



Re-play:

# Breathing Life into Empty Spaces

Transforming forgotten urban land  
with recovered materials into playful,  
inclusive spaces for youth connection  
and activity

Eugenia Liut  
MA Interior and Spatial Design - Research Record

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# 01

## RESEARCH

### PRIMARY

At the start of my course, I was driven by the curiosity to understand how to enhance the well-being of people living in an urban environment like London.

In the first unit, I focused my research on identifying the elements that impact on both our mental and physical health.

By studying subjects such as environmental psychology, social behaviour, and salutogenic design, I refined the focus of my practice to urban marginalised communities, where the quality of life is more at risk compared to wealthier neighbourhoods.

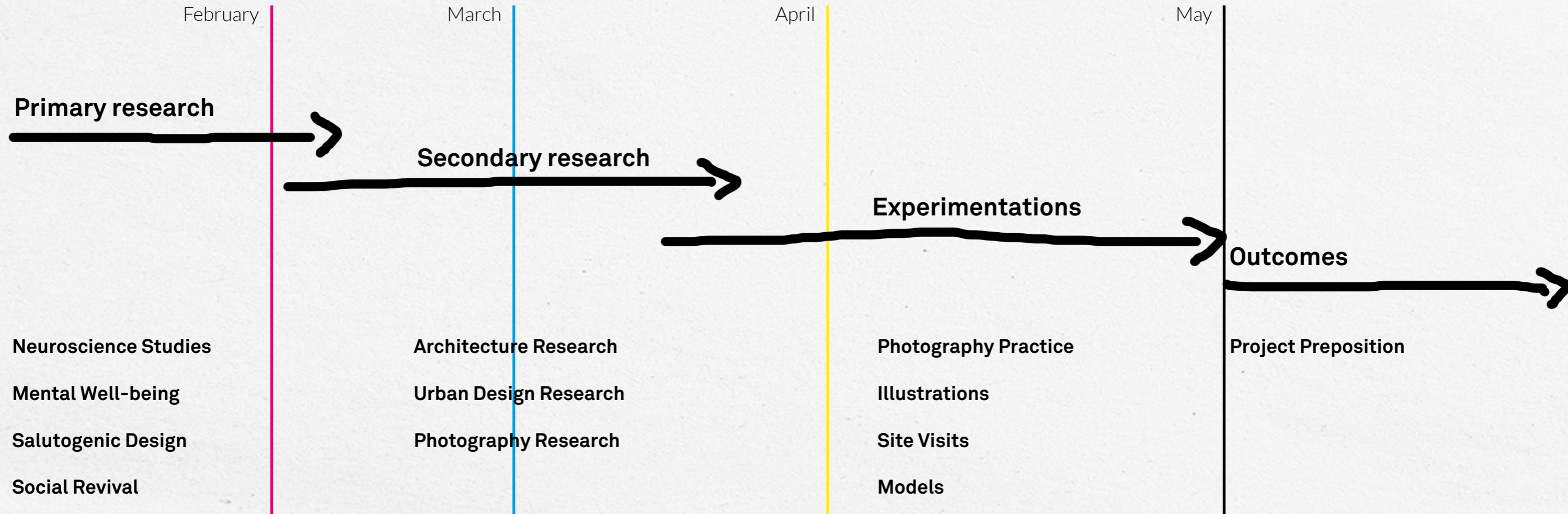
### SECONDARY

In the Unit Two, I centred my studies on topics related to design practice, including architecture, and urban design.

I attended an exhibition that inspired my photography practice and sparked my interest in documenting how local communities use public spaces in South London. I focused my street photography on the neighbourhoods of Walworth, Camberwell, and Peckham, where I live and study.

The findings from my research highlighted that urban spaces in these areas are predominantly dedicated to street markets, children's playgrounds, and urban transport, leaving little room for activities that cater to one of the most overlooked and at-risk age groups, teenagers.

# Research stages

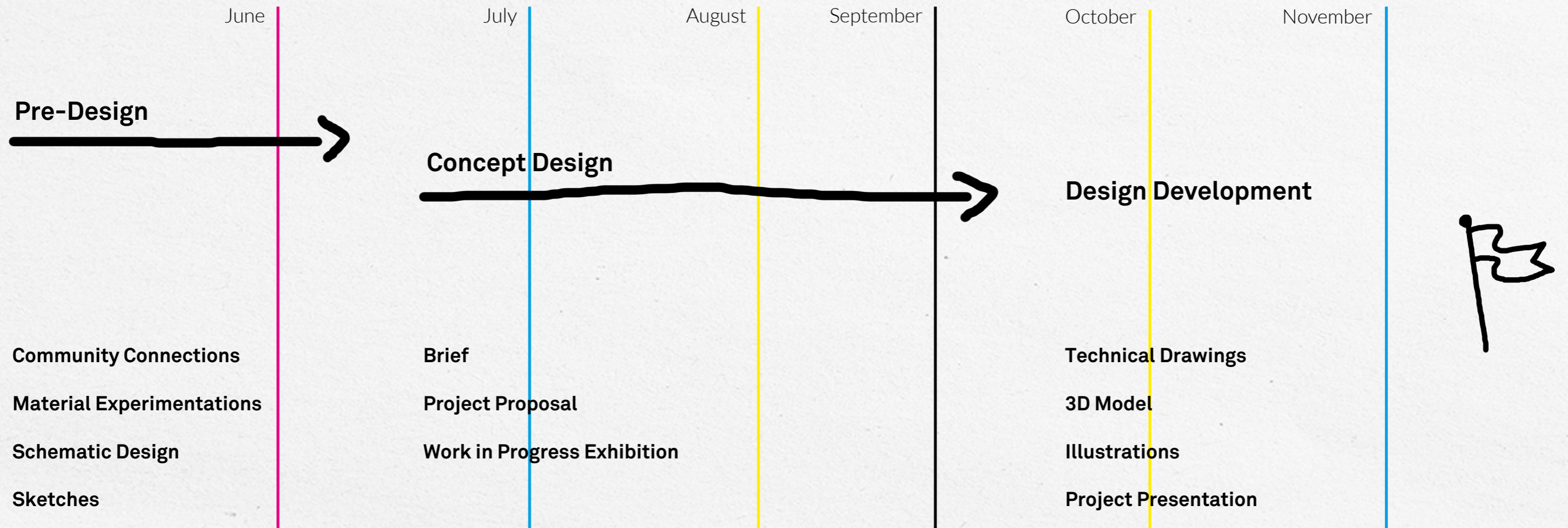


DEFINE



DEVELOP





DEVELOP → DELIVER!

# Primary research

## Neuroscience

In order to understand how to design a space that prioritises our mental and physical well-being, I began to look for scientific sources that tested how our brains develop and what factors it requires to stay healthy.

I found relevant to my research an experiment conducted by the Lise Meitner Group for Environmental Neuroscience and Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin.

This study showed how the brain develops in size, especially in individuals who have been influenced by negative moods, if time is spent outdoors.

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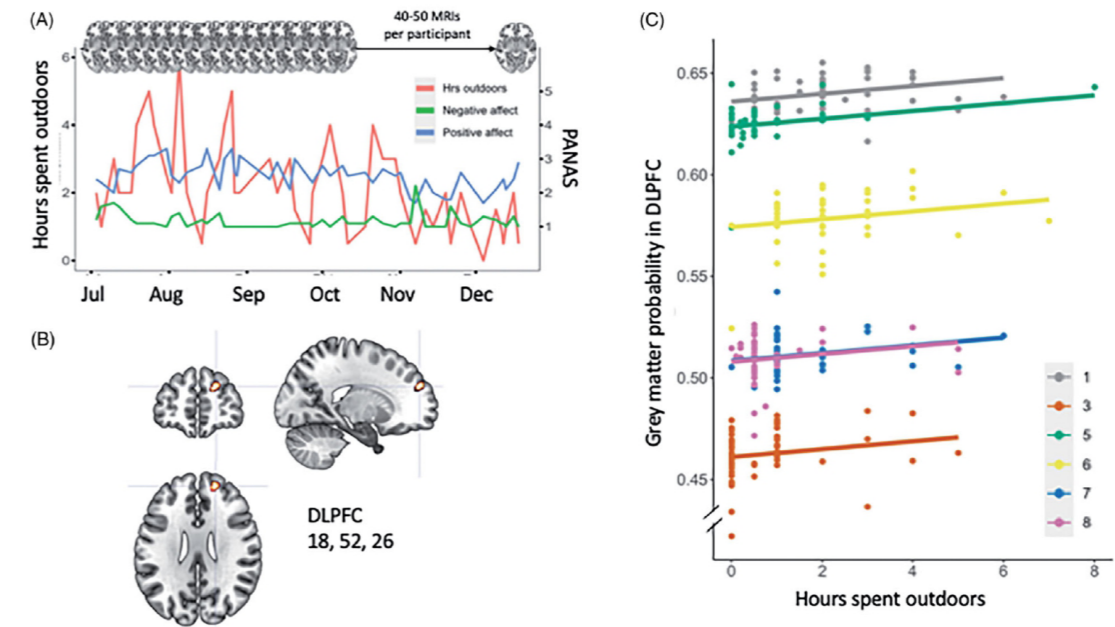


Figure 1. (A) Illustration of the data collected from a single subject, (B) cluster in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC) showing a positive association between grey matter probability and self-reported hours spent outdoors, and (C) for illustrative purposes only, we plot a line graph depicting the regression of the extracted grey matter values of each subject from DLPFC (right), the y-axis has a break, as indicated by the break symbol.

Table 1. Characterisation of the study participants (SD in brackets).

