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**,'THE HOME'**  
AS AN UNSAFE TYPOLOGY  
THROUGH THE NOTION OF UNCANNY



Writing Portfolio  
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Fig. 1: Cover Page. digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *Doll I* -digital illustration]

Fig. 2: digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *Doll II* -digital illustration]

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# ABSTRACT

This study investigates the meaning of what Home is and scrutinises the unsettling qualities of domesticity through the notion of uncanny. Introducing Sigmund Freud's theory described in his essay "Das Unheimliche" opens up a broad subject and enables an alternative view of the everyday understanding of Home.

Examining the art of Francesca Woodman and Marc Quinn and describing my experience captured at my childhood Home presents an understanding of how the unhomey feeling looks and what could evoke it. It looks closely at the causes of why people may require to escape their homes, studies why the house is often not a space of comfort and the challenges in safety within the home country. In the counterpoint to that, it focuses on how the architecture addresses those concerns and examines case studies that are typologies of safe spaces as an alternative to Home that offers flee from unsafe and resembles domesticity. Presented case studies cover space for women looking for a refuge "House away from home", children who require a safe residence "Instead of home", cancer patients who are searching for support and, at the same time, "The Comfort of home". The reason is to raise awareness of how those places are significant for human well-being and what we could learn from them to improve home typology.

All of them are significant: none of them is 'home'!

## HOME noun

1. the place where someone lives or originally comes from: the place to which you feel most strongly attached
2. a family living together in one building, house
3. a place where people who are unable to care for themselves live and are cared for<sup>1</sup>

## AT HOME noun

„relaxed and comfortable“<sup>2</sup>

## HOME AWAY FROM HOME noun

„a place that is as pleasant and comfortable as your own home“<sup>3</sup>

## HOMELY adjective

„being something familiar with which a person is comfortable and at ease : comfortable and familiar like home“<sup>4</sup>

## UN prefix

„is a prefix meaning not. It is used to give opposite and negative meanings to adjectives, adverbs and nouns.“<sup>5</sup>

## UNHOMELY adjective

„not homely“<sup>6</sup>

## UNCANNY adjective

„strange or unusual in a way that is surprising or difficult to understand“<sup>7</sup>

1 "Home" (no date) Britannica Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/home>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).  
2 ibid  
3 ibid  
4 "homely" (no date) The Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/homely>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).  
5 "Un Prefix | Learn English" (no date). Available at: <https://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/un-prefix>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).  
6 "unhomey" (no date) Collins Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/unhomey>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).  
7 "uncanny" (no date) Britannica Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/uncanny>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).

# INTRODUCTION

The definition and meaning of Home are complex ideas that can be answered in many ways. It might be, for example, a location, a physical structure, or relationships related to space and time. Experiences associated with it are sometimes connected with feelings of security and childhood memories, attachment to people or dreams for the future.<sup>1</sup> This study, however, takes a different approach and explores the Home from a precarious perspective. It also identifies the unpleasant feelings that Home evokes in us, in light of the fact that Home also defines relatives and the different people with whom we share a space.<sup>2</sup>

When investigating the home from an unsafe typology perspective first thought and feeling that comes to mind is unhomey. For a deeper understanding of the concept of unhomey, it is significant to introduce its background and connection to the uncanny notion linked to architecture since the end of the 18th century.<sup>3</sup> While researching this topic, almost all books, articles and art descriptions directed me to Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis<sup>4</sup>. It is essential to a broader understanding of the topic of this writing.

<sup>1</sup> Blunt, A. and Dowling, R.M. (2022) *Home*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

<sup>2</sup> "Home" (no date) Britannica Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/home>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Vidler, A. (1992) *The architectural uncanny : essays in the modern unhomey*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.

<sup>4</sup> Sigmund Freud | *Biography, Theories, Psychology, Books, Works, & Facts* | Britannica. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sigmund-Freud> (Accessed: Nov 14, 2022).

