REUSE THE MUSE
The Museum as a Transcultural Negotiator of National Identity

by

Lee Dykxhoorn
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Signature of Author: __________________________________________________

Department of Architecture
January 14th, 2010

Certified by: ____________________________________________________________

Mark Jarzombek, DiplArch, PhD
Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture
Associate Dean, School of Architecture and Planning
Thesis Advisor

Accepted by: __________________________________________________________

Takehiko Nagakura, MArch, PhD
Associate Professor of Design and Computation
Chair of the Department Committee on Graduate Students
ABSTRACT

The project proposes a museum that acts as public infrastructure, situated across the boundary between east and west Oslo. The architecture of the museum is a continuous linear element that acts as a bridge through the different urban conditions from one side of the Aker River to the other, becoming the primary circulation path, reinventing the public street and positioning the cultural value of the exhibits alongside the daily life of the city where it infiltrates the exhibition spine of the museum. The imposition of this system questions contemporary definitions of Norwegian identity through the relationships developed between the historic narrative of the museum and the slices of city life that it presents at the intersections.

Several registers of content pull through the museum - exhibition, production and public space. The collections explore what it means to be Norwegian, through the art of Edvard Munch and artifacts from Norway's viking past presented in a timeline of development, all consistently bracketed by visible processes of restoration and production needed to keep the museum operational - undermining through process the traditional modes of cultural legitimation of the museum and allowing for an imposition of an alternate kind of user driven identity for the city.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

09  Introduction  
SINGULAR VERSUS INCLUSIVE IDENTITY IN NORWAY

12  History of the Museum  
DEVELOPMENT OF ART AS COMMON PROPERTY

16  History of Oslo  
ROLE OF THE ARTIFACT IN CULTURAL LEGITIMATION

Reference Pages
20  1. Immigration in Oslo, 1995-2010
36  2. Redevelopment of Bjørvika
56  3. Plans and Commentary on Significant Museum Precedents

66  Site Analysis
76  Project
138  Presentation Material
144  References
Architecture's critical project lies in its ability to respond to and inform the societal conditions within which it exists. In the case of a society in flux, issues of cultural and political identity are especially of relevance to the intellectual project of architecture.

I am interested in crafting a response to the changing social conditions within Norway; it becomes a test case of the rapid shifts possible in the contemporary moment. In Oslo, formerly solid definitions of the state and the basic consensus on what it means to be Norwegian have been challenged through the rapid repopulation of the city through both internal and international migration.

For a strong contingent of the population, this concept of Norwegianness is very much tied into the blood and the shared cultural linguistic heritage of being Nordic. Having undergone nation building in the last century, Norway still retains the initial definitions of what made it coalesce as a distinct cultural and political entity. As such, it is only now is beginning to deal with issues of complexity of the citizen base in a way that informs Norwegian identity. It is precisely this inflection point brought out by diversity that makes this such a fascinating condition to study.

Oslo has a rapidly growing population at just over half a million people in 2010. Of those, roughly a quarter are immigrants, a majority of those being non-western in origin. This gives Oslo, more so than any other part of the country, a cultural diversity that results from the close proximity of people from different backgrounds living together. Among other things, the city of Oslo has set up a welcoming service for new arrivals called (Velkommenoslo) that pairs mentors between current and new residents, with the idea that the city should tell the intercultural story of Oslo to help integrate new populations. This effort to make the city a more accessible place that people from diverse backgrounds could belong to the city is emblematic of an inclusive definition of what it means to be Norwegian.

The increasing entrance of Norway into a globalized community has led to a reversal of a decades old political policy of egalitarian cultural infrastructure. Under the Social Democratic policies of the last fifty years, cultural institutions and their ac-
companying public spaces were seen as a social infrastructure, distributed to the city as a whole. However, in the 1980's a significant shift in policy and public opinion moved the city from this egalitarian view of public space into a developer driven revitalization of the waterfront. Development started first at Aker Brygge, then following the success of the gentrification there, more recently in Bjørvika. Instead of the museum as a public resource to be shared by all, there is a mentality of the museum as a developer's tool to effect change in under-utilized sections of the city. While both are admirable, this is a significant shift in the way public resources are considered. The development plans in Bjørvika, centered around the new national opera house on the waterfront, are more invested in the project to create a curated view of Oslo and what it means to be Norwegian. Focusing on a business district, art, and Scandinavian heritage, and almost more importantly, the lack of tolerance for the existing cultural mixing zones along the waterfront, such as the MS Innvik, the Fjord City development plans create a very narrow view of Norwegian identity in its projection to the outside world.

This thesis leverages the agency of architecture to facilitate a negotiation between the singular and inclusive identities at play in Oslo by reconceptualizing the cultural/social identity of the Norwegian people through the historical project of the museum. An increased visibility of the non-Western elements in society will work towards the empowerment of the immigrant populations as well as the emergence of a new more inclusive national identity.

The discussion of the role of the immigrant within Norwegian society exists amidst a larger discourse of the role of cultural institutions in the definition of Norwegian identity, faced with the intersection with the increasingly globalized and connected capital, the influx of capital surpluses from oil industry held by the current power structure, and the realization of an inflection point in the social fabric of the state. In addition, there is a vast amount of attention in Norway going into cultural institutions that define the image of society, from a lingering hangover of Bilbao - attempting to leverage architecture to revitalize disadvantaged sectors of the urban fabric, to preserving and defining a curated view of what defines Norwegian culture. I propose a project that works within this line of production, but yet works not to perpetuate a static image of the state, but an inclusive view of the changing identity of what it means to be Norwegian. Architecture becomes the enabler to shift the role of the immigrant from a passive unit to be placed and placated to a active participant in the host country, complete with identity and self-determination.