ID <sup>a</sup>	1	3	5	6	7	8
Weight at inclusion into study (kg) <sup>b</sup>	58.1	68.8	64.9	63.0	72.3	59.7
Mean body weight (kg) <sup>b</sup>	59.4 (0.83)	69.0 (0.83)	63.5 (0.72)	63.1 (0.68)	71.8 (0.71)	59.2 (0.46)
Mean hours physical activity <sup>c</sup>	0.13 (0.32)	0.22 (0.55)	0.35 (0.77)	1.55 (1.04)	0.51 (0.76)	0.21 (0.55)
Mean liquid intake (l) <sup>c</sup>	1.86 (0.43)	2.12 (0.70)	1.68 (0.76)	2.81 (0.86)	3.38 (0.93)	1.50 (0.57)
Mean number of alcoholic drinks <sup>c</sup>	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.57 (1.5)	0.66 (1.56)	0.18 (0.65)
Mean number of caffeinated drinks <sup>c</sup>	0.02 (0.14)	6 (1.63)	1.68 (1.54)	1.70 (1.50)	2.08 (1.02)	1.51 (1.10)
Mean number of caffeinated drinks last 2 h	0 (0)	0.96 (0.39)	0.68 (0.91)	0.18 (0.49)	0.28 (0.60)	0.40 (0.61)
Mean number of cigarettes <sup>c</sup>	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.03 (0.16)
Urbanicity score during first 15 years in life	33	15	45	30	33	15

<sup>a</sup>The participant ID is based on the numbering used in the protocol paper of the Day2day study (Filevich et al. 2017).

<sup>b</sup>Weight was measured with clothing.

<sup>c</sup>During the last 24 h before MRI scanning.

that values were overall quite low ( $M = 1.82$ ). Also, the present sample was considerably younger than the sample of older adults living in retirement communities, in which depressive symptoms were reported to be lower with greater outdoor exposure (Kerr et al. 2012). Generally, our finding may be seen as in line with the results of a meta-analysis on the beneficial effects of nature exposure, observing more pronounced associations with positive than with negative affect (McMahan and Estes 2015). However, the present study did not discriminate between time spent outside in nature vs. other more urban contexts.

Most strikingly, and independently of affect, we observed that more hours spent outdoors was associated with higher grey matter volume in DLPFC. We then searched for factors potentially associated with spending time outdoors, that may also have a positive effect, or that could constitute a potential mechanism by which time spent outdoors may substantiate in more grey matter volume in DLPFC. It came as a surprise to us that none of these covariates, namely sunshine duration, amount of fluid intake, hours of free time, or physical activity, explained variance in DLPFC volume. A factor that we were not able to enter as a

## Mental Well-being

With my research, I aim to highlight the social discomfort that the younger generation is experiencing, especially in an ever-expanding city like London.

I believe that a particular attention on mental wellbeing should be considered as a starting point to understand how to improve our lifestyle in the future.

Nowadays, more people are aware of the benefits of taking care of their mental health, however, there is still a tendency to avoid talking about it.

“Time to Talk Day” is one of the biggest surveys conducted in the UK with the aim of sparking millions of conversations about mental health across the country.

The outcomes of the survey showed that:

69% of 16-24 year olds say they put a brave face on to avoid talking about their mental health.

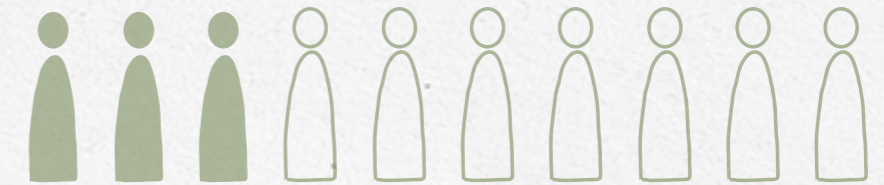
49% of 16-24 year olds say the pressures of the last few years, for instance the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, has made them less likely to open up to avoid worrying others in difficult times.

Over a third of young people say social media impacts on their mental health.

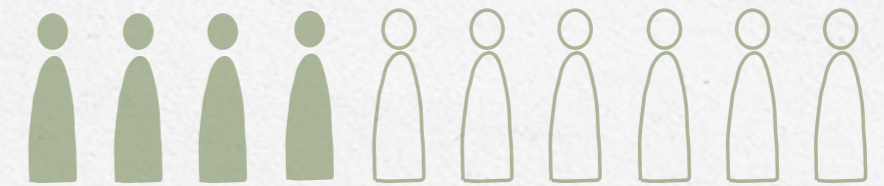
Two fifths of young people feel withdrawn, over a third feel isolated and 38% feel less able to socialise.

People that feel comfortable to talk about their mental health :

young people  
16-24



adults  
25-74



elder people  
+75



Time to Talk Day (1 February 2024). The larger online conversation about mental health. Mind and Rethink Mental Illness. Available at: <https://timetotalkday.co.uk/>.

## Salutogenic Design

I developed my studies on this subject by consulting the publication of Aaron Antonovsky, the sociologist that coined the term salutogenesis (origins-genesis of health-saluto) and settled the base for the design related field.

The key concept from Antonovsky studies that most resonate with my experience is the Sense of Coherence (SOC).

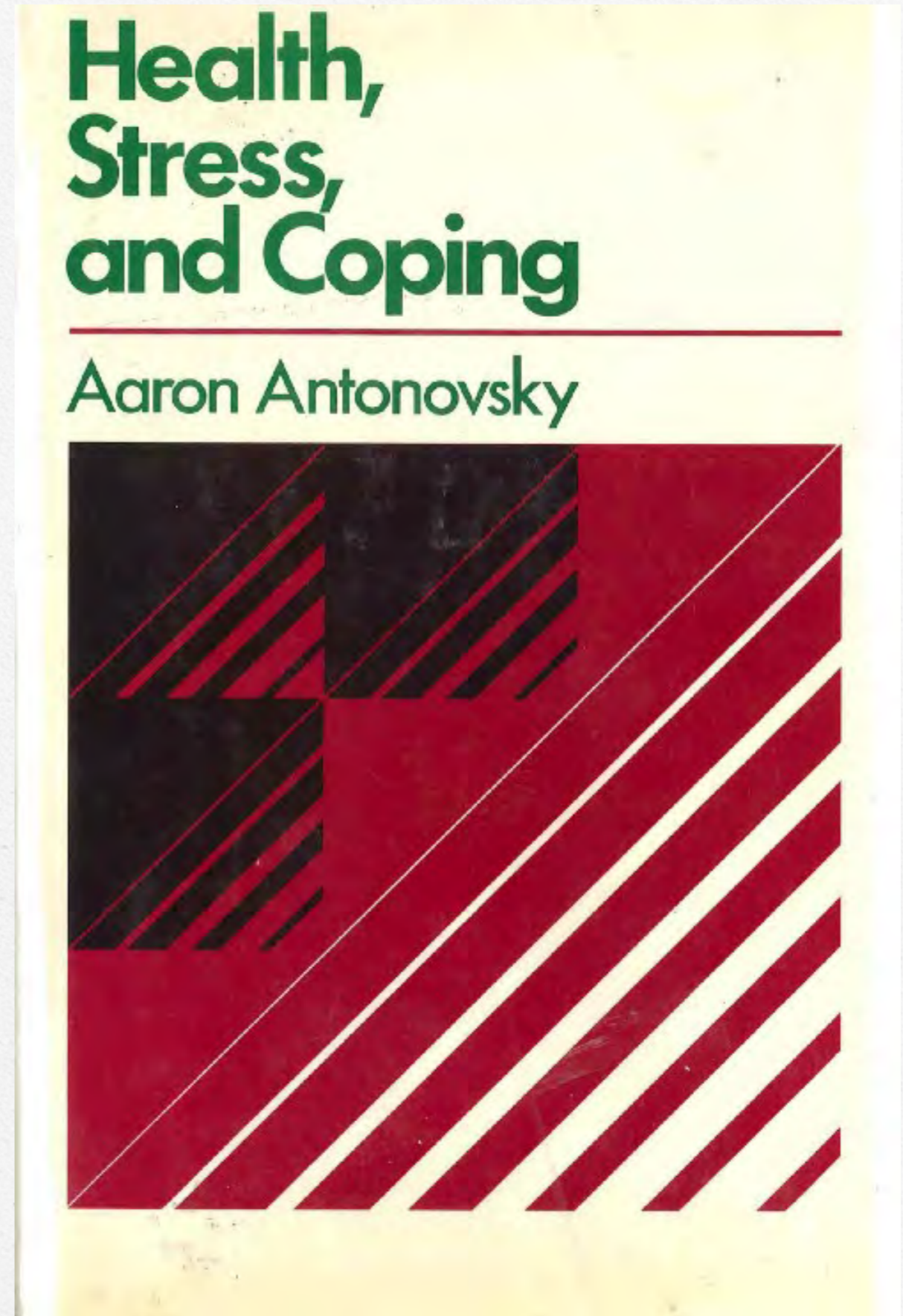
It consists of three traits that shape our personality:

- comprehensibility (the cognitive ability to understand ourselves and the others),
- manageability (the behaviour that we develop in critical situations),
- meaningfulness (the emotional meaning that we address to the events of our lives).

Antonovsky described meaningfulness to be the strongest factor, and I fully agree.

All the stress and anxiety caused by the city environment is often connected with the loss of our identity when we move from our hometown to a megalopolis such as London.

This is one of the reasons why people who grow up in the city develop mental illnesses sooner than the ones who live in rural realities.



Aaron Antonovsky, (1979). Health, Stress and Coping, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## Leftover Spaces

This article helped me to develop my research about the sites of London that would be ideal for my project.

There is a specific narrative around the leftover sites that fascinate me.

Here I selected some extract from the document that influenced my understanding of those urban spaces:

“The Leftover City asks: What are the varied forces, circumstances and actions that make and maintain a site leftover and how do they influence the broader city?”

