

The redesign process and challenges of using a former church as a contemporary art centre

2nd. semester project

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Abstract

Through this paper, we examine the redesign process that the building of Nikolaj Church has gone through from the 1960ies, to how it appears today, as Nikolaj Kunsthal. The traces and layers have visible signs of a random design process through time. Nowadays the art centre aims for a coherent atmosphere and sense of place in an upcoming design process. Our analysis of textual data gathered from relevant documents and interviews with key stakeholders, relies on the development of a sociotechnical perspective. This perspective allows us to recognise the various agencies and networks in connection to the design process that emerge from the technical and social aspects, which are analysed. The findings emphasize the building as an actant and a network, that plays a crucial part in the design process.

Keywords

Re-design process, Nikolaj Kunsthal, former church, new uses, contemporary art centre, Copenhagen, design, actor-network theory.

1. Introduction

Right next to the main pedestrian street of Copenhagen, Strøget, a church whose tower is visible from many parts of the city stands iconically. Nikolaj Kunsthal, a former church, is now a contemporary art centre that takes advantage of the structural benefits of the building and its central location. This paper aims to study the current uses of a former church building highlighting its redesign process. In short: how the original essence of the building shapes and structures present identity of Nikolaj Kunsthal, an art centre that holds innovative exhibitions and a modern restaurant.

Our research question focuses on how the process of the redesign of a former church can be used as an art centre and which challenges occur in that connection. Thus, we analyse the design process that culminated in present Nikolaj Kunsthal – an art centre in the contemporary art scene. In this analysis we approach the dilemmas, tensions and limitations faced during the process of the redesign, as well as the actors, the network

and the resources that interacted on it. Nikolaj Kunsthal has been under a constant process of development and change since its origins, so a chronological approach is needed to understand the sequence of events that has led us with today's building. In order to give a clear view of the topic, we contextualize historical facts related to the configuration of the building and its uses. Keeping in mind that our focus is the process of the redesign of the building, we present a broad vision of the matter that includes topics such as the creation of atmosphere or identity of a place; Fluxus and art practices linked to the building; or a review of theoretical approaches about uses of former church spaces.

The analysis shows a constant presence of tensions and limitations. That is to say that the building has itself several limitations due to its architecture and historical condition. At the same time, we find tensions regarding the status of the art centre: Nikolaj Kunsthal wants to detach from the religious identity of its building, but at the same time it benefits from that, using this curious aspect as an advertising claim. Furthermore, we examine the spatial design of the building, i.e. the redesign process from through time and space. The spatial design gives identity to the place and gathers the several purposes of the building, due to an actor-network approach. As mentioned before, the creation of atmosphere is of great interest in this paper, as it is manifested in the diverse atmospheres that the building has, linked to historical layers, illuminations, changing decorations, temperatures or interior design.

The secular uses of former church buildings have been increasingly experienced over the last decades in a global scale. Specially visible are the cases of countries such as the United Kingdom or the USA, where New York offers a large number of examples: Gospel Tabernacle Church (now an Italian restaurant), Washington Square United Methodist Church (private apartments), Church of the Holy Communion (marketplace and nightclub), St. Ann's Church (student dormitory), among others. Nikolaj Kunsthal is a significant example in Copenhagen, as the building has a close historical and sentimental attachment to the city. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to illustrate how the redesign process can create a successful new space and to show the wide and creative potentialities of this kind of historical building.

Research question

How can the design processes be seen regarding Nikolaj church, in the remaking and change of functions from being a church, to function as a modern contemporary art centre?

In order to answer the research question, we have developed the following sub-questions:

- Which are the design challenges in reconstructing a former church building into an art centre?
- In which way the events, actants and networks have influenced the role of the building throughout time and space?
- How does the art centre currently function and be successful?

Reading guide and report structure

In the present chapter we introduce the problem field of the report, our motivation and the research question, which is the point of departure of the project. This chapter thus constitutes the frames for this paper's investigation.

Chapter two accounts the case and framework of this report: Nikolaj Kunsthall. Historical aspects and significant events are delineated to get an overview of different historical periods, which might have influenced the design process throughout time.

Chapter three introduces the methodological foundation regarding the actor-network theory, our fieldwork approach and research strategy. Since ANT can be perceived as a method and a theory, this chapter links to our chosen theoretical approach.

Chapter four elaborates this paper's theoretical fundament with relevant aspects of Slavoj Žižek, while also delineating the theoretical tools and concepts we wish to make use of in the analysis and discussion.

Chapter six is the analysis and discussion, which comprises three analytical themes: spatial analysis, Žižek inspired analysis, and the art centre seen from an ANT perspective.

Chapter seven applies SWOT analysis and BMC as strategic tools on the empirical findings of this research.

Chapter eight and nine outline reflections on the management of the project work and the paper's overall conclusions.

Appendix is to be found on the audio file uploaded beside the report. The appendix includes interview with interview with the Head of Department, Andreas Brøgger, and the information executive, Søren Holm, at Nikolaj Kunsthal. It also contains interviews with randomly chosen visitors outside Nikolaj Kunsthal.

2. Framework case: Nikolaj Kunsthal

In this chapter we introduce the contextual frame of our subject, a historical case description of Nikolaj Kunsthal and a short description on why the culture and society of Denmark is relevant for this investigation. Further we will introduce the significant meaning of the Fluxus art movement.

The context framework

Throughout modern western society the relevance of churches has faded, and empty unused buildings are increasingly taken out of function. However, the symbolic and characteristic architecture remains in the townscape as significant religious symbols. The discourse which emerged in city planning, revolved around the possibility of transforming and changing the churches into another kind of building, such as apartment etc., or being condemned, so the cadastre would be free and the area could be used for something new. The Danish government has through the Culture department, decided on a plan that will take minimum 14 churches out of function in Copenhagen (Ministeriet for Ligestilling og Kirke 2013). The identity of churches is hereby being

experimented with and sought transformed, such as the closed down Methodist church Bethania in Nørrebro, which in 2005 changed into Litteraturhaus - a literary and cultural meeting place and café (Litteraturhaus, Accessed 2/05/2015). The popularity of Nikolaj as a place for art exhibitions boosted after *Fluxus* performances in 1960s. Thus, we are going to investigate *Fluxus* movement through its approach to the church, religion, buildings and urban planning in general.

The history of Nikolaj Kunsthal

The former Nikolaj Church has been developed and changed several times throughout time, due to various circumstances. Today the building houses a contemporary art centre, which offers cultural events, performances, exhibitions, tours, a bookstore and an art library. The other half of the building accommodates the restaurant Maven, that serves homemade Danish/French dishes, with a wide selection of wine. Nikolaj Church is an iconic building, placed in the centre of Copenhagen, visible with one of the highest towers in the city: a copper-clad spire from 1909, which was rebuilt in renaissance style to look like a church from the earlier 17th century (Webpage, accessed 13/5/2015, Nikolaj Kunsthal).



The prior Sct. Nikolaj Church, originally build in the early 1200-century, is the third oldest church in Copenhagen, with a wide historical background. The church was build for a medieval fishing villagers, who wanted their own church and it was named after the patron saint of sailors. It was mainly used by sailors, fishermen and traders, due to its location near the shore. It remains uncertain exactly when it was build, but the best guess would be early 1200s, due to the architectural construction. The building was originally a late-Romanesque, three-winged church of bricks, which was later rebuilt into a bigger Gothic building in around year 1500.



Picture of how the building is said to have looked around the 15. Century. A reconstruction by architect Charles Christensen. (Linvald,1982)

The building became an important Danish asset and in year 1520, Sct. Nikolaj was the first church in Denmark to hold Lutheran sermons. In year 1536 the church officially stopped being Catholic, and is said to be first-movers of the reformation in Copenhagen, with Hans Tausen in front, which was hired as priest in 1529. Hans Tausen was a priest and bishop who translated the bible into Danish and is known as ‘the Danish Luther’. In 1574 Frederik II. appointed Christoffer Valkendorf to be in charge of the building and one of his tasks, was to raise a tower on the old church building. It is said that Valkendorf himself contributed with funds, bricks and mortar and that he even climbed the scaffolding and taught the masons (Møller, 1988). The tower was completed in 1591 and if compared to the surrounding low complexes, the tower must have seemed quite impressive. In addition to being an ornamental for both church and city, the tower had the practical function of being a lookout spot for possible fire. It is seen as an example of the renaissance architecture that became a trend during the reign of Christian IV. The buttresses of the tower came soon after the establishment. The ground, which the tower was built on, was found to be too sandy that it later had to rebuild again it to stabilize it.

The architect is still unknown, but it is considered that it could have been the Flemish Hans van Stenwinkel (Nikolaj Kunsthall, Webpage, accessed: 17/5/2015).



One of the oldest existing drawings of the church, approximately 1587. The church is the building with the spire in the background (Møller, 1988).

In 1628 a great storm caused the spire to collapse, this was rebuilt in year 1669. The next century St. Nicholas Church changed from being the church of sailors and traders, to being the church of the upper class and the nobility. The year 1795 was the year of the great fire of Copenhagen. Nearly everything was destroyed and lost during the fire, including the new spire, the interior and so on.



At left we can see the church building on fire (Møller, 1988)

Due to the states bankruptcy, other buildings had a higher priority to be rebuilt, even though the priest and congregation tried to get the church to be rebuilt; it was not going to happen. The parish was dissolved in 1805, and the congregation was transfer to other nearby parishes. This came to be the end of the building's function as a church. In year 1817 the ruins get removed, except from the tower, which in 1822 is transformed into

an observation post for the fire department. The space around, Nikolaj Square, which was now a burned down cemetery, turned into a large butcher's market. The butcher's shops were popularly known as 'The Stomach' (Maven), which the current restaurant in the building, is named after.

Several different plans and reconstruction ideas were created through historical periods, in order to create a new function and identity of the building. Most of the plans occurred from the wish of a more decorous utilization of the former religious space, which was now 'merely' butcher shops (Møller, 1988). Many drawings and sketches have been made, some of which shows a small beautiful park, an arcade with small shops, two monumental buildings standing beside the old church, a convent school and a garden, planted on the old graveyard. All of these plans with accurate drawings seem fairly thought through, but simply never happened (Ibid.).

In 1909 J. C. Jacobsen, the founder of the Carlsberg Brewery donated a new spire to the building and Permanent Secretary Rentzmann donated the funds to rebuild the rest of the building. In 1917 the last of the butcher's shops were demolished. When the brewer Jacobsen had raised the current spire on the tower of building, this was an old idea of his, which he finally realised. In 1902 he offered to finance the construction of the spire, but he met resistance for the project for several years. He came through with his idea by talking about filling a deficiency in 'the city of beautiful towers' (Møller, 1998).

The new building then housed a library, a city museum, a lecture hall and was furthermore used for religious purposes, but due to difficulties with supplies because of World War I, the Nutrition Council became the first to move in. The city museum was never established; instead the Copenhagen Central Library moved in in 1922 and stayed there until 1957. Afterwards, the Salvation Army's helpline was housed in the south chapel until 1972, and in 1958 The Royal Danish Naval Museum moved in on the first floor until 1979. From 1957 Knud Petersen, the Danish resistance fighter and artist, rented the large hall for his library of art. This had significant meaning and the building has played an important role for the contemporary art, since he opened the library. Some of the first Fluxus performances and key avant-garde manifestations were held in the building during the 60's. In 1981 Copenhagen Council's Exhibition Hall which today is Copenhagen Contemporary Art centre opened (Ibid.).

The most important historical dates of the building - the perspective of Nikolaj Kunsthal:

“1261, The oldest written document referring to St. Nicholas Church.

1479, Copenhagen University’s biannual Vice Chancellor elections are held in the church until 1487.

1517, The consecration of the Gothic church that replaced the smaller Romanesque church of the 1200s

1520, The first Lutheran sermons in Denmark by Reinhardt of Wittenberg. Since the sermons were in German, not many people understood them.

1529, Hans Tausen was employed as priest and brings the Reformation to Copenhagen.

1591, The current tower is completed.

1628, During a storm the spire collapses and destroys the nave. After reconstruction the nave is larger and lighter.

1669, A new spire is erected at the top of the tower.

1670, The wedding of Count Peder Griffenfeld.

1795, The Great Fire of Copenhagen destroys the nave and spire. The cemetery falls into disrepair.

1805, The parish of St. Nicholas is dissolved.

1822, The fire brigade take over the tower.

1829, Hans Christian Andersen writes the vaudeville ‘Love in St. Nicholas’ Tower’.

1843, The poet J. L. Heiberg writes an ode to the tower.

1845, Permanent butcher’s stalls are built on the square, which becomes popularly known as ‘Maven’ (‘The Belly’).

1868, A 'clock' where a metal ball falls down at 1pm every day is installed at the top of the tower for the benefit of ships in the harbour and people in the city.

1909, Inauguration of the new spire.

1917, Inauguration of the new nave.

1922, Copenhagen Central Library moves in.

1931, Inauguration of the organ.

1957, Copenhagen Central Library moves out. The Salvation Army's helpline, The Royal Danish Naval Museum and Knud Pedersen's art library move in.

1962, The first Fluxus concerts.

1972, The Danish Visual Artists' Union take over the ground floor.

1975, A restaurant and café open in the south chapel.

1981, Copenhagen Council takes over the administration of the building. The tower and first floor are used for exhibitions.

2006, On April 1st the name is changed from Nikolaj Exhibition Hall to Nikolaj – Copenhagen Contemporary Art centre

2011, The name is changed from Nikolaj – Copenhagen Contemporary Art centre to Copenhagen Contemporary Art centre.” (Nikolaj Kunsthal, webpage, accessed 1/5/2015).

Through these historical dates pointed out by Nikolaj Kunsthal, we get an overview on the relevant historical details, but we may moreover see what the art centre itself recognizes as most important and which story they want the building to tell. Although Nikolaj Kunsthal does not emphasize on exhibiting the history of the building, which we confirm from an interview showed when reading further, are still several historical elements to see, when visiting the place. Some of the historical elements are to be found inside the building, for instance the spire from 1669, located at the entrance. The spire

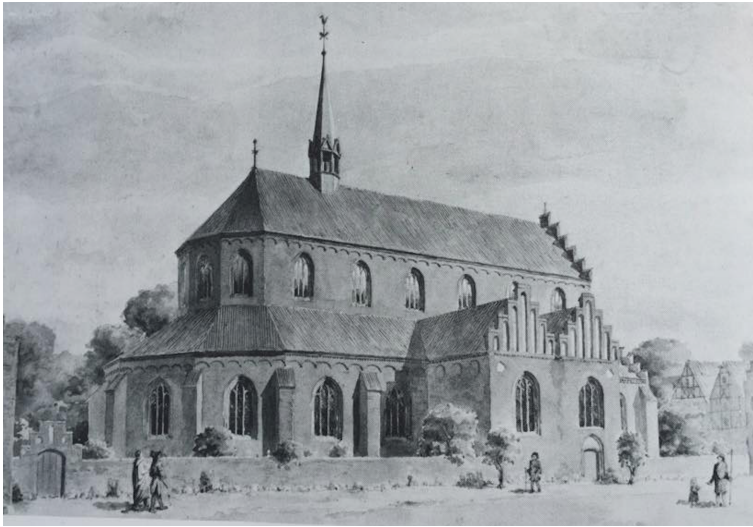
fell to the ground during the great fire in 1795 and at the opposite wall one can find a gravestone from the time when the building functioned as a church. The stone belongs to the grave of Jacob Nielsen, who was a priest at St. Nicholas Church who died in 1571. One can also find Permanent Secretary Rentzmann and his sister's will, that provided the funds to rebuild the nave and underneath the stairs, - an engraving of the year of the construction of the tower showing '1591' is visible.

