

# *Urban Experiments and Concrete Utopias*

*- Platform4 a 'Bottom Up' Approach to the Experience City*

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## *Abstract*

*The paper explores how concrete urban experiments can challenge the pecuniary version of the experience city and stimulate a locally rooted and democratic version of an experience based city using heterotopias and concrete utopias as the link between top down planning and bottom up experiments in an emerging experience city.*

*The first part of the article describes the growing and uncritical interest in the concepts of the 'creative economy', 'creative class' (Florida 2002) and their relationship with cultural production and economic growth (Bille & Schulze 2006), many of which, however, are driven mainly by political discourses producing more strategies and reports or commodified 'experience projects' that are not rooted in real democratic experiments. Instead, the experience based development should emphasize a more object-oriented and a critical approach where real urban experiments link public administrations with public participation in order to shape a cultural agenda.*

*The second part of the paper looks at two cases: NDSM in Amsterdam and Platform4 in Aalborg suggesting that it is concrete urban experiments like these that can create a link between visions and local reality in the Experience city. It is done using Michael Foucault's notion of Heterotopias as test beds of change and new modes of ordering a society in transitions. The paper explores how participatory experiments can create interspaces focusing on new meaningful interactions in the city – recapturing Debord's Spectacle of the city and society (Debord 1995) and not the commercialized trail that Swyngedouw speaks of. These experiments have the potential of becoming political objects of attention and together form the starting point for a bottom-up approach to urban cultural development if they can enable a large variety of actors and audiences.*

## Introduction – A Cultural Turn in City Development

In the last decade, a cultural turn has swept through Europe. Klaus Kunzmann (2004) has called it a 'friendly virus'. It is a turn where culture and creativity have become the new guiding forces in much city development and urban design (Martin Zerlang 2005). A wide range of policy areas from business development, culture and urban planning have, throughout the last decade, been influenced by the notion of creativity and the experience economy (Evans, 2001, Skot-Hansen 2008, Andersson & Kiiib 2007, 2008). Notably, two books have spearheaded this cultural turn; the first one is 'The Experience Economy – Work is a Theatre and Every Business is a Stage' (Pine and Gilmore 1999) and the second and most influential on city development and urban design is 'The Rise of the Creative Class' by Richard Florida (2002).

In Denmark, the turn can be found in the the report from 2000 'The Creative potential of Denmark' (own translation) from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. The report follows in the footsteps of 'The Experience Economy' (1999). Both focus on new possibilities which apply values and methods from arts and culture when developing business and places in a post-industrial context. The aim of the Danish ministerial report is to promote a Danish cultural policy in answer to the strong influence of the generic international entertainment orientated cultural industry. (reference fra cultplan I phd)

A second report followed in 2003, now joint work between the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and The Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs. It underlines the new, close relation between culture and business that both Pine and Gilmore and Richard Florida point to as essential if cities, regions and the corporate sector are to become prosperous in the future!

## The Experience City as a Commercialized Trail

Seen from an urban planning and design perspective, Richard Florida is not the first to say that vibrant cities are innovative drivers of new types of development (Hall 1998, Landry and Bianchini 1995). Going back in time, then Jane Jacobs' notion of social constructed city has similarities with that of Richard Florida's city for the creative class. But, there are also great differences as Florida's image of the city for the creative class aims at a certain class – the well-educated creative class, whereas Jane Jacob's city was one of mixture and a multiple class structure, the city as a social construction (Jacobs 1961).

*'The diversity, of whatever kind, that is generated by cities rest on the fact that in cities so many people are so close together, and among them contain so many different tastes, skills, needs, supplies, and bees in their bonnets.'* (Jacobs 1961:147)

The difference between Jacobs and Florida is also the impact and use of their theories in praxis. Florida's notion of a new creative class, who values soft values and tolerant environments influenced by culture and art, has almost unquestioned entered policies in many cities and regions of Denmark as in the rest of Europe. They all want their region or their city to have the best experiences or the 'biggest' spectacle, and they hunt in packs for it using Florida's recipe as an instrument for economic growth.

'Meet the guru' (<http://www.vejle.dk>)

This was on the front page of the Municipality of Vejle's website the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2008 promoting the 300 euro ticket event with Richard Florida that month.



