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## City Sets – Narrating Visual Urban Identities

### 1. INTRODUCTION

City Sets is a metaphor that refers to cities as stages where passers-by are seen as actors. People with different motives and identities come to cities to live, to do business, spend free time and meet other people. These encounters have inspired many artists and designers from filmmakers and photographers to writers and architects.

Architecture in an urban environment tells about the history and the gradual development, which created the characteristics of the city, its visual urban identity. City districts differ according to their embedded stories and functions, and although the architecture is relatively permanent, the atmosphere of a place changes according to people's activities, lightning and weather. Design elements, advertising and signage in a city can be seen as sets, which also influence the appearance of a place. When a spectator moves from one quarter to another, the visual identity of the city seems to alter, and finally it is drawn by the people, the actors and the point-of-view of the spectator.

This paper frames the theoretical background and presents the multidisciplinary workshop model initiated by the authors, Marja Seliger and Mika 'Lumi' Tuomola, for the masters of art curricula at the Aalto University in 2010. The aim of the workshop was to apply visual ethnographic methods to study and document urban scenes, designs and every-day life, and to use thus collected pictorial material to create moving and still image narratives showing multiple points-of-view to the city. The educational objective was to explore how an art production can benefit from scientific research methods, and to experiment with visuals and audio material to create representations of urban identities.

The idea for the workshop came about when the two authors realized that although having different research interests, they both had the focus on the city and its visual appearance. Mika, 'Lumi' by artist name, had co-written and directed the interactive black musical comedy *Accidental Lovers* (2006/2007) for Finnish television, investigating how the set, city of Helsinki, changes its appearance according to the protagonists' subjective viewpoints and moods, depending on their experiences and phases of love. As a researcher of the art and design of storytelling in New Media, one of his key interests is the presentation of simultaneous multiple point of views in interactive narrative

productions, so that a complexity of human experience may be described better. Marja had written her doctoral thesis about visual rhetoric in advertising and collected material by photographing outdoor advertising in Helsinki (Seliger 2008). She continues to research various design aspects in cities and lectures design research to graphic design postgraduate students in Aalto University. There is a demand for multidisciplinary courses to diminish the gap between art and science departments at Aalto University which was created from the merger of three Finnish universities: The Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and The University of Art and Design Helsinki.

The pilot workshop was arranged in November 2010 for students in architecture, graphic design, new media and photography. It was followed by an open two-day seminar aimed for researchers, art and design students, town planners and general public. Both the workshop and the seminar got positive feedback initiating networks and collaborative art, design and research projects. City Sets project aims to the year 2012 when Helsinki will be the World Design Capital and various events, exhibitions and conferences take place in the city.

The theoretical frame of the workshop is introduced in the following two chapters. The chapter *Visual arts, photography and ethnographic methods in urban research* discusses how urban scenes and environment have been depicted and documented in paintings and photographs, and how similar techniques have been used for urban research in visual ethnography. The third chapter *Narrating Multiple Points of View* outlines some of the history of screen narratives depicting cities, building up to the visual narrative structures used in the City Sets workshop. The chapter four describes the City Sets workshop model as it was applied in the pilot workshop in November 2010, as well as provides notes on the seminar that followed. The outcomes are reflected in the conclusions.

## **2. VISUAL ARTS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS IN URBAN RESEARCH**

Urbanization is one of the global megatrends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It has been estimated that every week one million people move to cities to look for better life, and that since 2007 already half of world's population live in cities (Paukku 2010, 50). An urban environment is visually rich and inspires artists today, as it did already during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the population growth was fast in many European cities and changes in social structures created the urban lifestyle as it is known still today. Technical innovations improved people's lives in cities when electric light, central heating, transportation, water and sewage systems were installed.

