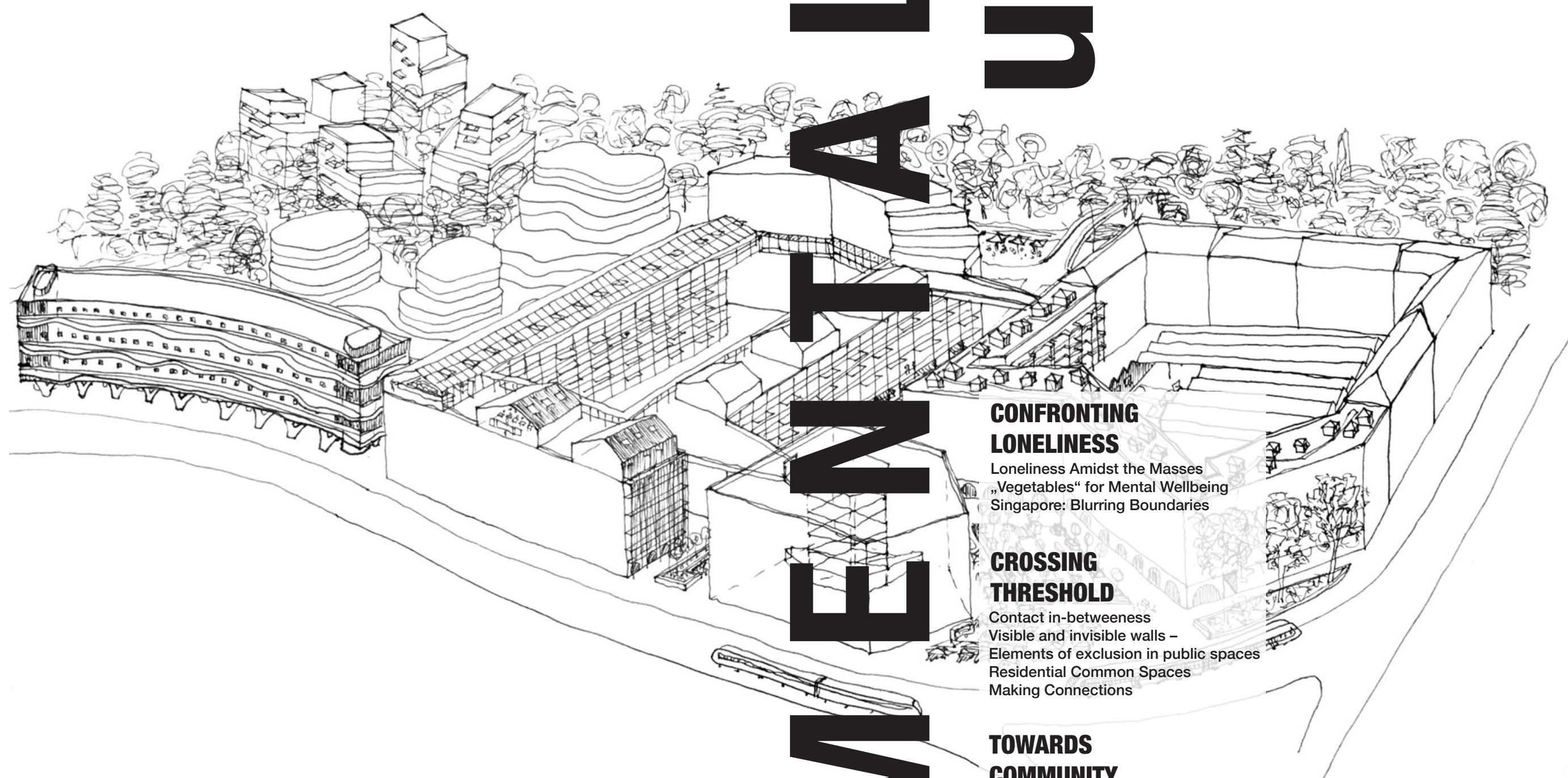


MENTALY Urban

TUM Sustainable Urbanism



CONFRONTING LONELINESS

Loneliness Amidst the Masses
„Vegetables“ for Mental Wellbeing
Singapore: Blurring Boundaries

CROSSING THRESHOLD

Contact in-betweeness
Visible and invisible walls –
Elements of exclusion in public spaces
Residential Common Spaces
Making Connections

TOWARDS COMMUNITY

Community as a service
Strong neighborships
How to plan cities of encounters

IMPRINT

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EDITORIAL

Research in the spatial disciplines occupies different epistemological locations and produces knowledge that is framed in different ways. As a consequence, it cannot be assumed to be self-evident or a pre-given process. However, rather than perceiving the lack of certainty as an obstacle to research, we can take it as an epistemological and conceptual resource to work with, based on the understanding that urban issues cannot be grasped in isolation and from a single perspective. Accordingly, the research, practical and design work conducted in this field is increasingly seen as a 'trans-disciplinary' activity, which moves beyond the confines of the single discipline, or the interdisciplinarity of different disciplines. This approach to research decidedly integrates actors from non-university contexts and aims to produce outcomes with social relevance.

The joint work on this magazine provides students in architecture and urbanism with the possibility to explore areas which intersect with other disciplines, develop new ideas, change perceptions, engage with others, and critically reflect on architecture and urbanism. We believe that this is pre-requisite for the developing of a better understanding of the complex and often contradictory processes that shape our urban environments and cities, as well as the controversies that emerge from them and are in this sense of broader concern. The insights gained in this way are meant to inform and, perhaps, challenge the student's own work as designers and help them to further develop their own interests and agendas.

The conceptual dichotomy of contact/no contact, or connected/disconnected can be used for the drawing of comparisons between different spaces and

spatial practices. Historically, we see how cities and the built environment have constantly shifted their positioning between the two poles, a phenomenon that is, perhaps, even more evident in shifting social practices, politics, or economical arrangements. Problems of inequality and exclusion are often, but not always, accompanied by spatial disconnectedness, separation and isolation.

The topic of „contact“ is closely related to the making of connections. Most obviously, this includes connections between human beings, but also between humans and non-humans like institutions, legislation, ideas, or the spatial arrangements that pre-structure everyday actions. In our everyday lives we experience environments in which we may establish new connections more easily than in others, and we notice that there are differences in 'connecting ourselves' to a given space or environment. The making, or un-making of contacts and connections is an essential part of our social lives and in this sense influences our psychological state and well-being. Not all contacts are of the positive kind and wanted; sometimes we have to cross a threshold to establish new contacts; contacts can be risky, rewarding, or superfluous and ephemeral.

The current crisis has revealed the multiple questions and the complexity in the making, or un-making of contacts and the previous issue of the magazine is dedicated to this field.

The contributions in this issue are focussed on three broadly conceived areas – confronting loneliness, crossing the threshold, and towards community. The authors explore different formats, modes of enquiry and presentation as part of their engagement with their cho-

sen field of interest. The diversity of contributions demonstrates that multiple connections from within the spatial and design related disciplines can be made and that it is a rewarding undertaking to shed light on existing and new connections/disconnections. It is, at the same time, a very challenging task, because it inevitably involves leaving behind the comfort zones of the disciplines. Like in the field of design, there is always the possibility of meeting criticism and different opinions. This is why we think it essential to maintain a lively discourse about spatial issues and all the other questions that are related to them. A magazine seems to be perfectly suited to engage in debates and to share different positions with each other.

**Norbert Kling and
Dorothee Rummel**
Munich, July 2020

In which ways does the modern urban landscape influence our state of mind? How and where can we observe its effects? Leonie Wrighton discusses these questions in the article **“Loneliness Amidst the Masses”**.

Decreasing levels of physical activities and interaction in the city as a result of digital and high-pace life are posing new problems for our mental and physical condition. Prayudi Sudiarto explores the relation between urban environments and health in **“‘Vegetables’ for our Mental Wellbeing”**.

This example from Asia provides a new perspective on the diversity of urban landscapes and cultures. Juan de Armas presents us an interesting interview with Dr. Ružica Božović-Stamenović, **“Singapore : blurring boundaries”**.



Zebra cross for people, but where are the people?

CONFRONTING LONELINESS



Photo: Prayudi Sudiarto

Loneliness Amidst the Masses

In the last century, our planet has witnessed a widespread societal transformation, touching all areas of our lives. Loneliness is one of the results of this transformation and has quickly and quietly become a worldwide still-growing epidemic. While our cities are believed to be places where people come together, in reality existing urban structures have proven to trigger higher rates of loneliness than in rural settings.

The Path that led to Loneliness

Everything is changing and it has been ever since the beginning of life on this planet. However, it is evident that in the last century our lifestyle and consequently our environment has changed a lot faster and with a much stronger impact than it has ever before in human history.

The two underlying reasons for this transformation have first and foremost been the technological advances we have experienced in areas such as transportation, energy power, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and communication/digital media. These advanced technologies have transformed the way we move and travel through space, the way we transport and consume our goods and it has also revolutionized the way we communicate with one another. In other words, this transformation has led to an all-around acceleration, touching all areas of our daily lives.

Secondly, these advances made it possible for the interconnectedness of the world's economies and cultures to grow at high speed, resulting in the globalized world we live in today.

The Cities Reaction

As a result of this profound change in society, cities have been forced to change and adapt to the resulting new lifestyles of the population. Such adaptations include building wider streets to accommodate cars, minimizing sidewalks for pedestrians and obstructing

ground-floor zones that no longer allow social interaction. In other words, cities were transformed to enable fast movement from A to B (by car) and also to promote extensive consumption, creating big, cold and impersonal urban environments. Amidst all this we humans live, deprived of social warmth and interaction. We have created an environment that does not offer the urban structure that allows spontaneous or other social interactions to flourish.

In fact, research shows that subsequently loneliness is one of the results of this transformation and has quickly and quietly become a worldwide still-growing epidemic. (AARP The Magazine 2010: 2)

“

Loneliness is a growing health epidemic. We live in the most technologically connected age in the history of civilization, yet rates of loneliness have doubled since the 1980s.

- Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy

The Impact on Urban Citizens

Through a new line of research, it is becoming increasingly clear that what kind of urban space we live in has an enormous influence on our mental health (Adli 2017:220-223). Urban life can contribute both positively and negatively to our well-being. Research shows that on a global scale, 1 in 4 urban citizens will experience mental health problems, such as depression, stress and anxiety (Peen et al. 2010). All these mental health issues can be (and often are) caused by feeling isolated and lonely amidst the masses. As John Cacioppo puts it: “The quality of being lonely in a crowded city is a particular one—it can feel like a failure of social aptitude, or an individual imbalance.” (Rao 2018). However, stress-related effects caused by feelings of loneliness and disconnectedness are not limited to our mental health. Research shows that loneliness may also have consequences on our physical health such as, cardiovascular troubles like high blood pressure, stroke and heart disease. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a psychologist who studies loneliness and its health effects at Brigham Young University, has found loneliness can potentially make premature death more likely for people of all ages (Holt-Lunstad et al. 2015). Colin Ellard, a neuroscientist and design consultant, says we are not only susceptible to loneliness, but our brains are not conditioned to live in cities in the first place: “We are living in this really unnatural state, in a massive crowd of strangers” (Rao 2018)



Amidst the Masses

Photo : Leonie Wrighton

“

Loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, making it even more dangerous than obesity.

- Douglas Nemecek, MD, chief medical officer for behavioral health, Cigna

Modern day cities are continuing to grow at high speed. The United Nations say that by 2050 70% of the world's population will be living in cities (United Nations 2018). And while cities continue to grow the loneliness of their inhabitants is rising steadily. It is said that the bigger the city, the more likely people are to develop mental health problems (Lazani 2019). While European governments are slowly recognizing the importance of mental well-being for all citizens a vast gap still exists between the need for treatment and the services available. In fact, a European Un-

ion survey published in 2003 showed that 90% of people who suffered from mental health problems reported they had received no care or treatment in the previous year – only 2.5% of them had seen a psychiatrist or psychologist. Besides the lack of availability of services, the costs and financing of mental-health treatment also poses a significant problem. Mental health disorders cost national economies billions of euros; however, a large amount of the costs fall directly on the people suffering from mental health issues and their families. That is also a reason why many people do not seek treatment, although they are in need of it. (The WHO 2005:2-8)

The Hidden Potential of the Neighborhood

At the same time, we are transforming urban settings in a way that is prohibiting people from naturally bumping into each other and allowing them to interact. As a consequence of this transformation we have lost some of the most valuable and essential components of our cities, like the plazas and piazzas that once formed the city center. While I believe it would be impossible to radically transform our cities from one day to another, it is due time to induce

changes in a location specific step by step manner. We need to create urban spaces that invite people to dwell and engage with others. Facing the climate emergency, we need urban environments that promote emotional well-being and resilience. If we want to survive as a society it will be more important than ever to establish social cohesion in urban settings. In my opinion, the best way to create such urban spaces would be to return to and focus on the smallest unit in a city – the neighborhood. I believe, strengthening ties within neighborhoods will not only be essential to cope with the climate tragedy we face but it will also counteract loneliness by reducing anonymity among people. □

Text and images: **Leonie Wrighton**



Loneliness in Urban Settings

Graphic : Leonie Wrighton

„Vegetables“ for Mental Wellbeing

In this era of digitalisation, we have the luxury of having things done from the couch or delivered to our doorstep. We are getting used to being fed with news and doing things through our devices. Humanity has then fewer reasons to move. Especially during the times of Corona, we were even forbidden from leaving our homes. Therefore we were starting to realise how important it is to have a contact with other people. This is not because of boredom. It is because we need it.

In one of the lecture series from this class last semester, we learned that deep inside our brain sits an area called the hippocampus. It contains many common neurons. Around 97% of them are responsible for social relations (feeling and empathy) and space. They give us the feeling that we humans are social and should have contact with fellow human beings. “The statement that ‘man is man’s greatest joy’ comes from Hávamál, a more than 1,000-year-old Icelandic Eddic poem, which succinctly describes human delight and interest in other people. Nothing is more important or more compelling.” (Larrington 1996).

Research conducted on cab drivers in London showed that they have a larger than average hippocampus because they keep training their memories of London’s streets. This small area is trainable like any muscle. A website that studies the brain and dementia, kompetenz-statt-demenz.de, remarks, “Most fascinating is that the hippocampus is the only region of the brain where new nerve cells can be formed [...] But of course, it is the totality of positive stimuli that causes nerve cells to develop and grow: sufficient physical activity, meaning in life, social contacts and mindfulness (avoidance of permanent stress)” (Fotuhi, Do and Jack 2012). Furthermore, “observational studies and preliminary clinical trials have raised the possibility that physical exercise, cognitive stimulation and treatment

of general medical conditions can reverse age-related atrophy in the hippocampus, or even expand its size” (ibid.). These hints lead to the conclusion that more movement in our life could help reduce the chances of dementia or improve the condition of someone with dementia.

“

Walking is the beginning, the starting point. Man was created to walk, and all of life’s events large and small develop when we walk among other people. - Gehl, J (2010: 19).

