Open Platform and the Design Case
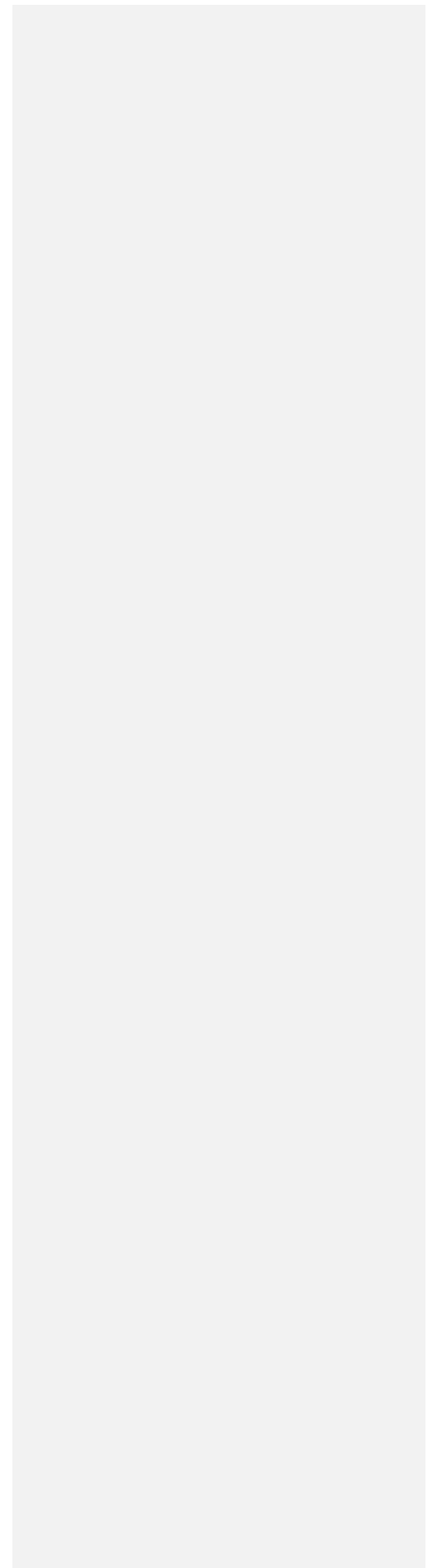

Design Processes and Entrepreneurship

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Character count: 35417

Introduction and context

The rapidly changing urban landscape calls for transformations to fit current societal concerns. As global urbanization rates are higher than ever before, more space is needed in cities to house all its inhabitants. Cities are constantly being (re)developed through building projects, not only to fit its inhabitants, but also to accomodate to changing conditions in the natural environment. Today, sustainability is one of the major concerns that governments and municipalities consider important.

Common interest in the themes of future, sustainability and architecture brought our group into formation with the goal of finding out how architects incorporate future unknowns into their designs. One specific architecture firm, Open Platform, complemented our frame of interests and areas of inquisition well.

Open Platform (OP) is a Copenhagen-based architecture studio founded by Jennifer Dahm Petersen and Niels Lund Petersen. The Danish couple met during their architecture studies and became partners in life, before eventually becoming business partners. After spending several years working in the Netherlands, returning to Denmark and being employed in famous architecture firms such as BIG and JDS, Jennifer and Niels decided to start a company themselves, and in 2010, OP was launched (Open Platform, 2019a). From its initiation, the architecture studio has set out to disrupt the notion of what they define as traditional architecture practice and have followed a path of their own that embodies and reaffirms their collective design ideals.

OP's philosophy encompasses a strong interwoven relationship between architecture, politics and art. The ideas are founded to develop meaningful and sustainable structures that can be adapted to future changes in the environment. It is their resounding ambition to minimise the human footprint in their designs, for example by creating structures predominantly made of wood, whilst simultaneously trying to maximize the positive impact on human life and social inclusion (Open Platform, 2019a). OP is also keen to highlight their method of "breaking the rules." By pushing the boundaries of what is requested by their client, they are able to fulfill their mission of creating spaces embedded with meaning.

