

# Reclaiming the Streets For Play Through Participatory Design With Children

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# Reclaiming the Streets for Play Through Participatory Design With Children

## ÅTERTA STADENS GATURUM FÖR LEK GENOM DELTAGANDE DESIGN MED BARN

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## Abstract

Children and their play are disappearing from the urban public realms of the street. This change is driven by increased presence of motor driven vehicles, built environment as well as changing attitudes about childhood and notions of street functions. Thus, a change that is mirrored in cities that become absent from children. The absence of children in the streets reflects a loss of cultural identity and practices, as children’s collective free plays, environmental exploration and freedom of mobility have been marginalized in cities. Furthermore, this loss can become extended to generations of children with less opportunity for building social and environmental skills. There has been a change from streets that once harboured play to isolated playground islands in the urban fabric. Contemporary cities are not planned or built considering the most vulnerable citizens such as the children. With this in mind, this study explores the role of streets in relation to play and the potential of participatory approaches to contribute to street designs supporting children’s play and presence in the city. Based on a design case of the Analia Franco school in Santos Brazil, studied through fieldwork, interviews and a workshop with children of 5 years of age, participatory design methods are tested and a redesign of an adjacent local street is proposed. Drawn from this experience the participatory design process is discussed, as well as ideas on how the development of playful streets can be supported through participatory design. The study’s results outline opportunities and challenges of working with participatory design with children as a method of reclaiming streets for play in the field of landscape architecture. The study argues that Participatory design is a valuable approach to redesign the streets for play with children as it allows the process to be grounded on local culture and wishes, thus providing local relevance for design proposals.

## SAMMANFATTNING

Barn och deras lek försvinner från gatans offentliga stadsrum. Denna förändring drivs av ökad närvaro av motordrivna fordon, byggd miljö samt förändrade attityder kring barndomen samt föreställningar om gatans olika funktioner. Följaktligen, en förändring som speglas i städer som blir frånvarande av barn. Frånvaron av barn på gatorna återspeglar en förlust av kulturell identitet och erfarenhet. Som kollektiva fria lekar har utforskande av omvärldsmiljö och rörelsefrihet marginaliserats i städerna. Därtill kan denna förlust utökas till generationer av barn som får mindre möjlighet att bygga sociala och miljömässiga färdigheter. Det har skett en förändring från gator som en gång hyste lek till öar av isolerade lekplatser i stadsväven. Samtida städer planeras eller byggs inte med tanke på de mest utsatta medborgarna som barn. Med detta i åtanke undersöks i studien gatans roll i förhållande till lek och potentialen hos deltagande tillvägagångssätt att bidra till gestaltningen av gaturum som stödjer barns lek och närvaro i staden. Baserat på exemplet Analia Franco-skolan i Santos Brasilien, studerat genom fältarbete, intervjuer och en workshop med barn i 5-årsåldern, testas deltagande designmetoder och en omgestaltning av en intilliggande lokalgata föreslås. Erfarenheter av den deltagande designprocessen diskuteras, samt idéer kring hur utvecklingen av lekfulla gator kan stödjas genom deltagande design. Studiens resultat beskriver möjligheter och utmaningar med att arbeta med deltagande design med barn som en metod för att återta gator för lek inom landskapsarkitekturen. Studien argumenterar för att deltagande design är ett värdefullt tillvägagångssätt för att göra om gatorna för lek med barn eftersom det gör att processen kan grundas på lokal kultur och önskemål, vilket ger lokal relevans för designförslag.

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# Situating the author

The practice of situating the author is common within indigenous and decolonial studies (Kovach, 2010). This practice is intended to share the context that the author comes from and what the author is coloured by. It is important to question objectivity and to embrace that I cannot look at anything in an absolute objective way or fully understand others' realities (Reitsma, 2024). The way I see and engage with things is influenced by my past and my position in the world. In this section I will situate myself by sharing my position and past experiences. These have greatly influenced my choice of topic and my way of approaching this work.

I am a child of a village, a father from Sweden and a mother who comes from the Philippines, hence having a mixed culture in my upbringing. I grew up in a small village, called Apelskift, with a house with a garden next to fields and forests in the northwest of the region Småland, in Sweden. I had an abundance of free play, building huts and a sense of freedom of moving and exploring the big and the little landscape on my own, or together with kids in my village. My grandparents and my parents were at home working a lot in the family company, making traditional sweets and travelling to markets, a tradition I also got to help out with during my childhood. With my parents "close" at home I never went to preschool.

Every now and then we would travel to the Philippines to visit my grandmother "lola Bernada" and my aunts, my uncle and cousins. On the island of Cebu, my mum had built a house that my grandma and relatives used. We continuously visited and stayed at this place. I think because of that, not staying at hotels, I got a more immersed experience of my relatives' reality. I played with my cousins who let me taste different fruits in the forest garden around the house and we took trips to go playing in the water of the Pacific Ocean.

When looking back to my own relations to roads and streets I can remember winters with snow on the soil road that provided the perfect slopes for sledding down on the road of the hills in my village in Sweden. Around the age of nine years I have memories of skateboarding, sitting down on the skateboard with my friend and going down the street making the cars stop in the small town Habo, to where I went for my first nine years in school. Furthermore, alongside the intense vehicle traffic that leads to Dalaguete and Argao in the Philippines, there are memories of dancing in outdoor dance classes with kids from different places.

With having my daughter, one and half years ago, I had a realization that my children will probably grow up in the city of Malmö, where my husband and I now live. She is also growing up with mixed cultures with her father coming from Brazil. Our home relations to Brazilian culture and our yearly travels to Brazil to visit relatives influenced me in choosing Brazil as a context to carry out this work. I cannot provide elements from my childhood to my daughter such as the same

free plays I experienced, loose materials, hut building, spaces and elements for experiments, tree climbing, fresh air, moving freely in the landscape and nature connections in everyday life, however, maybe I can help to provide the spontaneous social connections and opportunity to play that I had. With thoughts from Cele (2006) that our everyday places from childhood are embodied knowledge that we hold for life, I am concerned with my daughter and with children in general growing up in the city today.





# Introduction



Mimmi Beckman, in part 3 of Gatalabbas' end conference (2024) argues that "the most neglected sustainability question is to give room for play". She argues that this is a challenge that needs to be part of the sustainable futures we seek to approach. Children and their play are disappearing from the public realms of the street creating a city that is absent of children. A change from streets that once harboured play to designated isolated playground islands in the urban fabric, has forced children to become both physically and mentally disconnected from the urban realms. Social attitude towards childhood (Bishop and Corkery, 2017; Derr, 2018; Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019) and urban planning accompanied with technologies such as screens and cars change and influence various existing cultures and social behaviours (Manzini and Vezzoli, 2002). It's not a surprise that today's generation of children are living more sedentary and indoor lives than any generation before them (Bishop and Corkery, 2017; Van Vliet, et al., 2017). Furthermore, with the UN convention on the rights of the child (United Nations, 1989) and the initiative of child friendly cities planners and designers need to take in children's opinion and wishes in planning. (Gosso et al., 2015) mean that play can be seen as a cultural activity, and Ellis (2004 cited in Pinto, 2018) argues that culture can be promoted through play. Cities are losing the local cultural identity of the streets as a free place for children's play, people's spontaneous meetings and sharing of resources. Approaches such as tactical urbanism and urban acupuncture can be guided by participatory design as a way to make the streets playful again. Planners, designers and landscape architects have an important role in hindering the collective loss of cultural memory and identity of children's use of streets and vital arenas for practising social and environmental skills.



# Background

This section presents and describes children's situation in cities, the role of the street and play with its varied cultures.

## Children and the city

Karsten (2016) states that children always have been part of the city. However, contemporary cities are not built considering the most vulnerable citizens, such as the children, people with function variations, seniors and economically vulnerable people (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). Young children in cities meet many barriers to participate in their communities, starting with physical barriers such as too high window placements and non accessible toilets to attitudinal and social barriers such as, for example, beliefs that they have no opinions to express or the expectations that they should not be heard only seen (Derr, 2018). Children's outdoor exploration, play and encounters with various other children without adult supervision have been marginalized in cities. While children's outdoor exploration was common in Europe in the first decades after the world war, today it has become a rare cultural practice (Karsten, 2016). Contemporary cities with their designated places for play and low or no connectivity in the streetscapes result in isolated children islands in the city, that do not consider children's embodied need for exploring their local environments. Therefore, Karsten (2016) argues that urban public spaces as practice spaces for citizenships are experiences that children have less of. In urban realms children are losing ground (Bishop and Corkery, 2017) with contemporary children's environments being confined to isolated islands in the urban fabric (Kylin and Lieberg, 2001; Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019) making children's life in the cities into an island hopping (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006). In the cities children are relegated to three traditional environments, Bishop and Corkery (2017 p.81, 88) explain that these environments are their homes, schools and recreational spaces; such as playgrounds and skateparks. Furthermore, tendencies are that children's freedom at home has grown while there is a decrease in their freedom outdoors (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006). With fewer and less time for children's play outdoors and their limited independent movement in the city (Cele and Van Der Burgt, 2015; Karsten, 2016), society becomes unacquainted with children's presence or play in the streets or other public realms (Karsten, 2016; Murray, 2024). A reality that can be partly caused by planners having a presumption that children's needs are fulfilled through the planning of children's zones that separate them from the adult world (Karsten, 2016; Kylin and Lieberg, 2001). Furthermore, Karsten (2016) means that this "everyday citizenship" for children has been neglected by urban

planning policies. Prescribed functional children zones in urban design do not take in consideration the presence of children and their continuous play or interest in other realms of the city (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). These explorations are important experiences in childhood for the development of analytical, spatial and social skills as well as environmental knowledge (Cele and Van Der Burgt, 2015; Gray et al., 2023; Shadkam, 2024). Moreover, Bishop and Corkery (2017) explains that the continued lack of opportunity to participate in community development processes are a reason for children's loss of space. They argue that two more drivers of this change have been social attitudes about childhood and children, joined with changes in social environmental experience, and opportunity (Cele, 2006). Pitsikali and Parnell (2019) explains that in cities there is a wider societal attitude coloured by discomfort of the presence of children in public realms. This attitude can be influenced by people's concerns for safety (Shadkam, 2024). Another view is expressed by Valentine (1996), who argues that public realms are viewed as adultspaces that limit behaviours and are defined by adults and often white males. Children's freedom was further decreased through intensified news about "stranger danger" during the 1980s (Murray, 2024). "Stranger danger" is a phrase that parents tell their children to enforce and protect them from strangers that are potential abductors or violators (Wodda, 2018). The phrase originated as a response to high media coverage, which Wodda (2018) means gave the impression that this kind of crime was increasing. Murray (2024) interviewed Peter Norton, an American historian, who described that in the USA, the former method to cope with "stranger danger" was through neighbors and people looking out for each other. These community acts of collective eyes on the street were further confirmed by Karsten and Van Vliet (2006) who explains that parents from earlier generations got help from people in their surroundings such as shopkeepers, neighbours and families. Even parks are now considered too dangerous by parents for children to explore them independently without parental guide and watch (Karsten, 2016).

These isolated islands for children in cities can represent lost environmental and social spaces as it reflects the neglect of children's needs, wishes and their use of space. Pinto (2018) argues that children's perceived right to the city and its public spaces diminishes when children get displaced in safer and more planned islands in the city. Children's transgressive character of play both inventing new ways of interaction with the space and seeking contact outside the borders of the playground, can demonstrate a curiosity to the world outside and a resistance to being contained in these children zones (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). The changing attitudes and built environments in cities have affected parenthoods and correlated childhoods from being more resilient towards more vulnerable practices. For example, in cities of Brazil, children in different socioeconomic



Children climbing the trees to see a football game in Sao Paulo. Photo (Pilagallo and Diwan, 2012)



situations get restrained to enclosed and divided environments such as schools, houses, apartment buildings and gated communities (Pinto, 2018) a separation of a community to heterotopias of deviance (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). Heterotopias can be seen as places that enclose various deviant behaviour that does not correspond to established norms in contemporary society (Foucault, 1998 cited in Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). With less children outdoor playing, more children indoors and children in the backseat of cars, hopping between different scheduled activities and function islands in the city, Karsten (2016) states that the opportunities for building up “bridging social capital”, become scarce. A skill that is essential for creating connections and establishing relations outside of one’s own group (Karsten, 2016). Further she argues that: “The city should be a meeting place for children where differences can be bridged and where children can build up bridging social capital” (Karsten, 2016, p. 80).

However, the issues of segregation, attitudes of safety and childhood among others have reshaped children’s presence in cities and are also present in the isolated islands that children are now confined to. Winder (2024) explained that broad social norms have been embodied in playgrounds for a long time. Furthermore, Shadkam (2024) argues that playgrounds with their over monitoring and segregation divide children by gender, race and class are societal biases reflected in the urban realm.

## The role of streets

Prior to the automobile, streets were places for socialization and trade. Streets together with squares and parks are part of the realms of public space (Wheway, 2015). Karsten (2005) explains that the street’s public space was before considered and used as a child space. However, in the study that took place in Amsterdam, two out of three streets had been transformed into an adult space (ibid). In Brazil until around the 70s, children had a freedom to access streets and they were commonly considered a place for children’s play (Pinto, 2018). The streets in cities in Brazil were a space that provided physical connections into the world and its sensations:

“For several children, it was in the streets that they found their friends’ house, the empty lots, the soccer field, the sun, the rain, the trees, the bakery and the bar, among other elements of the daily life in an urban zone” (Pinto, 2018, p. 85).

When the car arrived as a new technology there was negotiation of the public space of the streets followed by resistance (Cowman, 2017) but the attitudes got influenced by companies to be in favor of the automobile (Murray, 2024).

“The famous street plays in the streets of big Brazilian cities, such as São Paulo, which were typical of the decades of 1950, 1960 and 1970, were slowly pulled to controlled environments such as schools” (Arújo 2016, cited in Pinto, 2018, p. 85).

Consequently, it is now prevalent in cities that many streets have become inhospitable to children (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006). In the year 2005 there were more than twice as many cars than children in Amsterdam and the majority of these cars were parked in residential streets, places where children’s play is presupposed and likely to occur (Karsten, 2005). Automobile traffic affect other urban dwellers that shares the living spaces, in a conversation with a local São Paulo resident who brought up that in São Paulo, roaring traffic in early mornings has forced birds to sing and attract partners in the pause of the traffic which is during the night before dawn, this effect of traffic has also been seen in studies in Spain (Arroyo-Solís et

al., 2013). In a study in Salvador, Brazil, by Pinto and Bichara (2017) involved children between 7 to 11 years that got to give suggestions for change in their neighbourhoods. The most asked of by the children was safe places to play and play spaces. A suggestion by the children in the study was to remove the cars from the streets in his neighborhood, for instance, Paulo 7 years old said:

“I wish there was a place to park the cars and not on the streets where we play” Paulo cited in (Pinto and Bichara, 2017, p. 34).

Further the study showed that, less play spaces on the street was not balanced by new or maintaining existing planned play spaces. Another example from the study displayed that children’s play spaces were demolished for building houses, Breno 9 years old:

“What I liked most was the slide. I used to go there alone with my friends, but it is no longer there. It was demolished to build new houses” (Pinto and Bichara, 2017, p. 34).

Both speeding and parked cars act as a barrier for children’s play, hindering their freedom of movement and use of the street further that the above quotes show that loss of play space is not compensated through active planning for new play spaces. The increased verticalizations of Brazilian cities and the development of horizontal and vertical gated communities has been an ongoing trend since the 1970s (Pinto, 2018). She explains that the change of the built environment influences the uses of urban public spaces. From a multitude of functions to become empty passageways, with people’s activities such as meetings, play, talk, nature connections and rest reallocated to shopping malls. Among children in higher socioeconomic status is a larger decrease in playing in the streets (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006). A conclusion that is also reflected in a study in Brazil by (Bittencourt, 2010) who showed that children from low socioeconomic communities in Rio De Janeiro, walk and circulate more in their surroundings, as well as taking the bus, therefore they had a wider knowledge of their neighbourhood compared to economically favoured children, who did not know the streets areas for neither play nor social meetings. Moreover, the children who had a larger experience of using the street had a more playful and imaginative appropriation of public spaces. (Pinto and Bichara, 2017) made a study in Brazil that showed that children living in gated communities had less experience of urban public spaces and no local awareness about the routes to various previously visited squares and parks in the city whilst children who lived in working class neighborhoods had established mind maps on routes to nearby parks and squares. The streets and other spaces in cities that have been traditionally been used for coexistence, tend to disappear, these spaces have helped children to spontaneous get together in groups through collective free play (Pinto, 2018) with the present day of individualism, violence and consumer values influencing the experience of urban life in Brazil (Bittencourt, 2010, p. 1302). Moreover, the United Nations convention of the rights of the Child committee arises this issue and sees it as a general threat of urbanization to children’s self agencies in the cities, especially to interact with their surrounding environments and the ability to access spontaneous play forms (Mårtensson and Nordström, 2017).



The city Santos in Brazil. Photograph by Mike Peel ([www.mikepeel.net](http://www.mikepeel.net)), CC BY-SA 4.0

# One function to multiple functions

Lerner (2014) argues that spaces of streets are too valuable to serve only one function, as mobility or parkings. Other key functions of the streets in the urban fabric need to be taken into consideration such as social interaction, play, politics and imagination (Bertolini, 2020). For streets to yet again host these functions and multiple uses over time the design of streets and spaces need to change (Lerner, 2014). At some places in England, roads have been redesigned to slow traffic down, which has allowed children to play (Wheway, 2015). This illustrates how actual street designs influence the playfulness of streets. The car-centric society needs to give back spaces for meaningful social and ecological processes by resisting the dominance of cars with limited speed and street space, further making other mobility accessible for a sustainable and resilient future (Manzini, 2015). For the authors, Manzini and Vezzoli (2002), cultural and technological change are always related, meaning for example when changing the use of streets towards allowing for multifunctionality, we need to think of the cultural and technological changes and how they influence each other and not only focus on technology (such as the built environment) or just on cultural change (behaviours). Various research have shown that behavior has a relation and influences the built and natural environment (Woolley, 2003). It has also been recognized by two decades of research that children relate and connect differently with the built environment (Bishop and Corkery 2017).

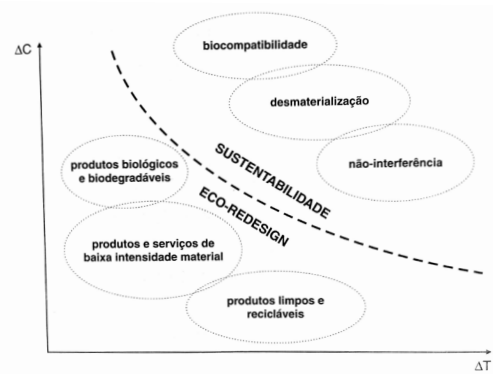


Figure 1 - The culture and technology chart by Manzini and Vezzoli (2002, p.41)

The chart by Manzini and Vezzoli (2002) displays the relation between culture and technology for a sustainable world. They argue that there is always a relation between cultural and technological change and that we should design solutions that balance between both changes. This balance between cultural and technological change is a challenge to achieve and to keep in balance. Various projects have found tensions with local cultures while trying to change the function of the streets. For instance, In an evaluation of the pilot project Play street in Stockholm made by Origo Group (2023, p. 18) there was feedback from individuals, an example of a response was:

“The streets are not made for play. Children should not learn that. Respect to cars and roads is important to teach children”. (Origo Group, 2023, p. 18)

The former quote can demonstrate a perception of a contemporary notion of how a street should be used. Further, in an interview with the grounders of ‘Play out’ tells that it is not easy to close off a street for play with a society that is no longer accustomed to children’s play in the street (Rose and Ferguson cited in Murray, 2024), with vehicle drivers’ frustration of not being able to pass. At the same time streets in the city are increasingly becoming spaces for experimentation (Bertolini, 2020) with the car dominance being more and more questioned.

Karsten (2016) says that urban planners need to respond with planning and designing broader sidewalks that can accommodate children’s meetings and focus on creating safe traffic routes along buildings that are frequently used by children. Moreover, there is a need for creating environments and situations that enable play and free play in the city (Wheway, 2015). Parks and playgrounds do not automatically deliver valuable and desired play situations or accessible environments for children (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). There is a need to create street realms that are perceived as safe for children and as for parents. In a meeting with a traffic planner in Malmö Stad working with the project for school streets, Dalundh<sup>1</sup> addressed the issue with unsafe streets around schools because of car traffic and comprehended that for a behavioral change in mobility the streets also needed physical (infrastructural) change. A society and urban planning that supports children’s independent exploration and mobility in cities Wheway (2015) enables and builds terrains for free play. Furthermore, Kylin and Lieberg, states that already at (2001) that children had less agency of their own time with increased scheduled and controlled activities than before, therefore the opportunity for free play has been limited. Further in the USA and UK breaks for free play in schools have been reduced since the arrival of what Jarvis et al. (2014) call the “transmit and test” culture.

## Streets for social and spatial resilience

There is resistance against the car dominance of streets with self initiated temporal reclaimings of the streets for play together with children. In 2009, Bristol, two mothers conducted an experiment with closing off a street for two hours after school for their children to use the space for play (Murray, 2024). Residents in the project got aware during the experiment that they were strangers to their neighbours along with children’s surprise that there were classmates amongst their neighbours. Further the experiment exposed and made noticeable the extent of children in the neighbourhood. Karsten and Van Vliet (2006) mean that it is difficult to build trust and establish neighborly relationships, thus this experiment in Bristol is an example of how social entanglements and collaborations for reclaiming street space for children’s play can help to connect and build trust between people. Children’s capacity to bind us to one another has been unintentionally undermined by society and planners. Murray (2024) reflects that children’s play shifts the atmosphere of a street, to a feel that invites and permits adults to engage socially. Social boundaries tend to be crossed by children with examples such as asking straight questions, wandering and plays that goes into other peoples outdoor dining tables at plazas (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019) and long stares that surpass the formal, acts that can stir the social dimensions and bridge the boundaries. The acts from children’s play together with a collective collaboration of closing off their street, the residents in Bristol reclaimed the capability to get to know and connect with the people living nearby (Murray, 2024) which is significant for social resilience. Today, there are still children in Brazil who on their own claim the streets for their play. They are a marginalised community with their cultures risking extinction, when we plan cities from universal, adult and consumer viewed perspectives and values. Pinto (2018) argues that streets are important spaces for children’s opportunities to intermingle with children that have other social differences as ethnic, economic, cultural belonging and religious beliefs. Previous and contemporary coexistence with diverse children and people built up an understanding towards various differences and supported them in their abilities of autonomy and socialisation (Araújo 2016 and oliviers 2004 cited in Pinto, 2018), which they mean helped to lower social violence. Thus, fewer opportunities for collaborative free play can create societies with “low social connectedness and high environmental threat” (Twenge, 2000 cited in Jarvis et al, 2014, p.63). The authors mean that this social disconnectedness is far away from humans’ natural environments who have evolved to live environments with high

<sup>1</sup>Linda Dalundh, Trafic and mobility planer, Malmö stadshus, meeting about the project Skolgata (School Streets). 2024-12-03



social connectedness. Therefore it can result in a society that is dysfunctional with people’s social skills being less developed, which could result in societies with more violence, fear and loneliness. I conclude that children’s play in the streets are important for a sustainable future, with social abilities for collaboration and imagination for creative solutions and peace work.

Children’s own place making and relationship to the street was versatile with reference streets in their city such as the friends street, the grandmother’s street, the school street (Pinto 2018). Children choose to play in the streets where most friends lived or the most central streets in the city, with steeper streets used for bicycling or skateboarding (Oliviera, 2004 cited in Pinto, 2018). Hence, these children were able to make mental maps of the places of the city, with reference points that they were able to locate in space, showing their spatial abilities. Unplanned spaces have the possibility to be reimaged through the play of children (Pinto, 2018). She explains that streets or other spaces that often are ‘precarious in terms of structure’ and considered inadequate for children, are spaces that support a creative free play that challenge social, spatial and economic barriers.

Lerner (2014) means that local movie theatres were formerly important places for city residents to gather, meet and mingle, with less local movie theatres he refers to as the loss of local cultural identities. A parallel can be drawn to local cultural identity loss of the streets as a free place for children’s play, peoples spontaneous meetings and sharing of resources. Former and contemporary street play and social ecological interaction have been neglected practices that have been pushed away by technology change, such as cars and the built environment. Streets are a vital reference of a city, as the dance floor that enables practices of a sociocultural identity. How can we recuperate and hinder the collective loss of cultural memory and identity of children’s use of streets?

## Play

I think everybody has their own understanding and relation to the word play. However, there exist no universally agreed definition of play. Play can be considered as culturally situated therefore having various and diverse concepts. In a series of cultures, play is seen as a typical childhood activity that children do spontaneously and without the need of adult participation (Gosso et al., 2015; Shier, 2001, p. 115). Gosso et al. (2015) mean that play can be seen as a cultural activity. Further Ellis (2004 cited in Pinto, 2018) argues that culture can be promoted through play. The context of economy, how adult values are transposed to children and adult perspectives on ludic and non-ludic activities influences play (Göncü et al. 2007 cited in Gosso et al., 2015 ). Most people recognize and have an understanding that play is vital to children’s development (Mozaffar, 2021). Gosso et al. (2015) mean that play is a cultural phenomenon with it being deeply embedded in the sociocultural context; an example is pretend play that involves gender stereotypes. This work focuses on play with a design process in Brazil. Therefore the section that follows emphasises play in a Brazilian context. It is important to notice that Brazil is a large country with a vast diversity of natural environments, sociocultural and socioeconomic conditions and ethnicity. Hence, the play is also very varied throughout the country.

### Types of play

There are no universally agreed existing play types or how to define the different types. Moraes and Otta 2003 cited in (Pinto, 2018) identified in studies of play in Brazil at least six types of play: (1)social contingency, (2)physical activity, (3) construction, (4) with rules, (5) rough- and tumble, and (6) pretend play. The types of plays that can overlap or fit in more than one category.

(1) Social contingency includes play that is motivated with unforeseen, contingent responses between participants, such as tag, hide and seek, tickling and mimicking. (2) Plays that involve physical activities in relation to their bodies, objects and spatiality, examples can be running, bouncing a ball, skateboarding and jumping rope. (3) Construction play is to change an element or to build with different elements to construct an artifact, for example to create a mini boat of a leaf, stick and a woodchip. (4) Plays with rules there can be to set roles and representation with setting a stage, for example soccer games in Brazilian streets, seven stones a common play in Brazil is flying kite in city reserves, avenues and on the beach. (5) Rough-and-tumble play involves acts of escape, chase and fight, with the last mentioned being distinguished from a real fight through laughing. (6) Lastly, the pretend plays, also known as make believe can consist of creating imaginary scenes, role-play and giving new or other properties to an object, the plays can be such as to make a imaginary call using a brick or taking a walk with the dog, with a rope tied to a toy that is assigned in the play the role dog. (Moraes and Otta 2003 cited in Pinto, 2018).



**The photo shows the Brazilian play “Cabra cega” game. Photo by blueberrymuffin [https://desciclopedia.org/wiki/Arquivo:Rua\\_hilda\\_crianca4.jpg](https://desciclopedia.org/wiki/Arquivo:Rua_hilda_crianca4.jpg) (accessed 2025 03 19)**

### Play in different environments

Children’s play in Brazil reflects their immediate environment. Caiçara children from the coastal area Ubatuba between Serra do Mar and the Atlantic ocean, had play themes that centered around swimming in the river, riding horse back and bathing in the waterfall, among other nature and more-than human connected play which were not found in urban children (Moraes and Otta, 2003 cited in Gosso et al., 2015, p. 30). In Salvador, a large urban area in the state of Bahia, Brazil, children in low socioeconomic communities appropriate, in creative and collective ways, their plays in the urban spaces that are not considered children’s spaces (Gosso et al., 2015). Plays that have been observed are flying kites on large avenues, playing marble or playing football on the pavement (Pinto 2018). Both urban and natural environments can be seen as stimulating. A view on urban life is Noschis (2008 cited in Mårtensson and Nordström, 2017) who describe the city as a very stimulating environment for especially children because of the varied activities that can take place, in which children can learn from and develop their identity from. However, (Gosso et al., 2015) considers that indigenous communities in Brazil have a greater exposure to stimulating and challenging natural environments and a closer contact to the adult world compared to urban children. Indigenous communities in Brazil have a rich, varied environment that they are allowed to explore and play in from the forests with trees to climb, to rivers and the ocean to bathe in (ibid). Nevertheless, a group that stands out are economically favoured children in urban contexts of Brazil who have less self agency, mobility and opportunity to varied socio ecological play spaces in their city and surroundings (Pinto, 2018). Communities of urban socioeconomic vulnerable children and indigenous communities have less toys. The indigenous community Xikrin in Brazil as other indigenous communities generally have fewer toys than urban children and no industrialized toys (Gosso et al., 2015). The Xikrin community the children either make their own toys, such as mud puppets or items of straws, or adult made toys such as carved small canoes (ibid). Children from favourable socioeconomic backgrounds had less opportunity, time and allowance of agency of their own explorations of their cities. Whilst urban low income children and indigenous children have more opportunities to explore the outdoors and free

play. Children in natural surroundings also have many opportunities to play with loose parts, whilst the city streets have varied opportunities, some street accesses abandoned lots, trees, playground with varied structures, loose stones and sticks. Further, in outdoor free play in Maringa Brazil the streets of poor neighbourhoods have a higher prevalence of collective plays such as tag, soccer and hopscotch (Arruda and Muller 2010 cited in Pinto, 2018).