Walking is the most simple form of physical activity, it does not only affect ourself but also our environment or the society. Our body is getting the first reaction to this small action. By walking to the train station or to our offices, we use our muscles. In the same time their muscle memories are refreshing itself. When we walk, contacts are made automatically. People passing by, spontaneous small talks by groceries shopping or asking a direction on the streets, are the little things that feed our needs in our hippocampus. Greeneries or sceneries in the city parks that we

have never really realised, refresh our soul and simultaneously are offering us a little break from our rapid pace life. This short break for our brain is a kind of ‘refresh button’, similar to the refresh button in computers. It has subtle positive effects while being hardly noticeable.

Designers and architects once suggested that the future in transportation would be flying vehicles, which bring us from A to B in a fast and futuristic way. But is it sustainable? We may have to raise this question again in the future. At the present moment, the most sustainable means of transport seem to be public transport and bicycle. Why? Public transport has higher capacities and is more efficient if compared to the private car. Most cars are not used on a daily basis. If they are being used, they rarely carry more than one or two people. There is no question that our system could not work without cars, vans and trucks. But imagine if we could reduce and redefine them to the main sectors which really need them, for example for the delivery of goods, the public services like ambulance, or police vehicles. On the other hand, private movements rely on well-connected public transport, bicycles, car sharing and taxis. This would bring and also add qualities to our city life. “Bicycling in the city has become the way to get around. It is faster and cheaper than other transport options and also good for the environment and personal health” Gehl, J (2010: 11). If we were to roam around the city using

well-connected public transportation for longer trips and bicycles in the city center, we could reduce the amount of CO2 emissions and have less problems with parking spaces and traffic jams.

According to Jan Gehl there are four key objectives to a good city. They are lively cities, safety, sustainability and health. “All four key objectives [...] can be strengthened immeasurably by increasing the concern for pedestrians, cyclists and city life in general.” (Gehl, J (2010: 6). In his book “Cities for people”, he refers to cities that are benefiting from having transformed their streets to pedestrians areas or bicycle lanes. Among his main examples is Copenhagen. “The City of Copenhagen has been restructuring its street network for several decades, removing driving lanes and parking places in a deliberate

process to create better and safer conditions for bicycle traffic [...] Bicycle traffic doubled in the period from 1995 to 2005, and in 2008 statistics showed that 37 % of personal transport to and from work and educational institutions was by bicycle.” (Gehl 2016: 11)

Big cities like New York, Melbourne and even Munich are gradually going in the same direction. Currently, there is a temporary pilot project in Munich with pop-up bicycle lanes which is running until October 2020. This small step is an experiment to implement more bicycle lanes in order to promote movements in the city. Due to COVID-19 people are using their bicycle more often. This pop-up project will provide a greater safety feeling to city cyclists. “A whole-hearted invitation to walk and bike as a natural and integrated element of daily

routines must be a nonnegotiable part of a unified health policy.” (Gehl 2016: 7) There are, of course, critics. Most of them are car owners and users. They claim that the bicycle lanes take their space on streets and their parking slots. The thing is that, “more roads invite more traffic. Better conditions for bicyclists invite more people to ride bikes, but by improving the conditions for pedestrians, we not only strengthen pedestrian traffic, we also — and most importantly — strengthen city life.” (Gehl 2016: 19) Another example is Car Free Days that are happening in capital cities of developing countries, such as Jakarta or Bogotá. The government closes the main streets on Sundays and turns them into pedestrian areas. Because of its huge scale, it offers the citizen a place to meet, do sports, markets, parades, demonstrations or just to cycle.



Cyclist in the middle of the road. Tokyo, Japan.

It is where the interaction, contact and life happens.

Let's imagine we arrive in a state of mind where the egos of having a sexy brand new Porsche 992 or a powerful G-Wagon are repressed. We get up a few minutes earlier to catch the metro, then ride a bike for one to two kilometers until we arrive at the workplace. By walking and cycling through the city, we fulfill the needs what our common neurons are looking for (If you want to look like Arnold Schwarzenegger, it will not be enough, but it is still enough to make you fit). Furthermore you automatically close those daily activities rings that your apple watch has challenged you. In addition to that there would be less CO2 Emission, less traffic, less stress with other drivers that cut your way. And you could enjoy the smiles

of the barista and other guests at your favorite coffee shop, where you have a delicious latte macchiato on your way to work. The whole journey could be a positive experience, an extra portion of healthy 'fruit and vegetables' for mental health and wellbeing.

Of course, we cannot force people to change to healthier life-styles. However, we can provide better options to choose from and encourage them through offering 'veggies and dressings' that are more attractive. Eventually, we may live in world which is better for our body and soul. Architect Ralph Erskine said "To be a good architect you have to love people, because architecture is an applied art and deals with the frameworks for people's lives." Oxfeldt Mortensen, L (2000). □

“

There is direct contact between people and the surrounding community, fresh air, time outdoors, the free pleasures of life, experiences and information. - Gehl, J (2016: 19).

Text: Prayudi Sudiarto



Photo: Ginnya Pryscilla

Singapore: *blurring* boundaries

Interview with
Dr. Ružica Božović-Stamenović

In a time of rapid world population growth, acceleration of climate change and limitation of space, equally distributed access to urban green areas is increasingly becoming an issue. The city-state of Singapore, despite being one of the most densely populated countries worldwide, has been able to confront the dilemma by providing hybrid typologies of public open space. We had the opportunity to meet Dr Božović-Stamenović and discuss the design for mental healthcare in the Garden City.

Even before COVID-19, why is it important to address mental health in cities?

“Mental health is, in a functional way, the first eductive of the cities. If you look at Singapore, the scale and speed of developments, their achievements are the peak in the world amongst the cities, and yet in Asia, they have the highest rate of depression. The main cause is the working attitude combined with the pressure of the corporate world that treats people like changeable resources. We might not be able to anticipate every event, but we should anticipate two main things: First, that human beings haven’t changed for thousands of years, our brain is exactly the same as the Neanderthals’. Thus, we have to come back to understand that Architecture is creating an environment for people to inhabit. Second, when we speak about protecting Nature, it seems as if we are putting ourselves above Nature like a defenceless entity. We should not put ourselves on the top of understanding what the environment is.”

Singapore is an extreme case of a hyper-dense city-state with limited space and rapidly growing population. How does it still provide natural green spaces?

“By challenging the fundamental outdated concepts in Architecture. The architectural boundaries we are talking about don’t exist in Singapore. We talk

Info box 1

Dr Ružica Božović-Stamenović is an Associate Professor at the Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore. Her research interest is in human ecology, health-restoring design processes, and design for wellness in contemporary urban settings and mega-mature societies. She is Executive Board Member of the Global University Programs in Healthcare Architecture.

about urban and rural, that’s an old concept from the 20th century. Who is to say now where is the rural ground? It is creeping on our buildings. The vision from urban and rural is the coexistence of different realms in Singapore. Namely, the possibility of creating multiple independent realities that could coexist and help people have an experience. Every realm with its own rules, capacities and atmosphere. People feel like they have a choice. A good example where Architecture fails: I live in one of the Kent Vale Campus Towers in NUS, which was awarded a platinum green mark in terms of sustainability. I am looking at my neighbouring block and its stretch of green climbing on the facade all on the top like the one in my building, only a few meters from where I am speaking to you right now. However, I cannot even see or touch it, that green which is closest to me. The green is to protect the concrete wall behind from the heat; it is not to contribute to my health.”

Therefore, would you say that they are not respecting the founding vision of the city in a garden? Is not

the green facade more of a visually aesthetic concept, rather than an experiential space to enjoy?

“Yes, that’s the biggest trouble. All these efforts of sustainability, wellness, planning or urban design they are all compartmentalised, and we cannot afford that in the 21st century. We have resources, but just because of not being able to unify and transform the thinking, it remains just visual. Ideas are taken down by the planning authorities with a set of rules and guidelines. Those guidelines are remnants of the 20th century thinking of planning and it doesn’t work like that anymore. They need time to adjust and create different legislations to acknowledge the interference of different domains.”

Does Singapore have specific typologies or places for healthy interactions?

“Not for now, although Singapore has early recognised the need to create a healthy environment to live, work and play; precisely because of people’s depression and secondly, because society



Garden City

Photo: Juan de Armas

is very old on average.”

What about the Kampung Admiralty? The WOHA-designed mix-use development which combines a park and a nursing home.

“Well, yes. In Singapore, it was the first big project of that scale and character, which brought together different agencies: housing, building, urbanism... This time they had to work together and definitely, that was an unprecedented association. The value comes from that.”

Interestingly, this typology is bringing the younger generations into the building to enjoy the park, while the elderly benefit from their company.

“Definitely! Research shows, even in Europe from the Netherlands, that elderly, particularly women like to be in the city centre, they want to be where life is. Even if they are incapable of going out, they want to see the hustle of the city. Admiralty overcame that: they are not isolated, life is there. Maybe from this kind of proximity, new ways of symbiotic living could emerge. In Singapore, we support working and people love to work as long as they can. It is part of the culture, where self-esteem comes through work, so they tend to work as long as they can. Thus elderly still can contribute, since sharing knowledge and experiences is also helping. We need other typologies of social housing to cultivate that bonding on a smaller level. With this new trend of discouraging big gatherings, is there something in between the big plaza or shopping street and your apartment? Is there a way we can gather at a level where I live?”

An adequate example would be the Pinnacle at Duxton. The seven towers intertwined by two void decks at the middle and top. Primarily, these are conceived as fire safety refuge. However, they rethought it into an urban plaza on the 50th storey of a residential complex, where the public is welcomed.

“Exactly. I thought of that also when I was writing about Synesthetic Architecture. They have the stretch of 700m, the length of the rooftop-garden, and they decided to mimic what would happen in Nature. There will be a difference in

plant species with a lot of small features that change the ambience. In a traditional city, 700m is a lot. On the other hand, you are on the 50th story, which not that many buildings are at your horizon. What you see is not a dense Singapore, but rather a low-dense ambience, a fantastic big sky and it is recuperating. You’ve shifted the perception of the city you live in. When you see such a thing, you get challenged by the surreality of the situation, and that makes you feel good because that is what human brain is built for: to explore more, to find more challenges, not to be bored.”

Besides extending the public realm into the skyscrapers, how is Singapore going to combine the necessity of providing urban green space while continuing to build? Could they pro-

posed to attract butterflies and certain fish, so the students were studying those. These agricultural gardens on the rooftop don’t have a budget for maintaining; it is preserved by the community together with hospital staff. They have arrangements with school children and different boundary groups to cultivate. That already makes it a more acceptable space. The design of the hospital is such that you can hardly tell when you’ve entered it. It is seamless so that the fear of trespassing the boundary is non-existent, plus it is so well integrated with the public area around that lake. You have cafes, which ordinary people go in as well or little public spaces where staff spend their free hours. Even visually, there is no boundary; it is completely integrated.”

Let us discuss the indoors now. In

Info box 2

Despite being a small city-state with a land area of only 700 square kilometres and a population of 5.8 million, with careful planning through a model of liveable density, Singapore has been able to commit 10% of the total land area to parks and nature reserves. They are connecting the parks into a network of a few hundred kilometres of walking trails throughout the island.

pose an open mix-use like Kampung at an urban scale?

“The Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, for instance, was built by one small lake with a different agenda right from the beginning. They had the vision to create a hospital, which diluted the boundary between the building and the city. They have eight specific gardens and an agricultural rooftop garden to grow crops. When they started operating, I visited the hospital and the CEO was taking us around. Instead of boasting with having operation theatres, which

Singapore, you have a hot and humid climate, so people tend to refuge themselves. Shopping malls mimic the urban ideas inside public buildings: a mega-hub as an extension of the city.

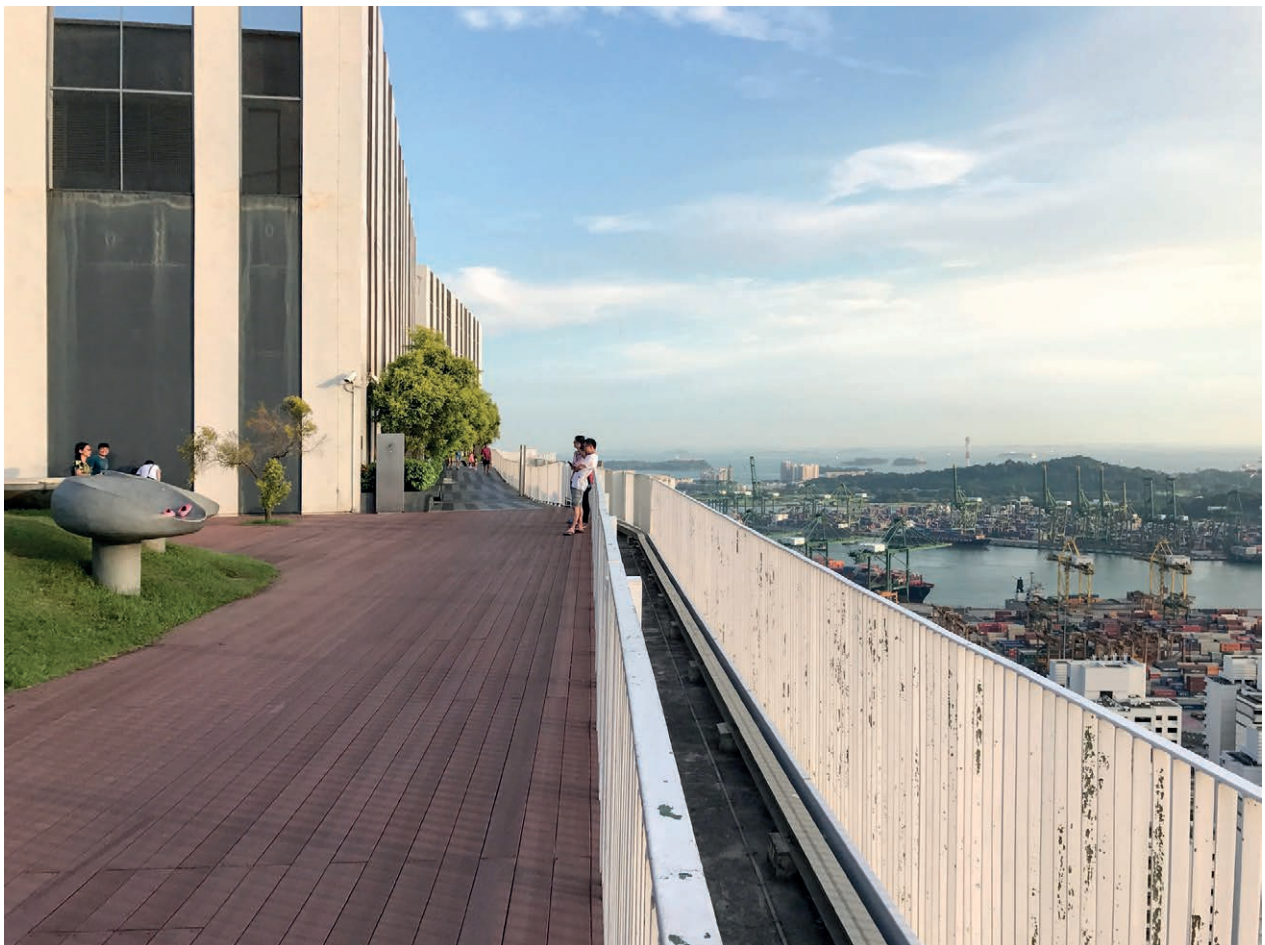
“About indoor urban spaces: Singapore has this underground urban plan, where it is planning for 150m below the ground. It is possible to bring down the characterisation of above the surface. Regarding shopping malls, having the eateries inside turns them into social spaces. Singaporeans are very keen on

Info box 3

In the 1960s Singapore’s founding father Lee Kuan Yew mooted the creation of a clean and green environment to mitigate the harsh concrete urban environment and improve the quality of life in the city. This was the beginning of the nation’s development into a Garden City. Going forward, the plan is to evolve into a City in a Garden - a bustling metropolis nestled in a lush mantle of tropical greenery.

they do have, he was showing off that garden. We all went home with a bag of corn and papayas. I took pictures where school children are working on their assignments within the hospital’s public spaces. The greenery was specifically

eating together outside. They maintain that level of interest of street life; it is part of their ancestral heritage. On the other hand, they are completely accepting the western model of global economy, which provides unified and



The Pinnacle at Duxton

Photo: Juan de Armas



Kampung Admiralty



Photo: Moritz Maier

simplified things everywhere. Now, if we expel those things which are global and prefer to have local manufacturing, where more people can work and creative individuals can start their own small businesses being diverse and exclusive, it will boost interest and interactions. That would bring a lot of joy, enthusiasm and self-esteem back to people.”

