

using space



alexander roos



master thesis booklet
architectural experimentation



Examiner: Daniel Norell
Supervisor: Peter Christensson

Chalmers School of Architecture +
Department of Architecture &
Civil Engineering 2024

space is pure act

-Joseph Raphson,
matematichian b. 1648

ACEX35 Master's thesis in architecture
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2024

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abstract

This thesis takes place in a speculative scenario where the public ownership and rights to use the building of Skeppsbron 4 in central Gothenburg are recognised. Inspired by the past movement of allaktivitetshus and theories of alternative economies of use value. The mostly vacant building with an otherwise uncertain future is saved by a contract, opening up the building in trade of maintenance responsibility.

By using an architectural office as a platform and mediator between the building and the public, shaping the building and organising a schedule of active tasks and free passive phases, the role of the architect is extended and tested. Establishing a relationship with the owners, makes it possible to be close to an existing building. Testing scenarios, configurate and constructing structures at site, using available materials, models and drawings. Based on the principles of simple machines as tools, to achieve a flexible layout to accommodate different scenarios in the limited space. This method becomes site specific but develops a potential strategy viable to other buildings.

Skeppsbron 4s found state is reconfigured to fit specifically designed simple machines with various functions of different scales, while the existing structure is used as is in other cases.

The interventions range from a wedge to signal access to the public, to a manually powered freight elevator connecting the floors. The simple machines are used as tools to interact with the building and shape it after need, creating a place where people can go to celebrate a birthday party or just escape the rain for some time.

The thesis has provided an experience of being close to an existing building, constructing and testing scenarios in combination of real and speculative aspects, thru models as tools. With the approach that architecture is more than something to look at, but can be accessed and used as a resource from a public perspective.

Keywords: access, maintenance, simple machines

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Master from Chalmers school of architecture (MPARC), 120 hp

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Grundläggande konstutbildning, Basis folkhögskola

Bild och berättande, HDK-Valand, 30 hp

various manual labor positions

POSITION

ideas of an open house

The conception of allaktivitetshus in the late 1960s in Stockholm was a reaction to the increased commercialization of society at the time (Stolpe, 1967).

A vision of a building that could house all sorts of activities and welcome people of all ages seeking active or passive outlet. Without the hierarchy of government agencies or organisations. A public owned and managed space for self production over consumption (Nelhans, 1971).

These ideas of writer Pär Stolpe was supported by a collective of artists and pitched to public officials. Suggesting the transformation of a gas-holder set for demolition to a open place where people could spend their time. Later joined by architecture students and members of the public. This convinced the public officials to agree to the project, but under some conditions that would evolve the concept to more of a youth centre relocated in Gamla Bro, another vacant building in the city.

Despite claims of problems attracting individuals abusing drugs and disagreements arising between authorities and members led to closing down after a few years (Nelhans, 1971), the concept eventually spread to other cities in northern Europe, including Gothenburg, in various shapes, initiatives with ideals of self governance and selfactivity within buildings, to not just consume but produce.

These spaces are examples of valued social growth over economical. Available rooms to produce without being tied strictly to financial ability since the spaces would often need to be subsidised by the government.

At first glance Allactivity could be disregarded as an utopian concept, not viable in current reality, and point to the failed attempts. But there is qualities wort testing in an adapted contemporary format that would involve an architecture office as mediator between a building and the users. Testing the architects role as a curator of space and organiser of maintenance for access and use.



fig. 1 Pär Stolpe addressing the public with the vision in 1968

local perspective

After brief attempts to establish and run allaktivitetshus at Aveny18 and Hagahuset in the early 1970s and following an occupation of the latter, an opportunity to reside on two floors of an old brewery on Sprängkullsgatan 19 A was realised.

Sprängkullen was an Allaktivitetshus organized by the association Ett hus i centrum (a house in the centre) between 1974-1986. And functioned mainly as a gathering spot for the music scene, but also arranged theatre performances, film screenings, a café, art exhibitions, lectures and debates. At its peak it had 8000 members. (Svensson, 2018)

Sprängkullen took an active part in starting the association driven Viktoriahuset on Linnégatan, a building still active today, several organisations and associations moved there after the closing.

The remnants of a once free and visionary concept has transformed to a more commercial shape of modern standard, that is rented and dependent on monetary economy. This thesis will attempt to look back at the roots of an alternative to consumption as inspiration but situated in relation to a specific building and the opportunities it possess.

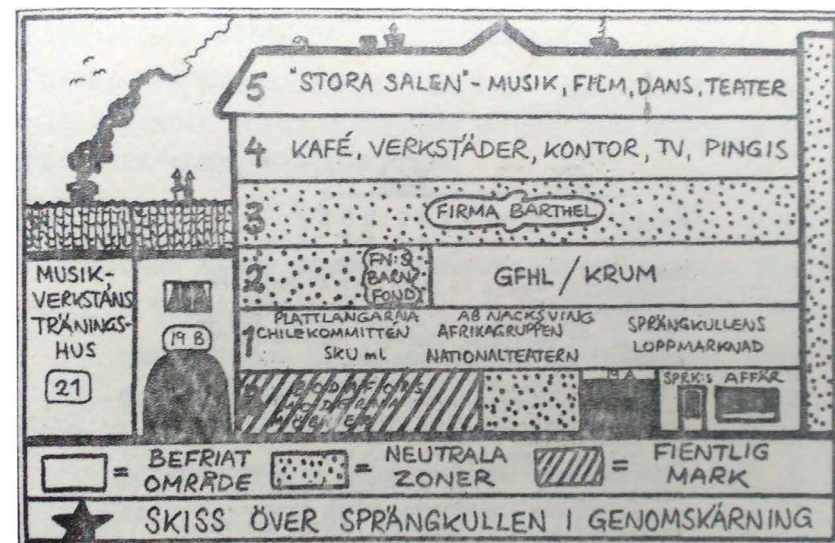


fig 2. drawing of Sprängkullen in section, shows placement of different activities

fig. 3 visions of how an allaktivitetshus could look in the gas-holder

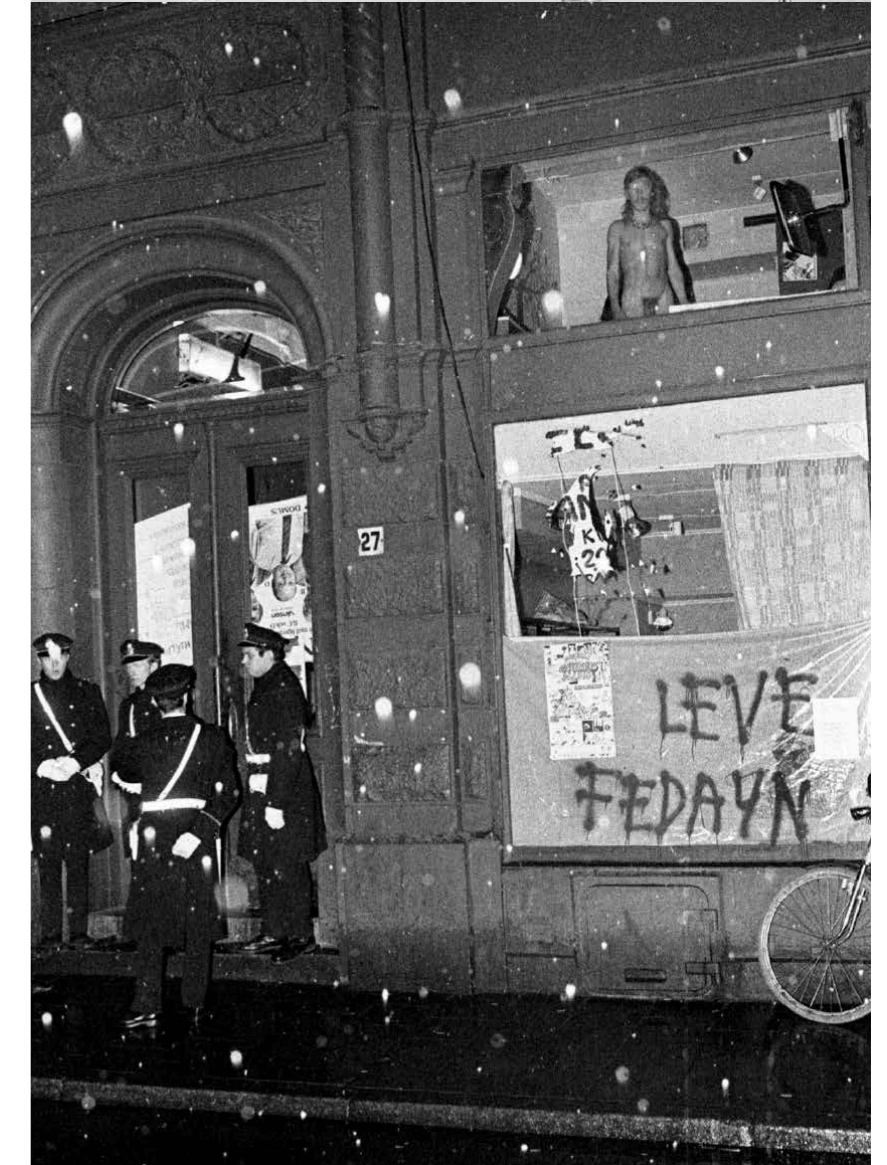
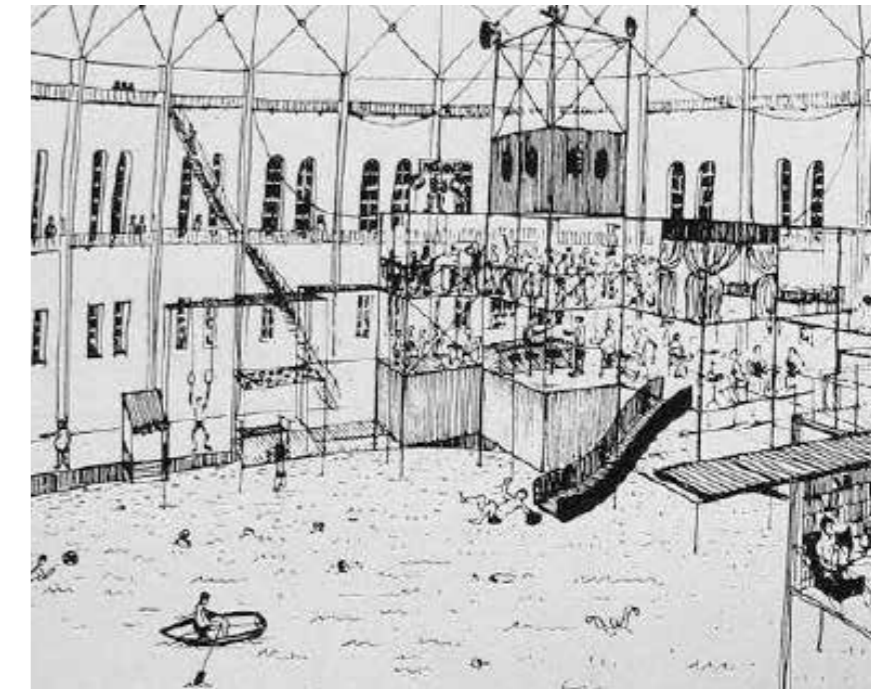


fig. 4 Leffe Medborgare during an occupation of Allaktivitetshuset Gamla Bro.

frame

This thesis is positioned at a point where the fields of architecture and urbanism meet. The study of how inhabitants interact with the built environment in combination with the transformation and use of a specific building.

And if the aim is to architecturally transform an existing building, lets look at what shaped it in the first place according to (Stoner, 2012):

"as much as any art, it relies on language of masters for momentum. in former times, its masters were deities and monarchs; since the industrial revolution, these have been replaced by the more abstract economic forces of "free" markets."

The free market language that shapes the physical architecture also informs how we behave around it. We have been culturally shaped in turn to become a part of the market. Allowing private or state ownership and profit to form our cities and lives within.

Our market are dominated by exchange value over use value (Harvey, 2014). Houses as well as other goods can be seen in different ways, they have a value of function, use, such as shelter, and a believed potential value of how much money they can be worth now and generate in the future under certain circumstances as exchange value. This feeds growth, an universal motivator in our economy.

In the perspective of this thesis most inhabitants of Gothenburg work. One of the reasons people work in the city is to get a salary and with that have the freedom to fulfill their lives with what products or experiences is available in the market. The onsequences of this behavior in combination with growth of the market puts stress on the resources of nature and humans participating.

In response this thesis is set to be speculating and operating in a world where this problem is recognized and strategies to counter the negative effects are encouraged. If perpetual growth of production and consumption is not ideal, one direction is to facilitate opportunities for people to decrease their dependence of salary. Perhaps some buildings could be retired from commercial activity. Thru a programme that can gap vacant times in a resourceful city that provides buildings for use over ones standing empty.



blocked former entrance of skeppsbron 4

institution of society

The municipal company Higab that owns the property of Skeppsbron 4 was created in 1966 to facilitate displaced craftsmen when the area of Nordstan was developed. It has since grown to a massive company with responsibility of around 300 significant buildings in Gothenburg, quoted is that they don't have the resources to handle them all.

Skeppsbron 4 for instance are low on the priority list of renovation, especially given its uncertain future by being located within the detail plans of the Skeppsbron area that were set for development in 2014. These plans will run out in 2025, meaning that demolition might be on the agenda again, since the building is not seen to live up to the potential profit value of the site, located next to the river within the moat of central Gothenburg.

The area was once filled with buildings but has since the demolitions started in 1970 been used as an expanding area for parking.

A parking lot surrounded by movement. The constant flow of the river trafficked by ferries and the paved tram tracks and road, makes the area largely populated by complex machines such as cars and trams, tools used by humans to transport themselves between work and home.

Offices, apartments, a power plant, some restaurants and an increasing number of hotels is located around but otherwise its a transport distance with a view, of the river and Hisingen with the old cranes and karlatornet dominating the skyline.

The current master plan of Gothenburg is focused on growth. Housing and business districts, production, logistics, trade and management must find a balanced way to expand without colliding. This can be seen as an one sided perspective on progress and development, synonymous with just increased monetary growth, possibly disregarding user perspective.



photo of site model scale 1:1000

Skeppsbron 4

The building started off as a bank in 1914 and has since housed various offices, some small shops and a restaurant (kinesiska muren) that has nicknamed the building.

Today two of the eight floors, including basement, are occupied, one by a private company called Healsafe, specialising in suicide proof furniture and one by the planning office of neighboring Masthuggskajen, Älvstanden utveckling, an affiliate of Higab, the owners. This means 75% is currently unused, and left in an abandoned state.

The site has been designated for development in a detail plan for over 10 years, now it seems like they will run out due to lack of consensus. The building has an uncertain future within and outside of these plans, despite the recent improvement of the supporting poles, Higab has a difficult time finding use and resources for it. Leaving it mostly empty, an artifactual resource wasted.

When approaching the property manager about using a part of the empty space to establish a location office as a project when initiating this thesis, it was revealed that they would not under any circumstances lend or rent out any of the space that were not renovated to modern standards.

The conclusion made is that the city will rather have a vacant and unused space than allowing people to be there, and a multitude of reasons contributing to this culture, such as liability and insurance, economy, potential profit, custom, but i categorize this as a bureaucratic delimitations for now and choose to look forward. This is a speculative scenario where other situations are explored.

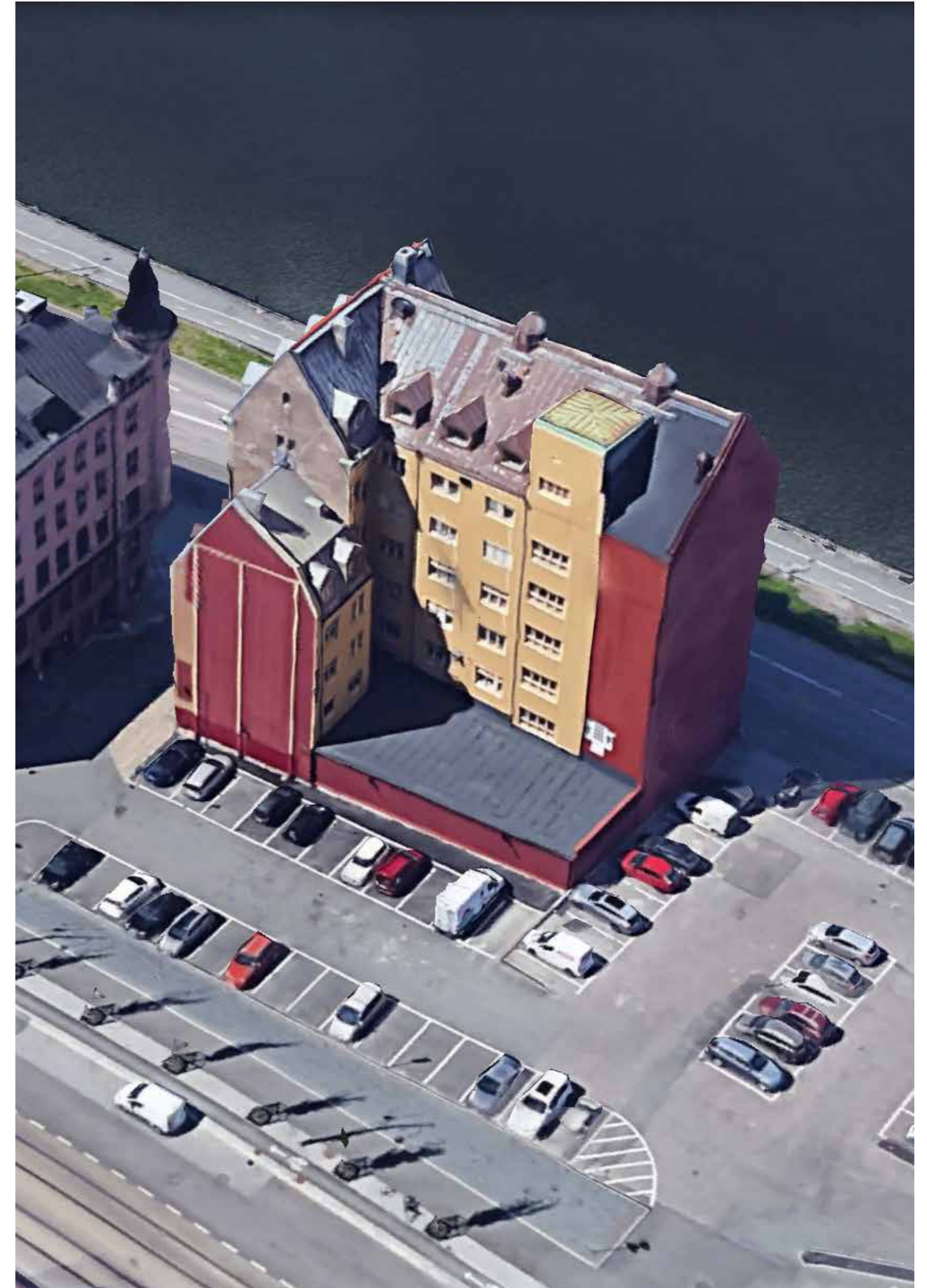


fig. 5 image of the exterior conditions and facades as seen from the east

the retirement of a building

the right to the city is far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and re-invent the city more after our heart's desire ... the freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is ... one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights. (Harvey, 2012)

Harvey suggests that we as citizens don't exercise our opportunity of change, a power currently motivated by growth of wealth, built by many but accessed by few. This is a part of what shapes us and our cities and keeps us stuck as consumers.

