Practicing creativity
Landscape architects make future Stockholm

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SAM 212 Master´s thesis 30 HE credits
Master´s program in Social Anthropology
Spring term 2017
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Abstract

Green urban spaces are a vigorous part in cities development, all over the world (Swanwick, Dunnet, & Wooley, 2003). These spaces are persistently constructed and negotiated over a creative process, which includes a network of actors, such as clients, designers, constructors, and users. This thesis addresses this process - with a case study of landscape architects in Stockholm, and their practice of creativity. The landscape architects present one group of actors involved in the process, where they design urban spaces for the future through their creative work. It begins with a mental image, an idea, and ends with a built site, a designed space.

In reference to practice theory (Ortner, 1984 and 2006) and the biosocial becomings approach (Ingold, 2013), I analyze how creativity as a practice is socially produced by history, culture and power, through the biosocial growth of the creative agent, the landscape architect. Referring to Hallam and Ingold’s definition (2007, p. 3), I understand creative practice as an improvisational process. I argue that creativity is accumulated, i.e. a becoming practice amongst becoming creative agents. While investigating the practice of creativity through a traditional participant observation, I primarily focus on sounds, where I listen to the practice, and use it as a method of collecting empirical data. With that method, I enrich the registration of sensor impressions (Borneman & Hammoudi, 2009, p. 19) during my fieldwork, providing a sonic dimension to the knowledge of creative practice amongst landscape architects.

Keywords: Creativity, landscape design, practice, anthropology in sound.
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Acknowledgement

I feel so privileged to have had the opportunity to do this practice in ethnography, my master thesis in social anthropology. Not only was it the fruitful environment of creativity and design amongst landscape architects, but I also “did anthropology in sound”, inspired by Steven Feld (2004), when I listened to the practice. I owe all my interlocutors at the Office a warm and deep thank you – I really learned a lot from participating with, listening to, and observing them at their work for over two months in late 2016. There are but several others I would like to thank:

First I would like to thank my supervisor at the Department of Social Anthropology at Stockholm University, Asta Vonderau, who I was so fortunate to have both as my first and last mentor during this master program. I would also like to thank Christina Garsten, who I met in the course Organizational Anthropology, and got to know better when I was hired as her research assistant in the project Global Foresight: Anticipatory governance and the making of geo-cultural scenarios. She encouraged my choice of field and my analytical method in future design. Also, I want to thank Rasmus Rodenielson and Davíð Stefánsson for all the practical comments during my writing period, and Daniel Escobar, for showing me how to use the media room at the Department, for analysing and editing my collection of sounds. Additionally, I would like to thank Shahram Kosravi, Beppe Karlsson and Helena Wulff for their warmth and support, and Darcy Pan, Lina Lorentz, Eva Eyton, and Peter Skoglund for always being there, at the Social Anthropology Department at SU.

Last, but not least, I want to share my warmest thanks to my family; my husband Búi Stefánsson, who listens to me and makes me listen, and has helped me create time to write and read during the master’s program these last two years; my three children, Heiður Anna, Brimir and Kári, who make my sonic environment so good to live in. Their creative way of being, in music, their laugh and their language inspire me on this journey of mine. I also want to thank my dog, Elvis, who made these last months of writing easier, not only because of the fresh air during our walks in the open public places of Stockholm, but also because of his warm and thankful presence, no matter what.
1. Introduction

Even architects, however, are human beings. They move in the same circles as those who walk the streets of the cities they have helped to design. And it is surely in these movements, not in splendid isolation, that their ideas take shape (Hallam & Ingold, 2007, p. 9).

It was autumn 2015. I and a group of other people\(^1\) had recently moved to Stockholm, one of the world’s cities that is growing fast in population, and circulating in a green urban development (see for example recent discussion in Littke, 2015). My main reason for moving was to continue my education in Social Anthropology and take a master’s degree at Stockholm University. I rode the bus from my apartment to the university. I walked briskly from the bus station to building B, because I had only seven minutes to get there on time. I followed a broad pathway through the Frescati Campus. On that rather quick and short path I passed several people – students, professors, tourists, researchers, beggars, and employees cutting the grass. Their usage of the Frescati Campus, as an urban space, varied. They talked different languages. Their mobiles rang and pinged. Their shoes clicked on the asphalt. I also heard birds singing and flies buzzing. I felt the relatively cold moist of fall in the air and smelled the decaying grass and falling leaves from the green spaces. I saw the brown, orange and purple colours taking over the ‘greenness’. I also saw benches to sit on, stairs to walk up, paths to stroll and houses to enter. This landscape I heard, saw, smelled, and felt is a designed product. It is a designed urban landscape in Stockholm. It is made for me and other biosocial becomings\(^2\) to use. The biosocial becomings is a concept from Tim Ingold which highlights how every being grows and becomes what it is through its biological and social connections (2013). The urban landscape is not only created for (or not for!) biosocial becomings of all species and kinds, but by a group of them as well - the landscape architects. They walked through that space and that space shaped their ideas (Ingold & Hallam, 2007, p. 9). It is through experiences like these that my interest awoke on the creation of future urban landscape, viewing it as a sonic anthropological field. Who are these landscape architects that make future Stockholm? And how do they create urban landscape? *Since I can listen to and hear their produced site, as I*

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\(^1\) 2015 was a record year regarding immigrants in Sweden (SCB, 2015).

\(^2\) As a chosen theoretical concept for my thesis, I find it appropriate to use from the very beginning of my text. I elaborate deeply on that concept in the theoretical chapter.
just described, what will I find when I listen to them and their practice? I decided to seek answers to those questions one year later.

From early September 2016 to the end of December the same year, I studied creativity in the process of landscape design at a landscape architecture office in Stockholm. I entered the field with two research agendas; first, to explore creativity as a practice amongst landscape architects and secondly, to use the methodology of *listening to the practice* where I “hear the culture” (Erlmann, 2004) and “do anthropology in sound” (Feld & Brenneis, 2004). Through these agendas I investigated the making of future urban landscape through and in sounds and saw how the practice of creativity is in some way affected by, and produced in, the sonic surroundings of the creative agent (Hughes-Freeland, 2007, p. 207). Entering those surroundings as a novice, where landscape architects create urban landscape, made me feel their expert knowledge very clearly. Their expertise appeared in the technical language, the digital programs used for designing, the examples of material all around, and a whole lot of drawing material – paper, pens of all sorts, pencils, brushes, paint, rulers etc. It also appeared in their engagement and strong sensation as a group, opposed to other experts working on the same floor. “We, the landscapers” was a common beginning of a professional discussion, formal or informal. Their awareness of creativity as a core in their work was also frequently visible, which supports my take on the matter. One example comes from an interview with Lina, one of my interlocutors, who said: “We create. Our work is basically creative”.

Anthropological studies on creativity have become increasingly important (see for ex. Hallam & Ingold, 2007), presenting the call for answers to questions about current ways of living and cultural

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3 To respect the anonymity of my interlocutors, I refer only to their office as placed in Stockholm. I call it the Office.

4 Listening to a practice is a methodology that can be related to an interdisciplinary research field, generally called sound studies (see for example Gallagher, 2015 and Morat, 2016). Those studies, as a regime, are controversial, for as Steven Feld has mentioned, they are biased towards technology and western sounds (Feld, 2015). When it comes to anthropological research, the absolute dominating name in audio and sound research is Steven Feld. His influence and shaping is immense, where, for example his research on sounds Kaluli expressions (Feld, 2012 [1982]), plus more recent research has formed the topical, theoretical, and methodological approach on sound (Feld & Brenneis, 2004; Wulff, 2016). I agree with Feld in that studies of sound should include other parts of the world, other origins, coming from humans and animals - biosocial becomings. Anthropology as an academic discipline has a key role in relation to those studies, as it contests the field, whilst simultaneously it provides material and representations from different sonic environments around the world (see for ex. Malmström, 2014 and Waldock, 2016).
improvisation. In that call, significant issues, such as urban living, sustainability, and immigration (among others), are met and dealt with. I use Hallam and Ingold’s definition of creativity in my thesis:

By harnessing our understanding of creativity to improvisation rather than innovation we propose a forward reading that would recover the productive processes that have been neglected in cultural studies due to their almost exclusive concentration on consumable products (Friedman 2001: 48). The improvisational creativity of which we speak is that of a world that is crescent rather than created; that is ‘always in the making’ (Jackson 1996:4) rather than ready-made (Hallam & Ingold, 2007, p. 3).

Firstly, I understand creativity as an improvisation, characterized by its processes, moving forward. I chose the angle of creativity as a practice in process, based on the data gathered from the Office. For example, Gudrun, a young landscape architect, defined creativity as a three formed practice that is a “mixture of ideas and inspiration and a will to try out and explore. The result is not that important” (underlining by author). According to Gudrun, the creative process lies in the combination of ideas, inspiration and will, rather than addressing creativity as innovation, or an outcome. I witnessed this process as well in my participant observation at the Office, in their tryouts and exploration. I even heard their inspiration from the sounds I collected and saw their ideas on sketches. Hence, creative practice appeared as an improvisational process rather than a consumable product. With that definition I could identify the growth and the becoming of the practice, as well as the sound of it. Secondly, I chose Hallam and Ingold’s definition because it includes four valuable points that were present in the landscape architects’ practices: Creativity is generative, relational, temporal and “the way we work” (ibid, pp. 1-15). Those points echoed in my interlocutors’ discussions on creative practice, as in the actual practice itself. Creative practice was “generative in the way in which it [gave] rise to the phenomenal forms of culture as experienced by those who [lived] by them or in accord with them” (ibid, pp. 3-6 (brackets added by author)), as some practices were labelled as Swedish in character, or even “Stockholm mode”. Gudrun, for example, talked about accuracy in measuring centimetres in landscape design to be “Stockholm mode” practice. Secondly, I found creative practice as relational, as “it’s continually attuned and responsive to the performance of others” (ibid, pp. 6-9). Cissi, one of my interlocutors, described her creative practice as “the teamwork with others” and “the discussion with others”. I also observed how creative practice was attuned to the performance of others. For example, when two landscape architects discussed their project and one of them changed their sketch by drawing
a different line, all because of the response from the others. Thirdly I experienced the temporality of the creative process, as “it embodies a certain duration” (ibid, pp. 9-12). The creative practice at the Office was dependant on time and duration. It was both expressed on an hourly basis, “where we sell our hours, not our work”, as Lina said, but also in longer periods. Viktor, my gatekeeper, described the creative practice in phases, during our interview: “We have a very long process from the first sketch to a built environment. So, most of the time at least two years and quite often more, 10 years maybe. [….] And it’s quite many phases also on the road”. Lastly, creative practice at the Office was “the way [they] work[ed]”, or “the ordinary conduct of [their] everyday lives” (ibid, pp. 12-15 (brackets added by author)). Andreas, one of my interlocutors, told me how “…that is the creativity – being creative. In discussion, in design, in more general terms, but also in the details. So, everyday, on several different levels.” After this introduction, where I have contextualized the field and clarified the anthropological understanding and my construction of the main concept for the analyses, creativity, I clarify my aim and describe the organization of the thesis.

Research question and disposition

My aim is to examine how creativity is practiced amongst landscape architects. While examining this, my research questions are: How is urban landscape for future Stockholm made and created by landscape architects? And how does this process of creation affect them as creative agents?

Additionally and simultaneously, I ask a methodological question about how listening can be used as a tool for investigating practices, in this context the practice of creativity. I want to know how creative practice can be experienced, not only visually and emotionally, but also sonically - I listen to the practice, by “doing anthropology in sound” (Feld & Brenneis, 2004)5.

5 An interesting research was done by Stefan Helmreich about underwater ethnography and the practice of diving (2007). Raising awareness to the sounds of a practice takes part in fighting against the hierarchy of senses in the discipline itself. The anthropology of sound is growing, affecting the methodology of hearing, listening and recording, which matches the current increase in studies within the anthropology of senses (see for example Erlenmann, 2004; Feld & Brennais, 2004; Ingold, 2000; Meyer, 2008; Pink, 2009; Bull & Howes, 2016).
The thesis is organized into five main chapters. This first chapter, **Introduction**, is an attempt to place the reader in the context of my field. There I contextualize the topic - creativity amongst landscape architects - and describe how creativity as a practice is an improvisational development in the design process of urban landscape of the future. I conclude the introduction chapter with my aim and research question and an additional methodological question about *listening to the practice*. The second chapter is called **Method**. First, I describe the field and how I entered it. Secondly, I discuss my main methods for data collection, participant observation and interviews and how I listened to the practice and collected sounds. Lastly, I reflect on ethical consideration regarding the thesis. The third chapter, **Theory**, is divided into three major discussions. The first covers anthropological research on creativity, where I reflect on the research gap in this area. Then I move onto the theoretical tools used for the analysis, practice theory (Ortner 1984 and 2006) and biosocial becomings approach (Ingold, 2013). Chapter four is my main ethnographical chapter, called **Practicing creativity**. It begins with a detailed description of the field where I also introduce my key interlocutors. Following that description I enter the analytical discussion that is organized around three main themes. The first one concerns *time and creative practice*. There I reveal how temporal factors, such as history, future, routine and rhythm affect the creative practice. Secondly, I discuss *space and creative practice* and the way in which space plays a role for creativity. Thirdly, I enter a discussion on *senses/sounds and creative practice* that includes a brief examination of visual factors and emotions but mostly sounds and sonic environment. The fifth and final chapter is **Conclusions**. There I review the main points from the ethnographical chapters and relate to the research questions. I argue that the practice of creativity as an improvisational process is accumulative and growing, a *becoming practice*. I conclude with how landscape architects as creative agents are *becoming deviant experts* through the growth and accumulation of creative practices in the improvisational process. In the following section I discuss my methodological choices and ethical considerations.
2. Method

The various roles which ethnographers establish within settings are, of course, the bases from which data can be collected. One form of data is researcher’s descriptions of people’s behaviour, of what they do and say in various circumstances, and of their own experience of participation in settings. Equally important, though, are the accounts that people in the setting provide, while being observed or in interviews (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 96).

