

The Idea of a House



AAHM10 Degree Project in Architecture at LTH

2024

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this report is

This is a digital (or printed) version of a written report of the thesis project "The idea of a House". It contains fragments and pieces from the project and uses the physical report as a media to order, show and guide you through the project.

This part of the project tries to create a map to find the work. It complements a 22 minute film in which the entire process of the project is sorted and shown. Extensive material such as this film, instruction videos, photos and other materials can be found at this website <https://strohkir.ch/the-idea-of-a-house-1>

Due to the nature of this project, the physical report serves as a container or package, not being reliant to be read in any specific order. It aims to avoid a linear reading approach, constructing multiple ideas across different topics, allowing the reader to immerse themselves in a world constructed by reader and material. I hope you enjoy the process of picking out and disassembling each part piece by piece of this package and story, getting glimpses and fragments of the full story. I encourage you to spend time with it and feel free to construct your own narrative.

The package includes a manuscript from the film documenting much of the project's process. It also contains texts, images, and event posters to help understand the project's development and impact at the Faculty of Architecture at Lund University. Additionally, links to a digital environment are provided, enabling further exploration, transfer, and sharing of the project.

The project's aim is to explore ways of thinking and positioning oneself to foster reflections and thoughts. This is crucial in a climate dominated by quick fixes, buzzwords, and final products that often oversimplify the contradictory and complex nature of architecture.

Currently, the project encompasses various acts and reflections, manifesting in different formats rooted in architectural elements, discussions, language, and topics. It seeks to inspire and explore the extent to which a project can challenge conventional boundaries, derived from a house slated for demolition. As long as it generates knowledge and reflection, it remains relevant.

Whenever I undertake something, I ask myself how it can challenge or investigate what lies beyond my initial thoughts. I treat everything as a tool, not a product. Consequently, every part generates anecdotes and metaphors that can be expanded upon by myself or others. Thus, the project has evolved into an act of world-making, demonstrating that architecture is far more than aesthetics, built structures, and cleverly placed materials. It highlights that a crucial aspect of architecture is the story, image, and theatre, triggering our senses to construct a feeling of space—an experience I was very pleased to discover by getting out into the built reality, with a work ethic of not always knowing if what I did would lead to any answers.

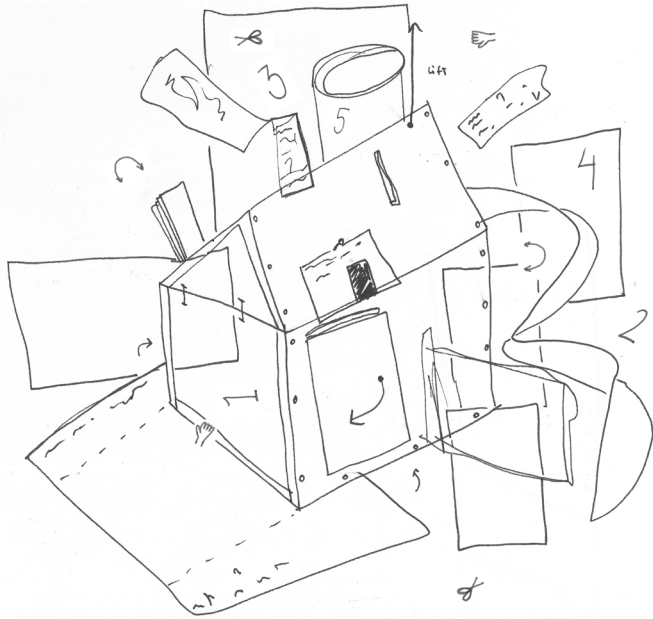


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links:

<https://strohkir.ch/the-idea-of-a-house-1>

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<https://strohkir.ch/zines>

<https://strohkir.ch/the-gift>

<https://strohkir.ch/house-objects>

<https://strohkir.ch/house-in-a-house-lund>

<https://strohkir.ch/film>

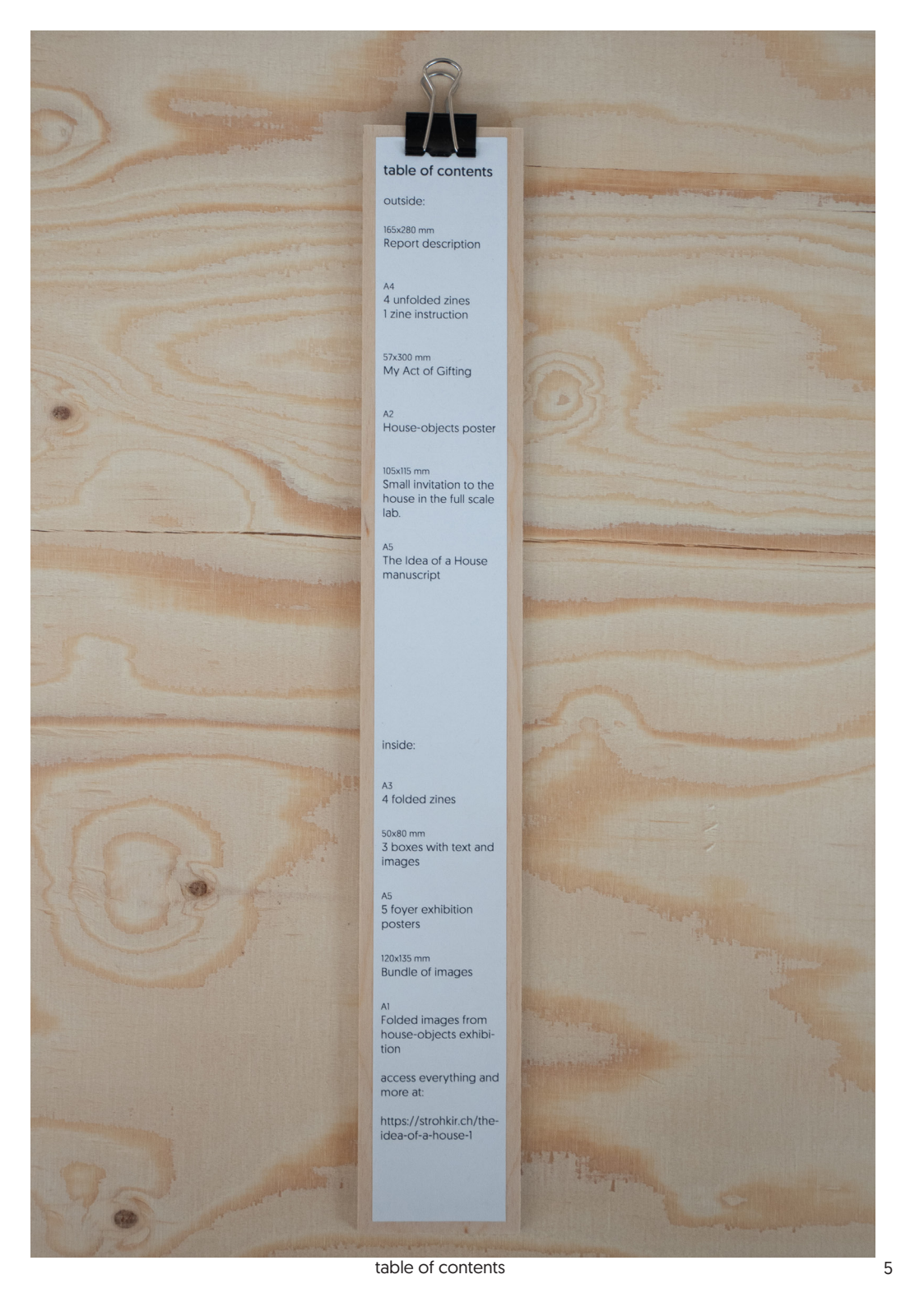


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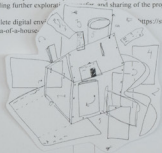


this is a report

Due to the nature of this project, this report serves as a container or package and being meant to be read in any specific order. It aims to avoid a linear thinking approach, encouraging multiple ways of reading and exploring, allowing the reader to immerse themselves in a world constructed by reader and presenter. From the process of packing and unpacking, drawing each part piece by piece of this package and story, getting glimpses and fragments of the full story. Spread loose with it and feel free to construct your own narrative.

This package includes a manuscript from the film documenting much of the project's process. It also contains texts, images, and event posters to help understand the project's development at the Faculty of Architecture at L and University. Additionally, links to a digital environment are provided, enabling further exploration and sharing of the project.

The complex digital environment is a multi-layered and dynamic space, designed to be explored and shared.