It moves to occupy the boundary between the Norwegian and the non-Western Immigrant, creating a place that is simultaneously of neither, yet a product of both. This Other place within the city becomes a provocation for the kind of re-conception of identity inherent in the changing social conditions. It is also invested in the historical project of the museum, not as an institution of dusty relics, but in the assumption of identity that is inherent in the didactic experience of the museum exhibit. The display of the Munch collection alongside the Viking ships and artifacts creates an immersing, curated world of Norwegian culture, while breaks in this programming to allow for unplanned and unpredictable infiltration by city life keep the role of the artifact in perspective.

By turning the institution of the museum inside out and making it a truly public place of exchange of ideas and the complexities of the daily life of the city, I am attempting to imagine a different kind of development that would use cultural institutions within the city in a more inclusive way. The role of the museum in society should be so much more than a box to put art or a way to create an exclusive cultural district and sell expensive condominiums. The waterfront development patterns in Bjørvika follow the mold of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao, that architecture can create enough interest in an area to revitalize it and start systems of gentrification. However, the museum typology with it's embedded narratives and the potential to have a larger interaction with the city could have a more positive impact in the negotiation between disparate cultures within the city. The ideas tested in this thesis are meant as a provocation to a different kind of development in Oslo in opposition to the curated national image that is being created around the waterfront today. Rather, it is a fantasy of Oslo that takes a more inclusive view of the complexities of the changing society and the future developments of the city.
The historical typology of the museum can be broken into two different poles of intention: That of the archive for objects, and of a place for the exchange of ideas. In the first, the architecture becomes static, a container of objects, elitist and cut off from its own time. It is a place meant to store and preserve the idea of a particular moment. In the words of Theodor Adorno, “dead visions are entombed, and Venus becomes a document.” The other view, dating back to the original Greek word for museum, Mouseion, which meant place (or perhaps dance floor) of the muses, was used in the ancient world to designate places of learning and scholarship that were attached to the idea of the muse. Schools of poetry and philosophy were situated amidst their displays of the arts of their time and the focus of the museum was on the interchange of ideas, not as the container of the objects themselves.

It is in this last spirit that I wish to explore the idea of museum and the strategies inherent in the display and formation of interchange and identity. As an institution, the museum establishes its own narrative through its programming and curation and position that against a place of uncertain narratives through social and political change.

The progression of the Museum as a public institution is tied to social structures and their developments over the last several centuries. While art in the middle ages in Europe was seen as a private endeavor to be possessed by individual collectors and the Church, during the Renaissance many precursors to the modern museum arose in the collections exhibited in private homes that were open to the public on limited occasions. This preceded the 1753 decision by the British Parliament to establish the use of public funds to support the new art museum - making the British Museum the first public Museum.

However, it is necessary to also consider the roughly contemporaneous opening of the Louvre in Paris in 1793 as equally important in furthering the ideas of art as a public resource. Coming on the heels of the French Revolution, the Louvre Museum displayed the King’s personal collection in one of the most prestigious palaces in Paris - all completely open to the public. This reversal of the privilege of art ownership and making it a common asset of the people came very shortly after the Revolution and marks one of the important psychological changes.
in a society that was adjusting to the new power structures that defined it. “France’s revolutionaries... commonly referred to the Louvre as a institutions dedicated to the glory of the nation.” (Davis 14). From the beginning the Louvre galleries were politicized, not only for their aspirations of national prestige, but also in their role in the opening up of the emerging society. In an attempt to use the museum as a tool for ending the medieval system of master and apprentice, the galleries were opened up to students, paintings placed at eye level without roped off protection. This of course sparked a debate between the vision of art existing in open spaces with public access and those who wished to close it off and sanctify the art. This tension between art as a resource to be protected and common property to be enjoyed is a continuing discussion in museums today.

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The actual history of Oslo is in some ways less important than the way that history is being represented within Norwegian society and to outsiders. The consolidation of museums in the Bjørvika area in recent years leads to some interesting questions on how the museum, as an authority on history and culture, is being used to legitimize the current power structures in Oslo.

The Edvard Munch museum is currently being moved to the waterfront from its existing location in a park in Tøyen, a multicultural area a twenty minute walk from the city center. There is discussion about moving some of the exhibits of the Viking Ship Museum to the waterfront as well, to the site of the medieval ruins that mark the first known settlement in the area dating from the thirteenth century. The planned relocation both of these museums signifies an important change in the way museums are experienced in the city. The current system of distributed cultural infrastructure that was developed under the Social Democratic policies of the last century required that any tourist experience of the city involved trekking from one corner to another to see all of the attractions the city has to offer - a system that, while slightly awkward for the tourist, has great merit when combined with the philosophy of egalitarian social infrastructure. However, in recent years this stance on the role of the museum in society has begun to shift and now it is a vital part of development packages to revitalize under used areas of the city.

This marks a significant shift in the way the museum is perceived, from being a common resource to which all are entitled access, to a tool to define the character of the new urban space being recreated on the waterfront. My intervention in this discussion is to provide a middle ground for the interpretation of the museum, somewhere between the perfectly distributed museum and the museum as developer's tool. In Oslo there will always be a place for the cultural attractions to be distributed across the city. The National Gallery, the Henie Onstad Kunsthal and the Vigeland sculpture park among others will all remain where they are from the center of the city to the outskirts providing the chance for the random encounter for the tourist with actual Oslo (a fascinating concept on its own, in which the city itself can be seen as the museum). However, for the purposes of this project I will propose that two of the museum collections
currently being slated to be moved to Bjørvika be combined just north of the Oslo S train station, right at the intersection of the old city grid, Gronland, and the Akerelva.

