field, i.e. what we know to be the 'normal' definition of capital, whereas social capital turns to our different social connections we often gain through our inherited 'class' (Dovey, 1999). Cultural capital is gained by interaction and understanding for "high culture" as the use of a cultivated language and other types of attributes of credibility. This type of capital is most gained through our upbringing and/or educational background. Often, social, and cultural capital is combined in manners that appear 'natural' or 'inborn'. The last category, symbolic capital, can be viewed as a sub-set to cultural capital, where cultural capital is used to produce symbolic, mostly when put in relation to taste. It is those of
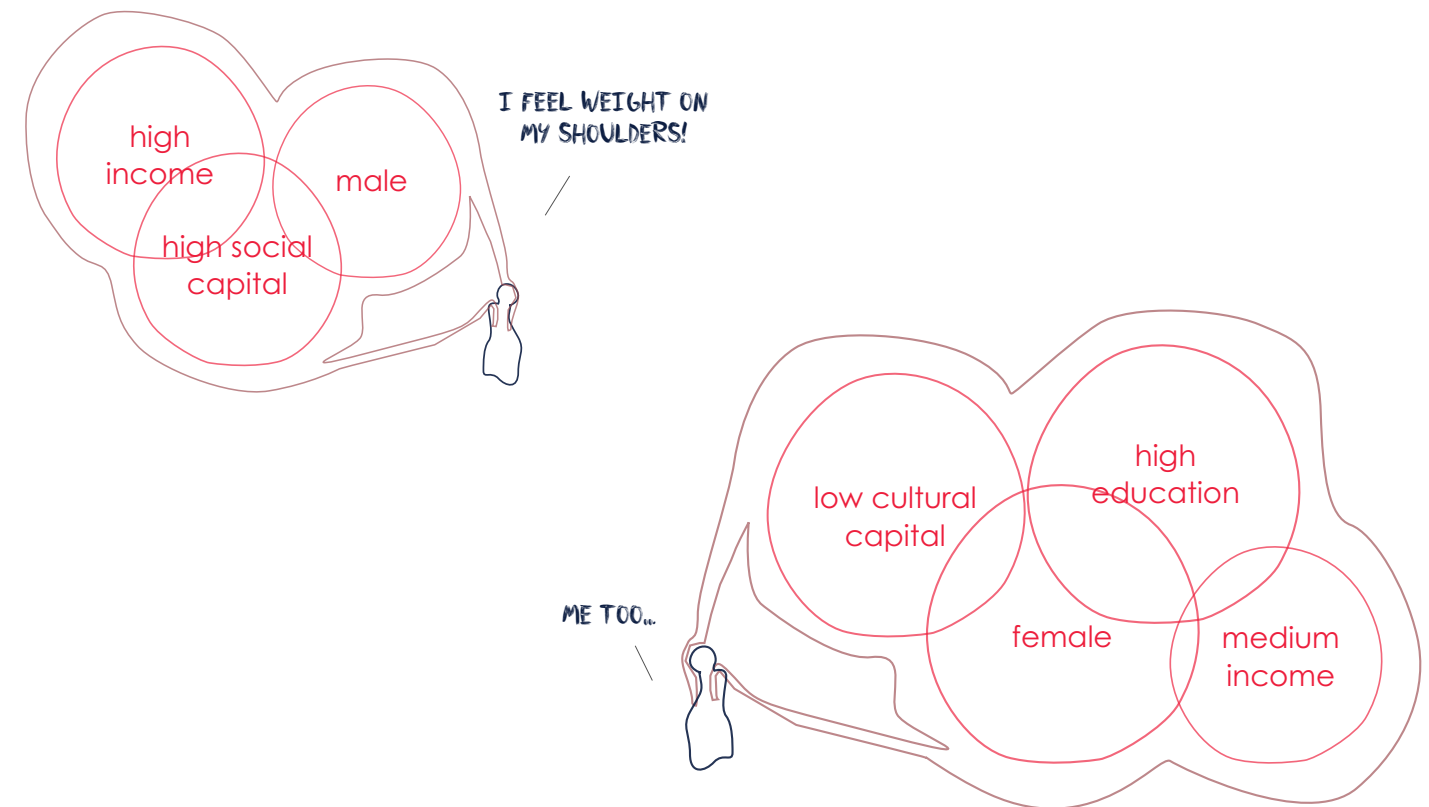
high cultural capital that decide what are to gain symbolic capital. This capital becomes embedded in built form, when those of power decide what are to be "good architectural taste" as well as what is to be built and for whom, which as stated, also affect who move within these spaces. This position architectural practice somewhere between symbolic and economic capital, set in relation to a painting that can interpret as all symbolic capital or a factory who mostly consists of economic (Dovey, 1999). This is also why power is most commonly gained by those with economic assets or "good taste" (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012).

Summarizing, this theory by Bourdieu seeks to explain how and on which premises society divides us into different classes in relation to how

much we can show in social assets, i.e. how much of the respective forms of capital we have access to (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012). As Bourdieu explains, these different capitals are many times inherited in structures that we cannot change, such as our skin color or what socio-economical or academic background we were 'born into' (Dovey, 1999). To make a simpler definition, it can be translated into emotional backpacks we all carry around, deciding our possibilities to inclusion in the cityscape. Connecting back the view of ourselves as agents, we are often left unaware of such tendencies, if they don't affect us directly in negative or discriminating ways. Bourdieu argues this form of unconscious unawareness in result in giving people false and sometimes a lacking description of their social lives (Stevens, 1998).

Fig. 2.3 - "Emotional backpacks"

a social responsibility?

the need for professional awareness

This chapter consisting of a theoretical framework has investigated in what ways the architectural practice and us as professionals are connected to issues of power and social constructions, and by doing so it has raised the question of inclusion. Through spatial structures, architecture can work both oppressive and liberative in the cityscape, connecting the spaces we move into different meanings. In this way, architecture and urban design naturally lend themself to practices as a legitimation of authorities through their framing of everyday life and architecture is at every stage of its existence ruled by external forces (Dovey, 1999). It is no way around this, which only leaves us with the nexus of built form having the possibility of both positive and negative manifestations. In this, we as architects and designers of urban space must understand both the complicities and complexities this comes with. Henri Lefebvre argues that social space always becomes a social product, which consists of ideological as well as social constructions of place. As Jeremy Till puts it, "one can never again see the world as a place set apart, or reduce architecture to a set of abstract forms" (Till, 2009, p.26). Hence, we both make places and are so made by them. This ideology constructs the experience of a place and the design process at all levels. In this, architecture is a contradicting practice torn between optimistic ambitions in the creation of the new, but also the acceptance of more conservative orders (Dovey, 1999).

As architects, we hold a prioritized position when it comes to the matter of inclusion. It is therefore important to point out how the built form is connected to issues of power, since it is with

this power, we as professionals will imagine the future, potentially better, worlds. This hold a great responsibility where it becomes important to ask ourselves if we are taking it? To create more inclusive spaces that actually will include the big diversity of people our societies consist of today can seem to be an impossible task, but at least, we have the responsibility to use our position for raising these matters and issues. But how and where do we begin? A start is to highlight and expose the elitist structures that we are all experiencing, more or less conscious in being more or less affected by them in the cityscape depending on our backgrounds. Places will still always mediate power relations, why it becomes crucial to instead accept and engage with this inevitability relation to mediations of power. An individual building may not make a difference, but the architect who designed held the power position of maybe doing so.

In relation to these issues, the question of who should be socially responsible in this big and complex mechanism may arise, but that cannot be answered within the scope of this thesis. What can be said, is that it is my firm belief that architectural awareness and acceptance is key for understanding built form in its natural habitat, i.e. the cityscape. It will always be closely connected to, as well as aaand ideals where it takes shape. Also, to solve a problem you have to first address and accept it, whereas if we do not raise the debate above "who are to be held responsible", we risk missing out on understanding the excluding effects that our visions and images may projects of what is to be the future. Therefore, we must highlight this duality in

"the opposite of love is not hatred, the opposite of love is *ignorance*"

quote by Elie Wiesel, from "Vår tids rädsla för allvar", p. 22

WHO AM I IN THIS MESS...?

the debate for it seems an inclusive vision can also become an excluding one. When architects become agents who engage with and imagine a 'better' future (Dovey, 1999), it also becomes important to whose future are we imagining? Who do we include and in whose interest? Here, an understanding for that the realization of some dreams also decides whose dreams don't get realized, is key, e utterly socially responsible, or not.

To conclude, the design of built form is inevitable connected to issues of power and therefore the invention of the future will always mediate power relations (Dovey, 1999). By raising our awareness for these structures, and as Dovey puts it "not practice with our heads inserted in the sand" (Dovey, 1999, p. 6), hopefully, a greater transparency of the practices of power can deepen the understanding for its affects in order to further engage with matters of inclusion.

3

the Oslo opera:
a folksy space?

This chapter practices a theoretical and spatial investigation of the term folksy space in a case study of the Oslo Opera house. Through critically discussing if the meaning of a folksy space truly exists, it will also analyze and investigate the term folksiness in relation to urban space.
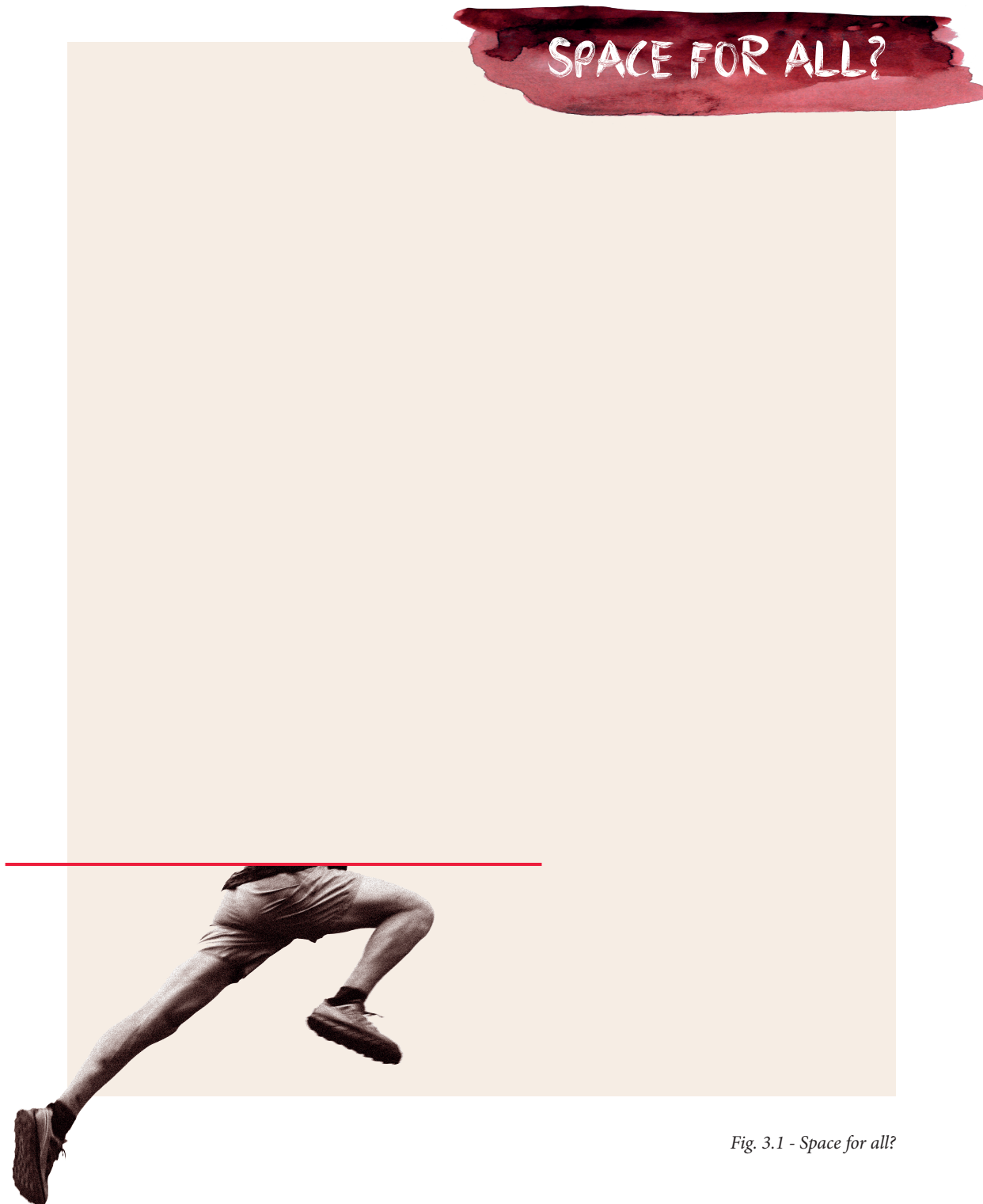
inclusive space?

planning for inclusion

Although everyone is allowed access to all parts of the city, the previous chapter concluded that architecture contributes to building social structures that result in that everyone presumably will not feel included in all areas, and will so not reside there. Seeing through these critical glasses, architecture as a curator of social, political, and economic values will work as a structure in the urban context, and the curated social actions and right to belonging to become an agency (Dovey, 1999). This asks the critical question of *whose* agency we live after in the social spaces of our cities and who are to be included in these, as well as how architecture contributes to mediate its elitist tendencies. To target and discuss how architecture influences and shapes societal belonging of space, and to do more concrete research of the speculative concept of the right to belong we, therefore, will turn to the architectural strategies for how to reach and achieve inclusive planning.

When talking about creating inclusive spaces, descriptions of new architectural projects are often filled with visionary inclusive linguistics such as 'meeting place' and 'for all'. This becomes accurate in the case of the Oslo opera house, where an ambition of creating a public space has been combined with the need for a new opera. It seems that the aim to create a 'folksy' meeting space has been mentioned frequently through this process. But, the critical question to ask in this is if the creation of folksiness is truly an ability for the architects and if this is to be a strategy to reach inclusive planning? As the previous chapter concluded, there is also power in the decision-making of what type of spaces we want to create, and thereby also power in planning a space to be folksy for it will indirectly affect who are to be the included "folksy crowd".

