"Kallbad vid Vinterviken"
"Cold bath at Vinterviken"

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In today’s world we all live very fast, we all have places to be and stuff to do and most of the time we are not aware of time passing, seasons coming and going, changes happening etc. We used to live more closely connected with time and nature, and I think it is important to try to regain that connection. I wanted to look closer at our relationship to time and presentness, and try to find ways that architecture can help bring about an increased awareness of our place in the world.

This is investigated through designing a cold bath which offers the user a ritual journey of experiences. A place where one can relax and reflect, and take ones time to experience and look at the world and one self in a new light. The focus is not on escapism or purely pleasure but rather on creating intense experiences to foster mindfulness.

I chose the site of Vinterviken in Stockholm because it has a good access to water, and is centrally located with public transportation close by. The site is surrounded by hills on both sides, and currently not very exploited and sort of a bit off from the rest of the city, which makes it really feel like a different place.

More specifically I placed by project on the edge of Rävudden, which (if you come from Liljeholmen) you reach after passing through a series of different nature experiences - kolonilotter, garden club, an open field with Nobel buildings and café. Until you reach the edge of the cape where everything just fizzes out into overgrown bushes. I felt that something was needed to create a sort of end or focus to the site.

The project itself is spread out over the site, creating a journey and spaces in between the buildings. There is a ritual or procession driving the design but I didn’t want it to be completely controlled, creating spaces with loose edges along the path.

The bath is open to both men and women, with certain days of the week reserved for nude bathing separated by gender.

At first you reach a Reception building with a small inner courtyard, changing rooms and a pre/post relaxation room connected to a bigger garden. Here you pay for access, get a robe, soap, slippers, and change before waiting in the garden or heading directly to the showers.

The Showers are separated individual structures, with open roofs and views of trees changing with the seasons. They serve as ritualistic cleansing, and is a very personal part of the journey.

Cleaned and mentally prepared you head out across the water on a thin wood bridge, to the Sauna. The anonymous building does not reveal what’s inside, and sits like a rock on the water. Inside there is a small pre-room with additional showers and place to leave your robe and belongings, before crossing a small bridge and open courtyard to the sauna. After the sauna you leave through another door and is greeted by the full and uncensored view of the water, and can bath directly.

One then leaves the same path, but perhaps it is now experienced different, with different views and a changed mindset.
Continuing on the path to the right, a new type of landscape is revealed, similar to but different from the previous. Unlike before you are only guarded by the hills and exposed rock on one side, while the other consists of a filter of trees, and beyond them the water, given to you in small packages.

Following this path, rock on one side and filtered water on the other, punctuated by strategic gaps, you reach a grove of trees to pass under, and after them, the apex of the journey; the open space of the cape. In the middle is an open field of grass, with a backboard of exposed rock, as a memory of the journey here.

Trees and bushes are dotted along the edge, still filtering your view but it is clear that you have reached the cape, surrounded by water on three sides. By the path along the edge there are benches, as well as gaps in the vegetation giving you views of the surrounding islands and land.

Turning back from the cape the path now leads up unto the rock, changing its role from handrail to floor. A marked change in vegetation also takes place, a shift from deciduous to evergreen. You walk among the cliffs with the surface switching from hard rock to soft pine needle carpet.

Gradually you go deeper and deeper into the forest, with less and less light reaching you until you arrive at a clearing. You have a view of a residential area across the water which is filled with boats. This is a clear sign that you are leaving the special place and heading back to the "city".

Exiting the forest you arrive back at the garden association, one last look of flowers before heading back the way you came, this time Essingeleden is in front of you, drawing you forward instead of being invisible at your back.
Entering the site you pass under a grove of trees, with one cluster to your left and a single proud birch just in the corner of the crossroad. After ducking under these trees, the whole site opens up in a very empty way, the field is almost completely flat.

The site of Rävudden is sometimes used for barbecues, pick-nicks and impromptu concerts in the summer time, so some vastness or open usable space has to be left. The big gravel field in the middle is useful and should be somewhat left intact.