This combination allows for the creation of the tourist destination that waterfront development plans always seem to call for, but by placing it just outside of the current redevelopment area it allows a level of commentary on the social and political forces driving the cultural consolidation in Bjørvika today.

It would be easy to trace the history of the Norwegian people through the collection of the Vikingskiphuset. The artifacts within represent a shared Scandinavian history that ties the Nordic people together through more than just language and ethnicity. They represent a common cultural past that defines for many people what it means to be Norwegian. The ships themselves were harbingers of the first globalization of Norway, the means by which Nordic influence spread over all of the North Atlantic and enabled cultural interchange a millennia ago. However, today the artifacts of the collection and the ships themselves represent a conservative view of what it means to be Norwegian, through the shared history of the Norwegian people.

If the Viking Ships represent the Scandinavianization of Norway, The painter Edvard Munch is emblematic of another form of identity that has defined the Norwegian collective sense of self. He was, along with others of his contemporaries, known not only as Norwegian, but as a European Intellectual. He is the one of the most globally recognized Norwegian artists, yet did much of his painting in Germany in the early 1900’s before moving his studio back to Norway. He is the most recognizable name in Norwegian arts, and is emblematic of the Europeanization that Norway underwent in the transition to the twentieth century.

Today Norway is in the midst of adapting to a new globalized society in which many of the expected norms such as ethnicity, language and customs are more fluid due to immigration. This project seeks to investigate the role of the museum in a society dealing with issues of national identity, multiculturalism, urban regeneration, gentrification, conservation and production and the role of the artifact. The setup of this project to take on the programs of the Munch collection and the Viking Ships outside the development areas in Bjørvika is a change to explore the role of the artifact in its position perpetuating the mono-cultural view of Oslo that is at odds with the influx of immigration.

The museum typology is unfolded and nullified through two programmatic devices. Primarily, on an urban scale the museum acts as a large scale public space stitching two different areas of the city together through activating social programs, the concentration of urban flows through the museum at nodal winter gardens that interupt the museum bar, and reworking of the public space of the street alongside the museum narrative spaces. On an architectural level, the museum negotiates the role of the artifact through a constant interweaving of exhibition and production in the museum. The occupant is shown the magnificent Hall of Ships to revel in the age and craftsmanship of early Nordic ship builders, while shortly later is given a window into parallel workshops in which those same exhibits are crafted restored and rebuilt to look old again. In the same way, the Munch collection is paired with restoration galleries, art classes and studios.

The intent of the museum is to question the sanctity of the artifact in determining social structures, and provide an alternate view on Norwegian identity that is related more to the complexities of the current population than common cultural heritage.
reference article
1995-2010

IMMIGRATION IN OSLO

relationship of citizen to state
“The traditional and persistent East-West divide, with the East both poorer and “blacker” damages the image of an inclusive city and could foster unrest”

- City of Oslo Intercultural Profile
  Report by Council of Europe 28 August 2008

Population Demographic Comparison

- 37% of Somalia lives in urban conditions
- 10% of Somali immigrants live in cramped housing conditions (fewer rooms than household members)
- 80% of Norway lives in urban conditions
- 45% of Norwegians live in detached houses
- 10% of Norwegians live in cramped housing conditions
- 50% of immigrants live in cramped housing conditions

SOURCE: ssb.no
Percentage of Norwegian Population Born In Norway By Year
SOURCE: ssb.no

Comparison of Nationwide Diversity to Diversity in Oslo

Population Demographic Comparison

- 41 abortions per 1000 woman in Somalia
- 18 abortions per 1000 woman in Norway
- 36% of immigrants electoral participation
- 62% statewide electoral participation
- 28% of immigrants electoral participation (non-western)
- 62% statewide electoral participation
- 42% of immigrants electoral participation (western)
- 92% of voting population
- 90% of voting population

Primary Origin Points of Foreign Born Population
SOURCE: ssb.no
In addition to housing and employment, housing is a critical factor for integration. There are no ethnic ghettos in Oslo today, and different groups live side by side. Newly arrived refugees are resettled in all of Oslo’s city districts, on the basis of the number of inhabitants. However, the number of non-western immigrants who settle in urban districts is increasing relatively quickly, while this group is dwindling, in relative terms, in inner Oslo East. - Kommuneplan Oslo 2008

Non-western immigrant settlement by district.

Western immigrant settlement by district.

*Non-western immigrants refer to persons born in countries outside Western Europe (except Turkey), North America or Oceania.

*Excludes residents in districts with less than ten immigrants.
Religious diversity in Norway has increased dramatically with immigration.

At the beginning of the year, 9.3 per cent of the Norwegian population, or 449,900, were members of religious and life stance communities outside the Church of Norway. About one quarter of the members live in Oslo.

More than half of the members, 246,000, were members of Christian communities. A total of 62,900 were members of life stance communities and accounted for approximately 1.5 per cent of all members of communities. Furthermore, various Islamic communities accounted for around 22 per cent of the members, while the members of Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh communities accounted for 3 per cent, 1.2 per cent and 0.2 per cent of the members respectively.

Source: ssb.no

When considering the demographics in Oslo, it is necessary to consider the increasingly distinct groups that make up the country. While it is not as simple as two easily defined groups, taking account of the cultural and social changes introduced with the rapid repopulation of the city with foreign-born residents is important to understanding the social context.
“We need to reflect on how Norwegians have changed their way of living: into single households, without children. I don’t think immigrant families will live like this, not even in the next 20-30 years, so there will be children. Where will they go? What will they do? They will be the future generation who are going to use the public space.”

