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Pretty boring

AN EXPLORATION IN
A LEFTOVER SPACE

»Pretty Boring«
– *An exploration in a leftover space*

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Thank you!

Abstract

Every city has them. The in-between boring places. They are not defined and usually unappealing. When in correlation with a defined space, such as a transportation hub, that also happens to be unappealing, you get a mix of boredom and stress.

But what defines boring architecture? It is a difficult question to answer since boredom is highly individual and never static. The definition of boring can also change over time, but we know lack of diversity and stimuli can cause diverse psychological malign effects.

My interest is in the kind of spaces that are usually not registered at all, the leftover spaces, the blind spots of the architectural gaze. What makes it boring and how does it make people feel?

Both boring places and feeling stressed can be seen as having potential and as threatening. These spaces can be activated, transformed, and

integrated into the main urban fabric to achieve environmental and social gains.

This research examines how boring stressful spaces are defined and how they can be activated. It will be an exploration in seeing if small scale interventions are able to enhance an area. Is it possible to detect what boring is and if so, can something be done about it?

The aim is to create care in relationships between humans and place and explore how it can be used to create meaning in a space.

A result will be provided in a proposal of an installation at Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop in hope to leave the visitor intrigued, to want to stop and explore and feel a bit more enticed. It will be an investigation of space, ambiance and environment in an area that is paradoxically busy yet empty.



STUDENT BACKGROUND

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Manifesto

I'm not after perfection, on the contrary, quite often beauty and charm are found in the defects. But some places, like the forgotten and the ignored patches in the urban context are often, well, just that. Not beautiful nor charming, they are just there. Most of all they are boring. What is positive about them though is that they make excellent platforms to showcase what can be. I say let's utilise the vast emptiness and fill it with life. Through the act of adapting and adding, interventions can lead spaces to evolve and become something new.

Small-scale projects can be implemented to demonstrate the transformative power of interventions in the public space rather than achieving perfection. It can lead to changes, improve spaces for people and is well suited for highlighting problems and / or solutions.

It will require a larger shift in attitude and ideology and one installation alone will not solve boredom nor change society, however it may enlighten the importance of adapting to changes and hopefully bring joy to some passer byers.

Can boredom be reduced
with small scale interventions
in leftover spaces?

Boring

When dealing with very boring conditions one ends up with an emotion of boredom. It can be a mix of feelings, such as frustration, disgust, apathy and feeling confined all together. (Toohey, P. (2011). Boredom : A lively history.) It can also occur when we find ourselves in circumstances where we don’t know what to do. (Struk, Scholer, Danckert, Seli (2020) Rich environments, dull experiences: how environment can exacerbate the effect of constraint on the experience of boredom, Cognition and Emotion)

Most of us turn to our own screens to kill time and distract ourselves to avoid feeling it.

ABSENCE

The absence of stimulation, of interest, of excitement, an apparent lack of ambition and care are all common features.

MONOTONY AND PREDICTABILITY

Any situation that stays the same for too long can be boring. Commuting and waiting for the bus or tram every day produce boredom and it only becomes worse when a situation seems valueless. Standing at the stop, day after day, in an asphalt desert waiting for your change of communication, counting down minutes off the information display and it seems like forever until it arrives.

CONFINEMENT

When you have no choice but to endure something, feeling you could have been elsewhere engaging in something other than what one is currently doing. You want to escape, but you’re stuck here.

DURATION

Waiting at the stop because you just missed your connection is a bore. And, when you feel like this, time seems to slow, to the point that you feel as though you stand outside of these experiences.

IS BORING BAD?

It is a feeling that can be embarrassing. Often people don’t want to admit that they feel bored because there is judgment about it. “Only boring people get bored.” Maybe I’m not as creative or as great or fascinating as I would like to seem. So we just don’t talk about it. But boredom also has benefits. Boredom can be a catalyst for action. It can provide an opportunity for thought and reflection. (Svendsen (1999) A Philosophy of Boredom. Beaktion Books). However, when it comes to urban spaces, maybe we need to look into why people feel bored in some of them.

WHAT’S THE OPPOSITE?

Interesting, fascinating, intriguing, appealing, amusing, compelling, hypnotic, pleasing, gripping, absorbing, stimulating, exciting, curious, readable, motivating energy, happiness, joy, contentment, motivation, sympathy, interest.

Stress

URBAN STRESS

A research publication on stress, (Benedictus, (2014) »Sick cities: why urban living can be bad for your mental health«, The Guardian) shows that city dwellers handle stress poorer than people living close to nature. Other possible impacts are traffic noise, smells, disorder and intensity of other inputs. The later leads to a “cognitive load”, the wearying of a person’s brain by too much stimulation which is thought to weaken some functions such as self-control which drives people to seek relief in quiet spaces.

COMMUTER STRESS

In a research study made by Evans, Wener, Philips (2002) The Morning Rush Hour- Predictability and Commuter Stress, Environment and Behaviour, Vol.34 No.4) it is argued that commuting to work can elevate stress. Attention has been given to congestion in traffic and motivational deficits indicative of helplessness. When something occurs along the journey that delays you and there is no way of controlling the situation.

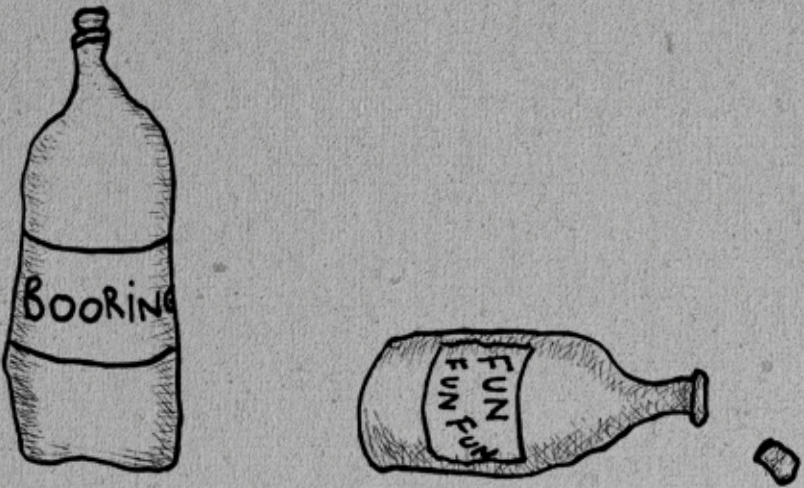
INDIVIDUAL STRESS

Other variables are on an individual level. For example tolerance of ambiguity, control-related beliefs, time urgency, and anxiety.

- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Control-related beliefs
- Time urgency
- Anxiety
- Social factors

HOW TO EASE IT

- Make meaning, facilitate positive interactions
- Flexible use public spaces
- Safety
- Activity
- Access to greenery

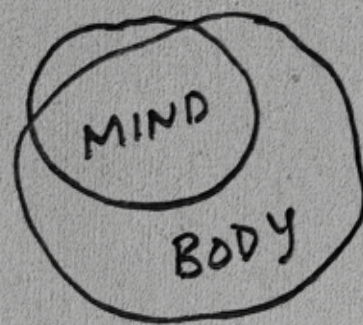


Senses

»Architecture is the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world, and this mediation takes place through the senses«

Juhani Pallasmaa

People primarily evaluate their environments through the ensemble of stimuli generated by the materials selected, spatial relations, formal proportions, scale, patterns, rhythms, tactile values, and creative intentions, comfort, convenience, craftsmanship, presence, warmth and beauty. Robinson, Pallasmaa (2017) *Mind in Architecture – Neuroscience, Embodiment, and the future of design*, MIT Press



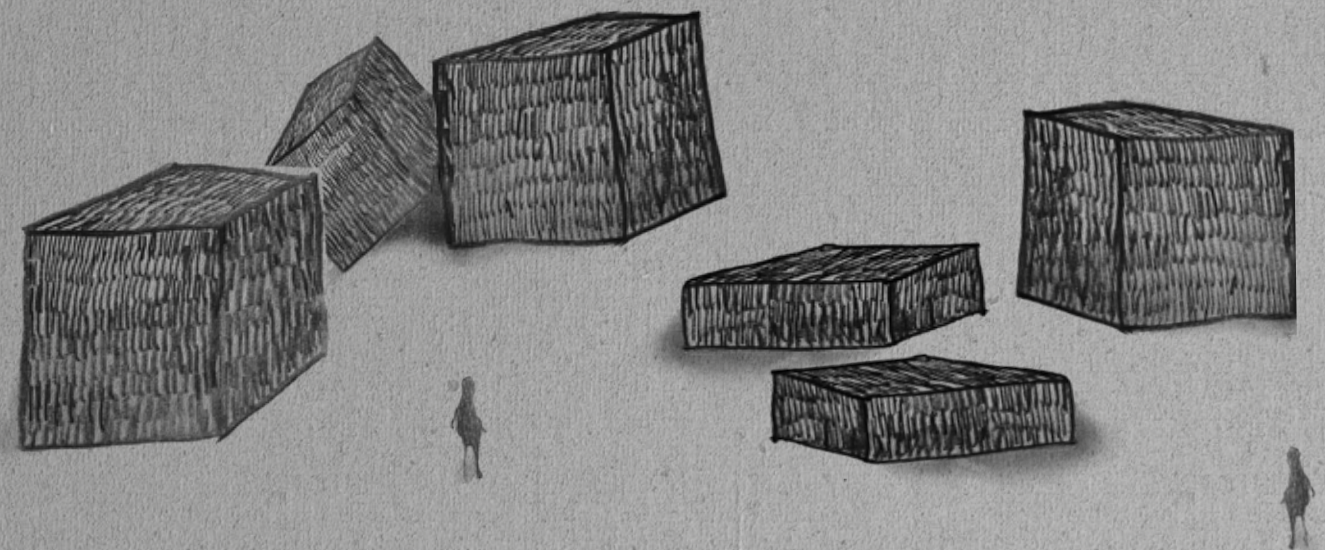
In-Between

The meaning of in-between is when something is between two clear stages or states. In an urban context the 'in-between' can change over time due to the spaces changing around them. They also inhabit different people at different hours which also changes over time. They are at the limit of being in between private and public space, without belonging to either one of them.

But what they have in common is that they are visually unappealing places, they lack a fundamental identity, lack a form, a givenness, a nature. Yet it holds all the capacity and potential for everything to be, it allows all identities, all matter and all substance. (Grosz, (2001) *In-between: the Natural in Architecture and Culture*). It is in-between possible and impossible.

They usually come to exist unintentionally when building in the area or intentionally to keep defined areas apart. The voids are usually undesirable and make people ignore them and reduce pedestrian interest in the surroundings.

To define an area is to have somewhat control over the area, to have it in order by sorting, defining and programming otherwise it is a disorder as Douglas, P. M. (2002) *Purity and danger*. Routledge) puts it.



Traffic Nodes

Transportation is fundamental to the proper functioning of a city. A city is more likely to succeed when people can get around town easily, quickly, inexpensively, and safely. So it's needless to say that transportation is important to cities, but cities are also important to transportation. The human being is often forgotten, that is, at a human scale when it comes to traffic nodes. Despite the functionality of the comings-and-goings, these structures must function both on a pragmatic and emotional level, whereas the emotional requirements are not fulfilled. It is designed solely to transport the body to different parts of the city.

They make barriers between parts in forms of motorways and fenced off tracks. Dense traffic roads need to be crossed, it's noisy and quite often lacks greenery.

According to Sandberg, Schumpp, Pettersson (2013) Trafikstrategi för Göteborg – Underlagsrapport attraktiv stadsmiljö), too much vehicular connectivity results in change in people's behaviour. The unwillingness to be near or around traffic makes people change their routes when not using them.

The chosen site for this thesis is Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop. This junction is designed for traffic to flow. And it does. It's very functional, it offers access to different parts of the city and safety for travellers moving in traffic, everything works.

But Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop is never a destination in itself, it is merely here to help you get away from here. Even though it is set up for walking and cycling, it is not inviting enough to choose this route. Popular recreational areas nearby, such as Slottsskogen Park, Botanical gardens, Änggårdsbergen nature reserve and Slottskogsvallen Sports Center, make more inviting options.

Creating Value

If a place is taken care for and given value it is more likely to be enjoyed and stay that way. Caring for aesthetics, functionality and durability is caring for value.

SOCIAL

According to Research Practice Leads, (2020) Social Value Toolkit for Architecture. Royal Institute of British Architects) social value is gained when these three aspects are achieved:

- Positive emotions
- Connecting
- Freedom and flexibility

The wellbeing generated by the design of a place – connecting people, promoting freedom and flexibility, encouraging positive emotions and meaningful engagement by allowing people a say in the design of their environments. (Samuel, Hatleskog. 2020. Architectural design: Why Social Value)

Since functionality and safety of travelling are achieved I will focus entirely on the boring aspects and in solutions ranging from context to detail.

ECONOMICAL

Research made by Bartlett School of Planning (2001) The Value of Urban Design) suggests that good urban design adds value by increasing the economic viability of development and by delivering social and environmental benefits by:

- Higher density areas
- Reducing management, maintenance, energy and security costs
- Supporting mixed-use elements in developments
- Differentiating places and raising their prestige
- Reducing the costs of rectifying urban design mistakes

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Well connected, inclusive and accessible
- Mixed-use environments
- Development sensitive to its context
- Safety and security
- Returning inaccessible or run down areas to beneficial public use
- Boosting civic pride and image
- Energy efficient and less polluting
- Nature

HEALTH

Space and surroundings affect mental and physical well-being. Access to daylight, fresh air and appealing outdoor spaces stimulates health, comfort and well-being.

GOTHENBURG

Values and goals of Trafikverket and Göteborgs Stad. (Shared Space – attraktiva stadsrum för alla (2010) Trafikverket, Göteborgs Stad, (2018) Göteborg – modig förebild inom arkitek tur-Arkitekturpolicy för Göteborgs Stad)

- Coherence
- Safety
- Easy to find your way
- Lighting
- Clarity
- Participation
- Sustainability and quality
- Aesthetic, artistic and cultural historical value
- Accessibility
- The same ambition for designed habitat in all districts.
- Work with temporary architecture

Reference Projects

The following projects provide examples and work as inspiration on how people are engaging in boring spaces to create a more inspiring and meaningful environment.

Questioning the use of public spaces



1. THE PINK GHOST, PÉRIPHÉRIQUES ARCHITECTS

THE PINK GHOST

Périphériques Architects
Paris, France

The Pink Ghost is a temporary installation that makes an argument about the use of public space. First built in Place Furstemberg, Paris, the Pink Ghost was a 'sculptural transformation' of the centre of a boring square. Made of pink epoxy, the installation enveloped four trees and a streetlight to a height of 2.5 metres and covered the entire surface of the small square. Chairs and tables were covered under the resine, to turn the exterior urban space into an 'interior' lounge situated outside, in a way that raises questions about the status of public space in the city.

In-between area transforms from dark and intimidating to bright and inviting.

Adapting to changes



2. Light Rails, Bill FitzGibbons



3. Parc de la Distance, Studio Precht

LIGHT RAILS

Bill FitzGibbons
Alabama, USA

How an in-between area can transform from dark and intimidating to a bright and cared for passage. Built in 1931, this Art Deco railroad underpass in Birmingham, Alabama is a vital gateway between the heart of downtown and a new urban space called Railroad Park. In recent years the dark tunnel had deteriorated into an unwelcoming and potentially dangerous area, so the city hired sculptor and public artist Bill FitzGibbons to create a lighting solution that would encourage more pedestrian traffic. Titled LightRails the installation is composed of a network of computerized LEDs that form various lighting patterns in the previously darkened underpass.