Even though Nikolaj Church does not function as a church, an organ was installed in 1931 for concerts and other musical performances. The organ from Marcussen & Son has since received international reputation for being a milestone in the development of a modern type neo-baroque organ, since this organ was the first in Denmark with electrical pumps. At the top of the stairs, In the gallery you can see a chandelier with the towers of Copenhagen and the words "*Kiøbenhavns Musæum*", Copenhagen City Museum, on the ceiling, which show the plans for making the building a museum, but this was never realised. A sandstone figure from the 1900s can also be seen, showing the patron saint of sailors, St. Nicholas. Permanent Secretary Rentzmann who donated the funds to rebuild parts of the building has a memorial suite and the top of the tower, which can be open to visitors with a special permission. (Nikolaj Kunsthal, Webpage, Accessed 20/5/2015)

Based on the history and information available on the design processes that the building has gone through, we claim that the process is mostly random and influenced by events and incidents. The reason why there have been so many different propositions on what to do with the building can be explained by the great community involvement in the project and the fact that the building used to be a church, has made the project even more difficult. There was many discussions on what was right and what was wrong considering the old church, but the subject must have been too difficult and the circumstances often to unfortunate, to reach complete agreement, which resulted in the more or less random functions and process.



Visual timeline



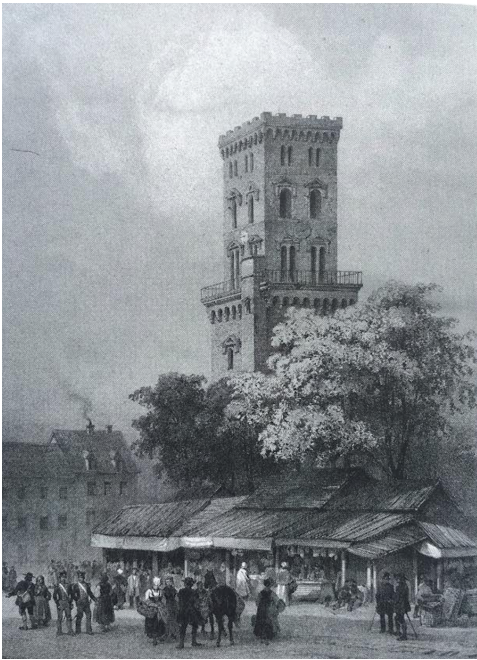
Nikolaj church as Catholic
Church around 1500. (Linvald,
1982:11)



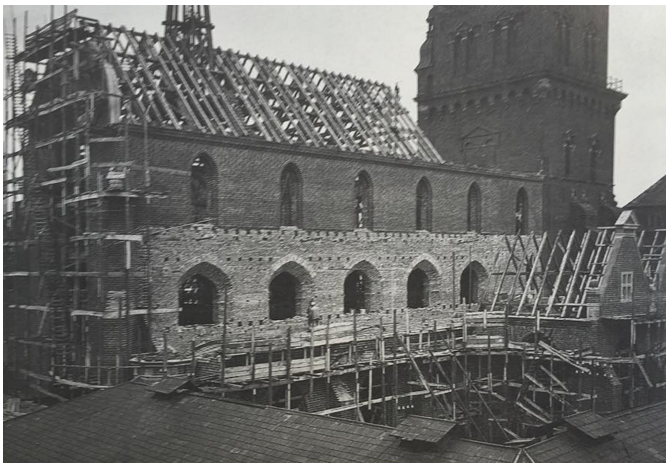
The church around 1700, with the
spire, which burned down in 1795
(Møller, 1988:163)



The first 15 years after the fire, the
church stood as the fire had left it.
(Møller 1988:165)



In 1830, random stalls used the space around the building.
(Møller, 1988:168)



In 1916 initiatives were taken to rebuild a new church for the tower that they did not know what to do with for the last 120 years.

(Møller, 1988:184)



The church was finished in 1918, because of permanent secretary Rentzmann and the spire from brewer Jacobsen.

(Møller, 1998:186)



Sankt Nikolaj Church as we can see it today, with Nikolaj Kunsthall and restaurant Maven located inside.

Culture and society

To determine why the Nikolaj Kunsthall functions as a result of a design process, we need to pay a bit of attention to the Danish culture and society, as some reasoning can be found in this. In an interview with Søren Holm, the information executive at Nikolaj Kunsthall and the person primarily in charge of the contact with the visitors, we get informed that some visitors with a different cultural background, does not approve on the concept of having an art exhibition in a church-like building. *“We get it every summer with tourists coming from some of the catholic countries and some of the eastern European countries they have got some really strict believers and they see this as problematic. If you don’t get that kind of switch 'it looks like a church, but it's not a church' if you don’t get that kind of construction, if you don’t comprehend that, then you are into something what's a bit unsettling to you and then they can react by either being frustrated or mildly aggressive. Filthy, obscene disgrace - those are the words there have been used.”* (Appendix). Clearly there are some tensions in relation to the culture issue, especially considering religious culture.

A church building is perceived in many cultures as a religious building “a house of god”, which is why it might seem strange or wrong for some people to have non-

religious activities going on inside such a building. Arguably this case of a church being an art exhibition could not have happened in e.g. a mosque in Iran, since the culture there is completely different. Thus in Denmark we have, what some may refer to as a vague religion culture, so in Danish culture the issue of the building as a church does not have a great importance in a religious matter.

The investigation of religious culture made by Gallup, shows that Denmark is one of the least religious countries in the world (Gallup, 2010, accessed 27/5/2015). The poll shows that religion plays a significant role in the daily lives of 84% of the world's population, but when looking at Denmark it is quite the opposite. 81 % of the Danes do not consider religion an important part of their everyday lives, which makes Denmark the world's least religious country together with Estonia (84%) and Sweden 83% . As the poll determines, the religion in Denmark does not have great importance in many Danes lives. Adding to this the churches have lost some authority, which makes it even more acceptable in the Danish society to make church buildings function with non-religious purposes. (Article on website, Politiken, Peter Lüchau, 2010, accessed 27/5/2015) Summing up, we might find significant reason for why Nikolaj Kunsthal can function and be somehow a success, based on the Danish culture and society, which it is located in.

The art movement Fluxus, originated in the early 1960's, had a significant impact in shaping Nikolaj Kunsthal present form. Performances and *Flux concerts* took place here, establishing a meeting point for innovative artists and setting the transgressive nature of the current centre. In order to have a clear understanding of what Fluxus consisted and more precisely, which values the art movement contributed to this space, it is necessary to have an overview of its roots and development.

The impact of Fluxus

In September 1962, a group of young avant-garde artists participated in an event called *Fluxus Festspiele Neuer Musik (Fluxus Festival of Very New Music)*, at the Wiesbaden Museum, Germany. Among the artists, Dick Higgins (1938-1998), Alison Knowles (1933), Wolf Vostell (1932-1998) and Nam June Paik (1932-2006) were

present. At this time, a fundamental question is raised concerning the nature of the art object (Hegyi et al., 164). The Lithuanian/American George Maciunas (1931-1978) conceived the event at Wiesbaden, which was initially thought as an advertising tactic for an international magazine that was to be dedicated to promoting new art, music, literature, film, architecture and dance. While the magazine was never actually released, the promotional event served as the starting point of a new cultural movement that influenced the art of the following decades (Alexander Klar 2012:6). Maciunas, the initiator, financier and coordinator of the Fluxus network, began a movement that bridged artistic genres and brought together art and life.

Fluxus was initially the name, which George Maciunas and fellow Almus Salcius planned on giving a cultural magazine that they were going to create for the Lithuanian community in New York City back in 1960 (Klar, 2012:10). This project failed due to several reasons, but Maciunas and Salcius turned their intentions to another project: founding an art gallery. Establishing contact with New York based avant-garde artists such as George Brecht (1926-2008), Alison Knowles, Al Hansen (1927-1995), Yoko Ono (1933), Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), Nam June Paik and Dick Higgins, the artist John Cage (1912-1992) proved to be their intellectual father figure.

Fluxus means “flowing” or “flow” in Latin, i.e. in English a flux is a flowing out. In that sense Maciunas said that the purpose of Fluxus was to ‘promote a revolutionary flood and tide in art, promote living art, anti-art’ (Tate Modern website, Accessed 10/05/2015). The group staged festivals in Germany, Paris, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, London and New York, realizing concerts of avant-garde music and performances. Their activities included festivals and the dissemination of innovative designed anthologies and publications, including scores for electronic music, theatrical performances, ephemeral events, gestures and actions constituted from the individual's everyday experience. Other types of work included the distribution of object editions, correspondence art and concrete poetry. The typical *Flux concert* consisted of a rapid series of performances of short events of scored actions and music. These events frequently consisted of physical performances representative of mundane activities, or music based on non-musical sound sources. They were often humorous and concerned with involving the audience, specifically to disrupt the expected conventions of musical and theatrical performance and spectatorship; their ‘event scores’ were characterized by

reduction, repetition, improvisation and chance (MoMA website, Accessed 10/05/2015).

Fluxus played an important part in the opening up of definitions of what art can be that led to the intense and fruitful pluralism seen in art since the 1960s. Maciunas' manifesto of 1962, which will be later discussed, categorizes the diversity of the group under the broad heading of "Neo-Dada" and stresses the shared interest in manifesting time and space as concrete phenomena. The *Flux manifestos* used innovative typography and ready-made printed images to communicate the concept of the self-sufficiency of the audience, an art where anything can substitute for an artwork and anyone can produce it (MoMA website, Accessed 10/05/2015).

In several Fluxus manifestos, which Maciunas created after the Wiesbaden event, one finds the artist's renounce to exclusiveness, individuality, ambition, pretense of meaning, rarity, inspiration, aptitude, complexity, profundity, greatness, and institutional and merchandise value. Instead, Fluxus "*aspires to mono-structural, non-theatrical, non-baroque, non-personal qualities of a simple, natural event, an object, a game, a puzzle or a gag.*" (Hendricks, 1988:31). Furthermore, Fluxus was "*a series of separate and discrete formal experiments, without much to tie them together*" (Friedman, 1988:219). Indeed, it was the result of the collaboration between extremely diverse artists, i.e. painters (Alison Knowles, Wolf Vostell, George Brecht), sculptors (Robert Watts), musicians (Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins), writers (Mac Low) and architects (George Maciunas). Some had their roots in the U.S. and met Maciunas' AG Gallery or Yoko Ono's loft in New York City. Others were based in Europe and in Japan, where, in the wake of Fluxus, the Japanese Gutai Group¹ was formed. Thus, it is extremely difficult to delimit and define Fluxus' components. Even so, it is clear that Fluxus embraced many of the concepts and practices associated with the post-war avant-garde movements of Western Europe and North America, including those of concrete poetry, concrete and random music, happenings and conceptual art.

As it has been mentioned before, Maciunas created five manifestos between 1961-1966,

¹ The Gutai Group is the first radical, post-war artistic group in Japan. Founded by the visionary artist Yoshihara Jirō in 1954, the group's radical ideas and approaches to making art anticipated later performance and conceptual art of the 1960s and 1970s.


which he intended for Fluxus to adopt, not least of the reasons for which were to hold the group of artists together, and to provide them with a common ground which could retain its validity (Alexander Klar 2012:172). Manifestos were already a potent tool used to define the intentions of politically, socially and artistically active art movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism and Futurism. Manifestos highlighted and endorsed the cohesion of an artistic group. Nevertheless, in the case of Fluxus that did not happen.

Maciunas' manifestos were a case of discussion between artists such as Dick Higgins or Wolf Vostell, who refused to be associated as a group. In that sense, one may agree on the extreme variability of this art movement. There were a large number of artists with a wide range of artistic background and characteristics, working with diverse media and artistic themes. Despite the disagreements, Maciunas manifestos play a significant role in the configuration of Fluxus and should be briefly introduced. The five main manifestos of Fluxus were produced between 1961 and 1966 and can be divided into three groups: a theoretical foundation publication (1961), a political statement (1963), and three publications for the purpose of advertising magazines or products (1962, 1965, 1966) (Alexander Klar 2012:183). Thereby, Maciunas had a good overview of the Fluxus network and all five manifestos reflected the development of this art movement.

1961 Manifesto

The first known manifesto dates from 1961. It consists of a theoretical essay, which was presented on June 9, 1962, as part of a Fluxus concert called "Après John Cage". During the reading out of the essay, named "Neo-Dada in Music, Poetry and Art", two films were projected on the wall and the term Flux was defined for the first time. The several definitions of the term were essential for the future manifesto of 1963. The essay provides a unique description of the growing art movement, in which all artists should be linked to what is 'concrete', i.e. each work of art should have at least some small degree of artificiality (Alexander Klar 2012:174). When Maciunas used the term 'concrete' he was, indeed, reflecting the very international, interdisciplinary context from which the loose grouping of artists had emerged (Dezeuze 2010:51). Furthermore, Maciunas tried to organize the characteristics of the different works of art in a coordinate system where he divides the dimensions of space and time for the media used. He created the categories of 'time art' and 'space art', although knowing that most

of the artists create in several forms of art and that some forms of art belong to multiple categories.



flux (flŭks), *n.* [OF., fr. L. *fluxus*, fr. *fluere*, *fluxum*, to flow. See FLUENT; cf. FLUSH, *n.* (of cards).] 1. *Med.*
a A flowing or fluid discharge from the bowels or other part; esp., an excessive and morbid discharge: as, the bloody *flux*, or dysentery. **b** The matter thus discharged.
 2. Act of flowing: a continuous moving on or passing by, as of a flowing stream; a continuing succession of changes.
 3. A stream; copious flow; flood; outflow.
 4. The setting in of the tide toward the shore. Cf. REFLUX.
 5. State of being liquid through heat; fusion. *Rare.*
 6. A fusible glass used as a base for enamels; also, an easily fusible enamel used as a ground for enamel painting.
 7. *Chem. & Metal.* **a** Any substance or mixture used to promote fusion, esp. the fusion of metals or minerals. Common metallurgical fluxes are silica and silicates (acidic), lime and limestone (basic), and fluorite (neutral). **b** Any substance applied to surfaces to be joined by soldering or welding, just prior to or during the operation, to clean and free them from oxide, thus promoting their union, as rosin.
 8. *Math.* The integral over a surface of the normal component of a vector field. Cf. STOKES' THEOREM.
 9. *Photom.* = 1st LIGHT, 18 b.
 10. *Physics.* **a** The rate of flow or transfer of fluid or of energy across a surface. **b** By analogy, the surface integral of a vector distributed over a surface. Cf. ELECTROSTATIC FLUX, MAGNETIC FLUX.
 11. *Plant Pathol.* A slime flux.
flux, *v.*; FLUXED (flŭkst); FLUX'ING. *Transitive:* 1. To cause to become fluid; to fuse; to treat with a flux.
 2. To affect, or bring to a certain state, by subjecting to, or treating with, a flux. "*Fluxed* into another world." *South.*
 3. *Med.* To cause a discharge from, as in purging.
 —, *Intransitive:* 1. To flow freely. *Archaic.*
 2. To become fluid; to melt.
 3. To undergo a flux; specif., to bleed copiously. *Obs.*
flux (flŭks), *adj.* [L. *fluxus*, fr. *fluere*. See FLUX, *n.*] In flux; variable. *Obs.*

George Maciunas
 Dictionary definition of Fluxus
 Black offset print on orange paper, 20 x 21 cm
 Luigi Bonotto Collection

1962 Manifesto

The second manifesto appears entirely different, where Maciunas experimented with multiple graphic designs and the use of single words, which coalesced into one another. Thus, the refuse of using coherent sentences and his experience in creative design thanks to his job as a graphic designer for the U.S Army is clear. For each artist he designed a unique font, and for himself, one named "Maciunas font", used for the manifesto. The influence of mass production of art and design products is highlighted in

this graphical manifesto. Moreover, it was made up of bullet-point style keywords, presenting the diverse media used in Fluxus: music, film, dance, sculpture, poetry, prose, theatre and performance art. For Maciunas, Fluxus was the international avant-garde, which should fight cultural imperialism and motivate a change in society, two inquires that are present in this manifesto.

