

Parc La Salvaora

- A design proposal exploring the aesthetics of place-related curiosity

Oskar Persson

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Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU

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Parc La Salvaora – A design proposal exploring the aesthetics of place-related curiosity

Parc La Salvaora – Ett gestaltungsförslag som utforskar platsrelaterad nyfikenhet och dess estetik

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Abstract

Architects are constantly faced with having to make aesthetic decisions. Big decisions – like a project’s overall aesthetic character – or small, yet important decisions regarding individual details – without which the aesthetic entirety of the design would be compromised. Making these decisions is a skill that is developed and honed throughout architecture-school and later in the professional life. This development happens mostly through a combination of gained experience, references, and development of taste – something that makes aesthetic decision-making a difficult thing to teach.

When the architect has decided on an aesthetic vision – how do they ensure that the intended aesthetic experience is realized and mediated to the users of the architecture? What aspects are important for a successful rendering of the artistic vision? This thesis explores, among other things, how theory can inform the creative process and help architects (and other creatives) make more informed and intentional aesthetic decisions. The theory used is Nick Zangwill’s Aesthetic Creation Theory (ACT), which describes the process of artistic creation and the nature of aesthetic value. One of the aims of the

thesis is to explore how ACT can inform the design process so that the desired aesthetic, and its functions, are realized. This is done by applying the theory as a framework for the designing of a neighborhood park.

The project site is a derelict factory plot in the old brick industry area Els Rajolars, located on the southern outskirts of the Valencian coastal town Oliva (Spain). There are currently development plans in the making for Els Rajolars and the proposal made in this thesis is meant as a suggestion for an early-stage intervention to activate the area and create engagement towards its future development, among the community. This activation is particularly relevant with regard to the area’s current lack of functional public spaces.

The design part of the thesis is an attempt at identifying, and through landscape design mediate an aesthetic of place-related curiosity. Curiosity is chosen as an aesthetic in merit of its connection to interest and care – two emotional states relevant for creating engagement. The final proposal for the park is to a large extent based on strategies of creative reuse and features facilities for public dialogue, cultural events, movement, education, and festivities.

Sammanfattning

Bakgrund

Som gestaltande landskapsarkitekt behöver man ständigt fatta beslut som rör estetik. Under landskapsarkitektutbildningen får man praktisera detta, mestadels genom personlig handledning och vid presentationstillfällen av gestaltungsarbeten. Samtidigt lärs det ut få verktyg som beskriver hur man tar fram, utvecklar, och realiserar en önskad estetik. Motivationen att skriva just den här uppsatsen kom från en önskan att gestalta med stöd av just ett sådant verktyg. Aesthetic Creation Theory (ACT) är en konstteori utvecklad av filosofen Nick Zangwill, som bland annat ger en användbar förklaringsmodell av processen vid estetiskt skapande. I uppsatsen används ACT som teoretiskt ramverk och som struktur för designprocessen.

Els Rajolars är ett gammalt, i stort sett avvecklat tegelindustriområde beläget i utkanten av den valencianska kuststaden Oliva, Spanien. I skrivande stund pågår arbetet med att ta fram en ny översiktsplan för området, en process som bland annat informeras av en inbjuden arkitekturtävling (Europas 15). De flesta av de gamla fabriken är i väldigt dåligt skick och de enda strukturerna som i nuläget är skyddade inför framtiden är de tio skorstenarna med sina karaktäristiskt böjda toppar. Vad den nya översiktsplanen kommer landa i är ännu ej publicerat men tävlingsprogrammet för Europantävlingen efterfrågade en blandning av bostäder, verksamheter och utbildningsfaciliteter. En digital enkät har publicerats på Oliva kommuns hemsida med syftet att

ta del av människors åsikter kring enskilda frågor som rör utvecklingen av Els Rajolars. Det är dock oklart hur och om man tänkt jobba vidare, mer aktivt, för att fånga upp människors, särskilt de kringboendes, tankar och önskemål i planprocessen.

Syften

Uppsatsen har både praktiska och teoretiska syften. Syftet med den gestaltande delen är att föreslå en design för en kvarterspark på den industrifastighet som tidigare inrymde tegelfabriken "La Salvaora". Gestaltningen är ett svar på den brist på inbjudande och sociala offentliga platser i området kring Els Rajolars. Förslaget skulle innebära ett tillskott av ett nytt offentligt rum, med fokus på sociala möten, vilket förhoppningsvis skulle stärka människors emotionella koppling till landskapet och väcka engagemang kring dess kommande förvandling. Målet med gestaltningen är därför att skapa en plats som ger förutsättningar för att bygga lokal gemenskap, samt stärka människors

relation och omsorg för området. Parken är även tänkt att fungera som ett forum för diskussioner kring den pågående utvecklingen av Els Rajolars.

Uppsatsens teoretiska syfte är att utforska hur estetik kan användas funktionellt – i det här fallet som ett verktyg för att öka människors relation och omsorg till Els Rajolars. För detta syfte används Aesthetic Creation Theory som teoretiskt ramverk.

Frågeställningar:

- Hur kan en kvarterspark i Els Rajolars gestaltas för lokalt gemenskapsbyggande och offentlig dialog?
- Hur kan gestaltningsprocessen informeras av Aesthetic Creation Theory för att uppnå en estetik med potential att stärka människors engagemang och omsorg för området kring Els Rajolars och dess framtida utveckling?



Ovan: Foto av projektområdet, upplagsytan framför fabriken La Salvaora. Foto av: Navarro, tidigt 1960-tal.

Teoretiskt ramverk – Aesthetic Creation Theory

Aesthetic Creation Theory är i grunden en konstteori men går att applicera på alla typer av estetiskt skapande; måleri, musik, möbeldesign etc. Teorin definierar konst (eller landskap, möbler, musik mm.) som artefakter med den gemensamma nämnaren att de har estetiska funktioner. Med detta menas syftet att förmedla en viss estetisk upplevelse. Dessa estetiska funktioner kan dessutom samexistera med andra, till exempel rent praktiska funktioner. Zangwills definition av konst bygger även mycket på konstnärens estetiska intention och det slutgiltiga genomförande av den estetiska visionen – vad han kallar för den *estetiska insikten*. Mer specifikt menas med "estetisk insikt" visionen att en specifik sammansättning av exempelvis färg, form, ljud, och symbolik ska frammana en specifik estetisk upplevelse. Om ett konstverk förmedlar konstnärens estetiska insikt så är det konst. Om en landskapsarkitektur förmedlar landskapsarkitektens estetiska insikt, samt uppfyller de aktuella praktiska kraven, så är det landskapsarkitektur. ACT definierar också konst (och andra estetiskt kreativa uttryck) med att de tillkommit genom en kreativ process. Enligt teorin har en kreativ process ägt rum om den estetiska insikten med avsikt realiserats och därmed förmedlar den tänkta estetiska upplevelsen (och eventuella andra funktioner).

Aesthetic Creation Theory är alltså inte ett verktyg för hur man skapar konst eller landskapsarkitektur – men det finns lärdomar att dra som kan understödja en estetisk skapandeprocess. Framförallt uppmanas kreatören att se på estetik som ett verktyg för att förmedla en viss upplevelse. Teorins struktur för

skapandeprocessen uppanar även till reflektion kring vad ens "estetiska insikt" faktiskt innehåller och betyder. Vilken upplevelse vill jag förmedla och hur gör jag det bäst?

Metoder

Uppsatsens struktur är baserad på ACTs uppdelning av skapandeprocessen. Första kapitlet handlar om att identifiera den estetiska insikten. Andra kapitlet handlar om att förstå insikten djupare och därmed öka chansen att kunna åstadkomma de estetiska intentionerna. Tredje kapitlet beskriver hur förståelsen av den avsedda estetiken översätts till en faktisk gestaltning.

Analyser

För analyserna har ett fenomenologiskt perspektiv anammats. Detta genom att min subjektiva erfarenhet av att landskapet används som underlag för iakttagelser och slutsatser. Den övergripande analysmetoden bygger på promenader som sedan visualiseras genom så kallade "serial visions", sekvenser av bilder med anteckningar som beskriver rörelsen genom, och upplevelsen av landskapet.

Litteratur

En enkel och ostrukturerad litteraturgenomgång genomfördes med syftet att fördjupa min förståelse av nyfikenhet, dess relation till upplevelsen av landskap, och hur den kan definieras estetiskt.



Ovan: Bilder från analyspromenaderna på situationer som väckte min nyfikenhet.

Getsaltning

Gestaltningsarbetet inleddes med en period av intuitivt, nära kaosartat skissande, med syftet att lära känna platsen och prova ideer på ett förutsättningslöst sätt. Efter att den estetiska insikten blivit slutgiltigt formulerad började en iterativ skissprocess med syftet att kombinera estetiken med de satta funktionerna och platsens givna förutsättningar. Skissandet skedde nästan uteslutande i fysisk och digital modell.

Insight

I kapitlet "Insight" beskriver jag den process som ledde fram till temat som skulle utgöra grunden för min estetiska insikt: *nyfikenhet (mer specifikt, platsrelaterad nyfikenhet)*. Nyfikenhet valdes som estetisk insikt därför att jag hypotiserade att den kunde leda till känslor av omsorg (denna koppling styrktes sedan av litteraturen som presenteras i kapitlet "Intention"). Med avsikten att skapa en platspecifik arkitektur som tar sin kontext i beaktande, hade jag bestämt mig för att "leta" efter min estetiska insikt under mitt möte med det fysiska landskapet. Idén om nyfikenhet dök upp under mina analys-promenader genom Els



Ovan: Bild från skissmodell. Här utvecklas entrémotivet som leder besökaren runt La Salvaoras skorsten.

Rajolars, då jag blev varse om hur de många murarna i landskapet väckte min egen nyfikenhet över vad som låg där bakom. På så vis kopplar den estetiska insikten till den specifika platsen.

Insight-kapitlet består av en bakgrund om Els Rajolars och Oliva, samt arbetets olika analyser. Kapitlet innehåller även en presentation av ett studiebesök till referensprojektet La Zona Santiago i Valencia.

Intention

Kapitlet "Intention" består av en sammanställning av den litteratur som fördjupade min förståelse av plats-relaterad nyfikenhet och hur den uppstår. De två huvudsakliga slutsatserna var att den kan kopplas till mötet med kontextuellt oväntade föremål i landskapet (kuriositeter), samt förändringar som får en att se det bekanta med nya ögon. Baserat på detta kunde jag, i ord, formulera min slutgiltiga estetiska insikt: *Den estetiska upplevelsen av platsrelaterad nyfikenhet kan framkallas genom förändringar som ger nya perspektiv på det redan bekanta; genom mötet med kontextuellt oväntade föremål eller händelser i landskapet (kuriositeter); eller genom en kombination av de två aspekterna.*

Translation

I kapitlet "Translation" beskrivs processen av hur den estetiska insikten användes för att åstadkomma de gestaltade landskapsinterventioner som tillsammans är tänkta att förmedla upplevelsen av nyfikenhet. Denna översättning skedde genom att kombinera aspekterna från den estetiska insikten med parkens tänkta funktionella program. Till exempel kombineras

programpunkten “Vegetation – för upplevelsevärden, skugga (och andra ekosystemtjänster)” med idén att återbruka platsens spontana vegetation. På så vis upphöjs “ogräset” och bildar tillsammans med adderad växtlighet en typ av okonventionell landskapsplantering. En kuriositet som samtidigt kan ge nya perspektiv och ideer kring exempelvis återbruk, växtgestaltning och “fint och fult”. Förutom planteringen är det ytterligare ett fåtal designelement, bland annat ett böjt långbord och en scen/paviljong, som är tänkta att vara de huvudsakliga förmedlarna av den tänkta estetiken.

Resultat, gestaltningsförslaget

Förslaget är sparsmakat och bygger mycket på ett omsorgsfullt omhändertagande av den relativt lilla platsen. Återbruk används på flera sätt i gestaltningen, både vad gäller markmaterial, vegetation, och byggda strukturer över mark. Muren som omgärdar platsen idag öppnas på strategiska ställen för att göra parken inbjudande och trygg, samtidigt som dess omgärdade karaktär bevaras. Paviljongstrukturen som är tänkt att användas som scen placeras centralt på platsen, på så vis skapas två större rumsligheter med olika karaktär.

Då scenen vänder sig åt tre håll blir platsen flexibel. En del av muren bekläds med spegelmosaik och bildar på så vis en spegelvägg som går att använda för dans, gymnastik etc. – en idé som uppstod efter att ha sett hur referensprojektet La Zona Santiago ofta användes för just rörelse i grupp. Det karaktäristiskt böjda bordet (inspirerat av skorstenarna) är tänkt att fylla många funktioner. Med en griffeltavla vid sidan av lämpar det sig väl för både viktiga möten och som uteklassrum. Det blir också ett givet bord att använda till fest.

Diskussion

Gestaltningsförslaget är en möjlig lösning på hur en del av Els Rajolars skulle kunna göras om till en inbjudande kvarterspark. Den överhängande frågan är huruvida jag lyckats åstadkomma en park vars estetik väcker nyfikenhet hos sina besökare. Frågan får givetvis olika svar beroende på vem man frågar. Skulle man fråga Zangwill – eller i alla fall hans teori – skulle nog svaret bli att jag lyckats. Detta eftersom teorin väger intentionalitet och genomförande tyngre än mottagande. Dessutom finns det inboende kvaliteter och funktioner i förslaget i sig, som oberoende av

estetik skulle kunna uppbåda både nyfikenhet och omsorg. Bara att föreslå en park på den givna (något oväntade) platsen gör det till en kuriositet. Om en konsert skulle ljuda från en scen inifrån det gamla fabriksområdet skulle det säkerligen göra många människor nyfikna och börja se nya kvaliteter och potential i området.

ACT är som tidigare nämnt inte en metod i sig. Att använda sig av teorin som ramverk säkerställer inte att man finner en “bra” estetisk insikt. Den uppmuntrar dock arkitekten att reflektera över intentionen bakom sina estetiska val – något som i sig bäddar för mer lyckad arkitektur. Att öva upp sin medvetenhet och intentionalitet kring estetiska beslut ger också stärkta argument när ens val behöver motiveras i relation exempelvis budget eller andra prioriteringar. Personligen hoppas jag att estetisk intentionalitet i allmänhet – och ACT i synnerhet – blir något som diskuteras och lärs ut vid landskapsarkitektprogrammet – gärna från och med tidigt i utbildningen. Jag vet att i alla fall jag hade uppskattat det.



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Background



Fig. 1. The brick and ceramics factories of Els Rajolars. The rightmost of the three closest chimneys belonged to the factory "La Salvaora" – the project site for this thesis' design proposal. Photo by : Navarro, late 1950's

Introduction

My connection to Oliva

I first visited the Spanish town of Oliva, about six years ago. It is the birthplace of my partner; where she spent her early childhood, and where she still has half her family. When we visit, we stay in her parents' house, which is located in the neighborhood 'La Carrasca' (Spanish for 'holm oak'). From their terrace, one can enjoy a nice view overlooking the neighborhood. In the distance, the mountains, and in the foreground, the characteristically bent chimneys of the old brick industry – just a stone's throw away from the house. The chimneys really look peculiar – forty meters high and most of them have a slightly bent top. No one I have talked to has ever been able to answer why they are shaped the way they are – or how they are still standing despite being bent. We have many times walked through the industrial area, called Els Rajolars, thinking of what might become of this abandoned, yet curiously beautiful place. I always get intrigued to climb the old brick walls to explore what is behind. But the plots are all private property and the crumbling factories are a safety risk. Luckily, there are many peek-holes through which one can look.

The task at hand - evoking care

A few years ago, the municipality of Oliva started a process to develop Els Rajolars. An architectural competition, the 15th edition of the European competition was arranged, and new plans are now in the works. A digital questionnaire has been created to gather people's opinions on the future of the area.

But how are people to form a personal opinion about a place, most of which they have never really been to – that is cut off from the public by walls and fences? With this project, I want to investigate how a part of Els Rajolars could be made accessible to the local community and the general public. This, with the purpose, to strengthen people's relationship to the landscape, and thereby, hopefully, make more people care about and get engaged in the creation of its future.

Making decisions about aesthetics

Besides the abovementioned purpose, there is also a parallel purpose with this thesis – one that relates to the creative process behind the design. This parallel purpose was born out of a personal wish to find tools to make more informed aesthetic choices in my design work. I would argue that strengthening one's ability to explain and defend one's aesthetic choices is a relevant skill for anyone working with aesthetic creation – especially when working in collaboration with other people. Because: how does one, during a design process, argue for one's aesthetic decisions if it all just comes down to personal taste and/or Pinterest algorithms? Thinking that option A looks better than option B might be too weak an argument for option A (especially if option B is cheaper). But if the argument is that "the aesthetic qualities of option A has the potential to strengthen the functions X, Y and Z while option B is likely to only improve the function Y", then, option A might be worth considering. The second purpose with this thesis is (in other words) to develop an aesthetic that can support and make better the other desired functions of the design. In this particular project, these functions mainly relate to

public dialogue and community development, which in turn depends on an engaged and caring community.

As landscape architects, we are tasked to provide solutions for complex situations; harmonizing functions, ecologic systems, and aesthetics into coherent design proposals. Throughout my years as a student in landscape architecture, aesthetics always seemed like the most challenging and arbitrary aspect to argue for – while function, accessibility and ecology (etc.) seemed inherently virtuous and thereby easy to motivate in a design. But aesthetics are undoubtedly an essential aspect of landscape architecture – so why does it appear so difficult to me? When I first read the article *Aesthetic Creation Theory and Landscape Architecture* (2016), by Rudi van Ettgen, Ian Thompson, and Vera Vicenzotti, I realized that there might be an underlying tendency (or maybe culture?), reason to my experience. The authors begin the article by establishing that "in recent decades the landscape architectural discourse has tended to eschew ideas of aesthetics while focusing instead on notions of functional and sustainable design." (2016:80) I found the self-evidence of this statement both liberating and reassuring (reassuring, as in "I am not the only one feeling this way"). In the article, as a means for leveling this imbalance, the authors suggest turning to art theory. More specifically, they propose looking at the *Aesthetic Creation Theory*, developed by philosopher Nick Zangwill. The theory provides an understanding of art, focused on the creative agency of the maker (artist, architect, designer, composer etc). What spoke to me is how Zangwill manages to demystify the process of aesthetic creation without taking away the

mystery of artistic intuition. His theory gave me a lot of insights about my own creative process – and how it is fundamentally the same as every other creative process. These insights have helped me to understand and work with aesthetics in ways that are new to me – and hopefully of interest to others. This thesis is an attempt to implement Zangwill's ideas of aesthetic creation in a landscape design project.

Underlying themes

The following themes, *public space* and *resource-aware architecture*, have been some of my primary interests during my studies to become a landscape architect. Together, they make up the foundation from which I developed the project's design task – to repurpose unused space, turning it into an inviting public place.

Public Space

In the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (nr. 11.7), public space is pointed out as a vital aspect for sustainable cities and communities (UN-Habitat 2018). Public space is generally defined as spaces that are open and accessible to anyone, and is associated with many important qualities fundamental to democratic society. For example, good access to high quality public space can strengthen social cohesion, community development, health, well-being, urban mobility, and environment (Andersson 2016; UN-Habitat 2018). Sidewalks, libraries, parks, cafés, and squares are all common examples of public spaces but each place's level of publicness depends on many different factors. As pointed out by John Parkinsson (2013:300), "[...] spaces and places

can have all, some, or just one of the features that we generally label public and yet therefore still be considered ‘public space’’. Factors that can influence the level of publicness are for instance whether you have to buy something to get access; whether the place is full of advertising; whether the park closes its gates at a certain time; or whether you are allowed to sleep on the park bench. Xuefan Zhang and Yanling He (2020) argue that defining public space is important for its administrative legitimacy and that “identifying a public space is a normative activity that shapes power and rights” (Ibid, 750). This is of particular importance for when developing strategies for urban development, as room for public space is best guaranteed when planned for, early on in the planning process (Andersson 2016). As pointed out by Parkinsson (2013), many different kinds of spaces are labeled as public – but based on varying merits. For that reason, I believe it to be important to try to specify what one means when discussing such a wide and elusive topic. In this thesis I build on two understandings of the term: public space as “third place” and as physical manifestation of democratic society. I will develop further on these two themes in the following sections.

The Third Place

‘Third place’ is a concept coined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg (Oldenburg & Brissett 1982). It signifies a place that is not the home and not the workplace – but a (third) kind of place that is “accessible to its inhabitants and appropriated by them as their own” (Ibid 1982:270). A third place can be, for instance, a boule court in a park, a café, or a hair saloon – places

where people regularly meet, casually socialize, and get a respite from the stresses and demands of work and domestic life. In Oldenburg’s definition, a third place is recognized by its relaxed atmosphere and can potentially be any kind of public space where people like to spend time and socialize. According to Oldenburg (Ibid), spending time in third places – and partaking in public life – increases social connectedness and people’s sense of belonging to a community. By extension, this can have positive effects on mental health, especially among people who live alone, like many seniors (Ibid). Seniors are a group of special importance for this specific project as Oliva’s older population is growing, especially in relation to other groups (Generalitat Valenciana & Institut Valencià d’Estadística 2022). Although a lot of research on third places has been focused on privately owned businesses such as bars, cafés, and hair-salons (Rosenbaum 2006; Mehta & Bosson 2010; Wessendorf & Farrer 2021; Lee 2022), Oldenburg’s definition really encompasses any kind of public space where people gather and socialize in this way. In the light of a growing discourse concerning privatization of public space (Németh 2012; Kohn 2013; Montgomery 2016), I find it relevant to apply the concept of third place on places such as the project site of this thesis – where no commercial attractor is to be found - just the site (in this case a park) itself. Surely a good third place can be achieved even in places that lack the option of buying coffee?

