FEAR IN PUBLIC SPACES

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The project *Fear in Public Spaces* investigates and highlights emotions of possible crime in urban context.

In cities nowadays there are many public spaces with anonymous people around you. The word public might be equated with risky. Also, I have a personal experience with crime in public spaces when a man was watching me over a toilet cubicle wall a few years ago. In my individual view, I feel insecure in many public spaces after that experience.

My research is based on the analysis of sequences and details of spaces where I feel anxious. I identified three such places, a toilet cubicle, in front of a subway station ticket machine and the space under a bridge.

The goal is to make people aware about possible crimes in a joyful way. As I bring out my fear in a humoristic way, my fear can affect someone like me, but also the humoristic part can give positive affect to people who enjoy public spaces.

As an Interior Architect, I explore how public spaces affect us derived from emotions and human behavior. I create spaces by describing crime to the public. Using symbols, text and artwork, I interact with your emotions and behavior. How you react to the project depends on you and your experiences.
SAFETY IN PUBLIC SPACES

A world of strangers

The city in the photo above is Seoul, the capital of South Korea. I have lived there almost my whole life and it is one of the most crowded cities in the world. A quarter of the South Korean population live in this dense city. However, just one hundred years ago there was almost nothing except fields and paddies in this area. Although Seoul has been the capital city for the last 600 years, this sudden explosion of population is a quite recent phenomenon. Common people lived in small villages through generations where they knew almost all neighbors and the things happening every day in the village.

This happened around the same time in many other cities around the globe. In Stockholm, urbanization arose longer ago than Seoul. As cities grew larger people became more separated from their neighbors. The city that I am currently living in, Stockholm, is filled with anonymous people that I don’t know about.

Also, larger cities meant more public spaces. In these days, there are numerous kinds of public spaces around us and they are occupying our life more and more.

From Places to Non-Places

Talking about public spaces now, there is an anthropologist named Marc Augé who first defined the norm “Non-Places” in 1995 to describe characteristics of the modern society. Through

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1 Marc Augé, Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Super modernity, 1995, (p. 77, 79)
his theory, the norm “Non-Places” is the opposite word to “Anthropological Places”. Here is how Non-Places was described:

If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place. Non-places are the real measure of our time; one that could be quantified—with the aid of a few conversions between area, volume and distance—by totaling all the air, rail and motorway routes, the mobile cabins called ‘means of transport’.

In the table, I categorized some public places with his logic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Non-Places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realities of residence</td>
<td>Realities of transit (transit camps or passengers in transit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads (where people meet)</td>
<td>Interchange (where nobody crosses anyone else’s path)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveler (who strolls along his route)</td>
<td>Passenger (defined by his destination)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monument (where people share and commemorate)</td>
<td>Housing estate (where people do not live together and which is never situated in the centre of anything)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language (which is spoken)</td>
<td>Communication (with its codes, images and strategies)</td>
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Table 1 Places and Non-Places

The emergence of supermodernity created a great quantity of Non-Places around us. Many public spaces are understood as Non-Places. We spend much of our life in public spaces in this contemporary society. However, here you can see how

Non-Places\(^2\) are in danger:

It is in the manner of immense parentheses that non-places daily receive increasing numbers of individuals. And they are particular target of all those whose passion for retaining or conquering territory drives them to terrorism. Airport and aircraft, big stores and railway stations have always been a favored target for attacks (to say nothing of car bombs); doubtless for reasons of efficiency, if that is the right word.

Augé predicted that public spaces and especially transporting places are in potential danger of terror. Generally, this is true. These places are filled with anonymous people who are just passing by. This is why I feel uncomfortable in public spaces. We can never fully trust people in public spaces because we have not seen them before.

Frank Feuredi\(^3\) also said like this:

The word “public” is equated with risky, the presence of other, unknown people presumed to be a problem.

For me, it seems like there are so many risk elements. But is it really dangerous being in public spaces? Are they really unsafe in relation to the fear that people feel?

Efforts for safety

Every public and private place must now fulfill safety perspectives. Society becomes more and more aware of safety aspects


of design. In the last decades several research centers related to safety design have been established. Korea Safety Design Lab⁴ defines safety designs as a combination of a safety side and a design side.

Safety design is providing general environmental design as well as numerical control of standards to improve quality of life.

The territory of safety design is limitless. From helmets, safety belts, safety vests, oxygen masks that you wear while transporting to cross walks, water cleaning system in cities, labels for toxic substances. Our life is full of safety nets. Safety design is a broad topic with many small categories. It covers livelihood safety design, prevention of fire and disaster, public order design, mass communication for rescue and even politics.

The general idea what safety design should provide is more than just putting mechanical solutions. I decided to concentrate more on the psychological aspects rather than the physical aspects. Also I will focus on the appearance of public spaces.

Two opposite views on safety: Weapons

In nations like the United States, many states allow people to possess arms. Possession of arms has been a way of self-defense. People wanted to keep weapons to protect themselves from danger. But now United States became a nation where you cannot be relieved.

As a result there have been many people who have died or got hurt by weapons owned by regular citizens. More people are killed in accidents than in crime prevention. Kids get hurt by mistake shootings. Sadly, there are gun firing at random. Although possession of arms was started to keep people safe, the result is the opposite. People can never be relieved as others also have guns. The control of guns in the United States has been a very controversial topic for a long time with powerful pro-gun groups such as the NRA (National Rifle Association) opposing any law that might ban guns.

Many people are protesting against the possession of weapons, and this stream is getting powerful. A movement organization against gun possession “Everytown for Gun Safety” was founded with support from the former New York Mayor, Michael Bloomberg. Bloomberg is very supportive to the gun control movement volunteering 50 million U.S. dollars a year to Everytown.
Which side do you think is safer? Would it be safer if everyone possesses arms or if guns were totally prohibited for civilians?

