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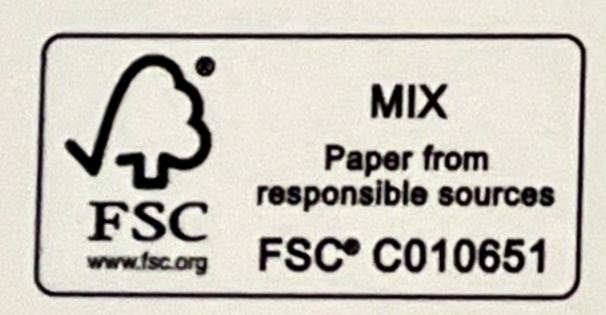
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CHAPTER 6:

Designing place through rhythms and affinities

Anne-Lene Sand

Introduction

I opened the door to Hall2, the local skateboarding hall in Roskilde, and the silence hit me; where were the familiar sounds of skateboard wheels crossing ramps, pipes and pavement and boards slamming onto the pavement? Was no-one skating? That particular day, Hall2 was closed to the regular users and skateboarders. Only people with wheelchairs could participate. I was only allowed to observe the event Street on Wheels if I participated in a wheelchair like the other practitioners1. That suited me very well due to my anthropological approach to understanding embodied practices and my memories of spinning on rear wheels in informal wheelchair competitions during high school. I met Bo, one of the organisers of the Street on Wheels event, and he directed me towards a helmet and wheelchair equipment I could borrow. I felt a bit of adrenaline running through my arms and stomach as I rolled into the hall. A huge landscape of classical skateboarding architecture was lined up as permanent installations in the centre of the hall. As I sat in my chair, one metre high, the physical installations seemed huge. The tricks I had learned for fun as a youngster suddenly seemed far away, and I felt humble in comparison to the other wheelchair practitioners. I passed a few people standing on their feet and several people in wheelchairs along the sides of the hall, and I positioned myself sitting alongside the other practitioners - out there, on the floor. In total, I counted around 30 wheelchairs. Hesitating, we waited. We heard metal (from a wheelchair) hit a pipe, which broke the silence. We turned our wheels, and David Lebuser, a professional German wheelchair skater who had been invited to run the workshop, arrived. He

¹ Introduction video (2015). https://vimeo.com/135949589

drove fast down a ramp and slid down a pipe in his chair. At this moment, the adrenaline took on the character of discomfort in my body. Was I going to do that? The other wheelchair users seemed out of their element too, as they had difficulty making eye contact with each other and Lebuser and were looking down. In front of us we had a whole day of exploring the new constellation between the chair, bodies and the material environment. (Fieldnotes, December 2014)