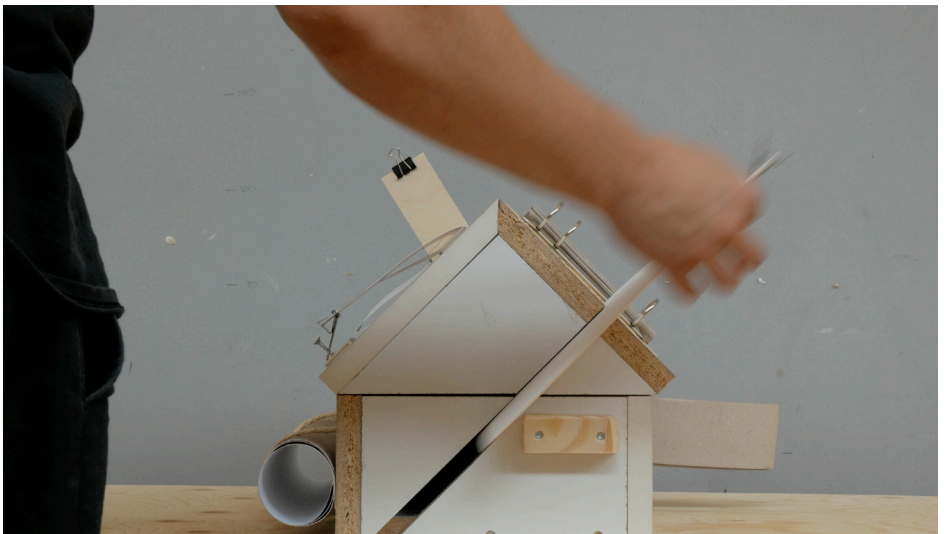


The project's aim is to explore ways of thinking and positioning oneself to foster reflections and thoughts. This is crucial in a climate dominated by quick fixes, buzzwords, and final products that often oversimplify the complexity and complex nature of architecture.

Currently, the project encompasses various acts and reflections, manifesting in different formats rooted in architectural elements, discussions, language, and topics. It seeks to inspire and explore the extent to which a project can challenge conventional boundaries, derived from a house aimed for demolition. As long as it generates knowledge and reflection, it remains relevant.

Whenever I undertake something, I ask myself how it can challenge or investigate what lies beyond my initial thoughts. I treat everything as a tool, not a product. Consequently, every part generates questions and metaphors that can be expanded upon by myself or others. Thus, the project has evolved into an act of world-making, demonstrating that architecture is far more than aesthetics, built structures, and cleverly placed materials. It highlights that a crucial aspect of architecture is the story, image, and theater, triggering our senses to construct a feeling of space — an experience I was very pleased to discover by getting out into the built reality, with a work ethic of one always knowing if what I did would lead to any answers.

4 unfolded zines
1 zine instruction





4 unfolded zines

House thoughts

This is a collection of excerpts from my thoughts. Thoughts that have come to be a project I choose to call "The Idea of a House" at this moment. The collected texts try to capture the essence of acts, reflections and material resulting from work since my first meeting with a house in Denmark. The texts try to construct voids that can foster own connections and thoughts that can stand alone, or be complemented with a film and an installation.

To experience this story, I ask you to become part of it. Connect to it. By printing these documents (A3) and folding them into your own zines, with eight pages each, you will have performed the ritual of creating something out of predetermined material. Your hands in action, connected to the material. A greeting. A contract. A becoming.

It takes about 3 minutes to make a zine. I have made an instructional video that you can watch here: <https://strohkir.ch/zines>

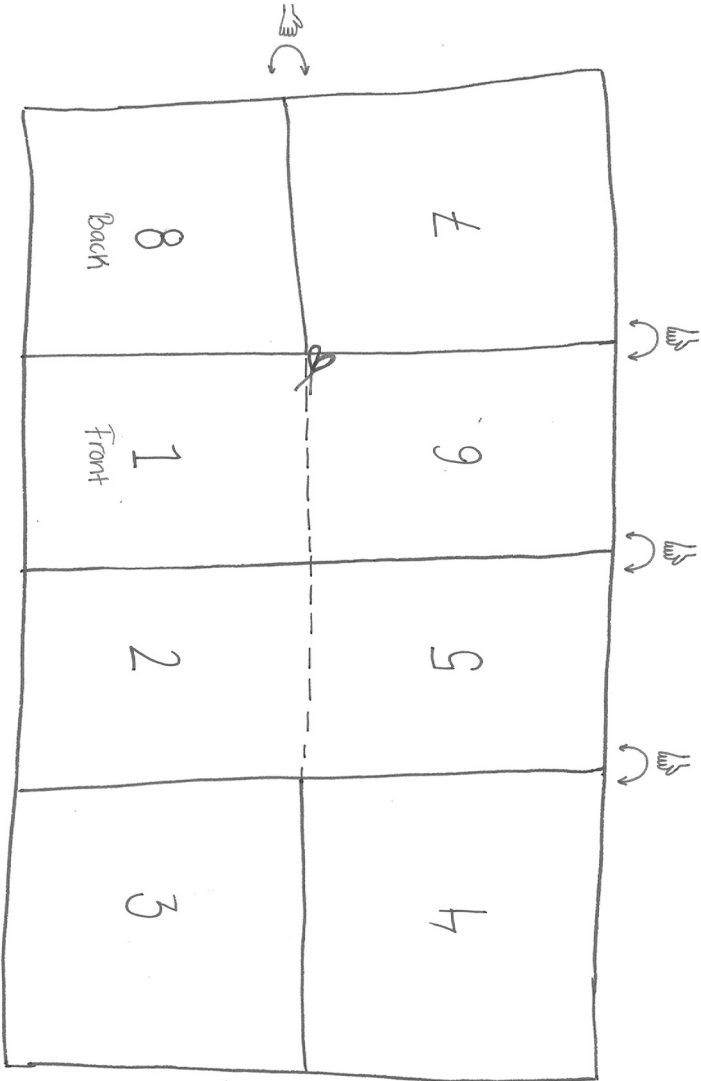
Through this act, you should now have sorted and created four zines.
Please read in this order:

the house, the ritual, the object and the archive.

Thank you for taking the time, and congratulations, you have created something!

sincerely

Valentin Strohkirch





Buildings are physically present spaces made out of collections of materials and stories. They are built to a certain image, shaped over time by so many aspects it is impossible to list.

At some point, most of them are demolished.

The collective understanding of their value is often lost over time where feelings of sentimentality often seem to be their greatest value, however, limited to their appearance and contribution of images, not their space, material or stories.

Working with the house is an exchange. The house becomes something I can harvest from the house, while other activities and things merge and allow for new contexts to enter the house, or to be entered by the house.

As a result of this project, the house will not be demolished as just a house. Its timeline will not have ended with being left to rot. By working with it, it has become something, it will exist in a quantity of mediums and ideas, even after its inevitable demolition. It has created a beginning of an ending.

In search of methods for remembering.



the house





During these 94 days, all my activities and thoughts have revolved around the house. Our timelines are now entangled, we work together to create new stories and investigations of space, material, and ritual. The house seems to contain all the answers for my questions. By its existence, it can tell us what it means for architecture to exist in time. I enjoy how it enters an architectural discussion that so often becomes a certain kind of space or building.

9x7 metres of existing house! Probably one of many cousins all around Denmark.



The origin of this project was my interest in investigating what would happen if I spent time with a house, having no pre-planned goal or intent beyond gathering knowledge and reflections.

What happens when a building is going to be demolished? What are the social, physical and mental processes of and around a house?

At the time of writing this I have spent 94 days with a house to be demolished. It is 7 kilometres south of Roskilde, Denmark. It is a residential house that is one and a half stories tall, it connects to a barn and an old bar/lounge area. It has stood empty for at least ten years and is nothing particular, it is nothing that crosses your mind. It just exists.

Wonderful!





Gordon Matta-Clark is an artist-architect that made these aspects graspable within the discourse. He visualises the aspect of ritual and its effects on space, and the discussion thereof, by planning, performing and documenting the acts. Documenting resulting spaces are manipulated and re-configured in photo-collages in order to achieve new spaces, which highlight the performative act and the spatial qualities resulting from it. By performing a ritual in a certain context, he achieves broad discussions about architectural autonomy, value and the right to manipulate space.

Most of my own understanding of Gordon Matta-Clark's work comes from reflections during and after the action, where the content of his work became comprehensible through the experience of actions. I make cuts in the house and reveal new sights. You fold the paper. Friends play and have lunch in the house. The house becomes a structure that hosts rituals that shapes spaces, but also creates new places, discussions and meanings.

Rituals create anecdotes that can reveal and compare dualities, complexions. They show how broader discussions within society manifest themselves in the scale of buildings, objects and artefacts. This has been the most effectful when I refrained from fixing all the circumstances, rather just doing, and then observing and reflecting on what happens.

Ritual transforms architecture into a verb. My body in Denmark, in Lund or inbetween, creating an extension of the house.



the ritual



For me, the initial quantitative mapping in the house to explore its spatial configuration in relation to vision was also a qualitative analysis, a ritual, which forced me to put my body in the space, becoming an actor.

I had created a new spatial understanding that went beyond what I could see, by fixing points within the house and connecting them to one single point with threads. That one point became present wherever I moved or was in the house, making conscious the presence of existing space.