1963 Manifesto

Probably the best known of all, one can see how the political leftist orientation of Maciunas is now totally visible. *The Festum Fluxorum*, organized by Maciunas and Joseph Beuys in Düsseldorf, was the perfect setting for the distribution of the flyer in February 1963. Called “Purge, Promotion and Fusion”, the manifesto cites the different dictionary definitions of the word Fluxus and adds Maciunas’ own vision of the artistic world (Hegyi, Lóránd et al., 2008). Part of the content of the *collage-manifesto* belongs to the 1961 manifesto, paper that was cut into three pieces and served as an introduction to each of the hand-written statements. Maciunas calls society to “Purge the world of bourgeois sickness, ‘intellectual’, professional & commercialized culture”; “PURGE the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematic art”, and ends saying “PURGE THE WORLD OF ‘EUROPAISM!’” To that effect he calls for cleansing the world of elitism and everything that belongs to the Western culture. Another topic highlighted in the manifesto is the importance of Fluxus as a continuous flow, as a movement or a revolutionary flood, calling to “PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND TIDE IN ART. Promote living art, anti-art, promote NON ART REALITY to be grasped by all peoples, critics, dilettantes and professionals”. The last part of the manifesto relates the substances that create something that can be qualified Fluxus and states that it is necessary to “FUSE the cadres of cultural, social & political revolutionaries into united front & action”. Therefore, the reader can concrete that the three main aims of Fluxus are to purge, to consolidate and to expand non-art reality. Due to Maciunas extreme and quite aggressive political orientation, some artists like George Brecht began to distance themselves from him. That fact led Maciunas to mince his words from then on (ibid.).

Manifesto:

2. To affect, or bring to a certain state, by subjecting to, or treating with, a flux. "*Fluxed* into another world." *South.*
3. *Med.* To cause a discharge from, as in purging.

flux (flŭks), *n.* [OF., fr. L. *fluxus*, fr. *fluere*, *fluxum*, to flow. See FLUENT; cf. FLUSH, *n.* (of cards).] 1. *Med.*
a A flowing or fluid discharge from the bowels or other part: esp., an excessive and morbid discharge; as, the bloody *flux*, or dysentery. **b** The matter thus discharged.

Purge the world of bourgeois sickness, "intellectual", professional & commercialized culture, PURGE the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematical art, —
 PURGE THE WORLD OF "EUROPANISM" !

2. Act of flowing: a continuous moving on or passing by, as of a flowing stream; a continuing succession of changes.
3. A stream; copious flow; flood; outflow.
4. The setting in of the tide toward the shore. Cf. REFLUX.
5. State of being liquid through heat; fusion. *Rare.*

PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND TIDE IN ART,
 Promote living art, anti-art, promote NON ART REALITY to be fully grasped by all peoples, not only critics, dilettantes and professionals.

7. *Chem. & Metal.* **a** Any substance or mixture used to promote fusion, esp. the fusion of metals or minerals. Common metallurgical fluxes are silica and silicates (acidic), lime and limestone (basic), and fluorite (neutral). **b** Any substance applied to surfaces to be joined by soldering or welding, just prior to or during the operation, to clean and free them from oxide, thus promoting their union, as rosin.

FUSE the cadres of cultural, social & political revolutionaries into united front & action.

George Maciunas
 Original 1963 Manifesto
 Black offset print on white paper, 21 x 15 cm
 Luigi Bonotto Collection

1965 and 1966 Manifestos

In 1965 Maciunas presented his fourth manifesto, called *Fluxus Broadside*, which lists mass products distributed by artists, locations of Fluxus shops, warehouses, festivals,

concerts and all publications related to the movement. In this paper he still appears to be committed to keep art as concrete as possible and to connect it with life: he makes it possible for anyone to participate in a Fluxus event or what he calls entertainment. Fluxus seems now more an inartistic phenomena or an entertainment art. In describing Fluxus as an art entertainment he points out that in order *“to establish artist’s nonprofessional status in society, he must demonstrate artist’s dispensability and inclusiveness, he must demonstrate the self-sufficiency of the audience, he must demonstrate that anything can be art and anyone can do it”*. He describes Fluxus as a democratic structure where every person, even the audience itself, can perform and create Fluxus art. According to the last three manifestos, *Fluxshops* were found in Nice, Amsterdam, Villefranche-sur-Mer and Tokyo, selling mass-produced products, promoting publications and graphics. The graphic design was again crucial and used for the manifesto of 1966, also presented in a flyer. That included not only the list of all the shops and festivals worldwide, but also listed products such as *Fluxmachines*, *Fluxmusicboxes* or *Fluxpost*.



George Maciunas
 Original 1966 Manifesto
 Black offset print of white card, 6.5 x 3.6 cm
 Luigi Bonotto Collection

<p>PUBLISHING, MASSPRODUCING & PERFORMING WORKS BY:</p> <p>GENPEI AKASEGAWA ERIC ANDERSEN AYO GEORGE BRECHT STANLEY BROUWN GIUSEPPE CHIARI PHILIP CORNER ANTHONY COX WALTER DE MARIA WILLEM DE RIDDER ROBERT FILLIOU HI RED CENTER DICK HIGGINS TOSHI ICHIYANAGI JOE JONES ALISON KNOWLES JIRI KOLAR ARTHUR KOPCKE TAKEHISA KOSUGI SHIGEKU KUBOTA FREDRIC LIEBERMAN GYORGI LIGETI JACKSON MAC LOW GEORGE MACIUNAS JONAS MEKAS ROBERT MORRIS LADISLAV NOVAK CLAES OLDENBURG YOKO ONO BENJAMIN PATTERSON JAMES RIDDLE DITER ROT TAKAKO SAITO WILLEM T. SCHIPPERS TOMAS SCHMIT CHIEKO SHIOMI DANIEL SPOERRI</p> <p>BEN VAUTIER ROBERT WATTS EMMETT WILLIAMS LA MONTE YOUNG</p>	<p>PUBLICATIONS:</p> <p>Periodical newspaper: V TRE (4 times per year) Periodical yearbox Complete works: (supplemented yearly) of: George Brecht, Takehisa Kosugi, Chieko Shiomi and Robert Watts. Individual compositions by: Eric Andersen, Giuseppe Chiari, Dick Higgins, Hi Red Center, Alison Knowles, Gyorgi Ligeti, Jackson Mac Low, Yoko Ono, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Tomas Schmit, Daniel Spoerri, Ben Vautier, Emmett Williams, La Monte Young. Films by: Eric Andersen, Ayo, George Brecht, Walter de Maria, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Alison Knowles, Arthur Kopcke, Takehisa Kosugi, Shigeko Kubota, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Chieko Shiomi, Robert Watts, La Monte Young.</p> <p>MASS PRODUCED OBJECTS BY:</p> <p>Ayo, George Brecht, Joe Jones, Shigeko Kubota, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Claes Oldenburg, Benjamin Patterson, James Riddle, Takako Saito, Tomas Schmit, Chieko Shiomi, Daniel Spoerri, Ben Vautier, Robert Watts, La Monte Young.</p> <p>boxes, cards, chess & checkers, clocks, clothes, fingerprints, flags, food, holes, machines, music boxes, organs, postage stamps, puzzles, rocks, signs, sporting goods, suitcases, tablecloths, etc.</p> <p>art, amusements, circus, compositions, concerts, events, everything, films, gags, games, jokes, music, non-art, nothing, objects, paintings, plans, poetry, theatre, vaudeville, etc.</p> <p>FLUXSHOPS & WAREHOUSES</p> <p>New York, P.O.Box 180, New York, N.Y. 10013 Amsterdam, Postbox 2045, Holland Nice, 32 rue tondutti de l'escarene, France La Cedille qui Sourit, 12 rue de May, Villefranche-sur-Mer, France c/o Akiyama, 3-814 Matsubaracho, Setagayaku, Tokyo, Japan.</p>	<p>FLUXUS FESTIVALS, CONCERTS</p> <p>WIESBADEN, W.Germany, Sept. 1962, at state museum, 14 concerts. COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Nov. 23 to 28, 1962 6 concerts. PARIS, France, Dec. 1962, 7 concerts. DUESSELDORF, W.Germany, Feb. 2 & 3, 1963, at Academy of Art. AMSTERDAM, Holland, June 1962, 2 concerts. HAGUE, Holland, June 1962, 1 concert. NICE, France, July 27 to 30, 1963, 1 concert & 7 street events. COPENHAGEN, "2 internationale koncerter for nyeste instrumentale teater og antiart," Sept. 1963 AMSTERDAM, "Internationaal programma nieuwe muziek, nieuwste literatur, nieuwste theater", Dec. 1963. AMSTERDAM, "16th. Fluxus Film Festival", 24 Feb. 1964 NEW YORK, "Fully Guaranteed 12 Fluxus Concerts", at Fluxhall, April 11 to May 23, 1964 NEW YORK, Fluxus Symphony Orchestra Concert, June 27, 1964, at Carnegie Recital Hall. MILAN, Italy, Nov. 16, 1964 at Galleria Blue. ROTTERDAM, Nov. 23, 1964 AMSTERDAM, Holland, Dec. 6, 1964 WARS COPENHAGEN, Dec. 3 to 23, 1964 NEW YORK, Sept. 1964 to Jan. 1965, at Washington Sq. Gallery. NICE, France, 7 concerts Oct. 31, to Nov. 7, 1964 MARSEILLES, France, Mar. 8, 1965 at Marseille University theatre NICE, 1965 perpetual Fluxfest NEW YORK, Perpetual Fluxus Festival, weekly concerts since June 27 '65 at Cinematheque. NEW YORK, the 83rd. Fluxus concert: Fluxorchestra at the Carnegie Recital Hall, Sept. 25, 1965</p>
<p>ART</p> <p>To justify artist's professional, parasitic and elite status in society, he must demonstrate artist's indispensability and exclusiveness, he must demonstrate the dependability of audience upon him, he must demonstrate that no one but the artist can do art.</p> <p>Therefore, art must appear to be complex, pretentious, profound, serious, intellectual, inspired, skillfull, significant, theatrical, it must appear to be valuable as commodity so as to provide the artist with an income. To raise its value (artist's income and patrons profit), art is made to appear rare, limited in quantity and therefore obtainable and accessible only to the social elite and institutions.</p>	<p>FLUXUS ART-AMUSEMENT</p> <p>To establish artist's nonprofessional status in society, he must demonstrate artist's dispensability and inclusiveness, he must demonstrate the selfsufficiency of the audience, he must demonstrate that anything can be art and anyone can do it.</p> <p>Therefore, art-amusement must be simple, amusing, unpretentious, concerned with insignificances, require no skill or countless rehearsals, have no commodity or institutional value.</p> <p>The value of art-amusement must be lowered by making it unlimited, massproduced, obtainable by all and eventually produced by all.</p> <p>Fluxus art-amusement is the rear-guard without any pretention or urge to participate in the competition of "one-upmanship" with the avant-garde. It strives for the monostructural and nontheatrical qualities of simple natural event, a game or a gag. It is the fusion of Spikes Jones, Vaudeville, gag, children's games and Duchamp.</p>	

George Maciunas
Manifesto of Art/ Fluxus Art Amusement in a flyer, 1965
Black offset print on white paper, 8.5 x 21.6 cm
Luigi Bonotto Collection

Fluxus and the passion and innovative potentiality of its artists supposed a profound change in the expression of art. This artistic evolution prompted by the present and facing the future, created the notion that each individual is a work of art in itself and that life can be understood as an overall artistic composition. Fluxus affected society from a sociological and psychological perspective and became an element of communication (Vásquez Rocca 2013:13). The aura of eccentricity that enveloped Fluxus artists was an intimate expression of their different personalities and characters

and did not respond to a passing trend. If the evolution of the international art market from the 70s to the present is examined, one will realize the diverse influence of Fluxus, Happening movement and Video Art. The artistic expression of many works of contemporary art displayed now in galleries and museums actually pay an unintentional tribute to those pioneers of the 1960s.

Indeed, *Flux concerts*, publications and performances lasted far beyond Maciunas' death in 1978. The composition of the Fluxus group experimented several changes and transformations, but remain alive during the seventies and eighties, and still today is somehow present, resisting institutionalization and attempting to blur the line between art and real life. In the case at hand, we can strongly affirm that Fluxus is somehow essential to Nikolaj Kunsthal background, and it is responsible of the configuration of its present identity. The Danish artist Knud Pedersen, who was a Fluxus pioneer in the country, had an extensive Fluxus network and established Nikolaj Kunsthal as the perfect place for *Flux* meetings, performances, exhibitions and concerts. As Søren Holm points out, "people come here to see old Fluxus rooms, because if you look at pictures from *Flux* concerts in the 1960s, you can still recognize bits of the room today" (S. Holm interview). Nikolaj Kunsthal has also hold many exhibitions about its Fluxus identity in the past twenty years. In fact, Fluxus belongs to Nikolaj Kunsthal essence and this aspect cannot be denied when analysing its current attributes.