The notion of uncanny spawned from inquiring minds began to emerge during the Enlightenment, and what was once considered pristine is now perceived as unhomey.<sup>5</sup> The precursor of the concept of the uncanny is Ernst Jentsch which was then developed in depth by Sigmund Freud in the essay "Das Unheimliche", written in 1919.<sup>6</sup> However, the concept was only picked up after his publication in the last three decades of the 20th century when the subject was widely discovered, causing fascination, and Freud became the 'founder of the discourse.'<sup>7</sup> The most basic definition of the uncanny proposed by him depicts it as a feeling of unease that occurs when something familiar suddenly becomes strange and unfamiliar. However, the concept has gone far beyond this ethereal definition. It has become a ubiquitous concept with which almost any topic can be addressed, such as politics, art, history, humanity, technology, psychoanalysis, religion, motifs and literature. The concept is in constant transformation and cannot be pigeonholed.<sup>8</sup>

Freud based his theory on everyday experiences and the aesthetics of popular culture, which was associated with everything that was repulsive, frightening and disturbing. He wrote his essay in two parts; the first examines the etymology of the words homely and unhomey, and the second discusses the people, things, situations and experiences that most describe the feeling of the uncanny. As uncanny is based on one's experiences, it is entirely subjective but haunts everyone

<sup>5</sup> *The unhomey*. (2004) Cambridge: Kettle's Yard.

<sup>6</sup> *Uncanny* (2022). Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uncanny> (Accessed: Nov 11, 2022).

<sup>7</sup> Masschelein, A. (2011) *Unconcept, The: The Freudian Uncanny in Late-Twentieth-Century Theory*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

<sup>8</sup> Masschelein, A. (2011) *Unconcept, The: The Freudian Uncanny in Late-Twentieth-Century Theory*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

to any degree.<sup>9</sup> In my understanding, it signifies that everyone experiences uncanny to some degree; however, as everyone has different life experiences, beliefs, and degrees of sensitivity, everyone finds it at different times, and each is influenced by a different stimulus which triggers it.

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(Grunenberg, 2004, p.58) "Traditionally, the uncanny has been located in the domestic environment."<sup>10</sup>

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In connection with the above statement, there is an association between uncanny and unhomey. In my opinion, when one of them is located in a place or environment, the other feeling is also perceptible. With that said, places and people who evoke the feeling of uncanny can be considered unhomey. Also, contrarily, when we encounter an unhomey place, it gives us the feeling of uncanny. Nowadays, the uncanny is an accepted and popular concept in various disciplines in the humanities, from literature and art to philosophy, film studies, architectural theory and sociology, and more recently, even transcending the 'hard' field of robotics and artistic intelligence.<sup>11</sup> For a thorough investigation of this complex subject, I will first present in the section 'My Unhomey' how visiting one of my safe childhood places currently evokes this feeling, which will allow a deeper understanding of this experience and help to identify it.

<sup>9</sup> Ruers, J. (2019) *The Uncanny*. Available at: <https://www.freud.org.uk/2019/09/18/the-uncanny/> (Accessed: Nov 12, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> Kelley, M., Welchman, J.C. and Grunenberg, C. (2004) *The uncanny*. Köln: Walter Konig.

<sup>11</sup> Masschelein, A. (2011) *Unconcept, The: The Freudian Uncanny in Late-Twentieth-Century Theory*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Furthermore, I present three chapters that take a different approach to investigate further the uncanny notion and how architecture can address the issue when the Home is an unsafe typology and evokes an unhomey feeling. As its a complex subject, I chose to focus on three types of inhabitants who may need to flee from unsafe domesticity and each chapter is dedicated to one of them. Each also presents one case study, intending to resemble home and safe domesticity.