Public space as democratic right

Public space (and people’s access to it) is often discussed as a physical manifestation of democratic

society, and as a fundamental democratic right (Goodsell 2003). Tied to the general idea of public space is its function as the arena for interactions between individuals and groups; where identities are developed and get presented; and where the actions of political authority gets discussed and/or contested (Melucci & Avritzer 2000). The idea of public space as a democratic right was maybe most famously (and successfully) promoted by Henri Lefebvre in his book *The Right to the City* (1968), which title would become the slogan of a political movement that stays active and relevant today still (Global Platform for the Right to the City 2023; Right to the City 2023). Lefebvre criticized the increasing urban inequalities and the commodification of urban space (and life) and proclaimed the people’s right “to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete usage of these moments and places” (Lefebvre 1968:78). According to Lefebvre, people’s shaping-power over, and access to the city decrease as privatization of urban space and centralization of economic and political capital increase (Ibid). In his article (also named) *The right to the city* (2008), economic geographer David Harvey revisits Lefebvre’s ideas. He argues that:

The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves

is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights. (Harvey 2008:23–24)

Distribution and access

Proximity is an important aspect of urban society and a large contributing factor to why, globally, more and more people choose to live in cities (World Bank 2018). Living close to workplaces, schools, shops, and other amenities are some of the benefits of urban life – but of course, in real life, these things are not evenly (equally) distributed throughout the city. Harvey argues that “accessibility [...] can be obtained only at a price, and this price is generally equated with the cost of overcoming distance, of using time” (2009:57). Spatial justice signifies equity in accessibility to public services such as healthcare, fire protection, and public space (Nikšič & Sezer 2017). The closer one lives to public services the better one can benefit from them. People living close to firestations have better access to fire protection. People living close to high quality public space have better access to public life and the social benefits it embodies (Oldenburg & Brissett 1982).

The second theme that, together with *public space*, make up the thematic context for this thesis is:

Resourcefulness, repurposing, recycling ...

In the field of landscape architecture, working with reuse and repurposing of existing conditions and structures is not a new concept. Projects such as *Girona's Shores* in Girona, the *Renaturation of River Aire* in Geneva, and *Jardin des Joyeux* in Paris, are all quite well-known examples of landscape projects with the common factor of creative reuse and/or repurposing of the existing. Of course, there are many more projects like these, where the concepts, to a great extent rest on the idea of repurposing the site's existing qualities and materials. I believe this mindset to be one of the virtues of much of contemporary landscape architecture. Facing the challenges of rapidly changing climate and environment, I would argue that it is the duty of anyone who works with our shared, built environment, to really think creatively about how we can move away from the (still dominating) norm of building new – to instead move towards a culture of reconsideration, resourcefulness, repurposing, and recycling. Not only could it help alter the way that we, under capitalism, think of development and progress, but more tangibly, it could foster respect for the existing uses, systems, and historic layers in the landscape that are so easily erased and so hard to recover.



Fig. 2. Photo collage showing the construction of the "Jardin Joyeux" by Wagon Landscaping, a good example of creative reuse and resource-conscious landscape design. By breaking up and leaving the asphalt, the architects turned a carpark into a diverse urban meadow. Photos by: Yann Monel and Wagon Landscape (2015). Some of the photos have been cropped.

Objective

This project has two main objectives. As a design proposal, it is an exploration of how reuse and repurposing can be implemented in order to turn unused space into functional and attractive public space. My aim is for the new space to support the engagement of the local community in the ongoing development of Els Rajolars, hopefully strengthening people's feelings of care towards the area. Theoretically, the ambition is to explore how Nick Zangwill's Aesthetic Creation Theory can be implemented in a landscape project in order to find, develop, and realize an aesthetic concept.

Based on these two objectives, I pose the following research questions:

How can a neighborhood park in Els Rajolars be designed in order to function as community space and a place for public dialogue?

How can the design process be informed by Aesthetic Creation Theory in order to render an aesthetic with the potential to strengthen people's engagement and feelings of care towards the area surrounding Els Rajolars and its future development?

Delimitations

Design > Method

Methodologically, the thesis builds on Aesthetic Creation Theory and how it can support the aesthetic decision-making during the project. The main focus, however, is to come up with a good design rather than to develop a method. As I will explain further in the next chapter, turning Zangwill's theory into a design tool has already been done by landscape architect Alexandra van Zyl (2019).

The Site

The site for my design proposal is a part of the old 'La Salvaora' factory, located on the northernmost corner of Els Rajolars. The site itself was chosen on the merits of being located in the junction where Els Rajolars connects with the most residential buildings. It is also located right at the obvious entrance to Els Rajolars (if one arrives from the more central parts of Oliva). The chosen size of the project site (it does not cover the entire plot) is about 1280 square meters and is a result of the built preconditions as well as my desire to make a quite intimate and familiar space.

Program

The purpose of this thesis is not to answer what functions make for the best public space. This question depends, of course, on what purposes one likes for the site to serve, and is fundamentally a subjective issue. For this reason, I do not try to empirically justify the functional programming of the site. Instead, the program builds on the analysis of existing public space in the area – and what functions I find to be used/appreciated or missing in the area.

Temporality

I consider this a semi-temporary project. It would fill an important purpose, even if would only be allowed to stand for a few years. Should the plans for Els Rajolars, for some reason, be put on hold indefinitely, the neighborhood would still have gained a park that fills its intended purpose. Regarding timing, this project, if realized, should preferably have been built yesterday. The more time people get to spend in the area – before decisions are made – the better.

Safety concerns

The project site has two apparent safety concerns: First, the roofs of the old factory are in a poor condition and are at risk of caving in some places. Secondly, the site is contaminated with asbestos-containing debris from a nearby, caved-in roof. I have not gone into depth trying to evaluate the limitations these hazards might set for the project. However, I know that sanitation of asbestos is underway in other parts of Els Rajolars and my proposal contains fencing that prohibits people from walking under the unsafe roof.

Aesthetic Creation Theory and the creative process

The following chapter is a brief introduction to Nick Zangwill’s Aesthetic Creation Theory (abbreviated to ACT). It is the main theoretical framework for this project and therefore important in order to properly understand the structure presented in the following method chapter

Aesthetic Creation Theory in a nutshell

Aesthetic Creation Theory is an art theory developed by British philosopher Nick Zangwill. The theory builds on a definition of art as intentionally made artifacts, created with the purpose to create certain aesthetic experiences. Zangwill presents and defends his theory in the book *Aesthetic Creation* (Zangwill 2007). Condensed into a single sentence, this is how Zangwill summarizes his theory:

Something is a work of art because and only because someone had an insight that certain aesthetic properties would depend on certain nonaesthetic properties; and because of this, the thing was intentionally endowed with some of those aesthetic properties in virtue of the nonaesthetic properties, as envisaged in the insight. (Ibid:36)

Aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties

This sentence can appear a bit complicated, but with some clarification, it really does sum up the theory well. According to Zangwill (2007), it is the purpose of art to have aesthetic functions – that is – to give aesthetic experiences. These functions are the result

of the artwork’s particular *aesthetic properties*, which, in turn, are created as a result from a certain combination of *non-aesthetic properties* (Ibid.). The aesthetic properties are categorized as either verdictive (beauty or ugliness) or substantive (curiousness, elegance, balance, awkwardness, eeriness ... etc.) (Ibid.). These subjective adjectives are the aesthetic properties of the specific piece of art – and they are, as previously mentioned, the aesthetic result of the applied combination of non-aesthetic properties (Ibid). Zangwill (2007) divides the non-aesthetic properties into three categories: physical properties (shape and size etc.), sensory properties (sound, color, and texture, etc.), and semantic properties (meaning, symbolism, explicit/implicit messaging, etc.). It is worth mentioning that the verdictive property of ugliness is not meant to be solely understood as a lack of aesthetic value or beauty (Ibid.). According to Zangwill’s (2007) definition, ugliness can certainly be used to describe a piece of artwork as ugly – but it is also just another aesthetic quality that can be used for artistic purposes in a larger aesthetic whole (Ibid.). For instance, a dissonant chord can appear ugly, put out of its musical context – but when used in a chord progression, resolving back into the piece’s tonal center, it adds tension, complexity and stylistic character. There could also, for example, be the case where an artist creates a piece of art with the intention to materialize the aesthetic qualities of awkwardness and imbalance. Although being properties more likely to be associated with ugliness, the artwork is aesthetically successful if it accomplishes to embody the desired aesthetic properties, according to Zangwill (2007).

Aesthetic properties		Non-aesthetic properties		
Verdictive or evaluative aesthetic properties	Substantive aesthetic properties	Physical properties	Secondary, sensory properties	Semantic or representational properties
Beauty	Curiousness	Shape	Sound	Meaning
Ugliness	Elegance	Size	Colour	Cultural context
Etc.	Awkwardness	Etc.	Etc.	Historical context
	Etc.			Etc.

Fig. 3. *Different kinds of aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties. Based on a table by van Ettenger et al. (2016) p. 85*

Insight

With insight, Zangwill (2007) specifically means the insight (hypthesization) that certain non-aesthetic properties – once materialized and combined in the right way – will result in certain aesthetic properties. This kind of insight can either be acquired as a sudden stroke of inspiration (maybe as a result of the labor of one’s unconscious mind?) or as a result of experimenting, sketching or other kinds of research, where the purpose is to find non-aesthetic properties that can bring about the intended aesthetic properties (Ibid.). The creative process is, however, never this simple and linear in real life. As Zangwill (2007) puts it himself, “tinkering and experimenting are often part of the artistic process. Insight and execution usually flow into each other and affect each other. It is rare that a work of art stems from just one solitary

insight. Usually, matters are more complex, and many efficacious insights are affected by the evolution of the work as it is constructed.” (2007:45–46)

Aesthetic insight ≠ Aesthetic idea

Zangwill (2007) is clear in his differentiation between *aesthetic insight* and *aesthetic idea*. The insight is personal and experiential and cannot be shared. It is a psychological event that takes place in a certain period of time. Sharing or materializing one’s aesthetic insight requires turning it into distinctive aesthetic ideas (Ibid.). Trying to illustrate Zangwill’s differentiation between insight and idea, I came up with the following example: An artist (who is not a glass blower) has an aesthetic insight involving a glass sculpture and wants to realize it. By translating her insight into a drawing or clay model, the insight is

turned into shareable ideas. A glassblower then helps realize the aesthetic insight of the artist based on the shared aesthetic ideas. Now, the artwork exists. But the finished glass sculpture (or any other piece of art for that matter) can never be a perfect representation of the personal aesthetic insight. Or rather: artworks are representations of the aesthetic insight, materialized by aesthetic ideas. The glass blower who helped make the artwork probably gave some skilled input regarding how to optimize the translation of the aesthetic ideas into glass. The art piece is thereby a collaboration with a skilled craftsman – but the artistic ownership, however, according to Zangwill's definition (2007), would belong to the artist who had the initial insight.

Intention

According to ACT, the *intention* of the artist to create a piece of art - and thereby an aesthetic experience - is what gives the artefact its status as art (Zangwill 2007). For example, art cannot be found in "nature" – even though nature itself can give us a wide array of different aesthetic experiences (Ibid.). A person can however, as exemplified by Zangwill (2007:123) find a beautiful piece of driftwood - previously untouched by human hands - and with intention make some kind of intervention to that piece of wood (be it its physical appearance or its context) and thereby giving it an aesthetic property beyond that which it possessed before being found laying on the beach. First then could it be considered art, regardless of its previous aesthetic value.

Supplementary but essential conditions

Zangwill adds two, what he calls, 'supplementary, essential conditions' for his definition of aesthetic creation. The first one is the condition of success. According to Zangwill (2007), it is crucial that the envisioned aesthetic properties are successfully realized by the nonaesthetic properties – at least to a predominant extent. However, the condition of success is probably not meant to be taken too strictly. It is, after all, a very subjective and difficult thing to judge. Zangwill (2007:40-41) writes that "[even] 'unfunny' jokes are somewhat funny, otherwise they have not succeeded in being a joke. Similarly, works of art are not all as good as they were intended to be. But no work of art is a complete failure."

The second 'supplementary, essential condition' is that of 'non-deviant causal chains' (Ibid.). This condition should probably be regarded in a similar way as the fine print of a contract; important for some rare situations, but probably not pivotal for the overall understanding of the terms. The condition means that the insight has to be realized in the 'right', causal order (Ibid.). For instance, an artwork cannot be made by accident - even if the end result would prove to be the exact same as if it was done intentionally (Ibid.). In short: the realized artwork must have been made intentionally.

An inclusive definition of art

Zangwill (2007) argues that a general theory of art should be indifferent to the distinctions between 'high art' and 'low art', and therefore, ACT does not rely on any categorization between, for example,

artistic painting and decorative painting – as long as the intention is to create aesthetic experience. Many theories separate between art and craft but Zangwill (2007) defines art as a subclass of craft and argues that only if crafts had no aesthetic ambitions could such separation be viable. Within the theory, all kinds of aesthetic creation are considered the same way. Handicrafts, architecture, painting, sculpture, music, dance, and different kinds of design-work all have functions that include aesthetic experience. This means that we can describe the process of creating landscape architecture using Zangwill's theory (Ibid.).

Aesthetic Creation Theory and landscape architecture

In their paper, *Aesthetic Creation Theory and Landscape Architecture* (2016), Rudi van Ettger, Ian H. Thompson, and Vera Vicenzotti propose an implementation of Zangwill's theory of art into the field of landscape architecture, its theory, practice, and pedagogy. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, they start off by addressing the turn, away from aesthetics, that landscape architecture has taken in the last few decades. This change, they argue, has resulted in a discourse and profession focused more on functionality and sustainability, rather than aesthetic qualities (Ibid.). This trend can be noted in Ian Thompson's article *Ecology, community and delight: a trivalent approach to landscape education* (2002), where he shows that many landscape architects prefer to frame their work as "design" rather than artistic or aesthetic practice. Van Ettger et al. (2016) argue that the ideas stemming from ACT can be useful for both procedural and substantive theorization of landscape architecture, for instance: how aesthetic

decision-making and ownership is distributed in collaborations (procedural theory) or in the aesthetic evaluation of already built landscapes (substantive theory). This, argues van Ettger et al. (2016), makes ACT helpful for practicing landscape architects who want to improve their awareness and argumentation regarding their aesthetic decision making.

Critiques

Zangwill (2007) goes into depth, in his book, defending his theory against many of the thinkable counterarguments that would be likely to come from the most prominent rivaling art theories. These theories can generally be divided into four categories: formalist theory, expression theory, institution theory and imitation theory (Carroll 1999). I will not dive deeper into all of these theories – nor further recapitulate what Zangwill has to say about them. It can be said, however, that Zangwill's general critique of all of them is that they are extensional theories – that is – theories that explain what art is by identifying *things that are considered art* (Zangwill 2007). For example, institutional theories – also known as audience theories – explain art as something that has been granted its status as art by prominent institutions of the art world, such as gallerists, curators, and critics (Carroll 1999). Such a theory can definitely give an account of things that *are* art, however, they don't explain *what* it was, in the nature of these artifacts, that made the gallerist find liking in them in the first place. Audience theory is, however, interesting as it can reveal processes of how trends in style and taste develop (Ibid.).

A valid critique of implementing ACT in landscape architecture, pointed out by van Ettger et al. (2016), is that good landscape architecture should first and foremost be concerned with its users' needs and preferences – not the lofty, artistic ambitions of individual architects. I would argue that most landscape architects have similar values regarding their work in relation to its users. This is, again, clearly supported by Ian Thompson's (2002) research into attitudes and values within the landscape architect community. As a result of Zangwill's minimalist, almost barebone definition of art, one would be forgiven for assuming that he believes that the audience is irrelevant. This, I argue, is however not the case. There is definitely room for an audience, as well as for architectural programming and functionality within Aesthetic Creation Theory. As mentioned before, Zangwill (2007) includes design and crafts in his definition of art. This strongly suggests his awareness of an audience as design and crafts typically has a practical dimension that relates to its intended user. If a design would be too focused on aesthetics and fail to meet the needs of its users, then it has failed as design (Ibid.). A design that fails in its functionality has not fulfilled its aesthetic insight (that includes combining aesthetics and functionality) and is therefore also failing at being art (Ibid.). There are also, I would argue, implicit signs of an imagined audience in Zangwill's "success condition", which, as previously mentioned, is one of the fundamental criteria of Zangwill's theory. The realization of the aesthetic properties must, to some extent, be successful in order for art to have happened (Ibid.). Although not said explicitly, this condition suggests that someone makes this judgment; the artist

herself; the imagined critical audience in her head; or the visitors at the gallery. This is left undefined. Nonetheless, just like in landscape architecture, someone has to decide whether the artistic insight or design has been successful or not.

It is probably not too wild a guess that some landscape architects might take issue with the idea that landscape architecture should be considered a form of art. This would be understandable since the reality of the day-to-day work for most landscape architects has more to do with technical and practical problem-solving than aesthetic insights and artistic creativity. It is not my intention – nor do I understand it as being the intention of van Ettger et al. to argue for a total reimagining of landscape architecture as art. It should rather be understood as a tool to help redress the diminished status of aesthetics. This does not take away from the equal importance of the practical and ecological aspects of landscape architecture and its practice.

Aesthetic creation theory - previous application

This project is inspired by Alexandra van Zyl and her brilliant master's thesis in landscape architecture called *Tribute to a glacier: designing a landscape for melancholic contemplation* (2019). In her thesis, van Zyl develops a tool based on ACT, in order to test the practical application of Zangwill's theory within landscape architecture. Van Zyl's work includes an inspiring design proposal but the thesis, I would argue, is primarily concerned with developing a method. In a nutshell, the project is an homage to the melting 'Haupapa/Tasman Glacier' located in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Van Zyl (2019) hypothesizes that people experience 'environmental nostalgia' when confronted with inevitable and irreversible changes in the landscape (and climate). These feelings, she suggests, can be fertile ground for growing people's desire to get engaged and act on environmental issues. Van Zyl's hypothesis was confirmed through a series of in-depth interviews with local stakeholders and park visitors. The functional program of the project was to create a footpath, making the hike to the foot of the glacier more accessible (Ibid). This could, as pointed out by van Zyl and van Ettger, "[...] have been taken on as a civil engineering project by constructing roads and paths. [...] but it was differentiated from an engineering project by its aesthetic aim to introduce footholds for an aesthetic experience of melancholy and contemplation [...]" (2021:55).

In order to achieve a design that could potentially put the park visitor in a state of melancholic contemplation, van Zyl created a design methodology based on ACT. Van Zyl's design tool divides the process into three separate stages, *insight*, *intention*, and *action* (Ibid.). The first phase, *insight*, consists of developing insight into the aesthetic/non-aesthetic dependencies in landscapes of melancholia and contemplation. For van Zyl, this meant a literature review of landscape-related melancholia and contemplation. Entering the second phase, *intention*, she conducted a content analysis of the texts from the first phase. In practice, this meant identifying different aesthetic qualities, mentioned in the texts, and pairing them with the non-aesthetic properties that the authors had subjectively associated with them. This resulted in a

body of collectively associated dependencies between aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties. Van Zyl then began translating the non-aesthetic properties into more tangible 'design devices'. An example of this kind of translation, given by van Zyl and van Ettger (2021) is the following: The wanted aesthetic quality is attention to absence → this could be prompted by the nonaesthetic property of a void → in the context of landscape, this could be translated into the design device of a bench with a view over something that used to be - e.g. a receding glacier. Finally, the third phase, *action*, consisted of a rather traditional, iterative design process where the design devices got applied to the specific landscape in order to achieve the aesthetic insight (van Zyl & van Etteger 2021).

Structure based on Aesthetic Creation Theory

Aesthetic Creation Theory is in itself not a method – it describes how aesthetic creation happens. But by structuring my creative process after Zangwill's theory, I aim to show how the aesthetics of this project was achieved – and how it can be traced through the process.