Towards spectators participation

A new range of artistic practices developed since the 1960s and today is still significant in contemporary art. These practices required an active physical and/or conceptual participation of the spectator. Because of their extreme variety of forms, participatory practices are labelled by 20th century categories such as performance, conceptual art, installation art or new media art. The do-it-yourself artwork is a practice that exists only through a potential participation. The verb 'do' suggests an emphasis on process and actions to be performed by the spectator in real time and space, while the pronoun 'yourself' sets up a new relation between the artist, the artwork and the spectator/participant (Dezeuze 2010: 4).

Fluxus played an undeniable role in the configuration of these new art practices. Maciunas, by referring to ‘play’ as an alternative form of the traditional ‘serious’ culture, developed the concept of ‘art amusement’, which challenged the foundations of the capitalist society, and the concepts of order and disorder, freedom and control. In the same line, spectator participation emerged as one of the possible outcomes of a broader redefinition of the artwork as an ‘open work’ (Dezeuze 2010: 49). This shift allowed artists to acknowledge specificity and subjectivity, elements that moved art towards another form of expression: that of the spectator experiencing forms in his or her own in real time and space. Nikolaj Kunsthal has strengthened these principles throughout his career, as a centre for contemporary art. The exhibitions held there are carefully selected according, even today and the bases, which Fluxus implemented. This selection - which gives prominence to the spectator, has had an important role in shaping the exhibition space.

3. Methodology

In this chapter we introduce our methodological approach and operationalization, hereunder: actor network theory and fieldwork consisting of observations, photography, interviews with users and an interview with head of department, Andreas Brøgger and information executive, Søren Holm.

Actor Network Theory

Methodologically, we use *Actor Network Theory* as a tool for understanding the redesign process of Nikolaj Kunsthal from the 1970ies to current appearance of the building, and how knowledge is constructed within the process: “*ANT is considered as much a method as a theory; anti-essentialism informs both the conceptual frame used for interpretation and guides the processes through which networks are examined.*” (Crawford 2007: 2). This means, that we take the historical context in consideration as an analytical part. The analytical approach is thereby in connection with the networks and actors, which revolves around the design process. “*ANT is a conceptual frame for exploring collective sociotechnical processes, whose spokespersons [Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law] have paid particular attention to science and technologic*

activity.” (Crawford 2007: 1). ANT gives us a constructivist approach, which is not a characterised as *social* constructivist, but a combination of constructivism and objectivism. Meaning that: “*ANT privileges neither natural (realism) nor cultural (social constructivism)*”, but instead asserts that science is a process of heterogeneous engineering in which the social, technical, conceptual, and textual are puzzled together and transformed or translated (ibid.). Thus ANT works on both micro- and macro-levels of phenomena, because it suggests that societal macro-structures can be understood as derived from a micro context. Hereunder an analytical tool for the specific process through social and scientific phenomena, thus human and non-human actors embedded in society (Fuglsang 2009: 435).

ANT sharpens our focus and challenges us to investigate human and non-human relations on a sociological level. For instance, we define context of Nikolaj Kunsthall and redesigning of it as a network, the building of the church as a non-human actor, given that the building is the essential frame in which the redesign process takes place. The agency of nonhumans (machines, texts, objects among others) and humans are termed actants, are any agent, collective or individual and enter into networked associations, which define them with substance, subjectivity and action: “*actants are considered foundationally indeterminate, with no a priori substance or essence, and it is via the networks in which they associate that actants derive their nature [...]* Networks are processual, built activities, performed by the actants out of which they are composed.” (Crawford 2007:2). We are aiming to define networks and actants in redesigning and current usage of the Nikolaj Kunsthall in order to investigate, which aspects or details keep it being a successful, due to the high visitor amount. Furthermore, we define the field of research as the redesign process that took place after the Fluxus performances in the seventies and up till now.

Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva are addressing the perception of buildings always as a fixed, solid structure. They suggest the issue as the de-emphasised Euclidian space, meaning the fourth dimension *time* and that our static view on buildings derives from drawing buildings too well: “*The problem with buildings is that they look desperately static. It seems almost impossible to grasp them as movement, as flight, as a series of transformations. Everybody knows, and especially architects, of course, that a building is not a static object, but a moving project, and that even once it is has been built, it*

ages, it is transformed by its users, modified by all of what happens inside and outside, and that it will pass or be renovated, adulterated and transformed beyond recognition." (Latour & Yaneva 2008: 80). It is thereby necessary to emphasise Nikolaj Kunsthal from drawings (floor plans and photography), to the environment the building is constructed (the redesign process), and how the building lives (the usage and interaction). This account for the movement of the art gallery, and gives us a tool to *capture* how the building acts as network and actor. Moreover the missing *dimension* of time is thereby an important factor in understanding the building (Latour & Yaneva 2008:82). The terms actor and network are linked together, as we recognise the former church building as a moving project, and it is thereby the framework for our research field, and "*ANT does not differentiate between science (knowledge) and technology (artefact).*" (Crawford, 2007:1). The human society is thus, according to Latour, characterised by the nonhuman actants as an integrated part of society with societal relations. It advances a *rational materiality*, which presupposes that all entities achieve significance in relation to others (Fuglsang 2009: 419).

The lived dimension of Nikolaj Kunsthal is the understanding of buildings living in the space and; "*It is not only the architects, his or her clients, de Certeau's pedestrians, Benjamin's flaneurs that do not live in Euclidian space—it is also the buildings themselves!*" (Latour & Yaneva 2008:83). A paradoxical aspect of ANT as a method is the distinction between humans and objects, where one should categorise both as actants, but without reducing humans to objects (Latour & Yaneva 2008:84). In relation to Nikolaj Kunsthal, this means that we can define the building as a non-human actor, when we keep in mind that the human component of key persons in the redesign process, maintenance and the users, are what contributes to the building as a moving project. The building is dynamic and consists of a flow of transformations throughout time, influenced by its environmental context, space and coexistence in an *ecosystem*: "[...] *a building project resembles much more a complex ecology than it does a static object in Euclidian space. As many architects and architectural theorists have shown, biology offers much better metaphors for speaking about buildings.*" (Latour & Yaneva 2008:88). In context to our case, the ecology of Nikolaj Kunsthal for example includes the different entities of the church.

Fieldwork

In order to examine the Euclidean space of the art gallery, we take a phenomenological approach, by doing spatial analysis based on fieldwork with an emphasis on observations in- and outside the church. By doing this we understand how the redesign process has manifested in the materiality of the church and this subjective perspective contributes to the objective understanding of the church as a moving project. We enter the art gallery as travellers, meaning with a curious and open mind-set. We spend time in the building and outside the building, by observing movements, the materiality and interactions between the actants. Moreover we supplement the observations by taking photographs in a discrete manner. The photographs are assisted with field notes. The observations are followed up by interview with five visitors of the gallery. The selection of the visitors was chosen on the basis of what we have observed the average visitor to be. More specifically, we ask them to enter the art exhibition and answer a few questions, when they are done visiting. The perspective of the visitor is important in understanding the network and actors as linked, and moreover to emphasise how the visitors are a part of the definition of the place, because they are the audience experiencing and consuming it.



The entrance to the upper gallery,
as we approached it during the Stan
Douglas' exhibition, May 2015.

To get an inside view on the redesign process, we make an in-depth semi structured interview with head of department: Andreas Brøgger. This means that we ask him open and short questions such as: *Can you describe the process that the building has been through to make it look like it does today?* These questions invite empirical description and we ask follow-up questions to the red flags and themes in his answers (Brinkmann & Kvale 2009:45). The semistructured interviews contribute with clarification of the different understandings of the design process and the place and atmospheres (Brinkmann & Kvale 2009:49). The perspective, which Brøgger contributes with, is his knowledge as an internal view of the redesign process. Moreover we arrange an interview with Søren Holm, the information executive. He is the one who has direct contact with the audience and therefore he provides an external point of view.

Concepts

The concept ‘intermediary’ meaning, that the intermediaries are the links connecting actants into a network. Intermediaries: *“passes between actors in the course of relatively stable transactions.”* (Bijker 1992:25). In our research case, the building, staff, artists and visitors are all the actants, thus we can claim that the events, exhibitions and performances, are the intermediaries binding the those actants into a network, which is called Nikolaj Kunsthal. Through intermediaries the actants communicate, thus we can investigate if those intermediaries between audience and building and artists are containing a message of Nikolaj Kunsthal being a church.

The concept of ‘black-boxing’ is also important in ANT, as it relates to simplification. When networks are simplified, resulting in single-point actants, then those networks are black-boxed. This means in order to describe a case, such as Nikolaj Kunsthal, in terms of an actor network theory, the complex systems must be simplified down to individual actants and merely focusing only on their relations with other actants within the network (Crawford 2007: 2). Black-boxed networks *“are considered only in terms of their input and output, are taken for granted or are counted as a resource.”* (Ibid.). Latour describes the concept as the scientific and technical work made invisible by its own success, however, focus should be on its inputs and outputs, not on its internal complexity. Black boxes may always be reopened to create a ‘swarm of new actants’

(ibid.). We use this concept to emphasise what might have become opaque in the network of Nikolaj Kunsthal, and thereby highlight tensions within the design process.

Summing up the methodology

The ANT perspective as a method gives us a specific tool to chart the networks and actants revolving the redesign process of Nikolaj Kunsthal. This means that the ANT will contribute as the overall framework for understanding the sociotechnical processes of the art centre. Moreover we use fieldwork in form of observations, user interviews, and semi structured interview with a key person in the design process: the head of department Andreas Brøgger and information executive Søren Holm.

4. Theory: Žižek's approach on architecture

In this chapter we outline the relevant concepts defined by Slavoj Žižek, philosopher, provocateur and psychoanalyst from Slovenia. Even though the process of redesigning Nikolaj Church into Nikolaj Art Centre can be seen as a spontaneous and unregulated process, nonetheless we find the approach on architecture, described by Žižek, as relevant framework for investigating the design process of Nikolaj Kunsthal. His thoughts on such the fields as a post-modernist architecture, the concept of 'political unconscious' architecture and a description of a role of art-venues are explained in this chapter in relation to our research question.

We claim, that the process of redesigning *Sankt Nicolai Kirke* into *Kunsthallen Nikolaj* can be seen as merely adaptation of the building for a post-modern reality. Žižek, drawing on Lyotard defines postmodernism as a 'post-68 capitalism', which forms "*specific economic, social, and cultural unity.*" (Žižek 2010:246). Post-modernism, according to Žižek, "*introduced a new order of intelligibility into the confused multiplicity of historical experience.*" (Ibid.). The process of development of architecture from realism to modernism, and further to post-modernism is partly bounded with a "*Lacanian triad of the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary.*" (Ibid.). The turn towards 'imaginary' use of architecture is connected with a post-68 capitalism way of thinking, the radical approach on art, which was also common for the Fluxus

movement. In case of redesigning Nikolaj Kunsthal, Fluxus concluded and speeded up this turn. The realistic approach was quite simple: a building has to fulfil the certain practical needs and to fit into costs, etc. On a symbolic level, thus meaning modernism architecture, building had to bring a message, it is supposed to embody and convey, for example ideologies, divinity, religion... (Ibid.). In those levels, or styles, what looked like a church building was unambiguously a church. The post-modernist thinking about a building is based on the 'imaginary' part of the triad questioning, how will it feel to the ones, using the building, how people will imagine the building? That image starts to be individual, thus it arises separation of form and function. In this sense, redesigning Nikolaj Kunsthal during the 1960-ies, jumped into a front car of the train of postmodern architecture. The form, church, got dissociated from an actual function, art centre, exactly fitting trends and demands of the times.

Another idea by Žižek, which is relevant as a research frame for investigating design process of Kunsthal Nikolaj, is a concept of 'political unconscious' (Žižek 2010: 255). He claims, recalling Wittgenstein, that: *"... what we can not directly talk about, can be shown by the form of our activity. What the official ideology cannot openly talk about may be revealed in the mute signs of a building."* (Ibid.). We do not claim that in Denmark there is some position of 'official ideology' on a turning a church into an art centre, however 'activities' and 'mute signs' of Nikolaj Kunsthal, meaning interior, concerts, parties, exhibitions, are happening in the space, which used to be a church, can be seen as a way of heralding position of the given society, without verbalizing it. Throughout our fieldwork we have looked into the design process, traces, use of space, present interior details, as well as content of past exhibitions and events, in order to confirm or deny the tendency, that the design processes of Nikolaj Kunsthal have been expressing the mind-set towards religion matters of Danish society.

The other relevant thought from Žižek on architecture is his understanding of the role of art venues. *"Performance-arts venues function as exceptions: artificial islands of meaning in our meaningless existence, utopian enclosures sticking out from the ordinary reality of our cities. As such, they unite the opposites: they are sacred and profane, like secular churches —and the way a visitor relates to them is with a mixture of sacred awe and profound consumption."* (Žižek, 2010:271). The 'sacred awe' and 'profound consumption' are very much the actions visitors engage themselves while

visiting art galleries. Furthermore, Žižek in detail mentions a church adapted to an art gallery example. Due to an engineering process appears the existence of some parts of a building, which do not have a pre-planned function. E.g. *“The spaces between the pillars of a bridge can thus be used by homeless person for sleeping, even though such a spaces were not designed for providing such shelter [...] and does this procedure not expand to buildings themselves, such that a church or train station might be exapted into an art gallery, etc.?”* (Žižek 2010: 278) As a natural laws and engineering process requires to create pillars and spaces in between them in case of the bridge, the socio-technical context once required to have a church, of some particular form and place, meaning to have naves and tower and being in central location. As the spots under the bridge do get occupied by the ones in need, homeless people, the churches empty of one or other reasons than the parts under the bridges, but still ‘homeless’ institutions, such as art-galleries find their way to use the empty space. We see the Žižek inspired part of analysis as a suitable fulfilling, besides the ANT analysis, since ANT is not dealing with the symbolic and imaginary features of actors and networks. However, it is important to emphasise that our chosen theoretical aspects from Žižek differ from the ANT. The Žižek perspective adds a dimension to our analysis, which allows us to integrate a social and symbolic aspect. The similarities that makes the two theories work together are that they both consider objects as a part of a wider context or network. Furthermore, they both have a perspective on architecture, where ANT considers buildings as moving processes; Žižek sees architecture as a component in society.

Summing up the theory

We are looking into case of the redesigning of the building through the theories described in Žižeks chapter called *‘Architectural parallax, spandrels and other phenomena of class struggle’* (Žižek, 2010). We want to find exact steps in which the building has moved from symbolic to realistic and eventually to an imaginary architecture. As well as to investigate, if building has been heralding any kind of political message, according to its managers, users, and re-designers. We investigate Nikolaj Kunsthal redesign having in mind the context of post-68 capitalistic society.