The article aims to discuss leftover sites as conditions in the city that, due to their negative aura, and not necessarily due to their re-design as open public spaces, can help rediscover the hidden resources of our urban environments.”

Although these spaces are usually received negatively, this should not be so, because, as the architect Ignasi de Sola-Morales argues, “**this absence of limit, precisely contains the expectations of mobility, vagrant roving, free time, liberty.**”

“Far from compromising it, humans bring the desertedness to its perfection and highest point”

Gilles Deleuze, Gilles, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953–1974* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), p. 10.

He states that the human need of feeling lost at some stages of its life is directly related to the qualities that we can find in the leftover sites.

I also believe that we need to get lost in order to improve as individuals. This concept also refers to the Sense of Coherence from Antonovsky studies on human behaviour.

What are these empty spaces emptied of?

“They are immanent: spaces in which something might happen. Something might be found, someone might hide”.

J.G. Ballard, *Concrete Island* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974), p. 32.

PEER REVIEW

# The Leftover City:

Leftover Sites as Disruptors of Urban Narratives in the Work of J.G. Ballard, Jim Jarmusch, and Wim Wenders

*Christos Papastergiou*

Papastergiou, C. et al. (2020) *The Leftover City: Leftover Sites as Disruptors of Urban Narratives in the Work of J.G. Ballard, Jim Jarmusch, and Wim Wenders.*

# Secondary research

My secondary research focused on understanding the urban environment and the people who inhabit it. Another significant element at this stage of my research was the concept of play and how it can manifest in various contexts, such as playgrounds, community spaces, or the streets.

I delved deeper into the history of London and its adventure playgrounds, as they represented one of the earliest social initiatives prioritising the well-being of young people after the Second World War.

This exploration highlighted the transformative power of play and its role in fostering resilience and community spirit.

I also extended my research to include designers who work closely with local communities. One studio, in particular, that stood out for its inspiring projects was Assemble Studio. In this chapter, I will present the projects that had the most influence on my practice.



Assemble studio (2018). Play XY, Kings Cross, London.

## Rope Structures - Conrad Roland

Conrad Roland was a German architect who developed his practice in the design of playground and spatial net structures.

In 1987 Roland constructed the biggest Spacenet of the world, the "Super Four Mast Spacenet" in Südpark Düsseldorf, which is still in use after remedial maintenance in 2007.

His studies on net and mesh architectures have been collected in his book publication *Frei Otto – Spannweiten* (1965).

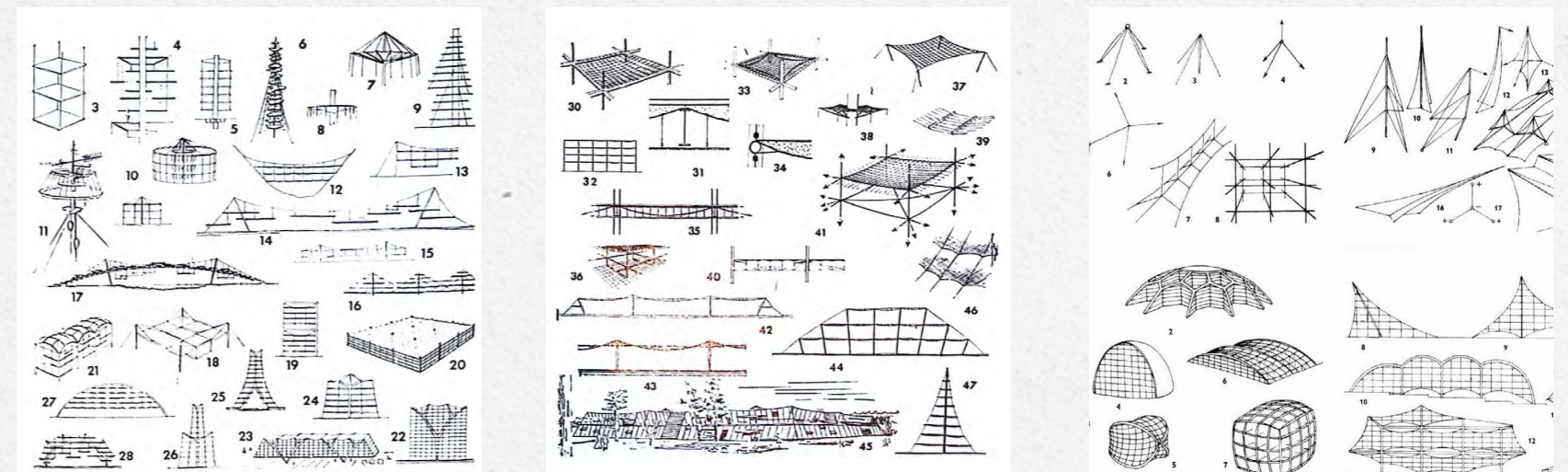
I have studied the rope structures configurations and techniques in order to apply them to my project in a playfull way.



Conrad Roland (1965). *Frei Otto: Structures*. Westview Press.



Conrad Roland (1987). Super Four Mast Spacenet, Düsseldorf, Germany.  
Available at the link: [https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Conrad\\_Roland\\_Super-Viermast-Seilzirkus\\_D%C3%BCsseldorf.jpg](https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Conrad_Roland_Super-Viermast-Seilzirkus_D%C3%BCsseldorf.jpg)



## The Cineroleum - Assemble Studio

Assemble is a multi-disciplinary studio founded in 2010. Its practice is distinguished by the democratic and co-operative working method that enables built, social and research-based work at a variety of scales.

I have been inspired by some of its projects involving the community to design social spaces for their neighbourhood.

The first one that I want to mention is The Cineroleum, located in Clerkenwell Road, London. It was a self-initiated project that transformed a petrol station into a cinema by using recovered materials.



Assemble Studio | The Cineroleum, Clerkenwell Road, London, 2019



Available at the link: <https://assemblestudio.co.uk/projects/the-cineroleum>

## Horst Festival - Assemble Studio

The second project from Assemble that was useful to my practice is the Horst Festival in New Castle. This festival is a two-day event of music and a two-month exposition of art. In 2017, Assemble were asked to design one of the two stages.

The site of the project was located nearby a 14th-century castle. On this occasion, Assemble studied the geometry of the historical building and reinterpreted it through the use of scaffolding structures and blue netting, with a budget of just 10,000 euros.

The use of scaffolding combined with nets inspired me to analyse those elements and use them in a playful way.



Assemble Studio | Horst Festival, New Castle, 2017



Available at the link: <https://assemblestudio.co.uk/projects/horst-festival>

## Simulacrum Installation - Pedro Henrique

This temporary space installation was designed by the Pedro Henrique Architectural Studio in Santa Maria de Feira, Portugal.

This project was relevant to my design practice for two reasons:

Firstly, it is a project focused on what happens within the space, not the space itself. This means the intervention is centred on the experience of the users who walk on the net, observe the river from a different perspective, and listen to the water running beneath their bodies. It is a project about experiencing space through movement.

The second reason is the graphic communication. I adopted a similar system in my project to convey which actions can be taken within the community space through logos and colour.



Matheus Pereira | Installations & Structures, Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal, 2019



Available at the link: [https://www.archdaily.com/918715/simulacrum-installation-pedro-henrique?ad\\_edium=gallery](https://www.archdaily.com/918715/simulacrum-installation-pedro-henrique?ad_edium=gallery)

## Commons Sense - Urban Vision with CRA

Carlo Ratti Associati introduced an innovative urban intervention for the European Nomadic Biennial, Manifesta 14, in the city capital of Kosovo, Pristina. This project aims to reclaim public space through a participatory, open-source urbanism methodology.

By mapping socially significant sites in the city and leveraging AI for urban analysis with MIT Senseable City Lab, CRA developed temporary design interventions to demonstrate how these spaces could be revitalized.

The materials adopted for the project have been reclaimed from the local industrial area and citizens have been encouraged to shape the space in collaboration with CRA.

This project represents a fount of inspiration for its methodology and outcomes within the local communities.



“Manifesta 14 aims to shape a new and alternative public space for the community and convert abandoned urban spaces into areas where people can interact with one another.” - Urban Vision



Atdhe Mulla | Manifesta 14. Urban Intervention at Brick Factory, June 2021.



Available at the link: <https://manifesta14.org/pre-biennial/urban-vision/>

# Context

Growing up in marginalised communities like Peckham can be challenging for a teenager.

Those neighbourhood are exposed to vandalism and criminality, which can lead a young person to exclude themselves from outdoor activities and social interactions.

Another risk can be to take part to gangs or unhealthy activities because of the need to feel part of a group of friends. All those factors impact negatively on the lives of the new generations that will grow up in those urban settings.

For those reasons, teenagers struggle to create a sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods, which led to experience more anxiety and stress compared to other age groups.

In order to better understand the elements that impact most on the life quality of the residents of Peckham, I decided to meet the community during a public assemble and ask some questions about their experience of growing up in the area.



Eugenia Liut - Peckham Rye Road - 20.05.24

# A PROJECT ABOUT PEOPLE



# Community Engagement



Photo by Adrian L. - Peckham Community Assembly - 08.06.24

Peckham Community Assembly is a collective of twentyfive volunteers that are involved in political and social activities within the local community.

I first met Larch, one of the founders of Peckham Community Assembly, during a writing workshop at the Peckham Pelican. We had an interesting conversation about the challenges faced by residents, particularly the lack of public space maintenance and the frequent vandalism affecting local businesses. This discussion led me to the opportunity to take part in one of the community assemblies organised by Larch and his team.

On June 8th, I attended a meeting with the focus on improving the quality of life in the Peckham neighbourhood. The group discussed solutions to local issues, encouraging a collaboration with the council ahead of the upcoming local elections. The primary goal was to give residents a voice and select a representative to stand in the elections.