## Free play or structured play

Often play is referred to as either free play or structured play (PlaySmart, 2022). Free play is often characterized by children creating play conditions on their own terms and from their imagination. Free play is independent from suggestions and conditions from adults. This play can be supervised by an adult and only interrupted by an adult when a dangerous situation appears. Whilst, structured play is considered organised and/or supervised by adults, often this type of game is often goal oriented and trains the children to follow instructions. In free play children get to explore and train socialisation and communication with friends on their own. By allowing children time for engaging in free play it can open their minds and develop creative ideas (Mozaffar, 2021). However, in the USA and England, collaborative free play outside school time has been reduced and broadly replaced by adult controlled pursuits and activities that are consumption and technology based (Jarvis et al., 2014). There has been a decrease in prevalence of children playing in public realms of the city compared to four or five decades ago (Pinto, 2018) even though spontaneous free play can still be spotted in streets, parks and public playgrounds in Brazilian cities.

I translate and draw parallels of the concepts of free and structured play into the physical sphere with free play that can be supported by play spaces that are flexible in the structure and have space for imagination, whilst structured play can be translated into play spaces with structures and manufactured equipment that have a user guide and a set and inflexible use. Pinto and Bichara (2017) observed that contemporary spontaneous free play outdoors happens more often in housing areas rather than around apartment buildings. This kind of play is more common in areas with low economic status, with limited possibilities to play indoors (ibid). Children's free play is highly dependent on public realms consisting of streets, verges, incidental open space, front gardens and pavement (Jarvis et al., 2014; Wheway, 2015). Furthermore, parked cars and frequent vehicle traffic hinders or impacts children's free play and appropriation of streets (Pinto, 2018; Pinto and Bichara, 2017).

## Loose parts play

Changeable, flexible, moldable, moveable and diverse are some of the characteristics of the materials in loose parts play contexts (Mozaffar, 2021). These varied characteristics provided infinite possibilities, such as integrating different elements and moving them around, for the children's imagination to use them in unexpected ways. The play spaces that were observed in a study by (Mozaffar, 2021) showed that children played more creatively in a loose part play space compared to a play space with manufactured play equipment that had a more set user design. Therefore, designed play equipment that have a user guide and over clear functions do not provide the same opportunities as with loose parts. A forest, an abandonment lot, garden, the beach are play spaces that support opportunities of loose parts play whilst an indoor room with only a traditional slide in plastic can be seen as more static and inflexible in its use and characteristics.

## Social collective play

Karsten and Van Vliet (2006) describes outdoor play as in its essence a social play. A physical environment that is supportive for outdoor play is significant. However, Karsten and Van Vliet, (2006, p. 162) mean that “children need other children with whom they can play”, that outdoor play mainly happens together with other children. Therefore they mean that with homes being seen as childspaces combined with parental fear and concerns of safety, and with less children outside on the street, children have less desire and willingness to go out to play. Informal games that occurred during outdoor plays and together with other children such as street hockey, kick the can and ‘run sheep, run’ are becoming increasingly unfamiliar to children in the USA (Jarvis et al., 2014). In indigenous communities children's freedom to travel independently in their environments are tied to local assigned roles (Gray et al., 2023). The care of the community's toddler, the youngest children are after weaning, taken over by the older siblings and relatives, who take them along on geographically broad territories of play (Gray et al., 2023). Moreover, children in urban playgrounds through their curiosity and transgression of space seek interaction with people of different ages, not only attention from children in their own age span (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). It is in the spaces between people that we collectively create understandings of the world not in separated individual zones (Bruner 1986, p. 45 cited in Jarvis et al., 2014).

## Planned and unplanned spaces for play

Children in Brazil play in both planned and unplanned play spaces (Pinto, 2018) with examples of children playing in and around flower beds and streets with close vehicles are places where there has been recorded play in Salvador, Brazil. Planned and unplanned play spaces influence children's play as Brazilian studies (Pinto, 2018) show that there is less gender segregation in streets and other unplanned play spaces whilst planned spaces tend to engage and separate boys and girls in different plays. Therefore, places and spaces in the city need to be open and or plan for spontaneous presence of children and their play. Pinto (2018) means that the designs must hold and encompass spaces that enable children's own appropriation of space with the adjustability and flexibility of accommodating various plays. Moreover, Bishop (2017) raises that citizen processes, such as participating in planning dialogues and community design workshops, are an uncommon experience for children. An issue that also exists in Brazil, with public spaces designed and/or repurposed without taking account the wishes and demands of children (Pinto, 2018). To implement the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child into local actions of reclaiming streets Karsten and Van Vliet (2006) argues it inevitably demands involvement and working closely with children and their parents and caregivers. When the urban realms and environments are shaped by adult views that excludes and neglects the children's own perspectives and uses, one can ask how can these spaces become relevant and inviting for the youngest citizens, the children? Mårtensson and Nordström, (2017) argues that children build a relationship with their surroundings if they get valid opportunities to get involved in urban life. This relationship will increase their concern, care and interest for their community as in the large and whole. Children need to develop and create their own relationship to the city, for a future with citizens that want to play active roles as citizens (Mårtensson and Nordström, 2017). The authors argue that we have to go beyond the islands of play facilities for children's healthy and happy development, to also provide opportunities for them to explore their surroundings on their own terms, from close streets to home to places further out into the city. Further Pitsikali och Parnell (2019) argue that children's transgressive play around playgrounds can indicate that there is a need to reimagine our contemporary concepts and presumptions on urban realm and streets to include possibilities for playful environments.

# Research question

The purpose of this study is to increase the knowledge of how participatory design methods involving children can support the designing and planning of playful street and city realms. The main question of the study is:

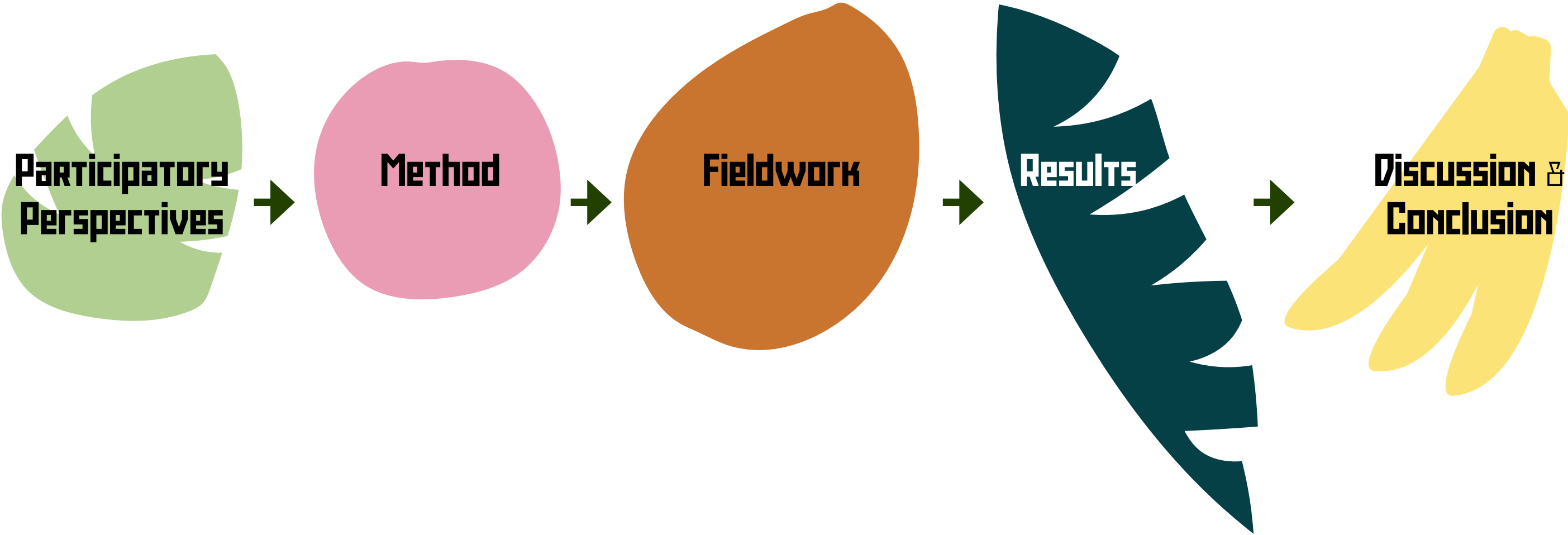
How can participatory design processes with children contribute to redesigning streets in the city to support the integration of children's play?

The question is investigated through identifying approaches to change streets with children and through testing methods for participatory processes. I have chosen this task to explore the potential of collaborative processes and co-designing with children as an approach to transform city streets to become more playful. With the focus on participatory design, the project also seeks to contribute to an increased understanding of how the public realms in the city can function as room for children's play.



# Reading guide

This thesis work is divided into 5 sections. After the introductory part which consists of the introduction, background and presentation of the research question, the first section, called participatory perspectives, introduces the outcomes of readings on the topics of changing the streets, participatory processes, reference projects and a study of context for carrying out fieldwork. The section that follows, methods, introduces the research methods used in this thesis. The next section then introduces the fieldwork which consists of field visits, a participatory workshop with children to redesign a local street for play and interviews with teachers. Following comes the results section which presents the outcomes of the fieldwork. This section includes the outcomes of the workshop, outcomes of the interviews and a sketched design proposal for the local street (Júlio Conceição street in Santos, Brasil). This work then follows into the discussion and conclusion section where the insights, reflections and conclusions about the whole process of this work are presented.







# Participatory perspectives

## Approaches for changing the city

Urban acupuncture, tactical urbanism and design for social innovation are some concepts that aim to catalyze urban and social revitalisation and renewal. These can be seen as reactions against the large-scale and none inclusive intervention projects in urban environments that have occurred in the last decades. The XL trend in urban planning, architecture and other technology of gigantic structures are detached unsustainable concepts from the local nuances of social and ecological input (Lydon and Garcia, 2015), examples of this can be large scale shopping malls, large traffic avenues that separate people from places, heavier and bigger cars. The concepts of urban acupuncture, tactical urbanism and design for social innovation are concepts that can overlap into each other. These concepts can enable designers and communities to experiment together for local, creative and flexible creative interventions.

### Urban acupuncture

*“Successful urban planning involves healthy responses within the city, probing here and there to stimulate improvements and positive chain reactions.” (Lerner, 2014, p. 1)*

Targeted sites are selected points in the urban realm for intervention just like it is in traditional Chinese medical theory of acupuncture, instead of random and opportunistic sites as it can be in the case of tactical urbanism (Balicka et al., 2021). Lerner (2014) argues that good urban acupuncture brings people out to the streets and develops places for social encounters. Essentially urban acupuncture aims to probe and help the city to become a catalyst of meetings between people (Lerner, 2014). The design methodology of Urban Acupuncture involves intentional, tactical and small scale intervention in the urban fabric that results in ripple effects and a possible transformation and change in the whole urban organism (Casagrande, 2015). Furthermore Casagrande 2015 explains that in the built human environment the approach produces ecologically and socially catalytic small-scale development. Urban acupuncture is viewed as an experimental urban planning tool that doesn't demand to have all the answers or resources before you go into action (Balicka et al., 2021). However, it also involves an understanding of the site as Casagrande (2015, p. 6) writes that:

*“Through the acupuncture points, Urban Acupuncture seeks to be in contact with the site-specific Local Knowledge.”*

Therefore this approach can be through designers developing the design interventions in dialogue with the community in a co-designing process. (Casagrande, 2015) means that Urban acupuncture is not an invention from the academics but rather the origin and existence is in collective local knowledge practices that takes self initiation and action towards healing the urban organism. The project within this thesis takes inspiration from finding a point in the urban fabric that can work as a first trigger point, that can act as a catalytic node in the urban organism. One of the places that the children spend most time in is schools and preschools, therefore the streets around can be important as places to trigger. The situation today is that children and their families have to walk in narrow pathways to school next to prioritized cars, trucks and fast motorcycles, with few or none places in the street for pause and play. Moreover, the emphasis on use on cars not only affects pedestrians and peoples street realms further it makes us vulnerable for becoming too dependent on cars.

*“We have to know how to coexist with the automobile without becoming its slave.” (Lerner, 2014, p. 68).*

Today's children have to learn to navigate, with various rules, these street realms and create their own inner guide to be able to access the city. Streets that are used by children and their caregivers, in their walks to and from school can be possible streets around the school as an identified point in the urban public realm to try an intervention. The street realms have been claimed by motor driven vehicles leaving little space for social and ecological presence, as the arteries and veins in the urban organism get clogged and filled by one person driven cars that with their dominance, volume and extent interfere with and extinguishes the former social and ecological exchange that earlier took place on the streets or around our homes. The city can reclaim points in the street realm that can hold the spaces of social and ecological synapses yet again. The arteries and veins, as the streets and other public spaces are vital for the transportation of products and exchanges, that can be social and ecological, connecting people to the whole urban organism. When these vessels dont function and get clogged by passive use of space, for example car parking it can hinder the social processes and put literal pressure on ecological processes . Lerner (2014) means that many cities today urgently need urban acupuncture because they have neglected their cultural identity. Urban acupuncture seeks to preserve or restore the cultural identity of a place or a community.

## Tactical urbanism

The approach of tactical urbanism is similar to urban acupuncture as at the same time different in the core, with the firstly mentioned as an approach that seeks activation and neighbourhood creation by the use of low cost, short-term, scalable policies and interventions for the larger purpose and longtime change (Lydon and Garcia, 2015). Further the authors argue that tactical urbanism is an innate response to the slow conventional silo planning and building processes in the city. Therefore, tactical urbanism can create fast innate responses compared to conventional planning and redesigning. Lydon and Garcia (2015). There are no static places inhabited by people, therefore each response is site specific and dynamic with initiatives that can come from local citizens that start their own interventions, or from nonprofit organisations as well as governments. Tactical urbanism results in direct tactile proposals instead of plans or computer rendered abstract proposals (Lydon and Garcia 2015). Tactical urbanism can be applied with placeholder projects with temporal installations and materials to circumvent time consuming budget, regulation and formal planning processes before landing and implementing final design. The temporal approach with temporal materials and installations can be installed either by self initiatives (informal), planners (formal) or in a collaboration between the two, followed by a response from communities, planners and locals (ibid). The tactical urbanism with its experimental implementation approach of applying physical prototypes and/or design proposals directly on site iteratively trying out the proposal can be seen as a parallel to the commonly practised iterative design process in design and landscape architecture. Design proposals with temporal characteristics and elements that can get tried out directly to the site, before a long term change can give valuable responses from communities on if a design intervention has flaws or possibilities. The opportunity to try and change a design without immense cost and material use is beneficial for both economic and environmental aspects. This approach can be seen as very cost effective and it can be used as a tool during the design process especially in projects with children. For the reason that through the opportunity of implementing a temporal design children can try out a design with their embodied play and sensing (Derr, 2018; Kylin and Lieberg, 2001). Furthmore, it can give opportunities of feedback for improvements. Implementing temporal design proposals as part of a design process with children can enrich the tactile outcomes (Derr, 2018) during the process towards a design that functions for the community. Moreover, the children get chances to physically try the design with all their senses combined with intertwined participatory processes with responses and wishes from the children can change and enhance the intervention to get closer to the wishes of the children. The summer street temporal intervention in Friisgatan, Malmö Sweden has questioned the notion of a car centred street and changed the identity of a street to becoming a street for pedestrians. Furthermore in Malmö the temporal approach is implemented in the conversion of a car parking, Davids halls parking, in Malmö to become a square through temporal summer design proposals, its experimentations acts as a design tool letting the designers collaborate and try out varied designs before final design. These temporal interventions are examples of transformations of use and changing attitudes towards the former car dominated spaces. Living cities in Ghent can be seen as an example of a tactical urbanism and urban acupuncture approach that incorporates collaboration between municipality and citizens who are given the opportunity to change their streets during 3 months periods (Ghent, n.d.). Living streets is a concept that aims to redefine the street through inviting residents in a street can close their streets from traffic with also negotiating and collaborating together on how the residents want their street design to be during these 3 months, then the wishes are put forward to the municipality who provides the furniture and artefacts to a temporary living street (ibid). These ways of tactical urbanism and urban acupuncture can be effective methods for both experimenting with designs and for redefining the notion of streets.

An example of this is Friisgatan in Malmö that through the implementation of temporary summer streets became less viewed as a car street by people, and used more by people and now is physically changed into a pedestrian street. It can be considered both tactical or as urban acupuncture.

## Design for social innovation

Ezio Manzini (2015) means that the whole of society should be seen as a laboratory of social experiments that can get enriched by a connectedness so that small initiatives can get a bigger impact. Every design activity when done reflectively can be considered as research activity (Muratovski, 2023). In an interview with Ezio Manzini (Muratovski, 2023) he says:

“I believe that the knowledge generated by reflective design can also create debate and research in other disciplines. In fact, understanding a complex and rapidly changing reality can mainly be achieved by making something happen and critically reflecting on the results of this design initiative”. (Muratovski 2023)

The former exclusive and elitistics attitudes of expert designers are changing to make room for the fact that none expert also can contribute with critical and important ideas and desires, accompanied with vital local knowledge. Design for social change is designing with existing communities for a social change towards a sustainable future (Manzini, 2015). Design experts need to collaborate in various ways with non- expert designers, the latter have what Manzini calls diffuse design skills, human capabilities such as lived experience, natural ability to imagine and create projects (ibid). Design for social innovation is generated by the none-expert communities (Muratovski, 2023), and as expert designers therefore should work and find and enable existing communities in the design process and find issues that need to change. The codesign process in which the involved actors both expert and non expert designers, put their design abilities to work. A collaborative process that includes identifying issues and things that need to change and imagine the change and then creating the practical steps to realize the imagination (Muratovski, 2023). Further, he means that the definition for social innovation needs to be contextualized in space and time. (Muratovski, 2023) Contextualisation is important and to awareness that we are not living in a one universal truth when dealing with design. Design for social innovation shows that community wills can become something physical through the interaction between expert designers and non- expert designers. From just observing users and letting them be passive in the design process to enabling users with design skills and to have a say in the design generates future ideas. The involvement and enabling of local existing communities to the design process required knowledge about dialogic design. When implementing interventions Hoogduyn (2014) means that a neglect of local communities and their needs can risk an intervention becoming alienated by the local people, therefore these mentioned approaches also can benefit from the essence of participatory design.

## Participatory design

Participatory design takes a step away from the individualistic design to collective designing way of designing.

“In Participatory Design, the dynamic processes of designing are characterized, not by the individual designer but, by collective reflective design practices between multiple participants who collaboratively shape their future practices and worlds”(Smith et al., 2025, p.3).



The kite called Pipa, a common play in the beach of Santos. Source: Augusto Martini. A Simplicidade das Coisas wordpress —by Augusto Martini <https://asimplicidadedascoisas.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/pipa.jpg> Accessed 2025 03 19



In history, Participatory Design had its early projects in the 1970s in Scandinavia, which then was focused on workplace democracy and the empowerment of the workers against the inflow of information technology (ibid). Today's contemporary participatory design builds upon earlier participatory design practices and involves emerging complex issues, matters and lifeworlds:

"Participatory Design embraces concerns of power inequalities through collaboration with affected actors, as well as those excluded by design processes and technologies. By doing so, Participatory Design fosters equity, agency and self-determination in decision-making (politicising). Working across contexts, regions as well as human and more-than-human actors, technologies and domains, Participatory design adapts practices and methodologies to diverse knowledge and lifeworlds (diversifying). Participatory design articulates participation through the interconnectedness and coexistence across globe among researchers, participants and other actors, through relational and caring approaches (relationality). Participatory Design addresses shifting societal challenges and aims for impact across multiple arenas and scales through strong participatory practices that support the ambitions, needs and sustainable futures of collectives, societies and the planet (transforming)." (Smith et al., 2025, p.3)

This interpretation of contemporary participatory design shows that the methods need to be relevant for its context, in this way to urban children in the city of Brazil Santos. Further, to hold the dialogic design process it is important to speak the participants' language. The attention to excluded or marginalised voices, knowledge and agendas are aimed at in Participatory design (Smith et al., 2025) such as children's perspectives in planning and design that affect their lives and spaces. Further Derr (2018, p. 201) who has experience from participatory processes describes that young people and children often express a sense of fairness and a concern for nature and beings, therefore in a way speaking for silenced voices.

## CHANGING THE CITY WITH CHILDREN

How can we as designers and planners of the public spaces and built environment meet the UN convention on the rights of the child when planning and changing the city? Already in 1959 Children's rights to play, health care, education and a supportive environment was recognized by the United Nations general assembly approving the declaration of the rights of the child (UNICEF, n.d.). In 1989 the Convention on the Rights of the child was adopted by the United Nations general assembly. Present day the convention is accepted by 196 countries making it the most widely approved international instrument. The United States has not yet ratified the convention (UNICEF, n.d.). Countries who have ratified this instrument are obliged to act towards it, hence children have the rights to express freely in all matters that affect them, with the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child stating in article 12:

"States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" (UN, 1989)

To respond to and follow this convention it requires planners and landscape architects to have an understanding on how children communicate. Children

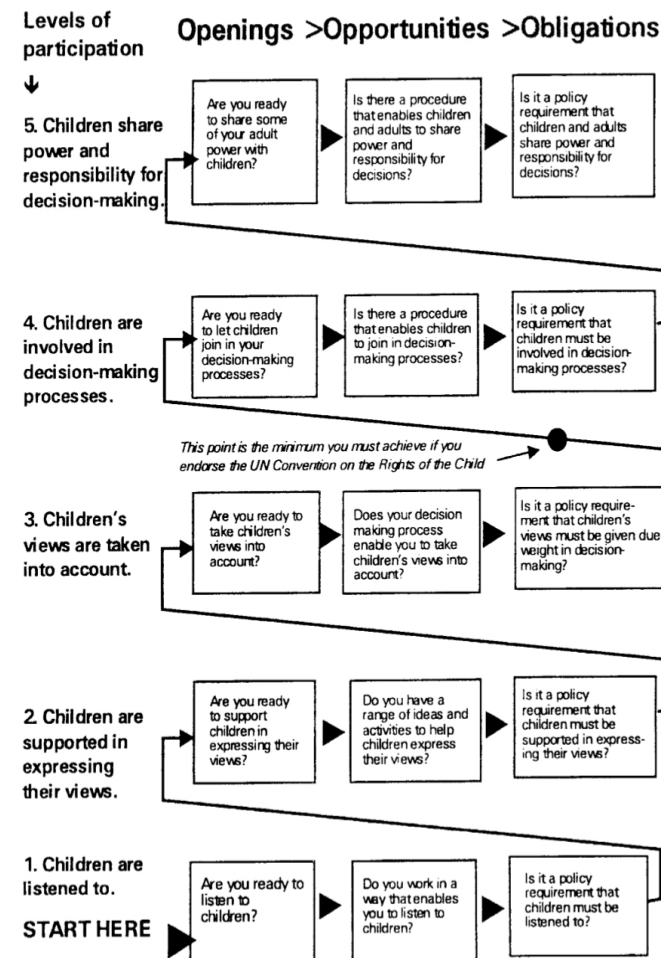


Figure 2 - The Pathway of participation, from 'Pathways to participation: openings, opportunities and obligations' by Harry Shier, published by Children & Society (2001).

experience and engage with the world with all their embodied senses (Derr, 2018; Kylin and Lieberg, 2001), an involvement that is accompanied with their feelings, thoughts and curiosity. Therefore children experience the environment and places with all of the senses of the body, by doing, and they are therefore not mainly visually oriented (Kylin and Lieberg, 2001). The main way children express themselves is through their bodies and behaviours Derr (2018) gives as examples of these expressions are play, through their various forms of art, and speech. Children have communicative approaches that go beyond the adult norm of speech, which means that in the UN Convention on children's rights article 12, in practice means to hear and listen to children's "voices" in their various ways of expression (Derr, 2018). Thus enabling these expressions is a vital part for understanding. In the design process it is important to build trust and relations in the design process, young children use non verbal communication such as making eye-contact, reaffirming through smiles, among other gestures in their friendmaking (Engdahl, 2012) that can be incorporated into the ways of doing participatory design. Young children's participation in city planning is hindered by planners and designers' language and use of terms that are not known by the children, who have just started the learning journey to speak (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). Further to set the conditions for a collaboration the power imbalances in the room needs to be shifted so that children can feel valued and equal in the process (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). Physical imbalance as adults with their larger physical height combined with generally standing and speaking down can intimidate and inhibit children's sense of influence (ibid). A generative involvement that is mutually beneficial for children as a possibility of exchange and learning requires what (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017) state that adult facilitators need to reorient and to tune in to the habits of children,

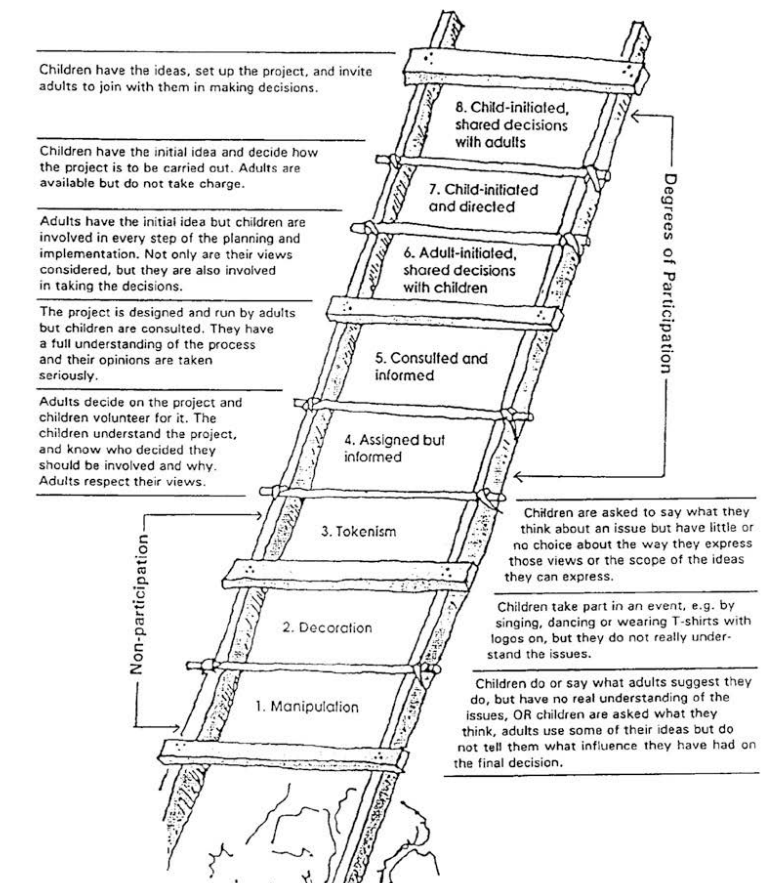


Figure 3 - The ladder of participation, 'The right to play and children's participation by Roger Hart in Article 31 Action Pack, published by Play Train 1995, as presented in Shier (2001)

their capacities and what you can expect from them. Therefore, to think of the adult behaviours are important for creating a safe environment for children participation, which enables children expression. Claudia Ceccon from Brazil cited in (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017) states that bond building, meaning building relationships of trust, is a slow process that takes time which demands the facilitators and designers to have perseverance and patience.

