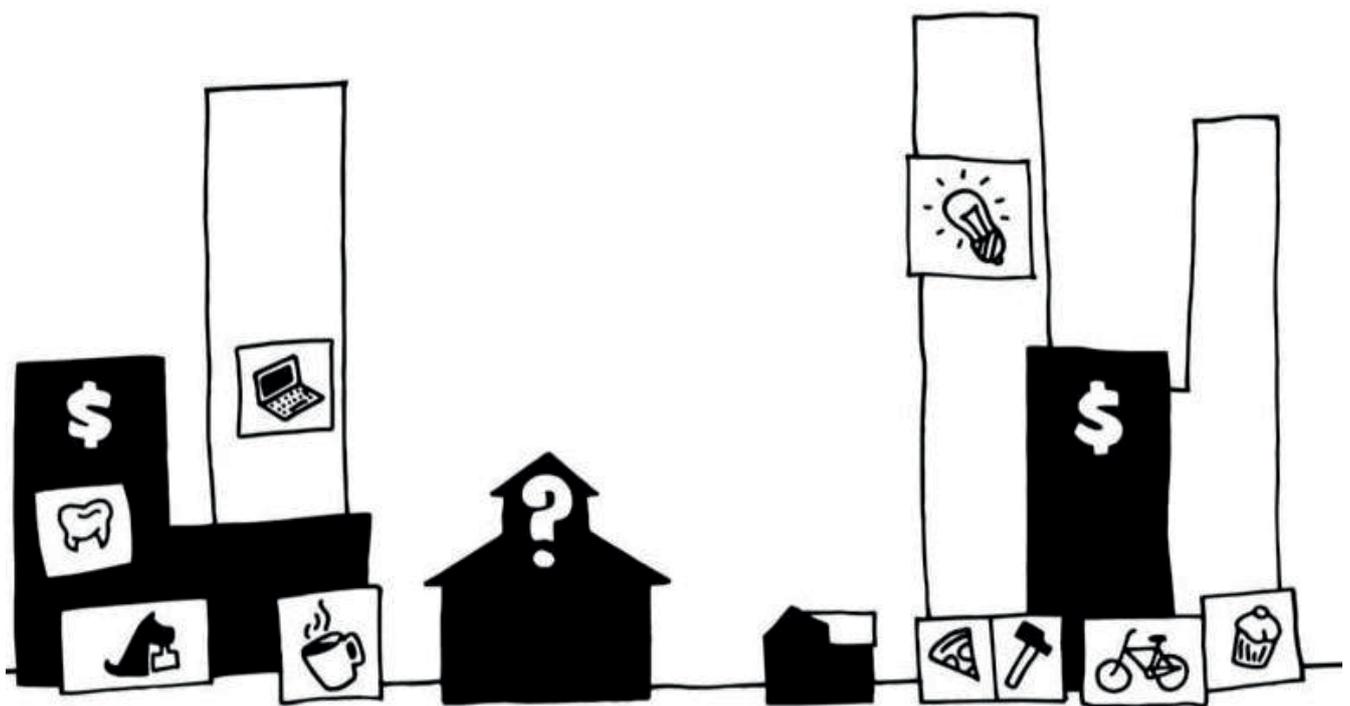


# Urban Alternatives

- Creative communities influence on the preservation of urban heritage sites



## Urban Alternatives

- Creative communities influence on the preservation of urban heritage sites

Master thesis in Sustainable Heritage Management

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## Abstract

The thesis builds on the assertion that heritage is a cultural and social process, and it draws on the 'Historical Urban Landscape' recommendation from UNESCO 2011. This recommendation points at the social dimensions of urban heritage and the process of integrating historical sites into the contemporary city by emphasising local use and interest. To explore this claim the thesis focuses on the creative environments; Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, in Aarhus and their active reuse of two post-industrial sites; the old freight and slaughterhouse districts. Through these cases, I will explore how creative communities influence historical sites and ensure their further integration within contemporary urban regeneration. Simultaneously, the thesis points at the important role historical sites can play as place-makers for the development of creative environments

### Key words:

Creative communities, Bottom-up heritage, The historical urban landscape approach, Identity and Place-making.

## Urbane Alternativer

- Vækstlagets indflydelse på bevaringen af kulturhistoriske miljøer i byen.

Specialet udforsker en hypotese om, at lokale fællesskaber kan bidrage til at integrere kulturhistoriske miljøer i den moderne by ved at skabe midlertidige aktiviteter, som aktivt er med til at udfordre moderne plan- og byudviklingsprocesser. På nuværende tidspunkt er der en tendens i Aarhus til, at post-industrielle områder bliver midlertidigt aktiveret af vækstlagsinitiativer, som på mere eller mindre autonom vis også involvere sig i udviklingen af disse steder. De kreative vækstlagsmiljøer i Aarhus, Institut for (x) og Sydhavnen, er gode eksempler på dette, da de ved at genbruge det gamle Godsbaneområde og Slagteriområdet er med til at skabe en fleksibel inddragelse af de industrielle strukturer. Diskussionerne i dette speciale peger i den forbindelse på at socio-culturelle, økonomiske og politiske processer konstant påvirker udviklingen af vores byer og er med til at definere hvilke historiske lag, der præger urbane områder. Miljøer som Institut for (x) og Sydhavnen bidrager for eksempel ved, at deres midlertidige aktiviteter skaber en forståelse for, hvordan det er muligt både at inddrage og transformere kulturhistoriske områder, som en vigtig og funktionel del af den moderne by. Samtidig er de med til at ændre folks forståelse af Aarhus ved at invitere folk til at bruge byen på nye måder.

Baggrunden for dette speciale er at forstå den stigende interesse for disse kulturhistoriske miljøer og sætte ord på, hvordan denne kulturarv kan bidrage til at øge livskvaliteten i byerne. Ved selv aktivt at deltage i de Aarhusianske vækstlagsmiljøer, Institut for (x) og Sydhavnen, har jeg forsøgt at udforske, hvordan 'de kreative' bruger disse fysiske rammer til at få en generelle indflydelse på byens udvikling. Målet er at udforske specifikke områder, som har betydning for udviklingen af Aarhus i dag, og se på den aktive brug som en måde at styrke kulturhistoriske miljøers indflydelse i en by, der ellers er i konstant forandring. Jeg forsøger herved at skabe et nuanceret billede af udfordringer og potentialer ved at transformere kulturhistoriske miljøer i forbindelse med den moderne byudviklingskultur.

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Sydhavnen during ShowOFF  
Picture by Per Bille

# 1. Introduction

*“Even if it tastes a bit dusty saying the word ‘heritage’ it has rarely been as alive as it has been in recent years. This is the verdict of several experts in the field.*

*New ways of communicating museum objects and a focus on the living and active preservation of urban heritage structures offer present communities’ the best opportunity to understand the past - and possibly the future”<sup>1</sup>*

The thesis is related to a global phenomenon of transformation and adaptive reuse of previously industrial sites which has become quite popular for creative communities over the last thirty years. This change of public spaces, from traditional industries to social urban experiences, have changed the patterns of western city allowing for self-organised creative communities to develop. This thesis examines how these creative communities active use of historical areas can contribute to the preservation of urban heritage sites, and it focus in particular on the creative communities Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen and their influence on two post-industrial areas in Aarhus. The argument is that both areas have inspired to urban regeneration locally and act as important contributors to the social environments of the old freight and the old slaughterhouse districts in general. These communities’ have contributed the integration and preservation of the previously enclosed areas, which a few years ago were expected to be demolished to make space for new urban constructions. Therefore, their transformation these post-industrial sites into spaces for cultural production have not only strengthened their own communities but also kept these post-industrial structures relevant within the contemporary urban scene. The communities therefore play a central role in the contemporary urban regeneration of Aarhus as their adaptive reuse have inspired a new understanding of urban patterns by transforming **previously enclosed into public spaces.** During the thesis I try to gain a better understanding of

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<sup>1</sup> Ekspert: Ingen krise for kulturarven i Danmark, 27.07.2017: <http://www.dr.dk/nyheder/kultur/historie/ekspert-ingen-krise-kulturarven-i-danmark>  
I will in this these use my own translations of danish quotations.

contemporary heritage management and what local participation mean for the survival of such heritage sites, as well as look at how the creative communities benefit from using these historical areas. **I therefore understand their role in the current urban development as alternative contributions to the preservation of urban heritage sites.**

By studying the urban renewal process of Aarhus, I realised the complexity of urban areas and how social, physical, economic, and political aspects all influence the development of the city, and whether or not urban heritage sites are in fact preserved. In this thesis, I therefore explore the complexities of contemporary urban development focusing specifically on post-industrial sites in Aarhus and how local communities influence these areas. I further compare their activities to **current the political strategies of the city as they focus, among other things, on these creative communities. These communities' are said to foster social well-being in urban environments as well as increase urban identities. I primarily refer to us the cultural agenda *Kulturpolitik 2017-2020* and the newest municipal plan for Aarhus *Kommune ForFra (2015)*. These agendas do not specifically refer to urban heritage management but argue for social well-being in the city using creative communities as examples of how this goal is reached, even though they are autonomously driven spaces.** I use the definition of Richard Florida (2002) *Creative Class* to argue the value of these creative communities'. He argues that the economy of modern societies is based on knowledge, innovation and creativity, which means that these creative communities have become essential for the economic development of modern cities'. The communities' interest in using the post-industrial sites therefore make them important actors for integrating these areas into the contemporary city as they introduce street life and business activities which increase the value of the areas. **From a political point of view, the communities are used as temporary experiments which support urban development by attracting people to the sites as well as actively explorer new use of the areas as part of a collaborative planning strategy.**

*“Today there is a raising international competition between bigger cities to nurture and attract creative businesses and entrepreneurs. According to Florida, it is necessary to have an expanding and dynamic alternative subculture in order to succeed”<sup>2</sup>.*

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<sup>2</sup> De kreative miljøer er ombejlede som aldrig før, 16.06.2017: <https://www.information.dk/kultur/2011/08/kreative-miljoer-ombejlede-aldrig-foer>

In order to understand the relation between people and urban heritage sites I have, among others, used the theories of Rodney Harrison (2012) and the concept of *the dialogical model*. Dialogical heritage is a process which occurs in “the relationship between people, ‘things’ and their environments as part of a dialogue or collaborative process of keeping the past alive in the present” (Ibid: 216). From this perspective urban heritage is produced when people actively engage with and adds value to the physical space and through that create a sense of personal identity connected to the area. To legitimise the creative communities influence on the sites as alternative contributors to the preservation of post-industrial areas in Aarhus I refer to *The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)*<sup>3</sup> recommendation on the Historical Urban Landscape (2011). This recommendation acknowledges the adaptive reuse of historical urban structures as “a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas”, and that it “fosters economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment” (UNESCO 2011: Introduction 3). The argument of local value is therefore vital within issues of preservation of urban heritage as the social activities connected to these areas keep them relevant in a contemporary context. Through this study, I seek to understand the mutual benefits between the preservation of urban heritage sites and local involvement, as a means to revitalise historical areas by integrating them into contemporary urban environment. However, the question remains what role does heritage play in a contemporary society and what are the limits for integrating these sites and structures into the city?

## 1.1. Objective of the thesis

In this thesis, aim to understand the dialogue between the post-industrial sites and the creative communities, and how the two communities Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen have become strong tools for the contemporary urban development. The thesis questions how their activities can be understood as a strategy for preservation of historical urban sites, and considers these alternative uses an important influence for the survival of historical environments.

*How historical sites are transformed by local creative communities,  
and how local creative communities are affected by historical sites.*

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<sup>33</sup> I will use UNESCO as an abbreviation for *The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation* during this thesis.

## 1.2. Structure

The thesis is structured in two parts.

Chapter 1-3 is an introduction to the thesis: chapter 2 explains some of the concepts used often during the thesis, such as creative communities, and Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen. Chapter 3 explains the methodology I have used to explore these creative communities, and why this process have been important for the matter of this research.

Chapter 4-6 is the combined research of the studies as well as a discussion of the synergies and challenges between the urban heritage sites, the creative communities and current renewal processes in Aarhus. In chapter 4, I will reflect on the importance of involving local communities in the preservation issues of urban heritage sites. As both of the creative communities, Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, have been actively involved in the development of the two areas, I will elaborate on their specific influence and contributions in chapter 5. Their involvement is also reflected in the political and cultural agendas of the municipality of Aarhus and I will therefore introduce some of these aspects in order to understand it in a socio-cultural context. Chapter 6 is discussions of the thesis where I attempt to put the information into context using the different perspectives from chapter 4 and 5.

Chapter 6 is structured in three themes which have been reoccurring topics during my field work which are important for the two communities. The chapter is therefore a reflection on the discussions and dialogues I have been a part of during the thesis, which are put in the context of urban heritage:

### 1. *Theme 1: Social engagement*

I evaluate on how people use the post-industrial sites, and how they relate to them, trying to understand the creative communities' relation to the areas and their contributions to the contemporary development of urban planning. Their influence on the preservation of the areas and the consequences of their adaptive reuse are analysed in relation to their cultural production.

## 2. *Theme 2: Place-making*

I evaluate the municipality's interest in the areas and their plans within recent development strategies. The urban development, ownership and gentrification of Aarhus will here be discussed in relation to the cultural spaces that these creative environments produce.

## 3. *Theme 3: Collaboration*

I analyse the different interests in the sites and try to understand the role different actors play within the urban development and how they contribute to the preservation of the urban heritage sites. In particular, I focus on the creative communities' involvement as an important aspect of enhancing the relationship between people and urban heritage sites, and how these dynamics are important to support within the management of these post-industrial areas.



## 2. Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the primary concepts used in the thesis to make the research more accessible as well as support the arguments of my discussions. As the focus of the research has been on the balance between urban heritage sites and contemporary urban development I will shortly introduce how urban heritage is understood and used throughout the thesis in section 2.1 An introduction to Urban Heritage. Further, the concept of creative communities needs a proper introduction as this type of local influence has been my main interest, in section 2.2 Creative Communities. Finally, I elaborate shortly in the two cases Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen and how these communities are defined in section 2.3 An introduction to the Case studies.

### 2.1. An introduction to Urban Heritage

Urban heritage is physical spaces that contains traces of past generations<sup>4</sup>. This could be historical city centres, urban districts, or as in the case of this thesis a post-industrial area. These sites are often used as a means to create a narrative of or add uniqueness to it an urban space, as I will point to in chapter 6. But urban heritage sites also support a practical knowledge of previous building techniques, architectural styles, and urban ideals which make them important as a means to communicate urban development and create a continuity in the history of a city<sup>5</sup>. Latiner kvarteret in Aarhus is an example of an area that was supposed to be demolished in the 1950's, but today play an important role as the historical centre of Aarhus where a lot of small

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<sup>4</sup> UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, 18.07.2017: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>

<sup>5</sup> Lokalplaner og Kulturarv, 25.07.2017: <http://slks.dk/kommuner-plan-arkitektur/lokalplaner-og-kulturarv/eksempelsamling/>

shops and cafes are located<sup>6</sup>. According to the report *Byarkivar i Århus* from 2008 that there is a connection between “historical events, and people, and the development of society which is important to understand as a reflected human being” (Aarhus 2008: 10). According to this report urban heritage sites are a means to protect urban continuity and visualise the development of a city over time. In other words, urban heritage sites are spaces which are redefined over time as contemporary experiences and trends change. According to Harrison (2012), this dialogue between the sites and the communities is a way to integrate historical environments into the contemporary understanding of the city. The value of urban heritage sites, I will argue in this thesis, depends peoples interest in using and interacting with it the areas, especially in the case of non-valued heritage<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore a dynamic relationship between the physical spaces and social constructions which makes the areas more than a visual element but a contribution to the urban experience (Ibid: 223). By integrating existing structures into the contemporary urban grid it is, according to UNESCO, possible to make them the driving force within urban development. I use the historical urban landscape recommendation from UNESCO<sup>8</sup> as it encourages the participation of local communities in the preservation of urban heritage sites to integrate them probably into contemporary cities. It is an approach that seeks to keep and integrate historical values into modern societies and among other examples use the HighLine in New York. I will in chapter 4 introduce recommendations from UNESCO and *The International Council on Monuments and Sites* (ICOMOS<sup>9</sup>) in order to argue the benefits of an active preservation. However, I understand this relationship as important for the preservation of urban areas and the urban continuity in the context of a contemporary urban development.

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<sup>6</sup> Fjern det gamle skidt, 04.03.2017: <https://fuaa.dk/aarhus/program/festival/fjern-det-gamle-skidt-1711-530>

<sup>7</sup> Kommuneplan Aarhus, Bevaringsværdige Bygninger, 11.08.2017: <http://54.194.117.254/aarhusplan/kort.htm>

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. See chapter 4.2 for the historic urban landscape recommendation

<sup>9</sup> I will use ICOMOS as an abbreviation for *The International Council on Monuments and Sites* during this thesis.

## 2.2. Creative Communities

I use the concept of creative communities to refer to entrepreneurial collectives, as both Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are self-grown and self-organised platforms for cultural industries. In *The rise of the Creative Class* from 2002 Richard Florida defines such communities as creative led business-communities which primarily consist of young, creative professionals who are attracted by the *Bohemian neighbourhoods*. He argues that these types of communities are attracted first and foremost by the quality of life, tolerance and a creative feel of the city. In regard to this, Institut for (x) refer to themselves as a *community of egos* (Jonas Larsen, Institut for (x) 03.2017), which is a network of people best characterised by the concept of modern sharing economy where sharing, lending, trading, renting, gifting and swapping are essential for the synergy of their community. The communities do therefore not have a common economy as they are collective entities of entrepreneurial egos consisting of architects, designers, musicians, artists etc.

*“(X) is like the history of animals, right? How the first animals came into existence was when bacteria started working together. They got more out of working together. And that’s kind of what I think is happening here. If you see bacteria as all the different units that are here. Then it kind of functions as one big animal” (Jonas Larsen, Institut for (x) 03.2017).*

According to Florida (2002) these communities are often used as a way to revitalise unappealing areas as well as invest in people’s creativity (Ibid: 56). From this perspective, the social network between the users of the creative communities is an active contribution to the identity of the urban area. The social notion of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen is therefore important as both communities actively participate and engage in the current urban development process, and the bottom-up revitalisation of these post-industrial areas. “We believe that temporary use and re-use of abandoned land and buildings can help create dynamic and resilient places in and around our towns and cities. Through this Character we will promote such uses as an integrated part of both short and long term planning to help bring landscapes and urban areas back to life” (This is X 2015: 31). Understanding the communities roles as active participants in urban development, and preservation of urban heritage sites, points to a discussion of social well-being in an urban context as the people here actively contribute to the contemporary social environments of these specific areas.

## 2.3. An introduction to the Case studies

In this section I will introduce the two cases, Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, to frame the communities I am using in the thesis. They are both examples of creative communities which is a tendency that has been developing in Aarhus over the last couple of years. Especially Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen have been referred to as positive examples of an urban and cultural development during the application for Aarhus as the Cultural Capital of Europe 2017<sup>10</sup>, as well as integrated into current municipal agendas as strategies for urban renewal that brads Aarhus as a *creative city*<sup>11</sup>. I will elaborate on these political agendas and interests in chapter 5.

