

# Reflection // Place of Unpretentiousness

As an architectural master student at the TU Delft, I was once confronted with a bachelor course that emphasized the importance of architectural research in the design process. This was for me the first time to be aware of the fact that research has a great influence on empowering the design. This awareness opened for me a new approach towards the design process. As a result I started with the studio Complex Projects, a studio in which doing research is more important than the design itself. Eventually, I gained a grown interest in designing through research, instead of just following my intuition. However, the research process was always a bit chaotic since I was not aware of the different research-methodological approaches. I would start doing intuitively-based research on different interesting topics, with as a consequence ending up with an incoherent story due to the lack of choosing a certain research method. However, thanks to the lecture series Research Methods I gained awareness in the different research methods one can opt before conducting a research. The lecture series provided a wide range of methods that might be of great use for the final design

assignment.

The graduation studio I have chosen is the chair of Public Building. The aim of the studio is to design a public condenser within the context of Copenhagen that can act as a catalyst for the development of their environment. Multiplicity is one of the key aspects that the public condenser aims for. This refers to buildings that provide different kinds of program that make the building more resilient and thus less singular in function. However, consumerism is the topic that fascinated me the most, therefore the design tends to stress the importance of non-commercialized architecture within the context of Copenhagen as an opposition to the concept of consumerism.

According to Leslie Sklair: "Consumerism - or more accurately, the culture-ideology of consumerism - refers to a set of beliefs and values, integral but not exclusive to the system of capitalist globalization, intended to make people believe that human worth is best ensured and happiness is best achieved in terms of our consumption and possessions." Through psychoanalysis and psychogramming, people are being manipulatively forced

to consume even more for the sake of making economic profit. The fact that one of nowadays most common public activity in gathering people is been led by manipulative strategies is shocking and urges to consider a place for the public that does not intend to manipulate for the sake of making economic profit.

The Harvard Guide to Shopping provides a global approach on the issue of commercialization, meaning that what is happening in Copenhagen is recognizable in other countries on a global scale. Therefore the importance of this project is that it provides a possible perspective on how to react on a global issue as such, yet within a local context.

However, the toughest challenge I have encountered during the design process was the translation of the research into something physical. How can non-commercial architecture take shape? In order to achieve that I translated the research into specific design strategies. With the word 'specific' I tend to stress that these strategies are an outcome of the way the research is conducted, meaning that it could take any other shape depending on the way of doing

research. Nevertheless, the current outcome has led to an architecture that can be recognized as an opposition to commercialization, a "Place of Unpretentiousness, which refers to a place that does not try to be anything else than itself.

# Position // Place of Unpretentiousness

## Consumerism

material profit

manipulative

psychogramming

forcing

ordinary

class polarization

maximum effort to reach the maximum

Aims to make economic profit through manipulation.

## Non-consumerism

immaterial profit

honest

trustworthy

inviting

unique

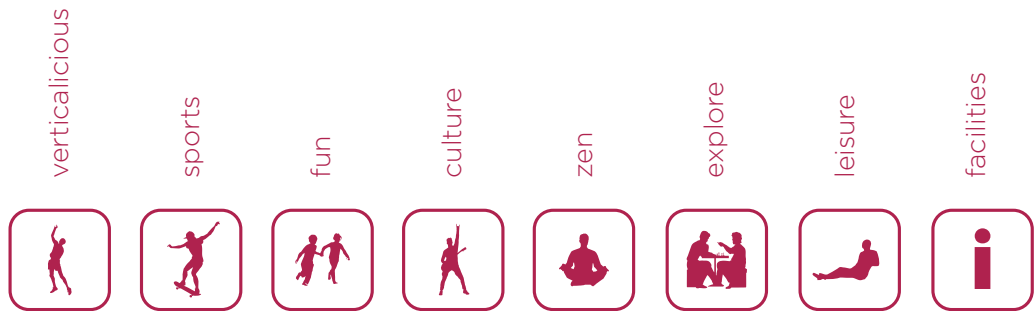
inclusive

minimum effort to provide the maximum

Aims to provide valuable and unique experiences through honesty, trustworthiness and transparency.