Between thought, drawing and house, the body acts.



Architecture is often held high and regarded for its solid and static qualities. The reality of existing is however very different when experienced in real time as a built actuality. When experienced, architecture creates theatrical qualities by constructing visions, sequences and visual layers that we experience with our moving or static body.

In this project, I have tried to understand, create and analyse these qualities by becoming an actor and an activator that performs rituals within the existing house, and a reconstruction thereof.

Adding removing turning looking thinking dropping sticking detaching supporting moving placing sitting standing folding attaching scratching



Within the newly constructed system I did not avoid touch and closeness because of their repellent qualities anymore;

I was instead fearful because I did not want to disturb their configuration or break them.

Ritual and place change value and judgement.



the artefact





By reconfiguring, moving and merging material with new sites, the artist, Robert Smithson creates metaphors between what he calls “non site” and their original “site”. With the non-site Smithson constructs a mental connection and understanding of the original site. He does this without forcing the displaced materials and added materials to depict an accurate image or representation of the original site.

My first encounter with the house in Roskilde was influenced by leftover objects and how they over time seemed to have become moulded into the structure of the house itself. The totality of what made the space was not necessarily the floor plan, the walls or the furniture, but the synthesis thereof. It guided the way I wanted to move, avoiding touch and closeness. There was a power in the objects and my own prejudice towards them.



I think it is very human to enjoy objects. They have an almost infinite possibility to carry stories and become new reflections. That is why I over the course of this project have brought multiple objects created by the interaction with the house in Denmark to Lund.

By giving the objects this acknowledgment and attention, they become artefacts. Cutting, adding and re-locating became a conversation of matter, drawing and body. A conversation between the found and the new. The act reveals original qualities and creates new traces of ritual, adding to the artefacts narrative, and placing it in contrast to its origin, making us reflect about it.

Similarly to Smithson, I use the original site to generate a new site, a non-site. This becomes an act of place-making; materialising rituals in new contexts to make space into place. The artefact becomes part of a new system and a new totality. One artefact is the original, another is the replica, connected through the ritual, one artefact's void relates to another one's extension. Multiple layers of relations start playing into the experience, story and history make the artefacts relate between each other. The void around them allows for a mental game where the story unfolds and at the same time they also cite their origin, making us read multiple stories at the same time, fixed into physical matter.



German historian Wolfgang Ernst coined the term "anarchive", a speculative alternative to the institutional archive, searching for new orders and views of what the archive is. Naturally, the archive that this project has become, remembers but also proposes. It contains ideas for future acts. It contains the tools and the knowledge needed to do so. This archive is not a graveyard, rather a space for ideas. It is not as readable and diverges from the idea of explaining everything, and means. The gaps create room for own reflections and hopefully can inspire thoughts around the topic, the house.

Now archive seems to become a movement where the house lives in multiple formats in multiple networks. It becomes and generates things, thanks to the archive. It becomes present and accessible in others minds. Archive becomes a way to generate, host and inspire. It is a momentum, a carrier of the story that is this house.



If I try to categorise the parts of the project I would find it to be an impossible task, since everything is connected to a complex network of ever changing circumstances and also its own. One can dwell in multiple scales and multiple stories surrounding the smallest of details. Maybe we should not try to force things into categories? Let the material speak for itself. Categories offer quick explanations and understanding, this project acknowledges existence and existence takes time. The origin of this project was my interest in investigating what would happen if I spent time with a house; hence I have to spend time with the material generated by the house.

the archive

100424 100424 060324 260224

160324 design, host, sweat, splinter, chipboard, 100424 000324 1302

150424 100424 040324 1702

260224 290224 210224 1002

030224 050324 010424 06

Considering gifting as an architectural intervention in working with an existing house. An architectural intervention always means that access to gifting, and thinking of it as a gift can elevate and levels access. The intent of this text is to bravely explore what an architectural gift can be, should be, in the specific context of housing material with a house to



This archive, though, is fluid, it lacks a system of taxonomy. Its contents oscillate and change over time, offering further interactions and iterations as time goes. The aim of this archive is to engage and inspire thoughts and reflections. It has values beyond the physical matter: Social interactions created by the material create collective memories and reflections that can happen again and again changing the original material but also adding onto the general material surrounding the house.

When work generates content from the house, it creates documentation by also changing its state. The house however keeps existing, its characteristics are not fixed to the latest state of my interactions, but to natural circumstances following some system of entropy.



One could call this project an archive. The notion of the archive however offers a temporal dilemma, generally it orders and sorts material in categorised folders to be fixed in a linear time frame.

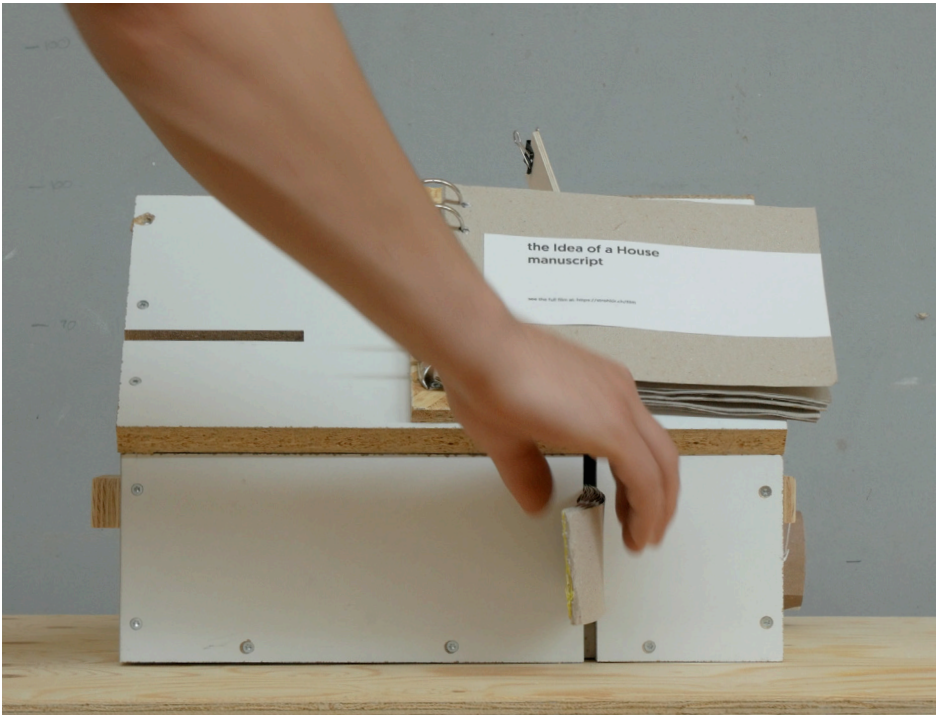


This body of work has amounted to a substantial amount of material. At the time of writing, the project contains about 24 hours of unedited video, over 2000 edited photographs, reflections, notes, sketches, collages, ideas, over 140 artefacts, fragments of full scale reproductions of the house.

This material is the result of spending time with a house. It is the by-product of ritual. Documentation is art-making, art-making is documentation.

My Act of Gifting







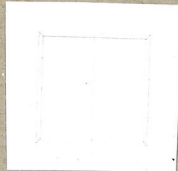
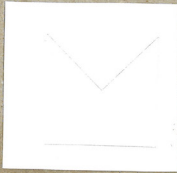


1

Considering gifting as an architectural act is an exercise relevant to working with an existing house. An architectural intervention shares many likenesses to gifting, and thinking of it as a gift can elevate and break norms. My intent of this text is to briefly explore what an architectural gift can be, should be, in the specific context of having worked with a house to be destroyed.



4



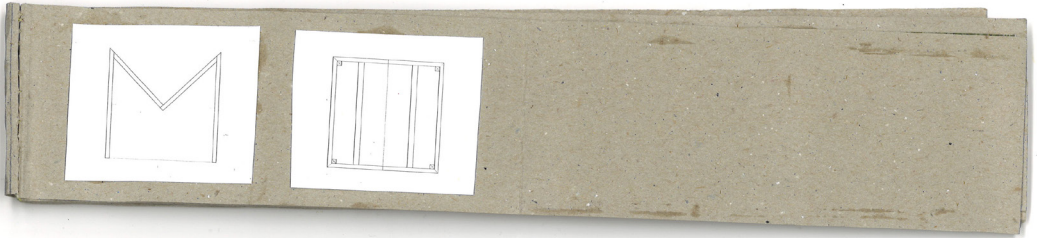
6

In this specific context, I view gifting, presenting a gift, as an altruistic exchange. When giving a gift, various factors must be considered to ensure it is successful in its intent. To gift can be the reason of multiple happenings, it can be an act of kindness, a thank you or a celebration. It can also be part of politics, acts of politeness, an apology or as a routine ritual. I have disregarded the act of gifting with malicious intent, putting in question if it can even be considered gifting. With malicious intent I mean instances of bribery, justification of wrong-doings or satisfying your own needs by transmitting something to a recipient.