5. Analysis & discussion

In this chapter we analyse and discuss Nikolaj Kunsthal in different levels, which comprises three analytical themes: spatial analysis, Žižek inspired analysis, and the art centre seen from an ANT perspective. The spatial analysis work on a phenomenological level, as we delineate how we observe the place through our own subjective experience. This is followed by the next theme where we use relevant concepts and theoretical approach in a Slavoj Žižek inspired analysis: the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary architecture. This leads to the next theme that takes an actor-network approach in analysing the different relevant actants within the Nikolaj Kunsthal network. The latter part allow us to take a constructivist point of view, which links to the next chapter that is a strategic output of the analysis. The common thread throughout the analysis is characterised by the design process and how it has manifested itself in today's spatial design of the art centre.

Spatial analysis

“By tracing the continuity of the architectural networks – in their historical entanglements and actual design challenges – we can see that a building is not obtained in an astute double-click moment of invention, but through numerous little operations of visualization, scaling, adjustment of instruments, options’ production and selection, office presentations, historical comparisons and interpretations. Recollecting the social career of a building, re-enacting design moves, producing and circulating visuals, presenting and discussing them with a variety of public, architects simultaneously learn how to modulate social relationships, how to take lessons from the social trajectory of a design object, how to anticipate group reactions and how to incorporate them into design.”

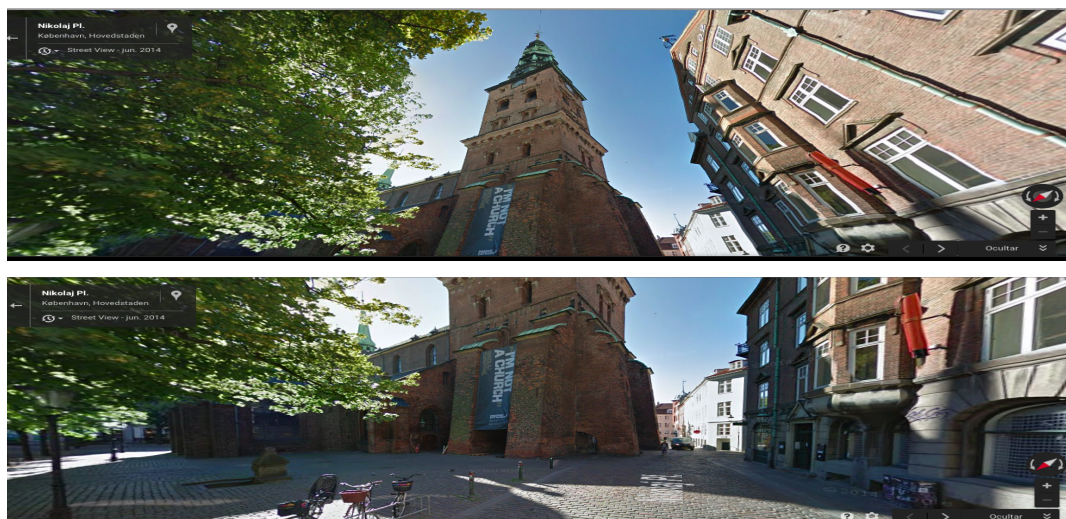
Albena Yaneva (2009: 6)

Just as Yaneva argues, buildings are normally being investigated after-the-fact of their construction, not in the process of planning and designing. Our main focus of analysis will be the random design process of Nikolaj Kunsthal and the Actor-Network-Theory (ANT) will report it. This method allows us to follow the actors in their routine

practices and have an account of their actions and transactions in complex spatial settings, the materialization of the successive operations they perform on a daily basis and to foreseen and unforeseen consequential effects they trigger (Yaneva, 2009:25). Through all this data we can gain access to the actors' own definitions of the social, of the way they are given identity as a group, and of the variety of agents that partake in their actions in this particular space. Therefore, by examining the ways and actions through which architects, specialists, and users of Nikolaj Kunsthal have shape it; we can shed light on how this design product has been produced.

Kristine Samson (RUC pdf on website, Accessed 21/05/2015) states that design and architecture are spatial mediators, so spatial mediation must be reconsidered in terms of aesthetics and intentionality in order to understand how design produces experiences over us. At the same time, design and architecture are the result of spatial assemblages and perform in socio-material networks. In short, Samson believes that architecture and design produce aesthetic experiences; are part of spatial assemblages, power structures and intentions; and mediate and shape our environmental experiences. Following this line, our analysis will try to glimpse the connection between the aesthetic, physical design and the experiences of space as well as the reaction of society to it.

The site



Nikolaj Plads, Copenhagen. Source: Google Maps, 2014.



Nikolaj Kunsthall, Copenhagen. Aerial Photo: H.C. Stensen.

Nikolaj Kunsthall is located in Nikolaj Plads 10, Copenhagen, near the pedestrian and main shopping street called “Strøget”. It’s hidden, but central location is one of its main attractions. Although it can be sort of difficult to find Nikolaj Plads, a little square concealed by the old streets of the city, Nikolaj Kunsthall tower is definitely visible and recognizable from many places in the city. After the heavy fires in the city around 1795, about 900 buildings were demolished including Nikolaj Church and the City Council. Right after its reconstruction and until 1882, the high tower building became a strategic place where watchmen from the fire brigade could detect fires around the city. A new marketplace developed around the church in 1820s, where merchants sold meat, vegetables and other groceries. Still today, some of the oldest shops in the town can be found at Nikolaj Plads. In 1909, Carl Jacobsen, founder of Carlsberg Brewery, donated funds to re-built a spire in the tower, identical to the original one from the 17th century Renaissance style. Thus, Nikolaj Church spire is a landmark of the city that highlights the skyline of Copenhagen.

Architecture

- Exterior:

The original building of Nikolaj Kunsthall was a late-Romanesque style structure made of a three-winged, brick church. That building was later replaced around 1500 by a larger Gothic style church consisting of three naves, choir aisles and ridge turrets. The iconic tower of the church was built at the end of the sixteenth century following the Renaissance style. The spire and the nave collapsed in 1628 and a new structure was added in 1669. Unfortunately, in 1795 almost everything was destroyed during the Great Fire of Copenhagen. At the same time, that event supposed the end of Nikolaj’s existence as a church. In the 20th Century a new nave was built in accordance to the

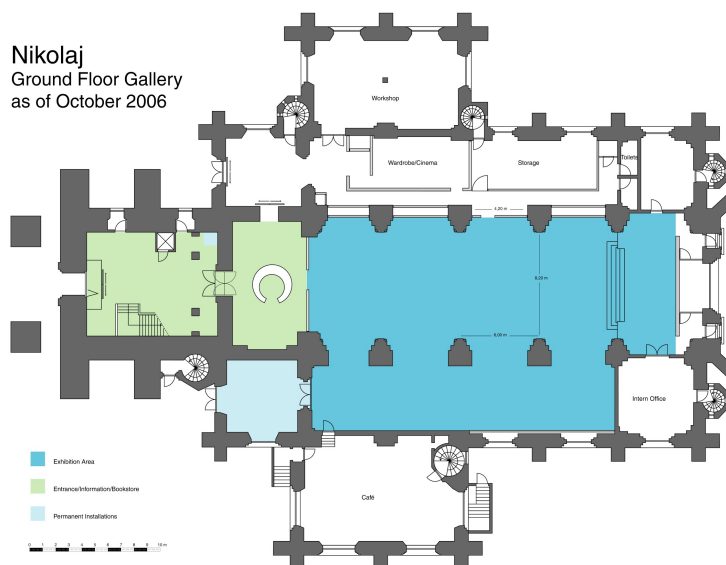
Gothic settings, accommodating various and diverse spaces: a house, a library, a city museum, a lecture hall.

The present building is not the result of a single project and has evolved over centuries. At the same time, the different uses of the space through the time shaped today's building. However, the key date is 1957, time when Nikolaj Church becomes an art library thanks to the artist Knud Petersen and starts having a close relationship with contemporary art. During the 1960s several avant-garde events and Fluxus performances and concerts took place, all that leading to 1981, when today's Contemporary Art Centre opened its doors.

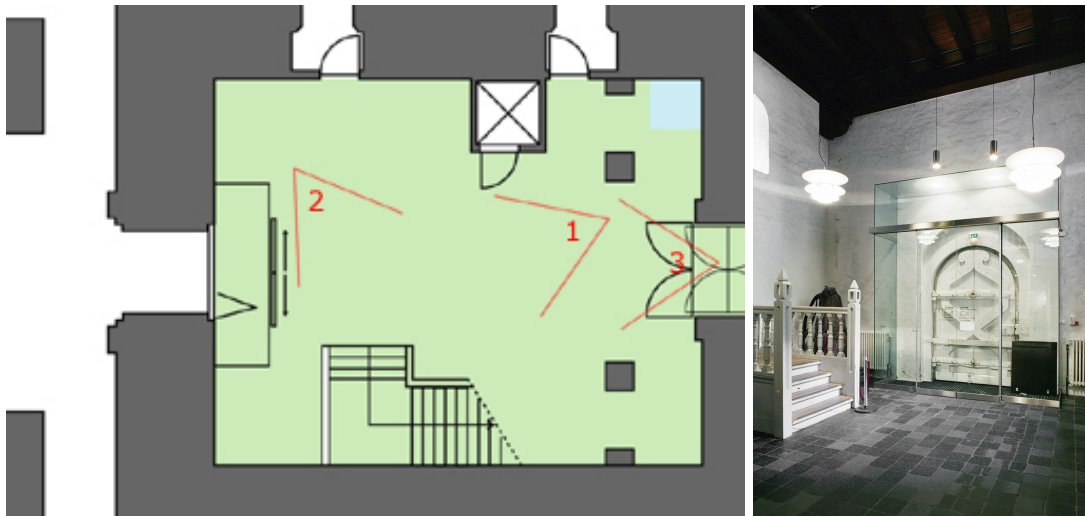
The tower of the art centre is visible in most parts of central Copenhagen, yet it is not a place that many know of, when you ask for directions on the street. The large dark brick building takes up most of the space at the location of Nikolaj Square and the historical church architecture marks a part of the old Copenhagen, before the fire.

- Interior:

Nikolaj Kunsthall has four main floors, corresponding to the ground floor (lower gallery), the second floor (tower space), the third floor (side galleries) and the fourth floor (upper gallery). The ground floor hosts the main entrance, the reception hall, a small bookshop and the lower gallery. The entrance is located at the bottom of the tower and is left empty for practical purposes.

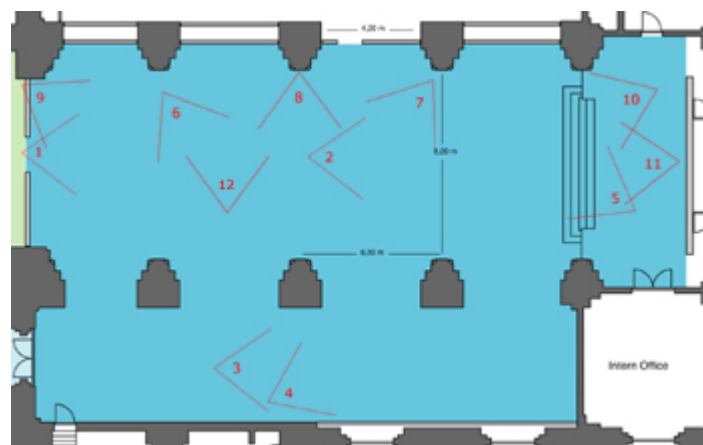


Ground floor. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthall.



Main Entrance. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.

The lower gallery takes up a large room divided by pillars, and it is often also divided by light partition walls according to the type of exhibition hold. The room offers multiple possibilities, and it can be divided in several ways.



Lower gallery. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.



Lower gallery. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.

The tower of Nikolaj Kunsthal is the oldest part of the building and links the lower and the upper gallery areas. Half the way up is the entrance of the so-called tower space,

room for side galleries. Some of the platforms of the way up are a multifunctional space, often used for exhibition purposes.



Tower space. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.

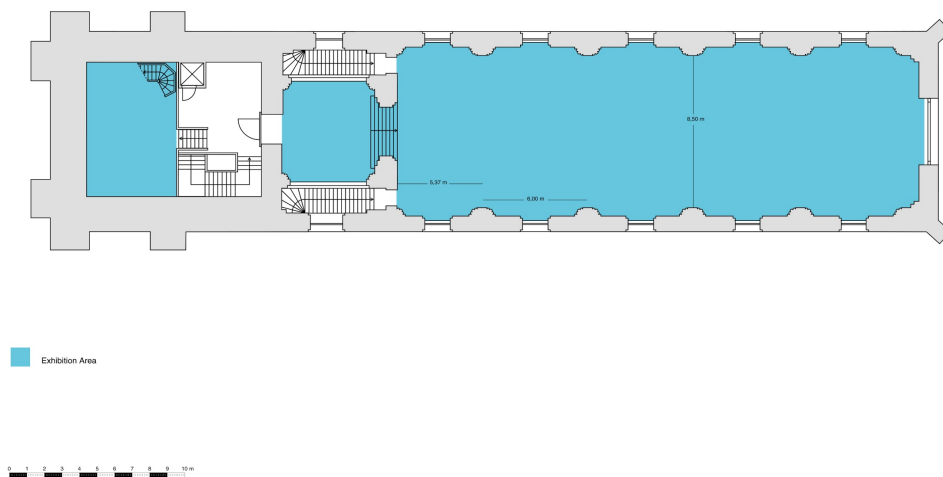
The upper gallery is smaller than the lower gallery, but offers many spatial possibilities, where partition walls can be installed to create new spaces. Thanks to the large windows that are arranged in the gallery, the presence of natural light is very important.



Upper gallery. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.



Nikolaj
Fourth Floor Gallery
as of October 2006



Upper gallery. Source: Nikolaj Kunsthal.

The design process

A way to understand a building is to analyse the design process, the architectural structure and the artefacts as much as the frameworks and context. In order to give meaning to a building is necessary to “return to the ambition of mainstream social science – and namely to produce a ‘social explanation of *“architectural projects, buildings, city dynamics, urban networks, design controversies, and by so doing to socialize every object and phenomenon that can be named ‘architectural’ or ‘urban’, thus ignoring or destroying their specificity”* (Yaneva, 2009:195). Indeed, design is a mirror of the shift in politics. Architectural projects are associated with the social contexts of their creation, the cultural and political climate and the particular institutional developments of their time. Nikolaj Kunsthal design process is characterized by randomness and its short stylistic coherence due to its changing identity and usage through time.

The current interior design is characterized by a great distinction between two main levels that separate two areas: the lower, where white walls are left for the exhibiting pieces, and the upper one, still conserving the church’s ‘old’ identity. While walking around, the visitor can clearly appreciate this distinction between spaces.



The historical paint levels on the walls in the lower gallery.

Even though Nikolaj Church does not function as a church and has not since 1805, a new organ was installed in 1930 for concerts and other musical performances. It definitely provokes a clear incoherence to the exhibition space and to the visitors.



The organ, even though introduced only in 1931 and have never been a detail of a functioning church, triggers users' sense of religious building.