When our system favors exchange value over use value, influence to monetary growth becomes the main goal with less regard of the effects on people and environment, and possibly what we actually need as a society. Harvey suggests another scenario:

The direct provision of adequate use value for all (housing, education, food, security etc.) takes precedence over their provision through a profit-maximising market system that concentrates exchange value in a few private hands and allocates goods on the basis of ability to pay. (Harvey, 2014)

between work and home

Third places are spaces that anchor our community, places that not your home or workplace but where you relax in public and have social interactions (Oldenburg, 1999). Among other qualities such as being on neutral ground it can be considered being a home away from home. A space for social leisure and recreational activities.

The retirement of a building from commercial demand could possibly set example of reevaluating what is important, by suggesting alternatives to commercial activities and provide a space to use for the public under open circumstances. Given the culminated revenue Skeppsbron 4 has generated over 100 years, we can afford to care for it and use it for leisure purposes.

research questions

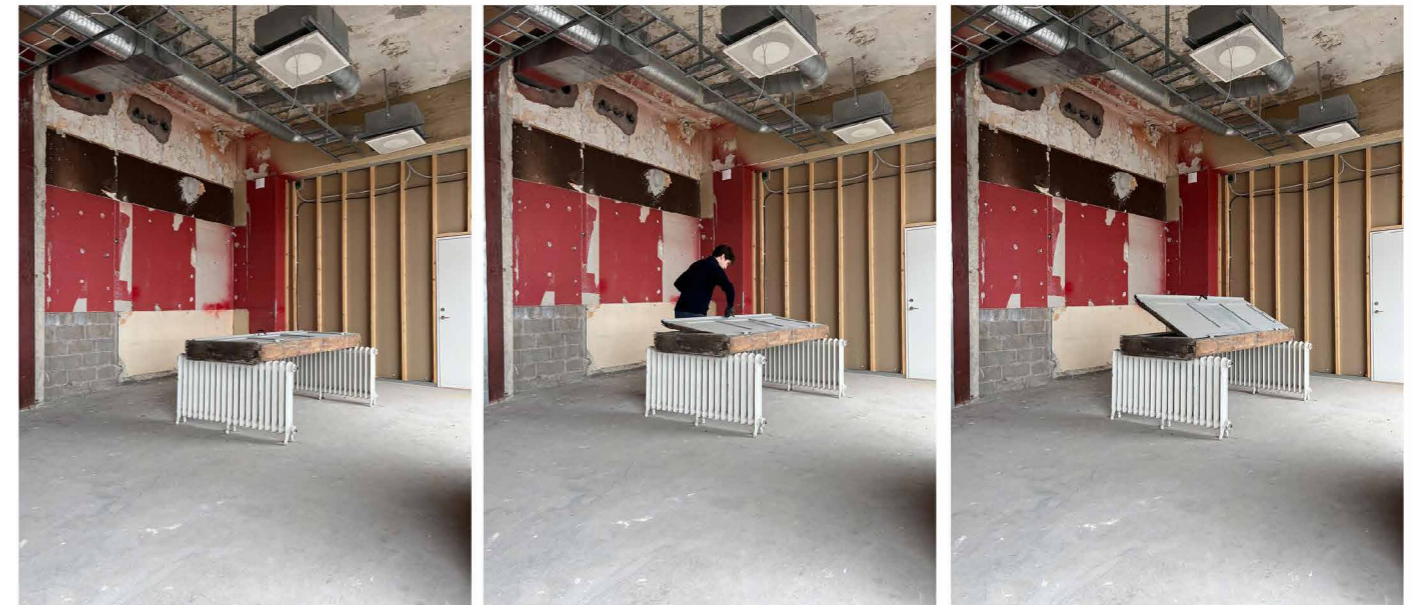
This thesis investigates the current state of Skeppsbron 4 by posing two main questions. First,

how might simple machines as a design tool open up the building to the public?

This question stirs the direction of the iterative design process.

Second question, answered by the end of the thesis:

How can the act of using space, with the help of an site specific office help to see the current possibilities of using Skeppsbron 4 in its found state?



test of draft simple machine at Skeppsbron 4

maintenance as tool

Post-occupancy offers a means to consider prolonging the relationship between building and architect. If the responsibility of the architect were extended, how would design practice and buildings change? (Sample, 2016)

The concept of the member owned condominium started around the shift of the century and was built on the idea that rent can be decreased in exchange for maintenance responsibility of a residency.

When several people own their apartments individually but the whole building together and by forming a condominium association with responsibility to organise and maintain. A response to landlords profiting of tenants.

Given the lack of official resources to take care of the potential of Skeppsbron 4, maintenance responsibility is used as a way of achieving a reasonable use and ownership model.

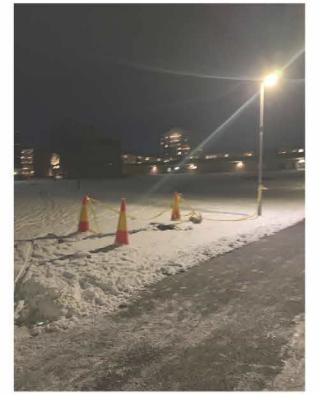
The establishment of an on site office is the platform needed to test and organize a project intended to open up a building to be used for desired purposes.

A scenario where architects act as mediators between interested groups, the building and the managers of property in order to suggest uses that not focus on revenue but social development, space for leisure thru maintenance.

Efficient process created with only hired professionals is not a viable path, but the public is used to transform the building in exchange of opportunity to use and care for it. This is also a viable strategy since the owners is a municipal company and has a responsibility to provide public utility, as well as being owned by the public by extension.



30/1/2024



29/2/2024

observation of maintained fallen lightpoles in the city, an example of how we rely on professionals to take care of our surroundings in exchange of payment

"Like a book no one is reading, a vacant building vibrates with unseen intensities, ready to shed its excess, its burden of overwrought grammars, its syntax of profitability: its closed interior and its brittle shell. if we can, let us imagine emptiness recalibrated, space unfolded towards smooth and slippery and nonconforming use." (Stoner, 2012)



first office sketch model, configured by found materials

EXPLORATIONS

platform

The establishment of an on site office is used as the platform needed to test and organize the project intended to open up the building to be transformed and used with low expenses.

A central hub in the scenario where architects act as designers and mediators between interested groups and the managers of property in order to suggest acts of transformation and maintenance in an expanding process.

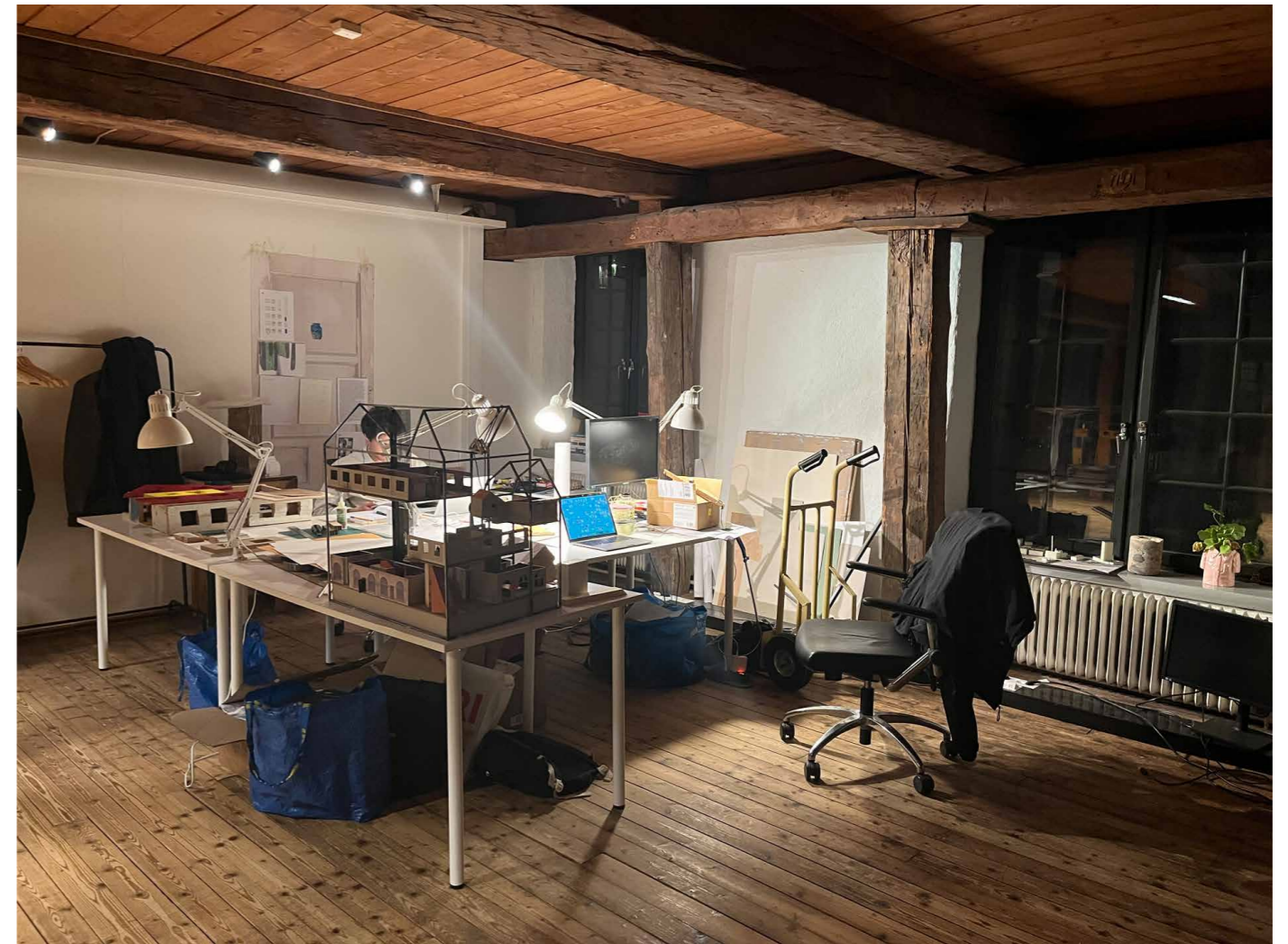
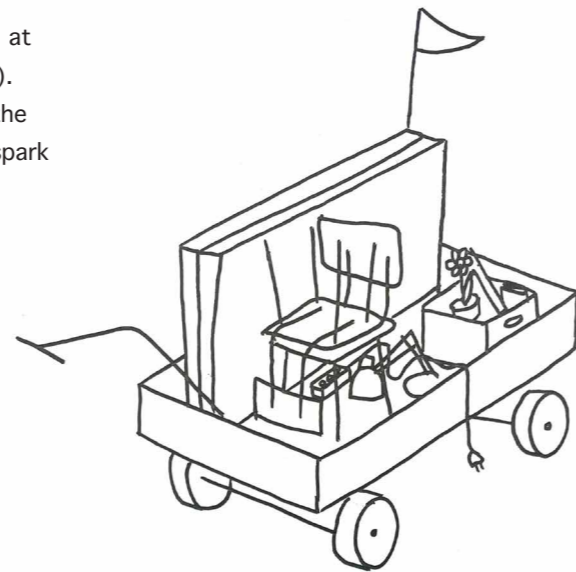
Key relationships to stakeholders such as the current property managers Higab has been cultivated through this platform as well as the sharing and collaboration between myself and Anton Axell.

Persistence, luck and contact with the right people within Higab led us to getting keys and free passage to all vacant floors of the building, allowing for in depth observations of the space. As well as an opportunity to work from the nearby building of Kronhuset, within a 750 m proximity of Skeppsbron. This made frequent site visits possible.

In the more speculative aspect of this thesis the platform evolves into the organising element inside of Skeppsbron 4, allowing for a substantiated knowledge of the present situation to evolve into actions taken within the structure. Uses that not focus on revenue but social development and care in exchange for rent obligation.

The office works as an architectural prototype. A prototype can be defined as the first preliminary version of a device from which other forms are developed. This attitude allowed the purpose of the office to take shape and adapt according to the level of access to the site.

As a conclusion to this thesis we will host an exhibition of our work at Skeppsbron 4 (sometime after 7/6 2024, precise dates are not set). This is a opportunity to share our experiences and thoughts about the current and possible future situations of the building and hopefully spark a wider public discussion.



the current location of platform in Kronhuset, a building owned and managed by Higab

contract

The contract plays a crucial role in the public opening of Skeppsbron 4. It communicates the responsibilities replacing the monetary exchange previously required to get access to buildings in the city.

If public access to the building is granted small tasks of maintenance are needed to be divided over time to facilitate opportunity of leisure. This is organised by the platform office and clarified in the user contract.

Tasks are scheduled and communicated to users.

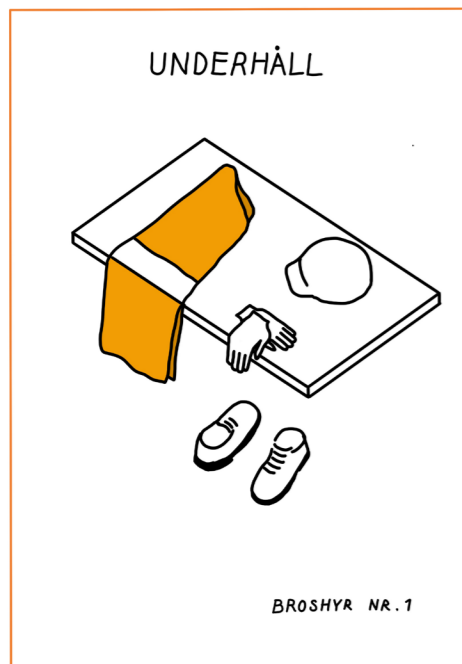
examples of maintenance in practice:

regular

- X everyday cleaning after use & occasional tasks
- X sweeping the floor
- X washing the windows

irregular

- X applying paint to a wall
- X replacing a cracked pipe
- X mending a hole in the facade
- X constructing a new bench



manual for maintenance of building
+
user contract -->

Contract for Access and Use of Skeppsbron 4

This contract regulates the terms of access and use of the building located at Skeppsbron 4 (hereinafter referred to as the "Building").

- **Purpose and Use:**
 - a. Individuals who have signed this contract (hereinafter referred to as "User") are permitted to use the Building for personal purposes.
 - b. Users agree to assist with maintenance of the space as needed, including cleaning and reporting any damages or issues.
- **User Responsibilities:**
 - a. Users agree to keep the space clean and tidy after use.
 - b. Users shall be responsible for any damages resulting from their own actions or negligence.
- **Access and Access Card:**
 - a. Access to the Building will be granted via a digital or physical access card, provided by the office designated within the Building.
 - b. Users agree not to transfer or use the access card in any way other than its intended purpose.
- **Usage Cost:**
 - a. Usage of the Building is free of charge, and Users are not liable for any costs associated with access or use.
- **Overnight Stay:**
 - a. It is not permitted to stay overnight in the Building without explicit permission from the designated office.
- **Supervision and Organization:**
 - a. An office within the Building shall be designated to supervise and organize Users as needed.
 - b. The designated office shall assist Users with any questions or issues that may arise.
- **Access and Termination:**
 - a. Access to the Building is granted based on this contract and may be revoked if the User fails to comply with the terms.
 - b. Both parties have the right to terminate this contract with [specified number of days] days' notice in writing.
- **Miscellaneous:**
 - a. This contract constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements.
 - b. Any amendments or additions to this contract must be in writing and signed by both parties.

Signed:

[User's name and contact information]

[User's signature] [Date]

Please ensure that the terms are accurately reflected and understood by all parties before signing the contract.

access

When entering the building the first times a material appeared everywhere in the otherwise quite bare interior, doors, piles of them saved from partial demolitions. But also still hanging in all of the almost identical office floors, apart from the ground floor.