I would even claim that Food Courts are the reflection of Singapore’s multiculturalism. They help ethnic communities feel identified with their heritage and be proud of sharing their culture with the city.

“It is about the comprehensibility because how your brain comprehends the ambience is based on layers of inheritance, and after generations, they pass this attitude. That is just suppressed, which is just another level of stress for the mind. Understanding how the brain functions would help Architects extend their whole knowledge.”

To conclude, do you think we should try to implement these urban ideas in

Europe?

“I think we should. Of course, we have the issue of climate, but again when you acknowledge the benefits, we will find the solutions to do it. Unfortunately, we still do not think like that; that’s where Singapore is ahead. Although I must say, even in Singapore, it takes personal effort, enthusiasm and vision from decision-makers to help this become true. The pace of change is slower in Europe. In one’s lifetime, you might probably experience just one major change. Yet the ability of Singapore to use the time is better than anybody else: speeding the pace, dreaming big, managing the vision and having a mechanism which is the government who is able to push it. They are efficient! In Europe, you will discuss things for 20 years and nothing will happen.”

Would you say that Singapore is a successful case study in providing healthy spaces within the city?

(Long pause)

“Yes, in a way, not in its totality. They

are on the right track of understanding that human resources are the most important. Only cities which can rely on society are able to tackle a change. With every attempt, they try something new. It starts with exceptions but eventually they are on the way of creating this pattern of healthy spaces as a critical mesh that will be the ultimate turn of this city in the garden into a city of wellness. Singapore is brave enough to try, risk and fail until they come up with an adequate solution. Ultimately, all this amount of acupuncture points will heal you. In that case, yes, they are successful.”

This interview was edited for length and clarity. □

Interview: **Juan de Armas**



Jewel Changi

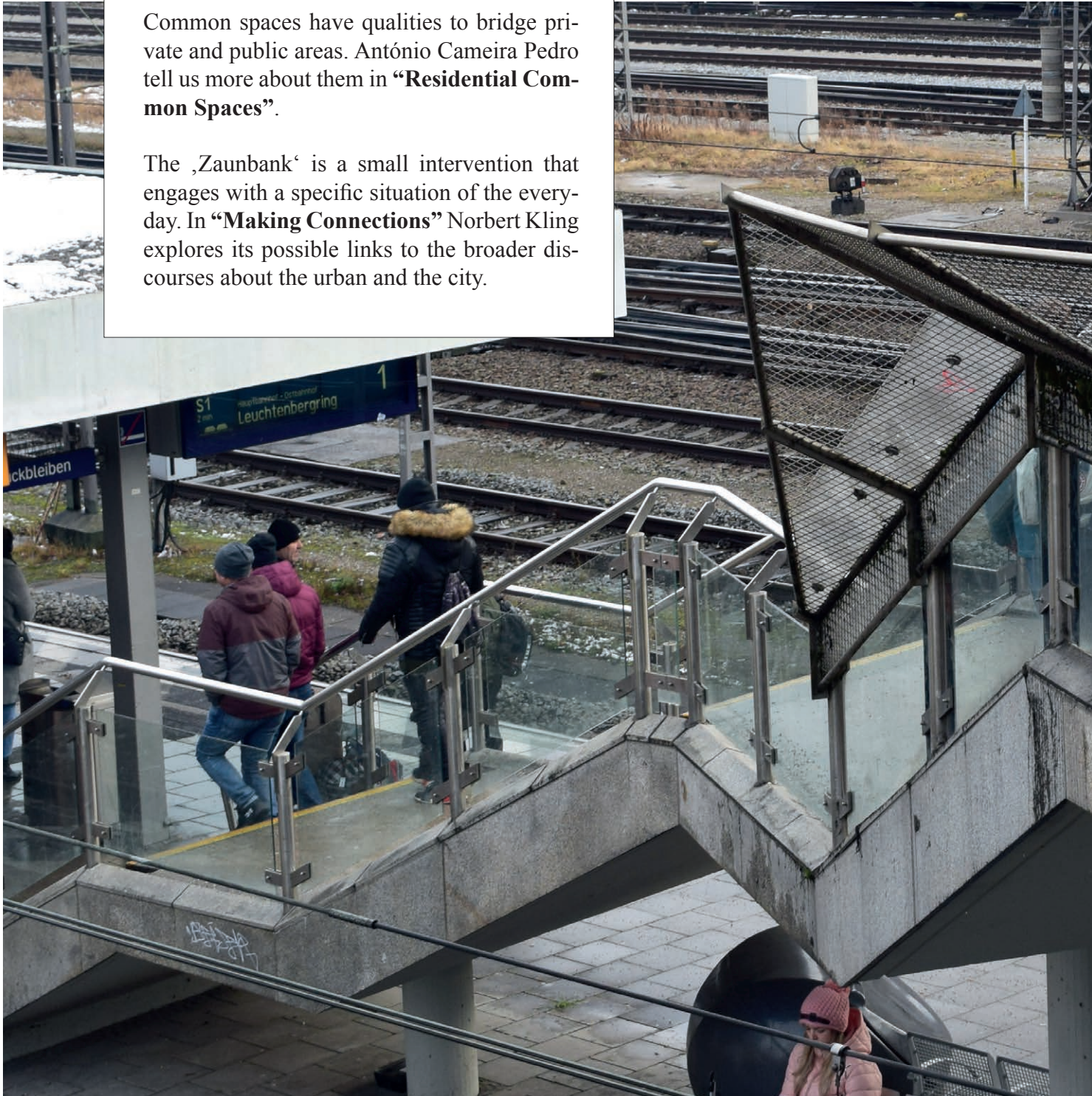
Photo: Juan de Armas

Where is the place to make contacts? Cong Liu analyses porous spaces and highlights their significance for urban life in “**Contact |in-betweenness|**”.

Franziska Mühlbauer detects and describes some of the more hidden spatial mechanisms of exclusion in “**Visible and Invisible Walls. Elements of Exclusion in Public Spaces**”.

Common spaces have qualities to bridge private and public areas. António Cameira Pedro tell us more about them in “**Residential Common Spaces**”.

The ‘Zaunbank’ is a small intervention that engages with a specific situation of the everyday. In “**Making Connections**” Norbert Kling explores its possible links to the broader discourses about the urban and the city.



München, S-Bahnhof Hackerbrücke

CROSSING THRESHOLDS



Photo: Spyridon Nektarios Koulouris

Contact |in-betweenness|

“Urbanism[...] will no longer be about meticulous definition, the imposition of limits, but about expanding notions, denying boundaries, not about separating and identifying entities, but about discovering unnamable hybrids; – the reinvention of psychological space.” (Koolhaas 1994: 959)

If a city is not a rigid definition of space, what is it? If we want to connect with others or the city naturally in urban life, what kind of space should we look for? If there is such space, How does it relate to the ways we make contacts and to urban life? These are not only the relevant questions to new urbanism. But also, these are the spiritual needs that are vital to our urban life nowadays. We search for such answers, we need to step down to observe the spatial details of our lives. From student perspective, this article is about analysing the function of in-between space in student dormitory and university environment.

Living in a hectic city, contacting with other people and with this urban culture happens almost everywhere. But space, which is comfortable for contact, is probably much less than we think. From student perspective, this article is about introducing “in-between” space and analyzing its relationship with contact in student dormitory and university environment.

Part I **what is “In-betweenness”?**

In the article Drifting Clouds: Porosity as a Paradigm, Maren Harnack has written: “If we conceive of urban space as being porous, we have, on the one hand, a strong physical component, which describes the type of connection between urban spaces, and on the other hand a process of absorbing (of people, memories, energy), which is indispensable for urban life.” (Harnack, 2018: 38). Spatial

porosity and transition define two key aspects of in-betweenness. In geology, porosity refers to the fraction that measures void space in matter. In terms of urban life, porosity refers to the void to contain different matters. Whereas transition plays the role of a fluent and gentle connection between different areas. They are the representation of absorbing ability and creativity of city. Through my observation in daily life, in-betweenness is mainly represented in two aspects. From a spatial perspective, in-betweenness is a soft connection in the concrete jungle, which weakens the stiff and direct joint of blocks. It is also a buffer zone between different functions. For example, the green space interspersed in office building street blocks. From a spiritual perspective, in a hectic metropolis, in-betweenness is probably a place to provide the possibility of psychological status transformation, or a place to mix different cultures together, or even a place to be inclusive of the creative development. For instance, street cafe or student common room.

“In-betweenness” is introduced to the urban realm to enhance the urban experience. More specifically in the urban life, it provides a space, where people are softly connect to the city and establish contact with each other.

Part II **“In-betweenness” and urban life**

Since In-betweenness offers the space of having gentle connections between individuals and the city as a whole, to be

in-between is a crucial factor in social relations in urban life. Under the background, that the high density and the fast tempo of a metropolis are more or less giving residents the feeling of compression and anxiety, people need a way to be unconstrained and spontaneous in a conversation as well as in some moments of their daily routine. However, interestingly, In-betweenness might also add density. To deal with the pressure caused by being in rush and high density, in-betweenness promotes spontaneous gathering, prompts the flow of information and the transition of social roles, for instance, from serving to customer, from speaker to listener. The need of being so gives responsibility to “In-between” space, to keep the dynamic flow and active vibration of a city and enable citizens’ participation.

The in-between space allows interaction between individuals.

Urban life is adapted to the daily routine from home to work/campus. Being busy is characteristic of urban life. There are limited chances to connect with others once people are leaving working or studying place.

But in-between space could be porous not only spatially through dense building blocks as a flexible buffer zone but also spiritually through the busy schedule of urban life. As Eduard Hall defined, there are four zones of interpersonal distances, (Hall, 1966: 116). The third zone is social space, for interactions among acquaintances, the majority of social connection. The radius of this zone may be

slightly different to each person caused by different backgrounds and experiences. But the flexibility and porosity of in-between space create the interaction space in different sizes in response. For instance, in a inner garden of campus building, student have the chance to share a bench for two or sit on stairs in groups, with people they know already or just meet. Thus, providing some in-between places, where people feel safe and free, could bound individual more to each other. Therefore more people could involve in the urban life and become part of it, instead of being isolated from hectic urban life.

The in-between space starts the conversation between individual and city.

As we zoom out a little bit, the porosity of In-betweenness in a more abstract way breaks the inherent boundary of city, because it creates the possibility to transmit information through different levels. Eduard Bru has written in the article *Porous Iridescences*: “Turning to my own environment, in the Mediterranean cities the complexity of their history/geography (they go together) frequently gives us a porous order, a porous framework able to offer a diversity of physical havens, ways of life, platforms of meaning and understanding.” Indeed, the platform that this porous order provides, becomes more like a container of absorbing changes and challenges of the city itself. On one hand, transformation of in-between space happens following the urban de-

velopment, and the urban developments is actually a result of human activities (Friedmann, 1986: 69-84). On the other hand, spaces construct the city and the developed city impacts people. As response, thoughts and commons that people have during their adaption have reformed and reshaped the space. Contrary to the old top-down model, the verticality in the new conversation model disappears and it becomes a horizontal circle, where the beginning and the end could be either the same one, which is porosity, or two different versions of porosity, and this circle absorb anything in between.

Part III

Floor plans analysis with participant



Inner garden, TUM Campus

Photo: Cong Liu

observation

In-betweenness is often showing its characteristics, which is emerging softly and quietly at some corner in a busy city. Thus its presence and its effect on the social connection are mostly imperceptible. To further understand and analyse the space and its impact, it is helpful to look at some specific area and to have close observation of people's reaction.

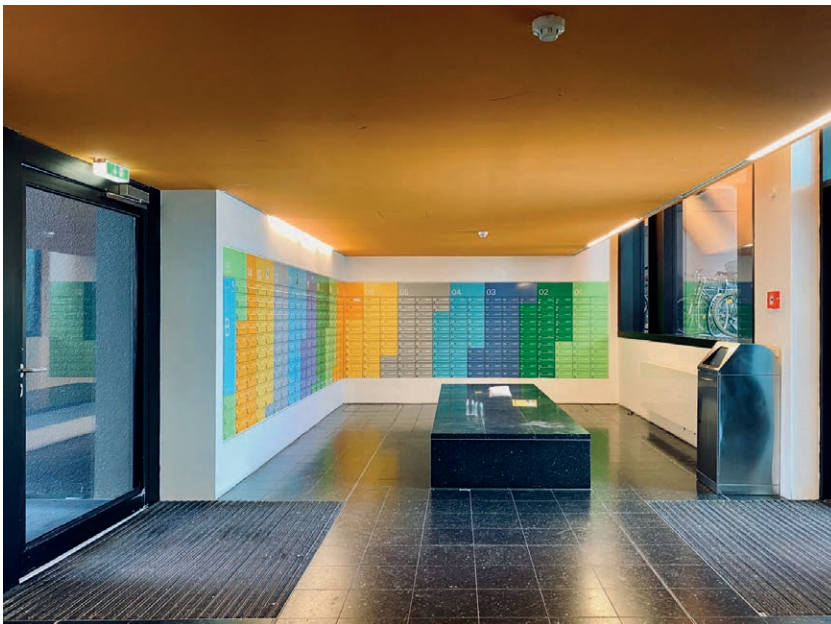
In the entrance hall of the student dormitory Olympiazentrum, the postbox is situated at a separated space from the main entrance circulation area. In the center of this semi-space, the In-betweenness, there is a stone platform with sitting-height. This space seems very normal and plain, but that is this simple facility, which breaks the silence of students who live together but have no trigger to start conversation with each other. Firstly, the semi-space per se is a relative big waiting area, which offers enough place for the needed radius of social zone with the sitting platform (Hall, 1966: 116). So, even in this main entrance, people are relatively relaxed when they are engaging some social interaction. Secondly, this post-

box semi-space encourages students to exchange things because of its location advantage that everyone will pass by this hall when visiting this building. No one could tell, when and how did this charming activity start and how did it spread. But now if you visit the OlyDorf Hochhaus, it is not surprising to see that on the platform there are several second-hand things left by some students, for example, books, class scripts, furnitures or even foods, waiting for their new home. And later other students will check those stuff, when they pass through the entrance hall, and decide whether they are going to pick them up. In this student dormitory community, people move in and out in every time and the personal preference changes. The need for disposing stuffs becomes important and exists constantly, which reshapes the function of the entrance hall to literally a connection point of this residential building.