### Sydhavnen

Much of the recent focus surrounding Sydhavnen in Aarhus has been on the old coal bridge, which is left as a remaining object from the previous gas production, which ended in 1979<sup>12</sup>. The municipality and KulbroensVenner sees the potential of it as an infrastructural structure that can bridge the industrial harbour to the city centre. Kulbroens was earlier supposed to be demolished but now after the attention it has been given it is revitalised and thought integrated into the current development plan as an important element of the future of Sydhavnen.

*“It started as a fun experiment between Martin and I applying for a competition which we then won and received some money from Realdania Ildsjæle-pulje. And from there it all progressed quickly... We did not know who owned the bridge when we applied for the money, we just liked the idea. It was not till after we received the money from Realdania that we went to the municipality and asked for permission to use the site” (Daniel Walsh Sydhavnen, 02.2017)*

However, Sydhavnen consists of many different people, or communities, that all share this area. There are 4 primary user groups; Kulbroen consists of the small group that has taken interest in the coal bridge structure and the preservation of it as an industrial trace in the city. On the lower

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<sup>10</sup> Aarhus 2017 - Europæisk Kulturhovedstad, 11.08.2017: <http://www.rm.dk/regional-udvikling/kultur/aarhus-2017/>

<sup>11</sup> Aarhus Kommune: Kulturpolitik 2017-2020  
Aarhus Kommune: Kommune ForFra, udviklingspolitik 2015-2020

<sup>12</sup> Ugens Aarhushistorie - Kulbroen, 16.06.2017: [https://www.aarhus.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/AarhusStadsarkiv/Home/Servicesider/Nyheder/2015/3-kvartal/Ugens-Aarhushistorie-Kulbroen.aspx?sc\\_lang=da](https://www.aarhus.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/AarhusStadsarkiv/Home/Servicesider/Nyheder/2015/3-kvartal/Ugens-Aarhushistorie-Kulbroen.aspx?sc_lang=da)

side of Kulbroen, there is a community of artist called Spanien 19. These artists have rented the spaces of two old warehouses since the 1980s and transformed them into creative studios from where they do their work. On the upper side of Kulbroens is different communities of socially vulnerable people, homeless, and drug addicts located with facilities such Værestedet, Nappifik, Nåde Hospitalet, and Blå Kors to service them. This community is the most vulnerable of them all in an urban development context as they are often the first forced to move. Concerns regarding their existents is therefore very tense as they try to figure out where they will be moved to within the next couple of years as Sydhaven is currently being developed (Ove Abildgaard, Værestedet at Sydhavnen, 28.06.2017). Located in the part of the slaughterhouse district which is still functioning, within the structures which has been abandoned, is a relatively large creative community consisting of 172 registered businesses and organisations<sup>13</sup>. It is mainly designers, architects, musicians, sound producers, artists, and education centres such as Frontløberne and F16. This diversity of people shows demographically as the age group spans from 16 to 79.

Recently the municipal has initiated the development of Sydhavnen with the ambition of the area becoming an important new business districts in Aarhus. Within the development plans the area is described as “known for its diverse cultural environment, established and new entrepreneurial businesses, rooms for homeless, artist and creatives. Further, the area has many buildings and cultural traces worth preserving, such as the old power plant, Restaurant Kohalen and other buildings that add character to the area”<sup>14</sup>. Many of the people here have kept a low profile for many years as an attempt to attract less attention in fear of being forced to move or have an increased rent. The area does however attract a lot of new businesses that seek to be a part of the environment and creative atmosphere at the old slaughterhouse district. Jonas Pindhund, co-owner at a workshop at Sydhavnen called GIVISME, describes the relationship between the industry and the community as ‘*rough but charming*’ (Jonas Pindhund Sydhavnen, 02.2017). An example of people moving to Sydhaven is the cultural school Frontløberne that moved from Mejlgade in Aarhus when this central street changed from being a creative young environment to become a gentrified hipster district. The same with initiatives such as Knudskiosk that moved to Sydhavnen when the municipal cultural centre *Godsbanen* were constructed and they where thrown out of the warehouses of the old fright. The area has therefore continuously evolved to contain more and more creative people making it an

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<sup>13</sup> Sydhavnen Aarhus, 31.07.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1692517437636792/>

<sup>14</sup> Sydhavnskvarteret, 10.08.2017: <https://www.aarhus.dk/da/erhverv/byggeri-og-grunde/Byudvikling/Sydhavnskvarteret.aspx>

important district for especially the musical industries within Aarhus. However, the area is less known and accessible than Institut for (x), which might have to do with the regulated zoning of the harbour industries that limits the activities taking place here (Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017). As the slaughter house is still functioning there is a co-dependency between the slaughterhouse and the different communities'. "The cows just disappear into the slaughter house. Sometimes they escape and run around in the yard here in front of my studio. It is quite grotesque how they are then shot down and driven away on a truck. But that is life here!" (Abdul Dube, Sydhavnen 2017).

The municipality is incapable of developing the site because of the functioning slaughterhouse and therefore rents out the buildings cheaply to the users of this area. When the slaughterhouse contract expires in 2025, the creative industries are similarly expected to move. However, studying the new development strategy, the plan is to continuously negotiate the development with the communities at Sydhavnen as the municipal strategy recognises the importance of mixed usages (Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017: 23). According to this plan the communities are expected to be integrated into the development process in order to keep this creative environment active, as seen in Copenhagen and London<sup>15</sup>. However, not many of the users believe they will be involved in the area after 2025, but rather asked to leave (Gudrun Steen-Andersen, Sydhavnen 01.2017). As a result the different communities have started to organise under one organisation called SydhavnsForeningen in order to gain a more influence in the process. They are still trying to establish a common bond between the different communities, however, this organisation has affected how people in the area interact especially within the creative community where people have started to exchange knowledge and meet casually in front of their offices. In will elaborate on this development in chapter 5.

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<sup>15</sup> Sydhavnen skal være erhvervslivets svar på latinerkvarteret, 08.08.2017: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/Sydhavnen-skal-vaere-erhvervslivets-svar-paa-latinerkvarteret/artikel/302175>

Reportage: Lær Sydhavnen of Kødbyen at kende - i Aarhus, 08.08.2017: <http://politiken.dk/ibyen/byliv/art5564556/Lær-Sydhavnen-og-Kødbyen-at-kende-i-Aarhus>



Sydhavnen during KulbroMarkede  
Picture by KulbroensVenner

## Institut for (x)

*“Institut for (x) has created a cultural level in Aarhus that didn't exist before. It's a lot easier to please more people if you aim for the mainstream, but you'll get a more interesting promenade if there's 20 different minority projects. You'll still be able to walk your dog, you'll still be able to get your latte. But something interesting will happen on that walk, because there are minorities living in the area. If these minorities disappear, all you have left is granite, recreation and latte” (This i X 2015: 222)*

The old freight in the centre of Aarhus was built in 1920 in the outskirts of the city as an infrastructural distribution centre. The trails were built along the green landscapes that combined the city to Ådalen south of Aarhus, this is later going to be an important factor for the development strategy of the modern city<sup>16</sup>. DSB left the buildings in 2000 when it became an abandoned site, which the municipality gained ownership over in 2008. Parts of area was transformed in 2012 into the centre for cultural production called *Godsbanen*, which is a public centre that contains creative workshops, stages, a cafe, project rooms, exhibition spaces. Behind *Godsbanen* is an autonomous space for creative entrepreneurship under the collected name Institut for (x). It is an independent and not-for-profit platform for creative businesses which started in 2009 as a cluster for culture, business and education. “The (x) is continuously being defined and redefined. The space should be understood as a private workshop with an open attitude”<sup>17</sup>. Institut for (x) includes 72 registered businesses and 25 associations. Other than the individual businesses, the users actively collaborate with each in a supportive network, where they give or share work with each others. As a result of their collaboration, several entrepreneurial collectives have emerged, such as Studio (x), where the different businesses collaborate as interdisciplinary knowledge and craftsmanship. “Together they have created a new, playful and diverse neighbourhood where they show what can happen when the municipality stay out - this is their own explanation”<sup>18</sup>. This quote is from an article in Euroman

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<sup>16</sup> see chapter 5

<sup>17</sup> Institut for (x), 16.06.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/164200956447/?fref=ts>

<sup>18</sup> Institut for (X) i Aarhus er en succes på lånt tid: “Man skal have ild i øjnene for at komme her”, 16.06.2017: <http://www.euroman.dk/livsstil/institut-for-x-i-aarhus-er-en-succes-pa-lant-tid-man-skal-have-ild-i-ojnene-for-at-komme-her>

last year on the creative energy at Institut for (x), and it is only one of many national and international articles written about the site.

It is a hands-on environment that gradually transforms the post-industrial site spontaneously to fit the needs of the creative community. The environment is therefore a result of people's own initiative, economy and work, as well as their personal investment in the area. They refer to themselves as a *Do-mocracy* which describes a flat organised cultural platform that produce temporary initiatives. "Do-ocracy gives power to the once who act on their ideas and follow through. The essential lack of hierarchy within the system gives space for rapid change and smooth spatial transformation, easily occupied by doers" (This is X 2015: 159). The area is, opposite Sydhvanen, constructed as one community supervised by three people on a daily basis; Mads Peter Lauersen (MP), Christian Juul (Juul) and Jonas Larsen (Larsen). These people control the development of the area, and in collaboration with the users curate the physical development of the space as well as makes sure it lives up to the regulations of the municipality. The users are therefore responsible for the maintenance of the area only framed by the municipal direction of "do it right" (Jonas Larsen, Institut for (x) 03.2017). However, they relay on the slogan 'Feel free to fuck up'<sup>19</sup> which is a quote that supports peoples initiative contribute and participate in the development of the site.

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<sup>19</sup> Sag2: Introduktion til Institut for X, 11.08.2017: <https://www.aarhus.dk/da/politik/Udvalg/Medborgerskabsudvalget/Tidligere-moeder/2015/2015-05-11/Referat-fa47/Introduktion-til-Institut-for-X.aspx>  
- this quote is taken from a summary of a municipal hearing



### 3. Methodological approach

This chapter elaborates on the methodological studies of the thesis and how the empirical data has been collected. As a part of understanding the values Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen place on the two post-industrial sites I have had to touches upon a lot of different issues within urban development, such as social, political and economic aspects besides reading the communities use of the physical environment. My approach to the question on the creative communities influence urban heritage sites as “a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas” (UNESCO 2011: 3) has therefore primarily been led by two approaches:

The first part of the research, under section 3.2. Participation and Communication, is focused on social value as both communities actively contribute to the cultural activities at the sites. Much of the empirical data is collected through participation and active involvement in the creative environments, to get a qualified understanding of their influences. I have spent a lot of time in direct participation with the communities from both sites in order to understand their perception of the socio-cultural context of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen. Through conversation, I have gained their perception of the municipal plans for the local urban development.

In the second part, under section 3.3. Observation and Behavioural Mapping, I use observations from the sites to understand the information I have gained through conversation and dialogue in order to form a basis for my analyse. In this process, I have tried to understand and identify the characteristics of the areas and how it is reflected on to the image of the urban scene.

The aim is to understand the conditions in which the relationship between creative communities and urban heritage sites take place in Aarhus. The research is supplemented with data from local legislations, newspaper articles, and online media in order to create a nuanced understanding of the communities and their influence on the urban scene. This information is primarily used in the discussion of my thesis in chapter 6.

### 3.1. Personal context

*“We sit around a small fireplace in the Gallery at Institut for (x). The fireplace has been made by the local blacksmith and is placed near the exposed brick wall of the old DSB building. The group I sit among talks in a lively and friendly manner sharing coffee and jokes on this cold January day. Why are we here? What brings us together? It is a diverse group of people from different nationalities, backgrounds and disciplines, but we have one thing in common - we are all a part of the community at Institut for (x). Together, we build workshop spaces and office studios, discuss the development of the area at neighbourhood meetings, or just meet for a coffee and a smoke. The conversations can be about everything or nothing, you can ask for a helping hand or you simply offer it, and it is this basic kind of sharing that make Institut for (x) the community it is. The social environment, the activities, and the way the old structures are reused is what creates the atmosphere here”*

*(Personal notes, Institut for (x), 05.01.2017)*

Since I moved to Aarhus in the summer of 2015, I have in different ways been involved in the creative environment at Institute for (x). I started my connection to Sydhavnen later during my internship at *Sager der Samler* in summer 2016, and I have since developed close ties there as well. I have therefore been actively involved in both environments and followed this development of creative communities in Aarhus for roughly two years. The most notable change within this timeframe is the organisation of these communities where they have gone from accepting the temporariness of their occupation to actively organise as groups in order to both influence the development of the areas but also force the political agendas of Aarhus to support the development of future creative communities. In regard to this, I will draw on my knowledge from being on the local advisory board for the new *Aarhus Liveable City Lab* which is a new municipal initiative to explore potentials for social well-being in Aarhus. The advisory board represents some of the creative industries in Aarhus such as Kulbroens Venner, Institute of (x), Culture Works, and Sager der Samler. These meetings have focused on what way the municipality can actively support the local creative environments and their networks as a strategy for urban planning rather than working top-down. In this context, supporting the creative communities could contribute to more diverse society embracing liveability bottom-up.

This is an important recommendation because co-creation and local participation are important characteristics of the new political agendas of Aarhus, *Kommune ForFra* (2015).

The internship at *Sager der samler* has been important for me in many aspects as it has both helped me to create a strong network with the communities as well as thought me a lot in regard to participatory methods and communication. It is an independent community-based organisation in Aarhus that provides people with a place for creating networks and develop social initiatives. Especially, my involvement in their festival Rethink Activism has strengthened my knowledge on the cultural and political development of Aarhus and how to work with it in practice. The practical knowledge on participation and involvement, which I use in this thesis, I have therefore primarily learned from this internship.

In the process of collecting the empirical data I have, however, had to learn and remember to take notes and describe my experiences as well as contemplate on the relevancy of the information. As these are scribbles I have chosen to keep the material as personal notes and recordings as the amount of transcribed material would otherwise be too extensive for the matter of this thesis.

### **3.2. Participation and Communication**

Much of the focus has been placed on my own interaction with the communities in their day-to-day actions as “a means of developing intersubjective understandings between researcher and researched” (Crang and Cook 2007: 37). The empirical data and my research can therefore not be separated, which will become apparent during the discussions in chapter 6. The arguments of the thesis primarily build upon the creative community’s own perspective, and focus on the on their adaptive reuse and engagement in the development of the sites. I then use this knowledge to compare the municipal strategies and principles of heritage management in order to legitimise the communities’ use of the sites through out the thesis.

My involvement has varied for each of the case studies, but it was conducted at their facilities as it has been important for the informality of the conversations (Crang & Crook 2007: 65). By taking part in the communities, I gained an understanding of the social interactions and the material alterations (Watson and Till 2010: 126) in order to understand how communities

actively use and associate with the two urban heritage sites. This direct involvement was a conscious decision to be an active part of the DIY-culture (Do It Yourself) of the communities using labour to start a conversation. These observations of the daily life at Sydhavnen and Institut for (x) made the communities' senses of humour, frustrations and challenges quite clear, and it has helped me to understand the relations that form these urban heritage sites. At Institut for (x), I have joined many of the everyday activities in order to help out and participate in social activities.

My participation in their environments influenced our relationship as I became a regular face within the communities. This affected the level of information and personal views that were shared with me, which in some cases were frustrations that contradict the municipal authorities (Bergold & Thomas 2012: 12). These dissenting views are however also important for the understanding of the sites and the communities (ibid: 6). Both communities strategically seek out people within the municipality to avoid bureaucratic complications and in order to gain a more direct involvement. The users of Institut for (x) have created their own discourse and refer to this a *municipal bowling*: "If you hit the right cone they all fall" (Mads Peter Lauersen Institut for (x), 2016). Municipal bowling is a concept of persistently present ideas or projects to municipal members in order to create a co-ownership and secure a continued dialogue with politicians. In order to create these dialogues the communities also have to keep themselves updated on the various development plans of Aarhus<sup>20</sup>. Thus, The relationship I gained with the communities made dialogues easily accessible, thereby being able to support my observations and keep me updated on the development strategies from a local and municipal perspective (Bergold & Thomas 2012: 5). The conversations, observations, and experiences from interacting with the communities have therefore been important for my ability to place them in a theoretical and political context as well as an important empirical foundation for my work (Bergold and Thomas 2012: 5). However, a possible downside of working closely together with the different communities have also been my personal involved, as it from time to time has been difficult to objectively analyse the communities. The thesis is therefore to some extent affected by my personal opinions of and friendship with these people (Ingerslev and Stage 2015: 127). I will elaborate on this in section 3.4. Research Content.

Because of the difference in the two communities, my involvement at Sydhavnen have been approached in another way, as a I have spent much time observing, and talking to the different

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<sup>20</sup> I will elaborate on these political agendas in chapter 5.1. Understanding the socio-cultural context of the case studies

users of this community. The different perspectives of the many user groups at Sydhavnen have made it challenging to collect information (Bergold & Thomas 2012: 6), but I recognise that all of these narratives add to my understanding of the social diversity of these communities as well as the significant role they play in the development plans (Cohen & Uphoff 1980: 222). However, by listening to the different users personal stories and memories of the area, as well as their reflections on the social environments and local development, I have tried to gain an idea of the site and the communities' active use of it. I have therefore not been particularly involved in the community at Sydhavnen as it is not as well defined as at Institut for (x), but I have lend a helping hand in small projects, such as building a scene for the Jazz-festival 2017, helping at the Kulbroen Festival 2016, and co-hosting ShowOFF as coordinator for the Aarhus2017 project OFFTrack. The difference between the projects I have been involved at the two sites is that Sydhavnen primarily has been events coordinated by one group, where Institut for (x) is much more communal based and collaborative. Here I have been involved in the construction of Plantecafeen, helped Aarhus Volume build an office space, and participated in the process of the new bydels-kontor<sup>21</sup> and the development of X2. These have been much more fluid in their organisation which made it easier to contribute.

I have primarily selected daily users and members of the communities as my main source of information. I have therefore screened active community members from loosely connected users and local citizens enjoying the recreational spaces. This organisation at Institut for (x) made it easier to gain access to understand where to gain specific information (Cohen & Uphoff 1980: 219). These observations are important for the means of this thesis as I seek to understand the communities ' active use and integration of the post-industrial sites; how they argue their right to facilitate them and what effect it has on the preservation of the structures as a consequence. The general age group of the communities' participants and users is between 20 to 50 years, and the people vary a lot in regard to being single, having an established family, being refugees, or being homeless. I have therefore gained information from a wide variety of people with diverse cultural backgrounds.