As mentioned, Zangwill's theory has previously been reinterpreted and adapted to work as a design methodology, by van Zyl (2019). My thesis is inspired by the way van Zyl uses Zangwill's theory, but there are also some instances where we have different ideas on how to apply it. Primarily, these differences has to do with what activities we connect to which phase. Van Zyl and van Ettger (2021) argue that ACT – and thereby the creative process – can be divided into three separate moments, *insight*, *intention* and *action*. I would argue that Zangwill's theory really has two moments: a moment of *insight*, followed by *intentional action* of materializing the insight. Even though I find it to be a step away from Zangwill's theory – to separate *intention* from *action* – I still like the three-part division made by van Zyl (2019). I think it suggests an understanding of *intentionality* as a part of the process that can be worked on and improved. Sometimes, after having spent some time working on a creative project, one might realize the 'true' meaning and intention behind that which one has been working on. Then, with an even more developed intention one might re-work the project in order to make it more in line with the developed intention. This, I argue, would be to really work

actively with intention. This way of understanding intention as something that can develop and change throughout the process is in line with Zangwill's (2007) description of an iterative creative process. My way of understanding and using intention is that it encompasses everything that is needed for the intended aesthetic insight to be successfully realised. Therefore, I think it deserves to be considered and used as its own separate phase.

Inspired by van Zyl's ACT-based design method, I chose to also divide my method into three separate parts or phases. I have named these phases *insight*, *intention* and *translation*. The *translation phase* is similar to what van Zyl (2019) refers to as *action*. I decided on this alternative nomenclature as I think it better describes the specific activities I apply during the last phase – that is, to *translate* the aesthetic insight into shareable design ideas and physical design interventions.

Insight phase

The insight phase is focused on finding the artistic insight (or concept) for the project. As previously mentioned, the insight is the hypothesis posed by the artist (or landscape architect, in my case) that a certain combination of properties (color, size, shape, context, rhythm, symbolism, etc.) will render certain aesthetic properties – and by extension – aesthetic experience (e.g. the feeling of anxiety and existential dread expressed in Edvard Munch's *The Scream*). The insight phase is therefore the part of the process that builds up to – and hopefully brings about – an artistic insight. For me, this meant building a familiarity and

understanding of the landscape, solid enough for me to feel that the insight would be truly rooted in the landscape (and my experience of it). Therefore, the insight chapter consists of the project's **context and analysis**.

Aesthetic Creation Theory does not provide any rules for how an aesthetic insight should be found/created/had. I think architecture generally has to be well suited to its specific context in order to be fully successful. It therefore makes sense to me that a concept that is supposed to help achieve successful architecture also should be derived from said, specific context. I could of course have picked any concept at random, without ever having seen the site and the landscape it belongs to. But it is then, however, less likely that this concept, picked at random, would prove itself helpful for the other purposes of the design. Following this logic, I decided to not start actively "looking for" my aesthetic insight before having spent some proper time analysing the area.

The insight phase also included a study trip where I visited a **reference project**. The intention was to get inspiration and to learn from a similar project and situation.

Intention phase

Secondly, the intention phase is a theoretical exploration of the found insight, with the purpose to build an understanding of the aesthetic/non-aesthetic dependencies of the insight. Practically, this phase is a **literature reading** on the topic of the insight (in my case, *place-related curiosity*).

Translation phase

Finally, the phase which I call translation is where the aesthetic/non-aesthetic dependencies of the insight is combined with the site's functional program. This translation turns the personal insight into shareable, site-specific, aesthetic ideas or design interventions. An **iterative sketch process** is applied in order to manage the complex combination of spatial and theoretical information. This phase includes everything relating to the final **design proposal and its representation**.

(The abovementioned, underlined chapters are further explained in the methods chapter.)

A phenomenological approach

Phenomenology and phenomenological research centers around the lived, subjective experience of the observer (Seamon 2022). In order to take my inherently subjective (and personal) experience of Els Rajolars and turn it into useful and shareable information, I chose to adopt a phenomenological approach for my analysis. The following part is a short introduction to phenomenology and some methods – all related to walking – that build on the experience of the (walking) observer.

Sensing [...] invests the [observed] quality with a living value, grasps it first in its signification for us, for this weighty mass that is our body, and as a result sensing always includes a reference to the body. The problem is to understand these strange relations woven between the parts of the landscape, or from the landscape to me as an embodied subject [...] Sensing is this living communication with the world that makes it present to us as the familiar place of our life. The perceived object and the perceiving subject owe their thickness to sensing.

This passage is taken from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's prolific book on phenomenology, *Phenomenology of Perception* (2012:52–53). Here he speaks of the fundamentals of 'embodied phenomenology', a philosophy focused on perception and which identifies the human body as the primary interface for experiencing the world (Nixon 2020). In this

view, consciousness and body are one - inseparable. The consciousness relies on, or rather, *is* the same thing as the sensing of the body. As stated in the last sentence of the quote, both the perceived object and the perceiving subject are a result of the sensory awareness of the body. This understanding of the body as a vessel that simultaneously moves through, experiences, understands, and interacts with the world, is what Merleau-Ponty calls the *lived body*. Building research on different phenomenological methods is popular within several fields of research. Environmental psychology, human geography, and landscape research are some of the fields where the use of phenomenological methods has been particularly prominent (Seamon 2022:3).

Walking

Commonly used phenomenological research methods – especially in the field of landscape design and research – are different kinds of “walking methodologies”. By walking through a landscape (following Merleau-Ponty), the lived body becomes immersed in the subjective objectiveness that appears as the observing subject and the observed object meet. The methods used in this kind of research can vary greatly, from participatory “self-narrated” walks (see Costa & Coles 2019), where users and local stakeholders record their experiences while walking; to less structured walks, where the researchers themselves explore the landscape and record their own experience and response to it (see Qviström & Saltzman 2006). Whatever the approach, by walking the landscape it becomes relational to the body, thus perceivable to the senses. Or as Macpherson (2016:425) puts it, “walking

methods do not simply ‘uncover’ people’s responses to landscape, they open particular relational spaces of ‘people-landscape’”. Similarly to the way in which Merleau-Ponty argues for the interconnectedness between subject and object, Macpherson argues that a walking methodology is simultaneously affecting - and affected by - the landscape. This means that the researcher has to be aware of both the preconditions of the given landscape (distance, terrain, walkability, etc.), as well as the embodied disposition of the one who is walking/experiencing the landscape (fitness, disabilities, age, gender, lived experiences, etc.) (ibid.). In short, the experience of the landscape is influenced by the walk - and the walk is influenced by the landscape.

Serial vision as analytical and representational tool

One of the most well-known walking methods used for documenting and analyzing urban landscapes is the “serial vision”, developed by Gordon Cullen. The method focuses on the experience of the observer in relation to the surrounding landscape. Although not explicitly described by Cullen as a phenomenological method, I argue that the serial vision methodology is a suitable tool for phenomenological research as it focuses on the moving body’s position in the world.

Cullen introduced his serial vision method in the book *The Concise Townscape* from 1961. He identifies three aspects that are essential for how people experience their environment: *motion*, *position*, and *content*. He argues that by building an awareness of these factors, planners and architects can make the city (or any landscape really) more enjoyable for the people

who are in it. With motion, Cullen (1961) means the motion of the perceiving subjects; the people moving through the city going about their business, moving from point A to point B. From a visual/optical (and phenomenological) perspective, the human organism experiences this movement as the relation between “the existing view and the emerging view” (Ibid:9). With place, the second aspect, Cullen means the body’s experience and reaction to its surrounding. More specifically he means the experience of enclosure and exposure which dictates our spatial and positional awareness relating to the room; I am outside of it; I am entering it; I am inside it. The third aspect, content, is simply the characteristics of any given environment, its scale, texture, rhythm, variation, color, etc. Cullen writes that:

[...] there is an art of relationship just as there is an art of architecture. Its purpose is to take all the elements that go to create the environment: buildings, trees, nature, water, traffic, advertisements, and so on, and to weave them together in such a way that drama is released. For a city is a dramatic event in the environment.”(p7-8).

In Cullen’s opinion, the city is – or should be – similar to a theatrical performance being played for an audience; a dramaturgy of the landscape – as perceived by the people moving through it. In order to visualize the abovementioned movement through the landscape, Cullen developed the method that he called serial vision. In short, this method consists of walking through the landscape; documenting the view

ahead and thereby creating a sequence of snapshots from the pedestrian's point of view. Cullen calls the snapshots *revelations*, something that speaks about the function he intended for the pictures to have (1961). The locations from which the chosen revelations are depicted should be chosen with care so that they highlight the thresholds between the current view and the emerging view; *revealing* the spatial dynamics that are characteristic of the given walk. This curating of vistas allows for a condensed visualization of the defining moments of the movement through the landscape, as experienced by the maker of the serial vision. It should be clarified that Cullen does not give a recipe for how to analyze or design the city. Instead, the serial vision is presented as a representational tool for making an analysis or design more understandable for the reader/viewer. In order for the serial vision to be easily read, he also points out the importance of marking the route and the viewpoints for the revelations in the plan drawing.

There are many practitioners who argue that hand sketching is the most effective tool for communicating and conveying visual ideas (Nute 2021). During my time as a landscape architecture student, the sketching part of the serial vision (visualization-) method has often been pointed out as a central part of the method. Drawing by hand almost felt like a requirement for the method to be successful. I would, however, guess that Cullen resorted to hand-drawn sketches simply because it was the quickest and most effective method available at his time, to document his walks. Furthermore, Cullen uses both photos and sketching for his method in *The Concise Townscape*, why it

is hard to imagine him opposing any technological tools of today being used, that could facilitate the documentation process. I have chosen to work with photos instead of sketching as I feel like it makes the walk more natural and less disrupted by the long pauses that comes with sketching.

Methods

Walks

Gordon Cullen's serial vision methodology is used to document and represent my experience of being in and walking through the landscape of Els Rajolars. I decided to arrange the documented walks so that they showed the most obvious routes that lead to the project site. The documented walks all took place the same day, the 25th of February, 2022, during daytime. I did, however walk around in the area, and the rest of Oliva for at least two hours per day, for three weeks. This time spent in the landscape (about half of it before the 25th of February) made me aware of a lot of aspects that enriched the documented walks.

During the walks, I tried to stay open and write down whatever came to my mind – but sometimes my head felt kind of blank. At those moments it was helpful to remind myself of the three main aspects of Cullen's method, *movement*, *place*, and *content*. Thinking about my movement, and whether it was free, directed, or restricted proved to be particularly fruitful in order to find the aesthetic insight for this particular project.

Site inventory and analysis

Because of legal and insurance-related reasons, I didn't get access to visit the project site until the very end of my stay in Oliva. I did, however, spend a lot of time trying to get a look over the edge of the perimeter wall. The eagerness (and struggle) to see the site was a part of the reason why curiosity became the aesthetic theme for the project. When I finally got access to the site, I had already decided on curiosity

as my aesthetic insight. This allowed me to adapt my site analysis and focus especially on conditions, artifacts, and phenomena that triggered my curiosity.

Public Space Analysis

To identify what kind of public space is needed in the area, an analysis focusing on the access and quality of existing public space was carried out. The analysis is focused on the neighborhoods La Carrasca and Sant Francesc, both of which border to Els Rajolars and the project site. The analysis was done by identifying and evaluating the access and quality of public spaces such as streetscapes, squares and playgrounds in the area.

Contextual and historical information

The documents that were put together for the participants of the European competition have served as a base for the historic and contextual information about Els Rajolars and Oliva. Other sources used to learn more about Oliva was literature of local history and the municipality's website and Facebook page. Updated statistics on demography etc. were obtained from the website of the Valencian Generalitat (the government of the autonomous region of Valencia).

Study of reference project

As this project is my first experience working with a landscape situated outside of Sweden, it felt important to find at least one good Spanish reference project, with a similar purpose and situation as mine, to visit and learn from. Working in another country means that there are differences to be aware of – not only in climate, topography, and vegetation et.c. but

also in how people live, socialize, and relate to their surrounding landscape. Luckily, I came across the 'Zona Santiago' schoolyard and community space in Valencia City, just an hour's drive away from Oliva. The project's purpose and program had many similarities to my own project, making it a very useful reference. The main difference between Zona Santiago and my project site is the level of publicness. I want to propose a space that is always open whereas the Zona Santiago is a semi-public room that primarily functions as schoolyard and space for organized activities. I visited the site on the 24th of february, 2022.

Literature reading on curiosity

In order to deepen and formalize my aesthetic insight I needed a better understanding of what curiosity really is. For that reason, I primarily read about different philosophical views of the subject. I also looked at research that specifically investigate curiosity in relation to landscape and care. The following themes are the main topics I explored and present in the intention chapter:

Curiosity and questions

Ilhan Inan's book *The Philosophy of Curiosity* (2012) provided insights about the connection between curiosity and questions; how it is a prerequisite for curiosity to happen to first become aware of that which one is unaware. He also draws on the connection between curiosity and interest. According to Inan, our curiosity often reach for that which overlaps with our current interests.

Curiosity and care

Michel Foucault's (1998) thoughts on care as an inextricable quality of curiosity was the perfect reassurance that curiosity could indeed be used as a means to invoke a sense of care in people, towards something – in this case a landscape and its future. Marianna Papastephanou's (2022) critique of Foucault's abovementioned ideas further enriched my understanding of curiosity, its etymology, and its meaning through history. This revealed some of the more problematic aspects of curiosity. History is filled with examples of ruthless 'exploring' and colonization, much done in the name of curiosity. This was a good reminder to reflect on my role as an architect coming from outside, imagining new futures for a landscape based on my own curiosity.

Landscape and curiosity

Geographer Richard Phillips' (2015) research on curiosity and care in relation to landscape provided many insights that were useful for my design work. For instance, he shows that landscape-related curiosity can be triggered by juxtaposing the familiar and the unfamiliar, by highlighting or recontextualizing found artifacts, or by encouraging activities that put the landscape in a new light. All of this informed my aesthetic insight and my design choices.

Cues to care

The concept of 'cues to care', first coined by Joan Nassauer (1995), has been interpreted by landscape architects such as Martí Franch (2018), as a method for changing the perspective and usage of a landscape

by adding small interventions – or signifiers of care – to the existing situation. For this project, cues to care has been interpreted and utilized in a similar way; as a for resource-efficient way of showing that a landscape is being cared for.

Design process

The final design proposal is based on the creative insight; the analysis that led up to it; the theory on curiosity that deepened the insight; and finally, a long sketch process to combine the program with the creative insight – turning it into buildable design interventions. According to Zangwill's theory of aesthetic creation, the creative insight is experiential and personal and can only be communicated to others after having first been translated into shareable, aesthetic ideas – what I chose to call *design interventions*. This translation, from personal and abstract to physical and shareable, was done by combining three different elements: the desired functions from the program, the non-aesthetic qualities of the insight, and the project site's specific pre-conditions (see diagram on next page). The translation was done through sketching and could be described as a rather intuitive process of adding and developing design interventions to make them work both as individual features and as parts of a whole. I predominantly sketched in models, both physical and digital (I prefer to design all three dimensions at the same time). Being able to revisit the site, three-dimensionally, in a model, felt extra important as my time on the actual site was so limited.

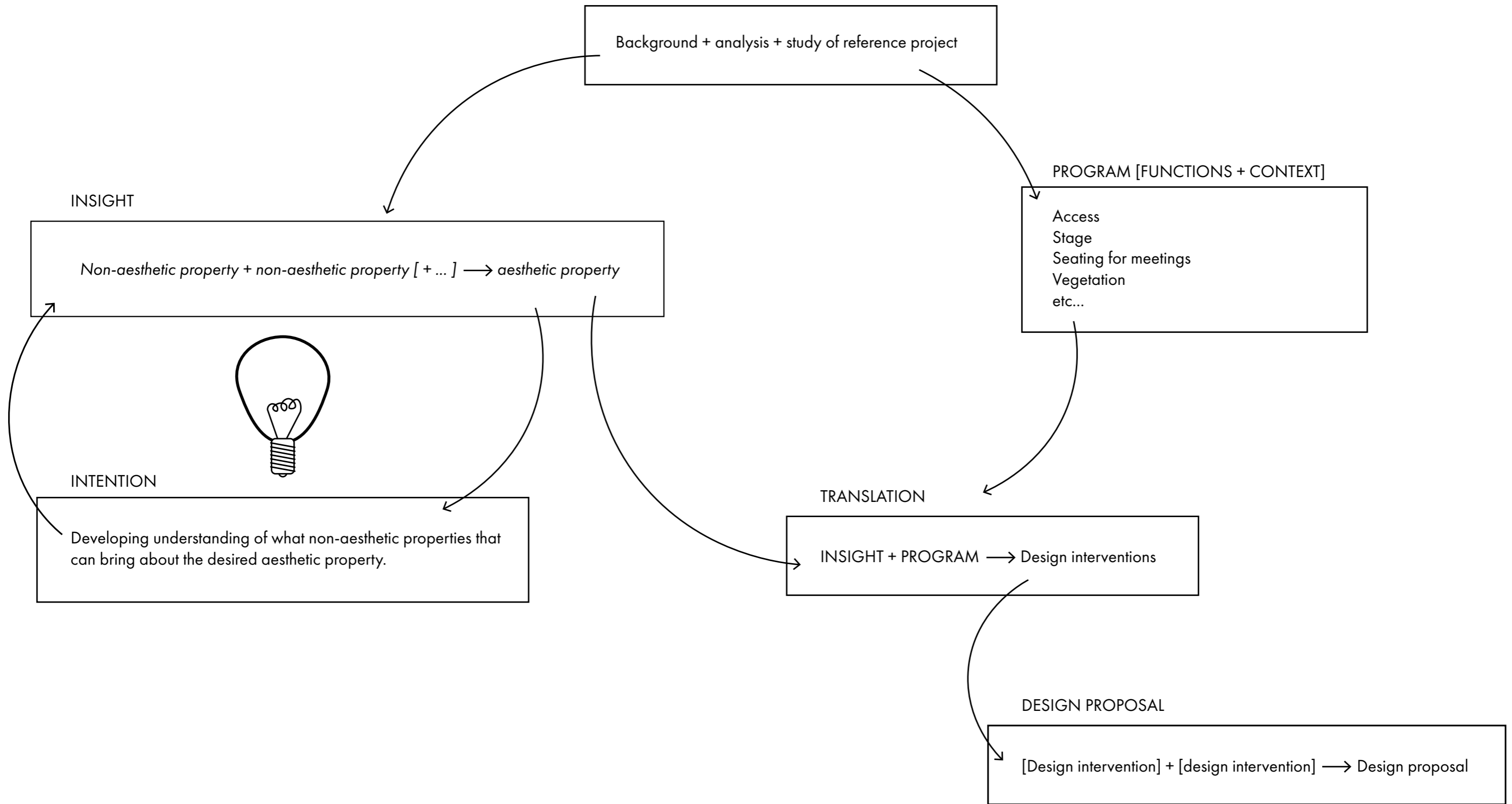


Fig. 4. Schematic representation of my creative process informed by Aesthetic Creation Theory.



Insight

*Fig. 5. A spontaneous meadow in Els Rajolars.
The La Salvaora factory in the background.*



Context

Oliva

Oliva is a town on the Spanish east coast, in the autonomous region of Valencia. The old city center sits on the foot of the Santa Ana mountain and spreads down onto the plain. Besides the town center, Oliva also has a stretch of urbanisations along the coastline, close to the beach. About 70 percent of the housing in the coastal townships are summer residences used by people living in the city center. Oliva's total number of permanent inhabitants is around 25000 people, but the number increases dramatically during the tourist season. (Generalitat Valenciana & Institut Valencià d'Estadística 2022)

The project site and its surroundings

The project site is a part of the old La Salvaora factory, a former brick factory located on the northern border of Els Rajolers. Els Rajolers borders to the neighborhoods 'La Carrasca', 'Sant Francesc', and 'Ciudad Jardín' ('Garden City'), three quite different neighborhoods in terms of socioeconomic situation. La Ciudad Jardín mostly consists of detached villas with lush gardens and pools whereas the other two areas are constituted of attached or multifamily housing. Some parts of La Carrasca and Sant Francesc are quite run-down with a noticeable amount of empty houses. Especially in La Carrasca, there is a striking amount of vacant houses with old signs saying 'se vende', meaning 'for sale'. There are no real clear-cut borders between the neighborhoods and La Carrasca is probably most understood as a small part of the larger Sant Francesc area.

SPAIN



Fig. 6. Map showing the project site in relation to Els Rajolers, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the rest of Oliva.

500m
1:10000 A3



Oliva history

Oliva and its surrounding landscape have been populated by different groups throughout history (and prehistory) which all have left more or less noticeable traces in the landscape, the culture, and the town itself. There are archeological remains from Iberians and Romans, the last of which left irrigation systems that to some extent are still in use today (Antoni Esteve Blay & Vicente Barreres Martínez 2016). Oliva's Muslim heritage can be found almost everywhere, in architecture, language and placenames. Especially in the El Raval neighborhood where most of the "Moorish" (as the Muslim population was called by the Christians) population was forced to live from the 13th century, when the Christians reconquered the Iberian peninsula, until 1609 when most of the Muslims in Spain were ultimately expelled by the king Felipe III (Ibid.). Oliva lost a big part of its population and it would take a century before the town had the same number of inhabitants as before the expulsion (Ibid).

