HIDDEN SPACES
REIMAGINING THE LIBRARY

BY ANTONIO SEGURA

THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE EXPANSION

CONTEXT

The array of 300x300mm concrete panels on the square depicts a page from a book, where one corner pull up to reveal, both metaphorically and physically, a new place to discover.

The public library is located at the cross between Odengatan and Sveavägen. The site offers both a hill, square, urban buildings and a pond. My expansion to the library takes place behind and under Asplund’s iconic building, Railway. The pair to the north is the Tunnelbana and the four to the south is the Citybanan.

This section depicts how the expansion begins at the street level on Sveavägen and continues through the basement of Asplund building. The entrance is, connects with the annex buildings and potentially to the future mall on the far right side of the section.

The commercial spaces on Sveavägen and the Asplund basement have been expanded and joined to create the main part of the library. The main part of the library contains the study zone, cafe, communal kitchen, sauna, sleeping spaces, as well as advice center and studios to borrow for creative work.

SECTION A

MAIN FLOOR PLAN

The commercial section of the annex and the main part of the building can be connected through the basement of the main addition. This connection can also be accessed through the commercial spaces.
**What if the library supported both mind and body?**

“The library is a good place to at least catch up on the sleep you missed out on the night before,” said Tammy Salo as she sat in. Lombard Library on a recent Tuesday, a black suitcase filled with her belongings at her side.

—Chicago Tribune, December 13, 2011

**SPACE**

The current Stockholm city library is too small. When Asplund’s library was finished in 1928, it was already too small to house all the media and functions, hence the annex buildings were built. There will be 150,000 more inhabitants than today in Stockholm by the year 2030. If this is the case, the city will not have a public library that lives up to the ambitions of a “sparkling cultural city of knowledge”, as the former Mayor of Stockholm put it.

**What if the library could endure into the future by offering things that can’t be digitalized?**

What if the library was a place people could stay at indefinitely?

What if it was less a book closet and more an urban foyer; a welcoming social meetingplace?

**What if we didn’t tear down the three annex buildings?**

What if we didn’t strive to make it a boastful building?

What if the library could be able to easily make a map in my mind.

**What if the library was a meetingplace?**

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THE TEMPORARILY BEDLESS

Each year, more than 1500 hotel rooms are missing in the city. Only a handful of hostels in the inner city offer rooms for less than 500kr a night. 4500 people in the country are “acutely homeless” every night and have nowhere to sleep. Furthermore, a lot of non-homeless people are in need of a place to sleep occasionally. With these facts in mind, my project proposes adding sleeping spaces for visitors to make the library a place people can stay indefinitely. Aside from the lack of sleeping spaces, the stigma itself of sleeping in public is a problem. We eat in public and use the bathroom in libraries, so why not sleep at the library? Books may one day be predominantly digitalized, but what the library can offer than cannot be digitalized is space. Space for sleeping, for meeting, for studying and for creative work.

MONUMENTALITY

Asplund’s library is world-renowned, iconic and monumental. This isn’t a problem, but it does present a situation where one must ask how to relate to this monumentality when designing an expansion. My project experiments with the concept in various ways, foremost by reversing monumentality by actually burying most of my addition.
During the day, people descend from the noisy streets and/or the cold weather to a new kind of meeting place where, during the days, it’s a place to hang out. During the nights, beds are pulled out from the wooden hill-like structure. Valuables are stored in compartments and the beds serve as the lid and lock for them. For those in need of more privacy, a few beds are inside enclosed spaces.

Wall Concept

The walls are all based on 300mm wide rows integrating the idea of a cave with the striations of a quarry and the idea of the “endless row of books”. The wall concept is flexible enough to accommodate different materials suited best for the occasions.

Comparing the New and the Old

New Additions
Preserved Volumes

Layout of the Entire Program

COMPARING THE NEW AND THE OLD

NEW ADDITIONS
PRESERVED VOLUMES

LAYOUT OF THE ENTIRE PROGRAM

KITCHEN + GREENHOUSE
STUDIOS + ADVICE CENTER
THE MONUMENT CAFE
BEDS FOR LOAN
AUDITORIUM

EXPLORATION OF COLORS AND MATERIALS OUTSIDE

EXPLORATION OF COLORS AND MATERIALS INSIDE

WALL CONCEPT

DEFAULT POLISHED CONCRETE
WOOD PANEL (E.G. IN CAFE)

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EXPLORATION OF COLORS AND MATERIALS OUTSIDE

EXPLORATION OF COLORS AND MATERIALS INSIDE

DEFAULT POLISHED CONCRETE
WOOD PANEL (E.G. IN CAFE)

THE ARTS
AESTH.
ART+
HIST + GEO
CIVIC STUDIES
PPL & COUNTRIES
NATURE & TECHNOLOGY

PLANNING

CHILDREN’S FICTION
FICTION
FOREIGN LANGUAGES
THE ARTS
SOCIAL SCIENCES
TECH
RELIGION

MEDIA
ADMINISTRATION
MEDIA MANGEMENT
CBA OFFICES
STUDY ZONE

THE MONUMENT CAFE
AUDITORIUM
LEARNING AREA
CAFE
RESTAURANT
ACTIVITIES
TOILETS
LOBBY

NEW ADDITIONS
PRESERVED VOLUMES

EXPLORATION OF COLORS AND MATERIALS INSIDE

COLORED ALUMINIUM TO INDICATE INFORMATION DESKS AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST
SEAT WITH CUSHION

BOOKS CONSULTED


A sketchbook was also included in final presentation:

Helene Frichot & Meike Schalk
January 17th 2013

Critical Studies Design Studio

Hidden Spaces, Reimagining The Library

Antonio Segura

BOOKS CONSULTED