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<sup>21</sup> I will elaborate on the concept of urban labs in chapter 6.3 Collaboration

Primary informants at Institut for (x):

(Local leaders) Mads Peter Laursen, Jonas Larsen, Christian Juul

(SpantStudio) Troels Thorbjørnson and Kasper Holmboe

(Punkt&Felt) Eske Brunn

(PLUKK) Andreas Freandsen and Sacha Bechtle

(Bureau Detours) Mads Binderup and Ari Marteinson

(Aarhus Volume) Albert Helmig

Primary informants at Sydhavnen:

(Sydhavnsforeningen) Sara Jarsbo

(Kulbroens Venner) Daniel Walsh

(the drop-in centre) Oddur Thordarson, Ove Abildgaard

(Strudio02K) Peter Skjalm

(Maxmoebler) Max Buthke

(Lydhavnen) Nicolai Absalon

(F16) Martin Skytt

(Zine) Abdul Dube

(Center for Urban Kunst) Nicolai Juhler

(Local artists) Gudrun Steen-Andersen and Lars Høygaard Andersen

### 3.3. Observations and Behavioural Mapping

I have used drawing and mapping as a tool to reflect, visualise, and record some of the experiences and impressions I have from the two sites. I have made sketches of my observations to illustrate the users' behaviour in relation to the urban heritage sites. These mappings are used in the thesis to compare the observations to theoretical and political notions stating that "the city is as much a subjective experience as it is an objective reality" (Holl 2009: 16). This idea of subjectivity and objectivity is interesting in relation to the Historical Urban Landscape recommendation (UNESCO 2011) which seeks to actively integrate urban heritage sites into the local communities thereby acknowledging the intangible aspects of the site. I will elaborate further on the recommendation in chapter 4.2 to draw a connection between local use and participation and heritage management. The Historic Urban Landscape recommendation points to the importance of undertaking "comprehensive surveys and mapping of the city's natural, cultural and human resources"<sup>22</sup> in order to gain an understanding of its current relevancy.

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<sup>22</sup> New Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, 09.03.2017: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities/>

*“First, their surfaces are directly analogues to actual ground conditions...The other side of this analogous characteristic is the inevitable abstractness of maps, the result of selection, omission, isolation, distance and codification...The analogous-abstract character of the map surface means that it is doubly projective: it both captures the projected elements off the ground and the ground and projects back a variety of effects through use. Hence, mapping is a projective device that may allow place projecting” (Corner 1999: 214)*

Corner suggests that mapping allows us to explore and record facts in addition to it being a tool for hypothetical thinking. In regard to this, the architectural firm Diller, Scofidio and Renfro, who did the work on the HighLine in New York<sup>23</sup>, argue that a graphic representation of urban space is an effective method for documenting contemporary patterns and relation to social and environmental issues<sup>24</sup>. In the case of Sydhavnen I made an experiment where I asked different users of the different communities to draw a map of the area. I used these maps to compare their understandings of the site, in order to address both the physical and social qualities of the different environments. I approached it by sitting down with each of the participants individually at their workshop or location at Sydhaven and asked them to draw a map of *Sydhaven* for me as they explained how they use it. By listening and asking questions to their visualisations as they drew, I both got a map of the cultural environment and the structures important to them as well as their personal stories and memories of the site. I found this type of cognitive mapping very effective as a method to collect the many narratives to understand the overall use of the site. Both mine and their maps are used in the thesis to frame and analyse the social values they place on the post-industrial area as they explained many of the site’s characteristics. An example of this is my meeting with the artist Lars Høygaard Nielsen from Sydhavnen. He has had his atelier in the same space since the 1970, and told colourful stories from his time here including both his relationship with the previous industrial workers and how it changed into what it is today. The drawing on page ? illustrates his experience of drinking beer the restaurant Kohalen and afterwards having intercourse in the old barn with random women. These stories are beyond the physical space and shows how much history a site can contain. I will evaluate further on urban identities and how the creative communities actively transform the two sites in Aarhus to fit their specific needs in chapter 5 and 6

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<sup>23</sup> I will elaborate on this project in chapter 4.2 The Historical Urban Landscape recommendation

<sup>24</sup> Diller Scofidio + Renfro, 30.07.2017: [www.dsrmny.com](http://www.dsrmny.com)

### 3.4. Research Content

The thesis is based on communication, with most arguments build on conversations and interactions that I have had with the users of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen. From these conversations, I have extracted relevant topics that focuses on the social interactions, the physical space, and the correlation between the users and the sites. From these topics I have then constructed the primary discussions of the thesis using chapter 6 to compare the information to heritage theories, recommendations and cultural-political agendas. My involvement and direct communication with the environments definitely made it easier to follow this development and an effective way of gaining the *wisdom of the crowd* (Kelty et al 2014: 2). Wisdom of the crowd refers to the knowledge of the communities as a whole, where each individual has contributed with informations that collectively explain the communities and their interest in the two post-industrial sites. The conversations have therefore been important in order to determine the direction and focus of the discussions of the thesis.

A particular challenge has been that Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are under constant development and evolve in their position. Institut for (x) for example went from being a temporary community that would be demolished in 2018 to now be an integrated and vital part of the identity of the future urban area; Aarhus K. Similar, Sydhavnen was supposed to be demolished and build from new but the municipality have changed perspective on this site as well. As a result the research question of the thesis has changed over the course of the semester from focusing on the communities as temporary programs to understanding them as persistent involvements in the development of the areas, which as a consequence has affected my reflections (Bergold & Thomas 2012: 20). I have therefore actively sought input from the communities to help strengthen the argument of the thesis (Kelty et al 2014: 7), and continuously reflected on these engagement and conversations in order to put the knowledge I have gained into a context as it is a “process of piecing things together, figuring things out, gaining focus and direction as the research unfolds” (Crang and Cook, 2007: 132). This process has been important as the questions from the users and the dynamics of the developments has encouraged a continues reflection on the communities relevancy for the urban development which has made it impossible to construct the outcome of the thesis beforehand (Bergold & Thomas: 14).



Institut for (x) common dining at Plukk  
Picture by Andreas Freandsen

## 4. Urban heritage and sustainable urban development

The purpose of this chapter is to place the discussion of the thesis in a heritage context in order to later argue for the relation between urban heritage sites and the creative communities.

In section 4.1. Urban Heritage, I look into the concepts of urban identity in relation to heritage sites and the urban experience, as well as how heritage can contribute to the construction of urban experiences. In section 4.2 the historical urban landscape recommendation, I use the Historical Urban Landscape recommendations (UNESCO 2011) to legitimise my arguments for local participation and involvement in the preservation of urban heritage sites. The recommendation points at heritage preservation of urban environments as a process where local involvement is important in order to incorporate urban heritage into the contemporary city. Drawing from this, local citizens' interest in the areas has become an important strategy within heritage management to keep the areas active and thereby relevant in the contemporary urban scene.

In section 4.3 Industrial Heritage, I look at industrial heritage and temporary uses of such sites. Contemporary development of the cities from industrial societies to a cultural environment has led to spacial changes that have to be taken into consideration when planning the urban landscape. The section seeks to highlight how contemporary urban communities contribute to the integration of these sites by adapting and reusing the post-industrial areas to support modern social experiences.

## 4.1. Urban Heritage

The term *urban heritage* refers to the value of urban structures as both representatives of urban historical developments and as a frame for contemporary social experiences. In the thesis I emphasize the value the creative communities Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen place on the post-industrial sites as a way to construct urban and social identities. I use the concept of heritage as described by Rodney Harrison (2012), as it understands heritage as a social process which is developed over time in relation to its contemporary society. In this sense, local communities, such as Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, influence the development of the post-industrial areas, and therefore need to be considered in the preservation process. Their activities in relation to political processes is a way to understand the social and physical complexities that characterise the areas as well as the sites relevancy in the urban development. I reflect on the communities values and the social image connected to the areas as it is an important part of the identity the communities construct around themselves. It is this sense of identity that sustains the sites as they are a result of the interactive relations between people and space in the contemporary environment. E.B. White wrote an article called *Here is New York* (1949) in which he describes spaces and atmospheres of New York City:

*“I am sitting at the moment in a stifling hotel room in 90-degree heat, halfway down an air shaft, in midtown. No air moves in or out of the room, yet I am curiously affected by emanations from the immediate surroundings. I am twenty-two blocks from where Rudolph Valentino lay in state, eight blocks from where Nathan Hale was executed, five blocks from the publisher’s office where Ernest Hemingway hit Max Eastman on the nose, four miles from where Walt Whitman sat sweating out editorials for the Brooklyn Eagle, thirty-four blocks from the street Willa Cather lived in when she came to New York to write books about Nebraska, one block from where Marceline used to clown on the boards of the Hippodrome, thirty-six blocks from where the historian Joe Gould kicked a radio to pieces in full view of the public, thirteen blocks from where Harry Thaw shot Stanford White, five blocks from where I used to usher at the Metropolitan Opera and only a hundred and twelve blocks from the spot where Clarence Day the Elder was washed of his sins in the Church of the Epiphany (I could continue this list indefinitely)...” (Ibid: 696).*

In this book White illustrates how social experiences are framed by the physical surrounding and how memories of these experiences are connected to their physical context. Areas such as

Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, which I use for the purpose of this thesis, therefore illustrate the contemporary influences on these urban heritage sites, and how they are being made and developed as a result of the activities of the communities. As an example, the local newspaper *Stiften* wrote in 2016 ‘great possibilities for the preservation of Jyllands Christiania’<sup>25</sup>. This article caused a lot of debate which I will elaborate on in chapter ‘5.3 Institute for (x)’, but the notion here is how the community of Institut for (x) has managed to create an identity connected to the sites, which support people’s awareness and interest in the area. **In this sense, the urban heritage has become a social construction which has to be understood in relation to the physical space in order to “ensure continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society’s relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance” (Lefebvre 1991: 33). In this sense, contemporary social and cultural experiences are reflected onto the sites when they are actively used as part of the city. Social environments that use the areas contribute to an understanding and image of the sites, and what is associated with that particular space. However, these experiences change over time as they are a result of the dynamic relations between people and place. Henri Lefebvres (1991) uses the idea of space being a social construction that only exists as a product of its time and context. “Space is at once result and cause, product and producer; it is also a stake, the locus of projects and actions deployed as part of specific strategies, and hence also the object of wagers on the future - wagers which are articulated, if never completely” (Ibid: 142). According to Lefebvre, space is an active entity that is created through the activities of people in their daily lives and not a pre-existing thing. Similarly, David Harvey (2001) argues that heritage is a social construction, which is redefined over time, and proposes “since all heritage is produced completely in the present, our relationship with the past is understood in relation to our present temporal and spatial experience” (ibid: 6). **Drawing from this notion, urban heritage and the experiences of the sites are continuously recreated in relation to a contemporary time and place (Ibid: 7), and from this perspective, heritage is a contemporary socio-cultural expression.****

*“It is value and meaning that is the real subject of heritage preservation and management processes, and as such all heritage is intangible, whether these values or meanings are symbolised by a physical site, place, landscape or other physical representations, or are*

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<sup>25</sup> Gode muligheder for at bevare Jyllands svar på Christiania, 08.10.16: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/gode-muligheder-for-at-bevare-jyllands-svar-paa-christiania>

*represented within the performance of languages, dance, oral histories or other forms of intangible heritage” (Smith 2006: 56)*

Laurajane Smith argues that heritage only exists due to the meaning people ascribe to it. She notices that heritage management needs to be a social and cultural practice which can secure local values and thereby strengthen the identity and social continuity of a heritage site. Following this approach, the presence of creative communities and their social actions can be understood as an urban negotiation in a contemporary development processes concerning “a range of identities and social and cultural values and meanings” (Smith 2006: 3). Even though Smith focuses on the context of native communities, such as the aboriginals in Australia and their right to continue traditional use of landsites, her theories inspire on an abstract level to think of the general right to use and integrate urban heritage sites into contemporary environments, which supports the idea of urban heritage as a process. She uses the concept of *subaltern heritage* (Ibid: 35) which describes people’s engagement with the past as an active, emotional, and embodied process that transforms heritage sites. Heritage is “a cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present, and the sites themselves are cultural tools that can facilitate, but are not necessarily vital for, this process” (ibid: 44). Urban heritage is, in regard to this thesis, understood as urban areas which are constantly modified by its contemporary context. It therefore represents two perspectives; on the one hand, it represents the physical spaces of historic urban sites, in this case the post-industrial areas of Aarhus. On the other hand, the areas frame a contemporary social context where modern uses are integrated into the old structures, which add to a contemporary use and understanding.

### Urban Identity

The process of heritage both illustrates time as well as contemporary social, economic and cultural trends, which makes it a dynamic resource for modern time and place (Carman 2002: 47). Even though the cultural production of the communities have little to do with the historical space their activities contribute by integrating the structures and thereby keep an understanding of the urban industrial past. John Carmen refers to this process of urban transformation as *adaptive re-use* and considers it appropriate for old buildings which are considered worth keeping. Adaptive reuse is an approach which transforms the use of a historical site to fit

contemporary needs, as well as retain a lot of the features that are unique for the spaces (Ibid: 46). Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen actively influence the urban sites by actively engaging in social activities, and through these interactions negotiate the spaces and what the areas mean for the contemporary urban experience. Thereby both communities actively contribute to a sense of identity that both incorporates the historical structures into the contemporary context and keeps the areas active. Smith (2006) argues:

*“Heritage is something vital and alive. It is a moment of action, not something frozen in material form. It incorporates a range of actions that often occur at places or in certain spaces. Although heritage is something that is done at places, these places become places of heritage both because of the events of meaning and remembering that occur at them, but also because they lend a sense of occasion and reality to the activities occurring at them” (Ibid: 83).*

From this perspective, urban heritage sites gain relevancy because of the social actions at the sites. According to John Urry (1995: 48), the relationship between heritage and identity lies in the interaction between the sites and the people who interpret them into a modern context. He argues that a community’s association with a site is a way to negotiate the social identities of an areas (Ibid: 59), I will elaborate on this in chapter 6. However, these activities help change people’s perception of the areas and make the sites important cultural political subjects as they contribute to the social well-being of the city. I will elaborate on the cultural politics of Aarhus in chapter 5.3 Understanding the socio-cultural context, in order to compare the adaptive reuse of the areas to the strategic development plan of the municipality. For Carman the concept of heritage is related to the idea of identity because it is linked to what individuals think is important or valuable: “Any heritage or heritages we create should enhance our understanding of who we are and what we do, and increase our enjoyment and delight in the world we jointly inhabit” (Carmen 2002: viii-xi). Contemporary social and cultural processes are therefore important in order to understand the development of urban heritage sites and how communities, such as the communities at Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, are tools to rethink urban spaces. I will argue in chapter 6.1. Theme 1: Social Engagement that urban heritage exists in the realm between physical structures and people, and its survival depends on peoples’ engagement with the space.

## 4.2. The Historical Urban Landscape recommendation

*“Recognising, the dynamic nature of living cities,  
Noting, however, that rapid and frequently uncontrolled development is transforming urban areas and their settings, which may cause fragmentation and deterioration to urban heritage with deep impacts on community values, throughout the world,  
Considering, therefore, that in order to support the protection of natural and cultural heritage, emphasis needs to be put on the integration of historic urban area conservation, management and planning strategies into local development processes and urban planning, such as, contemporary architecture and infrastructure development, for which the application of a landscape approach would help maintain urban identity” (UNESCO 2011: Preamble)*

In this section I will look into the historical urban landscape recommendation made by UNESCO in 2011 as it elaborates on the concept of urban heritage sites and how participation of local communities support a sustainable urban preservation and development as it helps to understand how spaces are used by contemporary communities. The recommendation acknowledges the value of local communities and focus on how urban heritage sites are preserved and integrated into contemporary urban development plans. It is a tool for urban change to “involve more people in preservation efforts, raise levels of awareness, and seek innovative schemes” (UNESCO 2011: 4). In this thesis, I therefore use the recommendation to understand and legitimise the adaptive reuse of post-industrial sites in Aarhus as it supports the local communities’ uses of the post-industrial structures as a way for the users to actively engage with heritage and socially reconstruct it.

*New life for historic cities; The historic urban landscape approach explained* point to several projects that integrate historical sites into contemporary urban environments, such as the canals of Amsterdam, biking in Quito, ‘Play the City’-app in Istanbul. However, in regard to this thesis the examples of *Ushahidi* in Kenya and The HighLine in New York are quite interesting. *Ushahidi* is a softwaresystem that allows locals to share their individual stories in an interactive map by inviting the communities and visitors to record, take pictures, and locate the heritage they think is worthwhile on a map (UNESCO 2011 - explained: 20). The other project is the

HighLine, a public park built on a historic freight rail elevated above Manhattan. It is an example of how local communities take ownership of sites and participate in preserving historical areas, quite similar to the development of Kulbroen at Sydhavnen in Aarhus (UNESCO 2011 - explained: 21). The railway structure is, as in Aarhus, publicly owned by the municipality, but maintained and operated by the organisation *Friends of the HighLine*. Ninety per cent of the annual cost for maintenance and staff is raised by this non-profit campaign. It is a space that attracts both locals and tourists, and has therefore become an economic and cultural benefit for the city of New York. I will use the example of the HighLine in chapter 6.3 as it is comparable to both cases in Aarhus where the **responsibility of preservation springs from local action.**

In this sense, the recommendation supports a modern relationship between the sites and local communities to achieve a better “balance between urban growth and quality of life on a sustainable basis” as it “constitutes a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas, and fosters economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment” (UNESCO 2011: 3). **Preservation of urban heritage sites is therefore not focused specifically on securing historical sites, but on how the past is used by its contemporary surroundings, thereby challenging the static perception of heritage sites.** By moving away from the traditional static perception of heritage preservation towards a more flexible approach, UNESCO acknowledges community values and cultural processes as part of a sustainable urban development. With this, heritage has shifted from differentiating between tangible and intangible heritages to recognise dynamic nature of heritage where local contemporary values influence the significant of urban heritage sites. Francesco Bandarin and Ron van Oers (2014) notes in their book *Reconnecting the City: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach and the Future of Urban Heritage* that “time has come to look at urban heritage as a resource for the entire city and for its sustainable development “ (Ibid: iiix). It is therefore important that heritage management is a collaboration between professionals, politicians, and locals (UNESCO 2011 - explained: 24). The argument from UNESCO is that the expression of the communities and their understanding of the sites make the experience of a city more diverse, as well as force professionals to question heritage preservation and management strategies, in order to integrate the sites into the contemporary environments. “By actively engaging public, private and civic sectors the city, historic and contemporary, can be better preserved and celebrated” (UNESCO 2011 - 4). The recommendation here acknowledges **urban heritage sites as important resources for contemporary communities which can potentially connect urban heritage to the cultural**

environments of the contemporary city (Bandarin and Van Oers 2014: 205). It is therefore important to understand the process of urban heritage as well as local perspectives in order to gain a deeper understanding of the urban identities and the dynamic development of the social environments.

*“Preserving the quality of the human environment, enhancing the productive and sustainable use of urban spaces, while recognising their dynamic character and promoting social and functional diversity” (UNESCO 2011: 11)*

The relationship between the historical sites and contemporary urban communities here become a form of democratic heritage preservation. A democratic heritage is a concept of transferring power from the professionals to the local communities in order to give them an influence on the development of urban heritage sites. The recommendation notice that “the city is not a static monument of group of buildings, but subject to dynamic forces in the economic, social and cultural sphere that shaped it and keep shaping it” (UNESCO 2011 - 5), hereby linking social environments to the physical structures. I find it relevant for the purpose of this thesis as the democratisation of heritage preservation encourages participation of local communities in urban heritage sites and acknowledges their use as a method for new strategies<sup>26</sup>.

### The Danish policies

There are many similarities between the urban heritage landscape approach and the implementation into the Danish preservation policies. The Danish *Agency for Culture* has for example made a project called *Kulturarvskommuner*, which was initiated in 2005 as a collaboration between the agency and the Realdania foundation. The project seeks to incorporate heritage sites actively into development strategies, and in 2015 they initiated the third step in the project called “Cultural heritage as a potential for development processes”<sup>27</sup>.