*Photo: Mads Hansen*

If we give a simplistic version of Richard Florida, he claims that high numbers of bohemians, gays and foreigners (cultural and artistic production) are equivalent to cities that are open and attractive to knowledge workers (his creative class). These workers again stimulate innovation and creativity in high-tech industries creating economic growth.

*Our work finds strong connection between successful technology- and talent-harnessing places and places that are open to immigrants, artist, gays, and racial integration.....Such places gain an economic advantage in both harnessing the creative capabilities of a broader range of their own people and in capturing a disproportionate share of flow. (Florida 2005:7)*

But could it not be the opposite? In an article on culture in urban and regional development, Trine Bille and Gerhard Schulze point out that there is a problem with causality in Florida's argumentation. The case could in fact be that bohemians and foreigners followed fast growing firms rather than the other way around. They stress that there is a problem of endogeneity in Florida's model (Bille and Schulze 2006: 1068). And equally important according to Bille and Schulze we don't know the effect of the interurban competition that the Florida inspired policies causes. If we look at the regional and national effect of this competition on creativity perhaps the effect is zero seen in relation to economic growth because the development in one city is on the expense of development in neighboring cities and regions.

The first remark in this article on the effect of new relations between culture and business seen in relation to city development is that the complexity of the subject requires more knowledge on the relation between cultural production and economic growth, before we turn it into local policies in an interurban battle for business, residents and economic growth.

By this we want to enter a discussion saying that there might be a risk of failure if local urban experiments do not challenge and test the intentions in this new creative policy area. Policymakers in cities in Denmark such as Aalborg, Odense and Horsens cannot necessarily act as their colleagues in tolerant high-tech San Francisco or in tourism based Bilbao because we implement Florida's recipe or other experience based models and projects in provincial cities in Denmark.

## The local policies do not challenge the generic creative recipe

We will argue that urban experiments are needed if we want to move from a notion where culture and business are closely linked in a spectacle of the commodity instead of a model searching back towards a version of the city that is not predetermined by pecuniary interest but closer linked to the situationist movement's version of the spectacle of society – in this case the spectacle of the city.

According to Eric Swyngedouw, the new focus on culture and business has turned Debord's situationist city into a commercialized trail strangely respectable and far from the experience of the *derivé* when drifting around their personal (experienced) City in the 1960s. It's clear that Florida's recipe tends to create normative scripts and shiny generic versions of the spectacle.

*'..It (Situationist city, authors note) has become part of the commercialized cultural trail and spectacularized capitalist order that Guy Debord so sharply dissected.'* (Swyngedouw 2002:155)

In Denmark the new policies and strategies tend to forget to link the local condition - the cultural infrastructure (soft as well as hard) – with the intentions of the experience-based policies.

*A particular version of this cultural economy has become popular among policy-makers, so much so that, we claim, it is possible to trace a normative script of cultural economy linked to prescriptive recommendations for economic development. (Kong and Gibson 2005:542)*

North Jutland in Denmark is an interesting case because there has been a strong link to the aforementioned national policy reports on experience economy from 2000 and 2003. In the Regional Cultural Agreements North Jutland from 2000 and 2005, the new integration of culture and business and hence the experience economy are central elements expressing the 'creative' turn where culture becomes an instrument for growth and development.

*North Jutland as a pioneer region*

*A model that takes into account the continually increasing emphasis on culture as a source of creativity, growth and as a framework condition for settlement, residential as well as of businesses, and tourism. Cultural understanding is in a state of perpetual development and plays an important part in more and more areas. (own translation from Regional cultural agreement North Jutland 2005 page 10-11)*

The problem is that there is little correspondence between what is stated in this agreement and what is possible if you look at the infrastructural layers of Aalborg and North Jutland. The soft infrastructure (artists, events, educations etc.) is weak. (<http://www.apex-center.dk/images/stories/Apexanalyser> & [http://www.aalborgsamarbejdet.dk/media/oplevelsesoekonomi\\_lav.pdf](http://www.aalborgsamarbejdet.dk/media/oplevelsesoekonomi_lav.pdf) )

The question is therefore whether it is right to build ones strategy on a thesis that says that culture and art are the driving force for allocation of new citizens, companies and tourists? The outcome is very likely to be more strategies and reports and less action and concrete projects because the cultural producers are few.