In order to answer the research question "Does an inclusive architectural strategy risk to become excluding in its target group?" and the secondary question "How has inclusion worked as an architectural strategy in the case of the Oslo Opera?", this chapter covers a case study of the opera house in Oslo. The project is chosen for its relation to the questioned architectural creation of so-called 'folksy space'. Here it seems that folksiness has been an active tool both in the process and in the following marketing of the space. By doing so, this project has generated both an icon project and a regeneration tool in the process of reshaping the former harbor area of Bjørvika. This creation of an inclusive public space seems to have become a strategy to help raise the status of both the surrounding neighborhood and the whole city (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015).

To discuss the questions regarding the folksy ambitions for the project, the second part of the chapter will theoretically examine the term folksiness and its meaning. This to ask what we are hoping to achieve when we call out a space to reach the inclusive qualities that will get it to reach the status of a 'folksy space'. The discussion about folksiness is directed to this ambition for inclusion as a strategy and planning tool and how this affects the concept of belonging by calling out a space to be so. Thus, the discussion is not directed to matters of style or what can be interpreted as typically seen as folksy design attributes. In this way, researching so-called 'folksy space' becomes a tool for framing the notion of the right to belong. The following analysis will then conclude how well these ambitions are reached within the project and how it affects the tangibility within its audience.

SPACE FOR ALL?

Fig. 3.1 - Space for all?

background

a divided city

Since the discovery of oil in 1969, the Norwegian economy has gone through major growth and the country is today one of the world's richest (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015) Oslo's capital function has been driving in the city's economy as well as serving the site for the country's national cultural institutions. Through large investments in recent years, we can today experience a present 'noveu riche' culture when we move within the city center. Still, as most cities today, Oslo struggles with large income inequalities between both individuals and different districts.

In Oslo, this division through history has become visually and physically present in the cityscape through a symbolic "division line" (Bergsli, 2015; Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015). The city is commonly divided in east and west along the path of the river Akerselva. Here, heavy industries and the city harbor with its associated working-class quarters have been established through history alongside the eastern areas of the river, covering districts as Gamle Oslo, Grønland and Grünerlukka (Bergsli, 2015). The western part has instead over the years come to symbolize the bourgeois elite, and its areas hold functions such as the royal castle, residences, national gallery, theatres, etc. (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015).

This historical division and tension between the elite and the lower classes are still very present in the Oslo we experience today. The eastern areas of Akerselva have over the years, as well as today, served the function of a so-called zone of transition, receiving a great number of immigrants.

Over many years the Grønland district in the middle of the city, just behind the central station, was referred to as close to slum, which witnessed a city with great contrasts in its most central areas (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015). Still, of today's situation, Grønland holds the biggest percentage of immigrants in the city, causing yet accurate socio-economic segregation (Bergsli, 2015).

During the years both Grønland and its neighbor district Grünerlukka has been renovated in different rounds and through different programs of social and renovational kind. Critical voices have been raised, calling this a form of 'Byførdyrelse' ('city expense program'). Actions as so-called 'social-mix programs' are called to be different ways of getting the east quarters to be affected by the seen as desired western lifestyle and culture. These actions have also attracted inhabitants from the west to the eastern parts of the city, causing both tendencies of rent raises and renovictions.

This has fueled a gentrification process, in which the former working-class neighborhood has been reevaluated as hip and attractive to a cultural class with higher incomes, causing the neighborhood to gradually become more expensive (Hauge, 2018). Grünerlukka can now be seen as fully gentrified. The old industries along Akerselva have been transformed into bars, design schools, new housing complexes, etc. (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015). Grønland however still has the status of a more mixed and continental neighborhood.

the symbolism of the opera site

Akersevla empties into the Fjord in the old harbor area of Bjørvika, which makes the site symbolically important for a union of the east and west (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015). This is also the site of the Oslo opera house. In the process, Bjørvika was promoted for this quality since it represented a promising site in the city that could prove beneficial for intergrating the eastern working-class districts in the city centre, and when voting for the site in the Norwegian Parliament, it retrieved the majority of the votes (Bergsli, 2015). Since this tension between the east and west parts of the city still existed both symbolically and visually, the opera was seen to serve as a part of a project of a bigger symbolic value and a unifying function. This has become important both for the identity of the building and its architectural programming. Giving the opera function this symbolic and societal mission, the Norweigan Opera and Ballet has strived for the image of an arena for the whole population of Norway, serving society at large rather than just the elitist art world (Larsen et al, 2017). One of their inclusive strategies is to attract young audiences from multicultural parts of Oslo, and in 2010 the opera set the highly ambitious goal that the opera house audience should reflect the demography of modern Norway (Larsen et al, 2017).

Thus, the relocation of the opera from the former People's Theatre (Folketeatret) at Youngstorget in the city center fueled a political debate during most of the 20th century. At first, the proposed location was in the western part of the city, in line with the other important and capital instances. But, at the turn of the century, the final decision of locating the opera in Bjørvika was taken. This also played part in a bigger project regarding an urban restructuring of the city's former harbor areas. which illustrates the strategic choice of using culture as a placemaking function (Bergsli, 2015).

While the opera house was to be a "locomotive" for urban development, it was very important that it would not become part of the socio-spatial divisions between the east and west, or that it would be associated with one area more than the other. Instead, the building was to be easily accessible to its visitors, and the building should belong to the city center as part of a shared area for the entire city. This would also enable it to serve as a national function rather than a municipal one; thus, becoming a face outwards for Norway as well as boosting an identity inwards. Therefore, the location was to contribute both to the unification of the city by connecting the different areas, and as a strategic site for representing the cultural status of the nation (Bergsli, 2015). The area of Bjørvika had also been discussed for a decade as a new strategic space to expand the city. Therefore, to use the opera and its addition of culture as a driving force for the development of this new seaside area was also included in a bigger renewal project called the "Fjord City". The location had mutual strategic benefits, serving the higher goal of including and transforming the former harbor industrial areas by the fjord in the process of restructuring the city.

'Fjord city' arose as a governance strategy from urban redevelopment policies that was established by the municipality of Oslo in the planning for the waterfront development of the city. The idea was to transform the former industrial areas of the harbor in order to make them more accessible for the citizens (Bergsli, 2020). The municipality is the main authority in charge, but the central state and national government has also been involved in the development. With a vision to create a greater connection to the sea, different sub-areas were divided, Bjørvika being one of them. These were planned to be developed by a combination of public, pseudo-public, and private companies as well as the central Norweigan government who together created a governance for the development of the area. Governance means a shift from the traditional government management or steering towards a more "entrepreneurial" approach regarding regulations in urban space. These shared public-private interests are seen as beneficial since they are combining private investment and public interests, whereby public authorities provide conditions for investors (Bergsli, 2015).

Fjord city set the goal to contribute to both Oslo's regional and national role as well as aiming to be sustainable and socially diverse in the project (Bergsli, 2015). The development plan was politically adopted at the turn of the century as the desired strategy for Oslo's seaside. However, the ambitions for this strategy of urban redevelopment can be tracked back in political discussions to as early as the 1980s. Until the 60s, the waterfront areas were mainly used for industrial and transport purposes, but when these industries ended their operations, the possibilities for new urban areas arose. This would also help to recover the economy from the impact of the business that had now left the area.

In the 80s the western harbor area, today known as Aker Brygge, was first out to be redeveloped. Aker Brygge is a popular waterfront district with restaurants, offices, and housing. In more recent years the area has grown towards the Fjord with the modern and much more dense area of Tjuvholmen

"The vision is for Bjørvika as the port of Norway's capital to appear as an expression of contemporary Norwegian urban culture and identity within architecture, technology and sustainable city development. The new district is to be the *pride of all inhabitants of Oslo* and will contribute to writing the city's historical development from its origin to the 21st century"

Bjørvika Development and Bjørvika Infrastructure, cited in p. 144, Bergsli, 2015

(Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015). These two areas still uphold much of the historic symbolism of the west, where the old harbor industries have been gentrified through economic restructuring. Though, today Aker Brygge and its generous waterfront promenade also have become a lively area and a seen as a folksy tourist magnet, which creates a great contrast to Tjuvholmen's few public spaces and exclusive architecture (Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015).

The redevelopment of the area Bjørvika had been discussed for a long time before the opera was included. Complicating infrastructural aspects as railway systems and roads alongside the harbor industry caused a lack of spatial connection to the neighboring eastern districts for years. This made the project dependent on central state engagement since a solution for redirecting the traffic to an underwater tunnel became a prerequisite. The city council had evaluated Aker Brygge as a success and when the development plan for Bjørvika was adopted by Oslo City Council in 2003, it was with regulations of as much as 40 percent of the area to be reserved for parks, public spaces, and harbor promenade (Bergsli, 2015). Bjørvika was seen as a symbolically important site and was also perceived as a gate to the city and the new horizon of the capital, which should stand out as an expression of modern Norwegian urban culture with the goal to bring pleasure and pride for all inhabitants of Oslo.

Through this process, a "quality culture" as well as a cultural program were established, including a shared vision of what the seaside areas should include based on concepts such as the combination of different functions, recreational areas, and accessible public spaces. Through what can be called 'vision planning', the project aimed to govern and produce visions and scenarios of the future where political aims are formed together by public and private actors for securing place qualities as public spaces and cultural offers. To reach this, an open competition was held to get suggestions for types of overarching concepts for diversity and coherence both in and between public spaces. The winning proposal laid ground for the development plan suggested a fostering of city life through securing democratic public spaces and make them accessible in order the not risks to become an exclusive area consisting of expensive housing and offices like the case of Tjuvholmen (Bergsli, 2015).

This form of vision planning practiced by professionals in the project seems to have its origin in a genuine will to achieve an inclusive area for all of Oslos citizens, that was belong as much to the east as the west. But Bergsli (2015) also concludes that using this type of scenario building or vision planning as a tool risks being characterized by a weak analytical basis and seems to rely more on assumptions. Also, this creation of visions of the future risk to formulate a clear goal of what this space will be interpreted as, in terms of both inclusion and exclusion. This we can connect to Ahmed's (2000) theories about the production of strangers. The construction of images of the future of Bjørvika contributes to mental conceptions and boundaries for what types of groups are to be socially diverse in these spaces. It also generates a conception of the people who we will find strange and who will find themselves to 'fit less' within this moral and aesthetic vision (Ahmed, 2000).

These high set ambitions for a democratic and open district also have been affected by the use of governance planning and private interests in the process, where we today can interpret that the functional programming outcome of Bjørvika have come to resemble the case of Tjuvholmen. Profile

offices and exclusive housing has driven up the prices and rents and left little room for other offers such as social housing (Bergsli, 2015). Contributing to the image of creating a new horizon for the city, a group of dense skyscrapers, called the Barcode district because of its resemblance, rises behind the opera. This distinct line of profile offices and luxurious housing complexes have generated criticism both for their poor spatial connection to the existing east parts of the city, e.g. Gamle Oslo and Grønland, as well as for the limited amount of public spaces the area provides due to its compactness. This tendency is referred to as 'zombie urbanism', a term in urban planning where the public life in the area seems to be non-existent, "dead" or "apocalyptic". The same critique has been directed towards the new housing district Sørenga, but here the harbor promenade and an appreciated harbor bath bring greater activation to the area (Bergsli, 2015; Forsell & Hallemar, 2015).

The development of 'Fjord city' can, despite its inclusive strategies and ambition, be seen as a concept that builds on an idea of a global concurrence turned outwards towards the rest of the world and has gained critique regarding its lack of local roots and spatial connections to neighborhood districts (Hallemar, Forsell, 2015). Here, the opera, which was developed as the pilot project in the area on the same premises and ambitions as for the 'Fjord city', i.e. to create an inclusive space, has grown in importance for promoting accessibility and inclusion, where its generated success has become of symbolic value to boost the attractiveness of Bjørvika. Evaluation of the success and appreciation that the opera has gained shows that the use of culture has risen as a strategy for the following development, adding to a democratic sphere and the image of being open to all (Bergsli, 2015). In recent years, other municipal cultural institutions such as the Munch museum and the main city library, the Deichmann library, have been relocated to Bjørvika (Bergsli, 2020).
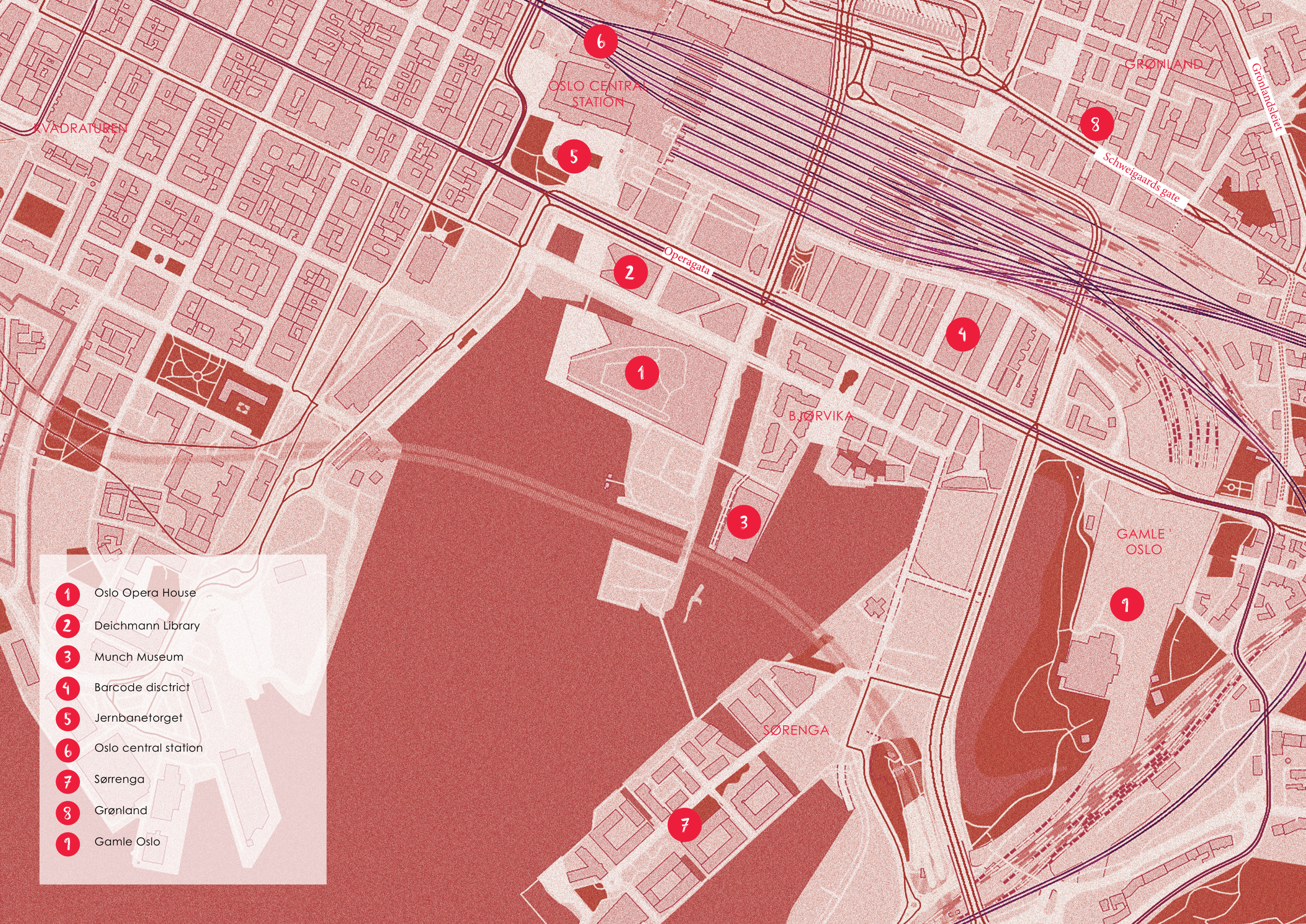
KVADRATUREN