PARC DE LA DISTANCE

Studio Precht
Vienna, Austria

A labyrinth-like park isolated by high fences that would permit individuals to be outside while keeping up social separation during the coronavirus pandemic. The recreation center would have various courses partitioned by 90-centimeter-wide supports to keep up a safe physical separation between its guests. A mark molded whirl design makes numerous courses that can be utilized all the while. Every one of the red-stone rock ways through the recreation center would be around 600 meters in length and course guests from the edge of the recreation center to the Center, where wellsprings would be found, and back around. It would take around 20 minutes to walk.

Method and delimitations

- Focus an making a space feel less of a bore
- Spotlight on non defined forgotten spaces
- Spatial dimension, Place identity
- Infrastructural side effects
- Sensatory, Emotional aspect
- Health wellbeing
- Aesthetic wellbeing
- Small scale

METHOD

Finding a boring place in an urban context, a space that has many people passing and looking into what is going on there. How do they feel when they are there? Research by design and for design will be implemented. Studies of relevant literature, references from architecture, psychology and neuroscience and art, reference projects and study visits along with personal experience from the site. Sketching along the process, model studies and prototype explorations, reflecting new findings, are among means of understanding the value of meaning in meeting points in architecture practice and society in general.

DELIMITATIONS

- Subjects that go deep into medical aspects of health due to urbanisation will not be covered but well-being in a space is thought of throughout the project.
- Traffic Safety
 - Commercial Activities
 - Green Recreation



Method

PROBLEM

Boring

ACTIVITY

Wait
Rush

ACTION

Diversity in architecture
Make meaning by adding value
Instigate change

VALUES

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Positive Emotions | Coherence |
| Connecting | Participation |
| Freedom and flexibility | Sustainability and quality |
| Differentiating places and raising their prestige | Aesthetic well-being |

ACTIVATE SPACE

Installation
Open for all
Craftmanship
Aesthetic well-being



Context

Göteborg

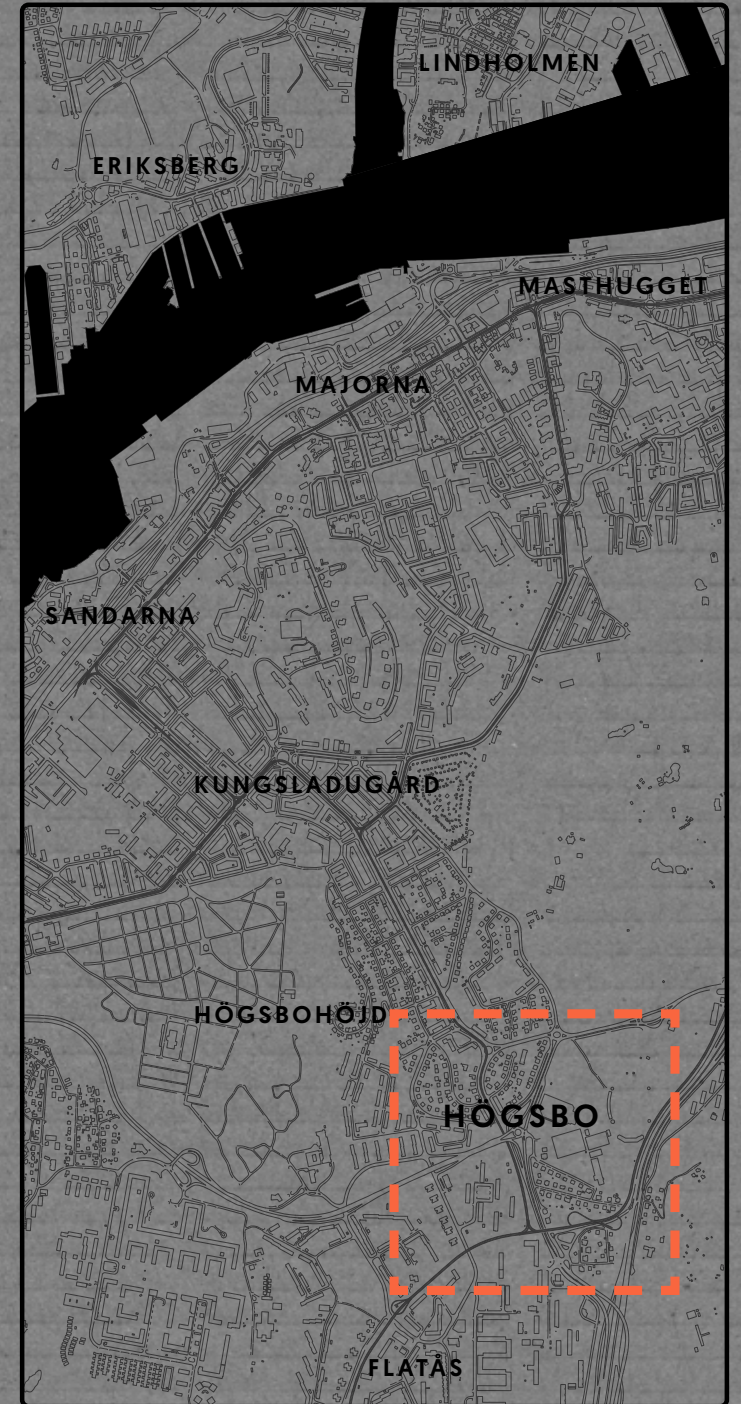


0 1 2 3 (km)

5. GÖTEBORG



Högsbo



6. HÖGSBO



Between the city centre and Högsbo you'll find the residential areas Masthugget, Majorna, Kungsladugård and Slottsskogen Park. Geographically close but very different in character.

MAJORNA

Bustling area with a village feeling
Mainly housing from 1875–1950,
initially built for the working class.
About 30,000 people live here.
Housing queue: 9,9 years

MAJORNA → BRUNNSPARKEN

DISTANCE 5,2 KM
TRAM 12 MIN
BUS 20 MIN
BICYCLE 13 MIN
CAR 12 MIN



HÖGSBO

About 17,000 inhabitants
Mainly housing from 1940–1960s Housing
queue:
Askim–Frölunda–Högsbo 6,7 år

MARKLANDSGATAN → BRUNNSPARKEN

DISTANCE 6,3 KM
TRAM 13 MIN
BUS 20 MIN
BICYCLE 18 MIN
CAR 15 MIN



Inventory

Inventory

Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop is situated in Högsbo in southern Gothenburg, isolated between Högsboleden and Dag Hammarskjöldsleden traffic roads. The land was initially used for agricultural purposes around 1920s and in the 1940s and twenty years onwards it filled up with multistorey apartment buildings. Between the traffic routes and Änggårdsbergen remain the villas from the time before Dag Hammarskjöldsleden.

The tramway came to Marklandsgatan in 1962. The trams pass here on their way from the city centre towards Frölunda, Tynnered or to Majorna. Bus routes operate to further south of the city as well as to Hisingen and Mölndal. The stop has one kiosk, Pressbyrån. Nearby is a grocery store, a pizzeria, a petrol station and Slottskogsvallen training centre. The botanical gardens, Änggårdsbergen nature reserve and Slottskogen park is within walking distance.



TOWARDS
KUNGSLADUGÅRD
MAJORNA

SLOTTSKOGSVALLEN
TRAININGCENTER

TOWARDS BOTANICAL
GARDENS AND
LINNÉPLATSEN

TOWARDS
FRÖLUNDA
TYNNERED

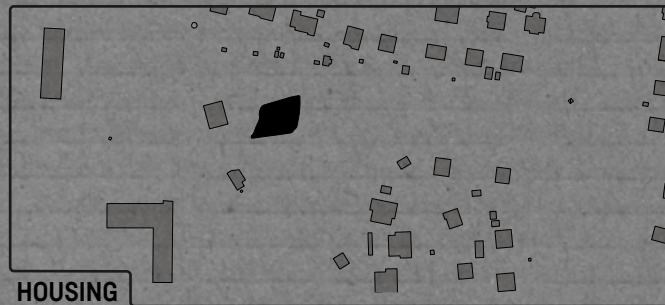


Surroundings

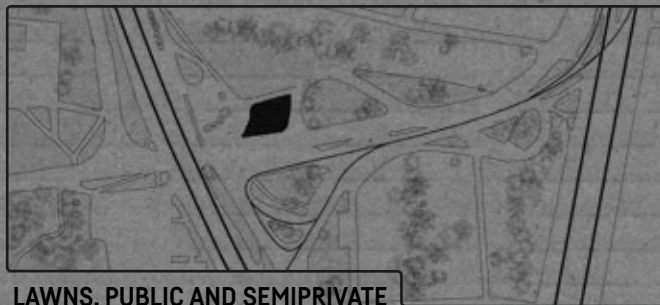
SURROUNDINGS

The maps show that there is plenty of housing in the area even though it isn't clear when standing in the middle of it. Up north, the villas are fenced off towards the bus and tram stop and makes them almost invisible. To the west, multi storey buildings consist of several identical buildings with large lawns in-between. The lush parts are on the villa side.

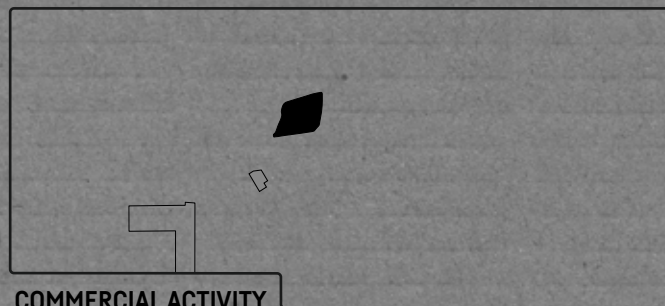
One of the multistorey buildings has a few shops on the ground floor, it is however too far away to be able to nip in and out if you want to catch the tram in time.



HOUSING



LAWNS. PUBLIC AND SEMIPRIVATE



COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY



PRIVATE GREENERY

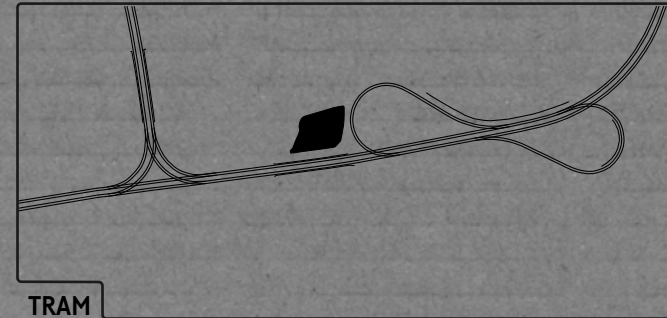


TERRAIN



ALL GREENERY

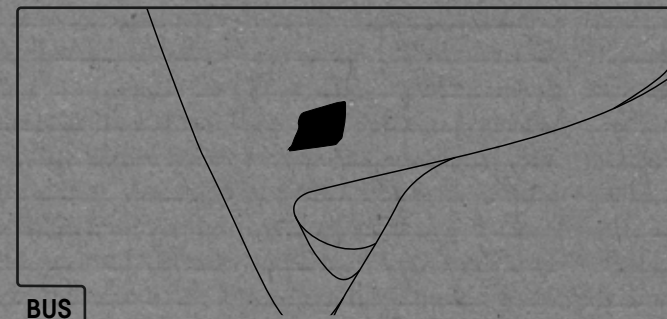
Flows



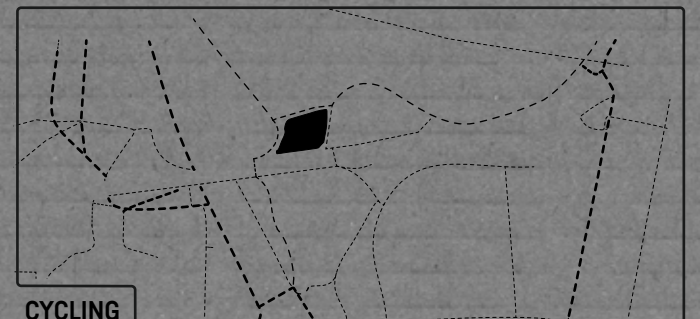
TRAM



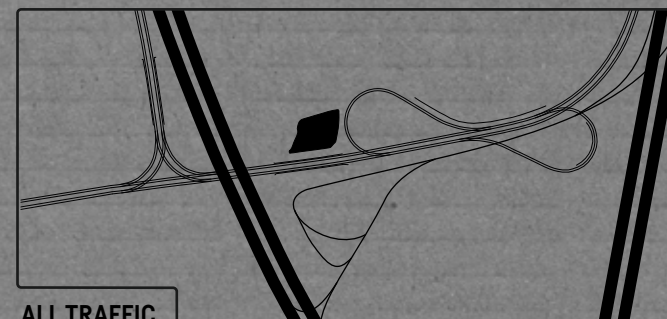
WALKING



BUS

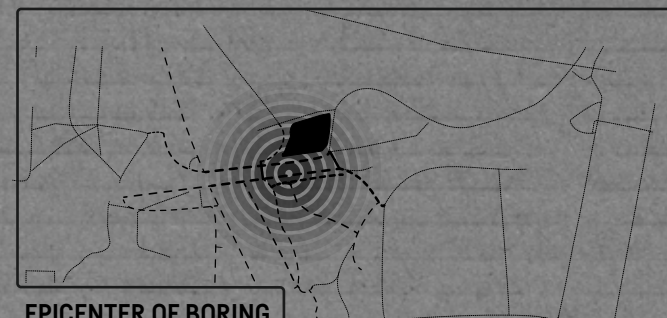


CYCLING



ALL TRAFFIC

SUMMARY



EPICENTER OF BORING

FLOWS

This is a dynamic space, there is movement around the shelters while the patch behind it is static, less sense of movement.

Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop is easily accessible by all forms of transportation. Both walking and cycling are made easy. This is a place where many people pass, however it is not a place where many people stay.

The transportation hub is surrounded with two high dense motorways, Högsboleden to the west and Dag Hammarskjöldsleden to the east.

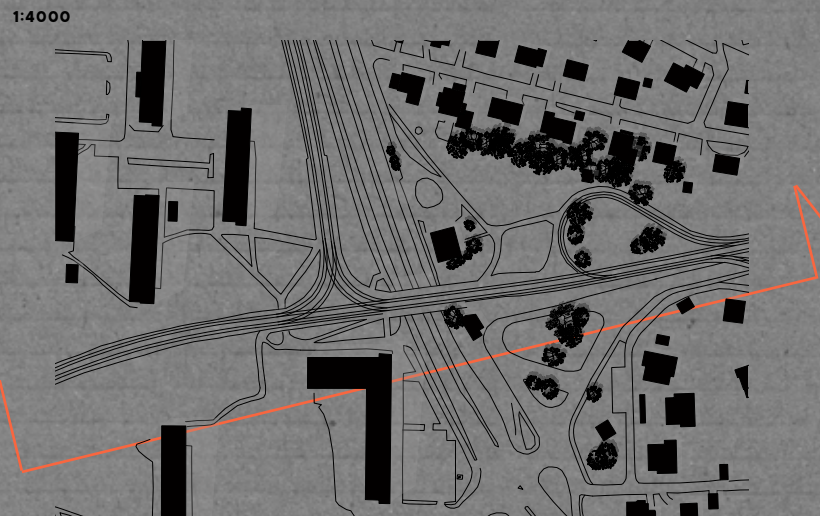
Tram and bus occupy the area and even if it is accessible by foot and bicycle it is more common to move around on local transport.