Economic sectors influencing the landscape

Today, the service sector is Oliva's largest sector, both regarding economy and employment (Generalitat Valenciana & Institut Valencià d'Estadística 2022). In second place comes the industrial sector, followed by agriculture. The service sector is, to a large extent, connected to the city's tourism. The tourism industry has, however, had a relatively small influence on the city's appearance. Unlike many other towns along the Costa Blanca, most of Oliva's seafront is free from hotel complexes and highrises. This is due to (or thanks to) the city's cautious planning regulations during the



Fig. 7. Aerial photograph from the 1960's. The mountains provide generous amounts of ground water, making the plains surrounding Oliva ideal for orange groves. Unknown photographer.



Fig. 8. Aerial photograph from the 1980's showing one of Oliva's coastal urbanizations. Unknown photographer .

mid 20th century (Quesada 2022). Instead, most large hotels are situated in Oliva Nova, an urbanization and popular golf resort, just south of Oliva Pueblo. Oliva's active industries are predominantly located in an area, south of the city, not far east of Els Rajolars. The agricultural sector was until the 60's the cornerstone of Oliva's economy, with a production almost entirely

based on monocultural citrus cropping (Antoni Esteve Blay & Vicente Barreres Martínez 2016). Most of these orchards are still standing but growing competition with the global citrus market has made much of the small-scale farming unprofitable (Wong & Navarro 2014). Because of this, a lot of the crops fall to the ground and are left to rot. However, there are citrus plantations still in production and the orange plantations are indeed a characteristic and active feature of the agricultural landscape surrounding Oliva. About 36% of the municipality's surface area is covered by orange groves (Generalitat Valenciana & Institut Valencià d'Estadística 2022). Historically, raisins, sugarcane, and white mulberry (for silk production) has been cornerstones of Oliva's economy, and it was first in the second half of the 19th century, as the silk production started to decline, that oranges and rice became the major crops of the region (Antoni Esteve Blay & Vicente Barreres Martínez 2016).

Landscape characteristics

The mountain ranges that stretch along the Valencian coast, collect a lot of precipitation. This creates generous amounts of both ground- and surface water in the plains below, which, in turn, creates a landscape that is relatively lush and green. An example of this is the Natura 2000 park 'Marjal de Pego-Oliva' which is a freshwater delta and marshland, located just south of Oliva, previously used for rice farming. The park has a rich birdlife and is often promoted as a must-

Fig. 10. To the right: Working orange pickers in the 1960's. Photo by: Navarro



Fig. 9. Historical photo of workers in the rice fields of La Marjal. Unknown photographer.



see excursion destination in tourist brochures etc. Oliva's beaches are, however, probably the greatest tourist attraction of all. Significant for Oliva's coastal landscape are the preserved sand dunes that stretch along the beach line. Except for being an important ecosystem, the dunes also provide ecosystem services in the form of protection against storms and inundation. (Quesada 2022)

Traditional celebrations activate Oliva's public spaces
 Oliva is a town where the people seem to cherish their traditions and public celebrations. There are about a dozen major traditional celebrations, besides Christmas, New Year, and Easter, that take place in the town throughout the year (Ajuntament d'Oliva 2023). The two largest and most well-known celebrations are 'Moros y cristianos' and 'Las Fallas', both involving several days of consecutive celebrations. As these public celebrations often take place in the streets and squares of Oliva, they provide a steady and recurring activation of the public space. The celebration of moros y cristianos includes large parades, historic re-enactments and particular gastronomic traditions. The preparation for the festivities engage people throughout the entire year. Las Fallas is similar in that it consists of several days of celebration – and with a build-up of pre-celebrations, months in advance. During Fallas, some women wear traditional "fallera" dresses, large communal paellas are made in the streets, and impressive displays of fireworks are traditional. Most characteristic for Fallas are, however, the elaborate papier-mâché sculptures, called just "fallas", that for a few days decorate the streets and squares of the town before being set ablaze in the final day of the celebrations, known as

"La cremà". The preparations and celebrations of Fallas are divided by neighborhoods and organized by parties called (surprisingly) "Fallas". A final example of a local tradition that activates the public space of Oliva is "Calderas de San Antoni" translating to "The cauldrons of Saint Antoni". With a history stemming back to the 17th century, this tradition has evolved and centers, today, around the making of a certain rice and legume soup. The soup is made in large cauldrons, rowed up along the street of San Vicente, and shared with anyone who wants to participate. (Ajuntament d'Oliva 2023)

Fig. 11. Above to the right: The street temporarily becomes a communal kitchen during the festivities of "Calderas de Sant Antoni". The cauldrons filled with rice soup feed around 4500 people (Ajuntament d'Oliva 2023).

Fig. 12. Below: Parade during the celebrations of "Moros y Cristianos" in the 1980's. Photo by: Vicent Sifres



Fig. 13. Above: Long tables along the Carrer de Sant Vicent Ferrer during the festivities of "Calderas de Sant Antoni". Foto by: Ajuntament d'Oliva



Fig. 14. A giant "falla" sculpture, at least 20 meters high, from the Fallas celebrations of 2019 in Valencia.

Els Rajolars - history

Els Rajolars is an industrial area, now mostly inactive and partially in ruin. The industries, which cover about 18 hectares, were almost entirely focused on brick and tile production. The first factories were established in the mid-1940s when a building boom created a great need for building materials (Ajuntament d'Oliva, European España 2018). The location was ideal for this kind of industry because of its proximity to high-quality clay, fresh water, and a dry microclimate perfect for drying ceramic products before burning (Ibid). Further back in history, the area and its climate was utilized for drying fruits, like grapes and figs. This gave the area the nickname 'El Sequer' (a 'sequer' is the kind of shed and drying bed used for this process). There were also sanatoriums located in 'El Sequer' as the dry air was considered beneficial for people suffering from tuberculosis (Ibid). Ceramic production peaked in the 70s before gradually diminishing and coming to an almost complete halt by the end of the century (Ibid). In the 1980s, having foreseen this decline, the municipality stratified a comprehensive plan for the area that envisaged a transformation of Els Rajolars into a residential area with two new schools (Ibid). Nothing in this plan has since been realized and the area has been mostly left untouched.



Fig. 15. Els Rajolars in the late 1970's. Bricks ready to be shipped. Photo by: Levante



Fig. 16. Factory workers in the late 1950's. Photo by: Salvador Forrat



Fig. 17. Construction of the chimneys. Photo by: Javier Garrido



Fig. 18. (Far left) Workers and the equipment they used to extract the clay from the nearby mining sites. Unknown photographer.

Fig. 19. (Left) Processed clay being turned into roof tiles. Unknown photographer.



Fig. 20. The factory building to the right is the only one still in use. "Anticfang" still use the same techniques for their ceramic production as in the factory's heyday. Aerial photo from 1967. Unknown photographer.

Els Rajolars - uses today

All the industry in Els Rajolars is now inactive, with the exception for one factory, 'Anticfang', that still makes artisan tiles using traditional methods. Most of the other factories are vacant and/or in a state of

ruin. Other examples of active businesses are garden nurseries, caravan parks and small contracting businesses. Integrated into the old industrial complex are also some residential houses. About twenty people live in the area at the moment.

Els Rajolars - European competition

In 2019, was Els Rajolars one of the sites for the 15th edition of European, an architecture and planning competition that invites European cities to participate with competition sites. The theme of that year's competition was productive cities and the specific competition brief for Els Rajolars was a collaboration between the municipality of Oliva and the European organization. The competition brief asked the participating design teams to submit strategic proposals that would turn Els Rajolars into a new urban hub with better connections to the rest of the urban fabric. The proposals should also define new building typologies that would repurpose and/or harmonize with the existing structures. The only structures in Els Rajolars that cannot be touched, due to their heritage protection status, are the ten, around forty meters high, chimneys. All the other industrial buildings could be demolished or repurposed according to the design brief. Furthermore, the proposals should also provide solutions to the municipality's new vision for the area, focusing on education and job-creation connected to the sectors of agri-foods, ceramics, and tourism. (Ajuntament d'Oliva, European España 2018)

The brief was complex (and surely demanding) but generated a lot of interesting and visionary proposals. The winning team has since been collaborating with the municipality on the early stages of making a new comprehensive plan for Els Rajolars.

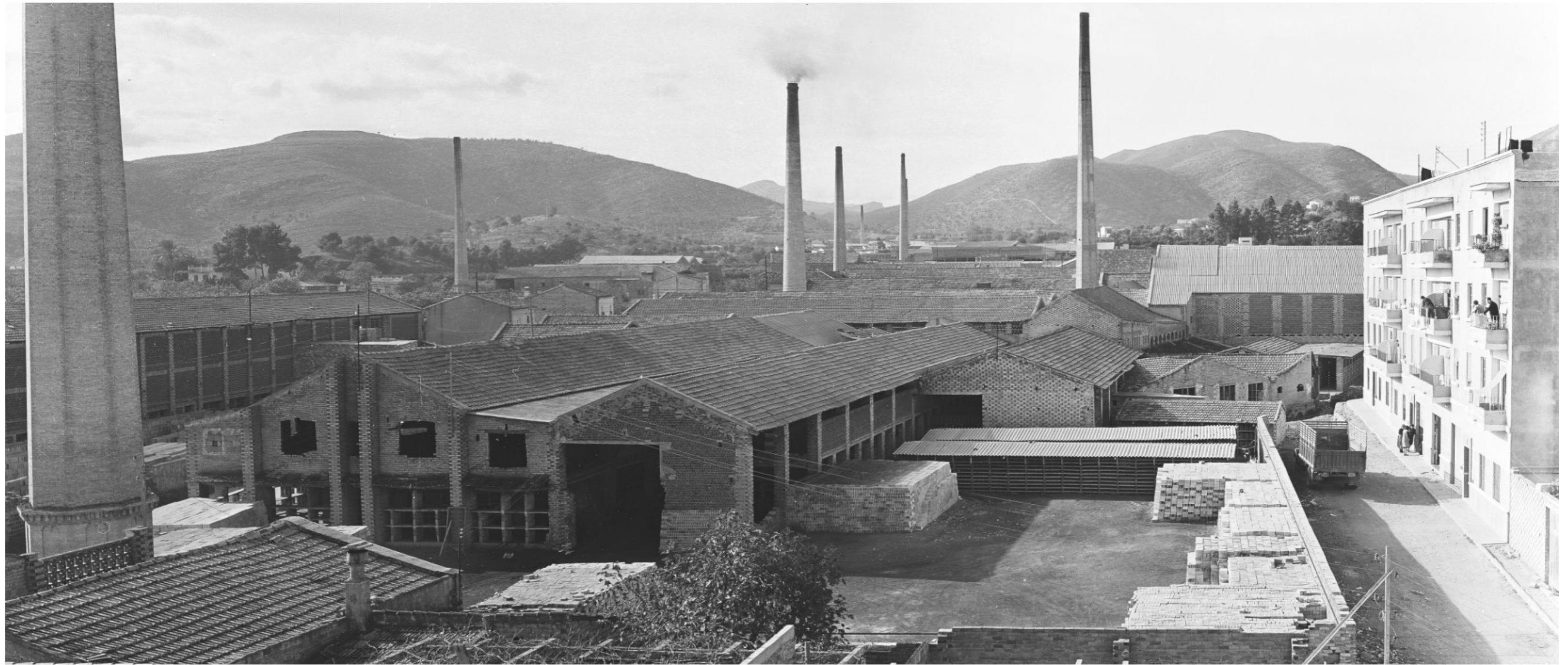


Fig. 21. My project site, the La Salvaora factory, when it was in full production. Photo: Navarro, early 1960's



Walks – illustrated by serial visions
Shown on this page are the different routes that lead to my project site (the red dot). I documented each of these different approach-routes with a serial vision. They are shown in the following pages.

Fig. 22. Map showing the routes of the serial vision walks.

200 m
1:4000 A3



Fig. 23. N332 → Carrer del Niño Jesus → Passeig Dels Rajolars (A), continuing on next page



1. Starting my walk from the main road, Carretera de Gabriel Ciscar (or the N-332) that cuts through central Oliva. Busy traffic with big trucks and the intense noise from mopeds. Exhaust fumes. The bells of the modernist church tower of Parròquia de Sant Francesc d'Assís just rang.



2. Rounding the corner, there is a bar with outdoor seating where a lot of people usually go to eat breakfast before work. Now, it is close to lunch and only a few guests are seated by the tables. Everyday chattering and cigarette smoke fills the air.



3. Turning in on Calle de Niño Jesus, a narrow street similar to countless other winding streets in the older parts of Oliva. The sidewalk is just barely wide enough for one person. The passing cars almost brush your shoulder. Far in the background I can just barely make out the silhouette of one of the chimneys of Els Rajolars.



4. The street bends slightly and the chimney disappears out of sight. Trying not to stare too obviously into the windows and open doors that I am passing. It is easy to get a glimpse of people's living rooms and daily lives.



5. The intoxicating scent of freshly baked bread hits me as I pass the bakery on the corner (the orange building). Friendly chattering from inside when the door opened.



6. Now, the narrow street widens and splits up in two. A woman, about thirty years old with a child in a stroller, calls my attention from across the street. "Are you an architect? Are you going to develop the area?" I ask if she would like to see some particular change to the neighbourhood. "It doesn't matter, just change it", she says as she walks away, seemingly in a hurry.



7a. Another chimney has appeared in the distance. I spend a moment trying to figure out whether the fishbone pattern of the crosswalk was intentional or not. Probably not, but a nice graphical feature in the streetscape nonetheless.



8a. The street splits up in two again. It is unclear where I am supposed to walk as a pedestrian. The chimneys align with the street in a way that makes me think of a gateway, an entrance to Els Rajolars. I take to the left.



9a. This street crossing is where the neighbourhood of 'La Carrasca' meets Els Rajolars. The mountains form a backdrop behind the old industries. The dog on the sidewalk lays by the entrance to its owners garden shop. Another, bigger, nursery garden is located in the white industrial units ahead. It is intriguing trying to understand what the chimney to the left used to be connected to. Now, it stands right on the sidewalk, looking kind of lonely without the factory to which it once belonged.



7b. Taking a right instead



8b. This street feels a little bit dead. Maybe it is because of the seemingly closed up industrial building to the left.



9b. Suddenly the street feels much more alive as the sound of chirping birds sounds from a half open window on my right side. Apparently there is a small canary bird shop inside. Three chimneys point towards the sky which is very blue.

Fig. 24. N332 → Carrer del Comte d'Oliva → Passeig Dels Rajolars → Carrer del Cavall Bernat (B), continuing on next page



1. Again, I am starting my walk from the N-332. Quite a lot of heavy traffic with a surprising amount of big trucks passing on the rather narrow road.



2. Walking on Carrer del Comte de Oliva, I am approaching Els Rajolars from the east. The street is a kind of shared space, the only pedestrian friendly street in this particular neighbourhood (La Carrasca and Sant Francesc). To the right, behind the parked cars, there is a small public square where they previous summers have had a small outdoor cinema. I remember thinking that it was a petty with all the noise from the big road behind them. There is also a small playground in the shade of some trees



3. Stretched across the facades hang the classic spanish light ornaments which aluminiate the busier streets during holidays and festivities.



4. Along this street the houses are generally a bit higher than in the rest of La Carrasca. Six stories, instead of two, create a street-house ratio that feels intimate but not too tight. Ahead, to the right, there is an offset in the row of houses that creates a nice variation.



5. Although in a rather poor condition, the trees help to further accentuate the human scale of this street. Street trees are generally a rare sight in the older parts of Oliva because of the narrow streets.



6. The decorative light ornaments in combination with the towering chimneys makes me feel like I am approaching an amusement park. It is, however, clear that the street just dies off into nothing here. The houses are rundown and empty. No obvious reason to go this way.



7. The Chimneys really are high. From this angle, their slight curvature towards the top makes me think of a herd of Brachiosaurus.



8. We are back at the 'entrance' to Els Rajolars.



9. Some of the walls surrounding the 'La Salvaora' factory have gable roof silhouettes. Now, the roofs are gone but the walls still tell a story. From here, the undulating outline of the factory blends in seamlessly with the mountains in the distance.



10. At the foot of Santa Ana mountain, looking up Carrer del Cavall Bernat. At the end the street lays La Carrasca elementary school. I wonder what purpose the bollards, lining the left side of the street, used to fill.

Fig. 25. Cami Collado → Passeig Dels Rajolars (C), continuing on next page



1. This walk starts at the southernmost border of Els rajolars, and goes along the area's central road, Passeig dels Rajolars. Here lays, Anticfang, the last ceramic factory in the area, still in production.



2. On Passeig dels Rajolars, a narrow road without sidewalks or verges. Noise from the ceramics factory on my right. In the middle of the orange groves, on my left, is the hotel 'El Sequer'.



3. As I look to my left, at the end of the orange groves, there is the entrance to Villa Ferrera, a modernist gem by the architect Luis Sancho Coloma, tucked in among the factories. A somewhat curious location for a detached family house. I wonder how it was to live there when the industry was in full swing.



4. Now, I have reached the most central parts of Els Rajolars. Some smaller businesses now occupy some of the old factories. Guard dogs bark at me from behind the fence, setting off a chain reaction of answering barks from all directions.



5. There is often a light perfume of orange tree smoke in the air. From peoples' chimneys and from the orchards where they burn prunings to minimize the risk of disease spreading between the trees. Now, however, I smell a less fragrant, heavier kind of smoke. I think it might be from the Anticfang factory.



6. Looking to my left, there's an interesting space between one of the old kilns (on the right) and the storage building. Trees have started to grow on top of the old kiln. This would be an alternative site for this project but I feel like it is too far away from where people live.



7. On my right, there is another space opening. The sign is advertisement for Tot Arroz. They make great takeaway paellas and are located here somewhere



8. Some residential housing on my right. To the left is the large plot of the La Salvaora factory.



9. Walls and fences. I walk where I am supposed to.



10. The old office of the La Salvaora factory. I feel a bit uneasy after having walked the central road of Els Rajolars. I guess it is common to feel melancholic in the presence of ruins but I feel like these are not old enough to be this wetherd.



11. The garden nursery on my right. Ahead is La Carrasca neighbourhood.

Fig. 26. Carrer Senda dels Lladres (D)



1. Walking along Carrer Senda dels Lladres, beginning in the Ciudad Jardín (garden city) neighbourhood. Nice views overlooking Els Rajolars, the orchards, the mountains and the sea.



2. The street bends slightly, hiding and revealing the view ahead. In this neighbourhood, the detached villas have gardens and a wall towards the road.



3. A bit further down, the facades of the houses align with the road. Nowhere to sit down and have a rest.



4. The last house with a garden is neighbouring directly to Els Rajolars. A blue, iron fence with golden spikes protects the property.



5. This is the only street that intersects Els Rajolars from East to West.



6. Fenced off material depot on the right.



7. Suddenly, a single window through the wall on my left. Barred windows and high walls are effective ways to make people want to climb over to the other side. At least I am feel like doing a little breaking and entering.



8. A bit further away, the wall is lower and I get a full overview over the open, unused plot. The spontaneous meadow sways in the breeze and it looks quite beautiful. As if it had always grown there.

Fig. 27. Carrer dels Centelles → Carrer el Algar → Carrer de Francisco Ferrando (E)



1. This walk shows the probably least used path people would take to my project site. Starting by looking to my left, there is a ceramics manufacturer, which I know also has a store down in the city centre. The sign is made from ceramic tiles. It strikes me how much effect some color and ornamentation can have on a place which otherwise feels rather boring.



2. This street follows around the yellow multi-family building on the left.



3. In the corner, a former entrance to the factory is now sealed shut. There is a garbage collection spot by the entrance. A handful of stray cats lay in the shadow from the cars.



4. A peculiar view to see the chimneys reaching up behind the wall. The patchwork of the wall tells a story of many adaptations made in the past.



5. This is a passage, not a place to stay.



6. Around the corner and we are back to the site.

Fig. 28. photo collage of Cami de la Carrasca (F)



1. Approaching Els Rajolars by the Vía Pista road. The road serpents down from the mountains and between the orange groves before ending up where I stand now. Walls and fences line the road and there is no designated space for pedestrians. The cars pass by quite fast. Almond blossom on my left.



2. To the right, the bushes and vines suggests that there is a garden behind the wall. The street ends by the foot of the Santa Ana mountain.



3. 'Se vende', for sale, followed by a phone number. This kind of message is written on many empty houses and overgrown orchards around here. I wonder how long ago it was written; if the number still goes somewhere. The house has disappeared behind layers of vegetation but the arched gate gives a clue about how it might have looked back in its heyday.



4. Beautiful advertisement for insecticides.

Fig. 29. Carrer del Cavall Bernat (G)



1. La Carrasca elementary school behind the gate on my left. Children play on the school yard and a simple melody is played from a speaker. I think it means that recess is over.



2. I am staying in the white house on the left, which belongs to my girlfriend's parents. Music from one of the balconies of the yellow house. In the morning and afternoon, this street becomes busy with kids and their parents on their way to school.