Towards the end of the site is a small hill, covered with fir trees. From this point you have a good view of the whole flat site, and it marks a change in vegetation from deciduous to evergreen, and a change in surface from gravel and grass to rock and pine needles.

A small place at the edge, off the path and hidden under dark trees, from here you have a good view between Lindholmen and the mainland and a very nice backdrop of smoothed cliffs.

At the furthest edge of the site two benches are placed, a bit away from a grove of trees and with no view at all. Just a few steps north there is a great view of a tall hill with houses and a chimney in Hägersten.

Placed by the second grove of trees is a small bench, with a view that could be of the harbor but currently blocked by weeds and overgrown trees. A perfect resting place, a perfect starting place but wasted through neglect.

These are two of the best places on the site. The first with a framed view straight at Rotholmen, backdropped by tall birches. The other frames a view of a small red house on Lindholmen, one of the few focus points on that island.

Up the bath, surrounded by cliffs on all side you reach a small lookout point, a throne above the rest, before the path continuous into the fir forest.
Vinterviken is a small cove in Östra Mälaren, west of central Stockholm. The cape Rävudden extrudes between Vinterviken and Mörtviken, creating a natural point out in the water with views in almost 360 degrees. Just off the coast are two small islands, Lindholmen and Rotholmen.

To the north is Stora Essingen and to the west about 800 meters away is the coast of Smedslätten in Bromma.

Existing baths and water access

There are many existing access points to the water in the area.

DOCKS: There are three nearby docks: one in Axelsberg run by Dalbo båtsällskap1; Hägerstenshamnen run by Örnsbergs båtklubb2 and one in Mörtviken run by Ekenbergs båtsällskap3. In addition to this there is a small steamboat pier in the cove, accessible by steamboat from Stadshuskajen and Nybrokajen.

BATHS: There are two nearby bathing sites: Örnbergs klippbad with rocks to jump from and a pier, and on the other side of the water, in Bromma, the sand beach Solvikshadet. On the cape it is possible to swim from the shore and there are safety buoys there.

TREKANTEN: To the east there is the big lake Trekanten, a very popular stretch of water used for swimming, promenades and ice skating in the winter. The link between the start of Vinterviken and Trekanten is underneath the big thoroughfare Essingeleden.

Access

There are several car routes possible to go to Vinterviken, both from outside of Stockholm and from the center. The closest metro station is Aspudden on the red line, and the station is about 2.2 km or 25 minutes by walk away. On the route you pass by small scale residential areas and kolonilotter.

History

The whole area surrounding Vinterviken was bought by Alfred Nobel in 1865 and used for his dynamite factories. The site was chosen because it was surrounded by hills on both sides and without residential areas close by. Many of the factory buildings as well as blasting bunkers used for testing and production still remain on the site today and are culturally protected.

Parts of the factory was moved to Vinterskogen towards the end of the 19th century, but industry on the site continued up until the 1970’s. In the 1950’s and 60’s nuclear fuel was produced here.

In some places you can see the scars from the industry on the mountain sides, patches where acids have colored the stone or deep cracks from various explosions. There were several big explosions on the site which caused continuous rebuilding.

Current use

Overall the entire site is teeming with history, but still in use and not just preserved as a dusty museum. The old workers apartments are refurnished into residences, a sulphuric acid factory, Syran, is used as a restaurant and sculpture art gallery today. Close by there is an artist studio collective, Ateljéerna Vinterviken1.

An area by the edge of the cove is used for koloniträdgårdar, urban gardens, and a garden organization with community activities and café.

There is a sculpture art walk, designed by landscape architect Torbjörn Andersson, running through the area.

1 http://www.dbs.nu/
2 http://ornsbergsbatsallskap.se/
3 http://www.ekensbergsbs.com/historia/

Woodcut made after a big explosion in 1868 by J F Meyer.
Site photographs
Site photographs
How do we experience time?

Intellectual

Memory

One of the most obvious concepts connected to time is that of memory. St. Augustine thought that our ideas of past and future must depend on our consciousness of memories and sense of expectations (Whitrow, 1988), and in a very real way the only connection or proof that a past exists is through our memories.

