

A tutor

name: Benedek Hajnal

city: Budapest

country: Hungary

date of birth: 1984.04.25.

quick personal introduction: environmental and city protectionist; squatter activist; photographer; full-time citizen of Budapest.

education: sociology major

languages you speak: english

your ambition to hold a workshop at easa006.hu: To put OVIS program in practice; to help a local group to become a community; to build an international network for the OVIS program; to try myself in holding a workshop.



B workshop description

Descriptive text:

Conceptual background:

Every place that is used by a community is a common space. Thus, a common space can be an empty house where squatters live, a blank firewall where creative talents make street art or an empty plot where children play football.

In Budapest we usually give the name "square" just to intersections of the main roads. These places are used only to pass through, and thus escape from, as fast as possible (a prime example of this would be Kálvin square). Budapest's squares are owned by the society (Gesellschaft) and not the community (Gemeinschaft). That would not be a big problem, if communities would have enough space of their own. Under the current conditions, we have several places we can pass through but not enough to linger in, where we can spend time together.

However, we do have several empty and unused spaces which could be usable for such spaces, or renovated for such a purpose.

Synopsis:

Our main purpose is to make these empty spaces (abandoned houses, plots, firewalls) available and usable for the local communities. This involves two areas of work activity: administrative and physical. The former involves getting information, inquiring in offices and negotiating with the local authorities and property owners to permit the requested areas to be temporarily used. Beyond that, collecting tools, materials and people for the work and deciding with the locals upon a plan for implementation. That is why we are making a map of the empty spaces and a detailed database (physical and legal features, the owner's floor plan, photos, videos etc.). The second part: entering, cleaning, building (you know it better), occasionally squabbling with the police and at last using our new place.

Which is the easier and therefore preferred way: to sneak into, set up and use a place without permission or to get the necessary permissions?

We have two and a half months until the EASA 2006. Within this time we might just be able to get the permission for the temporary utilization of an empty ground. At the start of the workshop we will see what is on offer and what the opportunities are. Maybe we can temporarily use a space with the size of 20 square meters, plant two trees and put one

bench there, which would later be demolished after the workshop by the owner. On the other hand we could open an abandoned ground, demolish the fence, since the owner won't do anything with the place for years and it is unlikely that the police would bother our work. Anyway, we should be able to find a ground owned by the local government or a private person, which for the time being has no use. We can then apply this territory to a good, altruistic and communal purpose.

The 8th district of Budapest is a perfect setting for the legal version.

The 8th district has many empty grounds. Children occupy and play in every new territory where a demolition has just taken place. Currently a social rehabilitation program is being conducted in this area, and the local authorities are open to work together with civil organizations. They also want to include the local residents into the work, although they have had difficulties with this. This workshop can open the door for collaboration with other projects - both civil and governmental initiatives.

Summary:

In the beginning of the workshop the participants will plan a communal space to an empty plot which would be without any function for years. The second part of our time is for building the place. Both of them will take place with the co-operation of the residents. At the end the workshop's presentation will be at the same time a garden-party – one of the last parties if the EASA 2006.

C objectives

What are the objectives of the project and how will these be achieved?

To give function to an unused place and to give place to a local community. (To tell the truth, I can imagine even a little, thick forest with nooks on the trees for children.)

What will workshop participants "learn" in your workshop?

Many things about Budapest, the problems of the city, something about our governmental system, how to communicate with disadvantaged people only by drawing, human-scaled planning. And maybe it will make them think about what is communal and what is not.

What results or outcome do you expect ?

Leave a working, living space there for the local people at least for 1-2 years and after it will be one of the common places which cannot be taken back by the owner (the local government).

D resources

Materials and tools: Later.

Some examples now:

Materials: gravels; agricultural land; some trees, bushes, creeper (e.g. ivy) and other plants; outdoor distemper/acryl/spray for making a wall mural or a projection linen; bricks and other stuff remained of a demolished building (could be from the local government) for making a flowerbed, path etc.; dustbin (should be from the FKF Zrt.); pallets or boards for making a multifunctional removable pulpit/stage; coloured crinkle-papers and cardboards for decoration; street-furniture: benches and armchairs, sofas (should get them from removing the lumbers, our group have some); etc.

Tools: spades, barrow, etc., everyday tools for park building.

Special extras which depends on the concrete place: container and transferring the waste; building up a working water system (cause we want green area) etc.

Budget: for printing maps of Magdolna district and of Budapest's empty spaces for at least the participants of the workshop, and maybe for other participants of the EASA 2006. Other solution could be to have this map on a computer in the centre of the Summer Camp so that every workshop can use it.

E space

A room for planning and for pauses during the manual work near to the plot; at least 20-25 square meters with tables and chairs, toilet etc. Flexible timetable, depends on the work and on the other programs. A storage for the materials and the tools, also near to the plot. The size of it depends on how much tools and materials we will have and if we can store them on the plot.

We should get the room and the storage from the local government. It can be in the school in Erdélyi street cause it's closed in the summer, and in can also be in an empty parlor or an empty house cause there are several places like that.

F time – G final presentation and exhibition

Flexible timetable, depends on the work and on the other programs. We are sure only that we want to use up every possible time we can have because the best would be to get a huge empty plot and to communicate with the residents a lot to know what they really want. And of course this needs more and more work from the participants.

Special workshop events: Opening party, maybe on the 4th, 5th, or 6th of august. The party contains dinner, music, video and photos projected on the wall, and that time other EASA participants can meet with the residents. So we don't want a closed party but a party together with everybody who took part in the work.