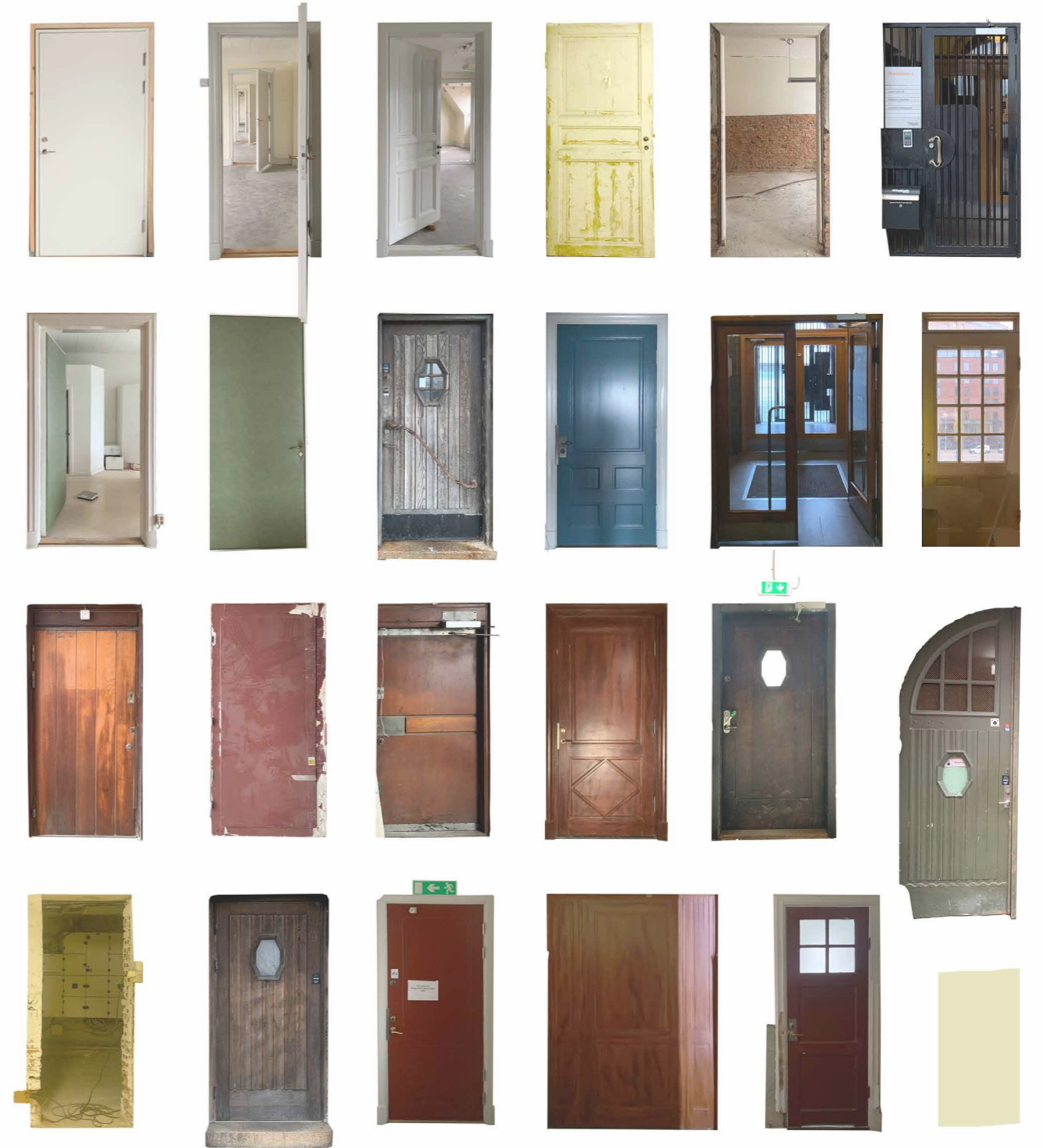
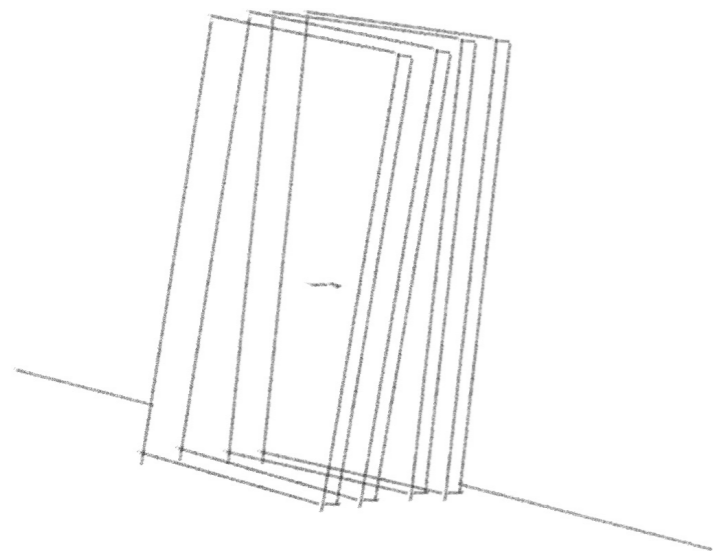
The door represents the promise of having it every way: openness, entry, freedom; but also security, safety, privacy. To meet in private is "to meet behind closed doors." To be welcoming is to have "an open door policy." A part of the wall and an unavoidable breach in it; as secure as you like, yet instantly penetrable with the right key... the door is always part of a self-cancelling dialectic...

(Koolhaas, 2014)

The door can be seen as a portal but also a barrier, physical and mental in the situation of not having the key. This thesis asks how do we access a building, most commonly thru a door, but how could we as architects contributing in opening a door to the public that is otherwise locked.

A key can take many shapes, and in a substantial part of the city you as an individual already have access by being in the role of the consumer, or even owner. The theories of the maintenance contract is set to speculate in opening a mental and legal door of allowed access.

Still the door as available physical material and its basic function became the spark of the design explorations.



collection of doors found inside of the building

simple machines

A wedge can be used as a tool to hold a door open. A wedge is also a type of simple machine. The wedge seen from this perspective represents the first step and basis of the design approach.

Simple machines are core physical principles that are translated into tools to help humans accomplish task that would require much more energy without them. The wedge splits the log and stone into more useful pieces, the block helps heavy lifting by dividing the force required to lift an object, just as the lever. These among others are essential to construction, still today but most often in motorised forms.

Tools used for manipulating matter from a state or place to another. This thesis's interpretation of simple machines sees both symbolic and functional potential as the aim is to opening the building and have its space function for different types of use. The naming of the designs as *simple machines* is a way to signal their potential as tools to using space.

Can segregation of individual roles and opportunities in society be solved not by stricter measures of conventions, but a wedge, separating the use of an existing building from established comforts and rules. Giving opportunity to transform a building but also build a place, confidence of belonging and skills within the public.

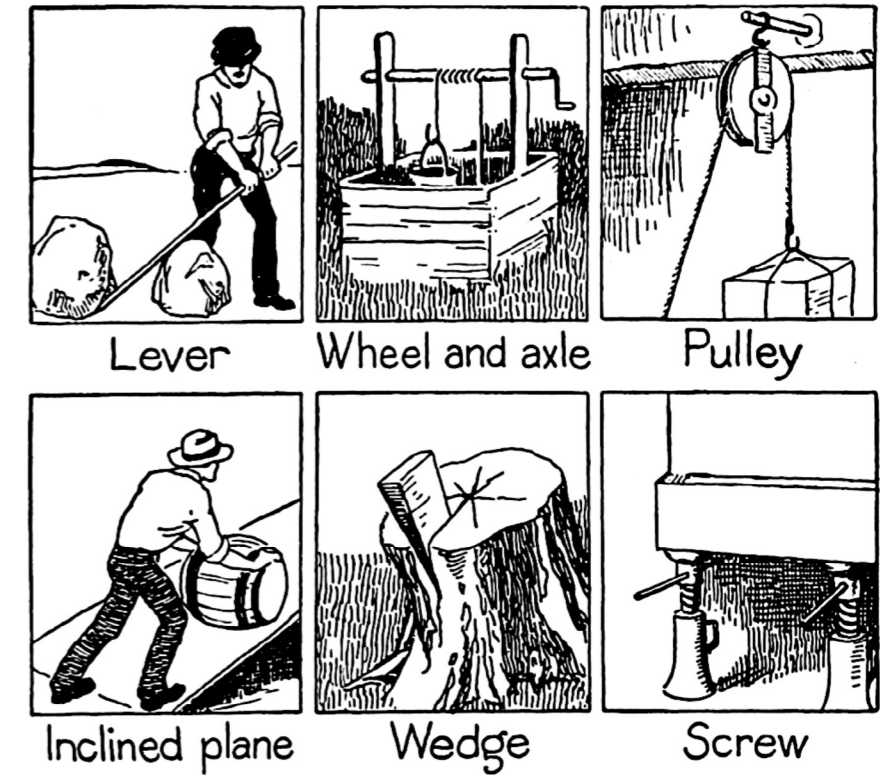
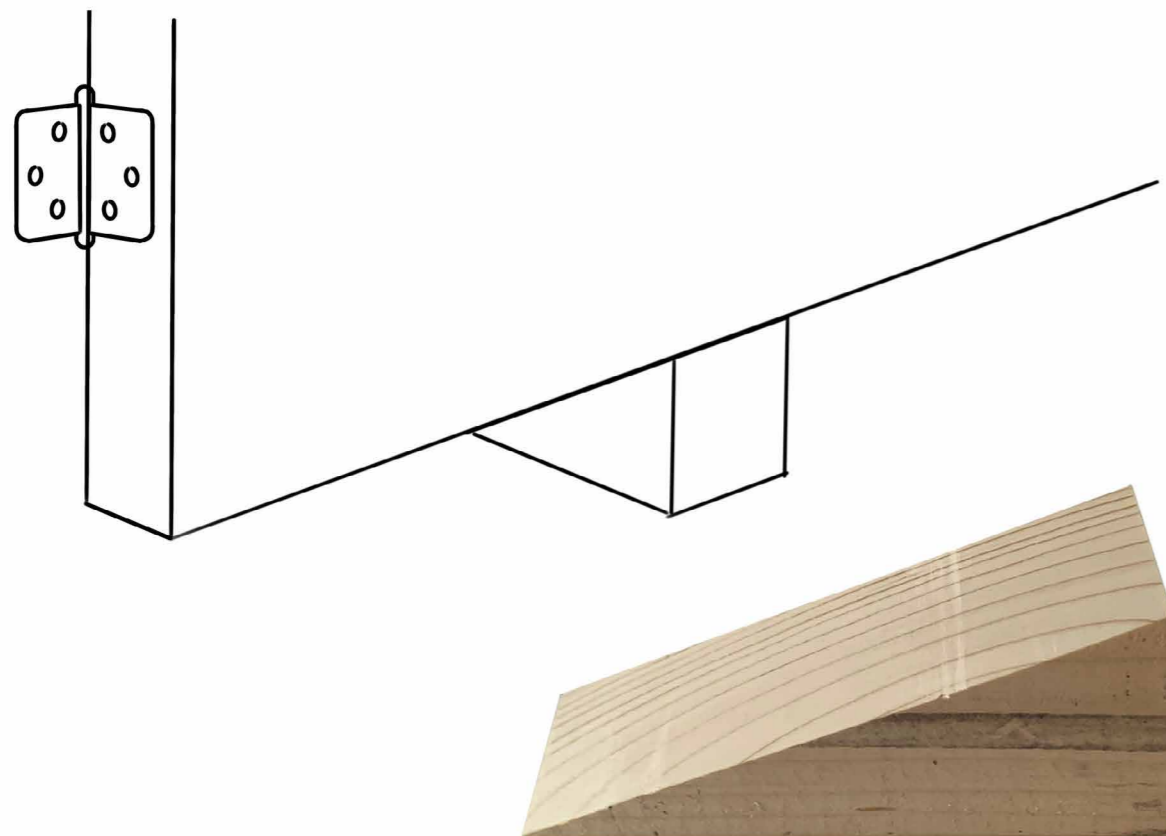


fig. 6 explanation of the six principles of simple machines

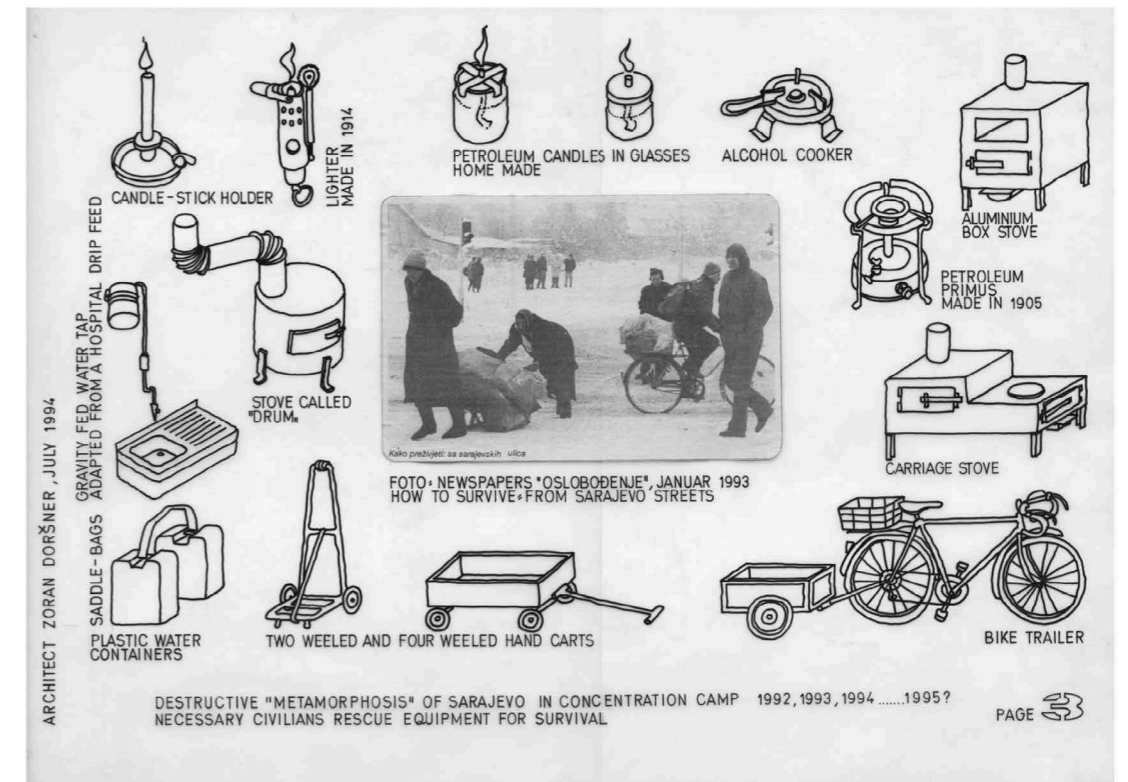


fig. 7 these drawings showcases how people built artifacts for everyday life during the siege of Sarajevo.

design principles

The design explorations are called simple machines.

Following are the simple machine criterias as design method in the context of this thesis:

X based on the simple machine principles mentioned on the previous page.

X available or cheap materials

Intention to use the stored materials of the building at hand with additions of cheap materials is a strategy to be economically viable and accessible. Its a reasonable limitation with aesthetical aspects of function. That should not feel arranged within the building.

X flexible states

When architects define the intended use of a space, we often create a rigid situation where there is little room for user imagination and the concept of adaptable programming. By intentionally suggesting designs that can change position or state.

X built, operated and powered by humans

Manual assembly with intent of being manipulated by people, one or a couple cooperating.

X function

aiding use for access, office, maintenance and/or leisure*

Simple machines plays a crucial role in fulfilling the intentions of use by enhancing flexibility and effort, opening up new possibilities for how spaces can be utilized within the building. They contribute to the programming by facilitating various functions and accommodating diverse needs, easily transforming the purpose of a room.