Entering the field

When I moved to Stockholm in July 2015, I took my family with me, my husband and my three kids. We found our personal places effortlessly, gradually began speaking Swedish and my kids all started school at the end of August. My youngest son, six years old at the time, had a limited Swedish vocabulary, which made him vulnerable and scared on this first day of school. Another boy, one year younger, stood beside my son, also looking scared, but because of another reason - it was his first day at the elementary level. His father held his hand and he looked at me and my husband, holding our son’s hands, smiled sympathetically and introduced himself: Viktor, a studio manager and a landscape architect at the Office. At that time, I did not imagine that I was meeting my key interlocutor and gatekeeper.

I therefore had the benefit of knowing my gatekeeper when entering my field and we discussed my access long before I began my fieldwork. Early August 2016, he asked me “are you going to be able to just hang around and watch us work and be quiet, like anthropologist do?” He wondered about my role in the field, based on his preconceptions about the anthropologist. He knows a different side of me, as being a performing mother, an action-oriented person and sometimes “boisterous” (fyrirferðamikil in Icelandic), and seemed to find that contradicting his ideas about anthropologists. After having talked about my possible presence at the Office, being an active and enthusiastic person and researcher, he felt positive about asking his co-workers about my anticipated fieldwork. My access was granted unanimously because it could give something back; an important discussion on the work of landscape architects in the Office, as well as a useful ethnography on creativity amongst landscape architects. These expectations affected my fieldwork, as I experienced an inner hope to find something of use for them. I didn’t want to let them down.
Creativity is a mobile practice for landscape architects as it is practiced at distinct locations. I collected empirical material for this case study from three of those locations with the goal of revealing the dynamic character of creativity, and how it is a polyphonic practice, a sonic bricolage. Primarily, I gathered data from the Office where the landscape architects work, “in the accounts that people in the setting provide” as Hammersley and Atkinson said in the quote above (2007 [1983], p. 96). Here is an example from one of those settings, provided at the Office in November 2016:

Viktor: So, how should we get inspired and increase our creativity?
Jon: Let’s go abroad (vi kör studieresa).
[Laughter]
Viktor: Well, that’s your solution every time we ask. But, we all know, that seeing different things, experiencing new environment and finding new technological solutions can all be found when we go abroad. Not to mention the power (kraften) in creating a collective discussion and memory. So, let’s start saving.
[Laughter]

This discussion between Viktor, my gatekeeper, and Jon, one of my key interlocutors, occurred at a workshop one afternoon during my fieldwork. Discussions as these highlight their constant awareness of creativity in their field of expertise. It also reveals how creativity is in a way desired and sought out through inspiration from new experiences in various locations. Empirical settings of this kind provided the material for this thesis. Though it should be noticed, as Hammersley and Atkinson emphasized, that the field notes represent a selective part of the field, for “it is impossible to capture everything” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 142). My focus on creativity and sounds influenced the selection and the field notes thus represent that sole anthropological version of the field.

My second observation site was a square in Stockholm, designed by my interlocutors. I chose that site to examine the produced design since it represented the result of the improvisational process. I constructed this field site around the sonic environment, where the square reveals a temporal inspiration that is based in the future. It adds knowledge to the practice of creativity amongst landscape architects, in the way in which it enlightens how the anticipated production inspires the creative practices. Also, it contextualizes the time of the fieldwork. The usage of a designed space was considered to be of great inspiration for my interlocutors,
particularly how much it was used. As Birgitta said: “When we were in Madrid, we saw this park that was so much alive – many people were there all day, and that was exciting. […] That was inspiring”. During a cold December month 2016 in Stockholm, the square was not “used” much for other things than walking through, as seen in my field notes: “December 21st: 4° C, windy and no snow. […] People don’t sit on the benches on the square; they just walked through, without stopping.” It was not an inspiring site to be in, according to Birgitta definition of an inspiring site. That fieldwork revealed how creative practice amongst landscape architects in Stockholm is affected by the time of year, due to weather conditions. It can thus be questioned if the inspirational effect for creative practices among landscape architects decreases when accessibility is unreliable, due to snow, wind or low temperature.

Finally, I include my third observation site, the sonic environment at the home of the landscape architects. The home as a sonic environment is a fragment and a representation of the landscape architect’s history and culture (Ortner, 2006) and a part of the biosocial growth (Ingold, 2013). I chose this site because it established knowledge about inspirational sounds for my interlocutors’ creative practices. I never entered their homes physically but instead asked them to take a recorder home from work to collect sounds from their personal sonic environment. They selectively chose the sounds to record, for me to analyse and organize. With the data I collected I reveal how sounds and sonic environments from this specific field site, motivate creativity and affect the practice of it. My interlocutors had different opinions on sounds and sonic environment as inspiration. Some of them were sure about it being inspiring and claimed that they used sounds, mostly music, consciously. Others believed that sounds had some unconscious effect. None of them claimed sounds and sonic environment as not being inspiring and on these grounds I confidently analyze them as such. Here is an example from my field notes:

While Ludvig washes the dishes, he listens to a classical radio station. The sounds from the radio are selectively turned on, in addition to the sounds from the water running and crockery clinging. His decision to record this audio scenario, as a possible inspiration for his creativity as a landscape architect, reveals how sounds as music and language, plus domestic sounds, can affect a creative agent. Is his sonic inspiration heard? Does it take part in shaping the sonic bricolage of a becoming landscape architect?
**Participant observation and interviews**

Due to my topic of research, examining a practice grounded in both habits and opinions, the setting is amorphous (Esterberg, 2002, p. 64) where I “ride along with the [landscape architects] as they go about their daily business” (ibid, information in brackets added by author). I had the benefits of knowing my gatekeeper, which meant that I could visit the Office two times before formally starting my fieldwork. During those visits, I introduced myself at one of their regular Monday meetings, and presented my anticipated research. I also got a chance to inspect the environment, evaluate and envision how my fieldwork would eventually look like. All the landscape architects took me well and some of them even asked about my methodological and theoretical intentions, which I found promising, indicating that they were interested in the topic. Shortly after these visits, I spent eight weeks at the Office and a major part of the fieldwork was participant observation, characterized by participation and/or observation (Rabinow, 2007 [1997], p. 79). I had my own desk at the Office, which allowed for me to take field notes when in the field. I could sit in front of a computer and write my notes while my interlocutors did their work. I could blend in and join their environment without too much disturbance. The participant observation at the Office had the character of what Luhrman calls the anthropology of appointment (1996). This is due to the access to my field being highly structured by the landscape architects working hours and working place, “limited, regulated and timed” (Hannerz, 2006, p. 34). I went to formal meetings with the whole group several times

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6 Two months “in the field” is a brief time to collect material and so I found it very helpful to visit the office twice before I started. My interlocutors could therefore get somewhat used to my physical presence. I can only imagine what effect it would have if I was able to prepare the field as a researcher, for a longer time. An extreme example is found in Wolf’s fieldwork amongst motor bikers, where he would “hang around” them for three years before entering the field formally (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 57).

7 “Among other things, the fieldworker will want to ask what to write down, how to write it down, and when to write it down” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 142).
during these weeks and joined informal meetings with a few landscape architects working on collaborative projects as well. I measured and calculated plant arrangements in a project with Lina and Liv (see photos 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3). I took part in discussions during lunch breaks and joined them for jobs outside.

Additionally, I got the opportunity to join them for their Christmas party, a personal and intimate activity. At that point, I thought about the phenomenon “going native”, as I was getting invited to a personal feast that had little to do with my research topic. As it turned out I found the party highly rich in material because it revealed a motivation of creativity in practice. Many of my interlocutors talked about the need for discussion and collaboration, both as an inspiration and as a creative practice. Liv, for example, talked about the benefits for the landscape architects at the Office of knowing one another. She referred to it as a need of collaborated activities and discussion and claimed that it would affect creative practices in a positive way: “Then you dare to offer your ideas, your thoughts. You stop being afraid of other people’s opinion, you don’t need to be perfect.” At the
Christmas party, where collaborated activities and discussions took place, I therefore generated ethnographic data without looking for it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 96)⁸.

My last week of fieldwork was more of an observation, rather than a participation (Rabinow, 2007 [1997], p. 97) at a square in the north part of Stockholm, designed and created by some of my interlocutors at the Office. I went in my own time of the day, which was mainly practically controlled⁹. I spent several hours per day at this location. Sometimes I sat on one of the benches, that were empty most of the time (see photo 2.4), or walked around, watched and listened, took field notes, took photos and recorded. I followed the creative practice and sensed, saw and heard how a produced site, a representation of an inspirational future, is used in a cold December month in Stockholm.

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⁸ Only once during my fieldwork did I feel like I should take a rest from my planned fieldwork, but I didn’t need to.
⁹ I am a mother of three children and I also work part time during my studies. I therefore have a fully booked schedule every day and the flexibility that was included in the fieldwork at the square was used very practically.
When observing, I frequently took photos. Researching with a camera is perhaps a method as old as anthropology itself (Ruby, 2000, p. 48), but how it’s done and for what purpose has been discussed and debated perhaps just as long (see for ex. MacDougall, 2006; Ruby, 2000; Heider, 2006 [1976]). The visual material was all recorded with my iPhone 5S, chosen for its convenient size. I took over 190 photos in the field and three videos during my fieldwork. This included 139 photos from the Office, mostly of spatial settings, infrastructure, and materials, but also of people in social situations. I collected 49 photos from the fieldwork in the square and two videos of people walking by. Moreover, I took six photos from sketches in my notes (see photo 2.5). Visual data is highly important in architecture and design (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 148) and photography therefore became a granted method for my research. To respect anonymity I have only selected photos that don’t reveal my interlocutors’ faces.

When booking my interviews, I walked around the Office and asked those present if they could meet me soon and give me an interview. It happened only once that a landscape architect could talk to me on the spot. This revealed the dominance of time at the Office. I took 17 semi-structured interviews, for my goal was “to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words” (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). The interviews included landscape architects working at the Office, 15 regular employees and two employees working as studio managers. All interviews took place at the Office and they lasted from 17 minutes to 63
minutes. Being a novice in doing interviews, I unsuccessfully attempted to take notes during my first interview. I felt that the connection with the interviewee became vague and it was difficult to follow up on an interesting dialogue because I was too busy noting down. I immediately decided not to take notes during the upcoming interviews, but to record them and transcribe them. This helped me focus on my interlocutors and the flow and flexibility of the interview improved (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007 [1983], p. 107). Here are the three main questions I asked all my interlocutors:

- Can you describe the process of your designing, from beginning to end?
- Where do you seek inspiration for your work?
- How do you define creativity?

My language knowledge affected my ethnographical work in several ways that are important to mention (see for example Tanu & Dales, 2016). Firstly, due to my short experience of speaking Swedish\textsuperscript{10}, my first question was always if they were willing to talk English during the interview. Six of them felt uncomfortable about it. They, however, all commented on being willing to do it in “svengelska”, meaning a mixture of English and Swedish. I accepted these terms and in cases of doubts of definition or meaning, we managed to find it in “svengelska”. There was one exception to this, however: Jon, one of my interlocutors, said good morning in Icelandic, my mother tongue, when entering the turquoise room for our interview – “góðan daginn”. I answered in Icelandic and then he changed over to Swedish and asked me where I came from. I answered and to my surprise he replied that he had been working one summer in the same village I come from several years before. We had never met before because I didn’t live there at that time, but the coincidence was effective. It gave the interview an entirely different atmosphere, now that we shared not only an interest in creativity as a topic of discussion, but also due to the joint residential experience in Iceland.

\textsuperscript{10} I have only lived in Stockholm for two years.
In addition to the 17 semi-structured individual interviews, I recorded one group interview, having been encouraged by Viktor, to lead a discussion during landscape lab (landskapslab), a monthly meeting that was planned for educational purposes and useful dialogue for the landscape architects. “It’s a win-win meeting” he said and smiled. This interview was taken in Swedish, on purpose, in favour of creating a flow in the discussion. The interview was also semi-structured, with possibilities of expanded dialogue and open discussion on specific topics. Two of my main questions were:

- What is the future for public outdoor places in Stockholm?  
  (Vad är framtiden för offentliga utomhus platser i Stockholm?)  
- How will changes in the future affect your creativity?  
  (Hur kommer framtidens ändringar att påverka er kreativitet?)