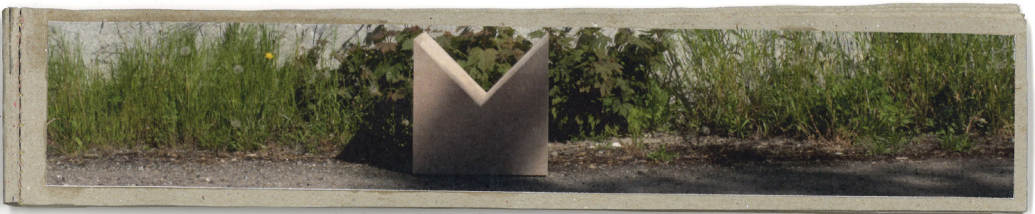
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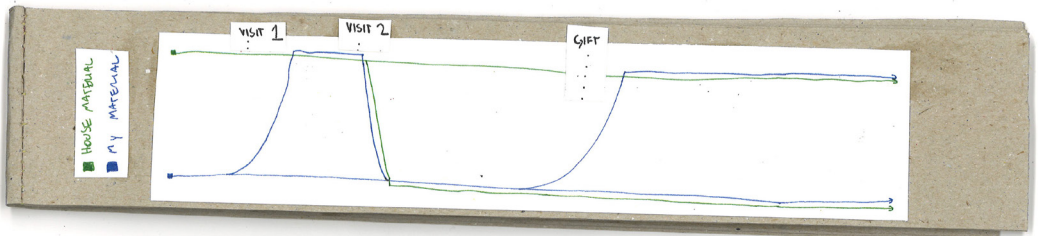
3



5



7



8

It's important to acknowledge that gifting involves an exchange, as Marcel Mauss argues in his essay "The Gift.". To consider are also certain factors of duty connected to the act of gifting, the duty of giving, the duty of receiving and the duty of reciprocating. I believe gifting can embody altruism while still fostering stronger bonds between giver and recipient.

10



12



14

It is the thought that counts.

9



11

Within this definition I have set certain guidelines for gifting to clarify its intent, meaning and relation when I give. Here, the gift is an addition of something, an excessiveness that would not necessarily have been required otherwise. A physical gift should not burden the recipient. It should be of appropriate scale and relevance to them. Additionally, importantly, the gift should not imply that the recipient is inadequate or requires improvement.

13

I prefer gifts that fulfil desires rather than immediate needs. In regards to the current context, gifting represents an abundance of care. Helping is something you should do, gifting is something you could do. Gifting becomes an experiment; you can not reveal what you are gifting until the recipient is receiving it, and here you become an observer, analysing the reaction resulting from the act. In this case, the goal is an exchange of positive emotion, the recipient acquires something beyond payment, and the giver gains a feeling of accomplishment, having thought, prepared and materialised something in the world of another.

15



16



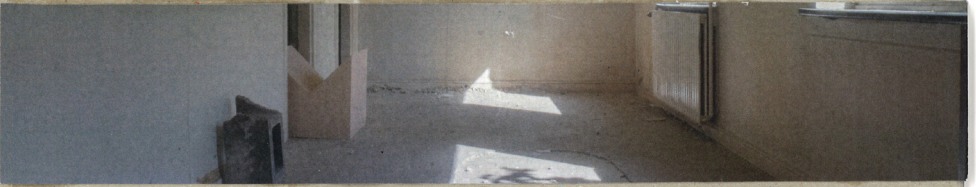
My gift should be an act of care, an act of thought, that can manifest itself as thing, experience, activity, food, precious materials, words, artefacts and much more. By gifting, we entangle ourselves with the recipient, part of us becoming present in their existence as they accept the gift. It does not matter what happens to the gift, whether it be stored in the basement, opened and drank immediately, worn or never worn, it is something from us, that becomes something of theirs.

18

It is my intent to give the house an excessive object as a gift, that can be left to the house during its days of celebration before being demolished. It is my intention that the gift shall leave the house with something luxurious, something it does not need but something that makes the general content of the house different than before receiving the gift.



20



22



17



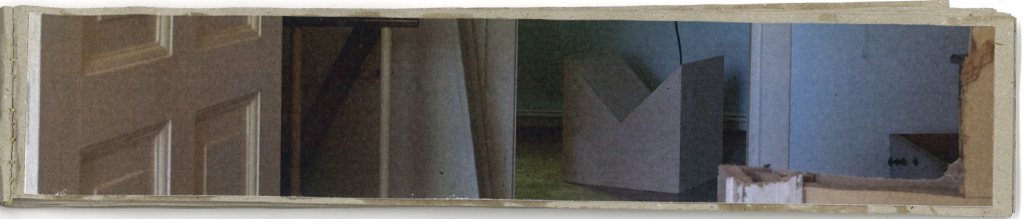
19



21



23







The Idea of a House

AAHME: Degree Project in Architecture at UTH

2024

Author: Valentin [unclear]

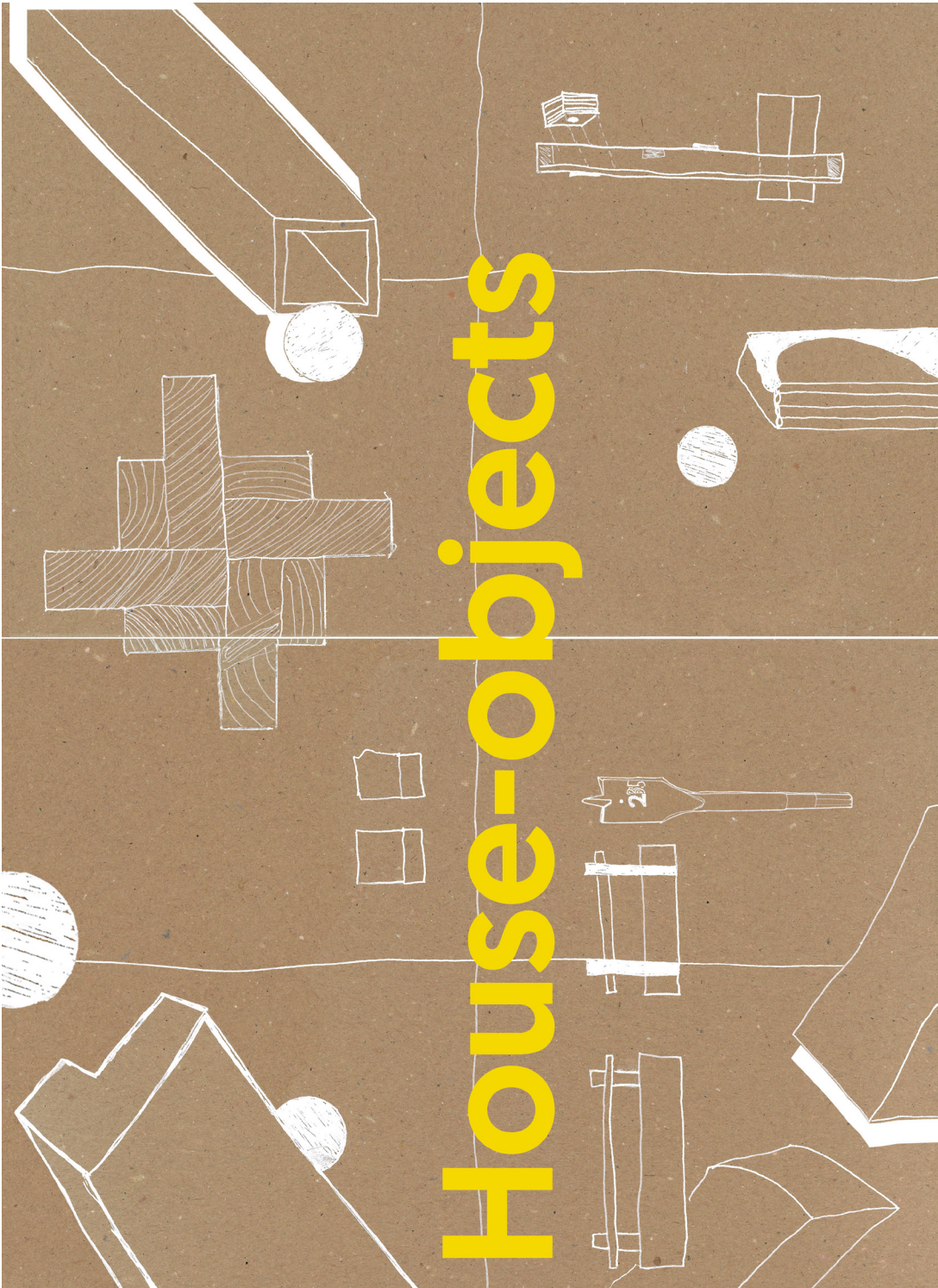
Examined by: Peter-Johann [unclear]

Supervised by: Erik [unclear] Andreas Malm

reference I was very pleased
with a week after of each
answers. into the hall ready,
it would lead to any

22.04.2024
Sol-Labbet

House-objects



22.04.2024
Sol-Labbet

Welcome to Sol-Labbet to experience
an ongoing process where materials
meet through the act of building.