OSLO CENTRAL
STATION

GRØNLAND

Grønlandsleiret

Schweigaards gate

6

5

8

Operagata

2

4

1

BJØRVIKA

3

GAMLE
OSLO

1

SØRENGA

7

1	Oslo Opera House
2	Deichmann Library
3	Munch Museum
4	Barcode disctrict
5	Jernbanetorget
6	Oslo central station
7	Sørrenga
8	Grønland
1	Gamle Oslo

oslo opera house

The Oslo opera has become an architectural and cultural success that from its opening has gained huge popularity and become one of Norway's biggest tourist attractions. Its angular architecture, serving the analogy of an iceberg rising from the Oslo Fjord, has become well-known around the world and the architecture has become a keystone signature for the city (Operaen.no, 2020).

What has drawn the most attention, and what can be reviewed as the most distinctive success, is the combining the opera function with the creation of a new public space in the city. By making the opera roof accessible and creating a square in front of the entrance, the design carves out a space where there usually is none. This makes the usage of this space unique, especially when compared to architectural power manifestations that we usually see in other elitist functions. Here people walk *on* the fine culture, the art form that possibly holds the highest amount of cultural capital. This creates a fascinating combination of the elitist art form and the folksy usage of the space, which makes it different from almost any buildings of this high cultural capital value. The opera roof and the square upfront become an outdoor space for the use of all citizens of Oslo, and they are commonly used for outdoor events such as concerts. The space and the opera are therefore described as an inclusive space that belongs to everyone (Bergsli, 2015; Forsell, Hallemar).

As stated, a democratic strategy was involved early on as part of Bjørvika and the Fjord city project and the symbolic importance of the opera space was to create a space that would belong as much to eastern as western parts of the city. Therefore the opera became a political project serving interests and adding value both within the urban and the national scale. Initiating the area development with the opera house, its inclusive premises was seen beneficial for an increased accessibility and diverse use of Bjørvika by different social groups, in order to prevent the city center and the Fjord from being exclusive areas. Therefore it was important that the opera would not focus to serve a the urban redevelopment because of its association with the high-status art form, but to instead assure a broader audience (Bergsli, 2015). The government stated that this project would both "raise the Norwegian's self-esteem" and speak to the "Norwegian folk-soul" as well as also stating that this cultural democratization aimed to show that the opera art form was "for the people" (Bloxham et al., 2014; Smith and Strand, p.105, 2011).

An open anonymous architectural competition was held in 1999 where the brief stated that the opera house should be monumental in its expression, but also contribute to public space through the concepts of *togetherness, joint ownership, easy and open access for all* (Archdaily, 2008). The proposals were then shown for public display, where the Norwegian office Snøhetta both got the biggest public support and won the competition with their bold suggestion of making the opera's sloping roof into a public space for all citizens, integrating this as a vital part of the building (Hauge, 2018). Their argument was that their design was to achieve this monumentality proposed in the competition brief by making the opera accessible in the widest possible sense, which they argued to be a modern monumentality achieved through horizontal extension and not verticality as we are typically used to. In this, they claimed that they wanted to "*create a social monument rather than a social one*" (Archdaily, 2008; S Snøhetta, 2021).
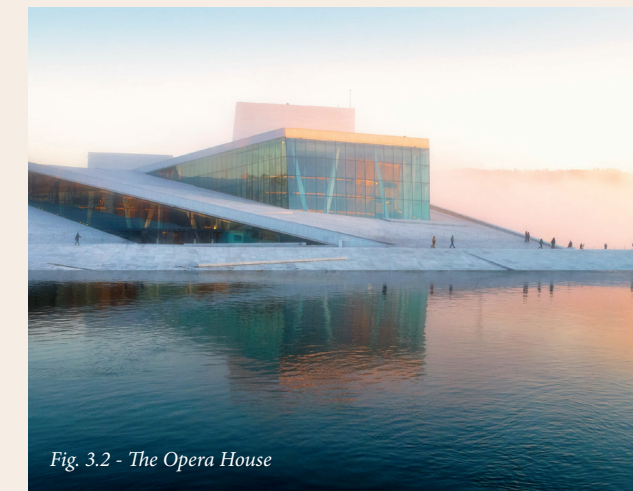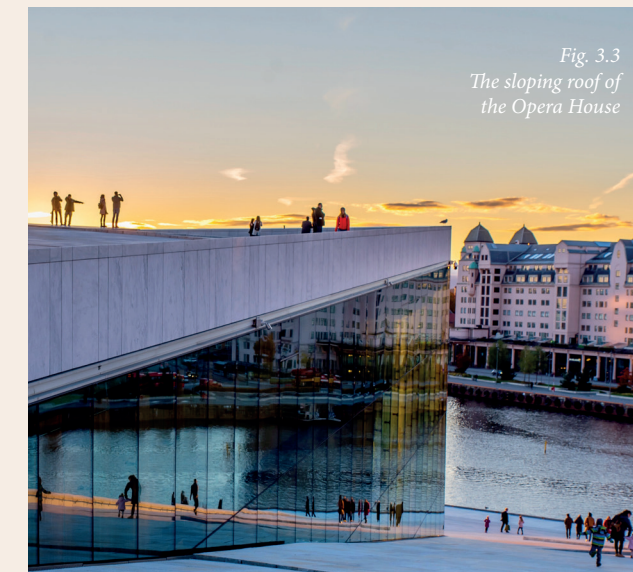
Fig. 3.2 - The Opera House

*Fig. 3.3
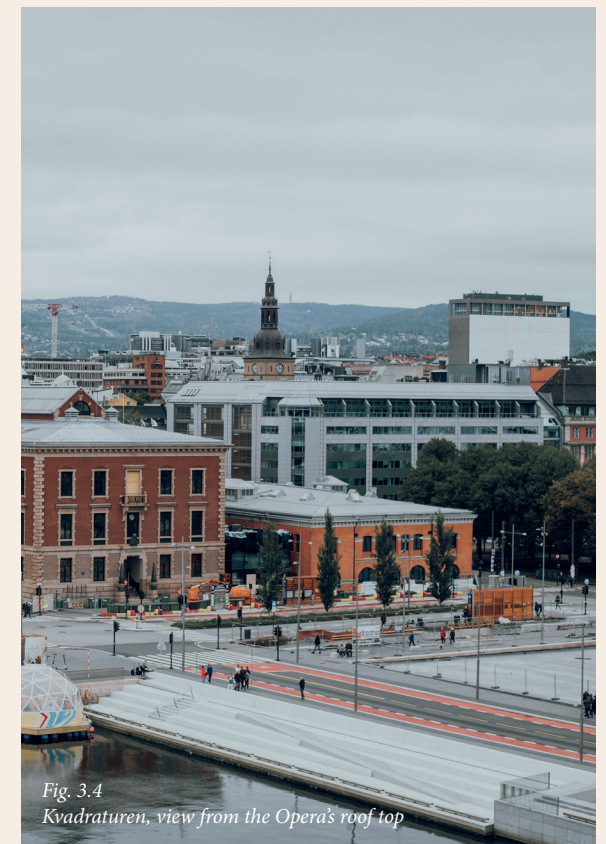The sloping roof of
the Opera House*

*Fig. 3.4
Kvadraturen, view from the Opera's roof top*

*Fig. 3.5
The Opera House
and its square*

*Fig. 3.6
The square next to the opera*

*Fig. 3.7 - Social areas
around the opera house*

Fig. 3.8 - The Barcode district

Fig. 3.10 - Deichman Library
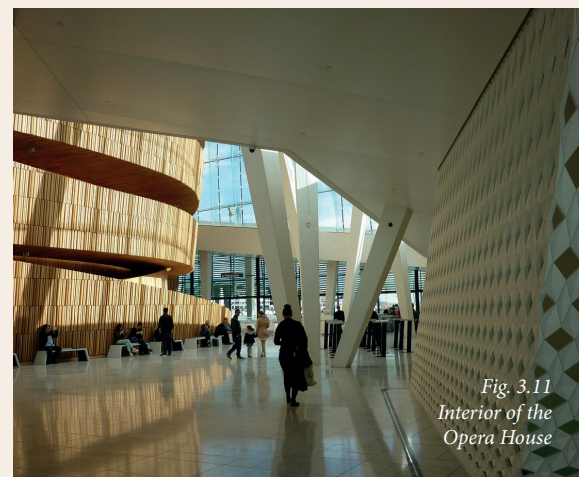

Fig. 3.12 - The Barcode district

Fig. 3.9
The Munch Museum

Fig. 3.11
Interior of the
Opera House

Fig. 3.13 - The square outside the opera

This egalitarian and democratic idea that lies ahead due to the design of the building and its location in the urban landscape can be seen as a great contrast to the building's content. This since opera as an art form who primarily appeals to the upper classes. The contradiction that the building manifests, therefore, has become almost like a sociological phenomenon (Bergsli, 2015). The Opera management self describes it as "We didn't want a South European monumentality, with stairs and pillars signaling that "this is not for you; it is something for the upper class". So we managed to create "broad monumentality", which I would call a Scandinavian, socio-democratic monumentality. It is not something exclusive" Here the symbolic and aesthetic potential of architecture came to serve as a factor (Smith & Strand, p.106, 2011).

The opera house has provided Oslo's citizens with a public space, and Oslo with a symbolic function that has come to serve as a marketing tool for both the city and the country (Smith & Strand, 2011). Many people claim that the success of the opera house rests upon this achievement of enhancing a national pride through its architecture, symbolizing the country's natural and national beauty. At the opening, the Norwegian king drew attention to the social affects that the opera potentially could contribute to, where the opera usually interpreted as exclusive could emphasise equality at the same time, and promoted its belonging to the entire nation and all social classes (Bergsli, 2015).

The success of the opera house has contributed by making the surrounding area more attractive for both citizens and tourists, but also for surrounding investments where it has played a big part as a motor in the following redevelopment of Bjørvika. Its national role and international success are though evaluated as a bit unexpected, and it has arisen as a bonus according to different stakeholders. The opera has come to serve both as a flagship, a brand, and a monument of national culture promoting the capital city internationally. The wow-factor of the sloping roof is seen as a key element, inviting visitors to climb its roof all year, and has helped to raise the status of the building as well as the status of Bjørvika (Smith & Strand, 2011).

Visiting the public space that is the opera roof, it raises a dualism in connecting the space with much of the rest of the areas more fully gentrified parts as the Barcode blocks - and so the image of these different projects would have anything to do with each other. In this debate, there have been plenty of critical voices about the development that is now taking place in Bjørvika. It is a dense and exclusive ongoing construction. Many are afraid that the opera will become estranged from its original location and that its most vital idea of a democratic space for all within the city center will fade (Bergsli, 2015).

What becomes important when reviewing the opera is to acknowledge the difference between public and common space. Common space can be explained as spatial relations produced through commoning practices that enable forms of social life. Public space has the same intention of creating and enabling social life, but they have rules and are always governed by a prevailing authority. A public library is such a space, to mention one example (Stravrides, 2016). Therefore, even if the space around the opera is open to all, it is still ruled by the authority of the state and the opera function, who have the power tools to regulate and shape this public space according to their interests. Admittedly, it is democratic in its form, but the exclusive white marble design also signifies the exclusiveness of the opera art form. Once again, it raises the notion of the right to belong and who we will see inhabit these spaces and feel the right of doing so. Perhaps, there is a risk that this very strong inclusive strategy might not be reflected amongst the citizens using the space.

a folksy space?

a folksy image

An inclusive vision for the opera was early made clear as a part of a bigger strategy for the development of the Bjørvika area. As quoted by the developers, the area was to be the pride for all inhabitants of Oslo. The opera became a driver for this development, gaining the strategic role of an instrument in Oslo's redevelopment where the new building, despite its association to high arts, also needed to assure a broader audience.

Snøhetta seems to have met these demands with successful tools, turning the symbolic elitist function of an opera, usually demanding very high cultural capital for access, into a public space which is being described as a democratic and inclusive space for all (operaen.no, 2020). Evaluating the project through the literature review, it becomes clear that this strategy seems to have grown stronger during the process. First, it was stated that the space should meet the tensions between east and west of Oslo, but also that it should be monumental in order to represent the exclusiveness of opera as an art form. These aspirations seem to evaluate as largely met and the opera repeatedly is given the status of a 'folksy' icon both for the citizens of Oslo and the pride for an entire nation, where accessibility is seen as key. In an evaluative study of the effects and justifications of the opera, Smith & Strand (2011) states that the communication of "a new (cultural) natural identity" seem to have defined the project, which builds a theory of how architecture is being used as a tool "to re-narrate nations".