# Design strategy // Place of Unpretentiousness

immaterial profit



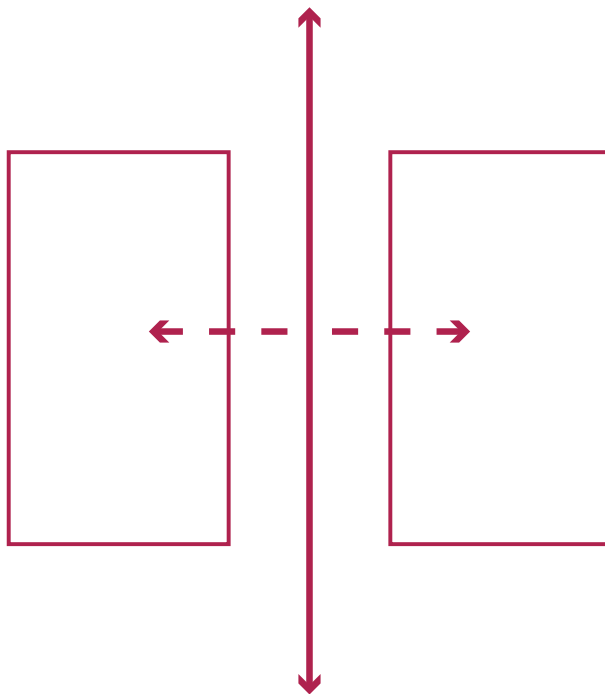
The program of the public condenser tends to stimulate the production of intangibles such as the production of ideas, innovations and experiences.

inclusive



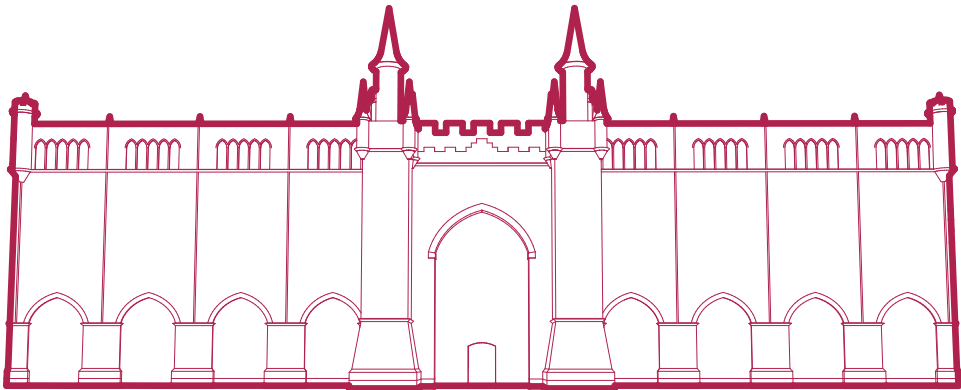
Whereas consumerism enhances class polarization, the public condenser seeks for inclusivity by offering places for multiple target audiences.

inviting



Instead of forcing people to enter, the public condenser tends to kindly invite people without any means of confrontation.

