“Being at home’ has different definitions nowadays, both within domestic settings and in the space defined by national boundaries.” With this statement, the 2016 Oslo Architecture Triennale launched its ten week-long programme. Publicly opened on September 8 with the overarching theme After Belonging, “it addressed and imagined the objects, spaces, and territories of a transforming condition of belonging”. On the whole, it is a complex inquiry at both micro and macro levels of experiencing the “homely”, from the individual to the community and their corresponding materialities, from the object to the territory.

Architecture exhibitions have a long history of being instrumental within architecture culture. However, it was not until the 1980s, architecture “-ennials” emerged as a new form of large-scale international exhibitions, following the Venice Art Biennale as an archetype. Gathering a considerable number of professionals as well as non-professionals in the field, they have now become major platforms for disciplinary debates and exchanges. Although the programmes have been enriched with conferences, academic debates involving students and so on, the exhibitionary block remains the main format through which architecture culture is disseminated. The way in which architecture is represented and displayed is however a burgeoning concern among academics and professionals (Lending 2014, Di Carlo 2016).

After Belonging. A Triennale In Residence, On Residence and the Ways We Stay in Transit was the response to an open call for curatorial projects, announced in September 2014 by Oslo Architecture Triennale (hereafter OAT), a major architecture institution in Norway. Gathered for this particular project under the name of After Belonging Agency, the Spanish team of architects consisted of Lluis Alexandre Casanovas Blanco, Ignacio G. Galan, Carlos Minguex Carrasco, Alejandra Navarrete Llopis and Marina Otero Verzier. They explored the theme of belongingness through comprehensive and far-reaching research, extending the triennale period to roughly two years. As such, and comprised of both academic and public investigations and experimentation, the sixth edition of OAT began much earlier than the three months of exhibitions and ended later. Within this period, projects developed in the academic environment, and exhibitions and other related events formed a knowledge production process. Leading educational institutions were involved in this pursuit, such as Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO), the London based Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA), and the New York based Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAP). Two publications followed up the triennale. The book After Belonging. The Objects, Spaces and Territories of The Ways We
*Stay in Transit*, which is basically an academic study material aimed at complementing the program and contextualising the content of the exhibitions. The second publication, launched at the closing of the event in November, presented the triennale's knowledge production outcomes.

The notion of “belonging” provides a versatile linguistic foundation. The dual, related meanings one can construe from “belonging” relate on the one hand to aspects of social life, and on the other hand, to material possessions. While the former is understood as a human, universal need of acceptance and inclusion in society which is evaluated as equally important as the need for shelter or food, the latter implies a sense of ownership of tangible objects. Both meanings however are contained in the state of “being at home”.

As such, *After Belonging* “analyses the ways in which architecture participates and intervenes in both our attachment to places and collectivities – Where do we belong? – as well as our relation to the objects we produce, own, share and exchange – How do we manage our belongings?. Although *After Belonging* investigates the homely in relation to architecture and urban form, the notion of “home” is only present in the headline. Instead, it is being replaced by “residence”. While “home” implies stability and fixity in an enclosed space, physically bounded by walls or national boundaries, “residence” is a temporary dwelling, which implies movement.

Six elements form the core programme of the 2016 OAT from which the exhibitionary block is subject to the present review. The two exhibitions are: *On Residence* and *In Residence*. In addition, the programme contained the publication of *After Belonging. The Objects, Spaces and Territories of the Ways We Stay in Transit, The After Belonging Conference, The Embassy*, a temporal installation which aims to explore the ideals of “stateless democracy”, and *The Academy*, a platform for academic sharing.

The *On Residence* exhibition was held at the Norwegian Centre of Design and Architecture (DogA), an iconic building in the centre of Oslo. The architecture of the old industrial building formerly a substation platform with its high ceiling and generous space, frames an immersive display of the five sub-themes: *Borders Elsewhere, Furnishing After Belonging, Sheltering Temporariness, Technologies of a Life in Transit, and Markets and Territories of the Global Home*. The narrative of the exhibition approaches the theme of belonging by dealing with the redefinition of spaces of residence, where “architecture takes different forms beyond the building, from arrangements of objects and their logistics, to territorial configurations and digital systems of organisation”. Overall, there is a generally dramaturgical atmosphere, where the scenography, intertwining light and sound creates a dynamic multisensory environment (Bubaris 2014). The textual information is present through panels and labels. Yellow frames, a recurrent design feature to both locations, lightly clusters the installations into the sub-themes mentioned above.