3. Ahead, to the right is myproject site. Just a stone's throw from where I am staying.

Summary of the Walks

1) *The serial visions that I have made show seven different routes that all lead to the same destination, my project site. Eventhough the routes are all quite close to eachother, they show a relatively high variation in character within the analyzed area. Cullen (1961) describes how the city's character is revealed to us as we walk through it. The interplay between the existing and the emerging view decides how interesting we find our surroundings. When I walked through Els Rajolars, it was not the view ahead that caught my interest. Instead, it was the surrounding views of the landscape, as I turned my head, that sparked my curiosity. My movement through Els Rajolars became dramatized by the interplay between the walls closing off the views and the holes and gaps that sometimes revealed what was behind. This is where and when the aesthetic insight of curiosity started to form.*

2) *In the area, there is almost no public space except for the streetscape – and even there, the sidewalks are extremely narrow or non-existing.*

3) *Most of the social activity seems to happen in third places like the bars and restaurants along Carrer del Comte d'Oliva and Carretera de Gabriel Ciscar (N-332), or the bakery on Carrer del Niño Jesus.*

4) *(Visualized and further explained in the following public space analysis) Carrer del Comte d'Oliva is the only really activated street in this part of Oliva. Unfortunately, the street has vague connections in both ends. In one end, the heavily trafficed N-332, and in the other, a quite desolate part of the Sant*

Francesc neighborhood where it meets Els Rajolars. My site could provide a connection between the activated Carrer del Comte d'Oliva and the La Carrasca neighborhood.

5) *Bordered by the N-332 to the east, Els Rajolars to the south, and the Santa Ana mountain to the west, the neighborhoods of La Carrasca and Sant Francesc really feel like one defined (and seperated) part of Oliva. This means that the public space within this area must be of a good enough quality for it to feel alive and welcoming.*

6) *The chimneys are visble from almost every direction. They are, in other words, effective landmarks.*



Fig. 30. This sequence is taken from a walk along the Camí de la Carrasca towards the project site. By editing out everything but the barriers, I want to convey the restricted movement that I experienced during my walks around the neighborhood. To me, this is one of the most noticeable aspects of this landscape. My urge to look over and through the walls gave me the idea of working with curiosity as my aesthetic insight for the project.



Parking space (sometimes used for events) + small playground

Library

Paseo

Santa Ana Mountain Public Park

Plaza Riuet dels Flares

Small Square

Carrer del Comte d'Oliva

La Salvaora Factory

Ciudad Jardín

Els Rajolars

Playground

Public space analysis

I did the following analysis with the purpose to identify what kinds of public space that exist around the project site – and most importantly – what kinds of public space I believe are missing. This analysis builds on my experience of the area as I was doing the serial vision walks.

Generally, I find there to be a lack of inviting and useful public space in the neighbourhoods surrounding Els Rajolars. The Santa Ana public mountain park has few points of access, just one that vaguely connects to this neighborhood. The accessibility within the park is also generally quite poor. Also, with a relatively high number of older people living in the area, I am surprised that there are not more benches where people can sit down and rest. There is, however, the exception of Comte d'Oliva, a street where the municipality in recent years has taken measures to limit motor traffic and to promote pedestrian movement and public life.

Fig. 31. Map over public spaces close to the project site

200 m
1:4000 A3



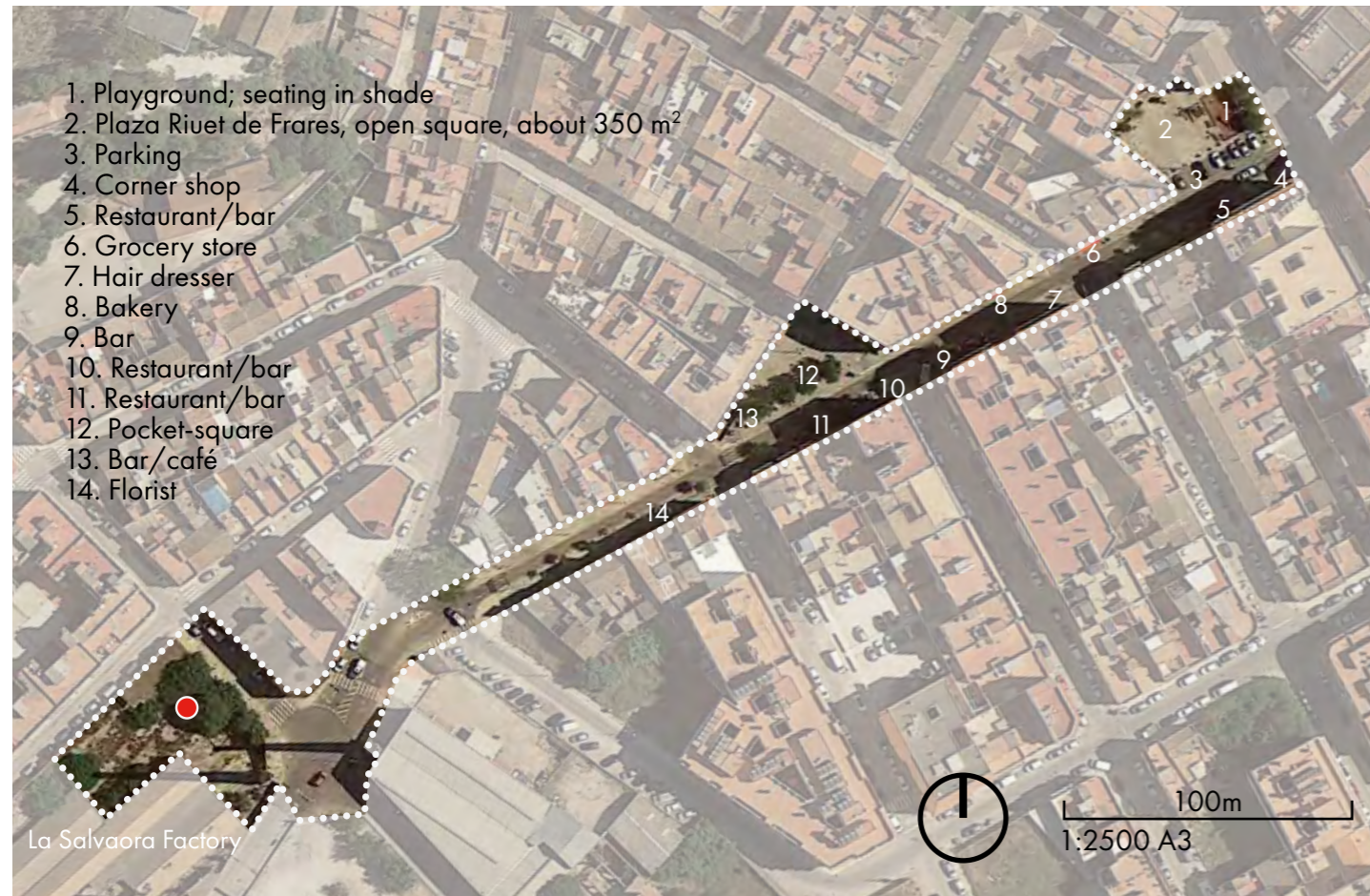


Fig. 32. Public spaces and potential third places along Carrer del Comte d'Oliva. The idea is for the project site to connect to this street, and extend its public life further into the neighborhood

Most of the designated public space of La Carrasca and Sant Francesc is located along the street Carrer del Comte d'Oliva. To the east, it connects to the highly trafficked Carrer de Pego and the N-332. The two squares, Placeta Riu de Frares (2) and the small pocket-square (12) were renovated in 2016 to provide more functional public space. Also, this street is the only pedestrian-friendly street in the neighborhood, with much wider sidewalks than average and with several bars and restaurants with outdoor seating.

As shown in one of the serial visions, the eastern half of Carrer del Comte d'Oliva is quite a lively street. Further west however, towards Els Rajolars, the street quickly becomes less inviting with no real public destination points. Here, I believe, my suggested location for a neighborhood park could contribute as a means for extending the public life of Comte d'Oliva further into the Carrasca neighbourhood.



Fig. 33. Carrer del Comte d'Oliva, before the renovation. Photo: Google maps (2021)



Fig. 34. Carrer del Comte d'Oliva, after the renovation in 2016. More space designated for pedestrians and one-way traffic makes this public space much more useful and flexible. Photo: Google maps (2021)



Fig. 35. Plaza Riuet dels Flares – the small square at the end of Carrer del Comte d’Oliva. Much space is taken up by the parking spots. The square behind the cars is frequently used by the local Fallas organization. Photo: Google maps (2021)



Fig. 36. The square has a playground for small children. A swing and a slide and seating in the shade. Not the most inspiring playground and the busy road right next to it makes it less attractive and safe. Photo: Google maps (2021)



Fig. 37. Map of public spaces close to the project site.



Fig. 38. The playground (in the bottom right corner of the map) is much bigger than the one on Plaza Riuet dels Flares but does not offer more options in terms of equipment.. Photo: Google maps (2013)



Fig. 39. It does, however, have a multi-sports court that appears to be quite well used. The playground has almost no shaded areas and is likely too hot to be used during most of the summer (except, maybe, in the evenings). Photo: Google maps (2013)



Fig. 40. Map of public spaces close to the project site.

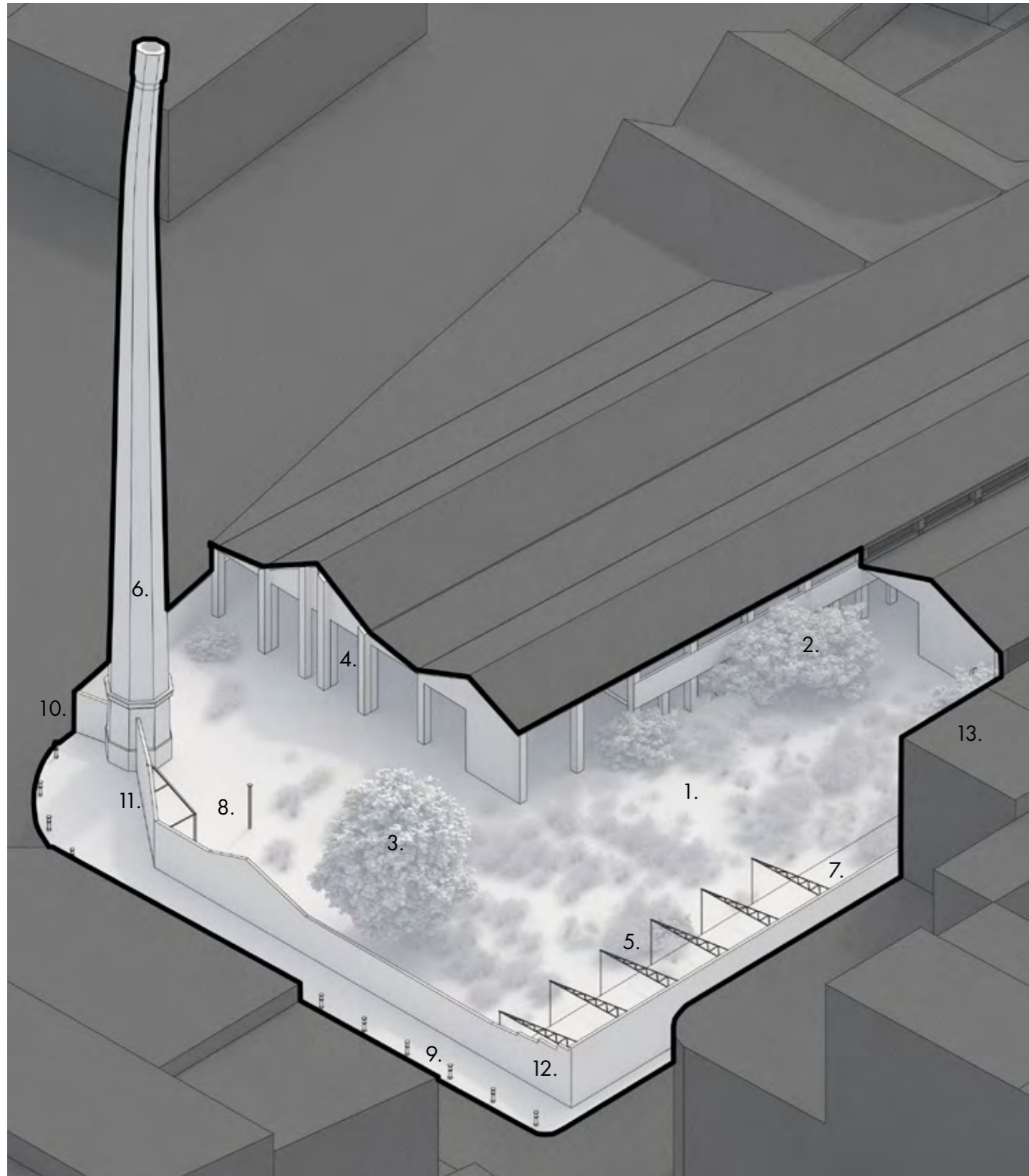


Fig. 41. Isometric view of the project site. View from North.

Project site inventory/analysis

I was able to visit the project site on one occasion. During this visit I focused on documenting the site and identifying any structures or loose material that I could repurpose in my design.

Following is a list of these features:

- 1. Spontaneous meadow*
- 2. Shrubs*
- 3. Tree (unknown species)*
- 4. Facade and view into the factory*
- 5. Shed roof with trussed steel beams. More beams, of the same kind, can be found in other parts of the factory.*
- 6. Chimney*
- 7. Brick floor under the beams and along the wall.*
- 8. Steel post and roof structure*
- 9. Bollards*
- 10. Street name sign*
- 11. Slightly transparent brick walls*
- 12. Trash can/peekhole*
- 13. Live music from balconies*

Pictures and more thorough descriptions of each listed feature in the following pages.



Fig. 42. Collage with photos from site inventory.

1) A spontaneous meadow has formed in the cracks of the concrete floor. Mainly grass but also some flowering herbaceous plants and succulents.

2) Beams that used to hold a roof. A useful structural element to repurpose. I found more of this exact type of beam in another part of the factory. The shrubs are mainly olive trees.

3) In the middle of the site stands a tree that has started growing spontaneously. I could not identify the species on site and I forgot to take more detailed pictures of it. Obviously, it is deciduous (leaf shedding).



Fig. 43. Collage with photos from site inventory.

4) There is a nice open view into the old factory.

5) More of the beams – here creating a shed in the northern corner of the site.

6) This chimney is probably the one with the most intricate ornamentation in Els Rajolars. Its faceted shape with seven faces create a beautiful shadow play (compare with the round chimney in the background). The tall giant does something to the scale of the site – making it appear smaller than it actually is.



Fig. 44. Collage with photos from site inventory.

7) There is a beautiful brick floor hiding under the dirt and shards of asbestos cement. It stretches along the northwestern perimeter wall, under the beams.

8) Remnants from an old roof structure.

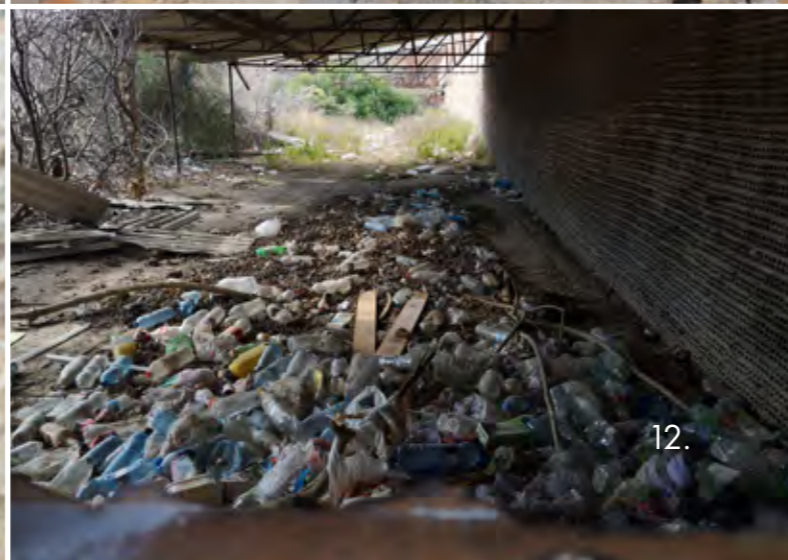
9) Bollards and part of the perimeter wall (view from the street)



10.



11.



12.

Fig. 45. Collage with photos from site inventory.

10) On the corner – an almost intact, traditional street name sign made of painted ceramics. This kind of detailed decoration really stands out like a curiosity in this otherwise visually rugged place.

11) The perforated bricks make the wall slightly seethrough when looked at from a certain angle. I can just make out the contour of the chimney on the other side.

12) (Four pictures) I first noticed this hole in the wall after I had seen a cat use it as an entrance to the site. A nice little peek-hole that also turned out to be used as a garbage can.

13) (No picture) During the entire 45 minutes I spent on the site, there was flamenco music being played and sung (live) from two of the windows of the neighboring house. There is apparently a lot of musical talent in the neighborhood!



Fig. 46. La Zona Santiago seen from above. The donut-shaped "UFO" makes the space interesting and dynamic. Photo by: Milena Villalba



Fig. 47. The UFO seems like a good arena for playing catch. Photo by: Milena Villalba



Fig. 48. It is also a nice shaded place for relaxing. Photo by: Milena Villalba



Fig. 49. Trees in planters made from repurposed buoys. Sadly, the trees on this picture were not alive when I visited. Photo by: Milena Villalba

Reference project - visit to Zona Santiago

Zona Santiago is a schoolyard and neighbourhood park located in the El Cabanyal district of València city. The project is a collaboration between architects Bernat Ivars, Javier Molinero (Mixuro), and students from the Santiago Apóstol school. The project was preceded by a participatory dialog process conducted by Fent Estudi and Nautae.

I visited Zona Santiago on a schoolday, thursday the 24th of february, 2022. Having seen pictures of the project online, I was interested to see if it felt as inspiring (and curious) in real life. It took me a while to find it since it was not yet put into Google maps and because of its rather hidden location, squeezed in between the buildings. Also, to my surprise (and disappointment) the community space that I had come to see was enclosed by walls and the doors could only be opened by people with access. In other words, I had to settle with looking through the fence. In this way, it felt very familiar to Els Rajolars.. However, thanks to the Zona Santiago's Instagram account, I could get a more complete idea of the space and how it is being used, after my visit. Pictures from the Instagram on the next page.

The plot, which previously served as a parking lot, was lended by the municipality of València to be temporarily turned into a playground for the school – which lacked outdoor space for its students. It was also built to be used as a community space for other people and organisations in the neighbourhood. The architects' ethos for the project was "radical reuse,

maximum vegetation, materialization with materials that reduce our footprint on the planet, and above all, fun in the process and in the result" (Coulleri 2021). Eventhough the project area is quite small, about 650 square meters, the multifunctional design allows for a diverse programme. The wooden centerpiece, by the children called the 'UFO', serves as outdoor classroom, music/theatre stage and play structure. Being a temporary project, the architects were not allowed to affect the ground. Therefore, all vegetation had to be put in containers. The planters for the trees were made from reused buoys, donated from the nearby marina.



Fig. 50. Warm-up before "senior parkour". Photo by: @delpatialbarri 2022

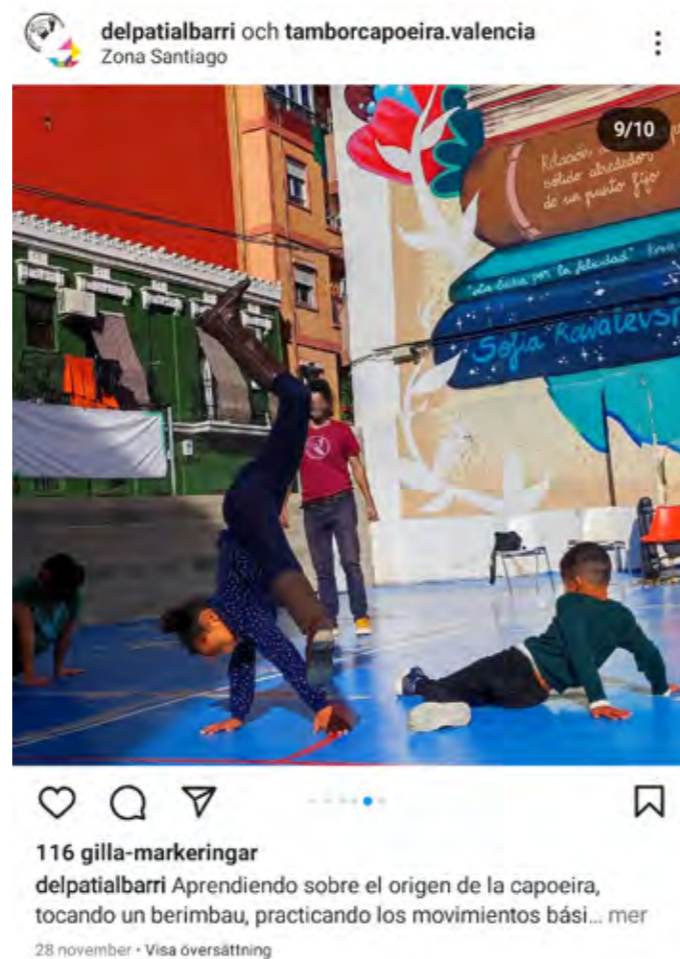


Fig. 51. Capoeira lessons on the smooth surface of the ball court. Photo by: @delpatialbarri 2022



Fig. 52. The space is big enough to fit an orchestra and an audience. Photo by: @delpatialbarri 2022



Fig. 53. The shaded interior of the UFO seems like a good spot to have a planning meeting. Photo by: @delpatialbarri 2021



Fig. 54. The UFO. Photo by Milena Villalba. (The photo has been cropped).



