Akerselva – The Right Side of The Brain

Oslo has until now been divided into the west and east, separated by categories of economic and social class as well as a physical barrier, the river, Akerselva. The west predominantly represents people of middle to upper class, whereas the east represents the middle to lower class people. This division has been formed throughout history, as the river that separates Oslo has been home to industry, supplying energy for industries to thrive and grow along its edges.

The difference between the east and the west has always been present, but it is mainly in recent years that they have been discussed. There are many plans of development on how to enhance Oslo’s city centre, such as new cultural centres and a Fjord Boardwalk, however, how does this influence the east and the identity it will have in the future?

Akerselva is seen as a clear distinctive physical barrier that people associate with the boarder. However, according to the municipality the actual line that distinguishes the west and the east is the main road, Uelandsgate, which runs parallel to the river. This slight difference in the perception of the boundary leaves an undefined zone, where the project is located.

Given the history of industry and innovation along the river, there is a local interest in homemade products, which has inspired my decision to design a learning facility for industrial design, incorporating students and new entrepreneurs. Working with these components, I want to encourage Akerselva’s identity to become a spine for learning. The centre of Oslo represents the brain and Akerselva is the creative Right Side of The Brain.