For the 10th anniversary of the opera in 2018 Kunnskapsverket published the report "Operaen -

symbol og strategi?" The focus of the study was to evaluate the cultural effects the opera had gained both as a symbol and a strategy, and how this has affected the people who use this public space and their affection for the opera as a symbol for Oslo and Norway. The evaluation through the study is in general using positive terms saying that "everybody loves the opera!" and that it still seems to be a popular destination both for tourists and citizens. The study frequently mentions how the opera has gained the status of a folksy space, claiming that this is an inclusive building that manages to combine and uphold the unusual pairing of elitism and folksiness. It is in the meeting of these two that the opera is described to have gained its success. It is also stated that the accessibility makes it used by *most people* (Hauge, 2018).

This distinctive use of folksiness as a description for the opera building and its assisting public space can also be traced to how professionals involved in the project have created and marketed its image. The opera's official website claims that the interest in opera has never been higher, and they stress that this amplifies the Norwegian soul and shows that the opera is "for the people" (Operaen.no, 2021). It is repeatedly stated that this is an opera for all of Norway with the argument of how Norway's first opera has become folksy. The identity of a folksy space seems to have been seamlessly embedded and are now deeply rooted in the opera's identity marketed by the city, the architects and the stakeholders.

Et operahus for alle

Denne lidenskapen, kombinert med et møysommelig politisk arbeid utført av mange aktører, førte endelig fram til byggingen av Operaen slik den framstår i dag. Den er blitt en spydspiss for kulturnasjonen Norge, og bidrar til å løfte musikk og dans i hele landet. Den er også blitt et symbol for hva det moderne Norge representerer, og den vekt kulturen bør ha i samfunnet. Operaen er en realitet – bygget for å skape magi.

Alle elskar operan!

Bygget har både trekk av høykultur for de utvalgte, men også av folkelighet. Det er åpent for alle og blir brukt av de fleste.

! Det er et inkluderende bygg som folk er stolt av. Et sted man tar med gjester på besøk til og som man forteller andre om etterpå. Bygget har både trekk av høykultur for de utvalgte, men også av folkelighet. Det er åpent for alle og blir brukt av de fleste.

Ever since its creation, the NNOB has been an inclusive opera house for the whole country.

Et landemerke

Et rom som tilhører alle

Praktbygget ble raskt folkeeie. Operaen anslår at 16 millioner mennesker nå har besøkt bygningen.

Norges første operahus har blitt folkeeie.

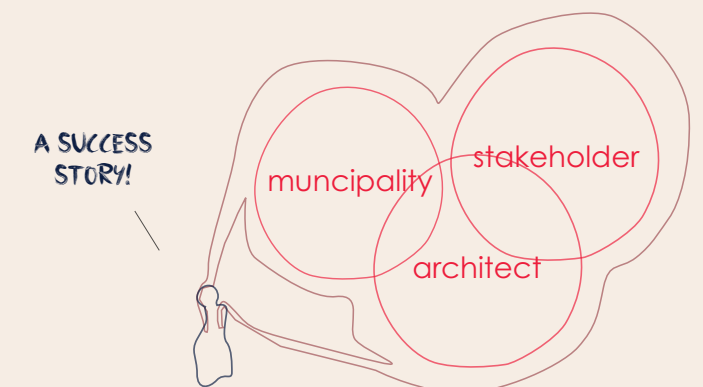A SUCCESS STORY!

muncipality
stakeholder
architect

Fig. 3.14
Mapping of the use of folksiness found in the litterature review

a folksy strategy?

The literature review repeatedly shows that the identity of a folksy and inclusive space has become strongly connected to the Oslo opera. But, as the theoretical framework covered, when using these terms to call out a space to be inclusive, this also risks excluding the people seen as strangers in this environment, not having the attributes that are seen as the aesthetic moral code for this wanted 'folksy crowd'. Therefore one could ask, what values are written into the project when calling it out to reach the "self-esteem" of a country and how this comes to affect who "for all" are to be in relation to who uses the opera space? Secondly, it also opens the discussion if the creation of folksiness are to be something that can be achieved through an architectural planning strategy?

The theoretical framework presented theories regarding the right to the city and the speculative addition of the right to belong and concluded that a space will not uphold people just because it is accessible. In this, it is clear that just because you say that a space is open, you still need to be critical towards who this space opens up to. Being estranged from the claimed vision of the space, you could presume you will not acunticice people of marginalized groups in these spaces. A space can be open to all, but we neither will see nor seem to want to see all. Architecture here will be a social curator that contributes to legitimate the accepted social structures in urban space. The right to belong and to the city here also can in continuation be seen as the right to reflect yourself in your surroundings.

In the case of Bjørvika, the curation of who was to be included in the visions for this neighborhood started early on in the process through the so-called "vision planning". The city early created scenarios that both intentionally and unintentionally can be seen as a fostering form of attraction. Indirectly, they will also exclude certain groups from this visual consumption of future Oslo (Bergsli, 2015). This risk of expelling forms of social diversity, forming boundaries by spatial and symbolic structures to reach these visions. In this, the city risks becoming a place of escape, a wonderland that ignores reality and risk to conceal the social realities of the city (Bergsli, 2015).

This strive towards an urban social cohesion, Bergsli (2015) explains further as the ways in which an inclusive society are to become justified and theorized. This is also seen as an opportunity for diverse urban societies and the collective making of 'your' city. In the case of Bjørvika and the opera, the aim for social cohesion, therefore, can be set in relation to the presented theory around social inequalities in how we access resources differently and are more or less able to create a sense of belonging. Setting those high inclusive goals as regulations for both Bjørvika and the opera can therefore be seen as highly unrealistic. For example, the opera management admits that their goal of that the opera house audience should reflect the demography of modern Norway are so, but that this "signals an attitude that is beneficial", and that this goal "has lowered the threshold for a broader audience and given us a reputation as an open, diverse and inclusive institution"(Larsen et al, 2017, p.209)

Insufficient spatial connections to the existing eastern neighboring district and a lack of accessible housing for lower and medium-income citizens have further been a central critique of Bjørvika, which addresses the area's problems of not reaching a social diversity. To combine high-quality design with affordable housing offers is a challenge in urban development which Bjørvika, despite the inclusive strategies through joint public ownership and governance, has not been able to meet. This has raised the expectations of the public spaces of the area to be seen as a key function in an overarching role of the city, increasing the value of the opera and the other cultural functions of the district to meet these ambitions (Bergsli, 2015).

This expectation that one singular institution and its so-called inclusive architecture should contribute to everyone feeling included in this space is of course not realistic. But what to be critical about here is that this project seems to have made its manifestation of inclusive and folksy space a big part of its identity. By doing so, this also claims to represent and inhold a folksy crowd in its spaces. Using folksiness as an aesthetic cohesion in this way risks making us evaluate these spaces' diversity with uncritical eyes, for something folksy to us is something usually interpreted as inclusive.

Usually, attractiveness in cities is described as a vibrant city life and the city center as a good place is often rated based on the level of activities and the amount of people mingling the streets. Bergsli argues that what we interpret as the banal places of everyday life do not fit with the polished

attractiveness in waterfront places such as Bjørvika. Now this instead becomes a place demonstrating Norway's contemporary urban culture, and in contrast to enabling the city life with diverse offers of experiences, it is still done to fit a coherent frame, in this becoming the notion of a 'folksy space'. By doing so, we are also indirect establish the production of strangers who are seen to not fit within this corerence, making the idea of the folksy space be the "standardized situation", determining the social imagined forms of belonging through the differentiation between strangers and the groups who fit in the moral or aesthetic vision of being the groups socially accepted as 'folksy'(Ahmed, 2000). In order to get closer to the critical question of who is to be the folksy crowd, we first need to ask what we are hoping to create for kind of values and sphere when saying that we want to create an inclusive, folksy space?

what is "folksy"?

The online dictionary Merriam Webster (2020) describes the meaning of folksy as something sociable, friendly, familiar, or casual, that is informal and unpretentious in manner and style. All of these are adaptable terms depending on the context, why folksiness becomes a multifaceted term that builds upon exterior circumstances as cultural values or geographic location. When we talk about the meaning of 'folksy' and the term 'folksiness' it is thereby important to acknowledge that this will always be shaped by a subjective view and context of the beholder (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012). This holds the definition of 'folksiness' or 'the quality of being folksy' more as an ambient term and not a set structure.

This opens the possibility for the term folksy and folksiness to be associated with various emotions. Historically it has been most frequently connected to national and cultural heritage as folk dance, folk costumes, i.e. attributes that typically hold a high cultural capital. But today, the term has in many cases instead shifted its position within the cultural fields, and become more connected to values of a 'lower status' being less exclusive and more commercial by targeting a larger group of people (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012). Traditionally elitist phenomena of high culture as opera therefore rarely becomes connected to being folksy. Instead, it is seen as not tangible and unfamiliar, in contrast to how the greater commercial public wants to feel recognition and safety. Hence, folksiness and elitism seem to be on opposite sides of s scale when it comes to class attributes.

The concept of folksiness can be traced way back in history, but because of its dependence on external factors, it is hard to find qualitative mapped data

regarding its definition. In the report "Folklighet-trovärdig kommersialism inom kulturnäringarna" Sandström and Silverloin (2012) try to define the term by asking what it has come to symbolize. They collected empirical data from a range of interviews, asking focus groups what their versions and experiences of folksiness were, to get closer to a more articulated definition. The main issue they identify is that these very vaguely set structures for the term open up for a very wide interpretation. The study mainly focuses on collecting knowledge for understanding how folksiness comes to happen or appears by asking questions of how it is being produced by emotional aspects and interpretations. Through this research, they concluded that one of the most distinct features in reaching folksiness is to gain a diverse and widespread common appreciation, which means the consumer both should be anyone and at the same time all of us. This means high demands in reaching both a wide diversity and segmenting in the target group. They also state that folksiness is frequently used in public contexts when pushing to communicate values of humanity as identity and belonging. This folksiness can both rise among a person or a phenomenon, attracting or becoming accepted by the number of people needed to create a feeling of identity and belonging. This socio-cultural consumption is seen to be extra strong and is defined by how we gather around the folksy phenomenons through interaction and participation. The value of individualism is also raised. In order to feel included in this folksiness, it must also inhold a certain amount of personal values that make us feel included (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012).
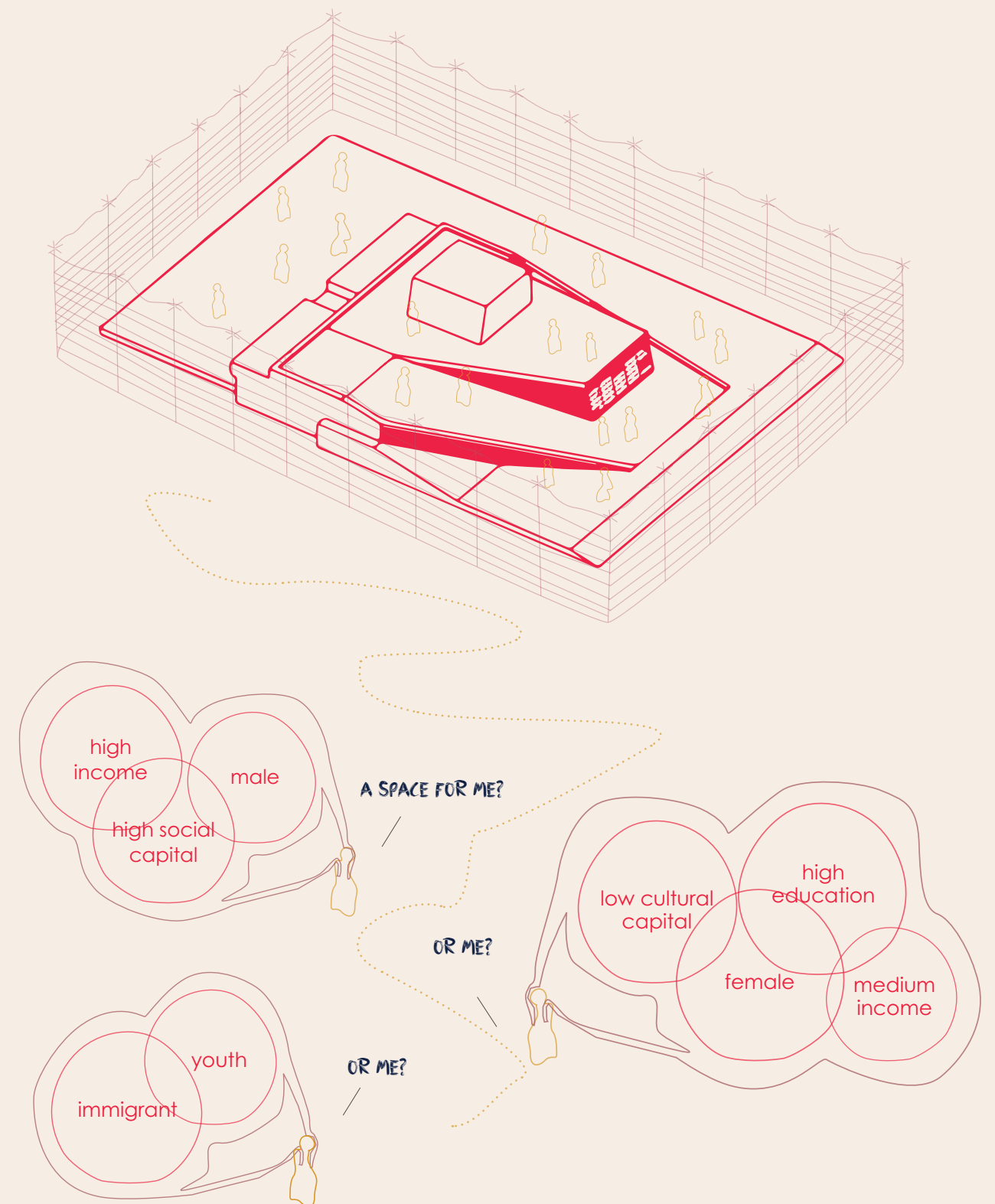
Fig. 3.15 - "A folksy space?"

folksiness as legitimation

The use of folksiness seems to gain authenticity through the marketing of folksy attributes as inclusion and recognition. Sandström & Silvendoin (2012) therefore also evaluated the potential of folksiness as a marketing tool, where the attributes of identification and recognition seem to be fruitful to create loyalty and trustworthiness/authentication. Folksiness is seen as a term loaded with positive aspirations, and using this to create an identity of belonging is connected to positive marketing effects, gaining trustworthiness, and increasing loyalty (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012).