The installation is part of an ongoing
project exploring:

A reconfiguration of fragments
creating new experiences and
relations citing somewhere else.

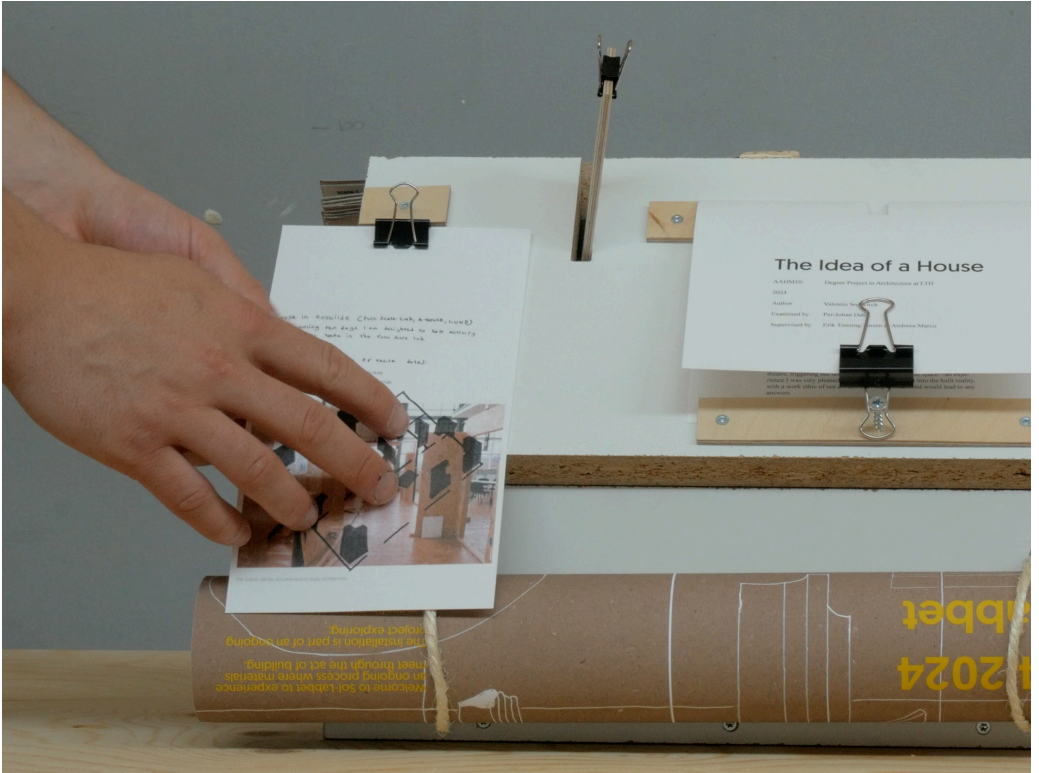
An archive of a house across scales.

An action of understanding what
creates a house.

VALENTIN STROHLICH

Invitation to the house in the full scale lab.





House in Roskilde (Full Scale Lab, A-HOUSE, LUND)

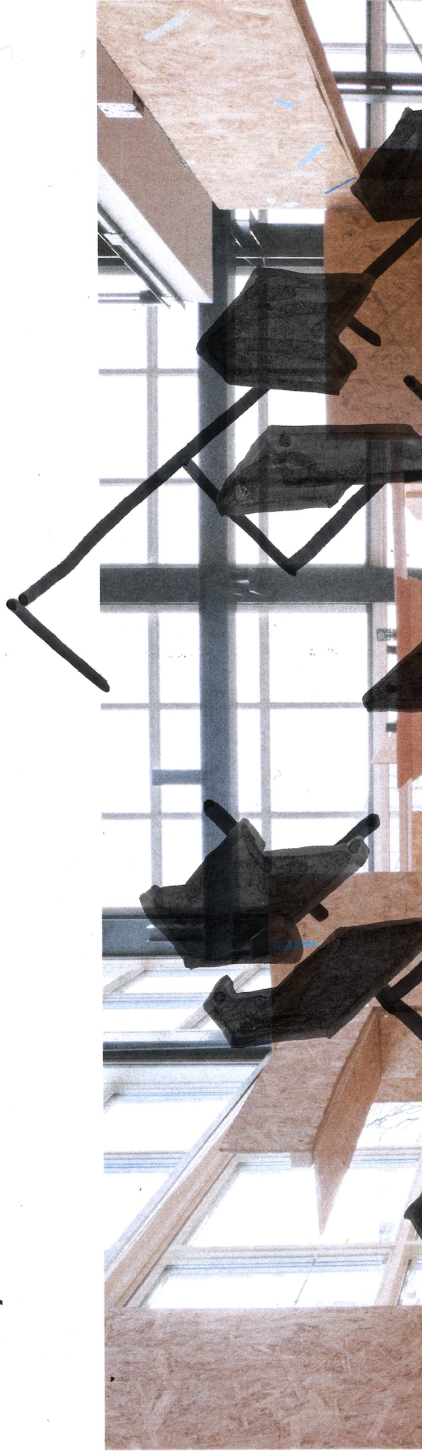
The upcoming 10 days I am delighted to host activity in/around the house in the full scale lab.

Feel free to join any of these dates:

Wednesday March 6 - Lunch (bring your own) 12:00-13:00

Thursday March 7 - Cinema (there will be popcorn) 16:00-17:00

Wednesday March 13 - Table Tennis Tournament 15:30-End





The events will be documented to study architecture.

The Idea of a House
manuscript





see the film here: <https://strohkir.ch/film>



**the Idea of a House
manuscript**

see the full film at: <https://strohkir.ch/film>

scene 1.

In this specific context, I view gifting, presenting a gift, as an altruistic exchange. A gift is presented because of various reasons, it can be an act of kindness, a thank you or a celebration. It can also be part of politics, acts of politeness, an apology or as a routine ritual.

Marcel Mauss argues in his essay "The Gift," that gifting involves an exchange. I believe gifting can embody altruism while still fostering stronger bonds between giver and recipient. In my case, the gift is an addition of something, an excessiveness that would not have been required otherwise. It is the materialisation of a relationship between two.

The gift should not imply that the recipient is inadequate or requires improvement.

I prefer gifts that fulfill desires rather than immediate needs. In regards to the current context, gifting represents an abundance of care. Helping is something you should do, gifting is something you could do.

And gifting becomes an experiment; you can not reveal what you are gifting until the recipient is receiving it, and here you become an observer, analysing the reaction resulting from the act. In this case, the goal is an exchange of positive emotion, the recipient acquires something beyond payment, and the giver gains a feeling of accomplishment, having thought, prepared and materialised something in the world of another. In this case, it brings balance.

It is the thought that counts.



scene 2.

Today I have spent 108 days with a house to be demolished. It is 7 kilometres south of Roskilde, Denmark. It is a residential house that is one and a half stories tall, it connects to a barn and an old bar and lounge area. It has stood empty for at least ten years and is nothing particular, it is nothing that crosses your mind if you pass by. It just exists.

This project has its roots in the interest of exploring what are the social, physical and thought processes around a house to be demolished? And how does documentation intertwine with architecture? And lastly Can I become one with a house?

Through inserting myself in the timeline of a house most people would pass by, I have through documentation in various ways aimed to make architecture into a verb. During this process the questions that have floated around have been more open and leading.

These questions have been understanding what existing architecture is? What does it mean to exist? What is "house"? How do we relate to space, house, architecture?



scene 3.

By putting my body into the space and narrative of a house that is going to be demolished I created a new chapter of the story that is this house. From the beginning the house forms the narrative, it exists, it makes space, frames and rhythm and together with me it shapes a non linear narrative of spatial sequence and understanding.

By letting vision guide the process I set up points in the house which I mapped and measured. These experiments created a choreography of the body in space. As I moved around in the building at this time, I started to read strings as direction and a solidified relation.



scene 4.

After having come back to Lund with these thoughts I longed to further investigate what this built configuration was. I let it inspire a fragmented replica building, consisting of these relations.

When building, my body became a mediator of the experience and memory of the existing house.

By the act of building I had this strong reflection of the likeness of building and un-building.

Hence I made a list with everything that was architecture at that moment, or the result of the creation of it.



scene 5.

The fragments become allegory, and play with the notion of being the house, in a completely different place. The fragmented pieces of existing space lets one feel, think and construct own understandings and experiences of the house. It also lets you play with the notion of site-non site, becoming a laboratory of a house in Roskilde, but in the full scale lab in Lund.



scene 6.

By inviting people to different activities in the house I could celebrate it. The feeling of anticipation, action and ruin, what was left after the events, also became very clear, and shared a resemblance to how the house in Roskilde was perceived.