Space, place and atmosphere

The process of making associations with significant places is considered to be a deep human need. As Relph argues (1976:9), space is not a kind of container that holds places and space must be explored in terms of how people experience it. Indeed, people, both as individuals and in groups, create the concept of place. Following Relph's theory (1976), space and place are dialectically structured in human environmental experience, since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn create certain meaning from their spatial context. Thus, the potential of place lays in its power to order and focus human intentions, experiences and actions. In other words: place gathers worlds in spatial and environmental terms, defining centres of human action and meaning.

On the other hand, identity refers to how we make sense of ourselves, and meanings given to a place can be strong enough to become essential in the configuration of the identity of the people experiencing them. Identity can also refer to lived experiences and all the subjective feelings associated with everyday consciousness, suggesting that such experiences and feelings are embedded in wider set of social connotations (G. Rose, 1995:88). In short: identity marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we live within (Ibid, 1995:88). Although it may appear to be a very personal feeling, sense of place should be understood as well in terms of its wider social context.

The case of Nikolaj Kunsthal presents a challenging relationship between the visual, the verbal and the way we attribute significance to what we see. When looking into the building structure, a medieval church, we can outline how its iconographic forms shape our sense of the past. Consequently, the space leads us to experience a church-like atmosphere, whereas at the same time external agents tell us that we are inside a contemporary art centre. The external agents are, among others, the graphic identity of Nikolaj Kunsthal, its exhibition profile, its interior design and its slogans (e.g. "I'M NOT A CHURCH" or "LET THERE BE ART"). There is no doubt that the contemporary art centre benefits from Nikolaj Church iconic architecture and atmosphere in order to compliment the art exhibited there. As Ben Anderson suggests, the term atmosphere seems to express something that we could refer as vague:

“Something that hesitates at the edge of the unsayable. Yet, at one and the same time, the affective qualities that are giving to this something by those who felt it are remarkable for their singularity” (Anderson, 2009:78). Nikolaj Kunsthal architecture extols its unique character. Indeed, it gives an extended experience and added value to the visitors.

The building’s history is not denied, and its atmosphere appears to be the result of the combination between the historical, the religious and the contemporary art influences over the place. The historical background comes as something extra, as an expansion of the experience and as something new that you may have not expected from the visit, creating added value. The concept of atmosphere holds a series of opposites - presence and absence, materiality and ideality, definite and indefinite, singularity and generality - in relation of tension (Anderson, 2009:77). Atmospheres are then singular affective qualities that emanate from but exceed the assembling of bodies. Nikolaj Kunsthal is susceptible to create an affective atmosphere to the visitor, i.e. affected by the ambiguities of the affect/emotion, by that which is determinate and indeterminate, present and absent, singular and vague (Ibid, 2009:77).

As it has been discussed, the character of space or place is not merely a visual quality, but a complex fusion of countless factors, which are immediately and synthetically grasped as an overall atmosphere, feeling, mood or ambiance. It’s a multi-sensory experience that also involves external factors such as cultural, social or interpersonal background, i.e. it calls for our entire embodied and existential sense. Architecture allows a multi-sensory experience in all ways. Maurice Merleau-Ponty highlights the simultaneity of experience and sensory interaction: *“My perception is (therefore) not a sum of visual, tactile, and audible givens: I perceive in a total way with the whole being: I grasp a unique structure of the thing, a unique way of being, which speaks to all my senses at once”* (1964:48). Nikolaj Kunsthal includes all these theories in its experience of atmosphere, creating a unique - and controversial - character of this place.

Žižek inspired analysis: The real, the symbolic, and the imaginary architecture

The Nikolaj building started its existence in a ‘symbolic’ part of a triad - it was a cult building which was “supposed to embody and convey” (Žižek 2010: 246), and it

represented a particular ideology - Christian religion. The building moved through a phase of being an ideological building, a realistic, having very practical adaptation, e.g. butcher's' market and firemen station, and came to its present state - 'imaginary' architecture, where a form is liberated from a function, the role of the building is imaginary, depending to whom, and in what circumstances the building appears. At some points, form creates the obstacles to maintain the function, e.g. as the manager remembers *"...we have a very small lift, so to show very big pieces upstairs is not practical"*. In addition sometimes they need *'to cover up the windows, you have to create temporary walls, in order to have space for hanging art works, instead of having one open space. Its difficult to create exhibitions here because of how the sound travels'* (Andreas Brøgger, Appendix). According to Søren Holm: *"the original Nikolaj Church may date back us to 1160 it might have even been a wooden Church and lying just next to the water - it started out as a church for fishermen and sailor."* (Appendix). As any other of the oldest churches in Denmark the Nikolaj Church started as a Catholic church, however in a the very beginning of the Danish Reformation it became a place for Danish, thus Lutheran-protestant, masses and services, and eventually has fully turned into a protestant church, for as long as it was a church. For us it matters, in a sense that protestant church architecture tradition abstained the building from going through Gothic, baroque, rococo - the colourful and expressive architectural styles, which would have been regular for Catholic churches of the given periods. The modest protestant way of designing a church kept it closer to a "white cube" appearance, thus further from any ideological, sacral role.

The other aspect to consider as we talk about the Reformation is a more neutral approach by protestants towards the particular objects and building, in compare with the catholic Christians, who would relate to the same objects in a more sensitive way (User interviews, Appendix), and the opposition towards the redesign would be much bigger, thus could even make it impossible. Quoting Søren Holm: (Appendix) *"... every summer with tourists coming from some of the Catholic countries and some of the eastern European countries, they have got some really strict believers, and they see this as problematic.... Filthy, obscene disgrace - those are the words have been used."* Thus we see the Reformation as a first of the windows of opportunity, which made the design process of Nikolaj Kunsthall to the state of affair it is now, it made a path for the first conversion - from a 'symbolic' to a 'realistic' architecture. On the other hand, the

redesigning of Nikolaj Kunsthal could not go too radical due to the same Reformation, as “...so many things go into this place: national history, religious history, cultural history” (Andreas Brøgger, Appendix), the building has become an important and legally secured heritage.

The most significant impact about moving from ‘ideological’ to ‘real’ use of the building was indeed the fire of 1975. Let us imagine the very hot day in drought forest. Situation is calm and stable, unless the sparkle of match would change the landscape unrecognizable and rapid. The function of the building was undergoing some changes, so did the form, e.g.: “it started out as a church for fishermen and sailor but over the centuries it also became a kind of a church for the well-to-do classes of Copenhagen” (Appendix: Søren Holm), yet those changes were slow and did not have a strong input to the building's present appearance. However the turn was a big fire, which created a window of opportunity for new actors to appear and the former actors to change their behaviour regarding the building. The congregation members found the other places to pray, this would have no reason to happen, unless the fire. Only the tower left standing, and eventually the main nave was also rebuild, yet much smaller than it used to be. “... The church is slightly unbalanced from an architectural point of view in the sense that the tower is somewhat too high and too big comparing to the main building, the nave”. (Appendix: Søren Holm). Thus it was a point where spontaneous, unbalanced, unorganized redesign process started to appear, traces of this kind of design process are lasting up until now.

The empty building found its new users, such as butchers and firemen brigade. This point of time we see as the final separation between the buildings form and its ideological use – what looked as a church, or leftovers of a church indeed, was not functioning as a church anymore. As the architecture was split from ideology it started to posses a mere practical function, thus entering a period of ‘real’ architecture. E.g. the former church tower was used as a watchtower for firemen, reason for that, it being one of the highest towers around. This is paradoxical, since Žižek describes triad of real, symbolic and imaginary architecture happening in rather chronological sequence, our case is different, since the building started as being an ideological building. The post-modernist thinking about a building is based on the “imaginary” part of the triad, thus questioning, how will it feel to the ones, using the building, how people will imagine

the building, while being in it? We argue that having an art centre in a building, created a good opportunity to raise these questions about the building. As the manager agreed, the art centre have had many 'religion inspired exhibitions', 'Fluxus inspired exhibitions', in that sense triggering the images of past phases of the building. The 'imaginary' use of the building in this manner concludes both 'real' and 'symbolic' periods of the building.

Important footprint is a name of the place, Nikolaj, which is the trace of the very primarily function of the place - home for congregation of sailors and fishermen, as Nikolaj is the patron of people working on the seas. This one is a trace from 'symbolic' period, while one other trace of the realistic period in the present design also exists. That is the restaurant in a southern wing of the building, which is called the same name as a butcher canteen was called back, then – Maven, The Stomach.

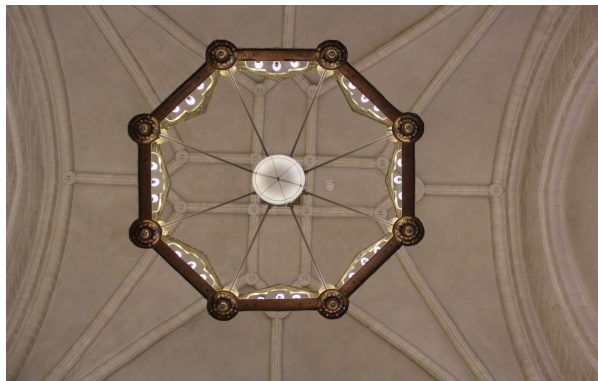


Mute signs of a building

Could we say that the whole redesigning process of Nikolaj, and its presence as an art centre is a manifestation of Danish culture? According to head of the place, Andreas

Brøgger, yes. According to him, *“...it is an expression of Danish culture. You have this opportunity here to constantly renew your way of looking at things, so something that was used for specific purpose in the past, can now be used for something very different. And some people might say it is a shame, because we lose this attachment to something, what could be very important, while other people would say that finally you got rid of some conventions which kept us locked in a certain mind-set”* (Andreas Brøgger Appendix).

Even though the building is not a church anymore, and the biggest part of the building has never been a church, the particular geographical location would always play a role, as it is the place where the important church used to be. On the importance of the location the manager of the art centre explained: *“Its centrally located. If you put something in Arken for instance, in Ishøj, or even in Carlsberg, or new area they are building in Nordhaven or Ørestaden it just mentally outside of the city”*(Appendix: Andreas Brøgger). The communication manager Søren Holm added: *“ It stimulates both the artist and the audience to think about history at the same time, as seeing something what's about our present age. If we move around without on present day without any historical references we lose ourselves, so obviously a church is a reminder, that history is difficult to escape from.”* (Appendix: Søren Holm) Thus the location itself is acting and will keep particular agency despite in what way the building would be redesigned. *“I think it's meaningful, significant position to be in. To play our little part in the history of a place that goes back for 800 years or so. Perhaps we should instead of trying to underplay the historical aspect of things, we should embrace it a bit more”*(Ibid.).



Visitors do mention the ceiling and the lights as details, which remind them of a religious interior space.

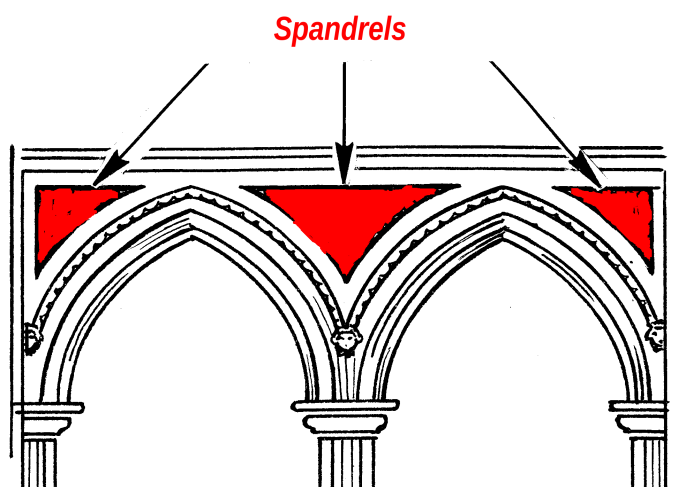


An image of the random design of the building. The artist talk is organized in a stair landing of the tower; the area allows only small amount of people to actually see the talker.

Secular churches

Arts venues, according to Žižek 'function as exceptions: artificial islands of meaning in

our meaningless existence, utopian enclosures sticking out from the ordinary reality of our cities'. The visitor in those buildings experience 'sacred awe', yet as well perform 'profound consumption' (Žižek 2010: 271). Indeed some of our informants see the architecture of a church especially suitable for an art venue. Arthur, 22 years old literature student just after he visited Nikolaj Kunsthal shared his opinion with us: 'interesting thing is the spiritual function of a church building, and then some kind of spiritual function of art, which overlap here and that makes it kind of nice to go and meditate, reflect, and experience'. The manager of Nikolaj Kunsthal comments similar in regards to the building: "... *obviously for some people when you enter the church it can be oppressive or you feel that you have certain obligations. Or you have to behave in certain ways*" (Andreas Brøgger, Appendix). In addition, the information executive S. Holm defines some users as "*fairly active from cultural point of view*" and as '*cultural consumers*' (Ibid).



Spandrels

Žižek notices the existence of details in the buildings, which are necessary for technical reasons, yet; otherwise, have no use for consumer of the building. One of those details would be triangles on the top of pillars, called spandrels

(picture). Spandrels are needed to connect pillars with ceiling, to form and support the arch. The empty space on the spandrels can be used for whatever needed. Similarly the spaces between the pillars of a bridge, are being used by homeless people for sleeping, even though such a spaces were not designed for that. There could be examples, where particular construction besides maintaining its main function, provides unplanned one. As Žižek notices, this procedure expands to buildings themselves, such that a church or train station might be exapted into an art gallery, etc. Just as spandrels besides existing for their main purpose, additionally they do provide space for fresco or mural, likewise the specific construction of a church building provides many 'spandrels' - in

metaphorical sense. The necessary combination of naves, the tower, the stairways creates areas, which can be used for various purposes.

The whole squatting culture can be seen as a way of making use of various ‘spandrels’ - the unused corners, rooms, or of a bigger scale, whole buildings or districts. Copenhagen has a somewhat liberal approach on autonomous use of spaces – *“history of free lands that governments have allocated for different reasons, cultural or economic where the society and the state had no big interest to part-take e.g. concessions in the harbour to support international trade, other examples of temporary self-managed squatted place, etc.”* (Bidault-Waddington, 2005). The remarkable output of such kind of mind-set reaches us from sixties and later decades. Famous examples being the Freetown Christiania and the alternative culture houses such as Folketshuset, which were started in 1970s as the illegal squatted places, nonetheless throughout the decades got one or another kind of recognition, thus became a part of established Copenhagen socio-cultural landscape.

We argue that Nikolaj did undergo similar process - squatting - regarding its design process. This period was briefly retold by Søren Holm *“its kind of a interim there are no much information (...) I don't think anybody had the means to do so [renovate the building in between fifties and late seventies, to make major iterations to the building because that would cost money. Nobody had money to spend”* (Appendix). This ‘interim’ period lasted between Fluxus performances and the official establishment of the art centre, so almost 20 years. The regular designing of a squatting is marked with lack of money and decentralized process. Interesting traces of that ‘squatting’ period are the direction plates to not-anymore existing galleries, as there was no redesigning done for a whole building.