*I also think that it has to come from the involved parties themselves. Having a group of people perpetually needing to set things in motion is no good. It needs to be a natural need, right.....It is a political agenda. No businesses have gone out and said that they want this or that they have not got any artists who have said this either. (Artist from North Jutland educated from the Academy and Fine Arts)*

The same situation can be found in various Danish cities like Odense. Odense´s cultural strategy 'Odense, Denmark´s Creative City' from 2004 adapts a lot of Florida´s ideas and it is almost too obvious reading the newspaper in mid February where politicians in Odense would like to adopt the Copenhagen gay parade and bring it to Odense.

*The Municipality of Odense wishes to be known as the playful city – 'to play is to live', we say, and by that we mean for one thing that we wish to be a home for creativity and progressive culture. The Gay Parade would fit this line of thought perfectly, and at the same time it would send a message that the province is also open to overt homosexuality, which still has a somewhat tarnished reputation in this context, the city council member continues.. (Own translation Politikken 15.02.2008)*

What these cities linking culture and business together miss are in many ways a critical mass when it comes to the core cultural producers, which again means that projects with a critical approach to the integration of culture and business are few. So, many of the projects that are created are either big, traditional, prestigious lighthouses which by nature are not experiments because a lot of money and prestige are invested in them. (Utzon Center or House of Music in Aalborg or Water Culture House and Music and Theater House in Odense ). Or they are events like the gay parade reflecting Florida's recipe; or they are minor projects inspired by Pine and Gillmore´s experience economy that only survive as long as the hardworking public servants feed them money and push them forward (Dreamhouse, Creative alliances and various networks in Aalborg and The Starship in Odense).

## From political visions to practical reality

The experienced based development in Danish cities tends to become a closed circuit project because in many ways exists on a policy level and in the corridors of public administration, but not in the heads of creative entrepreneurs unfolded in the city – creating spectacles. It has a tendency to become detached from the real cultural producers, citizens and public space because it is mostly discursive.

The introduction and the examples above should illustrate that we strongly need models and approaches that can mediate both a democratic and critical approach to the present instrumental development of The Experience City (Andersson & Kiib 2007). A model where concrete projects create links between administrative layers in public administration and create spaces and experiments in the city where citizens, artist and business life can challenge each other as contending parties developing a local and democratic version of 'The Experience City'.

This second part of the article will discuss heterotopias in general (Foucault 1966,1997, Hetherington 1997, Shane 2005) and the concrete utopia in the image of Ernst Bloch (Andersen et. all 1982). Both are seen as a possible link between political vision and the real context. The focus is on a bottom up perspective and not on a top down plan in the image of Richard Florida's creative class or Pine & Gilmore's experience economy. The discussion is unfolded through two projects; the NDSM wharf and Kinetisch Noord in Amsterdam and the research experiment Platform4 in Aalborg, Denmark.

As we will see, the bottom up approach is useful as a method to test and scale the potential of the local creative and cultural infrastructure. Finally, the research experiment Platform4 prompts a re-discussion of the necessity of concrete local experiments as a way to create both robust knowledge in a research perspective and new toolboxes and ideas in the development of the Experience City in praxis perspective (Andersson & Jensen 2006, Marling, Kiib & Jensen 2008). These experiments might respond to new ways of discussing the city as a spectacle with public participation which shape new censorships and agendas that facilitate an emergent cultural economy based on a local infrastructure that is both cultural, social and economic sustainable.

## Heterotopias and Concrete Experiments

Looking across Europe, new spaces for entrepreneurs in the creative industry start to surface on the urban scene. Some of these are interesting, as they are developed bottom up and have characters that resemble that of heterotopias and concrete utopias, as Michel Foucault or Ernst Bloch would have called them (Foucault 1999, Andersen et. all 1982:51). This means that we are looking at spaces that challenge and rearrange the given norms and values in the surrounding city. Heterotopias are, in the interpretation of Kevin Hetherington and Graham Shane, enclaves or interspaces in the city that can be seen as reactions to ongoing transitions between different states of ordering in society. It could be the transition from agricultural economy to industrial economy or from the industrial to a culture and knowledge based economy, as the underlying one of this article (Andersson & Kiib 2006, Marling & Zerlang 2007).

*Heterotopias are spaces in which an alternative social ordering is performed. These are spaces in which a new way of ordering emerges that stands in contrast to the taken-for-granted mundane idea of social order that exists within society (Hetherington 1997:40)*

*Urban heterotopias are specialized patches, acting as test beds of change (Shane 2005:9)*

Both Shane and Hetherington rest their understanding of heterotopias on Michel Foucault who in 1967 starts a lecture with a quote that describes heterotopias as lived spaces where change takes place and new ordering in society occurs.