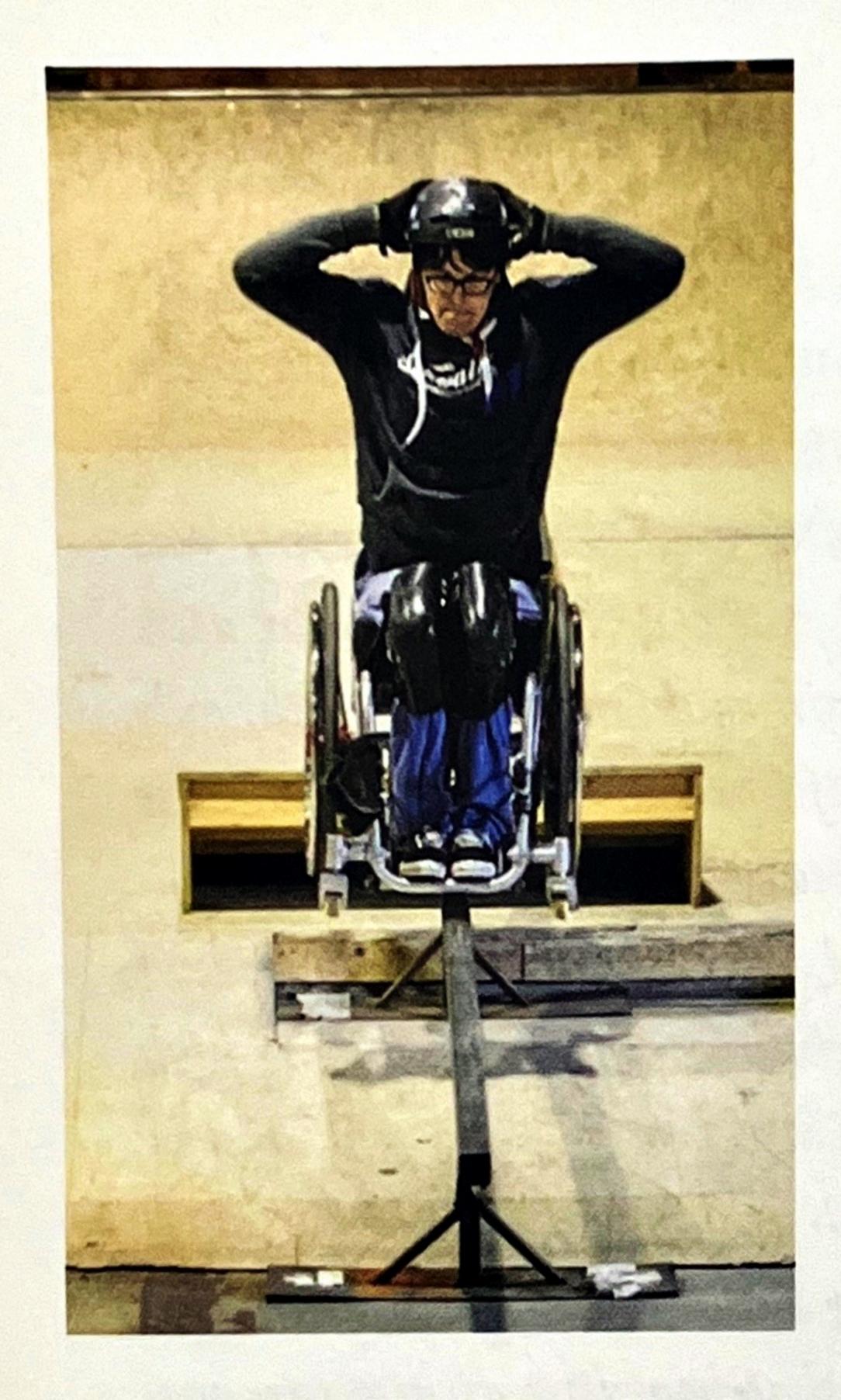


Figure 1: David Lebuser illustrating Sit n' skate.

In 2015-2018 I was carrying out a research project whose aim was to generate knowledge about the organisation of alternative cultures of movement, such as skateboarding, parkour, street soccer and more alternative forms like urban climbing and Sit n' skate. I followed projects which had gained financial support from the National Platform for Street Sports (http://gadeidraet.dk/). The fieldwork was characterised as a multi-sited (Hannerz 2003), short and focused ethnographic fieldwork (Pink & Morgan 2013)2. Throughout this chapter, I draw on empirical material from the event Street on Wheels, which was centred on the practice Sit n' Skate. The empirical material nuances how a traditional skateboarding hall was transformed into a place for wheelchair practitioners where they could experience, explore and exceed embod-

ied practices in skateboarding facilities while using their wheelchairs. The event Street on Wheels was organised on the initiative of two men; Bo, who was the leader of an existing skate hall, and Jesper, who is a wheelchair user himself. The idea was to introduce Sit n' Skate to Danish wheelchair users by making a playful space where wheelchair users could have fun and get experienced with new types of movement between body, chair and skate facilities. Bo and Jesper wanted to make a safe place where wheelchair users were the majority of people

² This research project was funded by the Carlsberg Foundation.

skating. I was allowed to participate as a researcher, but only if I participated in a wheelchair. From the perspective of a chair, although for only the one day the event took place, I observed and participated in the challenges held during the event. It allowed me to reflect on how designing place to a large extent is sensory and socially embedded, which from a design anthropological perspective raises questions about future design of place. Furthermore, it made me reflect on how transforming place through a participatory and dynamic design process can provide alternative embodied experiences for wheelchair users. Being positioned as a researcher in a one-metre-high chair with wheels constructed a comparative dialogue between apparently skilled wheelchair practitioners and me, as a novice, and at the same time, brought me into an overwhelming landscape of architectural installations.