Several informal interviews were also taken and they were seldom recorded. They are intertwined with my field notes, a document of over 50 pages in double columns, called “notes” and “thoughts”. These informal interviews took place in various settings, such as meetings, workshops, lunch breaks, coffee breaks, elevator trips, outdoor work, and at the Christmas party. Informal talk like this often included additional information from interlocutors on creative practices, or motivation, in relation to the semi-structured interviews. Sometimes it was more of a chat where the person seemed to want to “take me in” and make me feel as one of the Office staff. My attempt to fit to their crowd, dress similarly and use my desk when there seemed to be working. The things that could underline my status as an anthropologist at the Office was my recorder and my camera. To decrease the effect that these research tools could have I used my phone to take photos with instead of an actual camera. I also used the phone to record interviews. For the sounds collection, when listening to the practice, I bought a handy sound recorder.

Collecting sounds

We thus explore fieldwork experience mainly not as a geographical orientation to the mapping of place or personhood but as engagement with both Being There and with forms of distancing that help make cultural difference visible. That is, fieldwork is the registering of sensor impressions in a (temporal) process of mutual subject-discovery and critique, an engagement with persons, groups, and scenes that take into account the dynamics of our interactions as well as the differences between our locations and those of our interlocutors (Borneman & Hammoudi, 2009, p. 19 (underlining by author)).
Registering sensor impressions can be difficult, since words and texts are in some cases difficult to use, when producing a detailed story on the sensation from the field. As MacDougall said, “anthropological writing is therefore not simply cultural translation, as it is often described, but the creation of a completely new object” (2006, p. 44). The written text can in fact hinder the sensor impression so severely, that it creates another impression. MacDougall was mostly referring to visual material in ethnography, photos, and films. Sensory impressions are also about sound, taste, smell, touch, etc. “Doing anthropology in sound” (Feld & Brenneis, 2004) is my attempt to add knowledge in the registration of sensor impression, with the method of *listening to the practice* and collect sounds. According to The Oxford Dictionary, sound is: “Vibrations that travel through the air or another medium and can be heard when they reach a person's or animal's ear” (Oxford Dictionary, sound, 2016). Those vibrations create what we experience as sounds, with our whole body because sounds are experienced, not only heard (Ingold, 2000, p. 274). The sounds that we experience in our environment can originate from other biosocial becomings\(^\text{11}\) (voice, movement), as well as from artifacts in general (technological equipment, instruments, materials). In this way, I follow the theoretical perspective of Feld, where I want to study with, to and about sounds (Feld & Brenneis, 2004). I focus on them methodologically, as I listen to, record, and collect sounds that are related to the practice of creativity. I collect them from all three field sites; the Office, the square, and the home of the landscape architects. The sounds from the Office and the square are sounds that I heard and recorded myself. The sounds from the home of the landscape architects are however sounds that my interlocutors heard and selectively recorded for my study. I analyse these sounds as part of the practice, where hearing and listening can be defined as something that people do, as Ortner defines practice (1984, p. 149). Based on this variation in sounds from the field, I categorize the material I gathered on creative practices into two clusters: as *inspiration* and as *making*. The sounds were analyzed in this context, representing sounds of inspiration and sounds of making.

\(^{11}\) This theoretical concept is defined and described more fully on page 34-35.
The inspirational sounds were sometimes acknowledged in interviews, not as actual sounds but as descriptions of sounds or a specific sonic environment. In this way, I found them and even felt them in discussion (see Ingold, 2000). This following example comes from Jon, where he describes how musical sounds motivate his creative practices as a landscape architect:

If I draw a line with no music it would be 10 points, but if I draw a line whilst listening to Sigurrós, it would be 30 points. It adds on something, because if I listen to a very nice atmospheric music when drawing a landscape, then I am more focused and can feel myself walking in that landscape, than without music.

I never heard Sigurrós’s music during this discussion, although I have heard it both before and after. The sound was thus described, when referred to as a musical piece by the band Sigurrós. Some sounds were acknowledged as real sounds that I received on audio files from four of my interlocutors. The group of sounds for creative practice in action, or sounds in making, was recorded by me at the Office. I coded the sounds in a finer grid, where I handle them first as technological and material sounds, secondly as voices and dialogue and thirdly as music. Technological and material sounds of creativity as a practice are, for example, sounds of a pen stroking a paper or clicking sounds from a keyboard when drawing or writing on the computer.

These audio files cover about 2 hours of sounds from the Office. Additionally, I recorded sounds at the square as a part of listening to the practice. This recording is approximately one hour in total and it includes sounds indicating the usage of the square at that time, for example people talking, a dog barking, a bird singing and stroke sounds from shopping bags.

The sounds were recorded on a ZOOM H1 sound recorder, a small, pocket sized recorder, featuring 96 k audio, lo-cut filter, and auto level controls. It suits well for recording voice and other sounds (see photo 2.6). The size of it was chosen at the
expense of quality, for it didn’t disturb the field, drawing too much attention to it. The four landscape architects were also easily able to take the Zoom home, after I had given them some basic instructions on how to use it. I, being a novice in sound recording for ethnographic purposes, found this recorder fit for my knowledge at the time\(^\text{12}\). It suited my premier doing anthropology in sound.

*Ethical considerations*

I followed the ethical guidelines made by the American Anthropological Association during my fieldwork, where the responsibility has been towards the landscape architects at the Office (AAA, 2017). Following Hammersley and Atkinson, I focused on ethical issues, such as informed consent, privacy, harm, exploitation, and consequences for future research (2007, pp. 210-219), when I asked for admission into the field, and when conducting interviews or entering different settings in the field. By doing this I protect the person’s privacy and anonymity in the thesis. I changed all names of my interlocutors, as well as the names of their relatives or clients if mentioned in the context of practicing creativity. I include only photos without faces. The audio recordings are analysed anonymously because they come from personal surroundings and were at times indicative of private practices\(^\text{13}\). Viktor, my gatekeeper, was quite surprised over my interest in his work before I entered the field. But I hope that this fieldwork has not damaged any future research, for I believe there is a demanding need for research in this field, as landscape architects represent a group of experts of high importance for the future of urban landscape and the future of cities.

This wraps up my methodological approach of “doing anthropology in sound”, where I have described how I entered the field, conducted participant observation, taken interviews and

\(^\text{12}\) I have taken part in sound recording in music studios, but the equipment, material and infrastructure in studios are different than from an anthropological field for study. That kind of recording at the field would demand extra resource for research, which was not available for this thesis.

\(^\text{13}\) What is regarded as private and personal concerning audio data seems to be evaluated in other ways then visual data. The sonic material my interlocutors recorded from their homes was of a wide variation, ranging from materialistic domestic sounds to intimate and personal discussions and practices. I am convinced that some of this data would not have been so willingly shared through visual recordings or photographs. As methodologically interesting this discussion is, it will not be taken further now, but later, in an upcoming article on the method of listening to the practice.
photographs, and listened to the practice. The following chapter covers how I theorize and analyze my topic. My academic positioning is mainly within the subfield of anthropology of creativity and design, and I elaborate on the literature review in the following chapter. I start discussing the history of anthropological research within that field, and reveal the research gap discovered. Additionally, I elaborate on the anthropological theories chosen for the analytical process, and clarify why I found them beneficial when examining creativity as a practice amongst landscape architects.
3. Theory

*Anthropological research on landscape architects and creativity*

Architecture and landscape architecture in anthropology has been a fundamental part of the discipline’s fields from early on, although in an implicit manner (Ingold, 2013, pp. 134-141). Geographical borders, urban spaces, rural spaces, cities, and towns are all traditional topics in anthropological research, and have a collective background – in landscape architecture. Recent anthropological researches have been done on urban landscape and the design of cities (Low, 2001), such as Los Angeles (Caldeira, 1999) and Sao Paulo (Davis, 1992), where the findings imply a construction of segregation and fortress making. The infrastructural design made way for urban cleavages. There, the research focuses on the production, the designed space, and not the improvisational process or how the space came into being.

Anthropological research on landscape architecture and urban design in Stockholm is a blank topical area. However, in rhythm with the growth in anthropological research on environmental sustainability in Stockholm (see for ex. Kalantari, Khoshkar, Falk, Cvetkovic, & Mörtberg, 2017; Littke, 2015; Polzer, 2015), this is about to change. Landscape architecture in urban cities such as Stockholm is a key factor when it comes to “predicting and assessing the consequences of changes in the external environment, such as environmental impact assessments (EIA), inventories, design programmes and landscape analyses” as it is documented on the Office’s webpage\(^\text{14}\), and it needs to be addressed relationally. Some research has been made within sociology on the matter, concerning urban ecosystem services and green areas in Stockholm (Ernstson, Barthel, Andersson, & Sara, 2010). This reveals a knowledge gap in anthropological research which I intend to fill.

Landscape architects represent a relatively blank field when it comes to anthropological research. Their expertise in creativity and design is a small research field within the anthropological discipline itself, but a growing one (see for ex. Smith, et al., 2016 and Gunn, Otto, & Smith, 2014 [2013] on design and anthropology; Hallam & Ingold, 2007 on creativity in anthropological research; Schneider & Wright, 2013, on art as a practice). Doing anthropology of design and

\(^{14}\) I do not refer to the webpage, due to the promise of anonymity regarding the Office.
creativity is also argued to add important representations of the field, providing a different kind of knowledge (Gunn, Otto & Smith, 2014 [2013], pp. 10-14), where the process of creativity is emphasized instead of it’s product.

A recent anthropological work by Aina Landsverk Hagen inspired me topically. She did fieldwork for her doctoral thesis at Snøhetta architect office in Oslo and New York (2012-2013), as a part of a bigger project, produced by Ideawork in Norway (Hagen, 2014). Hagen looks at creativity and design through an anthropological theoretical framework related to magic and ritual and the way in which design can be viewed as a magical task. She briefly talks about sounds at the office and compares the representation of sound in the organisation geographically, between Oslo and New York. Her conclusions regarding sound were that it was kept at a more private level in the New York office than in Oslo. The tone of voices was of lower volume in New York, as was singing and laughing more prominent in Oslo. Hagen’s work affected my choice of topic, where I address it in a different theoretical manner, and emphasize the sonic sensory impressions.

I have established the theoretical background on the topic and revealed the research gap regarding anthropological studies on creative practice amongst landscape architects. I turn the discussion to how I analyze my topic. I clarify what practice is in anthropological research. For this task, I combine the theory of practice (Ortner, 1984 and 2006) and the approach of biosocial becomings (Ingold, 2013). I relate practice theory to my thesis as a “theory of the production of social subjects through practice in the world, and the production of the world itself through practice” (Ortner, 2006, p. 16). I end my discussion on practice theory in relation with the concept on the creative agent (Hughes-Freeland, 2007).

**Practice theory**

**Júlia:** How do you define creativity?
**Liv:** I don’t know how to describe it – I guess it sits in your body (det sitter i kroppen). It’s a balance, felt in your body that appears in your action. I don’t know (laughter).

In *Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject*, Ortner (2006) points out the benefits of using practice theory in anthropology. She provides an updated version of practice theory that is a collage of different interests from various practice theorists, such as
Bourdieu, Sahlins, and Giddens (Ortner, 2006). There she has combined several principal considerations that make practice a central theoretical theme. I agree with Ortner when she claims that the theory is still compelling and attractive for contemporary anthropological research, as “it was a general theory of the production of social subjects through practice in the world, and the production of the world itself through practice” (ibid, p. 16). She says that “a modern practice theory seeks to explain the relationship(s) that obtain between human action, on the one hand, and some global entity which we may call ‘the system,’ on the other” (Ortner, 1984, p. 148), through a broad theoretical frame. During my case study it was the relationship between the landscape architects’ practice “that sits in your body”, as Liv talked about in the beginning of this chapter, and ‘the system’ that they belong to. That system is a sum of historical, cultural, and power related connections (Ortner, 1984 and 2006) which provide the embodied elements for their creative practices. The practice studied can be “anything people do” (Ortner, 1984, p. 149) and it is usually analyzed in relation to acting units, such as individual actors (ibid), here the landscape architects.

The practice is temporally organized in context with short- or long-term plans of the future (Ortner, 1984, p. 150), but also with the past, as it relates to history and inspiration (ibid). I asked my interlocutors about inspiration for creative practices and found out “that to look at other older works” and “get inspired from the big, old names” was a common answer. This echoes Ortner’s emphasis on historical awareness where she even claims that “that was the way of our ancestors’ may be unduly undervalued” (ibid), representing the historical connection. I recommend, and will use henceforth, the concept professional ancestors for these older landscape architects.

Ortner not only discusses the lack of history in the early versions of practice theory but also the lack of power. “The big, old names” are not only old indicators of history but also value loaded indicators of power. Ortner emphasizes the strain as a part of a practice and how this strain makes social subjects obey rules and follow norms (1984, pp. 151-154). By following the rules these strains from history and culture both enable and disable practices (Ortner, 2006, pp. 8-16). As Sylvia, one of my interlocutors said: “And when you create, you’re just a small part of a big project. You have to compromise with a lot of other professionals”. Here she is referring to how landscape architects obey and follow the rules made by the buyer of the landscape design and other creative
agents in the improvisational process. Their practice is a part of a system which is an example of power related connection.