Small children have no concept of time, at first they live only in the present and then develop a sense of the future, thereby establishing time as a sort of border between now and their desires (the satisfaction of which lies in the future). Only at a later age do they develop a sense of the past, and this is due to the development of memories which is gradually expanded until it becomes universal. "The child's sense of memory involves not only events in his experience but, in due course, some in the memories of his parents and eventually memories in the history of his social group" (Whitrow, 1988).

In a more practical sense our memories are linked to our sense of expectation (see below) in that it creates a link of expectation through a much longer time frame than a single visit could do. It also allows one to draw on both the collective and individual memories of a user to inform ones own design.

History

Closely linked to memory is the concept of history, but also more intellectual. It connects to a sort of collective memory, rather than linking to something experienced personally by the individual it draws upon the knowledge and information learnt by this individual. We can get a very conceptualized sense of time by visiting ruins or seeing buildings built in a classical style, even though these things might not be old at all they are transformed into symbols that our intellect can interpret as connected to time and thus give us this realization and consciousness of time. Connected to this is Material below.

Sensual intellect

Material

Some materials, such as stone mentioned before, have a certain sense of permanence or impermanence too them. We all have an idea about material’s durability, hardness or other material aspects. Paper or thin fabric are ephemeral while concrete, stone, steel can last through the ages. Even shorter spans such as through the seasons affect materials differently.
Heat or cold can change the sense and size of metals, and wet wood is different than dry. Many times we do not make a conscious connection to this, it is rather an underlying assumption we have.

**Ageing**

Closely connected to material properties is the aspect of ageing. Rusting metals, paint that is flaking off, lichen and moss growing on stones, rotting wood are all associated with time. As is the opposite: new materials, fresh paint, reparations and maintenance. Sometimes these aspects are just a background to our sensation of a place or they can be at the forefront of our thought. This is especially connected to the human hand, as a sense of decay only really enters into the picture when we believe there had been something more ordered before. Nobody would call a moss covered stone in a deep forest decay, but if the moss is growing on overturn furniture seen through the broken windows of an abandoned house it is a different story.

A freshly renovated gothic church might even cause a sense of dissonance for us because our the shape and our historical sense tells us it should be old but the stone is so clean and fresh. Big contrasts like this can help to bring the perception of time from the background to an active thought.

**Expectation**

Closely connected to variation and memory, our sense of expectation can be a big factor in our experience of time. The very words in Swedish väntan (waiting) implies a connection to time. Experiences that falls neatly within our expectations often go by unnoticed. Walking the same path to work everyday, without interruptions or deviations, the episode becomes compartmentalized into a short, unimportant package and time does not exist. But if the route is disrupted, you wake up 30 minutes late, your body feels the change. By keeping busy with something new it can first seem like time is moving very fast, so much to keep track of, but as one becomes used to it and monotony sets in time slows down again.

**Cultural**

Through the ages and the world, different cultures has dealt with time in different ways, often without even thinking about it. We are very used to the idea of an objective time, a scientifically measured time that moves equally for us, animals, plants and inorganic matter. The time trudges forward with or without us, and we’ve built increasingly sophisticated machines to document this. This way of looking at it is not given.

For example in ancient Egypt they divided every day and every night into ten parts, and added two parts for dusk and two for dawn, over the year the parts swell and shrink according to the sun (though not as noticeable in Egypt as it would be here in Sweden). This is where we first got the idea of 24 hours to a day (Whitrow, 1988). A similar practice was used in Japan, but they divided the day into six parts instead, and experience a much bigger change over the seasons (Kulturhuset, 1980).

**Sensual**

Physiological

There are certain physiological factors that can influence our sense of time, such as sleep, drugs and illnesses. This is one aspect of time I am not interested in, in my project.

**Variation**

“Our process of thinking consists of a linear sequence of discrete acts of attention” (Whitrow, 1988). I think this is true in many ways, and our experience of events and change are closely linked to time. If there is variation that means we experience many events, and events occur in time which means much time has passed. The opposite of this is monotony where nothing happens, and as a result time moves very slowly.