Photography was one of the new innovations, and the development of modern city life in 1800s was documented in photographs, in addition to paintings. Paris and Berlin, two European metropolitan centres, emerged as modern cities and engendered two of the most influential periods of modern art, namely French Impressionism and German

Expressionism (Hollein 2006, 8). Both styles acutely analysed the new urban lifestyle in visual terms as artists depicted city scenes and events in paintings and drawings. These new styles were introduced to Finnish audiences by artists travelling to Paris and Berlin to study. Olavi Paavolainen promoted the urban lifestyle in his book *Nykyaikaa etsimässä*, which was a manifesto to modernism, illustrating with photographs current arts and design in European metropolis. (Paavolainen 1929)

Since the invention of photography, cameras have been used to serve both scientific and artistic purposes. Anthropologists used photography already in the 1800s to have an eyewitness's evidence of distant places and people. Visual ethnography showed its potential especially in the study of cultures, and in the 1920s the use of photography was regarded as a part of the process of observation (Harper 1998, 25–26).

Landscapes and urban scenes were popular topics for the first photographers, although people's portraits taken in studios were the real business. The oldest photo taken in Finland is most likely the picture of Nobel's house in Turku photographed by Henrik Cajander in 1842 (Kukkonen and Vuorenmaa 1999, 29). The technique used by Louis Daguerre is applied in that photo, and also the scene resembles the *Boulevard du Temple* photograph taken by Daguerre in 1838.

There are few photographs showing the urban development, which took place in Helsinki during 1800s. Helsinki was established already in 1550, but Turku was the capital until 1812. When Finland became a Grand Duchy of Russia in 1809, the capital was moved to Helsinki. The city's architectural development began in 1816, when Carl Ludvig Engel, a German architect, was employed to plan Helsinki's Empire-style centre. The Helsinki Cathedral was inaugurated in 1852 and the oldest panorama photo of Helsinki is from the tower of the Cathedral taken in 1866. (Helsinki City Museum 2010)

Helsinki City Museum was founded in 1911 and since then professional photographers have been employed by the museum to document architecture and people's everyday-life. Signe Brander (1869–1942) is known as the first Helsinki photographer, and her pictures illustrate how a small town became a city. Signe Brander's Helsinki photographs are more than documents, for the artistic quality of her loved pictures rejoice people still today in several publications (e.g. Alanco 2004; Alanco and Pakarinen 2009). Also Ivan Timirjasev (1860–1927) photographed everyday life and events on the streets of Helsinki at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kukkonen and Vuorenmaa 1999, 76–77).

In the 1960s the focus in photography turned towards documenting social issues such as poverty of urban immigrants or racism. Visual sociology -term came into existence as sociologists were inspired by the work of documentary photographers (Harper 1998, 28). Douglas Harper points out that the documentary photographers often had deep involvement with their subject and thus an insider's knowledge. They were not sociologists and their books lacked theoretical frames, but by exposing social problems they had an impact on the fieldwork practices of sociology.

Also ethnology in 1960s and 1970s expanded its methodologies from traditional inventory and historical studies towards quantitative research and current issues, including fieldwork to research urban lifestyles. Methods developed in sociology were applied in an extensive research programme which Helsinki City Museum implemented in 1970–1975 to survey and document urban lifestyles, living quarters and environments in four different districts of Helsinki: Museokatu, Vaasankatu, Puu-Pasila and Tapanila. In addition to questionnaires and interviews, visual ethnographic methods were used and the outcomes of the research include photographs, carefully drawn floor plans, descriptions of furniture and interior decorations in people's homes. (Peltonen 1997, 222)

The large data collected in the Helsinki City Museum's urban research programme in 1970s includes verbal and visual documentations from 385 homes and 228 shops, offices and working places (Koskijoki 1997, 221). The four residential areas in the city represent different characteristics and thus complement each other in the research material. Museokatu and Vaasankatu were then and are still today central areas, the first one being a middle class and the second a working class living quarter. Pasila and Tapanila were suburban areas with small housing and gardens.