Fig. 55. Entrance with murals.



Fig. 56. A smooth floor and plenty of seating are important features for a useful and adaptable space.

Positive aspects that will inspire my work

+ The strong architectural expression of the centerpiece UFO gives identity to the entire schoolyard (Fig. 54).

+ The use of graphic design, murals and colors make the site stand out from its context (Fig. 55, 56, 59).

+ The size of the plot is small enough to give it a coherent character with minimal intervention, yet at the same time, big enough to function for many different kinds of uses; playing, math lessons, capoeira training, senior gymnastics etc.

+ A community space is not successful if the community do not utilize it. The instagram account @delpatralbarri is one of the channels through which the activities happening in Zona Santiago is being communicated to the public.

+ A lot of the activities carried out in the space relates to movement, such as dancing and yoga, which need very little in terms of equipment. An open, smooth floor surface and some chairs goes a long way (Fig. 56). The only thing lacking for the space to become a real outdoor dance studio would be a mirror wall.



Fig. 57. An almost public space.



Fig. 58. Buoys-turned-planters.



Fig. 59. Landmark mural announcing the space.

Challenges of the project that will inform my work

- I can understand the need to restrict access to a place that is primarily used as a school yard (Fig. 57). I believe, however, that this kind of public place is important for everyone. To be able to use it spontaneously would benefit the community even more, I think.

- The goal to "maximize" the use of vegetation clearly was not achieved. The day I visited, the trees in the planters were dead and/or removed (Fig. 58).

- Because of its location and the walls closing it off, Zona Santiago is quite hard to see from a distance, and therefore hard to find. The big mural can be seen from one direction however, and serves as a landmark (Fig. 59).

- The shade provided by the inside of the UFO was probably not enough. Additional shade sails has been put up over the open space when I visited (Fig. 60).



Fig. 60. Added shade sails.



Intention

Fig. 61. Peekhole offering a glimpse of the project site

Literature Review – Curiosity

During the analysis phase, I decided to work with curiosity as my aesthetic insight. I had a feeling of what this aesthetics of curiosity might look like, but it still was just half a creative insight – I still wasn't sure what non-aesthetic properties would best render my envisaged aesthetic of place-related curiosity. Also, this vague, yet-to-be developed, aesthetic was entirely based on my own, personal experiences of curiousness, and therefore, not necessarily an aesthetic that would trigger other peoples' curiosity. I needed a better understanding of the general mechanisms of curiosity and how it might be evoked by aesthetic experience. To identify related non-aesthetic properties of curiosity and to deepen my overall knowledge of the subject, I did a reading on curiosity in general, and landscape-related curiosity in particular. As one of my research questions concerns how to make people care more about Els Rajolars and its future, I also looked specifically for research on curiosity in relation to care. The following is a summary of the literature that came to inform my process and design.

The relationship between curiosity and care – an etymological perspective

Curiosity is a vice that has been stigmatized in turn by Christianity, by philosophy, and even by a certain conception of science. Curiosity is seen as futility. However, [...] I like the word; it suggests something quite different to me. It evokes "care"; it evokes the care one takes of what exists and what

might exist; a sharpened sense of reality, but one that is never immobilized before it; a readiness to find what surrounds us strange and odd; a certain determination to throw off familiar ways of thought and to look at the same things in a different way; a passion for seizing what is happening now and what is disappearing; a lack of respect for the traditional hierarchies of what is important and fundamental. (Foucault 1998:325)

This quote is a passage from an interview with Michel Foucault that was first published in the newspaper *Le Monde*, in 1980, and later in his book *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (1998:321). Even though he did not write extensively on the topic of curiosity, this passage has many times been referred to by scholars, using it in ways that presents his statement as self explanatory and factual (Papastephanou 2022). This despite the non-scholarly context of the interview, and the unexpansive elaboration on the subject. In the interview, he declares his own fondness of the word, which he connects to its etymological origin in the latin word *curitas*, meaning 'care' (Foucault 1998). Foucault's claim seems to be that the mental state of curiousness always involves some sort of care directed towards that about which one is curious – or, rather, towards the thrill and sense of novelty it involves (see Ibid).

Marianna Papastephanou (2022) argues that Foucault's way of associating curiosity with care is an oversimplification that could be considered a kind of dehistoricization that separates curiosity from

its colonial-political connections – both historic and current. She argues that what is lacking in Foucault's account of curiosity is an understanding that could be retrieved by looking at the word's older origin in the greek word *polypragmosyme* (the latin word for curiosity, *curiositas*, was indeed conceived as a direct translation from polypragmosyme) (DeFilippo 1990:479; Papastephanou 2022). In ancient Greece, polypragmosyme was a word signifying both "nosiness" as well as the act of colonial expansion of states or the meddling of one state in another state's affairs. The word, according to Papastephanou (2022), therefore had a rather negative connotation, something that most likely remained, even in its Latin reincarnation and roman-Christian context. Papastephanou (2022) speculates that "Possibly, with this subtle value-semantic shift [towards care], Foucault wishes away precisely the stigma of vice that accompanied curiositas at the moment of its introduction into the Latin vocabulary." (2022:204) Polypragmosyme was (just like curiositas by the church) considered a vice by the ancient classical philosophers – but this stigmatisation was, however, not morally referring to hubris towards God (as it was by the christian church), but to the ethico-political immorality of colonial expansion (Ibid.:201).

Another scholar who points out the relationship between curiosity and colonialism is the geographer Richard Phillips. Phillips (2014) argues that curiosity, in a western context, has been – and still is – closely associated with the idea of *terra incognita* and exploring the 'unknown'. This prevailing connection, argues Phillips (2014), reproduces problematic ideas

of places, the people who live there, and their cultures as curiosities.

Regardless of the abovementioned critique of Foucault's reasoning, I still share great sympathy for his way of connecting curiosity with care. It seems logical to me that together with feelings of curiosity comes, automatically, a sense of care. This *care* might, of course, be ephemeral and quickly disappearing as soon as the unknown is known, one's curiosity is satisfied, and that which once sparked curiosity is no longer of interest.

Curiosity and questions

In his book *The Philosophy of Curiosity*, Ilhan Inan (2012) argues that curiosity can be divided into two major strands. One, he labels as 'behavioral' or 'instinctive' curiosity and is related to the kind of drive associated with novelty seeking and exploratory behavior expressed by humans as well as animals and nonverbal, small children (Ibid.:125). (This kind of curiosity, however, is not what he is interested in, why he passes that ball along to the research communities of psychology and philosophy.) What Inan (2012) discusses in his book is the kind of curiosity that stems from the intellectual urge to understand something – a mental state that he calls 'conceptual curiosity'. Fundamental to this type of curiosity is its connection to questions – and especially, the linguistics of posing questions (Ibid.). Inan writes that "The limits of what we can be curious about are set by the limits of what we can attempt to refer to within the language available to us" (2012:183). Language is, in other words, essential for our ability to ask questions about things that we

don't understand and are curious about. Inan's (2012) argumentation builds on a discussion around 'Menos paradox', a philosophical puzzle written down by Plato. Very simplified, it goes something like this: 'How can you ask questions about something that you do not know what it is? If you already know what it is, then there is no need to ask'. Building on the contradiction of these questions, Inan argues that curiosity originates from our ability to become aware of, describe and ask questions about that of which we are ignorant (ibid.:67). According to Inan (2012), there is, however, a prerequisite for curiosity to occur. In order to be curious about something, one must first have an interest in that subject - or at least in something relating to said subject (Ibid). He writes that "only when awareness of ignorance concerning a specific matter is accompanied by a certain kind of interest in that matter could it result in curiosity" (2012:126). For instance, there is a difference between the feelings of awe and wonder that a thunderstorm might impose on a person, and the curiosity and interest that would encourage said person to investigate the nature of this phenomena (Ibid.). In this way, Inan's research adds to - and even extends Foucault's claim regarding curiosity's relationship to care: we *only* become curious about things that we (already) care about.

Landscapes of curiosity and care

Richard Phillips has dedicated much of his research to investigating curiosity - mostly in relation to place. As my thesis is an exploration of curiosity in relation to a specific landscape and place, Phillips research has been quite instrumental. In the article *Curiosity, place and wellbeing: encouraging place-*

specific curiosity as a 'way to wellbeing' (2015) he investigates the abovementioned relationships. By adapting a relational approach, he manages to address the subject of curiosity without getting stuck in the different philosophical and epistemic definitions of the term. The article builds on a case study of three different projects; a garden of curiosity, a landscape photography project made by military veterans, and a project where 'memory boxes' use curiosities in the form of small objects to invoke memories of persons and places in people with dementia. From this study, Phillips (2015) concludes that "places are central to expressions of curiosity through the material objects - or curiosities - that, in part, constitute those places and relations of care" (Ibid.:2349). In turn, the condition for places to function in this way - as catalysts for curiosity - is that they are being seen in a new light (Phillips 2015). This becomes particularly clear in the photography project where the veterans were prompted to portray their lives and the places in which they take place. In doing so, they began seeing their everyday landscape in a new way. The photographs also worked as a prompt for discussing the difficulties many of the veterans had experienced, adapting themselves back into civil life. According to Phillips' study, watching place with 'a new pair of glasses' is one of two ways in which place-related curiosity happens (Ibid). The other one derives from the "attentiveness to things that might be found within those places, [...] the polished boots in an ex-soldier's untidy home: ordinary things, transformed into curiosities."(2015:2351). This also happened in the example of the 'curiosity garden', which was created on the plot of a burnt-down industrial

building. The unconventional location of the garden and the remaining traces of the house served as clues to the site's history, evoking curiosity and debate on the future of the site. In this way, a shared curiosity can bring people together and also make them curious about each other (Ibid). According to Phillips, this sharing of interest promotes social interaction, and by extension, peoples' well-being (2015:2352).

Landscape architecture and (cues to) care

'Cues to care' is a concept, first coined by researcher and landscape architect Joan Nassauer in her seminal article *Messy Ecosystems, Orderly Frames* (1995). In the article, Nassauer argues for the use of an aesthetic that signifies human care and attention in order to increase people's acceptance towards the 'messier' appearance of landscapes with higher ecological value. Nassauer suggests several examples of design



Fig. 62. Example of cues to care. Meadow patterns in the Girona's Shore project by EMF. Photo by: Sergi Romero (2015). The photo has been cropped.

interventions or ‘cues’ that can have this function. For instance can birdhouses in a brushy thicket highlight the bushes’ importance as habitat, and a mowed edge surrounding a meadow signifies that the grass was left to grow tall with intention and not by neglect (Ibid). The cues are basically different signs of human presence and care. One of the more well-known examples of landscape designs, that build on Nassauer’s ideas, is the *Girona’s Shores* project, by Estudi Martí Franch (EMF). The project is an experimental and ongoing development that makes accessible the preexisting green infrastructure surrounding Girona. The foundation of the project is a differentiated maintenance regime, where mowing and cutting of the existing vegetation creates a landscape that is both visually intriguing and ecologically sound (Franch

2018). Besides shaping the existing vegetation; trimming pathways in meadows and clearing sight lines, EMF also add some built interventions to the Girona project, which they call ‘confetti’; eye-catching curiosities that stand out from the general appearance of the landscape (Ibid). An example of confetti, used in the Girona project, is a handrail that surrounds some fossils visible in a bedrock outcrop. The seemingly out-of-place fencing subtly announces the fossil’s existence, guiding any passersby towards them, while at the same time protecting them from the ware of the visitors’ trampling (Ibid). I interpret EMF’s use of confetti, not solely as signifiers for care in the context of ‘messy’ *ecosystems*, but as a general, ‘minimum input - maximum effect’ kind of approach to show that a landscape is being cared for.



Fig. 63. Example of landscape architecture that evoke curiosity (at least with me). “Confetti” from the *Girona’s Shores* project by EMF. The handrail highlights the outcrop and the holes in the metal plate direct the eye towards individual fossils in the rock. Photo by: EMF

Takeaways and reflections on the reading

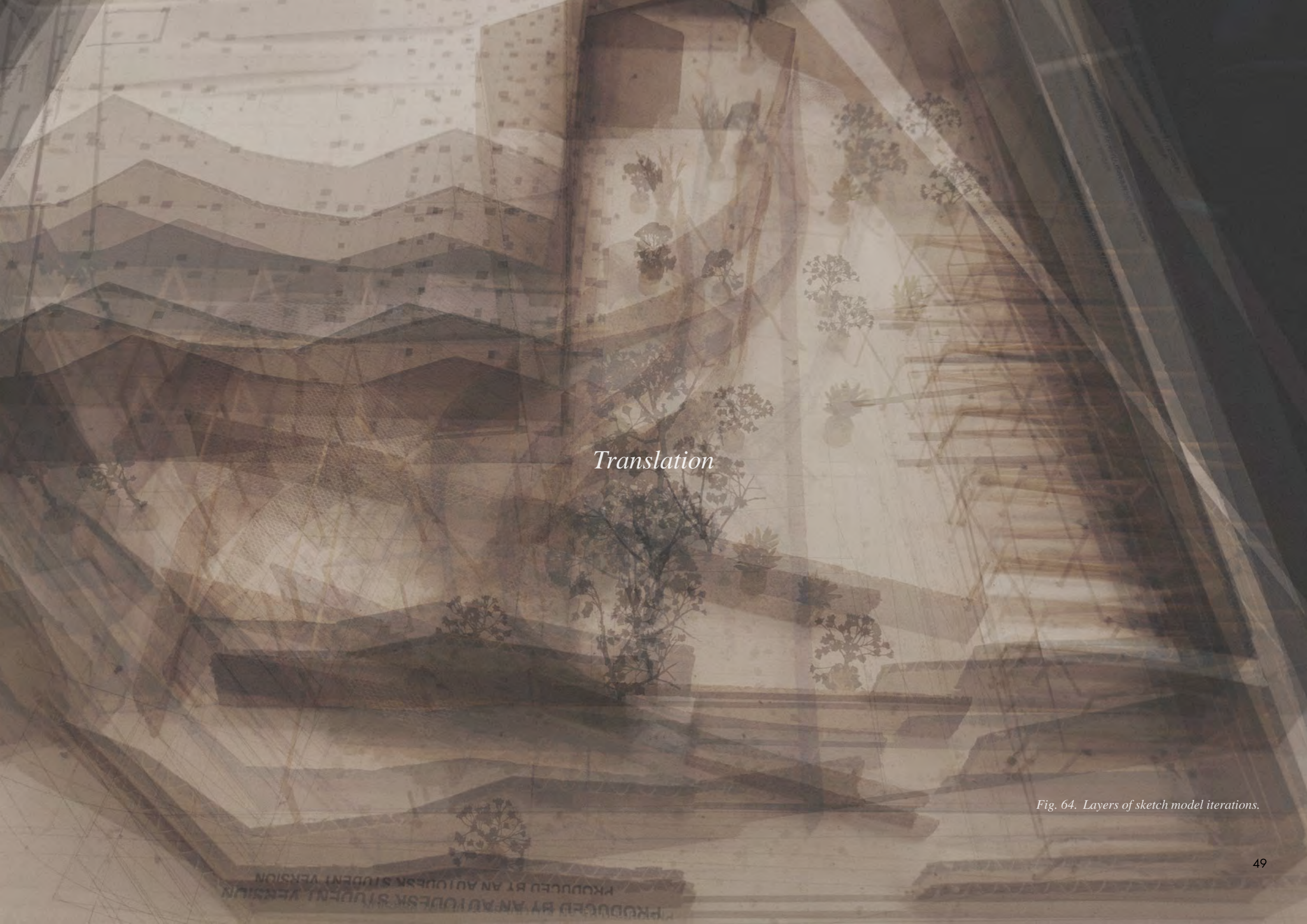
What I find to be an particularly important take-away from Papastephanou (2022) and Phillips (2014), is an awareness of the more malign side of curiosity – when it justifies colonial tendencies or when it borders on more or less exploiting forms of spectatorship; exotification, sightseeing, or bystanding. I argue that it is very important, especially for architects and planners, to be aware and honest about one’s position as an outsider and spectator. To me, it is a privilege to be able to work with something as complex and creative as landscapes – especially from such a personal perspective as my own curiosity. My hope and ambition is that it will stay perfectly clear and obvious, throughout this project, that my work, although personal in its nature, has been made with the hope of evoking the curiosity of the people living in and around Els Rajolars. As I am offering to share my ‘outsider glasses’ with anyone interested, my hope is that they land on the nose of someone with a truly familiar relationship to Els Rajolars, and that these glasses might let them see this beautiful landscape with an increased sense of curiosity and care.

Non-aesthetic properties of curiosity

Based on the abovementioned literature, it seems to me apparent that there is a connection between curiosity and care. Hopefully, I will be able to utilise this connection in order to evoke peoples’ engagement and feelings of care towards Els Rajolars and its future development. After having deepened my understanding of curiousness, I had identified two major non-aesthetic properties that are essential aspects and triggers of place-related curiosity. Both

are derived from Richard Phillips’ (2015) research on landscape-related curiosity. The two identified non-aesthetic properties are **changes that render new perspectives on the familiar** and **contextually unexpected artifacts and events (curiosities/curios)**.

Having identified my non-aesthetic properties, I could now formulate my aesthetic insight something like this: **The aesthetic property of place-related curiousness can be achieved by changes that render new perspectives on the familiar; by contextually unexpected artifacts or events (curiosities/curios); or through a combination of the two.**



Translation

Fig. 64. Layers of sketch model iterations.

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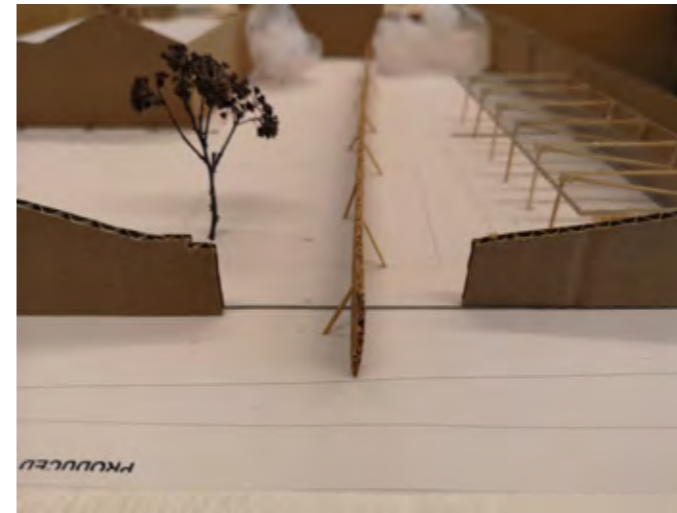
Intuitive sketching – (or tinkering and experimenting)

I find it easy to get creator's block when presented with a project and site with few delimitations. This project is a classic situation where this could happen. Everything is possible; a terrifying feeling of *tabula rasa*. To avoid this, I like to start with completely free and intuitive sketching. For me, this means sketching down ideas as quickly as possible with as little self-censoring or refinement as possible. By adding new objects, barriers, openings, flows, (etc.) the site becomes animated – and what first seemed static becomes dynamic and changeable. By adding something simple – maybe a wall or a pile of dirt, it feels like the room starts to communicate with the added object and the space suddenly appears relational (to the added object) – and thereby relateable. This time, I sketched almost entirely in physical model. My idea was that working in three dimensions could compensate a little bit for the short amount of time I had spent on the real, physical site. Sketching in a kind of stream of consciousness and letting things be weird is a way for me to understand and develop ideas and my relationship to the site, without getting stuck repeating convention – at least in the beginning. This kind of sketching is also characterized by a lack of interest in the final product – it is all about generating new understandings. After having finished a sketch, there are almost always unexpected lessons to be learned that will inform the next sketch – as well as the final proposal.

During this early phase of intuitive sketching, I had the idea that I wanted to renegotiate the image and use of brick walls in the landscape of Els Rajolars. Currently, the main function of the freestanding walls in the area is to be barriers, protecting the perimeters of the different factory plots. Working with the freestanding wall as a typology felt natural as it was already a dominating feature of the landscape. This way I could hopefully create new perspectives on something existing (the walls) – one of my two strategies for creating an aesthetic of curiosity.

Some of the sketches I present in the following pages might appear absurd (or at least a bit off-kilter) and it is kind of my intention. Oftentimes, I did not understand what I had learned from each sketch until some time had passed. As it would turn out, the idea of working with freestanding walls would not make it to the final cut. Exploring the potential that added walls could have on the site did, however, help me understand and develop the spatial division and flow of movement that I think the site needs.