*1. Buildings worth preserving. Buildings worth preserving contain important external preservation values. How is it possible to preserve, protect and use, so that historical structures can be incorporated into a contemporary society and live up to the expectations*

---

<sup>26</sup> The Historic Urban Landscape recommendation, 28.05.2017: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>

<sup>27</sup> Kulturarvskommune 2015, 07.07.2017: <http://slks.dk/kommuner-plan-arkitektur/kulturarvskommuner/kulturarvskommune-2015/>

*people have of social well-being in the city? How and with which means can municipalities create attractive neighbourhoods that contains buildings worth preserving? Can these heritage structures become key aspects in urban development?*<sup>28</sup>

The project seeks to incorporate and communicate cultural and urban heritage sites into the local communities by involving people more in the preservation process in order to increase the qualities of the areas. It is a three year project ending in 2018 so there is unfortunately no documentation for the project yet. The urban identities and social experiences are, however, seen in their *open call for projects* as an important aspect in the relationship between urban heritage sites and contemporary urban communities. Local communities' interest in actively adapting and reusing the areas here contributes to the preservation and relevancy of urban heritage sites as well as support the development of urban communities through collaboratively maintaining a site.

Understanding urban heritage sites as a collaborative project contributes to the identities of contemporary social environments and places it in the interest of social well-being in the city. In regard to this, the *Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs* has published a report *Fællesskaber i forandring - Tænketaken Byen 2025* (2014) which argues the need to engage and collaborate with citizens in welfare experiments. It calls for “urban spaces with room for committed communities” and “the possibility for co-creation and ownership as well as temporary space with room for spontaneity” (Ibid: 32). This report, similar to the project *Kulturarvskommuner*, shows an ambition from governmental authorities to support social initiatives that engage the users in the urban development process. I find these notions relevant for the matter of this thesis as they support the active reuse of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen as creative process of heritage preservation.

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Kulturarven som potentiale i omstillingsprocesser’, 07.07.2017: <http://slks.dk/kommuner-plan-arkitektur/kulturarvskommuner/kulturarvskommune-2015/>

### 4.3. Industrial Heritage

The deindustrialisation of western cities has resulted in a lot of changes to the urban grid, and many abandoned post-industrial areas are therefore “often at risk, often for lack of awareness, documentation, recognition or protection but also because of the changing economic trends, negative perceptions, environmental issues or its sheer size and complexity” (ICOMOS 2011: Preamble). In Aarhus a lot of these changes are happening rapidly at the moment where industries are moving out of the city thereby leaving larger spaces available for transformation. *The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)*<sup>29</sup> and *the International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage (TICCIH)*<sup>30</sup> notice in the *Joint ICOMOS - TICCIH Principles for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage Sites, Structures, Areas and Landscapes* (2011) the value of these types of urban post-industrial sites:

*“It illustrates important aspects of local, national and international history and interaction over time and cultures. It demonstrates the inventive talents related to scientific and technological developments, as well as social and artistic movements”*  
(ICOMOS 2011: 4.13)

Reading these principles, there are both a need for industrial heritage sites to actively be adapted to the contemporary urban development as well as protected as historical traces. As this thesis seeks to highlight there is, however, a conflict between preservation and development within an urban context. On the one hand, the post-industrial sites adds to the continuity and historical ‘authenticity’ of the city. On the other hand, there is a need to develop, densify and transform the areas from its former industries to contemporary uses. This urban transformation is happening at both Institut for (x) which is located at an old freight and will be turned into a new residential area within the next couple of years, called Aarhus K. As well as in Sydhavnen which is the old slaughter house district that will be turned into a new business centre<sup>31</sup>. Within the development strategies for both sites the tangible values of the areas that concern the buildings, structures, technical machinery (ICOMOS 2011: Preamble) are recognised as worth trying to

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<sup>29</sup> I will use ICOMOS as an abbreviation for ‘The International Council on Monuments and Sites’ during this thesis.

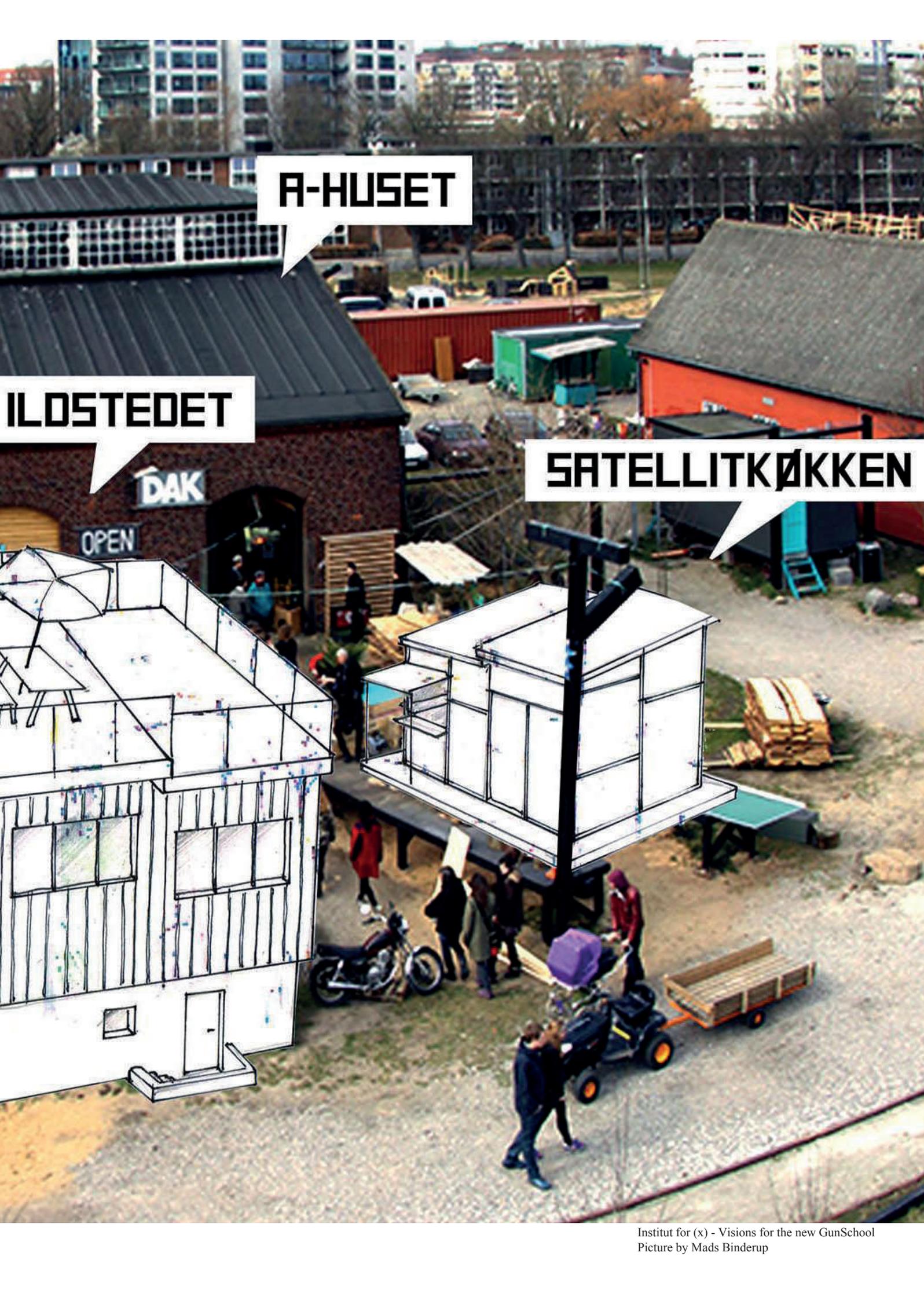
<sup>30</sup> I will use TICCIH as an abbreviation for ‘the International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage’ during this thesis.

<sup>31</sup> Sydhavnen is a difficult site to develop as the harbour of Aarhus is still functioning. Because of fire hazards from this industry it is not allowed to build housing on this sites of the city and it is therefore developed as a business district. It makes it difficult as an urban area to integrate it properly into the city and they are therefore negotiating with the creative communities to keep their activities at the site. It is not possible for the municipality to move the existing industry from Aarhus harbour as it is state funded and an important international connection for Denmark.

preserve in the future. However, with the creative communities active use of the area they have developed intangible, social values connected to the sites. ICOMOS and TICCIH note that accepting local communities adaptive reuse of the sites might be “the most sustainable way of ensuring the conservation of industrial heritage sites or structures” but at the same time push for a respectful handling of the “material, components and patterns of circulation and activity” of the industries (ICOMOS 2011: 3.10). In chapter 6 I will discuss these relations further.

From a municipal standpoint, the communities’ actions are seen as temporary programs before the areas are regenerated (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7). Reusing the abandoned industrial sites to preserve a continuity of the city by involving the local users are a way for local neighbourhoods to actively contribute to the development. The communities’ activities can therefore be understood as a way to test the sites as well as mediate between top-down and bottom-up urban planning. However, it is not the most sensitive approach to urban preservation. The motivation of the local communities for restoring the old industrial buildings is not to preserve the historical structures for the future, but rather to use them as a space to develop their social communities. In the case of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, the post-industrial structures are transformed to fit the communities’ needs and are often seen as flexible urban resources defined by the users’ needs (Zukin 1982: 6). The flexibility of the structures provides large spaces for experiments and creative uses as well as low leisure agreements. It is these types of spaces that are important for the development of the *creative class* as they become spaces for new types of social interaction that connects the city and its citizens (Florida 2005: 38).

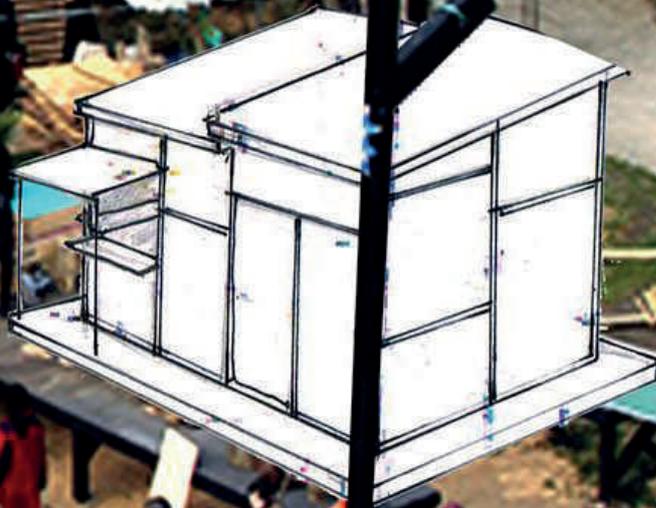
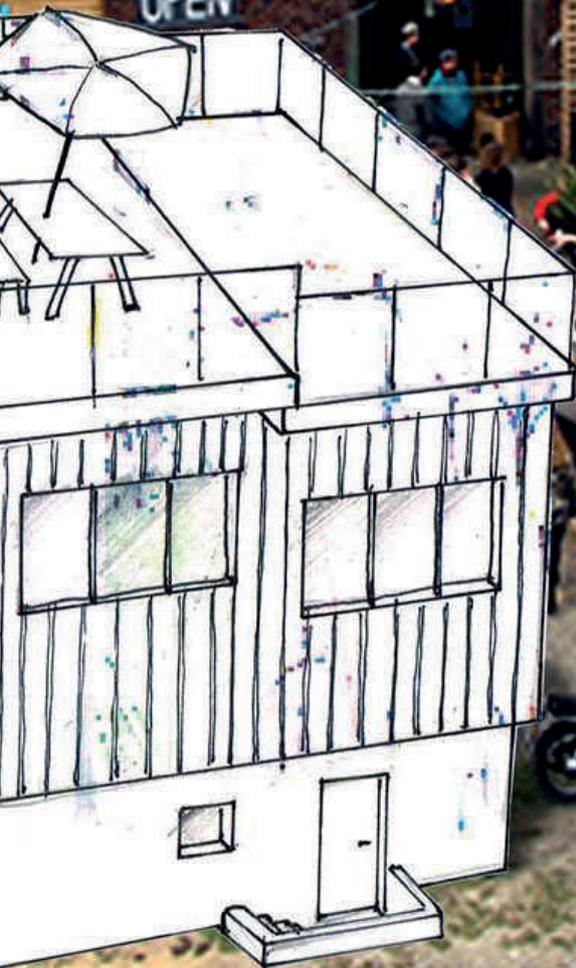
In this context, the creative communities understanding of the urban heritage becomes a social activity rather than a physical monument to be preserved. It is therefore not a nostalgic image of industrial heritage which is the main focus, rather, it is the desire from both the municipality and the communities to influence the creation of the city. Therefore, the transformation of the sites not only turns industrial areas into active urban spaces, but also points at how these urban structures change with the social changes in the city. This approach is important in the discussion of sustainability as it makes the city itself a resource for urban development and social well-being. I will look further into the communities’ investment in the sites in chapter 6.



**A-HUSET**

**ILDSTEDET**

**SATELLITKØKKEN**

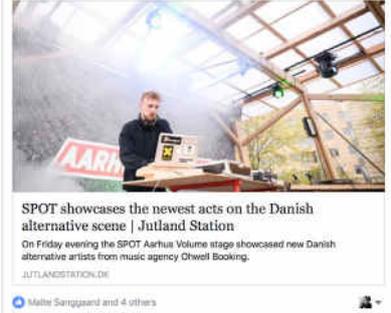


# Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen Socialmedia as the main communication platform

**Mads Peter Laursen updated his profile picture.**  
Friday at 14.50 · 🌐

Parlamentarisk Attitude, ikk'å 🌴🌴🌴  
🌴 In it for Life perhaps 🌴

A big thank you to SPOT Festival, Aarhus Volume and Double Rainbow for hosting our showcase and afterparty this weekend in Århus! Amazing turn up and incredible vibes! S/O to all artists who made their connect to make it happen! You can read a couple of articles on the Ohwell Booking showcase and **Håns SOLD** here: <http://www.jutlandstation.dk/spot-2017-ohwell-booking-show...> and here: <http://www.jutlandstation.dk/spot-2017-hansolo/> by Paris Bethel



**SPOT showcases the newest acts on the Danish alternative scene | Jutland Station**  
On Friday evening the SPOT Aarhus Volume stage showcased new Danish alternative artists from music agency Ohwell Booking.  
JUTLANDSTATION.DK

**Phil Nemos** 11 hrs · 🌐

Højtryksrensere på X man kan låne?

View 4 more comments

**Phil Nemos** Min far kommer med en satan2000 men tak  
Like · Reply · 10 hrs

**Bror Blagaard Winsther** satan? Den lyder vild - kommer den også i en 8000?  
Like · Reply · 6 hrs

**Andreas Pedersen** 10 hrs · 🌐

Nogle der ligger inde med en lysdæmper?

View 3 more comments

**Mogens Knudsen** Den var ry: Stille og rolig 240V.  
Like · Reply · 2 · 10 hrs

**Oliver Halken Tønnes KEA**  
Like · Reply · 1 · 9 hrs

**Mads Hvidkjær Binderup** ▶ Institut for (X) (INTERN)  
Monday at 18.33 · 🌐

Ildstedet er skudt igang, efter dag 1 holder tidsplanen 😊



👍👍👍 34 1 Comment

**MFC Street Food** Sponsored · 🌐

MFC Street Food

Weekendåbent street food servering i hjertet af vores skønne bydel på Godsbanen.

I weekenderne over sommeren vil vi invitere århusianske madentusiast... Continue reading



👍👍👍 136 10 comments 26 shares

**Kulbroen** 5 hrs · 🌐

TV2 Østjylland var på pletten i gårt <https://www.tv2ostjylland.dk/...kulbroen-skal-vaere-nyt-vaer...>  
FSC Danmark Aarhus 2017 - Europæisk Kulturhovedstad Aarhus Kommune Bricks Superwood Underværker Realdania Statens Kunstfond SLETH AJS Buis Anlæggspartner AJS 3R Kontor

**Kulbroen skal være nyt varemærke for Aarhus**  
Kulbroen på Sydhavnen skal laves til en overgang fra midtbyen til havnen  
TV2 ØSTJYLLAND

👍 Like 🗨 Comment ➦ Share

**Mads Peter Laursen** added 11 new photos to album: Arbejds Forår 17 — at Institut for (X), Godsbanen, Aarhus.  
21 hrs · Aarhus · 🌐



👍 Like 🗨 Comment ➦ Share

**Jonas Larsen** ▶ Institut for (X) (INTERN)  
44 mins · 🌐

Hej X!  
Nogen der ligger inde med en cykelpumpe. (til en racer)

View 4 more comments

**Troels Irgens-Møller** Ellers er der en i min rygsæk i vognen  
Like · Reply · 38 mins

**Jonas Larsen** fedt fedt tak  
Like · Reply · 33 mins

**Jonas Larsen** Hvor er du lænns Rønlev  
Like · Reply · 12 mins

👇 Ianox Rønlev replied · 1 Reply

**Institut for (X), Godsbanen, Aarhus** at Institut for (X), Godsbanen, Aarhus.  
Yesterday at 17:12 · 🌐

🔥🔥🔥 LOKAL LEGENDS 🔥🔥🔥



👍👍👍 10

**Mads Peter Laursen** 22 hrs · 🌐

MYNDIGHEDSBESØG x 2  
Onsdag kl 12.30 : Byggeri, Hans Jørgen om Smed X games  
Torsdag : Polit i Brand om GADEFESTEN

👍 Like 🗨 Comment

Kepper Bærup Høimboe, Jonas Larsen and 1 other

View 1 more comment

**Nesarekram Ztalp** Sumsar Hvad betyder Hans Jørgen om Smed X games?  
Like · Reply · 12 hrs

**Martin Lindgreen Hjørnild** Det betyder at han kommer og skal se på sikkerheden samt fugtveje omkring xgames arealet  
Like · Reply · 2 · 12 hrs

**Kulbroen** added 5 new photos  
August 9 at 4:41pm · 🌐

INTRODUCING: KULBRO ART 🌐

Hej, vi har modtaget en del kritik af projektet her og vælger at stoppe det og bruge midlerne på noget andet. Vi håber til gengæld i samarbejde med kommunen at kunne få opsat træ-vægge til den nye byggeplads, så der bliver yderligere muligheder i området.

Vores Lab er færdigt og lige om lidt også Kulbro View oppe på broen. Nu skal vi have lidt kular på nogle af de vægge, der står bag Lab - så vi annoncerer hermed Kulbro Art. Vi har 4 stykker beton... See More

**Mads Peter Laursen** ▶ Institut for (X) (INTERN)  
23 mins · Aarhus · 🌐

Haven for 6 år siden 🌞  
Memory Lane  
Go Ferie Dag 🌴



👍 Like 🗨 Comment

**Maria Cecilie Otgaard Jensen** and 9 others

**Klaus Kriemke** "The sky glowed red. People were stunned, everyone waiting. Nobody knew why..." See More  
Like · Reply · 10 mins · 5:03am

**Mads Peter Laursen** with Jonas Larsen and Juul Wendell.  
16 hrs · Skanderborg · 🌐

Gruppe Bowling 🌴  
Kultur- & Borger Service  
Den 3. direktør  
Den 1. Rådmand



👍 Like 🗨 Comment

View 3 more comments

**Mads Peter Laursen** Det leukeste Strike Team  
Like · Reply · 11 hrs

**Kim Stær** må trille en kassekugle afsted. Gerne en der "ved impact"  
Like · Reply · 50 mins · Edited

**Jonas Larsen** ▶ Institut for (X) (INTERN)  
2 hrs · 🌐

Så der nabomøde på X! Sådan!