The research programme was carefully planned and ethnographic fieldwork organized so that each research team had an interviewer, a photographer and a graphic artist. The residents in the four areas welcomed the researchers, gave their time for couple hours' interviews and allowed their homes to be photographed and drawn. Marja Seliger who was a graphic design student at that time and worked in the project, assumes that a similar fieldwork nowadays in any city would be confronted by different attitudes. The research outcome, the extensive verbal data and the unique visual material, photographs and drawings illustrate the visual culture, people's everyday life and the use of art and design artefacts in Finnish homes in 1970s.

The experience gained in the fieldwork gave impetus to Marja Seliger for her doctoral thesis in which she used visual ethnographic methods, i.e. photographing outdoor advertisements in Helsinki, to collect research material, which she later on analyzed using semiotic methods (Seliger 2009). The photographs taken in so-called 'street galleries' in Helsinki revealed the role of design artefacts in an urban environment. Advertisements and signage can be called city sets, which reflect the culture and values of the surrounding society.

Photography became an important part of people's everyday communication when digital cameras and camera phones were innovated. The possibility to view images immediately in a camera generated new methods to use photography also in ethnographic and sociologic research. For example in a project aiming to study and understand children's experiences and voices in cities, Phil Mizen and Yaw Oforu-Kusi gave cameras to poor children in Accra, Ghana to record their daily activities. The fieldwork produced pictorial and spoken testimonies of children's lives in large informal urban settlements. The researchers conclude that the children's photographic voices had the capacity to surprise, to illustrate and communicate elements in their lives, which

the researches did not know and had to revise their understanding. (Mizen and Ofusu-Kusi 2010).

There have been remarkable changes in photographic techniques and methods since the advent of visual anthropology. Douglas Harper writes about new ethnography emerging from the postmodern critique. When ethnographic knowledge traditionally derives from the interaction between the 'subject' and the 'researcher', the postmodern critique questions the normal assumptions surrounding this interaction. The critique questions also the 'truth' of documentary photography and suggests that the meaning of a photograph is constructed by the maker, the viewer and the viewing context (Harper 1998, 30–32). "The idea of ethnography as 'partial truth' rather than 'complete document' lies at the basis of the new ethnography." (Harper 1998, 30)

In visual arts the interaction between an artist and a subject has traditionally been different than in ethnography. An artist observes the world and documents scenes and events by sketches to create a new artwork. Sometimes the sketches become pieces of art, and in some cases they could be called artistic research. For example, the skilful drawings and notes of Leonardo da Vinci contributed to medical science and engineering in addition to visual arts (Klein 2008).

There is an analogue to sketching when an artist uses cameras for observations and to collect images, which he/she later on transforms and combines with other visual elements to create an artwork. An artist's intention is to tell his/her point-of-view about the subject, whereas a researcher using ethnographic methods aims to transform the material into scientific knowledge. The argument in this paper is that when visual ethnographic methods are applied to artistic work, the result may surprise as it deepens the picture of the subject. Especially photo-observation and fieldwork methods have much to offer to art and design education. The authors' intention in the City Sets project was to experiment and combine these methods.

### **3. NARRATING MULTIPLE POINTS OF VIEW**

In order to make artist/designer's point of view more visible in recording the city environment, so that ethnographic observations may be made more objectively, the authors looked for narrative presentation methods of still and moving image recordings. As city itself is of man-made design, among unintentional elements, it was important to first outline how the object itself directs its observer's attention.

We used the metaphor of 'city as stage', City Sets, in order to investigate critically the design elements, visual languages and narratives embedded in the cities. Narratives define people by defining their roles on stage. City design has multidimensional impact. For example, it attempts *to inform* people about their space and rules (e.g. street and traffic signs), *to identify* places and events (e.g. shops, restaurants, exhibitions), *to persuade* people to change their behavior (e.g. advertisements and promotions) and *to tell stories* about past, present and future (e.g. monuments, building plots and people's

interaction in space). These dimensions together with architecture create city's identity, it's 'big story.'

Awareness of the city as a set that constantly directs our attention - not unlike a stage of dramatic improvisation, which "offers us a set of rules for... participator representation and action" (Tuomola 2009) - was our key starting point before pointing camera's observing eye at the city.