This phenomenon can be seen in both architectural discourse and projects. If searching the archive of the Swedish Architectural Review, folksiness is used to describe the attraction of an inclusive public space with the ambition of being "for all or everyone". Common functions are such as libraries or cultural houses. Here, the use of folksiness becomes a way to utilize attributes that balance and disarm negative attributes and instead promote an atmosphere of acceptance. Calling a space folksy seems to be a strive towards communicating an identity of belonging (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012).

In the case of the Oslo opera, the use of folksiness seems to have been used as a way to both attract and remain attractive amongst a wide audience, while still maintaining credibility amongst the elitist art world. Using folksiness in this context becomes a form of credible commercialism, to reach a broader audience than the original opera visitor, who usually holds a high cultural capital (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012). However, the question remains,

if this planning for folksy or inclusive space are to be seen as an architectural tool, e.g. in the case of the opera, helping the elitist function to promote its identity of being "a space for all"(Hauge, 2018).

This dualist position between elitism and folksiness is common for cultural institutions today. Being stately financed, the functions need a balance between the inclusive and exclusive ambitions in their communication about the organization's image. Both needing the publics' support for remaining relevant and get political funding, but at the same time also assure that the art world finds their work credible. Here, the public sphere has become important for this so-called legitimation work (Larsen et al, 2017).

Through this legitimation work, serving a societal mission has become important as a rhetorical element for the opera, both in relation to reaching a broader public as to the historical symbolism of the site. A distinct aspect of the legitimation work of the Oslo opera has been this image of being inclusive and folksy. As mentioned, they management admit that formulated the goal of reaching out not only to as many people as possible with their program but also to young audiences from multicultural parts of Oslo in order to reflect Norway's modern demography is highly unrealistic, but still, they argue that this signals an attitude and gives them a reputation of an open, diverse, and inclusive institution. Though, this does not mean that they emphasize these set ambitions in everything they do internally, why it can be seen as a way of practicing double talk (Larsen et al, 2017).

Through these mechanisms, it becomes of importance for the opera to be visible in the public sphere in a way that also corresponds to the dominant values of society. This can be an explanation for where the continuous use of folksiness in its marketing has become relevant. The architecture by Snøhetta has further contributed to this image, turning the design of the opera into what is seen to be an inclusive and folksy space in its design through the addition to public space that the roof has provided (Larson et al, 2017). Here, the architecture helps construct the folksy image who is seen to be fruitful for a greater tangibility and the feeling of being a space where everyone is welcome. By lowering the threshold to enter the opera house and making it perceived as both relevant and sympathetic by a large proportion of the population (Sandström & Silvendoin, 2012).

It is relevant to add that the actual audiences still are the segments of the population with high economic and cultural capital, which further confirms this practice of "double talk" (Larsen et al, 2017). It becomes more an inclusive strategy through the use of folksiness, which risks becoming only an attitude communicated outwards in design and functions but still may not reflect in the "folksy" crowd using the space or going to the opera.

Through this, folksiness risks becoming reduced into an architectural strategy which also works excluding. That all groups will not feel that they have enough cultural capital to visit an opera with an inclusive image of being open to all is one thing. But what we as professionals need to be critical about

in this is when we also apply these strategies to the cityscape without further reflection. If not doing so, the branding of our cities' inclusive spaces becomes more similar to how we brand products. It also constitutes a manual for how to use them, or in this case, how to behave to fit the folksy image that the opera house has projected on the citizens who use the space. Hence, folksiness here becomes used in an architectural context that we cannot fully control, as a strategy that is both applied to a whole city and a central public space.

So, the question remains if we can really use folksiness as a "benchmark" for creating an architectural experience? As mentioned, the use of vision planning can become excluding in how it plays out, producing social and moral codes of who is wanted in these spaces by planning for their interests and wallets. Here, the use of folksiness creates a vision for the Oslo opera as an inclusive space, but by doing so, it also creates visions of who are to be the folksy citizens moving in this public space. Here, it seems that the relation between elitism and folksiness are not on opposite scales. Instead, the creation of folksiness can be an elitist action by the architect or planner, aiming to create more "common sense of belonging" but this action will also risk excluding certain people from this vision. Is an inclusive architectural planning really equal to creating folksy spaces?

authentic/fake

The city had a clear vision of Bjørvika to be inclusive area, and when that seemed to lack in its authenticity, the representation of the Oslo opera as a folksy space has become important, but also becomes an agenda hidden within issues of power.
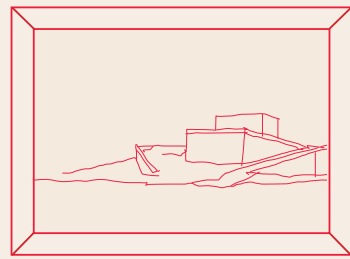
Norges første operahus har blitt folkeeie!

stability/change

When the opera tells the story of being a space for all, and target folksiness as a part of their architectural strategy, we are told a story of a produced illusion of permanence as a stable social order and the impossibility of change. In this the quest for designing for the whole demography of Norway remain unquestioned.

dominant/docile

In the area, the new Munch museum is a massive building that takes the opposite approach against the opera for inviting people over the cultural capital borders. The dominance built signify a control over resources, showing its domination in art through the expressive architecture.
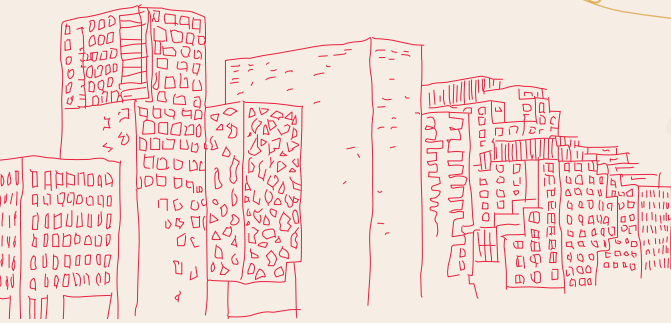
NOT FOR ME....

segregation/access

The Barcode area shows tendencies of exclusive architecture who has blocked access to the eastern more socio-diverse districts of Oslo as Grønland. The railway adds to this and will segregate the area in terms of status, gender, race, culture, class, and age, creating privileged paths for access.

identity/difference

The Bjørvika area will symbolize socially constructed identities and differences of persons, cultures and the institutions situated in the area. For example, the opera and the Deichmann library are examples where its open identity is mediated in an arena of spatial representation where these buildings will contribute to 'fix' this inclusive identity over time. Also, together with the Munch Museum this cultural line is being used as a way of promoting identity and belonging in the area.

publicy/privacy

The opera roof is a great success as an open public space. But, the question is whose vision of the world it remains open to. Being a public space and not a common also places certain people and actions under conditions of surveillance on the open space of the roof, while privileging other people and their actions as private.

nature/history

The Opera house faces the fjord and creates a strong visual connection in the area. By using the methaphor of an iceberg, it connects both the Norweigean nature and constructs artificial meaning through these politics of representation. Historically constructed meanings can in this be 'naturalized' to legitimize authority through the space called to speak to the "Norweigan folk soul".

orientation/disorientation

In the area we are oriented, disoriented and reoriented in spaces primarily directed towards the Fjord and around "the cultural line" that the area builds most of its inclusive status on. This will constitute our cognitive map of Bjørvika, paying less attention to the area's "backside" directed towards the eastern districts.

a folksy architecture?

In order to ask how the Oslo opera and the area of Bjørvika meet the goals of inclusive planning in this if we are to create folksy spaces through our architectural tools, we return to the place-power mediations suggested by Dovey in the theoretical framework. These mediations aimed to break down and explain how architectural representation contributes to meet certain desires and constructs and sells us images of what will appear to us as nature and order (Dovey, 1999). In the case of the opera, the story of an inclusive space for all helps to legitimize certain social orders, and the architecture and spatial programing of the area will contribute to this through the different aspects visualized in the city sequence above.

These different dimensions help us analyze and explain which different ways power in the area are played out through built form and architectural constructions. As the Literature rev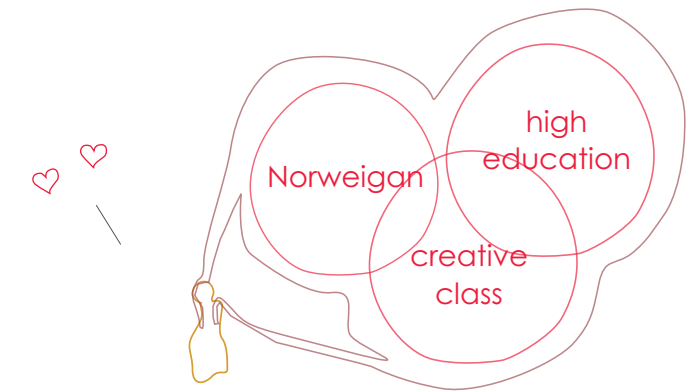iew showed, to be folsky is seen as an honorable mention and something the area wants to promote outwards, claiming this is the city centre for all where east and west are to meet(Forsell, H. & Hallemar, D, 2015).

Trough these findings it becomes important to be nuanced and raise awareness for different individual perspectives. Through Bourdieu's theories around "cultural fields", we can deeper understand the different types of capital that the individual acquire to access these areas. A function can be interpreted as open and inclusive to a person with a certain kind of emotional backpack, whilst being interpreted not as inclusive by another. This is also to realize that there is no determinate answer on how the spaces are inclusive or not. Using these dimensions instead becomes a way for us to further understand how this space will treat different social groups differently which will affect their right to belong in the area, and, how architecture and built form contribute to these tendencies.

who are the folksy crowd?

The dualist meeting between elitism and folksiness becomes distinctive in the case of the Oslo opera. At the same time as maintaining an aura of culture, the opera function and its program direct itself to a niche audience with a rather advanced taste in arts. Therefore, this has been met through planning and architecture to create a folksy space to be paired with the elitist function. Though, this duality is not in itself a guarantee that the rest of Bjørvika will be reflected to reach the same level of a diverse area as the opera is described as. Instead, what made the opera symbolically attractive in the first place has caused the engine of the capitalist dynamics we now see in the area (Hauge, 2018).

The strategy for the Opera has been to also attract consumers that usually do not move in this elitist context for their social status are not being met or seen as attractive. Here, the folksy image and/or strategy has helped to create a more tangible sphere around the opera, hoping to connect different social groups through its design and the addition of public space. The use of folksiness becomes a communicative tool as well as an architectural strategy to create the image of an inclusive space, by generating positive affirmations and increased loyalty.

The opera art form is historically niched in its audience, why a new identity through architecture was seen as necessary throughout the project. Returning to Bourdieus 'fields', this premise usually demands a certain amount of social and cultural as well as economic capital. In this, the question that has been raised is what happens to this use of folksiness regarding who the opera in the end will attract. If

failing to reach the ambitious set goal of a demographic reflected audience, the use of folksiness instead must be nuanced as also being an elitist constructed usage of the term. For who is the real folksy crowd that the opera is claiming uses the space frequently?

In a report that Kunnskapsverket conducted in 2018, the question of who is the common visitor of the opera was raised. They interviewed around 500 people, equal gender distribution, and a wide range of ages, asking them what brought them to the opera and their view of this public space in the city (Hauge, 2018). Among the respondents, they met a big amount of international tourists, mostly European. About half of the Norwegian visitors were from Oslo. Most of those citizens were visiting the opera as a part of a promenade through the city, not having an errand at the opera or being their end destination, whereas the tourists of natural reasons had the opera as the main attraction for their visit. What is interesting about the visitors who lived in Oslo was that they in general had some sort of higher education (Hauge, 2018). These people said that they visit the opera frequently. When asked if the opera had become an important part of the identity of Oslo, the common answer was high, close to 4 on a 5 level scale. When asked if the opera had increased the interest in architecture, the response was also positive, but here it was a clear relation to the education level. For the people living in Oslo, who had higher education, the interest in architecture has increased at as much as 73 percent in comparison to those of lower education.

Returning to the argument of the opera as a folksy

space, this will turn towards the folksy crowd overrepresented by the so-called creative class. This group consists of people of high education and economic capital but also high demands on culture. It is therefore seen as attractive to get these groups to uphold in the cityscape, why cultural programs need to be high and diverse. To serve this group's interests seem to have become a big part in city planning as well as in the Bjørvika and opera project (Hauge, 2018).

Going back to the question of social cohesion, there is little evidence that this goal is reflected in the planning of the vision of the Fjord city. The opera was desired as an enabler of socio-spatial development in the area. Bjørvika's evolution however, did not comply with this vision, and what happened after the operas gained success was, according to a council member, that the entire cultural elite has moved from the west of Oslo, both with their money and demand for culture (Bergsli, 2015). Here, the socio-spatial urban division initiatives did in multiple ways ignore this challenging division of Oslo in the redevelopment of the seaside. Firstly, the program targeted the cohesion of the city center with a focus on recreational and commercial functions, but it included few concerns of how this would reflect the socio-spatial compositions of cuíty center. Here, Bersgli (2015) raises a critical question regarding how people related to this were included in the governance steering and ambition of reaching this social cohesion. Looking at the continuity of the socio-economic composition, the development of Bjørvika has become much of a policy-led high-status as well as gentrified area, where the social cleavages between the districts have reduced possibilities for

citizens to benefit from the re-opened spaces along the seaside. The role of social cohesion is also to be questioned when asking for the right for citizens to appropriate the spaces by the waterfront, which is now being blocked by social and symbolic barriers.