## Pathways to participation

Shier (2001) made Pathway to participation as a model to follow the United Nations Convention on the Children's rights as a complement to Hart's ladder of participation (Shier, 2001). He means that Hart's ladder of participation, can help to guide practitioners to avoid the four first levels of the ladder, which are non-participatory levels. The biggest difference between Shier's 'Pathway to participation' and Hart's ladder of participation is that Shier's model does not have a separate level where the children act independently and make decisions on their own; this is due to the collaborative essence of this model, as it conveys levels of participation between the adults and the children (Shier, 2001). The pathway to participation by Shier (2001) starts with level one: children are listened to. He means that when a child takes it on their own to express his or her view and the adult facilitator listens carefully. Level two children are supported in expressing their views. The facilitators in the participatory design take action and have a working strategy that enables their listening and support the children to express their views, openly and confidently (ibid). The strategy should help to break existing barriers that prevent the children's thoughts and opinions from being expressed. Hence, the facilitators need to provide opportunities that can help



the communication in age and context appropriate activities, Shier (2001) gives examples of these activities which can incorporate art, games and interviews. For the countries and organisations that have embraced and adopted the UN convention of the rights of the child Shier (2001) means that this is the minimum level of participation. It is important to know that to only actively seek out children’s views without taking in their views and letting their views influence the decision-making can be seen as tokenism or manipulation(ibid). Therefore, the next level has great importance for participatory design processes. Level three children’s views are taken into account. In this model the processes have gone further and children’s views and interests are taken into consideration in the decision-making. The author raises that this does not mean that children’s wishes will be fulfilled in every decision but that their views will together with other factors be part and have weight in the decision making . Further my reflection is that children’s views consist of varied views and are not one unified view. The facilitator and designer in this context, a landscape architect, needs find a way to realize a multitude of wishes together with other factors that affect the physical design which can be done in a iterative approach where the designers’ iterative design process bounces to the children for feedback and collectively going through the design proposal and bounce back to the design table. An example of this approach was the project of Play street with the children of Kastanjeskolan in Malmö and Gatulabba who used the method ‘iterative sketch processes’ for a unified vision and fulfilled wishes about the design (Gatulabba, n.db). Shier (2001) propose that it is a good practice to give feedback to children who have taken part in the processes, to share and explain the decisions making and if there’s time and space to explore further ways to achieve their wishes. Level four the children are involved in the decision making processes. At this level there is a transition in the process, from a consulting character to an active participation where the children are given power to make decisions about the design (ibid). There are many benefits to give space and time for childrens participation in the decision-making, thus Shier (2001p.4) mentions that the benefits encompass:

"improving the quality of service provision, increasing children's sense of ownership and belonging, increasing self esteem, increasing empathy and responsibility, laying the groundwork for citizenship and democratic participation and thus helping to safeguard and strengthen democracy". (Shier, 2001, p.4)

When implementing a design intervention in the public spaces of the city, this step can have great importance for making the intervention sensitive and inviting for the local children’s appropriation of space, further the space can become more democratic through processes in level four. Level five children share power and responsibility for decision making genuinely with the adults in a supportive environment (ibid). As earlier in the process the author means that there should be no pressure for children to share power or responsibilities and further, that decisions about when and how to share power need to be based on the risks and benefits. Further Shier (2001) argues that the outcomes should be monitored so the intervention can be reviewed and revised.

### Methods for supporting the expression of children

There are existing approaches practiced by organisations that can act as a guide for planners and facilitators that want to involve children. For example Växtvärket, in Sweden, and their project Gatulabba, funded by the Swedish inheritance fund, and ‘Kin and Samleven’ in Germany. The project Gatulabba which can be translated to street experimentation, has developed an extensive method bank that is open source and free on their web page (Gatulabba, n.dd) with both examples of activities and an own dialogue method for guiding the process and creating participatory conditions that are supportive, playful and creative for children in

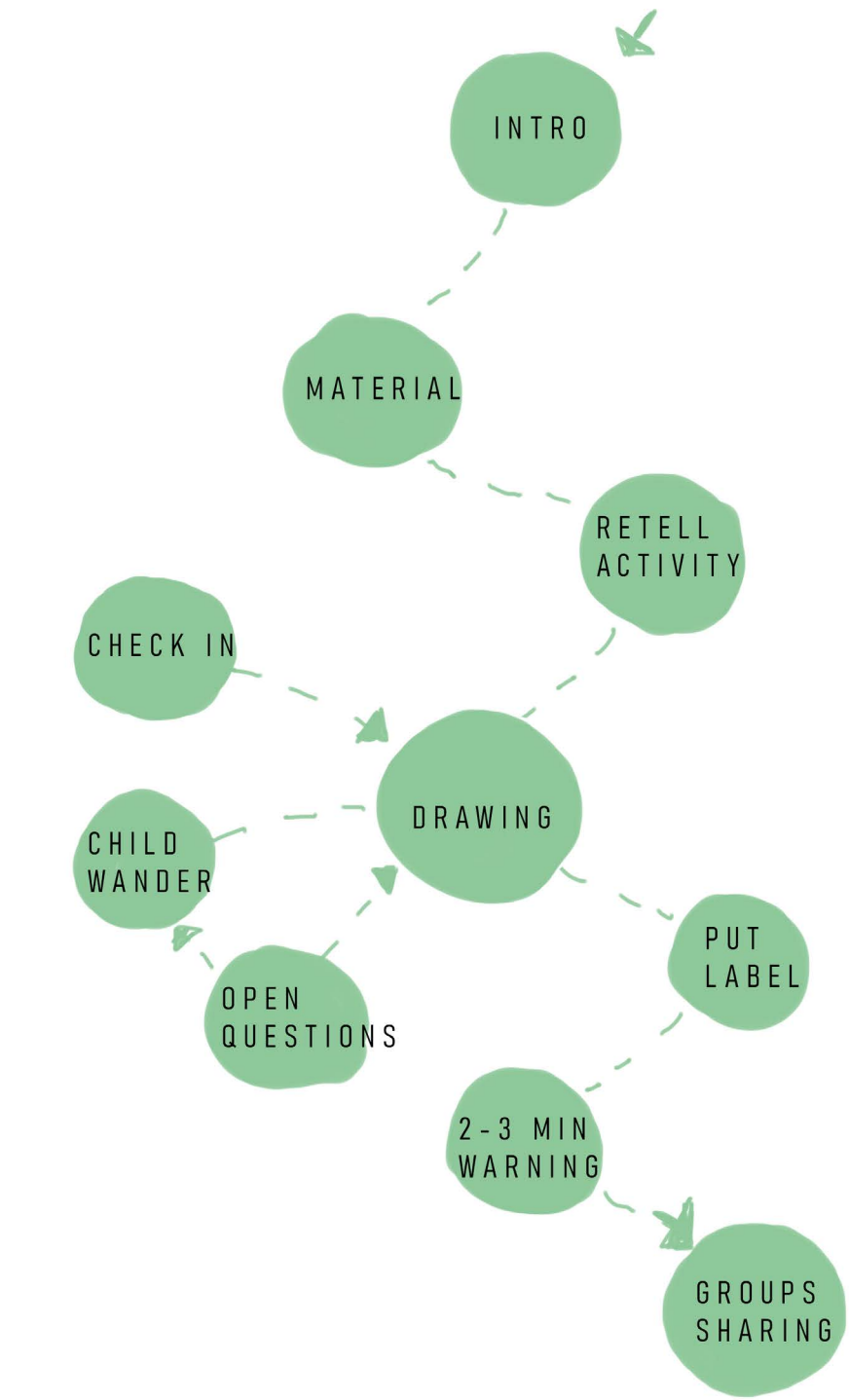
various ages.

Gatulabba has four guiding questions that shape their dialogue method for participatory processes with children. The guiding questions for the dialogue method by Gatulabba (n.dc) are: The first question is what energy do you bring into the room? When holding a workshop or facilitating involvement with children, set out the importance of bringing a playfulness and creative energy that can support children’s experience of safety. This is also reflected in having a flexible mind that can say yes, rather than no. Further, the design method includes the importance of letting children explore their own ideas before implying prompts, interrogations or questions. The second question: Are you without prestige? The dialogue method emphasises the importance of letting go of prestige from work life and to be present with the children. The approach includes that the facilitator needs to be a part of the whole group and to share your ideas so that the children can test them, as well as building on ideas together with the children. Furthermore, to be without prestige means that before a workshop or involvement it is important to make a plan but to also trust the process in a workshop and to be flexible to take a detour when needed, which Gatulabba (n.dc) describes can lead to new unexpected outcomes. Another significant aspect in this aspect of no prestige is the importance of building trust and relations so that the children can have courage to give critique or feedback on ideas. The third question is: Are you inspirational? That as designers we get inspiration from the world and imaginations, not from a white empty paper. Gatulabbas method involves to spark creativity amongst the children and to generate an understanding that there are immense possibilities. Gatulabba emphasizes that this should be implied in the beginning of an idea phase that does not yet need to be limited to realistic solution proposals. The fourth last question is; are you apprehensive? In this dialogue method, to be apprehensive, stands for being open, attentive and willing to take in what the children are expressing and saying. This also means to listen to creative ideas and give responses back in a way that shows that you value their inputs. Here Gatulabba emphases that the important information is found in between the lines. With this they mean to listen to the essence of what the children express and their thought patterns, not only what they say. Furthermore apprehensive signifies also to tune in to the atmosphere of the room and when needed make space for play. (Gatulabba n.dc) The dialogue method by Gatulabba can help and support the children to express their views through providing a safe social and creative environment. The key questions and descriptive clarification of the questions can be used as guiding and helpful during involvement with children. The dialogue method of Gatulabba (n.dc) was used as a guide in the workshop in this study.

### Maps and field visits as methods

Methods for early phases in participatory design projects with children include introducing the site and/or topic, aims of the project, inspirational references and prestudies (Derr, 2018). In the initial phases of participatory design workshop with children consists of getting to know the involved people and project. The introduction of the project can consist of sharing relevant information and concepts, the activities in the workshop and the design site (Derr, 2018). Gatulabba (n.de) means that an enlarged, above “street photo” of the design location can be used for children to familiarize and study the site both as a method and tool, in early to later processes in the project. In this stage (Derr, 2018) describes that it can include showing references and example projects from the world which Gatulabba (n.dc) also has as a tool for inspiring the children in their dialogue method.

The method of site visit in the pre-study of a design phase is common practice in



Drawing method of Victoria Derr (2018) illustration by author.

landscape architecture studies. Field trips to the site in involvements with children is a method that both Derr (2018) and Gatulabba (n.de) mentions. Gatulabba (n.dd) has ‘The pennant walk’ as a method in the pre-study phase. “The pennant walk” consists of the children walking in the site each one with two coloured pennant flags, that represent something they like or dislike depending on the colour (often red and green colour works). When the children find something they either like or dislike in the site they stop to wave with a pennant flag, and the facilitators stop and listen to the child’s thoughts about the elements accompanied with open questions and discussion. (Gatulabba, n.dd) states that a good way for documenting this method can be through taking photos of flags and the referred element

### Art Based methods

During a workshop with children there are various activities that can help generate and spark ideas among the children. Derr (2018) presents arts-based methods as a versatile activity that can consist of drawing, model making, storytelling, music and photography, among others. Children’s right to self expression through art is stated in Article 13 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

“The child shall have the right to freedom of expression... either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice.”(UN 1989).

A good first initiation point for participatory processes can be with art-based methods, (Derr, 2018) means that it is for the reasons that art can act as a medium in which allows and enables children to explore and communicate their world, themselves and their values. She means that art based methods can develop personal connections to the project and support analyzing and identifying ideas. Further she argues that identity and history in the community can be expressed and enabled through arts, moreover shared vision can be joint. Children and youth are the experts on what their creations mean. Therefore Derr (2018) describes that with every art method, allow time for children to interpret their work if capable in writing or by asking open ended questions about their thoughts and ideas, and documenting the answers with sound recording.

Drawing as a method is a simple method that children, between 4 to 11 years, easily can use to describe experience, give voice to ideas and use for communication with each other (ibid). Gatulabba (2024a) “iterative sketch process” is a drawing method which is recommended between 5 to 18 years, that engages the children into the landscape architect’s own common practices of iterative design processes. However, Derr (2018) does not recommend the method of drawing for children above eleven years due to the fact that they tend to be limited by drawings as a tool with higher self-consciousness of the aesthetics of the drawing than the content and meaning (ibid). Nevertheless, I interpret that depending on the group, facilitators’ provision of a safe workshop environment and context can differ how drawing can be used as a method depending on age. An opportunity during the drawing is one and one interviews with the children. Derr (2018) argues that shy children have the tendency to open up when attention is not focused on them but rather on the explanation of their drawing. Between the ages of 2-6 years Derr (2018) proposes recording the children’s thoughts while they draw, due to when asking afterwards the answer can be “it is a painting”. It can be helpful to have beforehand decided on the purpose of the drawing session with a pre-written description, prompt for the activity to get children started and motivated (ibid). During and after the drawing session it is important to have enough time to share and discuss ideas. Therefore during the workshop having conditions that allows “a fair sharing of opportunities to contribute and be heard” (Derr, 2018, p. 31). The generated artifacts during the workshop acts frequently as tools for identifying interests, composing recommendations and establishing priorities but can be significant and valuable

in themselves (ibid). The generated arts can serve as a medium for dialogues and sharing which can bring understanding of children’s perspectives.

The drawing method by Derr (2018) starts with introducing activity and its purpose followed by demonstrating and providing the materials for the activity. The author describes that when the participants are settled and able to listen it is good to retell in detail the prompt and activity. During the drawing session the facilitators can check in with participants, to see if there are any questions or if the children understand the activity. In the drawing session there will probably be children that start wandering in the room who either want to share their ideas or need clarification then, Derr (2018), means that the facilitators can respond with open ended, general questions about their drawing, which can inspire but not overly direct the child to continue drawing. An example of a general question can be “can you tell me more about this?”. Further Derr (2018) recommends being able to provide drawing paper so that children do not need to be limited by the size of the paper for their ideas. When walking around the facilitators can encourage the children to label their drawings (if they are old enough) with what they think is important and/or facilitators can ask and help to label their drawings (ibid). The author means that when there is 2-3 minutes left of the drawing session, announce and warn the participants. The drawing session is then followed up by group sharing either in one big group or in smaller groups with facilitators (ibid). The author means that this phase can be supported by having a flipchart paper that the facilitator can use for recording word of the main points of the children’s drawings. This can act as a tool for all to see and comment on, so that the children’s ideas and thoughts are captured correctly. Further Derr (2018) has an extension of the method that can be applied if time is available for the group size. The extension consists of asking each participant to think of and share a connection to either a drawing or something they heard that also resonated in them (ibid). An followed up activity that can tie ideas together for shared vision and group cohesion.

### The iterative sketch process

The iterative sketch process can be a tool for shared vision of concept and enabling a well worked through design proposal where the participants have been able to take part of the iterative design processes of the designer. Gatulabba (2024a) has created this drawing method called “iterative sketch process” which is considered applicable between 5 to 18 years, which requires two to four occasions of one hour workshops. The sketching method consists of exchanges between the children’s sketched ideas and the designers who fuse, reinterpret and build further on the children’s ideas and create another sketched idea (ibid). The reinterpretation becomes another sketched idea which lay as a foundation for the next workshop, where the children can draw into proposals of changes, comment, ask questions and develop the idea further (ibid). This is then followed by another session for the designer to reinterpret and fuse the children’s ideas, and the authors mean that this co-designing process continues until the concept is finalized and all participants are satisfied.

### Murals as a collective method

A mural can communicate a community’s visions and ideas, however Derr (2018) explains that it requires collective decision-making. How and why are questions that the participants need to decide on when communicating through murals. Derr (2018) recommends this method from 4 years and up. The method of making a mural can be used both in the early phases for developing collective ideas or towards the end of a project as summarizing and synthesizing the generated ideas. The act of making a mural contributes to the community through demonstrating the participants creativity, capabilities of collective decision making and activates the site with the presence of the participants. The following physical outcomes can give colour and place to communicated ideas (Derr, 2018) and enable ownership of site through the continued collective decision making (Shier, 2001).



Collage

Cutout pictures, words, painting, drawing among other things, these are objects that can be assembled into and form an image on a surface, so called collage (Derr, 2018). The author means that these objects can be collected from a field study of the site, from magazine cutouts or put together digitally. Derr (2018) states that collages have a wide use and can act as a medium for various purposes from identifying problems, inspiration and design ideas to expressing culture and identity. Gatulabba (n.dd) suggests using collage either in a vision or concept phase of the project, an example can be to create a moodboard for choosing colours, aesthetics and shapes in the design.

Storytelling

“For many cultures, storytelling remains an important means of understanding who we are in relation to the larger world” (Derr, 2018, p. 87).

The tradition of storytelling being a widespread practice in cultures around the world (Derr 2018). Thus, each nightfall the world gets filled with words from the good night stories that are told to the planet’s young children. The practice of drawing in the sand combined with song, speech and gestures is another example of storytelling, called sand stories, which are traditional to Aboriginal women in central Australia (Green, 2014). Dreams and reimaginings of futures can become graspable for children through the art of storytelling and support narrative for children’s journey through challenges and fears (Derr, 2018). Furthermore, she means that complex social ecological issues such as social justice and environmental degradation can be expressed and discussed through stories. Storytelling can be weaved in many approaches in participatory processes. From children’s personal story making, oral history, stories told by adults to reading written stories (ibid), sharings that take place around a fire, a book, at the food table or in front of audiences among other possibilities.

Making models in three dimensions

In landscape architecture and city planning the practice of making models is essential for the design process. Miniature versions of parks, buildings, city districts and public realms enables the designers and the involved people to understand how a place functions, the connectivity in the city or identifying issues or possibilities (Derr 2018). This practice of model making has also marked progressive education providing a medium in which children can study their local spaces, present their environments and imagine new possibilities and proposals for the future (ibid). Model making serves double purposes with both enabling opportunities for dialogues during the modelmaking and after the finalization, with the model as a tool for discussion. The model and the making of the model can encourage reflections of children’s experiences and knowledge of the place (ibid). The author means that materials for the model making can come from the natural surroundings and waste materials. The model then is built up through a tactile process that includes observing the model from various angles, reflection and collaborative acts. Further Derr (2018) adds the possibility of ephemeral models that can be made outdoors in drawing in the sand, snow or creating a map in the soil combining with found materials, such as wood, tree sticks, stones, bricks.

Interpreting and generating material from workshop

After a workshop the designers sketch drafts and initial plans from all the generated ideas from the workshop and create a concept plan that “convey participants essential ideas” (Derr, 2018, p. 203). If it suits the circumstances, Derr (2018) states that this stage can be done during a workshop together with the children but it is more commonly done through designers bringing the gathered ideas and thoughts from the children back to the design table. The designers can then

reflect, summarize, prioritize and tie the ideas to the site analyses, conditions and generate drawings and proposals derived from the varied ideas of the children. The drawings and proposals can then be used as foundation for further dialogue and collaboration, with inputs, comments and edits from the children. In that sense the involvement with the children reaches higher levels in the pathway of participation with Shier (2001) who mean that it can bring benefits such as strengthening democracy and the sense of citizenship among children.

Reference projects of changing the street with children and residents

School street, a municipality initiative in Malmö Sweden

The view of children’s mobility and access to street realms has been recognized and applied to two pilot projects in Sweden, one in Stockholm called play streets and the other named “skolgata” translated to school street in Malmö. In the pircture to the right we see the school street in Norra Sorgenfri Malmö. I got in contact with the municipality of Malmö to hear more of the project of skolgata, translated to school street. In a conversation with Linda Dalundh<sup>1</sup>, mobility and traffic planner in Malmö, is part of the team behind skolgata (School street) in Malmö Sweden. They identified that streets around or close schools were not designed or planned to support children’s mobility and safety, with examples of streets around schools having traffic congestions from parents driving their children to school that interfered with children’s experience and independence of walking or biking to school. The project concluded that stressed parents in cars are part of creating the unsafe street realms for some schools. Furthermore, to change the behaviour also needed a physical change. Therefore the planning group invited schools that were interested in the project and made two pilot projects where they temporarily changed the streets depending on different mobility situations, with implementing one year experiments such as stopping the traffic in a place of the street, directing the traffic elsewhere and adding speed bumps. The process of making the streets close to school safer included gathering opinions from students. The school street project also brought up that the teachers had a lot of influence on which groups of children got to use the reclaimed street space, this information stirred ideas to include the teachers in the thesis fieldwork. Such the idea of streets that to be used by children should not only be safe but also incorporate children’s presence that often includes play. How would streets look if children had the chance to design together with city planners and landscape architects.

The play street through participatory design process with children in Malmö

“The play street” was a project by the project Gatulabba (n.db)and the organizers Växtväcket in collaboration with nine year old children from the school “Kastanjeskolan” in Sofielund, Malmö, Sweden. The play street was an initiation by the students in the safety team who identified the turning zone in the street outside Sofielunds fritidsgård as unsafe. It was a project that lasted from January to June 2022. They tried variations of methods including inviting traffic planners from Malmö municipality and pedagogics from surrounding initiatives in a workshop over the generations. Continued workshops with children included methods of iterative sketch processes together and the design team until everybody was satisfied with the co-designed concept of creating a play street through protecting the children through separating the traffic with planting boxes and liberating play and movement in a safer and possible greener environment.



The view of children’s mobility and access to street realms has been recognized and applied to two pilot projects in Sweden, one in Stockholm called play streets and the other named “skolgata” translated to school street in Malmö. Here is the school street in Norra Sorgenfri Malmö. Photo by author (2024).

<sup>1</sup>Linda Dalundh, Trafic and mobility planer, Malmö stadshus, meeting about the project school streets. 2024-12-03



# Method

In this section I outline the methods used in this thesis.

## Readings

The purpose of the readings was to develop a base knowledge around the streets, children and participatory design and its methods and building a foundation for a design process and intervention. Relevant literature within the study area of streets, experimentation, children's perspectives of the city in Brazil and the world, as well as participatory design with children, have been identified in conversation with my supervisor and fellow colleagues. Furthermore, the method of snowball effect was used as each reading was also a doorway to new readings based on cited texts in the readings. The readings were made by searching platforms such as SLU primo, google scholar, google and local libraries. The aim of the readings was to build an understanding of the following: of children's situation in the city and their use of streets, local play, the social importance and role of streets, existing approaches for changing the use of streets with a focus on play. Based on these topics the readings covered global references to specific Brazilian references, to understand links between global and local situations. To gain insight of the specific community and local context, the readings were complemented with secondary sources of data (Derr, 2018, p. 52) about the city Santos such as articles about the history of the city and demographic information. Overall, the readings revolved around the keywords of: Participatory design with children, reclaiming the streets, play, children and the city, street experiments, play in Brazil, playgrounds as separate zones in the city. Important sources for the readings and background have been Derr (2018), Lydon and Garcia (2015), Pinto (2018), Casagrande (2015), Karsten and Van Vliet (2006).

## Field studies

The overall aim of the various field studies was to analyse and understand the design site and explore and discover alternative ways of using the streets that can benefit the understanding of use of the street and for the design intervention, as well as to connect to the local context of Brazil.

Background research is an approach to understanding community, which plays an important role in preparing a workshop (Derr, 2018, p. 51). Site research from distance was made before the workshop, through above street photos and immersed photos from Google Earth together with historical photos to understand

the city (Derr, 2018, p. 54). The pre-study of the street was compared to site visit 8th of January, this was to see if there had been changes of the streets and then to be used for the workshop and design proposal.

Contact with the preschool Anália Franco was established through a personal connection with a volunteer of the school who asked the pedagogical coordinator if there was any interest in having a workshop in their school. The response was that the school was very interested due to the fact that they were having the school open for summer school, which included out of the ordinary activities for the children. The workshop would fit in the summer schedule for the attaining group of five year old children. The first visit to Anália Franco's school and its surroundings took place on the 8th of January, a later visit than planned because of the preschool's Christmas holiday. The visit included a tour of the school together with the schools pedagogic coordinator and own field visit to the schools connecting streets. During the tour of the school I took photos and noted while asking questions about the place, what materials that were available at the school and other important information related to the workshop or the interested children. The aim of the field studies at Anália Franco preschool was to develop relations with the school and its classrooms for identifying a suitable workshop space. Moreover field visits of the streets around the school were made for building a base knowledge of the design site's possibilities and limitations for a design intervention, as well as gaining insights for building a model of the street Julio Concecao, which was made to be used in the workshop. The aim of the field visits of street interventions and alternative concepts was to gain insights of the interventions and how people use these temporal spaces in the city. Studies of this kind are valuable for gaining understanding of how the local people use the city (Jan Gehl 2011 cited in Derr, 2018, p. 60) and for developing methods in the planning of cities. The field studies included visits to food markets called 'Feiras livres' in two streets of Santos and a visit to the temporal open space of Paulista avenue in São Paulo, which regularly occurs every Sunday between 10am to 4pm. The visits to the 'Feiras livres' on the street happened, around 11 am, on the 7th January at Boqueirão and on the 8th of January on Encruzilhada. Furthermore, the long stay in Brazil, five weeks enabled embodied immersion in the local Brazilian culture and environment of the region São Paulo, from city to rural environments with a lengthened stays in Brazilian homes. The visits extended to include parts of the city of Santos where the school is situated. During the visits I took notes and sometimes took photos and filmed.



# Workshop – participatory design process

The aim of the workshop was to try out methods for participatory design with children and accompanying teachers for redesigning and reimagining the street for play. The redesign site was decided from both a visit to the street in the year earlier, in dialogue with the contact volunteer and site analyses from distance with google earth, both street view and from above and in dialog with the school contact. From the readings, the main aspect used for the study was art methods of mainly drawing and collage by Derr (2018) and Gatulabba’s dialogue method (Gatulabba, n.dc.)

The workshop contained activities with drawing and making collage as medium for the children and teachers to express their ideas and views. The workshop contained displaying inspirational references, using models and photos as tools during the activities. Furthermore, to listen between the lines and to be aware of what energy the facilitators bring into the room were some important aspects that shaped the practical case. Further a model of the street was made to communicate and relate to the site together with a street photo of the design site, street Júlio Conceição. An important source for background research for the workshop has been my husband who has shared stories about street games from his childhood and gave me insight about cultural practices in Santos and other parts of São Paulo’s region.

The workshop had seventeen participating 5 year old children who were from socioeconomic vulnerable situations in Santos. In this age the children have less autonomy and are still dependent on the caregivers in their freedom of mobility (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). The school Anália Franco is a preschool for economically vulnerable children between 4 months up to 5 years and 11 months. In the time for the workshop the school was going to have summer break but Analia franco held open with a special summer schedule for the children who could not stay home during summer vacations. The summer preschool included museum visits and other out of the ordinary activities for the children. This workshop would then be included into their summer schedule of activities. Due to the summer school the children and parents were informed about varied activities and got signed consents by the parents. The initial number of children for the workshop were between ten to twenty. From this information the workshop was planned for being facilitated by a team of volunteering people, me and two more that preferably had Portuguese as their native language. Unfortunately one facilitator could not participate for the workshop day. Moreover, the teachers of the summer class were welcome to participate in the workshop, both welcome to join in some activities and to help us navigate the children through the workshop. Teachers have already established relationships, developed trust with the children and helped out in the workshop. The planning of the workshop involved making a workshop plan and description in both English and portuguese. Further, to collect all materials that were needed for the workshop as carbon boxes and paper. Then a couple of days before the workshop the model of the street was made. The workshop took place the 10th of January 2025 and took 2 hours. After the workshop the children went to eat and rest. During that time the artwork from the children was documented and the exhibition was built up in the workshop room. The facilitators could not partake in the exhibition, due to time. Afterwards the facilitators discussed the workshop and all of the ideas and thoughts to summarize the main outcomes from the children and teachers. The documentation was through notes, photos and audio recordings. The full workshop description can be seen later in the section ‘Fieldwork’ where I describe the workshop.

## Interviews

Derr (2018) describes interviewing key informants, meaning people with local expertise, can help to understand the concerned community. These local context experts can consist of municipal staff, urban planners, architects and teachers among others. The aim of the interviews were to get an understanding of the role of streets for play, to gain knowledge about the teachers local practices and cultures and to open up for reflection about today’s relations to play in the streets and if they are changing and why. Moreover, the interviews also involved participants to generate and share ideas and thoughts on how to reclaim streets for play. The interviews took place at Anália Franco’s preschool, a week after the workshop, the 17th January 11 o’clock. The interviewed were 6 teachers, 3 which were teachers that did not take part of the workshop and 3 teachers who participated in the workshop. The interviews were semi structured questions (Brinkmann, 2014) with a character of open ended questions about the teachers childhood memories of play and their view on streetscapes play capability today. The interviews took place in the same room as the workshop and exhibition and was audio recorded with permission from the teachers. Further, it was originally planned for one and one interviews that became spontaneous group interviews with the teachers.