*The explored designs have various degrees of these criterias fulfilled but always aim to aid in at least one function.

fig. 8 Furniture by UGLYCUTE, a modular system of cheap parts

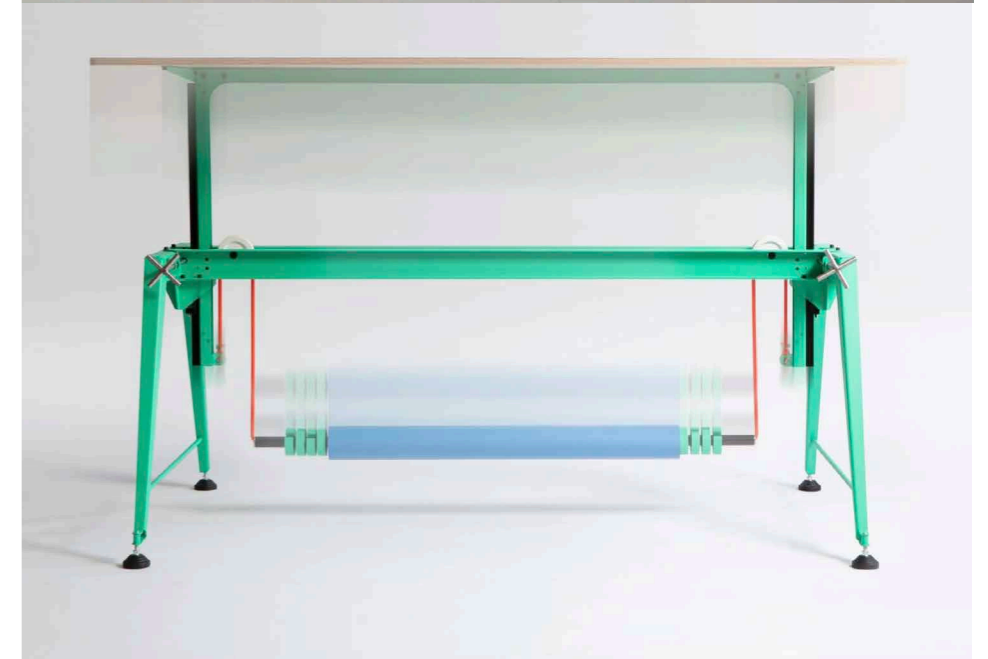
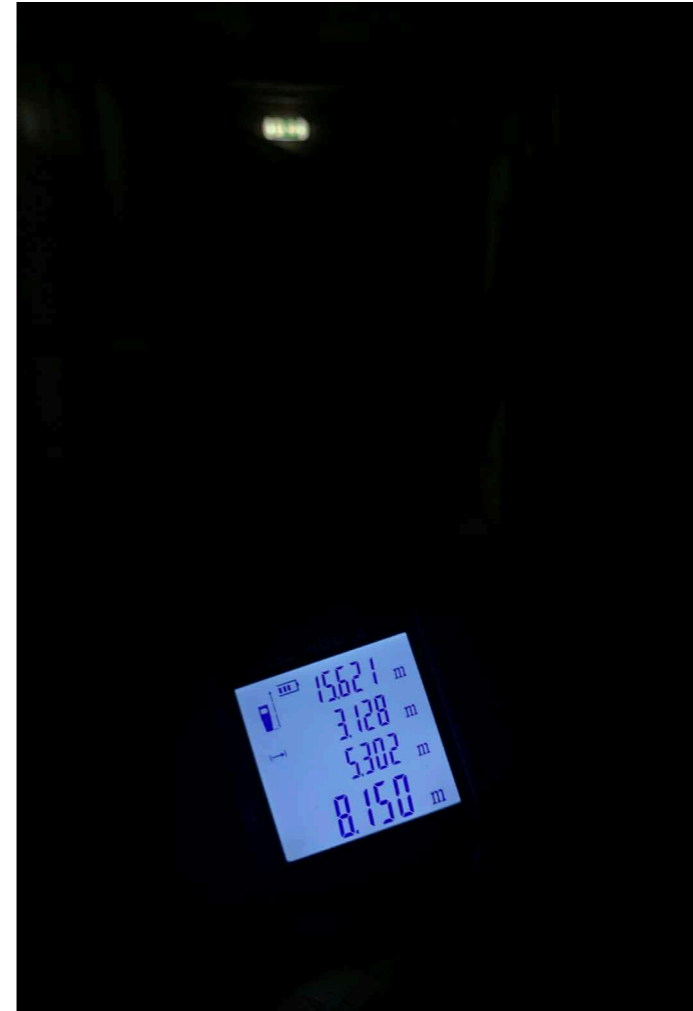


fig. 9 desk that can be lowered/risen by a light touch thru the help of a counterweight

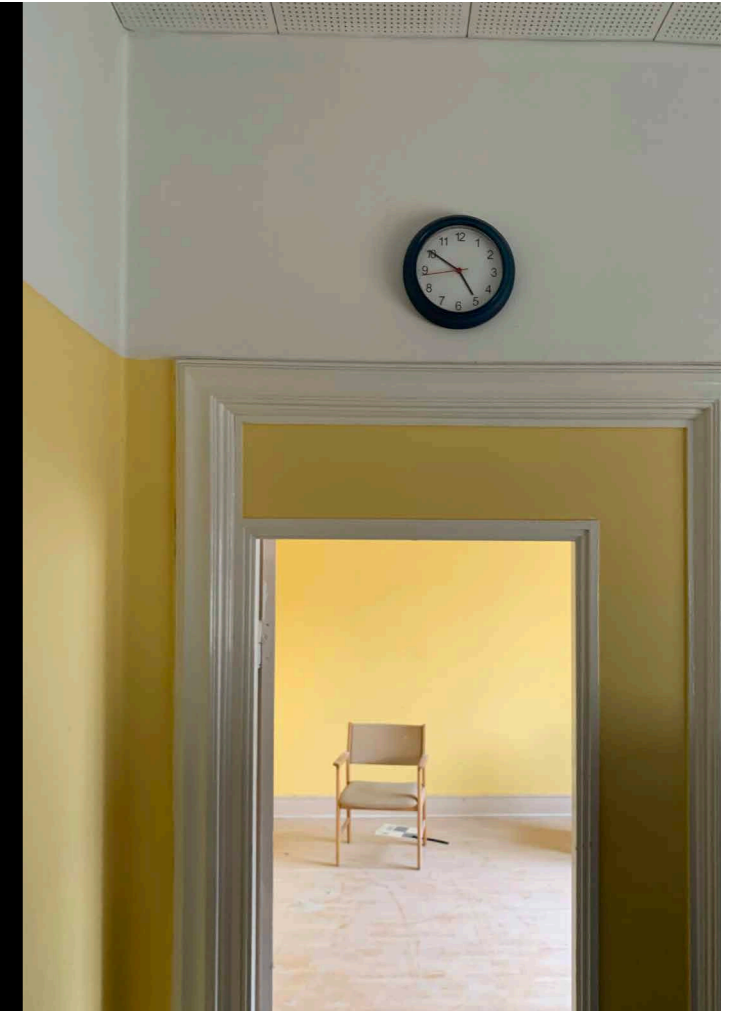
steps

1 rooms

the 1:50 process model of the existing building was made by documenting the current state and manufacturing pieces in cardboard to assemble into each room, making them easy to adjust in case of design intervention. Many of the walls was wallpapered to represent the current characteristics of the rooms.



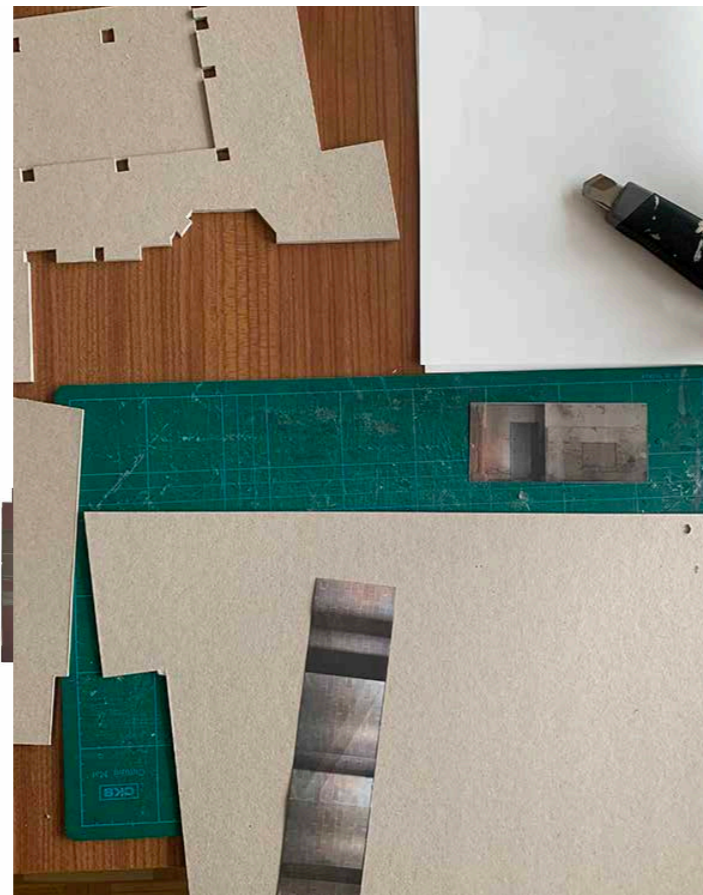
1. taking measurements



2. systematical photographing



3. collage and print



4. cut parts



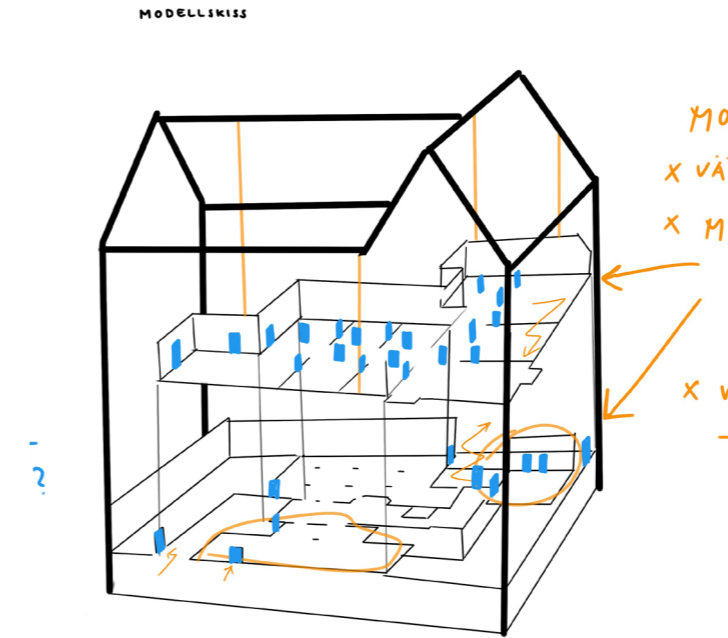
5. assemble models

steps

2 structure

The building consists of a concrete structure, one of the first constructed in Gothenburg, this is not represented in the model. Instead the rigidity of the silhouette is welded in steel in order to provide a solid base to test configurations of layouts and design concepts inside. Also an opportunity to represent the stable future this building can have as a frame of opportunity within the city.

The choice of just making one of the current office floors is based on that they are almost identical, and the model would provide opportunity to both decide on a floor to focus on later in the process and convey the flexibility of the design strategy, it can be applied on any of the floors.



1. sketch idea



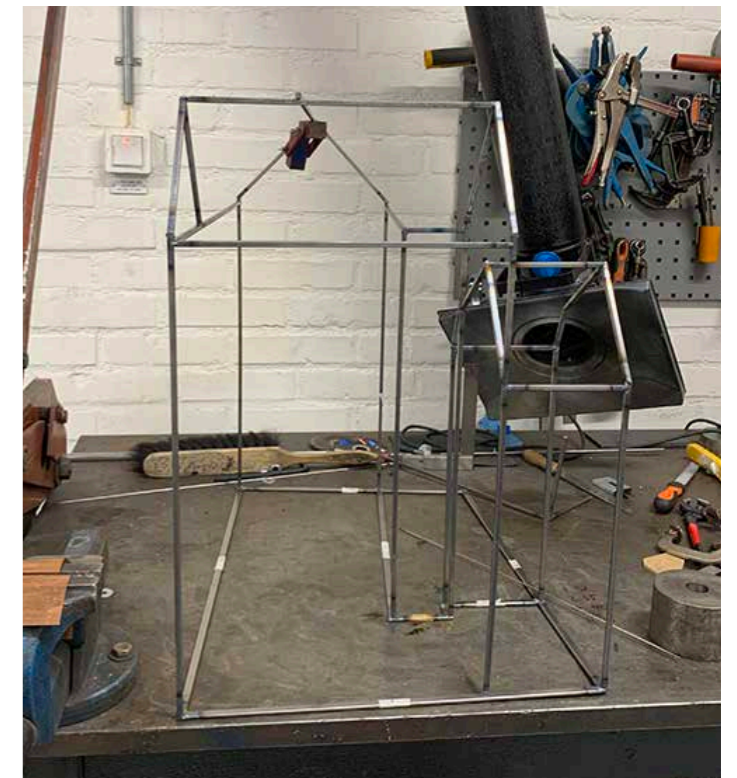
2. 1:250 sketch model



4. investigating



5. populating



3. welding

steps

3 producing a concept

The birth of the concept is a bit more vague to explain since one thought leads to the next in a chain that started who knows when. Despite that important steps such as finding a suitable building to focus on was crucial to have as an anchoring point.

The aim has been consistent in terms of being speculative but still realistic, this thesis is not about living on mars, all the pieces of this project are possible today, just that some, public access, are harder to obtain in our context of the city.

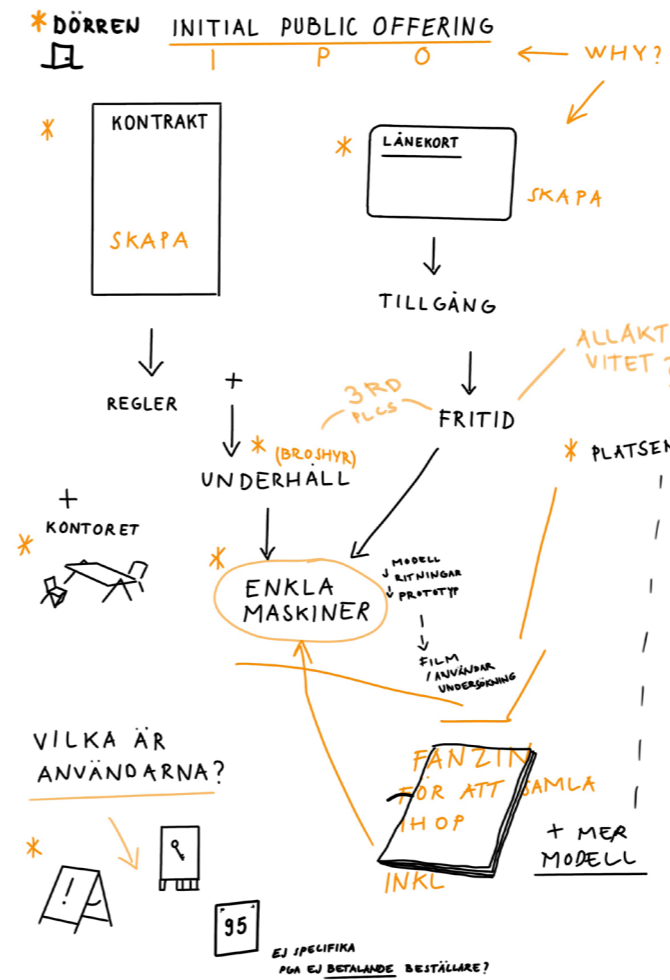
The thesis has used an exploring and questioning mindset focused on solutions for the concept of opening up a building to the public and testing it in practical ways.



2. collection of references (fig. 10)



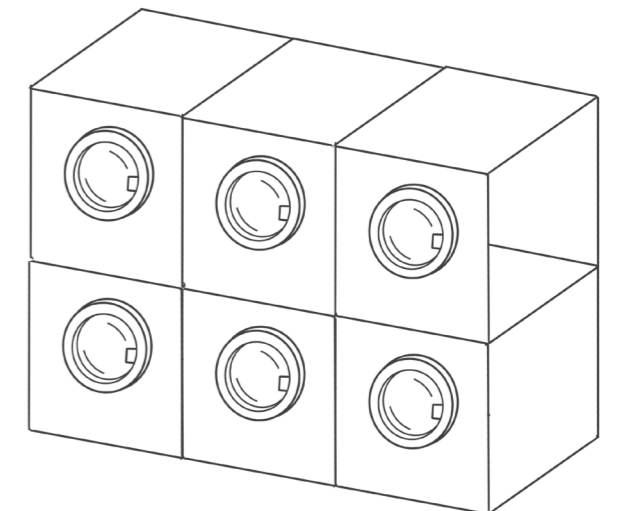
4. relation to building



5. connection of aspects



1. observations of culture



3. representation of ideas

steps

4 explorations of configurations

Models and drawings are used to speculate on and create simple machines based on the concept of reusing found materials and opening up the building.

These vary in scale from a freight elevator to a wedge. Function and placement has been configured in tandem and following the aims of access thru office, maintenance and/or leisure.