Lastly, Ortner highlights the cultural connection in practice theory (2006, p. 18). With this she emphasizes culture as a public, mobile, and travelling factor (ibid), thus affecting the constant production of social subjects and the world with its practices\(^\text{15}\). This production of the social subjects and the world relates to a reality as it defines both the time and space of the practice. Sylvia declares:

> And for projects to be built, you have to build them so they’re going to hold and last, so for society, the landscape architect work cannot be more creative then it is. It’s always different from project to project but it’s always locked in reality.

The theory refers to the production of social subjects and the production of the world through practice. In context with my thesis it refers to the production of landscape architects as creative agents\(^\text{16}\) and the production of Stockholm through their creative practice. I view the social subject or the landscape architect as a creative agent (Hughes-Freeland, 2007), as a subject affected by history, power, and culture. Through these influences, the subject, the creative agent grows through what he does. When I identified and labelled the production of the social subject as a growth of the agent it opened up a theoretical window: the \textit{biosocial becomings} approach, from Ingold.

\textit{Biosocial becomings approach}

Between species of organisms and the scientists who study them, between nature and reason, human cultures figure as a middle tier in the overall scheme of things, above the former and below the latter. The very concept of the human, then, is fundamentally duplicitous: the product of an ‘anthropological machine’ (Agamben 2004) that relentlessly drives us apart, in our capacity for self-knowledge, from the continuum of organic life within which our existence is encompassed, and leaving the majority stranded in an impasse. To break out of the impasse, we contend, calls for nothing less than a dismantling of the machine. And the first step in doing so is to think of humans, and indeed of

\(^{15}\) Rouse discusses this as well when he claims that individual actions and agents can only be understood as a part of a culture or society (Rouse, 2006, p. 505) or the system.

\(^{16}\) These agents have agency, which is a highly-debated concept within anthropology and even among practice theorists, mostly due to its various definitions and broad understanding (Ortner, 2006, pp. 129-153; Rouse, 2006, pp. 504-511). On these terms, I do not use the concept ‘agency’ for theoretical purposes, but talk about practices and actions.
creatures of all other kinds, in terms not of what they are, but of what they do (Ingold, 2013, pp. 7-9 [italics original]).

In *Biosocial Becomings: Integrating Social and Biological Anthropology*, Tim Ingold introduces the concept of *biosocial becomings* (2013). With it he encourages scientists to rethink the concept of humans, and other creatures, by placing that thought in relation to what they do or practice. This way of thinking is highly related to practice theory, as seen above, and in that way it is not new. Ingold, however, suggests that we should not look at humans as beings – “discrete and pre-formed entities” (2013, p. 8) – but as becomings, i.e. “as trajectories of movement and growth” (ibid). As becomings, humans “arise within the weave of life, in conjoint activity” (ibid), and are thus social becomings (ibid, p. 9). Landscape architects arise within this weave in their collaborative work and shared activities and they grow in their own profession when practicing creativity. Ingold also emphasizes that all life is biological, stemming from a biological process of creation, which makes way for the concept of *biosocial becomings*. Landscape architects are a group of living beings that stem from biological processes and are thus creative agents with specific biological history. When I asked the landscape architects where they sought their inspiration for creativity they mentioned biological factors in some ways, such as from the nature, as grass, trees, plants, and flowers. They referred to the biological nature, as it appears as a picturesque environment. When I asked them to elaborate on this, Simon, replied:

The peace of nature is the core of my inspiration for creativity. And that peace I feel in Japan [his home country]. And when you are in such environment, you feel the peace. And I want to create that feeling of nature.

His reference to his home country, as an inspiration for creative practice, indicates the relation for the creative agent to biological and natural grounds. In his process of growing, the landscape architect becomes a creative agent. He is a biosocial becoming, woven into his own position of existence (ibid, p. 10) as he emerges from biological and social systems. I do not intend to apply the concept to combine social and biological anthropology together, as it is too far to reach (Kiik, 2013, p. 175). However, I find the approach useful as a theoretical tool regarding the social subject, through it’s creative practice, where the focus on the human and other becomings has moved “from essences and states to relations and processes” (ibid).
What I have established so far is the contextualisation of the field, the methodological approach, the research background of the topic and the theoretical tools chosen for the analyses. I will now turn to the empirical analyses, *Practicing creativity.*
4. Practicing creativity

Our work as landscape architects is fundamentally creative. [...] Once I went to this creativity course, and they said that you need to draw 20 sketches just to get one good, and I share that with my co-workers. Everybody can do around 3 or 4, but when it comes up to 10 and you have to think differently, turn things upside down or inversely. Do crazy things. Some things, that releases something inside you. It might not be the best idea, but it’s quite often a very good help to release the force of creativity. So that is what I try to do and think we should do.

(Viktor)

A Becoming Office

My interlocutors work at the Office. It is located on the 5th floor of an architect company building in the center of Stockholm. The whole building is occupied by people designing and creating Stockholm in one way or the other. 16 men and 18 women work as landscape architects at the Office. I had the opportunity to work with 17 of them as my interlocutors. Veronica, one of three studio managers at the Office, worked closely with Viktor, my gatekeeper. Veronica had only worked at the Office for just over a year, but had an extensive experience as a studio manager and landscape architect from other offices. She and Viktor were immensely helpful when it came to organizing interviews and taking part in collective activities, such as workshops or group meetings. I also met and worked closely with Sylvia, Lina, Jack, Gudrun, Liv, Ludvig, Cissi and Jon. I spoke frequently with them, informally or formally, during our semi-structured interviews. They always made sure that I would have company during lunch break or ‘fika’17. Three of them sent me audio files from their homes which implies the closeness we shared. Birgitta, Alexander, Calle, Simon and Andreas are landscape architects with extended work experience and were highly respected at the Office. They were irregularly seen at the Office, due to their amount of work and busy schedule. They all, however, gave me an interview and one of them even shared with me an audio file from home. I also met Hanna and Julia at the Office. They had a short work experience as landscape architects and were both a bit low-key in their performances at the Office, low voiced and perhaps shy. They both gave me an interview. All my interlocutors were willing to share with me their ideas and knowledge.

17 A Swedish word for a coffee break.
The Office had recently taken over another landscape architect office, which meant that the group at the 5th floor was new and in formation. They were going through an organizational liminal period where the managing was still in process and each landscape architect was looking for his professional place within the group. According to Turner, liminality is a social situation characterized by a ‘statuslessness’ where actors are in the transition from one status to the other (1969, s. 97). This period affected the atmosphere at the Office and provided material that would not have been provided otherwise. The dynamic effect of this transition phase revealed itself in practice where new actors adapted to the new space and former actors adjusted to the new ones. They were therefore not only working on creating the future of urban Stockholm, but also their own future as a team at the Office. The characterization of emergence was both intrinsic and external, found on a micro and macro level. My role as an anthropologist moved in pace with the growth of the field.

The number of landscape architects present at the Office each day varied a lot. One reason for this is that they frequently work outside, researching the site, to anticipate the possible outcome of the design. Another reason is that they sometimes work from home, where they mostly draw or sketch. A third reason is that some of the landscape architects come from another town in Sweden, but work for the company, and just happen to be in Stockholm and can thus join the Office at that time.

The 5th floor is divided in the middle with walls, bathroom facilities, and a printing space with printers, folders, staplers and paper punches, a small kitchen, and an elevator area that is shared by everyone working on the floor. In the shared area there are tables for sketching or other work spread around the floor, as well as bookshelves, cabinets with drawings, sketching paper, folders, and material examples (see photo 4.1).
In the two ends of the floor, there are several desks with double computer screens, a chair and electricity extension cords (see photo 4.2). The desks are flexible, i.e. the landscape architects do not ‘own’ their desk and they can change whenever they want.
Figure 4.2 Desks at the Office
They keep the material they were using each time in a black paper box (see photo 4.3 and 4.4), that could be placed at every desk. Each black box included different things, such as pens, photos, paper, scissors, brushes, headphones, books, and aspirin. These things represented a specific background and provided historical knowledge about each landscape architect and his or her creative practices. The black boxes can be seen as representational for the landscape architects themselves. They embody their methods and practices, habits and beliefs, inspirational and practical tools for creativity. The content of the black boxes changed during my fieldwork, it grew in connection to the growing experience of the architect. The walls in the main area are white but the floor and the furniture varied in colour, one colour in each area, representing rooms in distinct colours - the green room, the turquoise room, the orange room, the white room, etc. (see images 4.5 and 4.6). These coloured rooms are sealed off with Plexiglas walls, making them visible and transparent but soundproof. One could not hear what was being discussed in the rooms when they were closed. The only exception is the red room, the glass walls at the red room had draping
because it was intended for massage, which was not to be visible from the outside. The landscape architects could book a massage with a professional masseuse that worked for the Office. Each room could be booked for various occasions, such as formal or informal meetings, planning, individual work, sketching or interviewing.\(^\text{18}\)

The landscape architects are the creative agents at the Office and I listened to what they did when designing a landscape. I sometimes closed my eyes to focus on the sounds of the practice at the Office. Soon, I became aware of the effects from the carpet on the floors, which damped the sounds at the Office, so it was notably quiet. I had to concentrate to grasp the sounds in the sonic environment of the Office. I decided quite early in the listening process not to exclude any sounds.

\(^{18}\) I, however, never got the permission to book in advance nor to get an access to those bookings, for it was through an internal computer program. This affected my status at the Office - I was not “one of them”, because I didn’t have the same permissions nor access. It also affected the practicalities around the interviews. If a room was booked during the interview time, me and my interlocutor had to move and the interview was recorded in two different rooms.
when I took notes and recorded. This gave me the opportunity to find a pattern or a fundamental categorisation later, when coding and systematically organizing the sounds\textsuperscript{19}.

One of the common sounds that I heard during my stay at the Office, and one of the most clearly heard sounds, came from the two coffee machines in the kitchen area. It was a high buzzing sound, indicating a coffee cup in the making. One Thursday, during my participant observation, I heard and noted this sound over 50 times. After this I stopped counting. It soon became clear that the buzzing sound of the coffee machine was a sound of creative practices. In an informal discussion with Ludvig, Lina and Petter, Petter said: “Oh, I really need some coffee now – I need to turn on my creativity”. He walked to the coffee machine – BUZZZZZ – and grabbed a cup before heading towards his desk to work. Ludvig and Lina agreed to his comment and the benefits of coffee drinking for creative practices was a common opinion. I categorize this sound as a creative practice, for it fore”hears”\textsuperscript{20} creativity in practice at the Office. Other examples of clear sounds that I heard came from the printers in the printing area, sketch paper being ripped, picking on a keyboard and people talking. The talking was notably often in a faint voice and people rarely laughed out loud. No music was heard at a public level in the Office during the fieldwork time, but some of my interlocutors wore headphones while they were working, creating a private sonic environment, often with music but also with spoken input.

\textit{A Becoming urban landscape}

The creative practice did not only happen at the Office itself but also outside at a production site. One Thursday in November 2016 I sat around one of the discussion tables at the Office with a group of seven landscape architects. We were preparing ourselves to go out and work at a production site. It was a rather cold November day in Stockholm and we all dressed well and placed needed material in our bags - notebooks, pens, and phones to take pictures with. We took

\textsuperscript{19} It also included a problematical side effect: I have too much data, too many sounds. Some of them have no clear relation to creativity as a practice, such as the pinging sound of an elevator, and can be analyzed and organized only for other purposes. That, for me as an anthropologist interested in sounds, provides a database to use in future research and writings, but I will not be able to analyze all of it for this thesis.

\textsuperscript{20} A word game – can be linked with the concept \textit{foresees}. 

the elevator to the lobby, walked to the nearest bus station and commuted to the production site. It was placed in a suburb in the northern part of Stockholm. I walked with these seven landscape architects through the suburb, just as I had walked through the Frescati Campus before. They were working – moving in the same circles as those who will walk through the area when it has been designed and built. I was also working – participating and observing my interlocutors in their practices as experts in landscape architecture and as creative agents. Two of these landscape architects, Sylvia and Birgitta, were working on a project in this suburb, creating a pathway through a residential area that leads to an open public space with a park and continues with a path past the park. The other five were there both to inspire and be inspired. The design process had begun several years ago, and was still on going, since the landscape was being constructed. However, the drawings were ready, which meant that the dominant part of creative practices for the landscape architects was done. As they passed through the area, largely untouched of their design, they shared thoughts on the anticipated function and structure of this future space - what could be “nice here” or will “create a nice feeling” or “is smart to use” in various settings. The discussion they had was creative in a general understanding where “the use of imagination or original ideas to create” (Oxford Dictionary, creativity, 2017) was obvious during the walk and talk. The dialogue included aesthetical comments that were mixed with expressions about feelings, emotions and technical solutions. They kept on walking through the suburb and saw a piece of handrail behind an iron fence, normally seen at building sites (see image 4.7). “This is not how we drew it”, said Sylvia, pointing to the handrail bit, “and we’ve
made this clear to the constructors”. The architects’ idea had not made it through to its material becoming in the process from designing to building. In other words, the creative process of the design had not stopped, but it had moved from the landscape architects to the constructors.