Two opposite views on safety: Public toilets

Like the conflict on gun safety, I realized that there are similar problems with toilet designs.

With my experience, toilets with small openings on the top and the bottom are dangerous since you can be watched by someone. Thus, I feel more comfortable in private toilets without openings. But if a public toilet is completely isolated, is it not easier for offenders to commit more severe crimes? A completely blocked room could be very safe, but very dangerous at the same time. There will be no sound going out, no openings to be seen, nobody who can help you as nobody can notice you. If we are blocked in, then we are blocked out.

On the other side, Chinese public toilets are completely different from private toilet rooms. Chinese public toilets don’t have doors. They are divided only by small plates which are around one meter high. Moreover, some toilets have no division at all. Can we say that they are unsafe? There are a lot of possibilities to be seen. But, the possibility of being seen makes this place safer. Although I would feel very uncomfortable in a toilet like that, it is hard for offenders to commit crimes there. Then what does “Safety” mean? What kind of danger should we consider?

Safety design can be very conflicting depending on users. As there are many different kinds of people, we cannot expect who is going be risky or not.

A few years ago, I was studying in a library in my previous university in South Korea. Then I had to go to the toilet. To access to the toilets from the library one has to turn right two times around a convenience store and walk to the end of a corridor. The male and the female toilet were next to each other and neither had any entrance door. In the women's toilet, there were three toilet cubicles, a sink and a mirror. I took the first one from the entrance as I was in hurry. In the cubicle there was a toilet seat and a shelf which was attached to the wall.

When I was sitting on the toilet seat, I heard a strange sound from above. I looked up and saw a man’s eyes who was trying his best to see what I was doing.
I ran away from the cubicle like a rocket and screamed as loud as I could. I didn’t stop to gather people as I was in panic. Luckily a guy was running towards me from quite far away. When he arrived, the offender sneaked out from the toilet to the corridor. Soon around twenty people surrounded him not to let him go.

The annoyed offender said:

“Let me go! She’s lying. I was in the guy’s section.”

The police came and investigated the surroundings. The offender kept lying. At that time the guy who came to me for the first time gave his testimony. He testified that he saw the offender coming out from the women’s section. As both toilets’ entrances were quite close together, there was nobody who saw that except him. Luckily the police found some footprints on the neighboring cubicle’s shelf and some handprints in the dust on the top of the wall between the cubicles. Finally, he was captured.

Now, I would like to describe more in detail about the place where everything happened. Thinking back about the location, the public toilet was a quite easy place for the offender to fulfill his plan.

First, Accessibility – The location mattered. It was at the end of the corridor with limited accessibility. That made the place to be isolated. The man had enough time to prepare, since he was being alone. In addition, both the women’s and men’s toilets faced each other. That allowed him to try to rescue himself with a lie.

Second, Concealable place – He could wait for his victims while being hidden in the cubicle. Even though he was hidden he could see me above the cubicles. Like a hunter waiting for animals behind rocks, he could hide himself watching me, while I know nothing about him.

My fear in public space began from that day

After that accident I had much depression. I was shocked that he lied and everything could have been disregarded if the witness had not shown up so quickly. I had regular appointments with a professional sexual assault counselor. Although I got the curing counseling for a few months I couldn’t remove that memory from my head. I started to strongly dislike going to public toilets alone and I avoided going to toilets which had cubicles that were not empty next to me. At the same time I thought about how to improve public spaces. Although this was a very individual experience, I am sure that there is a need for improvement of safety in many spaces and similar bad experiences have happened to more people besides me.

Individuality of emotions

From July 23 to September 11, 2014, 16 episodes of a television series drama It’s Okay, That’s Love 5 (Hangul: 괜찮아, 사랑이야; RR: Gwaenchanha, Sarangiya) was on air in South Korea. The main character Jang Jae-yeol is a bestselling mystery fiction novelist and radio DJ. But when he was young, he was exposed to domestic violence by his cruel stepfather.

One day, the father tried to borrow money from him. He ran away from the stepfather not to lose the money which was meant to pay his school fee. But there was no place to hide as he lived in a small village. Suddenly Jae-yeol saw a public toilet. The toilet was of the outdoor type without any water flushing. He went into the toilet and hesitated to jump into the latrine. At last he did it. The stepfather chased him but could not find him. After that day, bathrooms became the safest place for him. Although Jae-yeol became an adult, Jae-yeol could only sleep in his own bathtub. For him toilets were the perfect places to hide himself safely.

It is interesting that the scariest place for me could be the safest place for someone else. When something is stored in the memory,

5  Noh Hee-kyung, Kim Kyu-tae, It’s okay, That’s love, South Korea, 2014
we usually cannot remember events exactly as it happened. Dylan Evans explain this:

Traumatic memories do not retreat into some dark recess of the mind, as Freud supposed. Rather, they obtrude persistently into consciousness, perturbing us when we would rather forget them, even disrupting our dreams.

Jang Jae-yeol has a psychological syndrome which is known as “post-traumatic stress disorder” as he re-lives the event in painful details. Although he is a fictitious character, we can see how a place can be transformed depending on the individual memories from the past. Jae-yeol and I have opposite kind of experiences in the same place. Although we are in the same place, we can feel totally differently depending on our own memories and personal experiences.

Unlike me who feel danger in public spaces, someone can feel safe to hear and see other people. Perhaps, there are people who feel nothing in public spaces. Someone could feel more comfortable in public spaces than in their own home.

What brings out your fear in public places?

Individuals decide if a place is safe or not based on their experiences from before. But actually, fear that people feel when there is nothing happening is from an imaginational scenario. Through experiences, people learn and predict. But in reality, in almost all occasions, nothing is going to happen.