*...It is about external spaces that I would like to speak now. The space in which we live, from which we are drawn out of ourselves, just where the erosion of our lives, our time, our history takes place, this space that wears us down and consumes us, is in itself heterogeneous. (Foucault in Leach 1997:350)*

The new spaces that occur on the urban scene in Europe developed by the end-users, the cultural and creative entrepreneurs, are the kind of external space that Foucault, Shane and Hetherington speak of. These spaces mix private and public, culture and business, everyday life and leisure time. The most successful creative entrepreneurial spaces are the ones where the interaction between the end-users, the developers and the local government occurs and where public and private companies act as facilitators and not strictly as planners and developers. One could say that these successful projects rest on a notion of the city and economic development similar to that of heterotopias, as described above, and thereby also on the image of Jane Jacobs' social constructed and experimental approach to the city and its urban economy. So with this very brief introduction to heterotopic spaces and concrete utopias, NDSM and Platform4 are used to illustrate such new interspaces in the Experience City.

*Cities are an immense laboratory of trial and error, failure and success, in city building and city design. This is the laboratory in which city planning should have been learning and forming and testing its theories. Instead the practitioners and teachers of this discipline (if such can be called) have ignored the study of success and failure in real life, have been incurious about the reasons for unexpected success, and are guided instead by principles derived from the behavior and appearances of towns, suburbs, tuberculosis sanatoria, fairs, and imaginary dream cities – from anything but cities themselves. (Jacobs 1961:6)*

## NDSM

An example of a concrete utopia and the city as an immense laboratory of trial and error lies in Amsterdam on the north bank of the river IJ. Here the former shipyard NDMS has been turned into a miniature city developed and constructed by pioneers from the squatting movement in Amsterdam. Organized in the foundation Kinetisch Noord headed by Eva de Klerk, squatters, cultural entrepreneurs, architects and many

others have since 2000 developed the 20.000 m<sup>2</sup> wharf building and turned it into 'Studio City'. The project houses almost 200 creative and cultural entrepreneurs; moreover there are theater companies, workshops, a skate board arena, a music club and a restaurant. The local government in Amsterdam has funded approx. 50 percent or 10 million euro which is topped by the users that have taken up loans for the same amount (Jørgensen 2007, Ghilardi 2006).



*The old NDSM wharf building and shipyard, then and today*

*Photo2+2a: Lasse Andersson*

The main idea of Kinetisch Noord's approach to the development of NDSM is based on the concept of '*Stad als Casco*', translated to English this means 'the city as a skeleton or the city as a frame' (Jørgensen 2007). The vision for Kinetisch Noord and NDSM is a user-driven development and the end goal is that the users buy back the city. It is in many ways a vision and a goal similar to the cooperative movements in the beginning of the last century securing that the revenue was returned to the small producers in the shift from an agricultural to a industrial economy. NDSM can therefore be seen as a frame in which the end-users develop their own space in the bigger social and entrepreneurial network with the end goal of being master in their own common house – NDSM - so to speak. For less than 40 euro per m<sup>2</sup> per year, the creative entrepreneurs can rent a plot in the three dimensional grid of 'Studio City' and build their own vision of a workshop, office, or atelier.

The main idea behind Kinetisch Noord has in a very formal and understated way been designed into a structure called Studio City by the Dutch architects from the office Dynamo.

*The huge NDSM shed is a self-built ideal society; dream and act in one, and it consists, varying degrees of interest, of the initiator, the market and the local government shoulder to shoulder.*

*(Bakker et al. 2008:12)*



*Studio City a self-built ideal society, design by the creative entrepreneurs and Dynamo Architects*

*Photo3: Lasse Andersson*

In the introduction to the Dutch architectural yearbook, Bakker says about NDSM that it can be seen as dream and act in one. In NDSM users, market forces, and the state facilitates the development of an ideal entrepreneurial society. It is a miniature society both challenging and working according to the rest of Amsterdam, re-configuring organizational models and challenging the norms and values of the developer plans and straight forward business development in the late 1990's. A development that in the 1990's caused the creative entrepreneurs and cultural milieu to flea Amsterdam in favour of Rotterdam, Berlin, and other up and coming cities in Europe (Ghilardi 2006, Jørgensen 2007).