-Spekulasjon
by Bik Van der Pol
As a nation, Norway has historically had little experience with cultural diversity. Never having been an imperial power and largely isolated from the population movements of the mainland Europe, outside influences were limited in points in its history. However, a distinct change in the population of Norway has been happening since the 1970’s, with escalation in the last fifteen years. Changes in immigration policy and world events have contributed to a sharp rise in the number of foreign-born citizens living in the country, primarily concentrated in urban areas. Culturally, the foreign-born population is distinct from the ethnic Norwegians, and at almost twenty-five percent of population in the capital city, is indicative of a significant cultural change ongoing within the Norwegian state.

This project seeks to investigate the implications of these shifts as the result of globalization on the role of architecture in society. This negotiation of the primarily Christian, Western culture with the influx of primarily Muslim immigrants from Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan is a uniquely Norwegian debate, but it is emblematic of the same debate being held around the Western world. The definition of a socio-political structure capable of encompassing the disparate entities that make up the contemporary state is most poignantly studied in Scandinavia, where the integration process is still in its infant stages.

Throughout much of the last hundred years, Norway has been known as a population prone to emigration, however, a high standard of living as well as a robust labor market and willingness to accept refugees has shifted the trends toward immigration. The commitment within Norway to maintain the social equality of the foreign-born population also makes it an attractive destination for immigrants and refugees.

The labor market in Norway is partially insulated from global economic trends through its reliance on industry centered around exports of natural resources, in particular oil from the North Sea. This orientation towards industry and exports not only lends the economy resilience, but provides much of the basis for the wealth that works as the corner stone of Norwegian society. Thirty percent of the state revenue comes from state owned petroleum industry, and this surplus of wealth allows a generous system of social welfare.

As evident in the map of human development index, there is a
wide range of standard of living across the globe. This difference, when it becomes too great becomes a social force for migration, pulling people from one spot to another. The countries with the highest standards of living, the United States, France, Japan, and Norway tend to experience net immigration, while countries where conditions are not so favorable, such as much of sub-Saharan Africa and the parts of the Middle East, experience a net population flight. In fact, the majority of the foreign-born originating outside of Scandinavia come from Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, all three having a very low standard of living.

So if immigration can be understood for a moment as a direct simplification of the economic forces around the world, population movements can be easily linked to globalization and the interconnected nature of capital and the economies of the late capitalist period. And as globalization is known to be progressing down a path of increased entrenchment, it can also be easily drawn that the kinds of social conflicts from immigration experienced in Norway and other European countries are not isolated incidents.

Another contributing factor to the rise of foreign born citizens in Norway is the increase of political refugees seeking asylum. The opening of the Norwegian borders to refugees is an interesting turn in the political development of the situation. Through the 1970’s Norway had very draconian code of laws keeping out both immigrants and refugees. However, the first loosening of that happened in 1975 with the acceptance of thousands of Vietnamese refugees after the fall of Saigon. There continued to be several backlashes through the eighties and nineties in the political system, with various pro-immigration political parties vying for power with more nationalistic governments.2 This history of having a fairly charged political history relating to the immigration issue makes it evident that the current decision to accept large numbers of refugees from Somalia following the unrest there this decade signals a rise of the civic over culture.3 Norway knew the potential problems and implications of allowing large numbers of foreign-born people to enter into the country, namely the shifting identity as the population changes, but this decision signals a political shift from the importance of culture to the importance of the civic.

This is an important realization within the structure of the shifting definition of the Norwegian state. It is moving from a protectorate of Nordic culture to a representation of the political commonalities of a heterogeneous population - a trend I would like to highlight and develop through intervention. The relation of the state to citizen is an equalizing factor, ignoring myths of origins and focuses instead on the common social bonds defining society.

Currently, almost ten percent of the population across the country, and an even more dramatic twenty-five percent of the capital city was born outside of Norway.4 Oslo is not just the largest city in Norway, but also the seat of political power, base of the Norwegian church, as well as the stronghold of Norwegian cultural identity. That more than a quarter of such an important institution now consists of people from outside of the Norwegian system has dramatic implications for the changing identity of the country. The implications of this impending change are what make this context so fascinating; the manner in which the changes are addressed is inherently an architectural proposition. The implication is that intervention could also shape the direction that the societal changes take within the Norwegian conception of national identity.

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1 Statistics Norway has published figures on those born outside Norway since the Population Census of 1865. Back then, 1.2 per cent of the total population of 1.7 million were born abroad; the majority in Sweden. By 1950, the immigrant share of the total population had increased to 2.8 per cent. During the interwar period there was little immigration, and by 1950 only 1.4 per cent of the population was born abroad. Today, immigrants and those born in Norway to immigrant parents constitute 608,935 persons or 10.6 per cent of Norway’s population.

2 From Statistics Norway, (ssb.no) official statistics of the Norwegian society, as governed by the Statistics Act of 1989: The number of immigrants residing in Norway varies with the government’s immigration policy, labor market needs and shifting global crises. Immigration increased during and after the Balkan wars of the 1990s.

3 Statistics Norway has published figures on those born outside Norway since the Population Census of 1865. Back then, 1.2 per cent of the total population of 1.7 million were born abroad; the majority in Sweden. By 1950, the immigrant share of the total population had increased to 2.8 per cent. During the interwar period there was little immigration, and by 1950 only 1.4 per cent of the population was born abroad. Today, immigrants and those born in Norway to immigrant parents constitute 608,935 persons or 10.6 per cent of Norway’s population.