The variation can be in terms of activity, external or internal change. By keeping busy with something new it can first seem like time is moving very fast, so much to keep track of! But as one becomes used to it and monotony sets in time slows down again.

An internal change can occur even if the external is static. For example in a very ornamented gothic cathedral one can sit completely still and let the eyes wander over all the intricate details, and get a sense of time stretching out. A similar technique is used in cinema with a long shot, where the frame and editing might be static, but this allows the viewer of the movie to investigate every part of the shot in his own time, some movement in the shot might attract his attention but then he is free to wander to the other side, thus taking an externally static long stretch of time and making it internally dynamic.

Concepts such as messy, bored, busy, interesting, hectic, calm are all connected to variation.

**Movement**

Closely linked to variation is the idea of movement. The idea of duration and movement, time and space are very closely linked both in our experience and in physics. Abstract concepts such as acceleration, velocity, speed are all a combination of duration and movement. Time is often considered the fourth dimension, after three dimensions of space, and in Einstein’s theory of relativity this link is made explicit by the creation of a space-time.

Often it is hard to accurately separate our judgement of time passed from distance passed. We might say a location is an hour away, or 75 kilometers. “It’s just a short walk”. By moving through space we automatically assume time has passed as well, and a fast movement might indicate a fast time.

The movement of our own bodies, both in relation to themselves and in space is also one of the most effective ways to make us aware. By stepping over a tall object or crawling under a tunnel you are often very acutely aware of yourself and your position in the world, which includes time.

Movement is also closely linked to expectation, where our bodies might realize something is not as expected before our minds do. I’m sure we’ve all had the startling experience of misjudging the number of steps in a stair, or not noticing a high threshold and hitting our foot.

**Subject**

Who you are affects your sense of time. Whether you are young or old, stressed or have plenty of time, in company with people you like and feel safe with or surrounded by aggressive strangers.
Design concepts

Contrasts
In order to enhance or underline, working with contrast and juxtaposition can be useful. For example outside/inside, light/darkness, warmth/cold, closed/open.

Framing/focus on change
Working with highlighting or focusing on changing aspects of the world and the project. Ones consciousness can be focused on different things, sometimes just a hint or a pointer is needed to be aware of something that was always there but never noticed.

Body
By physically moving the body in an unusual way the user can be woken and made conscious of themselves in a new way. Rather than making everything so comfortable it is unnoticed small entrances or high steps or guided routes can be used.

Privacy/sharing
Sometimes it is necessary to be alone or private to experience, and sometimes together. It depends on the person and the situation, but it is required to allow for a variety of constellations, making space for both individuals and groups.

Exposure
A bit of inconvenience or vulnerableness can be a good thing. The main point is not to just feel good but to be aware and conscious, and a bit of discomfort or unusual exposure can help.

Human hand
By clearly showing human intervention things take on a different meaning. A stone covered in moss in the forest is nothing to notice, and is not even old, but once a human hand is introduced it brings a scale both in size and time to create something else.

Recursiveness
The same environment can be experienced differently depending on ones own focus or mindset. By working with loops and recursiveness the user can see the same scene with different eyes, and find new qualities in something thought to be known.

Design for time
Work with materials and designs with decay and passing of time in mind. Not only thinking about how it will be at one moment but over the seasons, different weathers, and with wear and tear. Rather than looking at this as unfortunate realities it can be seen as a positive aspect used to inform the design.
Sequencing
By taking larger experiences and breaking them into discrete pieces they can be more appreciated and amplified.

Pauses/preparation
Things take time. Every event or experience can not be stacked tightly one after another if one wants to experience them fully. Rather time and space is required, and events are allowed to spread out. Powerful events require preparation before, and decompressing afterwards.

Expectation/surprise
Sometimes things are so completely anticipated that they pass unnoticed. By being surprised or experiencing something unexpected it can enhance the experience. By not always working in the most expected way, or actively hiding the end result before it is achieved the impact can be increased.