Within this chapter, place is understood as the embodied, material and physical dimensions of place and the notion of space refers to the spatial, temporal, social and cultural dimensions (Cresswell 2004). A sensitive approach to place is necessary in order to understand the dynamic and sensory character of place and to reflect how a design of places can accommodate these dimensions (Nyseth, Førde and Cruickshank 2018). Design has often been understood as a product development related to specific problem-solving, but the field of design has developed into more dynamic design processes (Brown and Martin 2015). A newer approach within design is design anthropology, which as a discipline has been developed to a particular degree in Denmark (Smith, Vangkilde, Otto, Halse and Binder 2016; Gunn, Otto and Smith 2013; Brandt, Messeter and Binder 2008). Design anthropology makes an important contribution to design thinking since it has everyday life as epistemological departure: "Practitioners of design anthropology follow dynamic situations and social relations and are concerned with how people perceive, create, and transform their environments through their everyday activities." (Gunn, Otto and Smith 2013, p. xiii). As argued, design anthropology is about learning through dynamic and social relations and taking seriously the way in which people influence their environment in everyday situations. In contrast to being a descriptive and analytical discipline, the concept of future brings forth a design anthropological interest in change and future-making (ibid., p. 10), which Joachim Halse describes as 'ethnographies of the possible' (Halse 2018, p. 180). The aim of this chapter is not to contribute a design solution, but instead raise questions of design anthropological relevance and reflect upon how affinities and rhythms are a part of the design of place. Additionally, it will shed light on how designing place for one day can provide an in-between space where people live multiple sensory experiences – individually and together. As illustrated in this chapter, making Street on Wheels was not just a question of lending a place to wheelchair users, but rather taking multiple sensitive placemaking aspects into consideration.

Theoretically, this chapter is inspired by French urban philosopher Henri Lefebvre's Rhythmanalysis (2004), which is discussed and developed through sociologist Jennifer Mason's (2018) concept of 'affinities'. An essential ambition in this work of Mason is to push the boundaries of sociological knowledge through a more open, attentive, inventive and sociological sensibility. Combining these theoretical perspectives makes it possible to grasp sensory practices that are processual, dynamic and improvisational, which are dimensions important to include when planning and designing place (see Pløger, Førde og Sand, 2021).

The theoretical combination of rhythms and affinities lays out a sensitive understanding of the connection between the design of place and embodied experiences of wheelchair users. Hereby, the chapter wedges *in-between* the everyday life of the skate hall and the everyday life of wheelchair users, providing a space where bodies, materiality, sociality and spatial rules are combined in new ways. The design anthropological reflections open up an in-between space between the present and the future. In other words, the event Street on Wheels and specific sit n' skate practices connect to reflections of future design of place.

The chapter consists of three analytical sections. First, Transforming Place analyses how the skate hall was designed through specific rules and initiatives in order to make the participants feel good about exploring the physical landscape of the skate hall in their wheelchair. Second, Connections between everyday life, bodies and materiality unfolds how rhythms and affinities are related to the use of materiality. Third, Affinities connecting the individual and social analyses how designing place also happened during the day through the way in which people in collaboration helped each other, encouraged each other and at the same time confronted their own limits of fear. All three sections give insight into how a design of the skate hall during the event was set up before and during the event and how affinities and rhythms were a part of it.

Rhythms and affinities

Henri Lefebvre and his wife Catherine Régulier introduced the concept of rhythmanalysis in 1985 (Lefebvre 2004; Lefebvre & Régulier 1985, 1986). As a neo-Marxist philosopher, inspired by Nietzsche's Dionysian perspective (Lefebvre

1991, p. 22-4) and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (Lefebvre 2004), Lefebvre critically advocated for legitimising alternative and playful practices. Studying everyday life in Paris, Lefebvre (2004) noticed different types of movements: people walking, crossing the street, shopping and playing music; cars accelerating; and different formations of people, smells and sounds. He observed routine temporalities and how the clock marked certain times and actions, such as lunch breaks and school opening and dismissal (Lefebvre 1987, p. 31). Lefebvre wrote that 'everywhere there is interaction between a place, a time, and an input of energy; there is rhythm' (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 15, original emphasis). Lefebvre did not provide a clear definition of *rhythm*, but argued that rhythms are everywhere and an embedded part of social life. The strength of this framework is that it attempts to understand rhythms through a perspective of temporality, and seeing different dimensions of practice as temporal, which makes it possible to combine, compare and discuss dimensions of practice that are related, even though they are very different.

Lefebvre passed away in 1991 and left the conceptual framework of rhythmanalysis somewhat unfinished. In my previous work I have illustrated how the rhythmanalysis has potential for further development. I developed the concept of a spatial jam session, which provides a framework suitable for analysing spatial dimension of contemporary youth culture (Sand 2017). Using the concept of a spatial jam session, I argue that a central aspect of young people's placemaking is being able to improvise with what I analyse as rhythms of material, social and cultural character. Within this chapter I will illustrate how Mason's concept of affinities can supplement the concept of rhythmanalysis and gain more detailed insight in sensory practices which are ad hoc, improvisatorial, dynamic and processual.