The still and moving image presentation of city has a long history to draw upon, as demonstrated in chapter 2. One of the first representatives of the genre of *city symphony*, in which the main focus of moving image narrative is the city itself, almost like a character, is *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927) by Walter Ruttmann. Today the semi-documentary film can be reviewed as a socialist-modernistic film about the city as a well-oiled machine in which various elements from people to traffic system, factories and places of entertainment all play their perfectly designed roles. While bringing forward the investigation of city as the main theme of cinema, *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* no doubt loses the individual experience and alternative, multiple points of view to the city, as deploying the *linear* structure of screen narrative: "All events of the narrative take place in chronological order, as if the camera had merely followed the action in real life, and the narrative was the edited highlights." (Parker 1998)

The single point of view of directorial vision, like that of *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City*, is deliciously discussed in John Smith's short film *The Girl Chewing Gum* (1976), in which the fictional director's voice-over seems to direct random events that unfold on a London street corner. "It quickly becomes evident that the scene is not responding to the voice, but vice-versa. Through staggering image and sound track, the voice seems to gain powerful authority over the scene, predicting events that the images thus confirm. How much is this simple trick like viewing the evening news? Much like Chris Marker's best work, Smith's film exposes the constructedness of the real in a way that is fundamentally destabilizing." (White 2007) By reversing the directorial point of view to happen after the shoot, Smith reveals how any frame of camera can be made to appear anything director/reporter intends. At the same time, the idea of visual narrative being able to present real city events *de facto*, is put to question.

So how then to achieve a truer, more multi-voiced, visual narrative of cities that themselves direct our observation by design, while *(wo)man-with-the-camera* is necessarily limited to a frame and directorial point of view? Contemporary media offer us many alternatives, out of which we present few and our choice for the workshop methodology introduced in this article.

*Run Lola Run* (1998), directed by Tom Tykwer, shows us quite a different Berlin from that of Ruttmann. The individuals and their different choices affected by the choices of others - particularly those of the main character Lola - come to focus, as the film portrays three possible worlds and sequences of actions depending on how Lola solves the problem of his boyfriend Manni. The film is constructed of three runs of Lola as she rushes through the streets of Berlin to save Manni. After the first two runs the film goes

back in time and shows the alternatives of Lola's action and its subsequent impact on the lives of citizens, thus handling the city space and its dwellers as a fluid system influenced by our choices of action. Philip Parker (1998) calls the visual narrative structure *circular*. "Here the narrative is formed from repeated events. This has been used in one-off narratives such as *Groundhog Day* and the various episodes of *Road Runner*. However, its major contemporary use is in the form of interactive games from *Super Mario* to *Doom*."

In the same year than *Run Lola Run*, Peter Howitt's *Sliding Doors* (1998) painted us a vision of two Londons. Two alternate realities open when the protagonist Helen either makes it in time through the sliding doors of the Waterloo station underground train or not. Maureen Thomas (2003) sees the narrative as a *branching* structure, "where the main character steps through sliding doors into an alternative version of her reality, and the movie switches between events in both."

While *circular* and *branching* visual narrative structures offer more opportunities than *linear* structure to present a multi-voiced image of city and its design, we still wanted to bring in the *simultaneous multiple points of view* in the city - its choral voice, if you will - in still and moving image presentation for ethnographical research purposes. Mike Figgis' *Timecode* (2000) that depicts a Los Angeles based melodrama from four simultaneous points of view that open up very different views to the city from inside a limousine to therapy rooms, acting agencies and L.A. streets, proved inspirational.

For narrating the multiple points of view to city, we have so far optimized our narrative presentation tool City Sets Media Player, introduced in the next chapter, to show still and moving image collections by a four split-screen technique (see pictures 4-6). At the same time, the tool also enables associational review of the annotated visual material. In Parker's (1998) *associational* narrative structure "the narrative is formed from a series of moments which are linked by common elements and do not rely on chronology or episodic relationships to produce their meaning or effect."

