

PROGRAM AND ABSTRACT

AN ADDITION TO GRORUD

Architectural elements of Grorud as generator for a new
wing of the Oslo Schools of Music and Performing Arts

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DIPLOMA

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Institute of Architecture
The Oslo School of Architecture and Design

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PRE-DIPLOMA

PROGRAM FOR DIPLOMA PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

WORKING TITLE	Architectural elements of Grorud _ a place
SYNOPSIS	<p>Grorud as <i>place</i> is the architectural program of my diploma project. I will develop an architectural project that investigates and discusses how one adds to a given place. I see place as something in itself, containing all aspects of what relates to and participates in it. In built environment, architectural elements are contributors to what constitutes a specific place and the experience of it. In my diploma project, a sensual experience of Grorud will result in a chosen number of architectural elements from the place. These will be my startingpoints for my architectural study of Grorud as place, and as a generator for my addition to it. I will use the functional program <i>Kulturskole (Oslo Schools for Music and Performing Arts)</i> to inform the creation and development for a new building at Grorud.</p>
SUPERVISORS	Lisbeth Funck and Matthew Anderson

INTENTION

In my diploma project, I will investigate the act of interacting with and adding something to a given place and context. The act of interacting suggests an intervention, a risk of interference, an adaptation, an adjustment, an altering, an arrangement, a rearrangement, a response, a conscious starting point, a recombination, a recurrence, an interpretation, a continuation – to take part in what Sigfried Gideon described as “constancy and change” in time, space, and place.

The *(some)thing* added, and the way it interacts, will therefore be discussed through a physical structure, a spatial intervention, a place within the place, a programme – coming together as an architectural project. The *(some)thing added* comes with the story of not having been there before. To what is already there, this *(some)thing* will always be understood as *new*. The concept of “the new” takes part in the profession of architecture and in every architectural project, as each part of the making of architecture (whether drawing it, building it, experiencing it, discussing it, analysing it, transforming it, etc.) is based on bringing in to being something that was not there before.

However, “the new” must not be misunderstood as being an independent dimension. In an architectural context, “the new” always stands in a relationship to “the prior” (existing context, landscape, time, culture, knowledge and history), as these are the premises for its being as *new*. In what way “the new” actively or consciously relates to “the prior”, in how it finds its own nature and how it interacts, is what finally determines its verdict as a *meaningful* contribution to a place.

Through his extensive philosophical work, the theorist in architecture and phenomenologist, Christian Norberg-Schulz, defined the “meaningful” in built environment as what is capable of *collecting* or *gathering* a place’s distinct identity and character, its *genius loci*, seeking to maintain them in built form, and by this bringing them “close” to us as something we can identify with. To achieve this meaning, Norberg-Schulz reaffirms that the act of building must be understood and executed as an act of *nursing, caring* and “to spear” the place, in a way that lets it *be itself* and enables it to develop its own distinctiveness and individuality. He assures that this does not mean a necessity not to build, but to build in a way that captures a place’s more or less hidden properties and qualities, through an interpretation that enables the place to *realize itself*. Hence, the place and the built are in an interdependent relationship, as the built needs to be aware and take on a place’s identity while the built is also what creates the character of a place.

Thus architecture can be seen as an artform of place. Places and buildings are real. They are concrete. They are here. In the

present, where humans perceive and experience it, being *affected* by it. A new physical addition to a place, a new building, is being set straight into the realm of reality, to the layers of life, memory and time, lightness and darkness, into both history and a continuous present. In this present, in this *here and now*, a building's specific interaction with its surroundings and its own spatial qualities, how it manages to affect us, is what gives it its presence and constitutes place.

The idea and concept of "constancy and change" inform us that something remains through all changes, that there is an enduring relation between humans and their surroundings; a relation in need of continuous interpretation. The (some)thing added, "the new", therefore needs to include and involve the existing and the old, to maintain and create a meaningful relation between architecture and place, so that the spirit (genius) remains the same, even though it *is* not the same. In the making of the new, the (some)thing added needs to emerge through an understanding, experience, and interpretation of what a given place *is* – its *being*. Here the *new* and the *old*, the *past* and the *present*, and even the dreams of the *future*, are one.