As Søren Holm argues, during the period between Fluxus performances and the establishment of an official art centre, *“it was under some kind of a municipal supervision or something like that, but it hadn't been formalized, it hadn't been finalized the way it had to be, up until the late 70s”* (Appendix). Just as with the other mentioned examples, the spontaneously created institution gained relevant recognition from a state, and became established part of a Copenhagen's socio-technical landscape.

The head of the art centre described something, what we see as an example of ‘spandrel’: *“Downstairs of this room the workshop has some old murals, from about 100 years ago, which tells stories of people in Copenhagen, and their everyday and Sundays. It was actually a reading room. So you could sit there and reflect on how factories were eating their way to the landscape from the cities growing. And on the other hand you have something... where you could go out and be in idyllic surroundings. That’s also a very interesting part of a building”* (Andreas Brøgger, Appendix).

The described room does not belong to the main nave of the building, thus we can see, how the place get occupied by the ‘homeless’ - for what was most needed. For now it is a workshop, and a storage space. Nonetheless the manager has the plans for it: *“we have this our workshop and it is completely messy, but it has a potential to become a very nice lounge for visitors, where they can read about the building, and our shows and so on”* (Andreas Brøgger, Appendix).





A former reading room with the frescos from beginning of twentieth century; room currently occupied by workshop and storage place, planned to become lounge area for visitors.



The church window, covered, is being used to rest the projector in order to sometimes show video art or an advertisement on the opposing wall. The image is an example of a 'spandrel' use of the space.

ANT analysis

The framework of the analysis is based on ANT as a conceptual frame for exploring the collective socio-technical processes of Nikolaj Kunsthal, thus actants and networks relation.

Appears as a church, but acts as an art centre

The nearly 100-meter high tower and steeple form the third highest tower in the city of Copenhagen, just after the tower of Christiansborg and the town hall. The density of the tower and also the steeple asserts itself in the cityscape, yet to visitors it seems somewhat hidden amongst the many buildings in the centre of Copenhagen. At the location of Nikolaj Square, the form of the church dominates and only a few details indicate that an art centre accommodates the building. The buttresses in the construction of the building differentiate it from the rest of the architectural surroundings in the area. They are a necessity in supporting the weight of the large tower, but also give the building a unique characterisation with small size stalls around the building. The heavy wooden front doors with rivets make a solid appearance during closing hours, visually this means that the building come off even more as a religious building and the art centre details are hard to distinguish. A day in our fieldwork investigation, we discover the graffiti: “Helvede” on one of the front doors, which emphasizes the tensions between the perception of a building that most of all looks like a regular church, see photograph.



Front door of Nikolaj Kunsthal written with white graffiti pen stating “*Hell*” in Danish, supposedly made by a repel, in the briefing of the art centre being a church.

Inside the building, in the church porch, is a wooden object placed in the right corner, this is the only remain from the great fire in the year 1795 in of the steeple. It is the top of the spire, which fell down from the tower and was buried, but rediscovered a 100 ago. This symbolizes the many reconstructions that the building has gone through throughout the history and is a proof of the original church building. As information executive Søren Holm mentions Nikolaj Church was desacralized in a very early stage, and the future use of the building was decided to be for cultural use: *“In Denmark it's kind of a standing discussions, that some of the Folkekirken-churches will have to be closed and some are being sold already. People, wrongly, to me seem, say 'we can refer to Nikolaj', that's not really the case, because we are not a church and used to function as a church with a congregation and priest and everything that history ended in 1795, so it's a different story.”* (Appendix). As an actor the Kunsthal positions itself in a way that is easy to distinguish, due to the history of the building and many different reconstructions it has gone through.

In a reformatory perspective the former church was the first to preach in Danish in the year 1537 and Søren Holm categorize the building as a historic symbol of rebellion: *“It*

has a massive historical standing in the sense that this was the church where the Danish reformation, rebellion against the Roman Catholic took place because the Danish preacher Hans Tausen was a minister here and he preached in Danish, as a part of a whole Lutheran thing that made its way to Denmark eventually. In this way the building is a symbol of the reformation and is, in its nature, a rebellion.” (Appendix). It is thereby interesting that the place of Nikolaj Kunsthal and Church has been a place for rethinking the idea of the church and implementing art pieces in contemporary exhibitions.

The building is orchestrated in a complex manner, thus with interjected floors in various levels of the building. In the upper gallery on the top floor similar to the large gallery on the ground level, the former nave of the church. The arches of the ceiling centres in round ornaments with the inscription saying Museum of Copenhagen. This historical detail symbolises the early stages of the redesign process, as Andreas Brøgger expresses: *“Right now we are actually merging with the Museum of Copenhagen, so it is a funny historical hint from the early 1900, that there was this idea that building could work as a museum for the city, but they realised that it was going to be too small, so they abandoned the idea.”* (Appendix). Another place that is marked by the historical decision of not continuing as a church in function is the chandeliers, which owns the escutcheon of Copenhagen Municipality that depicts three towers. Moreover, later the nave was turn into a art library, where one could lend an art piece for the price of a package of cigarettes: *“In the 1950s the pioneering person Knud Pedersen, decided to create another kind of library here, of artworks, so you could come here, and you could borrow artworks.”* (Appendix). Here Andreas Brøgger suggests that the concept of Nikolaj Kunsthal is based innovatively on pioneer and contemporary ideas and projects.

The Euclidian space of Nikolaj Kunsthal

The combination of a church environment and contemporary art is a challenge practically, due to the fact that the building is not constructed to be an art centre. However, this tension gives the artists an opportunity to create art and performances that embody the former church building as a co-player in the artwork. This means that the building’s strong characteristics of being a church, will always add a layer or dimension to the artwork, because of the embedded symbolic value in society. Thus, art

pieces can never be neutral in the art centre and will always be affected by how the audience's association of a church are, due to the distinctive visual appearance of the building. In contrast to a white cube museum, the architecture is a dominant actor, as Andreas Brøgger mentions: *"Currently, it is a mix between an odd church building, or church building is not odd, but it is a bit odd as an exhibition space. We have a mix between church space and a white cube. More a church, than a white cube, I would say... I think what we should do is to emphasize what the building is. It is very unique. Also in European context, to have a contemporary art space in the church is extraordinary. It is difficult to create exhibitions, but it is also unique. We have to make an emphasis on what the building is. People who come in, everyone mention 'art in a church', 'unusual experience' and how that really adds to the experience. As a little bit what you feel, when you enter the church: uplifting or sometimes you feel the opposite, but it changes your mood, and that is the same with this building"* (Appendix).

Networks

When Brøgger mentions that on main staircase are placed; *"old signs from a very ad hoc, random design process throughout time, even with different fonts on the different levels of the church. These signs points to the side galleries, but the side galleries have been closed off the last couple of years and now offices are placed there."* (Appendix), then we can categorise these signs and also the inscription as actors. Due to, that actors are combinations of symbolically invested things, identities, relations and inscriptions, networks capable of nesting within other diverse networks (Crawford 2007: 1).

Arthur, a 22-year-old student of literature and science, explains that he missed the side galleries during his visit due to his time schedule: *"... maybe I hurried too much, but I would like to see the 'side galleries' next time I visit the art gallery. They seemed interesting"* (Appendix). The sign to the non-existing side galleries creates an illusion of a larger art gallery and amplifies the attractiveness and thereby enhance the value of the experience.

The ANT network is conceived as a heterogeneous amalgamation of textual, conceptual, social, and technical actors. *"Networks can be described as following the actor, Interested in contextual conversions as well as alterations in content, ANT*

advocates entering scientific debates prior to closure, examining science in the making.” (Crawford 2007: 1). Within all socio-technical networks, relational effects result from disputes between actors, such as attempts at the advancement of a particular program, which necessarily results in social asymmetry. Therefore, ANT can also be considered a theory of the mechanics of power: the stabilization and reproduction of some interactions at the behest of others, the construction and maintenance of network centres and peripheries, and the establishment of hegemony (Ibid.).

In the perspective of the concept of ‘black-boxing’, it can be discussed whether black boxes have appeared in the design process of Nikolaj Kunsthal. Andreas Brøgger articulates: *“An interesting thing would be to share practical difficulties of creating exhibitions in these kind of buildings, but also how to tell both stories: that you contemporary art space, but you are also the historical building. When you enter now you can't find history of the building anywhere, but this is something we are going to do this summer.”* (Anders Brøgger, Appendix). He consistently categorizes the building as a historical building and not a former church and he and the rest of the staff are clearly avoiding the connotation to church architecture. Furthermore, they state that Nikolaj Kunsthal is a ‘unique’ place and not comparable to other contemporary art centres. This perception of disregarding the fact has an influence on the design process of the identity of Nikolaj Kunsthal. The concept *black-box* in the social sciences, describes agreed and accepted pieces of knowledge and is often part of more complicated systems, that is so unquestioned and stable that it can be ignored within that system (Fuglsang 2009: 432). The before mentioned unique status, has become a norm or an unquestioned fact in the internal network of the art centre. They clearly state to the surrounding environment that ‘it is not a church’ on a large banner, but we observe that the art centre is focusing on what they are not, instead of what they actually are.

The role of the building as an actor and a network, contributes to our understanding of the design processes. As a non-human actor the building and architecture shapes and gets shaped by the design process throughout time. To investigate the current role of the building as a business, it is thus useful to take a perspective of a more strategic degree with a look on the current functions and operations of the place.

6. Strategy

SWOT and Business Model Canvas as strategic tools

On the basis of our analysis and fieldwork, we have chosen to do a Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder et al. 2010) and a SWOT analysis, which should compliment each other, towards being able to determine the role of the building and answer the questions of what works well for Nikolaj Kunsthal and where there might be tensions and issues with the existing concept and operation of it. Further this method describes how the exhibition hall creates, provides and delivers value to the customer and it reveals the key processes that form the basis of Nikolaj Kunsthal as a business, all leading towards our research question of how this place is used, but also which possible strategic changes could be beneficial for the Kunsthal.

SWOT

SWOT is an acronym of the words: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This method can, through a simple process structure create an overview of a given organization's strength and competitive position by focusing on four categories: the organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the organization's external opportunities and threats. Thus, the organization's current internal resources are put in relation to its position in the surrounding environment. This provides an overall view on the organization's current position and strategic options.



What we find interesting about the SWOT analysis towards our research topic is that the building can be placed in every box. The building is a great strength due to it is what makes the art exhibition special and unique plus it adds an extra dimension to the entire experience and as a visitor, you do not only experience an art exhibition, but also a historical building with museum-like elements. This leads to why the “atmosphere” is placed both on strength and as a weakness. The building creates a certain atmosphere, which works well with the exhibitions and creates a “holy and historical experience,” but this does not count for the entire building. At some places in the building, there are more confusing atmospheres and an overall experience of the building and exhibitions being non-holistic and even working against each other, which is why the building also is a weakness. We know from an interview with Andreas, the head of Nikolaj Kunsthal, that the building can be difficult to work with when making the different exhibitions.

The architecture has a certain acoustics, which gives issues with sound installations, the big windows make it difficult to create the right lighting (picture) and the walls and high ceilings can also create issues. Further, the building is bounded by some politics, which makes changes towards the building even more difficult. This is why we also find the building in the threats-box. There are several factors that Nikolaj Kunsthal is not in complete control of due to the building being an old historical building, which has to be preserved by politics and laws. These politics could maybe change, creating a threat to the art exhibition inside. The building as an opportunity is seen by it being the attraction to possible visitors, by creating awareness through it. The building as an image and branding of Nikolaj Kunsthal, with a strategy on making people aware that they can experience this building that many people know, but never have been inside, can attract new possible paying visitors.

Further “funding” is placed in opportunities. Funds are essential to Nikolaj Kunsthal and the upcoming renovation is depending on it. If the funds are good then they might benefit from trends and getting new technologies in the building e.g., the old sound systems and projector is in need of replacement and the better quality can get returning customers due to a better experience. The same way as fundings can be an opportunity, it might also be a threat. If they do not reach good fundings they can be stuck in the current messy/non-coherent state or even worse, they can be forced to close down.

Also as a threat, we find “new competitors”, this is reasoned in the fact that in Denmark it is getting more common for church buildings to be used with another purpose (Politiken, 2014, ritau, article, website, accessed 20/5/2015). This is a serious possible threat because the art exhibition being in a church is the greatest asset for Nikolaj Kunsthal being unique.



An example of how big church-like windows create the difficulties in providing proper lighting for the art pieces. We took this photo without flash, just the natural daylight. Andreas Brøgger mentions: *“We really radically transformed the space, but what we want to do is open the windows, so that the light comes in and people can see what is going on, because now it is really closed to the outside surroundings”* (Appendix). The windows act with the art photography and thus interrupt the art piece in a way that would not happen in a white cube museum. The reflection in the art piece makes the soccer players appear in a sacral context.



Nikolaj Kunsthal wants to detach from the religious identity of its building. Yet at the same time it benefits from that, using this curious aspect as an advertising claim. In the picture: *“Let there be light”* - quote from the Bible at the entrance of Nikolaj.

As mentioned before, we wish to use the business model canvas to determine the role of the building and answers the questions of what works well for Nikolaj Kunsthal and where there might be tensions and issues with the existing concept and operation of it. The Business Model Canvas (BMC) by A. Osterwalder, Y. Pigneur and T. Clark is a strategic management tool and for developing new or improving existing businesses. It can assist in mapping and identifying activities and issues by illustrating potential trade-offs. The BMC is a methodology, which can identify the path towards a valuable and improved business model.



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draws the artists to the place, what makes fundings possible; it is a great deal of the value propositions and what many customers come for. So the building is undeniably extremely important for Nikolaj Kunsthal, but what may be more surprising, is that we also find “the building” in the boxes of customer relationship and channels. Since the Kunsthal does not have any personal service other than when paying for a ticket, buying a book or going on a tour, the building gets the part of holding an amount of the customer relationship. The visitors can connect with the building in some sense (see appendix) and let the building communicate and tell a story, without the need of an employee present, which we can see from an interview with a visitor is appreciated: “...*I really liked that you can walk around alone, that one does not feel so watched. uhm .. When you walk in here, you can be in your own little world and there is never really that many people here, so you can walk around and wonder alone...*”(Appendix, interview with visitor).