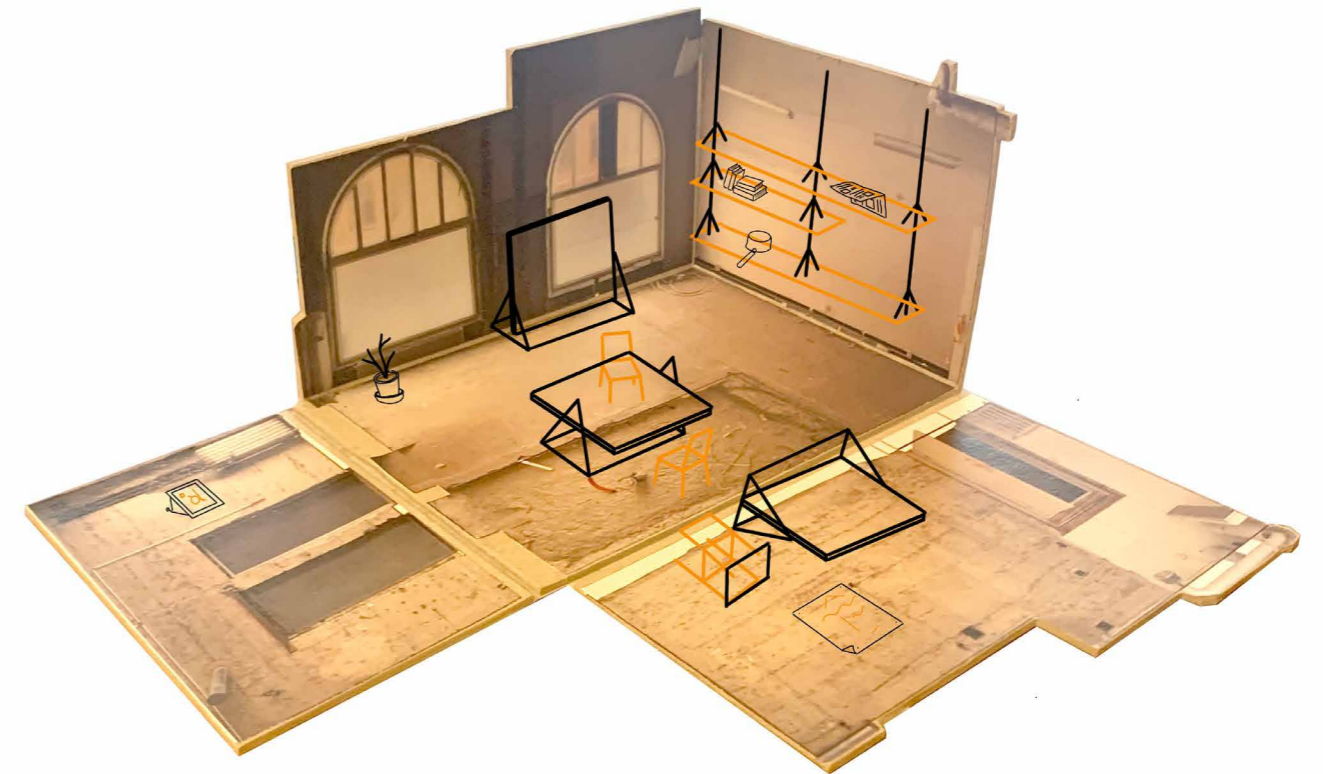


1. first draft idea sketches of functions

2. sourcing available material



3. configuring materials and placement



steps

5 1:1 prototype

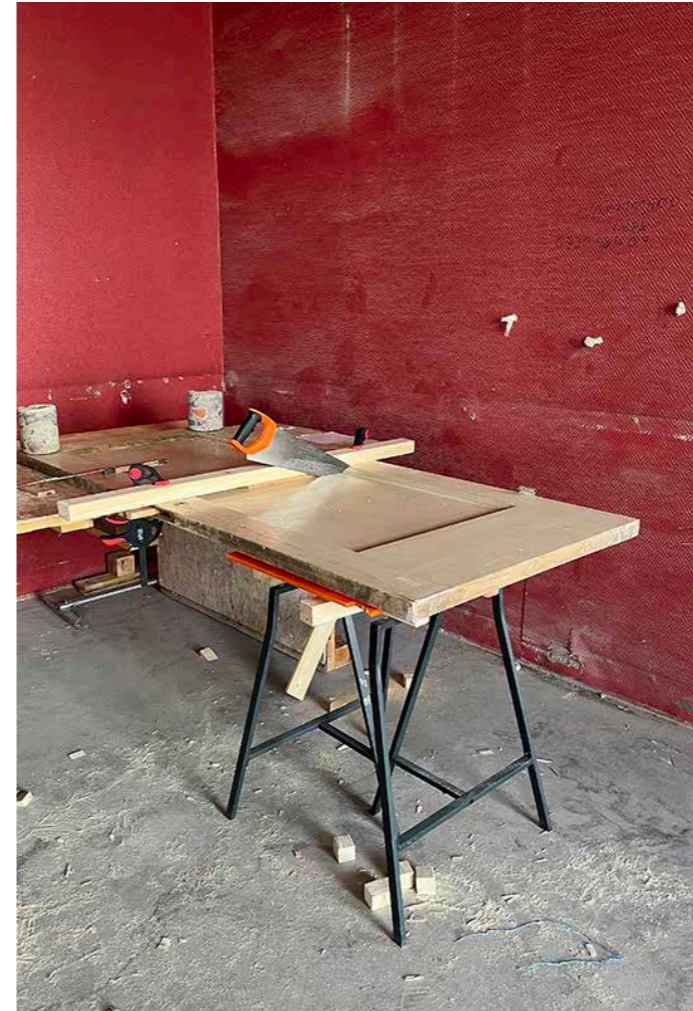
The strategy of collecting materials was to do it as cheap as possible. Apart from the wooden structure and most of the metal parts all the components has been picked up for free or given in exchange of favours. (not taken from the building, but would be in theory)

The model itself is a combination of cleaning cabinet and resting place and built without electricity inside of the building. An exploration show reuse of materials to test the principles of simple machines and the potentials. It evolved into a conceptual representation of what the building can become.

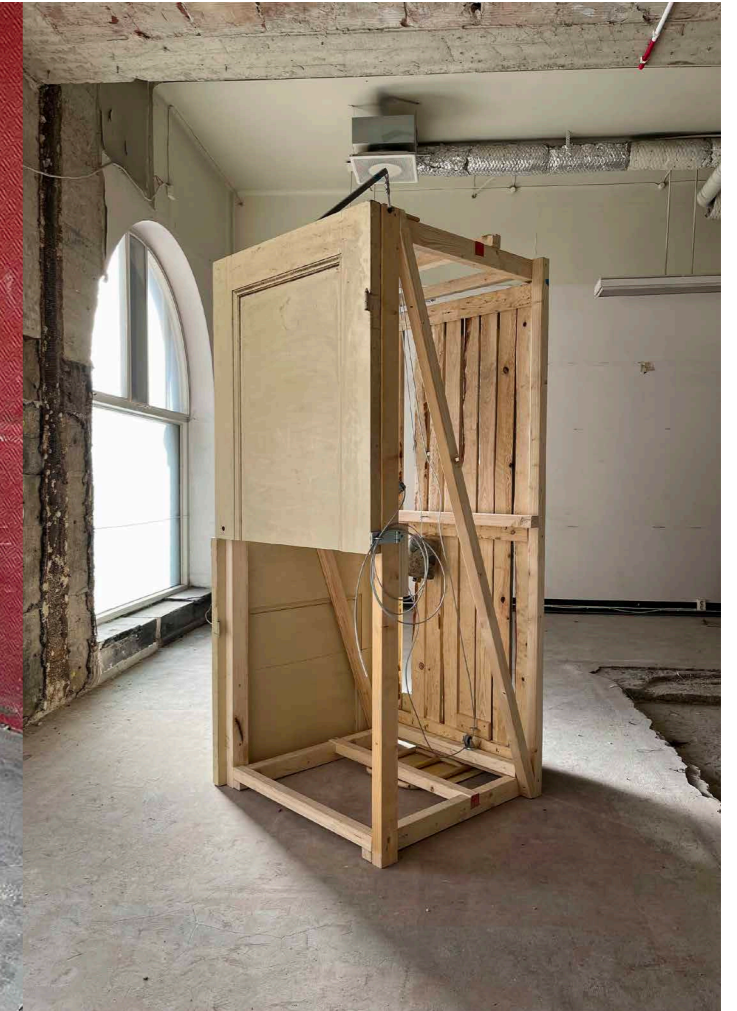
The process of the other design explorations has been made in a similar fashion on a smaller scale, with the aims to fulfill the simple machine design principles, but with different functions and instead tested within the 1:50 model.



1. collected materials



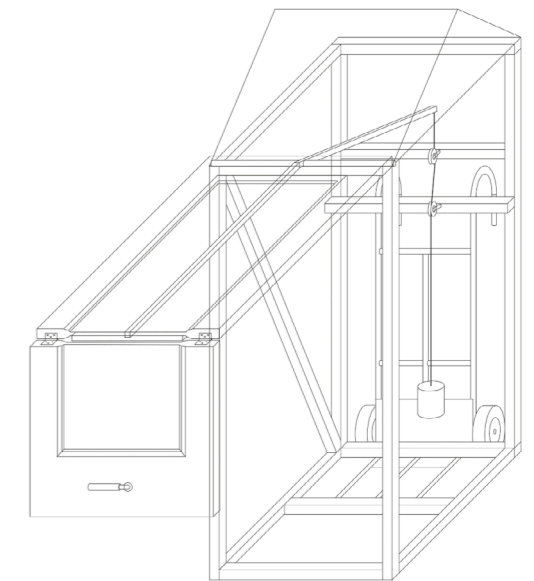
4. construction



5. testing functions



2. model testing (1:10)



3. sketch drawing

"William Gass once wrote that we should "dream beyond the bricks," but I think now, with so many bricks in place, that it is necessary to dream our way through them." (Stoner, 2012)



REPRESENTATION

current state of upper floors

the six upper floors currently consists of the same general layout of small office spaces with minor variations in terms of removed walls after previous adaptations conducted over the years.

strategy

establishing platform office to manufacture and install simple machines to be placed in building to assist people in use of: access, maintenance and/or leisure.



materials

dots indicates materials used in:

orange: 1:1 prototype

yellow: shelf tested at site

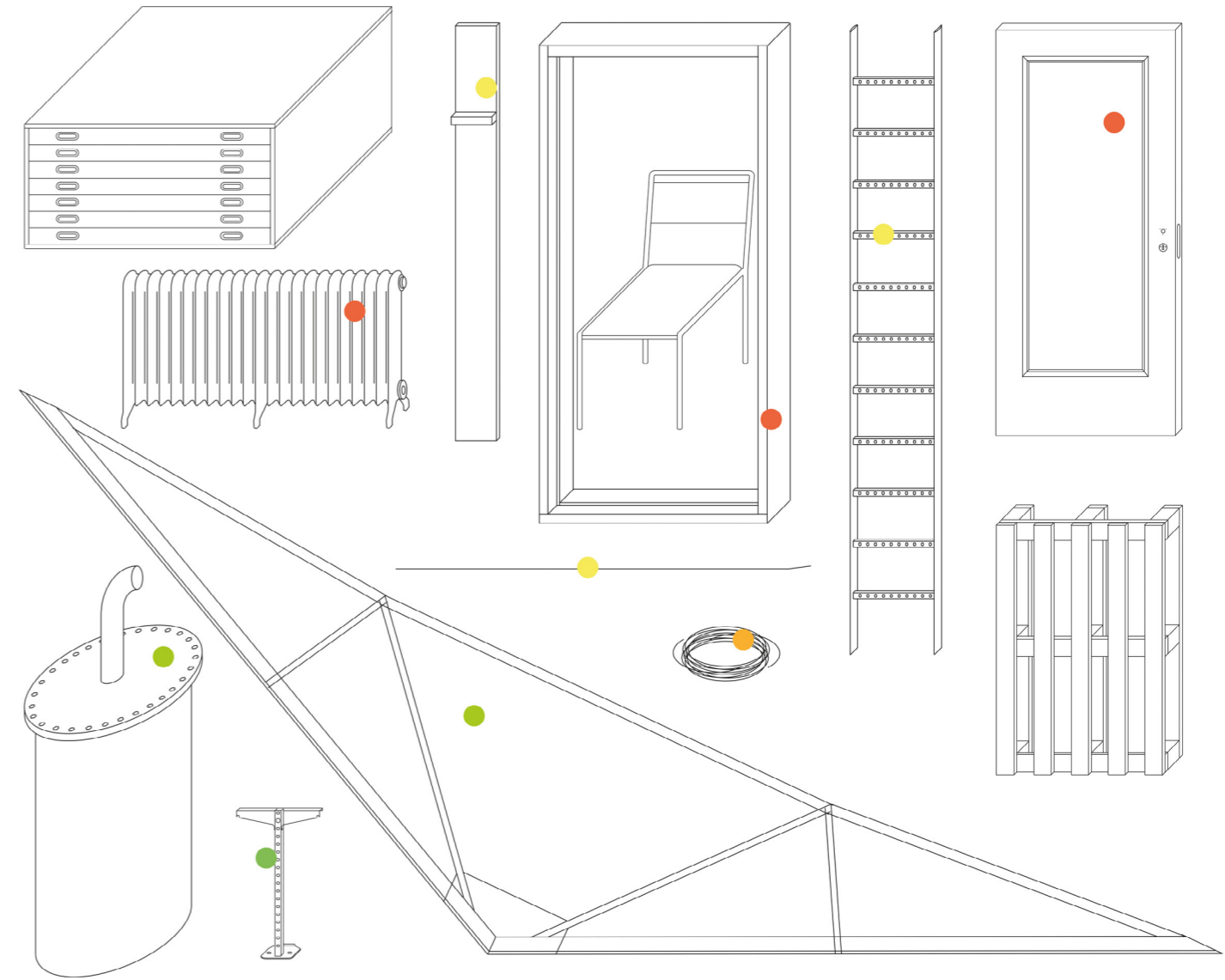
red: table tested at site

blue: big scale door wedge

light green: elevator

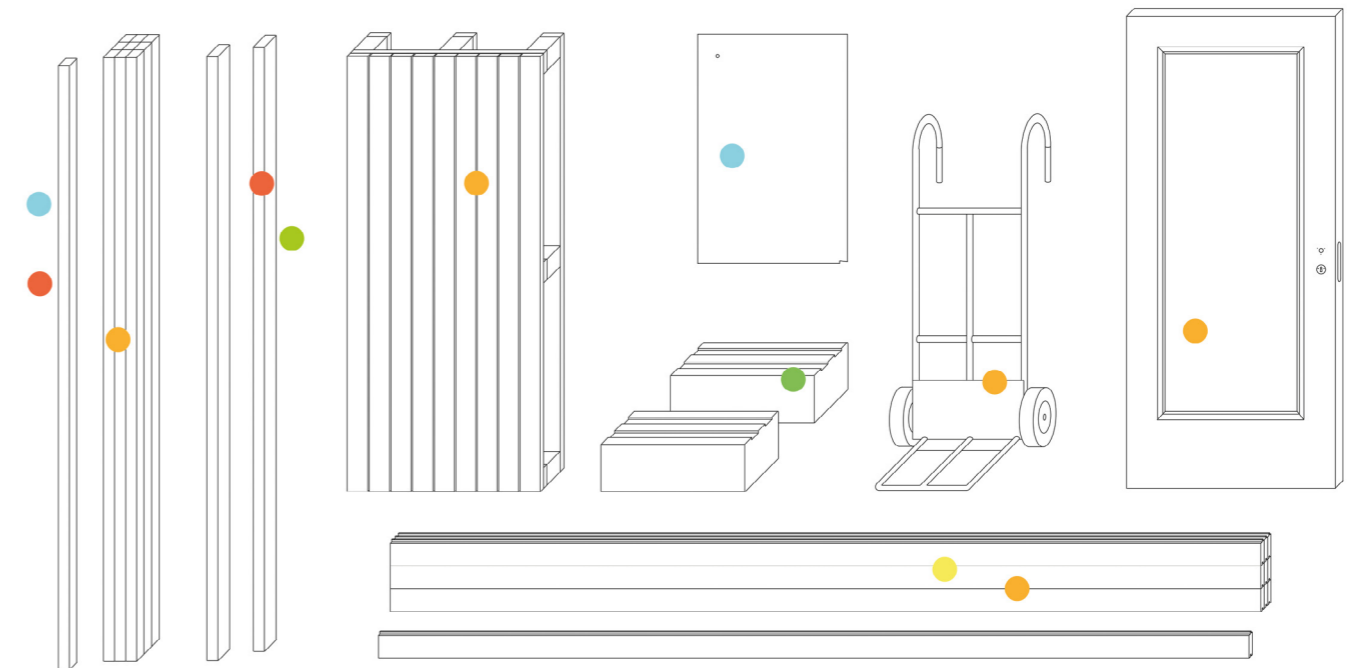
dark green: exhibition stands

1:10 (A1)



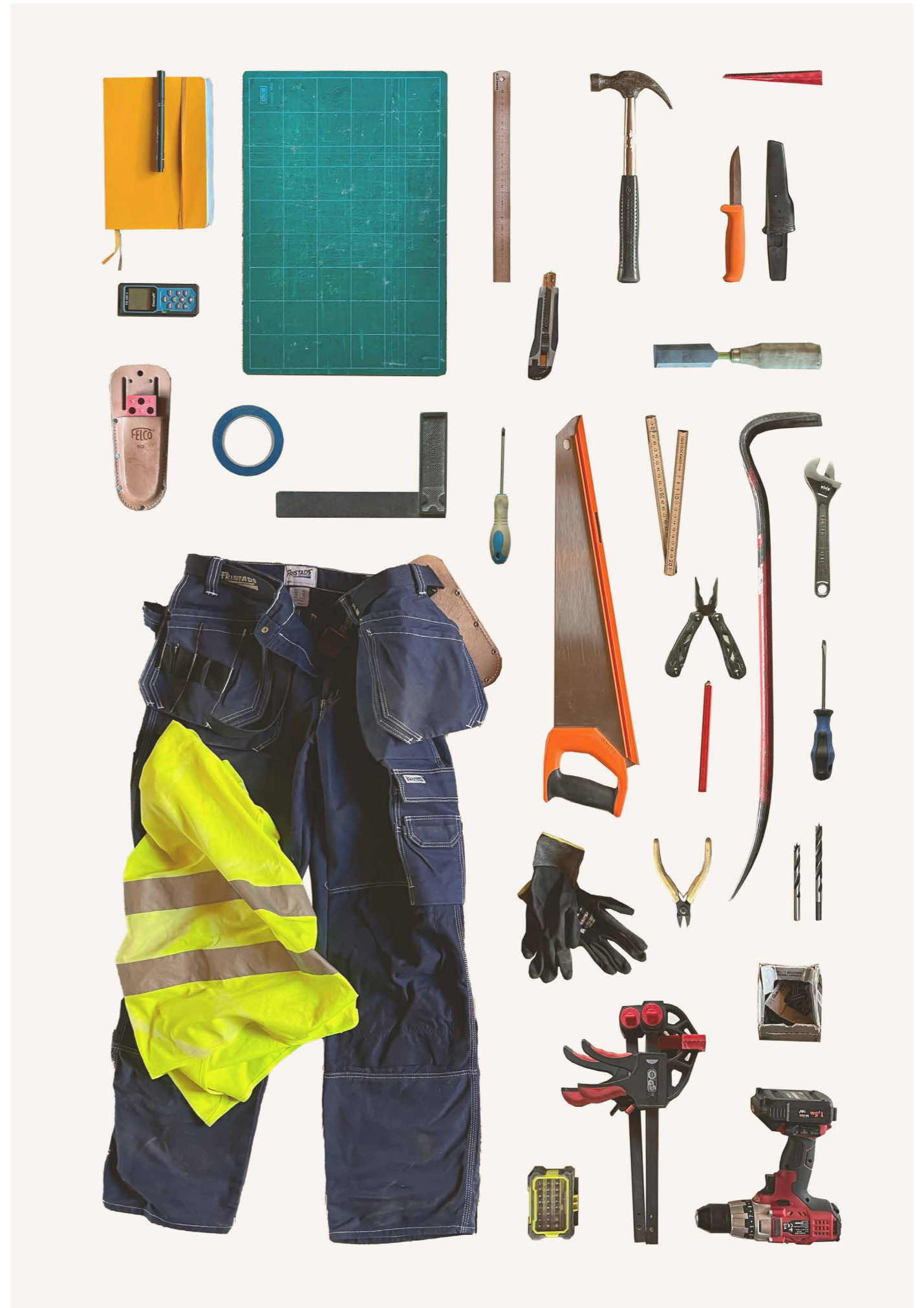
found at site

collected in purpose to construct 1:1 prototype(s)



tools

used to build models 1:1, 1:10, 1:50, 1:1000
(apart from metal cutting and welding)