Chapter 'comfort of home' presents the art piece 'No Visible means of Escape IV' produced by Marc Quinn and exhibited by artist Mike Kelley who, in his work, followed Sigmund Freud's uncanny study. It provides an understanding of uncanny feelings related to bodily experiences. A case study presented in this chapter is 'Maggie's Center in Oldham', which shows how the architecture addresses the needs of inhabitants with cancer who might search for the comfort of a home. Chapter 'house away from home' focuses on women's domestic violence, particularly on the unhomey feeling representation and how architecture can support this matter. Presents photography taken by Francesca Woodman, introducing her as enclosed or almost trapped by parts of the house and the case study of Shelter of Battered Woman by Amos Goldreich and Jacobs Yaniv architects. Chapter 'instead of home' focuses on a specific area of Djibouti and why children living there might need to look for a place resembling home and safe domesticity. Following that, I introduce a case study of SOS Children's Village In Djibouti by Urko Sanchez Architects, which addresses this issue.

## MY UNHOMELY

I perceive my surroundings in a receptive and sensitive way and have often experienced the unhomey feeling. Everyone has experienced this feeling at least once in their life. However, to describe it to a person who finds it difficult to recollect what this feeling is or cannot locate it, I will share one of my experiences that allows everyone to imagine it. The unhomey occurrence is a return to a place from my childhood. Despite having a loving and caring family, the living conditions I grew up in during my childhood until my teenage years were not favourable, but my father built a room in the attic for me. Its purpose was to serve as a safe, warm place and create healthy domestic conditions. This room is still there, uninhabited, closed, and contains objects close to my heart since early childhood. On my return to my home country, I always visit this place and spend moments there. Touching the objects bring back memories associated with warmth and safety. When I was little, on one of the walls, one of the many things I painted was a hat which still fits above my head almost flawlessly when I sit with my back against it. Each time I am there, I sit in that spot and observe. I notice the passing of time and see more traces of decay, dust and old age. It makes me realise that not only objects in this room are getting older but also I transience through time. I witnessed how objects that were once beautiful to me and created a world full of creativity and dreams are withering away. Something that was once safe and familiar to me becomes unhomey.

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*(Sigmund Freud 1919) "It may be true that the uncanny is nothing else than a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and then emerged from it."<sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup> Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny'" (1919) *Sigmund Freud: Collected Papers*, vol. 4, trans. And ed. Joan Riviere (New York: Basic Books, 1959), p.399.



Fig. 3: digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *My Unhomey Manifesto* -digital illustration]



One object, in particular, resonates with me and, in addition to the feeling of uncanny, evokes a sense of disembodied, which I have decided to capture. My memory goes back as far as I was the size of the doll which I received as a gift from my family. I remember one day when I woke up, it was standing there next to my bed, and it frightened me quite a lot. At that time, I was still using a bed with rungs which I could easily pull out to get out, and when I got out of it and stood next to the doll, it was exactly my size. Looking at it now, damaged and forgotten, I feel disembodied and disconnected from the little person I used to be.



Fig. 4: digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *Disembodied* -digital illustration]



## COMFORT OF HOME

(Jeffrey Sconce, 2004) "The link being that any phenomenon that throws our accepted ideas about the relationship of body, volition and consciousness into question evokes the uncanny, whether it be a disarmingly 'real' statue or the seeming intrusion of a disruptive force"<sup>13</sup>