Most people gather around the shelters as they are waiting, hence the boredom is felt strongest there.

Scale

SCALE

In *Cities for People*, Gehl states that most cities have neglected the human aspect when planning the built space. Urban planning has had infrastructure, speed, functionality and profitability as a priority and scales adapted to the senses and organic growth have fallen behind. The high rise buildings to the east are at quite a large distance so the ability for tactile understanding fades out. The stop itself is a vast flat concrete desert.



Barriers

BARRIERS

You may enter here, but not here, you must walk here or on that side, you may or you may not cross the road. All of these experiences of restricted or free access involve structured forceful interactions. Even before entering the tram stop we feel its affordances for how it will forcefully shape our engagement with it.

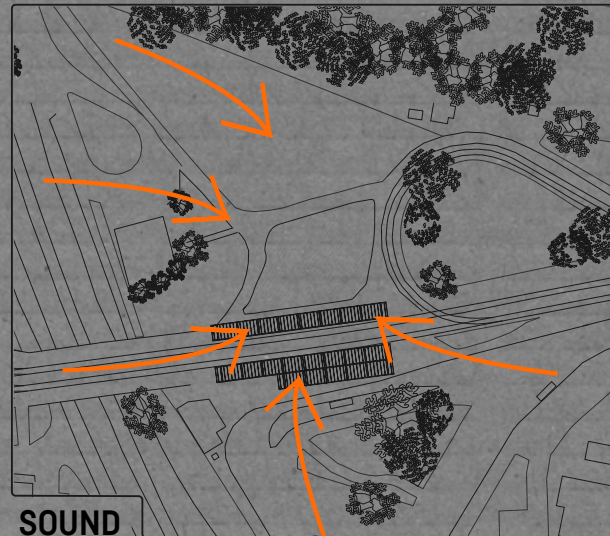


Roads and tracks become barriers for walkers and cyclists.



The stop have fenced off the tram tracks to maintain safety. The villa area have tall wooden planks facing the lawn.

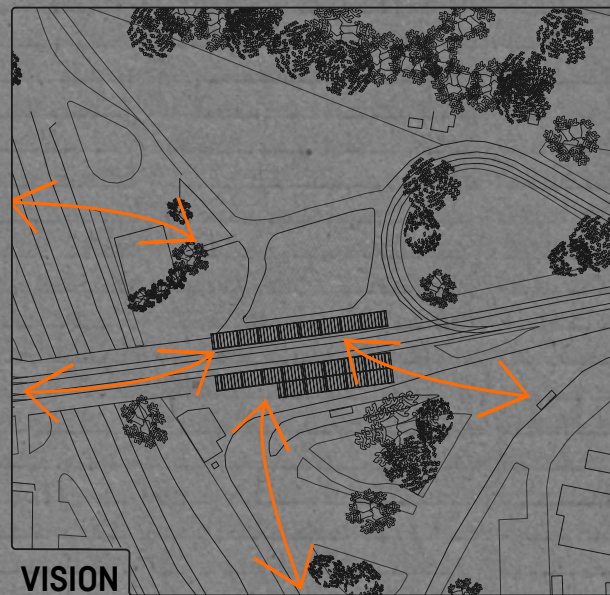
Senses



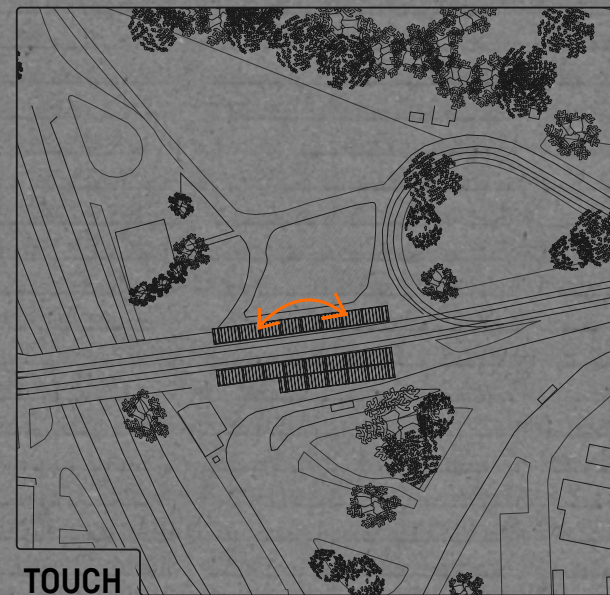
Most sound comes from traffic, from Högsboleden, trams and buses from all sides but the villa area



Exhaust smells.
Garden smells from villa area (summer)

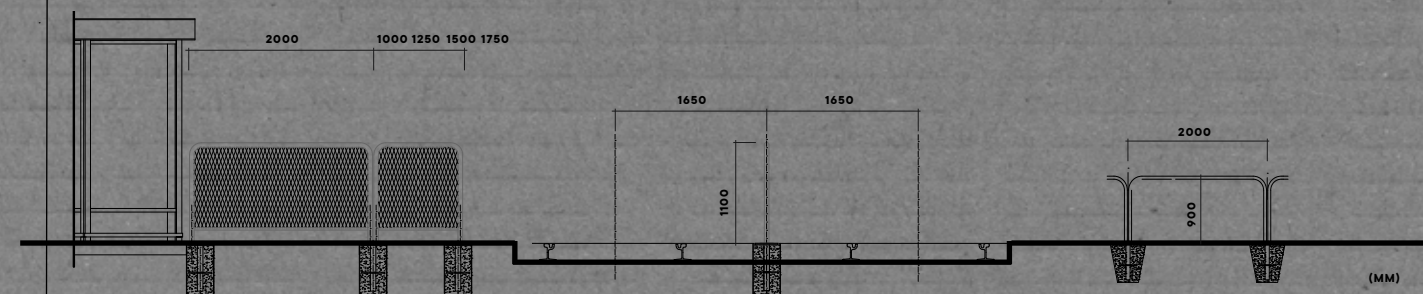
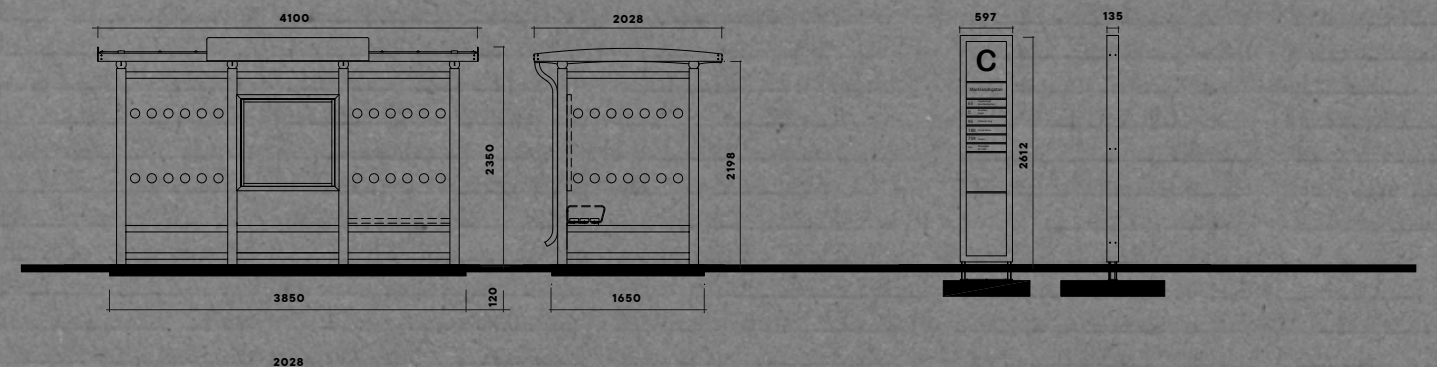
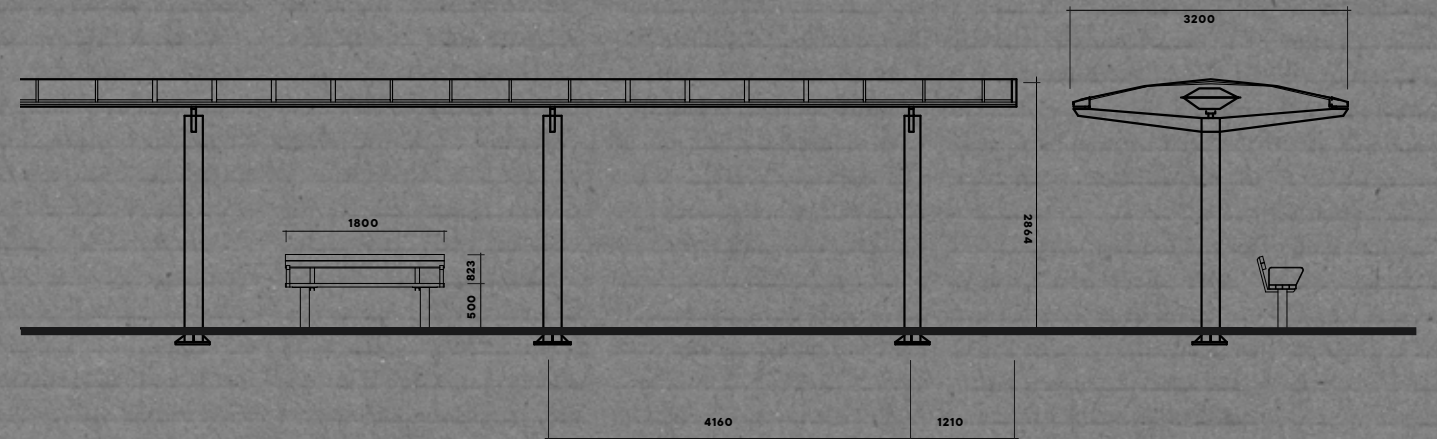


The flat terrain offers good visibility in three directions.
The villas are fenced off with a tall plank.



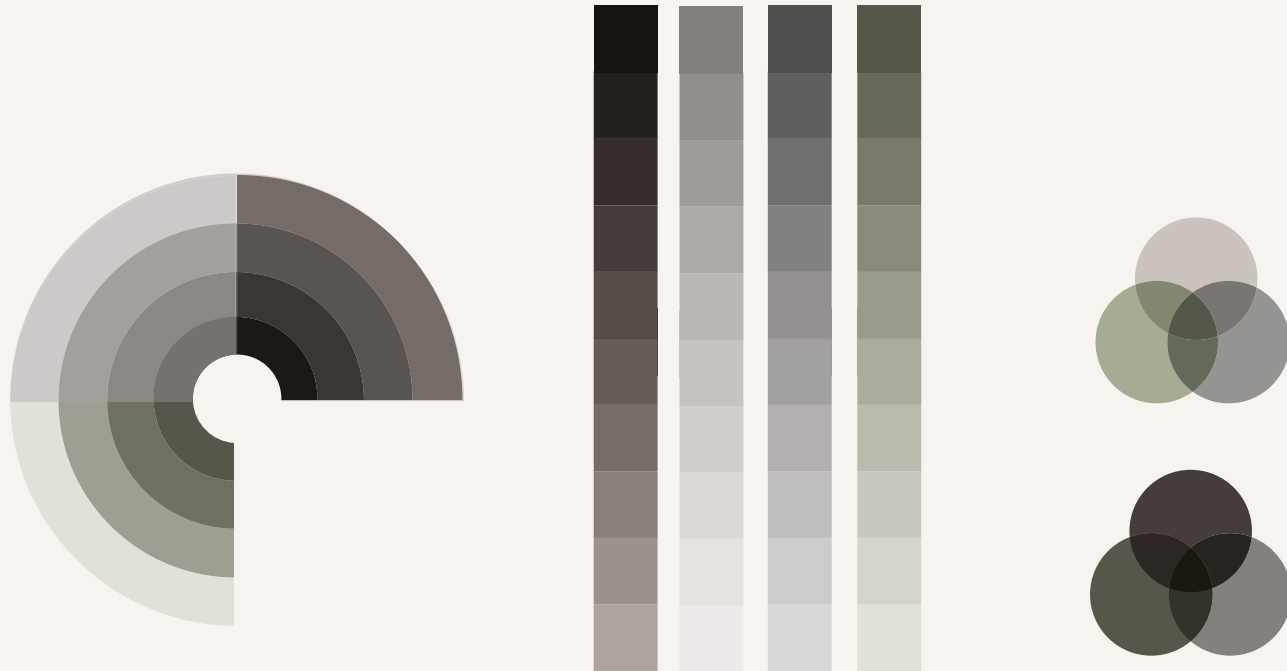
The site itself is a lawn.
The touch is sensed in the furniture of the tram stop

Typology



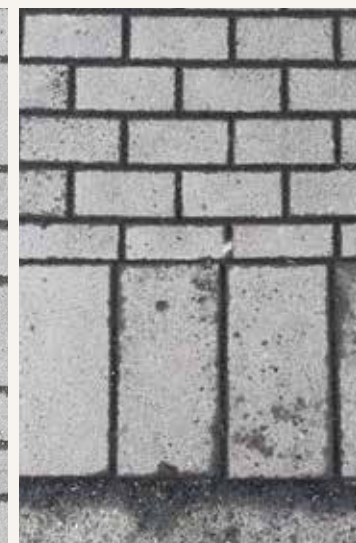
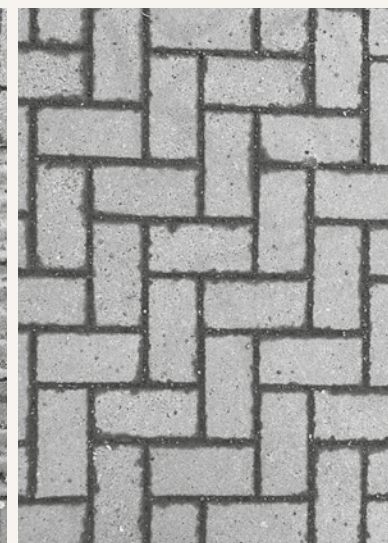
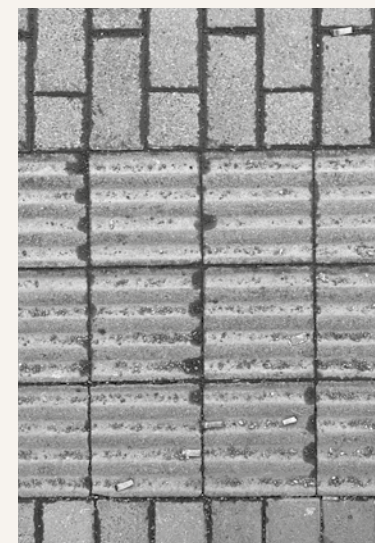
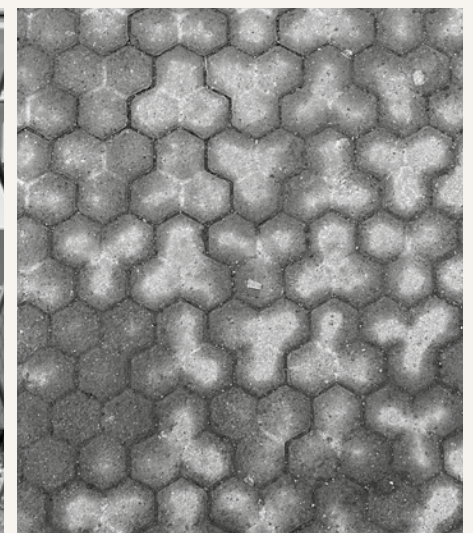
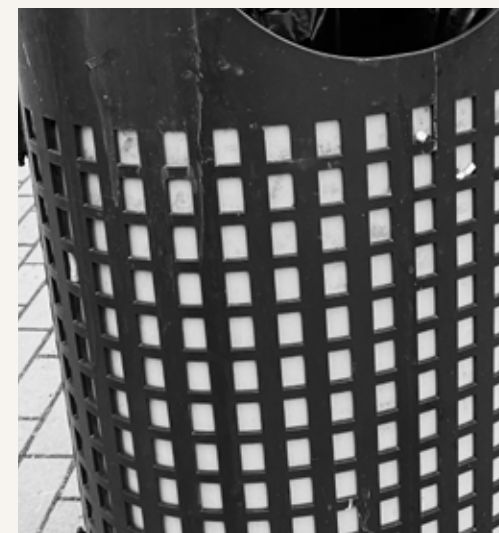
Colours

Brown dominates the space since it is the colour of all of the furniture and shelters of Västtrafik and sets the tone for the appearance. Some of the benches, if not in brown plastic are made with pine. The groundwork is grey or mud green



Patterns

The stone setting makes an attempt to break up the scale but is lost within the brown typology and asphalt and lawns surrounding it.
Patterns of trash bins
Fence



I used to be bored here

Why would I pick such a boring spot?