At the North gate of TUM, a road makes the entrance very crowded. Every day, a large number of students would pass through from the subway station when they come to school. Very shortly people may exchange greetings to each other when they meet friends. It is not

only because of the hurry that people cannot communicate more, but also the limitation of space makes people feel that this is not a suitable place to talk. But across the road, the north building provides a platform for students and faculty to rest and communicate. The front square connecting the North building and the North gate is a space with multiple public functions in between, the "unnamable hybrids" like Koolhaas said. (Koolhaas 959). Not only is it a place to park bikes or rent MVG shared bikes, it's also an ideal place to rest and refresh one's mind. Here, people can be seen sunbathing, drinking coffee, or chatting in small groups. And connection or conversation triggered by renting bike or other occasional events may even happen. The application of this elastic in-between space makes the connection between people more spontaneous. Furthermore, for individuals, it provides a place where people could charge their battery and prepare for their next step. □

Text, photos and sketches: **Cong Liu**



The entrance of students apartments at Olympiadorf, Munich

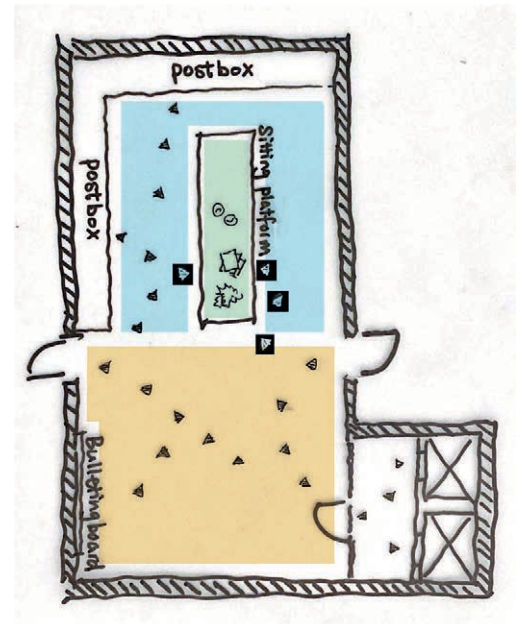
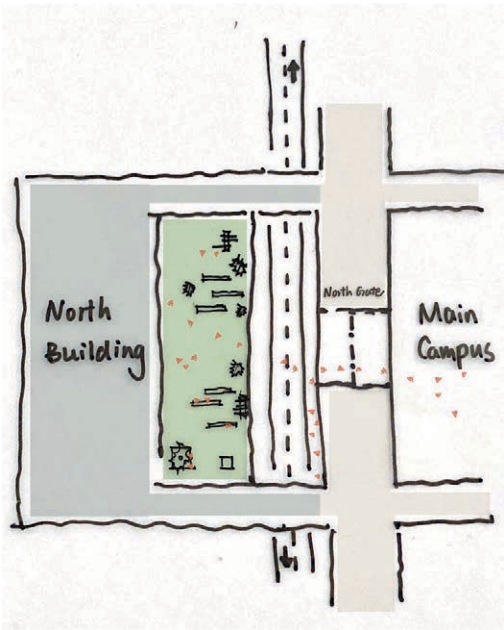


Photo & Sketch: Cong Liu



TUM north gate

Photos & Sketch: Cong Liu

Visible and invisible walls

Elements of exclusion in public space.

Public space as a good for really everybody? Already far back in time public space has often been exclusive - for example the greek "Agora" was only accessible for men. Nowadays the exclusive character of public spaces is reinforced through privatization processes - the following aims to unveil the small scale "symptoms" of these marginalization developments.

The concept of a public space is accessibility for everyone. It should allow for spontaneous interactions between heterogeneous individuals. But is this concept of an egalitarian zone our reality? Two main phenomena are influencing the exclusiveness of public space: In the first case, an increasing amount of privatization and the provision of public-like spaces by private stakeholders is blurring the distinction of the public domain. The line between public and private is becoming more and more difficult to recognize; examples of this include shopping streets and centers or even many train stations owned by business conglomerates and commercial enterprises. These spaces, although seemingly public, are based on consumption and are actually excluding everyone, who is not able to utilize them; for example homeless people are not allowed to stay there. In the second case, the public space itself is designed in a way to exclude certain segments of society. This so called "hostile design" makes it as uncomfortable as possible staying there for a longer time. In both cases "public space" is created with the intension of economic profit and targeting only a specific group of people; processes of marginalization are the result. Areas of closed communities are created without anyone recognizing it.

Quite often it is the small details of a space that reveal for whom the space is meant for and whom it is not. I have talked with people and walked around the city to discover these hidden details; what are the elements telling you to stay away and destroying the option of random interaction of people with a completely different background? What are examples for groups of people that are excluded? And how does closed borders in public space affect the mind of people, who are not welcome? The outcome of this investigation is a documentation of "visible and invisible walls" that create exclusive zones of public space. The case study focuses on four different groups:

Places to be afraid. Exclusion through a lack of safety:

The first picture I could take from different point of views including myself. There are many spaces, that you try to avoid, because you do not feel safe. Excluded is everybody who feels that they are in actual danger or even just uncomfortable. Reasons for feeling vulnerable can be very different; in general, it relates more to females, but also being afraid of racist offensives or just being alone can be the reason. The physical frame for these places are characterized through a poor lightning, low ceiling and large, noisy car streets leading to only few people walking or cycling. Let's start providing safe spaces for everyone?!





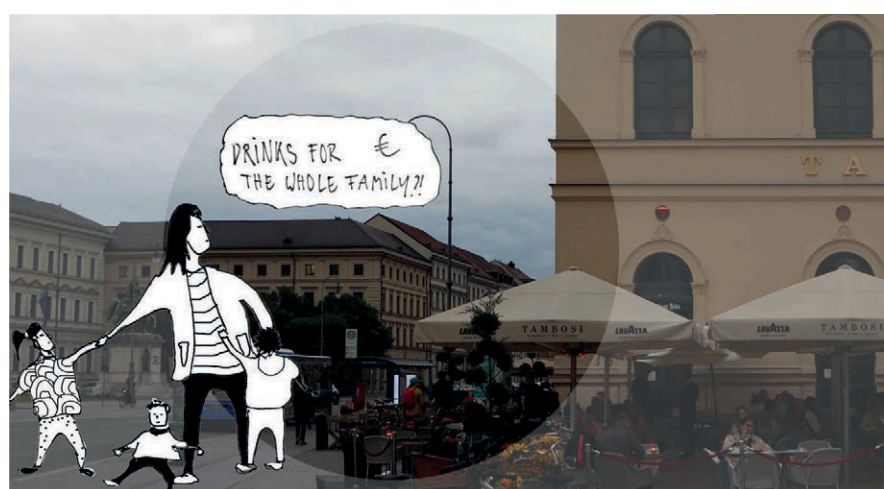
Places not to be.

Exclusion for everybody who wants to linger.

For this picture I talked with a friend, who for one and a half year has been travelling around on the traditional “Walz”. If he doesn’t find work or a place to sleep, he is dependent on the public infrastructure. But many places are designed for the opposite; music in underground stations and uncomfortable sitting places leads to people leaving these places as soon as possible. A heterogenous, socially sustainable city should provide places to be!

Places to pay for. Exclusion through money.

Many places are only created for consumption. If you don’t buy anything there is no place for you to rest. These places obviously exclude people with a low income. What about places where completely mixed people meet randomly instead of sitting divided by their income?



Places out of reach. Exclusion through accessibility.

The topic of building places barrier-free is increasing. But often we forget that it is not just about a second elevator. A bumpy road can also be a [border](#). Furthermore, through always providing two parallel systems for example the ramp next to the staircase, we separate people and as a result the contact between people is minimized. Maybe we could think a bit more in the direction one way for everybody?

After walking around “with open eyes” I got the impression, that almost everywhere spaces are defined by visible and invisible walls. Interestingly these walls are expressed in very different ways; they are the combination of certain structure of the physical and mental space; The physical structure of the public space is maybe easily recognized and could be changed, but this structure is always overlapping with a mental one: Public space has always a certain atmosphere through small details; materials, accessibility, functions,... that are telling you to not access the places without showing directly it. These invisible walls are more difficult to see and cannot be solved only by urban planners. So if we think about public space we should always change the perspective. Looking through the eyes of people that are unrepresented in our society, helps to get one step closer to the utopia of the egalitarian public. □

Text and graphics: **Franziska Mühlbauer**

Residential Common Spaces

The Middle Ground between Private and Public Space

To what extent do common spaces, in a residential context, promote social interaction within the living community? Should those spaces revert to a private domain instead?

Over the last century, the exponential growth of population density in cities has raised concerns about the environmental quality of residential areas. With a growing number of residents inhabiting the same space, there is a need for new design solutions that promote social contact and contribute to the development of a sense of community.

Residential common spaces can be vital to create a fertile ground for social interaction. Spontaneous meetings, developing friendships, activities with children, community events. However, the limited financial resources most housing projects submit to and the desire to turn them as profitable as possible, make it difficult to create such high-quality social contact spaces. These areas tend to be quickly sacrificed. Either they are not even planned in the first place, or they disappear in the course of planning due to insufficient budget.

For the design concepts of these spaces to also work in practice, there are various factors to take into consideration. If the common spaces are reduced to a necessary minimum and not designed to be attractive, there is the possibility they can prevent communication and interaction between the residents, having the opposite effect to desired. Nevertheless, well designed and functioning common spaces can improve the quality and attractiveness of the living environment.

Concept of common space

Common spaces in residential buildings are considered to be semi-public spaces, providing a connection between private space and public space. These can be interior or exterior spaces, to be shared by the residents. Circulation halls, semi-public buffer zones, community

rooms, terraces, balconies, courtyards, amongst others. Common spaces offer the possibility for social interaction in everyday life, something vital for the sense of community. Special attention must be paid to its design. The spatial program should respond accordingly to the resident's needs, which, ideally, should be found out in advance.

Common spaces demand special attributes particularly when it comes to privacy and comfort. The relationship between proximity and distance must be taken into account. A correct balance must be found to avoid, on the one hand, total isolation and, on the other hand, constant contact. The architecture must remain flexible and offer possibilities, rather than intervening in the user's experience. The feeling of social control can be noticeable and the user will choose to avoid that space.

Social Interactions in Common Spaces

Social interactions are essential to obtain a quality living environment within housing projects. The interaction amongst residents depends on various factors and can be influenced by social roles, culture, changing contexts, and situations. High-quality common spaces are proved to have the potential to promote communication and interaction within the community.

Passive Interactions

The first way of social contact within the community is through passive interactions with the neighbors. Random encounters, like waiting for the elevator, can initiate with a simple greeting and small talk and, in the best case, can progress to a pleasant conversation. If passive interactions become more fre-

quent, they can lead to the development of friendships. Social contact is crucial for the consolidation of the living community. A good social contact design should promote beneficial interactions and prevent unhealthy ones, such as the feeling of being watched or being monitored by the community.

Active Interactions

Active interactions are intentional and contribute to a growing sense of community. There is a predisposition from all interacting parts to participate in a specific activity together. Active interactions include activities like drinking coffee, eating together, etc. Active interactions can be divided into informal and formal interactions. Informal active interactions occur in close personal relationships between residents. Formal active interactions, on the other hand, refer to rather organizational meetings between residents.

Proximity, Visibility, Openness, Accessibility

Common areas that are open, visible, and easily accessible tend to be more inviting for a resident to enter. Open spaces will more likely house social interaction than closed rooms. Any kind of physical barrier will diminish the likelihood that a resident will enter the space and initiate social contact.

Even though factors such as openness and visibility might promote social activities at contact spaces, a correct balance, with the addition of spatial boundaries, should be found. For instance, if a common space is located in close proximity to a private space, special attention must be paid to the resident's privacy in order to prevent constant contact. An excessive visual and acoustic per-



A Café between residential buildings in Tirana. Does it count as a common space?

Photo : Prayudi Sudiarto

meability between private and common spaces should be avoided and will most likely cause a negative impact on the residents when the sense of community is not consolidated.

Distribution and Variety

A large variety of common areas distributed along connecting halls increases the chances of social interaction. Particularly in high-density housing projects, such as large buildings and towers, the integration of contact spaces with different qualities and utilities helps to bring the community together.

User Community

In housing projects, residents with a similar social and cultural background, tend to better relate to each other. The social contact design of common spaces should respond accordingly to the resident's needs, and if possible, those preferences should be found out in advance. The idea of suggesting the residents to set up common spaces together is a great incentive for social interaction.

Ownership/Usability/Management of Space

The openness and easy access to common areas can also pose some difficulties concerning the responsibility to arrange such spaces or to pay for the maintenance costs. If the residents participate in the setup of a shared space and are allowed to personalize it, they will most likely develop a better sense of responsibility and care for said space. The usual solution is to limit their use to a specific planned event, for a certain period of time. However, this option disregards the essential qualities associated with the concept of common space, becoming it rather a temporary extension of the private living space than a space designed for social contact between residents.

Multiple Activities

Common areas that combine several activities in a large space have the potential to attract different people and promote interaction across different social groups.

Quality of Space

A correct balance between natural light and artificial light, inviting colors and textures, good acoustics, and comfortable furniture contribute to a high-quality atmosphere in spaces of contact.

Dimension of Space

Large common areas provide greater space for social activities, but if they turn out to be oversized for their purpose, they might feel empty when only a few people are present. □

“

Appropriately sized common areas are simultaneously compact enough to encourage interaction and generous enough to house a range of activities. - (Nugent 2012: 4).

Text: António Cameira Pedro

Making Connections

An Urban View from the ‚Zaunbank‘

Cranes and high-rise office buildings cluster behind the trees. The noise of a construction site mixes with humming bees and bird songs. A while ago, Katrin and Gerd retired from their garden plot, but they continue to visit the allotments, talk to their former neighbours, enjoy the changing scenery of vegetables, shrubs and flowers.