The image of NDSM as a self-built ideal society is close to Ernst Bloch's concrete utopia which contrary to Henry Moore's utopia actually becomes a *there*, similar to Foucault's heterotopia.

*Heterotopias are spaces of the 'not yet' as Ernst Bloch might have called them, spaces that seek to turn that 'not yet' into a 'there' but never achieve their place in an order of things' (Heterington 1997:141)*

## Platform4 a Research Experiment in Urban Scale

This last section of the article describes a research experiment and development project that I as a researcher developed together with the City of Aalborg Business Department and later on in cooperation

with the City of Aalborg Planning Department and a group of four young creative entrepreneurs from Aalborg. The project takes an action orientated approach to research (Nielsen & Svensson 2006) and focuses on context and usefulness in the creation of new knowledge closely linked to the progressive phronetic research (Flyvbjerg 1991, 2005).

In 2006, a report from a local governmental association - Aalborg Samarbejdet - showed that Northern Jutland had the lowest number of self-employed practicing artist in Denmark. The same report also stated that the local experience economy, not counting tourism, had to be assessed per thousand in relation to the overall economy in the region of Northern Jutland (Aalborg Samarbejdet 2006). Later in 2007, a report from the local organization on experience economy, APEX, also clearly showed that the creative growth layer in the region was very weak (Apex 2007). Furthermore, interviews with the public servants operating the local initiatives on the experience economy showed that the projects on the culture and experience economy were most successful when public money and manpower were present (Andersson – own interviews in coming phd thesis). Still, these facts did not keep the politicians and public servants from formulating new visions and plans where the economic potential behind the local experience economy were praised, especially the earlier mentioned government report from 2003 claims that the Danish culture and experience economy has a yearly turnover of 175 billion d.kr. But this figure is based on a extremely broad definition of the experience economy which is difficult to operationalize as it covers everything from cd manufacturing to toy stores and theater production. This open result ends in what Klaus Kunzman and Ann Markusen call fuzzy concepts that can all and nothing (Kunzman 2005, Markusen 2006) and therefore do not really operate.



*The old warehouse home of Platform4 , photo Lasse Andersson*

Therefore, Platform4 had as its intention and goal to test the local creative potential in Aalborg and this was done in workshops focusing on concrete projects and less on visions, discussion, and ministerial numbers.

Instead of applying more reports and analysis, the concrete project and the experiment were used to understand the local potential or lack of the same. Secondly, instead of arguing for the integration of culture and business in a very broad definition of the culture and experience economy, the arguments were on experiments between art and technology as a way to create focus on competencies instead of economy. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, the intention was to test which of the city's actors were willing to facilitate bottom up development focusing on end-users instead of top-down planning based on visions that do not rest on a real local potential, but rather on creative buzz words.

## Two Workshops

In June 2008, a small group of persons including myself as a researcher, representatives from the business department, the planning department, and four young creative entrepreneurs from Aalborg sat up a workshop in warehouse number four on Eastern Harbor in Aalborg. Fifty persons from the local creative milieu turned up to develop new projects combining art and technology. Prior to this workshop, there had been a one year process during which a framework was set up: The local developer and owner of the Eastern Harbor accepted to grant our small group the right to use the building for free over the next four years. Also, the business department had agreed to sponsor the idea.

The project got the title Platform4 and had as its main purpose to promote the coming together of art and technology through experiments and was developed through a 'bottom up' perspective (<http://www.aalborgsamarbejdet.dk/default.aspx?m=4&i=325&pi=4&pr=3>).



*Participants in ARTificial working on the construction of a 3D printer*

*Photo4: Lasse Andersson*

The framing of the workshop forbade visions for the future were forbidden, as the only purpose was project proposals for installations combining art and technology. The six best ideas were granted 10.000 d.kr. if the persons behind the project could raise additional 5.000 d.kr. themselves.

The result was 15 project ideas, and from these, six projects were selected by two external curators; an interactive lounge and bar, a 3D prototype printer, a music installation in motion, a mix of computer game and skateboard ramp, an sound installation with interactive pendulums, and finally a pyramid for spectators. Two months later in August 2008, the projects were to be produced during a week-long workshop and exhibition – ARTificial - as part of the official opening of Platform4.

