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thesis title: Future-proof - a new model for flexibility

Abstract:

My thesis proposes a new understanding of flexibility in architecture.

It investigates reasons for a generic and dull spatial expression of the majority of contemporary buildings.

Nowadays, technology and lifestyle are changing so fast that buildings need to accommodate shifting functions. Unfortunately, in pursuit of flexibility, architects design featureless “boxes” which lack intentionality.

Contemporary architects have completely cut themselves off from the rich legacy of pre-modern architecture. As a result, a shallow interpretation of modernism sets a standard of flexibility. My point is to prove that in order to be flexible a building doesn't have to be a free-plan, post-and-beam construction.

I want to demonstrate that flexible architecture can have excellent quality and be inhabited by a language of familiar forms. I'm proving it by investigating spatial patterns and form languages in historical buildings.

Selected historical examples are analysed in terms of spatial qualities and materiality. The richness of collected archetypes can be translated into flexible, yet specific designs.

The design phase in an implementation of my research. I chose to adapt a pre-existing building, located in the centre of Lund. It is a rather dull example of office design from the 50s and 60s. Structures from these times are now facing demolition or a complete remodelling, which, after a couple of decades at the most, will need to be fully remodelled again.

My design goal is to prevent a vicious cycle of thoughtless and unprofitable adaptations.

I create a variety of spaces, expressions and scales which, through their geometry and materiality, affect the behaviour and experience of the users. This influence dictates the programme, which will change over time, much like the interpretation of space and the culture itself.