Through a focus and awareness of the relations mentioned above, I will in my diploma project work with a personal reading of Grorud (Oslo) as place, through the architectural elements found there. The findings from Grorud will be a generator for something new, coming together as structure, space and building. By process, it will be informed by a functional program: Kulturskole (The Oslo Schools for Music and Performing Arts). Through this, I will develop an architectural project with the programme of Grorud as place and a new wing for the Kulturskole in the existing context of Grorud in Oslo.

PLACE
AN ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM



thick dashed line: area of Grorud connected to the metro station to be studied

KULTURSKOLE / SCHOOLS OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS
A FUNCTIONAL PROGRAM

Oslo Kulturskole is the municipality of Oslo's resource center for cultural and artistic training aimed at children and youth. The Kulturskole offers a teaching and tuition program in various forms of art, enabling students to learn about and develop their artistic and creative abilities and skills. The Kulturskole is also a leisure activity, which places it in the everyday of kids and youth as a social arena, a place for finding and building identity, safety and belonging.

The Kulturskole was established in the 1950's and 60's. At first, it only offered tuition programs for learning and performing music (Musikkskolen). Later, a broader range of artforms was included, such as dance, theatre and visual arts. In 1997, it was legislated by the Norwegian Parliament that all municipalities should provide a Kulturskole (*Education Act*, § 13-61). This made explicit the importance of Kulturskolen in society, as well as the social responsibility it carries. As founded in the *Core Curriculum for primary, secondary and adult education in Norway* (2006, p. 5), the Kulturskole takes on the following mission: "The aim of education is to expand the individual's capacity to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathize and to excel." Kulturskolen is owned and managed by the municipalities. Thus, each municipality decides their schools' contents and range, without instructions by the state.

In Oslo, statistics show a distinct imbalance in kids' and youth' participation in the Kulturskole in different districts. While only 4% of the children attending public schools in Bydel Stovner are engaged in Kulturskolen, the participation is 27%, 17% and 15% in Bydel Sagne, Bydel Nordre Aker and Bydel St.Hanshaugen, respectively. According to the rector of Kulturskolen, Olav Kjøk, this gap is likely explained by social and economical factors. The sociologist Jørn Ljunggren (University of Oslo), whose fields of research focus on social inequality, residential segregation, and class, supports Kjøk in his assumptions, pointing out how a higher proportion of households with low income and a lower portion of parents with higher education are concentrated in the eastern district of Oslo. Ljunggren also draws attention to an established pattern of unequal distribution of social welfare (like the Kulturskole) between the center-, east- and the west-district of the city. Looking at the accessibility of the Kulturskole, its locations and range of programs in the city, one can see how it adds to the same pattern. The Vice Mayor for Culture in Oslo, Rina Mariann Hansen (Ap), sees the issue as a complex matter, concerning expectations from kids, youth and their parents, knowledge, visibility, infrastructural accessibility as well as local accessibility.

On the basis of the above mentioned conditions and circumstances, a clear common interest and aim from both Kulturskolen and the Council of culture is to make Kulturskolen an available and present feature of every local district in Oslo City, so that Oslo Kulturskole can attain their vision: “A Schools of Music and Performing Arts *for all*” (“En Kulturskole for alle”). A new wing for Oslo Kulturskole at Grorud answers to the need for accessibility, both by physical presence and in how Grorud plays an important role as a node for connecting Groruddalen’s parts together in terms of public transport.

ROOM PROGRAM FOR A KULTURSKOLE

Reception / Entré / Commonspace

Dance halls

Theatre hall

Small amphitheatre with stage

Staff room / Office

Class rooms for music lessons

Class rooms for singing lessons

Work space for visual art

Workshop

Circulation

(additional programs and functions can be added)

APPROACH

Field trips to area to be studied at Gorud.