Despite being a relatively small team of twelve, their project portfolio is very diverse. Past work includes housing projects, public schools, art installations and sport facilities, as well as conceptual works reflecting on the character of the architects' profession. OP has worked in cooperation with other architecture firms for both public and private clients. In an ongoing project named "The Nature's Party", OP places the concept of a client in a completely new perspective, with 'mother nature' being established as the client. An excerpt from their webpage states:

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 6:20 PM
Comment [1]: Even though we phrased it well, there might be questions regarding 'traditional architecture practice'

"We ask ourselves what society would look like, if we turn Nature into the world's political center of gravity. By treating Nature as an entity with legal rights and interests, we aspire to create awareness about the possibilities for taking a positive approach to creating a new balance between Nature and Man" (Open Platform, 2019b).

Through this experiment, they have created utopic plans that display a built world that has a positive impact on the environment. Whilst this experiment is conceptual and may not be realised in the physical world, it still informs their sustainability-driven work and highlights which outlook the firm has in regards to the environmental impact of architecture and design.

During our first visits to OP's office in Nørrebro, we had the possibility to learn more about the objectives behind their design processes. Based on informal interviews, observations and documentation provided on the website, we analyzed OP's way of working by drawing on several theoretical approaches. In the next section, we will introduce the importance of relational entrepreneurship for the establishment of OP. We will continue by discussing how the firm fits the framework of communities of practice. Subsequently, we will present how OP's way of working can be viewed in relation to design abilities and design thinking. Finally, the concept of sustainability that is prevalent in OP's philosophy will be discussed in relation to the integration of the local context within architecture practices.

Literature presentation and analysis

Relational entrepreneurship

No company appears out of nowhere – every architectural firm has its story of origin. We would like to use this story to understand an entrepreneurial process that resulted in the emergence of OP. There are multiple understandings of the concept of entrepreneurship. The first is discussed by Casson (2010), who focuses on personal competencies of entrepreneurs, and the second is presented by Jóhannesson (2012) who describes relations and networks. After several meetings with the founding partners of OP and learning about their history, we were able to note the importance of relationships, past experiences, people and previous projects in the creation of the firm.

Jóhannesson (2012) adopts the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to explain entrepreneurship through existing relations. As Jóhannesson explains, "the relational view focuses on the relations between the

individual (solid) actor and his or her context. It takes relations as a starting point through which other more or less solid entities or structures emerge" (p.185). As an example, the first milestone in the timeline of OP is the moment the founding partners met at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Open Platform, 2019a). Jóhannesson (2012, p.187) states that "entrepreneurship is an effect of networking or relational practices that rest on different styles of ordering." A new product comes from complex connections and experiences of actors that are not always obvious. For instance, OP displays the "birth" of their office through a timeline on their website (Open Platform, 2019a). After learning more about OP, we are able to see how the founders' professional lives have evolved and how their connections to other architectural offices, architects, and their previous work has influenced OP as it is now (Open Platform, 2019a).

For his investigation, Jóhannesson (2012, p.185) uses ANT to indicate "motivations for entrepreneurial activities" by revealing connections between actors. His research focuses on a cultural tourism development project in Iceland, which reveals styles of relational ordering during the process of entrepreneurship. One of them is "sparks," which refers to "the practices leading to the presence of entrepreneurship [that] may be absent and excluded from view" (Jóhannesson, 2012, p.191). From the information we gathered about OP, some of the "sparks" could be related to personal relationships between the founding partners, their work conducted separately and together in architectural offices and with different specialists, their work in the Netherlands and reflections on Dutch architecture (Open Platform, 2019a).

Another style of relational ordering is called "finding one's sea legs," which concerns settlement and stabilization processes (Jóhannesson, 2012, p.191). In the case of OP, stabilization of the architectural studio can be observed through the firm's launch and winning their first competition.