It becomes an experience of space and place, the house in Roskilde becomes meaningful space, place, through its activation in Lund. The architecture created the social, but the social also created the architecture.



scene 7.

After the activity the time had come, the Full scale lab house became unwanted and reduced to physical material in the way of something, and has since been in a state of displacement, it had no room, and shared the same unwantedness in the norms of the institution in search of apparent and logical function.



scene 8.

The act of removing to create is sometimes distant to us.

But by cutting the existence of the house becomes apparent. By creating a void we start to think, and engage with the house in a different way than we would if we would not have made these cuts, then it would be a house passed by. It is another play with the seen and unseen.

Somehow the act creates multiple materials that cite the house. It creates new memories which connect and grow out of the memory of the existing house. It materialises and uses the bodily ritual to carve space and narrative. By putting my body to work, I started understanding, at least my own take, of what Gordon Matta-Clark's building cuts achieve beyond sculptural value.

This act also became a way for the two houses to connect, through my body in the space. It felt good being here and working in similar ways to building the house in lund. It created a balance between here and there.

Lastly, the acts of me and others made me reflect on what the function of existing architecture is and can be other than house. This house has become a laboratory, a space to harvest, a social space, a house to dwell in your mind, a house to speak about and think about.



scene 9.

As a result of these rituals, pieces from the house in Roskilde were displaced. It was a good moment to see the house from the full scale lab and a house from Roskilde come together. They became displaced together, object, trash, item became artefact, and in my mind, full of potential.



scene 10.

After these fast actions and retrievals I had gotten into a state of reflection and organisation. It has become apparent that material is not only physical things, but thoughts, ideas and memories, which can be sorted, grouped and assembled in ways that intrigue and leave room for thoughts, discussions and imagination.

It is this material that constructs a house. And through sorting and organising and assembling the artefacts I become more connected to the house in Roskilde.



scene 11.

As a westerner and an architect I am questionably accustomed to the grid as a way to create a coordinate system, something I did to get a fixed set of relations for exploring the objects.

By creating a grid in a room you start reading its imperfections, creating points of relation within a void, making visible what makes the room. I find it humorous how the common idea of a static coordinate system meets the human body constructing it, ending with a non static, human, grid. I think it is comparable to our obsession to force our grids onto everything, yet our reality is far from it.

Similarly to Peter Smithson, I use the original site to generate a new site, a non-site. This becomes an act of place-making, materialising rituals in new contexts to make space into place. The artefact becomes part of a new system and a new totality. One artefact is the original, another is the replica, connected through the ritual, one artefact's void relates to another one's extension. Multiple layers of relations start playing into the experience, story and history that make the artefacts relate between each other. The void around them allows for a mental game where the story unfolds and at the same time they also cite their origin, making us read multiple stories at the same time, fixed into physical matter.

As a result of configuration and ritual, my prejudice towards the house had completely changed. When first visiting the house it felt as an uncomfortable intimacy, however when walking now in this configuration I became scared of touching the objects, in fear of destroying them instead.



scene 12.

Between thought, drawing and house, the body acts. In a dance with the house, a story unfolds.

As thoughts started to synthesise while spending time setting up and making the House-Objects exhibition I got an urge to analyse the layers of space, the existing fragments of material stories, and at the same I wanted to create theatrical compositions that trigger your mind to fill the gap, becoming storytelling through relation, material and space.

Architecture is often held high and regarded for its solid and static qualities. The reality of existing is however very different, when experienced in real time as a built reality. Architecture creates theatrical qualities by constructing visions, sequences and visual layers that we experience as a totality with our moving or static body.



scene 13.

This body of work has amounted to a substantial amount of material. At the time of writing, the project contains about 24 hours of unedited video, over 2000 edited photographs, reflections, notes, sketches, collages, ideas, over 140 artefacts, fragments of full scale reproductions of the house. This material is the result of spending time with a house. It is the by-product of ritual. Documentation is art-making, art-making is documentation.

One could call this an archive. The notion of the archive however offers a temporal dilemma, generally it orders and sorts material in categorised folders to be fixed in a linear time frame.

Finally the house could come out of its confinement. If the basement is the graveyard that is the traditional archive, this project has become an archive as a movement. As something that can appear, disappear, create, merge and generate new ideas and understandings.

The house is completely different from what it was 108 days ago. It is a harbinger of ideas, something that inspires. The ritual, displacement, study and documentation have created connectors to a before smooth surface, allowing multiple further stories to be told and become out of the house.



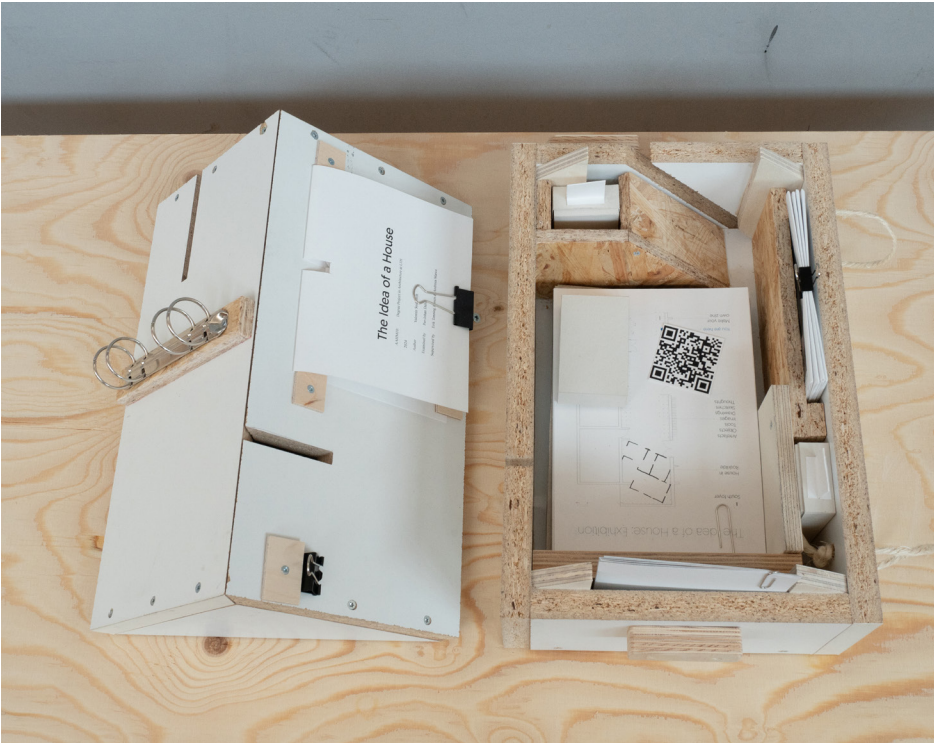


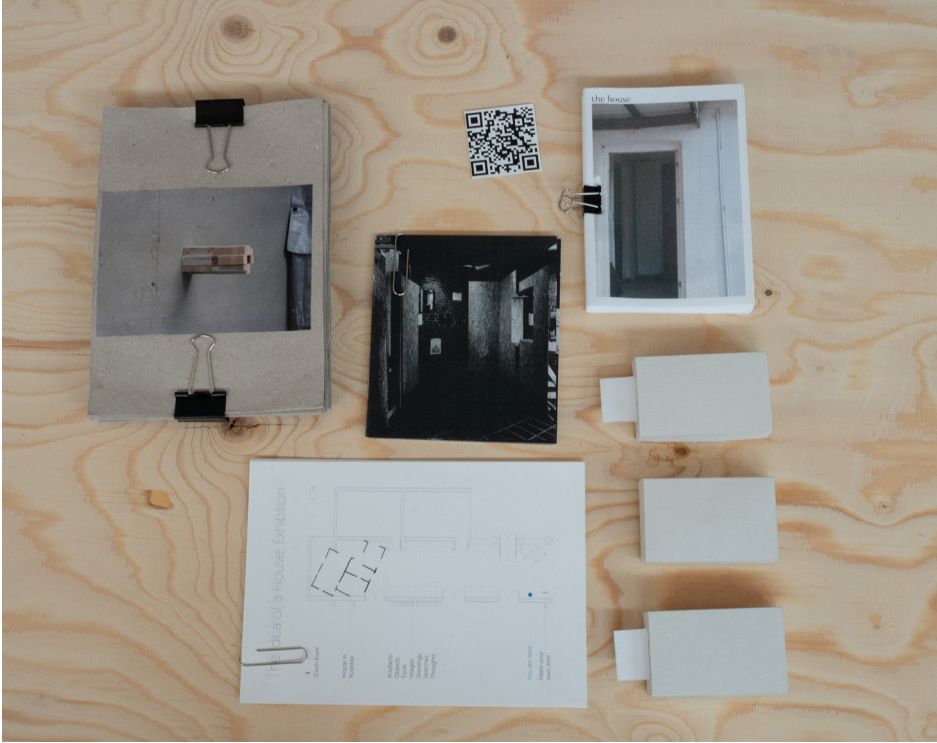
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Inside the box