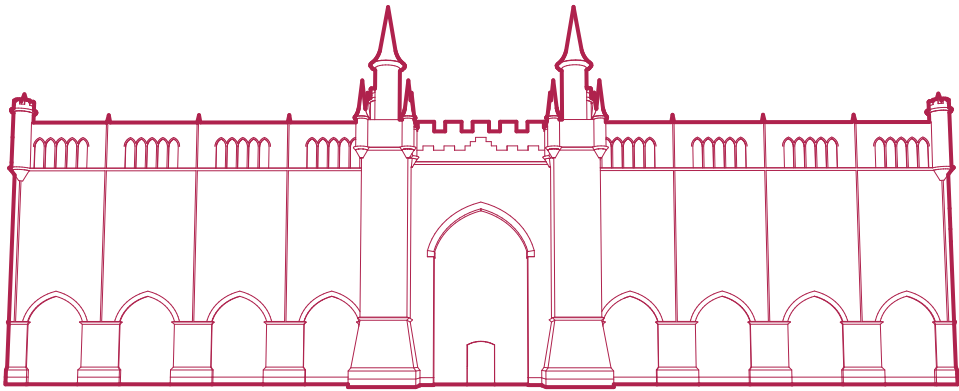
unique



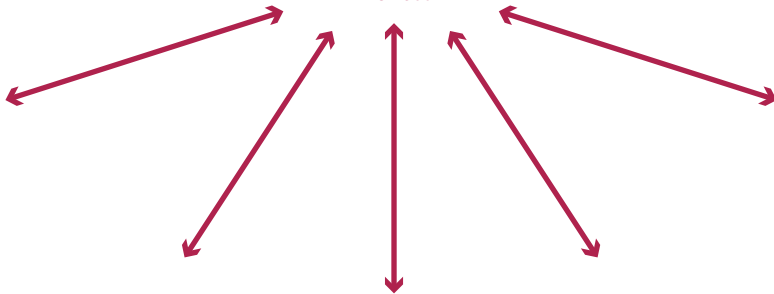
Whereas consumerism claims to stimulate status and uniqueness, the public condenser provides absolute uniqueness by using the wall, being it one of its kind.



## honest & trustworthy



focus on existing  
honest

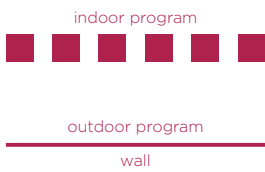


trustworthy  
focus on new

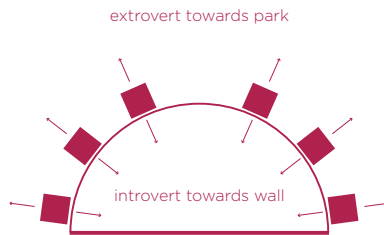
Honesty refers to preserving the original character of the place, while trustworthiness refers to the openness and transparency of the public condenser.

## minimum for maximum

program



focus

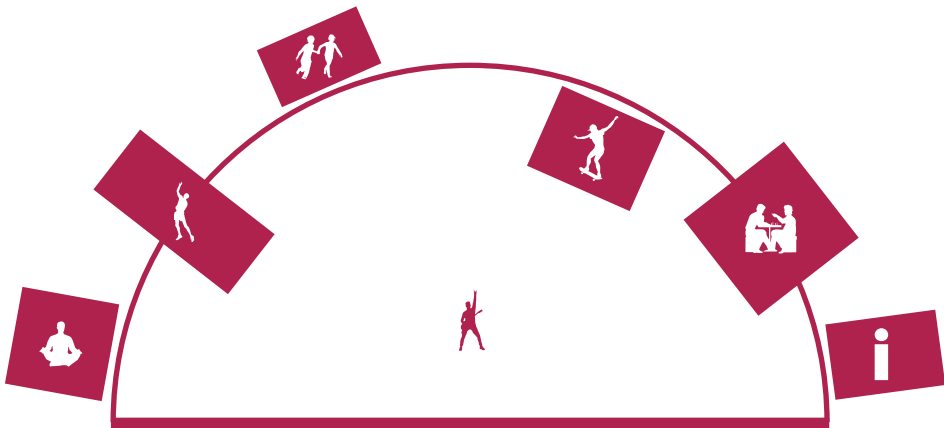


differentiate



Whereas commercialization tends to reach the maximum through maximum effort, the public condenser tends to provide the maximum through minimum interventions.

## multiplicity



The combination of these strategies results in a place that allows multiple activities to take place for different target audience in complete honesty and trustworthiness.