Additional investigation could help indicate other relations and ordering styles that are not expressed in OP's timeline. It is possible that some interesting connections or defining moments have been forgotten or lost their importance since the founding partners met in an architecture school. Finally, relations have not only been significant in the emergence of OP, but it can also be seen in their working process, as will be discussed in the next part.

3

Communities of Practice within and outside of Open Platform

The process of architectural innovation is seldom done in solitary or void of outside influence. The same can be said for the creative design process of OP, whereby innovation stems from a multitude of influences and a sharing of ideas, both local and global, static and mobile, and often collaborative.

In his paper, Faulconbridge (2010) examines how this connectivity between architecture firms and learning networks comes about as a result of communities of practice and their spatial organization. Wegner et al (2002, cited in Faulconbridge, 2010. p. 2843) have defined communities of practice (CoP) as "groups of people who share a concern, set of problems or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis."

CoP are formed as a result of a triad of commonalities: Firstly, mutual engagement, whereby members are collectively engaged in the same task, and regularly interact and hold conversations with common themes (Faulconbridge, 2010). Secondly, joint enterprise, wherein design tasks are completed based on knowledge gained from similar educational training. Lastly, a shared repertoire, where activities and conversations use and make reference to the same tools, objects, vocabulary and routines.

In OP, these CoP are evident through the shared passion and background in architectural design based on sustainability driven principles. It is further cemented by regular interactions and engagements between members of the architecture and design community inside and outside of the firm. As stated on their website, "Open Platform cultivates a dynamic, international network of like-minded colleagues and specialists, which provide our compact organization great agility and the privilege of managing bigger and more complex tasks" (Open Platform, 2019a). These CoP have been formed through the aforementioned trio of commonalities and are further strengthened by the spatial zone of the studio itself.

In regard to mutual engagement, the OP team is collectively engaged in designing innovative and sustainable buildings. The founders, Jennifer and Niels, often work face-to-face and jointly engage in conversation and idea formations. In the shared domain of their architecture studio, the studio space acts as a zone wherein idea development can form through conversations and continued interaction between members of the firm, all of which are integral parts of the design process. The importance of the studio space for learning and the generation of ideas is highlighted by Faulconbridge (2010. p. 2847), "sharing ideas, drawing inspiration from one another's drawings and models, and the competitive tension of the studio are all important in the design process." OP is considered as an open space, whereby any team

member is free to discuss and be engaged in the design process. Additionally, the building is shared by two other architecture firms, JAJA Architects and Third Nature, whom OP often collaborates with on their projects. As Third Nature has a strong drive to "contribute to a strong and sustainable" (Third Nature, 2019) world, they share a similar set of design ideologies with OP, thus the collaboration between firms came about and is reaffirmed by common philosophies. OP therefore has a mutual engagement that exceeds the perimeter of their own firm, wherein ideas are generated and developed in conjunction with others. Furthermore, as OP actively participates in architecture competitions, they have greater opportunity to converse with others within their field. This interaction allows for global relationships and connections to be formed and potential for new collaborations to ensure, thus expanding the repertoire for knowledge and learning and for a more global CoP to form.

The joint enterprise can be examined on two levels in OP. Firstly, Jennifer and Niels studied architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and thus share a common prescribed knowledge set from the same educational institution. They also share a strong passion and drive in sustainable design, one of which also incorporates issues of politics and art. Furthermore, Niels has been teaching at the academy and recently employed a former student to the firm. This showcases the interconnection between the educational and professional sector, wherein a knowledge transfer and personal connection previously made at the university is now used within the firm too. Additionally, many other members of the OP firm also have a background in architecture, however, due to OP's interdisciplinary nature, a variety of knowledge backgrounds are involved in the creative process, including architects, a graphic designer, consultant, cultural heritage architect and business developer. Overall, all members have a collective resounding interest in sustainability driven designs, and this passion and knowledge is freely shared within the studio.