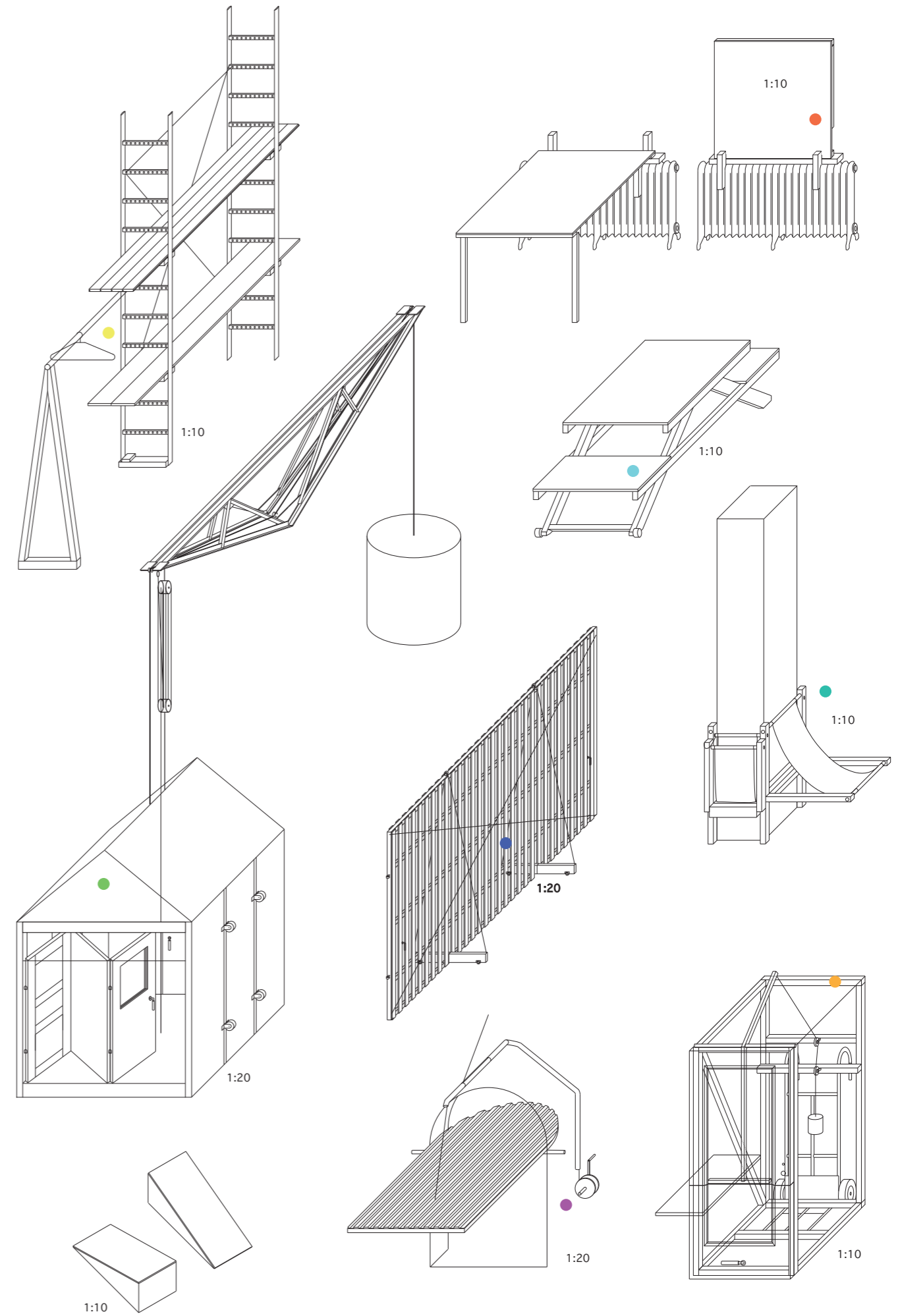


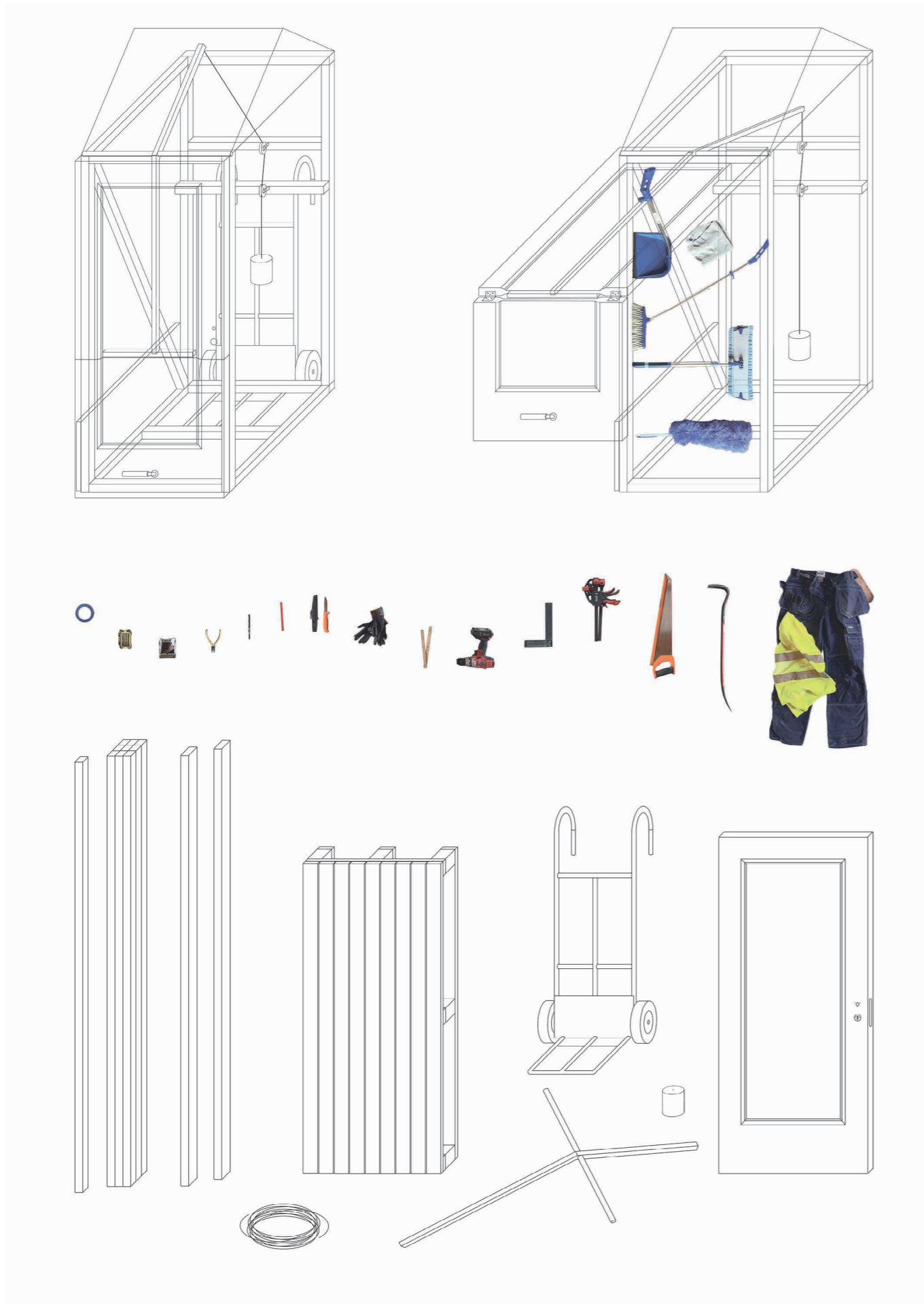
collection of assembled simple machines.

colors indicate following pages with further description and placement within axonometric drawings (bottom floor p.57 & upper floor p.67)

in a few occasions materials sourced (p.46)

scales (A0)





nearly complete 1:1 prototype of cleaning cabinet
 +
 <-- sketch, tools & materials

models

has been used as tools to explore the building and test design concept of simple machines as objects and configuration of the building.

during the process they evolved to also represent the transformation.



1:1 prototype

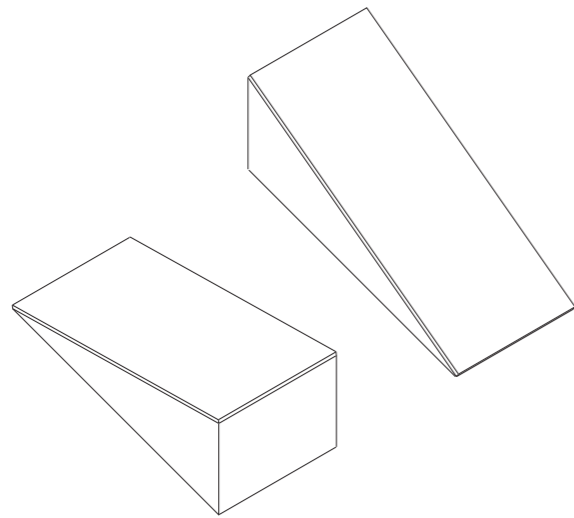


model 1:50

situated simple machines on the bottom floor

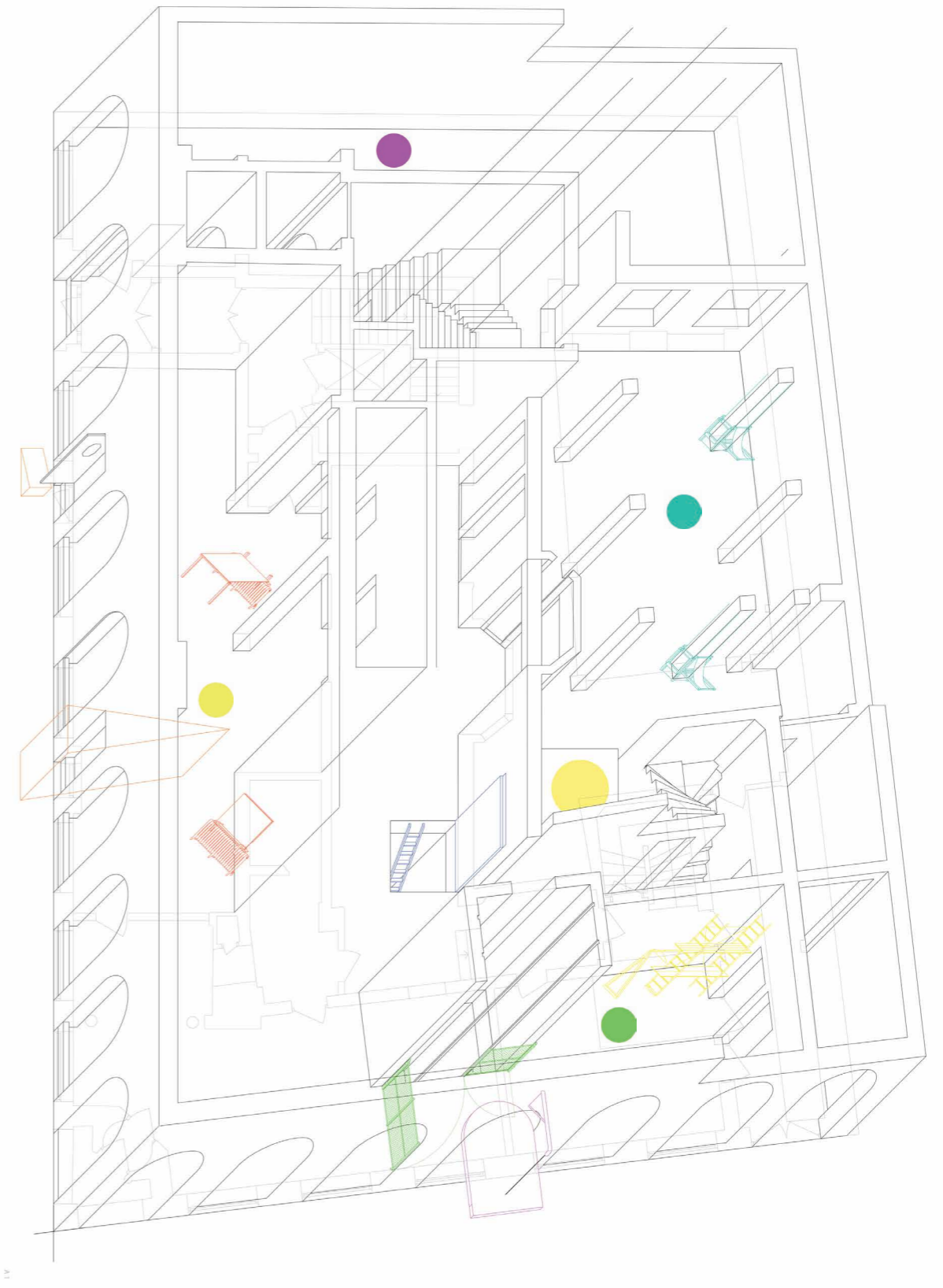
general strategy is to keep much of the current layout with distinct characteristics and adapt the spaces with specific interventions.