Jacob Voorthuis who teaches architectural critique at the Eindhoven University of Technology worked with a project called Tweak. He also describes fear as imagination:

Tweak is a study of fear in the non-private space- in movement between places of relative safety- in the west of Rotterdam. At the heart of this project is the premise that fear is imagination. Fear is not created by space, rather the space is redefined by mental sets associated with a stereotype. The dark empty street, the unpopulated canal side path, the fluorescent railway underpass: these are the blank canvasses where the mind can animate imaginary negative events.

Tweak searches for the stimuli that motivate the projection of negative images on the space, aiming to balance fear with reality instead of imaginary projections. Armed with a new kind of understanding of the relationship between the place and its inhabitants, the conditions that stimulate the projection of the imaginary fear landscape may be manipulated- tweaked.

Voorthuis puts a television on the streets with an idea of the streets as an urban living room. He tells that the feeling of comfort is derived from your mind. The television is an object which exist where we feel most comfortable - living rooms. Televisions
in many different kinds of public spaces impress us. Since the fear is in your mind, the televisions bring out calm and cozy feelings from your living room to public spaces.

The first question that I had during my project was “How to improve public spaces in relation to safety problems?”. But if fear is derived from people’s own experience, handling space with mechanical devices is not that helpful for their emotional condition. Cameras and emergency bells are obviously important for safety but dealing with being frightened, there could be other ways than just being watched by machines.

What I am interested in this project is that he studied what brings out our fear. Voorthuis studied where fear comes from and demonstrated this. Inspired by this, I would like to study what people perceive in a space and what makes them feel fear or comfort. He tried to change a space of fear to a comfort space with his own study about fear. I want to deal with emotions in spaces exploring what brings out our fear and comfortable feeling rather than just trying to make public spaces safer.

Fear in a historical context

Fear is a very old emotion. It is one of the basic emotions that has existed through the human history. Fear is probably one of the first emotions ever. It has been very useful for human for surviving in a world filled with hungry enemies.

Some people say that fear is a very thankful emotion for human survival. Dylan Evans describe it this way:

If the emotion of fear evolved to help us avoid these dangers, then it might seem that we would be better off without it today. Certainly, an excessive capacity for fear leads to all sort of problems that many people would dearly love to be free of, such as phobias and panic attacks. One does not hear of many people who suffer from the opposite problem – that of having too little fear. The reason for extremes of having too much or too little fear. The virtue of amiability lay halfway between the extremes of cantankerousness of obsequiousness.

Although Dylan thinks that fear is an inevitable emotion, there are many people who are suffering from useless concern in this contemporary society. We are all longing for feeling safe, but sometimes there is no reason to worry about being attacked.

Six basic emotions

Besides fear, I have researched different kind of emotions that people experience ordinarily. I took one of the theories from Dylan which shows human’s basic emotions to generate my works. In his text he believes that there are six basic emotions that we feel in our everyday life.

Dylan explained emotions are as following9:

Basic Emotions are universal and innate. They are rapid onset and last a few seconds at a time. Researchers disagree about how many basic emotions there are, but most would include the following in their list:

Joy · Distress · Anger · Fear · Surprise · Disgust

These are the emotions that we are dealing with. I agree with him. Also these emotions from the base theory to work on for me. If we divide them into more basic categories then they can be related to good mood and bad mood. The joy which is in the good mood category is the opposite emotion to the fear which is in the bad mood category. Forgetting about fear based on personal memories and imagination, I think achievement of joy will be helpful to overcome fear. The joy can be produced just by witnessing a beautiful sunset but that experience may lead us to a happy mood which last for hours.

Joy in relation to fear

When kids go to dentists they get cute stickers or sometimes they even get cute toys. They are taught about the dental clinic in a playful way. That is an effort that doctors do for anxious kids to make them enjoy being in hospitals.

I believe that the emotion of joy can be a method to make people feel comfortable. I have worked with toilet cubicles trying to block openings as I would like to be hidden. This work is according to my own interpretation of public toilets. My study cannot be a perfect answer because I have my own special memory and fear with public toilets.

The solution I used is to block where I felt frightened with cute rabbit faces, see Image 6. These cute rabbit blockers become soldiers for you to protect the toilet cubicle in a playful way. Human beings express their emotion from their face. I used

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a rabbit’s face to sympathize with rabbits. You get animal friends while you are in a toilet.

The rabbits blockers can be attached both on the floor and on the top of the walls dividing the toilet cubicles. On the bottom, you can put the rabbits to be in the middle of the cubicle wall. The vacant part between the ears let through sound. You can hear but it is very difficult to see what is happening in the other cubicle. Same goes with the rabbit blockers on top of the walls. The thin mouth of the rabbits fit to the cubicle wall’s thickness.

The installer can modulate them by selecting a suitable amount of rabbits. Without changing existing public toilets much, the atmosphere of toilets become quite different.

The material is EVA (Ethylene Vinyl Acetate) foam which is light, hygiene, soft, durable and easy to install.

Also, there is another example which used fear in joyful way. It is series of bags of great wit by designer Carolien Vlieger and Hein van Dam. The luxury label Vlieger & Vandam’s bags are contoured by guns, knife, and grenades. Image 7 shows one of their main products. The bag in the image doesn’t have actual arms in it but it looks like it contains them.

Here is a short introduction about their brand and handbags:

The story behind new generation luxury label Vlieger & Vandam is a story about interdisciplinary design, about the relation between art and fashion, and about innovative craftsmanship.

Carolien Vlieger and Hein van Dam, trained as graphic designer and industrial designer, respectively, started the Vlieger & Vandam label in 2004 in response to the overwhelming success of their collaboration in 2002. This collaboration named ‘The Guardian Angel Handbag’ was a comment from both designers on all the media attention to street violence in the city of Rotterdam, the place where they had just settled. Those early Guardian Angels were assembled with parts from second hand handbags and new brightly coloured felt embossed with a distinct profile of a large kitchen knife or handgun. A handbag turned out to be the perfect vehicle for an international widely felt and far from salonfähig sentiment. In 2005 the Guardian Angel Handbags were featured in the exhibition SAFE: Design Takes on Risk at MoMA in New York, where they have been part of the collection ever since.