4 From Statistics Norway, (ssb.no) official statistics of the Norwegian society, as governed by the Statistics Act of 1989: Currently, around 25,000 Somali immigrants make up the third largest non-Nordic population in Norway.
reference article

REDEVELOPMENT OF BJØRVIKA

(what kind of Oslo?)
THE STORY OF A HIJACKED MUSEUM

Leveraging of cultural currency in waterfront development politics in Oslo
Built in 1963 off proceeds of state cinema ticket sales, the Munch museum was the embodiment of the museum for the people - located in an emerging immigrant district in East Oslo.

The Norwegian Labor Party, the only true political power for the better part of a century had good intentions with their culture for all policy. The social democracy of the Arbeiderpartiet was invested in distributed cultural infrastructure. A painting in everyone’s view and a park in their front yard.

During the first fifty years of its existence, the Museum is the site of one of the most famous art thefts in history, as well as a later hijacking of the entire collection for political purpose.

The Munch, well intentioned as a place of the people, but still remained an aloof institution reserved for tourists and the cultural elite, it is set apart from the rest of the city.
Political priorities have changed since the 1980’s. Now is the age of the politician’s dream of the grand project to put their name to.

Munch is to be moved, leveraging all of his cultural currency to lend legitimacy to the city by the fjord.

In all of the excitement surrounding this new development, the coming out party of Oslo as a great European Capital, no one stops to question the potential of the Museum beyond the dollar signs on the developers spreadsheets. Cultural districts sell expensive apartments.

What is created, by Juan Herreros Arquitectos, is a hermetically sealed tower for art. Or was the tower meant to be art? No one in the city is really sure.
Disperse

disperse

curate

curate

1980

Social democratic politics led to an egalitarian policy of distribution of cultural buildings throughout the entire city.

2000

Post-capital consumer politics has led to a focus on symbolic capital of cultural buildings and the consolidation into curated cultural districts.
EXISTING CONDITIONS (2013)

REDEVELOPMENT MASTERPLAN
PUBLIC SPACE IN THE BJØRVika REDEVELOPMENT MASTERPLAN

BARCODE TOWERS: NEW BUSINESS DISTRICT IN BJØRVika
# Bjørvika Redevelopment Institutional Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bjørvika Redevelopment Institutional Areas</th>
<th>Munch Museum</th>
<th>Deichman Library</th>
<th>Oslo Operaen</th>
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<td><strong>Public Services and Common Areas</strong></td>
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<td>Public and common areas</td>
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<td>Storage and reception facilities</td>
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<td>Conservation department</td>
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<td>Operations and storerooms</td>
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<td>Transport and logistics</td>
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<td><strong>Stage Areas</strong></td>
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<th>Oslo Operaen</th>
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<td>Media collections and reading rooms</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The 24-hour library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Auditorium and cinema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art storage and receiving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibition workshops/production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Snøhetta’s Oslo Opera House, a house of high culture that has been repurposed as a tourist attraction. (And is amazing for that.) Come see what Norway is all about here.

In the Norsk Folkemuseum, traditional dress has become a tourist attraction, complete with numbered placard.

Touristic advertisement campaign for the new Juan Herreros Munch museum in Bjørvika. Emphasis on how an inaccessible glass cube is being imbued with the weight of history and culture.
The MS Innvik, Oslo's floating cultural arena. Formerly a traveling theater company, the boat has been docked next to the Sjøhetta Opera House for the last several years serving as a multicultural hub that provides an interesting complement to the institutionalized culture present in the Opera House. The Innvik houses a theater, café, hostel, and nightclub.

Despite being one of the most lively and diverse cultural scenes in an area supposedly being developed to be a cultural district, the Innvik was forced out of Bjørvika in the end of 2010 by the city government under pretext. The Innvik, with its multicultural leanings and non-conventional crowd is seen as non-desirable to the area. Bjørvika is carefully curated to be clean, new, shiny and ultimately, boring.

Construction progress on the Barcode towers as of August 2010. The whole waterfront area is rapidly changing and assuming a new identity.
The case for the Museum: Looking at program organization tactics inherent in the exchange of ideas.

A directed sequence of display, is an organizational tactic of sequential nodes of content on a set itinerary. This allows for a great control over the occupant, but also standardizes the user experience and presents little option for occupant choice over usage patterns.
A matrix style arrangement of display is a form of programmatic organization that builds off the multiplicity of user choice in itinerary, the content being much more free form than with a set itinerary, in that it could be experienced in any order. Also, the content can be arranged in smaller or larger circuits, adjusting to different intentions of the occupant.

In this system, content is much more autonomous from the total form of the system.
ORGANIZATIONAL TACTICS OF DISPLAY AND REPRESENTATION

MUSEUM PRECEDENTS

The case for the Museum: Looking at program organization tactics inherent in the exchange of ideas.

Spatial interpenetration and isolation represent two poles of possible programmatic relationships. In the Jorgen Bo museum on the left, content is conceived to be completely autonomous of the system, related only by the set itinerary linking the clusters of information. In this, distance and visual isolation are used to create a different micro-environment for each unit on the system.

As contrast, OMA’s Kunsthal museum relies on spatial interpenetration as a relational device between programs. This develops interesting relationships within the form of the museum, because each program must by necessity take a position on the rest of the architecture it is situated within.
ORGANIZATIONAL TACTICS OF DISPLAY AND REPRESENTATION

The case for the Museum: Looking at program organization tactics inherent in the exchange of ideas.

The open plan as an organizational device is an architectural hands off approach to program - on a certain level. Even less prescriptive than the matrix relationship of program elements, the free plan allows for easy and spontaneous relation between elements that coexist within the same space. The control in this system resides in the curatorial intention in pairing certain programs together within the context of the museum, making connections obvious to the occupant. Here too, this is a useful organizational strategy to consider at larger scales of programmatic relationships as well.