There is a diversity in the objects displayed as well as in the subjects approached, making it difficult to create links between the installations. Randomness and arbitrariness seemingly ground the logic of the exhibition in an interplay of contexts and scales. A central feature of the exhibition space was the suspension of used furniture objects to the ceiling, appearing weightless, as if levitating. Particularly thought-provoking are the utopian perspectives on the topic of “belongingness”, where being at home by way of owningness, incites reflection on a complete erasure of spatial boundaries.
Objects are the tokens of the home and constitute a homely experience. The First Whole Moon Catalog, by the Belgian architecture firm Unfold, is one example of architecture’s imaginaries, creating a utopian scenario. The future (2050) extraterrestriallunar context, is unable to provide the means of object production for humans, such as wedding rings. Through this re-contextualisation, the architects emphasise “material scarcity, and propose to develop a new material culture through the use of high-tech”.

The exhibition space at the National Museum Architecture structures a completely different architectural frame. Much lesser space is allocated to the In Residence section. With a neutral and natural light, the exhibition in its entirety has a less dramatic atmosphere, but it is nonetheless equally engaging. Ten case studies are presented in the square room, separated by yellow metal frames, creating a playful and joyous mood as one enters. Apart from marking out each project, the frames have a secondary, subtle function in leading the way through the exhibition. As such, these disconnected, open structures allow for a more permeable space in which the physical and visual access invites one to explore the projects discretionarily, plotting its own route. Overall, there is a prevalence of textual information provided in different forms for each project, informing their location, narrative and site specific challenges. However, text and photographs are the only common features by way or representation.

The distinctiveness in their appearance lies in the objects that form each installation and the representation techniques employed. While some installations are primarily visual through video clips and photographs, others use sound recordings in order to address social, economic, political, environmental or technological issues, as reflected in the architectural and urban environment. What stands out, however, is the almost complete absence of conventional forms of architectural representation, characteristic to architecture exhibitions, such as drawings and architectural models. Instead, the projects are depicted as a set of circumstances and conditions (social, economic, political, technological etc.) which informed and led to different architectural and urban intervention strategies. Moreover, the physical product of these strategies is not in all cases an architectural object.

Nonetheless, intriguing projects and strategies call for a reconceptualisation of space, drawing from these so-called “non architectural” constraints. The project Asylum and Shelter Provision in Torshov, Oslo, displayed the only miniature model in the entire exhibition. OPEN Transformation and Modes of Movement challenged the idea of the center – its isolation and in fact its existence – by devising different strategies for the asylum seekers to appropriate the city through a web application and city guide. Another engaging installation was the Home Sharing Platforms from Copenhagen, which dealt with the Airbnb platform, the well-known web provider of privately owned residential spaces, in which guests, in exchange for a fee, live amongst others’ belongings. The project’s site report was rendered through a video interview with Mark, a 34-year-old former tax inspector who is leading a nomadic life, constantly shifting hotels within the city. The intervention strategy was presented in the form of an interactive installation (CHER yourself, CHER your world) where the visitor, using the tablet from the installation, is invited to take a photograph and share it with “friends they haven’t met yet” and to “check out what others are sharing”. The compelling installation of Techno-Religious Communities in Lagos,
Nigeria stands out with a silk-curtained tent imitating a space for worship and staging typical events hosted there through video and sound recordings. The visitor witnesses these religious events as they are witnessed by the religious congregation, through different technological media.