#### **4. APPLICATION OF VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY AND MULTIPLE POINTS OF VIEW NARRATIVE IN THE CITY SETS WORKSHOP AND SEMINAR**

The City Sets multidisciplinary course, aimed for Masters of Art students at the Aalto University, began with a one-week intensive workshop including lectures, tutoring and fieldwork in small groups. The lectures and tutoring integrated the visual research and narrative presentation approaches introduced in the chapters 2 and 3. The course continued with an open international seminar and students' individual working period to write an essay about the fieldwork experience. The objectives of the City Sets workshop were to introduce visual ethnographic methods usable both for scientific research and for artistic productions, and to enforce multidisciplinary collaborative working practices in creative work.

## 4.1 The City Sets workshop

In the workshop the assignment was that students working in pairs were given a route in one of the central districts in Helsinki to observe and explore using visual ethnographic methods. During the fieldwork the students collected pictorial and audio material, photographs, videos and interviews, the contents of which were further discussed and analyzed to discover the focus of interest in the researched area. An on-line server, called City Sets Media Player (<http://mlab.taik.fi/citysetsmedia/>), was specially designed for the project to upload and save the visual materials (Pictures 1–3). Each group created their visual narrative by applying and editing the media clips collected during the fieldwork. At the end of the week four multi-point-of-view visual Helsinki narratives were presented and discussed. The students had still the weekend time to make amendments before the public presentation in the seminar.

Systematic way of working was emphasized in the workshop and advice was given to the students how to collect, name and save the material so that the metadata and annotations would fulfill the prerequisites even for scientific research. The City Sets Media Player supported this aim so that a person uploading data had to fill in annotations describing the contents, locations, names and the date and the time of shooting. It also gave the possibility to divide the contents into four categories according to the point-of-view in the media clip and to write down some keywords.

The participants in the workshop were architecture, graphic design and new media students representing five different nationalities. In the tutorial some facts about urbanization were discussed and the question of local and global visual cultures aroused. Design in cities and city sets were studied and terms defined. The design elements and their functions in cities were divided into four categories: information, promotion, identity and stories. Information is for example traffic signs and signage, whereas outdoor advertising is promoting products, ideologies or services. Brand names and logotypes identify companies and organizations, but also every person has his/her identity and stories to tell. Architecture illustrates the history of a place and various stories are embedded in buildings, statues and arts in cities. However, the guidelines for observation were purposely left open to allure the students' own decision-making and preferences to choose the most interesting aspects and characters in the city district they were to explore.

The weather during the workshop week in November was very cold and the lightning conditions were not ideal for shooting films outdoors. This hindrance did not scare the students, but had a special effect on some narratives. For example Ben Dromey and Anna Nyysönen filmed the empty streets in the darkness of November nights and watched lonely persons walking down the streets in central Helsinki (Picture 4). The film shows that people are more concerned with their preoccupied minds than the immediate environment. In order to bring some humor to the depressing dark scenes, Ben and Anna placed a chocolate Santa Claus figure in their narrative to watch the empty streets of Helsinki.

Observing and filming the cityscape of Kallio during a freezing cold day, Mina Arko and



Teresa Winter popped in a small restaurant to warm up. Enjoying the warm atmosphere in the restaurant they discovered that the liveliness of Kallio district has nothing to do with architecture and houses but rather with people living in them. People became the subject of their study as they spent a full day documenting people's stories in interesting places (Picture 3). Mina and Teresa concluded that without the fieldwork exercise they would have never entered those places in Kallio. The stories of their multi-linear narrative were recorded in a typical local Finnish restaurant, an Asian market and a gun shop.

Nature played an important role also in the narrative of Satoko Hinomizu and Jian Li. While photographing design elements in the city, they discovered interesting patterns and details formed by snow and ice on the streets. They divided their design elements into two categories: intentional design and unintentional design. Some accidentally forgotten objects, for example a red gap, belonged to the latter group in addition to the nature made designs. When filming people's activities in the city, Satoko and Jian observed also animals, dogs and birds, who seemed to be city dwellers. The aim of their work was to capture the character of Helsinki from the viewpoint "What is making the city?" Based on that goal they divided the activities into two categories. Firstly, there were people and animals, the actors, who formed a part of the cityscape just because they were there, walking, talking and watching. Secondly Satoko and Jian documented people who were literally making the city, for example builders and painters (Picture 2). For their final multi-linear narrative the four categories of visual materials were shown simultaneously on the screen divided into four sections (Picture 5).