## Analysis of results

The analysis brings together the outcomes from the workshop with the observations from the field studies, interviews and the readings. The analysis of results of the workshop consisted of analysing pictures from workshop results, audio recording from the workshops, interview transcripts and images of the participant’s engagement with the final exhibition. These results were then translated into a design proposal.

## Design proposal

Design proposal was created as a way to synthesize the children’s ideas and results from this thesis work into a concept plan that “convey participants essential ideas” (Derr, 2018, p. 203). Nevertheless, the design proposal also draws insight from readings and field studies of this work. The design proposal was created through a series of iterative sketches which were done with a continuous check of the outcomes from the workshop to draw out interpretation of the children’s wishes. Creating the design proposal also involved checking Brazilian regulations on building playgrounds and concerns with local traffic flow and safety. The design proposal is presented here through sketched visualizations of how the chosen street could be changed.

## Limitations

Due to the short nature of a Master thesis project, and budget limitations, this work does not encompass the actual implementation of the proposed temporary design nor the building of the actual playful street. Further, due to the possibilities allowed by the organization we worked with, the project had access only to work with children of 5 years of age and over a short amount of time. The methods during the workshop aimed to be inclusive and in the end to design a place that can be engaging for children of various ages and to support varied interests and play. However, the study does not include accessibility adapting a street for children with function variation.







# Field work

“Se essa rua,  
se essa rua fosse minha”

“If this street,  
if this street was mine”

(from a Brazilian Folkloric song)

This section presents field visits to street concepts and field visits to the works involved preschool and its surrounding. It also presents preparations for the workshop, the workshop and exhibition. Furthermore the section will describe the interviews with six teachers at the school.



Diego Silvestre: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/3336/>, CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>>, via Wikimedia Commons

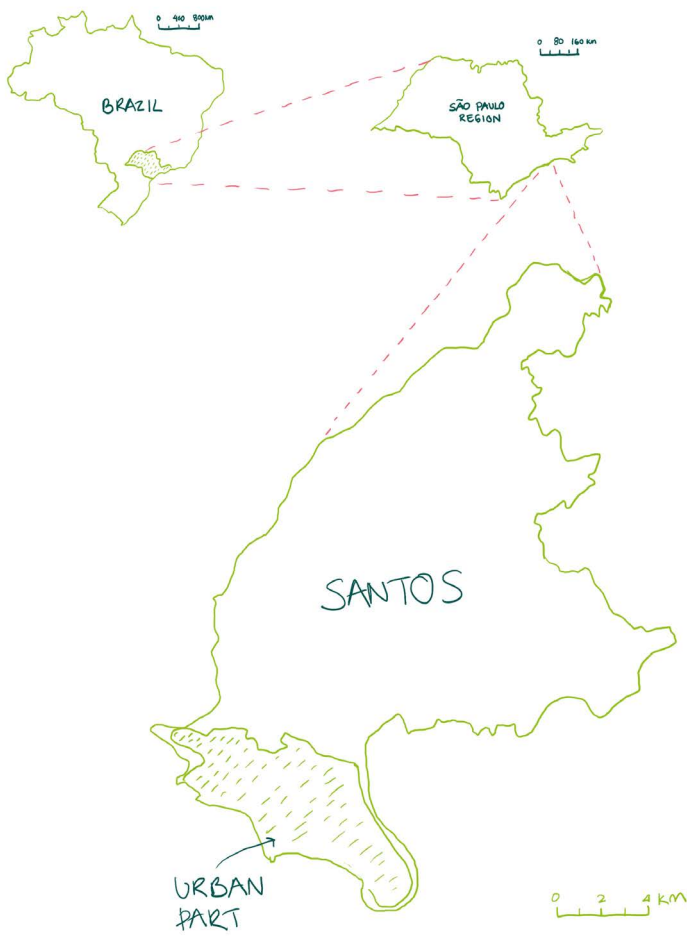
# Study of the context

The study took place in the city Santos which is in the region of São Paulo in the country Brazil. Santos municipality has a range from urban areas to the mountains with lush forests. The city of Santos is located on an island and surrounded by water with a population of 441.000 (World Population Review, 2025a). In the north the green mountains with the Coastal serra do mar (coastal forests that are part of the Atlantic forest) and to the south is the long beach of Santos meeting the Atlantic ocean. In Santos it is commonly known that the residents use the water channels as reference points in the city (Revista Nove, 2023). The seven open water channels (and eleven hidden channels) drain the city that was built on formerly swamp areas, therefore the city is placed near sea levels (Wallenfeldt, 2025). The channels are also referred to socioeconomic neighbourhood references for example the commonly known area called “The rich village” which is in the area of Gonzaga that is close to the beach between channel 2 and 3.

Santos and the connecting neighbor town Sao Vicente, were the first established towns in Brazil by Portuguese colonizers (Wallenfeldt, 2025). Santos became the main harbour for immigrants to arrive in Brazil, in a journey over the vast Atlantic ocean in search for a better life, natural resources or forced there in chains (Pilagallo, 2011). From the beach visitors can look at ships arriving and departing with goods and products. In a building in the historical center in Santos the world’s coffee prices were negotiated and set (Wallenfeldt, 2025). Further the city is known for having one of the longest beachfront gardens in the world. The city has areas with more developed bicycle lanes such as alongside the beach garden and between the palm trees in avenue Ana costa.

The beach and the beachfront garden is a place in Santos which is free from car traffic, and acts as one of the few places where people of all ages, class or status can meet for celebration, play, leisure or spontaneous encounters. Here, children from all places in the region of São Paulo can meet during vacations. The sand and the water landscapes have the possibilities of spontaneous free play and new encounters between children. A recurring experience from the beach in Santos was spontaneous plays that happened with my child and other children. The relations to the ocean and the beach are partly hidden but some are shown in the practices of people. Each new year thousands of white dressed people gather to celebrate and give offerings to the sea entity “Iemanja” also known as Yemanja, offering white roses and jumping over seven waves with wishes in their hearts for the new year. Followed up with dancing and celebrating on the sand until the sun rises. Furthermore, the first surf in Brazil occurred in the bay of Santos and the beach is a space used by the people for evening football training and local games as the “tamboréu”, a type a racket sport played on the beach using tambourines to hit the ball, which has spread to other places in Brazil.

Ponta Da Areia close to channel 5 and 6 is a landmark in Satos, in the east part of the beach garden, four kilometers away from Anália Franco preschool with music stages and fountains on the ground for children’s play. Further it anchors to the municipal aquarium. Tile mosaics are a common material in the public spaces and buildings.

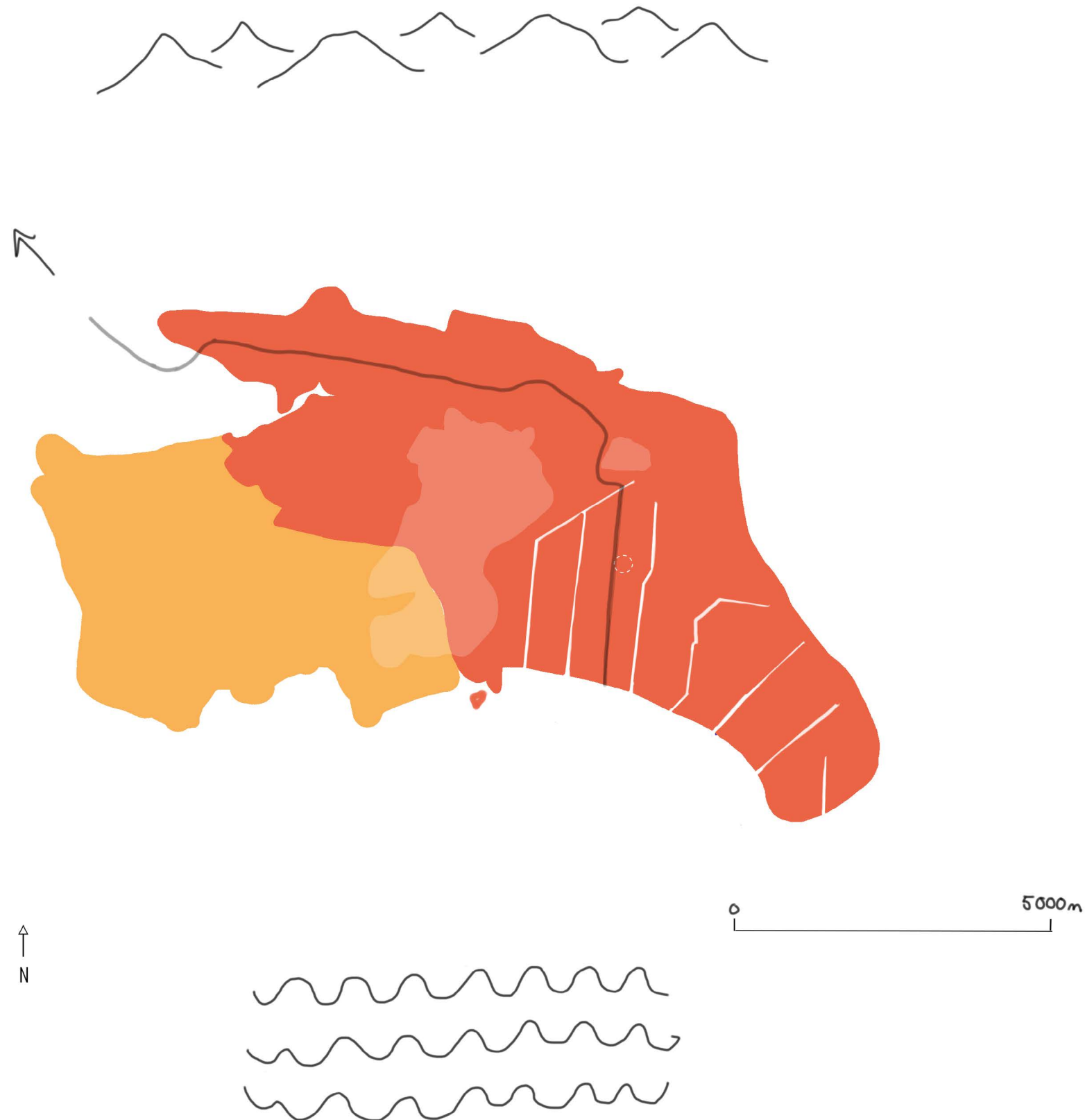


Author’s drawn map, based on “Localização do município de Santos no contexto da Região Metropolitana da Baixada Santista Fonte- Fonseca & Martins (2018)



## Santos, a beach town that became a city

Lerner, (2014) understands it as to improve a city you have to know it, a way to get to know the city can be by drawing your city or making a model. As a practitioner of designing and planning the city it is central to know the city you're working with and to be able to navigate in the city from established points of reference. Further this method can be incorporated into a community mapping (Derr, 2018, p. 55)



Authors own sketched drawings over Santos.

Santos in guava red to the right and São Vicente the neighbour city in orange to the left. Overlapping between the two are the smaller mountains in lighter colour. The smaller mountain is called Mount Serrat. The black line is the avenue Ana costa that after passing the channel goes into other roads that go out and up past the mountains to São Paulo. The white lines in Santos are the channels that connect to the water and the beach in Santos; these are the people's reference points in the city. Number one starts to the left and the seventh, last, ends to the right in Ponta da praia. When lost in the city, the usual way to find where you are is by looking up and seeing where the mountains of the continent are and the beach will be opposite, from that knowledge you can navigate yourself in the city. The light circle dot is Anália Franco preschool and the design site.

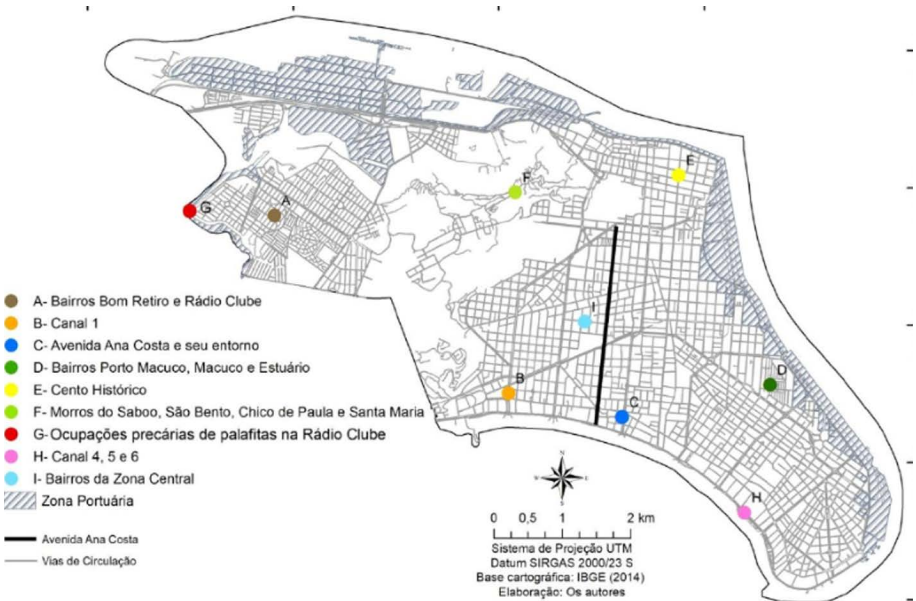


Chanel number 2 with a pattern on the fence that is a commonly known symbol, an identity pattern of Santos. Authors own photo (2025)



The development patterns in Santos show that areas that are more valued by the municipality with the most urban infrastructure and public spaces are near the coast (Fonseca and Martins, 2019). While visiting Santos play was observed in the beach and in the housing area (a) Bairros bom retiro, the latter area had during a visit less frequency of cars passing and parked in the streets compared to areas closer to the waterfront. The high vertical building patterns between the blue dot (C) Avenida Ana Costa and the pink dot (H) Canal 4, 5 and 6, are the areas in Santos with the highest urban land prices, these neighbourhood are close to the scenic waterfront and extensive public beach garden (Fonseca and Martins, 2019). These vertical buildings have very limited or none access to an inner yard or greenspace but provide safe home spaces, further that each building has limited parking therefore streets around vertical buildings are used as parking. There exists parkings lots that cost to park the car, however, parking in the street is free and therefore is considered a more available option. The areas in Santos close to the waterfront receive most urban infrastructure support and real estate investments (ibid). In the historic center many historic buildings have been occupied or illegally rented for low-income families, a process that started in the 1960 onwards (Fonseca and Martins, 2019). The authors mean that families permanence in these tenements are influenced by the closeness to work and the shortage of income to rent or legally buy property, even if it means living in places with structural problems and unhealthy conditions (Santos, 2011 cited in Fonseca and Martins, 2019, p. 198). Further places in Santos that have low-income residences are on the steep slopes of Morro Montserrat, (Fonseca and Martins, 2019). High living costs and population density cause families in Santos to occupy hill areas that are prone to soil erosion and landslides, these in turn are caused by increased rainfall and deforestation (Moreira, 2023). Landslides can destroy people’s homes and cause deaths (ibid).

The relationship between people from Santos and people from São Paulo is that many inhabitants of São Paulo go to Santos during celebrations and vacations, especially since Santos is the closest beach for the residents of the big city. Many people work and live in São Paulo however, on vacations and weekends the roads between Santos and São Paulo get crowded (from the author’s own experience), indicating that São Paulo residents go to Santos in their free leisure time. These periods of vacations fill the city Santos with visiting people and cause sanitation problems during the high season summer which is December-February.



“(Typological patterns found in the urban space of Santos” Illustration by Fonseca and Martins, 2019)



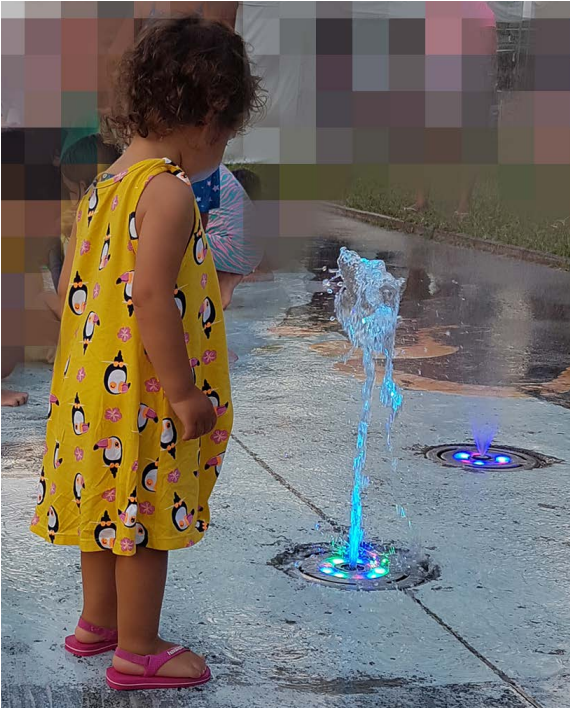
“History of landslides in Morro Montserrat, Santos, Brazil” By GIZ Brazil found (Moreira, 2023).



The mountains between Sao vicente and Santos, with the cities older wood houses. Authors own photo (2025)



The pavement on the beach in Santos. Photo by Elsie Baroncelli



The playful fountains at Ponta da Praia. Photo by author (2025)



# Field visits

In this section field studies of design site and school and related interventions that this work takes local approaches that can be considered temporal or seen as urban acupuncture, as well as to understanding how people use the streets in cities in Brazil.

## Faixa viva

At the crosswalk over to the beach in Santos the remains of the faded painted words “Faixa viva” barely clings on the asphalt. It is an echo of another unprosperous attempt to create a concept that can pause the roaring and moving motor vehicle traffic for a brief moment, just enough for some people to pass the street. ‘Faixa viva’ means living crosswalks, the words accentuate that these crosswalks support peoples’ life, creating bridges over the car dominance of the streets to access places in the urban life. The initiative was that raising your hand before crossing would signal the car and motor bicycle drivers to stop for you (Prefeitura de Santos, n.da.). However, when the ‘Faixa viva’ was applied and tested in during the trip between 17th of december 2024 to 21th of January 2025 at the road commonly called ‘Avenida Praia’ which refers the road alongside the beach in Santos, the drivers of cars, motorbikes and other vehicles were barely affected by us (me and my family) raising our hands. The opportunities to pass the crosswalk would occur when the traffic light further away on the road would turn red which made the traffic go slower and provide a moment for the cars to stop. This is an example of how human bodies in the streets in Brazilian cities negotiate with people in motor driven vehicles about using the space of the street often resulting in a battle that the human bodies are at a disadvantage.



Photo of ‘Faixa viva’ by Elsie Baroncelli





**MASP in the background, viewed from the handicraft market that goes along the open space. The rhythm of the street lines of people walking, biking and with kickbikes from beginning to end of open space. 12th January (2025). Photo by author.**

## Open space in Sao Paulo

The streets in São Paulo hold functions mainly for transportation, however the streets are also used for other public uses such as markets and Open space. Open space has various definitions, an understanding of the concept from an user's perspective is that an open space is an arena that can allow and hold for different types of activities from fundamental, social and optional (Gehl, 1987, cited in Woolley, 2003).

São Paulo has almost 23 million inhabitants (World Population Review, 2025b) and is commonly considered the economic heart of South America. The big city is situated inland about 85 km from Santos. The Open space in Paulista avenue is done through stopping the traffic temporarily for six hours for people to use the streets. This intervention takes place on the main business street of São Paulo, Paulista avenue and occurs every Sunday between ten to four o'clock which allows people to walk freely in an otherwise car dominated space in the city (Cidade de São Paulo n.d). The seven kilometer long open space on Paulista avenue coincides with and anchors to the local handicraft market that occurs on the Sunday on the pavement of the avenue. Paulista avenue open space holds spontaneous and temporal music concerts from various styles, political speeches, biking lanes in the middle. The open space did not have many temporary seatings. Observations of the street showed that the main thing to do was to walk along the straight road passing stands and temporal stages (not actual built stages) with local bands or political speeches. Children's independent or free play was not observed during this visit to the open space, even though the street was full of families and people of all ages. Observed play was biking and using roller skates with parents along the drawn bicycle lanes. A conclusion I have from the visit is that to close off a street from traffic does not make a street playful. There can be many reasons for this such as the fear of thieves or that the children will get lost along this big and vast street, or that the space is considered more as an adult space among others. Furthermore, the intervention did not have natural places to stop and pause except for standing in front of the temporal music and speech stages.



**Various live music performances and political speeches along the street. Two lanes are marked for use by cyclists and kickbikers going back and forwards on the street. Photo by author. 12th January (2025).**



## ‘Feiras Livres’ the local ephemeral street food markets

The moving local vegetables and fruits markets act as an ephemeral phenomena that draws people out to the streets of cities in Brazil to buy from local farmers. The two ‘Feiras Livres’ that I visited in Santos were at Rua Cunha Moreira Rua Osvaldo which occur on Wednesdays and at Cruz e Travessa Rua Dom Lara that happens on Tuesdays (Prefeitura de Santos, n.db.). In Santos and other cities in Brazil there are local food and veggie markets every day on streets, so called “Feiras Livres”, which is a street market that moves between different streets each day. The local market closes off a street for the use of it as a farmers market. Locally grown fruits such as mango, various banana kinds, guava, jabuticaba, two kinds of papaya and vegetables such as tomatoes, salads, catalonia, pumpkin, cassava among other products such as fish, meat and chicken can be found here. At a traditional market in Brazil the dish ‘Pastel’ is often a must together with either a sugar cane juice or maté. Here, various generations of people come to buy fresh and local groceries, often families or seniors. Often the food you can eat is on the go but some markets provide a food court area. It was observed that in the food market people of all ages often paused the grocery shopping to talk and meet a neighbour, colleague or friends. The street became during these markets a social hotspot.



There are feiras livres in different streets of Santos every day. Here is the ‘Feiras livres’ that is close to Anália Franco preschool. Wednesdays 7am to 12pm at Rua Osvaldo Cruz e Travessa Rua Dom Lara (Between Av. Epitácio Pessoa e Rua Amílcar Mendes Gonçalves)  
Photo by author. (8 jan 2025)





The Blue-white building, is old and breaking, and can not be used anymore by the school. (2025)



The building next to the blue white building is the main school building. (2025)



## Design site and the school Anália Franco

On the formal front side of Anália Francos the main artery vein in Santos passes; avenue Ana Costa, a road that is heavily used by cars and other vehicles and therefore has limited possibilities to be changed. The avenue has a bus stop in front of the school, where people can jump on and off the bus all the way to and from the beach. The back street of the school was the most suitable for redesigning from the analyses of the street images. This street is named Júlio Conceição and acts as an informal and commonly used entrance to the school. Júlio Conceição is a one direction street and mainly used as a car parking. Resident housing, car parking area, the school of Anália Franco and a car wash connect to the supposed area of redesign. The entrance toward the street Júlio Conceição was used by the children and also by teachers and workers of the school both by foot or by car.

The visit to the school on the 8th of January followed by field studies of the surrounding streets and the design site Júlio Conceição. The back entrance to school was the one of the main entrances to the school. Walking, taking notes and pictures, the street and surrounding street around the school was observed. The street Júlio Conceição was during the visit and, the short visits before and after workshop and interview, was mainly used as car parking with occasional and rare vehicle traffic passing. Streets close and connecting streets in the neighbourhood were mainly used as car parking. The neighbourhood that Anália Franco school was a mix of residential houses, offices, cafes and a recently built high building closeby. The pre-study of the street compared to site visit showed that two houses had been demolished during the time difference, 3 years, of photos and visit, with the two properties turned into empty lots. Next to Analia Franco was a carwash and residential houses. A discovery was made during the field study that street photos did not convey, the part of the street Júlio Conceição street that connected to Rua Cunha Moreira was closed off for market stands. Every wednesday the connecting street rua Cunha Moreira holds a "feira livres", translated to a free fruit and veggies market.



Backside entrance (2025)





View towards the closed part of the street for Feiras livres(2025)





# 36 Workshop

In this section the preparation of the workshop is presented, the workshop and the exhibition of the workshop.

## Preparation of the workshop

A workshop description plan, with both what materials were needed for the workshops and an activity plan, in both English and Portuguese was made before the workshop. The workshop was held in Brazilian Portuguese so that the children could freely communicate in their mother tongue, see attached appendix 1. There was not the possibility to go out with the children for a field study because of school regulations. To enable field studies together with the children a longer project with more occasions for building trust and relations with the school, children and teachers is necessary. Therefore, to still create a reference to the design site during the workshop, a model of the street and a street photo was made to be available and used for the children during the workshop. The model was inspired by legoland, which is a model of cities and buildings in a scale that younger children can walk between the buildings. The model was not a perfect replicant of the street but was made to act as a tool for the children to explore, familiarize with the design site and use for reimagining and redesign.

Selections of methods for children’s involvement in this workshop were considered by the age of the children and their context. Interviews and meetings done while sitting down as done in traditional involvements does not fit younger children with their energetic curiosity and unruliness (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). The methods and materials in the participatory workshop were inspired by Gatulabbas dialogue metodic and Victoria Derrs book, ‘Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities’ (2018). Which methods to use depend on age (Derr, 2018; Gatulabba, n.da.) and context (Muratovski, 2023; Smith et al., 2025). The freedom of movement for five years old children is limited to caregivers such as teachers, older siblings and parents furthermore the movement patterns are tied to the caregivers (Gatulabba, n.da.). Therefore, the workshop welcomed the teachers to also participate in both doing analyses and identifying what possibilities and opportunities streets have and the reimagine activity depending on when it suited in the process, because they can provide insight on their behalf on how the design can be welcoming for other caregivers and give voice for the youngest children of the school, who are between 4 month to 24 months. In the workshop it was important to inform the children that there are no existing plans for changing the street but with this workshop they got to try out designing, analysing and brainstorming how their school street could be shaped and reimaged with their ideas. Further, the facilitators informed the children that we were going to hang up and do an installation of their art, thoughts and ideas from the workshop.

The overall planned activities of the workshop was introduction circle, inspiration time, introduction to site and activities, activities reimagine and pre-study of street accompanied with play pauses. The workshop was documented through notes, photos and sounds recordings.

## Introduction circle

The introduction consisted of a short introduction to get familiarized with each other and about the workshop and project, followed by telling your name and gesture and saying a play that you liked, as an approach to get to know each other and to early spark thoughts about play. The following activity was to show inspirational material.

## Inspirational material

The inspiration material in the workshop was part of Gatulabbas dialogue approach of involvement with children. It is to spark creativity and encourage the children through showing inspiration. Which is also common practice within landscape architecture with visiting example projects or looking at other inspiration channels. This workshop planned to show videos of reimaginings and photos from real projects. Firstly to present a reimagining of a street that the children might be more familiar with, which was visual utopia’s (Kamensky, n.d.) video of São Paulo’s “Marginal Tietê” which are main multiple roads alongside both sides of the river Tietê that crosses São Paulo. Most people in the region of São Paulo have experienced this road and possibly the children and or the teachers. An inspiration for the children to think of their “near” surroundings as a possibility to be reimaged and changed. That video showed a big scale change in the infrastructure and mobility of São Paulo whilst the second video was a more close up example of Cologne Geronstrasse chosen for the children to see a visualisation of a street, viewed in a smaller intimate scale and size of area that can draw parallels to the street that the children were redesigning. The videos contain a storytelling with sounds of the surrounding demonstrating a change in the images of the video accompanied with correlating sounds of change. From sounds from roaring vehicles to sounds of people, birds and wildlife. Both short videos show an alternative city and street realms that go from car dominated to people oriented with a focus on pedestrians, bicycles, animals. Furthermore the videos replace parts of the asphalt and concrete for nature such as grass and trees. The example projects that were chosen for the workshop were municipality driven projects such as the temporal playful spaces in Davids halls summer plaza of Malmö city from last summer 2024 and a playstreets pilot project of stockholm city from last year. Another example project was “living cities” in Ghent, a collaboration between municipality and citizens with neighbourhoods’ own wishes of temporal designs of their streets and the municipality provided the artefacts, showing a long table dinner on the streets. The example photos were chosen for showing possibilities of varied, diverse redesigns and uses.



**The workshop process. Before, set the workshop room. (1) Welcome the children and intro circle with names and play references, (2) Inspiration moment, introducing why and what were going to do with showing model and street photo followed by (3) reimagine activity and the identifying opportunities and warnings on the street including sharing the generated ideas and thoughts followed by (4) play and then switching group for another round of (3) and finalizing with play(4). Authors own sketch of workshop process**



**The clouds in Santos, inspiration for the clouds in the workshop.**





The collage table, during the workshop.