**My aim was to assist the debate and collect usefull informations for my project which could potentially improve the life quality of the people from the area.**

We have been welcomed by Chris, a volounteer of Peckham Assemble, who introduced us to the other facilitators of the event and encourage to take a seat in one of the tables in the room.

I have met people from different background who leaved in Peckham most of they lives. It was inspiring to hear they point of view on the life in the neighborhood and how they hope to improve it.



Photo by Adrian L. - Peckham Community Assembly - 08.06.24



**The event was scheduled in three moments:**

- 1- Welcome and presentation of the volounteers and the event.**
- 2-Group discussion of the issues and positive aspects of living in Peckham.**
- 3-Sharing of the outcomes from the discussion and proposal of a possible candidate for the uncoming elections.**

During the debate each person has its space where to talk, giuded by the facilitators which gived us turns to talk.

**The outcomes from the debate where incedibly usefull for me to understand the real problems in the neighbourhood.**

From the poster that we wrote during the debate, I highlight the elements that resonate most with my previous research.

**The issue that I decided to work on through my project is the one related to the teenagers, which are also the ones causing vandalism and crime in most of the cases.**



## WHAT'S GOOD IN PECKHAM:

- Public transport
- Sense of community
- Street markets
- Library

## WHAT'S BAD IN PECKHAM:

- Vandalism and crime
- Poor services/activities for teenagers
- Lack of affordable houses
- Litter

**This assemble gived me the opportunity to meet Eleida, a lady who has spent most of her lives in Peckham.**

**She was concerned about her teenage nephew who has struggling to find a group of friends to do healty activities with.**

In her housing complex, where both lives, the communal playground has been used for drug dealing and criminal activities. She told me that a few years earlier the youth centre of the neighbourhood was forced to close due to a lack of founds.

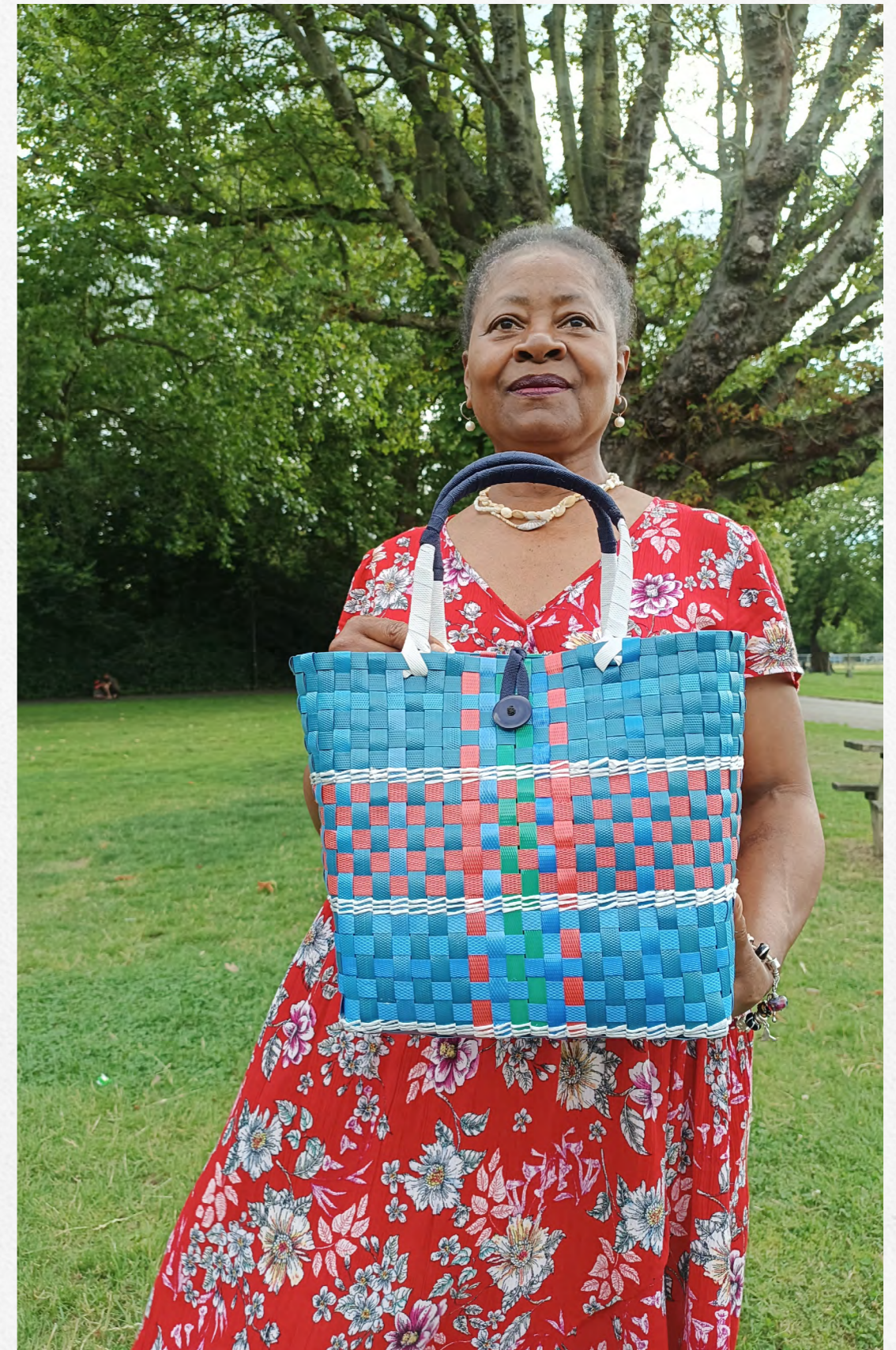
From that moment the number of teenagers taking part to those gangs encreased and is now causing dramatic issues to the new generations growing up in Peckham.

I listen carwefully to her words, which resonate with my willing to design a space where young people can meet and enjoy healthy activities toghether.

After the assemble we share our contacts and we decided to meet again to discuss about my project and how it can have a positive impact on the young community.

Moreover, she shared with me her passion for using recycled plastic from the street markets to craft bags! She tought me the technique to craft baskets that she learned from her aunt when she was a child.

**Eleida has been the most inspiring figures during my research practice, giving me insightfull advices about the use of recycled materials and their applications.**



Eugenia Liut - Eleida at Peckham Rye Park - 20.08.24

# History

London's urban space has experienced dramatic changes as a result of conflicts over the last century.

Having developed an interest in the use of public space within the local communities of South London, I decided to study the history of the city's urban and social landscapes, with a focus on the popular initiatives led by young people in their neighbourhoods.

After World War II, London was left scarred by the bombings. The air raids carried out by the German army between 1939 and 1945 were most intense in the city centre, as shown in the map on the right, which classifies bomb damage into:

- Total Destruction (Black),
- Seriously Damaged (Dark Red),
- Clearance Areas (Green).

As a key record of the attacks, the London County Council Bomb Damage Maps represent destruction on a massive scale, documenting buildings and streets reduced to smoke and rubble.

In the years of reconstruction and urban regeneration that followed, efforts to redesign the urban landscape were concentrated in central London, leaving many marginal communities to manage reconstruction autonomously.

Some empty lots left by the bombings still exist today. During my street photography practice, I came across one such site, the Camberwell Bunker Garden, located between Peckham Road and Vestry Road. In this chapter, I will discuss my research on the site's history and the community interventions in London that involved young people after the Second World War.



Bomb Damage (1945). Available at: <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/overlays/bomb-damage-1945>.

## Social Revival

After the Second World War, discussions about anarchy and popular initiatives were prominent.

Many communities in London began building their own playgrounds and spaces for spending time together.

This is how adventure playgrounds became a reality in some of the most damaged neighbourhoods in the city. Here, children were free to play and experiment with leftover materials, even lighting fires and getting dirty in the ponds.



Roger Mayne | Adventure Playground, Islington, London, c. 1957

Available at the link: [https://www.gittermangallery.com/exhibition/73/exhibition\\_works/2188](https://www.gittermangallery.com/exhibition/73/exhibition_works/2188)

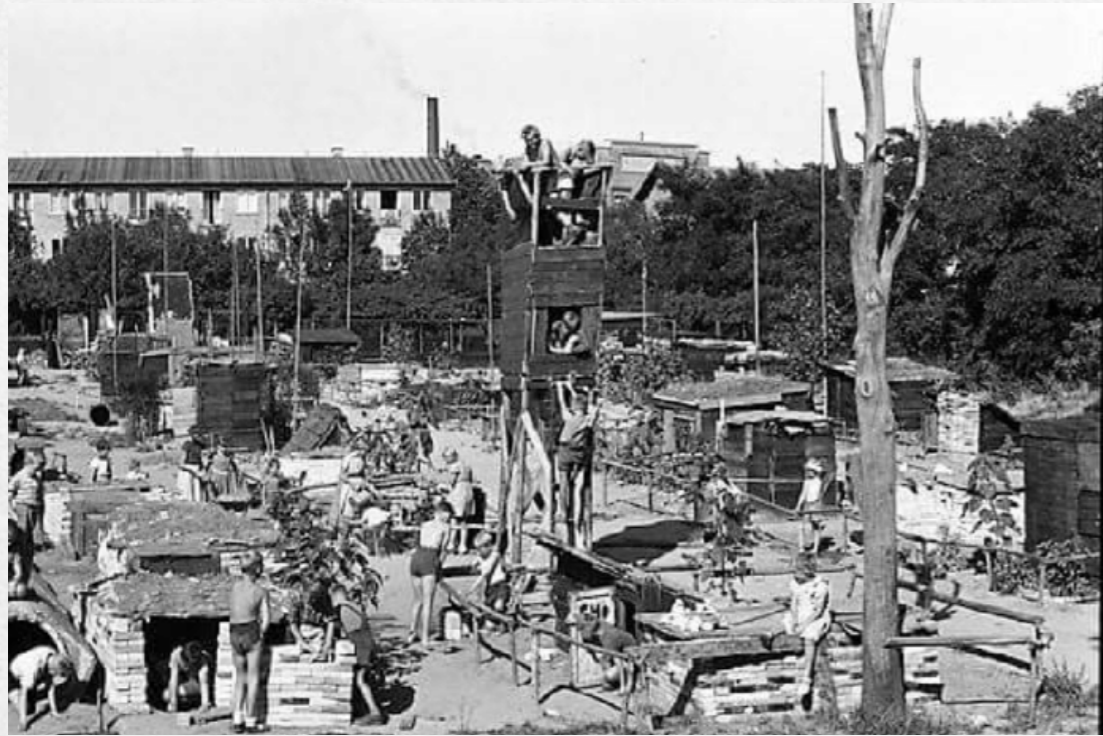
The adventure playground project was born in Denmark around the 1930s, from the studies of the landscape architect C.Th. Sørensen.