MUSEUM PRECEDENTS

MEDIATHEQUE
TURIN, ITALY
TOYO ITO & ASSOCIATES
2001

CENTRE NATIONAL D’ART ET DE CULTURE GEORGES POMPIDOU
PARIS, FRANCE
REXNO PIANO & RICHARD ROGERS
1977

KUNSTHAUS
BREGENZ, AUSTRIA
PETER ZumTHOR
1997

OPEN PLAN
SITE ANALYSIS

boundaries in oslo
CULTURAL AXES IN OSLO

- Public space
- Museum axis
- Deichmann axis
- West Oslo
- East Oslo
The city of Oslo can be understood through social and physical edges. A series of historical and current fronts are the traces of historic processes that have shaped it over the years. The physical history of the city can be traced through the beginnings of the city on the fjord, the fortifications along the water for defense at Akerhus, the build up of the city proper in the 19th century ideal arrangement of blocks, and the industrial area that grew up around the timber industry in Oslo Ostkant across Akerselva. The scars of modernization can be seen around the rail road, dividing half the city from the other, and placing for good the sanctioned edge of the city to the eastern edge. The recent developments along the water - the Opera House and the Barcode, all speak to a newest process shaping the city - the image building spirit for the nation.

Bjørvika could be seen as a national park that will help Oslo gain an identity on the global stage as more than just a provincial European capital, with a mix of culture, business and tradition.
The enormous piles of wooden planks that accumulated at the head of the city and for the country, resulting in stagnation and shortages of goods, including Norway and Denmark during the Napoleonic Wars. This was a disaster for the existence of the city. The quays developed northwards as the economy grew and created storage area for timber that was waiting to be shipped abroad. Shipbuilding renewal of the coastline southwards. The land infilling was carried out in order to inflow of mud and sawdust, combined with land infilling, led over the centuries to 10-12 buildings from the period immediately after 1624.

Primarily for safety reasons. He was also very involved in town planning, and the construction of the Akershus Fortress commenced on the headland opposite to the bay of Bjørvika. In 1624, a fire destroyed almost the entire city, and King Christian IV decided to relocate the city to the other side of the bay next to the fortress, creating a continuous tunnel from Ekeberg to the rear of Bjørvika.

The new town’s port was still located in Bjørvika, but now on the west side of the fjord. The existing major road infrastructure on land will be removed and the export of fish were other important industries.

The city became a Royal Seat and Seat of the Church around 1100. People made their living in agriculture, crafts and trade, and the town was an important artery into existence app. 1000 years ago at the foot of the hill of Ekeberget. At that time, the name “Bjørvika” comes from “Bæjarvika”, which means “the urban inlet.” The new town, Christiania, was given a new street layout called Kvadraturen, according to the prevailing thinking of the time. Most of this street layout still exists, as do stations on the pier. Nylands Mekaniske Verksted ceased its operations here in 1971.

From the 1950s and 1960s onwards, industrial activity in the city began to change. Production declined and exports from the port decreased. However, production of ships and other goods continued in Bjørvika. New quays were gradually built as the number of companies increased and the first railway line between Christiania and Eidsvoll opened in 1854. The station at the mouth of the Akerselva river in 1860. At the turn of the century, it was the Nylands Mekaniske Verksted established a shipyard and engineering workshops at the mouth of the Akerselva river, based on water power. The city grew rapidly both in population and geography. This period also represented a new age for Bjørvika. The country’s transport has been an important part of the city’s economy since the 15th century. The sawmills were packed closely together along the Akerselva river and the exports had been an important part of the city’s economy since the 15th century.

The new town’s port was still located in Bjørvika, but now on the west side of the fjord. The existing major road infrastructure on land will be removed and the export of fish were other important industries.

In 1299, the city ground was being used for roads. This has left its mark particularly on the city’s ground. Bjørvika lost its almost 1000-year old significance as the city’s port. Transportation in Bjørvika was dominated by ships and port workers.

The Bjørvika pier was build by Nylands Mekaniske Verksted. The entire area commenced, as described above.

In 1999, the decision regarding location of the Opera House and Bjørvika Tunnel, creating a continuous tunnel from Ekeberg to Bjørvika over the last 30-50 years.

Pedestrians and cyclists will also be prioritised. It will be easy to travel on foot or cycle within Bjørvika or over the bridge to the World Trade Centre district. The pedestrian bridge across the railway lines will ensure that the urban areas to the rear of Bjørvika will have good access to the seafront.

The development in Bjørvika will result in more public transport. It is estimated that the city’s transport systems with environmental benefits will also facilitate more environmental benefits.

ARTIFACTS FOUND DURING RECENT CONSTRUCTION

ILLUSTRATION: OSLO CITY MUSEUM

ILLUSTRATION: OSLO CITY MUSEUM

ILLUSTRATION: OSLO CITY MUSEUM

ILLUSTRATION: OSLO CITY MUSEUM

ILLUSTRATION: OSLO CITY MUSEUM
The above diagram depicts the historical immigrant settlement patterns of East Oslo (Oslo Østkant). Originally a large timber milling and producing area, immigrants worked in factories and saved to move into more suburban conditions. Today, more mixed immigrant populations produce a much more heterogeneous and layered definition of the metropolitan area.
PROJECT PROPOSAL

architectural drawings
EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

EXPANSION OF THE AKER RIVER

MUSEUM AS BRIDGE

INTEGRATION OF TERMINATION POINTS

REPOSITIONING OF THE TRAIN STATION

SHIFTING OF GROUNDPLANE IN RELATION TO MUSEUM

INTEGRATION WITH PUBLIC PROGRAM

PAIRING OF MUSEUM PATH WITH PUBLIC PATH

PUBLIC PATH PULLS THROUGH MUSEUM
EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