The Opera has also become a target for how architecture and new spectacular buildings are seen to contribute materially to the overcoming of a socio-spatial division as well as a naturalizing medium in the development policies for making the city's eastern parts more attractive. Through the opera, the city can claim that this is a space for everyone and that citizens from the eatsern part of the city are as included in this image of the city, why this strategy of regeneration risks instead naturalizing a class shift in the area. Adding to this, Oslo central station is situated in close proximity to the opera. This has been seen to represent the landscape of eastern Oslo, with outdated design and not seen as representative of the new symbolism of the Fjord city. For its future development, it has become clear that certain social attributes are undesired in the representational area around the central station and Bjørvika and the opera. The spaces outside the central station are known for the assembling of drugsters and homeless, why different policies and expel programmes of those groups from the area have been practiced (Bergsli, 2015). But research has indicated that this has not been followed up with preventive means or alternatives of social assistance for these people. Instead, the area is now transformed into the Opera Common, planned to be a festive and magnificent public space and becoming an axis between the station, Karl Johan

and Bjørvika. This is promoted through an aesthetic cohesion of Oslo's city center describing how visitors should become curious, amazed, and astonished. This vision shows that the Opera Common in this both curates and fosters the vision for who are to be public and use this space, also including the displacement of drug-users as a groups seen as unworthy to appropriate this representational space (Bergsli, 2015). This process implies the symbolic restructuring of functions in the area around the opera, where social groups are targeted or evicted from the public spaces, why again the matter of stranger production as well as the fostering of the folksy accepted citizen in this described folksy space.

Here, the architecture will inevitably contribute to shaping these social constructions through the built. The architectural success of the opera as an inclusive space has resulted in adding several cultural arenas seen to add values to the accessibility and diverse use of Bjørvika by different social groups, stating that this will prevail the Fjord from being an exclusive area (Bergsli, 2015). Here the use of culture is seen to offer and attract a broader range of Oslo's inhabitants to Bjørvika by being universally accessible and free of charge. Thus, this also becomes a way to further promote the inclusive sphere of the area, where especially the Deichmann library is the prior one, the library function having more historic legitimation of a space for all if compared with the opera(Bergsli, 2015). In this, the evaluated folksy spaces are seen as a way to increase loyalty by their positive affirmations. However, the ultimate question for the neighborhood Bjørvika returns to the same analogy as presented in Karlastaden, if these

affirmations really will equal with people feeling the right to belong or uphold in the area, and if the the folksy social constructions produced through the architectural programming of the district will promote or expel people to feel welcome to do so?

If connecting back to the theories regarding architectural constructions and how these take shape and mediate through the built in Bjørvika, these tendencies discussed in relation the curated 'folksy crowd', this will affect how different people of different backgrounds will be differentiated through the spatial programming in the area. Our different forms of capital will therefore orient and/or disorient us through the area, creating different cognitive maps and routes and thereby also our visibility and opportunities of encounters with other people, making us primarily encounter the so called correct 'folksy crowd'.
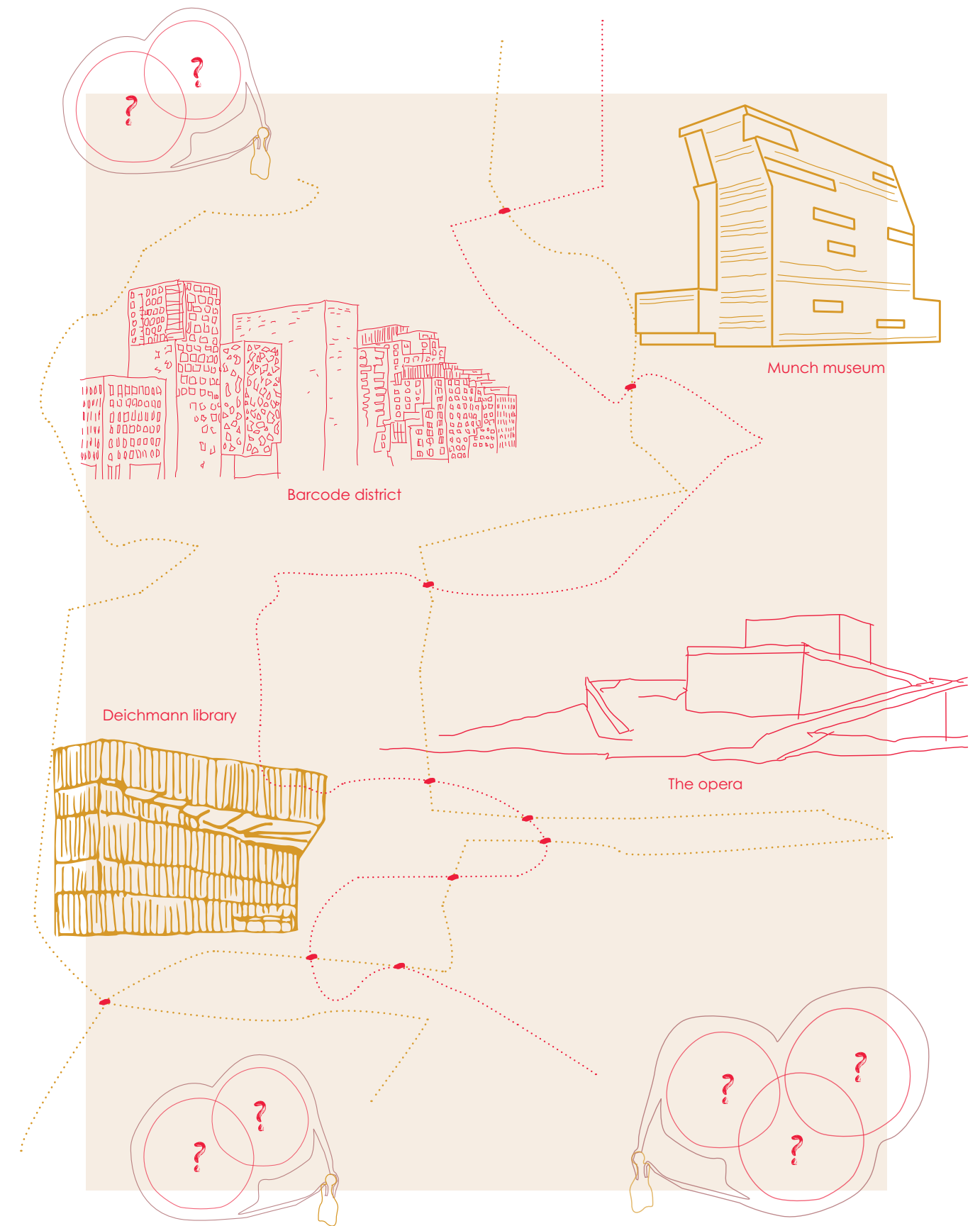

Fig. 3.16 - Cognitive maps

findings

The Oslo opera has become a landmark for both Oslo and Norway as a country, functioning as a local image for identity and belonging, also for those not interested in the opera art form. But, this icon of an inclusive space also comes with high set ambitions. As a strategy, the image of being a folksy space must be seen as successful. It is to remember that more different groups seem to move here than in comparison to other highly elitist spaces, but what to be critical about is when using this inclusiveness and belonging as a PR strategy it also works in direct excluding manners. The building, its architecture, and its function as a public space have become a huge success, but when looking further on exactly who seems to move in these spaces, it becomes clear that not all are to be included in this image of a folksy space.

The existence of the opera can be seen as a product of multiple phenomenons. Firstly it has become to work as a tool in the regeneration process of the city, where culture serves as a driving force. Secondly, its situation in the area of Bjørvika has played a big part in the transformation of the area from a former industrial harbor to what it has become today. Third, it is also clearly a product of the seen globalization and these new types of governance strategies where private capital influences and are invited to shape urban space. This form of governance steering and private interests are seen materialized in the area, where large and dense office blocks have been established. Housing rents are the highest in the whole country, and as a whole, the area is reviewed as fully gentrified (Hauge, 2018).

Still, Bjørvika had the vision from the start to become an inclusive area. Through so-called scenario building and vision planning as a tool in the process, they aimed to formulate a clear goal of what this space will be interpreted as. But, as it seems, this planning tends to rely heavily on assumptions. This is showcased clearly in the case of Bjørvika and the opera, where high set ambitions of creating spaces for all and high inclusion seem to have not been met as an overall achievement of the area. In this, the

scenario building risk to become a way for ignoring broader citizen participation, and it remains unclear to what extent the goals of socio-spatial cohesion have shaped the socially accepted constructions that we now see play out within the area. As the theoretical framework explained, we through these visions will produce strangers seen as less belonging in the area (Ahmed, 2000; Bergsli, 2015).

Despite these findings, the opera has been evaluated as a major success and is constantly reviewed as a folksy space, gaining pride for all of Norway and being inclusive for all social groups of Oslo. Forsell and Hallemar (2015) describe it as a space that can be seen as a warm hug, seeming to be a welcoming space inviting everyone onto the opera roof. It is a space filled with activity and a variety of people, youths skating, tourists, the elite, the youngsters "hanging out" and so on. In this, it becomes a symbolic action for the people of all classes to promenade on top of the elitist culture, literally speaking. It is through their description an easy action to walk right past the entry and instead up on the roof. Though, evaluating this, this is stated by, two white men, professionals in the area and highly educated. As Kunnskapsverket conducted their study, it shows that the biggest percentage visited the opera as a part of their promenade had higher education of some form, meaning that the theories of Bourdieu, as well as Lefebvre, once again become accurate. Because, does it truly mean that "all" will feel this easiness just walking by the entrance, moving freely within this urban space? To ask this question is to also consider the multiple dimensions in it, because if compared to other elitist functions the Oslo opera can seem to reach a much broader symbolic manifestation regarding its relation to power. Using the place-power dimensions suggested by Dovey (1999) we amongst found that for example the Munch museum takes an opposite approach against the opera for inviting people over the cultural capital borders. This buildings dominance instead signifies a control over resources, showing its domination in art through the expressive architecture, and the same architectural analysis can be applied to the Barcode district. In relation, the openness of the Oslo opera is

perceived as much more welcoming compared to its elitist function, and in this the architectural design has succeeded to reach a broader target group than other functions of likewise high cultural value as the Munch museum. Though, it still needs to be acknowledged that this ambition of reaching the "whole of Norway demography" is not reached, making space both reaching and not reaching its ambitions.

It is here a paradox between elitism and folksiness rises and becomes extra clear in the case of the opera because it seems to be both. In building an elitist function, the city has gained a folksy icon as well as a marketing image. In this, the wide usage of folksiness when people involved describes the project can be analyzed to have seamlessly turned it into an architectural strategy, but, as the literature review showed, seems to not reflect the demography that moves in these areas. The opera is successful in many ways, where the symbolic combination of an elitist function and appreciated public space are the most distinctive. Thus, appreciated space and folksy space are two different definitions because when calling a space inclusive or folksy this also sets an agenda for the social groups that are to inhabit these spaces.

When people of high education are the ones seen promenading in the area apart from tourists, whilst marginalized groups who were before seen in proximity Bjørvika has moved from the area due to different programs and the area's gentrification process, it can tell us something about who are welcomed to be folksy crowd in this area. Also, the spatial connections to the eastern parts, where many people of lower status and lower social capital uphold and live, are considered lacking. Here the exclusive Barcode area can be seen as an elitist mental barrier, disabling the right to belong and therefore also the access to this area. If looking at the Opera from a zoomed-in perspective, it can be seen as a more successful space regarding these matters, but, the function can never be torn from its surroundings and its social factors that affect who will on a prior basis move in these spaces. Instead, both the opera and other public functions in the area risk to become shields who promote inclusion but work excluding. This shows an image of inclusion, but by doing so also fosters the social and moral codes in this area, where architecture becomes a mediating structure. The Deichmann library has in this context in line with the opera also been used as a legitimation of Bjørvikas

inclusive sphere. This case can be seen as even stronger because a library function are not seen to acquire the same high cultural capital as an opera, but, as Bergsli (2015) concludes this also risk to become an illusion, something for the city to promote as folksy and inclusive and therefore not critically reviewed in the same end, the same tendencies as we can see for the opera. The addition of the Munch museum in this context can be seen as more transparent, holding a function of high cultural capital in a building that manifests and uphold approximately the same values, why this presumably will reach the usual public for a museum of art, more or less.

Looking at the development of Bjørvika as a whole it seems, according to the developers, that the goal of inclusion has been met by the adding of cultural functions. These are seen as a key opener for "everyone" to reside in these areas. But, again, this is no guarantee, and looking at the surrounding development of Barcode and Sørenga, it more seems to have the same types of problems as Tjuvholmen and Aker Brygge when it comes to reaching a broader social diversity. The Oslo opera came with a great symbolic value, and can also be seen as the engine for how the focus on Bjørvika has shifted towards more strongly related inclusive strategies through culture as a way to achieve great diversity in its audience. Being a symbolic valuable area from the start, the ambitions for many public spaces seem to have been planned in the area from the start, but again, the right to access is one thing, but the right to belong and reflect yourself in urban space in order to appropriate it is another.