4 folded zines

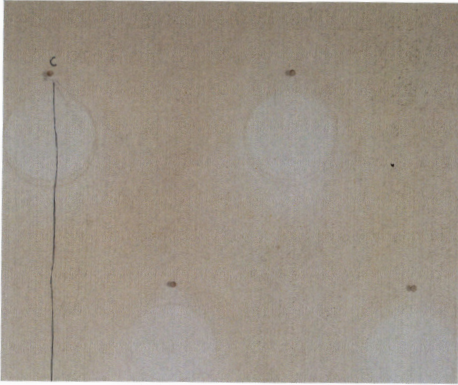
download the zines and see the instructional video here: <https://strohkir.ch/zines>





the house



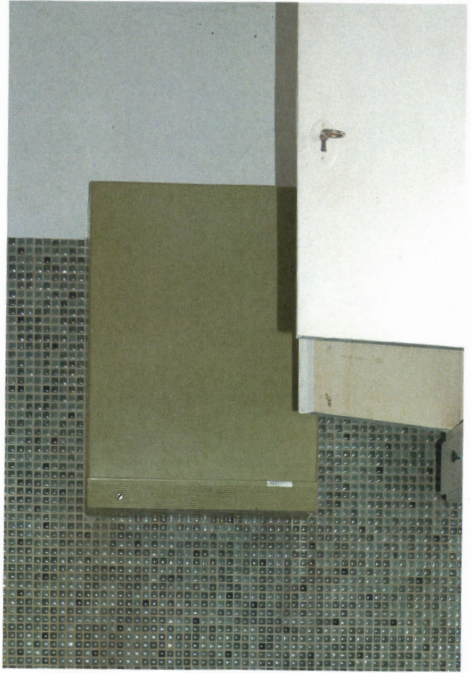


The origin of this project was my interest in investigating what would happen if I spent time with a house, having no pre-planned goal or intent beyond gathering knowledge and reflections.

What happens when a building is going to be demolished? What are the social, physical and mental processes of and around a house?

At the time of writing this I have spent 94 days with a house to be demolished. It is 7 kilometres south of Roskilde, Denmark. It is a residential house that is one and a half stories tall, it connects to a barn and an old bar/lounge area. It has stood empty for at least ten years and is nothing particular, it is nothing that crosses your mind. It just exists.

Wonderful!



During these 94 days, all my activities and thoughts have revolved around the house. Our timelines are now entangled, we work together to create new stories and investigations of space, material, and ritual. The house seems to contain all the answers for my questions. By its existence, it can tell us what it means for architecture to exist in time. I enjoy how it enters an architectural discussion that so often becomes a certain kind of space or building.

9x7 metres of existing house! Probably one of many cousins all around Denmark.

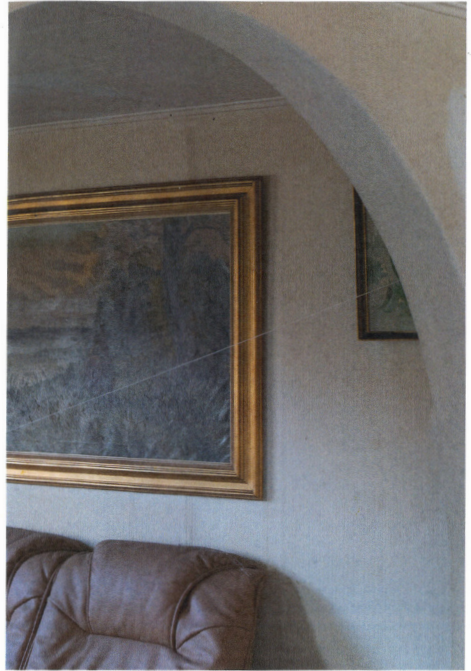


Buildings are physically present spaces made out of collections of materials and stories. They are built to a certain image, shaped over time by so many aspects it is impossible to list.

At some point, most of them are demolished.

The collective understanding of their value is often lost over time where feelings of sentimentality often seem to be their greatest value, however, limited to their appearance and contribution of image, not their space, material or stories.

Working with the house is an exchange. The house becomes something I can harvest. Some acts reconfigure, change and reimagine space and objects from the house, while other activities just change, merge and allow for new contexts to enter the house, or to be entered by the house.



As a result of this project, the house will not be demolished as just a house. Its timeline will not have ended with being left to rot. By working with it, it has become something, it will exist in a quantity of mediums and ideas, even after its inevitable demolition. It has created a beginning of an ending.

In search of methods for remembering.



the ritual



Between thought, drawing and house, the body acts.



Architecture is often held high and regarded for its solid and static qualities. The reality of existing is however very different when experienced in real time as a built actuality. When experienced, architecture creates theatrical qualities by constructing visions, sequences and visual layers that we experience with our moving or static body.

In this project, I have tried to understand, create and analyse these qualities by becoming an actor and an activator that performs rituals within the existing house, and a reconstruction thereof.



For me, the initial quantitative mapping in the house to explore its spatial configuration in relation to vision was also a qualitative analysis, a ritual, which forced me to put my body in the space, becoming an actor.

I had created a new spatial understanding that went beyond what I could see, by fixing points within the house and connecting them to one single point with threads. That one point became present wherever I moved or was in the house, making conscious the presence of existing space.

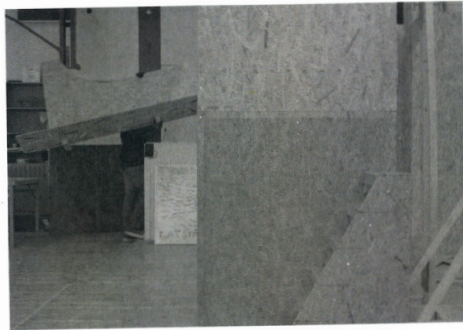
Gordon Matta-Clark is an artist-architect that made these aspects graspable within the discourse. He visualises the aspect of ritual and its effects on space, and the discussion thereof, by planning, performing and documenting the acts. Documenting also becomes ritual, where the acts and resulting spaces are manipulated and re-figured in photo-collages in order to achieve new spaces, which highlight the performative act and the spatial qualities resulting from it. By performing a ritual in a certain context, he achieves broad discussions about architectural autonomy, value and the right to manipulate space.

Most of my own understanding of Gordon Matta-Clark's work comes from reflections during and after the action, where the content of his work became comprehensible through the experience of actions. I measure the house, I reconstruct the house. I make cuts in the house and reveal new sights. You fold the paper. Friends play and have lunch in the house. The house becomes a structure that hosts rituals that shapes spaces, but also creates new places, discussions and meanings.



Rituals create anecdotes that can reveal and compare dualities, complexions. They show how broader discussions within society manifest themselves in the scale of buildings, objects and artefacts. This has been the most effectful when I refrained from fixing all the circumstances, rather just doing, and then observing and reflecting on what happens.

Ritual transforms architecture into a verb. My body in Denmark, in Lund or inbetween, creating an extension of the house.



the artefact



By reconfiguring, moving and merging material with new sites, the artist, Robert Smithson creates metaphors between what he calls "non site" and their original "site". With the non-site Smithson constructs a mental connection and understanding of the original site. He does this without forcing the displaced materials and added materials to depict an accurate image or representation of the original site.

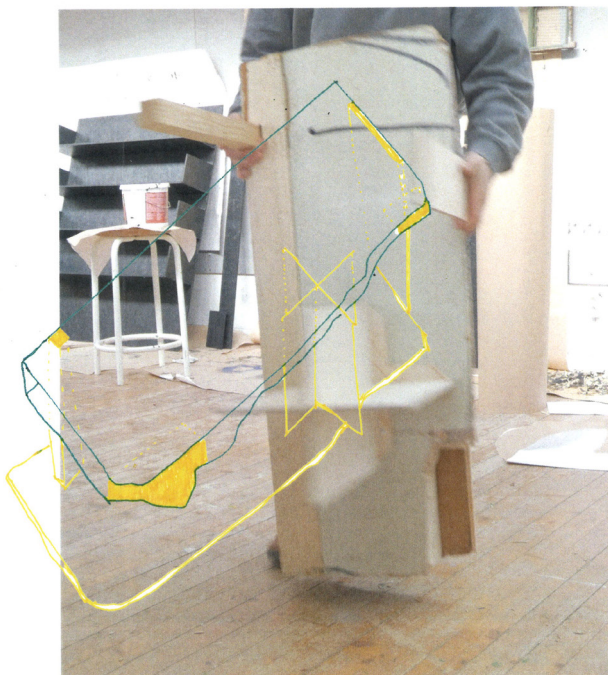
My first encounter with the house in Roskilde was influenced by leftover objects and how they over time seemed to have become moulded into the structure of the house itself. The totality of what made the space was not necessarily the floor plan, the walls or the furniture, but the synthesis thereof. It guided the way I wanted to move, avoiding touch and closeness. There was a power in the objects and my own prejudice towards them.

