The background is a vibrant blue with a pebbled, leather-like texture. A stylized, wavy line graphic, resembling a ribbon or a path, curves across the middle. The line is composed of segments in various colors: orange, yellow, green, and blue, with a dark outline. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

HOUSES OF LITERATURE

ROOMS FOR ARTS IN READING

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Foreword

Once upon a time, in the far north where the forests are deep and the sun glitters on the waters, some people had a dream. They gathered their closest neighbours around the fire to share the dream, the dream of building imaginative places where children's passion for creating and sharing stories could flourish.

This is the story about building eight different Houses of Literature in central Sweden. It all started with a field study in Germany. Inspired by the ideas of LesArt, a House of Literature for young people in Berlin, the county libraries of central Sweden initiated a large-scale reading promotion project called Arts in Reading, with the ambition to implement the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Swedish Arts Council funded part of the costs and children's librarians from nine counties participated in a two-year educational programme from 2007–2009. As a result of the project, a variety of Houses of Literature or Rooms for Arts in Reading are now being created.

The Houses of Literature are all based on the same ideas but they come in different shapes and forms; virtual, physical, mobile as well as in the forms of networks and festivals. The common goal for all the Houses of Literature is to inspire and empower children and young people and to fuel their passion for stories.

We are very happy to have the opportunity to tell you the story of all the Houses of Literature from central Sweden!

We would like to say thank you to the Swedish Arts Council's Fund for International activities that made the publication of this booklet possible. Thanks to Frances Hultgren for editing the English text.

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A House of Literature is a Room for Arts in Reading

A House of Literature is a Room for Arts in Reading, an enjoyable place full of storytelling activities that activate all the senses – inspiring, surprising, empowering children and young people.

The Houses of Literature are based on cooperation across borders, breaking the boundaries between the library and other institutions and art forms, professionals and associations, sharing resources, ideas, knowledge and methods as a way of achieving long term development to afford children the means to tell their own

stories, in their own ways.

The term “House of Literature” might be misleading or even deceptive:

- A House of Literature is not just a “house” in the meaning a building, in fact it might not even be a building. It could be a mobile or a virtual place, or it could be in the form of a festival or a network of people.
- A House of Literature is neither a bookstore nor a library - but it might be found at the library.
- A House of Literature encourages libraries to cooperate with institutions and actors that can contribute with

their own expertise and knowledge.

- The Houses of Literature build relationships that strengthen the position of the library in the local community.
- A House of Literature is neither just about literature nor about written text.
 - It looks to different art forms and activates different senses: looking, listening, smelling, tasting, feeling...
 - It takes different starting points for telling a story: a book, a sound, a smell, a word, a taste, a picture...



It could be virtual

Squoosh, enjoy writing! in the County of Östergötland

www.squoosh.se is a web-based House of Literature, produced by the Östergötland County Library with the goal of inspiring passion for reading among teenagers through writing.



Squoosh is planned in collaboration with songwriters, graphic novelists, movie

makers etc. It offers writing competitions and challenges. You can submit your own texts for publication and feedback from professional authors, create your own book and participate in online writing workshops. Young people have been engaged in the development of the website's appearance.

In the project "Write anywhere – squoosh on!" six libraries in the county of Östergötland participate in a staff

development scheme to develop writing activities and to starting writing clubs at the libraries in cooperation with children. Smart phones, touch pads, portable computer studios and social media are used in the project. Writing camps where young people from different writing clubs can get together are going to be arranged.

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It could be physical

The House of Literature in Sandviken for the County of Gävleborg

The small town of Sandviken is building a physical House of Literature to be used by the whole county. It will be situated in a culture centre, close to the public

A backpack for storytelling.

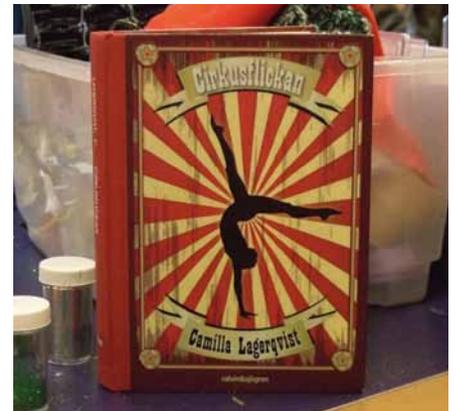


library and will be inaugurated in 2013.

The concept of the House of Literature is based on three aspects; the local, the regional and the scientific. Children have been working with the local novel *The Circus Girl*, written by an author from Sandviken. They have experienced circus life using all five senses; listening to music, performing acrobatics and drama, meeting with the author and creating figures based on the protagonists of the book.

An oversized backpack for storytelling has been created for the regional aspect. It is loaded with starting points for telling stories such as photos and different objects to feel and smell. iPads are used for documentation when the backpacks are touring the schools of the county.

The scientific aspect of the House of Literature in Sandviken consists of close contact with the scientific field of Early Childhood Literacy and New Literacy Studies at the University College in Gävle.



The Circus Girl – a novel by a local author as a starting point for storytelling.

A company called Kidding from the scientific area of Child Culture Design at the University of Gothenburg have organized workshops with staff and children to describe their needs and views in relation to the new House of Literature in Sandviken for the county of Gävleborg.

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The brand new Storytelling Cabinet finished in 2012.

It could be mobile

The Storytelling Cabinet in the County of Uppsala

As a result of the annual Meeting Point for Arts in Reading in the County of Uppsala where children's librarians meet with professionals from other art forms, a mobile House of Literature in the form of a unique Storytelling Cabinet has been developed. The Cabinet offers a variety of starting points for storytelling in groups, for example in school classes visiting the

library that hosts the Cabinet.

