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Mellanrum Interstitial space

In certain types of complex historical buildings an in-between space is often present. This space is a consequence of something more important such as another room, a necessary movement or the thickness of the wall. This thesis aims to investigate this kind of space, mellanrum, on an interior and an urban scale. Mellanrum means interstitial space in Swedish, but more directly translated mellan means in between and rum means room, this can both mean a room in between something else or something in between rooms. It is a slightly mysterious word and so are these rooms.

Mellanrum is investigated through three case studies Stockholm slott, Rosersbergs slott and Gripsholms slott, the rooms are documented in plan and with a portrait. On an urban scale mellanrum is explored on the small island Riddarholmen in the historical parts of Stockholm, mainly in model.

The main questions this thesis poses are thus:
- Can mellanrum, be a form giver?
- What is it about mellanrum that makes it special?
- Can one create a method to achieve something that holds the poetry of the unexpected and unplanned?

To create new mellanrum the project concludes in the design of a small juridical library on Riddarholmen. Most of the old palaces on Riddarholmen are owned by the Swedish state and are housing parts of the juridical system, mainly courts, the courts needs more space and a way to achieve this is to bring all the existing libraries (five in total) in to one common library.

The method used when designing the library has been to intuitively use the knowledge gained in the research of the case studies. In the case studies, different parameters generated mellanrum but in the design of the library the process has been somewhat reversed, mellanrum has generated the architecture. Mellanrum is about using the unnecessary and seeing the possibilities it possesses, it is a balancing act between order and chaos and about allowing the weird to exist.
Case Study Stockholm Slott

Stockholm slott was designed by Tessin in a quite rigid structure with double height floors facing the city and two floors facing the courtyard, the grand stairs and the smaller ones connecting it all. Mellanrum in Stockholm slott seems to have emerged were this structure was insufficient and over time. The stairs moving in the walls from one floor to another, the passage behind the grand bedroom making it possible to move through the building without passing the primary room and the broken arch passage where the symmetry is broken to get from one room to another.
**Case Study: Rosersbergs Slott**

Rosersbergs slott is just outside Stockholm. The castle dates back to the 17th century but has been redone and added on over time. Mellanrum in Roserberg are almost made as a stage set with hidden doors, a passage through pillar and hidden stairs taking you unseen from one place to the other. In these rooms little has been done to match the façade thus giving very small rooms very large windows and so on. The rooms are often a negative of the space on the other side.
Case Study Gripsholms Slott

Gripsholms slott was built as a fortress by Gustav Vasa and was completed in 1545 but with some older parts. After Gustav Vasa the castle has been redone and added on in different stages. As the castle was built as a fortress there are towers and the shape is very irregular. Mellanrum in Gripsholm are a consequence of the angles coming together and the wish to make rooms as orthogonal as possible. Another important part of Gripsholm is the construction with a brick cavity wall making the walls very thick and also giving a possibility to hollow the wall in some places, creating stairs, niches, passages etc.
Site Riddarholmen

Riddarholmen is located in the middle of Stockholm and is part of the historical city. The palaces, mostly from the 17th century, are relating to the water rather than the city thus creating urban mellanrum in-between them, not unlike the mellanrum within the case studies. To investigate mellanrum on the urban scale in Riddarholmen models in scale 1:200 were made of the urban rooms there.

The site is down by the water, where there seems to be a cut in the relationship between mellanrum and buildings. There is a piece of rock sticking out and a strange little tower is connecting the buildings.
Program Courts Library

Most of the buildings on Riddarholmen are owned by the Swedish state and are housing courts and other parts of the juridical system. The courts need more space but extensions to the old palaces are, for different reasons, hard to do. All the courts have their own library and a way to free space from the palaces could be to move them all to one common library.
Process Models

Some of the mellanrum found in the case studies were built as models in scale 1:50. The thickness of the walls were taken away as a way of reimagining what the primary rooms shaping them are.
Further on models of the found mellanrum were put together in new arrangements creating mellanrum between mellanrum. Findings in these new models were collected in photos. The most interesting things being the relationship between the small and the large, the connections between them and how the light gives them very different characteristics, the unexpected and the layering and also a beginning to create some kind of facades. In this part of the process an architecture generated by mellanrum is starting to emerge.
Library

The library is facing the water towards south west, the facade is strict relating to the existing buildings but with deviations made, translating the mellanrum within to the facade. A small parc is added east of the building, facing south.
1. Magazine room
2. Library - Mark- och miljööverdomstolen
3. Foyer lecture hall
4. Café

1st floor 1:200

1. Library - Rätt och mark篁vunkebersten
2. Reception and office
3. Foyer lecture hall
4. Café

2nd floor 1:200
1. Library - Kammarrätten
2. Work space

6th floor 1:200

1. Library - Högsta förvaltningsdomstolen
2. Office
3. Office

5th floor 1:200
Library to the right, creating new urban mellanrum

Library to the left, framing the existing

Facade detail facing south-west
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1st floor main stair dividing in two, model photo

3rd floor library interior, model photo

3rd floor library interior, model photo

3rd floor library interior, model photo