This is Pressbyrån Marklandsgatan. I used to work here. I have spent countless days and countless hours in this place. From 5 am, before trams and buses started to operate in the mornings to late nights, when everything else around the area had shut long ago. I was in the first row in getting to serve and observe the stressed and the bored.

Sometimes it was fun, sometimes it was boring. Sometimes it was unsettling. It didn't always feel safe working late nights being alone most of the time. I remember thinking thoughts like; it hasn't been robbed in a while now and that it was probably going to happen soon.

So, this particular bus and tram stop has a place in my heart and head, whether I want it or not. It felt only natural to return to it and investigate this area a little more.

Why is it so boring here? Is it the proportions, the architecture in the area, the colours, its context, the sounds, smells or something completely different? I am aware of the fact that it is a slippery slope to define boring. Not only due to perhaps my own assumptions and prejudice of how boring works but also because it is at the same time usually mixed with qualities and opportunities.

I will make an attempt to find out.



Interviews

JESSICA 68:

»Marklandsgatan is as inspiring as parking attendants, tram ticket inspectors and other government officials.
All-weather jackets, Falu sausage, low price food stores, gray rain and lonely people.«

Questions

- 1. What do you think of this place? Why?
- 2. How do you feel when here?
- 3. What are you doing when you are here (activity)?
- 4. Any wishes for Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop?
- 5. How often are you here?

SUMMARY

Total 23 people age 18–70

Pretty boring.
The interviewees felt unmotivated to nothing at all over Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop. Waits include staring into nothing or phones, some listen to music.
Wishes: greenery, commercial activity, art, more and better seating, more lighting, more tidy/less chaotic, toilets

REFLECTIONS

No one expects anything out of this place, it is what it is, and does what it is supposed to do. And noone wants to stay here. But it could be nicer, I feel that the wish for more commercial activity depends on the fact that it feels eerie at night. The greenery is there, it is just not catching attention because it is either fenced off or one stands facing the traffic situaton. My focus lies within attempting to give passengers a moment of peace, rest and something to lay their gaze on before getting on the next tram/bus, and not in an activity that includes monetary exchange.

JOWEL 50

I don't think much of it, there isn't much to see. Sometimes I place my eyes on a couple of small houses close to the place and sometimes on the small center with the shop just to make time pass.
It's a pretty depressing place, which usually makes me feel stressed to get out
i'm usually in transit or on my way to Slottskogsvallen more trees and make the place more inviting
10-15 times/year

REBA 25

Nondescript, bland. There's only waiting shelters and a small kiosk that looks a little sketchy
I'm only here to change trams. I want to leave
waiting
more clean and fresh
once a month

KALLE 40

It's a generally dull and bland place, even though it is situated between really nice areas it's only functioning as a node for public transport. Being almost completely surrounded by big roads makes it even duller.
Nothing at all. Possibly restless and bored. I tend to walk if it's too long until my connection arrives.
I stand as a Swede and wait with a dead gaze into nothingness
No. Possibly some greenery or something else that makes it less of a depressive wasteland
Every damn day

SEBASTIAN 29

No feeling, fills it function.
Nothing.
wait, stare into nothing, listen to music.
toilets.
Every day.

JONAS 40

It fulfills its function, but insecure.
Nothing special, unsafe at night.
Waiting, checking phone.
dont know.
1 time/week.

MONICA 70

Indifferent.
Hope tram arrives soon.
look at people.
No opinion.
Not so often anymore, before 1 time/week.

JOHANNA 48

Boring and desolate. In the evenings eerie and unpleasant. I just want to move on.
checking stuff on my phone, buy something at Pressbyrån, just staring out at nothing.
Feels like there is a lot of room for making this place nicer
5 times/week

SONIA, 35

Grey, stiff and a little scary at night
I want to leave
waiting, listening to music
Music, more flowers. Get rid of the scary
a few times per year

TOVA, 18 ÅR

Good transport hub but pretty boring
Usually I just want to get out of here, on my way.
Not a place to hang out in
scrolling my phone
Big paintings
2-3 times/week

ANEA, 18 ÅR

Not the prettiest place
Nothing much
Meeting up with friends and change of trams
Tidy it up, make it nicer
3 times/week

SINIKKA 55

Pretty boring
I want out of here, I suffer, feel neglected
I just stand here
More lighting, greenery, tidy up, maybe a flower shop, cafe
a few times / week

JOHANNES, 31 ÅR

Grey
Bored
Waiting for bus, checking my phone
more seating
This is the second time i'm here

HENRIK, 40 ÅR

I think its ok
Feels ok
waiting for tram, kicking stones
more greenery, fruit trees
every now and then

KATRIN 27

Its difficult getting around in rush hour. I often feel irritated or scared. Parts of the bus + side mirrors come up on the pavement when they turn around. I have experienced many times that the mirrors of the bus passes just a few inches from my head as I walk on the pavement. It is very unpleasant when it comes from behind at a high speed. I wish the turning space could increase. Separate walkway from the bus stop. It's hopeless in the mornings. Nice with apple trees in the middle.
I live nearby. 10 times/week. Twice a day at least, 5 days/week

LIEN 40

ok at daytime
Nothing
surf mobile, people watching
more alive, more commerce
many times/week

OLIVER 28

Well, it's quite depressing. Nothing nice to look at.
I just want the tram to come so I can leave
Listening to music
No. Don't really look at it, but once I was at a stop with heating in their seatings, they should have that.
A few times/year

HANNA 49

It's placed outside everything. Lacks joy. But there are buses to Särö and trams to Frölunda. It's desolate. Boring houses.
Just a hub
Boredom. Sadness
I used to train Taiji 5 minutes from here, then I was here three times/week. Now, seldom

KAROLINA 39, JAMES 42

Depressing, unsettling, anxious, a lot of traffic from everywhere
waiting, sometimes i end up here because i got on tram 3, the wrong direction, then I have to wait for the right one to get back.
not really. Works pretty ok for tramhopping. But a lot of stops could be made nicer. More shelters.
1-3 times/week

ISABELLA 31

I think it's a place where different social classes end up, from Hovås to Frölunda.
Anxiety. No peace. I'm on my way from one place to the next
no. Doesn't matter here
twice/month

AMANDA 45

Boring and not very charming
I don't feel a thing. Or, im unstimulated, i feel uncomfortable
waiting, checking my phone
A different design, something to look at, be stimulated.
Interesting art, some place to sit. Maybe a cafe
twice/week

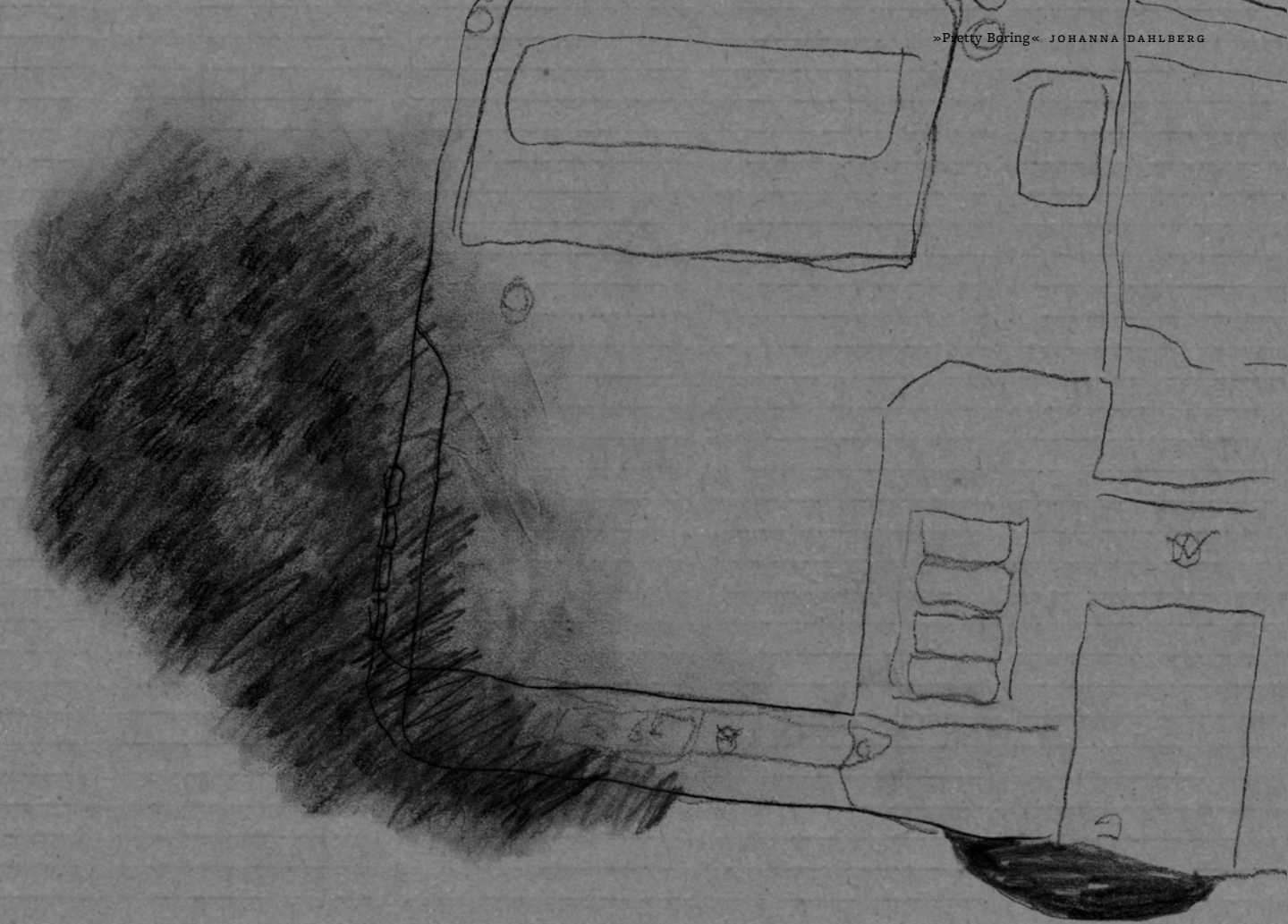
JOHAN 49

I think it's a functional place that serves its purpose. Trams and buses meet because the need for this exists. Commuters should commute. But also that it serves as an illustration of the "wrong side of the tracks" where the villa residential area ends and the concrete takes over
I've never felt anything for or in this place.
Changing means of transport
Once a week for periods, but it can also be that I do not pass or stay there at all for over a year.

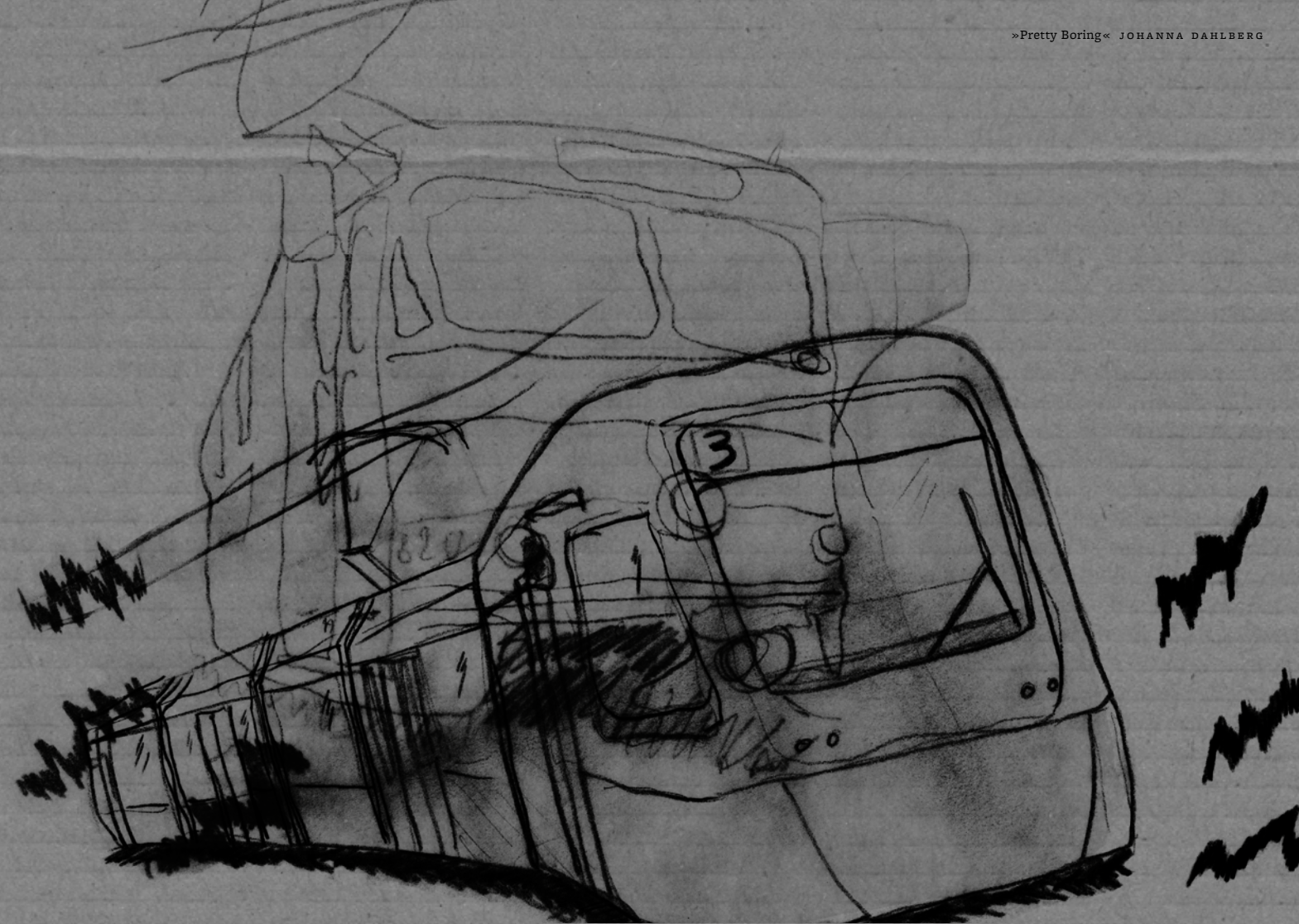
EMELIE 40

It is stressful with a lot of buses and trams everywhere. Ugly waiting areas and a pointless kiosk (Pressbyrån).
I want to get away from here fast
I'm only here to change transport
Nicer waiting area, better kiosk that is open 24/7
once a month