In the Cabinet there are lots of things to discover! When you lift a door or spin a wheel pictures appear that moves the story forward. Behind the cabinet doors there are objects to pick up and examine with all your senses. The Uppsala County Museum provides the Storytelling Cabinet with historical objects to create stories about.

Recently a brand new, second Storytelling Cabinet has been finished. The contents and appearance of the new Cabinet have developed slightly based on response from the children using the first Cabinet, created in 2010.

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Children wanted the Storytelling caravan to look like a space ship with graffiti-like paintings.

The Bubble – Stories on the Road in the counties of Sörmland, Örebro

The Bubble, or *Bubblan* in Swedish, is a mobile House of Literature in the form of a blue caravan reminiscent of the deep blue seas and journeys to the outer space. It comes as colourful surprise, visiting places where the children and young people are in their spare time.

Bubblan is a unique cooperation between three county libraries and the public libraries in the region. In the mak-

ing of Bubblan children were interviewed for their ideas on the appearance of a storytelling caravan, what you would be able to do with it and which places it should go. The caravan is loaded with equipment serving as starting points for storytelling with all five senses; iPads for digital storytelling, and neon-coloured giant animals to use in the more physical storytelling for example.

The idea is to encourage the public libraries to cooperate with new partners from other art forms and professions. The children's librarians apply for participation in the project and the loan of the caravan for a period. The county libraries then provide logistic support, study tours and hands-on workshops in, for example, driving a caravan.



I'm Supergirl! I'm a Pirate! Physical storytelling going on.



A member of the target group of 2012 exploring The Bubble.

and Västmanland

Bubblan is an ongoing developmental experiment:

- The number of public libraries involved in the project has increased from three to sixteen, which is more than half of the public libraries in the three counties together.
- The target group has changed over time, from tweens to teenagers to preschool aged children. To suit the

different groups of children we have:

- Equipped and refurbished the caravan
- Developed a variety of storytelling activities
- Visited a multitude of places.
- Bubblan is an outreaching library activity, but it is not a mobile library or a book bus. It does not cooperate with any educational institutions such

as schools or preschools. It is entirely concerned with an unbounded passion for storytelling.

- The project managers of the Bubble have a goal, and that is to inspire the creation of more bubbles in the world!

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*Hanging out at
the Festival for
Young Readers.*

It could be networking Rooms for Arts in Reading in the County of Dalarna

The County of Dalarna is a geographically large county consisting of several small municipalities, long distances and no central major city. This is the reason why the Dalarna House of Literature consists of a regional network of professionals, all working with children, young people and their adults close to them.

The network consists of the local children's librarians, representatives of different regional art forms, authors, cultural workers, school teachers and cultural educators that meet on a regular basis for shared reflections on interests relating to their different professional domains.

Once a year the network arranges a Festival for Young Readers which consists of stage performances by children, workshops, theatre, films and music for children and young people. A couple of times a year, the children meet together with an author in a creative workshop. Artefacts created at the workshop are then exhibited at the festival.

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BERYL CENTER
Summer 7

KURTY OCH KED
ÅKE AHLBERG

BERT OCH BADBRUDARNA
ASTRID LINDGRÉN

MY LEGENDARY GIRLFRIEND
Heather & Stephanie

Friday thru
Sunday, July
13 and 14

A Competence – and Culture Network in the Region of Värmland

The House of Literature in the Region of Värmland consists of a network of children's librarians and cultural workers from other art forms such as dance, drama, literature, vocal coaching and storytelling, thus widening the concept of the text by offering activities such as storytelling workshops, dramatized book presentations and "dancing a book".

The network consists of the regional dance consultant, the department of Cultural amenities in the Schools of the Värmland Region, the regional theatre in Värmland, the regional development Centre at the University of Karlstad and the public libraries in the county. The House of Literature creates opportunities for children and young people to

become more involved in library activities, through an ongoing dialogue with the library.

In the future the House of Literature in Värmland plans to cooperate with the County Library of Dalarna by offering joint further training, exchange of experience and, hopefully, by building a cultural network across county boarders.

Evaluations show that the House of Literature in Värmland has children's librarians' views of the wider

concept of text and all of them want to continue investigating the affordances of other art forms and thereby to develop their work with the U.N. Rights of the Child.

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A House of Literature Network in the County of Gotland

In the county of Gotland the House of Literature is in the form of a network consisting of the public libraries and regional culture consultants from other art forms, supported by the County Library. The evidence of their collaboration across art forms can be seen in the development of a library activities programme for children and young people at the libraries.

Microphone poetry, performances of Book Dancing, movie shows for pre-school children, storytelling with a policeman and a fireman are some examples of ideas developed within the House of Literature network in the county of Gotland.

Storytelling with a policeman and a fireman.

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The Tyresö Library in the County of Stockholm

Tyresö is a municipality located in the greater Stockholm area. The idea of the House of Literature in Tyresö is based on a Swedish study on children's reading preferences which reveals that children are stimulated by methods that "brings the books to life" in some way.

Staff involved in the House of Literature in Tyresö work with a set of imaginative and inspiring models for book presentations for children aged 8–12, where the children are co-creators. The book presentation models are developed in collaboration with the largest science centre in Sweden.

The different models have different aesthetic origins. One method that has proved popular with the children is the Adventure model. It is a form of book presentation which ends with a detective mystery that leads to a particular book. The book is then dramatized with the children as co-creators and actors.

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Experimenting is a way of becoming a storyteller.

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BUBBLAN

berättelser på väg

This is the story about the Swedish Houses of Literature, and the different ways they inspire and empower children and young people, by fuelling their passion for stories.