Despite the great potential of Lefebvre's (2004) rhythmanalysis, the conceptual framework becomes limited when dealing with different types of senses. Lefebvre characterised different types of rhythms but he did not apply the concepts at a practice level, which leaves it on one hand categorical, but on the other hand interesting to develop in relation to everyday practices. For example, in my previous work, I analysed how young people developed their own practices of improvisation, which included applying different types of urban rhythms (Sand 2017). Even though Lefebvre categorises rhythms into four types (to which I will return shortly), I argue that Mason's concept of affinity can help analyse sensory dimensions that are difficult to grasp and capture analytically as energies, flows, forces and charges. These dimensions are not mentioned nor

articulated in the theory of rhythmanalysis. Although the concept of affinities can seem somewhat difficult to grasp, Mason develops a sensory-kinaesthetic attunement, aimed at recognising that interactions are full of sensory information and kinesthetics which come together in what Mason describes as 'sensations' (Mason 2018, p. 7). "To begin with I mean that sensations are not simply derived from single sensory stimuli, or perceived through singular sensory receptors, for example, of sight, touch, smell. It is helpful here to reiterate the difference in definitions of 'senses' and 'sensations'." (Mason 2018, pp. 42-3). Sensations are different senses which are rolled together in the mutual and relational experience of sensations. According to Mason, sensations are manifest and of interest in themselves; they do not simply stand for, tell us about or express something else (ibid., p. 46). Thereby Mason argues that sensations call for analytical attention, and deserve it in themselves, instead of rushing too quickly towards abstracted interpretations (ibid., p. 47). Within a sensation, connections can be triggered or evoked, which makes them potent - as power, energy or sparks, that bring forth strong emotions. This is 'affinities' (ibid., pp. 47-8), potent connections that rise up and matter (ibid., p. 1).

Looking at Lefebvre's framework, rhythms can connect differently, and Lefebyre categorizes them into four types of rhythmic connectedness: polyrhythmia, isorhythmia, eurhythmia and arrhythmia. Polyrhythmia refers to rhythms that co-exist with no mutual conflict. Isorhythms form a co-ordinated, hierarchical positioning of rhythms. Eurhythmia refers to visible rhythms that are harmonic to each other. Arrhythmia denotes rhythms in conflict or discord with each other (Lefebvre 2004, p. 68). Within this chapter I will draw explicitly on eurhythmia and arrhythmia, since they bring forth an understanding of how sensory dimensions can be constructive or conflicting and might trigger different kinds of affinities in different people. Other rhythms will be introduced

throughout the chapter.

Rhythms and affinities provide a foundation for understanding how designing place isn't just about changing a physical environment or changing the social rules for places. It is also about different kinds of rhythms and complex sensations, which are filled with sparks, energies and flows (i.e. affinities) (cf. Mason 2018, p. 86). Combining Lefebvre's and Mason's perspectives on different types of sensory practices forces us to think differently by trying to grasp phenomenon in everyday practices that are slippery, instant and improvisatorial. These are sensitive dimensions that are rarely taken into consideration in specific designand plan processes (see Pløger, Førde and Sand 2021). Rhythms and affinities

nuance how transforming place did more than provide an inclusive place for wheelchair users: it also generated a place that maintained sensory possibilities and exceeded boundaries of the body, surpassing and handling affinities and emotions related to excitement and fear.

1. Designing place

I interviewed Kasper, who had been skating for more than 30 years, and he explained how specific rules dominated the practices in skateboarding halls. For example, the existing social norms prescribed that, if scooter users were welcome, they ranked lower hierarchically than people who skateboarded, which influenced the space they could occupy. The social relationships among skateboarders were also highly competitive and hierarchical and certain styles dominated skateboarding culture. Bo, who arranged Street on Wheels, explained that he wanted to change the normal use of the skate hall and make a temporary design where wheelchair users could enjoy bodily experiences in alternative ways through movement with their chairs, and perhaps generate new ideas of what they were physically capable of. For example, Bo and Jesper, the two initiators, closed Hal12 to skateboarders and allowed only wheelchair users to participate in order to make it possible for the wheelchair users to challenge embodied logics of what they could and should do in their chairs. For Bo, designing place in this way was also about constructing a space where they felt safe to skate. He explained:

Several of [the wheelchair users] were afraid of falling in their chairs, which is understandable. Arranging the event, we talked a lot about how to normalise the practice of falling. A video was made from last year's event, and they cut out all the sequences where people actually fell. We asked them to maintain that specific aspect in the video in order to normalise the aspect of falling. It is okay if it looks a bit dangerous. By showing when people fall out of their chairs, we legitimise it. When skateboarding, we have to make it legitimate to fall. (Interview, January 2016)

An essential aim of the event was to create a place suitable and comfortable for wheelchair users. The empirical example illustrates that redefining place was not only about changing the formal, temporal and spatial structures of place but also transforming and playing with feelings of being in place. Drawing upon Lefebvre

we can begin to articulate and understand how Bo designs a place, by making explicit rules about participation, allowing few audience members and journalists to observe, communicating through a video, constructing an image of mild danger in order to legitimise the risk of falling, considering feelings like fear and how to design a safe place where wheelchair users can challenge themselves. All these dimensions, which are connected, can be understood as rhythms (since they all have a temporal extent) being coordinated in order to generate a certain type of eurhythmic rhythm which, according to Lefebvre, are connected in a harmonic way. As I will illustrate later, the coordination of rhythms is important since it will influence the sensory experience of the participants.

During the event, Bo closes the hall for skateboarders. Everyday life has linear rhythms, where the repetition of practices is essential (Lefebvre 2004). As illustrated above, Bo changed the everyday linear rhythm of Hal12 and created a playful place. Lefebvre uses the concept of cyclical rhythms to describe how a determined period can foster alternative and playful sensory experiences (Lefebvre 2004, p. 90). Changing the everyday linearity of Hal12 created a cyclical space where the practitioners could exceed and challenge themselves, their chairs and the materiality of the physical environment. This nuances how place can be designed through situating sensitive and sensory experiences—letting different rhythms generate new embodied experiences and letting the practitioners exceed embodied boundaries.

According to Lefebvre, rhythms can be represented without being present (Lefebvre 1996, p. 223 in: Amin and Thrift 2002, p. 17); for example, internal rhythms are expressed within the body as feelings or sensory experiences. According to Bo, communicating the event through a video influences the practitioners' expectations and what it physically requires of them, and minimises the fear of falling. This nuances how the process of designing places can be related to sensitive dimensions such as feelings. Another element of transforming place was that the wheelchair practitioners were allowed to bring their helpers who supported them in everyday life to minimise potential fear. Furthermore, two men without chairs were invited to support the practitioners as they tried some of the challenges, catching them if they fell and simply being beside them as they rode. By inviting helpers, Bo set up a design that was connected to a safe place to practice sit n' skate, which might have encouraged the practitioners to try new challenging exercises.

One aspect of designing place is organising and planning how it will be used and what might happen. But not least, places take shape through social

and embodied practices. In the following, I aim to illustrate how the exercises the practitioners were encouraged to try out were connected to the design of the physical environment, and generated rhythms and affinities based on fear and excitement.

2. Connections between everyday life, bodies and materiality

Several exercises at Street on Wheels took place outside Hal12 at the architectural site Rabalderparken³ (Figure 2), a park combining facilities for skateboarding and rainwater containment. As we drove along a path to a bigger ramp, we could as practitioners choose to either drive down four or five stairs, designed for walking, or along a zig-zag slide, designed for wheels, which was a bit longer.



Figure 2: Hal12, Street on Wheels 2015, with practitioners in wheelchairs, a few helpers and a camera crew documenting the workshop. Photo by the author.

Rabalderparken (http://www.snearchitects.com/project/rabalderparken/) is a large park with drainage canals and water reservoirs collecting rainwater from adjacent areas of the city. The overall theme of the park is celebration of free movement and the flow of water.