small dots indicates positions of perspectives on following pages

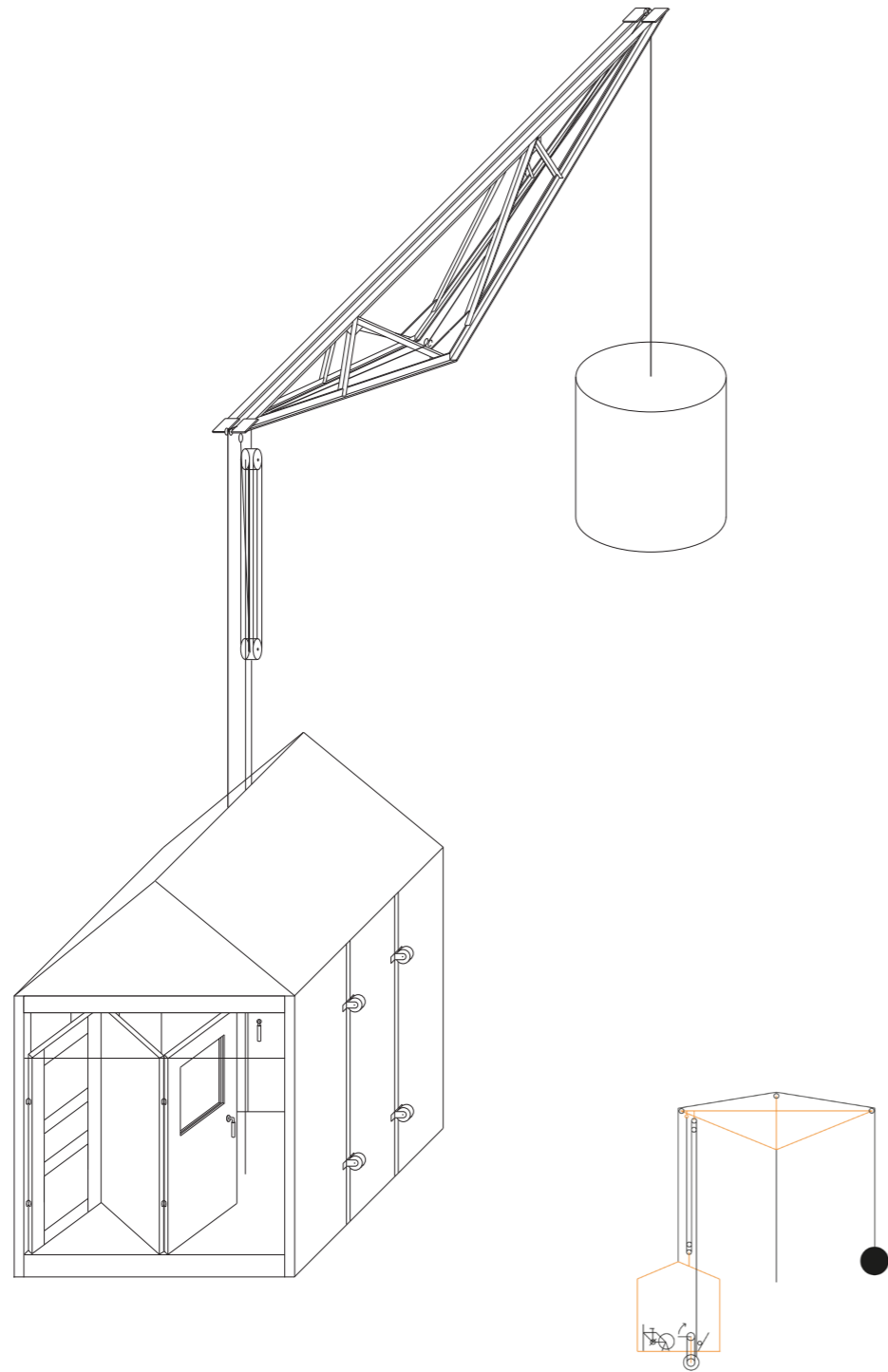


door stopper

used to signal that the building is open on the outside



platform office located next to the elevator

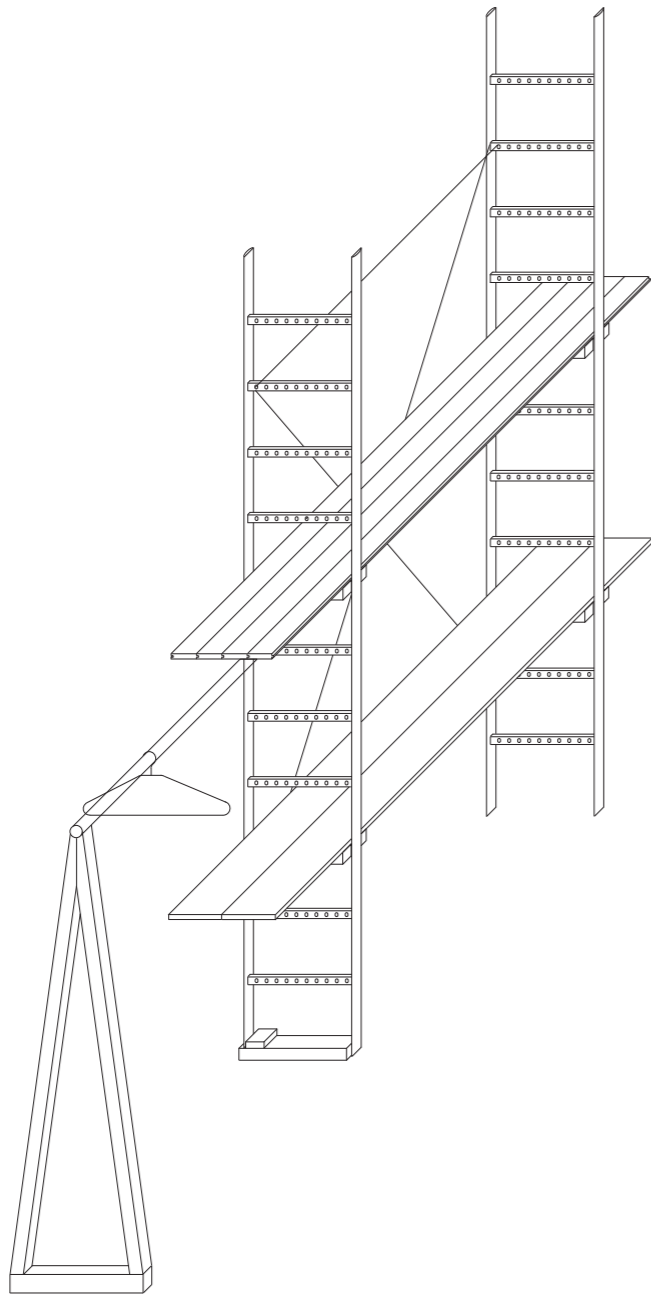


elevator

manually powered and counterweighted on the outside of the building



an exhibition in the riverfront part of the building

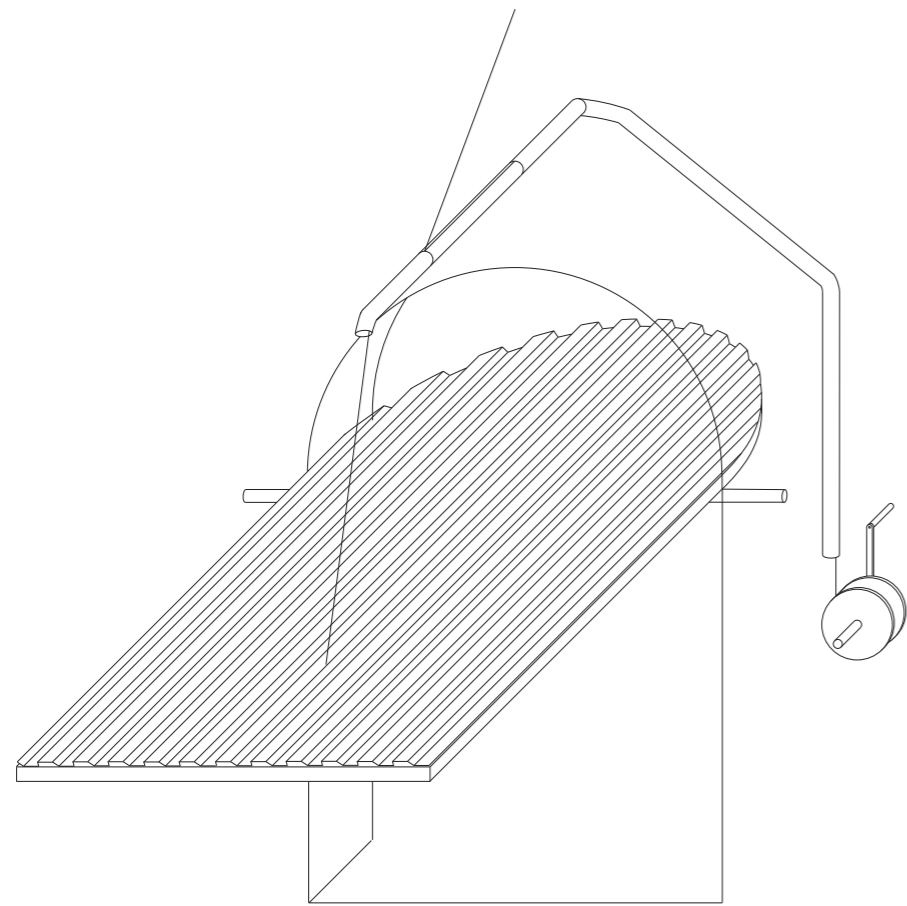


shelf

made of ceiling fixtures, planks and thin round steel bars



material storage area, already existing at site

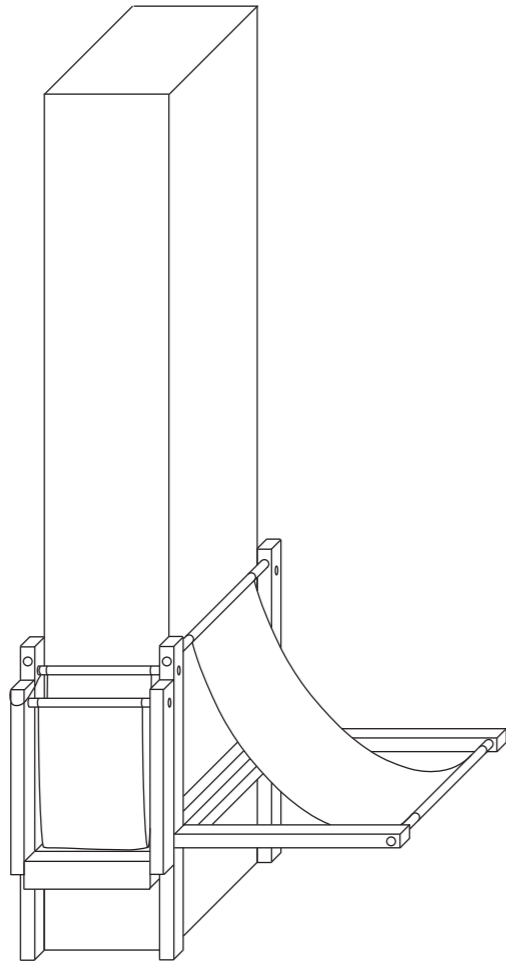


gate

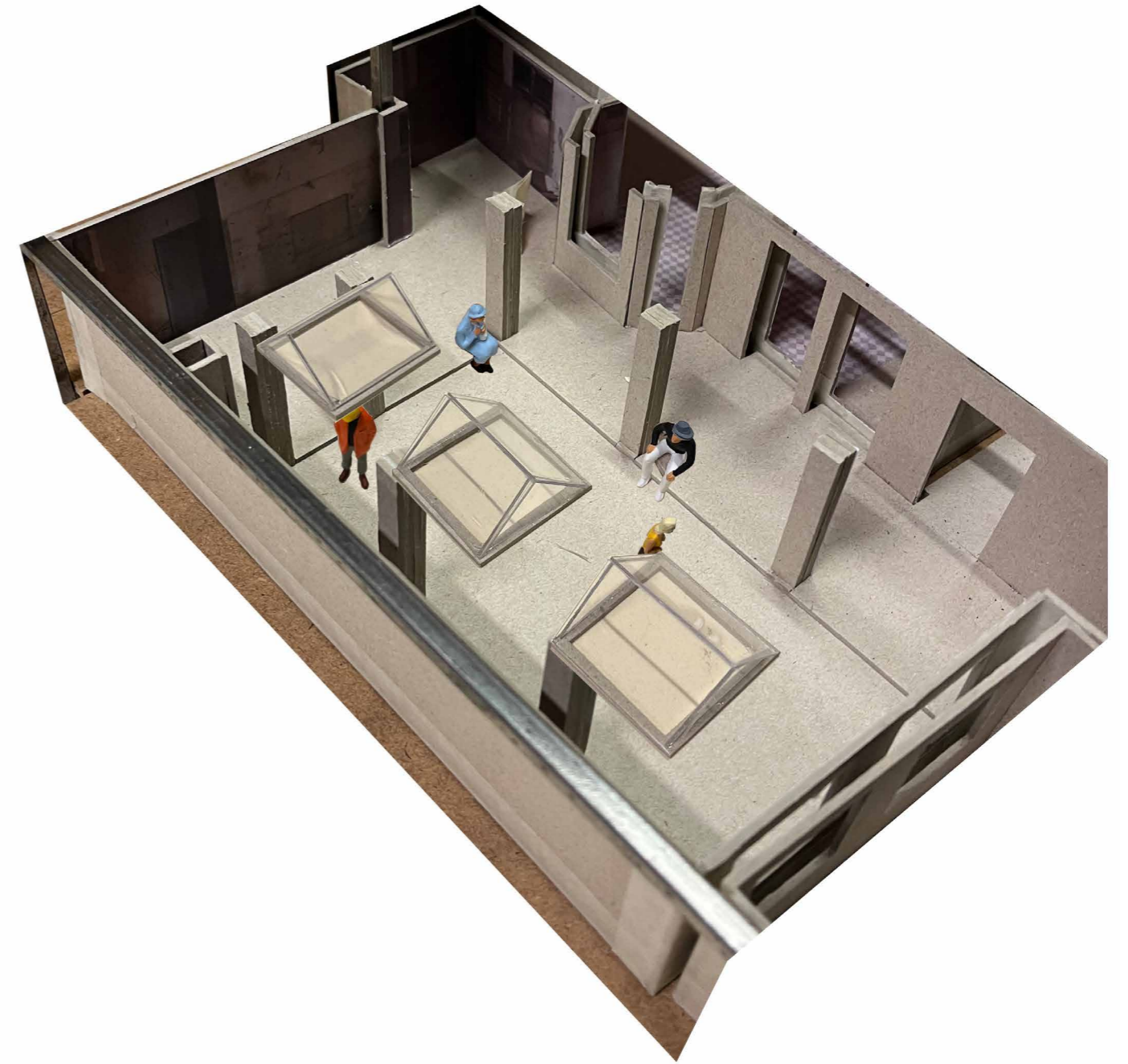
used to access the building especially when needed to carry in or out bigger objects



the atrium with ceiling windows allows for rest in the back



seating fixed to the existing concrete pillars



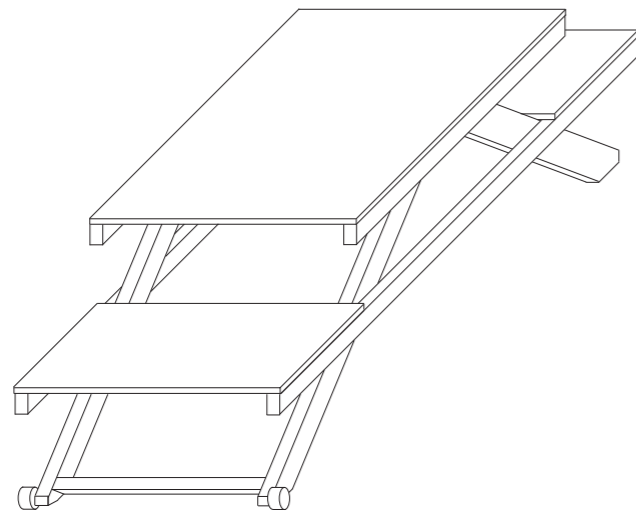
situated simple machines on the upper floor

several fixed walls are removed to make room for the adjustable partition walls.

a hole is cut all the way down to the bottom floor as an elevator shaft, two trusses are reconfigured and installed to support the elevator.

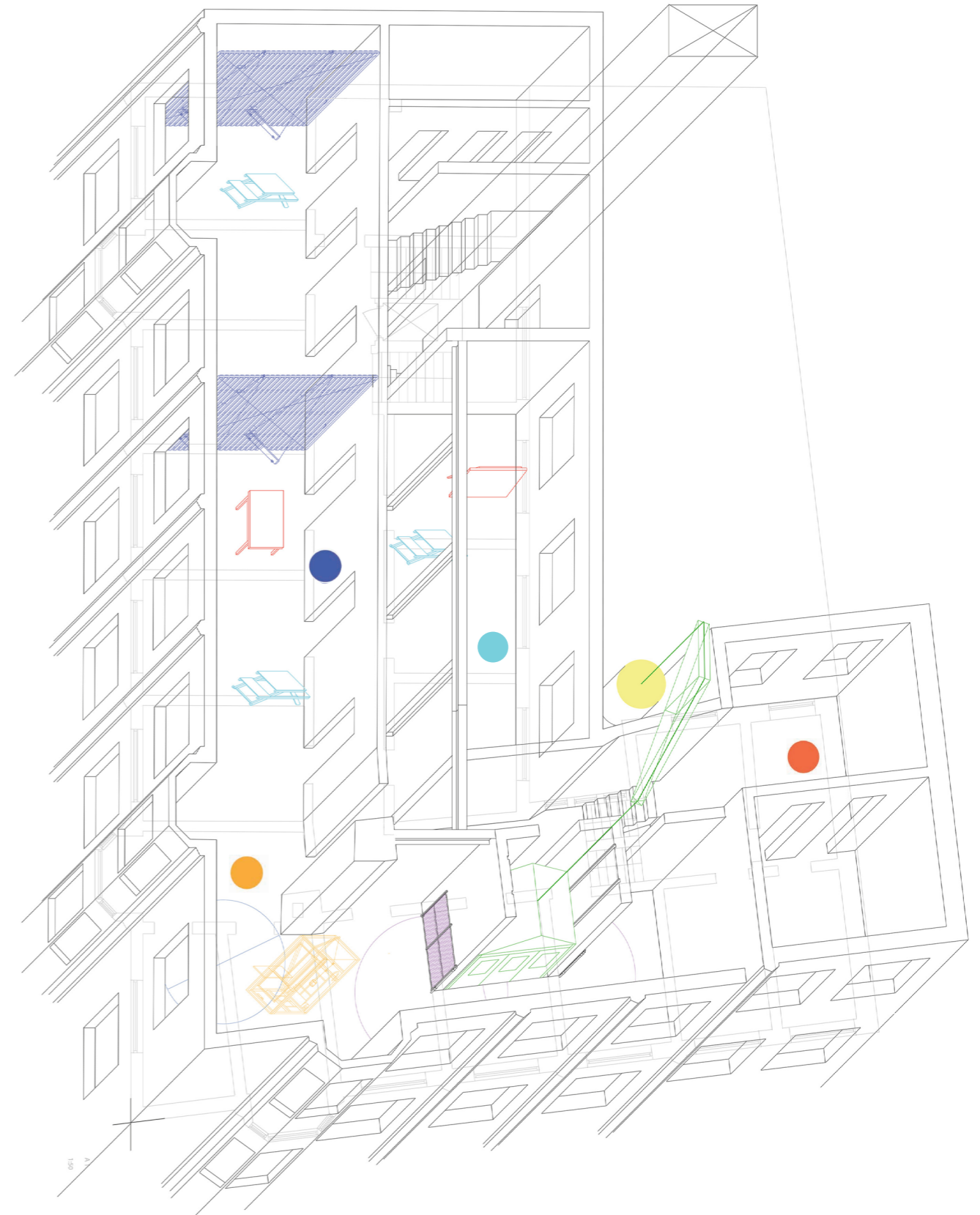
smaller simple machines are added to support maintenance and use of leisure.