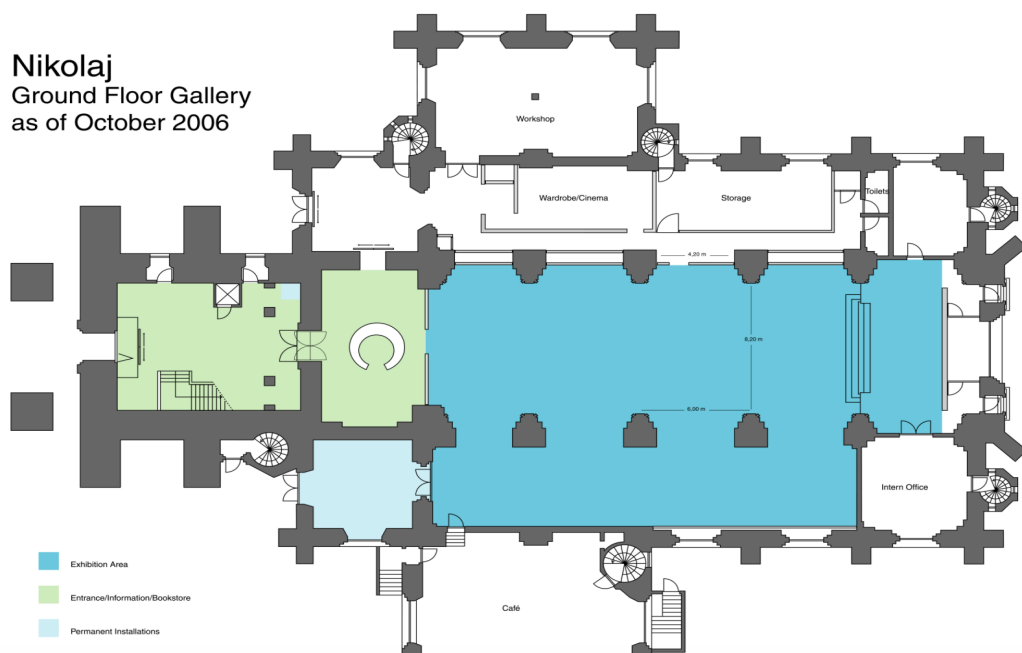
The building is also an important channel due to its visibility and overall appearance in the centre of the capital. Furthermore we see the building as a channel because of the history the building holds, which helps to attract visitors. Another aspect the analysis points out is the issue of the revenue streams, which we also know from the interview with Anders, the head of Nikolaj Kunsthal, is a concern for the business. The institution depends entirely on the state to pay for both salaries and maintenance of the building. As the model shows, tickets are quite cheap and Andreas Brøgger tells that the vast majority of visitors chose to visit on the days the entrance is free, even if they in some cases has arrived to the place where there is a 20 DKK entrance fee, they chose to leave only to return the day it is free. It is worth mentioning that on all the tours, including the free tours on Saturdays, the tour will end with free snacks and wine, so it is safe to say that the place depends on support from their key partners, as they do not make enough money themselves.

These issues have been discussed in house and they consider raising the entrance fee or making it entirely fee. This year, they are planning to renovate the entire inside towards creating a more coherent place, if they can provide the right funding. This might function as a fresh start for the place so it could be the time they chose to change the unsustainable business strategy.

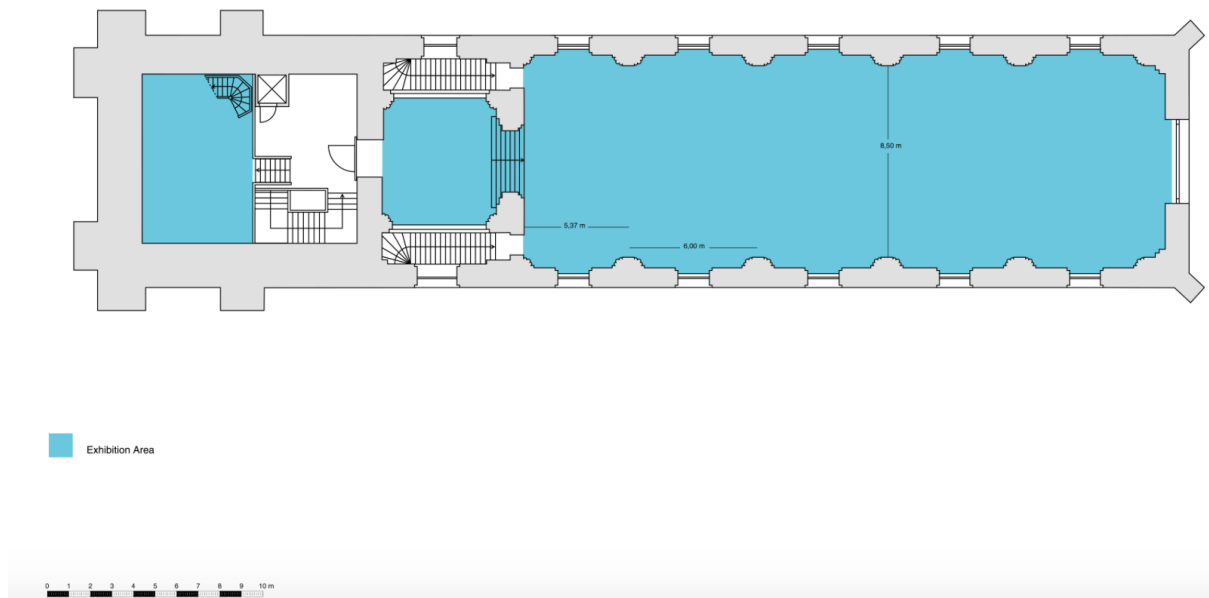
The renovation plans

As Andreas Brøgger, Head of Nikolaj Kunsthal, states: “*Nikolaj Kunsthal in its current condition presents itself as a building in dire need of a refurbishing*” (Appendix). If you were to visit the art centre today you would likely be met by a sense of non-coherence and messiness. You get the feeling that the place is undone or under some kind of construction, but this is apparently the state it has been in since the beginning. We argue that this is a result of the many functions the building has had through time which are still visible and historical in some sense, so it might have been a difficult task for the art centre to take over a building with so many different visual aspects of it being something else.

What they are planning on doing about this is a complete refurbishing of the business, including a basic renovation of: painting the ceilings, wall and pillars, making a new flooring on the ground floor and a general re-establishment of various elements such as heaters, toilets etc. Furthermore they wish to optimize the visitor areas including the reception, the lounge, a new signposting for finding way, better handicap conditions and counselling. Finally the systems used for exhibitions will get an optimization with remote-controlled curtains in the exhibition areas, new wall and lighting systems, a better elevator and storage room. For a better idea on what these changes will include and where, we include the floor plans of the place, which we have received from Andreas Brøgger:



Nikolaj
Fourth Floor Gallery
as of October 2006



As design consultant students, we reckon by looking at the analysis of SWOT and BMC together with what we know from our previous analysis section and fieldwork, that these renovation changes along with an effort on communication and a change on the entrance fee, can be very beneficial for the art centre on the long run. In addition, it might be a good idea to put stronger emphasis on the role of the building, which we can see has a crucial role for the art centre, meaning that instead of working against the building in a sense, then let it play its important role and let the architecture and history shine through. We know from our interviews that many people visit the art centre in order to see the building and not the art, e.g.: *"...Art has never really been my cup of tea, but the thoughts behind it, trying to understand the things in the picture a little better.. it is perhaps also the place which dragged me a little towards this place - such ancient architecture I do find very exciting so this was just as much the reason I came, to come in and see the church and how it is inside."* (Appendix, Interview with visitor). By allowing the building to play a bigger role in the business and letting the building be an experience and not only the art, they arguably can reach a wider customer segment and get more visitors.

7. Reflections

This Nikolaj Kunsthal analysis has been a great challenge in many ways. The starting point of our project was an idea to investigate the urban conversion, where an industrial building or an area would have been turned into a performance-art venue or an art centre. During the very beginning of our process we came to think, that an investigation of 'religious' to 'art' building conversion could be more challenging, and thus more fruitful, than an investigation of an industrial conversion. The conversions of religious buildings bring certain ethical dilemmas; depend on cultural landscape and societies opinion and values, which are for the social scientists to investigate. Industrial conversion interested us in a mere esthetical and technical sense.

Regarding us, the authors of this paper, we have to admit that we all come from different academic backgrounds: economics, ideation, performance design and art history, as well as from different national/cultural backgrounds and different sides of political spectrum. The variety of our group has been beneficial in the sense that it has allowed us to have a broader perspective of the topic, being able to examine diverse aspects such as history, art, economics & business, and new ideas in management and design. On the other hand the group work has been overall positive. Four people enable a greater distribution of tasks and a wider perspective in what comes to realize discussions and fieldwork.

The most defiant part of the fieldwork has been the big scale of the redesigning process, which extends through a very long period of time. It lacks from a detailed historical dating and it has suffered many restructurations and changes throughout the different uses that the space has experienced. At the same time, none of our stakeholders had participated in the redesign process themselves, so their knowledge is limited. We were only allowed to speak with the users outside the exhibition space so that means that they were on the move and did not had that much time for us. We had to interpret the redesign process mainly through our visual perception and general experience of the place. Regarding the literature, there are few books, all in Danish, about Nikolaj Kunsthal, and they do not go in depth with the redesign process. In fact, they give prominence to the historical background of the space. It seems to us that there is a vague knowledge of the configuration of the actual space. Moreover, we experienced

difficulties in analysing the space due to the continuous presence of exhibitions; indeed, we only have experienced one exhibition. In each exhibition the inside space changes due to temporal walls and opening or closing of certain rooms. Therefore, we have not experienced Nikolaj Kunsthal as an empty space.

About our theoretical approach, we decided to focus in the impact of Fluxus over the shaping of the current space and Žižek's approach on architecture and class struggle, as he clearly talks about examples relevant to our case. We were sharing our project idea with a professor lecturing us in Design as Socio-Technical System classes, who suggested to use Žižek's concepts as a theoretical framework. We included SWOT analysis and a Business Model Canvas as a strategy for Nikolaj Kunsthal, as we see it as a relevant illustration of our fieldwork and analysis, and we used the skills gained in a course 'Design processes and Entrepreneurship'.

The project management has gone dynamically thanks to the fact of being a group of four. The distribution of the tasks and roles has gone smoothly and the most intense period of work has lasted around a month. We defined and divided tasks such as theoretical research, fieldwork, translations of sources from Danish into English, interview transcriptions, communication, taking pictures, mapping, planning the internal deadlines and supervisory meetings. We took turns in managing the group regular meetings. Meetings were held both online and in diverse spots, such as libraries, cafés and Nikolaj Kunsthal. The writing part has been developed through the online platform Google Drive, which has allowed us to work all together at the same document, though from the different locations. To that effect the practicalities of the group work have been easy to handle. Since we all have had the same degree of expectations in this project, the result of the group work has been satisfactory and productive. We see this project as a starting point for further analysis of this topic.

In addition, the fact that many churches in Denmark are stop being used for their religious function or left empty makes Nikolaj Kunsthal a good example and inspiration for new uses of former churches. This topic is an actual issue that will be increasingly experienced. Curiously, during the writing period of the project, an article on this topic was published in a popular English-language newspaper of Copenhagen called 'Murmur' (issue April 2015). In 2013, the Diocese of Copenhagen put forward 14

churches for closure due to the drop of church members in the last times. We live in a different reality than our ancestors and that has obvious effects on the uses of churches. Certainly, this issue will have to be deeply explored in a foreseeable future. Thus, the design processes of the configuration of these new spaces have to be taken in consideration and play an important role in their success.

8. Conclusions

The complex design processes, across historical periods in remaking the former Nikolaj Church building into a contemporary art centre, can be described through the actants and networks revolving around it. Bruno Latour (1990: 113) states: *“we should shift from the study of “social” factors to the study of “associations”*. In that sense, buildings are not projections of the social, but *are* social because they possess an immense capacity of connecting heterogeneous actors. That is to say that in the design process, many important associations are traced architecturally and new associations are shaped, which is all being presented to the users of a particular space. Buildings can be considered as social actors, because they have the capacity to associate both human and nonhuman actors in different periods of time. The actors that take place in this association are multiple and they are connected differently through the trajectory of the building, e.g.: historical events, clients, architects, community groups and much more. Nikolaj Kunsthal is, indeed, a suitable example of that condition.

By examining the design process, we have been able to recognize most of the actors that have played an essential role in the configuration of the current space. Those have been, among others, the historical background, styles and mentality of each period, incidents such as the Great Fire of Copenhagen, shifting owners and the impact of external trends like Fluxus. Nikolaj Kunsthal is the product of an unexpected and slow process of a non-linear historical development, which has lead many actors to participate and contribute to the architectural initial project. The project is, indeed, subjected to due to the variety of constraints that take place through time. Design can be unpredictable and sensible to accidental results. At the same time, it requires negotiations among all the actors in the design that play a part in this long-lasting and complex process. As we can appreciate in Nikolaj Kunsthal users, design has the power to incite public controversies

and issues, generating social effects. The design challenges in reconstructing a former church building into an art centre, is thereby determined by the perceptions of how users experience the building, however the recurrent tension of the visual appearance as a church, is a challenge in creating identity of being an art centre.

Even though the design process of Nikolaj Kunsthal is characterised by a clear randomness and spontaneity, it although can be seen as proper steps through three different uses of architecture: symbolic, realistic and imaginary, the concept described by Slavoj Žižek. The use of the church building, just as the use of particular rooms in the building, can be seen through a concept of 'spandrels', when the details or rooms of the building eventually find itself maintaining unforeseen function, and this concept can be drawn on the whole building itself. Finally, we conclude that the redesigning of the building is a mute sign; it heralds changes of the opinion and needs of the surrounding society. We see various 'spandrels', technically needed, but otherwise empty spaces in a building, which have found unintended function, and we see the building itself as a spandrel, which has been taken into use by the ones in need, thus changing its initial function.

The current function of the art centre may be described as being in progress. As we can see through our analysis and strategy, there are some issues regarding the running of the place, but these issues are currently being taken care of and the art centre wish to reopen in the near future with an optimized strategy. Whether or not the building can be seen as successful, may be an individual aspect of how the building is being perceived by the visitor, relying on their cultural and religious background as well as their purpose of visiting - if they wish to see art exhibitions, the old cultural building or if they expect to visit a church. The expectations from the visitors are crucial at this point and the art centre is experiencing some challenges, due to their appearance as a church. Though, the church-like appearance is even more a strength and an important part of why the building can be seen as successful. We will conclude, that Nikolaj Kunsthal cannot be called completely successful, but they do have the basis for achieving success and on a future perspective. With the planned optimizing changes performed and an effort on funding and communication, Nikolaj Kunsthal may arguably be called successful.

Through the study of the design process of Nikolaj Kunsthal, we have clearly seen that the building is an active agent that gathers different community of actors and it manifests its agency in the design. Design connects and shapes the diverse social identities and relationships that the building produces. This understanding enables a greater awareness of the ways in which design is produced and how it shapes the social, i.e. the associations between the building and its public. At the same time, design entails a movement to go back, in the sense of re-interpreting and re-doing everything. That is, indeed, something we have continuously experienced at Nikolaj Kunsthal: to redesign its forms and associations. The design of a building never starts from zero and designers combine and assemble the old with the new, re-interpreting historical conditions and values.

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