**Mads Peter Laursen** added 4 new photos to the album Arbejds Forår 17.  
Monday at 20:26 · Aarhus · 🌐

Rød Sti flyer afsted powered by LOKAL SUPER CREW's !!!  
Transformations Planen 1:1  
🌴 X is here to Stay 🌴  
Theseus Paradox + SkunkWorks



**Ari Marteinsson** and 71 others · 7 comments

STOR dag for os og Sydhavnen. Det blir så vildt det her!  
Vi håber at rigtig mange vil møde op og være med til at tage dette vigtige spadestik. Vei medt... See More



**Kulkransporets fremtid: workshop**  
Mon 4 PM · Aarhus  
235 people interested · 44 people going

👍 Like 🗨 Comment

**Martin Thim Tønnegaard** and 28 others

Write a comment...

**Mads Peter Laursen** added 2 new photos to the album: Efterårs Halvlerie — with Stephen David Willacy  
9 hrs · 🌐

Endnu en kant. Endnu en pause i livet. Der tænkes, opleves og deses væk.



👍 Like 🗨 Comment ➦ Share

**Ari Marteinsson** and 28 others

**Kristian Würtz**  
Friday at 12:14 · 🌐

Kulbroen bliver Sydhavnens forbindelse til Frederiksbjerg, men også et vigtigt vidnesbyrd om stedets historie. Aarhus Kommune har igangsat en konkurrence om det bedste projekt for omdannelsen, og her fortæller Martin Thim, som var en af de første, der så mulighederne i det gamle kranspor, hvad Kulbroen kan komme til at betyde:



## 5. Case Studies

I use this chapter to present the two communities, their views, activities, and how they have influenced the development of the areas where Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are located. As there is not much written information on how the two communities work and production of the sites, I use my empirical study to understand in what way these two post-industrial areas have become public spaces in Aarhus by actively opening up for urban uses. My approach to the sites varies as the two communities play out differently; on the one hand, Institut for (x) is an organised collected community with a degree of hierarchy within it, on the other hand, Sydhavnen contains several different communities that are not structured. While these two sites differ from each other, both environments are autonomous and experiment with the areas through temporary programs. The sites are therefore developed in a spontaneous manner which can seem rather careless in the way the spaces are constructed within the buildings. The case studies are a tool to understand how the two sites have influenced the local development plans through their active use of the areas, and how these transformations become an expression of the users' identity. This chapter analyses the two communities' influence on the development of the post-industrial sites, and how they strategically seek to argue their right to these urban areas.

The next two sections, 5.1. Sydhavnen and 5.2. Institut for (x), introduce the development of these two post-industrial areas and how they have become important spaces for the development of creative communities. The sections are meant to provide a basic knowledge of how the two sites are being developed and how it corresponds with the political strategies that influence their outcome. Chapter 6 contains a discussion on the influences and challenges of involving these creative communities in a preservation of urban heritage sites.

In section 5.3. Understanding the socio-cultural context, I look at the cultural politics of Aarhus which support this type of development strategy by pushing temporary urban experiments and local participation. Both sites are mentioned in the new cultural agenda for 2017-2020 as important social initiatives that reflect important cultural values of Aarhus. I look at how the creative communities are supported by local politics to participate in the urban renewal and development.



## Institut for (x)

The old freight where institut for (x) is located is thought into a development called the cultural zone containing Aros, Kunsthallen, Botanisk have and den gamle by. The new Via College within the old Ceres By, the new architecture school, and the production school which will be build below Institut for (x) are all thought into this cultural environment.

## Sydhavnen

The old slaughterhouse district at Sydhavnen are integrated into the plans for the new Harbour front in Aarhus. This is a massive investment stretching from Aarhus Ø to Sydhavnen, which differs a lot in program. At Sydhavnen for example they focus on businesses as it is not allowed to live this close to the existing industries. Danske Bank has recently bought and started construction which have however been criticised and forced the municipality to change strategy. This strategy involves the creative communities. In addition to business the areas surrounding Sydhavnen have also become the new zone for building skyscrapers it is therefore going to be a dense and modern area.

## 5.1. Sydhavnen

*“The area is known for its notable cultural environment with a diversity of artists and creatives. Here are both established and new businesses, and space for socially deprived. Further, there are several buildings and structures worth preserving, such as the old power plant and Restaurant Kohalen, which adds character and have inspired some of the areas active users to start projects that can give these cultural traces a new meaning and create life in the area” (Konkurrenceprogram 2017: 3)*

The large transformation of Aarhus Harbour front is intended to secure a future positioning of the city in order to attract new capital. Sydhavnen, the southern harbour, is situated in the city centre of Aarhus and is under transformation as part of a bigger renewal scheme of the harbour front<sup>32</sup>. Over the next 10 years the plan is to transform the 6,2 ha sized area into a new working district by using the unique location close to the water and the central city area. When looking at the previous development plans from 2003 the existing structures were intended to be demolished focusing only on new high-rise constructions. Today the development strategy contains plans for preservation of the building culture and the existing structures (Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017: 20): “The slaughterhouse areas are going to be densified, but how do we do that in such a unique areas as this?” (Bente Lykke Sørensen, Sydhavnen hearing 06.2017). Demographically Sydhavnen is a difficult area to transform for the purpose of urban life as it is unsuitable for living because of fire hazards from the heavy industries. “We wish to attract people by using the temporary activities that already exists here. Such as Kulbroen and their events which have attracted a lot of people to the site” (Bente Lykke Sørensen, Sydhavnen hearing 06.2017). It is here clear that the municipality has put a strong emphasis on the creation of the physical space, communities, and cultural activities to brand the area, both through the physical space as well as through activities and events. Especially events such as Kulbroens Markets have earlier attracted a lot of people to the site<sup>33</sup>. These markets have been hosted by KulbroensVenner in collaboration with a lot of different Aarhus initiatives. The concept of this development is to use the existing creative community and the activities they have already introduced to the area as starting point as inspiration for the final development plan

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<sup>32</sup> See map on page 40

<sup>33</sup> See picture page 13

(Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017: 3). The development is therefore based on a lot of the cultural strategies which pushes a focus on the integration of culture as a leading element in the urban planning process, as well as collaborative processes. For the matter of this thesis I became interested in how these communities have evolved and materialised within the areas, and from that inspired the future preservation and integration of existing structures. Integrating the communities initiatives and their activities is therefore an important layer in terms of understanding the human scale of the industrial spaces as well as easy publicity to improve the cohesion between the city centre and the harbour (Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017: 19). A lot of the communities' activities are, in this regard, used as examples to support and explore alternative methods for planning (Udviklingsplan Sydhavnen 2017: ref. the general selection of pictures).

From reading material on the development strategy, it is understood that a lot of focus is put on how cultural programs and these temporary activities can be incorporated into the new area. However, to capture the environment at Sydhavnen is also a challenge as the area consists of four different communities. I have defined them as four groups as a result of my conversation and interaction with people here and they primarily identify with four different areas at the site. I acknowledge that it is an area consisting of many user groups rather than a collected community of users. KulbroensVenner is one of these communities who in collaboration with Aarhus Municipality focus on the preservation and transformation of the old coal bridge structure. Their ambition is to connect the inner city to the harbour area using the existing structure to bridge over Spanien to the new Fredriksplads (Konkurrenceprogram 2017: 9). The collaboration with the municipality pushes for social and collective events at the site surrounding the coal bridge structure to make the site more publicly accessible. The activities are carefully planned food markets and music festivals to suggest modern relations that can merge in to the environment surrounding the historical structure. However, these initiatives are both positive as well as difficult because of the other community nearby consisting of the socially deprived environment.

*“...not everybody appreciate our being here. All the socially deprived of Aarhus gathers here and I think they are nervous for their own existence, when the mainstream (‘det before borgerskabe’ - phrase apparently used by the homeless community) invites people down here? ...sometimes they throw rocks, but I can understand it because they are afraid for what will happen to them. In the beginning we tried to talk to them, but it has been a difficult dialogue. The first time we made a barbecued for them - we have no clue how we were supposed to do this, it was our first time - and after 10 minutes people had surrounded us and yelled at us. It was pretty spooky actually because there were so many feelings involved. But now when we have a market we bring them a plate of food or they come to us to talk - we know each other now. And it is a part of being in this area!” (Daniel Walsh Sydhavnen, 02.2017)*

As part of understanding Sydhavnen I asked people from the different communities to draw me a map while explaining to me their experience of the sites<sup>34</sup>. I let it be up to them to define Sydhavnen and I got a result that supported my idea of the division between communities but also pointed at a territorial segregation. The image on page 44 shows the overlap of three of these maps and highlights how the different groups have developed different knowledge of the area under study (Bergold & Thomas 2012: 8). Further up is, what I refer to as, the creative community who to a bigger degree meet, interact and socialise with each other, see the blue line. This part of Sydhavnen is more informal and has an atmosphere more typically for a private backyard. Because of the many music industries located here it is typical to pass by people who casually meet in front of the buildings playing music, working or casually talking. However, talking to Sara Jarsbo (Sydhavnen, 12.2016), the leader of SydhavnsForeningen, it is clear that one of the hardest things in creating the organisation have been to build a sustaining trust among all of the different users. This is still a process that they are working on to create a collaboration between everybody, but as they are all organised on individual terms and rental agreements with the municipality there is a natural independency.

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<sup>34</sup> See image at page 44

**“The industri is a quality. At the same time it's 'old crap' where everything is allowed”**

(Lars Højgaard, 02.2017 - Artist)

- The physical environment is seen as a quality and a tool for how the area develop. It is therefore not possible to create the same space another place in the city as the community depends on its context.

**“The space calls for alternative activities”**

(Daniel Walsh, 02.2017 - Entrepreneur)

- These activities stimulate and inspire visitors to come to the site, thereby making the area an integrated part of Aarhus.

**“Sydhavnen makes you happy”**

(Oddur Thordarson, 02.2017

- The drop-in centre)  
- The communication, friendship, and trust between people here make people here comfortable in their community.

**“Here at Sydhavnen there is space for start-ups”**

(Sarah Jarsbo, 02.2017 - Sydhavnsforeningen)

- According to Sarah it can be difficult for small entrepreneurs to create a business in the central Aarhus, both because of a lack of space and the high rent. Areas like these therefore allows creative communities to develop.

**“It is important that Syhavnen is in the centre of Aarhus”**

(Nicolai Absalon, 02.2017 - Musician)

- This is important because a lot of the music industry at Sydhavnen have clients from other places and therefore depend on an easy access. The location is also important for their collaboration with other creatives in the city, because being central is an attractive quality.



■ Sarah Jarsbo - Creative Community

■ Oddur Thordarson - The socially deprived

■ Gudrun Stenn-Andersen - The Artist environment



Sydhavnen during ShowOFF  
Picture by Per Bille

## 5.2. Institut for (x)

The area is 12.8 ha in total with only five buildings from the beginning of 1900 left at the site. The area is today owned by the Municipality of Aarhus after the freight closed, but has been rented out to the creative community Institut for (x). Before Institut for (x) many of the buildings had either started to deteriorate as a result of damage or vandalism, or had already been demolished. The location of the area is quite unique as it is an underdeveloped site in the city centre characterised by the green environment surround it called *den Grønne Kile*. *Den Grønne Kile* is a green space that connects the inner city with Ådalen outside of Aarhus, which has been the concept since introducing the railway to the city (Udviklingsplan Aarhus K 2017: 27). Demographically this is an important landscape for the urban development of the nearby areas such as the old DSB freight area called *Godsbanenområdet*. This part of Aarhus still carries a lot of industrial atmosphere along the train tracks and Søren Friksvej. Around the sites are new high rise constructions being built as part of the new and dense Aarhus K, which has resulted in a contrasting mix between the small freight and the modern development.

On a daily basis, the area is referred to as Godsbanenområdet; however, it is important to differentiate between the municipal owned cultural institution Godsbanen<sup>35</sup> and the autonomous cultural institution Institute for (x)<sup>36</sup>. Institut for (x) is located behind the cultural institution Godsbanen and only takes up 1.5 ha of the entire area under development. It was started in 2009 by the office Bureau Detours who were allowed to facilitate new use of this on a temporary basis. It has since been a temporary urban scene in Aarhus owned by the municipality and used as an experiment before the construction of the new Aarhus K begins in 2018. This day is in general referred to as *Bulldozer Day* by Institut for (x), which is the day the agreement with the municipality for use of the area expires (Jonas Larsen, Institut for (x) 03.2017). In this in-between time Institut for (x) has managed to create a space for temporary use that has inspired the future image of the district. It is thereby integrated into the cultural belt of Aarhus along with institutions such as *Aros* and *Den Gamle By*<sup>37</sup>.

Institut for (x) is characterised by a blend of smaller businesses and recreational public functions constructed in a self-managed and self-build manner. This small area and its use have over the

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<sup>35</sup> Godsbanen, 14.08.2017: <http://godsbanen.dk>

<sup>36</sup> Institut for (x) 14.08.2017: <http://institutforx.dk>

<sup>37</sup> See map on page 40

last couple of years managed to become a popular local and political theme used to exemplify attractive locations in Aarhus<sup>38</sup>. Further, it has had a lot of attention from newspapers and magazines following the ongoing controversies about the site being either a negative or positive contribution to Aarhus, with local users arguing over its public image. Especially one article written by the local newspaper Stiften called for a lot of attention. It was called ‘Jyllands version of Christiania is going to be preserved’, and started a long debate as the liberal alderman Bünyamin Simsek stated on his Facebook that “we do not wish Jyllands version of Christiania in Aarhus!! Nothing about Christiania is an example we should copy in Aarhus”<sup>39</sup>. To this Mads Peter Lauersen answer, after several heated comments from people in Aarhus;

*“This is not the case mr. Simsek. X supports the cultural cambium and is a diverse start-up environment. Would like to invite you to a dialogue so that you do not judge from the article, okay? ...a conversation about our different opinions about the city, this creative cultural food chain that belong to this Golden age<sup>40</sup>. I also have other subjects we could talk about on our opinions on what makes a good city for everybody. X is inspired by several things. Among others Jutlandic business ability, do-it-yourself culture, architectural history, modern planning and experiments in big scale + Big city culture, among these urban sub-cultures”<sup>41</sup>*

At the moment Institut for (x) is negotiating a 10 year rental agreement with the municipality which means they can begin to create a much more settled community. All of the users acts as one collective entity identifying with the same community-ideals, and not divided as seen in Sydhavnen. This idea of a collective makes it easier as people here use a lot of unpaid energy to create material that can be presented in a discussion with the municipality. The users constantly negotiate their use of the site with the municipality to reconsider their actions as an important contribution to the city of Aarhus. Of particular interest at the moment is the construction of the new architecture school which has been reserved for the site for years<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Visit Aarhus 15.08.2017: <http://www.visitaarhus.dk/kulturproduktionscenter-godsbanen-gdk836811>

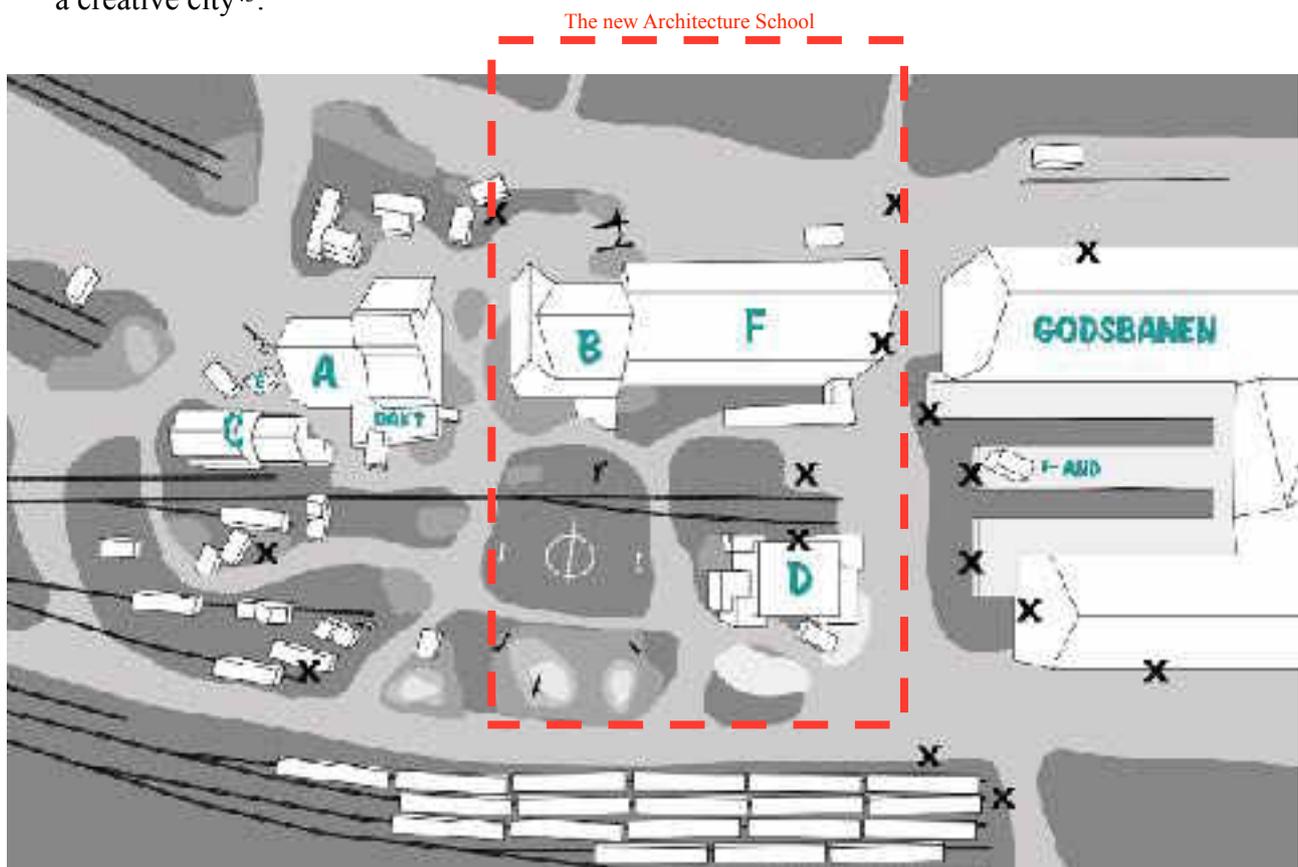
<sup>39</sup> Bünyamin Simsek (FaceBook) 15.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/BnyaminSimsek?fref=ts>

<sup>40</sup> (From article) Aarhus er inde i en kreativ guldalder, 15.08.2017: <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/erhverv/ECE9221440/aarhus-er-inde-i-en-kreativ-guldalder/>

<sup>41</sup> Bünyamin Simsek (FaceBook) 15.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/BnyaminSimsek?fref=ts>

<sup>42</sup> Arkitektskolen giver plads, 15.08.2017: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/arkitektskolen-giver-plads>

However, the architecture school also sees potential in a collaboration with Institut for (x) and have redesigned the new school to incorporate parts of the area and the environment (Jury Booklet New Aarch 05.2017). Originally the new architecture school was supposed to be placed where Institut for (x) is located, with an expectation of demolishing the entire area by 2018. However, the new design for the architecture incorporates parts of Institut for (x), A-building and C-building, which will continue to exist as X2.0, I will elaborate on this in chapter 6.2. Theme 2: Place-making. Even though the buildings B and F are seen as worth preserving, similar to the buildings A and C, their value have not been mentioned in the competition program for the new architecture school, nor specially in the development plan. Plans for demolishing the site have, however, been abandoned which simultaneously has secured some structures of the old freight to be preserved in the urban scene. Institut for (x) interest in the site and its structures is therefore contributed to the current preservation. From this perspective, Institut for (x) gathers cultural functions and supports these new synergies between communities and urban life, where their creative activities reflect and support the overall image of Aarhus as a creative city<sup>43</sup>.