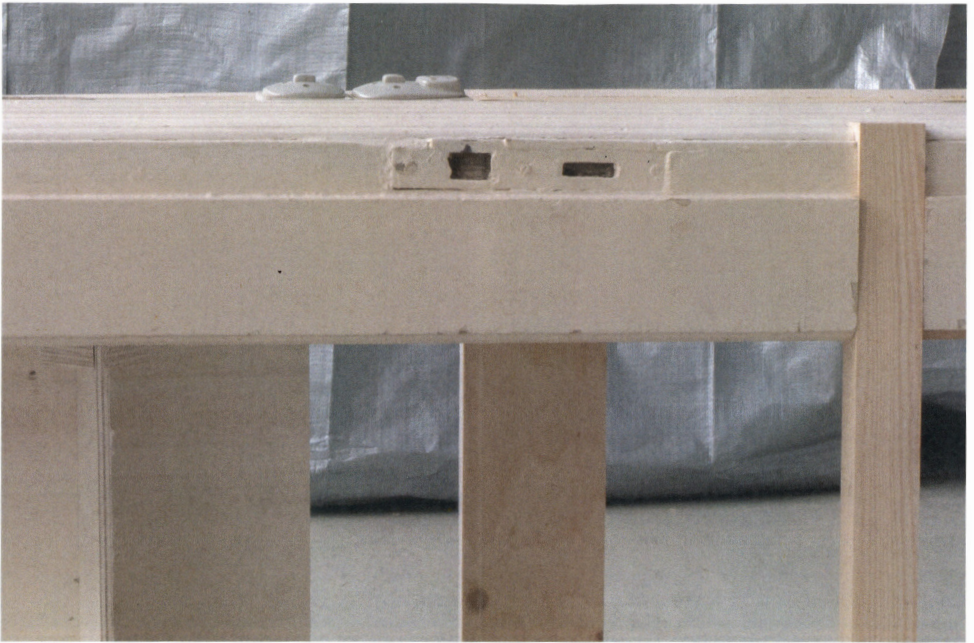


I think it is very human to enjoy objects. They have an almost infinite possibility to carry stories and become new reflections. That is why I over the course of this project have brought multiple objects created by the interaction with the house in Denmark to Lund.

By giving the objects this acknowledgement and attention, they become artefacts. Cutting, adding and re-locating became a conversation of matter, drawing and body. A conversation between the found and the new. The act reveals original qualities and creates new traces of ritual, adding to the artefacts narrative, and placing it in contrast to its origin, making us reflect about it.

Similarly to Smithson, I use the original site to generate a new site, a non-site. This becomes an act of place-making, materialising rituals in new contexts to make space into place. The artefact becomes part of a new system and a new totality. One artefact is the original, another is the replica, connected through the ritual, one artefact's void relates to another one's extension. Multiple layers of relations start playing into the experience, story and history make the artefacts relate between each other. The void around them allows for a mental game where the story unfolds and at the same time they also cite their origin, making us read multiple stories at the same time, fixed into physical matter.





Adding, removing, turning, looking, thinking, destroying, glueing, taking, feeling, pointing, giving, squishing, drawing, painting, copying, peeling, cleaning, lifting, balancing, turning, punching, dropping, slicing, denting, supporting, moving, placing, giving, folding, attaching, scratching

Within the newly constructed system I did not avoid touch and closeness because of their repellent qualities anymore;

I was instead fearful because I did not want to disturb their configuration or break them.

Ritual and place change value and judgement.



the archive

100424

100424

060324

260:



160324

100424

090324

130:



design,
host, sweat,
splinter,
chipboard,



HÄGGS
TIL
BAUENB!

150424

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170:



260224

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Considering gifting as a method of work is an exercise in working with an existing house. An architectural intervention shares many similarities to gifting and thinking of it as a gift can clarify and break down. My intent of this text is to clarify explore what an architectural gift can be, should be, in the specific context of how we worked with a house to





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This material is the result of spending time with a house. It is the by-product of ritual. Documentation is art-making, art-making is documentation.

One could call this project an archive. The notion of the archive however offers a temporal dilemma, generally it orders and sorts material in categorised folders to be fixed in a linear time frame.



This archive, though, is fluid, it lacks a system of taxonomy. Its contents oscillate and change over time, offering further interactions and iterations as time goes. The aim of this archive is to engage and inspire thoughts and reflections. It has values beyond the physical matter. Social interactions created by the material create collective memories and reflections that can happen again and again changing the original material but also adding onto the general material surrounding the house.

When work generates content from the house, it creates documentation by also changing its state. The house however keeps existing, its characteristics are not fixed to the latest state of my interactions, but to natural circumstances following some system of entropy.



If I try to categorise the parts of the project I would find it to be an impossible task, since everything is connected to a complex network of outer, changing, circumstances and also its own. One can dwell in multiple scales and multiple stories surrounding the smallest of details.

Maybe we should not try to force things into categories? Let the material speak for itself. Categories offer quick explanations and understanding, this project acknowledges existence and existence takes time. The origin of this project was my interest in investigating what would happen if I spent time with a house; hence I have to spend time with the material generated by the house.

German historian Wolfgang Ernst coined the term "anarchive", a speculative alternative to the institutional archive, searching for new orders and views of what the archive is.

Naturally the archive that this project has become, remembers but also proposes. It contains ideas for future acts. It contains the tools and the knowledge needed to do so. This archive is not a graveyard, rather a space for ideas. It is not as readable and diverges from the idea of explaining what everything is, and means. The gaps create room for own reflections and hopefully can inspire thoughts around the topic, the house.



Now archive seems to become a movement where the house lives in multiple formats in multiple networks. It becomes and generates things, thanks to the archive. It becomes present and accessible in others minds. Archive becomes a way to generate, host and inspire. It is a momentum, a carrier of the story that is this house.



3 boxes with text and images







The house got another chance to make an appearance, this time in the entrance foyer of the architecture school. A synthesis of materials telling multiple different stories using projection, sound together with the house in its, almost, correct relations. This created an effect of visual layering and parallax of senses, resembling the same feeling of the house in Roskilde.

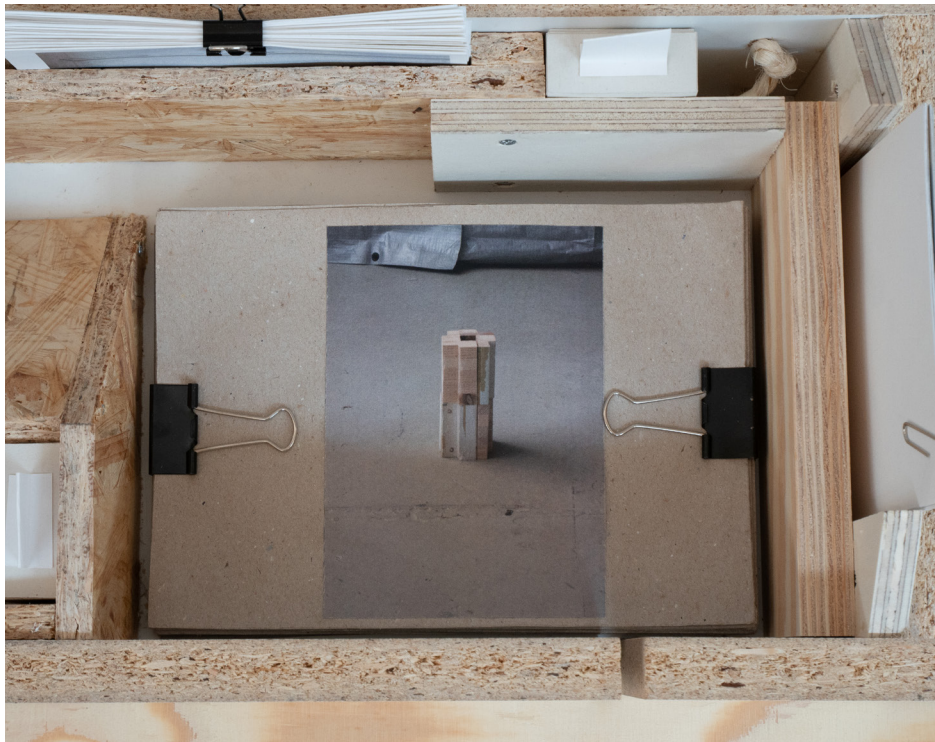








Folded images from
house-objects exhibition













Bundle of images





end notes

I built 5 more physical reports, each one containing less and less physical material, but through online links or this digital version, printed, it contained the same content.

The same content, however experienced totally different due to the interactions, time and contact created by technical details, placement and material.

This is the end of this report, but not necessarily the end of this project.







Thank you

Charlotte och Thomas Søder for letting me work on your house.

Erik Tønning Jensen

Andreea Marcu

Per-Johan Dahl

Maria Rasmussen

The janitors and cleaners at A-house in Lund

Friends and family