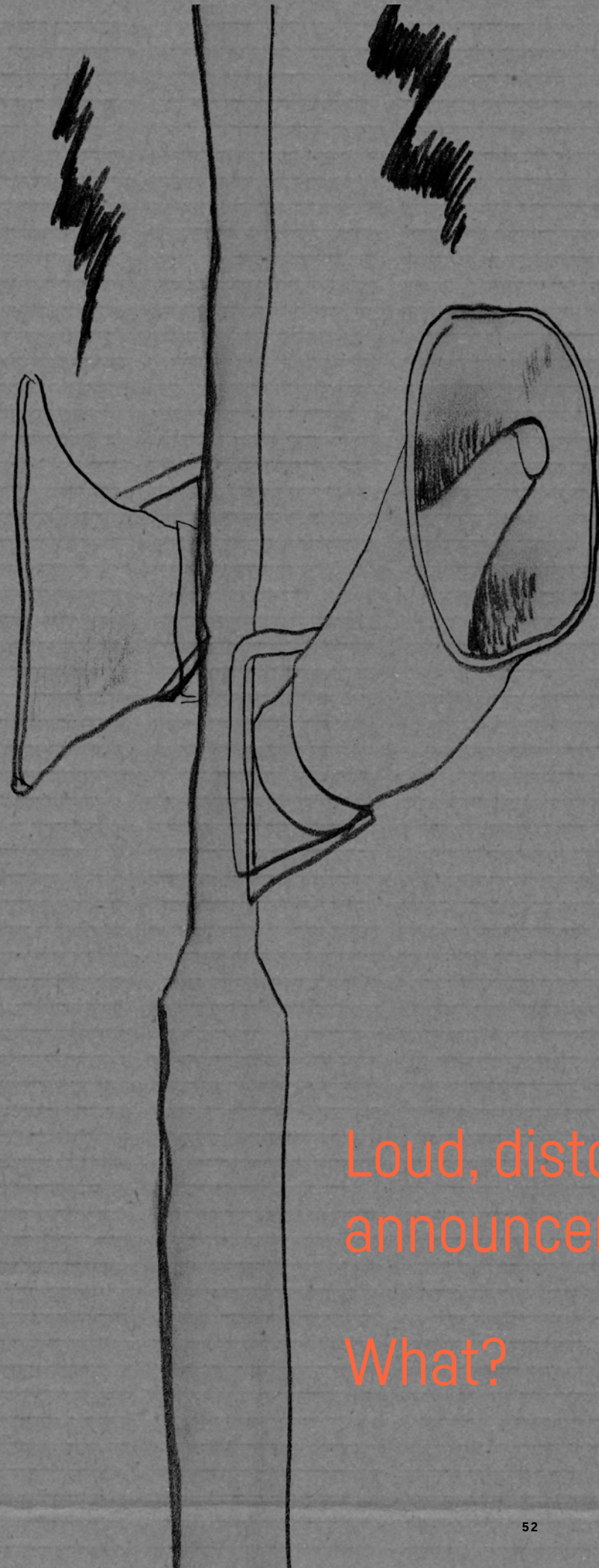




The honking of horns
The congested traffic
The smell of exhaust



The screeching trams
The jerks
The feeling of buses and trams
pressing in around us

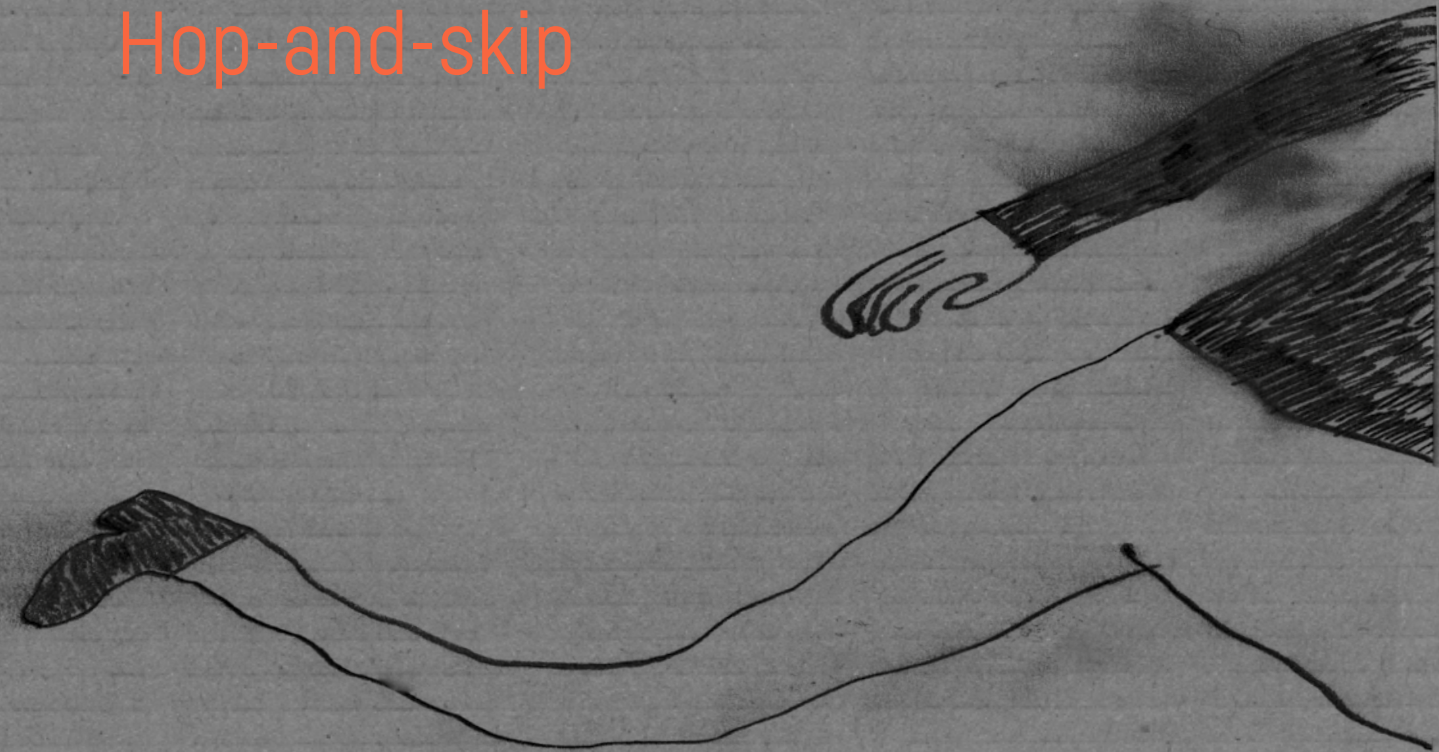


Loud, distorted
announcements

What?

Rush!

Hop-and-skip



Events speed up
and slow down

Creep along

Drag by



Analysis SITE SUMMARY

COLORLESS
AFRAID
DESERT
NOTHING
ROUGH
BANAL
EXHAUSTION
FLAT
UNMEMORABLE
RUSH
BORING
ORDINARY
STRESSED
TIRED
IMPERSONAL
AVERAGE
DULL
UNORIGINAL
DISPIRITING
UNENGAGING
UNINSPIRING
SOUL-DESTROYING

CONCRETE
MELANCOLY
UNPLEASANT
GAP
DEPRESSING
WINDY
VOID
INHUMAN
MUNDANE
HASTY
PREDICTIBLE
FEATURELESS
DEAD
UNAMBITIOUS
COLD
PREFAB
LACK OF ENGAGEMENT
GRAY
UNSETTLING
FORGOTTEN
MONOTONOUS

But also

OPEN SKY
GREEN

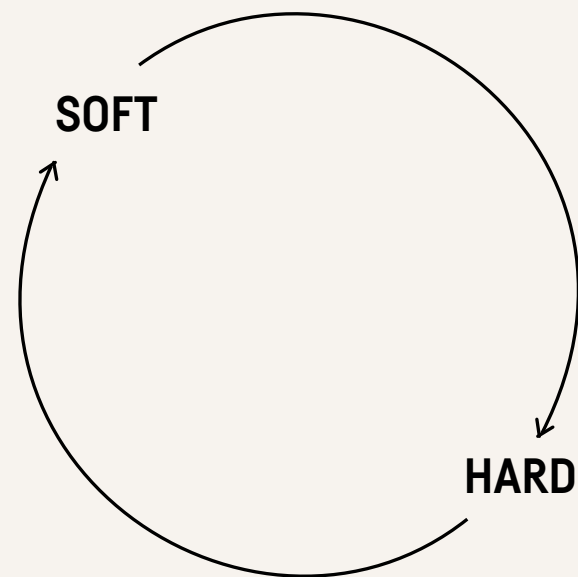
– if you look the other way



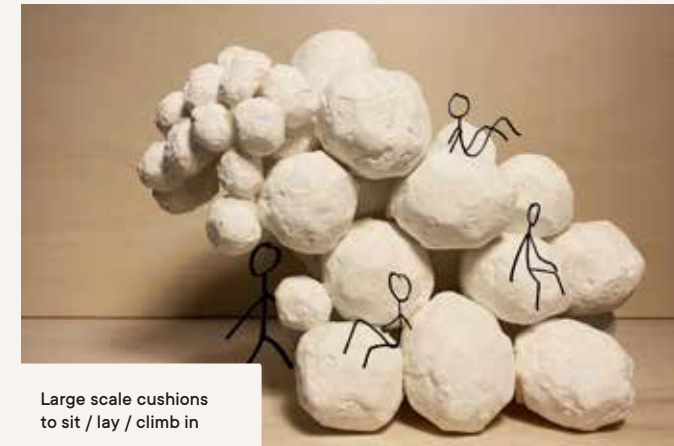
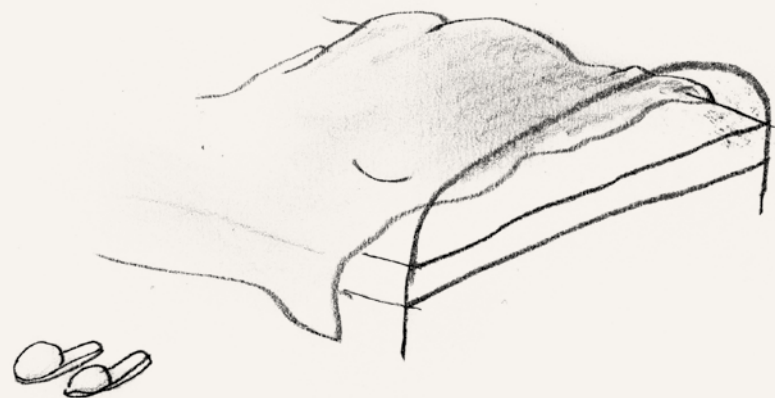
Too busy,
too bored

This study will not solve boredom in leftover places. It's an exploration about creativeness and how it can influence and benefit from an urban project.

Temporary Comfort



SOFT
RELAXING
WARM
ENCLOSING
SOOTHING



Large scale cushions
to sit / lay / climb in

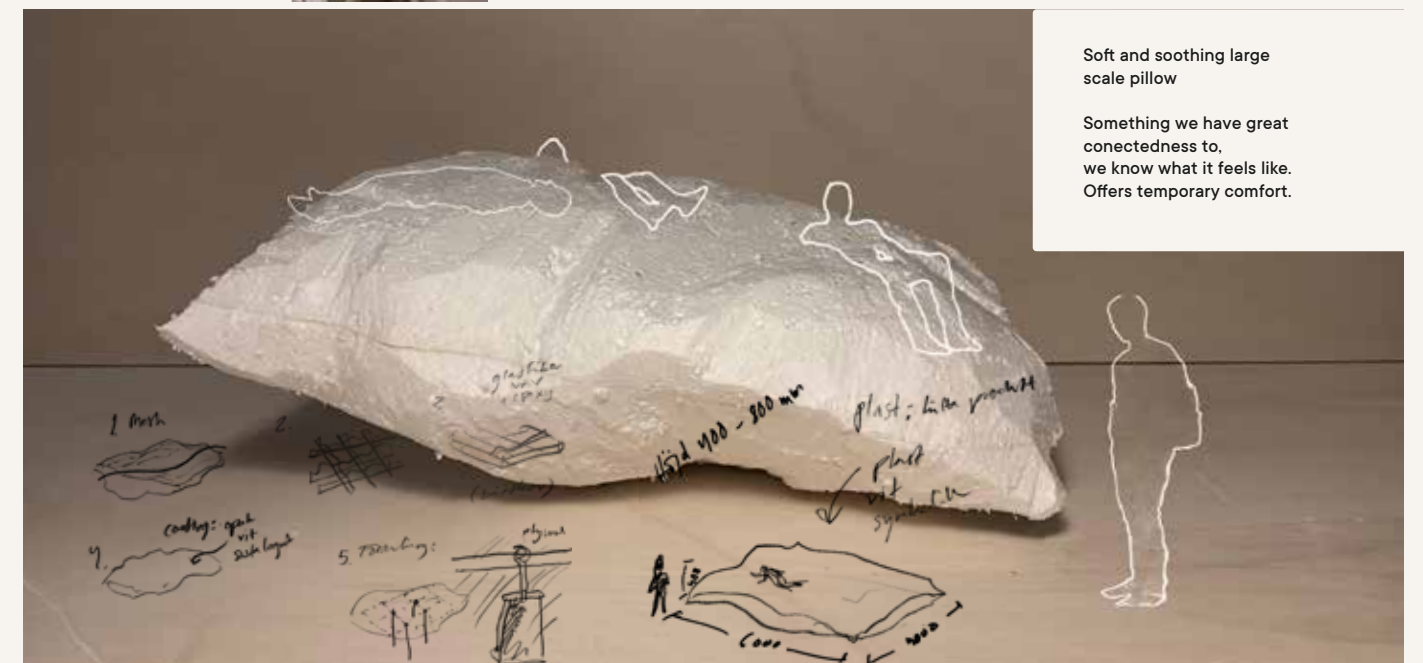


Flickering sensations
in the wind



Soft and soothing large
scale pillow

Something we have great
connectedness to,
we know what it feels like.
Offers temporary comfort.



Embracing it



REPETITIONS OF PATTERNS TO BRING REST

By mirroring the space and its people and making it the ingredients of the experience itself. The existing values are broken up into multiple fractals.