During the Nazi occupation of Denmark, Emdrup became the first city to open a playground based on Sørensen's ideas. Filled with 'junk', including wood, tyres, bricks, rope, and old furniture and vehicles, nothing in the playground was static or expensive.

**“They can dream and imagine, and make dreams and imagination a reality, at any rate, a reality with which the child’s mind is completely satisfied... It is so obvious that the children thrive here and feel well. Of all the things I have contributed to realise, the junk playgrounds are the ugliest, but for me, they are the most beautiful and best of my works.”**

Sørensen, History of adventure play.

Available at: <http://www.adventureplay.org.uk/history2.htm>



Carl Theodor Sørensen | Emdrup Adventure Playground, Denmark, Copenhagen, 1943 Available at the link: [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-first-examples-of-an-adventure-playground-Emdrup-opened-by-Carl-Theodor-Sorensen\\_fig1\\_336486279](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-first-examples-of-an-adventure-playground-Emdrup-opened-by-Carl-Theodor-Sorensen_fig1_336486279)



Camberwell Junk playground, London, 1948

Available at the link: <http://www.architectureofearlychildhood.com/2012/01/post-war-adventure-or-junk-playgrounds.html>

Lady Allen of Hurtwood, a landscape architect, was inspired by the Emdrup playground in Denmark and decided to bring the idea to London. Her work focused on planning for play in urban areas and advocating for children's rights after the war.

The first adventure playground in the UK was built by her and the local community in Camberwell in 1948. It was located on an empty site left after a church was demolished, having been bombed during the war.

The term "adventure playground" was used to make the concept more acceptable to local authorities and communities.

This playground survived for just three years before the land was sold for new development.

The feeling of freedom experienced in those spaces was a consequence of the desolation caused by the conflict. People were moved by a sense of social commitment in shaping a brighter future for the next generation.

Today, this sentiment has faded, leaving room for the convenience of consumerism and leaving the decisions to public and private companies.

This sense of powerlessness and lack of control on the part of the new generations to be able to change their lifestyle is creating a society that suffers the stress and frustration of being subjected to the choices imposed by others.



Notting Hill Adventure Playground, Donne Buck, V&A Museum, London, 1960.  
Available at the link: <https://collectingchildhood.wordpress.com/2015/01/07/junk-and-adventure/>

This is my favourite citation from the book “The Playgroud Project”, by Gabriela Burkhalter, which was fundamental for my research about the play space in urban environments. The book explains the evolution of the open-air playground between the 1950s and the 1980s, with attention to the social context in which children and teenagers were growing up.

This book gived me a panoramic view of how play looks like along the years after the Second World War.

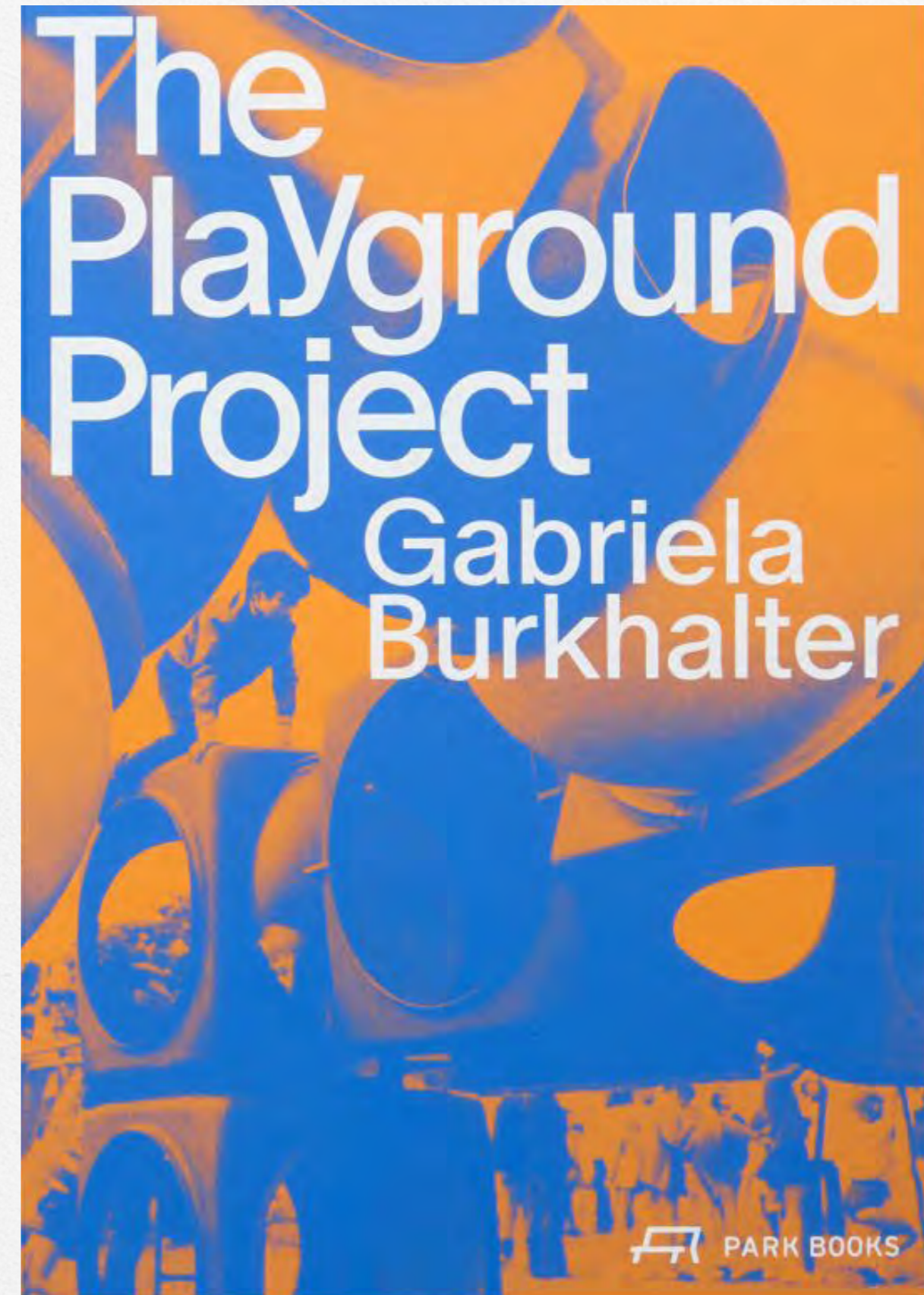
**“In time of change and crisis, the most important element is the people themselves.**

**Therefore, I believe that all cultural activities should be designed to encourage the personal initiative and sense of responsability in each individual, thereby creating and inspiring a sense of personal dignity, self-respect, and community spirit.**

**All cultural activities should, I believe, be dependent on participation and involvement by the inhabitants in their specific localized environment”.**

Robert Rauschenberg

“Proposal for Public Parks”, presented at the meeting of the New York City Cultural Commission, spring 1968, published in: *TECHNE* 1 (1) / 1969.



Gabriela Burkhalter (2023) *The Playgroun Project*. Park Books, Zurich.

From combining my research of the play space in the past with my site explorations in Peckham and Camberwell, I matured my will to design a playground that leave space to autonomy and creativity.

Notting Hill Adventure Playground, London, 1960.  
Available at the link: <https://www.ragpickinghistory.co.uk/post/adventure-playgrounds>



Playground in residential area, photo by Eugenia Liut, Peckham, Lisford St, 5 March 2024.



The rope is a material that connect the history of the adventure playground to the London war heritage. Those images inspired me to use the ropes as elements of my project to be used in autonomy. By crafting nets or swings...

Clydesdale Road Adventure Playground, London, 1952. Available at the link: <https://www.faireparis.com/en/projets/faire-2020/tapla-adventure-playgrounds-for-the-past-for-the-future-1863.html>



Troops climbing a rope net, 9 January 1953. Available at the link: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Troops\\_are\\_climbing\\_down\\_cargo\\_net\\_to\\_waiting\\_LCVP's\\_as\\_they\\_land\\_HD-SN-99-03076.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Troops_are_climbing_down_cargo_net_to_waiting_LCVP's_as_they_land_HD-SN-99-03076.jpg)



# Observations

I started to document how people use the street when I first went to Peckham Car Boot Market. It was my first experience in a second hand market, so I was fascinated by the variety of objects and clothes displayed on the street.

This visit made me realise how people live the city environment, and how it can be used for different activities.