Again, the expectation that one singular institution and its so-called inclusive architecture should contribute to everyone feeling included is a very high set goal, difficult to reach for as well planners as architects. But what becomes clear in the case of the Oslo opera is that we need to have our critical glasses on for where it is, as in this case a manifestation of an inclusive and folksy space that has turned into a big part of its identity. The opera is a clear success story in reaching out over its original target group and combining an elitist function with a public space for "all" citizens, and is this in many ways can be interpreted as an fantastic urban space. But as planners we need to also review the theories on exclusion in order to understand and seek for tools to further understand the duality our role seems to hold between a folksy agenda and an elitist agency.
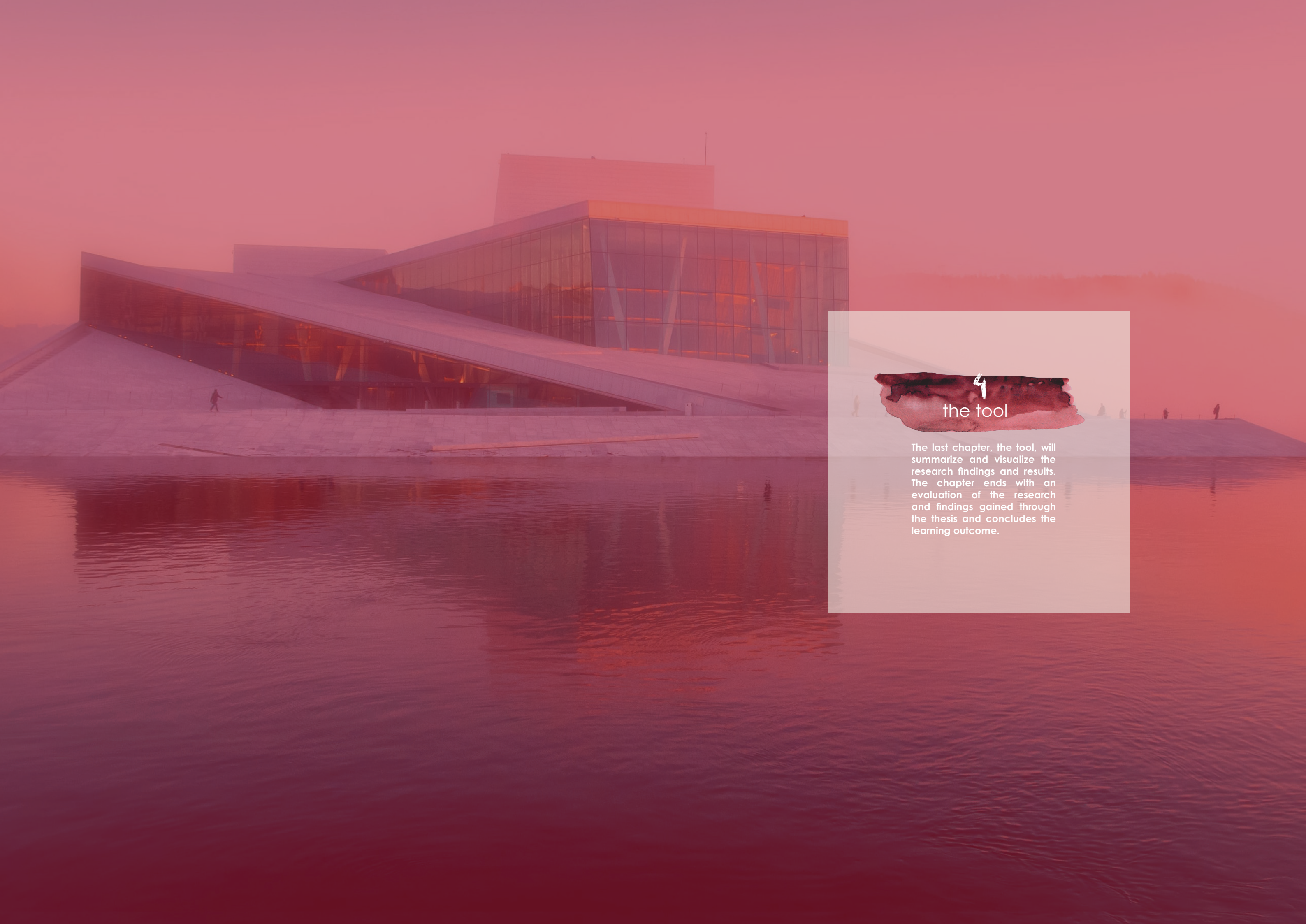
4
the tool

The last chapter, the tool, will summarize and visualize the research findings and results. The chapter ends with an evaluation of the research and findings gained through the thesis and concludes the learning outcome.

FOLKSY

The opera

Architectural strategy, create a folksy space.

Elitist in its agency, but the product is still reviewed as folksy?

Lars Lerin

High cultural capital and appreciated by critics = high elitist value?

Also tangible to a bigger audience = also high folksy value?

Gert Wingårdh

High cultural capital = high value on elitist scale?

High likeability= high value on folksiness scale?

ELITIST

what if being both?

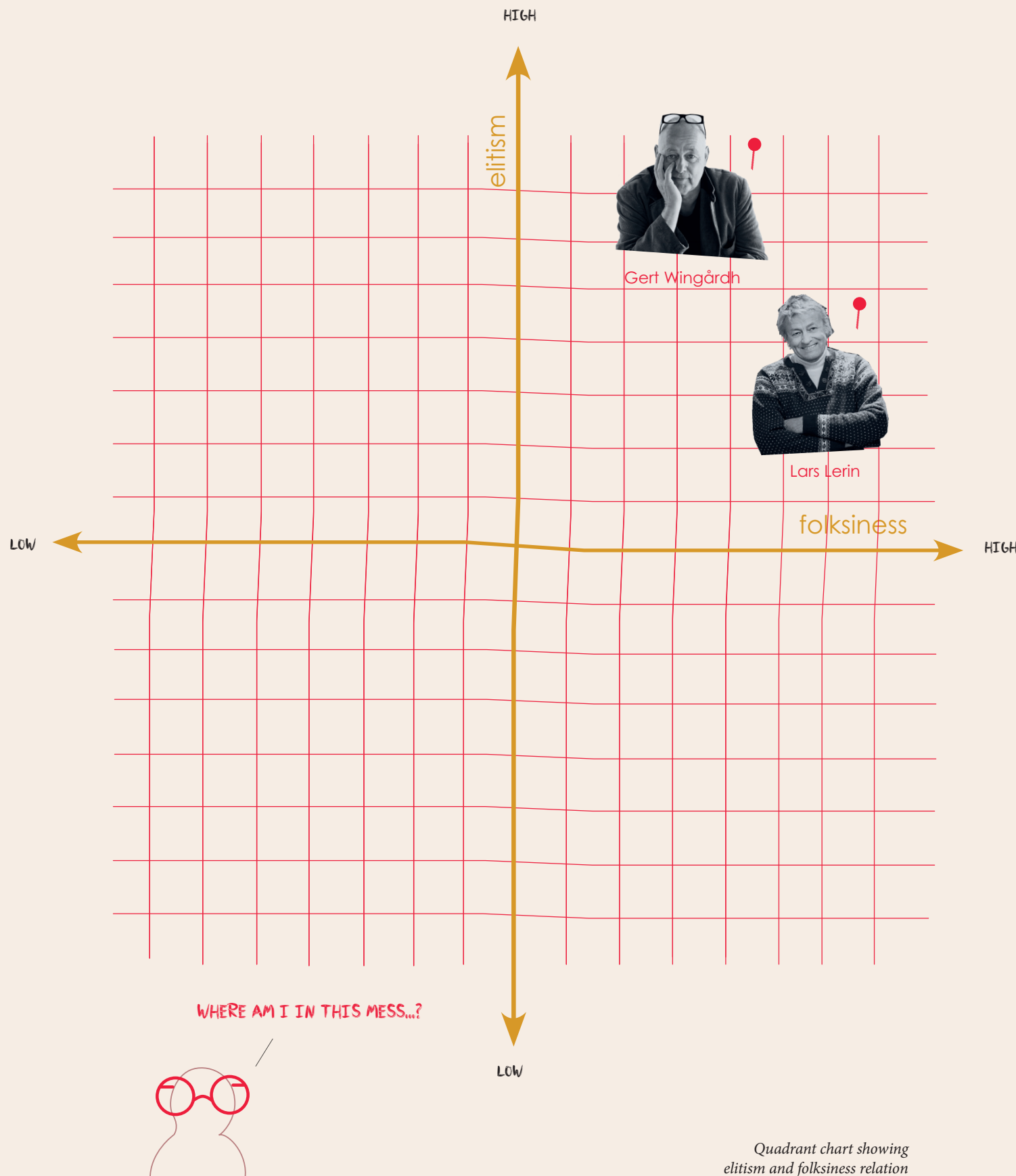### when folksiness meets elitism

As the case study concluded, the Oslo opera holds a paradox relation between elitism and folksiness, where it seems to be both at the same time. Therefore, putting the two values on two opposite ends of the scale seem to lack the phenomenon where the two values meet. To make this more tangible, we borrow two references of popular culture who seem to hold the same relation. The famous architect Gert Wingårdh is perhaps the most prestigious example and persona in the contemporary Swedish architectural debate (Volvocars.com, 2021). His position within the art world has therefore provided him with high cultural capital, i.e. high elitist value on the proposed scale. But, during later years Wingårdh has become a famous TV personality, also gaining success amongst the commercial crowd outside the architectural practice. Today he is described as a folksy architect, who educates the Swedish people about architectural qualities throughout the public service program "Husdrömmar". So, this also gives him high value on the folksiness scale. Still, one can argue that Wingårdh is folksy within his field of architecture, why he still has a quite high elitist value with his cultural, academic and economic capital.

Another example, not from architectural practice but the closely related art world is the Swedish artist Lars Lerin who has reached great success with his aquarelle paintings. Serving the art world and being widely appreciated by critics, he, like Wingårdh, holds a high cultural capital. But here, it also seems like his art is widely appreciated by the public and has gained big commercial success (Skuggutredningen.se, 2020). Connecting to the

study by Sandström & Silverdoin (2012) this tangibility possibly can be traced to his motives which usually portrays Swedish landscapes or societies. But, his most distinctive success in gaining folksy status seems to be his persona who has been viewed in different media formats in recent years. Perhaps this status was hits it highest when he was the television host of Christmas eve in the winter of 2020. Being likeable, he touches values of folksiness such as tangibility, positivity and personal connection which increases his loyalty (Sandström & Silverdoin, 2012). He thereby has reached a success that very few people in the art world gain, both appreciated by the art critics and the commercial crowd (Skuggutredningen.se, 2020). In comparison with Wingårdh, this also gives Lerin a slightly higher value in the folksiness scale, reaching a folksy image also outside his cultural field and practice.

Both Wingårdh and Lerin showcase examples of personalities who have gained a folksy status, which of course becomes a difficulty when comparing these examples with the case of the Oslo opera. What they do provide is other contemporary examples of that the dualist relation between elitism and folksiness do exist in order to further contextualize the need for a new scale or tool when relating these values next to each other.

HIGH

elitism

Gert Wingårdh

Lars Lerin

folksiness

LOW ← → HIGH

WHERE AM I IN THIS MESS...?

LOW

*Quadrant chart showing
elitism and folksiness relation*

a theoretical tool

gal-tan as inspiration

In politics during the recent years, the left-right wing scale has become less relevant when describing where the political parties stand in relation to each other. Therefore, a so-called gal-tan scale has become valuable. (Språktidningen, 2018). By adding an axis representing the ends between libertian and authoritarian to the ordinary left-right scale, it became much more representative for the positioning of political parties and their ideological differences in relation to each other (NE, 2021; Språktidningen, 2018). Even though the gal-tan scale is a political tool, it seems that the idea of turning a one-dimensional scale into a quadrant chart is something we can use to further contextualize the relationship between elitism and folksiness. Turning the dualist relation into a two-dimensional chart we get a scale that seems to make it easier to place examples holding both values in relation to each other. Both Wingårdh and Lerin would be positioned in the quadrant of high elitist and high folksy value. As concluded, Lerin seems to hold a bit higher folksiness in his persona, reaching a folksy image outside his traditional cultural field, why he also gets a lower value on the elitist scale. This makes him a bit more tangible than Winggårdh.
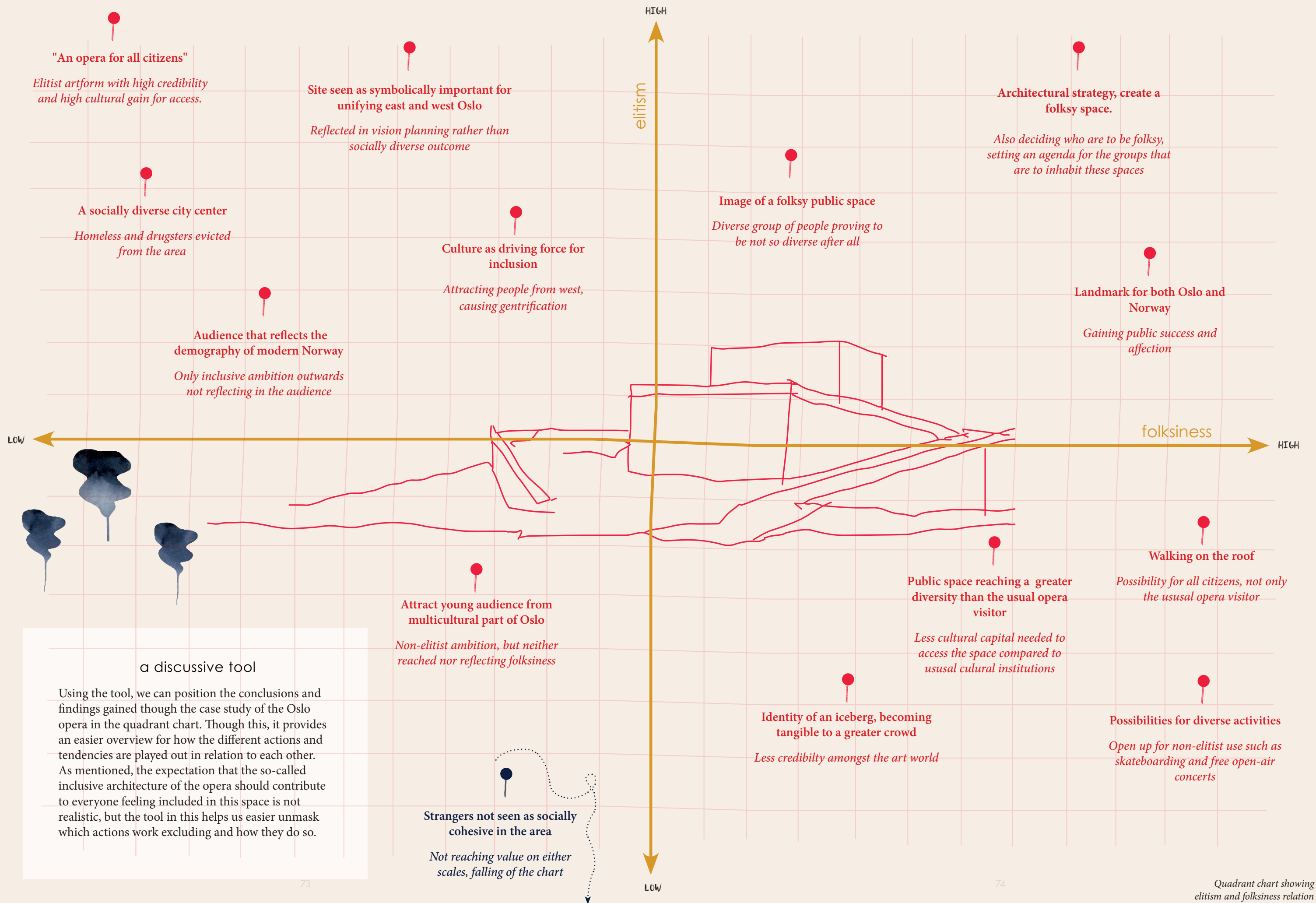
Again, Wingårdh and Lerin are examples of two personas from a traditional elitist field who have gained a folksy status, but this scale holds a potential also for further architectural use. Through the findings of the previous chapters, we firstly concluded that architecture and architects have a responsibility to be aware of architecture's societal effect and how it takes part in the production of social constructions in urban space. Secondly, the case of the opera showed us an example of when the use of folksiness as a strategy becomes excluding and elisist in its agency, for this also holds the power of

shaping who are to be folksy in these spaces. In this, this use of folksiness seems to become more alike what we usually interpret as elitism, i.e. "leadership or rule by an elite, but also consciousness of being or belonging to an elite" (Merriam Webster, 2020). Through this proposal, turning the relationship between folksiness and elitism into a quadrant chart, we can position our different architectural actions and how they come to place in the chart. This to evaluate both our professional role and what we can and cannot effect, as well as to discuss when folksy aspirations also relates to elitist matters, becoming a strategy that risks to work excluding as a backside of its inclusive ambitions.

