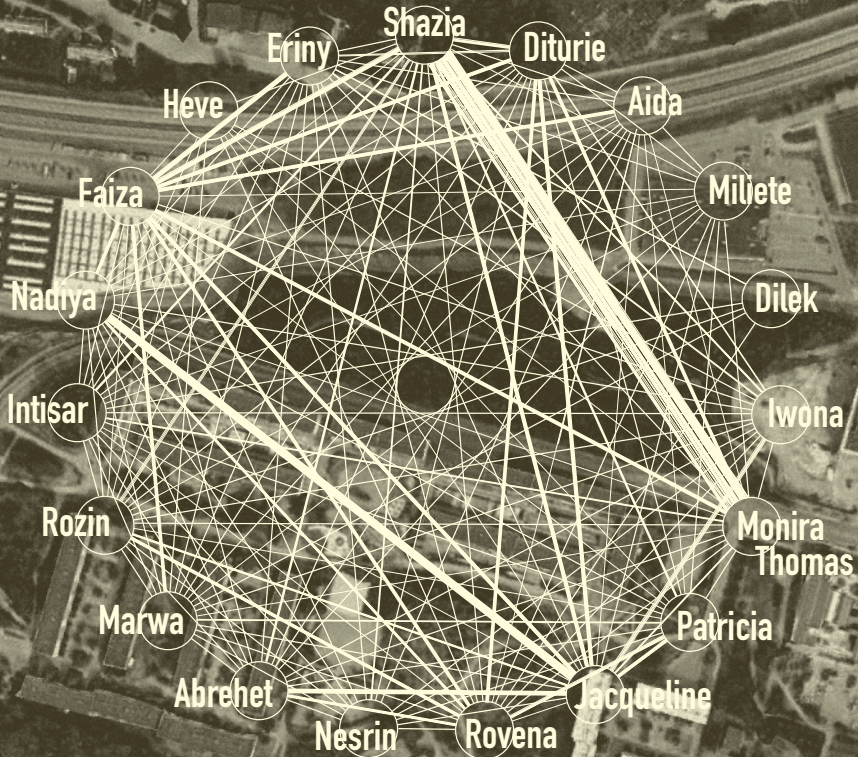


ELIN STRAND RUIN

26 November–18 December 2022



THE KITCHEN SQUARE

Women from Hallonbergen redesign the city

marabouparken

Elin Strand Ruin

The Kitchen Square – Women from Hallonbergen redesign the city

Food is that part of an immigrant culture that immigrants hold on to longest – when they have abandoned the traditional dress, the language, the music. It has been to London’s advantage.

Roden, C. (1999)

Public space without public presence is unarguably dysfunctional; moreover, public space without disorder (Sennett, 1996; Watson, 2006) or without chaos (Barker, 1999) is arguably lacking an essential component of city life.

Vaughan, L. (2015)

Could art make an impact on the crisis in suburban public spaces?

With art as experimental platform, the architect-artist Elin Strand Ruin, in close collaboration with local women in Hallonbergen, Sundbyberg, has developed a strategy to ‘turn Hallonbergen’s private and public spaces inside out’. *The Kitchen Square* – a public artwork and a functioning kitchen – makes the resource of women’s social network visible and shows the potential of an alternative public space created based on caring premises.

At Marabouparken konsthall, *The Kitchen Square* working process between 2016–2022 is summarized in pictures, film and conversation. On site, Elin Strand Ruin will produce drawings together with the women to map their social network in detail.

Women’s ability to build strong social networks around domestic care and everyday daily activities – is a neglected resource in socio-economically vulnerable suburbs.

In collaboration with the preschool Stella Nova and Verdandi, using a mobile kitchen as a tool, local women could cook food for their children, spend time together and talk about their city. The women’s social network was obviously an invaluable resource since they knew everyone in the local area – and the experiment became the starting point to develop a permanent alternative public space.



Shazia Chaudhry, preschool teacher at Stella Nova, and the mother Moawed Eriny is utilising The Kitchen Square.

In the public artwork *The Kitchen Square* – a sculpture on a pedestal and square – caring functions and practices from the private domain has been permanently embedded in the public realm.

The Kitchen Square creates an entangling public space that is open to anyone. Passerby's mixes with individuals of households, based on Stella Nova and Verdandi's social network: mothers, fathers, children, teenagers, fathers and grandparents, neighbors and friends – creating an alternative public space together.

The Kitchen Square is based on the residents' existing knowledge and increases the social, cultural and economic resilience in the local neighborhood in Hallonbergen.

In May (2022), *The Kitchen Square* was reactivated after the pandemic and 24 women completed a cooking relay in collaboration with the preschool Stella Nova and Verdandi in collaboration with Balder and the international research project MAPURBAN, in which also Marabouparken konsthall participated.

<https://research.kent.ac.uk/mapurban-eu>

The Kitchen Square is an art-architecture project exploring public domesticities and navigates in the borderline between art, architecture, social sustainability and urban planning.

The project is realised as part of the renewal of the Hallonbergen Centre in collaboration with the pre-school Stella Nova, the day-activity Verdandi, the Developer Balder and Marabouparken konsthall. Financed by Kulturbryggan and Balder.

Elin Strand Ruin is an artist-architect working within the field of participatory art practice based on caring

local networks and how to catalyse social change by implementing everyday practices activating the public realm. Her work operates at the interface between performative art-architecture and urban politics, exploring public domesticities. Strand Ruin has exhibited at leading artistic, architectural and planning venues around Sweden and Europe during the last 20 years, is running the practice S E S and is a lecturer (on artistic merit) at The School of Architecture, KTH Royal Institute of Technology.


Collage © Elin Strand Ruin material:

- Documentation photographs The Kitchen Square (2019) (photographer: Anders Bobert)
- Portrait (2019) Faiza Rebandi, Monira Haj Abdalla, Shazia Chaudry, Elin Strand Ruin (photographer: Alexandra Sell)
- Original drawings Kv Vandraren, Hallonbergen (Åke Östin Arkitektkontor, 1969)
- Aerial Perspective, The Kitchen Square at Hallonbergen Plaza (Google Earth)
- Diagram: The Swedish Research Institute for the home / household maps the housewives' movements while working in the home. The first Swedish kitchen standard – standardized interior design and construction standards for kitchens – came 1950.
- Other photographs etc (photographer: Elin Strand Ruin)

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EXHIBITION 2022

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