### Pre study activity

The prestudy activity proposal was to do a site visit of the street with the children which was not approved this occasion therefore the workshop changed to take place in the classroom. Inspired by Gatulabbas “pennant promenade” which should take place in the design site. I reinterpreted the method to an indoor activity with a street model in size 1:25 and an air view photo of the place in combination to let the children draw what they liked about the street in the circles and what they did not like about the street in the triangles. Initially it was meant for the children to place the triangles and circles in the model and around the street photo but there due to short workshop time it was changed. The method was an attempt to make the street “appear” into the classroom space. This was made through a street overview photo and through creating a street model in carbon boxes in the scale 1:25, a scale that makes it possible for the children to enter and analyse the models’ space. The use of an overview photo and map of the site in combination with creating models of the site is commonly used by planners and landscape architects. An air viewed street photography was also a suggested tool when involving children (Gatulabba, n.da.), that it can be a helpful tool in communication.

### Redesign/ reimagine drawing activity

Derr (2018) states that art based methods enable children to express their ideas and thoughts. The activity was set to reimagine and redesign a street that is for play through using her drawing method combined with collaging with papers shaped like clouds inspired by clouds in Santos. The time was planned for 40 min in total for intro and drawing and then 15 min for sharing. The vision activity connected to the first question in the introduction circle of “what do you like to play?” to the activity and question “how do you reimagine a street for your play?” with follow up questions during the activity for example “what is important for your play”? Mainly using art as a medium for expressing ideas and thoughts is a wide medium (Derr, 2018). Colour pencils and paper were placed on the table before the workshop. Collage images can over direct the children, however, in the workshop the collage buffet table was in a separate table in the room which made it the children’s own choice to walk there and choose inspiration and ideas for their reimaginings and likes and dislikes about the streets. The images were a varied selection from nature to city elements with mainly local species pictures. The selection for example included rats and garbage to not only have a wide variation of material. The selection was chosen to the specific context of the work but also having examples from the world.

### Switch of groups

The activities were divided in two groups with one group starting to redesign and reimagine the street first and the other group analysing the street and then switching during the workshop. It was planned this way to be both processes of prestudies and visionmaking at the same time to show that ideas and creative solutions can sprung out in any of these activities, in a way the practice of the iterative design process.

### Play pauses

Adults as children need breaks to reinvigorate energy and to regain and maintain focus for activities. The activities in the workshop have a seated character that takes focus for the children, a break with movement and physical activity can strengthen capabilities as creativity, concentration and memory (Johnsson, 2018). Furthermore, the play pauses are an important part of building up trust and a relationship between children and facilitator within the project (Gatulabba, n.de.). The play pauses in the workshop plan was to a play similar to the brazilian play of “pega pega” meaning the play “tag” that was inspired by Gatulabbaleken which is a reinterpretation of the original game called “monster and hoppetossor” (Gatulabba, 2024b) in this workshop the play had a twist, the monster was a local folkloric character and monster named Cuca with crocodile claws jumping after the children. The chosen character was to connect the game to Brazilian culture.

### The workshop exhibition

The workshop exhibition was planned with inspiration of Derr (2018) who suggests various conditions for a successful project with children and one condition is that it results in tangible outcomes, which affirms the competence of the children. In this project there were no actual plans to change the street Julio Concecao but to still create a tangible outcome was through creating the workshop exhibition.

### Letting the teachers take part in workshop and in interviews

880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, (2017) argues that the caregivers play a key role to understand the needs and desires of the youngest ones at Anália Franco school which has children between four months up to five years. Caregivers as parents, nannies and educators are the closest ones for understanding and communicating the needs of babies (0 - 2 years) and other non-verbal children (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017). Furthermore, the meaningful ways early childhood educators and caretakers connect with young children can be a learning for active professionals in the realm of city designing and planning.



Photo of the set workshop room, waiting for the children to arrive. 10 jan (2025)



# The Workshop

Before the workshop the facilitator met up with one of the teachers that was working with the children group today. The facilitators then set the workshop, placed the model on the floor and the street photo on the wall in the height for the children, arranged the tables and seats and created a collage buffé table. The workshop was facilitated by me and with help from a local volunteer and the presence of three teachers. The summer school class had 17 participants.

The workshop started at 9 o'clock with the children's entrance to the arts classroom. We welcomed them with open body language and communicated by showing and saying to make a circle. The children looked at us with curious eyes, barley sitting still around the circle. I welcomed them and said thank you for letting us have this workshop with you. My name is Diana and today we are going to redesign and reimagine a street together, but first we need to get to know everybody a little. Let's introduce your name and share a play that you like. Followed by me stating I can start: My name is Diana, and I started to climb in the air and I like to climb trees. I smiled and looked to the left and asked what is your name? That was the starting point of getting everybody acquainted with each other. During the introduction circle the most repeated play activity was to harvest strawberries and bananas. This can be understood afterwards, during the interview with the teachers, that these answers may have been influenced by a recent activity with planting and harvesting strawberries and bananas that they had done with the school.

The workshop continued with again presenting what we are going to do today and telling that when designing we often need to find inspiration for our projects (Gatulabba n.dc.). We gathered the children in front of a computer. So we prepared two inspirational videos from visual utopias by Kamensky (n.d) and photos of example projects from real life. We let the children view once and then we asked what they saw and listened to their answers. Then showing the videos once again followed up by presenting the project Davidshalls square, which is a car park in winter that transforms into a summer square with flowers and play possibilities. The next photo was an example of living cities in Ghent. Followed up with a picture from the pilot project "lekgata" play street in stockholm. A teacher got surprised that there existed projects on the streets and other city realms that are claimed from the car and given to children's and people's presence. The example project that was shared was the lekgata project in Stockholm, the car parking with temporal square/park Davidhall in Malmö and from an example picture from "livable street" in Ghent Belgium. When looking at the pictures I asked the children what they saw, for them to share reflections and thoughts. After this inspiration moment we moved everybody to the other side of the classroom and gathered around the street model. Here we have our redesign site and showed the street photo on the wall. It is your school's backstreet, called rua Júlio Conceição And here is the back entrance to Anália Franco school, pointing out its position in the model. After presenting the model of the street we showed the street image on the wall and invited the children to have a look. It got crowded so we had to move everybody around so everyone could get a view of the street.



Inspirational activity during the workshop, looking at Jan Kamensky's visual utopias







The workshop continued with two activities one called opportunity circles and warning triangles and the other called redesigning and reimagining the street. The children were split into two groups and one group got to start either activity. The activities were around 40 minutes and continued with a play paus, after the paus the children got to switch activity. Each table had a teacher who also participated in the workshop and at the same time helped out at the tables. During the workshop the facilitators walked around, answered questions and listened and asked questions. The children were sitting in groups drawing and whenever they wanted they were allowed to go and look and add material from the collage buffé and to look at the street model and the map of the street. The children finished their collage drawings in different tempos all from 15 min to some that were unfinished with their cloud and triangle and circle. After finishing the first activity the children were gathered by the teachers and we observed that there was a need for moving a bit so we did some spontaneous short playful movements together before gathering around the clouds, circles and triangles. Then everybody was welcome to share their clouds, asking if anybody wanted to show and share their thoughts about their art work. The children were eager to share their art work, and we asked who wanted to share until there was no one more who wanted to share their artwork. The workshop continued with a playful paus, with the game monster “tags” with inspiration from

Gatulabbas tips on games (Gatulabba, 2024b) but reinterpreted with a local touch. The monster was in this version the folkloric figure Cuca as the chaser and the escapers only doing even footed jumps. We first had a little vocal warm up to see if we could have the vocal part of the game which was “labba” meaning “laborate” in Swedish but we interpreted it to “brinca”, which means play in portuguese. But during the vocal we realised that this element was too loud in this room, that had a tremendous echo tendency and no sound isolation with the combination of the noise from the air conditioner. The monster tag game was appreciated and we played until everybody got tagged in two games. The workshop continued by switching activity and drawing and gluing together with the facilitators walking around listening and asking questions. During this session the children started to look more at the street model and analyse it through play. Yet again the children finished in different tempos and after 40 min we ended the activities session and gathered the children to let them share their thoughts of their artworks from the activities. We continued with one last play pause and said that we were going to hang up their collage drawings and said thank you for their engagement and for letting us have the workshop. The children wanted to continue the workshop but due to time limits and that the children needed to eat, the workshop ended without a wrap up circle.

The workshop created a space that inspired and encouraged both the children and the teachers to start reimagining another street. Through drawing, collage and communicating their thoughts with facial expressions and with words, the workshop opened for reflections about what they like about the street and what they do not like about the street. Furthermore, the workshop initiated a reflection about what or how each one liked to play and what was important for their play. The workshop happened through active contact, listening, playing and asking; through such participatory and inclusive methods, a playful dialogue.





## Workshop exhibition

After the children left the classroom, the facilitators documented the creations followed by setting a line through the classroom above the street model and hung up all the reimagining clouds above the street together with placing all the opportunity circles and warning triangles in the model earlier plan was to hang the circles and triangles around the street photo but at the scenery it made more sense to rather fill the street in the street model with the circles and triangles. The children got to see the exhibition afterwards, due to their schedule, therefore the facilitators could not be present in the display for the children. From teachers and pedagogical coordinator we got feedback that the exhibition was very appreciated by the children. The exhibition was then taken over by the teachers that got to decide when to take it down and to hand out the drawings to the children, who wanted to show their clouds, circles and triangles to their families. The exhibition displayed the children's and the teachers ideas and contributions from the workshop. The ideas and thoughts from the workshop were put together with both facilitators reflecting about the workshop and the children's expressions, thoughts and ideas. The exhibition was a small tangible whole connected multifaceted mosaic piece of reimagines and opportunities.



# Interview with teachers

A week after the workshop interviews took place with six teachers at Analia Franco school. The interviews were held in two groups, with teachers dropping into the conversations. The questions were semi structured and about their childhood memories of playing in the street, what was important for their play and about how play can occur on the street. The teachers consisted of a range of various generations, ages between 20 to 52 years. Each teacher was asked permission for sound recording. Names are changed due to privacy.

## Childhood memories of play

All six teachers had memories of playing on the street, many of them referring affectionately to these memories. There were various possibilities on the street for specific games, plays and encounters between children and adults that took place on the street. All the teachers smiled when talking about their memories of play in the street.

“My childhood memories... and they exist because of my grandmother in Rio de Janeiro, so with all my cousins there we played a lot in the street, “stealing flag”, jumping rope, “guarding the box.” I remember it very well, so I spent the three months of vacation there. I was always on the street, playing with everything, it’s street games, we played a lot. A good childhood memory is that I played with roller skates too, I love those things.” Vanessa

“Yes, I do, I played a lot on the hill where my grandfather lived, so I grew up playing with my cousins and my mother took me to the beach a lot too. I think those are the best memories I have of my childhood.” Verônica

The street play that was mentioned where embodied collaborative plays occurred with the street space and with other children. These kinds of collaborative free play require the spatiality of the streets (Pinto, 2018) as mentioned in the play section, and children that want to participate. There was a difference in how much you were allowed to be on the street depending on what generation the teachers were, with the teacher above having her childhood in the 70s and the 80s to the teacher beneath who had her childhood in the 00s and 10s, showing a change in attitude towards play on the street.

“ Yes, when I was a child I had, I couldn’t stay on the street that much because my mother was very scared, but there were some people there who we played with, we played street owner, tag, hide and seek....” Ana

The perception for most of the teachers in the interview was that the streets are not playable anymore today in an overall sense of the city of Santos.

“It was in the street that I played, as there is no possibility of the street today, so the squares are the place today. But in the street it was good...” Elis

In the interview the perspective that younger generations do not have the experience of playing in the street was apparent. One teacher that arrived later into the conversations responded:

“ I am 52 years old, so I used to play in the street. I don’t think she used to play.” [referring to the younger teacher next to her] Elis

Do you have childhood memories of playing and being in the street?

How/what did you play? What was important for your play?

Do you think children play on the street as when you were a kid? Why do you think it is so?

What do you think needs to be changed to make the streets and spaces between buildings available for childrens presence and play?

What did you think of the participatory design workshop with the children?

Is it relevant to include children in the planning of spaces?

The twenty year old teacher answered the previous quote with that she also played on the streets as a child. This tells that there are older generations who have a presumption that today’s children do not experience play on the street. This assumption can come from the older generations having an impression that there are less children playing in the street today and/or in other public realms compared to their childhoods. At the same time another teacher acknowledged that her own child was what she called an “apartment child” and that he did not get the opportunity to play on the street as she did.

“People, I loved playing “Steal the flag” on the street, on roller skates, playing things that my son didn’t experience, he didn’t experience, right? And my nephews did, but I see my son did not experience that. Now, not anymore because he’s 15 years old, but when he was younger I used to talk to him. About how he felt this, this need to have this, and nowadays he doesn’t have it [these feelings]... But I have the best memories, they were really incredible.” Paula

## Culture and technology changes

Three culture and technology changes that the teachers talked about was the change in mobility patterns with increased technology of cars in the cities. Second, a change in the culture from collectives and friendships to individualism, and last the third change was the arrival of technology with screens. The first change that had an impact on how the streets were used with the increase of cars and vehicles. Both taking up space on the street through car parkings, and to the fact that cars weigh a ton and move fast through street realms and therefore is a physical force that dominates over humans and other bodies in the streets.

“There are a lot of cars these days. There are a lot of vehicles these days. In the past you would see a car here and there, nowadays there are a lot of cars, a lot of motorcycles, a lot of vehicles, so we are also afraid of an accident. “ Luíza

When asking about what they thought about the amount of cars and vehicles in Santos. The perception was that the city could not cope with more cars, and in that raising that it is unsustainable for a city to have too many cars.

“ah, fewer cars because there are so many cars here in Santos, there’s no way we can’t take more.” Vanessa

Further it was mentioned that due to the increased and intensified extent and existence of motor driven vehicles and their dominance, both physical and mental in the street sphere, it hindered local communities to do self initiatives for play such as to close off streets from traffic. The negotiation of the public space of the street has become a monologue.

“It’s no longer possible to close the street to play football, like it used to be done.” Verônica

Figure: The Interview questions

The second change was a social change from collectivism to individualism. The street was a space that people used for the creation of a social web of support, trust and friendships. Elis shared about a local sense of social security that was practised between neighbours through “looking out for each other” a practice that does not exist in the same way anymore.

“There is no security [today]. We had neighbors that looked out for each other. That was always going with us but today it’s very closed, not even the neighbors talk to each other anymore. Today it’s every man for himself. Right? Now it’s different.” Elis.

There was a social dependence and trust to each other that passed geographical lengths and capacities of today’s technology. The second interview facilitator (age 36 years) shared a memory from his childhood in Santos during the conversations.

“I remember when I was little, we were playing in the street, we were meeting people and then out of nowhere someone [a stranger] would say; “Look, your mother called you home”. I don’t know how my mother got hold of the person, but we kind of had a trust.” facilitator 2

Furthermore, this social web was an act of people in the streets sharing resources of space and food.

“My grandmother used to say. When she shouted “it is time to eat” and it was for everyone, it wasn’t just for me... My grandmother, she sat down and the whole street sat with us.” Vanessa

The streets were a place where children from various ages intermingled in an intergenerational children’s play. As plays and games were passed on from older children to the younger ones.

“The older ones taught the younger ones and we played everything...” Luíza

A play that integrated and engaged children within a city block and between different blocks. A independent play that explored out into the urban sphere, to playgrounds and neighbourhoods.

“...We played in the whole block. So we would start playing around 4 in the afternoon and get home around 8 or 9 o’clock or so, and sometimes I would go to the house of some friends who lived nearby so we could play on their street, play Barbie or play in a playground that I had close to my house. “ Ana

The importance of friends on the street arose in the interviews. When asking what was most important for your play the response from many teachers was friends and to, in a sense, be united. The street was a place where the children on their own practiced to support each other through comforting each other and bringing everybody together.

“Oh, friends. It’s to be nice to everyone, so that no one would feel alone. If we saw that there were a few people who were sad, we tried to cheer them up, we tried to bring them to us so that everyone would be together and united. “ Ana

Another teacher mentions furthermore that this friendship extended into a sort of collective togetherness with friends, family and neighbours, that she thought did not exist anymore in today’s street.

“Friendship... I had a friendship with everyone on the street. It was a collective, right? It wasn’t like that it was just my family, my brothers who were on the street, there were neighbors. Everyone was there. So this collective doesn’t exist anymore. I realize that it doesn’t exist anymore”. Elis

She had a belief that this kind of a neighborhood collectiveness can be supported and created again with the municipality’s help but that they are too focused on things that give them money, which is also mentioned in the contextual section(Fonseca and Martins, 2019), rather than creating meaningful spaces for all of the people.

“Yes it is possible to give the neighborhood, for everyone, that collective. “ Elis

Another teacher points out that there is a need in society for a social support network.

“It’s a question of the laziest generation, but I think it’s a combination of everything, also tiredness from work, and nowadays there are many single mothers who don’t have a support network, they have to work but they have a child.” Verônica

Another aspect that arose in the conversation was that some local culture practices have been fading away with the example of the former practices of children going around the streets knocking on doors asking for gifts as a part of the “festa Junina” celebrations. Both adults and children celebrate in many regions of Brazil with typical food, music and dances that take place in the street and indoors from June into the first part of July.

“In the past, when there was the “Festa Junina” party, we would go around asking for gifts. I remember, my sister would ask for gifts all year long. My sister was asking the whole year long. Nowadays, I talk to my son about having to ask around for gifts. He says, “What, what gift? He has no idea...” Paula





The skateboard park in Santos. Photo by author

Her son was not acquainted with these local traditions and practices that took place in the streets and neighborhood, practices that also shape the cultural identity as mentioned in the section about streets (Lerner, 2014). This local tradition was also a practice of trust and a way to get to know your neighbour further, also creating a social connection in and beyond your neighbourhood. The movement away from local practices is also evident in cities in Sweden. I can draw parallels to my own childhood where the children in my village would paint the faces with red cheeks and freckles, dressed in layers of fabric and a headscarf sometimes also accompanied with a brom and a basket to become what we refer to as “påskkärringar”, then walking around knocking on neighbours doors asking for sweets, a practice I also shared with friends in the town Habo in Småland. Today I know people in the city Malmö that have never seen children dressed up as or heard about the practice of “påskkärring” during easter celebrations in Sweden. These local practices of walking around, knocking on neighbors’ doors, is an approach for children and adults to get familiarized with their social surroundings and environment.

### The third change with the arrival of new technology with screens

Video games, computer games, digital games in combination with people having more money to be able to buy technology was mentioned as another aspect that they thought had influenced the play that took place earlier in the streetscapes. One teacher tells about the absence of these technologies in her childhood playscapes.

“Because nowadays, children don’t play in the street, right? Nowadays, only on the computer, they play, playing, no, no, not even on the computer before, there was no computer, no video games, right? In my time, there wasn’t even a video game, there wasn’t anything on the street, but we played everything, tag, runs, everything on the street, day by day.” Vanessa.

A portrait of the children in the city appeared in my mind, with them confined and restricted to their apartments. The streetscapes and other public realms with

playgrounds such as the beach appear for some of the teachers to be more or less absent of children due to that today’s children are more indoors with their toys and digital games. One teacher implied that parents today use screens as a way to circumvent parental care and presence with the children, to make the children occupied by the screens. Jarvis et al., (2014) verify this notion that collaborative and free play outside school times has been diminishing and broadly replaced by adult directed pursuits. Further he means that these pursuits are often mediated with technology and activities that are consumption based.

“No, it is very, very rare to see a child playing in the street like in the past. Nowadays, children are more confined at home. They play more video games that they get from their parents at home. They can even call a friend to play at home. But playing in the street like in the past, no. Nowadays, it’s even very rare to see children in the playgrounds.” Ana

When comparing the quote above to the teachers’ own childhood memories of playing with other children and not needing programmed toys or gear, except than regular home items and loose materials from the surrounding environment for their play.

“Wow, I didn’t need much, I played, I slipped on the PET bottle, I played with rocks, yeah...” Verônica

Play on the streets seemed not to rely on special or expensive toys or devices rather that it was about sharing resources, reimagining and finding new ways creating plays together. A lack of gear and toys induced the children to be creative, imaginative and create plays. “Lúdico” is a word in Portuguese that means dreamy, creative, playful, which connects creativity and playfulness.

” We didn’t have the financial means so we played with what we had, cardboard boxes... Yes, you know, you have to get a rope, sometimes there were times when we had our own shirts, one knotted to the other, to jump. We did not have the financial resources for things, the skates were for 15 children, everyone would go and take off the skates. It was like that, you know, it wasn’t anything special...” Vanessa

Further, another reason for less children playing on the streets was that children get hooked to the screen.

“Technology nowadays, children are very attached to screens. They don’t have that much need to leave the house to play because they can have as much fun as they have at home with the television and video games, with the toys they have there, that’s the reason. “ Ana

One teacher also thinks that children are strongly affected by screens and therefore that it also has an impact on if children play on the street, that the screens kidnap the children’s attention in a way that it creates a deafness to your surroundings.

“I believe it is due to technology today, the television catches them if they are there watching the screen. If you are calling from the side, they don’t look, it seems like they don’t hear.” Verônica

### The fear and separated realms

Four of the six teachers were themself mothers and spoke on behalf of their experience as both teachers and as parents. The beach was talked about as a free



space and a valuable place for the people and especially for the children. And that schools that are even situated a single block away from the beach did very rarely go to the beach and its beach garden. The answer to why it was so was many but two teachers mentioned the perceived fear as a reason. A fear of something unexplainable. Furthermore, Ana means that this kind of worry that “something can happen to a child” is a very recent phenomena.

“It’s fear.” Ana

“It’s just fear “ Elis

While another teacher expressed that she thinks that the perceived fear of violence and crime are influencing the opportunity children have to be on the streets.

“and I also think that in the world today, there is much more violence, it is much more dangerous.” Verônica

The notion of stranger danger also appeared during the interview with a teacher saying that she is today uncomfortable with adult strangers playing volleyball with older children. A majority of the teachers said that today there is no trust between people. Furthermore one teacher mentioned that fear of crime changes the architecture in the cities, to develop skyscrapers and gated communities, which leads to higher and more walls that separate people.

“Why is it so... it’s because of the crime, right? Nowadays it’s very difficult to see children on the street... I think that’s why nowadays they build these buildings that have everything so that children can experience a little bit. It is Brazil, right? It is possible that if you leave your flip-flops, when you pick them up they are not there anymore.” Paula

Furthermore another teacher acknowledged that the children today have a different relation to the streets compared to the teachers childhood memories. The former common architecture had an unequivocal contact with sounds, smells, eye to eye views with the street and vice versa (photo of traditional houses santos). From an reality where the children were able to reach their parents at the doorstep of your home:

“... And with our parents playing, our parents at the door of the house. We’re already without this anymore, these days are not possible here”. Paula

to the perception of children today.

“They don’t even know the street. Most of them live in gated apartments”. Elis

Architecture, in combination with other living circumstances can separate the people from the streets. A graffiti artist portrayed Santos on a street light pole with the leaning towers of buildings as an ice cream cone and an egg trying to hold up the building. The egg represents a saying in this part of Brazil meaning that “everybody knows each other” further that the leaning skyscrapers are a common sight along the beach.

Schools were portrayed as the main space for children’s exploration and sensing of the tangible world. In the interview it was communicated that there is a sense of pressure for schools and teachers to provide all the children needs to learn and or experience about the world. It was mentioned that it is common for children today to wake up early in the morning and then spend most of their time at school(Luíza).



“Santos is a icream” Photo by Jessica Torretta

“... when you get to the fifth grade, you’re so exhausted from being at school, that’s how it is, and there are no other attractions, just here at school... And then you have to learn everything here, you have to be polite here, you have to play here.” Elis.

“And socialize here...” Luíza

It was implied that in the past the street was an important space for young citizens to meet and practise various abilities, from social to spatial awareness, and play. The school was then not the main place to learn, practise or play. A project with plants, soil and worms was mentioned as an approach to teach how to care for plants and in a way connect the care also to the public parks.

“It’s just a fact that they don’t have street play anymore, so they practise everything at school, everything at school.” Elis

The quotes earlier tells about the schools as a place where social abilities are taught and practised, this through the interaction between an adult teacher and children. These social abilities then are limited to social interactions within school, without the opportunity to integrate multigenerational and spontaneous interactions and play with people from “outside” such as examples of previous quotes of memories



in the streets and the public realms. The school is further limited with geographical borders, and is a separated realm just like many playgrounds today (Pitsikali and Parnell, 2019). A society with both closed physical and mental spaces, with children spending most time at school in combination with technologies such as cellphones and cars, the absence of people in the streets becomes a social existence of physical separation and closed walls.

“Everything gets closed” Luíza.

In the interview the teachers also mentioned that they thought that the children of today have a stressful transit from school to home, both children needing to handle and navigate around vehicle traffic, with passing streets and also needing to take transport in crowded public transports. A majority of the children at Anália Franco school live up in the hills or live near the schools.

“People, the children who study here, they usually come by public transport, it depends, there are many who work nearby so they come by public transport, there are some who even come by car, but it’s very difficult, the majority live up in the hills, in some places near here, and others live close by, but I think it’s a minority. I think that the majority of the people live in the hills.” Ana

The main ways of mobility to school was walking or taking the bus.

“Oh yes, it’s just walking, and some come walking, some live very close by, and many also live far away. I think it’s more stressful for those who live far away.” Luíza

Along with that schools have it more complicated to do projects outside schools. That there is a fear in combination with an extreme amount of bureaucracy work to be able to take the children out from the school area.

“You have to have a certain authorization. It’s a lot of bureaucracy. If the school is going to take a child to the beach, get a group and take them to the beach. You have to prepare transportation. Prepare the paperwork. The bureaucracy gets authorized so that the children can go. And you have to have some preparation, right? And you have to have... “Cash”, right.” Luíza

Economics was part of hindering the school from being able to take the children out of the school area. Almost all of the teachers mentioned the beach, the beach as a free place in Santos and a place that the teachers wanted to take the children there, but that the school was perceived as far away.

“Everything has a cost but the beach is free...” Luíza

“The beach is free.” Elis

“The beach is free.” Ana

“So, I’ve had students who didn’t even know the beach and lived here.... they don’t know it because it’s too far from home to go to the beach, so sometimes they go once or twice a year. I had students like that and I was shocked.” Elis

At the hills and the mountains in Santos, a majority of the children of the school live further away from the beach making the distance more difficult for spontaneous visits with many important play spaces located at the beach or its garden.

## Play in the street today and in the future

Concerning the future and today’s play in the street, it was expressed that to support and integrate play in the street it was mentioned in the interviews that there is a need for more public squares that integrate playgrounds and families and a wish for the municipality to invest into creating safe spaces for children. Furthermore a wish to create a neighborhood collective with a safe space where social networks of care and trust can be built up between people again as earlier mentioned in the interviews.

“Oh, more public squares with lots of playground artefacts/objects, that the children also can take their pets to play with. Spend the afternoon there, a park for families with places for picnics. So that children can have some distance from their parents so that they can also have their independence. I believe that this would really help children to have a little more coexistence on the street.” Ana

“It also depends a lot on the will of the city councils to do things if they really wanted to have a public place just for children with adequate security with everything adequate they would have.” Ana

A solution for the issue, of streets not being playable anymore, was proposed with the need for a changed mindset and attitude in society.

“I think people should have more compassion, respect and empathy. Love for your neighbor. I think that if people had a little more respect and empathy for everyone, then I think children could even play in the streets these days, then there would be less violence.” Paula

## Feedback about the workshop and exhibition

The workshop was eye opening for both teachers and children, that the street and other realities can be reimagined, and redesigned for other ways of usage. They expressed that it is very relevant to include and take in children’s views and reimagines of spaces that affect them. Furthermore, the teachers said that the children were fascinated and appreciated the workshop exhibition and the workshop.

“I found it interesting because it’s something that at least I believe that we here at school don’t work with nor their families so I think it’s something that improved for them a lot. and I think they can even see the street differently, right because it’s always like we’re always on automatic and we end up not noticing anything, or the tree that’s here in front of what you pass, it is always automatic. I think when they looked and did this activity, I think it gave them a lot... I loved it.” Paula

“that I think it’s really cool, then we brought them here to look at them, they were kind of enchanted looking at the work displayed like that” Verônica





# Results



This section brings forward outcomes and results from the interviews, workshop with the children and the design proposal.