What is further both important and interesting when using the chart as a tool is to also use it to ask ourselves what happens when folksiness takes this position of also being an elitist agency in the shaping of the correct folksiness. Through these tendencies, we will see groups neither belonging to the folksy or elitist aesthetic codes, falling outside the chart and left strangers in the cityscape. Here the tool can become of use in identifying who we do not plan for, as well as open up for discussions about how we can reach inclusion also for these people.

By using the tool, we can position the conclusions and findings gained through the case study of the Oslo opera. This provides a better overview of how the different actions and tendencies are played out in relation to each other. As mentioned, the expectation that the attempted inclusive architecture of the opera should contribute to *everyone* feeling included in this space is not realistic, but the tool helps us easier unmask which actions work excluding and how they do so.

elitism

folksiness

LOW | HIGH

"An opera for all citizens"

Elitist artform with high credibility and high cultural gain for access.

Site seen as symbolically important for unifying east and west Oslo

Reflected in vision planning rather than socially diverse outcome

Architectural strategy, create a folksy space.

Also deciding who are to be folksy, setting an agenda for the groups that are to inhabit these spaces

A socially diverse city center

Homeless and drugsters evicted from the area

Image of a folksy public space

Diverse group of people proving to be not so diverse after all

Culture as driving force for inclusion

Attracting people from west, causing gentrification

Landmark for both Oslo and Norway

Gaining public success and affection

Audience that reflects the demography of modern Norway

Only inclusive ambition outwards not reflecting in the audience

Walking on the roof

Possibility for all citizens, not only the ususal opera visitor

Public space reaching a greater diversity than the usual opera visitor

Less cultural capital needed to access the space compared to ususal culural institutions

Attract young audience from multicultural part of Oslo

Non-elitist ambition, but neither reached nor reflecting folksiness

a discussive tool

Using the tool, we can position the conclusions and findings gained though the case study of the Oslo opera in the quadrant chart. Though this, it provides an easier overview for how the different actions and tendencies are played out in relation to each other. As mentioned, the expectation that the so-called inclusive architecture of the opera should contribute to everyone feeling included in this space is not realistic, but the tool in this helps us easier unmask which actions work excluding and how they do so.

Identity of an iceberg, becoming tangible to a greater crowd

Less credibilty amongst the art world

Possibilities for diverse activities

Open up for non-elitist use such as skateboarding and free open-air concerts

Strangers not seen as socially cohesive in the area

Not reaching value on either scales, falling of the chart

Quadrant chart showing elitism and folksiness relation

concluding discussion

The purpose of the thesis has been to analyze how matters of inclusion are handled within a contemporary architectural project and to develop a theoretical tool that can be used to discuss and raise awareness of matters of inclusion and exclusion in architectural projects.

The chapter "The right to belong" aimed to investigate and conclude in what ways we are connected to issues of power as social constructions, and by doing so raise the question of inclusion. Here it became clear that both oppression and liberation become forms of social practice which are mediated through built form, and to understand that these power mediations have as much opportunity for positive as negative and problematic effects have been the primary discussion within this thesis. By using social theory to explain social constructions and for how we move different in the cityscape depending on e.g. background, the chapter concluded that architectural awareness and acceptance are key for understanding built form in its natural habitat, i.e. the cityscape, where it will always be closely connected to, as well as construct, the societies and the social structures and ideals where it takes shape. It was stated that there is no way around these issues, which only leaves us with the need for acceptance and awareness for how we as architects and designers of urban space must understand both the complicities and complexities this comes with.

In the third chapter a case study of the Oslo opera investigates the secondary research question, "*how has inclusion worked as an architectural strategy in the case of the Oslo opera?*" by researching how the attempt of the project's inclusive planning can also be excluding in its agency. The findings show that it risks becoming

so when turned into an architectural strategy which will also curate who will feel the right to inhabit and belong in these spaces. The conclusion is that the type of vision planning that was used in the case of the opera is a risky task. To be clear, this thesis does not land in that the ambition for creating inclusive spaces is not good and something we as architects both should and have a responsibility to work towards. Instead, the theoretical framework and the case study of the Oslo opera has stated that we need to do this more transparently.

In the architectural debate today the usage of folksy space seems to be a popular definition to work towards when creating inclusive space. This is evident in the case of the Oslo opera which has created an image being folksy, but it is not reflecting this demographically regarding multiple factors. When talking or promising to construct or design a folksy space, this also needs to include a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and voices in forming what this notion is. Though, as well as the architecture, people and their values change and/or move over time, which complicates the debate further.

The case study also indicated that there is a paradox between folksiness and elitism, and this becomes especially clear for cultural buildings. These functions typically hold the need of a certain level of both folksiness and elitism. The same dualist relation we find between the architectural ambition of creating folksiness and inclusion, and the elitist action and excluding agency in deciding whose interests are to be served and to be included. The case study therefore concluded that these two terms cannot simply be positioned as opposites on a one-

dimensional scale. Maybe this relation is inevitable, why we should not see it as a failure if not reaching full inclusion in all areas. Though, what can be stated through the case study findings is that a failed awareness for this dualist relation instead risks working excluding in relation to who we include in our inclusive visions. As a result of this finding, a two-dimensional scale or quadrant chart, with inspiration from the gal-tan scale, of the relation between elitism and folksiness was developed. This is to be used as a tool of understanding, reflection and discussion about elitism and folksiness for the architect and others in the planning practice. By positioning the opera house findings within the chart the tool was put into practice, and help us provide a better overview of how the different actions and tendencies in the case of the Oslo opera are played out in relation to each other, which actions work excluding and how they do so. A further possible and important use of the chart as a tool is to also ask what happens when folksiness takes this position of also being an elitist agency in the shaping of the correct folksiness, where groups will fall outside the chart neither belonging to the folksy or elitist aesthetic codes. Here the tool can become of use in identifying both who we plan for, as well as who we don't plan for.

The thesis has aimed to answer two main research questions

1. How does an inclusive architectural strategy risk to become excluding in its target group?

2.How can we deeper understand and discuss the duality of our architectural role?

What we can conclude about RQ1 is that a vision to include "everyone" also needs to be combined with a clear understanding of who "everyone" is. Through the case of the Oslo opera it becomes clear that a failed awareness for this dualist relation instead risks working excluding. Here the opera has created a very strong image of being a folksy space, but studies show that this folksy target group does not seem that diverse in relation to Bjørvikas's direct proximity to other districts of lower status. This also concludes that we need to be critical of where projects as the case of the Oslo opera seems to have made this manifestation of being an inclusive and folksy space a big part of its identity. By doing so, this also produces social codes for the accepted folksy crowd in its spaces. Using folksiness as an aesthetic cohesion in this way risks making us evaluate these spaces' diversity with uncritical eyes, for something folksy to us is something usually interpreted as inclusive. Moreover, folksiness should not be directly translated as a tool for spatial cohesion without a more thorough evaluation of who will be included in this folksy vision.

For RQ2 we can conclude that there is a need to understand the theory of architecture's relation to power structures and the user's different types of capital in urban space. Here, the theoretical framework is of great importance for understanding built-in power structures and the production of social space. Through the development of the theoretical tool visualising an elitism-folksiness scale, we can use the provided theories of stranger production and social capital to position our attempted target group and their possibilities for inclusion, evaluating these ambitions through

the use of the chart. This further helps us to both position and create a deeper understanding for our own architectural role within the paradox mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion.

Concluding, as architects we need to consider the use of wide inclusive linguistics as folksiness carefully. The term seems too wide to define and therefore almost exclusively becoming a tool for fostering social cohesion in urban space. The definition of folksiness is always subjective built upon attributes as culture, local context, values, geographic location why when talking or promising to construct or design a folksy space, this also needs to include a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and voices in forming what this notion is. Again, the ambition for creating inclusive spaces interpreted as folksy is not bad per se, but the lack of awareness for how this comes to foster who are included in these folksy visions can seem to be.

The importance is to not only talk about folksiness in a selling context, reducing and/or turning it into a strategy. To practice folksiness in the field can never be achieved in the design studio, therefore it is a notion and not a design element. We should raise critical awareness when we do so and be clear about why we use it. In the cityscape we are all chained within social constructions, and folksiness being a public notion that truly belongs to the people's interest. A key solution and conversation starter in this can be to instead discuss and create awareness of what we mean and are aiming for when we call a space folksy. Who is it folksy for? What are the spatial elements we aim for and in which ways do we believe them to be folksy? Are we, by calling these

spaces folksy, practicing power over who are to be folksy in these spaces?

The importance is to target the discussion from the everyday context, i.e., how we can create architectural output that is in more ways relating to its context in a more broad and relevant reflection of the spaces we move in. It can be seen both as crucial and a potential for following research to discuss further what we are attributes or architectural elements we seek and aim for when we aim for spaces to reach a folksy sphere. Here, the vague definition open for wide interpretation can open up the possibility for a broader and reevaluated definition of what the values of folksiness are in relation to architecture and urban space in contemporary practice. This can also fuel a discussion for how we as architects can get closer to these new forms of target groups and how to include their interests in the creation of updated folksy spaces. Folksiness today presumably holds a different position when it comes to both ambiance and attributes than it has been related to historically. A re-evaluation of the term folksiness possibly holds the ability to create more nuances in how we plan our cities.
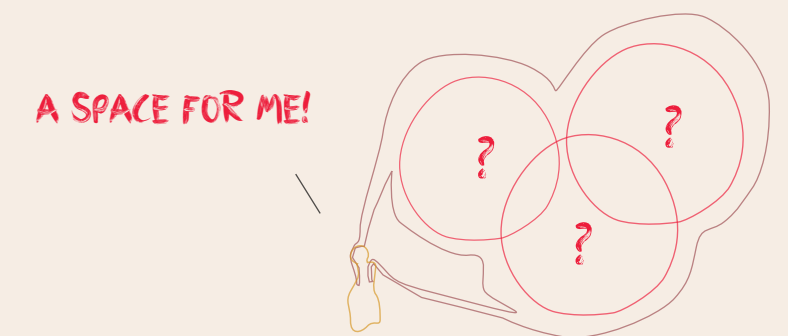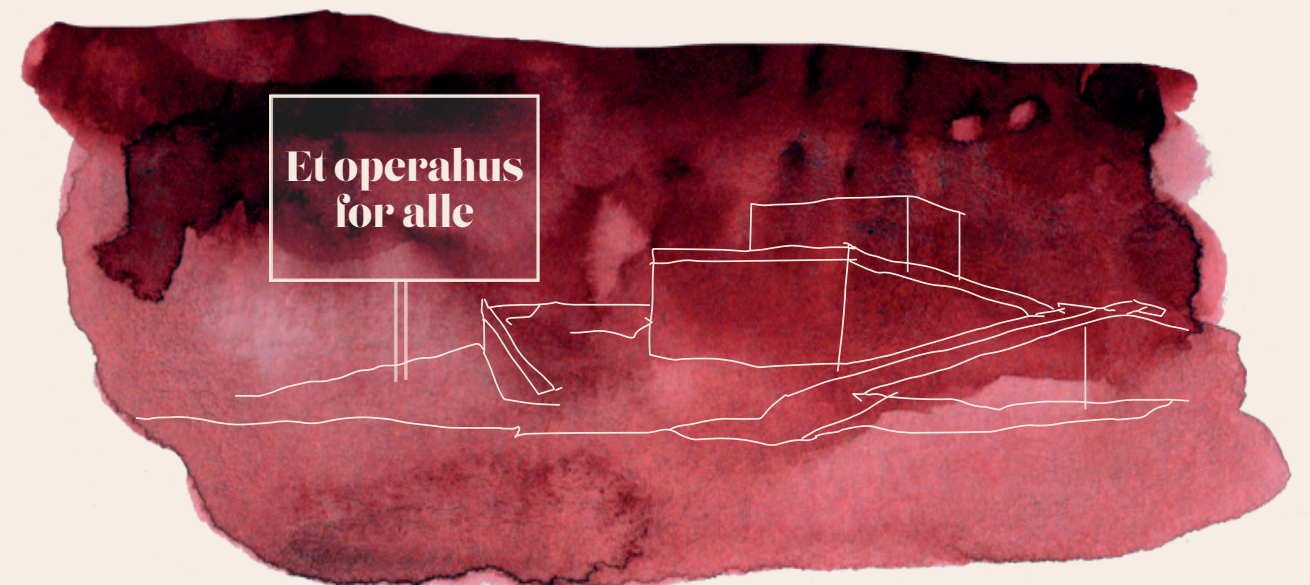

A SPACE FOR ME!

Fig. 4.1 - The future folksy crowd

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"In the end,
places are programmed,
designed and built by
those with the power to
do so. To practice in the
light of this complicity is
the primary liberating
move"

Dovey, K, p.194

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