## ARTificial – A New Flavor in the Urban Cultural Landscape in Aalborg

The official opening of Platform4 exhibited the art and technology based projects and the media coverage and amount of visitors showed a budding interest in the project from the people of Aalborg.

Mainly two things were important in relation to the intentions behind Platform4; testing whether Aalborg had a creative growth layer - is there potential in combining art and technology in Aalborg?, and finding out who in the organizational structure of the city would facilitate a very open-ended project focusing on the end-users like it is the case with NDSM.

Another important aspect of ARTificial was that in the two months since the first workshop a *small self-built ideal society* had started developing. During this time the creative entrepreneurs met to work on their projects by mixing with visitors in Platform4's beach bar or by attending a concert for electronic music. It was striking to observe how after a period of two weeks of rain, the four project leaders at Platform4 managed to fill the beach bar with 300 customers with only a two day notice using just text messaging and Facebook profiles. So from a consumer perspective Platform4 clearly worked, however the most important perspective was that of the creative and cultural production.

Platform4 has proved that the small handful of dedicated people with the technical and artistic skills could actually create quality projects with potential for the future. And these people are all part of the milieu around the creative educational programs at Aalborg University. This indicates that the basis of projects that mix art and technology has to rest on a firm base of knowledge as; a precondition which also applies to successful projects in the culture and experience economy (Schwab & Andersen 2004, Darsø 2004). Thus, initiatives in addition to the 'bottom up' perspective, have to incorporate a firm base of knowledge and a discussion about skills, an argument which again is linked to a well-constituted cultural infrastructure.



*The audiovisual festival APART at Platform4*

*Photo5: Lasse Andersson*

A third and perhaps just as important thing that happened during the launch of the project, was the broadcasting of the ARTificial event and the concrete experiments to the whole city and its politicians, businessmen, educational institutions, public servants, and citizens of whom several also visited the opening event. Thereby, the experiment had reached both the users and the potential future facilitators.

## What can be Learned from Platform4?

In many ways, Platform4 has 'grown' out of the image of NDSM, but not as a copy of the big project from the big city of Amsterdam. What has been copied is partly the content and the creative entrepreneurs, but mostly it is about the method, 'Stad als Casco', as the purpose is to create a development aiming at empowering the end-users.

Platform4 and ARTificial has showed that Aalborg has the potential for combining art and technology, but also that it is a fragile structure which rests on the production of university graduates. Furthermore, Platform4 has triggered new social interactions in the Aalborg's creative milieu creating a space and a platform for the development of concrete projects. Platform4 is a new hybrid experience space that combines competencies, economies, and spaces of both the industrial and the knowledge based economy in a development area (Andersson & Kiiib 2008). Platform4 moved in when the industry moved out, and it works in an interim urban setting discussing new social potentials between state, market and, end-users. But most important is the discussion which is taken through concrete examples like the Platform4 project and hence the installation and events exhibited in Platform4. Hereby, it works as an interspace or a incipient heterotopias, creating space and energy for the development of new norms and values which challenge the conform pecuniary parts of the Experience City.



*Installation made by 2. Semester students from the Art education, Aalborg University, at Platform4 in the spring 2009 Photo6 Lasse Andersson*

Platform4 also shows that traditional actors in the city seek and support experiments that discuss unknown territory in a Danish provincial city like Aalborg. Following the opening and ARTificial, Aalborg University has started to fund the project, and the business department has kept a high level of involvement as has the private developer that owns the building. These are not 'the usual suspects' when it comes to creative and cultural projects, but they clearly see that it is more than just words - it's also concrete experiments. It is experiments that create new art/tech potentials but also create a creative milieu for the early stages of an infrastructure for creative entrepreneurs in Aalborg. In relation to this, Platform4 is still just a playground for young people in Aalborg age 18-30. However, it creates something new - an unstable state in the city. It illustrates that for a very small investment, the future creative potential can be understood and debated in the interspaces at Eastern Harbour. The investments in Platform4 add up to about one million d.kr. for the first year and a half; and this includes renovation of the building. In comparison, the budget for the new Utzon Center, Nordkraft, and due in time, the House of Music in Aalborg runs close to one billion d.kr. Not to mention the operating budget if for the years to come!

As a final tentative remark, small concrete urban experiments can point towards a more sustainable cultural infrastructure emphasize both cultural and entrepreneurial production and consumption in a democratic version of the Experience City.

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