The two paths were a challenge to me; they made me want to explore. I wanted The two pauls wanted to drive down the stairs, not because the path was shorter, but because the sharp edges of the vertical stairs sparked curiosity in me. Relating this to Mason's concept of affinity, the connection between the stairs, my manoeuvring a wheelchair, and the spatial setup, which was designed to allow exploration of new ways of driving within a safe environment, evoked an eagerness that was rooted in my way of adapting to the physical landscape. It made my fingers itch, so to speak, in order to grab the wheel, drive and try it out. I wanted to experience whether I could manage the task with my body. From my standpoint, the different sensory dimensions concurred, which from a rhythm analytical perspective can be described as a eurhythmic and harmonic connectedness. During the day all of us in a wheel chair talked about the environment and the tasks we had to do. At one point Casper who is a 10-year-old boy in a wheelchair, and I are both looking at the stairs in front of us and I ask him: "Have you tried to drive down the stairs? Is there a special technique?" "I don't know," Casper answered, quickly turning away from me in his wheelchair. After this short dialogue, I wondered why he did not know. Participating in the event as a novice, I felt curious about the physical environment. I wanted to explore and challenge what I could do in the chair in the specific physical environment.



Figure 3: Casper trying to ride without the stick. Photo: Bo.

Figure 3 shows me balancing on the rear wheels of a chair and Figure 4 shows Figure 3 shows at the end of a ramp. I sensed and observed that Casper and the Casper driving at the end of a ramp. I sensed and observed that Casper and the Casper and the other participants were more oriented towards what they could not do than what they could do. I was trying to understand the different approaches we had to they constitute they constitute they constitute they constitute they by they constitute they by they constitute they can be constituted to the constitute they can be cons approach to the challenges of the day exhibited as 'itchy fingers' and a curiosity approach and a curiosity towards the physical environment, which seemed to increase my courage. Mason describes affinities as "sparks or charges of connection that intensify, enchant or indeed toxify personal life and the experience of living" (Mason 2018, p. 186). What Mason describes as affinities can be used to understand how the place came together through multisensory dimensions, such as the challenges, the chair, material obstacles to pass and so forth. Observations and dialogues with Casper indicated that he experienced it somewhat differently and did not feel the same eagerness to explore the physicality of, for example, the stairs. Why? Most of the practitioners had been in chairs for several years. In my eyes, they were everyday professionals, but what did I not see at that point?

The situation described above raises questions about what made the difference between what I experienced and my observations of Casper's reaction. Mason's perspective helps us come to an understanding:

Affinities are experienced as particularly potent connections with specific others who are characters with appearances, smells, voice, gestures, physicality, habits... ways of being in the world, traits, political and moral orientations and, of course, their own personal socio-cultural relational histories. It is the particularities of character and the role of characters-in-relation. (Mason 2018, p. 51)

Reading Mason's book, it becomes clear that essential parts of affinities are related to the past and what she here calls socio-cultural relational histories. I tried to understand the specific situation – the body, the wheelchair and the physical environment – and how we brought together different backgrounds and positions to Street on Wheels. For example, my role as a researcher doing sensory emplaced participation (cf. Pink 2008) became a kind of an explorative, relatively fun activity as I was able to stand up and walk out when the event was over. What I experienced could be described as affinities related to cyclical rhythms, as it was temporally short and experienced as primarily playful, and nowhere related to my everyday life.

Casper and the other wheelchair users were playful too, but their position was connected to their everyday practices (linear rhythms) where they had to exceed habituated everyday practices of going about their everyday lives in a wheelchair – not as someone who was riding on the back of the wheels of a wheelchair in high school, but as someone who would always be in a chair. These different everyday backgrounds and roles can help understand how the complex interplay of everyday practices, the particular play, the chairs, bodies, materiality and so forth generate sensations that spark affinities and give insights into glimpse of emotions like anxiety, hesitation, courage, eagerness and playfulness.

At the event, Casper was the only one his age. His father and mother attended with him, and they often spoke intimately together. Casper seemed shy and distanced himself from the other participants during the day. He drove faster than the others, and accelerating and speeding seemed to be playful ways in which he used his wheelchair. All the participants had their own personalised chairs, and I observed that Casper's chair differed from the others due to a metal stick pointing backwards a few centimetres from the ground. In Casper's everyday life, the function of the stick was connected to feelings of safety in order to stop the chair if it got off balance and tipped backwards. At this event, the stick seemed to foster feelings other than safety. Bo told me that, while the stick seemed to be a corporate part of Casper's embodied everyday practices, during the event it limited Casper's exploration of the physical environment. Elaborating on this analytical point means that skating with a stick before the event secured the interplay between body and materiality. In Lefebvre's terminology, the way in which the stick, the body and environment work together demonstrate a harmonic and eurhythmic interplay (Lefebvre 2004, p. 68). But in contrast, transforming the place into what Bo describes as a 'safe place for skating', where the practitioners could explore and exceed what they were capable of, the stick seemed limiting and a boundary to the principal intentions of the event. I observed Casper throughout the day. After several hours of skating, an instructor encouraged him to remove the stick. The instructor spoke to Casper's parents, who seemed uneasy with the suggestion but ended up removing the 30 cm of materiality attached to this chair he had been driving his whole childhood.