During this walk and talk with the seven landscape architects I gathered material about the creative agents and the practice of creativity. I became aware that the practice of creativity is not only based on capabilities and habits but also beliefs and knowledge systems. Generally, creativity is associated with imagination, which correlates to beliefs and knowledge systems – imagination is found in our mind, as our beliefs. But creativity is oriented towards creating original ideas and products that has a relation with habits and capabilities – producing in practice. In this sense, creativity as a practice is both epistemological and pragmatic. It moves and progresses through an improvisational process, based on an envisioned future, beginning with a mental image that moves toward a designed product.

During my fieldwork, when examining the process of designing future urban landscape in Stockholm and listening to this creative practice, I collected data about creativity as inspiration and as making. I soon became aware that these inspirational practices and practices in making could be organized in clusters of time, space and senses/sounds. This categorization however overlaps at times, and many of the empirical examples belong to two or more clusters. This selection represents my choice as a researcher, affected by my aim and goal. Following, I analyse creativity in time and examine how temporal units, such as history, future, routine, rhythm and pressure affect and appear as creative practices.

**Time and creative practice**

**Inspiration: Memories from the past and the visualisation of the future**

*Júlia:* What motivates your creativity?

*Birgitta:* In my own, like, yes, what you’ve seen and experienced and all the memories you have. To travel abroad is very important, to see new things and expressions, and from that a discussion is evoked, sharing ideas. Then you can always look at the internet, that’s also good.

Memories from the past were frequently referred to as inspiration and motivation for creative practices in my discussion with the landscape architects. In *Anthropology and Social Theory*,
Ortner states: “[…] - that ‘history makes people, but people make history’ (Ortner 2003:277) – is not only a contradiction, but is perhaps the profoundest truth of social life” (2006, p. 2, original underlining). She highlights history as a fundamental part of practice theory that is affected by and affects people, and encourages researchers to enter the analytical process on these grounds. The information my interlocutors provided about inspiration from their past and memory echoed Ortner’s focus. In the semi-structured interviews I had with my interlocutors, 14 of them claimed to be creatively motivated by memories and childhood experiences. They were creative agents, affecting and affected by their own history. A clear example came from Liv when she talked about her childhood playing as an inspiration for practicing creativity. She described how she had often played fantasy games, making worlds and homes: “Can this glass maybe be a tower?”, she said and laughed when relating her contemporary work to her way of thinking when she was a little girl, playing. Her creative epistemology emerged from her childhood and has followed her to her work as a landscape architect: “I always start with flipping things over, like, thinking what else can this be.” Liv’s embodied way of thinking as a young girl grows and spurs in her work as a creative landscape architect. Her history has enabled an epistemological tool for her to use, one that enriches her creative practice. Another example of childhood creativity comes from Gudrun, a young landscape architect at the Office. She described childhood memories that were similar to Liv’s and how she had started her creative experiments as a child, made her own radio shows and drawn cartoon sketches. “I loved to draw stories and that is what I still do – make a story while drawing the landscape”. Her creative practices are inspired by her way of creating as a little girl, where the practice is embodied as a storytelling. Both Liv and Gudrun are creating Stockholm’s history through their creative practices as landscape architects and they both are biosocial becomings, growing during their path as becoming creative agents.

Time as memory or past is also found in the “way our ancestors work”, which correlates directly to Ortner’s focus on the history of a practice (Ortner, 1984, p. 150). There, landscape architects are inspired by looking at other older projects, to see the use of materials, technical solutions and

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21 This however does not mean that the other three had not been motivated from memories, they however did not talk about this kind of motivation during their interviews.
aesthetical details. They collect inspiration from the past, as it appears in the work of others, created by their professional ancestors. Sylvia, a young landscape architect at the Office, claimed that all ideas that inspire creative practices come from older and/or other project/s, or as she said herself: “Nobody has ideas that just come from themselves – so everybody seeks inspiration from other projects.” I asked Sylvia to elaborate on this thought and she described how inspiration is both found in an already made product, but also in the improvisational process, before. “It’s in the dialogue between us. When I ask an experienced colleague [a professional ancestor] what hinders and provokes her choice of material, forms, plants, and, well, yeah, you know, the things she uses” (brackets added by author). The professional ancestors can thus both be represented by the older landscape architects, living or deceased, that have created urban spaces in Stockholm or elsewhere. They are also represented by older landscape architects, working with the younger ones. These groups of professional ancestors inspire creative practices with their innovative product and improvisational process. As Kjærsgaard et al. said: “In the act of giving shape to the future, ‘we evoke a past that makes this future possible’” (2016, p. 4). It is in the state of emergence that existing creative practices are located, here as inspirational practices.

Not only is the past a crucial factor in seeking inspiration and motivation, but the future is always the goal, hence it also inspires creativity in a strong manner. The anticipated function of the project and the desired look of it affected and inspired creative practices, as Hanna described: “Sometimes I think more about how it’s supposed to look than how it will be used, or how it will function. But it depends on the project”. The imagined outcome, function, and structure of the future product inspired creative practices. Sylvia referred to the structure in the example above. Birgitta, however, talked more about the function of the design in relation to the future as an inspiration:

Birgitta: In the beginning, you collect a lot of information, to know what the project is about. When you’ve done that, then the feeling starts to grow, like, yes, this is how it will work. But it’s never just that simple. There is always something that happens on the way, something new, let’s go back, and yes. How will it work, does this function for the user?
Júlia: Do you think this inspires you?
Birgitta: Yes, definitely. Who will use the place? It’s not for me. Yes, I think about that a lot during the whole process.

For Birgitta, the anticipated function inspired her. The functional vision forms her creative practices. Future, as a temporal inspirational factor, also had a more complex representation. The
future was described as an inspiration period of duration, not only a static point or an material product. Sylvia described it like this: “Mostly we work with places that are going to last. Of course, nothing lasts forever, but we want it to last for a longer period of time”. The choice of material, technical solutions and aesthetical details are affected by this duration – what will function properly over “a longer period of time”. This reveals that the future, as an inspiration for creative practices, is both represented as an anticipated outcome and duration of time. This was established in an event stronger and deeper manner during the group interview with my interlocutors. There they reflected specifically on the future and how it is always a part of their creative work in the form of inspiration. Due to the extended period in the design process from an idea to a built production, they think about future scenarios regarding for example climate change, population increase, and material supply. Susanna, a young trainee at the Office, said during the group meeting: “We will live in another world soon, so we need to find new solutions. New practices. New material. But what they are, I don’t know”. Susanna represents the future of landscape architects, as she was still studying to become one when we met. Her view of the future as an inspiration for creative practices was interesting. She was a becoming landscape architect with a strong image of the becoming future of urban creation.

The rhythm in making

Recall the words of Kjærgaard et al.: “In the act of giving shape to the future, ‘we evoke a past that makes this future possible’” (2016, p. 4). In this present act, the practice of future-making (ibid), the possible outcomes of creative practices emerge. As Viktor said during our interview:

The creative process takes place in phases. In the beginning, there are two things: One is to look for similar objects or assignments that you can get inspiration from. And the other one is to try to find a new concept or a vision that you need to talk about with your customer and your co-workers. So, one is to say what has been done before, what is the usual thing, what is possible, and the other one is unusual or a ground that you can pick up and work with. That’s the beginning somehow.

Viktor described the present of creative practices, as they have been inspired from the memories of the past and visions of the future. In their practices of future-making, they evoked and got inspired from the historical and cultural past, aiming for the possible future. The creative practices in the present are represented in the collaboration of past and future inspiration. Viktor talked about
the practice being scheduled, from hour to hour, and from one time phase to another. During this discussion, the essence of temporality in the process was revealed. Viktor started by describing how projects are distributed amongst the landscape architects at the Office:

We have a planning instrument to look at the time tables for all, which is important to see if a person really has the time. Then we use the meetings to ask people what they want, if they are missing something. And we try to do as they ask, but sometimes that’s not possible, due to lack of time. [...] An offer that is written of assignment leader and the study manager, including the budget is sent. The client then creates the contract, in good or bad. This can create tension and time stress. And then we have this external and internal time. When you’re working on an external project, you have this external time, which is best you spend as much time at, because there you get the money. The internal time is important to be spent on something important for us as landscape architects. When you have a problem figuring out how to spend those different kind of times, that can also lead to stress and pressure, surely.

The creative practices are found in a routine, formed by a time planning instrument, which is a technological program on a computer. This program measures how much time one agent has. He/she is then invited to take part in projects, based on the time measure.

Time, as described by Viktor, takes on different forms for the practice of creativity. It is duration of practice, like Ortner suggested (1984, p. 150), were the improvisational process takes from 2 to 10 years, from being a mental idea to becoming a built production:

We have a very long process from the first sketch to a built environment. Most of the time at least 2 years and quite often more, 10 years maybe. It took 8 years for me to see my first design being built. [...] And it’s quite many phases on the road. Like, early on its where should it be. That planning takes about 6 months, conceptual design before that is also half a year. Then there is a constructional phase, which takes 6 months at least. So, never less than 1 and a half a year of this work before. Then you find someone to build it and it almost always takes about 2 years. So, 4 years from the first sketch to a built environment, it takes at least 4 years. And most of the time when that’s finished, you are also quite finished. (Laughter). You’ve been living with it for so long, so you don’t really..., and most of the time, people have been switching places and maybe started new jobs, so there really are not that many that do follow the process all the way. And when you’ve finished, the consumer has taken over the place and you’re not really that much involved any more, as a landscape architect. Sometimes it comes back a little later, they want to change something or something has been ruined and they need it remade, and so on. But that’s not really often that happens.

Alexander made an interesting comment in this context on how the process from a mental idea to a designed and produced one is so long, and how this decreases the joyful experience when the project is fully made and built. “The most fun part in the designing process is when it is built. But the joyful time of looking at your product is tragically short, compared to the time it took to create
it.” The process is thus temporally embodied over a lengthy period. This period is characterised by distinct phases. Sylvia described the process as a spiral of phases: “It’s not a linear process, it doesn’t have a beginning and an end – sometimes it goes forward and then backwards”. Julia also talked about going back and forward in time. “You have to go back and change and change and change. And then vision the future. And then go back again. That’s really how it is”. She found it best to use a notebook with white pages to draw and write down ideas, to keep track of the “time travel” and to be able to look at drawings and meanings as well:

**Júlia:** So you are always working with the past, the present and the future at the same time? Do I understand correctly?

**Julia:** Yes. And I remember when I first started working here, I was like, I have some drawings there and there and there, but now you really have to have the altogether, because you have to be able to go back to them again and again and again.

**Júlia:** Ok.

**Julia:** To make some structure [laughter].

**Júlia:** And how do you make that structure?

**Julia:** Uhmmm. I’m not sure yet [laughter]. I don’t know. I’m still figuring it out. But this helps a lot. Just writing down.

**Júlia:** Yes, ok. And what do you write down?

**Julia:** Uhmm, what I do every day, and also thoughts for the future. And some tips from when I’ve learned something new. So it’s a mix of everything, maybe I should have like three different books, but I only have one.

The writing on paper is a creative practice that is used to keep track of the dynamic fluidity of creativity. The practices evolve and grow through time, in a circulative and diachronic way, where what you do now is remade again and then returned to even later. When I talked to Hanna, who was new to the profession of landscape architects, about creative practices, she said:

I almost always enter a project in the last phases, so I only work with fragments or small parts – details. I wish I will be able soon to work in a project in its earlier phase. I feel like I miss that, I want to do something where you have the whole picture, where you look at a place, not on a small detail. I kind of miss that. I also feel like when you haven’t done that for a while, you start to feel insecure.

Her experiences indicate the importance of entering the process at ‘the right time’ or in the first phase where the creative practices are dominating. Her co-workers generally agreed to this. When I asked about where in the designing process they felt most creative, most of them talked about the time of entrance as a crucial factor. Julia said:

It depends on when in the process I get into it, because sometimes you get in really late and all the ideas are already made and you just come and take part in putting them up, all the drawings together. And
then you’re not that big of a part in it. But when you get to be involved in the beginning, it’s really fun, because then you can be... it feels fun, because then you get to really make something real.

A planning program was used to organize and distribute projects at the Office. This technology was used, with the hope of preventing time pressure. However, the pressure of time was clearly visible in creative practices at the Office. When I asked Andreas about what he found most important for his creative practice as a landscape architect, he answered: “I could always wish for a bit more time”. This pressure was embodied as stress. The landscape architects’ opinions on stress varied. One example was given by Sylvia, who wanted to make some changes regarding time, for she sensed the pressure as a negative part of the practice:

We don’t have much time to go outside to seek inspiration for creative practices. But sometimes, when you work very hard with a detail, all you need really is to rest. So when you go home and rest and then wake up, you think like, oh yes, that’s how I will do it. The rest is good. [...] A different time plan is needed. Because you sense a lot of pressure. Because the projects always grow. Our design process is not for sale – we sell hours. And that backs you down on creativity – makes you feel less creative, you feel that you just have to… yeah, just work. [...] You have to be very aware of your own time, when saying yes or no to projects. And when to take a part in projects. And the more work, the more you learn, and in the beginning people are doing too much, because they are very lost and unaware how to use their time.