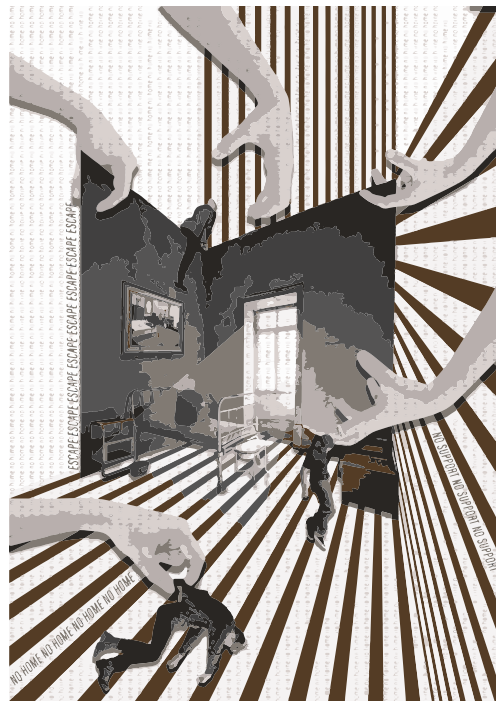


Fig. 5: digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *No Escape* -digital illustration]

<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey Sconce, M.K. (2004) *I've got this strange feeling...* – Tate Etc. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-1-summer-2004/ive-got-strange-feeling> (Accessed: Nov 12, 2022).

Introducing how uncanny is expressed through the art gives a better understanding of what it is, and as each person interprets and reads it through their own life experiences gives it more unique and sensible meaning.

Mike Kelley is an excellent example of an artist who expressed uncanny in his work and followed Sigmund's Freud thought process.

Michael Kelley (27 October 1954 – c. 31 January 2012) was one of the most influential American artists of his time, a commentator on American class, popular culture and everyday rebellion. He worked with found objects, drawings, collages, videos and performances.<sup>14</sup>

The Uncanny exhibition, curated by Kelley originally more than a decade earlier, was updated and exhibited at Tate Liverpool in 2004. The artist explores memory, recollection, horror and anxiety by juxtaposing a highly personal collection of belongings. The main focus is on many polychrome figurative sculptures, which convey a sense of the uncanny through their form. The artist depicts them as realistic, doubling the figure of the human being hovering between life and death. (see fig.6) The collection is complemented by documentary photography that evokes a sense of the uncanny and sixteen groups of objects collected by the artist during his life to explore the desire to collect and categorise as a way of understanding and controlling the world.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Mike Kelley 1954–2012*. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/mike-kelley-6782> (Accessed: Nov 12, 2022).

<sup>15</sup> *Mike Kelley: The Uncanny* | Tate Liverpool. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/mike-kelley-uncanny> (Accessed: Nov 12, 2022).

Kelley's exhibition at Tate Liverpool invokes the classic Freudian uncanny associated with home, family, trauma and repressed memory issues.<sup>16</sup> One of the works Kelley exhibited and collected was Marc Quinns' *No visible means of escape IV 1996* (see fig.7, p.15) It perfectly reflects and evokes a feeling of uncanny in everyone who sees it.



Fig. 6: Robert Gober *Untitled (Leg)* 1989–90 Beeswax, cotton, wood, leather, human hair 29 x 19.6 x 50.8 cm  
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey Sconce, M.K. (2004) *I've got this strange feeling...* – Tate Etc. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-1-summer-2004/ive-got-strange-feeling> (Accessed: Nov 12, 2022).

No visible means of escape IV is a sculpture of the naked body of the artist Marc Quinn, born in 1964, who produced this artwork in 1996. It was acquired by Tate in 1997 but is not currently on display. The work comprises PRTV 75-60 polyurethane rubber stained with brown oil paint and rope. It is a cast of the artist's body divided in half, beginning from the feet into two parts vertically. The rear half of the body is suspended upwards. The neck of the sculpture was reinforced with glass fibre to prevent it from splitting. Its uniqueness is also shown by the intentionally left unpigmented part of the rubber, the uneven edge of the carving and the tears. The sculpture conveys the impression of shedding skin while renewing itself, suggesting fluidity, change and transformation.<sup>17</sup> Any sculpture resembling a human body that has undergone such a transformation that it cannot remain alive evokes a strong sense of the uncanny. Its dark brown colour also marks the contrast between the white walls of the exhibition and the sculpture. The author initially envisaged a shedding of the skin and transformation. Still, when I first experienced it, it seemed like it was made of two heavy chocolate casts hung upside down, melted and peeled away with time. It gave me a sense of the uncanny but also of impermanence.