They know the place. For a long time, it had been their green home in the city.¹

Allotment gardens are an urban phenomenon. Their history is linked to the growth of cities and urban agglomerations (BMVBS and BBR 2008: 75). The uses in allotment gardens are to a large degree regulated, conventionalised, and in this sense institutionalised. In Germany, allotments benefit from a special protection status. The gardeners are organised as non-profit associations according to the Federal Allotment Law (‘Bundeskleingartengesetz’). Municipal allotment gardens are rented to individuals at affordable prices. They are in this sense detached from the free market and have escaped the regulated machinery of profitability and “financialisation” (Hesse 2018: 79). Yet, they are also based on a system of privilege – some people are granted rights of use to the exclusion of others. It does not seem to be surprising that this system is *under pressure*, in particular in cities where access to high quality green spaces is limited and rents and property prices high (Matzig 2018). A multitude of different and *conflicting interests* are directed towards allotment gardens and intersect here.

During the opening week of the ‚Zaunbank‘, I took a photo of Katrin and Gerd resting on the newly installed bench. We very much liked the idea that they and other former gardeners, visitors, passers-by, or playing children would be using the bench in the future. Since then, visitors take walks through the allotments as usual, but we noticed that they are reluctant. They wonder whether the bench is intended for public use. They apprehend the inviting gesture, but to them the overall arrangement is unusual, peculiar, not of the familiar kind. We had to put up a sign to provide some additional encouragement.

As a whole, allotment gardens seem to be peculiar places in cities. They often disrupt the urban fabric, with massive



View across allotment gardens towards the high-rise buildings at Arabellapark, Munich

photo: N. Kling

perimeter fencing enforcing the division. People who are not local or familiar with the culture of allotment gardens do not know how and where to get in and often do not feel welcome. At night or during the cold season, most allotment gardens are closed and become impermeable. Clearly, their season is on sunny days. Then, upon crossing the gates, the atmosphere changes, the views become wider, the scenery more inviting, visitors intermingle with gardeners. Yet, feelings of separateness and exclusion are likely to remain, because the local gardeners have access to a garden plot, while visitors are expected to confine their walk to the communal footpaths. Unlike public parks, municipal allotment gardens are for the main part privately used. Public accessibility is restricted.

Allotment associations in urban areas often find themselves confronted with an *ambivalent situation*. It is widely acknowledged that they contribute towards social inclusion, provide environments for well-being, and positively influence the ecological diversity in cities. Yet, at the same time, the privileged use of land and its inaccessibility are ques-

tioned, while the associations’ contributions to the common good (‘gemeinnützig’) are not readily apparent to the broader public. As a response, allotment associations seek to make the gardens more accessible and *establish new connections to local communities*. Visits by school classes, joint projects with kindergartens, gardening workshops, plots for collective gardening and other initiatives provide opportunities for extra access to and contact with the gardens and in this way the benefits of allotments can be shared with a growing number of people. The ‘Park am Gleisdreieck’ provides an example for the full integration of allotment gardens into a public park (Müller 2015). Munich’s allotment head organisation, Kleingartenverband München e.V., welcomes visitors to their website stating that “Munich’s allotments bring *happiness and friends, connect all ages, unite all nations* and contribute towards a healthy climate.” (own translation and emphasis, Kleingartenverband München e.V. 2020)

Despite the allotment associations’ general commitment to such high expectations and goals, it seems that some of them *struggle with the idea of*

opening up and keeping pace with the changes and adaptations demanded from them.

There could be a number of reasons for this. Over decades, allotment associations have established working routines for their administrative requirements as well as for the many everyday tasks of gardening. As in any organisation, justifying the alteration of processes that have proven their effectiveness is difficult and often met with resistances (Schön 1971: 31–60). Urban allotment associations are diverse and include members of all ages. However, the average age of the gardeners is usually higher than the average age of the urban population. Among members, personal safety and fear of vandalism are common concerns. This, in turn, may foster resistances against more openness and the changing of established routines.

Other, less obvious reasons could be located in the spatial aspects that rest in the social construction of collective identities and institutions. From the perspective of the social sciences, notions of community and neighbourhood are related to *concepts of boundaries* and separation (Berking et al. 2006: 9). Social processes of institutionalisation are spatially effective in similar ways. Martina Löw observes that „Institutionalized spaces secure the orderly cooperation of people. They provide security in action, but also restrict the possibilities of action. Both together, the routines of everyday action and the institutionalization of social processes, guarantee the reproduction of social (and thus also spatial) structures“ (Löw 2016 [2001]: 144f), and in this sense contribute towards *resistances to change*. However, the ‘making of contacts’, the opening up of processes and institutionalised spaces, requires commitment to change. Hence, the question arises as to how to approach and overcome this dilemma? Because of the variety of reasons behind the phenomenon, there is no single answer. Could one possible approach be based on introducing gradual change from ‘*within the situation*’, by means of establishing new routines that are closely connected to the *spaces of the everyday*?

The idea for the ‘Zaunbank’ emerged from the observation that allotment associations are looking for new ways of connecting to the local neighbourhoods while struggling with the rigidifying structural conditions they have inherited

from the past. We noticed that the communal footpaths in the allotments are obvious places for people to meet and talk to each other – to ‘make contact’ –, yet are lacking any spatial quality that would support encounters and interaction. We refer to the gravelled and accurately maintained, rectilinear footpaths as the ‘motorways’ of the allotments. Many of them were built during the first part of the 20th century, when efficiency and uniformity and, perhaps, ideas of social equality shaped their basic layout. We took as a starting point the conversation ‘over the fence’, realising that in this everyday situation of small talk the otherwise separating boundary becomes a connecting threshold, a porous space ‘*in-between*’ (Wolfrum et al. 2018).

Spaces of the everyday provide ample opportunities for establishing new connections, literally and conceptually. The everyday is made of situations in which macro and micro-level processes intersect, in which social and material worlds are related to each other in meaningful ways, in which dominant modes of space production encounter *alternative spatial practices* (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]), in which conflict and change are constantly negotiated. For researchers, the everyday offers a vast field for conducting ethnographic research, as well as the observing of and connecting to different phenomena, issues and people (Kling and Kurbasik 2018; Schwanhäusser 2016).

The Zaunbank is conceived as a device for ‘*making contacts*’. As a bench, it provides the spatial setting for everyday human interaction. It is meant to make people feel more welcome, to encourage longer stays, conversations, accidental encounters, contemplation. As a conceptual tool, it establishes con-

nections to urban and architectural discourses, the political, and the social. For us, it seemed to make sense to keep the bench as simple as possible. It is a do-it-yourself prototype that can be easily replicated with the means available in allotment gardens, a trial in terms of building technique, process and effects. Only a few things are required for its realisation: The willingness of gardeners to dedicate a small part of their garden plot to public use, and a few tools and materials to build a bench. The procedure is straightforward and minimal-invasive. The fence is sliced from top to bottom. The sections are folded towards the inside to accommodate the bench. What previously defined a rigid border between inside and outside has now become part of an invitation, a small gesture of openness and welcome.

We conceived the project as process in which we could introduce the intervention to the gardeners in a *step-by-step process*. Initial interviews and conversations were followed by constructing the bench on site. Both, bench and fence, moved to the local exhibition space Lothringer13, where they participated in the Munich Architecture Award Exhibition (‘Förderpreise der Landeshauptstadt München’) (Lothringer13 2020). During this period, a sign in the allotment garden provided information about the project and invited visitors and gardeners to inspect the installation in the exhibition hall. Finally, the bench and fence returned to their present location in the allotment gardens of ‘Kleingartenverein NO 17 Donau-Neuland e.V.’ in Munich for the length of the gardening season.

So far, the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Because of the general restrictions on gatherings, we split the opening event across the length of a week, and it was on this occasion that we met Katrin and Gerd. With the Zaunbank now in place, they may, perhaps, come more often for their occasional visits, to enjoy the changing scenery of vegetables, shrubs and flowers, and the peculiar views across the garden plots towards the cranes and the city. □



Katrin and Gerd on the ‘Zaunbank’

photo: N. Kling

Text: Norbert Kling

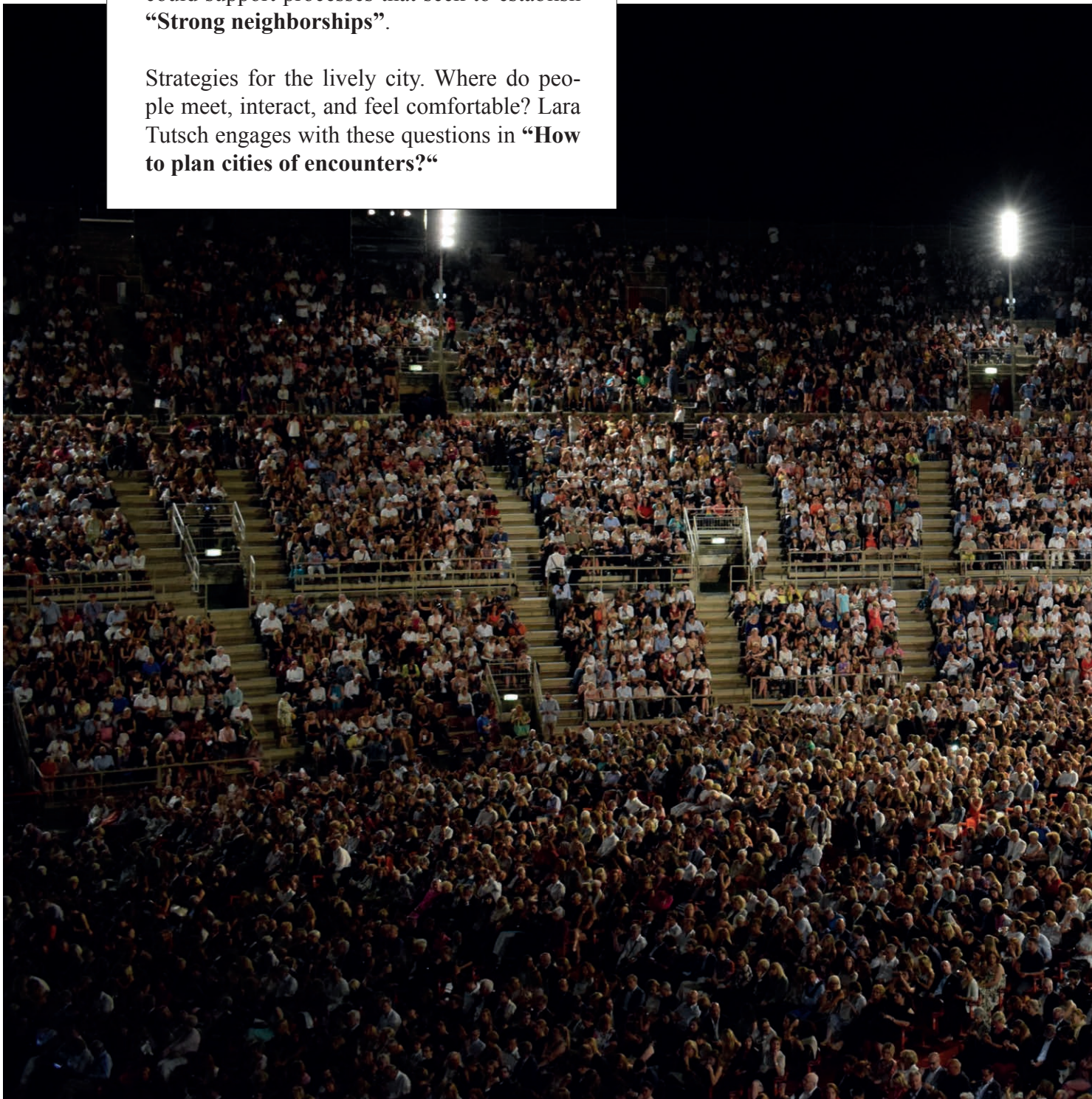
¹ I use pseudonyms to ensure the anonymity of the gardeners. Some of the claims made in this article are based on the author’s participant observations and conversations held with members and visitors of the allotment association ‘Kleingartenverein NO 17 „Donau-Neuland“ e.V.’. Further information could be obtained through a semistructured interview with members of the board of Munich’s allotment union (Kleingartenverband München e.V.) on 20.02.2020. I would like to thank both organisations for their interest and support.

The zaunbank project was conceived and realised by Norbert Kling and Carsten Jungfer (zectorarchitects London/Munich), in February 2020

Why share? Florian Perkuhn critically reflects on existing and emerging concepts of flat-sharing and communal living in the article **“Community as a Service”**.

Hans Richter illustrates in a step-by-step synthesis how architectural and spatial qualities could support processes that seek to establish **“Strong neighborhoods”**.

Strategies for the lively city. Where do people meet, interact, and feel comfortable? Lara Tutsch engages with these questions in **“How to plan cities of encounters?”**



Arena di Verona

TOWARDS COMMUNITY



Photo: Spyridon Nektarios Koulouris

OFFER

21m² furnished room: 1.500 €/mo

21 m² room in flat-sharing community in Munich, Old Town. The apartment is located right **next to the Viktualienmarkt**. The total size of the flat is **189 m²** and has six rooms plus two shared bathrooms, a kitchen and living room with access to the **balcony**.

All bills and following services included: **cleaning** of common areas 2 times a week and cleaning of private rooms once a week.

Furthermore, **basic supplies** such as toilet paper, paper towels, salt, pepper, oil, coffee, tea, etc.)

The room inventory: Side-table with lamp, desk with chair and lamp. **Quality bed** and bed storage. Cabinet with hangers and drawers. Bed blanket, artwork and plants.

Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com
Room	hello@joinlifex.com

Community as a Service

All over the globe investors are hyped to develop co-living and co-working spaces. Especially in Germany residential communities are very common and often pursue more than the purpose of saving money. Do the newly emerging co-living businesses bring relief to the real estate market or will they further push prices and reduce the ideas behind communal living to a mere selling strategy?

The encyclopedia 'Wikipedia' defines a residential community, also called flat-sharing community, as a living together in a flat or house of at least two people who are independent and often not related. Bathroom, kitchen and living room will be shared in general (Wikipedia 2020). In Germany residential communities have a long tradition and are very popular. This type of living is common since the 60's. Mainly students began to share their spaces to live with others for cost and community aspects. Before that time communal living was more driven by housing shortage. Nowadays, the share of people living in a residential community is increasing year by year. In Germany currently about 4.89 million people are living in a residential community according to a survey from 2017 (Koecher 2017). It is still the students amongst which this kind of living is preferred. In fact over one third of all students are living in a residential community and hence is rather common than living at the parents house or alone (DZHW 2017). Often the main and most prominent aspect is to save money. Especially in Germany in most cities living in a residential community is less expensive than living in a single room flat. This has also been figured out in a study by Immowelt (2014). However, for many other living in a residential community the economic purpose is not the key aspect. For instance, the search on a random basis for residential communities with and without the economic purpose in Munich on the website 'wg-gesucht.de' on the 18th of June 2020 results an offer of

860 rooms in residential communities without specific purpose and 472 rooms in residential communities for the purpose of saving money. This snapshot of the current market shows that the interest in community is twice as high as the sole interest in saving money. Another example beside students are elderly people who are more and more enjoying the benefits of communal living. They cohabit to avoid loneliness in old age and help each other in daily challenges (Kleber 2015).