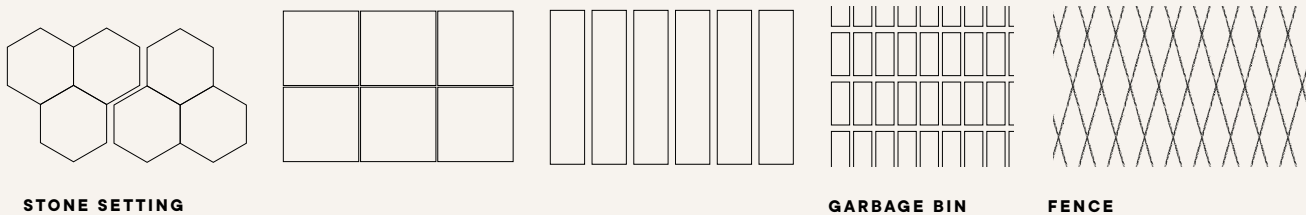
»Repetitive designs such as mandalas, which have been used as meditation aids for centuries in the spiritual practices of hinduism and buddhism. Our conjecture is that they have an ordering effect owing to the ease of visual processing – they are calming, regular structures.«

Thomas D. Albright,

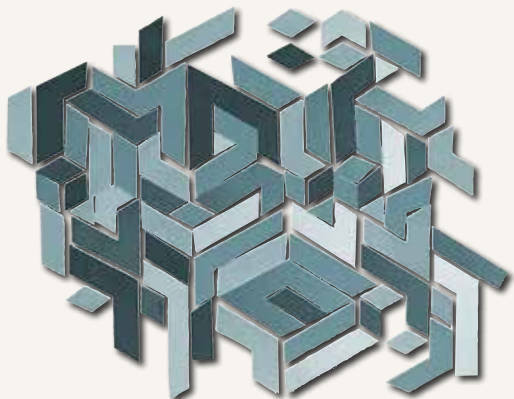
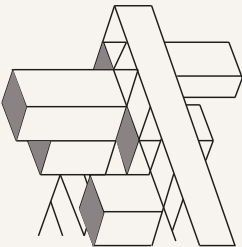
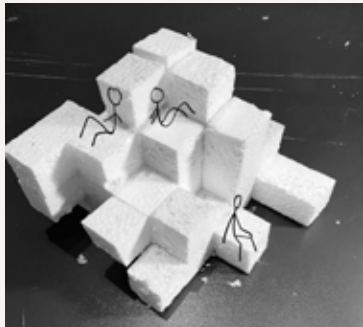
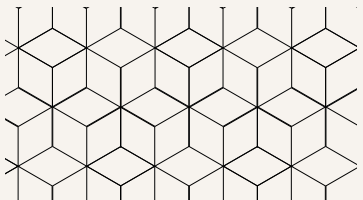


RESTING
PATTERNS
ORDERLY
REPETITION
REFLECTIVE

PATTERNS FOUND AT SITE



TESTING FORMS AND IDEAS

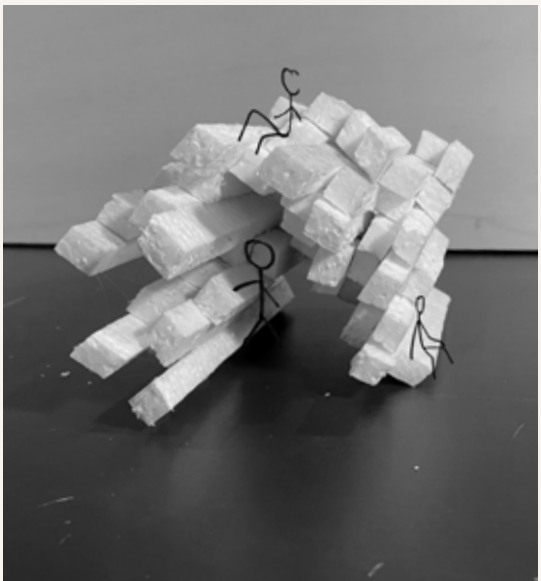
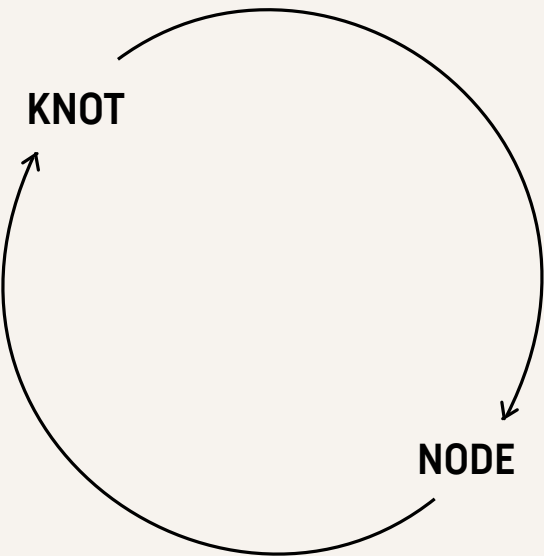


Connectivity

CARE AND CRAFTSMANSHIP IN MATERIAL

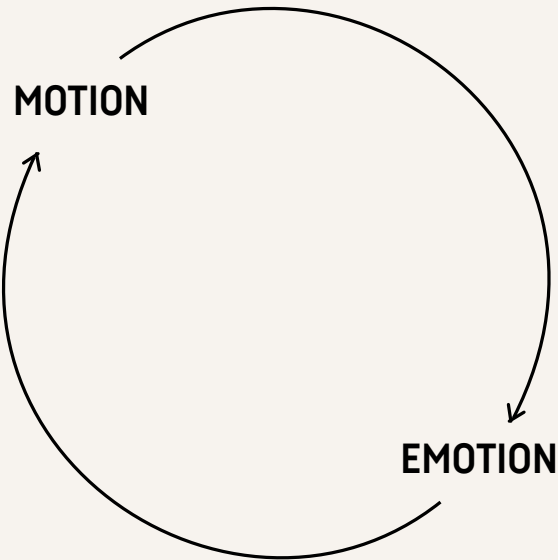
»Natural materials allow us to sink in, they have a history – a history that is revealed in the coming together of space and time in the present. Weathering, transition, decay: we need to permit them, even embrace them. They are a part of a changing world, not a perfect static world.«

McGilchrist
Architecture in Mind



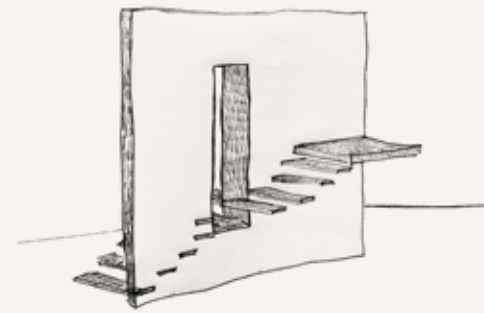
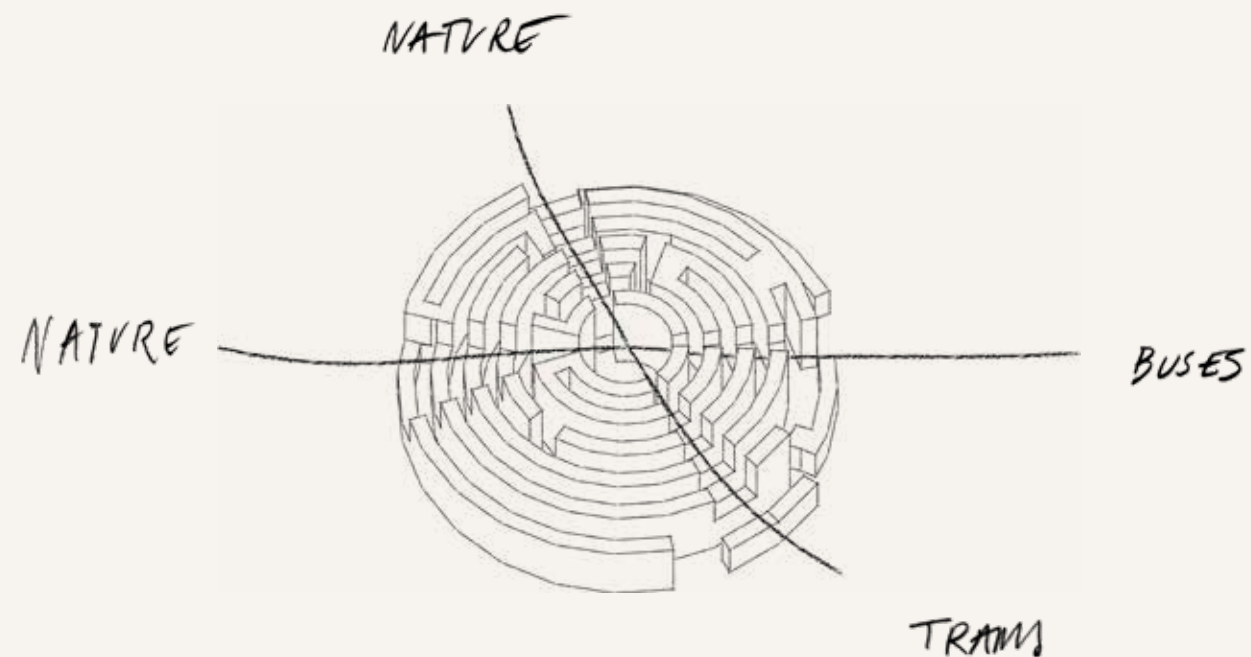
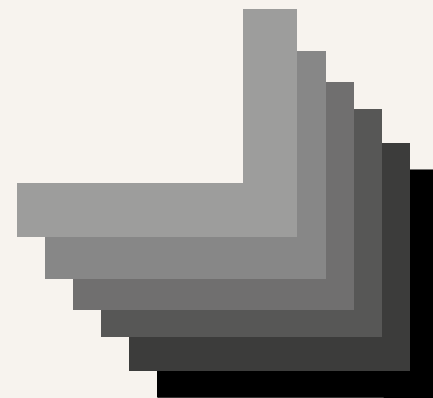
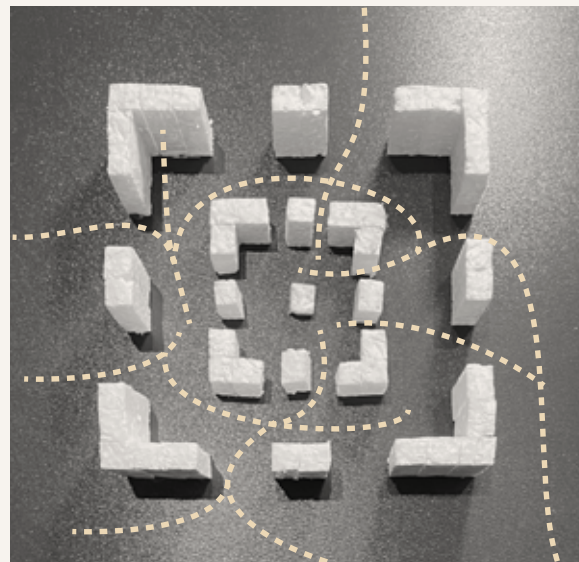
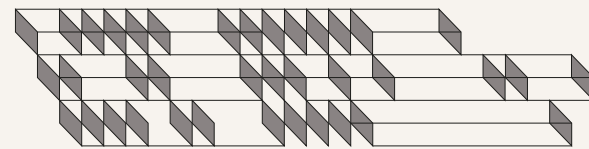
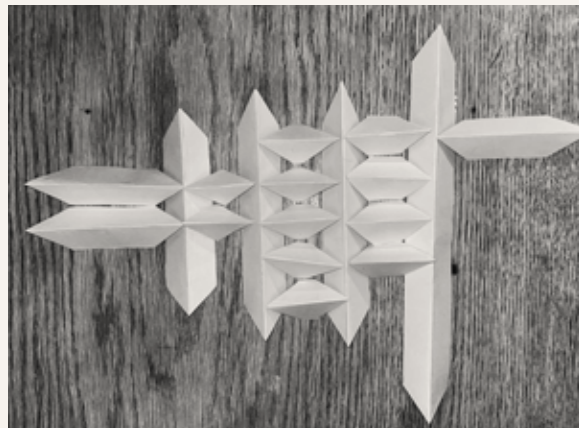
TACTILITY
MATERIALITY
CONNECTIONS
JOINERY

Rythm

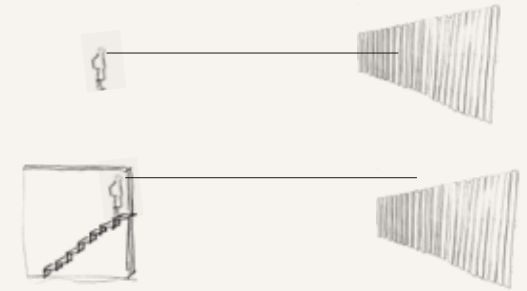


SEQUENCES
MOVEMENT
NEAR
FAR AWAY
RYTHM





SEEING THE GREEN



OUTLOOK



SEATING



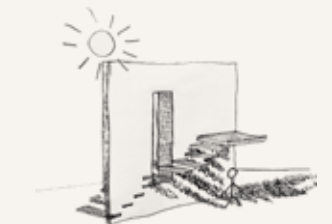
SHELTER



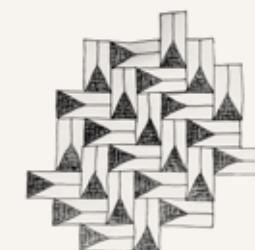
PLAY



TACTILITY



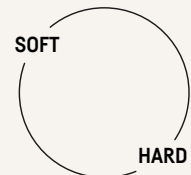
SHADE



Exploration

EVALUATION

Pt. 1 TEMPORARY COMFORT



SENSES

VISION TOUCH SOUND 

- Best if hard (sustainable plastic/epoxy)
- Contradictory
- Weak argument

Pt. 2 EMBRACING IT

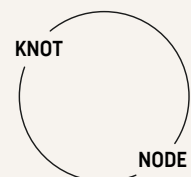


SENSES

VISION TOUCH SOUND 

- Creating relaxation with order
- Use of existing patterns

Pt. 3 CONNECTIVITY

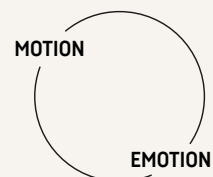


SENSES

VISION TOUCH SOUND 

- Connectivity
- Craftmanship
- Soft materiality (wood)

Pt. 4 RYTHM



SENSES

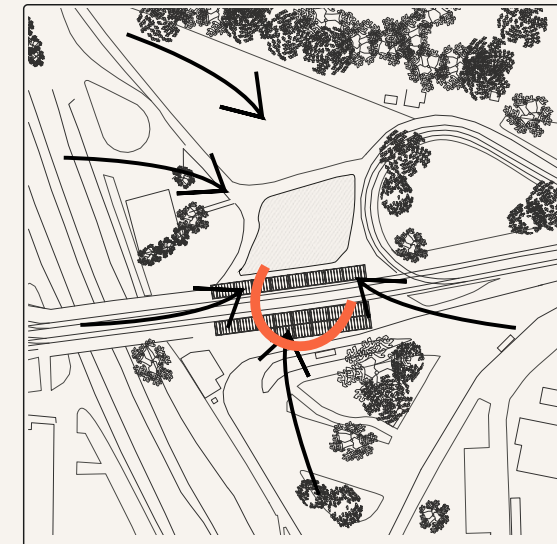
VISION TOUCH SOUND 

- Sound reduction
- Windows to greenery
- You have to go inside to be able to experience it