Although they show silhouettes of threatening items there is no one who would be frightened since it is obvious that the threat is intentional. Creating an atmosphere of playful mood is an inspiration to me.

10  www.vliegervandam.com, 2012
One of the important characteristics of emotions is that they last a few seconds at a time. The difference between emotion and mood is that mood can last for hours. What I want to focus on is personal emotions in public spaces.

The good qualities of sequences and details is that I can catch little pieces of moments and surroundings. By dividing time and space as a way to explore public spaces, I target exact moments and spots.

With sequences, I divided my actions in parts re-experiencing certain places. It is important to be a user of a space to really understand it and see how everything works in order of events. I had these following words to keep flow of time in mind during the experiments:

To come to · Arrive at · Discover · Pass through · Pass · Walk · Touch

Focusing on details, I measured and made drawings of the selected spaces. In the drawings I can measure angles and distances of spatial features. Furthermore, I took photos of items which could trigger people to commit crimes. Such items and spatial features are exactly what I worry about in public spaces.

The design criteria: Informative, Fearful and Humoristic

My project’s boundary lies between fearful, humoristic and real. The purpose of this project is not to make public spaces safer, instead I would like to interact with the viewer’s emotions and
behavior in public spaces by raising awareness of crime in a humoristic way.

“I bring out my imagination of fear.”

This thesis applies to everyday’s routine, especially in public spaces like schools, parks, metro, cafeterias and so on. There will be almost nobody who have not felt fear in public spaces. I would like people to share emotions, understand the cause of emotions in spaces, and maybe change the space together. I thought that people protect people (Awareness protect people) in public spaces for safety. If I shout, people can come and help me. So I decided to reveal my fear, possible crimes, to everyone who use those public areas and share it. Using signs, texts, artworks, I want to let people to be protected by the public who share the information that is fearful and humoristic at the same time. My question is how to point out possible crimes in public spaces by raising awareness of it. I want people to be aware of possible crimes that could happen around them and consider it, and being prepared to protect themselves.

“Not only me, but also others.”

As I mentioned before, emotions in places are very individual. Public spaces contain a many different emotions for different people. People can feel completely different in a place depending on their past experiences and mood of the day. People who is going to experience my project can be a person like me, who has terrible experiences, but also who could frighten others. The issue that I want to address is to understand fear in different situations.

I have a certain emotion but other people must have a different approach to a place. I am scared in many places but not everyone feel the same. What I want to do is to make everyone aware of the possible crimes. The work that I am showing people is about my fear. But I did not want to make the works to look too scary as I think that joy can reduce the fear. Exposing my emotion of fear in a humoristic way, people can get different emotions with the same object. I feel fearful when I see my works. But if you are not afraid, the works can look funny. My pieces of design contain human behavior with symbolism so they can actually deal directly with emotions.

By pointing out crime in a humoristic way, people think about possible crimes and fear with joyful memories.

The role as an Interior Architect

I explore and describe spaces with the way that I interpret them. I become aware about spaces in a specific way, with human behavior and risks in public spaces. I cannot say that what I tell you about spaces is correct since the possibility of crime is generally quite low. My outcome is not a perfect solution to lower possible crimes, but I explore how a space really works and gives us different emotions. It is important to consider about hidden possibilities in public spaces and how a space effect our emotions. I bring this awareness out to the public. As an Interior Architect, my hope is that people who have seen my work becomes more aware about diverse possibilities in public spaces and even share it with their friends.
The Outcome: Symbol, Text and Public art

Here is an example of emotional aspects:

![Mannequin, Symbol, Texts, Wall](image8)

There are diverse materials and ways to work with. But my purpose is to affect personal emotions in a comfortable way. Therefore, I took signs and texts instead of using ordinary walls or realistic human figures. For example, if I install a wall between the gaps of toilet cubicles, they can work well as they divide the space effectively. But the emotional aspect of the walls might not be stronger than symbols and texts. And by installing realistic human figures it could be a too big surprise and even shock to a person. Different from walls and realistic figures, texts and signs give people proper information and affection. The outcome will be as one to one size of street art installations with informative signs in public spaces that I work with. Also I have documented the works by taking videos and photos to see the reactions from people.

There are three different projects that I am going to show. I have picked three public spaces which I pass and use in my everyday life. First, I started to work with public toilets as I feel uncomfortable in them. Then I found out an article about pickpockets in subway stations. The third project is about a bridge that I pass every day.
I called my first project to deal with fear in public toilets as Back to the toilet. Although I feel anxious, I go back to toilets and challenge myself to experience the space again. I try to find the elements which make me scared.

Plan: Three different types of public toilets

To start with, I categorized ordinary public toilets using my university’s plan. As you see in the image below, there are three different types of public toilets.

Plan of Konstfack
The Type 01 is normal toilet cubicles you can see in big public buildings. This type is the same as where a man watched me from above. With this type men and women toilets are separated but there are possibilities to sneak in to the other gender’s toilet. Type 02 is for disabled persons. They are usually very next to corridors, so I feel quite safe as I am surrounded by public. Type 03 is separate room toilets and it allows both genders as users. But there is a long corridor between the outside and the rooms. Which makes users to be anonymous as it is hard to expect who is out there.

Sequences

I took the toilet Type 01 to work with as it is the most common type of public toilet and since there are possibilities, as I have experienced, that the other gender sneak in there and commit crimes. I use public toilet in this order:

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Type 01
Type 02
Type 03
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01. Find a women’s toilet sign.
02. Open the door.
03. Walk through the doors.
04. Check the rooms.
05. Choose a room.
06. Sit on the toilet.
07. Wash hands.
08. Go out.