In the era of shared economy, new buzzwords like co-housing, co-working and co-living are emerging. But what does the prefix 'co' exactly mean and is there anything new or just a rebrand of something that already exists?

The 'co' doesn't always have the same meaning. For example, in terms of co-working it can be defined as 'coexist' (Lodato 2016). Whereas, in terms of living the 'co' is best defined as 'community'. In general, it can be said that the concept of sharing is a key aspect in all of these words and they are a part of the sharing economy. There is no general definition of sharing economy (Roh 2016). It is a new economy sector which allows to share all kinds of assets and services between their users.

Moreover, co-living is indeed not a new type of living. The archetype of residential living dates back to the beginning of human kind. But these days, companies pick-up the idea of communal living, starting to run this professionally and are branding it trendily 'co-living'. Providers in Germany, such as LifeX or Quarters, offer single rooms in residential communities. They buy large

and top-located flats in popular cities, renovate and refurbish them to generate a high profit. Initially these companies wanted to reach a very special type with their business model: The so called 'digital nomad' (Elgan 2009). A new way of working in the globalised world. These people work mainly for technology companies without a dedicated location or office space. Often such tech companies hold offices scattered all over the world. The employees get to pick their work location based on their preference. It is common practice to switch locations after a few months or years. Employees can work six months of the year in San Francisco and the other six months in Munich. Likewise, many students are following the same way of living. Bachelor's degree in Italy, master's degree in Australia and in between an internship in South Africa. The opportunities are unlimited. But how does the social part of communal living and a profit-oriented service fit together?

One advantage and disadvantage at the same time of a co-living space in comparison to 'normal residential community' is that the community has no obligations like cleaning up the space. The offer which is given at the beginning of this article shows all services which are included in the total price. Hence, all residents can focus on the community and their free time. Further, no strict rules and hierarchy are needed. Generally, no one has any advantage or disadvantage because of their time of stay or age. The only rules to guarantee a good cohabitation are already defined since the move-in like all spaces are clearly separated

beyond the own room such as your own shelf in the fridge to avoid those points of friction. Therefore, it can be argued that the social relationship between the residents can evolve as free as possible. On the other side there is the argument that furnished households with all bills and services included jeopardise the main aspects of a communal living. Housekeeping activities foster social interactions and relations between flat-mates. Cleaning up the flat together can be super fun and strengthen the social behaviour of an individual. If there are no obligations to interact in the community the risk rises that residents withdraw from any kind of contact.

As mentioned before, co-living spaces are offered especially to young professionals who often want to be flexible as much as possible. This flexibility is also supported by the providers in form of short-term rent options and easy termination clauses. All those services and the top-located apartments result in high rental prices. The average rental price of a co-living space is 50% higher than the average flat price for a flat up to 30 m² in Munich. The average rental price in Munich is 28,59 €/m² in 2019 (Landeshauptstadt München 2019) and for instance the average price for a co-living space of the provider LifeX is 43,62 €/m² (LifeX 2020). Since the general rental prices in Munich are already very high and causing trouble, even less people are able to afford co-living flats. This means that this offer is rather for a special group of people who earns or has enough money to spend. The barrier of high rents may cause a social exclusion and limits diversity in the community. Despite this, the communities in co-living spaces may still be culturally diverse, reflecting the cross-border mobility of the main target group and the providers' policy to welcome all residents (as long as they pay the rent). Actually, the providers are advertising the globally backgrounded communities in their facilities. Therefore, they support diversity and appreciate to create multicultural communities. But how the procedure exactly works is not transparently given and does not allow a fundamental assessment of diversity aspects. Additionally, there are also 'local residents' who want to live in a globally settled community. The provider LifeX writes on the homepage that around 20% of the residents in their accommodations in Munich are from

Munich (LifeX 2020). In this way, the residents get access to the 'local community' more easily. It can be said that co-living providers are not directly interested in whether or not the community is working well despite a better harmonizing community would create less fluctuation and potentially less loss of rent which is again in their interest.

On the other side, non-professional co-living spaces are not much more socially diverse, in general. Online searching platforms such as 'wg-gesucht.de' are giving the possibility to specify the search of new roommates. For example, the filters are: residential communities only for women or men, students, professionals or seniors and also special interests such as veganism are assignable. Thus, social exclusion cannot be accused generally against professional co-living spaces. And in comparison to a 'normal residential community' there is no clear differentiation possible if those communities are more or less diverse because there are no specific studies about diversity.

The demand of single-household flats is increasing from 34% in 1991 to 42% in 2015 and the same time the demand of large flats (flats for a household of more than three persons) is decreasing from 35% in 1991 to 24% (Koecher 2017). This trend is forecast to continue regarding urbanization and the rise of living alone people. The co-living companies are looking for large apartments like four-room flats and larger. The more rooms the better. Usually, the co-living providers don't build their own houses and try to buy or rent existing facilities. Therefore, it could be assumed that they additionally burden rental market but they are generally after large flats where the demand is lower. The argument, that they are also pushing the rental prices should not be generalized. But, if they are growing rapidly and the demand of flats of any size will arise, they can become a relevant market driver. Additionally, this is and won't be a solution to decrease or even slow down rental prices, because they are interested in increasing prices to generate higher profit through higher rental prices.

There is one important thing which is in the interest of city's governments, more specifically of a society and hard to create artificially. Often, in co-living and co-working spaces synergetic effects occur (Baruah and Paulus 2020).

In those global communities people are living with different cultures and professions. So, there is the possibility that something new like a creative 'mini silicon valley' can be created. Additionally, living in a residential community is in general supportable by a society in fact of community and social behavior. Irene Nierhaus, professor at the University of Bremen, said in an interview with Geyer (2020) for the political magazine 'fluter' that there are tendencies which support the thesis people who are living in communities are more political and have a brighter understanding of society. Unfortunately, there is no specific study which deals explicitly with that thesis.

In conclusion, in fact of the given services and the total-furnished apartment a part of individualism and creativity is taken away in comparison to 'normal' flat-sharing communities. Nevertheless, the business model is highly recommendable in fact of diversity and support of individual behaviour. Furthermore, it avoids loneliness in cities.

In my opinion a co-living provider cannot be called a social impact company, because of their profit orientation. But it can be called like that to some extent if a solidary concept will be implemented. For instance, in a co-living apartment with five residents, they can ensure that one of them who has less income will be supported financially by the more prosperous. If four out of five will pay for example 25€ more than the actual rental price, they would collect 100€ as a discount for the less wealthy person. I'm convinced that would create a closer community and greater diversity.

And last, but not least, those business models are applicable to other groups in our society. Especially elderly people have a high potential to be another main target group in the future in fact of ageing of the population. At a certain point people are depending on specific services such as providing every-day products and care services which are easily implementable in those business models. It would be a perfect service for older people who don't want to live in a retirement home and still prefer to live and stay in contact with other individuals. □

Text and graphics: **Florian Perkuhn**

STRONG neighborships a shared key to communal space

In times of the increasing social individualization of our society, new forms of living together obtain popularity. Creating strong neighborships through common spaces inside apartments, residential buildings and neighbourhoods can be a possible approach to this matter. The following infographic, inspired by realised projects, is to be understood as an “architecture medley” rather than an urbanistic experiment and introduces the complex and sensitive topic of strong and healthy neighborships.

Text and graphics: **Hans Richter**

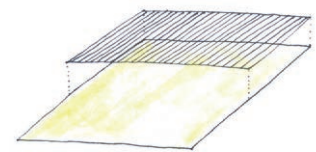
1. Building groups bring the future neighbours together through the creation process alone.

The civic association ‚Forum Vauban‘ in the city of Freiburg/Germany was able to implement common ideas as a building group in consultation with the city. In Vauban, people with a project idea come first, not investor or architect.



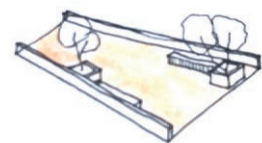
2. Covered open spaces enable neighbourly gatherings even in bad weather.

The conversion of the shed hall in the velvet weaving mill (Samtweberei) in Krefeld/Germany is beneficial for the entire district. Situated in an inner courtyard, it offers the residents of the quarter a multifunctional, largely covered area. The residents of the ‘Samtweberei’ are volunteers and offer a varied programme in addition to daily activities.

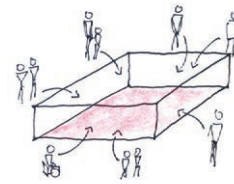


3. Bridges in between buildings create spaces of encounter for residents of different buildings.

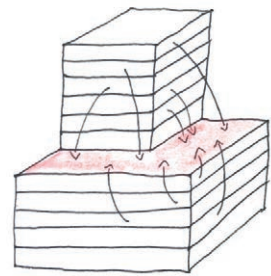
The ‘Wagnis Art’ project in Munich/Germany particularly promotes community through connecting bridges, spacious community terraces and two roof gardens with vegetable and flower beds



4. Common rooms invite residents of a building to meet each other in a place which is neither private apartment, nor public street. The residential building designed by Florian Nagler Architekten at Dantebad in Munich/Germany accommodates different spaces for shared use. Shared deck-access to the apartments and access to common rooms is provided at both ends of the building, while the roof terrace offers spaces for play, sunbathing and vegetable growing.



5. Common spaces can be created individually together and provide niches for communication between neighbours. The 'Caritas Lebenshaus St. Leonhard' in Frankfurt am Main consists of a nursing home, rental apartments, a kindergarten and Caritas offices, which are arranged around a common inner courtyard. Besides the latter there is a generous common balcony for all residents and visitors of the nursing home.



6. Traffic-calmed streets offer community-promoting leisure and play areas in the street space.

The quarter in Vauban in Freiburg is traffic-calmed and thus offers community-promoting leisure and play areas in the street space.



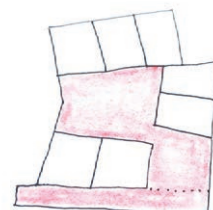
7. Voluntary work in the house community bring residents together.

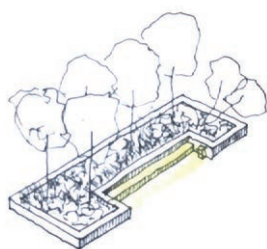
The 'Gleis 21 construction project' in Vienna encourages adult residents to spend ten to 15 hours per month in the house community, which is supported by common areas such as a roof terrace, a library, and a community house with kitchen and games room, sauna and meditation room.



8. Cluster apartments consist of private apartments connected through common spaces such as living rooms, kitchens and generous corridors.

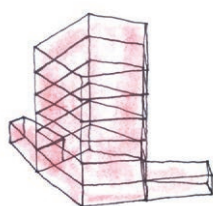
The Spreefeld Berlin eG promotes communal living and neighbourly cooperation and allows the residents to compose their own shared common spaces such as kitchens, balconies and gardens through working together.





9. Small open spaces are an indispensable component of open space provision, especially for people with limited mobility, such as children or elderly people.

Studio Dietikon would like to upgrade remaining areas in the city of Dietikon/Switzerland and convert them into small open spaces with quality of dwelling.



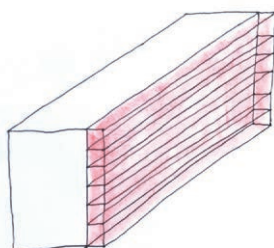
10. The staircase in the atrium is located inside the building and offers the residents rooms of encounter through generous galleries.

The residential building at Genossenschaftsstraße 16 in Zurich/Germany, which was planned by Duplex Architekten, contains such an access room. Five storeys deep, it is lit via skylights and forms the centre of the cooperative residential building.



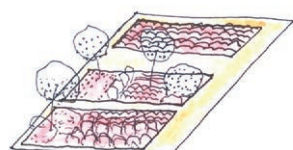
11. Resident surveys provide information on how residents of a neighbourhood imagine living together and how they envisage good public spaces.

The Mobile Studio Dietikon moves through the neighbourhoods in the city of Dietikon/Switzerland to listen and look.



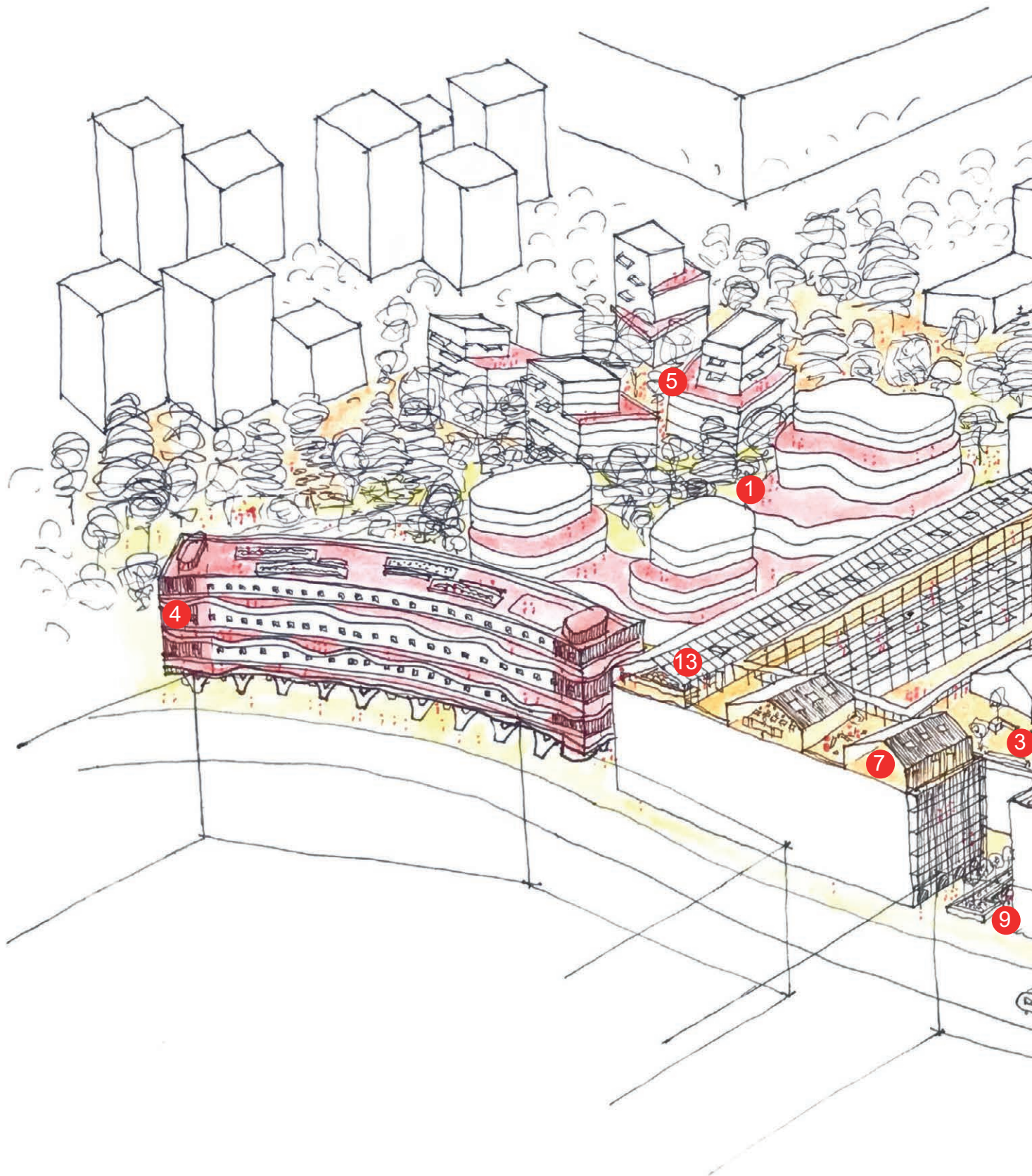
12. Access balconies can be designed in a variety of ways as threshold spaces for encounters and coexistence between the public and private spheres.