Map borrowed from Institut for (x)<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Iværksættere rykker næsten som før krisen, 03.12.2016: <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/erhverv/ECE9221397/ivaerksaettere-rykker-naesten-som-foer-krisen/>

<sup>44</sup> Institut for (x) 14.08.2017: <http://institutforx.dk>



### 5.3. Understanding the socio-cultural context

As mentioned in chapter 4.3, Aarhus is in a rapid development process where densification and transformation of bigger urban areas challenge the contemporary urban planning of the city. The map on page 40 shows areas currently under development. Within this development strategy the municipality attempts to nurture local communities under the department of *Byens Udvikling og Vækst*. This department experiments with how social well-being can increase the success of local businesses, drawing on experience from the creative communities such as Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen<sup>45</sup>. In this section, I will analyse the cultural and political agendas of Aarhus, as they influence the actions and methods used by municipal authorities to construct the urban development for the areas.

Earlier cultural politics were seen as an educational process where it was important to communicate an authorised culture, but with cultural becoming more democratic it is no longer possible to understand it as a singular concept. According to Peter Duelund (1995) cultural environments today consists of many subcultures which are equally important as they point to culture as a process which “is a key concept within cultural democracy. Culture is in this relation not understood as something static or a finished product. Culture is a permanent participation in society” (Duelund 1995: 36). A major shift has therefore happened within development strategies where the *department of Technic and Environment* are no longer the main developers, but an increased focus has been put on urban culture and *liveability* (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7). The alderman of *the department of Technic and Environment* Kristian Würtz explains:

*“Aarhus is rapidly growing, and we are very engaged in what we refer to as ‘Strategical urban management’...In Aarhus we wish to create a city for people. A city, where people fra Aarhus feel at home and enjoy looking at it, also in a 100 years. This is the frame from where a lot more people of Aarhus are supposed to contribute to shape the city - It is after all also their city” (Kommune ForFra 2015: 33).*

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<sup>45</sup> Byens udvikling og vækst, 05.08.2017: <http://www.aarhus.dk/politik/Politikker%20og%20planer/Innovation%20og%20udvikling/~media/Dokumenter/Borgmesterens-Afdeling/Byraadsservice/Politikker-og-planer/Materiale-til-indstilling---innovation/15--20-Byens-udvikling-og-vaeskt.pdf>

These thoughts of involvement and democratic participation are well integrated into the new municipal plan called *Kommune ForFra* from 2015. This strategy for Aarhus seeks to actively integrate citizens in to the cultural production and development of the city. Cultural activities, such as the communities Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, are therefore seen as means to get people actively involved in creating the social-wellbeing of Aarhus (Kommune ForFra 2015: 33). Both Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are within these agendas described as important examples of social initiatives which the municipality support as active producers of social-wellbeing in the city. Although the role of the two creative communities are recognised as important social initiatives in Aarhus, their influence on the post-industrial areas varies as Institut for (x) seems to be more involved in the development process. I will

Aarhus Municipality developed the plan *Kommune ForFra* to focus on the municipal and urban development as a collaborative process in which people are involved in the decision-making process, to quote Arnstein's (1969: 217) turning *nobodies* into *somebodies*. Sherry Arnstein links participation to the processes of power by creating equal decision-making among participants. In this context, I understand the municipal strategy as a way to involve local citizens to participate in the planning of the two sites by inviting their urban experiments to be a part of the development in a more democratic process. I will elaborate more on this in chapter 6.3 using Arnsteins theories to understand the collaboration between locals, municipality and heritage professionals. Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen mentioned in the new proposal for cultural politics:

*“Another type of development is the many networks and collaborations, which are characteristic for cultural landscape of Aarhus and the establishment of new creative environments, that develops where it is physically possible - such as Godsbanen and Kulbroen. This is a development that needs to be continued and strengthened - also following the years after Aarhus as the Cultural Capital 2017”*  
(Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 6).

This proposal for the new cultural agenda of Aarhus “reflects the growing need for culture within contemporary city development and its influence on human identity and liveability” (Ibid: 12), and represents an understanding of culture where different local values are taken into consideration. Culture has, therefore, become a socio-political and economic relation, rather than a static entity used for public enlightenment (Duelund 1995: 38). In this

sense, Aarhus strives to become “a city where the citizens are co-developers of their local neighbourhoods, and a city where we constantly rethinks the possibilities of living and developing our city as a community” (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7). The new cultural agenda actively references *The European Cultural Capital Aarhus2017* as a cause of the new municipal focus on culture as a way to “attract and keep citizens” (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7). Aarhus2017 main goal has been to increase the visibility of Aarhus and use the creativity and knowledge of the city to gain an economical growth, as well as support local participation and engagement in the urban development in order to support local communities and diversity with the urban environments (Aarhus2017 2012: 8, Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 9). From this perspective, it has become a means for Aarhus to brand the city as creative in order to attract new businesses and students and support an urban growth.

From this perspective, the development of Institut for (x) and Sydhvnen can only be understood in relation to this wider socio-cultural context, and as essential to the current culture development of Aarhus (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7). For the matter of this thesis I in chapter 6 use these strategies in the context of urban heritage and try to understand how supporting the creative communities‘ and their involvement in the sites can benefit the preservation of two post-industrial sites.

## 6. Discussion: Urban Heritage and Creative Communities

This chapter opens up for the discussion on this kind of bottom-up heritage using the two case studies from chapter 5 to argue creative communities influence on the post-industrial sites as well as on the local urban development. I begin with the assumption that the creative communities Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen in Aarhus participate in the creation of social spaces that connects the post-industrial areas to the current urban environments by their active use of the sites. Through this interaction they construct modern urban identities that is connected to the areas, in an addition to the historical value of the sites. The idea of urban identity draws on the definition of the historic urban landscape recommendation, described in chapter 4.2, which acknowledges temporary use and transformation of urban heritage sites in order to integrate historical areas into a modern society. By involving local users to participate in the preservation of the sites they also contribute to a stronger sense of community. Understanding local use of heritage sites therefore contributes to the continuity of history in the urban environment as well as offer an alternative understanding of the past which supports the creation of new local narratives.

In section 6.1 Theme 1: Social engagement, I analyse the role of the two creative communities in relation to urban heritage and how their participation in heritage sites support a social integration. I will explain how the historical layers of the city contribute to the uniqueness of a space and reflect on the balance between urban heritage and social well-being. In section 6.2 Theme 2: Place-making, I discuss the presence of historical references in the city and its function in the process of urban development. The communities' spontaneous and unauthorised influence on the post-industrial sites is addressed in relation to their symbolic ownership over the areas. They use this symbolic ownership to challenge the municipal regulations connected to the sites and force urban renewal strategies that involve them. In section 6.3 Theme 3:

Collaboration, I discuss the collaboration between the creative communities and the municipality in the development processes and how these two sites are negotiated.

## 6.1. Theme 1: Social engagement

In the following section, I will discuss how the creative communities' active participation in the urban renewal process strengthens peoples' local sense of belonging and thereby also the diversity of the city. Both communities illustrate how active use of these post-industrial sites can be integrated into present social environments, and how the preservation of them become central for the urban identity of the surrounding areas. Active local participation introduces diversity to a city as the areas develop and transform differently according to the communities identifying with them. This could be what people associate with living in Riisskov, Trøjborg or Gellerup just to mention a few areas within Aarhus. The city, therefore, consists of many different identities that people associate with or connects certain memories to. Doreen Massey (1994) describe social relations as the dynamic interactions that define a spacial identity which people feel attracted to and define themselves from. What matters is therefore the context of urban heritage sites and their capacity to become part of a social environment that people can associate themselves with. In chapter 4, I discussed how creative communities, such as Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, create a sense of identity for both the heritage site and its users. This identity is embodied in the physical structures and inseparable from the area, at the same time the urban identity depends on the social construction narrated around it. In regard to this, Michel Serres (1982) use the concept *quasi objects* to explain the relations between the tangible and intangible. He uses the example of a soccer ball in *The Parasite* where he points to the agency of the ball as an object that participates in the interaction of soccer (Ibid: 226). In the case of this thesis the post-industrial sites, or *quasi objects*, are not just a physical site, but a space for the people it inspires and creates social relations between. From this perspective, the sites get their distinct identity through the social network of its users which makes them an important part of how the areas are identified. I believe this notion is relevant because peoples associations with the post-industrial sites depend on the social environment constructed in relation to it as this is what people associate with the area. These contemporary values are important as the sites might otherwise have been demolished, or undergone an extreme transformation such a Ceres Byen in

Aarhus<sup>46</sup>. “It is called Kulbroen today after we started it. Before nobody around knew what it was...we were curious on its history, and saw potential in bridge” (Daniel Walsh, Sydhavnen, 02.2017).

The preservation of the sites depends on the communities’ interest in using them and integrate them into the contemporary city. In both the case of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, the structures were supposed to be demolished to make space for new construction, which is clear in the development plan for Sydhavnen from 2003. These plans have however changed as a consequence of the creative communities experimentations with the sites and the post-industrial structures have become important urban spaces, as Bente Lykke Sørensen also points out in the quote from chapter 5.2. Or as written in the development plans for the new Aarhus K:

*“The freight area is filled with a diverse cultural heritage that is the essence of the areas future identity. In order to strengthen the unique identity the industrial heritage is kept as an active entity that is both preserved as well as developed.*

*The unique by the cultural heritage at the fright area is not only found in the old rusty railway tracks, paving stone, stone aggregate, the ground poor in nutritional value, the red brick and in the red wooden buildings. It is also to a high degree in the feeling of the ever changing, the mobile, the movement, the exchange between people and the diversity in smells, colours and experiences that characterised the area when it was a freight.*

*Partly as many of the physical characters is preserved as possible, among others the old railway tracks, the buildings worth of preservation, lamp standards etc, but by newly constructed buildings and outdoor spaces a material catalogue should be used which plays one the materials we find in the area today - among others concrete, cortes steel, brick, wood, cobblestone and gravel. All in all it will frame the distinctive physical frame for the future urban life and strengthen the identity if the area.” (Udviklingsplan Aarhus K 2017, unpublished).*

The post-industrial site is here seen as an important quality of the new Aarhus K district that can help create a uniqueness to the site. However as Jonas Larsen notice these values lacks a critical understanding of the space: “ Cultural heritage is a ridicules buzzword, if you ask me. In this area (Godsbanen) cultural heritage is reduced to an old pair of train tracks, or a vague demand

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<sup>46</sup> I will look further in to this case in chapter 6.2

for the appearance of what the new building facades should simulate. I lack expert knowledge in regard to what cultural heritage is here”<sup>47</sup>. The critique is especially aimed at the local authorities strive of identity and place-making above the social activities that make up the culture environments<sup>48</sup>. The two communities in this sense integrate and preserve the site by making the structures relate to their surroundings and give them an active role in the urban space. Hall (1996) notes that all objects are material manifestations of changing values, which are reflecting the contexts they are created in. From this perspective, the communities’ social activities are a way to construct the contemporary urban experiences of an area, and from an urbanist point of view also distinguish urban areas from each other. “Don’t accept the city as it is. Create your own spaces and environments and make the city your own” (This is X, 2015: 387). This quote from Institut for (x) supports this idea that an identity of an area becomes stronger when the user actively get involved in creating the space and at the same time points to a type of ownership where they themselves begin to take responsibility of maintaining an area. Using existing structures as resource for future development is therefore not only about the buildings and spaces, but it is this dynamic interaction between people and space that makes an area.

*“Urban beauty is the aesthetic values of a city. Some argue that allowing layers of history and urban decay to be revealed, produces the ultimate urban aesthetic. Others prefer new, pristine employ the newest technology or building techniques. This multiplicity of perspectives, and the patchwork that the city becomes, is the ultimate manifestation of urban beauty. We believe in a mixture of new and old” (This is X 2015: 362)*

In Aarhus, the creative communities have been allowed to alter and integrate the two sites, which have made it necessary to recognise their alternative methods for actively reusing the structures. It is clear that there is a risk when inviting these creative communities to take control of the sites, as their interest is not necessarily the same as what is perceived historically valuable. Mydland and Grahn (2012: 564) note that the contributions of local communities within non-listed heritage sites are often more practical and instant in their approach, than concerned with preservation issues. As the communities alter the structures to fit their needs,

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<sup>47</sup> Når midlertidighed bliver en pauseklovn, 09.03.2017: <http://domeofvisions.dk/nar-midlertidighed-bliver-en-pauseklovn/>

<sup>48</sup> Først skal kulturen vises, siden skal den forvises, 02.05.2017: <http://stiften.dk/laeserbrev/Foerst-skal-kulturen-vises-siden-skal-den-forvises/artikel/376983>

often over the historical relevance, they might lose their significance. At Institut for (x), the users have, as an example, made a hole in the exterior wall of A-building, in order to make access for the pipe of the fireplace. These alterations are possible as the building is valued as historically significant but not worth preservation, and therefore have no specific restrictions<sup>49</sup>. However, seen from another perspective, it is through these changes, such as the fireplace or the workspaces, that these structures are probably integrated into the contemporary urban scene. The structures are therefore far from static, but constantly negotiated between past and present as a part of their social and economic significance. The use of the old DSB buildings as offices, café and administrative purposes has both transformed the buildings into useful structures, as well as turned the area into a mix recreational and working district. The users of Institut for (x) have through their alterations and activities helped redefine the abandoned freight area in Aarhus and have turned it into a central recreational area. Their influence and participation therefore become essential for integration and preservation of this site as heritage becomes “the interaction between people and their world, between people and communities; not primarily a set of objects” (Auclair and Fairclough 2015: 9). This self-organised development has become the image of Institut for (x) and the identity that many people connect to the site. According to David Gauntlett (2011), in his book *Making Is Connecting*, the active DIY-culture (Do-It-Yourself) is an alternative to the strategic development plans of the areas “because through making things and sharing them in the world, we increase our engagement and connection with our social and physical environment” (Ibid: 2). *Do-it-yourself* refers to the action of creating something without relying on experts. Gauntlett use it to explain a shift from *sit back and be told*-culture to a *making and doing*-culture (Ibid: 8) where the users build offices, galleries, studios and workshops from their own budget as well as craft the structures themselves thus through the work establish a close community within the urban areas.

The Historic Urban Landscape approach (2011) points to the importance of including contemporary uses and experiences of the city in to heritage management, in order to understand the importance of a relationship between people and urban heritage sites. “Preserving the quality of the human environment, enhancing the productive and sustainable use of urban spaces, while recognising their dynamic character and promoting social and functional diversity” (Ibid: 1.11). Therefore, when these creative communities are allowed to actively adapt the sites they simultaneously embody their identity into it. Both communities work from

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<sup>49</sup> Kommunal bevaringsplan 2017, 18.08.2017: <https://www.kulturarv.dk/fbb/frededeDanmarksKort.pub?sag=123742973>  
Further, an interesting observation is that the post-industrial sites in Aarhus are not valued as worth preserving.

and with a minimal budget, which means that the changes they make are small and a lot of their approaches actively use the existing fabric and structural elements of the buildings such as the large windows, height sealing, open floor plans, columns etc. Their reconstructions demand the users to understand the spaces in detail and the possibilities of the structures in order to transform them. Their experiments with the site adds a quality to these spaces of personality. A great example is the intertwined office spaces in the F-building at Institut for (x), also called the *Tetris*-building, or the additions to the gallery in the A-building. The most recent addition to the A-building is *Aarhus Volumes* new office space which is constructed under the ceiling of the building from 1917. The rules are: in order to rent a space, you have to build it. The space is therefore primarily built from recycled materials by the young people behind *Aarhus Volume* and other community members who had time to lend a hand in the building process. There are no restrictions on what materials that should be used and they therefore introduce a lot of new and different material to the structures. Their homemade alterations are further improvised and change over time to fit the needs of the users. Similar, the surrounding site is constructed by containers that are transformed in to workspaces which also change over time along with the gardens and pathways. The site allows for informal activities such as alternative sports, street foods and guerrilla gardening to appear. Their experimentation with the structures and the sites can be understood as a temporary reinterpretation which test how they can be incorporated into the contemporary environment. The recommendation (UNESCO 2011: 5) argues that it is important for people to be involved in the decision-making process for it to be sustainable. From this perspective, a successful urban development needs people to produce space and to actively contribute to the image of it. Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are, in this sense, contributing to the social and cultural values which make the sites useful, and encourage a new way of understanding the areas. Accepting these adaptations, while being indiscriminate towards preservation of the historical values, is therefore a way to integrate urban heritage sites into the contemporary urban processes (Harrison 2012: 222). According to Harrison, “thinking of heritage as a creative engagement with the past in the present focuses our attention on our ability to take an active and informed role in the production of our own future” (Ibid: 229). This means acknowledging the past as well as the present as:

*“...its open spaces and gardens, its land use patterns and spacial organisation; perceptions and visual relationships; as well as all other elements of the urban structure. It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity” (UNESCO 2011: 9)*

According to Keyes (1998) the sense of belonging is a result of social integration defined as “the extent to which people feel they have something in common with others who constitute their social reality, as well as the degree which they feel that they belong to their communities” (Ibid: 122). In this sense, the relations between the historical structures and the communities at both Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, are a matter of the communities associating themselves with and defining themselves from, the social identity connected to the sites. I characterise both creative communities by Richard Florida’s (2002) idea of the creative class. These people, according to Florida, actively participate in and contribute to different urban activities, and he argues that these communities are socially relevant because of their ability to increase an economy through innovative creative approaches. He uses the term *street level culture* to define areas “where it is hard to draw the line between participant and observer, or between creativity and its creators” (Ibid: 166). From this perspective, the adaptive reuse of the post-industrial sites is not only an abstract concept but a physical implementation. The communities active use and transformation of the post-industrial sites is an active way to integrate the earlier enclosed areas in to the city in order to make them more accessible to the public and thereby inspires to new urban uses. Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen have here become platforms for participation and co-production where people negotiate the narrative of the sites and actively challenge the image connected to the urban areas.