Photoregistration of architectural elements found at the place.

Let the found architectural elements be a generator that inspires to make new elements and structures with their own architectural qualities and properties.

Bring the new architecture back to a site at Gorud where a meaningful interaction can occur. This means that a further development of both place, site and the architecture, strengthens all parts.

Develop additions to become a building and to facilitate for the program Kulturskole.

SCHEDULE FOR DIPLOMA SEMESTER *

15.01 - 31.01

An understanding of Grorud as place
*experience, discover, recognize,
study, learn, understand, create*

Through several stays at Grorud, with a focus and awareness of a sensual experience of the place, I will find and register architectural elements from the given surroundings. Their factual being, particularity and properties will be a generator to create new elements and structures.

03.02 - 21.02

Spatial and structural creation and investigation
Space and structure as place

– *to alter, to renew, to remain,
to repeat, to substitute,
recombination, replacement,
recurrence*

24.02 - 13.03

Structure and space reunited with place
Interaction with and reproducing place
Becoming building for a place

– *to alter, to renew, to remain,
to repeat, to substitute,
recombination, replacement,
recurrence, to respond, to adapt,
to adjust, to arrange, to rearrange
external meetings and boundaries*

16.03 - 05.04

Structure, space and place meets programme
Introducing Kulturskolen

– *to alter, to renew, to remain,
to repeat, to substitute,
recombination, replacement,
recurrence, to respond, to adapt,
to arrange, to recreate, to create
**internal meetings and boundaries
additions for a program***

06.04 - 19.04

Finalizing phase

–

20.04 - 11.05

Finalizing project
Making clear and produce final material

–

15.05

Submission diploma

01.06 - 05.06

Presentation of diploma

REFERENCES

ARCHITECTURE Grorud

Laban Dance Centre, Herzon & de Meuron
School of architecture in Nantes, Lacaton & Vassal
FRAC Nord-Pas de Calais, Lacaton & Vassal
Médiathèque, Angoulême, Library, Lacaton & Vassal
Salle de spectacle polyvalente, Lille Polyvalent theater, Lacaton & Vassal
Cedric Price, Fun Palace
Schoolhouse Grono, Raphael Zuber
Storhamar Låven, Sverre Fehn
Almannajuvet, Peter Zumthor
Naoshima Ferry Terminal, SAANA
Bremer Landesbank, Caruso St. John

RELEVANT LITERATURE

Adam Caruso
Adam Caruso
Christian Norberg-Schulz
Christian Norberg-Schulz
Egil Bjørnsen
Kulturskoleutvalget v. Hans Ole Rian (red.)
Jørn Ljunggren (red.)

“Energy and matter”, **The feeling of things**
“The feeling of things”, **The feeling of things**
Mellom jord og himmel
Stedskunst
Inkluderende kulturskole, Utredning av kulturskoletilbudet i storbyene
Kulturskoleløftet. Kulturskole for alle Oslo – ulikhetenes by

ARTISTS

Donald Judd
Rachel Whiteread
Christo and Jeanne-Claude
Carl André
Richard Serra

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

AN ADDITION TO GRORUD

Architectural elements of Grorud as generator for a new wing of the Oslo Schools of Music and Performing Arts

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AN ADDITION TO GRORUD

Architectural elements of Grorud as generator for a new wing of the Oslo Schools of Music and Performing Arts

ABSTRACT

PART I - TO REGISTER, TO CREATE, AND TO FIND ARCHITECTURAL PROPERTIES AND QUALITIES

Grorud as inspiration

Grorud as place, a suburban part of Oslo, is the architectural program for my thesis. The project discusses how local architectural elements can be interpreted in a new architecture, aiming for local anchoring. My point of departure is elements from Grorud's past and present. These elements are clearly present in the surroundings of the place, creating the environment experienced and understood as Grorud. Inspired by something specific from the place, the new addition will be grounded in Grorud, where it originated.