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PUBLIC PATH PULLS THROUGH MUSEUM
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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*Taken from recent competition briefs and existing museum infrastructure in Oslo

### Project Proposal Program

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### EXHIBITION SEQUENCE AXONOMETRIC

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</table>

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S
INTERWEAVING OF ART EXHIBITION AND PRODUCTION WITHIN THE MUSEUM

MUSEUM TYPOLOGY UNFOLDED AND NULLIFIED

XL
INTERSECTION WITH THE CITY AT WINTER GARDENS

EXHIBITION PROGRAM
PRODUCTION PROGRAM

MUSEUM SPINE
PUBLIC ARMATURE
LEGEND

Context Building
Akerselva River
Museum Spine
Public Armature
Urban Activators
Context Streets
Rail Yards

Program Callout

Funneling Site Strategy

PARKING
GARAGES
SWIMMING
POOL
DIVING WELL
HOTDOG STAND
CHANGING ROOMS

EXCAVATION
AREA
EXCAVATION TERRACES
PUTT-PUTT GOLF COURSE
PUBLIC GREEN
PERFORMANCE SPACE
RAIL ENTRANCE HALL
TRAIN PLATFORMS

ARENA ENTRY PLAZA
SCULPTURE GARDEN
AKER RIVER EXPANSIONS
BOARDWALK
ICE SKATING
URBAN BEACH

DIAGRAM OF URBAN PROGRAM PULLING THROUGH MUSEUM BAR

SUMMER OCCUPATION

WINTER OCCUPATION

SEASONAL USE PATTERNS
SECTION 1

Section cut through a winter garden, showing the vibrance of the space even during the Oslo winter.

Visible in elevation is the museum gallery as it impacts the public space, with the connecting ramps descending in the center.
SECTION 2

Section cut through the Viking Ship Gallery, showing the simultaneous production and display of the ships on either side of the occupant path running down the center of the museum bar.

The ground plane pulls up through the building, creating a permeable barrier, linking public programs such as the pool and the grassy slope the south side, as well allowing pedestrian access to pass between the Museum storage and production workshops on the first level and the actual galleries themselves.
SECTION 3

Section cut through a public transit hub, encompassing the semi-enclosed drive for drop off commuters, a food court and waiting area for train patrons, and passage to the train station further down as well as the parking garage in the other direction.

Above this area are the individual artist studios devoted to recreating the particular indoor-outdoor studio conditions of Edvard Munch's creative processes. These studios spill out onto a public access roof garden that runs the length of this section of the museum.
occasional commuter who parks, then walks through the exhibits on her way into the city
airport traveler gets dropped off then walks straight up to their platform
tourist who flew all the way to Oslo just to see the viking long-boat exhibition
visiting artist who grabs lunch in the cafe and goes outside to eat with her friend
family that uses the barbecue grills embedded in the museum plaza while their kids play in the public pool
MODEL PHOTOGRAPHS
Welcome to the A-Museum, not your typical museum! Our galleries and Exhibit spaces are woven into the fabric of the city: Metro stops, train stations, swimming pools, restaurants parks...you'll find it all on your way through our corridors!

Our exhibits feature the Edvard Munch Museum and Viking Ships Museum. A-Museum also includes archeological and anthropological exhibits, shipbuilding and restoration, and artists in residence, as well as travelling exhibitions from all over the world. We hope you enjoy your time with us!
**Site Analysis**

- Industrial space site topology
- Uninorwegianness
- Multinorwegianness

**One Parent Foreign Born**

- Both Parents Foreign Born
- Disperse

**2009**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**2006**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**2004**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1998**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1993**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1992**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1990**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1987**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**1986**

- 74.0%
- 90.3%
- 91.1%
- 91.7%
- 92.7%
- 95.2%

**Women in Norway**

- 41 abortions per 1000

**Concentration**

- Moderate displacement

**Lowest Residential**

- Cramped housing conditions

- 10% of Norwegians live in cramped housing conditions

**45%**

- Of immigrants live in detached houses

**Somalia**

- 134,000 people have emigrated from Somalia

**2000 Waterline**

- Probable nodes of historic artifacts

**Industrivik**


**Viking Ship Museum**

- Biggest in the country with more than 1000 employees and two floating docks.

**River, Based on Water Power**

- The city grew rapidly both in population and geography.

**Villa Nansen IV**

- Decided to relocate the city to the other side of the bay next to the fortress, the bay of Bjørvika.

**1624**

- A fire destroyed almost the entire city, and King Christian IV decided to relocate the city to the other side of the bay next to the fortress, the bay of Bjørvika.

**1100**

- The city became a Royal Seat and Seat of the Church.

**1219**

- The existence of the city.

**Contact with the Sea**

- The quays developed northwards as the economy grew and renewal of the coastline southwards. The land infilling was carried out in order to create a large city block, which has today a length of about 3000 meters.

**Construction of the Akershus Fortress Commenced**

- On the headland opposite to the city.

**1825**

- The new town, Christiania, was given a new street layout called Kvadraturen, according to the politician’s dream of the grand new city.

**1950s and 1960s**

- Industrial activity in the city began to change. Production declined and exports from the port decreased. However, the imports of consumer goods and bulk products were steadily increasing, as was consumption of energy. The city's function as a port began to diminish

**1960s**

- The sawmills were packed closely together along the Akerselva river and the river, based on water power. The city grew rapidly both in population and geography.

**1970s**

- More and more of the rear of Bjørvika will have good access to the seafront.