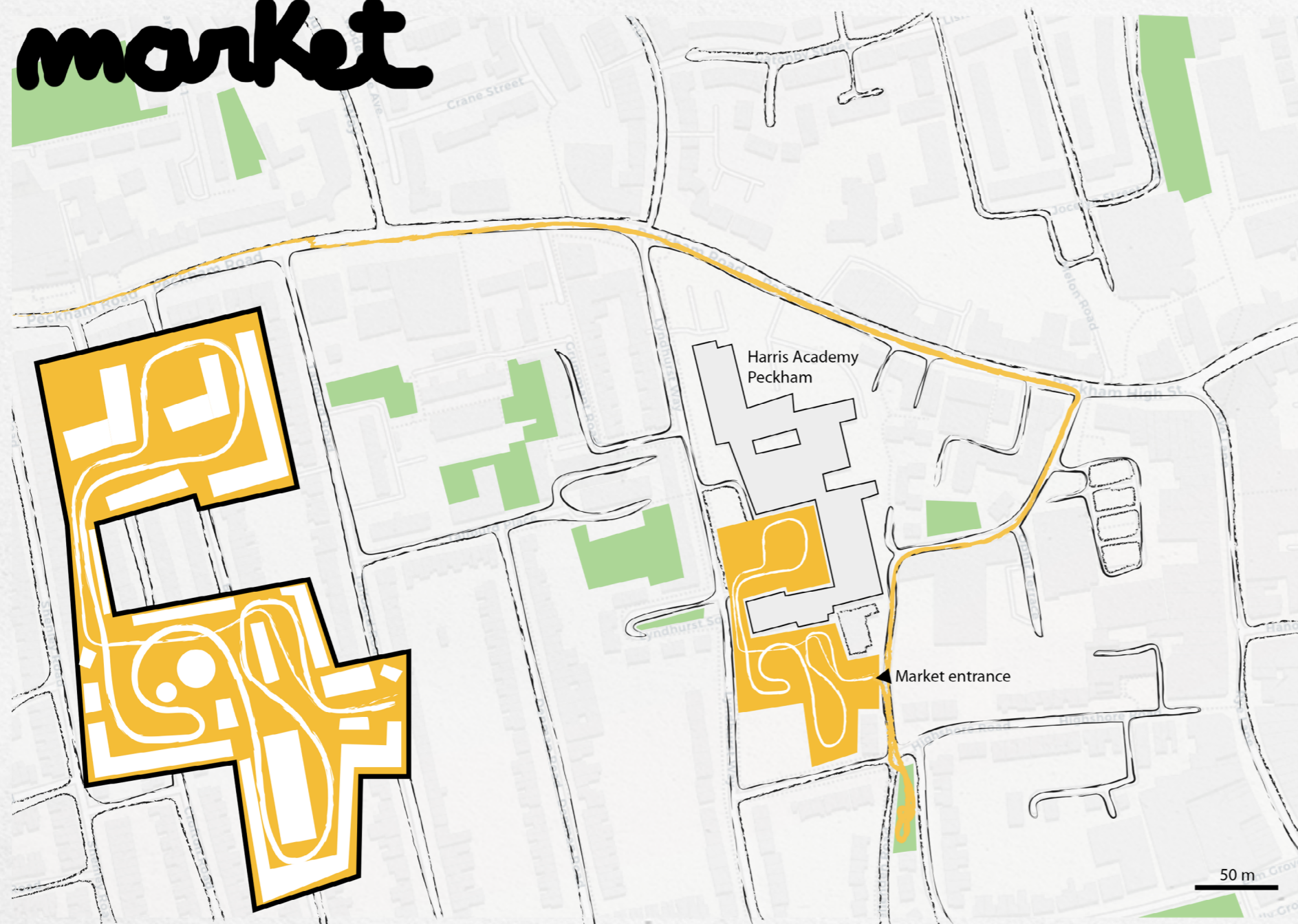
From that day I began to use my camera to capture the details of people and leftover materials on the street. My aim was to understand how it would be possible to give new purpose to an urban space by reusing the elements already present in the urban space, such as litter, scaffolding structures...but also the graphic communication associated with the street, the graffiti.

This analysis enabled me to understand the perception that people have of the neighbourhoods of Peckham, Camberwell and Walworth. The audience that I want to engage with in my project.



Eugenia Liut - Peckham Car Boot - 18.02.24

# Peckham Car Boot market



Peckham Map - Peckham Car Boot Market, Bellenden Rd - London SE15 5DR.

I developed the photography skill to naturally capture how people experience urban space in undefined and nimble environments.

Peckham Car Boot is a community-organised second-hand market, located in the parking lot of the Harris Academy.

The map reports in yellow my path to reach the site and its location within the neighbourhood.

I then highlight the market layout and the people flow around the stands. The vendors are requested to pay ten pounds to reserve a spot inside the car park, nevertheless, the layout can change during the day.

The park next to the market location is used by the customers as a meeting point. The contact with a natural environment can improve the shopping experience and encourage people to spend more time on the street.



I captured  
every detail  
that influenced  
my perception  
of the street



Eugenia Liut - Peckham Car Boot - 18.02.24



Here I documented my visit along the two hours that I spent there.  
The weather, the people flow and the number of vendors changed the atmosphere constantly. The only way to keep the essence of the moment was through photography.



**Entrance 11.30 am**  
**Tiket £1**



**12.00 am**



**12.30 am**

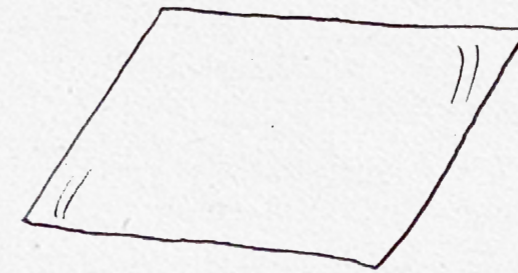


**1.00 pm**  
**The sun came out!**



Eugenia Liut - Peckham Car Boot - 18.02.24





Walking through the market, I began to notice how many elements vendors used to display their wares. It is crazy to think how much waste of materials goes into designing a space for selling in today's industry.

I worked for a year within a Retail Design firm, offering general contractor services. I still remember the amount of material wasted on the whims of our customers. I don't want to be part of this system anymore, so this is the reason why I believe those initiatives should be supported and encouraged.

What fascinates me most are the few elements required to sell clothes in a space like this one: an umbrella for the sun, a towel, a chair, the goods and the pos (just in rare cases).

# Walworth East St. market



East street Market, Walworth - London SE17 1EL.

I went to the Walworth neighbourhood because I was interested in documenting the elements that street vendors used to display merchandise, after the Peckham experience.

I had several encounters with people who stopped me to ask what I was doing with a camera, since the market is not properly a touristic area.

One meeting in particular brought me back to the feeling that I experienced when I was living in my little village in Italy.

I documented my experience by taking some portrait pictures of the people that I crossed along the street to reach the market.

In addition to that, I took photos of the recovered material used by the vendors to display their goods.

The market takes place every day between eight in the morning to five in the afternoon, except for Sunday.



Nature find  
its expression  
in various  
forms



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, East Steet Market - 14.03.24



# Same element, different uses...



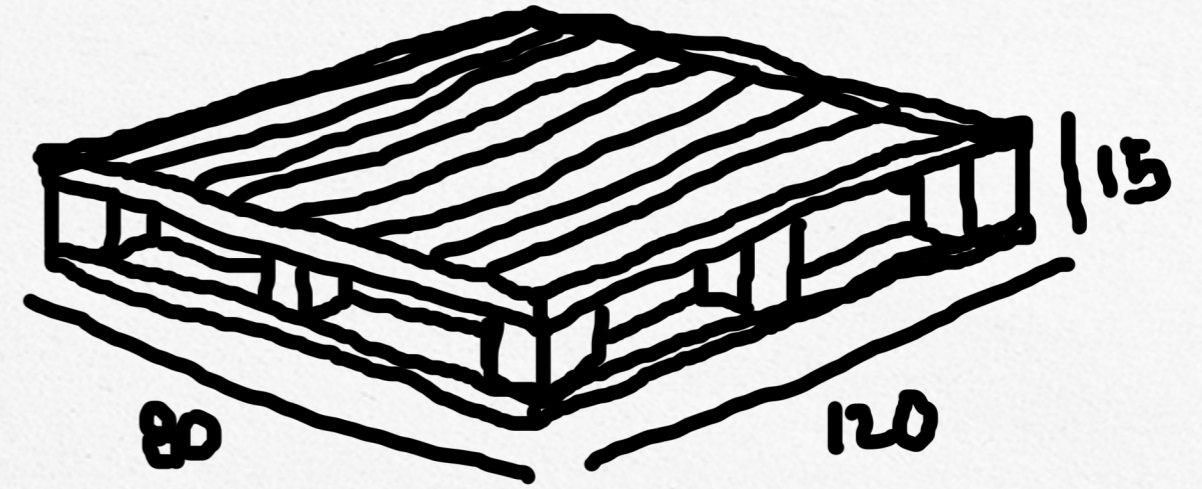
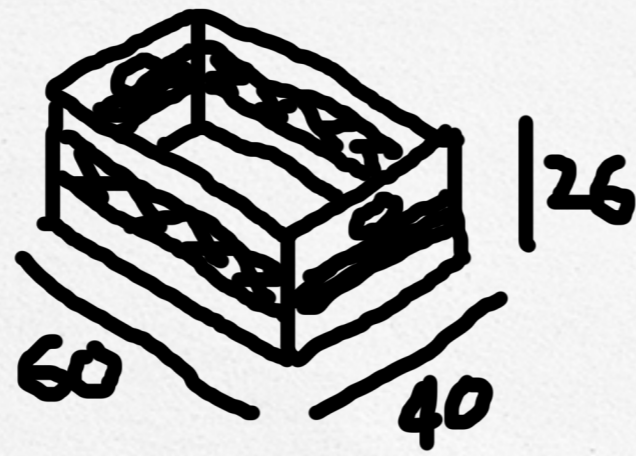
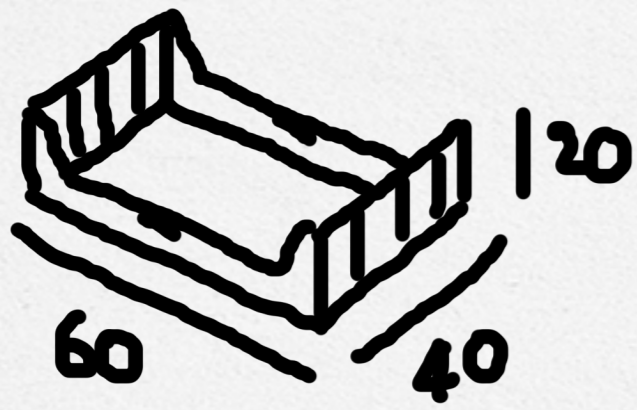
Storage for clothes



Supermarket packaging bin



Street shop display





As I was walking through the street market, a young man who was working behind a stall asked me if I was a photographer. I stopped to chat with him and he asked if I could take a photo of him and his colleague, as it had been years since they had last taken a photo together.