Birgitta agreed with Sylvia when she talked about the time plan at the Office hindering and breaking the creative mode, with collaborated activities at the “wrong” time. She gave me an example: “We have this monthly “landscape lab” (landskapslab), a meeting on the same day and time, and I am always so hungry during this time of day [laughter]. You cannot be creative or share creative ideas when you’re hungry [laughter]”. Some of my interlocutors talked about time pressure as ideal settings, where the limits of time provoke creative practices and encourage the creative agent, as an essential part of the landscape architect job. As Veronica phrased it: “The creativity needs rules and regulation, limits to overcome, not just chaotic flow. I believe that the routine for example helps, when you shower or when you run, then [the ideas] come”. Sylvia, my interlocutor, continued on the matter of having to obey the rules of the buyer: “Sometimes it decreases your creative work [...] but sometimes it’s good, getting a problem that you need to solve in collaboration with others”. Calle also talked about the matter and said: “I usually say that problems and limits are fantastic, they open [for] new solutions”. The strain, representing power, is but not simply obeyed by the social subjects, but negotiated and relationally valued (Ortner,
1984, p. 153), for when “given only a rule, the possibility always remains open to follow the rule in deviant ways” (Rouse, 2006, p. 502). When ransacking the practice of creativity it became clear that it is a practice about not following the rules – a fundamentally deviant practice. An interesting paradox can thus be addressed; when a landscape architect is deviant in his creative work, he or she follows the rules: The deviant act lies in following the rule. For example, in an informal discussion with Cissi I watched her drawing lines for heights in a green area in her project. She used a specific digital program for this drawing. I asked about why she chose those numbers for the lines of height, and her answer was that she was only drawing according to the books: “I’m not being very creative, following the rules”.

Veronica, as a studio manager at the Office, had some view over the time plan and schedules for the staff at the Office. She had a different perspective on the scale of strain: “People tend to work very loyal in their project groups, for the buyer. They don’t want to spare their time for anything else.” But she claimed that the time spent on discussion and sharing is also important. However, that was not the fact in practice. “They all say that they want to “fika” together, and we arrange that, and then they don’t come.” She continued:

Now we are all quite busy and stressed, and we feel like we dont have time to “be creative”, but when we are not busy, well yeah, then we start to worry for real. […] We tend to spend time on many things that we shouldn’t dwell upon, something pillipillepillepill, on details that don’t really need that much time. And that time we should really focus on spending in the creative phase more.

One of my interlocutors, Lina, was an organized and hard-working landscape architect. She was always a little stressed, under time pressure. Her experience of time as a part of the creative practice regarded time almost as a space, or an external state of mind that you live outside when you are practicing creativity:

When you are in the creative process, you live outside the regular timeframe. When you get a good idea during the night, you go up and write or draw. You sketch whenever… Then I can work anywhere, and it’s a preference actually not to work at the office. And you just want to work. You don’t need to eat and you want to skip all meetings. It puts you outside the timeframe at the office and at your home. It’s easier if you don’t have children. Than you can work during night, and sleep during the day.

Lina kept on talking about time, made of strains and temporal borders. Her opinion is important, because it highlights the ambiguity of time as a creative practice in making:
You need to get good sleep and to have a good day… Ahh, but it’s also good when you don’t sleep well, … oh, I don’t know. I think you just need to stop pushing it. Like, go for a walk. Or have something to eat. Meet your friends.

Alexander was clearer about the importance of a routine and a rhythm for creative practices that you need to set a rhythm, a beat in your working procedure and keep it all the way to the end for the project to go well:

As a [landscape] architect, it is the wholeness that needs to hold. A line needs to stay put, a material needs to stay in its place. It requires talent and experience to be able to step out of that rhythm and still create something functional. Alvar Alto is perhaps a name that should be mentioned here. And that is a very difficult task. But as a landscape architect it is difficult to step so much out of the rhythm. You need to focus on the function, all the time. And then the “offbeat” becomes in second place.

The landscape architects are ‘children of their time’, as their practices are inspired by the situated possibility (Kjærsgaard, et al., 2016, p. 1), they themselves have experiences from and grown in. They can simultaneously be called ‘children of their space’, which is my following discussion, regarding how space affects the creative practice and appears in it.

**Space and creative practice**

To be creative is to be solution based. Solving something. Get all these little parameters to fit together. Create feeling and situation, and with the numbers. Thinking and looking at it in different ways, not only one but in many new ways. Look at the problem from different points and angels. Problematize the whole stuff.

Ludvig described the creative practice in this manner during our interview. He, as Hallam and Ingold suggest (2007, pp. 2-3), refers to it as an improvisational process, where ‘stuff is problematized’ and looked and acted on in innovative ways. Here, creative practice is examined in relation with time, as it takes form as actions belonging to a rhythm, done under pressure, strain, and limitation. It is scrutinized in space, as practices in a workplace and in the making of a designed production site. It is also studied through senses and sounds, where I reveal how creativity was practiced through feelings and emotions. Then I discuss creative practices as technological, material and vocal sonic expressions, that were heard when I listened to the practice.
Motivation from ‘Home’ and ‘abroad’: Childhood playground and “studieresor”

I used to play in the urban site of Stockholm, jumping around all these backyards. They were all connected, in one sense, but divided with fences and walls, and we used to make a game out of it. We tried to get passed those fences, climb the walls, and get by all the grumpy men and women, and they all had different difficulty level, like in crossing borders or something.

This childhood memory from Ludvig, makes a connection between the temporal past as an inspiration and the spatial history as an inspiration. He told me that he thought this way of figuring out spaces as a playground and a space to live in had affected his creative practices. His embodied way of thinking about space to move in motivates and inspires his creativity. He told me about a project he worked on, building a playground for kids. There he used his own experience as a kid, playing in this specific space in urban Stockholm: “I wanted to create that emotion”. Birgitta also talked about the motion in spaces as an inspiration for creative practices. She described her youth as a motional time, climbing mountains, jumping, running, and dancing in different spaces. She had used this knowledge herself when creating an urban playground. Sylvia told me a story about her childhood spaces, when she talked about her childhood memories of skiing and how that nature sport inspires her way of thinking about freedom when working as a landscape architect, creating urban places. She continued: “I’ve always liked being outdoors, and I like the nature, and the knowledge of nature. […] I want to work with nature, but also be creative.”

Another spatial element was often mentioned regarding inspiration for creative practices, and that was travel and the importance of travelling to various places. During my interview with Gudrun, she talked about her personal travelling experience as a strong inspirational factor for her creativity. “I just started thinking a lot about spaces and open places. It just made me think about space in new ways, like looking at it socially.” She travelled the world for four years, “and I just started reflecting on the space and the cities, and on what happens to the landscape in these places I visited.” She gave me an example from her travels to Nairobi:

Gudrun: And there I really saw the lack of public places. There, 75% of the time is spent outside and people walk a lot. They maybe share an apartment, but they never meet, so it’s almost like you have

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22 Studieresa is the word they used in Swedish for this inspirational factor. The term was frequently mentioned, both formally and in informal discussions. See, for example, the quote from the field on page 14.
your own. So much of the time is spent outside. [I ask] Can we plan less? … Like, this is seat. This is gate. I always enter the design process with the question ‘Can this be something else?’ Like, can it be something during the day, and then something else in the evening? Not the Stockholm City mode, like 30 cm here and there… Now I’m maybe being unfair. I am always thinking about that, but I haven’t gotten the opportunity yet. Cause in Nairobi, like someone who would sell shoes, he would use the curb between the street to show and display his product. This basic fundament… what people do with them. How can we do it here, in another way?

**Júlia:** When you talked about the Stockholm City mode, it sounded a bit secure, but also depressing, like as something that maybe is socially and culturally structured and framed. Do you think this affects creativity for you as a landscape architect, and perhaps the users of public places in Stockholm City?

**Gudrun:** Yes, I think so. It affects the way we act, definitely. When you enter an environment, you start to act in different ways then in other parts or other cities. You even walk in a different way.

The talk of “studieresor” was common at the field, both between colleagues in informal discussions and in more formal situations, such as meetings or workshops. The Swedish word literally means “educational travels”. I asked Veronica about the purpose of these travels and she said their aim is to get inspired by the other landscape architects or the professional ancestors that come from and work in other cultural and historical settings. These travels were seen as a crucial factor for creative practices as inspiration. Birgitta told me how she was inspired during a trip by the usage of the space:

Like, there must be some care (omsorg) in it, in my opinion. A space that is supposed to be used, is it all empty and beautiful? That’s not inspirational, even though it can be really nice to look at, aesthetically. But once we were on this trip (studieresa) and we saw this amazing park, where there were lots of people, and it was so exiting, beautiful, and with many well thought and fun technical solutions, and there were people everywhere, all the time. This drives you on (sätter man igång).

What Birgitta describes is how a “studieresa” inspired her as a creative agent. The way of the professional ancestors inspires her creative practices, as in how the technological solutions and materials are chosen. Also, the usage of the urban landscape motivates her as a creative agent. To summarize, space inspires creative practices, in the form of a childhood playground and travel. The landscape architects are ‘children of their space’. Space gives way for an inspirational embodied knowledge where the creative agent accesses that knowledge for his/her creative practice. Space affects creative practices in other context as well, as it appears in the workplace itself, and in and as the anticipated outcome.
Making anticipated urban space at the Office

In a long interview with Viktor he made several remarks on the Office as a workplace for creative practices. He was not fully satisfied with the situation as it was:

I think that would be good to have more variety of places. Now it’s quite…, we have desktops, project areas and meeting rooms, but nothing that makes you feel something else. It’s all office like. We need more materials, leather, wood, steel or whatever, to create these different areas. More different places would be good.

Hanna also had an opinion on the Office as a workplace: “The office is too office-like. I would like something that is a bit more personal for our group. Natural materials, plants. But the flexibility of tables is also thought to increase creativity, but for me I like things to be stable.”

My interlocutors mostly agreed when I asked them about how they experienced the Office as a workplace for creative practice. Lina said that she would prefer a variation of rooms, with different atmosphere, materials, and sound. She also felt that the flexible desks, that were originally organized to provide a possibility for creative work, were hindering creativity: “I want to be able to leave things as they are, the papers, and go away and then come back the next day to look at it again, as it is all over the place. I don’t like to fix my desk every afternoon. It hinders the creativity, I think. It stresses me out.” Ludvig also talked about the office as a place hindering creative practice. The stressful time plan, the coloured rooms and the silent atmosphere he mentioned as standing in the way for truly creative practice.

Jack moved to Sweden as young man. He had an interesting experience about how space as a geographical and cultural environment affected creative practice. During our interview I asked him whether he had experienced a whole process of design, following a project from the beginning to the end, and if so, if he could describe this designing process. He told me that he had experiences both from Sweden and from where he came, France:

**Jack:** In France, you need to calculate how much the project will cost in the beginning and let the client know. In Sweden, first you draw and send the drawing to the client, and you have no idea about how much it will cost in the end. And that is kind of driving the process, because if you’re in France, and
you say that you’re going to build for this budget, you need to do that and do as planned. But in Sweden, you’re more free in one way, but also in France, you’re free in another way, because if you’ve sold it, you know it’s going to be built. But in Sweden, when you’ve drawn it, you don’t know whether they’re going to build it because they don’t know how much it will cost. I like both processes. I feel more creative in Sweden, in a way, but in France I have more control over the project. I can follow the construction as well. I was maybe 50% of the time at the office there, but here I’m almost 100%.

**Júlia:** Why do you feel you can be more creative in Sweden?
**Jack:** Because you don’t have any budget controlling you. It’s that simple.

**Júlia:** So money controls creativity?

**Jack:** No, it’s not that simple, but it affects it, sure. 23

This example resonates Ingold’s and Hallam’s notion on “the way we work” as a part of creativity as an improvisational practice (2007, pp. 9-12). It represents the culture in practice (Ortner, 2006, p. 18) as a part of a specific geographical space. Another example of a cultural strain appeared at the Office during a meeting with a man providing building material for playgrounds. Early on in the meeting he talked about safety regarding playground design and production and how important it is for the landscape architects to know the rules for Sweden because they can be different from other countries. The four landscape architects at the meeting elaborated on this comment. They agreed that the rules for playground design in Sweden were a hindrance for their own creative practices. Ludvig, who attended the meeting, described cultural strains in relation with water: “Children in Sweden all seem to drown when they fall into water. Children from other countries seem simply to be able to stand up.” The group laughed after he made this comment. The rules regarding water in playgrounds in Sweden limited the landscape architects when creating playgrounds with water because the bureaucracy was heavy and relevant licences were many and complicated. The social power of the culture affected the practice.