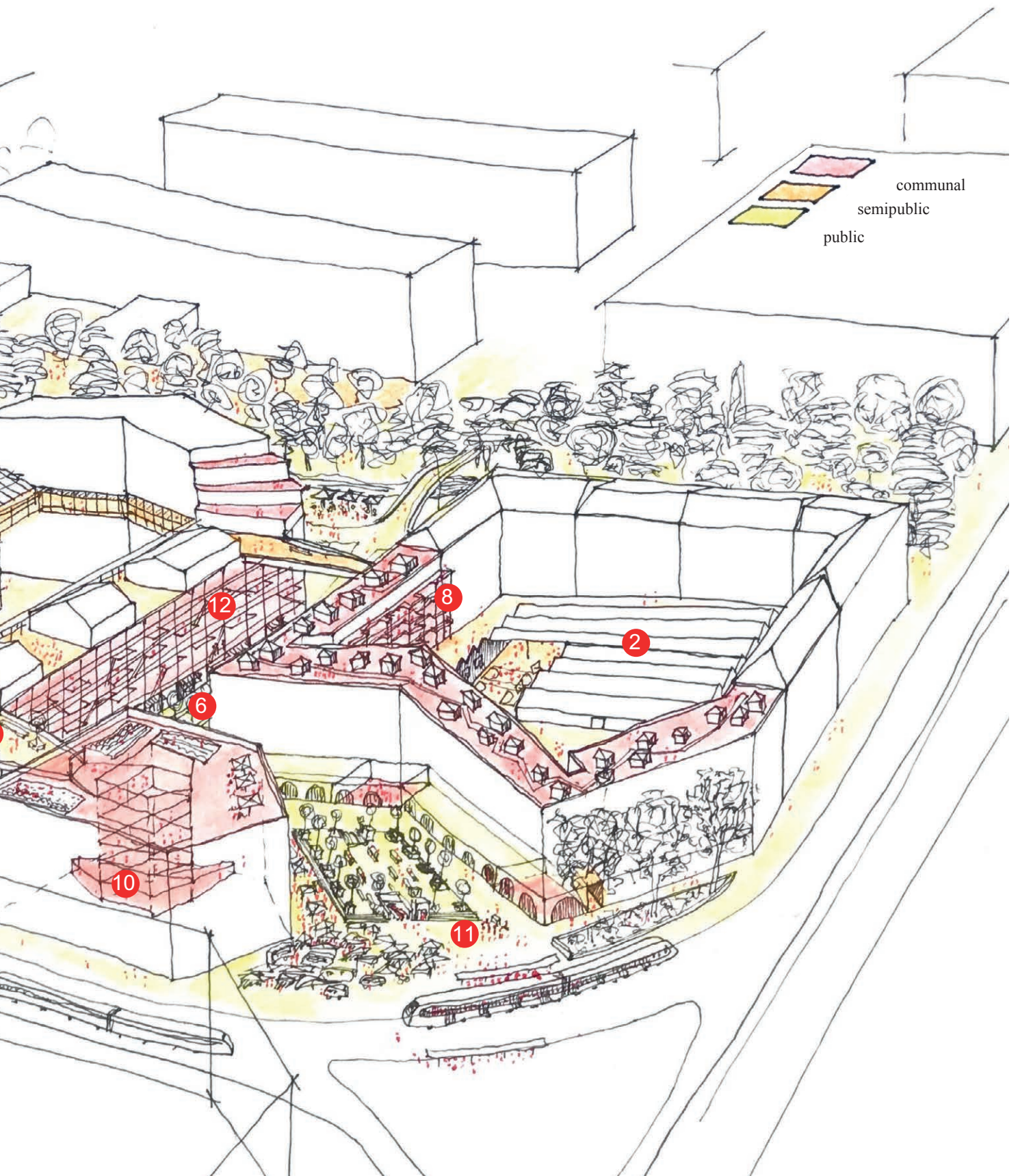
The Belgradstraße residential complex in Munich was designed by the architects bogevischs buero and, by means of an access balcony that is set back from the house wall, discreetly promotes the togetherness and meeting of the residents.



13. Urban gardening areas, in the form of raised beds in inner courtyards, greenhouses on roofs or shared cultivation areas in the nearest park, bring together residents of a house or neighbourhood through shared passion.

The GallusGarten project in Frankfurt am Main/Germany was initiated by neighbourhood initiatives and offers residents of the neighbourhood the opportunity to practise communal urban gardening in the middle of the city.





HOW TO PLAN CITIES OF ENCOUNTERS?

If the city is a place where all kinds of encounters are possible, and if we think of engaging with others as a special urban quality, how can we create places that support encounters? Are there some general rules?

Social contact describes any interpersonal form of communication and interaction. According to Edward T. Hall (Hall 1990: 113-125), there are four types of contact that differ in the distance at which people interact with each other: The intimate distance (0-45cm), the personal distance (45-120cm), the social distance (120-375cm) and the public distance (> 375cm). The first three contact distances describe active contacts, for example, two people who meet for dinner. Active contacts are often planned contacts between people who already know each other. One person actively reacts to the behavior of the other person. Public distance, on the other hand, refers to passive types of contacts between people, who usually do not know each other. Passive contact, in contrast to active contact, can be one-sided and is often without direct interaction: for example, observing and listening to people in the environment. Passive and active contact differs in the intimacy of the contact as well as in the activity of the participants and their social relationship.

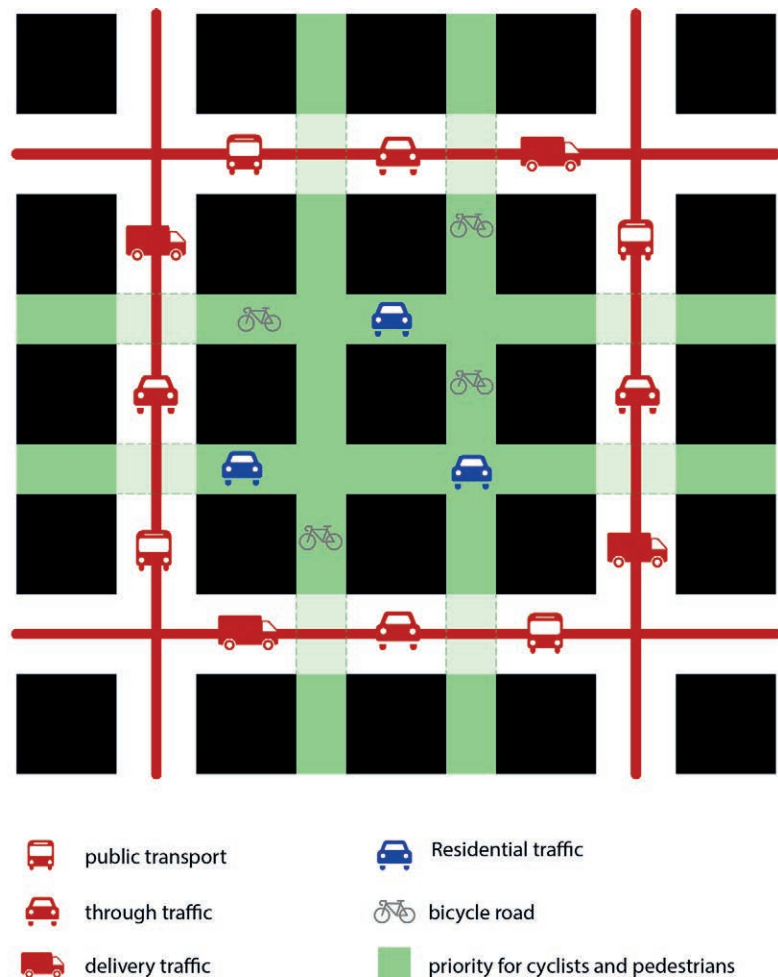
In the following rules, we take a closer look at the contacts in the public distance, because seeing, being seen and hearing are the most basic forms of contact that can best be influenced by urban interventions. „Built offers“ largely determine whether a public space is suitable as a meeting place or not (Gehl 2010: 37).

If contacts are supposed to be established in public spaces, the citizens of a city must be encouraged to spend time at these places. People stay longer and more often in places where they feel safe as well as in urban areas that are bustling and green. If the social behaviour of the city's inhabitants is supposed to be positively influenced, architects and urban planners have to create an environment in which contact can take place. But what does a city look like that supports the encounters of the inhabitants?

1. EYES ON THE STREET

People only stay in places where they feel safe. If we want to create safe cities, we first have to understand the sources of danger in a city. The two most significant dangers of cities come from traffic and crime (Gehl 2010: 110)

Motorized traffic is particularly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic keeps many citizens from using their bikes or walking because they do not feel safe. Non-motorized traffic is one of the most important elements for a bustling road space (Gehl 2010: 90). If bustling roads are supposed to be created, the user's sense of safety must be strengthened by giving a higher priority to footpaths and bicycle paths than to streets (Gehl 2010: 115). Examples in Denmark or the Netherlands show that a big and safe offer of footpaths and bicycle paths significantly increases the use of them (Monheim 2020: 27). If more people use their bikes or walk, traffic is automatically slowed down. This has a positive effect on people's social behaviour. Slow traffic offers an opportunity to get into contact with each other. As a pedestrian or cyclist, you stop more



alternative road system, priority for pedestrians and cyclists

Graphic: Lara Tutsch

often and perceive your environment more consciously, but as a motorist you move so fast that it is almost impossible to get into contact with the other people on the road and anonymous and inanimate cities are created.

The presence of others conveys a sense of security (Gehl 2010: 118). On the other hand, a neglected lonely street conveys the feeling of danger. The Broken Windows effect even assumes that only the slightest sign of neglect can be the source of vandalism and crime (Oberzaucher 2017: 189). The most effective way to prevent crime and vandalism is by revitalising a street. This can be achieved by neighbors who are identifying with the urban space. Incentives for this could be, for example, urban gardening or play streets (Oberzaucher 2017: 190) But also lively ground floor areas, for example, restaurants, shops and offices can contribute significantly to a vibrant street that is busy almost around the clock (Gehl 2010: 118-120).

In order to strengthen the feeling of safety and security and thus to increase the willingness to stay in the urban space, street spaces must be enlivened. This can be achieved on the one hand by promoting walking and cycling, and on the other hand by preventing crime, through the appropriation of urban spaces by the neighborhood.

2. MIXED USES FOR VIBRANT CITIES

Mixed uses bring people from a wide range of cultural groups, social groups, and interest groups together and ensure a diversity of city life. A lively urban space is created when the functions of living and working as well as leisure are present in a district. Public spaces, which allow for a wide range of uses for all generations, bring many different inhabitants together. This is the basis for social contacts (Gehl 2010: 80). The function of leisure is especially important for the design of public spaces. Sports and games are among the most important and most frequently practiced leisure activities, so these should be considered in the planning.

Mixed use can facilitate the emergence of contact between different groups.



mixed uses

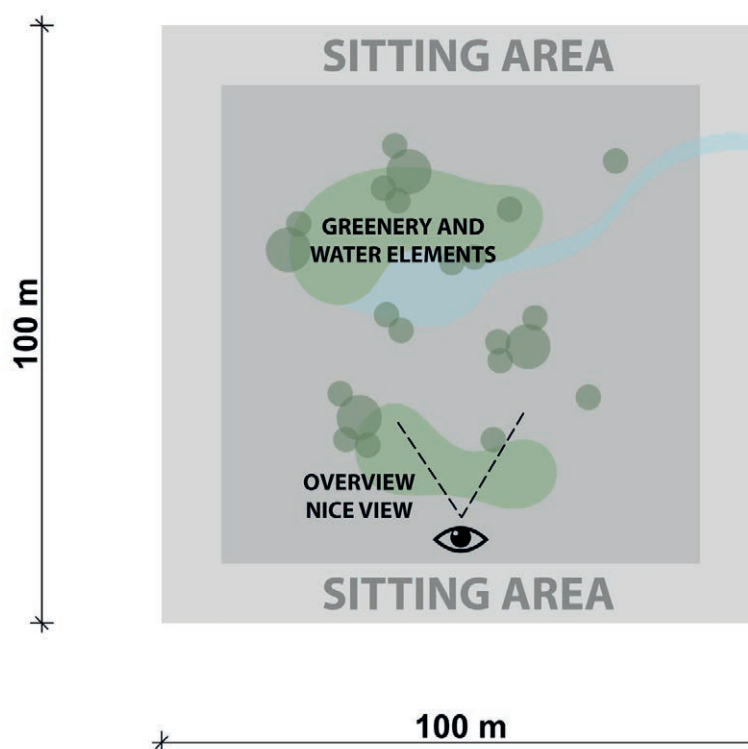
Graphic: Lara Tutsch

3. PUBLIC SPACES TO STAY

The time of stay and the contact behaviour of the residents in public spaces can be positively influenced by certain design rules and elements.

The human eye can detect movement and body language approximately from 100m. From this distance, passive contact can take place at the public distance. If there is a larger distance, contact in any form is no longer possible. Therefore, the length of 100m should not be exceeded when planning urban spaces (Gehl 2010: 50).

By observing the behavior of people in public spaces, it quickly becomes clear that the people who want to stay, are looking for a place on the edge, in the middle there are only people who pass the place. The Prospect Refuge Theory by the geographer Jay Appleton describes exactly this behavior of humans. It says that we prefer to stay in places where we have a good overview, but at the same time a protected back, to not be surprised from the back (Ellard 2015: 41). That is why seats should be placed at the edge or at least have a protected back. Seats in the corners are par-



design parameters for public places

Graphic: Lara Tutsch

ticularly popular. The number and distance between seats are also important. According to the contact distances of Edward T. Hall, proximity to unknown people causes stress and discomfort (Oberzaucher 2017: 57). Therefore, the distance between the groups should be at least equal to the public distance of 3.75m.