Lastly, the shared repertoire used by OP involves a myriad of items such as models, volume studies, sketches, computer technologies, photographs and architecture magazines. These non-human items are used in discussion within members of the firm, and clients and colleagues outside of the firm, and are critical in the process for generating and building on ideas. They can stimulate conversation, be used to highlight in-mode designs or used to discuss contrasts or inconsistencies in designs void of sustainable practices. Niels and Jennifer also highlight the importance of travel for gaining inspiration (personal communication, February 11, 2020). These non-human items, that are critical in generating ideas and sharing knowledge among architects, are also discussed in studies by Yaneva (2005) or Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk (2019).

Comments:

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 8:50 AM
Comment [12]: But often there are just a few people working on the same thing. How free are they when it's not "their" project?

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:27 PM
Comment [13]: Do we have any examples?

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 8:52 AM
Comment [14]: Not necessarily a "global" example, but we could expand on how young firms are forced to collaborate, to share knowledge and experiences

Elsa Nemrin-Daly 22/4/2020 1:34 PM
Comment [15]: Also Niels mentions something about how there is a shared experience and knowledge spread between architects. Could this be seen in the competitions?

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:29 PM
Comment [16]: advice: hire sociologists?

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 8:54 AM
Comment [17]: yes good one :D

Kateřina Joštová 22/4/2020 9:40 AM
Comment [18]: SDS intern!

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:31 PM
Comment [19]: refer back to Niel's interview

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:02 AM
Comment [20]: and how clients don't care very much about diagrams. they mostly care about the story

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:03 AM
Comment [21]: is this relevant?

Kateřina Joštová 22/4/2020 9:41 AM
Comment [22]: Maybe it is a bit out of place in this section (but we could refer to the interviews - getting inspiration from Netherlands/Japan/UK.. copy-pasting/adapting principles used in other countries)

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:49 AM
Comment [23]: Then we could rephrase it as getting inspiration from working with architecture practices in other countries/societies, rather than travel

Based on the fieldwork at the Office for Metropolitan Architecture set in Rotterdam, Yaneva (2005) discusses how buildings come to life through architects' use of physical models. Material representations in her case play an important part in the design process, as the office utilizes models at essentially every stage of their projects. Drawing on Yaneva's approach, Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk (2019) stress the importance of visual language in architecture practices of Copenhagen-based studio Nørron in the formation of so-called fellowship. As they state, "in architectural practices this is widely secured via the use of the model, and also the sharing of storyboards, references and the open office space of the studio, making it easier to attune people to one another" (Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk, 2019, p. 162). By gathering around the table with these materials and taking part in discussions about the project, architects build up a collective understanding of the phenomenon.

Model A - Karré   Model B - To blokke   Model C - Dobbeltkarré   Model D - To blokke invers
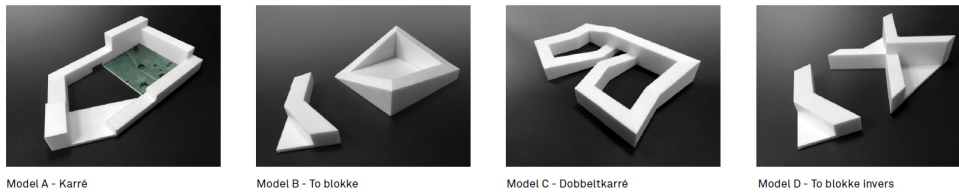
Figure 1. Volume study for housing project in Lyngby (personal communication, April 8, 2020).

While details of design practices of OP are to be revealed during our fieldwork, already now we can see a resemblance with some of the notions described by the authors mentioned above. In the first phase of the proposal for a housing project in Lyngby, OP worked with models and created volume studies illustrating their vision (see Figure 1). Moreover, they offered four different options to the client, each in a way fulfilling the requirements and constraints posed by the programme. This resonates with another point made by Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk (2019), who describe a multiplicity of possible scenarios as an important part of the initial phase of the design process. Similarly with the architects at Nørron studio, OP wants to keep the field open and not opt for one particular design too soon.