Exploration

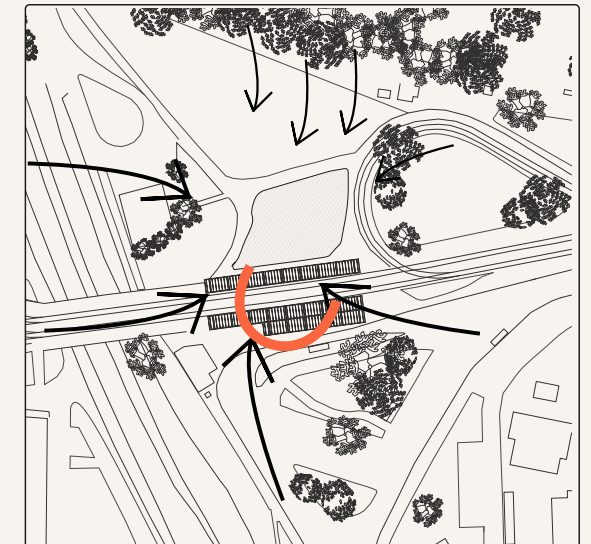
EVALUATION

Trying to make sense



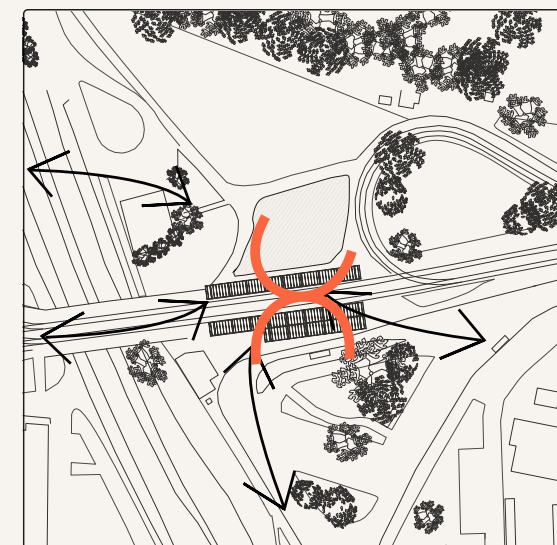
SOUND

Noise protection in forms of walls or something enclosing.
Absorbing materials



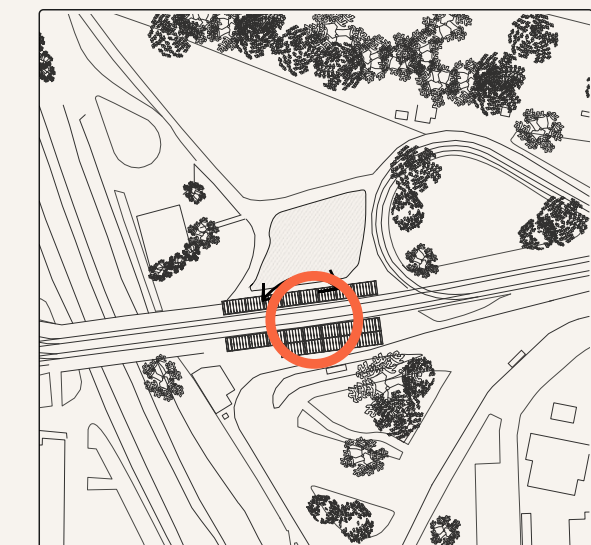
SMELL

Use of natural materials that emits fragrance



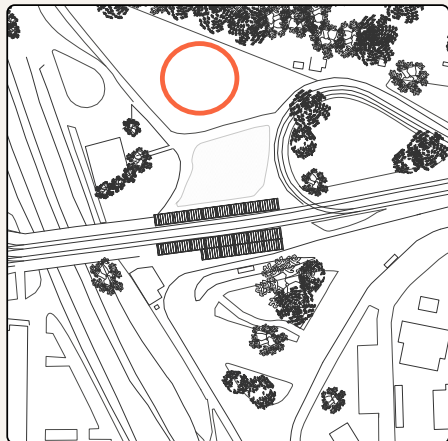
VISION

Direction towards the trees

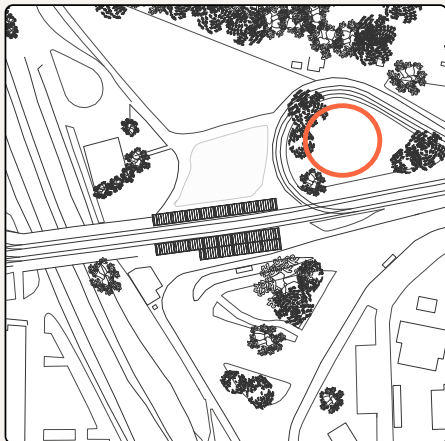


TOUCH

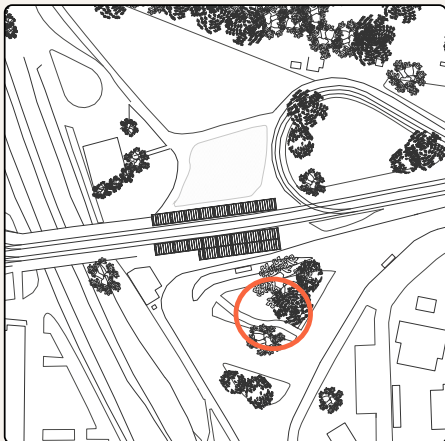
Texture in material
Natural materials



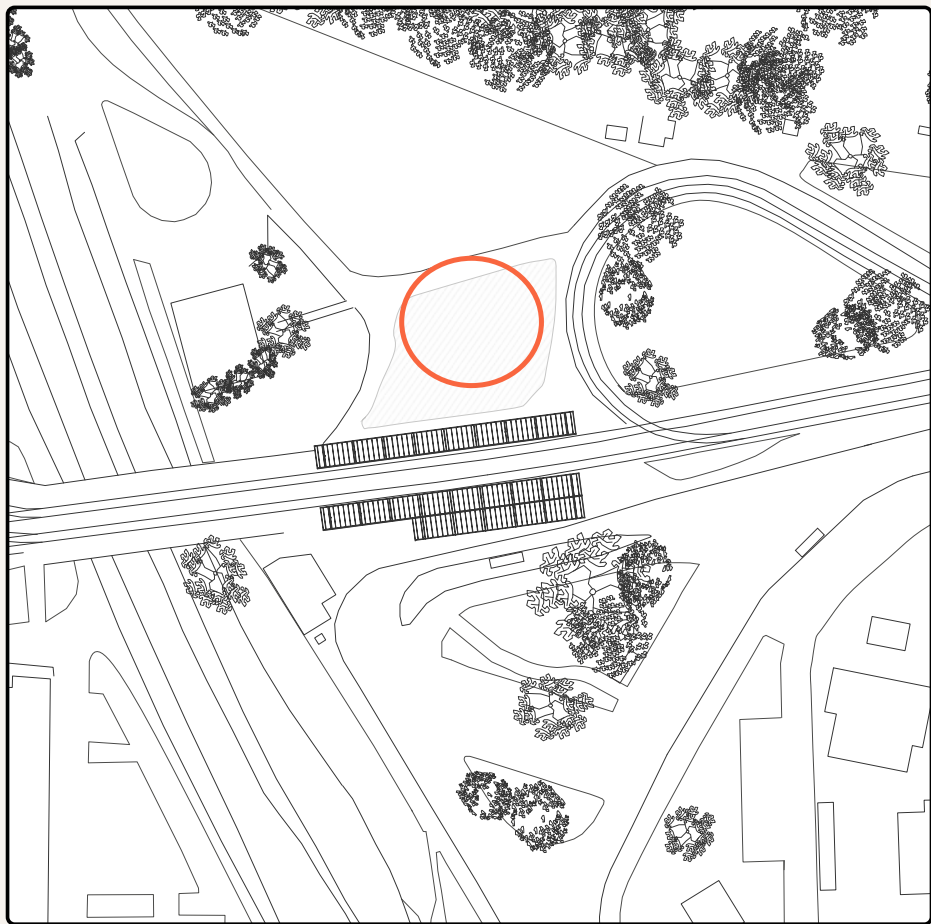
Poor visual contact with transport
Too far away to catch the bus



Fenced off
Not safe



Small and broken up
Not safe



Good visual contact with trams and buses
Close to all connecting transport
Open
Safe

Summary

Summary

Summing it up

ANALYSIS

The area is built for vehicular movements mainly and there are a lot of people coming through every day. People are stranded in an asphalt desert while waiting for a connecting transport.

SENSES

Humans experience the environment through all senses, conscious or unconscious. Paying more attention to senses in architecture helps improve perception and consciousness.

EXPLORATIONS

Soft materials can be difficult to maintain in a public space. Instead, soft can be conveyed in form, natural materials such as wood and with colours. Using mirrors will not have the same tactile effect as using a material with texture. Roughness, bumps, hard, texture, weight, density are related to the sense of touch that is desirable here.

Mirroring effects can also be achieved by using deceiving angles and optical illusions. Height and different perspectives helps reflect on how the area looks. Flickering sensations appear when passing vertical frameworks such as a lattice framework, looking through. Patterns show that when in an orderly manner they can bring a moment of rest.

RESEARCH

Uninspiring urban spaces can cause boredom. Stress and boredom in urban settings can lead to negative health effects. A place is more likeable if it has value and is taken care of. Activating an area with our senses, vision, smell, hearing and feeling in mind creates more value in a place.

EXPERIENCES

The interviewees felt unmotivated to nothing at all over Marklandsgatan. Waits include staring into nothing or phones, some listen to music. A majority of the interviewees request more greenery. Even though there is plenty of greenery, not many seem to acknowledge it. Most of it is behind fencing. Seating is also desired.

CONCLUSION

Boring does not have one antonym but many. The opposite is not solely fun, it can be enticing, exciting or interesting for example. So, in order to understand what exactly is missing at Marklandsgatan, or what could be added to reduce boredom I had to think differently. My conclusion is that one feels bored when there is time to feel bored. For example when you are understimulated and have to wait in a place you don't want to be.

When people say "I had so much fun/I had to focus so much/I was so immersed, I totally forgot about time and space!" Thoughts of boredom do not exist. Hence this installation will be an attempt in purposely trying to distract. An invitation to let your mind wander and loose track of

BORING

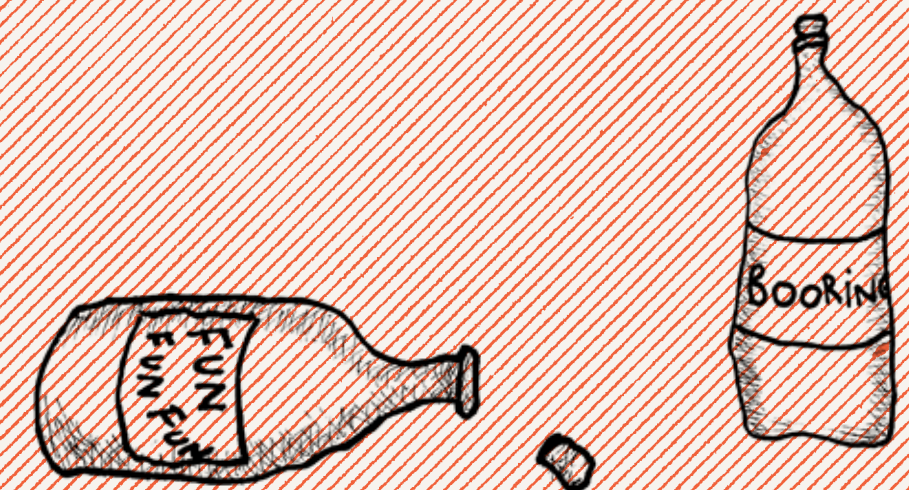
ANTIDOTES

- Forget about time and space
- Be present
- Stimulation
- Diversity
- Free to move

STRESS

ANTIDOTES

- Repetition in patterns
- Nature



Design exploration

WINDOWS TO NATURE

GAPS TO SEE YOUR CONNECTION

SEQUENCES

GREENERY

OUTLOOK



DESIGN CONCEPT

Another way to wait

Providing an optional preoccupation that focuses on getting away a little while being stuck for a moment.

The installation creates a static internal space, which emphasises and heightens the drama of what there is a lot of. Well, except the traffic situation. The ever changing sky. As the sun goes across the sky, the shadows cast patterns in and around the installation. The entrances are found along every side of the structure, some are small openings, some are big. In the middle, a small open space is found and the spatial experience of the sky and trees becomes more intimate. The open structure lets the wind, light, sun, rain and snow come into the core and creates a different environment, when letting nature in.

The west side is slightly taller in order to decrease seeing boring traffic going past on Högsboleden. The structure then becomes lower towards the green and quieter side. The wooden lattice forms paths, allowing parts to see through, reminiscing the rhythm one can feel when looking out the window of a tram.

The Escape creates a spatial continuity and entices the participant to explore what is around the corner. The shadows form a game between inside and outside. The wood contrasts with the views of the asphalt landscape that surrounds it.

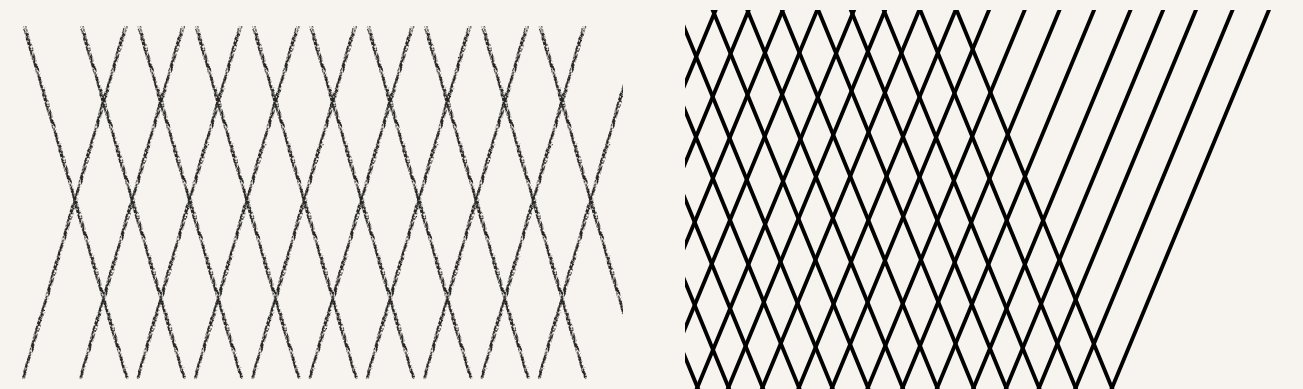
The pattern originates from the fence that you find around all the tram stops of the city.

Hopefully, the visitor will have a moment between breaths without feeling bored.