small dots indicates positions of perspectives on following pages

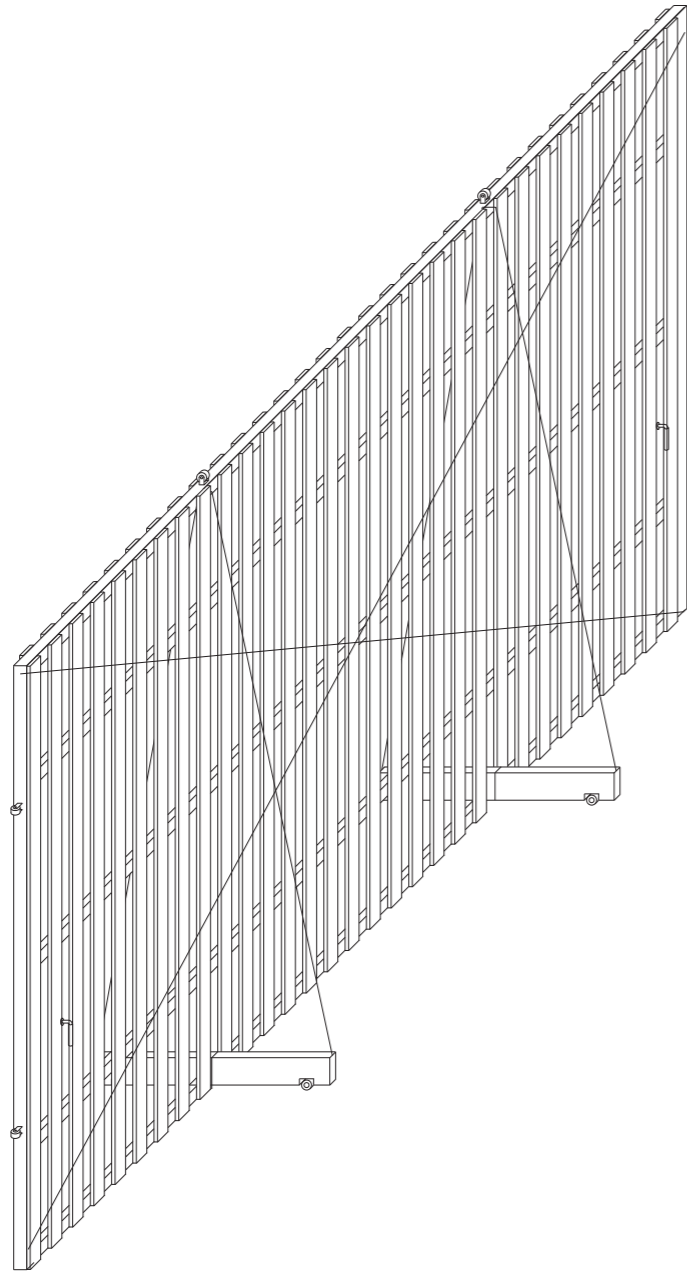


portable bench

moved on wheels like a wheelbarrow and narrow enough to fit thru the doorways, combined on a row if needed by a bigger company.



example of using space: a couple having a picnic while two friends are preparing to configure an area for some ping pong

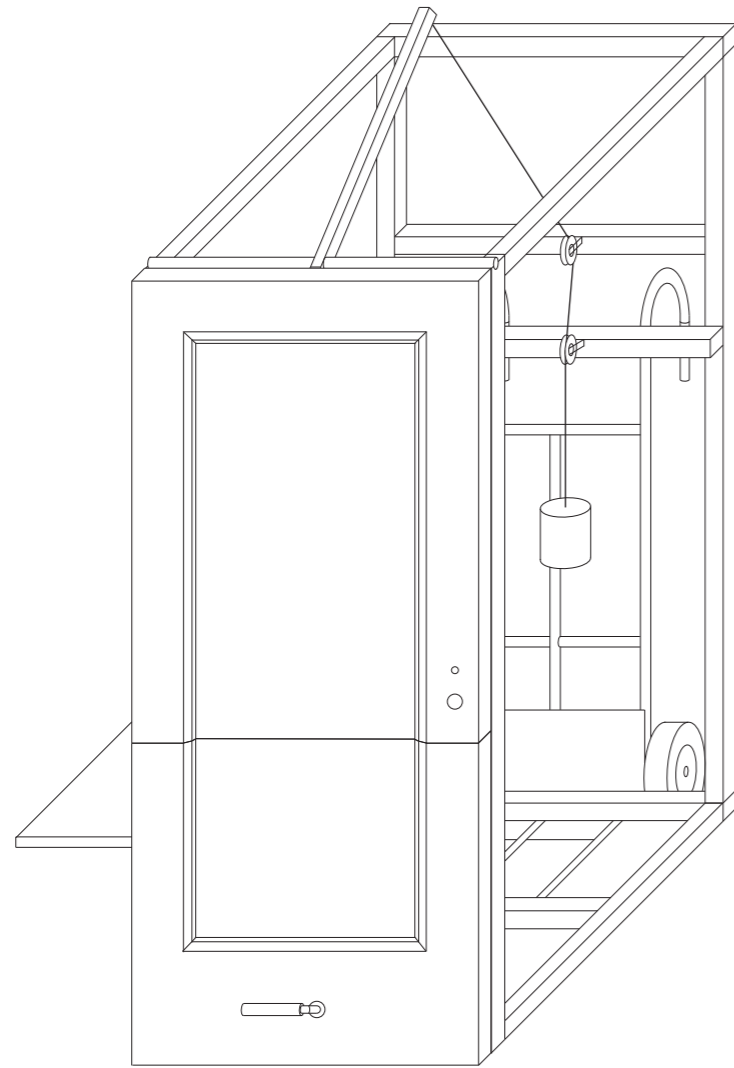


partition wall

can be moved around with wheels on the floor to accomodate different activities, allowing for people to share the space according to need.



the cleaning after a birthday party



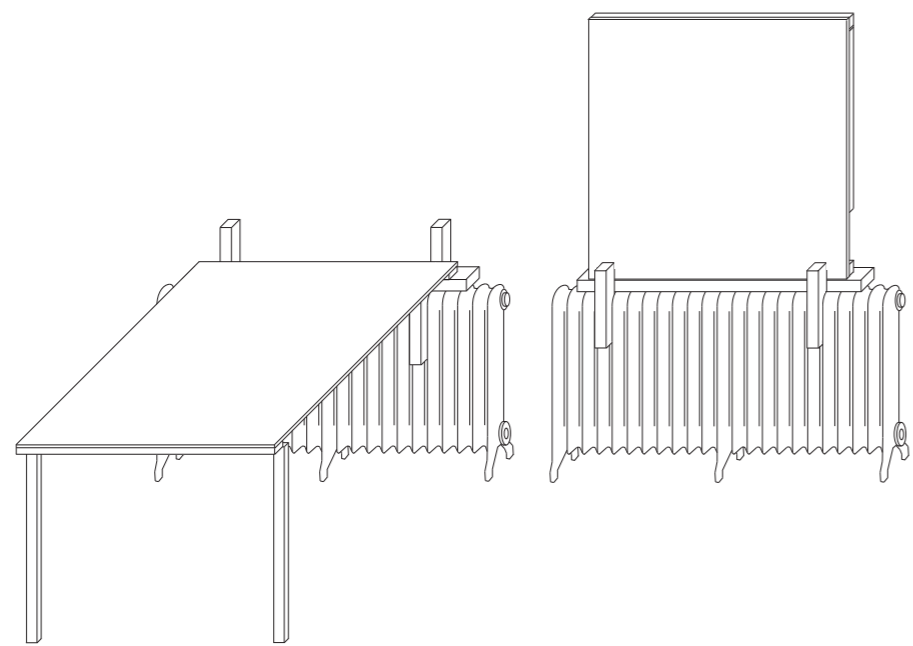
cleaning cabinet (1:1 prototype)

component explanation (p. 52), representation (p.54)

with two distinct states of maintenance / leisure



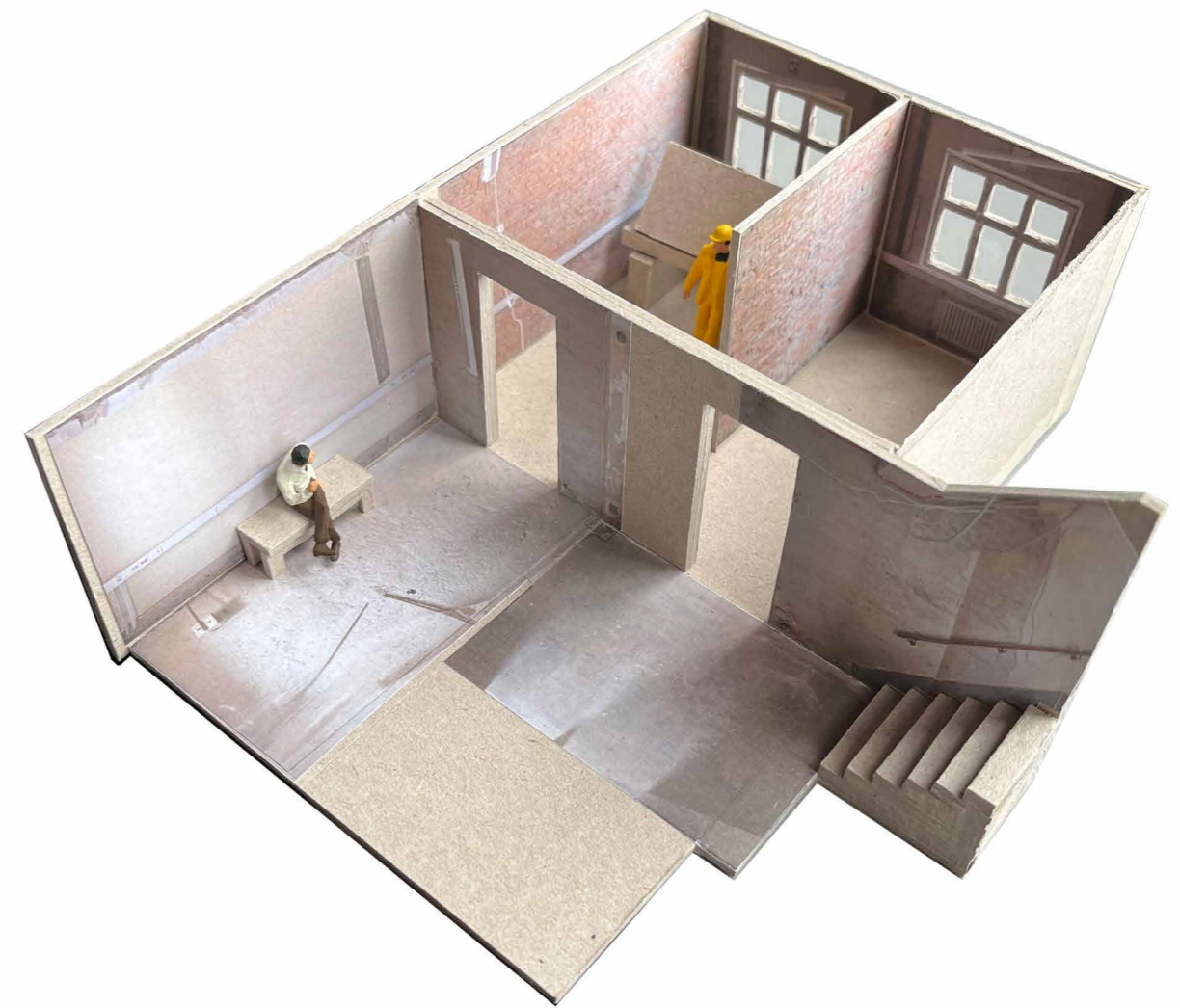
a conversation about plans of the upcoming weekend in the kitchen.



office table

made of radiators, lumber and board

with two distinct active and passive states



my experience using space (OBS in process, not finished)

The process has been more about exploring an approach of finding use for a building, use of space, rather than finding the "ultimate" design or transformation. To work towards a suggestion suitable for my personal and evolving approach as an architect.

There has been discussions about if I consider myself to be an activist regarding the subject of this thesis, I don't see myself as an activist but can see activist aspects of this project. I believe they are just my logical response to being asked to do something in the name of sustainability. And perhaps I at the same time identify more with a version of the role of the architect that is more resourceful, playful and fun. Something that I wanted to take the opportunity to explore while still in school. I also wonder if this is labeled activism, why is the conventional not.

To me this project is an attempt to capture part of an essence of what modern life is about at different scales, what roles both buildings and people fill in it, and work around what I believe can be improved to achieve a more balanced or equal society. It's an exploration of if architects can fill a role in working in this direction.

Being present in the building with different aims on a weekly basis has allowed for insights about the complexity a building can inhabit. Each time there has been a new discovery of a structural part not compliant with the drawings overlooked last time or an object suitable to make use for within the project. To experience this has been proof of how many possibilities an existing building have to offer, and how much material might be available in just one vacant building.

Also speaking to and considering Higab as a potential collaborator making the project touch upon not just being a speculation, has given motivation and valuable insights, perhaps mostly how much work it would be to pitch a project like this in reality. But also that it might not be totally impossible, it will be interesting to see what happens next.

It can be striking at times to glimpse the responsibility of an architect working by itself, luckily I have been both supported and pushed by Anton during this process, a lesson of how important a sharing platform can be on an individual level. I believe this has worked both ways.

One thing that I enjoy about architecture is the aspect that it should be looked on as a team effort, where not each individual has to master the same specific thing, but there is room within the field, perhaps even a demand, for some to explore and speculate, and live on the hope that perhaps something is learned from it in the collective group. To me there is a constant search and testing mentality within the field through history often adapting to and pushing the present possibilities of construction and envisioning how life can be supported.

From finding Skeppsbron 4 in the back of my mind to start investigating, realising its vacant, the forgiving state of the building as an object ready to inhabit, as a suitable part of the thesis, to now, has involved a lot of grasping and discarding. The insecurity that I felt working with a subject that is not common, suggesting a programme where people can use a building for free. I had a hard time finding references, or at least feel comfortable with the ones I had.

Perhaps I could have accomplished a more refined outcome if I really had been able to listen to people telling me what was enough in certain directions. And will try to see it as a lesson of having more confidence and trust my intuition going forward. At the same time the process has been a lot of fun most the time, and I consider it a gift to have the opportunity to be a part of an experimental studio that push for testing and speculation. It feels rewarding to have had the process guide the direction and the thesis evolve after working from an initial vague idea.

I knew before this fifth year started that I wanted to try two things, find a site that allowed for close contact and construct a 1:1 scale model of some kind. But the act of working through the thesis adapting to the different phases of the course has really forced the outcome in a direction where decisions have been made out of the process. This has, to me, provided a balance of visions and requirements.

Apart from being in close contact with the building, I see the method of having physical scale models evolve with the project as a living part, tool & representation of it, as a practical and successful strategy. It's a medium I preferred using over a digital 3D model when possible. And an output that has provided some closure in different phases of the process as well.

The explored approach of the ideal building in some situations not to be static has been a fuel in moving forward, and liberating as a concept. The qualities of cheap material and relative availability and not perfect state of a vacant building, also opened up to an exploration of the intuitive opportunity that can exist and how access to it could possibly provide an addition to the existing fabric of the city. Looking at buildings as valuable resources from different perspectives, not only as business investments of monetary growth potential.

Even if the building won't be demolished soon to make room for something more profitable, which I unfortunately believe, I am aware that the concept suggested in this thesis might not be an ideal solution or work in reality, it depends on interest, energy and dynamics of people, still I believe it's a speculation that would be interesting to try, and will try to explore it further in some place and capacity in the future.

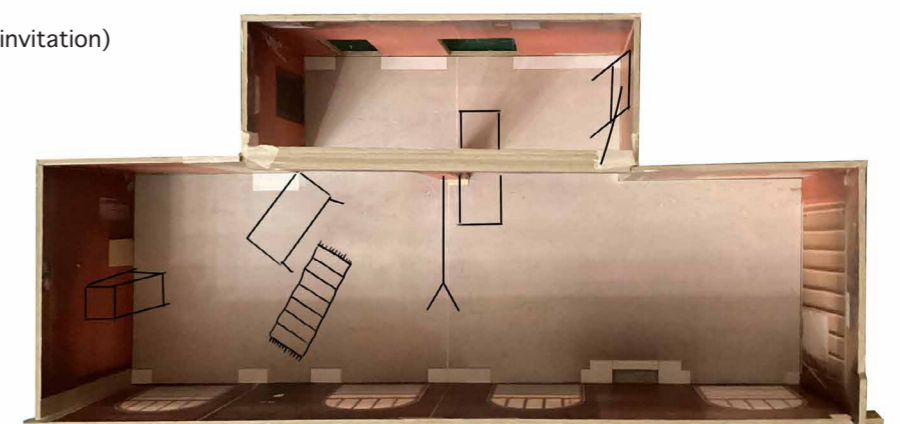


cleaning staff about to enter the building



display - exhibition

While the original plan to establish an office within Skeppsbron 4 did not fall through, we still have the keys and an assignment contract. We will host an exhibition of our work in the building of Skeppsbron 4 this summer.
(preliminary start in July, expect an invitation)



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Detaljplan Skeppsbron

<https://goteborg.se/wps/portal/start/goteborg-vaxer/hitta-projekt/stadsomrade-centrum/so-dra-alvstranden/skeppsbron>

Film

Dunér, E. Det var en tid då allt tycktes möjligt – All makt åt fantasin! (2015)

Influent conversations

Cina - Higab

Sandra - Backa Kåken Malmö

fig. 1 Stills from Det var en tid då allt tycktes möjligt – All makt åt fantasin! (2015) 60 min.Mats Eriksson Dunér.

fig. 2 P-O:s praktikrapport from (1977)
(screenshot from Sprängkullen page)

fig. 3 Kerstin Wickman. ”Fritt fram för gasklockan!” Form, nr 1 (1968)

fig. 4 photo: Jan Düsing 31/10 (1972)

fig. 5 Screenshot google earth

fig. 6 unknown artist explaining simple machines

fig. 7 Drawings by architect Zoran Doršner, (1994)

fig. 8 UGLYCUTE, ”Breaking New”, modulsystem, unik, (2013), furu, bemålad plywood och stålbeslag

fig. 9 Simple Machine is active work, human powered furniture by HeijltjesAkkaya

fig. 10 Pease, J, All the Tired Horses (2023)
(Still from digital animation)