The importance of communication through visual mediums has proven to be vital in relation to both the clients and the public. To communicate their projects, OP works with 'conceptograms', which capture the main message in one picture or GIF. As stated on their website, they "believe that every design process must be concept-driven and that the concept must be clear" (Open platform, 2019c). Thus, the visual does not only serve to establish a common ground within the team, but also as an effective way to outwardly

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 6:51 PM
Comment [24]: New insights based on interviews?

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 6:52 PM
Comment [25]: same as above + storytelling

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:10 AM
Comment [26]: Trying to communicate ideas in a simple way. How Niels said it's difficult to make simple explanations without leaving out important things

present ideas. The specific standpoint that OP adopts in relation to generating ideas and concepts will be elaborated in the following part.

Design Ability and "Breaking the rules"

In the first chapter of his book about design thinking, Nigel Cross describes and analyses the position of the designer and how they go through the process of designing. According to him, designing is 'normal' for human beings and 'design' has not always been seen as a skill separate from the creative practice of building (Cross, 2018). Designing used to be practiced in combination with the process of creating, as it was the blacksmith or the carpenter who would 'design' and then make artefacts to be bought and sold. Since then, there has been an emergence of the design profession as a trade separate from the manufacturing process. Whilst the carpenter can still design and create the objects, the designer may only design the object and not build it. Even though everyone can design, it is recognised as a skill that some people possess more than others. The designer is therefore employed to create something better than what could be imagined by the client. "Our job is to give the client, on time and on cost, not what he wants but what he never dreamed he wanted, and when he gets it, recognises it as something he wanted all the time" (excerpt from interview with architect Denys Lasdum in Cross 2018, p.3). In this interview, the architect highlights their role in "enlightening" the client and giving them something they could not have dreamed of themselves. The designer used what Cross has called intuition, which is *"derived from large pools of experience, and from prior learning gained from making appropriate, and inappropriate responses in certain situations"* (Cross, 2018, p.10).

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:12 AM
Comment [27]: Quote from Jennifer's interview: "It is very different from the old days when every architect needed handyman background and then it is more like craftsmanship and then you became architect, with aesthetics and so on. So it's like completely other way round."

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:19 AM
Comment [28]: also mentioned by Jennifer in interview

Elsa Nemrin-Daly 22/4/2020 1:37 PM
Comment [29]: Mentioned by Niels also

Figure 2. "Absent Monument" in Frankfurt (Open Platform, 2019d).

These design abilities and methods are comparable to how OP has been describing their own firm and the projects they have undertaken. While focusing on environmental sustainability in terms of materials, changes in landscape and also social changes, the studio prides themselves on being innovators, often "breaking the rules" of given design briefs. OP interprets the briefs they receive instead of following them in detail. Examples of this can be seen when they took part in a competition to design a monument for the deported Jews of Frankfurt, Germany. The client, the city of Frankfurt, requested firms and artists to design a monument as a meaningful memorial for the Jews that were gathered there to be deported to extermination camps. Instead of designing a monument to compete with the buildings surrounding the location, OP designed an anti-monument, which was the opposite of what was requested (see Figure 2). This anti-monument consisted of removing part of the river Main to "create a void - a space of absence, of nothingness, that can remind us of the lives that were taken away" (Open Platform 2019d). The designers interpreted the brief and created a monument of absence, creating a site and context specific artwork that answered the brief but from a different perspective than what was initially requested by the client. Instead

of giving the client what they want, the firm gives them an alternative solution whilst still following the constraints of the brief. "What this means is that designing is not a search for the optimum solution to the given problem, but that it is an exploratory process" (Cross, 2018, p.8).

Figure 3. Wooden parking house in Aarhus (Open Platform, 2019e).