I collected architectural elements from Grorud through a photo registration and brought them with me to a design process. Four of the elements were chosen as inspiration to create something new: the roof-column by the taxi stop, the spiral staircase leading to the metro station, a tall gable wall from a lamella residential building, and a column with pegs from a parking garage. These four elements were studied in drawing and model – a study of how they could be amplified, as well as of their spatial capacity. The column with pegs contained a property I became curious about: *the shift*. By using several extended columns with pegs in a grid, I developed a model that made the shift spatially determinative. Where four pegs in a grid have the same height, they can, in interaction with beams, form a plateau. This shift creates a structural principle, a column- and beam grid, with a varied whole and rich spatiality.

Finding spatial qualities and an architecture

The models porous spatial character gives an experience of transparency and visual contact in several directions. While each plateau establishes its own unit and enables a space, the visual contact ties the plateaus together in a collective. In this structure, people are present to each other and are here together, despite the separation of different levels. Consequently, the structure invites for a consciousness of coexistence and has an inherent character of social community, of being together about something. This also applies to the structure's relationship to its surroundings, as the structure is open and brings in the outside world. As such, the surroundings have a presence in the structure. Similarly, an activity that takes place in the structure will be a participant in its surroundings. The irregular plateaus make the light enter at several places, reaching far into the structure. The shift makes the structure operate as a filter, with its capacity to filter light, human contact and surroundings. These were the qualities and the architecture I brought forward and took with me as I returned to Grorud.

PART II – ADDING TO BECOME BUILDING AND TO REPRODUCE PLACE

Interacting with Grorud

Returning to Grorud, I looked for a specific site where the structure could meet the place in an interaction that amplifies both the character and the properties of the surroundings connected to the site, as well as the structure itself. The chosen site has many similarities with the structures properties, with the potential that the transparency and the porous can interweave different scales and programmes.

The surroundings connected to the bus station is an area of Grorud with much parallel activity. With its seven platforms for eleven different buses with overlapping departures to the whole of Oslo every tenth minute, a direct connection to Grorud metro station through a large ramp, and its proximity to the shopping mall and the residential buildings, the bus station is a dynamic spatial area encapsulating the most distinct public and social character of Grorud. Here there is much trade and visitors, children and youth are traveling to and from school and leisure activities, people are traveling to work in the city centre, and the youth hangs around in the evenings. The place's own character mirrors the structure's properties through the surroundings' specific physical environment (the housing blocks, the roof-column and the forest), the programs at the place (the bus station, the metro station, the shopping mall) and the human activity – all visible participants in the same environment. The place distributes people and brings them together in social encounters.

Placement and scaling

I placed the structure to directly tap into these surroundings, enabling the building to become, and the place, to substantiate each other. By letting the structure's columns land a little withdrawn from the bus platform, the bus station becomes an enlarged and extended public place. This presupposes that the building lets the public space be a part of its ground floor, which gives a varied urban space in open air and under roof. As a continuation of the character of the public floor of the place, a layer of asphalt is laid for the new public place, both around and in the building's ground floor. The asphalt layer has the colour red, to mark that this ground still is something else then the surface of the roads, sidewalks, and parking lots. By stretching this public floor into the building, it amplifies the building's relationship to the public space.

The filtering characters of both the place and the building are increased by letting people pass through them, and by integrating the ramp leading down to the metro station. The building has contact across rooms and draws in to it three different environments: the bus station and Grorud towards the south; the street, metro station and the view of Ammerud to the west, and the proximity of dense forest and the treetops in the hill to the north and east.

The structure finds its scale in the surroundings at Grorud by being measured against the spatial qualities and properties I found in the shift-model from *Part I*. Again, its porous character, as it can filter and distribute light in the structure, and maintaining a transparency making a social environment, are determinative parameters. This gives the plateaus both generous areas and ceiling heights, substantiating the possibility for larger groups of people to come together in parallel activities.