**Omar and Patrick have been working as street traders for years and the friendship that bonds them is very strong. I was moved by Omar request of taking a photo of them...**

After taking the photo, he gave me his contacts where to send the picture to. He then turned to his colleague, telling him that he will print two copies of the photo to hang on the fridge at home.

This encounter made me realise something very important...

I want to become a designer who listens to the needs of a community by creating a network based on trust and reciprocal help in delivering projects for the members of a borough. Living in between Peckham and Camberwell enables me to experience two different neighbourhoods. So after having visited different areas of the city I can tell that the sense of community in this area of London is something special.

**The sense of community can be a way to improve our well-being in low income urban areas.**

On my way bak to Camberwell, I spotted this pop/up market, perfectly located in between the buildings.  
I see so much potential in those kinds of spaces because they are open to the street and the public, however, most of the time they are neglected.



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Walworth Rd. - 14.03.24



# What elements worsen our well-being in the city?

Studies of urban populations have shown that areas containing more litter, graffiti and signs of decay cause the early development of mental disorders. This is why I started documenting these elements in order to find a way to convert them into useful materials for the design of community spaces.

I have also included photos of green spaces in my work, to consider any element that can positively influence the perception of poor neighbourhoods.

This practice has given me the opportunity to explore the area where I live a bit further, meet people and understand the issues with the urban space which is neglected.





# Graffiti

Graffiti is considered street art, but most of the time it is associated with vandalism. It is often associated with dangerous areas of the city, however, graffiti has recently been revived as a way of urban regeneration. Artists and young people are invited to paint the walls of their neighbourhoods by associations that would like to involve young people in social activities.

On the following pages, I have documented the works that most impress me because of the location and style that distinguishes these drawings.



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Walworth Rd. - 14.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Camberwell Rd. - 14.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, St Giles Rd - 05.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Peckham, Peckham High Street - 05.03.24



# Litter

Litter and leftover materials are the main cause of deterioration of the urban environment. In London people are used to find them outside their houses. In some cases they leave old furniture or clothes so that others can collect them, however, places such as charity shops or second hand markets serves to limit the spread of abandoned materials on the roads.

Here I documented the waste materials that I found on my way through residential areas, street markets and main roads. I also included some natural elements that changed my perspective on the degradation of the area that I was walking through.



Eugenia Liut - Peckham, Lisford St - 05.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, St Giles Rd - 05.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, St Giles Rd - 05.03.24



# Scaffolding

Scaffolding structures are temporary elements in the urban space. They can serve for different purposes in the construction field, such as renovations, installations or decorations. I begin to notice them for their qualities of being easy to transport and assemble. Despite this, these structures limit the experience of passers-by in the streets, creating discomfort.

There are several variants of scaffolding. Along the way I have documented them according to the materials, dimensions and joints used for the assembly.

The idea of using the scaffolding structures in my future project prompted me to study them closely.



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Artichoke Pl - 18.02.24





Eugenia Liut - Peckham, Peckham Rd - 18.02.24



Eugenia Liut - Peckham, Peckham Rd - 18.02.24



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Walworth Rd - 14.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Camberwell, Brunswick Villas - 05.03.24



## First Project Moodboard

Thanks to the photos I took, I learnt to use my camera to document the city environment with a keen eye.

I have identified the elements that impoverish a neighbourhood, but I have also learnt that it is in those places that people create stronger relationships.

In the mood board on the right I summarised the categories of objects that I framed along my journey. The purple chair, for instance, was placed in the middle of East St market, with a bluetooth speaker playing techno music in part of it. The playfulness of those kind of elements is something that I would love to see happening in the space that I am designing.



## First Photos Experimentations

One of my first illustrations were the photo that I edited after my visit of the East Street Market.

Handwriting is a powerful technique to communicate ideas and perceptions with a more personal approach.

I chose white paint to cover the face to simulate the white page where most people take their notes. Here the white brushes take the shape of a cloud, demarcating the contours of the man's mind.

I edited the photos digitally by using lightroom, combined with photoshop.

I then noticed that the filters that I used were not as effective as the prints, so this is the reason why I made the decision of editing the images by hand.

The subject of this image let his negativity shine through his gaze. So I tried to imagine what his thoughts were and surround it with text to represent them graphically.



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Walworth Rd - 14.03.24



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Walworth Rd - 14.03.24





# Playground exploration



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24

The outcomes from my primary research on salutogenic design consisted in three elements that can improve our health, based on the studies conducted in the recent years from the Architect Alan Dilani, the main exponent of this field:

## **Exposition to the sunlight**

## **Contact with plants**

## **Physical activity**

This is the reason why I have started documenting my experience inside a playground, from the beginning of Unit Two, which is a space that considers all three elements.





Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24

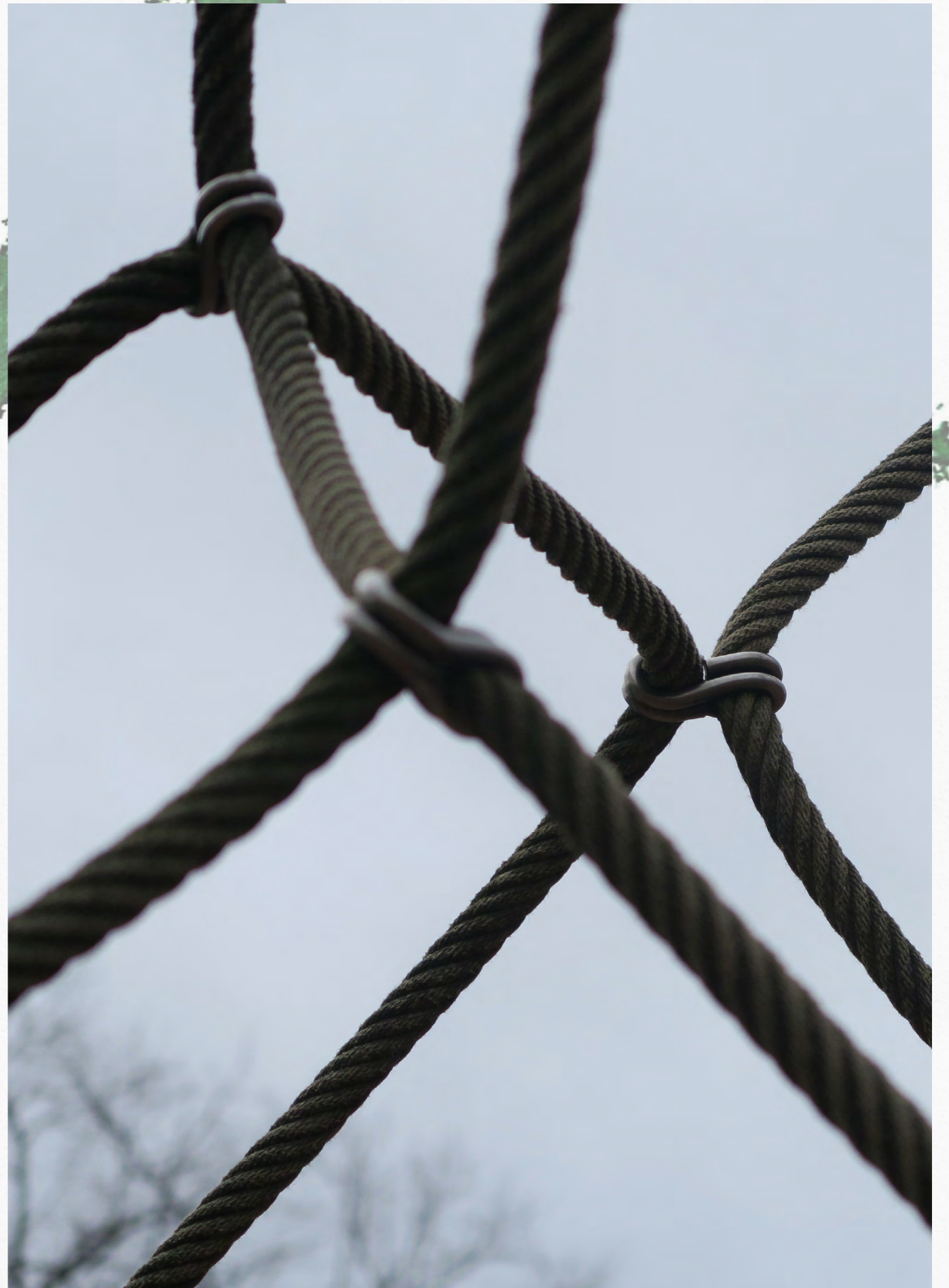


Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24





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With each movement of mine, a vibration of the strings corresponds, which conversely is reflected in relation to each movement made by other people.