The narrative of Suse Miessner and Heikki Nuutinen was again different as they observed the architecture and the type of activities, shops and institutions on their route. They discovered four contrasting sections, which they named Residence, Jewellery, Big Power and Modern Centre. To illustrate the contrasts they applied different speeds into the video clips and added music to describe the rhythms of those four city districts. The screen divided into four equal-size parts was the form of exhibiting the multi-linear narrative (Picture 6).

## 4.2 The City Sets seminar

In the two-days seminar following the workshop various aspects of visual urban identities were introduced and discussed by prominent keynote speakers (<http://citysets.media.taik.fi/>). In her opening speech professor Lily Diaz brought up the notion of cultural heritage in multicultural context when explaining the design research experiment or intervention recently carried through by her research group in Helsinki. Design research and urban planning in present-day European cities was also the topic of Evert Ypma when he asked what kind of design interventions and contributions are needed in contemporary European hybrid cities.

Dr. François Penz explained in his lecture how the city has been associated with cinema ever since the Lumière brothers filmed *La Place des Cordeliers* in Lyon in 1895. Using examples he showed how filmmakers have made use of city locations as background, as

character as well as subject – and how this might affect our perception of cities. Proceeding how in turn cities have made use of cinema François Penz introduced the idea of a reflective practice based on the observational camera. Using his own moviemaking experiments he demonstrated how cinematic observational methods, based on William Holly Whyte's New York street project (*Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, 1988), can be utilized to reveal the hidden narratives layers of the urban landscape. (<http://citysets.media.taik.fi/>)

Media arts in contemporary cities were the topics of two Aalto University researchers, Heidi Tikka and Minna Tarkka, whereas Koray Tahiroglu introduced city sounds as the object of research. A walking tour to Arabianranta led by Tuula Isohanni gave an evidence how art can be used to bring local stories to enrich new communities.

At the end of the seminar the students presented their narratives and got valuable feedback from the visiting lectures. In their course assessments the student rated the City Sets experience very useful and in the essays they described the manifold learning outcomes. To give one example, Satoku Hinomizu reflects his own production to the lecture of François Penz who introduced the concept of narrative layers: "According to François Penz's presentation, narrative layers are something that audience bring in while watching cinema by themselves to interpret the film. They are based on the expectation of what is being told, and it is not the action but the set, which makes this expectation. By looking at any part of the city we can extract four 'narrative layers' such as people, zoning (city planning), story of the space/ building, and framing". In his essay Satoku analyzes one video clip of his own depicting an old man buying bread in a bakery. He examines the four layers in the film and begins to create a narrative: "Who is this old guy? Is he coming to the bakery everyday? He must have his favorite bread that he always buys? Does the shopkeeper remember him because of his charming good-bye sign? (layer of people) The place looks urban (layer of zoning). If the Glass Palace would not exist, this scene would never have occurred (layer of the space). Reflection of the window gives the effect of keeping certain distance to observant that it is a true scene of the ordinary life (layer of framing)." Satoku concludes that the analysis of narrative layers made him to comprehend the concept of 'city as a set'.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The workshop participant Satoku Hinomizu's observations and the workshop results in general illustrate that the 'city as a set' metaphor can function well in opening up city for critical visual investigation. The application of ethnographic methods to document city as a construct of intentional design with unintentional elements has proven to be useful for analyzing the complexity of city environments and human actions. The experiment shows that when attempting to remain open and humble when pointing out the camera, the fieldwork may bring unexpected results, which can surprise even the observer. Based on the pilot workshop documented in this paper, we are convinced that the final presentation format *demand*s a narrative structure that includes *simultaneous multiple points of view*. The outcome may raise new artistic, design and visual urban narratives and entities in between the points of view presented as a chorus of aspects. Meanwhile,

the deep penetrating visual ethnographical research *requires* actual fieldwork and visual production in order to acknowledge the limitations of camera, frame and the subjectivity of the points of view, however chorally presented.

