

# ARCHITECTURAL PROBES OF THE INFRAORDINARY; *co-existence through everyday spaces*

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## Research field and objective:

The research project seeks through *methods of cognition* to explore the spaces of the everyday as framework for coexistence - and how these affects and are being affected by its inhabitants in a constant dialogue.

The *infraordinary*<sup>1</sup> spaces such as kiosk, stairway or street corner - worn invisible by use - are investigated as spatial and non-spatial field of potential; it is here that the *lived life* primarily takes place, by which the physical surroundings contains an accumulated richness of *narratives, events* and *depositions*. The city is considered an *archive*, a physical framework in constant transformation through which (conscious and unconscious) coexistence takes place through *events in real-time* and *depositions over time*, using the city as medium. Through the project it is elucidated what these spaces, in which we spend the majority of our time, means for our experienced world - and how these can be subject for studies. Thereby the research objective is twofold:

- 1) *conduct research of the infraordinary as a place of coexistence*
- 2) *to develop methods to explore and articulate this*

## Outline of research:

The research is conducted through a constant dialectical approach between acquired theory and independent practice-based development (research by design). These interacts, informs and resonates with each other throughout the project to generate new reflections and knowledge. In general the project is separated through three parallel phases:

### 1. *Artistic Cross-fertilisations:*

Studies of artistic precedents - George Perec, Eugène Atget, Jim Jarmusch - forms an initial foundation and framework for theoretical investigations, through their *methods of cognition* and systematic approaches to understand and represent the infraordinary spaces and multitude of layers in the city through literature, photography and moving pictures.

### 2. *Biopsy + Probes of Insight:*

The research is facilitated through meticulously selected *biopsies* - tissue samples - of the urban body, in which a series of *probes of insight* are developed to *see, examine and describe* the infraordinary spaces and inhabitants, where existing knowledge is tested out/examined and new knowledge is formed through practice-based development.

### 3. *Collocation of the Infraordinary Archive:*

Throughout the project biopsies and output hereof are put next to each other and counterposed to discuss relations and overall themes. These together forms a collated whole, an *Infraordinary Archive* or *City*, that more freely can be detached from the habitual and point towards the qualities of the infraordinary spaces.

## Ways of understanding the city:

Often, architects tend to *understand* the city on an overall macro-level; through this reducing it to diagrammatic and cartographic representations of which the manifold spatial and infraordinary qualities disappears or are left out. Through the *probes of insight* - specifically the first biopsy; the stairway where I live - another sort of knowledge is formed through sampling the near experienced world. The intention is 'scientifically, to get at distance at the well known and observe it through an analytic apparatus in order to gain new knowledge'<sup>2</sup>. This type of *deciphering* distinguishes itself from the traditional, architectural drawing by incorporating architecture's actual matter - *space, time, sound and materiality* - to interact with the surroundings in a performative relation<sup>3</sup>.

1 Perec, Georges, 'Approaches to What?', L'Infra-ordinaire, 1973

[...] *How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual?* [...]

2. Tygstrup, Frederik. 'Æstetisk Geografi - Jean-Luc Godards kortlægning af Lausanne', Kartografi, Morfologi, Topologi, p. 85, 2009

3. Lim, C.J. 'Architectural Inventor', Devices, 2006