I documented through photography the materials, joints, shapes and use of the playground rope structure, in order to understand if it would have been an option in terms of design opportunities for the future of my project.



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24



While I was climbing, two guys came to the playground and reached one of the three peaks of the structure where I was.

I asked them if I could photograph them and they gave me their consent.

I presented myself as a Master student at the University of the Arts in Camberwell and later I told them about my research practice. They sounded enthusiastic about my topic and they shared their contacts with me.

I then shared the photos with them.



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24



Eugenia Liut - Walworth, Burgess Park - 05.02.24



What fascinates me about this structure is the ability to penetrate the air by climbing upwards into the rope structure.

The contact with nature, combined with the potential of using a space in the air, could be a method to unlock the empty spaces between one building and another.

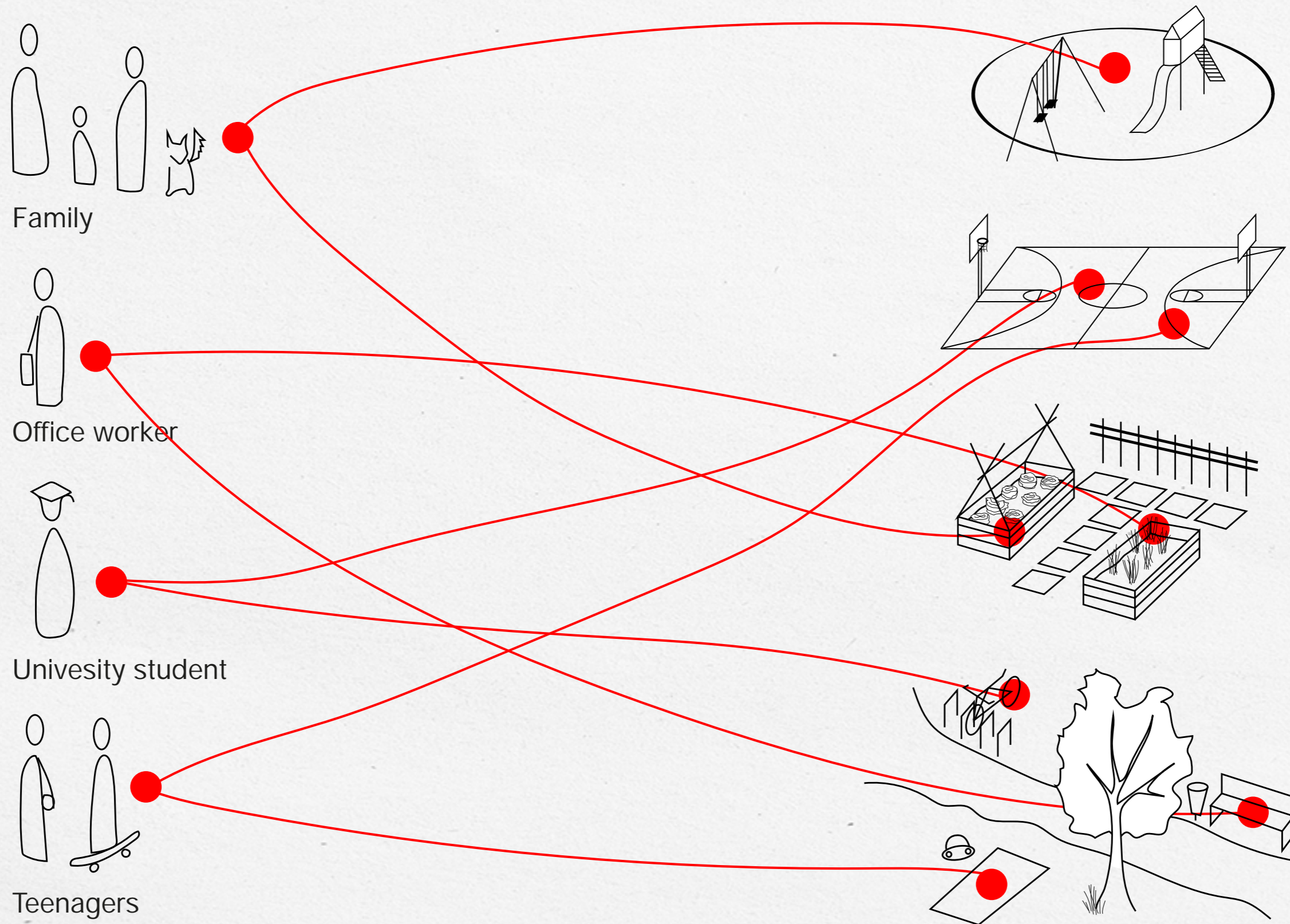
A metaphor to indicate the need for space for a generation that struggles to find enough of it in their flats, denouncing a social injustice.

On the left I begin to communicate the sense of distress that the young generation is experiencing in the city.

I used acrylic colours on a printed photo, highlighting the ropes and the two figures smiling to each other.

During my research I realised that outdoor activities are defined by different public environments. These spaces can place limits on the spontaneity and imagination of the community, especially for young adults.

My practice during Unit Two was focused on understanding what elements define them and how they can stimulate people to feel good, both mentally and physically. But above all to feel empowered to take the initiative.

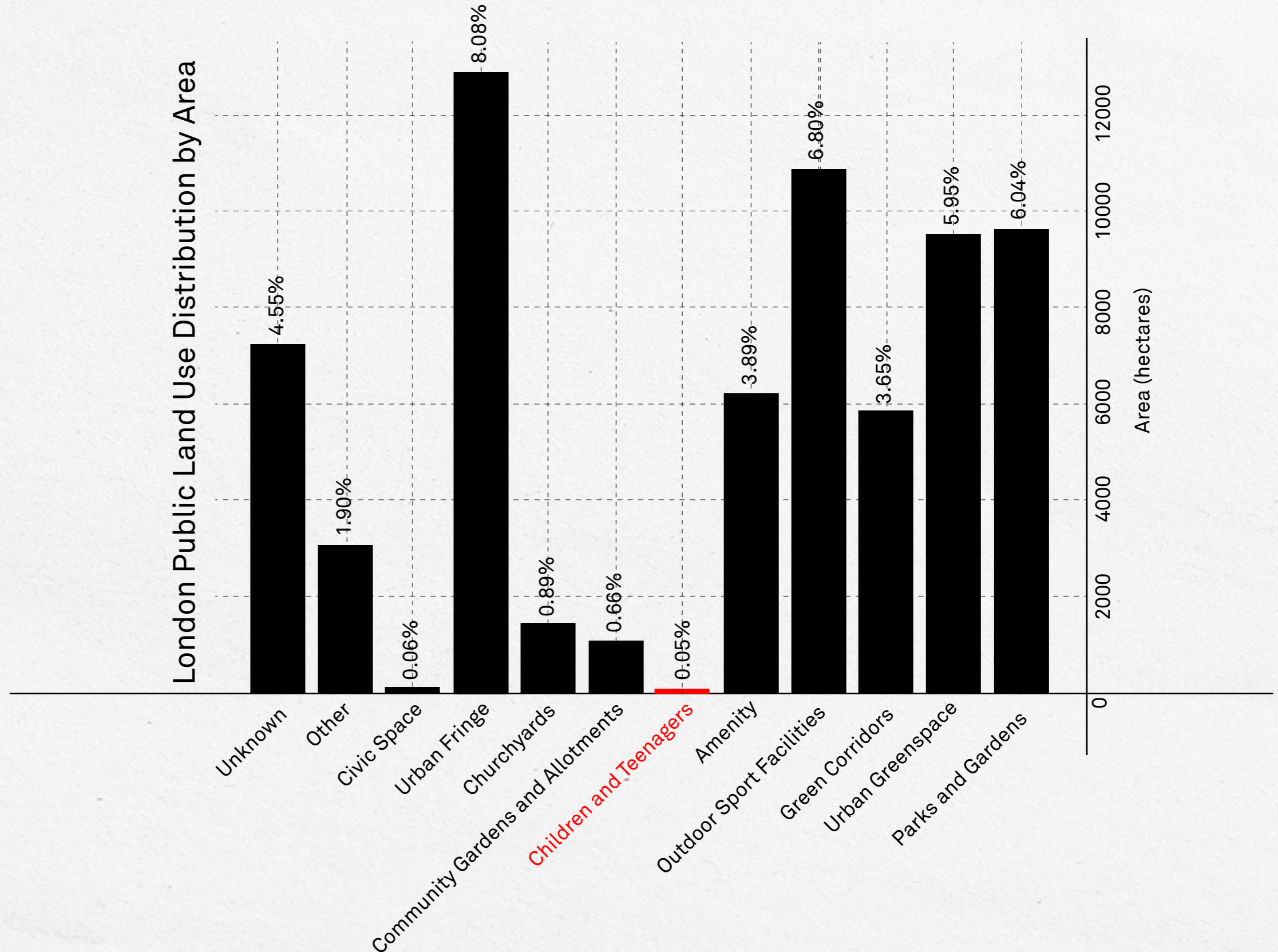


## Data

My playground photo explorations led me to further research on the use of public space in London. From the data collected by the Capital's Environmental Records Centre, I identified the percentage distribution of public land use, which I have shown in the diagram on the right.

The space allocated for activities for children and teenagers is the lowest among other types of spaces. Moreover, playgrounds in London are often designed specifically for young children, leaving teenagers with limited facilities to use in public spaces.

In my Critical Research Paper, I presented this information to support my decision to repurpose abandoned public spaces for teenage use. It is essential for both designers and communities to start considering teenagers as the future of our society. They need spaces where they can express themselves and build social connections in a healthy and positive environment.



Key London Figures (2024) GIGL. Available at: <https://www.gigl.org.uk/our-data-holdings/keyfigures/>.