In the step 06, I usually look up and check if there are someone looking down at me. In this scene, there are small details that I consider about:

I found out that there are small holes on the door. There are gaps between the ceiling and the wall and between the floor and the wall. The sanitation box and water pipe are elements which can trigger people to climb up on the cubicle walls.

This is what I see in few minutes of stay in the cubicle. The image below shows my observations:

The fear that I get is that there can be someone who would climb up the wall. These small factors and plan of toilet Type 01 makes me feel unsecure.
Three Initial Proposals

Through plan studies, I realized that when a private space draws attention they become more safe as people are aware of the private space. One of my first proposals was to put public toilets in the middle of a big square. But the doors of public toilets must be eye catching so that people can observe who gets in and out.

The second expectation was to install a tent to cover and protect my body. This installation shows where I want to be, how I want to be protected. It covers gaps and fear triggering elements like water pipes and sanitation boxes.

Another expectation was to block gaps in toilet cubicles with small blockers. I suggested this work as there are so many already existing toilet cubicles and it could be a way to change them economically. V shapes and Y shapes can be easily installed and removed. Also these shapes are good to apply both on top and bottom gaps. Also, I changed them to rabbit faces to make them look funny. Set Image 6 for more explanation.

However these three initial proposals are not informative about the possible crimes. So I thought about what could bring out and show my fear directly to people.

Proposal Drawings

I have two different proposals for installations. The first one is to write a sentence on the wall to interact with the users of public toilets. If a person look at the sign, that person might think about what could have happened. I tried to use direct, intuitive expressions. By explaining possible crime in a very short sentence people understand various circumstances.

What I had in mind from start is that people can protect people. If a lot of people are aware about fearful situation is in a place, then people become more cautious. People can have a
care not only to themselves, but also to the others. When a group of people share the same fear, a slight fellowship occurs. People are all different. The affection from this work to you is also very individual. You can become scared from this or you can just ignore this sign. How you understand this work is totally depending on you.

The second proposal is an iconic version of the text. I transformed the toilet sign of man to climb up the toilet cubicle wall. The man means a man, an anonymous person. He could be anyone around you. At the same time he is not a human being. He is just a simple two dimensional drawing which cannot be alive. This fact let people not to be afraid of him. As a drawing he shows possible threat without frightening people.

In the specific situation in public spaces, being alone in a toilet, you meet him face to face. Hanging on the wall he looks down at you like the man that I met in real. He has no expression but he definitely spy on your most private time.

I am going to lock the cubicle with the man in the installation to act out as a real situation.

I decided to take the second proposal as the main proposal since this one communicates with people more directly than the sentence in the first proposal. It is also more humoristic than the sentence.

The image below shows how the proposals look like when they are installed.
I have tried both proposals in one to one scale. I made the sentence with black rubber as material.

Using my drawing of the man climbing up, I printed and copied on a 3mm MDF panel. After cutting the panel as a man, I checked how it works in real place. Two plates of right arm, curved left arm work as hanging structures. The neck is connected with an angled wooden piece. I sprayed it with black and connected the body, arm and neck with glue.

I wanted to be look like a 2D man so I used thin and flexible material. The paint color is black to match with my school’s toilet sign.

This is how I installed the two proposals. I took two kinds of photos with different views. From the man’s view shows how I looked like from the offender. And the other photo shows how I look at the man.

This is the sentence on a toilet cubicle wall. As I thought more about it, I realized that this was not a very joyful way to communicate with people.
I took two kinds of photos with different views. From the man’s view shows how I looked like from the offender. And the other photo shows how I look at the man.
I found an article about pickpockets in subway stations in DN.se, the online version of the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter. According to the article there has been many people losing their credit cards after they have charged their SL-cards (a ticket for public transportation). Especially in Slussen station, which is one of the most crowded stations in Stockholm, many credit cards were lost. The thieves had observed the code while the charging was made, and after the card was stolen they could easily withdraw money in the nearest ATM.

When you buy tickets in subway stations, there are more people passing behind you than ATMs located in streets. Near the ticket gates, there is a mass of people passing through every few minutes. In my case, I usually don’t buy tickets so often but each time I buy them I become quite nervous. The problem as I see it is that you do your private action in a public space. No one would want his or her credit card to be stolen but you have to push buttons for your PIN code when there are many anonymous people around you. They might have looked at you for quite a while.
Sequences

I tested how everything works with the ticket machines when I charge my SL-card in the Slussen station. I started from outside the station. Step by step, I acted as I would buy the ticket in real:

01. Find the subway station
02. Go through the station entrance
03. Step in front of a ticket machine
04. Make the ticket selection on the touch screen
05. Insert a credit card on the right side of the machine
06. Push buttons for the PIN code and charge the ticket on the card by holding it under the screen
07. Pass the ticket gate
08. Put your wallet back

I realized that during the sixth and eighth steps, the credit card could be in danger. On the sixth step, after I decided which ticket I would like to buy, I have to insert my credit card in the machine and push the buttons for the PIN code. After that I passed the ticket gate towards the subway and put my wallet back inside my pocket. If someone had seen my PIN code and followed me, my credit card must have been so tempting.

Details

Observing how a subway station entrance looks like, I found out that there are many places where people can stand and pretend they are waiting for someone.

The problem is that the private password is visible to public people and that you actually can’t check if someone is looking at you each second. So I checked where the PIN code is visible and invisible.
I measured angles of to build a zone where people can see your PIN code. In the circle above, there are gray and purple parts. In the gray parts, a person who uses the ticket machine is viewed from the left side. Here, the PIN code was not visible as the person blocks it with his or her body. In the purple parts on the other hand, the PIN code was clearly visible.

Even through the windows of the unused ticket gate booth the PIN code could be seen. If someone had been there waiting for someone it would have been easy just to check my PIN code in a few seconds.