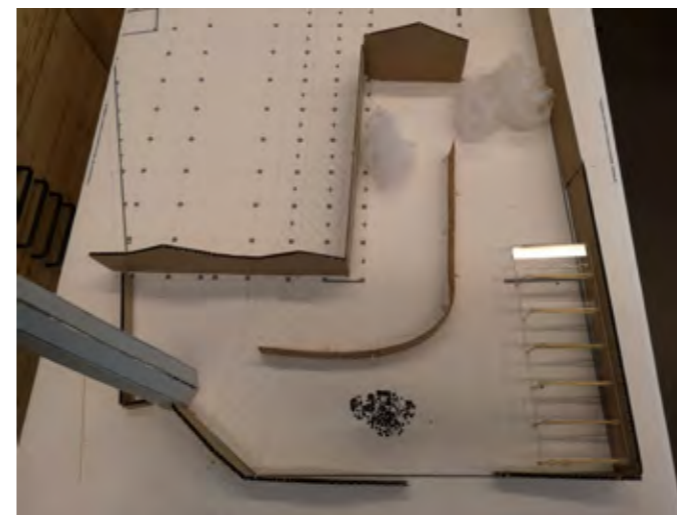
Fig. 65. Trying out different spatial arrangements of the project site.



A quite narrow opening in the surrounding wall and an added, straight wall that cuts through the project site. Here, I experimented with dividing the site into smaller spaces, useful for a neighbourhood park. Spaces for play, tranquillity, larger gatherings etc.



The new wall stretches out onto the sidewalk and becomes a curious feature that announces the new, accessible space inside. The wall itself becomes a sort of sculpture. Its fragile and unstable appearance is highlighted (but supported) by several stilts on each side of the wall.



I tried bending the wall, and suddenly, the artwork that divided the space in two turned the entire space into a kind of gallery space. The movement around the L-shaped wall reminds me of walking around in a museum with new spaces and artworks appearing behind each corner.



I tried different ways of curating the movement inside the gallery. From the entrance, taking to the left, you are faced with the towering chimney. If you take to the right, you enter a quite open, yet secluded space with shade under the existing roof or tree. The new wall became hollow and a small room (maybe for storage?) appeared.

Fig. 66. Early model sketches

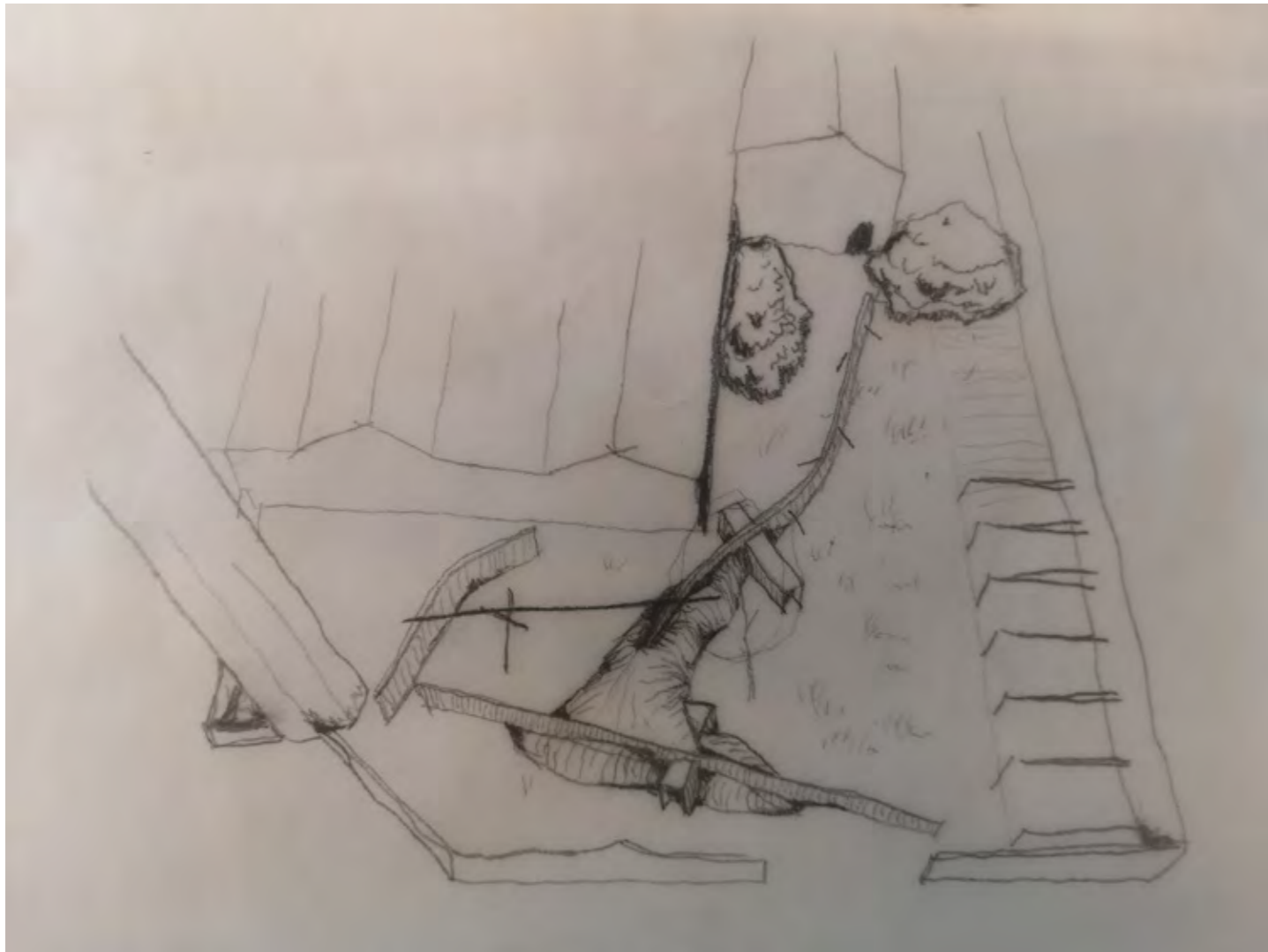


The hollow wall has been replaced by a mound of clay dirt (1), out from which the freestanding walls seem to grow. (An homage to the nearby clay mines, to which Els Rajolars owes its existence.) The mound is probably quite fun to play on and on the left side, it becomes an audience stand for the stage under the new roof structure (2). The existing, spontaneous vegetation gets accompanied by new specimen plants (3) that invite people further into the park.

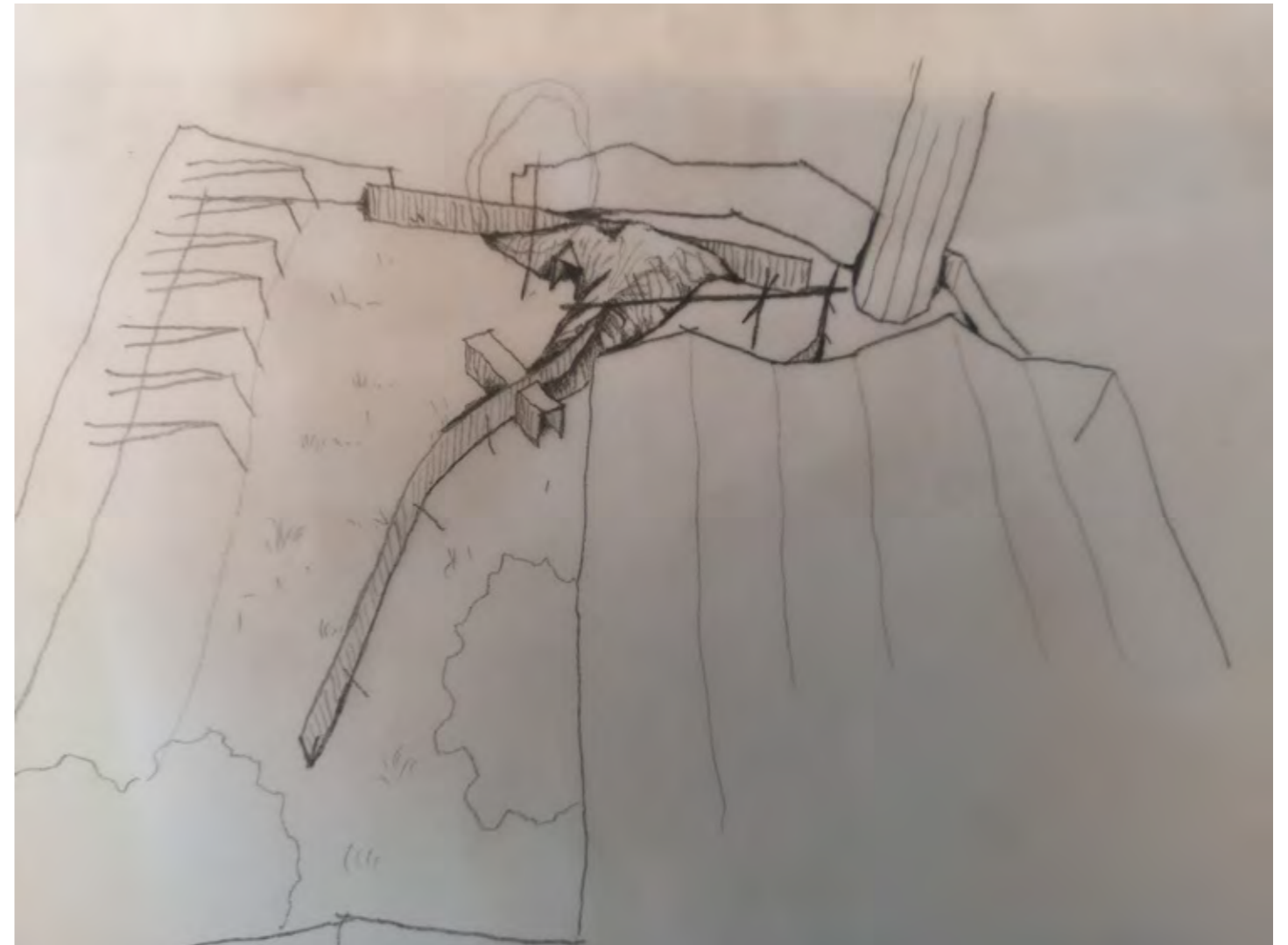


The mound would become the centerpiece of the park, a landmark that could be seen from behind the walls, inviting people to explore what it is. The tunnel-like passages (1) through the walls direct and curate sightlines into the old factory (2) and towards the mound. Small, sheltered spaces appear behind and on top of the tunnels.

Fig. 67. Hand sketches of the sketch model



Sometimes, when I get stuck, I find it helpful to document what I have in front of me in another medium – exactly as it is, right in that moment.



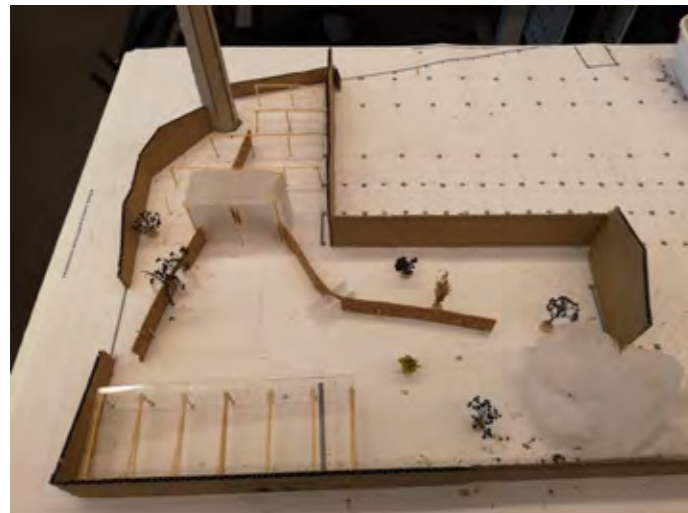
Making myself draw the physical model, as if it was a finished thing, made it easier to see it with fresh eyes. It felt as though it became more and more real for each time I took a photo of, or drew it.

Fig. 68. Materiality studies of a pile.



The mound explored in different materialities. As a reinforced pile of soil that would get colonized by local flora. Or, as a translucent veil, draped over the walls and lit from within when it is dark outside. I am leaning towards the latter. A translucent mound with a soft and friendly glow feels like a suitable centerpiece for a park of curiosity.

Fig. 69. Photos of sketch model.



I really liked the idea with the mound. However, it posed some technical challenges. Creating a large translucent hill seems impossible without the use of glassfibre and plastics – nothing that really rhymes well with my ethos of working with reuse. Instead, I tried exchanging the mound for a translucent pavillion. It could be used as a roofed stage, storage space, and as projection surface for outdoor cinema.



The walls began to bother me. How to create a space that feels safe for everyone, with this many visual barriers? I started imagining the walls as semi-transparent latticeworks. The "tunnels" could be made from something translucent as well, maybe glass bricks. This way, no unwanted surprise could be hiding around the corner.



Another aspect that makes this iteration of the park feel less safe is that it only has one access point from the street. I started looking for where to put a second entrance.



I quickly realized how nice it would be to enter the park by rounding the chimney. This movement reveals the park quite elegantly, little by little. It would also be nice to be invited closer to the chimney and its ornamented base.

Lessons learned from the intuitive sketching

Although I enjoyed the intuitive sketching process and the design it generated, I felt like it had become a bit too much of a sculpture. I was not convinced it would be appreciated by the local community (or anyone else for that matter). I was afraid it would be considered provokingly wierd and therefore left unused, and ultimately, a waste of resources. I want to design a park that I truly believe people will appreciate and use. I had, however, become quite familiarized with the project site after the intuitive sketching. The following points are things I realized during this phase:

- Though I conceptually like the idea of working with the freestanding walls; this particular project is not helped by that typology. This part of Oliva needs larger public spaces and my project site is already small enough. It seems counterintuitive to divide it into smaller spaces with fixed barriers. Also, new walls would block the visual connection from the street, towards the factory's interior and the concrete meadow, made possible by the new openings in the perimeter walls.

- A central feature, like a stage or a sculpture, can, if tall enough, serve as a landmark for the park. A visual signature announcing that something special happens behind the walls of the La Salvaora factory. This idea also draws from the Zona Santiago's UFO. That structure is, however, barely visible from outside the walls.

- To achieve a space that feels safe, several entrances are required, and there cannot be too many visual

obstacles inside the park.

- The chimneys are beautiful seen from afar but also very impressive to stand close to. Adding an entrance right next to the chimney creates natural opportunities to get really close.

- Added specimen plants can complement the existing concrete meadow and lift it to a (somewhat curious) landscape planting.

- Thinking creatively in terms of materiality can add a lot of visual interest with quite small means.

Developing the programme

With the aim to create a welcoming and functional public space with focus on public dialogue, many of the functions came naturally, like for instance: furniture adapted for meetings with larger groups of people; a stage for cultural events; and open and adaptable space for larger gatherings.

With the site's proximity to the La Carrasca school, it felt especially important to incorporate a children's perspective in the design. Especially as I found there to be a general lack of space for children in the surrounding area. At the same time, I did not want the park to become a playground – as it might become less inviting for other groups than children and their parents. Instead I tried to find activities and functions that could attract people of all ages. My visit to La Zona Santiago inspired me to focus on creating space for dancing, yoga and other kinds of movement. It also inspired me to imagine the space as a secondary classroom for nearby schools.

In order for the space to be attractive and usable, even when the weather is hot, it is important to create places with shade. Both the existing tree and added vegetation can be utilised to achieve this. Even though vegetation and ecology is not a main focus of this thesis, the fundamental idea of reuse makes it a natural choice to keep as much of the existing green qualities as possible. This, in combination with added vegetation, provides ecosystem services – primarily regulating and cultural services such as shade, food for pollinators, habitat, human delight, and educational possibilities.

Based on the different analyses, the intuitive sketching, and lessons learned from visiting the Zona Santiago project, I developed the following programme:

- Several access points to the site to prevent dead-ends and increase the experienced safety.

- Permanent stage that can be used for concerts, public dialogue, outdoor cinema etc.

- Furniture – including seating and tables suited for meetings, parties, and outdoor education etc.

- Vegetation for shading and delight (additional ecosystem services are a bonus).

- Open, flat, more or less unprogrammed space for larger festivities, markets etc.

- Mirror wall for dance practice etc.

- Blackboard for outdoor lessons and meetings.

- Fencing off the factory.

Translating the personal insight into shareable design interventions

To recapitulate my aesthetic insight of place-related curiosity: the aesthetic property of curiousness can be achieved by **changes that render new perspectives on the familiar** and **contextually unexpected artifacts and events (curiosities/curios)**. In the following chapter, I aim to show how I translated my aesthetic insight into the different design interventions that together make up my design proposal for the neighborhood park.

After having developed my aesthetic insight (or identified the two different aesthetic/non-aesthetic relationships of place-related curiousness), I could focus on turning this insight into shareable aesthetic ideas – what I choose to call *design interventions*. As mentioned previously, Zangwill differentiates between the personal, experiential aesthetic insight, and the shareable aesthetic idea – which is to be understood as a translation of the insight (Zangwill 2007:44). This translating process was the most time-consuming and laborious part of the design process, characterized by a lot of that which Zangwill refers to as “tinkering and experimenting” (Zangwill 2007:45).

In order to turn the aesthetic insight into design interventions, the non-aesthetic properties was combined with the desired functions established in the program. This process of mixing and matching was carried out through iterative sketching. Depending on the number of non-aesthetic properties, functions, and place-specific pre-conditions, the amount of possible combinations can be very big

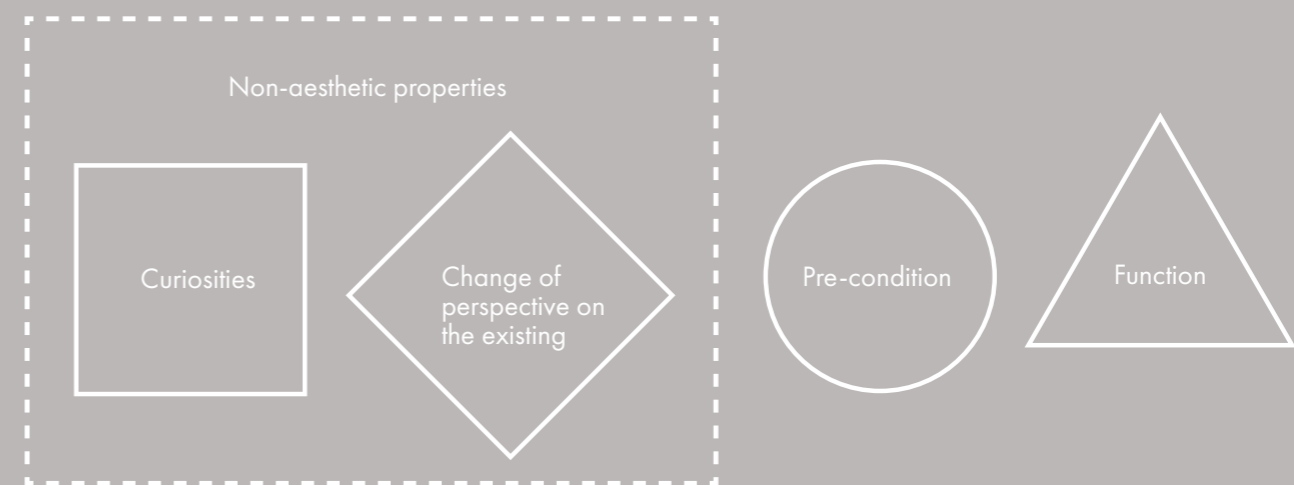
(infinite). All combinations have the possibility of creating the desired aesthetic experience – but not all combinations will be equally good. The task of the designer is therefore to identify the best combinations and then curate their resulting design interventions into a together whole – a final design proposal.

It might be worth mentioning, as pointed out by van Zyl and van Etteger (2021), that landscape projects, in contrast to many other forms of art, often are comprized by a large number of aesthetic ideas that together create the total aesthetic experience of the landscape. Landscape designs are not rarely large in scale and can of course also be comprized of several different parts with different aesthetics (and insights) but still be part of an intended whole. In many cases, depending on the size of the project, it might not be enough to deploy one single design intervention for the aesthetic insight to come through – unless it is very dominant or the project site is small enough.

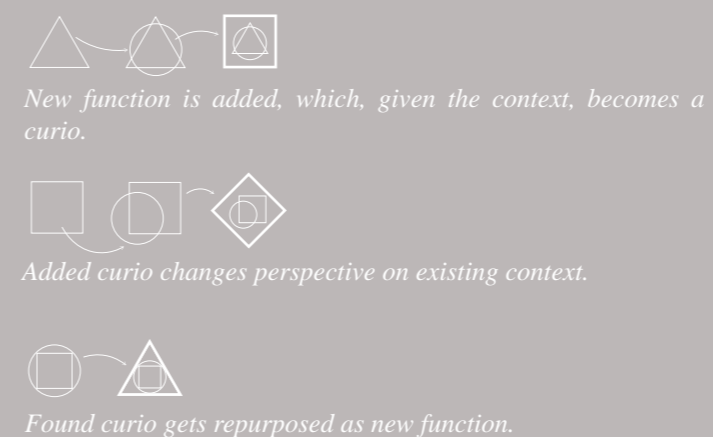
I think curiosities are best when they are just barely noticeable – this way it feels more special to have found them. For this design, I have been aiming for a subtle use of the intended aesthetic. I do not want the park to be percieved as weird – just a bit curious. This was a constant struggle throughout the design process, to find the right balance. I decided to work with a quite ”neutral” base for the design and then add a few, more pronounced and ”designed” design interventions that would mediate my aesthetic insight more strongly. In the following pages, I show each one of these four main design interventions and explain briefly how they came about.