Institut for (x) - Inside the A-building  
Picture by Kasper Holmboe

## 6.2. Theme 2: Place-making

### *“PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES:*

1. *The community is the expert*
2. *You are creating a place, not a design*
3. *You can't do it alone*
4. *They'll always say, "It can't be done"*
5. *You can see a lot just by observing*
6. *Develop a vision*
7. *Form supports function*
8. *Triangulate*
9. *Start with the petunias*
10. *Money is not the issue*
11. *You are never finished.” (This is X 2015: 402)*

In the following section, I will investigate the consequences that social engagement may have on the integration of urban heritage sites into the contemporary society. Referring to the discussion in *Theme 1: Social engagement*, the experience of the urban spaces includes not only structures and sites, but also the social networks and identities that exist in the city, its people and their involvement in the construction of the spaces. Urban development is, in this sense, uncontrollable as spontaneous, as everyday activities cannot be planned for. Both Institut of (x) and Sydhavnen add a creative atmosphere to the old industrial structures which are otherwise raw and pragmatic in their expression. I argue that the communities' active participation in the preservation of these urban heritage sites is beneficial as they experiment with the existing structures, introduces social urban activities to the abandoned industrial sites and inspires the municipality and developers to integrate and preserve the structures as a part of future development plans. Jan Gehl (1971) examines, in the book *Life Between Buildings*, the relationship between the use of space and the physical environment. He argues that the urban landscape has to be considered through people and acknowledges that social interaction needs to be the main focus within urban planning. Drawing from these theories there is a relationship between how people use public space and the physical environment itself which has to be understood from the *human dimension*. The human dimension is a phrase that describes

the importance of focusing on the people who use specific public spaces in order to understand how these spaces work and design spaces that responds to these needs. Gehl notes that “if activities and people are assembled, it is possible for individual events, as mentioned, to stimulate one another” (Ibid: 81). Activities are, in this sense, what makes a city vibrant and attractive as they invite to social interaction which initially is the experience of a city. The post-industrial sites at Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are therefore influenced by the social activities introduced by the two communities’ as these attract more people making the sites important social nodes in the city. However, as Gehl notice the physical space cannot be underestimated as it frames the situations and dictates the kind of activities taking place here. Besides the popular atmosphere of rough industry these spaces are optimal for the communities creative experiments that the add to the structures by building and constructing spaces that fit their needs. The flexibility and affordability of these abandoned sites make them ideal for these self-organised activities. Troels Thorbjørnson from SpantStudio located at Institut for (x) notices in regard to this: “It has been important for us because it is an affordable space, and it is a space we build ourselves and can add on to if and when needed. You don't need much capital to either build an office or buy a container. Kasper and I started construction with 20.000 dkk and have now added to the space three time” (Troels Thorbjørnson, Institut for (x), 11.06.2017). The low rent of the old structures, compared to newly constructed office complexes, helps the start-up businesses to strengthen their capital and professional brand before expanding their businesses. Institut for (x) is therefore functioning as a nest for the development of creative communities and use a strategy where they expect the users to move out of the site once their businesses becomes successful. An example of this is the design firm Nordic Tales, which started in the F building and have now moved to Guldsmedgade in Aarhus. Their development has allowed the new business Plukk to evolve, who has later started a collaboration with the barista, Moccachouse, in connection to their own greenery and created Plantecaféen<sup>50</sup>. This collaboration and public activity has further invited more people from the surrounding neighbourhood to take part in the area and use it as a recreational park. Here a wide variety of people gather to enjoy the site as a recreational area and participate in the different public activities such as markets<sup>51</sup>, sport activities<sup>52</sup> and festivals<sup>53</sup>. Several similar initiative has then

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<sup>50</sup> Plukk, 24.07.2017: <http://www.plukk.dk/plantecafeen/>

<sup>51</sup> Street Food Festival Aarhus, 06.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/events/686739718117547/>  
PLUKK Plantemarkedet, 06.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/events/686739718117547/>

<sup>52</sup> Happy Moves, 06.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/happymovesaarhus/>

<sup>53</sup> Aarhus Volume, 06.08.2017: <https://www.facebook.com/AarhusVolume/>

started to appear such as MFC Streetfood and Yard Shoppen, which further stimulates and contribute to the welcoming atmosphere of the place as a mixed urban space where work and recreation take place side by side. The previously enclosed industrial space has therefore evolved into a public space where people feel invited to stay, regardless of being an integrated part of the creative community. The Aarhus based developer Rune Kilden noticed this, and elaborated on this development in an article ‘Rune Kilden supports X’: “This environment we are sitting in (Institut for x), is a gift to any urban area, a small jewel. Is also a learning experience on how to build something bottom-up. And when creative power and initiative can come from below. I am really honoured to be following this process<sup>54</sup>. Then we can set the tone and hopefully inspire many others to think like this”<sup>55</sup>. According to Florida (2002), it is the creative class, consisting of students and creative industries, that attract new residents and businesses: “What they look for in communities are experiences, an openness to diversity, and the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people” (Ibid: 36). The *creative people*, in this sense, seek communities that are similar to their own priorities and values. “Instead of subsidising companies, stadiums and retail centres, communities need to be open to diversity and invest in the kinds of lifestyle options and amenities that people really want” (Ibid: 283).

The massive public interest in both Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen have influenced the municipal plans for the two sites and changed the previous idea of urban *tabla rasa* to visions of active preservation of some of the structures. Here using both the physical and social notions of the post-industrial areas to frame the future development, thereby making these specific areas key elements for the future image of these urban districts. From this perspective, through actively engaging with the sites the communities’ participate in the physical development as well as the discourse that frames the sites. This attention therefore supports the integration of these structures as essential elements in the contemporary city.

The communities reinterpretations are encouraged and supported by the municipality as “Public buildings and site which are abandoned could be used for temporary cultural activities” and thereby support a cultural and economic development (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 7), as well as their general strive of making Aarhus the danish capital of entrepreneurship<sup>56</sup>. From a political notion the municipality have turned these casual and temporary spaces into development

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<sup>54</sup> Rune Kilden is here referring to his participation in the development of Aarhus Ø.

<sup>55</sup> Rune Kilden håber på X, 19.08.2017: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/rune-kilden-haaber-paa-x>

<sup>56</sup> Iværksættere rykker næsten som før krisen, 03.12.2016: <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/erhverv/ECE9221397/ivaerksaettere-rykker-naesten-som-foer-krisen/>

strategies (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 16) and accepted the users' additions, constructions, and experiments within the sites as temporary projects that help investigate urban possibilities<sup>57</sup>. These strategies are, however, in contrast to the autonomy of the communities whose driving force is the passion and vision of the users which often create frustrations as they feel exploited. "I feel like a fucking 'Pauseklovn'. It is so easy to expect us to move around and make temporary project... 'liveability' (disgusted sigh)... We finance it ourselves which they often seem to forget" (Christian Juul, Institut for (x) 01.2017). From this perspective, the active involvement of the two creative communities in the development of the areas are interesting as it on one hand shows how openminded the municipal renewal projects are, as an opportunity for social participation that can support local identities. On the other hand, the process is also conflicted as a municipal involvement restricts the creative process and feeling of local ownership. Evans (2001) notes in the book *Cultural planning: an urban renaissance?* that the presences of a *cultural character* is relevant within cultural planning as "attempts by municipal and other political agencies to create or manipulate a city's cultural character are likely to fail, produce pastiche or superficial culture, and even drive out any inherent creative spirit that might exist in the first place" (Ibid: 137). The municipal development of these areas can therefore not be imposed if they seek to keep the creative atmosphere of the communities' as the identity and urban experience of the future sites. Rather, the atmosphere depends on the looseness of the communities and their self-organisation, I will discuss urban *Ownership* below. Many of the ideals for the development plans under construction now build on the innovative ideas of the communities' inspired bottom-up. In this sense, the communities actively contribute to the image and development of the urban experience using both people and the physical sites. In this sense, their experiments are a practical way of questioning existing policies and develop new ideas based on the concept of 'doing' and materialising the discussions in the urban environment. David Harvey argues in his book *Rebel Cities* (2012) that the "right to the City has to be constructed not as a right to that which already exists, but as a right to rebuild and re-create the city as a socialist body politic in a completely different image" (Ibid: 138). The users, in this sense, become important for the creation of urban and social well-being as they act on solutions rather than complaining about local issues. They therefore use these sites to participate in broader societal discussions such as; development policies, concepts of property, free cultural spaces, gentrification and general rights to the city. Essentially, for the matter of this thesis, their strive to partake in the development of these areas influence the integration of these post-

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<sup>57</sup> Aarhus' Kommuneplan2017, 25.06.2017: <https://vimeo.com/222259828>

industrial sites and identify new ways in which they can play an active role in the future urban districts.

### Ownership

How can the communities' own the right to these sites? This is a frequent conversation topic at both sites, as the users want to have influence and responsibility on a long-term basis. "People down here ask; what is going to happen here, and how can we be a part of it? - They fear for their existence, they all have their heart in the right place and create a lot of value to this area and to Aarhus as a city" (Sarah Jarsbo, Sydhavnen 02.12.2016). Figueroa et al (2002: 12) argue that the active participation increases a feeling of ownership as the communities actively partake in the development and can identify their own contributions. Both communities have now formed associations in order to strengthen their position within future development plans by using their social-relations in order to convince the municipality of their effect on the post-industrial areas. The creative communities' co-creation and participation in preservation and development of the sites, in this sense, empower the users with a symbolic ownership, even though both sites are owned by the municipality. Both the communities at institut for (x) and Sydhavnen have now forced a voice to be actively involved in the development and have their influence be taken serious.

*"Through the hard work great ownership arises between the inhabitants and the studios.*

*When you have your own space you can feel free to change the environment as often as you like. The personal challenges and independence in the task creates a major self-esteem and thereby you dare to take more responsibility.*

*Ownership is a mentality - we believe in ownership" (This is X, 2015: 388)*

The post-industrial sites make it possible to for the users to socially organise and collectively demand involvement in the development strategies. According to Susan Gal (2002) a "space that is undoubtedly public (in one context) can be turned into private ones by indexical gestures (the sweeping and care taking)" (Ibid: 82). She suggests that public and private spaces overlap, which means that the city is something which we all take ownership of by living and actively furnish our surroundings, much in line with the theories of Gauntlett (2011).

Further, the communities' study and actively refer to the municipal agendas in order to convince politicians by using their own words. Especially, the report Kommune Forfra (2015) is quoted and used specifically to argue for their involvement as public participation and urban co-creation. In this regard, Institut for (x) has made many interesting attempt to influence the local development and have recently become advisors for the mayors department within the municipality. This has had a great influence on how the site and the new Aarhus K area are being developed, where the community Institut for (x) gradually claim more and more influence in the new development plans. This is quite a radical change as Institut for (x) started as a temporary project which has now become a strong social influence for future urban development. Less than a year ago, they thought of themselves as a temporary project and did not expect nor wish to stay as a permanent site as a lot of the energy was in the temporariness (Kasper Holmboe Institut for (x), 12.2016). However, things have now changed:

*“Once it was called Next (x) because x was supposed to move and everything here be bulldozed. But now it's only half of it which is being bulldozed. So Next (x) still exists, but (x) 2.0 has taken over because we no longer have to find a new place. Instead we transform this place to adapt a concrete future reality... (x) 2.0 is about people. If there are no people we might as well burn the idea. Therefore, we have to think (x) in the long run and have an attitude for co-development of the new city district so that we can create an insane awesome space in Aarhus” (Mads Peter Lauersen, Nabomøde Institut for (x), 05.2017).*

Through the communities' collaborative actions, they have claimed a symbolic ownership of the sites and mobilised themselves to take responsibility of the development of these areas. Mads Peter Lauersen for example is behind the organisation and development of Institut for (x), and the one who allow people to transform, build, add or change to the existing structures from what he find appropriate according to the agreement with the municipality. David Harvey (2003) argues that the right to the city “is not merely a right of access to what the property speculators and state planners define, but an active right to make the city different, to shape it more in accord with our heart's desire, and to re-make ourselves thereby in a different image” (Ibid: 941). The right to the city is therefore the rights to create the city based on its use-value created by the people using it (Ibid: 939). Even though there seems to be conflicts between the municipality and the communities the authorities have loosened up their own control and allowed the communities' to actively adapt the sites. This collaboration blurs the lines between

the bottom-up and top-down interaction within the urban areas, and invites the creative communities to participate in the process of urban development thereby also engage them in issues of urban preservation.

*“We need to take ownership of this site so that they (the municipality) can't take it back... We have an autonomous approach to it by, among other things, making these street food markets to make the area ours” (Daniel Walsh Sydhavnen, 02.2017).*

KulbroensVenner has similar to Institut for (x) made an effort in activating the area surrounding the old coal-bridge structure by initiating events, talks, and recently a platform<sup>58</sup> beside and on top of the structure, in order to change peoples' perception of the otherwise conflicted area. They have created a connection between the visitors and the urban heritage by introducing social activities to the area and inviting people to participate in these different food markets<sup>59</sup> and festivals<sup>60</sup>. These activities in relation to the urban heritage sites influence the general perception of the area and redefine the use of the industrial structure as well as the areas as a whole. These activities have resulted in visions for the old coal bridge structure to become the new icon of Sydhavnen<sup>61</sup>. In many ways, KulbroensVenner is very comparable to the HighLine project in New York where the local community joined together to activate and integrate the old railway structure. Similarly the structure is owned by the City of New York, but the park area created on top of the elevated railway is maintained and operated by Friends of the High Line<sup>62</sup>. The sites have since its construction in 2009 become one of the most iconic new urban landmarks in New York, which attracted a lot of visitors, investors and property development to Manhattan's West Side. The group was founded in 1999 by community residents who fought for the preservation and transformation of the structure at a time when it was threatened to be demolished (UNESCO 2011 - explained: 21). The site has also managed to connect community and heritage through contemporary activities that locals have initiated on top of the old railway, contributing to it becoming an important and unique modern place-maker in New York.

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<sup>58</sup> Kulbroens skal være nyt varemærke for Aarhus, 21.08.2017: <https://www.tv2ostjylland.dk/artikel/kulbroen-skal-vaere-nyt-varemaerke-aarhus>

<sup>59</sup> Kulbroens Madmarked var bedre end nogensinde før - “Vi er blevet klogere - vi er blevet bedre!” 05.01.2017: <http://aarhusupdate.dk/kulbroens-madmarked-var-bedre-end-nogensinde-foer-vi-er-blevet-klogere-vi-er-blevet-bedre/>

<sup>60</sup> Kulbroens Festival 2016, 05.01.2017: [https://www.facebook.com/events/522419971301795/?acontext=%7B%22ref%22%3A%22%22%2C%22ref\\_newsfeed\\_story\\_type%22%3A%22regular%22%2C%22action\\_history%22%3A%22null%22%7D](https://www.facebook.com/events/522419971301795/?acontext=%7B%22ref%22%3A%22%22%2C%22ref_newsfeed_story_type%22%3A%22regular%22%2C%22action_history%22%3A%22null%22%7D)

<sup>61</sup> Kulbroen, 30.07.2017: <http://www.undervaerker.dk/projekter/kulbroen>

<sup>62</sup> Friends of the High Line, 27.04.2017: <http://www.thehighline.org>

UNESCO, in their explained version of the recommendation; *New life for historic cities* (2013), also uses the HighLine projects as an example of successful urban preservation projects. The preservation of these post-industrial sites are therefore relevant within urban planning and current urban environments, as it depends on the integration of the social values in addition to the physical surroundings. Jane Jacobs (1961) argues that the basis of community building is participation as “cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody” (Ibid: 50). She explains the importance of preserving neighbourhoods to erasure local communities, the diversity, and the complexity of the city. The urban transformation is, in this sense, not about the design quality, but rather the way local communities and how their active use contributes to the relevancy of urban spaces, as well as how they contribute to the maintenance and preservation of the physical environment. The local communities’ active participation is therefore a way for the communities to take responsibility of the areas by actively use them as a frame to develop their communities and express a social image and identity. Referring to UNESCOs Historical Urban Landscape recommendation the activities is an effective way “to involve more people in preservation efforts, raise levels of awareness, and seek innovative schemes” (UNESCO 2011: 4).

Both Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen can, in this sense, be understood as examples of how the community have produced an identity surrounding the post-industrial sites and actively participated in the preservation and integration of them. This dependency between the municipality and the creative communities is described below in chapter 6.3 Collaboration as it seems appropriate and worth exploring in order to gain knowledge on the ways users and experts collaborate to create urban culture.

### Gentrification

Gentrification is the process where these communities participate in making the post-industrial areas into more attractive sites for middle and upper class people (Zukin 1982: 2). Sharon Zukin analyses gentrification specifically in the case of creative communities and argues that because these environments often use deteriorating urban areas and improve them over time, the status of the area increases as well as housing demands and cost as a consequence. A challenge to both communities is therefore the threat of gentrification where residents who improve urban areas can no longer afford to live in their own neighbourhoods (Ibid: 15). According to the city architect, Stephen Willacy, and the two newly published development strategies, Aarhus

municipality is trying to avoid gentrification patterns by integrating space for the creative communities, and preserve some of the industrial structures<sup>63</sup>. However, the political agenda of Aarhus use the image of the creative communities to attract new citizens, which turns the value of the creative community into the values of the city. It raises a conflict as the municipality uses the creative communities' to brand the areas and through that supports a gentrification process where it in the future will be difficult for the communities to afford to stay at these areas. Further, the communities need time to grow<sup>64</sup> and with the increasing interest in the social constructions of the sites, they will eventually undergo an urban gentrification process as the areas become desirable locations and more economically valuable (Zukin 1982). The artist Gudrun Stenn-Andersen at Sydhavnen pointed out that since the 1980s, the communities here have deliberately attempted to keep a low profile, in order to avoid an increased interest. "Who knows what would happen. Either the municipality will remember that we are here and then throw us out, or they will increase the rent. I don't want that to happen" (Gudrun Stenn-Andersen, Sydhavnen 01.2017). However, in the case of Sydhavnen, after KulbroensVenner has introduced social events and activities to the area which makes the area very visual in the city. By being visual KulbroensVenner creates a symbolic ownership of the site and are thereby involved and consulted directly for solutions to integrate and create the future Sydhavn district. However, through their activities "it is clear that unless such workspaces are held in public or independent ownership, and protected from the pressure of the property and lands market wherever they may be located, their initial revaluation and rent will swiftly be followed by changes of use to more lucrative occupation or redevelopment" (Evans 2001: 176). Inevitably the adaptive reuse of the post-industrial sites is a driving force for the creative communities undergo a gentrification process.

*"Rapid an uncontrolled urbanisation may frequently result in social and spatial fragmentation and in a drastic deterioration of the quality of the historic urban environments and of surrounding rural areas. Notably, this may be due to excessive building density, standardised and monotonous buildings, loss of public space and amenities, inadequate infrastructure, debilitating poverty, social isolation, and an increasing risk of climate-related disasters" (UNESCO 2011: 2).*

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<sup>63</sup> Arkitekt: Min drøm for Sydhavnen, 30.07.2017: <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/kultur/ECE8086833/Arkitekt-Min-drøm-for-Sydhavnen/>

<sup>64</sup> Are creative people they key to a city regeneration?, 25.07.2017: <https://www.ft.com/content/349f249c-c642-11e3-ba0e-00144feabdc0>

According to UNESCO, the urban heritage sites contribute to the preservation of the areas as modern urbanisation processes take over, however, the rapid urban development process is also a major challenge for these areas. Aarhus is currently in a rapid urbanisation process where the municipality has to find space for 125.000 new residents by 2050<sup>65</sup>. As I have argued in this thesis the communities' contribute to the preservation of the sites as a result of their activities and interest in using the site which contributes to the preservation of the area and their integration of the structures into the contemporary city<sup>66</sup>. However, as the city is growing there has been a tendency to demolish older and historical areas in order to make room for new and more dense districts and structures. Of course, it must not be underestimated that developers are becoming more and more interested in the preservation and transformation of existing sites, but often in misguided way, as Jonas Larsen also mentions above. An example of a controlled development, where local communities have not been involved in the process of integrating urban heritage sites into the city, is the old Ceres Byen in Aarhus.