In short, the paper at hand proposes the following methodologies to investigate the life and design in the cities: 1) the metaphor of '*cities as sets*' to be applied to explore designs and human actions, 2) *visual* urban ethnography, i.e. photo-observation, filming, video recording and interviewing as method to document and collect material, 3) complex multiple points of view narrative as the format to present *the results* of exploring cities and 4) 'eyes on with minds on' research *and production* workshop format to convene multidisciplinary participation.

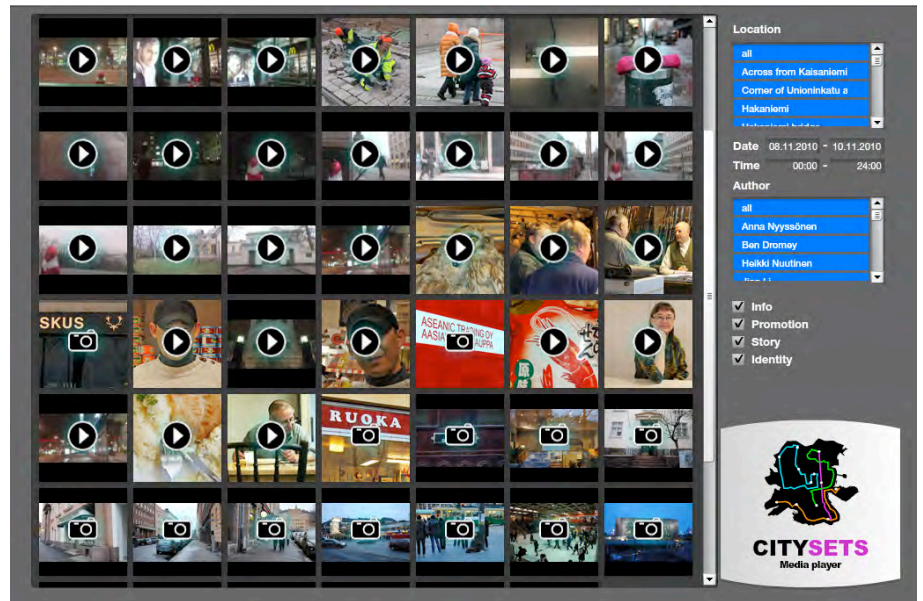
Our intention is to develop the City Sets workshop format from its prototype mode to more coherent model applicable for design research and education. The future work clearly needs to include more methodological analysis of the accumulating still and moving image material. This is partly already addressed in the ongoing work in developing the database, annotation and description system of the City Sets Media Player application, while its visual and interface design will be improved upon. While developing the approach and gaining more material via forthcoming workshops, we are also planning to include auditory aspects of cities in future work by collaborating with sound researchers, artists and designers. Our plan is to expand the amount of cities to be studied with City Sets workshop format from Helsinki also to other Finnish and European cities. This will take place through the forthcoming City Noises project, funded by EU Culture, and hopefully via the City Sets Helsinki World Design Capital 2012 project for which we have applied funding for.

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Picture 1. City Sets Media Player is an online-server designed to store the pictorial materials collected in the project. (City Sets Media Player 2010/2011)