Anticipation
Seeing everything at once compresses time into a single moment, while not seeing anything makes it impossible to plan or let your mind wander and wander. By allowing glimpses, hiding and revealing parts of the project the user can create sort of a road map in their head, which creates a reference by which to suspend the experiences and thereby appreciating it more.

Design concepts
- Reminder
- Anchor
- Connect to everyday
- Decompress
- Reflection
- Preparation
- Views of the external
- Socializing and space for privacy
- Slow, Long time
- Chock, fast, strong experience
- Contrasted
- Intense
- Release of the compression built up
- Short
- Solid, closed room, static
- Compressing and gradually building up anticipation
- Quiet, still, slow, introspective
- Intense but relaxed
- Separated from everyday

Concept/Experience program
- Start
  - First introduction
  - Start to set some expectations and anticipation
  - Gradual approach
- Entry
  - Pause on the threshold of the project and the normal public space
- Drawn out pause/transition
  - Slow, transitional and free moving
  - Preparation
- Practical, mechanical and fast
  - Going through the necessary steps
- Transition to normal
  - Reminder
  - Anchor
  - Connect to everyday
- Decompress
- Freedom of movement
- Reflection
- Preparation
- Views of the external
- Socializing and space for privacy
- Slow, Long time
- Chock, fast, strong experience
- Contrasted
- Intense
- Release of the compression built up
- Short
- Solid, closed room, static
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Pre room
Shower and storage
Wood fired sauna
(Space for wheelchair)

Tepid sauna/reflection/relaxation
Sun deck
Bridge to jump directly into the water after the sauna.
Steps to go slowly, or to allow handicapped people to bathe.

Rain gutter on two sides, loads water over windows, instead of over doorways. "Wall of water" during rain.

Exposed sea water on sides. Hint of what's to come.

Low doorway, increased depth by walls on side, increased privacy for showers behind.

Upon re-entry, view of the sky through skylight. No view, only light, when sitting in the sauna.

Sun deck towards the south, different levels of benches for sun at different times over the year.

Framed view of two islands, water and sky.
The garden goes from rational/controlled to irregular and naturist the farther away from the main building. Concrete and wood steps provide access and views to the water.

As the visually thick wooden deck hits the ground it turns into concrete with similar proportions.

During warm seasons the waiting hall expands out into the garden through tall pivot window-doors. Boards of the deck can be individually removed and replaced, creating patterns of new/old wood over time.

Rainwater leads by gutters to chains directing it to the plants and drainage at the corners. Clean runs and stacks the concrete slabs on the ground over time. Entry door covered by extended roof.

Inner courtyard paving slightly sloped up to entry door. Water can run off and down into drainage, which encourages growth in the wall gaps.

Inner south east facade has trellises with plants growing attached to gutters. Filtered light and views into hallway to changing rooms, providing privacy and enclosure. More sun in winter or summer.

Filtered view, then changing, then revealed view through courtyard.

Inner courtyard paving slightly sloped up to entry door. Water can run off and down into drainage, which encourages growth in the wall gaps.

Section AA 1:100
Plan reception building 1:100

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Showers directed towards trees. Access possible but discouraged by vegetation and building placement.

Slightly hidden entrance. Not immediately visible from rest of site.

Framed views to island. Direct view towards island. Similar view from inside tepid sauna. If you leave this way you will get the view again but from a slightly different perspective.

Views framed by vegetation to buildings and nature on the other side of the water. Esplanade, site, shoreline of an old factory and residential houses up on a hill.
The material is chosen to age with dignity, as well as to be able to be replaced or repaired and to show the changes made.

The facade is untreated fir boards, mounted in a locklist fashion, with a slight gap between them. They will age and turn grey at a different rate depending on the direction of the sun, wind and rain. The locklist structure offers two layers of decay, and individual boards can easily be replaced, creating a living and continually changing facade mixing old and new wood.

Details on doors and railings are bronze or copper, showing over time where people place their hands and brush against it.

The roof is covered in zinc sheet cladding to harmonize with the wood facade, and allow easy water runoff.

Contrasting with the dark and decaying exterior is a light and fresh interior with oiled wood walls and floor.
Shower views over seasons

Mood/reference board