The solution may therefore not come from the initial problem brought forward by the client but instead be used as a framework for the designers to work within. This creates more space for exploration which may lead the final design to act as a solution to other undefined issues. In the case of OP, these undefined issues can be the introduction of their sustainability initiative. This can be seen through the parking house project they took part in. The client, the municipality of Aarhus, requested a parking house design for the Sydhavnskvarteret and OP - in collaboration with JAJA, Rama Studio and Søren Jensen Engineering - brought forward a design of a parking house that was structurally made using wood and half of the land remained as a green outdoor area (Open Platform, 2019e). OP's sustainability agenda can be seen through the design (see Figure 3). By using wood as a construction material instead of concrete, the carbon footprint of the building is lowered, whilst the green outdoor space highlights the importance of social space as it invites inhabitants of the area to use the locale for recreational activities. The final project proposal tackles the initial brief of solving the issue of the lack of parking, but adds much more to the space and the community through creating a place for socialising, whilst simultaneously reducing the environmental impact of the new development.

9

During an informal interview with OP, we discussed how they influence the client to agree with their recommendations of using sustainable materials. OP stated that the first priority is that the proposal tackles the identified problem in the brief and that it is within budget (personal communication, February 11, 2020). To entice the client to accept unsolicited additions to the project, it must be seen as an added bonus without any extra cost. However, according to OP, the different stakeholders in the construction industry have a huge influence on the building regulations in the country, and in turn, influence the building materials used. As mentioned in OP's article about using wood as a sustainable building material, the norm in Denmark is to use concrete constructions (Aymo-Boot & Petersen, 2020). Therefore, to move away from concrete, it not only requires the approval from the clients, but also from other stakeholders in the construction industry. Furthermore, it highlights that lobbying is needed to change the Danish construction laws to accommodate for the change in building regulations.

Sustainable architecture

As discussed in the previous section, one of OP's characteristics that sets them apart from other architectural firms in Copenhagen is their strong beliefs and politics within their design practice. They believe they can shape a "bright future" through their designs, by including both technology and the natural environment (Open Platform, 2019a). As human understandings and intentions are embodied in the built environment, design should be understood as the "principal method used by society to envision how we want to live in the future" (Moore & Karvonen, 2008, p.30). This is especially the case for housing. It is symbolic of and spatially organized "as 'microcosms' of principal cultural constructs, so housing can be considered a representative building practice" (p.31).

Moore and Karvonen (2008) recognize three common practices in designing and building sustainable housing - context-bound, context-free, and context-rich. First, context-bound design thinking is believed to be a form of sustainable development in its most basic sense. It often relies on craftsmen, local materials and local ecologies. It can be understood as 'vernacular making', with a blurry line between designing and constructing. This type of sustainable designing is less about improving the world, and more about preserving the local community. Second, context-free design thinking is believed to be sustainable due to its efficiency. Often there is a spatial and social distancing between designer, builder, and ultimate inhabitant. It lies on the assumption that "specialized knowledge, the division of labour, and mechanization will lead to utopian levels of efficiency, availability, and perfection" (p.35). The most extreme example of context-free design thinking is prefabricated housing. Despite design and sustainability intentions, it has the reputation of being ugly and cheap. Moreover, only a limited number

10

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:03 PM
Comment [35]: More info?

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:25 AM
Comment [36]: Stubbornness

Elsa Nemrin-Daly 22/4/2020 1:44 PM
Comment [37]: Giving different options and make the projects "buildable"

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:35 PM
Comment [38]: Niels reaffirms this in interview

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:35 AM
Comment [39]: Similar to design in the old days?

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:06 PM
Comment [40]: Moore's view or ours?

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:37 PM
Comment [41]: Niels; We have to do it in a way to make more sustainable architecture.
But we are trying to expand this and like I explained in the beginning, to have a broader view on sustainability. It's not just a technology thing. It;s not just about the building materials, but to start to do something actually for the good of society and ourselves as art to do something beautiful. I mean, that's you cannot do it. Not make ugly sustainable houses. It's no good.