Changes in our body, which is, in fact, the home of the soul, affect how we perceive the external environment, but also that we need the external environment to give us comfort in moments of recuperation.

<sup>17</sup> 'No Visible Means of Escape IV', Marc Quinn, 1996. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/quinn-no-visible-means-of-escape-iv-t07238> (Accessed: Nov 16, 2022).

Every time I get unwell or my body demands more care, and I perceive my surroundings differently. Everything tends to become more negative, and if I am in an environment that is not adapted to the new needs of my body, it resonates with me strongly. Following surgery on my leg, when I returned home, I could see how unsuitable my home was for my new condition. I found it challenging to move around, especially in the bathroom, creating stress and evoking feelings of unhomey. Many people have experienced something similar where the home environment became incompatible with their new living conditions.

I began to experience environmental stress, which occurs when the demands of the environment exceed our ability to adapt to or cope with them.<sup>18</sup> One thing that contributes to our home being perceived as homely or unhomey is its bodily experiences. People with physical disabilities often feel out of place in their homes, and it becomes an isolating space. It is difficult for them to separate these experiences from the biological material of their body. It is the same with mental health; for some, it provides a sense of control and security, which is associated with positive mental health. Unfortunately, it may be too costly or impossible for some to change the home environment, exacerbating the negative experience.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Veitch, R. & Arkkelin, D. (1995). *Environmental psychology: An interdisciplinary perspective*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

<sup>19</sup> Blunt, A. and Dowling, R.M. (2022) *Home*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.



Fig. 7 Marc Quinn (1996) 'No means of escape': Image source: <http://marcquinn.com/artworks/single/no-visible-means-of-escape-vii>



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(Day, 2002) "Healing environment it's not just a need for those who are ill. It's also for health to make the most of living, being, thinking, feeling and doing. We all benefit from healing surroundings. They are as important to home and workplace as to buildings specifically for healthcare."<sup>20</sup>

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The first case study I introduce addresses the needs of cancer patients seeking the comforts of home. As I discussed earlier in this essay, the environment in which we find ourselves is significant to our recovery. The Maggie's Centres, founded by Maggie Keswick Jencks, who herself went through the difficult journey of recovery, is a beautiful example of how architecture tackles the feeling of the unhomely. Their unique quality is that they all share one brief and purpose but are designed by different architecture studios.

Maggie's Centres aims to support people diagnosed with cancer and assist in changing the way they live with it. It is run by a non-NHS charity with free support for all affected people and their families and friends, with no need for referrals or appointments and no time limit on support. Many staff are NHS trained and have expertise in treatment. To aid recovery, they work with some of the best architects in the world who design these centres so that they become a place where people can escape the clinical environment of a hospital.<sup>21</sup> I will examine Maggie's Centre in Oldham, designed by dRMM studio, whose project particularly caught my attention.

<sup>20</sup> Day, C. (2002) *Spirit & place : healing our environment : healing environment*. Oxford: Architectural.

<sup>21</sup> *Our approach*. Available at: <http://www.maggies.org/about-us/how-maggies-works/our-approach/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).



Fig. 8: De Rijke, A. (2017) *Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://divisare.com/projects/422235-drmm-maggie-s-oldham> (Accessed: 30 December 2022).





Fig.9: De Rijke, A. (2017) *Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://divisare.com/projects/422235-drm-maggie-s-oldham> (Accessed: 30 December 2022).



Fig. 10: DRMM Studio (2017) *Model Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://drmmstudio.com/project/maggies-oldham/> (Accessed: 30 December 2022).