In many cities it can be observed that people especially like to gather in green places as well as at the water. The biologist Edward O. Wilson established the previously unproven biophilia hypothesis for this human behavior. This states that humans are attracted to nature for genetic reasons (Wilson 1984: 1). Even if the biophilia hypothesis is unproven, numerous well-attended parks and green places prove that the inhabitants

of a city like to stay there. A study investigated the contact behavior and length of stay of visitors at a shopping center in two different situations: with a fountain and without a fountain. The result showed that visitors stopped more often at the fountain and the contact behaviour was also positively influenced (Oberzaucher 2017: 84-85). The integration of greenery and water elements can increase the popularity of a square and should be considered when planning public spaces.

The social behavior and the contact-behavior of people in public places can be positively influenced by an appropriate proportion of the space, the arrangement of the seats at the edge zones, as well as by greenery and water elements.

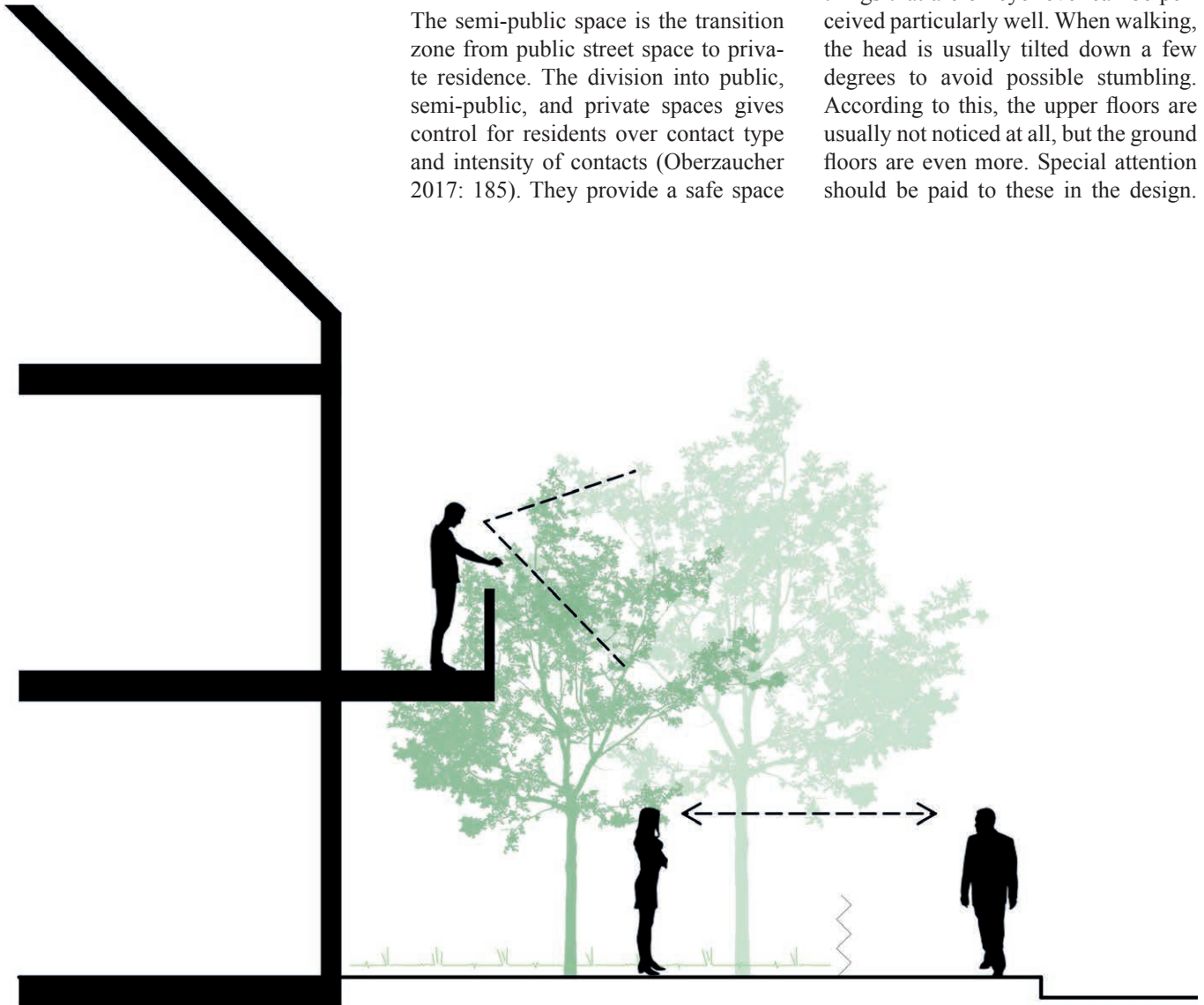
4. SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

The semi-public space is the transition zone from public street space to private residence. The division into public, semi-public, and private spaces gives control for residents over contact type and intensity of contacts (Oberzaucher 2017: 185). They provide a safe space

for contacts and contribute significantly to the vitality of the neighbourhood (Gehl 2010: 105). Semi-public zones can be used for both, active and passive contacts: observing pedestrians from a sheltered room or a talk with the neighbor. A semi-public zone can be a front yard, balconies or even courtyards.

Semi-public zones provide the ability to make contacts in a safe and familiar space at a controllable distance.
5. OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND

The height of the building must also be taken into account if we want to facilitate contacts between the inhabitants, because from a certain height it is practically impossible to communicate with the street level. In order to define an appropriate height of the building, the function and capacities of our sensory organs must be considered. Especially things that are on eye-level can be perceived particularly well. When walking, the head is usually tilted down a few degrees to avoid possible stumbling. According to this, the upper floors are usually not noticed at all, but the ground floors are even more. Special attention should be paid to these in the design.



Front yards as an example of a transition zone

Graphic: Lara Tutsch

In his book *Cities for People*, Jan Gehl states that contact with the street level is only possible up to five storeys, but perfect communication (speaking and hearing) works well only up to the third floor.

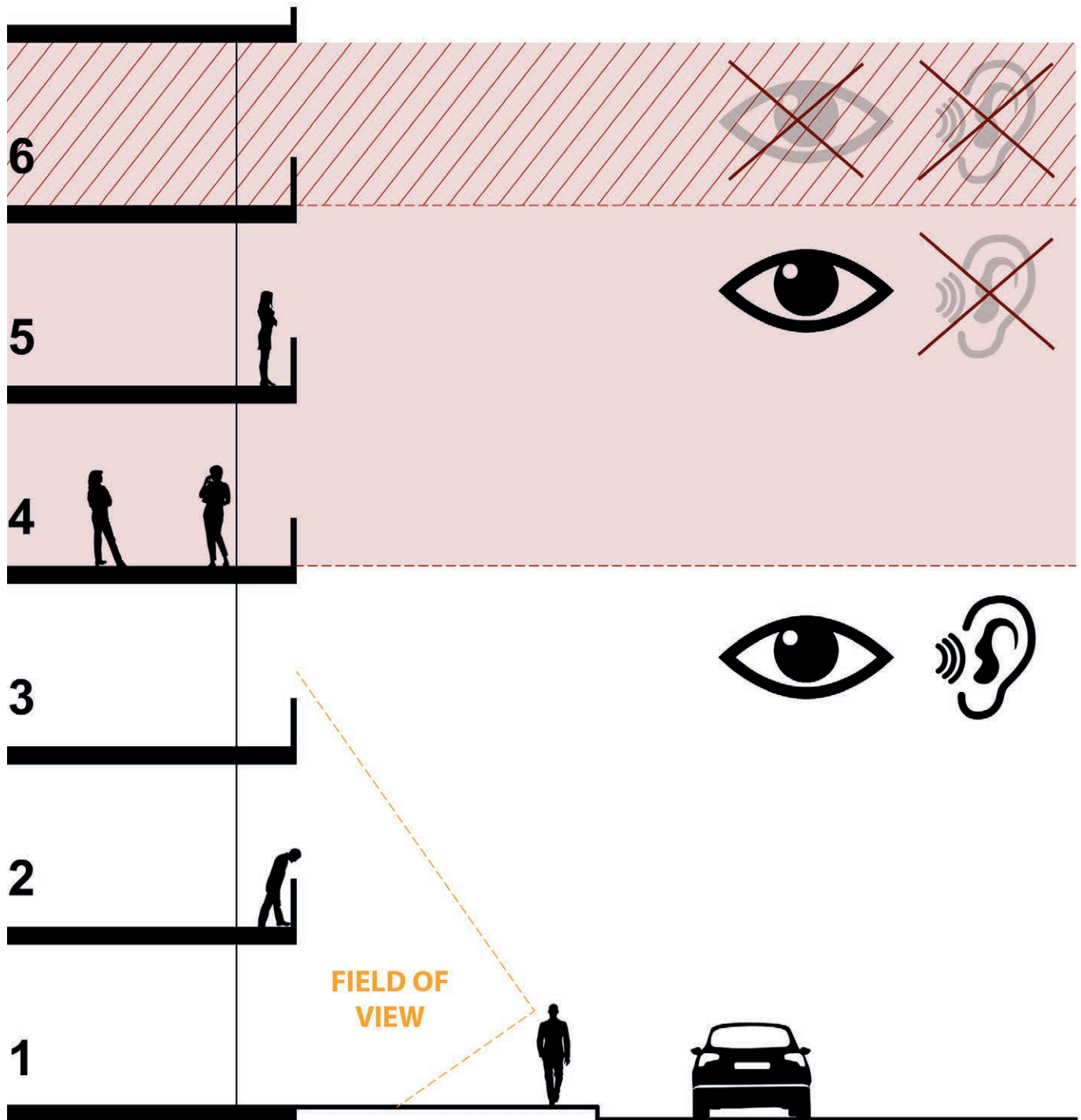
According to this observation, residential units from the sixth floor are completely excluded from city life (Gehl 2010: 55-60).

There are no precise rules on how to design cities, that support encounters and

contacts, because each city is different and has to be considered individually. Whether a concept works not only depends on the quality of the concept, but also on the willingness of the residents to get in touch with each other. As an architect and urban planner, you can only provide a built offer, whether and how this is used is not influenceable. Nevertheless, general knowledge can be gained about well-functioning public spaces: without the feeling of security, no one will stay in public space longer than necessary. The outbound danger

of motorised traffic can be minimized by prioritising pedestrians and cyclists. But the feeling of security alone does not constitute quality places where people like to stay. Well-proportioned, green spaces with seating, various leisure activities, beautiful views, and the many factors that are outside the control of the architect may jointly influence the contact behavior and well-being of people in the city in positive ways. □

Text and graphics: **Lara Tutsch**



communication with street level depending on building height

Graphic: Lara Tutsch

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Spyridon Nektarios Koulouris Spyridon Nektarios Koulouris studied Architecture at the TU Munich and the IUAV University in Venice. He is now doing a Master in Urbanism and believes that the pandemic forced us to re-experience our domestic space in a new, “intimate” way. He wonders if this process has possibly uncovered weaknesses or hidden potentials in our dwelling spaces, which have yet to be spatially addressed.

TEAM!



Lara Tutsch studied architecture at the Hochschule Darmstadt and she is now doing a Master at the TU Munich. She is interested in how to positively influence the social behavior of people in cities with build offers.



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Hans Richter is studying Architecture at the TU Munich and did an exchange semester at the UFRJ University in Rio de Janeiro. In his studies he is interested in ecological sustainability, social equality and participative project development.



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Franziska Mühlbauer studied architecture at the Bauhaus-University Weimar, Universidad de Granada, NTNU Trondheim and is now doing her Master at the TU Munich. She believes that public space is only working if everybody can be part of it. Therefore, we should walk around with "open eyes" and actively remove elements which present boarders for certain individuals.



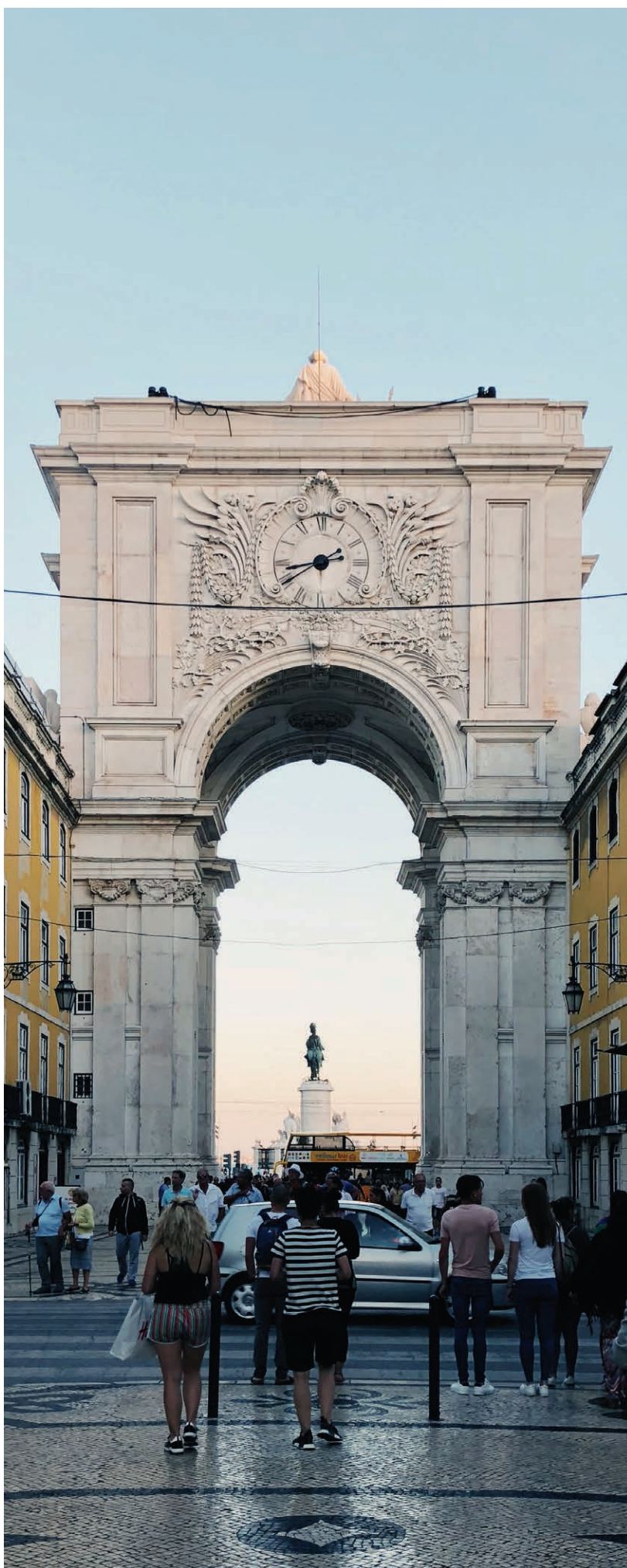
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