No less intriguing, is the overarching theme proposed for this far-reaching and vast architectural event. Firstly, choosing the notion of “belongingness”, which is essentially a psychological term, as a title for an architecture triennale, already points at a curatorial intent to at least partially exit the discipline's reductionist frame. Secondly, the curatorial team follows up on a thread rooted in the modernist critique, namely the unstable nature of house and home, the dedomesticated subject, the unhomely as a characteristic of the modern culture and an “unlivable condition” (Vidler 1992). With these premises, the After Belonging Agency posits many questions within architecture culture which, although focused on housing issues, is not restricted to them. Instead, it aims to once again question the autonomy of the profession and its canons, contextualise it within wider social, political economical discourses and technological processes. It is a triennale of architecture's constituencies and contingencies, arguably not of architecture itself in terms of aesthetic concerns, where the built and non-built spaces are produced not only in the sociologists' and psychologists' cabinets, but also in the rooms of economists, politicians, and technology professionals.

The custom-designed font for the exhibition is also referencing the theme. Featuring changing and delirious accents from different languages, it visually complements the theme of ephemerality and transience.

However, the academic undertones of the overall triennale might encourage an elitist scrutiny in order to access the information. For such a large-scale event, which gathers a considerable number of visitors, including many non-professionals in the field, it might be problematic. Hence, reviews that followed criticised this issue. For instance, Oliver Wainwright, for the newspaper *The Guardian*, asks the curators “to decide where they themselves want to belong: choose to engage with the real world, or retreat to the realms of arcane theorising?” (Wainright 2016).

On a very basic level, architecture is about building walls, enclosing a space. As Geoffrey Scott stated, “when we build we do detach a convenient quantity of space, seclude it, and all architecture springs from that necessity” (1914). Contemporary housing concerns are driven by phenomena like migration (voluntarily or involuntarily), homelessness, and human unsettlement. One question which arises in this context which the curators aim to delve into is whether architecture can have a proactive outlook. Consequently, they argue that it can be mobilized for and through “place-making and construction of identity”. One way of doing so is to investigate alternative ways of defining and creating (the home) space.

The representation techniques follow this unconventionality. It does not provide miniaturised architectures, stylistic and aesthetic prescriptions, and it is far from presenting iconic buildings, starchitects and trophy buildings, as in general might be alleged to. With this almost total absence of architectural and urban end products, one is left to wonder: Where is architecture? Or, for the more extravagant: What is architecture?

**Literature**

Arrhenius, Thordis, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller & Jeremie Michael McGowan (eds.) 2016. *Place and*
Anmeldelser


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Bøger


Fråga föremålen, oppfordrer historikerne Anna Maria Forssberg og Karin Sennefelt. Gjenstrender har ”mycket mer att ge den som är intresserad av historisk tid än att bara användas som ett exempel eller illustration” (s. 13). Tingene blir gitt agens i forskningsprosessen og ses ikke bare som nok en kilde for å få bedre svar på spørsmål. Aller helst skal gjenstanden bidra til at vi kan stille bedre spørsmål, hevder Forssberg og Sennefelt (s. 15).

Ved å ta utgangspunkt i tingenes posisjon i forskningsprosessen slutter antologien Fråga föremålen seg til den økende interessen for materialitet som har funnet sted innen kulturvitenskapene de siste årene, og som bare her i Norden er blitt gjenstand for ny behandling i flere temanummer og antologier med titler som: Tingenes kulturhistorie. Etnologiske studier i den materielle kultur (Stoklund 2003), Materialiseringer (Damsholt et al. 2009), In Defense of Things. Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects (Olsen 2010), Materiell kultur og kulturens materialitet (Naguib & Rogan 2011), Tingenes tilsynskomster (Eriksen et al. 2013).


Boken oppfordrer altså til at forskere med humanistisk nysgjerrighet og refleksjon skal gi seg i kast med den store gjenstandsmassen som befinner seg i svenske museer. Slike oppfordringer trengs. Som kjent brukes det enorme ressurser på å lagre og konservere tingene i museet. Samtidig har de tekniske konservatoren med sin naturvitenskapelige tilnærming sikret seg et godt grep om museets ting, et grep som ikke nødvendigvis bygger opp under