The designed production site is a space of creative practices; it is the outcome itself, of those practices. Lina referred to the production site as a space that needs to be carefully studied by the landscape architects when practicing creativity. She talked about how “everything is much smaller than you think. You need to study the scale to create your space”. Lina also talked about how the project needs to “live in your head for a while, before you start for

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23 I found more data regarding creative practice as capital. That provides material for an alternative discussion about the topic. I did not find space for it in the thesis and therefore it will be taken in an upcoming article about creativity as capital.
real”. As a creative agent, the landscape architect keeps the project “in his head”, while doing other things in his or her life. “When you do other things and just live and move, you collect inspiration and motivation all over, I believe.” Liv talked about this same phenomenon, getting the project in your head and the importance of going to the production site in the early phases of the project: “I start with myself, like thinking, do I want to be here? What would I like to do here? Where do I want to walk? That’s what I do. What is the goal and function of the space?”

At the group interview that I arranged to discuss the future of public places, this question came up: Who will and will not use the places, and how can that affect your creativity? Peter and Jon elaborated on this thought and described how space is sometimes supposed to be for some and not for others:

Peter: We had this project in an area where there are several beggars, and the goal written in the projects description was to get rid of them. It was at a place close to the Swedish liquor store (Systembolaget).
Jon: Yes, it said “to get the trash away” (få bort skräp) on the paper.
Others: Really? What? Did it say that?
Júlia: But how do you do that?
Peter: Well, you want to attract a specific group of people, but not the “wrong kind”.

The question about how they do that remained unanswered. The discussion continued and Jack talked about a similar experience, when he had designed a public place for a housing company in a suburb in Stockholm. It was a square with benches and the client from the housing company complained about the number of benches: “He claimed it to be attracting bums”. Tor mentioned another similar example:

I got a call from a journalist, because I had taken part in a project that included very many armchairs, to sit in a feel good (ha det bra). But she took the opposite way, like that you couldn’t lay down and that there was an agenda behind it, like to prevent people from resting or sleeping. But, well, I don’t know. I’ve also been a part of a project where we tore down all the armchairs.

The landscape architects described a (perhaps softer) version of fortress making, as Caldeira (1999) and Davis (1992) did, where the designed place is supposed to lure some people in and keep others out. The creative practices are directed towards a specific design process where the outcome, in this context two public places in Stockholm with benches, is intended for some but not everyone. The imagined production site as a workplace affected the creative practices.
I decided to spend my last week of fieldwork at one of these produced sites. I ended up in a square in the northern part of Stockholm that had been designed by two of my interlocutors. It had taken over five years to materialize. When being there after all this time at the Office, participating and observing the creative practice amongst the landscape architects, I quickly noticed the details - the handrail of the benches, the frame of stones around the trees, the location and orientation of flowerbeds and benches – and I felt how the design had been through the phases described above. The square was a creation of practice – it was something my interlocutors had done. This space had become through creative practices, such as technological solutions, aesthetical details and functional ideas. It was the future urban Stockholm, where the sociality of landscape architects structured the choice of materiality\(^2\) which produced possibilities for urban sociality.

I’ve talked about practicing creativity in relation to space as a workplace and as a designed production. When Jack continued his discussion on how he felt his practices to be more creative in Sweden, he emphasized the collaboration with other people, mentioning the discussion and dialogue as key factors. This makes for a good bridge over to my next discussion on senses and sounds where I reflect thoroughly on collaborative discussion as a creative practice. I also include other senses in this discussion, as they are empirically relevant, such as seeing and feeling.

*Senses/sounds and creative practice*

I had a long talk with Calle about motivation for creativity and he made an interesting comment that combined space and senses as an inspirational factor: “My experiences as a child in the environment in [my home town] shapes very much the emotional and visionary part of my creativity. It shapes my vision very much; I realized this already at school”. I asked him to elaborate on this comment and he described how he aims at creating a feeling in the urban

\(^2\) Together with other creative agents, such as constructors and manufacturers.
landscape her works on. This feeling is a combined emotion from different sensors, felt, seen and heard.

**Visual stimulation, voices and music**

At the Office, there were photos hanging on the walls. Some of them were of other projects or projects in the making. These photos thus became a visual inspiration from the professional ancestors. At each landscape architect’s desk there were few pictures, since the desks were supposed to be flexible in use and therefore emptied and cleaned at the end of each day. This was however not the fact and people sat at the same desk during all the time I spent there. Few had pictures on their desks, one had a plant on her desk, and around four to six of my interlocutors used headphones regularly when sitting in front of their desks and working. When I asked my interlocutors about what inspired their creativity, all except one mentioned visual stimulation. Hanna phrased it like this: “That’s probably my biggest inspiration, from visual stimulation – looking at the work of others and going to different places.” She liked to look at others working, learning visually from the professional co-workers, and to go to other spaces to learn visually from the professional ancestors. The creative practice for landscape architects is mostly motivated visually when seeing others work with all

*Figure 4.8 Inspirational board*
sorts of material, technical solutions, and aesthetical details. During my stay at the Office, I asked Viktor and Veronica if I could put up an “inspirational board” for the landscape architects to use and place motivational ideas, pictures, photos, words, links to music, etc. I got permission to do it. I photographed the board regularly to see ideas appear. It didn’t work as fast as I had hoped for, but some of my interlocutors placed things on the board. My last photo of the inspirational board during my stay included pictures or photos for the most part (see photo 4.8). One of the items, however, was a cover of an album by the band Arab Strap, revealing a musical inspiration (see photo 4.9).

It must be noted that the concept of sound was not as given or clear as I had imagined it to be. When I asked about inspirational sounds, most of my interlocutors talked about listening to music and using music as inspiration. Other sounds were seldom mentioned as inspirational. In addition to music, I however also include voices as inspirational sounds. All my interlocutors talked about the inspiration from a discussion or a dialogue as a key factor for creative practices, which made the ground for voices in a dialogue to be analysed as an inspirational sonic environment. When I asked my interlocutors about if and/or how they were sonically inspired for their creative practices as landscape architects, I got a scale of answers. This scale ranged from being highly inspired by
sounds and not at all inspired by sounds. Julia, a young landscape architect, said her inspiration came from her childhood and how she became interested in music. She used to dance and had studied dancing. Through this she began to listen to all sorts of music, which she still listens to when working. She says that she listens to all sorts of music, but mostly soul music when working. “The soul… I’ve got one playlist that’s easy to have in the background and I put it on when I want to think. […] It puts me in a mode that makes me not to think about anything else. It helps me to relax and focus.” When asked specifically about where she would seek inspiration she replied: “It depends on the project. But music helps, music and just, I think, “i vardagen”, I don’t know how to explain it [laughter]. Like every day, on the train…. Music was mentioned in more detail as an inspiration for creativity. Jack, for example, talked about his childhood being full of music, going to concerts two times a week over an extended period of his life. He still enjoys music and listens a lot. But instead of going to concerts he plays several instruments at home with his family and friends. When asked about whether this inspires his creative work as a landscape architect, he claimed to believe that it did “but more unconsciously than consciously”. Alexander gave another example. He is a respected and very experienced landscape architect. He, like several other landscape architects at the Office, has played in a band (some of them still do). He talked about the Beatles being a huge inspirational source, both for his music creation and as a landscape architect: “It’s about the process, how do you make something work, from A to Z. When you create music and [also when you create] land.” He said that this musical inspiration for creativity is easier to detect in his songs, rather than in his landscape architecture: “You can hear my songs and say, ‘yes, that’s Alexander, a Beatles fan’. But you cannot look at my architecture and say that.” The musical inspiration is hard to locate in the urban landscape production – but it’s still there as a part of the creative agent’s growth.

Private sonic environment was sometimes selected at the Office with the use of headphones. Jack told me that he used to listen a lot to music when working before, for all practices. Now he only listens to music when sketching:

I used to listen a lot to music when working, but now it’s changed. I think it’s disturbing. I don’t know, I feel quite tired when I listen all day to music, on the metro, at home and at work, it makes you tired. So I listen when I have two or three hours to sketch something, and you can enter your bubble and create and draw. But not during other times at work.
Ludvig sometimes sits with headphones at the Office. He told me that he uses them to “box himself out”. He uses music strategically while working to make the sonic environment motivational for him as a landscape architect. He said:

I listen to music. And it depends on what I’m doing. When I do this, monotonous tasks, drawing up stuff without thinking, then it’s up-tempo, mostly rock, that I listen to. But now, just before, I was just listening to this mellow stuff, trying to box myself. Because when you sit in this open office space, where everyone is talking, then you can get distracted.

**Júlia:** So you use the music?

**Ludvig:** Yes, to set up a mode and not to get distracted by the noise going on. But sometimes it’s good to talk with coworkers, but sometimes it’s good to focus with music.

He went on and said that the up-beat music made him more productive. It motivated the tempo of his creative practice. Ludvig was not the only one that used headphones at the Office. Jon did it as well more than the others. When I asked Jon about why and how he used them, he went so far as to claim that he hated silence, but loved it as well. He told me that he believed that it was a need for him to be in control of his sonic environment and sounds. “And if someone else is choosing for me, I feel bad. It’s tricky in this open space at the Office.” Jon tried to fulfill this need of his by wearing headphones. When I asked him why he listened to music while working he said: “It helps me focus, and maybe it’s linked to my creativity”. He went on: “If I forget my headphones, I just want to go home. I could go home for them”. I asked him to elaborate on this need to listen to music and he replied:

Maybe it helps the creativity. If I draw a line with no music, it would be 10 points, but if I draw a line with Sigurrós, it would be 30 points. It adds on something, because if I listen to a very nice atmospheric music when drawing a landscape, then I am more focused and can feel myself walking in that landscape.

The awareness of the benefits of having a selection of sonic spaces came up during my talk and work with my interlocutors. They wanted a change at the Office. Julia talked about the need for a ‘loud room’ “to crawl in, like somewhere you can just sit and you can maybe play music and you can feel secure and free in some way, where you can sketch and be free.” Veronica, one of the co-ordinators, also talked about the need for this room, not only for music playing, but for loud talking and lively discussions. She said: “When I worked at the other office it was a totally different atmosphere. We sat close together and talked loudly and laughed a lot. The dialogues where constant and they were audible. I liked that.”
Veronica went on about the Office being too silent. She thought it was due to a working atmosphere created a long time ago:

… it is something that was done by former staff, working in silence. One landscape architect had worked here for 16 years, and she used to wear hearing protectors on her head, even though it was silent at the Office. And others showed her respect and walked silently pass her. When you come, as a new member to an office so silent, you adapt to that. And the discussion that we have now at the Office, about creative motivation and creative workplace, is that we want to have spaces at the office that are silent and not silent. We have one room at the other side of the floor that is used as a silent room. It tends to be silent here as well, but there is no room where you can be really loud.

They have been talking about this ‘loud room’ for over six months, Veronica said, but had not found any solution. She was confident that the sonic environment influences their creativity, both as a part of the motivation and the practice.

Music, voices, and discussions are inspirational sonic factors that inspire creative practices. There were few other sounds present as inspirational for my interlocutors. During my interview with Liv, for example, she told me how much she loved animals, both as a child and an adult. She sent me recordings from her home that included almost 20 minutes of cat purr and cat sounds. That was her choice of sound to record, as a representation of what affected her sonic environment and inspired her creative practices as a professional landscape architect. Andreas brought in a different example, by sending audio files that included 40 minutes of dialogues about personal things. These discussions were, for example, about his family activities and plans for the day. His motivation and inspiration therefore came from discussions with his wife and children, as an embodied feeling of fatherhood and being a family member. Andreas is also a professional singer. When I asked him about whether that sonic experience and knowledge affected his creativity, he believed it not to affect the practice per se, but maybe as an inspiration for creativity. He went on and said:

Mostly I seek inspiration through what I see, but I must admit that I don’t consciously look for it, I just get inspired when travelling or on my way from one place to another, feeling what other people express. […] More of a sort of a constant awareness of the qualities and how people use the area. The characteristics that we work with.

This fits well with his choice of sounds to record, as his audio file represents an unconscious world, in his home, where his family expresses itself. He, as a landscape architect, grows in his biosocial surroundings and becomes the creative agent through his embodied inspiration.
Emotions, dialogue and technological sounds of creation

You tend to think about these small, small things, that kind of means, almost nothing, but it means something, but it’s not what people feel in the end. And that’s hard, to get a hold of these things that really matter in the end, for the whole for the project. Because you need to get all these ideas and decide, and you have to think about it, and it tends to take a lot of place, yeah, or space in your mind, during that process. Instead of thinking about what really matters.

Calle claimed that the feeling in the designed product is the goal for landscape architects through their practice, and that this feeling is made and shaped during the process of creativity. Simon also talked about feelings when he said: “I try to make everything as simple as possible. And that inspiration of simplicity comes from Japan. The simplicity as a feeling, calmness. I like that and I try to create that here.” His practices grow from his embodied knowledge and history of his homeland and appear in his creativity. Julia agreed when I asked her what creative practices are about: “It’s really hard, because it’s sometimes just a feeling. It’s sometimes difficult to be creative when you sit in front of the computer. You have to be able to go and be and feel.” There was a reasonable possibility for the landscape architects to fulfill this need of feeling and sensations at the Office. The landscape architects had access to closets and shelves, piled with different examples of material to work with, to create landscape. This material was felt and touched frequently, both for the sensation of it but also the texture and weight. Additional scenes of the importance of feelings and sensation for creative practice came up during my fieldwork.