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:28 AM
Comment [42]: Originally Moore's view, but great that he somewhat reaffirms this

of variables of the natural environment can be taken into account when designing these houses. Finally, context-rich design thinking is considered sustainable as it seeks eco-socio-technological change by applying an integrated and localized approach. It "promises to democratize architectural production through deliberate engagement with community and place" (p.38).

OP best fits into this last category. They incorporate the local context in different ways. They work with local stakeholders such as clients, inhabitants and municipalities in various stages of the design process. Moreover, they adapt their designs based on the local landscape. For instance, in the design of the wooden parking house, one side has no walls and is fully connected to an existing park (Open Platform, 2019e). However, Moore and Karvoonen (2008) focus very strongly on local community engagement in the design process. Even though OP does take into account certain local interests, it seems to be less of a collaboration in designing. Thus, it is not the type of collaboration as in certain forms of DIY-urbanism, where local users are incorporated in all stages of the design, as discussed by Fabian and Samson (2015). Community engagement, in the case of OP's process, may be most prominent in the initial stages of exploring and researching the area, and not during the actual designing process. Through our informal interviews we discovered that they carry out exploratory research at the locale. Further investigation is needed to find out what this exactly entails, and whether this is done by the OP team or by an external firm.

Furthermore, while Moore and Karvonen (2008) specifically examine the case of housing, this is not the type of architecture project that OP limits itself to. As previously mentioned, their past projects also include art installations, schools and sport facilities. Thus, the specific types of design project call for different types of engagement with the local context and the end users. Additional research is needed to examine to what extent and at which stages OP engages with locals in the different types of projects.

Discussion and Conclusion

Relational character of design

To conclude, we would like to review the topics addressed above. One of the recurring themes discussed in the literature is the relational character of architectural practices. It has been highlighted how a combination of actors and the connections between them allow the office to come to life, both for the establishment of the firm and the design practices. Jóhannesson (2012) uses a relational approach to explain the entrepreneurship process, focusing on the effect of relations and complexity of networks.

11

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:36 AM
Comment [43]: perhaps they'll ask us what this means

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:38 AM
Comment [44]: Somewhat similar to OP's quote of "believing in a bright future shaped by thinkers, powered by technology and ruled by nature" ?

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:40 AM
Comment [45]: Social sustainability. How they tried to address homeless people in the parking house design

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:07 PM
Comment [46]: Base our advice on this

Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:41 AM
Comment [47]: Perhaps they'll ask us to expand on this

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:08 PM
Comment [48]: How can community be engaged when it comes to these types of projects? (e.g. based on the lecture we had with arki-lab)

Meanwhile, Faulconbridge (2010) concentrates on CoP to explain design practices inside architectural firms, highlighting the relations between mutual engagement, location, and non-human actors.

Knowledge sharing is mentioned by Faulconbridge (2010) as a collective mutual engagement, while Jóhannesson (2012) uses the term "fellowship" to define motivation and interest in a common topic that builds working collectives. Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk (2019) also use the definition of fellowship to explain it in the context of architectural office. In addition, Faulconbridge and Jóhannesson have a similar emphasis on knowledge sharing through the use of physical space and interactions. In relation to OP, the studio acts as such a relational space, whereby discussions and engagement around common architectural themes are created and openly fostered within its walls.

Acquiring and sharing knowledge

As examined by Faulconbridge (2010), innovation and ideas stem from a multitude of engagements and learned skill sets that can be shared and collaboratively constructed between architects, often involving non-human objects. This is the cumulative result of CoP and extensive experience within the field which can equip an architect with what Cross (2018, p. 10) defines as 'intuition'.

jessica papini 21/4/2020 9:39 PM
Comment [49]: Niels talks about intuition a couple of times

Within any design process, be it designing a new building, redefining a proposal, or being faced with a problem, OP can utilise their extensive knowledge sets and intuition. This intuition is linked with ideas formed by mutual engagement, background from similar joint enterprises and a stimulating shared repertoire of items, all of which are important tools that can be used in unison to enable a knowledge rich design or solution.