Mason (2018) argues that affinities should not be interpreted as relational or symbolic but viewed as sparks that set loose an energy or force that might limit or push a person. Early in the day, the experience Casper seemed to be searching for consisted of driving really fast and experiencing uncertainty while gaining familiarity with the surfaces of the physical environment, the wheelchair

and his body. An hour after removing the stick, Casper overcame obstacles he had not attempted earlier that day. He was fast before, but now he used different techniques, such as lifting the front wheels of the chair off the ground. Practices that previously created conflict now seemed to be different and to be constructively related since he rode differently and explored the physical environment in a more curious and playful way. I observed the look on Casper's face and he seemed excited and revealed an expression of 'look what I can do'. His lips slightly pressed together in a careful smile, he seemed happy and said: "It's been fun. I have never had the guts to drive down something before." He then took off again, accelerating fast, his arms moved fast cross the handle on the wheels of the chair — he is just going fast while smiling.

Returning to the question of how place can be designed through rhythms of affinities, it nuances how design processes involve more than changing opening hours and social rules of the place. These sensory 'slippery' phenomena emphasise how designing place is to a large extent a social process about connections taking places in situ.

3. Affinities connecting the individual and the social

We just started the workshop. We line up one by one inside Hal12. We drive up a two-metre-high ramp, turn and drive back down. It isn't steep, but challenging to turn the chair while moving, without stopping. It is my turn. Hesitating, my body tells me 'no', I notice the crowd of people surrounding me, on the floor and alongside the hall. I choose not to listen to my body and I force myself to take off. And as I come up, I realize I drove too vertically. I have difficulty turning to ride down again. I cannot make it, and I turn my wheels horizontally on the ramp, and fall backwards, the chair is heavy and makes me fall hard and roll on my neck. I feel pain. From the others behind me, I hear shouts of 'Arghhh', 'Ouch'. (Fieldnotes, December 2015)

After the crash, several practitioners asked me if I was okay, which made me reflect on the situation. From the spontaneous and slightly fearful shouts I understood that I had experienced something they associated with fear: the fear of falling in a wheelchair, being hurt and unable to get up again. The entire social design was set up to minimise and at the same time confront the fear of falling in order to explore new ways of using the wheelchair. As a novice with

the ability to get up on my own feet, sensing the social space that surrounded me, asking myself the question 'What do I have to lose?' and observing the others' reactions as I fell made me sense the sensitive boundaries of the social space I occupied.

During a session outside Hal12, I observed the following:

One woman sits in her chair up on the top of a ramp and hesitates as she is about to take off and drive down. She has seen others do the same. She laughs nervously, and one of the helpers approaches her, ready to support her when she drives down. She shouts 'Yay!' as she manages to ride down, and the other practitioners clap collectively and yell, 'Well done', 'Respect'. (Fieldnotes, December 2015)

To Mason (2018), affinities take shape in the in-between of an interplay of multiple sensations. The frisson described above – the woman sitting positioned high on a ramp, surrounded by people ready to catch her, exploring within a specific social-relational space – generated a courage and an eagerness to exceed embodied logics. In Lefebvre's (2004) terminology, the interplay of external rhythms (material, architectural and structural), internal rhythms (embodied, sensitive and emotional) and eurhythmic rhythms (the coordination of the present rhythms) brings forth a social force, an affinity, that gave rise to the courage to ride and support each other.

The event was organised by dividing the participants into two groups. One group started in the skateboarding hall, while the other group used the skateboarding facilities outside Hal12. After two hours of practice inside the hall, a lunch break was held, with food provided for everyone. Next came a two-hour outdoor session, with more skateboarding activities such as riding down steep passages etc. We ate lunch together, a woman had a birthday and we celebrated with cake and singing and finally at the end of the day, all the participants were invited to dinner and a party with music. Transforming the skate hall, only allowing wheelchair users to participate, situated the practitioners in the same situation, which evoked a connection between then and gave them a social force. This force was observable in the ways that the participants helped and encouraged each other to try new, embodied practices together throughout the day.