![Figure 4.10 A piece of oak](image)
One was during a meeting at the Office that was organized by an external company, selling material specifically for playground building. The meeting took place in the blue room and four from the group of landscape architects attended. During the meeting, the man from the company talked about different kinds of material and innovative technical solutions for playgrounds. The four landscape architects touched and stroked the material examples (see photos 4.10 and 4.11) – it was important for them to sense and feel it, to comprehend its possible usage that affects their creative practice.

During my participant observation, and specifically through the method of listening to the practice, I heard creative practice as making. One type of these sonic practices were voices taking part in discussions. People came together in one of the coloured rooms for a meeting or to discuss projects in divergent phases and situations. Simon said: “If you want to develop and motivate creativity in practice, you need to talk to people. The discussion itself can really create something new, a new way of thinking and then doing.” The discussion mainly included voices talking and occasional laughter. Veronica talked about the practice of discussion as creative:

When you get the project, you start to imagine how it will look like. Then you need to get from your thoughts, down to the ground for work, and you start discussing with the others in the project. Then the creativity happens. That first phase in the designing process is the most creative, through the dialogue with others. (Underlining by author).
However, the discussion was at a low level, and the Office was considered *too* silent for some of my interlocutors. Veronica had also commented on this in relation with motivating creative practices, but here she referred to it as a practice: “When everybody is silent or does not take part in an informal discussion during ‘fika’, something is not right. But it’s a challenge, to create that creative atmosphere.” The group at the Office was in formation, in liminality (Turner, 1969), as it was a recent combination of two groups, a previous one and the additional one. This could explain the silence. Hanna reflected on this possibility:

> The core of creativity is in the relationships you have with your coworkers, for me at last. Working in the environment with nice people, in collaborative creativity. [...] my creativity is not used, I can be much more creative. I’m more creative at home for example, then here. And I don’t know how to change that. Maybe it helps to work with people… Because I don’t really know the people that I’m working with, but that would help.

Birgitta addressed this possibility as well. Her experience was that discussion was lacking at the Office, since it was a “young” group of co-workers that was recently made by the landscape architects sitting already at the Office and another group of landscape architects, from a company that was taken over by the Office. “It will be easier when we will know each other” Birgitta said and smiled.

Alexander talked about a different kind of discussion or the dialogue with the user as a necessary part as early as possible in the first phase of the design process. The social power of the user can affect the project drastically, for example when there is protesting towards the design and/or construction. This creates an economical control over the creativity. When the protest comes from a strong voice in the form of a big group, such as signature lists, or from an organization, it can transform the project. It was still considered important to enter this dialogue with others, but preferable during the appropriate phase in the making, as soon as possible. During the group interview, my interlocutors talked about the necessity of this kind of a discussion, not only between themselves but also with other professionals, the client, or the buyer and then the users themselves. In this discussion the function becomes clearer, they said, and the chances for expensive changes or re-drawings happen. However, there is seldom budget spent on this kind of discussions in the design process and therefore they claimed to have lacked this dialogue. Paradoxically, they also said that certain places
or areas in Stockholm have had enough of this citizen discussion regarding landscape creation:

Sofie: It takes time and effort to get so engaged in projects being built in your neighbourhood. And many of these people feel that the discussion doesn’t help at all. They don’t see their preferences being made.
Anna: Yes. It’s not enough just to take the discussion, you need to do something with it.

Other sounds apart from voices and discussions were also present at the Office. Those sounds were coded as technological and material sounds in making, when constructing and analysing the creative practice as sounds. One example was introduced in the beginning of chapter 4, *Practicing creativity*, the buzzing sound from the coffee machines. This sound is a sound of creative practice, because drinking coffee was deemed beneficial for *turning on* creativity. Other technological sounds were heard, such as printing sounds: The motion of a paper through the labyrinth of the printer. In the designing process for landscape architects, dozens of printed pictures of the becoming space are used. This sound represents creative practice as making, for the printing was crucial for the improvisational process. Another common sound was the clicking sound of writing, drawing, or making program commands on a keyboard. That represented also important sounds of creative practice as making. The rhythm of the clicking could reveal what kind of practice was being done – if it was a staccato sound, short click, with a regular tempo in between, it usually meant that a creative agent was using a program to draw. If the time between the clicking was irregular it meant that a creative agent was writing commands into a program or sentences in a document for others to read – co-workers or clients. It represented a whole sonic environment where sound waves floated through the air, creating the specific sonic environment that the Office truly was. All of these sounds highly affected the sonic environment at the Office, as indicators of creative practices. Sounds from material were also heard when listening to the practice.
Paper, as a material, was the noisiest one, where sketching paper – a light, see-through paper on rolls (see photos 4.12) – was ripped or cut from its roll and then used for drawing or writing on. Sketches were being made, ideas being born, creativity practiced. The pile of sketches grew, as the landscape architect grew in his or her profession. Sometimes the paper was ripped apart after being written or drawn on, which could indicate a failure in creative practices. At least it was creativity in practice, sounding as a rip. Every creative agent had his or her own roll at their desk and several other rolls could be found all over the Office floor. It was a material very commonly used for creative practices. Viktor also talked about the use of paper:

Then you have to create this new concept. And quite often it could be very different concepts that we work with parallel, because we don’t want to put the foot down to early, or that we want to be able to let the customer chose. And there is always this sketching process going on, at the same time. On this transparent paper with a pen or a pencil. I like to do that in groups, but that doesn’t always work, because everybody is different. If it works, it’s good. So, you like draw on each other papers and really work together. And then it’s quite much about shapes, relations, sizes, and scales.

Now I have analysed the creative practice amongst landscape architects as inspiration and making in time, space and senses/sounds. It is an investment for innovative ideas, new solutions, original thoughts, and the will to try out. It is through history and culture, and its borders and limits, as Ortner highlights (1984; 2006), that inspirational practice grows and landscape architects become
the creative agents (Ingold, 2013). With these inspirational practices, the improvisational process starts and a mental image of the urban space begins to evolve. Creative practice as a making is an improvisational process, negotiated by and in time. It is a practice growing in a certain space or certain spaces that form and condition the actual making. Lastly it is a practice made with, in and around senses, and is quite clearly heard. I have established how I analysed my empirical data about the landscape architects at the Office and how they practice creativity as inspiration and as making. Hence, it is time to conclude.
5. Conclusion

“Creativity presupposes a set of rules. And you can challenge these rules; one form of creativity is to challenge these rules. If you have no structure or rules at all, it’s like tossing paint at the wall” (C.P., 2016).

My aim was to examine how creativity is practiced and how creative practices are not only affecting and making the landscape itself, but also making the landscape architects. I attempted to examine this with participant observation where I focused on sound in particular. For the analyses of my ethnographic material I formulated my topic, creativity, based on Hallam and Ingold’s definition of creativity as an improvisational process (Hallam & Ingold, 2007, p. 3), in the subfield of anthropology of creativity and design. I used an updated version of practice theory as a tool, and focused on Ortner’s encouragement to pay attention to history, power, and culture (1984; 2006). Additionally, I used the biosocial becoming approach, where the growth of the creative agent is highlighted (Ingold, 2013). Furthermore, I have used the method of listening to the practice, influenced by the work of Steven Feld (2012 [1982]; 2004) and revealed how sounds and sonic environments are factors related to the social production, regarding creative practices amongst landscape architects. With these theoretical and methodological tools I have elaborated on how creativity is practiced as an inspiration and as making. I made my analyses clear around the key themes of time, space, and senses/sounds, where I examined the practice of creativity around these themes in relation to the theories and method. I will now recapitulate the ethnographic chapters within the fourth chapter, Practicing creativity. During my research I held on to these three following questions, which I relate to through the discussion: How is urban landscape for future Stockholm created and made by landscape architects? And how does this creation affect the creative agents, the landscape architects? Additionally, how can listening be used as a tool for anthropological investigation on practices, and here, the practice of creativity?

In chapter four, I began with a discussion where I describe the becoming of the Office, my main field site, in details. My goal was to open a window to the Office for the reader to situate himself or herself in, before entering the analyses. While describing the Office, I provided a mental room for the reader to visualize and sympathize with the surroundings for the landscape architects, where
they mainly practiced creativity. The Office is a space for creative practices, which are the fundamental core in the work of landscape architects when making future landscape. It’s important to understand the structure of this space and there I collected most of my data for the thesis. This dialogue was central as a pre-knowledge, because it framed the space for creative practices. There, the landscape architects became a group of experts. Following that discussion, I entered the empirical case study as a becoming urban landscape where I provided a detailed description from the field where the creative practices were found at a production site. This discussion highlighted the biosocial growth of the practice itself, where it revealed a dynamic and fluid relation between creative agents, material, technology and natural settings. It indicated the becoming of a practice. I then divided my ethnographical approximation in three core texts.

The first one, *Time and creative practice*, describes how creative practices are temporally linked. Firstly, I analyse time as memories of the past and visions of the future and explore how these temporal factors inspire creative practices, consciously and unconsciously. My interlocutors described the way the past affected their creativity when they referred to childhood memories of playing and making. They also described how creative practice is inspired from the past, when they look at other older designs. The way of the *professional ancestor* inspires and provides a possibility for certain types of creative practices. In this chapter, time was also analysed as visions of the future, inspiring creative practices. The anticipated product affected the way they worked. Not only was the expected form and structure of importance, but also the function and the feeling of it. When looking at creative practice as making, temporality was also a dominant factor. It appeared as a rhythm and routine, and as a pressure. The landscape architects both practiced rhythm at the Office and talked about repeated or scheduled actions. Time is also practiced as a pressure, strain or even limitation, were stress comes out as the need for quick and focused work. The strain of time also enables practices for some, which meant that it appeared on a scale, rather than in oppositions. In chapter 4.4 *Space and creative practice*, I analysed how space inspires and motivates creative practices, both through the childhood home, a home country and through travel. The landscape architects designated how a specific place could have a unique emotional effect that motivated them or how seeing different spaces included an opportunity for them to see technical solutions or aesthetical details. Here, the way of the professional ancestors is spatially inspiring.
Space was also analysed in relation to creative practice at the workplace, the Office and the designed production site. The general tone regarding the Office as a workplace for creative practices was quite negative and the landscape architects described it as hindering creative practice, due its design or because of the structure and function of the space. The production site is the outcome of these practices, where creativity has mobilized and grown through time, space and the senses. In the last empirical chapter, 4.5 Senses/sounds and creative practice, I show how the senses and sounds stimulate and inspire creative practices. I reveal how emotions, visual material and sounds - last but not least - were a part of the creative practice as inspiration. There I discuss how my interlocutors described emotions that were sensed in different spaces and separate times. Some of them even provided audio files of sounds or a sonic environment from their homes that included fragments of their biosocial growth, history and background, being a part of the motivation and inspiration in their work. I then reveal how the creative practice is sensed, and more specifically, heard, when listening to the practice. This produced new knowledge about the topic of creativity in landscape design, and enriched the ethnographical methodology behind the thesis. The acoustic information “thickened” the ethnography as such, and provided important data for anthropological analysis. The sonic bricolage was there, as sounds of inspiration and sounds of making. It was in the biosocial movements through time, space and sound that the landscape architects got their ideas for creative practices in landscape making.

**Becoming a deviant expert**

When examining the landscape architects in Stockholm as creative agents, and de-constructing their inspiration and making, one finds these agents to be becoming deviant experts. The creative practice is fundamentally about not following the rules; thinking outside the box, figuring out something new, something fresh, something innovative. They move around the cities, in search of this creative inspiration for creative practices, “and it is surely in these movements, not in splendid isolation, that their ideas take shape” (Hallam & Ingold, 2007, p. 9). The existence of the landscape architects is not a static situation but a growing and fluid entity, growing in itself and nurturing the agents in their process of becoming. As I stated before: During my case study, the becoming deviant expert became through the relationship between the creative practice and ‘the system’ that they belong to. This system is a sum of historical, cultural, and power related connections (Ortner,
1994 and 2006) which provided the embodied elements for their creative practices. The process of this becoming is polyphonic; it comes from history, culture and power relations. It stems from social and biological processes, grows through the motivational factors from memories of the past and visions of the future. It is inspired by the professional ancestors where the past is visited for visions of the future to make in the present. The practice is made under routine and pressure, in the form of an “offbeat” rhythm or the deviant rhythm. The growth is also found in space, as the landscape architects become more creatively motivated after travelling and experiencing new spaces. Their practices in space, as a workplace and a designed production, affect their growth and the way they become creative agents. They also grow through their senses when they seek inspiration from visual units, emotions, and sounds. The senses and sounds in their practice make them evolve even further in their work as landscape architects. They gain inspiration and experience in their sonic environment where voices, music, technological sounds and sounds from different material summon up an audio bricolage. The audio effects are both conscious and unconscious, sought and structured. Through the accumulation of sounds, the deviant expert emerges. The creative agents become who they are, through negotiation and combination of social and biological factors, represented as temporal, spatial and sensor/sonic structures. When creating Stockholm, they create themselves.
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