Here is a plan drawing of the PIN code visible zone:

As you can see from the drawing, there are gates just next to the ticket machines. Naturally people who buy tickets show their back and the screen of the machine towards the people passing by.

In the elevation drawing you can see that more clearly.

Also, especially in the Slussen station, the ticket machines are close to the station entrance. It seems it is like this because the person working in the ticket gate booth must have easy accessibility to people who get in to the subway station. Therefore it becomes natural that people stay and wait for someone just near the ticket machines.

I have two proposals with this space. The first one is to write exactly what I am afraid of on the floor. I am afraid of someone to stand where that person can see my code. If I let people know that there is an area that I have measured where PIN codes are visible, the people passing there would notice it. They might be more careful with protecting their PIN code after they have seen my work. Also, people can be more observant with people standing around the ticket machines. If there is someone who look suspicious standing around the PIN code visible zone, people who pass there would notice it. The potential offenders can be more hesitated, as there is information about how a thief would act like.

To check the crime trigging elements, you can see this drawing below:
Starting from the left of the drawing, there is a supermarket, photo booth, two ticket machines, ticket gate booth that is closed now and the ticket gates. Between the closed booth and the gates, there is a small space where people can hang out. In the first purple image in the drawing of angles of the plan, you can see that a person took a photo of my PIN code through the small building. The PIN code is obviously visible even there.

As most subway stations are similar, my work can be applied for the other stations than just Slussen

Proposal Drawings

On the other hand there is a possibility that people learn how to steal others money from this work. The information that I give to people can also be used in bad ways. The other proposal is to magnify the PIN code drawing on the floor. However, I think it could be more difficult to understand the information that I am giving just through an image of the PIN code buttons. Therefore I chose the first text to realize.
Model Making

To clearly communicate the message I want to make a clean white text with a triangular shape around. Triangles have high attention gathering aspects. As the floor is gray and dark, white color attracts people to read the sentence. I don’t want to destroy any public spaces with my work so I decided not to use any spray but instead attach rubber on the floor. The material that I chose was rolls of white rubber which can be on floors without disturbing people walking on it. The size of each triangle side was 2300 mm.

To find out a suitable size of the text I used white tape to try a real one to one scale. Then I printed out texts that I wanted to write on the floor. I tried out with A4 papers before I cut rubber rolls. I could use a razor cutter to make the text but I used hand cutting as I wanted it to feel more valuable as an artwork. I also cut the triangular parts. As the rubber is flexible I can roll the text and carry it around and when I want to install it I can unfold it and put it on the floor.

Installation

This is how I installed the sign. I could see that people passing by looked at my work for a few seconds. One woman stopped and said how important it is to keep your PIN code secret.

Developed Proposal

I think the sentence in the first proposals was too long to read and not joyful. Also the material was not so noticeable making it easy to pass the sign. I decided to change the sentence to be only the word ‘PIN code’. I do not need to say more than that to transfer my message. I changed the typeface to be more vivid and lively. Also I added an exclamation mark.

But most people just passed by and did not notice about the existence of the sign. Maybe they might think that it was a boring warning from a bank or SL.
I thought about diverse materials and I considered about how to make it look more fun and attentional. The idea that I got was to use lights, something like neon signs which usually attract customers in streets. I chose LED diods which does not become so warm. The color that I selected was red which means warning and excitement at the same time. I wanted it to blink to make the word look more like a warning and addressing people.

I kept the top angle but removed one side of the triangle. I reduced the size to be one meter so I would bother less people that are walking around.

Model making

It took a lot of time just to make correct drawings. I had to calculate the amount of LED diods, voltage, current and circuit layouts. I got some help from a friend who knows well about electronics. It was much effort than expected to connect all the lights. I connected four LED lights as one section and connected the sections in parallel. In total, it was 392 LED lights.

I did everything by hand. I printed and cut the texts and punched around 400 holes through a hard paper board. Then I inserted the LED lights into the holes and connected them on the downside of the board.
Installation

The image above shows the backside of the model with the circuit wiring.

I made the model to be blinking. The left photo shows when the light is on, the right one shows when the light is off.

The diodes are designed so when looking at them from top view, the light is much more concentrated.

I installed the sign in the Telefonplan subway station as can be seen in the image above.
This image shows the ticket machine and the model in the exhibition

This is the model in the Konstfack spring exhibition 2015
When I go to school I pass the start of a bridge to go to a bus station. Bridges are usually next to water so there are many people walking around there in the daytime. In the morning, the atmosphere is quite nice, but when I am on my way back home I hesitate to use this way, as I feel very scared at night.

The reason I have chosen this place to work with is that there are many similar places like this in cities. You can find this kind of spaces, under a bridge or next to a stair, quite often. As this thesis work examines public spaces in our daily life I think this is a good example to study.

One of the main observations I have done is that the light in this place is very different from daytime and nighttime. Also the amount of people who take this way is different depending on the time of the day, when it is dark there is almost nobody who uses this way. I think that the areas that become hidden in the dark are factors that make people avoid the place. I will now explain this further with sequences and details:
Sequences

I went to the north side of the bridge Västerbron that I pass every day to find out reasons for my fear. I visited this place two times, in the morning and in the evening, at the same time as when I usually pass there. It was completely different to pass under the bridge in daytime and nighttime. Below explains how I pass this space:

Daytime, 08:40
01. Find the bridge and stairs.
02. Walk towards it and check under the bridge.
03. Walk up the stairs.

Nighttime, 20:40
01. Go to the stairs leading down from the bridge.
02. Arrive at the top of the stairs.
03. Walk down and pass the cavity under the bridge.

On the first daytime step before I approach the space, I can look at and understand the complete view of the space. In contrast, on the first nighttime step, I cannot see anything under the bridge from my position. On the third step of the nighttime sequence, it is very scary to meet the black space under the bridge, as I don’t know what to expect from this space.