Setting the structure and deciding materiality

I remove elements from the original structure that covers for vision and natural light. Some plateaus are moved from the southern to northern section of the structure, and the shifts are adjusted to be able to meet a circulation. The structural elements are adapted, and an extra layer of transverse beams to carry the floor slab are added. The structure is set to be a reinforced in situ concrete structure to carry the column and slab span for each level. Diagonal stiffeners of reinforced concrete in length and width directions are added vertically all along the structure's north-eastern corner.

Accessibility

Two external stairs and elevators connect to a ramp and gallery structure, which extends around the body of the building at different levels, giving access to the plateaus at different heights. Adding circulation as a new layer outside the building makes it operate as a new filtering element that attaches itself to the social community by the way people will be visible when staying and moving here. While those inside will be able to see those who enters and moves around between different levels in the building, those moving in the gallery will pass and get insight into the activities playing out inside. This accentuates the experience of the spaces and of being in the building. Each gallery length, and thereby the structure, is protected from weather by a layer of large sliding doors in aluminium with embedded sheets of translucent polycarbonate with insulating capacity.

The vertical connections

The spiral staircase and the accentuated vertical character of the stairway in the gable wall from the models in *Part I* are put into play when making the structure accessible, letting it become a building. As transparency is about visibility, the vertical connections are made as individual architectural elements connecting to the structure from the outside. The vertical connections are given different characters, making them distinct participants in the surroundings. Thus, the threshold entering the building is moved up into the structure.

The added elements of circulation contribute in interweaving the flow of people in the public place and the building, by letting the public place below to be extended up into the building. Those moving in the stairs, elevators and the gallery, become part of both the activity in the public space, but also as part of the outside, visible for those inside. The effect of this can be increased or decreased as the doors along the ramps are pushed aside or closed, giving the building yet another layer of transparency through its translucent property.

PART III – ADDING FOR A FUNCTION: THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS MOVES IN

A program for the structure and the place

The building is given the functional program: A new wing for The Oslo Schools of Music and Performing Arts [Oslo Kulturskole]. The Kulturskole is the municipality of Oslo's resource center for cultural and artistic training aimed at children and youth. The Kulturskole offers a teaching and tuition program in various forms of art, enabling students to learn about and develop their artistic and creative abilities and skills. The Kulturskole is also a leisure activity, which places it in the everyday life of kids and

youth as a social arena, a place for finding and building identity, safety and belonging.

The Kulturskole has multiple wings. However, in Oslo as whole, the wings in the center and west districts are both more accessible and numerous than in the city's east districts. As Grorud connects Groruddalen to other parts of Oslo with its network and node of public traffic by the bus station and the metro station, the place is well suited to receive a program that can substantiate the childhood environment both locally and in the surrounding area.

The Schools of Music and Performing Arts has by nature a potential to engage with and complement the properties offered by the building and the public space. Such an institution gathers many people in different ages to a range of various activities with individual cycles, and that to a large degree amplifies its identity of being a diverse and creative place by being active and visible to each other. The building enables both pupils and teachers of the school to participate in separate individual activities in spatial surroundings that give the experience of taking part in and belong to a collective. The building being open and accessible for everyone makes the school a building for the community consisting of all those who travel to, via and through the public space of the bus station. The activities of the school and the building's capacity to take in and make visible other happenings can furthermore strengthen the public place as a node constituted by movement, encounters and activities, gatherings and socializing.

"Additions"

For the building to receive The Schools of Music and Performing Arts, I develop some specific additions. Some additions are principal and belongs to the structure (as isolation). Some are of a more general character to arrange for necessary facilities for staying in the building (toilets, kitchen, tables, chairs, sinks, curtains and acoustic actions). Other additions are more specific to facilitate for activities the school offers, such as flooring for specific activities, dance barres, and shelves for storing, tools and materials.

The transparency of the building creates the school's identity. The fact that people, things, materials and the surroundings are made visible make them all become participants in what is experienced as The Grorud School of Music and Performing Arts. Simultaneously, in interaction with the place, the school will become a participant that enlarges the surroundings' social, interwoven and active character at Grorud.