

The Maskinhuset: Hiding in Plain Sight

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Concealed behind a high, wooden fence in Kødbyen, Copenhagen's former meat packing complex, the Maskinhuset is a mystery for the thousands who pass its well known façade every day. No longer needed as the mechanical heart of Kødbyen, the Maskinhuset and its offices sit quietly occupied while its great spaces wait idle and empty as they slowly deteriorate.

In the last decade, Kødbyen has been opened to the rest of the city. The meat packing industry has long since decentralized and moved out and the complex has become a cultural and commercial center that serves Copenhageners and visitors. Central to its operations was the Maskinhuset; the maintenance facility from which heating and cooling was distributed to the rest of Kødbyen. Like Kødbyen itself, the Maskinhuset needs to be adapted to the city that has changed around it.

Nearby, within Kødbyen, Copenhagen's Madhus is an organization focused on improving the quality of food served and consumed in the public sector. Though thriving and expanding, the Madhuset does little to inform the very public whom they are ultimately trying to help. The Madhuset is not equipped to attract or show visitors the quality that they can demand from their public sector kitchens. By increasing public awareness, the Madhuset would be able to both justify their work with public institutions as well as encourage others to seek them out.

Both the Maskinhuset and the Madhuset can be revitalized through new connections; connections with each other and with the public they are meant to serve. By taking advantage of their position in the city and their combined qualities, these institutions can not only ensure their survival, but enrich themselves and their community.