Details

I have made elevation- and plan drawings of the specific area around the bridge to better understand about it:

The stairs connect the park Rålambshovsparken and the starting point of the bridge Västerbron that goes towards south crossing a river. In the summer months the area is quite lush with trees, bushes and grass. The stairs are divided in two sets with a small plateau in the middle. Starting from below the stairs, the first stairset consists of 18 steps and the second one of 17 steps.

The drawings below show how I walk up the stairs in the morning with my field of view marked with green. The two drawings to the left shows the same step, but from different viewing directions. Under the drawings there are photos showing the actual view of the space.
When I go to school it is usually bright and I can discover what is under the bridge before I approach it. Therefore I am prepared for what I would meet later. When I go up the stairs, I don’t have any fear. I don’t need to care and be frightened about anything under the bridge since I already know that the area is clear.

Going down from the top of the stairs the corresponding drawings of how I experience this space are shown below:

When I go home from school, I start from the top of the bridge. This means that I don’t see anything of what could be hidden under the bridge. As I start walking down the stairs it is usually so dark that I cannot see well what is next to the stairs. I noticed that the dark gap between the bridge and the stairs makes a triangular shape. My view of the space under the bridge gradually expands as I am walking down and this affects my emotion to feel afraid and begin to guess about what would be under the bridge.

I have compared the space in different light and time. The image above shows how the cavity under the bridge looks like from the top of the stairs, on the fifth and on the 16th stair from the top. Although the photos show the same space, the atmosphere is completely different.
I realized that from the top to the fifth step I could not see well under the bridge. As I wrote about in *V Methods and Purpose*, emotions stay on people for a few seconds. Walking down this place at night, you have a few seconds of time to feel uncomfortable and you don’t know if anything unforeseen will appear during these five steps.

I decided to use these few seconds of time and few seconds of emotions, when people don’t know and make guesses about the space for my installation.

**Initial Proposal**

The first thought that I had was to put blood on the floor so that people can misunderstand that there has been a serious crime. But when you go down the stairs completely, the blood could in fact be something which is far from any crime, for example a bottle of wine, kiss marks, a red beach sunset, ketchup and so on. I wanted to transform the blood into something that is not aggressive.

I made some fake blood and poured it on the space under the bridge. The photo shows the blood from the view on top of the bridge.

**Details 02**

The drawings show the top view of the space. I measured how much of the cavity that is not visible from the top of the stairs and found out that around 1.3 meters of space is hidden. This is enough space for someone to hide.
Proposal Drawings

Using the measurement, I decided to make the blood to be a message saying Imagination. Not just spraying blood on the soil, I thought about letting people react and think about their fear as imagination. To enhance the surprise with the blood and to ease the reading of the message, I decided to install a light on the wall under the bridge.

Actually the approach to this project is opposite to the other projects. In the two other projects my message was to say “A crime can happen”. But this project is saying that “It might not happen”. Still it makes you aware about a possible crime and that is the important part for me. With this I wanted to investigate the individuality of emotions in spaces.

Writing the word Imagination on the ground with blood, people who go down the stairs will see the blood first, and the actual word later making them aware of their imagination they just had for a few seconds.

With material and color, I made the text to gradually turn into raspberry jelly from the blood, and a tasty red color from the bloody dark red.

While I was making fake blood and jelly, I tested different textures and colors. To make the color as similar as possible with real blood, I used a few drops of blue color mixed with pure red color. To make the liquid blood that could be poured on the ground I used transparent sugar syrup. With the raspberry jelly text, I used vegetarian gelatin powder mixed with water.
To make molds for the jelly, I printed out the letters in paper and cut foam boards with the prints as templates. I covered the inside walls of the letter cutouts with electric tape and the bottom of the molds with plastic film. To make the jelly letters to easily detach from the molds I brushed oil on the walls and bottom. Then I filled the molds with the jelly mixture but put more and more blue color to make the letters gradually darker. With the last letters, I put some raspberries in them.

Installation

First, I installed a light to make the letters visible. I used a portable LED-light which is quite strong. Then I started with placing the first character “I” in “Imagination” approximately 1.3 meters from the bridge wall followed by the rest of the letters.

I made the installation at 5 am to see how it would work in the morning and in the night. Nicely, when I came back at 9 pm, nobody had damaged it.
The view from the fifth step from the top of the stairs

The view from under the bridge
The project “Fear in Public Spaces” brings out hidden possibilities in public spaces. I highlighted this awareness to share with the reader. Especially I considered potential risks in an urban context. As cities are full of strangers, crimes happen in public spaces by anonymous people. Therefore, it is important to explore how and why public spaces enable people to commit crimes.

I have worked with three sub-projects located in three different urban spaces where people pass in their daily life; public restrooms, subway entrances and an outdoor stair. The methods that I have used to explore these spaces are sequence (the order people use the spaces), details (every single object and architectural structures) and emotions (especially the negative emotion of fear and the positive emotion of humor). I have chosen my design criteria to give informative signs in a humorous and fearful way at the same time to confront the negative feelings in the spaces. To illustrate my research I made drawings, models and installations in these spaces based on my studies.

Looking at this thesis project from an Interior Architectural view, it is a contribution to the field of safety design. The project explores the safety side of spaces by experiencing and reading details of objects, spatial structures and locations. The architectural methods used are the following; measuring size of each space and associated objects (walls, floor, stairs etc.), observing the flow of people to divide a space by user behavior, recording sequences in such places; the spatial organization in combination with the sequence.

The installations bring out a possible situation in a space which has not happened yet. Instead they show how a space can drive a crime and which architectural composition triggers people to commit crimes.

The following sections give a short description about the three sub-projects and what I have observed and learned through the process.

Project 01

The first project originated from my experience of wrong usage of public spaces and I chose public toilets in my school to work with.

I tried to find a generic solution to prevent a similar situation to happen to others. I made many drawings and models to make safer public toilets. Eventually I realized that both sealed and open toilets can be safe and unsafe at the same time depending on the situation and there is not a simple solution.