**1980s**

- The pedestrian bridge across the railway lines will ensure that the urban areas to the rear of Bjørvika will have good access to the seafront.

**1990s**

- The growth in city area has slowed and the city’s residential areas have started to decline.

**2000**

- The use of motor cars increased sharply and more and more of the city became accessible by car.

**1995**

- Changes arose. Bjørvika lost its almost 1000-year old significance as the city's contact with the sea.
THE CITY AT WINTER

INTERSECTION WITH XL WITHIN THE MUSEUM

TION AND PRODUCTION INTERWEAVING OF ART EXHIBITS

AND NULLIFIED

MUSEUM TYPOLOGY UNFOLDED

SLOPE UP

SLOPE UP

STORAGE FACILITIES

museum as a bridge expansion and occupation of the

STUDIO SPACE

CONFERENCE ROOMS

expansion and occupation of the

STUDIO SPACE

STORAGE FACILITIES

section 2

section 2

STUDIO SPACE

expansion and occupation of the

STUDIO SPACE

PRESENTATION BOARDS

System A: Museum

Design Layout

System B: Connection Nodes

User Experience

VER FROM SOUTH

LONGITUDINAL SECTION (1:500)

UPPER FLOOR PLAN (1:500)

MAIN FLOOR PLAN (1:500)

GALLERY INTERIOR

CIRCULATION SYSTEM

User Experience

CIRCULATION SYSTEM

GALLERY INTERIOR

System B: Connection Nodes

System A: Museum

Design Layout

System B: Connection Nodes

User Experience

PRESENTATION BOARDS

System A: Museum

Design Layout

System B: Connection Nodes

User Experience

PRESENTATION BOARDS

System A: Museum

Design Layout

System B: Connection Nodes

User Experience

PRESENTATION BOARDS

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User Experience

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### Outside Spaces
- **Central Atrium**: Provides convenient access to Oslo central train station and The A-Museum
- **Ticketing and Museum Entry**: Get your ticket here. A-Museum is free for all!
- **Circulation Bank**: Access other levels within the Central Atrium here
- **Circulation Bank**: Access other levels within the Galleries here
- **Breakout/Function Space**: Everything from site-specific installations to Black Tie events. Book Today!
- **Parking Garage Access**

### Inside Spaces
- **Museum Shop**: Pick up a great souvenir or original artwork from our Artists-in-Residence!
- **Entry Court**: Oslo’s Front Door!
- **Museum Cafe**: Serving fresh coffee
- **Sculpture Garden**: Enjoy Contemporary Oslo Sculpture Gunnar Torvund’s Installation
- **Roof Terrace**: Enjoy al fresco dining from the food court below
- **Artifacts Gallery**: Archeological Artifacts from Oslo’s historic past
- **Munch Gallery**: A look at Oslo’s most famous artist and cultural figure and his place in history
- **Art Gallery**: A world-renowned chronological collection of Norwegian artists all displayed in one gallery
- **Art Restoration Viewing**: See World-class prints and paintings restored in real-time
- **Audio-Visual Theater**: An exciting visual look at Oslo’s art scene, narrated by Garrison Keillor!
- **Learning Center**: Individual computer stations for in-depth learning about our exhibits
- **Hall of Ships**: Our Landmark Attraction!
- **Gallery Showroom**: Please ask at the Information Desk for current shows
- **Ship Restoration**: See historic artifacts repaired and restored for our collection
- **Ship Building Artisans**: Demonstrate construction techniques of the Viking Ships
- **Studios**: A glimpse into Contemporary Oslo Art scene via our Artists-in-Residence
- **The Great Lifts**: 90ft. Boat elevators: an attraction in-and-of themselves!

### Final Jury Review
- **Thesis Advisor**: Mark Jarzombek, Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture, Associate Dean, School of Architecture and Planning, MIT
- **Readers**: Gediminas Urbonas, Associate Professor of Visual Arts, MIT
- **Nick Gelpi**: Lecturer in Architectural Design, MIT
- **Jury**: Rodolphe el-Khoury, Associate Professor, University of Toronto John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design; Principal, Khoury Levit Fong, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- **Caroline Jones**: Director, History, Theory and Criticism Section and Professor of Art History, MIT
- **Amanda Reeser Lawrence**: Co-editor, PRAXIS; Assistant Professor, Northeastern University School of Architecture, Boston, MA
- **Kiel Moe**: Assistant Professor of Design and Building Technologies, Northeastern University, Boston, MA
- **Marc Tsurumaki**: Partner, LTL Architects, New York, NY
Early massing studies for museum

Early study of integration of exhibition program with city fabric
My intent with this thesis was to be a provocation toward a different kind of public institution that weaponizes the cultural narratives of the museum to begin to negotiate between the complexities of the contemporary city.

It takes form in a direct reaction to the waterfront development plans in Bjørvika. The alliance of cultural institutions to the urban development project has a utopian appeal to it and the institution becomes a part of a larger goal to create an attractive cityscape out of a marginalized section of the city. However, several issues with the pace of development in Bjørvika make me question the final outcome - the representation of the public owned lands by a private company, the reliance on market forces to direct cultural building development and the sterilization of a culturally interesting and diverse place for ideological purposes seem to be misdirected in this situation.

It is precisely this tension between the potential of the cultural building to effect change and the possible sterility that the above conditions might inspire in Bjørvika that led me to the project of exploring the agency of the museum in Oslo further. It is an investigation of alternate relationships of the museum to the city, and in a larger sense of the relation of public space to the power structures that control it. This slightly fantastic, slightly irreverent museum experiments with undermining the role of the artifact as a cultural legitimizer as well as providing an interchange for people of different backgrounds to have a dialog with each other, enabled by the architecture.