Design exploration SHAPE

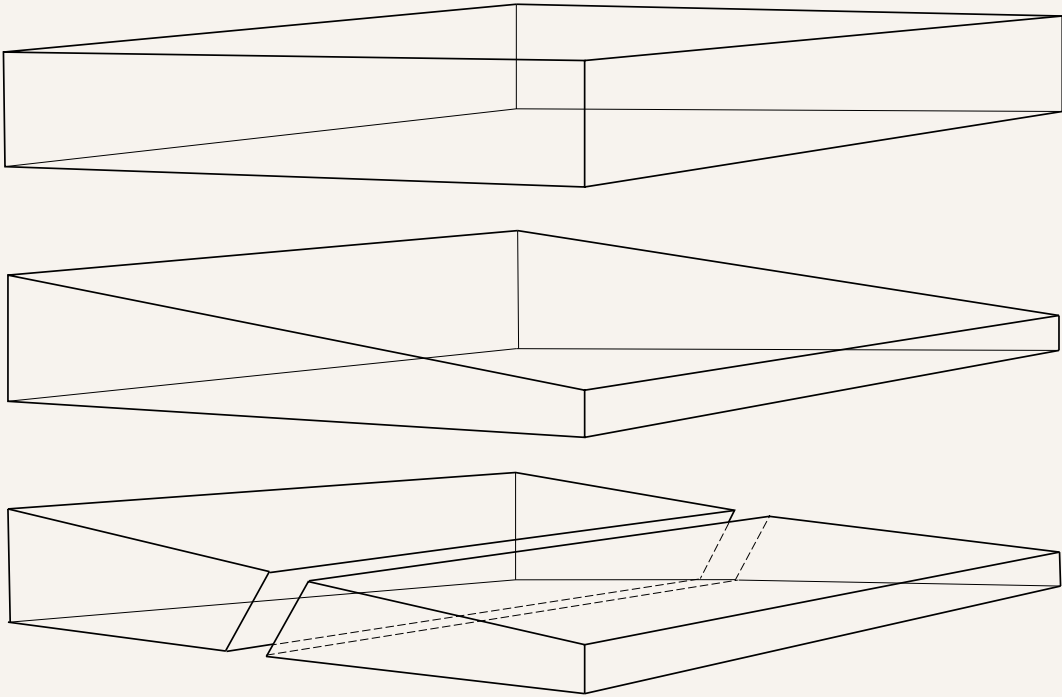


THE RHOMBUS SHAPE CHOSEN FOR THE PROJECT ORIGINATES FROM THE PATTERN OF THE FENCE THAT YOU FIND AROUND ALL THE TRAM STOPS OF THE CITY.



Shape

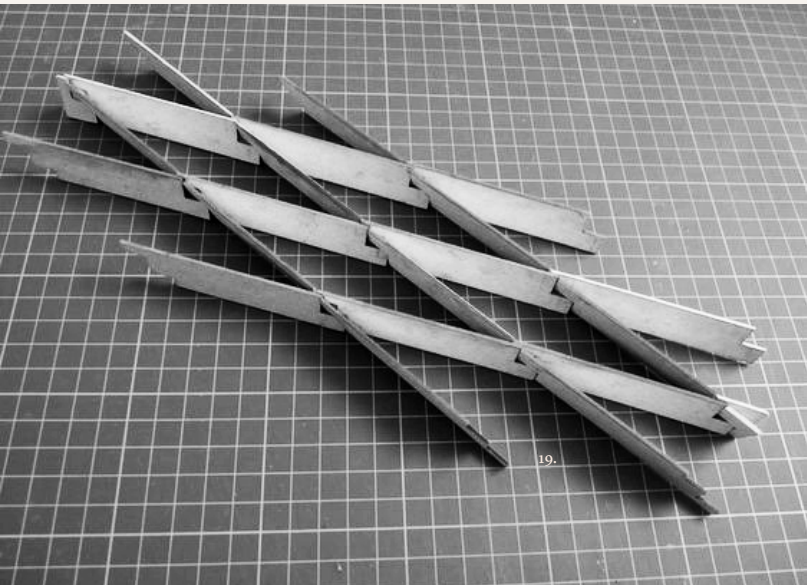
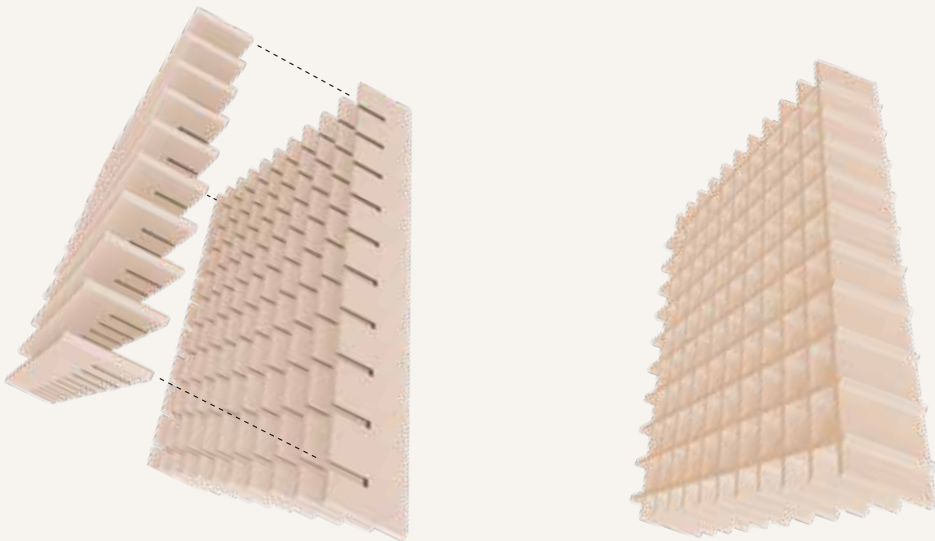
CONCEPT EXPLANATIONS



CLEAR LINE OF SIGHT

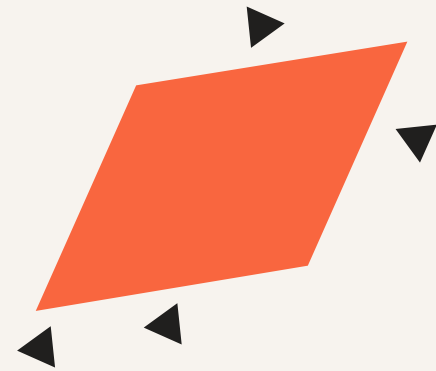
Shape

CONSTRUCTION PRINCIPLE



Escape

Concept idea



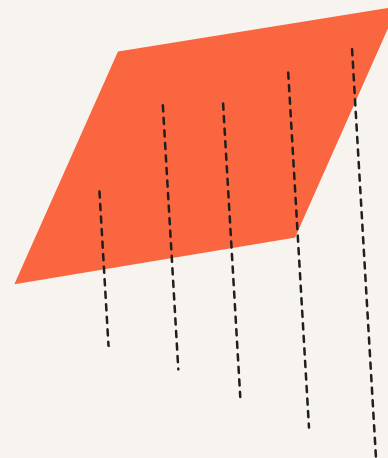
MULTIPLE ENTRIES



**LOWER PARTS
TOWARDS QUIET SIDE**



TRANSPARENCY

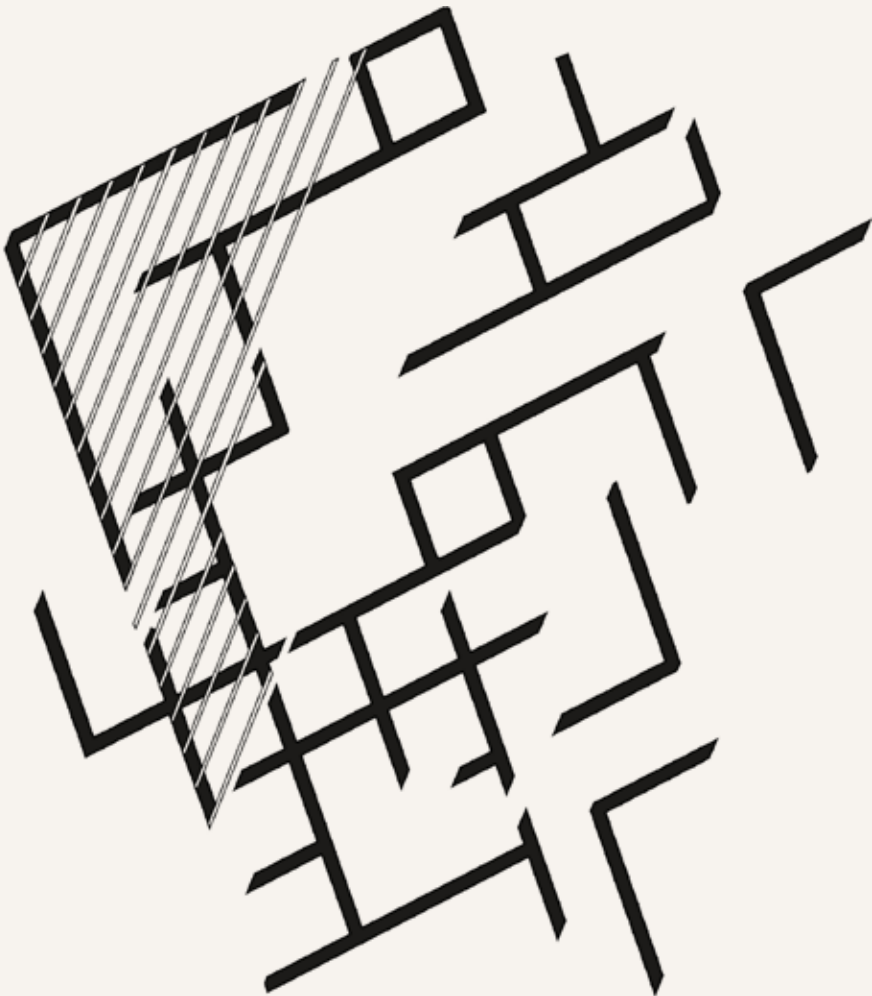


**VISUAL CONTACT TO
TRAMS AND BUSES**

Concept idea

SITE PLAN

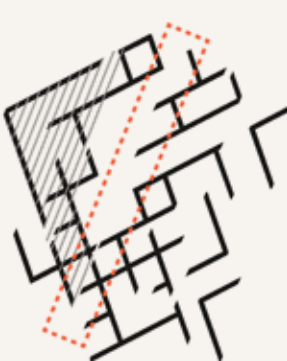




ENTRY WAYS



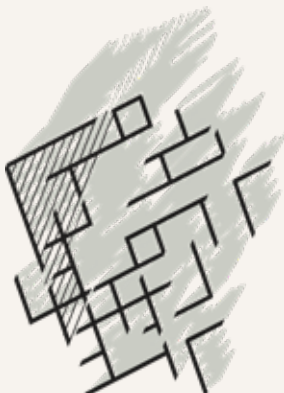
CHOICES



OUTLOOK



OPEN SKIES



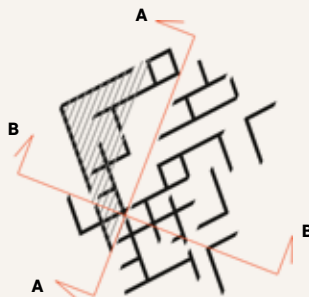
SHADOW



A – A



B – B



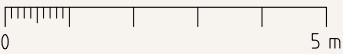
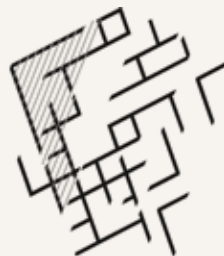
WEST SIDE



SOUTH SIDE



EAST SIDE





ANOTHER WAY TO WAIT

The Escape focuses on getting away a little while being stuck for a moment. The Escape creates a spatial continuity and entices the participant to explore what is around the corner.



SHADOWS

As the sun goes across the sky, the shadows cast patterns in and around the installation. The entrances are found along every side of the structure, some are small openings, some are big. In the middle, a small open space is found and the spatial experience of the sky and trees becomes more intimate. The open structure lets the wind, light, sun, rain and snow come into the core and creates a different environment, when letting nature in.



Reflections

Can boredom be reduced in leftover spaces?

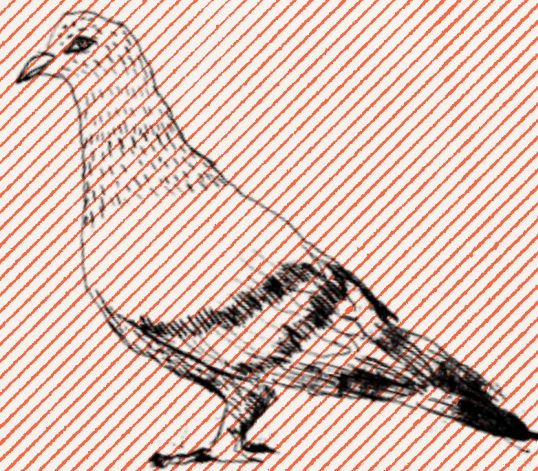
The site was chosen for its mundane and uninteresting character Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop is a place where you are available yet offered nothing, with no possible escape. Still, no one seems to expect anything from here. It is what it is, and does what it is supposed to do. But is it still functional if no one wants to be there? The boring elements in and around the tram stop I cannot do much about, urban structures are missing and the existing structures are inflexible and difficult to further develop. Focus lies within activating an existing boring place and there are spaces that are underused and hold a lot of potential.

I started thinking of how people move and feel when there and what unstimulating places do to us rather than the bus and tram stop itself.

In conclusion, embracing positive findings and bringing them attention may be better than trying to hide the negative aspects. At first I took Västtrafiks and Göteborgs Stads goals for making a better city in consideration. But I soon realized it was hindering me in thinking freely. Adapting to regulations and safety measurements, even though vital, made things more boring. Since those aspects are already looked after, I left them outside.

However, with that in mind I still wanted to offer ideas that were open for all and make the visitor feel welcome and safe. It was challenging to provide something that is intimate and yet anonymous, to be able to have solitude in a group with other people.

The aim became to try and loose track of time when interacting with it. The installation offers a moment of contemplation and a chance to disconnect. It is an idea of something that can be applied in various little spaces in the urban fabric. If this would have been a site specific installation then other values would have been added but since focus lies within sensorial aspects of feeling bored, I think it can be applied in other places too. My hope is that passer byers would find it both interesting and relaxing without having to feel stressed or bored. What is good about small scale projects is that it allows for mistakes and is still always a good source for learning in adapting and adding to urban context and understanding movements of people.



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IMAGES

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1. The Pink Ghost, Périphériques Architects, PINK GHOST, PARIS, Jumeau - Périphériques architectes (afja-architecture.com)
2. Light Rails, Bill FitzGibbons, LightRails - Bill FitzGibbons Artist
3. Parc de la Distance, Vienna, Austria, Precht Parc de la Distance for Social Distancing | HYPEBEAST
4. Aerial over Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop, Google Earth
5. Göteborg, Lantmäteriet
6. Högsbo, Lantmäteriet
7. Majorna, Hyreslägenhet Majorna | Hyresrätt i Göteborg (hyresratt.nu)
8. Landshövdingehus, 9f29ba6e7d14b56900e4490c5452f1e1.jpg
9. Slottsskogen Park, Steampipe Production Studio AB/Göteborg & Co
10. Högsbo, MED70A2BD3A7A7B4413A9A3FFAFE859321A.jpg
11. Högsbo, 8431618-15-328-17-photo-print-jpg-1698.jpg
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13. Aerial over Marklandsgatan bus and tram stop, Google Earth
14. Västtrafik, Trafikkontorets Tekniska Handbok, www.th.tkgbg.se
15. Envato Elements
16. Lara Buckley, Fata Morgana, Saatchi Gallery, b115964b-f7e2-48ce-bd98-862c181obe56.jpg
17. Phillip K. Smith III, COS, COS + phillip k. smith III reveal reflective ‘open sky’ installation in milan (designboom.com)
18. Caleb Ogg
19. Mandala, GT12505-scaled.jpg
20. Lattice, acd139fed9aab121dbfe8fe7382f6dd2.jpg