After observations with sequences and details in toilets, I noticed that some details can be wrongly used. I decided to recreate a situation which can happen with those details; gaps and structures to climb up between the cubicles. I chose a situation when a man climbed up the cubicle wall. To work with emotions, I used a common symbol of a person found in our daily life.

I guessed the familiar symbol of a man could produce joy. I made the man with thin wooden board as material to make it look more like a cartoon. My intention was to create a scary situation in a joyful way to make people feel confused. In the exhibition, some people were uncomfortable but the other people said it was fun. I could see that the same space can be read differently depending on personal experiences.
In addition to the wooden board I used rubber to put a text on one of the other toilet’s walls. However, the man seemed more implicative and easily understood than the text.

Project 02

I found an article saying that people lost their wallets in subway stations directly after charging their SL cards. The thieves had seen the credit card’s PIN code.

I realized that there are so many people walking behind the machine at the same time when people are charging their SL cards.

The situation became perfect for the thieves because they could hide in public: they became anonymous.

In this project, I came up with a warning sign to make people aware about the problem. I measured and divided a subway entrance to draw a ‘PIN code visibility zone’ to highlight the awareness of a possible crime.

If the criminal stands near ‘PIN code visibility zone’, it would be suspicious. Also the public can be more careful about their PIN codes. Therefore this sign protect people from hidden criminals.

I made two different installations with different materials. First one was with white rubber text. The reason that I used white rubber was to make people to think that the sign came from SL.

During the installation in the subway station, I noticed that many people walked on the installation without noticing it. I guess the text was too long and the material was not noticeable enough.

The second installation had similar shape but with blinking LED lights. I shortened the sentence to be only ‘PIN code’. I changed the typeface to be more eye-catching together with an exclamation mark.

This installation got more attention than the first one. In the exhibition, people stood in front of it and tried to charge their cards. But it was difficult in the subway entrance as there were so many people. The installations could exist only for a few minutes.

I think it’s good that I pointed out how the space was made not caring about flow of people together with their behavior. An easy solution would be to add a small cover screen on the machine.

Project 03

When I go to school I pass a bridge. Comparing morning in daylight, I feel scared to walk down a stair on the bridge at night since there is a hidden area which becomes dark.

Starting the project, I understood that there are two main reasons which make the space uncomfortable.

First, natural light in the space makes big differences toward emotions.

Second, the structure of the space enlarges the fear by creating a zone which contains unknown darkness.

Based on the studies of light and shapes of the space, I made an installation on the spot which is visible from many positions around the stair.

More importantly, I wanted to describe fear which is created by
the space. The space which made me feel nervous all the time was a small area under the bridge. So I decided to make a fake crime scene with sugar blood on there.

Here is how I found the blood working as an installation message;

First, the shape of the blood is actually a word 'Imagination'.
Second, the color gradually becomes tasty red color from dark bloody red. Only ‘I’ of 'Imagination' is in blood color.
Third, the material changes. The blood is made of sugar. The terrible crime scene’s main object tastes actually very sweet. Also, the word becomes gradually raspberry jelly to the right. The small raspberries in the end of the word exaggerate the fact that it is not dangerous.

The meaning of ‘Imagination’ can be interpreted in many different ways.

My intention was to make people to get surprised from the blood. When the installation was done it was in the middle of night. People passing there looked at the blood carefully. But it seemed like they were relieved that it was just a text in jelly form.

Comparing the three projects in various aspects

The characteristics of those three public spaces are different. Public toilets and in front of ticket machines are the spaces which has a right to be the most private in the middle of a public area. The problems happened because of the breakage of privacy. Under the bridge was a place which shouldn’t be private because it is a public space. But it became private because of darkness so that people can feel uncomfortable.

So the intention of installations was different.

In the first two projects, I read and re-created spaces thereby describe risks in public spaces. Using symbols, texts in installations, I interact with emotions and behavior by bringing awareness. Therefore the installations communicated to the viewers about possible crimes saying, "It can happen.".

On the other hand, with the third project, the message is different. I warn people in an opposite way as the other two projects. The installation looks like there has already been a crime. You can see blood from top of the bridge, but when you come closer, you notice that the blood is actually made with raspberry jelly and forms the word Imagination. This means it may not happen.

I learnt through this thesis project that fear is based on expectations about what could happen in the space in different situations depends on human behavior. By dealing with different ways to communicate with emotions, I could try a variety of expectations and different emotions especially fear.

Also the material of the outcomes developed. Starting from a flat toilet-man symbol I used rubber bands and LED lights to install portable and direct warnings. The last text was made in jelly material with color gradation. So I got opportunities to work with many different materials like wood, rubber, LED lights, sugar syrup, jelly and so on.

The good qualities of sequences and details are that I can catch each piece of moments and surroundings. By dividing time and space as a way to explore public spaces, I target exact moments and spots.

But to study the details during the process, I had to stay in
the spaces to install and examine them although I was scared to be there. People looked at me assuming I was doing something wrong.

Final reflection

My outcomes are study based installations. What is more important than the installations themselves are the studies and stories behind them.

Going back to the questions previously asked in this thesis;
What brings out fear? Is it really dangerous being in public spaces? Are they really unsafe in relation to the fear that people or I feel? Can we make public spaces safe?

My outcome is not a perfect solution to lower possible crimes, but I explore how a space really works and gives us different emotions. It is important to consider about possibilities in public spaces and how a space affect our emotions. I bring this awareness out to the public.

My hope is that people who have seen my work becomes more aware about diverse possibilities. Importantly I learnt how a space affects our emotions. How they are differently read depends on the viewer.

I believe that fear rely on imaginations. But the space really gives reason for crimes. Also it determines the atmosphere and emotions. Although emotions last a few seconds at a time, a space stays for a long time.
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