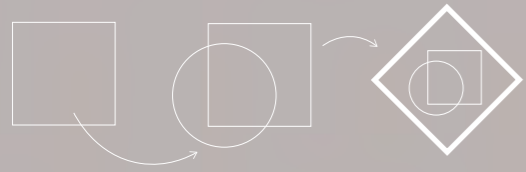
The diagrams below represent how I have worked with combining non-aesthetic qualities, desired functions, and place-specific pre-conditions in order to create the more pronounced design interventions. The diagrams are schematic representations of some of the ways in which the *translation* can happen. Out of context, they might appear quite abstract – but hopefully they will make more sense in the following four pages, where I connect them to the design interventions.

Fig. 70. Below: Factors used to achieve design interventions with an aesthetic of place-related curiousness:



Below: Examples of how the different factors can be combined. Each outcome exhibit at least one of the two identified non-aesthetic properties of place-related curiosity.





Added curio changes perspective on existing context. In this design intervention, the added curiosities (the agave plants) change the perspective on the existing context (the concrete meadow). Overgrowth is turned into plant design. Hopefully it can inspire others to look for more hidden qualities of Els Rajolars that can be repurposed.

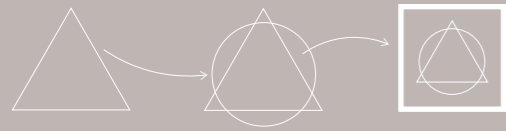
1. On my first and only visit inside the La Salvaora factory, what spoke to me the most, aesthetically, was the spontaneous meadow that had formed in the cracks in the concrete floor. A golden opportunity to think creatively in terms of reuse.

2. I wanted to frame the meadow as something beautiful rather than a sign of neglect. While I find it to be beautiful as it is, I realize that my taste is influenced by my profession and not necessarily coinciding with most people's ideas of beauty. I therefore took inspiration from Nassauer's (1995) ideas of adding orderly frames to messy landscapes. By cutting out and removing slabs of the concrete I created plant beds for added vegetation. This with the purpose to turn the existing urban meadow into an intentionally created landscape planting. I further enhanced this notion by giving the planting a defined border (this is shown more clearly in the final design).

3. For the added specimen plants to stand out among the grasses, they needed to be quite big. I decided to use century plants, *Agave americana*, as they grow big, have a strong visual character, and are drought tolerant. A bonus is that when they flower (which they do only once) their long flower stalks remind of the chimneys.



Fig. 71. Conceptual representation of the concrete meadow, also known as the "(Un-)naturalistic garden".



New function is added, which, given the context, becomes a curio. In this design intervention, the added function of a "conference table" becomes a curiosity when placed in this particular context. The curiousness of the table is further enhanced by its unconventional appearance.

1. In Oliva, during festivities, it is a common practice to close off a street and put up long tables where people can gather and enjoy good food and drinks. The quintessential white, monobloc chairs and plastic tables has, to me, become sort of a symbol for Spain in general and Oliva in particular. This typology became the starting point for developing my meeting table.

2. One of my first ideas was to simply give the table a bend. Still a very recognizable set of furniture but with a curious feature that might make people look again.

3. Making a custom-made bent plastic table would not be feasible, sustainable or practical. Instead I started thinking how the idea with the bent table might translate into concrete. A sturdy and long-lasting table rhymes better with the function and symbolism I aim for. A table that is always set and ready for both cheerful celebrations and important discussions. I felt like I needed to repurpose some of the brick rubble from the torn-down sections of the perimeter wall. Using the bricks as ballast for the concrete became the solution. A terrazzo table made out of Els Rajolar's bricks.

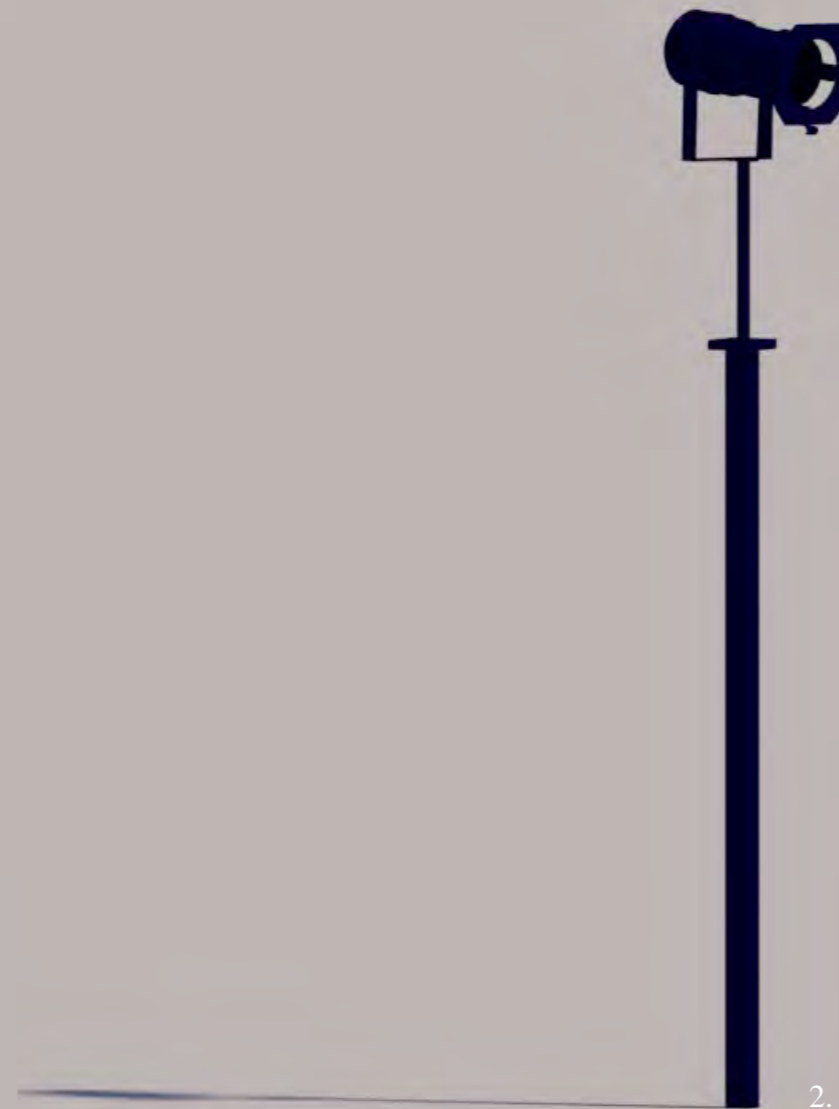
4. The size and bend of the table was adapted to fit the site. I wanted it to feel as long as possible (to fit as many as possible). I feel like the bend helps accentuating the length of the table – as if it had to be bent in order to fit within the space. I let the table extend a bit out on the sidewalk to subtly connect the park with the streetscape. I turned this part of the table into a bench.



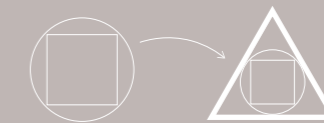
Fig. 72. The creative process behind the meeting table.



1.



2.



Found curio gets repurposed as new function. In these design interventions, similarly to the "curiosity garden" discussed by Phillips (2015), the highlighting and repurposing of found curios enhance their curiousness and contribute to a changed perspective on the existing.

1. Remnants from an old roof structure gets repurposed as a pergola.

2. The metal post gets to serve a new purpose as fixture for a spotlight. Controlled by a switch with a timer, the spotlight can be used by anyone who wants to perform on the stage.

Fig. 73. Conceptual representation of repurposed steel structures.



New function is added, which, given the context, becomes a curio. The design for the stage (which also is a pavillion providing shade) developed during the phase of intuitive sketching. The intention was to create a central feature for the park that would provide a lot of visual character as well as highlight the public stage as an important function. The transparent structure is quite tall so that it can be seen from outside the perimeter wall. Lit up from the inside, it adds an extra layer of visual interest in the evening. The cladding of corrugated polycarbonate flirts with the sheets of metal and eternity that cover most of the roofs in Els Rajolars.

Fig. 74. Conceptual representation of the combined stage/pavillion.

Design proposal – Parc La Salvaora

The new park provides a well-needed addition of community-centered public space to the area around Els Rajolars. With the intention to evoke feelings of curiosity, the park's aesthetic is achieved through a handful of design interventions – each one with its own curious characteristic. The concrete meadow, the bent meeting table, the glowing stage pavillion, and the mirror wall, all become curiosities in this post-industrial setting.

Much attention has been put into preserving the character of the old brickyard while at the same time creating a functional and accessible space that can host several types of activities. The site's existing character is also preserved by repurposing of existing structures and vegetation. The beams from the old shed roof get turned into a pergola and the weeds in the concrete, together with some specimen Agaves, become an "(un-)naturalistic garden".



Shipping container for storage of chairs, toys etc.

Agaves in existing concrete meadow

Boule court

Fence

Lamp post

Entrance

Garrofa tree in planter

Lamp post

Stage

Meeting table

Decomposed granite

Spotlight

Existing tree

Mirror wall

Notice board

Bench

Fig. 75. Site plan

10m
1:200 A3





Fig. 76. Section A-a

10m
1:200 A3

Carrer de Francisco Ferrando

Table under shading pergola.

Social space opening up towards the streets and the (un-)naturalistic garden.

More secluded space. The smooth concrete floor and the mirror wall makes it an ideal space for e.g. Tiktok dance practice.

Passeig dels Rajolars



Fig. 77. Section B-b

Carrer del Cavall Bernat

Open space between the meeting table and the stage. The bench under the existing tree is a good place to escape the sun.

(Un-)naturalistic garden. Ten large Agaves – one for each chimney in Els Rajolars

10m
1:200 A3

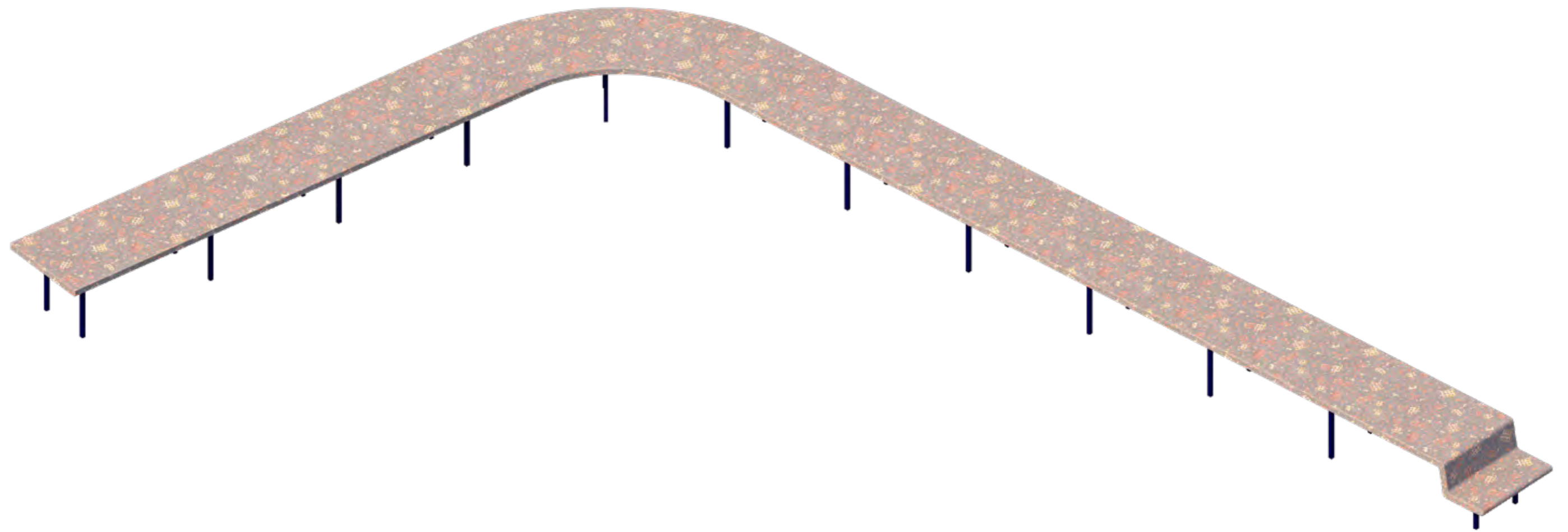


Fig. 78. The table with its integrated bench.



Fig. 79. Outdoor cinema in the new park.



Fig. 80. The long table can fit a whole party plus paella pans.



Fig. 81. Outdoor class.



Fig. 82. Gymnastics in front of the large mirror wall. The wall is made out of small mirror mosaics – same principal as a disco ball.



Fig. 83. Panorama over the project site in February 2022

Discussion

Result:

The design proposal was made with the intention to create a community space that would strengthen people's engagement, connection, and feelings of care towards Els Rajolars and its future development. During the analysis, I became aware of my own feelings of curiosity and care towards this specific neighborhood. I hypothesized that these two emotions had some kind of connection, and that by evoking other people's curiosity about this landscape, I could also maybe instill or strengthen existing feelings of care and affection towards it.

My intention

From the start, I knew I wanted to work extensively with reuse and repurposing of the site's existing qualities. This, with the purpose of maintaining and developing the particularity of the site, but also to minimize the design's negative impact on the climate. According to Phillips (2015), repurposed objects, found on-site, can be an effective driver for landscape-related curiosity. (A very suiting and lucky coincidence for me and my project.) The proposal repurposes existing roof structures and spontaneous vegetation and adds new functions to the perimeter wall. These design interventions are meant to trigger questions such as "Why did they keep these weeds?" or "What is that odd-looking table made of?". Hopefully, these kinds of questions would trigger further reflections on why public spaces look and are made the way they are. In the best of worlds, my design would inspire other people to imagine other futures and ideas for Els Rajolars and other public spaces.

I have been trying to strike a balance between achieving the desired aesthetic while at the same time not letting it get in the way of the project's functionality as a neighborhood park. I wanted it to become an attractive public space that would encourage curiosity and engagement – I did not want it to turn into a theme park of curiosities. Had the main purpose, however, been to develop and evaluate a design tool based on ACT, then I might have tried to take the aesthetic "as far as I could", without thinking as much about its potential users. I might have tried to squeeze curiousness into each individual part of the design – but then again, – would it have conveyed the intended experience better than the more subtle approach that I went with?

A valid critique of this project would be to question why I chose to apply an aesthetic that embraces some of the place's rundown "qualities", in a neighborhood that I have already described as somewhat rundown? Why not propose something new and more obviously beautiful? My answer would be that I have really tried to strike a balance where I get to express myself creatively (wierdly?) – while at the same time creating a park that I think is genuinely beautiful, although quirky. There are likely a lot of people who would disagree me, but I hope, in that case, that the aesthetic of my proposal at least would expand their ideas of what others might find appealing. Also, by working with reuse and less expensive interventions, the project would be more likely (hypothetically) to be built. I argue that a built park is better than no park in this case.

Success

So, have I succeeded in identifying what an aesthetic of curiosity looks like – and have I been able to incorporate it in my design? In Zangwill's model of aesthetic creation (2007), there is the condition of success; does the final product convey the aesthetic experience envisaged in the aesthetic insight? My design is, of course, just one out of an infinite amount of solutions to the task – but I believe I have been successful in incorporating some aspects of curiosity into the aesthetic of the park. I know that I, for one, would be intrigued by seeing the transparent and softly glowing structure of the stage, peek up from behind the old brick walls. Also, I would argue that the mere placement of the suggested park would make a lot of people curious. My aim was, however, to *design* a park that would evoke curiosity in others – which of course is a difficult thing to judge without the proposal actually being built. Discussing this design proposal in terms of "result" or success is therefore rather difficult. I leave it up to you, dear reader, to judge. Would it spark your curiosity?

Methods:

Aesthetic Creation Theory is not a design tool. With some inspiration from van Zyl's (2019) methodology, I have used ACT to deepen my understanding of aesthetic creation, but also to create a framework for structuring and describing my process. While it has been very rewarding on a personal level, it has also sometimes been challenging to stay within the frames of this structure. Sometimes I felt like the site needed things that were seemingly impossible to combine

with my aesthetic insight. Even so, I still think that my structure proved quite forgiving and flexible. This is because ACT only describes the essential requirements for aesthetic creation – not *how* the creative process should happen in detail. I was in other words free to fill my framework with whatever methods I felt helped my project best.

Intentionality

To me, the biggest takeaway from designing informed by ACT was that I really had to wrestle with – and finally become really grounded in – my aesthetic insight. Designing based on concepts is common practice among architects, but quite often, in my opinion, concepts are being (mis-)used in quite superficial ways. Sometimes it seems to limit the potential of the design and render it one-dimensional and too obvious. For instance, to work with a concept such as "stripes" might generate a lot of interesting form – but the question is what the intended aesthetic experience was. Is it to bring about a feeling of order and repetition, or maybe to create dizziness? I am not saying that stripes could never be a viable concept – but without a clear aesthetic insight, the successfulness of the design's aesthetic becomes hard to judge. If the aesthetic intention is not specified, then how can anyone take credit for the outcome? If the aesthetic turns out "good" and is appreciated by its users – is it then a merit of the architect and its concept or more of a lucky strike? Without pre-set intentions, it is hard to tell. Zangwill's theory underscores this – the importance of intentionality in aesthetic creation.

As I constantly returned to my aesthetic insight and really tried to understand its aesthetic/non-aesthetic relationships, I was able to make aesthetic decisions more confidently than usual. That being said, I have also sometimes felt quite limited in my creativity, as it felt like I was not "allowed" to take steps away from my insight. (Although, this had probably more to do with the academic format of the thesis rather than the theory itself.) This minor problem was, however, alleviated by the phase of intuitive sketching. This helped me get a lot of excess creativity (as well as bad ideas) out of my system.

Pedagogy

I agree with Van Etteger et al. (2016) when they suggest that ACT could be useful for the pedagogy of landscape architecture (-educations). My experience from architecture school is that working with design concepts is somewhat of a methodological requirement. At the same time, I think there is a lack of pedagogical tools for teaching this particular way of working. The student is therefore left to its own devices – something that can be both liberating and terrifyingly difficult (depending on the student's previous experience with concept based aesthetic creation). I think ACT provides a very straightforward understanding of the fundamental aspects of the creative process. Every aesthetic decision should serve the purpose of realizing the aesthetic insight. I argue that with this understanding, a lot of students would benefit more from their creative processes – and from earlier on in the process. At least I know it would have benefited me to know this from an early point in the education. Here, I think, lays some of the most interesting themes for future research.

Walking

I do not think it is possible to really get to know a landscape without spending time in it. Walking adds the dimension of movement and puts oneself in the same position and footsteps as countless people have walked before. For me, however, it was quite a challenge to try and step out of my previous familiarity with Els Rajolars and try to see it with fresh eyes. At the same time, my previous knowledge of the landscape probably enriched my analysis more than it limited it.

I think that serial visions are a great way of conveying an experience of a landscape. However, after a few days of walks, I found myself limited by the format. I realized that thinking in sequences of pictures made me focus solely on the things I saw – thus forgetting to reflect on what I could not see, or rather, what I thought was lacking. Luckily, I realized this during my stay in Oliva and could therefore adjust my analytical glasses and walk some more.

Other ways to make people care

If creating engagement from the community was the sole purpose of this thesis, then methods of participatory design would probably be much more efficient than working with aesthetics. If this project were to be realized, I would definitely propose revisiting the design and developing it with the knowledge and wishes of the community. But even in these kinds of co-creative processes – as in the case of La Zona Santiago – the architects often have a role (and responsibility) of steering the design towards a functional and aesthetically coherent endresult. The

knowledge provided by ACT could also prove helpful in those kinds of participatory design projects. This could also be an interesting theme for further research, how ACT can provide relevant insights for co-creative design processes, where the aesthetic insights and ideas must be shared among several creators.

Last – but most importantly: How to maintain the curiosity?

A landscape design is never really finished. It develops and matures – hopefully with grace. I think the key to achieving this is by encouraging the users to continuously participate in reimagining and developing the project. This, I believe, is one of the greatest strengths of the La Zona Santiago project; that is has a truly motivated organization that continuously activate the space, thereby creating engagement with the community. My dream scenario, if the project would be realized, would be for the La Salvaora park to be continuously used and activated by a group such as the local Falla organization "AC Falla Barri Sant Francesc". Maybe they could arrange movie-nights or line-dance classes? That would be fun!

References

List of figures

If not stated otherwise © Oskar Persson (2023), regarding photographs, illustrations and maps.

All digitalized historic photographs provided by Kiko Mestre Vila and his amazing Facebook page and historical archive, "Oliva - Història fotogràfica".

Fig. 1 - Navarro (Late 1950s). [Photograph]. Available: AMO archive. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=5407018256017232&set=pb.100079993072894.-2207520000>. [15-05-2023]

Fig. 2 - (Collage with photos from the same copyright holder) Monel, Yann (date unknown). [Photographs] Available: <https://www.wagon-landscaping.fr/tous-les-projets#/joyeux-1/> [15-05-2023]

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