Aside from the actors in the CoP, the local community can also play an important role in the process of acquiring and sharing knowledge. Jóhannesson (2012) describes how designers can create space for discussions and brainstorming by involving the local community. This form of cooperation with local participants creates a feeling of ownership and belonging to the project. In this way it is similar to context-rich design thinking which advocates for an integrated and localized approach to design, as discussed by Moore and Karvonen (2008). In addition to situating the design in the material context, the approach includes the local community, or the social context. It is intended to be a democratic process with a mutual exchange between designer and end user.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, OP takes into account the local context. During the initial stages of researching the design area, they interact with the material and social context. Further investigation is

needed to discover to what extent and in what ways OP researches and incorporates the local community, thus how they acquire and share knowledge with them.

The role of non-human objects

Models, sketches and storyboards have a significant role in architects' design practices. They have been described as tools for stimulating thoughts, which enable architects to develop and subsequently distribute knowledge. While Bærenholdt and Kjølbæk (2019) focus on their role as visual storytelling objects, Yaneva (2005) stresses the ability of models to act in an iterative and non-linear fashion. Cross (2018) also emphasizes the ability of material items to drive the design process. Designers get the possibility to identify limitations and create solutions through sketching or as Yaneva (2005) points out, through the use of models of various scales. Another quality of material items is their potential to facilitate fellowship in architecture practice (Bærenholdt & Kjølbæk, 2019). Mock-ups help to establish a common understanding of the proposal between architects who can then gather around the model and generate discussions. They are physical representations of prospective scenarios, and they also serve as an instrument to communicate with stakeholders. Finally, the circulation of objects, information and knowledge among architects appears on a global level, contributing to the establishment of wider CoP (Faulconbridge, 2010). OP fits into this realm with their focus on visual communication and integration of models and volume studies from the initial phases of their design process.

Creative process and breaking the rules

As a studio, OP works towards the integration of architecture, politics and art, identifying these as overarching socio technical factors. As mentioned previously in the section discussing sustainability, OP works with context-rich design. They design for specific locations with different stakeholders to develop the physical landscape, whilst also reflecting their ideologies of the 'future' of living. The term 'future' can elicit a scale of meanings from different stakeholders, and OP endorses their own ideology of the future in their design process through advocating for environmentally sustainable designs and materials. This occasionally leads them to push the boundaries of the design brief, falling in between the role of the "elite designers" - who design based on their own experiences (Cross, 2018) and co-creators - actors who work alongside other stakeholders to develop a product. According to Moore, "expertise is not solely a means of power and control but actually provides utility and value to society" (Moore 2008, p.40). Therefore, 'breaking the rules' can benefit society in a way that was previously unidentified. Combining their expertise and sustainable agendas can also inform other co-creators to include environmentally sustainable developments within their projects, even if it was not a priority to the other stakeholders. OP

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:11 PM
Comment [50]: Elaborate?

Kateřina Joštová 21/4/2020 7:13 PM
Comment [51]: Elaborate?

works in an abductive fashion, "hypothesising of what may be, the act of producing proposals or conjectures" (Cross, 2018, p.27). Their perspective of the world informs their practice and therefore is manifested in the artefacts they design (Moore, 2008, p.30). Their design process is a means to create the future that they envision, both in regard to the built and the social environment.

In conclusion, the articles discussed above encouraged us to discover and analyse previously unnoticed aspects about OP and offered an in-depth exploration in the design and entrepreneurship process of the firm. Further investigation will be conducted to uncover and examine some of these aspects, with a strong focus on the theme of the future of urban living.

> **Lieke Maureen 22/4/2020 9:46 AM**
> **Comment [52]:** Perhaps they'll ask about the urban aspect. Is it necessarily urban? Do we still want to focus on the urban?

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