

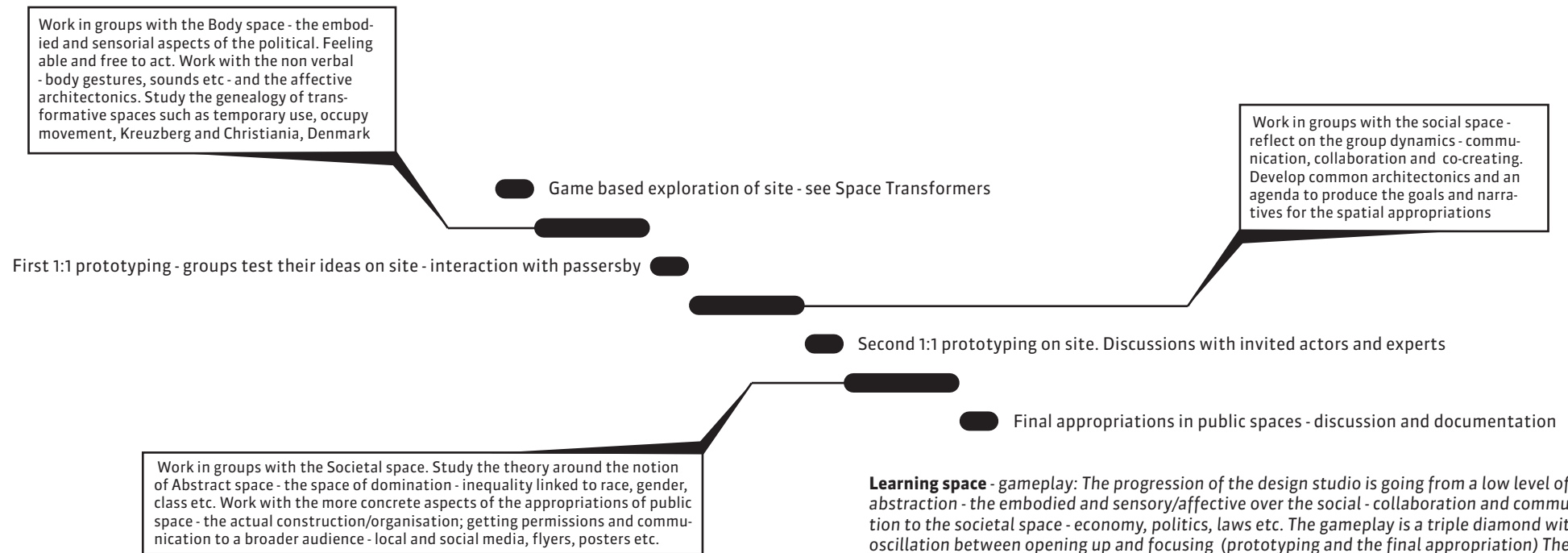
## Design studio - Architectonics of Transformative Spaces

**Short intro:** Architectonics of Transformative Spaces is a “super site specific” design studio where architecture interacts with participatory performance, pervasive games and psychogeography. The overall goal is to work with the non verbal architectonics in socially produced spaces - neighbourhoods, street corners, villages etc. - and learn how to foster and nurture societal transformations through 1:1 design and small scale appropriations of public spaces. Transformation is here understood as “changing the way to change” that challenges forms and representations such as language, plans and models.

**Examples** of such transformative spaces are the occupations of public spaces and empty buildings in Spain (as part of the movement that began with the Arab spring/uprising) that gradually turned into what we today know as the municipalist movement reshaping e.g. Barcelona and Zagreb.

**Quote:** *The architect occupies an especially uncomfortable position. As a scientist and technician, obliged to produce within a specified framework, he has to depend on repetition. In his search for inspiration as an artist, and as someone sensitive to use and to the ‘user, however, he has a stake in difference. He is located willy-nilly within this painful contradiction, forever being shuttled from one of its poles to the other ....desperately seeks to close the ever-widening gulf between knowledge and creativity. Lefebvre, Production of Space.*

The design studio is taking up the challenge described by Lefebvre but sees this not (only) as uncomfortable but also as a necessary rhythm that moves between the verbal and non verbal architectonics of socially produced spaces and thus create a signifying process that empower language and spatial action for possible societal transformations (or in the Lefebvre quote: difference instead of repetition).



**Learning space - gameplay:** *The progression of the design studio is going from a low level of abstraction - the embodied and sensory/affective over the social - collaboration and communication to the societal space - economy, politics, laws etc. The gameplay is a triple diamond with an oscillation between opening up and focusing (prototyping and the final appropriation) The aim is that the design studio itself becomes a working example of a transformative (learning) space.*

**Learning objectives:** - A methodology that oscillates between being open and operational  
- Awareness of how a concrete (body) presence produces space  
- A spatial - peripheral - sensitivity and an affective sensation of the political  
- Knowledge of the urban and its architectonics as a source of transformation  
- Understanding power dynamics in public spaces through concrete appropriations  
- Skills in onsite 1:1 design and interventions in the public sphere (incl. media)  
- A critical perspective on the use representations - plans and models - in architecture

**Learning strategy:** An experiential, situated and open ended learning process. The learning space - see above - functions as a backbone with a basic structure and progression to develop an agenda that can determine what modules that are relevant according to the thematics that is discovered in a first exploration. The modules can be both very practical - skills in cooking, building etc. and more theoretical knowledge of societal and technical issues - economy, ecology, history, politics etc.

**The background** for the methodology is a long experience working “in, with and for” the urban - e.g. regeneration projects in social housing - and gradually exploring the role of universities as a more independent actor in such work. Especially with the EU funded project Urban Education Live that involved architecture schools in Tampere, Sheffield and Bucharest.

**The site** for the design studio should be a peripheral site - a post industrial/marginalised neighbourhood or a smaller shrinking city/town. The role of the university (and the design studio) is to care and be a catalyst in an everyday local community. The design studio can happen in collaboration with a local high school or vocational school. This is optional and possibly complicated but will add an additional level of mutual learning for the students and the community.