## OUTCOMES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

All the teachers had childhood memories of play in the streets. The play that took place in the street was by five out of six teachers referred to as important, enriching and even referred to being the best memories of play memories from their childhood. The plays involved the whole street both physically and socially with collaboration and negotiations as the examples of neighbours and friends looking out for each other and the children's own initiative to close a street for a football game. Furthermore, another outcome from the interviews was that earlier social connections and meetings that occurred on and around streets had an importance for children's play and the other way around, that children's play were important for the social entanglements. The care, meaning culture and social engagement for children was from all adults in the street, not only the closest family. Furthermore, there is a desire to recreate social entanglements that formerly took place on the street, which enabled trust, sharing of resources and care for your fellow human being. On the ground of today's environmental, technological and social circumstances, attempts to recreate these opportunities for social tanglements can encompass physical and social interventions and adaptations such as paus and play spaces in the street realm. The eyes on the street can be difficult with fewer people using the street, a way can be to create a group of people who can help out as passing by play facilitators on the street, and provide safety on the street through looking out for the children.

From the interviews it was understood that also the teachers thought that the children's thoughts and ideas were valuable, with the workshop creating ripples to the schools educational program with the teachers planning activities for the children to reimagine the classrooms. Aspects that can help the children's life and

presence in the city can be through redesigning the streets so that the walks to and from school become safer routes. The teachers also thought that rethinking and reimagining a space that is very used by the children, such as a street, should be planned together with children. Furthermore the teachers in the interview pointed out that the school acts as one of the main sources of experiencing the world with the pressure that school has to provide and teach about everything, which is impossible to provide. The teachers raise the issue that schools are limited and bound to education structures and that they can not provide the kind of social skills and cultural learning that was practiced on the street. As schools are in a way deviating places with set ages of participation and norms where citizen exchanges do not happen as it did with the spontaneous social entanglements between different age, class, neighbourhoods of children and generations of adults on the street. But through making the street close to schools an accessible and safer space it can act as a stepping stone for children and caregivers to again use this streetspace as the soil for the seeds of cultures and social entanglements.



# Workshop results and interpretations

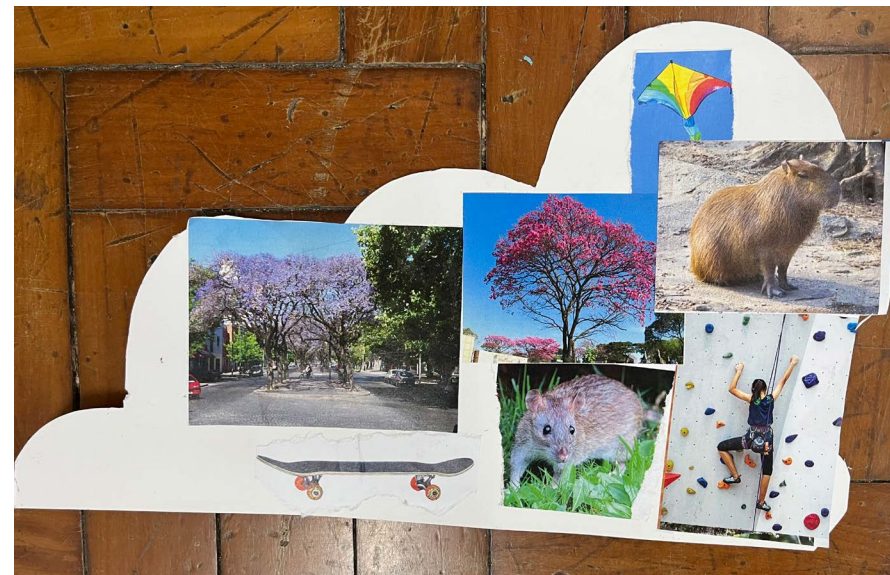
In this section I describe and interpret the results of the workshop. There is a table of counts of the occurrence of elements that was present in the collage drawings to get an overview of the outcomes and I then interpret the main outcomes from the children's (and teachers drawings). The children are given other names due to privacy.

## Interpreting the children's clouds, circles and triangles

The afterwork of the workshop was to gather all the material, sound recordings and notes from the workshop and interpret the clouds, circles and triangles and words by the children, when interpreting I interweaved the children's outputs with reflections from me as a landscape architect student, field visits, readings and interviews with the teachers. From the outcomes and interpretation there was an iterative design process to create a design proposal. On the cloud shaped paper the children drew and collaged their reimagines and redesigns of the street and the other activity with circles and triangles was pre studies of aspects that the children liked(in the circles) or disliked(in the triangles) about the street.

## Nature

The most recurring drawn or collaged element in the reimagine and redesign activity was elements of nature such as trees, flowers and grass. The children both drew trees and picked trees from the collage buffé and put them into the clouds and in the opportunity circles. "I like these trees and, here, is a heart," Mariana said and smiled during the sharing circle. In the workshop many children liked the purple flowering of the local trees Pau ferro and Jacaranda that were on collage photos. Ellida walked to the facilitators and showed collaged flowers in the cloud and held a collage picture in her hand asking the facilitators: "can I bring this picture to my mum?" which was a picture of yellow local flowers, in this question I understood it as that she would have liked to have been able to pick these flowers and bring them to her mum. There were children who drew trees in the circles, as things that they liked about the street. Earlier in the introduction circle the most spoken play that the children were talking about was to harvest and plant, an appreciation which also was communicated repeatedly during the workshop. "I like to harvest strawberries and bananas" said Fabio during the introduction. In the interview the teachers talked about the school's project with the plants and soil which could have had an influence on the children's views. Other influences can be from inspiration material from visual utopias that showed more green streets with trees and nature elements. Further, the observations from the first visit of Anália Franco preschool showed that the children's yard had an absence of natural environments or natural elements such as trees, flowers, loose leaves, branches, sand or soil. The children's play space, outside the classroom consisted of a small square made of concrete that was installed with various plastic playground gear. Each child had a little over one square meter of play space made of concrete. The lack of vegetation and loose materials also affects the possibilities of loose parts play (Mozaffar, 2021) as mentioned in the section about play. In the interview the teachers told that some children are in school from early morning until late afternoon, which means that the school is the environment the children are most immersed in when awake. These clouds and opportunity circles with nature and observations of their spaces show that there is an absence and lack of nature in their daily playspaces and that there is a desire to have a more green redesign of their street with trees, shrubs, loose materials and the possibility of planting and harvesting.





## Sun

Another commonly drawn element was the sun that most children also showed in their drawings. And what is this purple colored element? “ah, that is the sun” anonymous child. Also the teachers drew sun in all of the clouds and opportunity circles. To be out playing in the sunshine and good weather, in those conditions there are wishes to be outdoors. Also in the warning triangles another child showed and communicated “here is rain and bad weather”, weather conditions that were not nice to be out on the street. Therefore to consider a redesign of the street that can provide the possibility to be outside in sunny weather conditions.



## Animals

Animals were also in five clouds and the children mentioned that they like these animals, this can be an expression of their curiosity and fascination with other beings. The animal axolotl, a Mexican amphibian, was part of a reimagine of the street. “Here is the jaguar, I have seen it in real life... I would like to have it on the street”. Close encounters with animals was part of my experience of Brazil, not in the midst of the big city São Paulo or in the most developed parts of Santos but further out from the city. One meeting was from a river dam, a line of a tribe of capivaras walking up into the green forest; another encounter was of the light sound from the silk monkey family visiting in the garden trees asking for sweet fruit. The gardens in Ibiuna with most fruits (and/or people giving fruit) and kept trees from the authentic habitat seemed to get the most visits from the monkeys. Commonly seen birds during the visit in Santos were Bem-te-vi, hawks, doves, Sabiá and Maçarico-preto. Furthermore, wild animals are also a fundamental part of nature that was mentioned before and that the redesign can be part of enabling relationships between people and the wild.



On chosen pictures above, the flooding was not a flooding, it was a pretty river.



## Water and sand

“I like to walk here” said one of the children and showed a circle with the picture of a beach walk somewhere in Brazil. The tiles were black and white in the photo instead of the red and white pattern in the beach of Santos. Each beach walk has its own local expression in Brazil. The beach is a free place for everybody with many opportunities for free and collective play and loose parts play with the sand. In the interview, a teacher also mentioned that it would be nice to have a sand pit in the inner yard of the school. Water elements were in four reimagines and Jaime explained that “in this swimming pool I’d like to play with a floater” another one picked a collage image and walked to the facilitators and told that he liked to have this in his reimagination and that he liked to play with this fontaine. I understood that he was referring to his experiences of the playful fountains in Ponta de praia at the beach. Sand and water were also in the clouds of the teachers. In the interview it was understood that there were children that were not able to get to the beach and that the teachers of the school wanted to take the children there. Sand and water are aspects that the children brought up for its playfulness but also that these elements are associated with friends and family as the beach is one of the most used spaces for families and friends in Santos. Further another reflection is that the beach incorporates the two playful elements; of water and sand and is a vital part of a local identity that can be integrated in an imaginary way in the design proposal.



Two drawings of the teachers, showing the beach and the traditional kites, and fruits trees on the lower collage drawing.



## The trampoline, skateboard, kite, stepping stones of fun

The most recurring playful artefact was the trampoline, which was drawn or collaged in four clouds. In one cloud the trampoline was accompanied by himself jumping with a smiling face. Another story was from a child who had drawn her family in a car in the triangle and a skateboard in the circle. She shared that she doesn't like having to stay seated in the car too long and explained that she likes skateboarding more than the car. The trampoline, skateboard, hopscotch and stepping stones are elements that can challenge the children's movement and also stimulate their imagination and play (have I read an article about this?). A redesign with loose materials can extend the possibilities so that children can imagine and build their own stepping stones pathways to jump and balance between. Another result from the workshop was that no child drew or shared thoughts about digital screens or cellphones as part of their reimagination of their playful street. This can be from not having the experience of digital screens but also that they might not think of these inventions as important for their play outdoors. From these interpretations and reflections the design proposal can inhabit playful artefacts, it might be a trampoline if it's suitable and sustainable or other artefacts that challenges movement and the body as an artefact for play and corporal discovery.



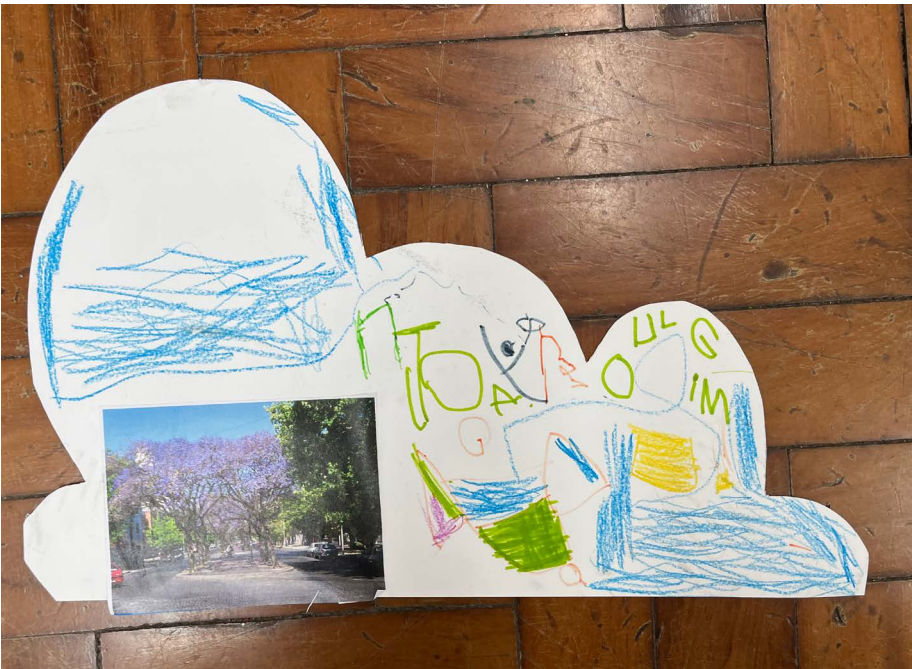
In the lower cloud, the girl liked all these pictures, the left picture with the roads was a pretty picture.



Vehicles, toys and streetscapes

Some had collaged in cars in their clouds but when asking about the cars the answer was that “it’s not real cars it ‘s my toy cars”. Another child had placed several pictures of the Brazilian music instrument “berimbau” in his cloud and the facilitators curiously asked about these collage images. “These are my toys and I want to have them on the street” the child said and pointed at the berimbaus. The freedom to bring your own toys to the street can be interpreted as a way to make ownership to a place.

Another child explained that he liked the trees in the photo and that there was a lot of space with “only cars here and there”. He showed with his finger pointing in the photo the purple trees and the occasional cars that were parked. The interviews also confirmed that increased cars on the street was part of the problem of why children are not playing in the street to the same extent as previous generations. The spatiality of the street is also important in the redesign so that the children can feel freedom to move around in the space without the fear of vehicles interfering with their safety or play (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006; Pinto, 2018; Wheway, 2015)). The car parkings will be used for creating a safe place for the children and their friends and families. Design proposal can consist of moving the car road to the other side of the street and lowering the speed to walking streets and adding signs and physical barriers such as speed bumps. In an conversation with an traffic leader in Malmö Stad it was mentioned that they implement the use of both signs and speed bumps so that school streets become safer for children. To make it visually clear that this street is a place for children the street can be painted or pavement changed to send clear signals to the vehicle drivers to drive slowly and carefully, in ways that are safe and in respect for the children. The design proposal can have space or elements for your own place making, allowing the children to bring toys and/or being able to move and things around and change the streets scenery, as a way for children make own decisions and change in their spaces (Shier, 2001).



I like these trees and that there is a lot of space with cars only here and there.



Bermibau instruments representing own toys in the cloud.

Traffic lights

The traffic lights appeared in the clouds of the workshop, where children placed the traffic light in the cloud and stopped the traffic to their redesigned street. “Here is the traffic light” anonymous child(picture)From these clouds I understand that the children have observed and interacted with traffic. Children can learn to move in the streetscapes as Grays et al., (2023) states that “children as young as 5 or 6 years are capable of understanding and following rules” such as waiting at the traffic lights or to walk together with a friend. Furthermore, children from age 5 can on their own develop new safety rules that help and steer them on the street (Gray et al., 2023). The design proposal will separate the cars from the play space on the street. It is currently not possible to stop entirely the street from traffic due to a business entrance and residential entrances.



A warning drawing about sitting too long in cars and to be heart broken.



Skateboard was lifted by one of the children, rather than sitting too much in a car.



Toys cars and a clean street, garbage truck.



Houses as shelters

The children drew houses in both activities, the clouds and in the circles and triangles. Whole houses on the street and in the triangles the children explained that they do not like when the house was broken. Children in this workshop are socioeconomic vulnerable, have a high chance of living in buildings that have structural problems, as mentioned in the section ‘study of Santos’ and can be considered more unsafe for children. To make sense of the houses is that a house can hold a safe space for play when not broken, the house protects from example traffic, dangerous people and weather. The house can in this context symbolise a safe and protected place for play. The design proposal can incorporate these properties of a whole house such as a protected space from the rain or vehicles, another idea can be to add miniature houses or as in nature it is called nests, this to bring a sense of safety and protection. Collective visual safety. In times when children played in the street it was more common that people and neighbours were there looking out into the streets (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006; Murray, 2024), this care from neighbours was also mentioned in the interview. Visual safety can be incorporated through making a hole in the wall with a plexiglas on the inside. The children can go into this space and be seen from the school’s yard and football field, giving a sense of safety and ability to communicate if they need help visually. Safety nests that connect wishes of more nature and wishes for shelter space on the street. To create safety it redesign will be separated from the traffic, but still be a place where you will be able to see the traffic. When night falls to create a safe and cosy atmosphere over the redesign with lights that are charged through solar power, hanging mini light bulbs strand over the area and adding lights inside the nests, drawing parallels to a home, a home that turns on its light when the sun goes down. One child showed in the sharing circle, and personally a drawing that explained that “here is earthquake”. Earthquakes are not common in this region but many of the houses on the hills are at risk of landslides, a common disaster that can affect this community, with the vulnerability of low income and fewer opportunities of safe homes (Fonseca and Martins, 2019; Moreira, 2023).



A typical house with mosaic fasade in Santos



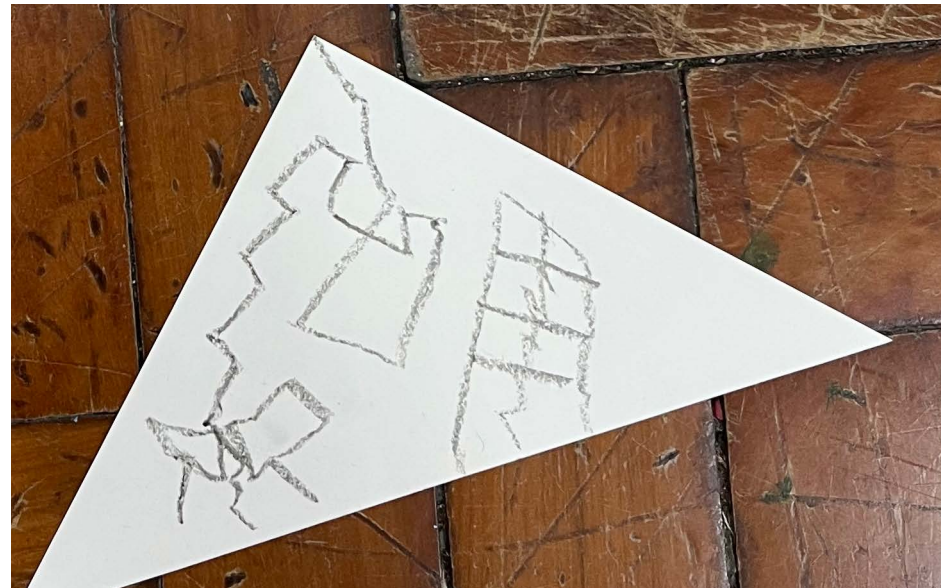
Whole houses







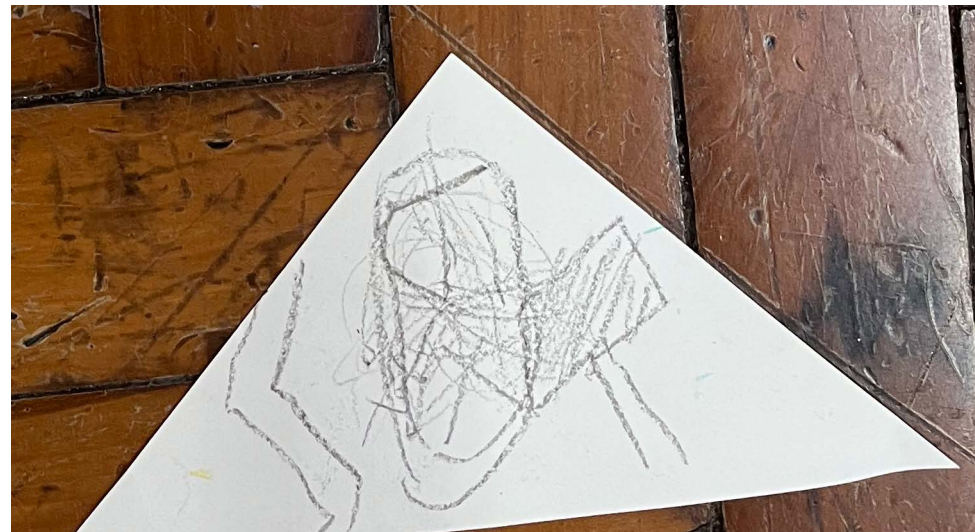
The pavement in front of the school, Julio Conceicao



Earthquake



Colours as something likable about streets



Broken pavement



## Clean and a whole street with colours

In warning triangles a broken pavement, dirty motorcycle, earthquake and trash were some of the things that the children did not like about the street. Parts of the pavement of the street Júlio Conceição were broken with shattered pieces making it easy to stumble on it. In two clouds and circles the trash or garbage truck was mentioned with a container and the truck arriving to take the garbage away from the street. One of the children explained that here is the “trash car that takes the garbage” raising the idea of a clean space where they can play. The children showed many circles talking about colours as an element that they like about streets. What do you like about the street? One of the children showed his art and thought: “Here are colours and here is another circle with colours, I like colours in the street.. and I like planting”. In the design proposal to provide trash bins, change pavement and to incorporate colour into the redesign are wishes of the children





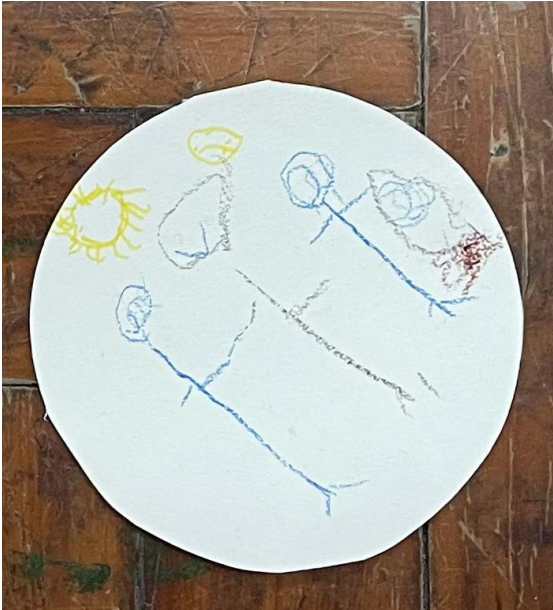
54

## Friends and Family

In four clouds and circles there were drawn figures of people and the children expressed, pointing and telling that it was “my friends” one child or also describing each family member explained: “here is my grandma, here’s my sister”. The redesigned street in these clouds was reimagined as a place where their families and friends can be together. One child shared his thought: “Here is a car and here is a traffic light that stopped the traffic, and here is the rainbow and the street that leads to my friend.”. This reminds me the brazilian children’s book “From my window” by Otávio Júnior, who writes about the mystery of the rainbow.

“ I want to see the end of the rainbow. Not for the treasure. I want to solve a mystery that is worth more than gold.” (Otávio Júnior and Starkoff, 2020, p. 13)

It was a redesign of a street that gives the opportunity to be with his friends. Another child showed things that she liked such as animals, skating and trees and then flipped side and showed her drawing saying with a smile “and here is my family”. Clouds like this raise and show wishes from the children of a redesigned street that is able to be a place for the whole family and a space for friendships. As mentioned in background, interviews and in field visits: carnaval, open space concept and other festivities take part on the streets when vehicles are regulated from the street. Furthermore, interviews confirmed that friends on the street were important for their play. Moreover, the redesign of the street can be a place for various generations to meet. Ana the teacher told in the interview that on the streets the older children would take care of the younger and that nobody was left behind. Furthermore, in the interviews the street was spaces that older children would teach the younger children games and plays, a multigenerational space and also that play was natural to occur with younger and older children exploring their surroundings together (Gray et al., 2023; Pinto, 2018) which was mentioned in the play section. Therefore there is a wish for a street that the whole family can enjoy and a place where friends can meet with possible positive outcomes such as multigenerational meetings and playful encounters.



Traffic light that stop the traffic and a rainbow in the street, with the street leading to his friends home.



“Here is my family”



“here is my grandma, here’s my sister....”

| The Reimagine Clouds       | Amount: n = children<br>(n) = teacher |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Social &amp; Safety</b> |                                       |
| Family                     | 2                                     |
| Friends                    | 2                                     |
| Own Toys                   | 2                                     |
| Cleanliness                | 2                                     |
| Stop Sign For Cars         | 2                                     |
| A Secure Space             | 1(3)                                  |
| <b>Related To Nature</b>   |                                       |
| Flowers/Trees/ Grass       | 9 (1)                                 |
| Related To Nature          | 7 (2)                                 |
| Sun                        | 2 (2)                                 |
| Sand                       | 4 (1)                                 |
| Water Elements             | 6                                     |
| Animals                    | 5                                     |
| <b>Artefacts For Play</b>  |                                       |
| Trampoline                 | 4                                     |
| Kite                       | 2 (2)                                 |
| Skateboard                 | 2                                     |
| Stepping Stones            | 1                                     |
| Hopscotch                  | 2                                     |
| Climbing                   | 1                                     |
| Swings                     | 1 (1)                                 |
| Slide                      | (1)                                   |
| Boat                       | (2)                                   |
| <b>Other Aspect</b>        |                                       |
| Colours                    | 2                                     |
| Spacefulnes/ Less Cars     | 2                                     |

Table 1 - Quantitative summary of the results from the reimagine clouds exercise

| Warning Triangels                       | Amount: n = children<br>(n) = teacher |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>broken street</b>                    | 3                                     |
| <b>dirty motorcycle</b>                 | 1                                     |
| <b>sadness &amp; rain, broken heart</b> | 3                                     |
| <b>Inside Car time</b>                  | 1                                     |
| <b>trash</b>                            | 1                                     |
| <b>broken house</b>                     | 1                                     |
| <b>earthquake</b>                       | 1                                     |

Table 2 - Quantitative summary of the results from the Warning triangels exercise

| Opportunity circles    | Amount: n = children<br>(n) = teacher |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Colours</b>         | 4                                     |
| <b>A whole house</b>   | 4                                     |
| <b>Whole heart</b>     | 1                                     |
| <b>Sand play</b>       | 1                                     |
| <b>Beach walk</b>      | 2                                     |
| <b>Family</b>          | 1                                     |
| <b>Trees or nature</b> | 4                                     |
| <b>bicycle</b>         | 1                                     |
| <b>skateboard</b>      | 1                                     |
| <b>recycle bins</b>    | 2                                     |

Table 3 - Quantitative summary of the results from theOpportunity circles exercise





The workshop exhibition Photo by the author



## The workshop exhibition

The workshop exhibition was appreciated by the children and teachers and can be a method for motivation for long and short term processes and to visualize and communicate about the project.





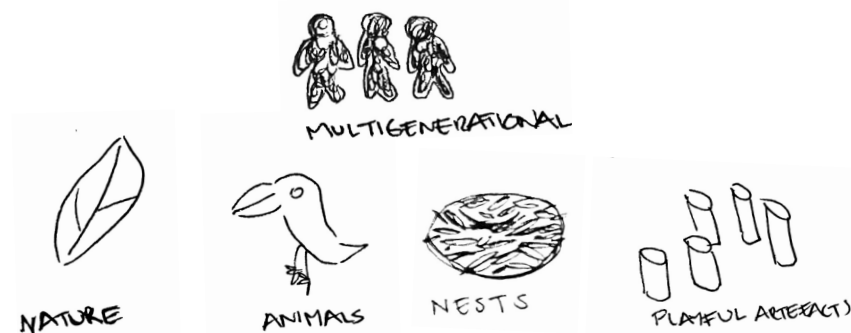
# Design proposal

The workshop and exhibition with its mosaic of children's and teachers' dreams, reimagines, thoughts of opportunities and warnings interpreted and glued together with the immersive field visits, interviews, readings and myself as a landscape architect created a design proposal. The process for the design proposal was iterative with going back and forward with relooking at the workshop outcomes, sketching, reflections, interviews, place and readings.