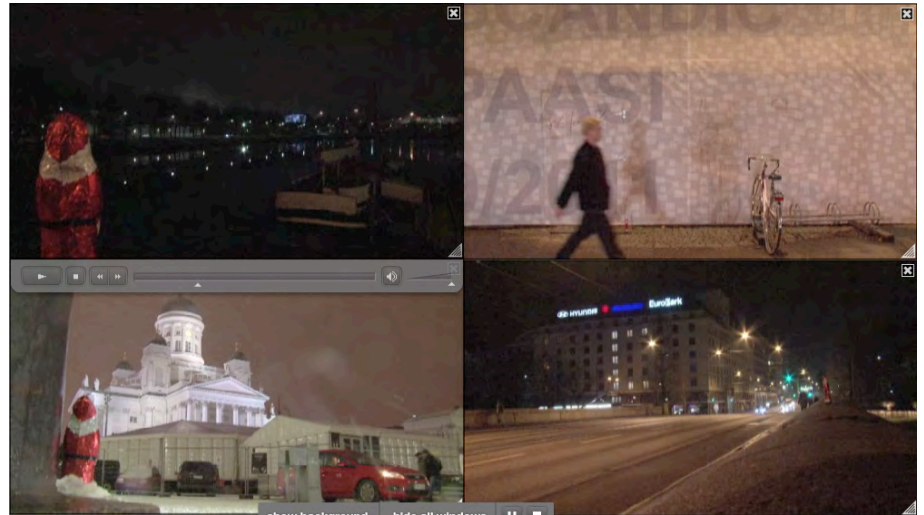
Picture 2. City Sets Media Player can be used to watch the videos in bigger size. "Making the City", the picture on the left is from the narrative produced by Satoko Hinomizu and Jian Li.



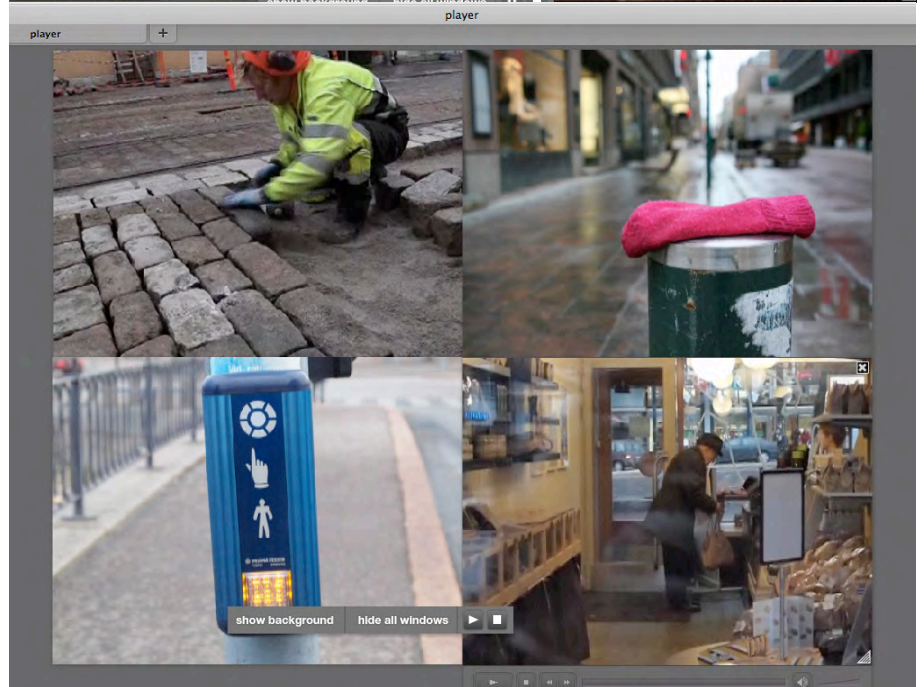
Picture 3. The narrative of Mina Arko and Teresa Winter shows life behind the shop windows. They documented stories of people in a local restaurant, an Asian market and in a gun shop.



Picture 4. In the final presentation the screen was divided into four parts. The multiple points of view narrative of Ben Dromey and Anna Nyssönen depicts the central district of Helsinki with empty streets and lonely people in November.



Picture 5. The split-screen multi-linear narrative of Satoko Hinomizu and Jian Li depicts simultaneously people making the city and design objects which are either intentionally or unintentionally placed.



Picture 6. The split-screen narrative of Suse Miessner and Heikki Nuutinen illustrates four different identities of city districts, which they discovered through photo observation.