*“Ceres Byen is much more than newly constructed buildings. The best and most usable buildings from the charming old brewery is being renovated. In this way the unique industrial history of the site is being preserved, and we create an exciting environment in Ceres Byen. Many of the old buildings could, however, not be reused and is torn down”<sup>67</sup>*

One of the main development strategies for ‘Cears Byen’ has been to preserve the sense of place of the old brewery site, however, only one of the original building and parts of a wall have remains as historical remnants at the otherwise newly constructed site. Their website states that a lot of the industrial structures were not able to be transformed for new use, because of the cost of re-designing the structures into new use. Here it seems that the image of the industrial site is more seductive than an intelligent preservation and integration of the area and its structures. This has played an important role for how this urban heritage site have been integrated into the city and the role it has been allowed to play with in the community. As there has been no social activities at the brewery site before starting construction, the construction of an identity is up to the developers. They experience the same challenges of constructing an identity from nothing at

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<sup>65</sup> Mål: Så stor skal Aarhus være i 2050, 30.07.2017: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/Maal-Saa-stor-skal-Aarhus-vaere-i-2050/artikel/270961>

<sup>66</sup> Iværksætter i blomstrer i det gamle slagteri i Sydhavnen, 31.07.2017: <http://stiften.dk/artikel/253538:Kultur--Iværksaetteri-blomstrer-i-det-gamle-slagteri-i-Sydhavnen>

<sup>67</sup> Ceres Byen, 14.06.2017: <http://ceresbyen.dk/om-ceresbyen/>

the new Aarhus Ø as well, where a lot of energy and economy is now being put in to the integration of the site in to the city<sup>68</sup>.

Florida (2005) argues that people move to areas where the creative communities are, which means that the physical surroundings is important. He notices that the creative class is the main force behind economic growth, and that it affects the modern society, economy, and everyday life and lifestyle choices (Ibid: 29). In this sense, culture, creativity, art, and urban spaces are not just something we consume, but also something we are co-producers of. What Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen therefore contribute to, is an understanding of how to use the sites, and reuse the physical structures in an urban regeneration process. The architect Søren Leth, a former user of Sydhavnen, points out in an interview with the newspaper Jyllandsposten that “One of the major qualities of this site is the intimate streetscapes. The closeness creates space where people meet and network - in a completely different way than at industrial sites outside of the city”<sup>69</sup>. By supporting local communities use and adaptation of the buildings, they become important entities for the development of communal bonds and thereby becomes a “key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas” as well as foster “economic development and social cohesion in a changing global environment” (UNESCO 2011: Introduction.3). Drawing from this, the communities are actively negotiating the development as well as the preservation of these areas since they are using the physical space and thereby encouraging new ways of understanding the contemporary urban dynamics. The purpose that the structures serve for the creative communities therefore simultaneously effects the preservation of the structures and their integration into the future urban scene.

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<sup>68</sup> Den nye havn mangler rum til liv, 13.15.2017: <http://stiften.dk/aarhus/Den-nye-havn-mangler-rum-til-liv/artikel/208430>

<sup>69</sup> Fremtidens Sydhavnen: Halvt nyt, halvt gammelt - og kører i gaden, 25.06.2017: <http://jyllands-posten.dk/aarhus/erhverv/ECE8035558/Fremtidens-Sydhavnen-Halvt-nyt-halvt-gammelt---og-kører-i-gaden/>



Sydhavnen - Construction of the new KulbroView  
Picture by Marthin Thim

### 6.3. Theme 3: Collaboration

Each site and their structures has agency (Serres 1982), but in order to understand the effects of the collected site it is important to look at the different relations connected the areas and understand them as an assemblage. DeLanda (2006) defines **assemblage** as a collection where individual parts depend on each other and the interaction between the different influences. This interaction is necessary as it is the *capacity* of the site to be a part of the assemblage. This is the notion I started this thesis with and now I will try to highlight some of the different interests in order to understand how they connect. In 6.1. Theme 1: Social engagement, I discussed that the local communities form an identity connected to the areas that both acts as an urban place-maker as well as support the integration of the post-industrial areas in the contemporary city. These relations give the sites agency, however as DeLanda (2006) notices that the capacities “form a potentially open list, since there is no way to tell in advance in what way a given entity may affect or be affected by innumerable other entities” (Ibid: 10). Drawing from this, the different relations connected to the sites can be argued from different perspectives, being political, practical, or social aspects. In an urban context, according to Colin McFarlane (2011), assemblage is both “the capacity of events to disrupt patterns, generate new encounters with people and objects, and invent new connections and ways of inhabiting everyday urban life” and on the other hand “the potential of urban histories and everyday life to be imagined and put to work differently” (Ibid: 209). The assemblage is therefore constantly affected by new interactions that are in relation to the urban sites.

*“Why do you personally find it interesting to keep structures like this?:*

*It is an interest in creating, an interest in wanting to be a part of what is created, and an interest in having an influence in an area. It is very popular being a tourist in your own city, but I want to be more. I want to be co-creator of the city, and add what I think the city needs. There is a tendency to critique, and it is so easy, but it gives me a headache. If you are not satisfied then do something about it!” (Daniel Walsh Sydhavnen, 02.2017)*

Kulbroen is an example of how KulbroensVenner at Sydhavnen has transformed the perception of this area as a place for socially deprived people, into a scene for social urban events and recreational activities. The newly opened observation platform, KulbroView, on top of the structure, is an example of this which has called for a lot of attention in the discussion on how the stature is integrated into the city in the future<sup>70</sup>. The communities’ experiments with the

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<sup>70</sup> Kulbroens skal være nyt varemærke for Aarhus, 21.08.2017: <https://www.tv2ostjylland.dk/artikel/kulbroen-skal-vaere-nyt-varemaerke-aarhus>

heritage should not be regarded as an indiscriminate attitude towards the preservation of the urban heritage landscape, but rather considered as an active part of the contemporary urbanisation processes. Through assemblage, it is therefore possible to analyse how social life is formed by the physical structures, the users, the policies, and their practices. This leads to the contemporary political orientations within the assemblage as it considers the strategic relations within the broader political and urban development. The plans for the new Aarhus K district and the Harbour front, along with the communities' Institut for (x) and Sydhavnens visions for these areas are therefore important to acknowledge and understand as they are a vital part of what generates social well-being surrounding these spaces. In this sense, Kulbroen, as well as Institut for (x), is an example of how urban areas are produced as an ongoing process of the city in the relation between the historical and its potential development<sup>71</sup>. The experiments and activities that KulbroensVenner has made in connection to the post-industrial sites become relevant on many levels as it goes beyond the physical sites and becomes a political negotiation of whom has the rights to the areas and the city<sup>72</sup>.

In addition to the urban changes the communities' involvement in the post-industrial sites is an opportunity for them to become engaged in the current urban, political and social agenda of the city (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 9). It builds on the assumption that "development without the conservation of key resources cannot be sustainable, while conservation cannot succeed without development to sustain its efforts" (Bandarin and Van Oers 2014: 318). From this perspective, the sites are a part of an ongoing negotiation that is best understood when the different aspects that influence the development of the areas are assembled in order to "identify the significance of the industrial heritage sites or structures" (ICOMOS 2011: 1.4).

The Historic Urban Landscape approach suggests that collaborating with the local communities can bring the users together as they share a common purpose through which it is possible to gain new insights into local preservation and development issues (UNESCO 2013: 16, Harrison 2012: 225). Connecting heritage to community and social well-being builds on the idea that people with a strong sense of belonging and identity will take responsibility for their own actions and contribute to the area, as noted in chapter 6.1. According to the recommendation the urban heritage sites are best preserved by the local communities who use and experience the sites through social activities, because it contributes to both the social as well as physical reconstruction of the areas (UNESCO 2011: 1.11). The approach thereby recognises the

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<sup>71</sup> This adapts the discussion from chapter 4.1 on the process of urban heritage.

<sup>72</sup> See chapter 6.2. Theme 2: Place-making

exchange between the historic and contemporary environments as the areas are influenced by the changing urban context.

### The Public, the Political and the Professional

*“UNITED NEIGHBOURHOOD: A sense of individual loyalty to one’s own neighbourhood can be a powerful tool to create collective change in a positive way and to coalesce an authentic community” (This is X 2015: 520).*

Sherry Arnstein (1969) introduces the *ladder of participation* as a tool for heritage managers to illustrate a level of civic power. The bottom of the diagram describes *non-participation* where authorities manipulate the idea of public participation, and where citizens are persuaded by authorities to act in a certain way. The next group is *tokenism* where the public’s opinion is heard during the decision making process, but their influence is limited as it is still under the control of the authorities. The last group is *citizen power*, which is also the focus of this thesis, where locals start to negotiate and actively influence the process of urban development and heritage preservation. Both communities at Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen represents alternative perspectives and concerns about the city, and because they are organised in the form of communities their voice becomes stronger as they discuss urban leanings through experimental processes. In the case of Institut for (x) the collective user group have initiated a dialogue with the municipality to be included in the development process. The users here organise in a close community to actively seek a dialogue with the developers, as well as continuously plan these social activities and events to strengthen their sense of place. Arnstein (1969: 217) argues that involving citizens in the decision making turns *nobodies* into *somebodies* which makes the users important for the construction of the sites.

From this perspective, heritage management should actively involve the local community in order to achieve this process and reinforce urban heritage as sustainable. Arnstein explains the difficulties of collaboration as the power of decision always lay in the hands of someone. The balance between collaboration and autonomy is therefore important as it keeps the users interested in the areas and in integrating the urban heritage sites into their communities. It must therefore be considered in a development or preservation process that Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen are autonomous in their approach and therefore being too restrictive in these

strategies will lead to the communities losing interest in the sites. It does not mean that the two communities should assume total control over the areas, as the communities are much more practical in their approach to heritage management (Mydland and Grahn 2012: 564). But it also has to be considered that this strong sense of community make people take pride in their area and naturally work to ensure that the site is a safe and an attractive place for themselves and others. It is visual in Institut for (x) ground-rule which states: “Rule 0: Do not act in a way that requires us to create a new rule” (This is X 2015: 438). It refers to the concept that if everyone respects their surroundings and each other so there is no need for other rules. Underneath, there is a guideline saying “Guidline 0: Rent is cheap, but to use (x) you must contribute to (x). Ask around for inspiration on how to contribute” which enforces the general idea of acting respectfully towards each other and help your neighbours. It is therefore not only the physical heritage and architectural value, but the experience of the sites that these communities construct around themselves. In this sense, the communities’ contribute to the local interpretation of the sites, as well as the preservation of post-industrial structures.

According to Figueroa et al (2002: 12) it is possible to encourage a collaboration between the municipality and the users to increase the productivity of the communities as well as create a shared value to secure future alteration to the sites. They discuss a model they call *Communication for Social Change* which argues that participation and engagement are core values of communication processes and can potentially lead to collective action. Through communication, they argue, it is possible to empower the communities and create a collective process, which is what Aarhus municipality is trying to do through their cultural and municipal agendas: “Culture becomes an active player and is supported by the well-being across age, population, interests, education and social background. Culture is a base for the creation of healthy communities and new relations and increases the individual well-being” (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 11).

*“The municipality seeks to share the responsibility for the urban development by collaborating in finding new solutions. One of the city’s most experimental development sites is the creative area ‘Aarhus K’. Within this area has the cultural institution Godsbanen (2012) and the independent cultural institution Institut for (x) (2009) created an unmistakable and creative urban identity. In the years to come will Aarhus Architecture, Aarhus Productionschool etc participate in this development. It is in this regard that Aarhus municipality and Institut for (x) has initiated a collaboration called the CityLab. It is a collaboration that builds on the experiences that Institut for (x)*

*has had on the how to create the good urban life and identity, as well as secure the municipal visions for the area” (Concept for the CityLab 2017)*

As part of this communication process local communities around Aarhus have initiated a development of local Bydelskontorer (CityLabs). The first CityLab was started in 2016 by Institut for (x) as a project to extract information on how the municipality are planning to develop the site and the new Aarhus K area. One of the main efforts in the project is how the municipal authorities and the local creative community can learn from each other and collaborate in the development of the local urban areas. These Labs are, according to Mads Peter Lauersen (Institut for (x) 12.2016), an attempt to create a dialogue between the private and public institutions, as well as challenge the development strategies to become more experimental and daring. To quote Mads Peter Lauersen “We need some more balls on the walls!” (Ibid). Institut for (x) is now attempting to expand this concept by collaborating with several of Aarhus’ other urban communities such as KulbroensVenner at Sydhavnen, Gellerup, Katrinebjerg, Rundhøj etc. “What was before Openoffice has now become Bydelskontoret. It is supposed to be a philosophical office for the area, but also to look at other areas in order to learn from them” (Mads Peter Lauersen, Nabomøde Institut for (x) 05.2017). This type of organised urban labs is a tendency also seen in cities like Vienna, Hamburg, Berlin where local CityLabs developed as an urban network-system<sup>73</sup>. It is a development where these types of creative communities through urban activities engage in the political issues connected to local and social well-being, as well as their right as citizens to interact and use the areas and physical spaces. This process is what Harvey (2012) expresses as the urban revolution: “a movement of movements rather than a single-minded organisation” (Ibid: 119). From the perspective of the municipality they support it because this development and organisation of local communities fosters an urban diversity where the production of the city becomes a process a lot of citizen participate in (Kulturpolitik 2017-2020: 11).

*“The municipality says they have a strategy for participation, but they don’t have a clue how to do it! I am so tired of the municipal participation aspect. We need to be recognised, more than just get a pet on the back and a sandwich. We are allowed to make all the temporary projects we want, but for us it is about creating permanent projects. I do not want to just be*

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<sup>73</sup> Free cultural spaces, 14.08.2017: [http://freeculturalspaces.net/?wysija-page=1&controller=email&action=view&email\\_id=22&wysijap=subscriptions](http://freeculturalspaces.net/?wysija-page=1&controller=email&action=view&email_id=22&wysijap=subscriptions)

*a 'hottentot', I am so tired of it. For me it is about letting people participate in the project on equal terms" (Daniel Walsh Sydhavnen, 02.2017)*

The historic urban landscape approach (2011) focuses on urban heritage as a flexible process that involves and depends on the locals users. The main value of the approach is to reconnect the historic and the modern city, in order to create an overall understanding of the significance of urban heritage and its power to inspire and guide contemporary regeneration and development processes. Focus in this recommendation is therefore not on the specific site, but on the process that creates the sites as an urban resource that form the urban landscape over time (Bandarin and Van Oers 2014: 253). This process of active participation offers an alternative preservation of the areas where the communities become key resources in protecting and activating the specific sites making them strong urban identities (UNESCO 2011: 3). Linking urban heritage to urban planning therefore offers the local communities a chance to connect their identity with the areas, and through their activities incorporate the urban heritage sites into the contemporary urban scene. Involving Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen is therefore important in order to identify the intangible values associated with the urban heritage sites as well as understand the contemporary experience of the post-industrial areas. As urban heritage is connected to the experience of the city urban preservation needs to be intelligent and cooperate with many different stakeholders in order to secure the image of the city. It is not possible to decide on what is being preserved, especially in this case of non-valued heritage, as it is influenced by many different interests but we can try to guide the development to handle these urban changes.

## 7. Conclusion

My objective was to answer the question on how and under what condition creative communities and historical sites can benefit from each other by using post-industrial areas in Aarhus as my cases.

I started this thesis asking what makes heritage “a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas” (UNESCO 2011: Introduction 3) as I found the statement of UNESCO’s quite unclear, in regard to how urban heritage sites can support contemporary urban developments. Even though preservation and reuse of historical sites have become popular within contemporary urban planning strategies, many developers still tend to ignore the value of historical structures. Several examples in Aarhus, such as Ceres Byen<sup>74</sup>, points to this issue as there are currently little integration between the preservation of the historical sites and urban development.

Contemporary uses naturally affect preservation strategies of the city as the city is a living and constantly evolving entity. However, when local communities actively engage with areas they create sense of identity connected to the them which as a result contributes to the preservation of specific sites as they become key elements within social environments. I focus a lot of my discussions on creative communities’ adaptive reuse of post-industrial areas and have spent a lot of time actively participating in the networks of Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen in Aarhus. The reason for this has been to get a sense of how the communities’ actively participate in the creation of heritage sites when given relatively loose restrictions by the municipality. The regulations and political agendas of the city emphasise the vision of co-creation within urban development and focus on a cultural concept of social well-being<sup>75</sup>. Their involvement and active use of the sites therefore resonates in contemporary municipal development, which is the reason why these creative communities have been allowed evolve and transform these post-industrial areas.

My personal involvement has been important for the research as it helped me understand how these creative communities construct and use the sites. Through these case studies, I have investigated

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<sup>74</sup> See chapter 6

<sup>75</sup> See chapter 5

their local involvement, and how these communities through their activities contribute to the renegotiation of the sites. What I found was that the organisation of communities and their activities in relation to the urban heritage sites strengthens the sense of urban identity structured around the post-industrial areas which makes them important elements in contemporary development of the city, as well as their interest in the sites contribute to the continuity of the urban grid. Simultaneously, these communities actively supervise the areas and contribute economically to the structures by adapting them to fit their contemporary needs, by constructing office workshops, play grounds, cafes etc. within them. These activities actively to integrate the urban heritage sites into the contemporary city which highlights urban regeneration and the potential role urban heritage sites can play within modern urban and social environments. In this sense, involving the local communities in the process of preserving the local urban heritage sites pushes for new ways of using and understanding the structures as well as the city. It is, therefore, important within urban heritage preservation to reflect on contemporary tendencies and understand the modern urban experience of the site.

This notion has tricked a lot of questions as well as reflections in regard to participation and local involvement in urban preservations issues. The communities' self-organised active use, as I see it, challenge the traditional perception of preservation as a static concept and introduce it into contemporary social environments. I therefore argue that communities, such as Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen, contributes to the preservation of urban heritage sites by actively integrating the areas and the structures into a contemporary city. The thesis therefore acknowledges that urban heritage is actively produced and re-produced by its contemporary context, and in the case Institut for (x) and Sydhavnen use these areas to renegotiate their position and discuss urban alternatives.

Final notion; the industrial areas are only meant as a frame to discuss bottom-up heritage in relation to any urban heritage site, as my aim has been to understand the dialogue between local communities and urban heritage sites, and how these sites can become a strong tools for contemporary urban development as a result of this interaction.

*“Rather than simply save things I emphasise the use of saved things to say something... what is saved is so self-contained in time as to be only peculiar or quaint. A sense of the stream of time is more valuable and more poignant and engaging than a formal knowledge of the remote periods. New things must be created, and others allowed to be forgotten” (Lynch 1972: 237).*

A woman with long hair, wearing a dark cap and a blue work shirt, is shown in profile, looking upwards. She holds a hammer in her right hand and a long metal level in her left. The background is a workshop with large windows and colorful bunting. Wisps of smoke or steam are rising from the right side of the frame.

INSTITUT FOR

# LOCAL HEROES

ELLA L. BULMAN MAY

Institut for (x)  
Picture by Mads Peter Laurersen

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