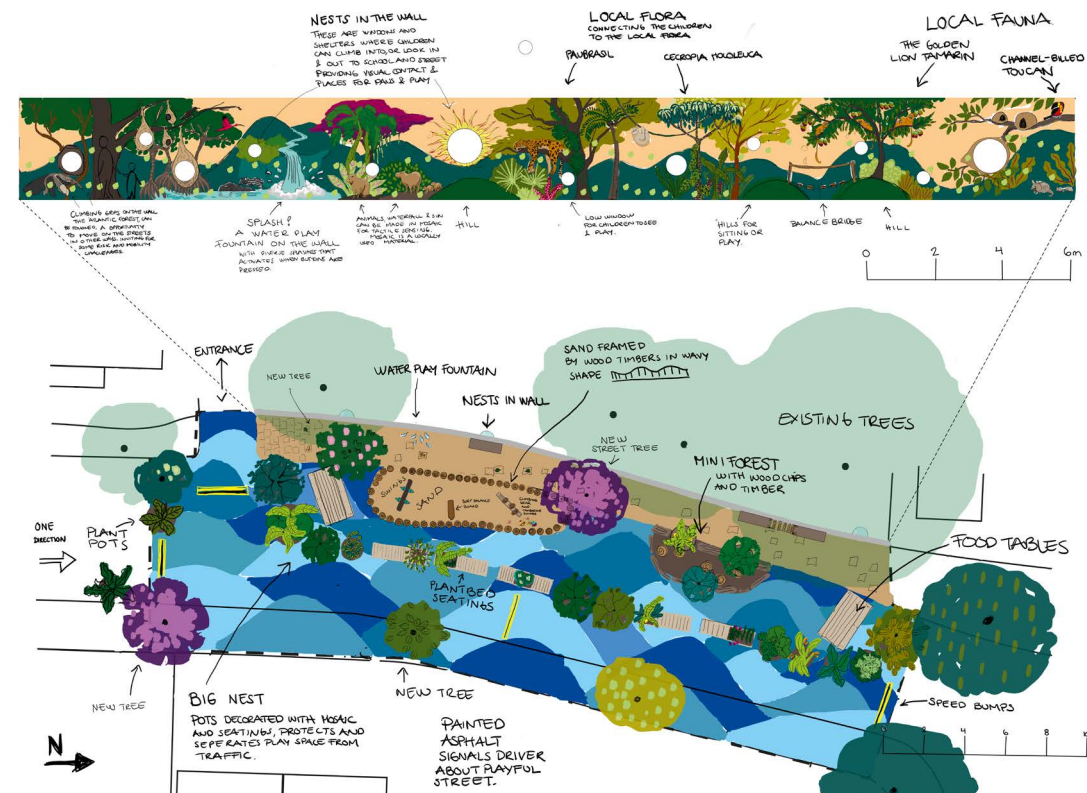
The proposal can act for a direct implementation, however, to have a richer and deeper understanding of the children's ideas and thoughts this can serve as a base for further involvement and workshop to become a design that the children can feel that they have had an influence on and to include the children in the decision making. A temporary to partly permanent design proposal, that can invite the people passing by on the streets and hold spaces for play and meetings of all generations.

Furthermore, In Brazil there are security norms for equipment and toys in playgrounds, but it's not always practiced (Pinto, 2018). However, the design has followed the guidelines for play space, with having cutted corners on the wood timber around the sand area and providing free falling space over elements that are higher than 50 cm (ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE NORMAS TÉCNICAS 2012 cited in Criança e Natureza, n.d.). Ellis (2004, cited in Pinto, 2018), means that there are potential spaces that can facilitate creativity and exploration, hence contributing to identity and culture development. In the studies design process the author's thoughts of these potential spaces for play and culture development must be, firstly predictable and stable combined with characteristics that display identity. Secondly, it has to enable exploration and creativity, therefore be flexible (ibid). Thirdly, there are elements that are attractive to various age groups and lastly, the space needs to provide safety as in the aspects of psychological, physical and social. There are many parallels from children's ideas and Ellis' thoughts about play spaces, such as the many of the children talked about a safe space, and limiting the car access to the street, and that they want to be able to play with friends and family in the street.

## The concept: "Flora & fauna for local friendships".



The main interpretations of the children's ideas and thoughts are made visual through the concept of "Flora & Fauna for local friendships". The concept is a playful colourful street with local nature and animals, planting possibilities, playful elements and a safe space that invites friends and family. The aspect of local friendships refers to supporting local relations to environments, culture and people. The essence of the outcomes from the children's and teachers workshop together with the study with readings, interviews and field visits lead to the concept. The concept is composed by 5 main characters in the design proposal. These are nature, animals, nests, family and friends and playful artefacts.









# Fauna, Flora for local friendships

**NESTS IN THE WALL**  
THESE ARE WINDOWS AND SHELTERS WHERE CHILDREN CAN CLIMB INTO, OR LOOK IN & OUT TO SCHOOL AND STREET PROVIDING VISUAL CONTACT & PLACES FOR PAUSE & PLAY

**LOCAL FLORA**  
CONNECTING THE CHILDREN TO THE LOCAL FLORA

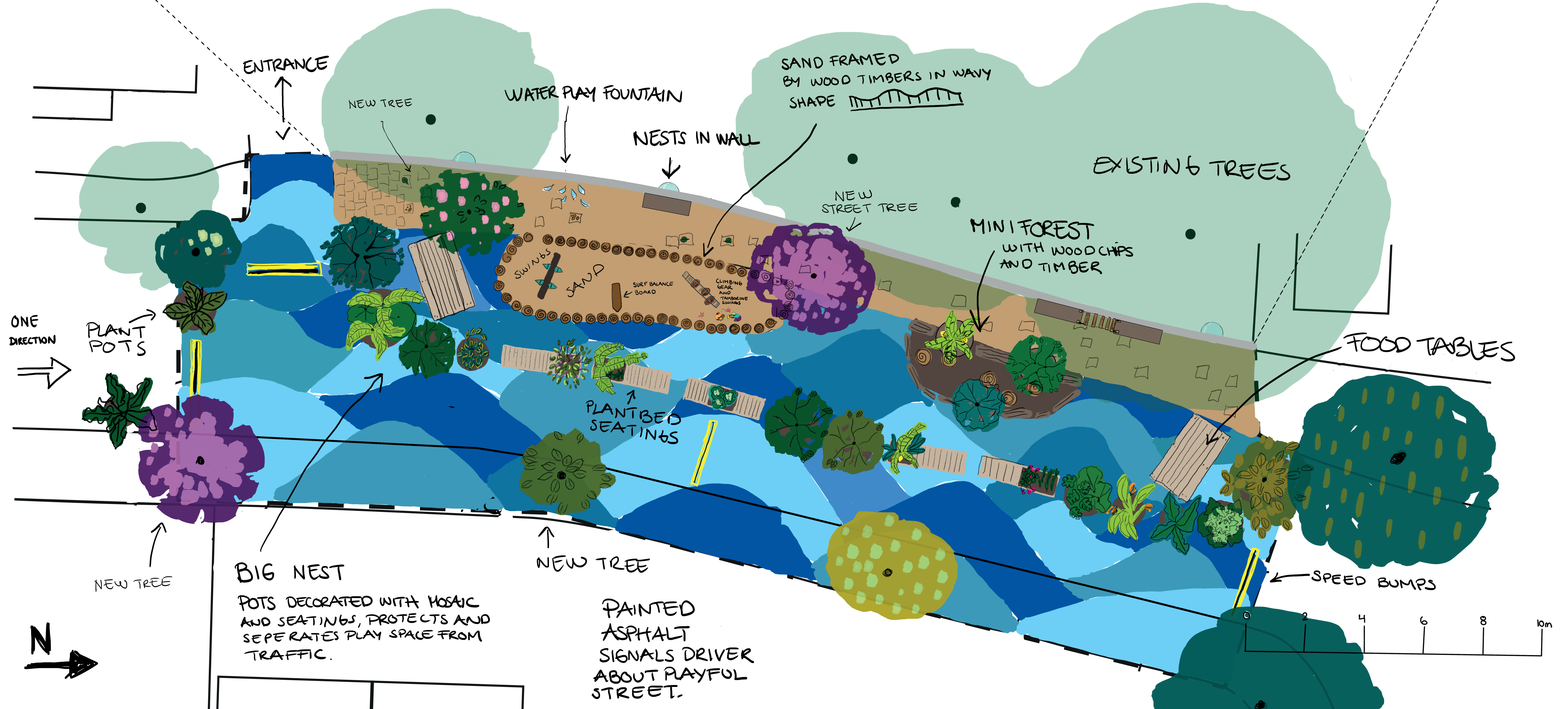
**LOCAL FAUNA**

THE GOLDEN LION TAMARIN

CHANNEL-BILLED TOUCAN

PAU BRASIL

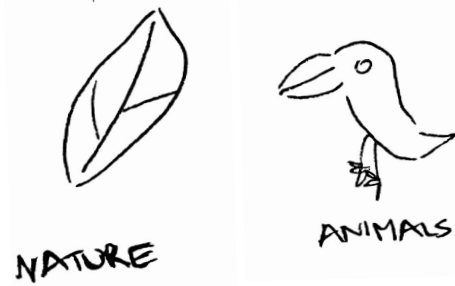
CECROPIA HOOLEUCA











## Nature & Animals

Nature (trees, flowers, grass among others) and its inhabitants (such as the jaguar and butterfly) were wished and put forward by a majority of the children, therefore the design incorporates nature and their elements. The children also talked about how they like to plant, as a playful activity. Hence, the design proposal gives planting possibilities with a children and friends community garden. To be sensitive to the local and to anchor to the local identity, the concept takes inspiration of Santos local nature and animals from the surrounding atlantic forest and its meeting with the atlantic ocean. The Atlantic forest is an endangered biome with only 24 % left, with 12,4% being considered as nature and well preserved forest (SOS Mata Atlântica, n.d.). The atlantic forest has varied biotopes and Santos surroundings accommodate the biotope “Serra do mar coastal forest” with also mangroves, the fauna is specific with animals such as the three toed sloth with long hair (Bradypus torquatus). Further the Atlantic ocean in this part of Brazil is home to animals such as turtles and stingrays. The preschool’s wall, pavement floor, pots and elements on the street will reflect some of the local nature. The design embraces the children’s ideas on more trees and flowers through planting more trees on the street and placing pots with trees, shrubs and flowers, together with modules that combine plant beds for the children’s community garden and as seating. Furthermore “Flora & Fauna, local friendships” also incorporated into an mural art on the wall next to the pavement, and on the asphalt of the street and on colourful mosaic plant pots. The children’s curiosity for other beings as animals (fauna) were communicated by some of the children, therefore the design has animals in mosaics on the art mural furthermore animals are reflected into some play artefacts, such as wood artefacts of sea turtles and sea stars that the children can discover in the sand. Further studies show that urban greening interventions have an impact on lowering violence and aggressive behaviors (Kondo et al., 2018). As some teachers mentioned that violence was a probable impact on the possibilities of play in the street, therefore a green redesign intervention would both meet the children’s wishes and caretakers with preventing violence, consequently creating the potential of a safer space.



## Family and friends

The design Proposal tries to make a space for families and friends with the possibility of intermingles of generations. Many of the children drew and talked about wanting their families and friends to be on the streets together with them. The design enables a multigenerational space through adding various seating possibilities with dining tables that can be moved around for families and people of all ages and playful chillout seats. The design’s open spaces can have various uses as play, training, celebrations such as festa Junina and music stages. An important structure in the design proposal is that the pavement of the street crosses and joins to the open space which can open up to opportunities of spontaneous meetings. Further that the street docks are partly closed from traffic on the wednesday market “feiras livres” can provide possibilities of connected open social spaces. A “pastel” maker can set its market stand close to the design with mutual opportunities for

customers and for customers having seating places. The street design is a semi open space with a glade surrounded by seats with plant beds and big colourful mosaic pots planted with trees, shrubs and flowers. Various seating both traditional as an outdoor dining table and less as undulating seats as waves in the ocean encourage people of all ages to linger and provide opportunity to make contact. The space invites a safe place with the motor vehicle road being moved to the east and the area for the children is semi closed through the seatings and big planting pots for safety. As much space that was earlier used for car parking is now used for a playful meeting space. In the design the open space for play is also for visual safety (ABNT 2012, cited in Criança e Natureza, n.d.) for the caregivers with play artefacts, seating and evening lights to provide a space that can be inviting for educators, caregivers and children. A majority of the children are young between 4 months up to 5 years and they still need to have supervision but with consideration that older children may need or want to have space for interdependence. Further a design that enables and invites caregivers and parents presence for the reason that children under six years still are tied to parents and other caregivers (Gatulabba, n.de.), this relation was also expressed in the workshop with some of the children drawing and talking about their families as important for making the street playful. An intergenerational space can encourage caregivers to socialize and make contact while the children play (Shadkam, 2024), which can resemble and enable the social intermingling that occurred on the street from the teachers childhood memories.



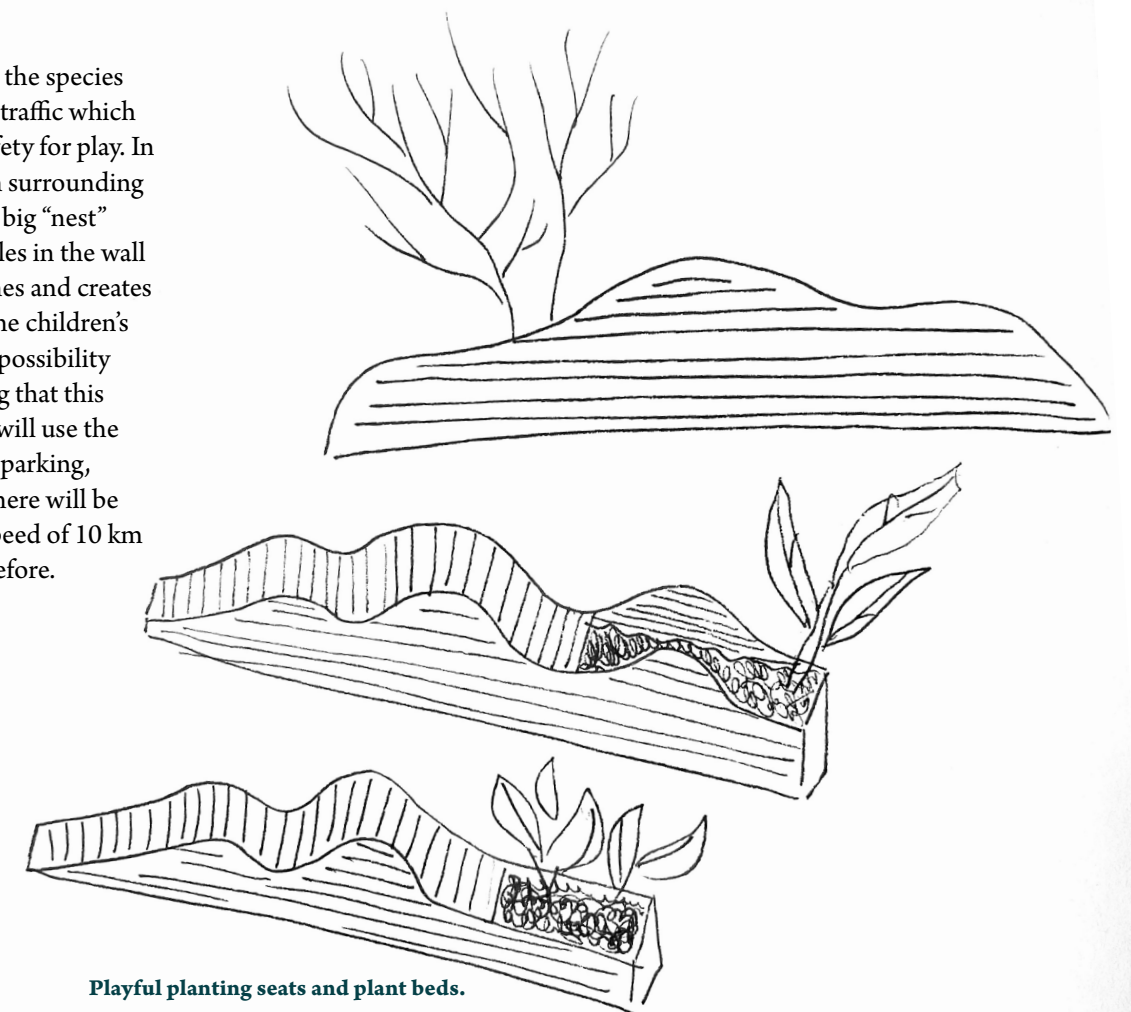
## Small and big nests

Nest, hives, burrows, and dens all are forms of shelters and homes for the species of planet Earth. The children spoke about whole houses and stopped traffic which was interpreted into the concept as shelters and nests that provide safety for play. In the design proposal there is a big and a small “nest”, with a glade with surrounding trees in big pots, seats and planting modules that frame the space as a big “nest” with foliage and colourful flowering followed by smaller “nests” in holes in the wall that can be used and crawled into by the children. The big “nest” frames and creates a sheltered space from the vehicle traffic which are towards some of the children’s ideas of stopping the traffic in the space. Trash bins are added for the possibility of a clean street. Alongside the road there will be a sign demonstrating that this street has children playing and people hanging around. The redesign will use the same amount of space that is taken for car parking today, two rows of parking, and moving the car road further away from the school. On the road there will be multiple speed bumps to limit the speed of the street to be walking speed of 10 km per hour. The road will stay and continue as a one direction road as before.



## Playful artefacts & elements

The children wished and talked about various play artefacts and their wishes in combination with analysing the artefacts that are available for the children in their school, I interpreted that there was a wish for artefacts that challenges movement and balance for both individual and collective play and discovery. The children of the school have plastic programmed play artefacts and the design proposal aims to provide some play elements in mainly wood or other natural material to extend their contact with natural materials, further providing both free, more structured equipment to provide flexibility and play opportunities. That the seatings in this design can invite free play, a play that I interpret as informal. From a personal experience some programmed, set play artefacts as a swing can be inviting for the youngest children and their parents and introducing the youngest children to discover the texture of loose materials such as sand. Animals as shapes of wood artefacts that either can be dug out in the sand and two wood animals on the street which can be moved and used as swinging artefacts. On the wall there are climbing grips that the children can climb and follow the landscape and encounter animals and local trees in the art mural forest.





Walking next to the wall of the Atlantic forest

Anália Franco’s wall toward the street will be painted as the mountains and the forest of Serra do mar which is part of the Atlantic forest that surrounds Santos with its animals dressed in mosaic to create a tactile dimension. The forest wall has nests incorporated into the wall as holes that go through with a window of plexiglas on the inside, this so that the children can be visually seen from the inside of the school area this to increase the sense of visual safety. Furthermore the nest is an interpretation of the houses as shelters that the children drewed. Some holes will be smaller and without a plexiglas so that sounds can move easier between the street and the inner yard also extending the street into the school realms and vice versa. The children can climb up to the nests and walk up the mountains in the wall with climbing grips placed on the wall and mountains that stick out from the wall. The waterfall made in mosaic in the wall can splash water out, through its fountains that splash, sprinkle or pour out water in various forms from the wall when a child touches one of the buttons on the wall. The existing pavement in front of the wall with the broken tiles will be changed to a forest floor with sandstone tiles with leaves and traces of animal enlarged paws in mosaic.

The vegetation

The vegetation for the design was chosen to meet the wishes and ideas from the children. Four new trees will be planted on the street and in the pots on the streets are the possibilities of varied trees, shrubs and flowers among others. As colour was put forward by the children as something they appreciated with the street therefore the trees and plants were chosen for their colourful blooming and foliage. Furthermore, the children expressed that they like to harvest and plant therefore this opportunity is also in the children’s community garden with edible proposed plants. The community garden consists of pots and the plant beds in the seat modules that the children and teachers can plan and pick plants together. In the workshop many children liked local trees with their purple flowering, therefore they were also chosen. Pau Ferro and Jacaranda trees are also common trees in the streetscapes of Santos. Brazil was named after the Portuguese colonization, which means special wood. Furthermore, the children talked about how they liked to plant and to harvest therefore trees that gave edible fruits and berries were selected for the design.

The trees and shrubs that are can be planted on the street are:

- Cashew tree
- Mango tree
- Avocado tree
- Jacaranda tree
- Ipe tree
- Brazil tree
- Pau Ferro Tree
- Acai tree
- Banana shrub
- Papaya Shrub
- Jabucicaba shrub/tree
- Monstera deliciosa vine or groundcover
- Golden pothos Climbing vine
- Various bromelias
- Orchids
- Canna variations
- Snake plant
- Strelitzia



The ocean and the beach

As a continuation of the concept of flora and fauna the forest of the wall and the pavement meets the beach and the atlantic ocean on the asphalt with a sand area surrounded by chopped wood timber with cutted edges( no sharp edged in brazilian standards) in spread out heights between 10-45 cm. The ocean floor will be painted in blocks of blue with spread out seawater animals. In the sea of the street is an island with a mini forest that has a floor with wood chips and plates of timber in varied sized cutted that are loose and can be moved around. The open space and the mini forest and nests provides a flexibility of use of the street. Plant pots are placed around the plates creating a sort of stepping stones as a trail between the pots.

Swings and surfboard

On the beach is a swing or climbing artefact with tambourines that is inspired by the local tambourine beach game. The school has a big group of babies therefore also adding a swing with wooden boats that can also be used by younger children’s boat swings. The swing boats are inspired by traditional fisherman boats in Brazil. A surfboard balance board placed on the edge of the beach and the ocean that can challenge the children physically and also stir imagination. The surf boats connect to Santos’ history of surfing.

A social intermingle space

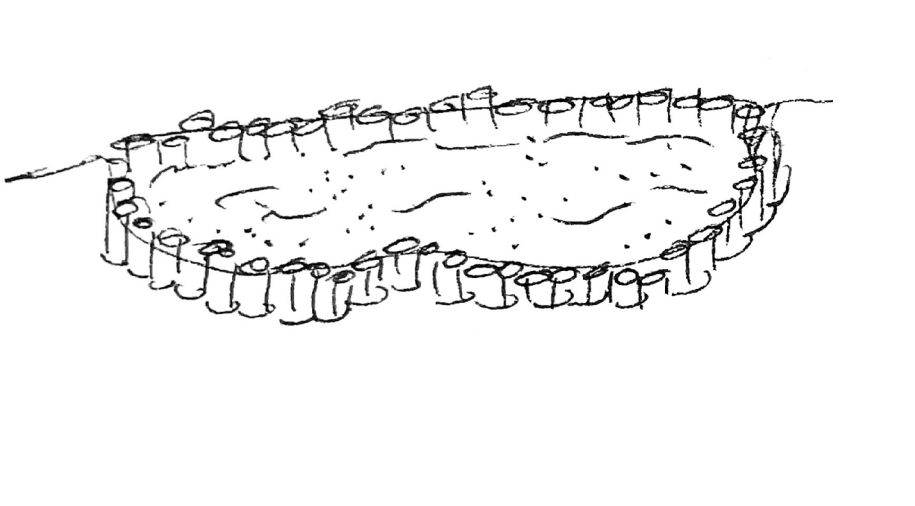
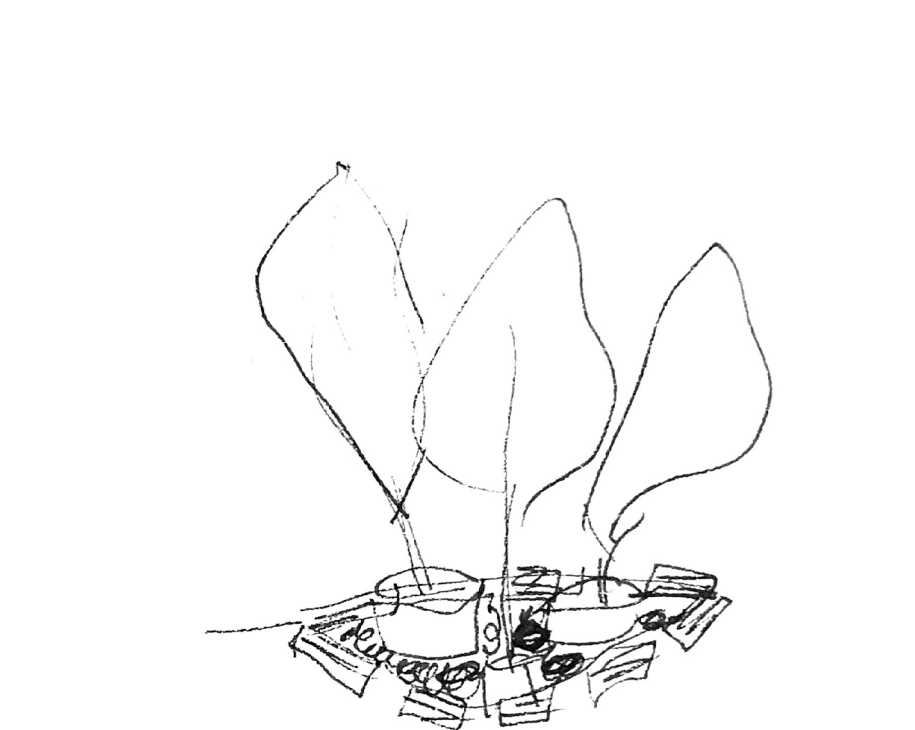
The children wished for a social space where family and friends can be, an intermingle of different generations, a street that both children of all ages and adults can desire for and use (Katsavounidou and Sousa, 2024). To make the design multifunctional and attractive for various ages it has plant bed seat modules that can be moved around with wheels that can be locked or released for reshaping the street. The plant bed furniture makes it possible for the children to do street farming and planting that also has the function as seats where families, relatives and neighbours can eat, rest and hang out while the children play. In the north part of the design the modules have tables integrated to the design. There were wishes for a clean and whole space therefore colourful trash bins will be located in the north and the south of the design site furthermore a clean street can give the impression of a well taken cared for space and be valuable for all users. The street design has available space which can encourage the users to bring their own props like the Brazilian sunbeds to the street. When the night falls in around 5:30-6:30 pm depending on the season the installed colourful light bulb strands set an welcoming atmosphere that also can add to the feeling of safety (Verissimo, 2012), along with light in the nests of the wall and colourful lights in the fountains outlets.

A Playful Multigenerational space in the street that can dock onto the ‘Feiras livres’

The connecting street to the design site is on wednesday a farmers market ‘feiras livres’ which can provide a connected space for play, food and social encounters from people outside school. Furthermore, the design proposal provides a space where parents, siblings and caregivers can meet and provide opportunities for play directly on the way home from school. Design proposal provided opportunities for play in the street while trying to incorporate aspects of the children’s wishes for playful artefacts that challenge the physical and balance. They wished for items such as the trampoline, climbing, skateboard. The pavement with the wall in the design is an element for play and interaction that connects to the passing people. The wall and its small nests with windows, “hills” and bridge and climbing grips invites the children for play and can



The cone that stopps the traffic on the design street, during Feria days. January (2025)





make the school more transparent to the world outside, further that the children become more visual from the inner yard, to provide a safer space, through enabling 'eyes on the streets'. There are trash bins for trash for a sense of cleanliness. Further the "beach" and the mini forest provide the opportunity for loose parts to play. The design space has open safe spaces for the children to freely play individually or collectively, with the parents being able to pause and meet other parents, caregivers or friends while the children are playing. Furthermore concerning changing the notions of the street as car spaces can be redefined through the methods of Tactical urbanism and Urban acupuncture towards enabling other attitudes of the use and functions of streets. Therefore, this study's design proposal has integrated the concept of temporal intervention with using pots, plants, paint and furniture as a low cost implementation and aiming at injecting playful spaces back to the street design in a targeted site used by children and caregivers, which can help to enable the interaction of people again in these today car dominated spheres. Permanent changes are only proposed with the school's wall and four planted trees in the street.

### **Collaborative continuation and implementation**

To turn the implementation into a participatory process it can be done through a series of workshop involving the children, teachers, designers, craftsmen and even parents. The continuation of the participatory design process can be to have a workshop about the design proposal with the children and teachers to get feedback and further refine the proposal together. After such workshops, the process can follow with material workshops with the children where they can engage with making elements and objects in the proposal area. For example, one workshop can be to paint a test mural, another can be to make mosaic pots together and yet another workshop can be to build the modular plant bed seatings out of wood, followed by a planting workshop. To finalize the implementation there could be an opening event akin to a block party which welcomes all the people involved in the process and surrounding communities.



**Drawing on the asphalt with my daughter, as a way to try the design. This can be an method in participatory design, both in prestudy, concept and in implementing a design.**



**Trying waves shapes**









# Discussion

This study explored how Participatory design processes with children can contribute to redesigning streets in the city that supports the integration of children's play. Methods for participatory design with children were tested in a design case in a Brazilian context. As a visiting landscape architect from a different context the visits to the physical terrain and interacting with the social terrains (Derr, 2018) of the study have been important to understand the current and local situation for the communities, these immersions with place and people have been important for the planning and the making of the workshop as well as the design proposal. In the study field visits, interviews and workshops have been important to understand and identify local challenges and possibilities. Further, these involvements with place and people served as anchoring and seeing differences in the readings to the local context. For example streets views from google earth does not show the whole reality of how the streets are used by people, with field visits ephemeral happenings such as 'Feiras livres' have been identified and used in the study. Further that the field studies of the street of the design intervention site, Júlio Conceição, showed empty parking lots and neighbourhoods streets full of parked cars, this observation confirms a trend that also Karsten observed in Amsterdam (2005) with public spaces of the streets being occupied by the technology of cars, spaces that are needed for children's presence and play (Karsten, 2005) and development of culture (Ellis 2004 cited in Pinto, 2018; Gosso et al., 2015). Therefore, technology such as the built environment and cars influence

the culture (Manzini and Vezzoli, 2002) of how people and children use and relate to the street in Brazil, towards a less sustainable living. These technologies can be part of hindering children's right to the city, possibly risking erasing the cultures that were practiced by children, neighbours and families on the streets. The development of attitudes of streets for cars versus streets for play have to be questioned by designers and planners to not only plan for mobility (Bertolini, 2020) but to support children's free play, socialising and exploration of the city, as an important part of developing citizens with social skills (Jarvis et al., 2014) and sustaining local cultures and communities (Gosso et al., 2015). Furthermore, isolated islands in the city do not take in consideration the most vulnerable families and children in the city. When the playfulness of streets disappears it forces parents and families to hop between islands in the city or to stay inside in their homes (Karsten and Van Vliet, 2006). Other studies such as Pinto and Bicharas (2017) study 'What children say about the public spaces where they play' (in Portuguese, author's translation) and this thesis work points out that local streets and nearby play spaces are important for children and for the social fabric in cities. The interviews in this study communicated that communities who do not have the financial means or time do not have access to the public spaces, such as in the study context, the beach. Therefore, streets that provide play opportunities and closeby play spaces are vital roles for these vulnerable communities to provide opportunity to play and build social and environmental skills.