At the same time, however, several rhythms constructed the contrary effect. Bo invited David Lebuser, a professional sit n' skater, to inspire the practitioners and demonstrate how wheelchairs could be used differently. Sit n' skate is

a term used to describe the specific style of skating in a wheelchair. Lebuser's approach to skating is illustrated in his Instagram account through photographs and hashtags such as #fail, #sitnskate and #destroystereotypes. These hashtags emphasised that failing was part of practice, connected to pushing the boundaries of the body, the wheelchair and the material environment. Showing how to practice sit 'n skate, Lebuser became a role model for how being disabled and driving a wheelchair could bring forth new playful, embodied potentials. Potentials which are not associated with the limitations related to a wheelchair, but potentials reinforced by the ability to play, move differently, be excited, overcome fear, be challenged playfully and experience being able to do what no one ever thought of doing. Moreover, he became a model of handling fear as he continually challenged the boundaries of what he could do with his wheelchair and thus influenced the process of transforming the place. Mason argues:

Affinities, then, come alive in sensations. They are energies, forces and flows that can take shape in an ineffable kinship as well as in ecologies and the socio-atmospheric of life, and they articulate and resonate with time and with their times. Their potency can come from the frissons, charges, alluring discordances and poetics that animate and enliven everyday personal lives. (Mason 2018, p. 200)

The potency of an affinity is expressed as different types of frissons, charges or dissonances. Designing a temporal place for wheelchair users to practise sit n's skate struck a balance between constructing a safe place where rhythms operated harmonically together and inspiring and socially encouraging the practitioners out of their embodied comfort zones. In the preceding excerpt, the female skater shouted 'Yay!' while driving off the ramp and the others shouted 'ouch' and 'arghhh'. 'Yay', 'ouch', 'arghhh' become examples of affinities confronting the challenges and transitions she, they, we and I faced during the specific day. Rhythms of arrhythmia can bring forth affinities of fear, discomfort and anxiety. In this case, the social dimensions for the design were of particular importance to the event, since it reinforced the practitioners' embodied attitudes towards the challenges they confronted during the day.

Conclusion

From the perspective of a chair, although for only the one day, I observed and participated in the event Street on Wheels and the challenges set up for wheel-chair users in a skateboarding hall. My participation in a wheelchair allowed me to make design anthropological reflections and in the spirit of this anthology, open up an in-between space to bring forth reflections between the present and the future. The previous pages reveal complex layers of designing place and how re-designing places temporarily can provide embodied potentials for example wheelchairs users. The aim of the chapter has been to understand how designing place for one day can provide an in-between space wherein people experience multiple sensory experiences — individually and together.

Theoretically, this chapter draws upon Lefebvre's (2004) Rhythmanalysis, which is discussed and developed through sociologist Mason's (2018) concept of "affinities". Lefebvre (2004) helps us understand how places can consist of rhythms operating differently and influence everyday practices, and how place can consist of rhythms of materiality, sociality and spatiality. Through the concept of affinities, Mason's work is centred around sparks, flows and charges of connections, which reveals how elements of designing place can have a more ephemeral and improvisational character. The event Sit 'n Skate is an example of how a design can be defined in flexible terms, which allows for the participants to define the content of place as they go along. This raises design anthropological questions related to future notions of designing place; how are we to provide places of *in-between*, where the concept can be shaped through people with alternative ideas and approaches?

The three analytical parts of the chapter illustrate how designing place is about the connectedness of rhythms and how different types of connections generate different affinities. First of all, designing place for wheelchair users to explore extends beyond materiality and structure and is to a large extent about designing a safe place for embodied practices. Secondly, designing an in-between place for wheelchair users to explore is also about understanding the everyday life of wheelchair users and how unnoticeable types of materiality generate affinities, which influence feelings such as joy, hesitation, courage, fear and discomfort. Thirdly, the practices carried out during the day depended on the social connections among the practitioners, which made them encourage each other. The chapter illustrates how rhythms, sparks, flows and social forces are underlying in-between dimensions of place, which, even though they can be difficult to grasp, are important in our understanding of place. In a broader

perspective, designing places for only one day is interesting since it can bring forth a discussion about how places can be designed temporarily, and create alternative sensory experiences and participatory spaces.

Because this anthology has taken seriously the 'small cracks of everyday life', I have had the opportunity to dive into an in-between workspace where I could first of all take seriously empirical material from a single day's fieldwork, and secondly explore new connections between theoretical concepts and disciplines. Thus, this chapter is a starting point for new research perspectives within my research.

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