## Local street usages and social possibilities

When it comes to approaches to reclaim back streets for the social functions have been studied in this work. The approach of temporal open space like the one at Paulista avenue can be seen as tactical urbanism due to its character of temporality and action (Lydon and Garcia, 2015). However, the temporal open space in Paulista avenue does not have the tactics of changing the city permanently but to offer an ephemeral comfort for peoples loss of space in the city. The open space does provide a temporal space for people's leisure in an urban public realm (Woolley, 2003). The intervention and concept of open space in Paulista avenue was observed in the field study to not enable fully children's free play, this can be due to of the location in the city and scale (Lydon and Garcia, 2015) or the extent of buildings verticalization and moving practices to shopping malls (Pinto 2018) furthermore, reasons can be social attitudes about the open space being more of a adult space and therefore limiting how the street should be used (Valentine, 1996) or other physical aspects in the built environment that promote certain cultures and certain behaviours (Woolley, 2003). The large scale open space can be an alienated concept when it is regarded to the community of children



(Hoogduyn, 2014), as it does not provide enough safety for their free play (Ellis, 2004 cited in Pinto, 2018) furthermore, in the interview with the teachers, they raised that fear by caregivers and parents was part of hindering the children's appropriation of streets. However, the field visit was important for the study to understand how people, and more specifically how children use open spaces in a street in a big Brazilian city. The use of the street during the 'Feiras livres' market in Santos had more spontaneous social encounters and pauses in the shopping activity compared to the Open space in Paulista avenue. This can be due to the different scales and amounts of people in the two different cities. The Open space of Paulista avenue provided informal activities such as spontaneous local music and events, however, missing the physical and social environments of small intimate and safe places for pauses, play and meetings, such as in more small-scale urban acupuncture intervention. When it comes to 'Feiras livres' it is a concept that brings the city valuable connections out to rural areas and local farmers. The concept and street use of 'Feiras livres' can be considered as urban acupuncture with the 'Feiras livres' acting as small life injections to various streets and connecting neighbourhoods each day in the city, providing the citizens local food and meetings. The street's physical aspect and smaller shape encourage meetings and children exploring the various fruits and veggies.

### Combined forces for reclaiming back streets for play

In Brazil it is common practice by various communities go to the 'Feiras livres' to buy veggies and to socialise, and therefore can be considered a part of the identity and culture (Ellis cited in Pinto, 2018). An reflection is that 'Feiras livres' can be connected to food court areas on the street, which enables more playful activities, as Pinto (2018) argues that children need spaces that are not too planned and programmed for their free play and at the same place the parents and family can sit, have a 'pastel' and meet friends. Anchoring and incorporating food courts with safe spaces that provides opportunity for play to these social hotspots, as the temporal food market, can help children from diverse communities to meet and have opportunity to play and develop what Karsten (2016) calls social bridging capital, therefore strengthening the social fabric in cities. Identified aspects of the various approaches for reclaiming back streets, both from readings and in field studies, were then incorporated into the study's design proposal together with the children and teachers' ideas and thoughts, with the design in the streets being able to anchor to the connecting street's 'Feira livres' and providing a multi generational space on the streets for both children and adults to use. Tactical urbanism and urban acupuncture can be methods in which streets can be redefined to recuperate children's opportunity and use of streets again. Nevertheless, to do so these interventions need to consider children's needs and wishes such as safety and flexibility of usage in the street space (Ellis, 2004 cited in Pinto, 2018). Through participatory design with children their practices and cultures can be identified and become the basis of redesigning the streets. These methods can be combined forces to hinder the collective loss of cultural memories and identities of local play in the streets. This study explored this combination by holding a participatory design workshop to redesign a local street with children and caregivers in Brazil.

### Workshop methods

In what concerns the methods in the workshop, the meeting with Dahlman in the 'school street' project in Malmö Sweden, the readings and in the interviews with the teachers it was apparent that caregivers such as parents, grandparents and teachers had an important role when it came to children's contact and opportunity to play in the streets. The teachers were also invited to redesign and reimagine the street which made the workshop a more joined together workshop and enriched with ideas. Furthermore, the interviews gave valuable insight about the importance of street functions as play, social meetings, trust, solidarity and culture. On a short project like this, with one workshop, it is a short time to establish trust and a relationship between facilitators and the children. The context with the children

having summer school with various activities that goes beyond the regular scheme can have, together with the facilitators playful and positive energy (Gatulabba, n.d.), led to that the children were able to share thoughts and valuable ideas. However, with more involvement occasions a deeper trust and relation can be built up and likewise the capacities for idea generating. Therefore, a design process with children can benefit from more occasions to come higher in the pathway of participation and enabling children's decision making (Shier 2001), which could benefit the children with ownership and connection to the design and more democratic processes. However, it is important even in short time plans to invite and enable children's voices to be heard in design processes. When it comes to enabling the children's expression during the art based activity, it was important and challenging to balance both the initiation time for the children to start thinking and drawing ideas and to have enough time to ask about their drawings. Individual and collective sharing provided diverse opportunities for the children to express themselves. The common practice of asking questions in the participatory design process was, in this context, different with children in their excitement walking on their own initiative to a facilitator to share about their ideas or thoughts. This is an example of what Gatulabba (n.d.) mentions about being able to be flexible and open for other currents in the participatory design process. Another example of such dynamics happened when children started playing with the model of the street during the workshop and when a facilitator could not attend. Therefore, being flexible, open and creative in the process is important.

### Conditions during the workshop

The group sharing after design activities in the workshop can be seen as positive, inspiring and collective building. However, the circle of sharing was more difficult when we were at the end of the workshop, with the children having concentration difficulties and less patience, which led to the workshop being finalized with one more round of play, in this way also tuning into the atmosphere of the room (Gatulabba, n.d.). This was probably due to the combination of sitting in a big circle close to a air conditioner, which made it hard to hear each other. A reflection from the workshop is that when children are sharing their thoughts in a big group, with new people, they tend to speak in a lower voice. Low voice in combination with a loud air conditioner and a room with echo tendencies, made it difficult to record the sounds and to hear. Hence, a learning from this is that it is important to try the workshop room beforehand to see how the space works.

### Selection of methods in the workshop

Concerning the selection of methods of the workshop could have been improved with adding other ways of expressing ideas. Other ways of working with the street model in combinations of newly taken photos of the street can have benefitted the workshop, or other non art based methods such as deeper discussion of map or photos or the method of storytelling (Derr, 2018) which can have been an interesting method to connect the children to the street and analyse its possibilities and challenges. Storytelling was not incorporated due to the need of more time before and during the workshop as well as I think it can need a deeper understanding of local social environmental conditions and cultures. But in a longer process with more occasions storytelling could enable and communicate valuable stories of the community. The method of art based suited the study as it was the initial processes in a project (Derr, 2018) alonging with drawing and making collage which are common practice in Brazil. Furthermore, incorporating local folklore figures as Cuca in the play pauses, can have been benefitting for building trust through attuning the workshop to local conditions. There are varieties of methods to involve children and readings emphasised on the importance of choosing methods that can enable the voices of the children to be expressed and heard. The choice of art based methods within the limitations of the study had many positive outcomes with ideas and thoughts that were generated in one occasion and two hours could be interpreted into a sketched



design proposal, which can be used for further participatory design processes or implementation depending on the design situation, project length and occasions. The collage buffé was an asset to look at and to get inspiration for the reimagines and redesigns. Further, it helped to communicate ideas that were difficult to draw, however, it was difficult to tear out the images, therefore cutting out them beforehand can help the process. The collage table and the drawing gave the children two mediums to choose between for their self expression which created more opportunity for communicating their views (UNICEF, 1989.). Concerning the classroom art based version of the method ‘pennant promenade’ turned out to have some interesting outcomes. The children drew thoughts of the streets from their relations and memories of streets, accompanied with impressions from the model and street photo which gave the study and overall impression of streets and showed thought patterns that the children had about the streets in general. These thoughts were not only streets but also elements that are connected to the streets and communicated their communities everyday challenges in urban life, as some children mentioned broken houses, hearts and pavement. In physical site visits the participants are subject to what is available there at that moment, for instance the children mentioned that they do not like broken houses. However, on this street there were currently no broken houses. Both methods of visiting the street and distant street analyses are valuable for the design process but you will harvest different results from it. A field visit will connect and introduce the children to the physical site of the project (Derr, 2018) making it possible for the children to use all their senses (Kylin and Lieberg, 2001) and therefore field visit methods can provide opportunities for more site specific wishes, ideas and thoughts. The workshop version outcome showed more of the community’s challenges in or close to street realms and innervations of general thoughts of what they liked and did not like about streets. A reflection of how to change the method, to make it more site specific, can be through filming the street beforehand in various angles and heights, for showing both adult and children’s perspectives of the street (880 Cities and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2017) and then showing the video for the children. This can be followed by having printed pictures from the video and posting it on the wall and connecting where it is in the model and letting the children comment and give feedback on the photos of the street. The video can contain storytelling as Derr (2018) means can be a method to understand and analyse a project and to stir reimagines. For example a story could be to follow a group of children in their everyday life in the street, to communicate various struggles and opportunities with the street in the project. Further extensions and ideas on methods are that the street model can be a tool for short to longer processes (Derr, 2018), it can also be used together with the design proposal due to similar scale. Hence, the design proposal can be cut out and placed in the model for the children to see and test the miniature proposal in the model. This can then be followed by the children adding, commenting with the collage buffet material, which also can include cut out elements that can be put directly into the model. A continuation of the Participatory processes can be the method of Gatulabba (2024a) ‘Iterative sketch process’ which enables discussions and improvements of the design proposal with the children and teachers. The design can get improved and closer to the communities ideas through returning to the children and teachers with the design proposal. As a designer, I could listen and hear if their ideas got represented in the proposal, I also could explain my interpretations and design choices and see if I understood them right (ibid).

### Workshop exhibition, a tool in the design process

When it comes to the exhibition of the workshop it serves as a tactile output and as an valuable initial intervention from the participatory processes with the children and teachers, and very appreciated by the children. The exhibition can be a beneficial method to respond to children’s ideas, as an extension of being apprehensive in the process as in the fourth question of Gatulabba’s dialogue methodology. The exhibition and how it was installed shows that the children’s

reimaginings, ideas and thoughts are valuable and can act as a source for further discussion in the process, both summarizing and stirring new ideas. Often workshop generated ideas and material during design processes mainly get used in the hidden, on the desks of the planners and designers but to raise the generated ideas and thoughts in an exhibition can be a tool for the participatory processes and provide inspiration and motivate the children in shorter to longer design processes. The exhibition can be used for further participatory processes with the children, teachers and be used as a foundation for communicating with stakeholders such as planners and municipality workers, about the ideas and project, as well as, making the processes visible and more transparent to the surrounding.

### Cross-cultural considerations

The context of Brazil and Sweden is different culturally, socially and environmentally. Cross-cultural projects and collaborations are rather common, therefore, it is not about whether we should or not do such work. The question is rather how we can do them in a way that respects, considers and builds on local cultures and communities. Therefore, doing Participatory design with the local communities is vital for making design that does not impose an agenda or culture from elsewhere. Involvement with local communities can hinder the risk of the design getting alienated by its socio-cultural surroundings. The process was supported with having dialogues with a former local person as a facilitator, both knowing the city, local practices and culture, as Derr (2018) mentions it is important to find resources that can help to understand the involved communities. For this study field visits with the immersion into Brazilian culture and environment, readings, background research, my own existing relations to both culture and place and knowing the language helped to understand the community. As Smith et al (2025) means that participatory design needs to embrace other languages, than only English to be able to hold cross-cultural participatory processes for a deeper understanding.

In what concerns the workshop, the Participatory design process with children and their teachers can be considered a collective and local move towards hindering the trend of children losing ground (Bishop and Corkery, 2017). Planners and landscape architects that plan cities have an important role to enable voices to be heard, as well as to identify, upkeep and generate new cultural memories of play and identities, which are tied to the streets of cities (Gosso et al., 2015; Lerner, 2014).

## Further research

In this study I found the exhibition valuable for the design process therefore further studies of the role of intermediary exhibitions during the participatory design process can be studied. How exhibitions can benefit the processes and if these can open up for further collaboration and transparency in the democratic dialogic design processes. Tactical urbanism and urban acupuncture can be effective approaches to temporarily or permanently reclaim streets however, further there are needed more practical examples on how Participatory design processes with children and caregivers in redesigning public spaces and streets and how it can impact the streets as a place for play.

## Conclusion

This study explored how Participatory design processes with children can contribute to redesigning streets in the city that supports the integration of children’s play. To achieve this, the work investigated approaches to change streets with children and tried methods for participatory processes in a design process in Brazil. The study showed that participatory design with children can support the designing of a safe and flexible community space that enables children’s various play and social encounters. The design intervention is a potential space in the street that can facilitate creativity and exploration, hence contributing to identity and culture development. In a world that has more cross-cultural collaborations than ever before, it is important to be sensitive to the local, as it is not about doing or not doing these collaborations rather how we can do them in a way that respects and builds on local cultures and communities. Therefore, doing Participatory design with local communities is vital for making design that is locally anchored and sensitive to the local identity, as well as hindering the collective loss of cultural memories.. Planners, architects and landscape architects need to identify valuable community practices that can get affected by implemented technologies such as the built environment and cars, for hindering the loss of spaces for the building of culture and identity. Moreover, the study concluded that children’s use of streets is important, as they harbour space for opportunities for collective free play. Culture can be promoted by play, and when children play in the street with diverse children it can help to build understanding, coexistence and social bridging capital, skills that are essential for a sustainable future with peace. Lastly, the study found that local community spaces in the streets provide valuable intermingling of generations which are important for regenerative, caring and social connections in urban realms.







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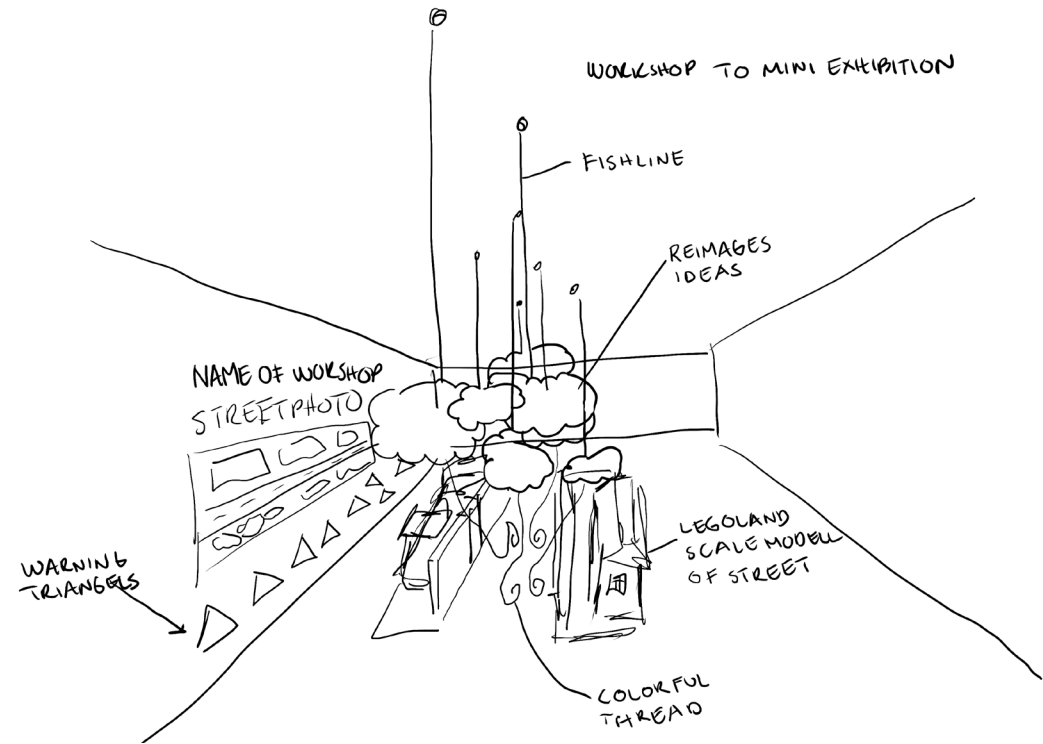
# appendix



# WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIVE PLAN

The workshop will hold elements of design process with introducing examples of redesigns of streets for the children and caretakers. Also providing a streetphoto and scale modell of the school street in carbonboxes that children can interact with during the workshop.

The triangles and circles are to identify problems or issues on the street whilst circles will be good, pretty things of the street. The clouds will be reimagines of the street. During the facilitators will ask questions about the drawings. Method is a blend from Gatulabba metodbank and Derr, V. et al (2018). Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities with my own reinterpretations to fit workshop and context.



## START

10min

INTRODUCTION  
TO EVERYBODY



CIRCLE  
NAME + MOVE PLAY  
MEMORY

15min

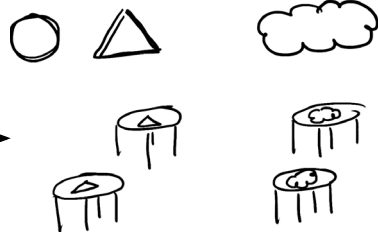
INTRODUCTION TO  
STREETDESIGNS, USE &  
SITE - WHY, WHAT?



LET KIDS LOOK AND  
MOVE THROUGH  
MODELL & STREET  
PHOTO 2 GROUPS &  
SWITCH

40min

DRAWING & COLLAGE  
2 STATIONS  
• WARNING TRIANGLES  
• DREAMS & REIMAGINE

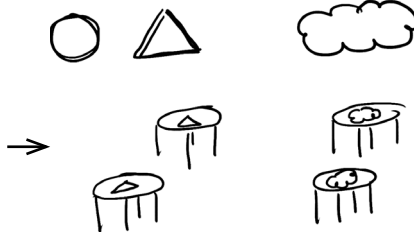


SPLIT CLASS INTO 2  
GROUPS, EACH WITH 2  
SMALLER TABLEGROUPS  
(+ TEACHERS TABLE  
OR INTERGRATE WITH  
KIDS?) EACH TABLE  
DESCRIBES WHAT DO DO

10min

PLAY PAUS

Pega pega  
Cuca e Brinca

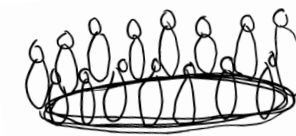


SWITCH GROUPS SO  
EVERYBODY GETS TO DO  
BOTH STATIONS

40min

DRAWING & COLLAGE  
2 STATIONS  
• WARNING TRIANGLES  
• DREAMS & REIMAGINE

5min + 2 Hours  
installation  
WRAP UP  
CIRCLE - THANKS



FACILITATORS  
INSTALL THE  
CLOUDS TO  
THE CELING  
AND MODELL +  
TRIANGLES ON  
WALL

## END

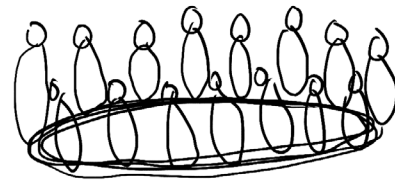


## START

10min

INTRODUCTION  
TO EVERYBODY

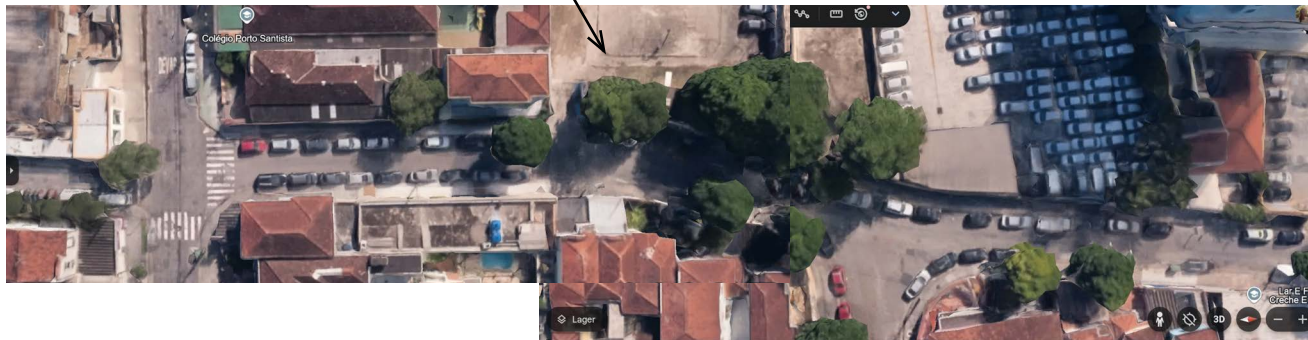
CIRCLE  
NAME + GESTURE  
OF PLAY MEMORY



Hi everybody!

Thank you for letting us have a co designing workshop with you. I am Diana from Sweden, I am studying landscape architecture and today we are going to reimagine and redesign a street together. These are my helpers.... Let us start with a circle and introduce our name and share a play we like. I can start my name is Diana and I like to climb trees "Imitate/gesture climbing".

Inner yard of Anália  
Franco school



Street photos in size A3, this will be used in the station with circles and triangles. Here we put the triangles and circles in or close by on the wall. Google earth.

15min

INTRODUCTION TO  
STREET DESIGNS,  
USE & SITE - WHY,  
WHAT?



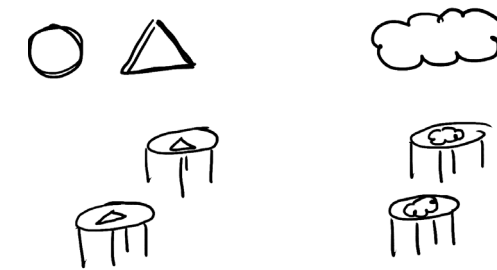
We gather all the kids. Why we are holding this workshop is because to see if designing together can be a way create more playful and safe streets for children. We want to share some inspiration for you guys so first we will show you two videos from Visual utopias. Continued with showing photos from example projects. In Sweden there are project where streets close to schools are temporarily changed from being a carparking and car oriented road to be a play street or so called school street. The road will down prioritise car parking and hinder fast driving close to schools and become a place for children. In this workshop we will analyse, reimagine and redesign your school street: Rua Júlio Conceição. Now we show the street carbon modell and then after the street photo on the wall.



40min

DRAWING & COLLAGE  
2 STATIONS

- WARNING TRIANGELS & OPPORTUNITY CIRCLES
- DREAMS & REIMAGINE



We split the class into to big groups with smaller groups within of 3-5 kids in each table (One fascilitator in each table). Then we will describe what to do in each station "Reimagine" and station "triangles and circles" with the two big groups.

The Two stations that the kids will switch between are:

- **Opportunity Circle and Warning Triangle** ○ ▲

Here the table groups will start with identifying and analysing the street with triangles and circles with a colour (this to separate the groups that start with designing and the other groups that start with the analysing).

The triangles and circles can consist of drawings, collage and writings(help from teacher) and will in the last15 min then be put on the street map.

Questions: what do you not like about the street? What do you like about the street? What are you drawing/thinking?

- **Reimagines and redesigns** ☁

Here the table groups will draw and collage redesign of the street.

During the drawings we as facilitators can ask the kids about what they are drawing and what is important for them on a street. Ask open questions and write down notes about their designs with their name. This is to know which drawing is connected to each note.

Questions: How can a street become more play friendly? What is important for your play?

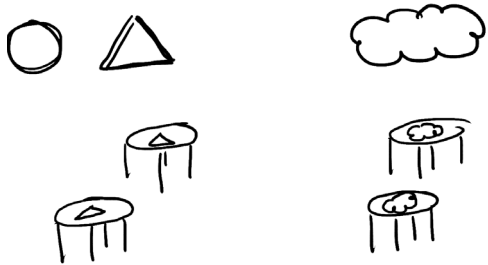


- 10min
- PLAY PAUS  
PLAYING TAG WITH THE FOLCLORIC  
MONSTER CUCA AND THE CHILDREN  
JUMPING & SAYING "PLAY"



Between the stations there will be a play paus. The play will be inspired from gatulabbas game and common games of tag that also exist in brazil. One will start as the brazilian folkloric monster Cuca and chase the other kids. Everybody including Cuca jumps with both legs and the kids that are being chased also says "brinca". Each kid that gets taken by Cuca also becomes a Cuca. In the end everybody will be Cuca. If there is more time and energy we will play the opposite and one child starts tagging the Cucas and they become Children again while saying "brinca".

- 40min
- DRAWING & COLLAGE  
2 STATIONS
- WARNING TRIANGELS & OPPORTUNITY CIRCLES
  - DREAMS & REIMAGINE

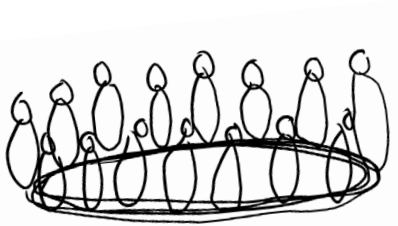


Start with switching the groups so everybody gets to do both stations.

**Documentation**  
All of the fascilitators take notes during the activity/design stations to document what the kids are drawing and thinking. Add the name of kid when taking the notes, this is to know which drawing the notes refers to.  
Nicholas will have main responsibility for taking pictures and sounds recordings during the design process but you are also free to take pictures.

END

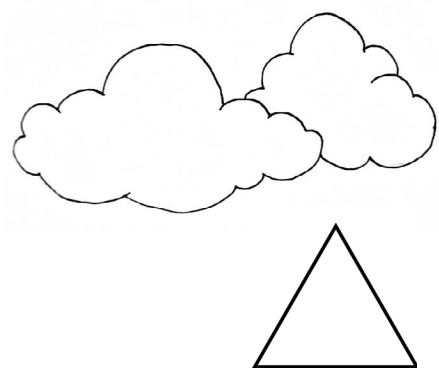
- 5min
- WRAP UP CIRCLE -  
THANKS & QUESTIONS
- Total 2h (and 10 min  
for installation)
- FACILITATORS  
INSTALL THE  
CLOUDS TO  
THE CELING  
AND MODELL +  
DOCUMENTING



The Workshop ends with a circle with Thanks and asking the children what was most fun and least fun. Is there something they wanted to do more of?  
After the Circle we take pictures of notes and drawing and then create the exhibition with install the clouds to the ceiling and modell with yarn.



# MATERIALS



PAPER CUT  
INTO CLOUDS  
AND TRIANGLES



COLOR PENS +  
KLUDD



STREET PHOTO (GOOGLE  
EARTH) PLACED ON WALL

EACH FASCILITAOR  
TAKES NOTES AND  
ASKS QUESTIONS  
- NAME ON  
TABLE? NAME ON  
FACILITATOR



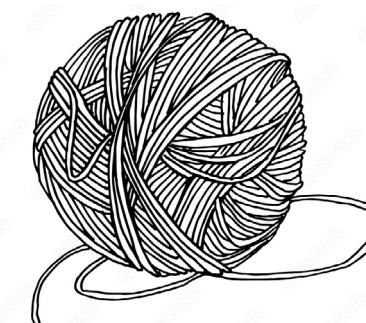
CARBON BOXES FOR A MODELL  
"LEGOLAND" OF THE STREET + SIGN  
REIMAGINE NAME OF STREET  
A PREMADE ABSTRACT MODELL



TABLES +  
SEATS (OR  
FLOOR)



COLLAGE MATERIAL (ON  
ONE TABLE OR ON EACH  
TABLE)



THREADS (YARN &  
FISHLINE)+ (HENS  
NET?)