In brief, intended to guide the designers, architects and landscape architects, the focus is on the environment and the feelings this building hopes to bring to the person with cancer. Beginning with the threshold and the landscape, indicated to be inviting, and completing with the interior, which is pointed to be a respite from the stress of the hospital. The Centre's intention is also to help the person find hope and determination and allow them to take in the information and their thoughts at their own pace. Visitors should feel supported by relaxing away from the worries of home in a calming space and will be assisted by thoughtful lighting and views of trees and nature. Each of the Maggie's Centres has a kitchen in a heart of the building which helps to feel homely.<sup>22</sup> I think dRMM studio has wonderfully captured all the qualities characterising these buildings. A unique feature is a tree planted in the heart of the building, which visitors can observe from inside through the glass wall. It is carefully designed so that there are places from which they can watch nature as the seasons change and take in the daylight, which is the foremost part of this building's healing architecture.

The Centre is located opposite the Victoria Breast Care unit and is helping its visitors to get started on the complex journey.<sup>23</sup> Looking through the programme of this Centre, I came across information on what support is available. The workshops I found are talking to a psychologist, talking to a cancer support specialist, helping with financial worries, sports, helping with fear, a support group for women/

<sup>22</sup> *Our Buildings*. Available at: <https://www.maggies.org/about-us/how-maggies-works/our-buildings/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).

<sup>23</sup> *Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <http://www.maggies.org/our-centres/maggies-oldham/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).

men, relaxation, and art<sup>24</sup>. Alternatively, anyone could come and have a cup of tea and talk to people going through the same experience.<sup>25</sup> Its inviting nature and building programme address the feeling of unhomely giving escape from the hospital environment and help visitors connect with their own body and mind to tackle their worries.

This centre is the first permanent building constructed from tulipwood cross-laminated timber. Designers used different types of wood in most elements to perceive this building as more homely to visitors. Knowing that sometimes people undergoing chemotherapy treatment may feel pain when touching cold objects, they choose oak door handles.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Timetable of cancer support – Oldham*. Available at: <http://www.maggies.org/our-centres/maggies-oldham/timetable/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).

<sup>25</sup> *Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <http://www.maggies.org/our-centres/maggies-oldham/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).

<sup>26</sup> *Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://drmmstudio.com/project/maggies-oldham/> (Accessed: Nov 19, 2022).



Fig. 11 DRMM Studio (2017) *Door Handle Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://drmmstudio.com/project/maggies-oldham/> (Accessed: 30 December 2022).



Fig. 12: DRMM Studio. (2017) *Section Maggie's Oldham*. Available at: <https://divisare.com/projects/422235-drm-maggie-s-oldham> (Accessed: 30 December 2022).

## HOUSE AWAY FROM HOME

The Surrealist cultural movement, which developed in Europe after the First World War, was one of the ways of self-expression at that time. Many works of painting, writing, photography and many others were created. These mainly depicted unnerving, illogical scenes and techniques, which were characterised by an element of surprise and unexpected juxtapositions. Initially, the term originated with Guillaume Apollinaire in 1917 but was only officially recognised after the publication of *The Surrealist Manifesto* by Andre Breton in 1924.<sup>27</sup> Following that, there is another experience I would like to introduce which leads towards the theme of domesticity with which the uncanny movement and unhomely feelings are highly associated. I discovered this example in a book that describes work once exhibited at the Barbican, which combines Surrealism, the notion of the uncanny and domesticity.

The exhibition's title is 'The Surreal House- Architecture of Desire' and was displayed in Barbican Centre from 10 June-12 September 2010<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Wikipedia Contributors (2019). *Surrealism*. [online] Wikipedia. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surrealism> [Accessed 17 Nov. 2022].

<sup>28</sup> *The Surreal House | Barbican*. Available at: <https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2010/event/the-surreal-house-architecture-of-desire> (Accessed: Nov 17, 2022).

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(Alison and Caws, 2010, cover back)  
 "The poets and artists gathered around surrealism's principal theorist, Andre Breton, were electrified by Freud's revelation that a secret world of desire underpinned their waking hours and that dreams might hold the key to their wildest longings and fears."<sup>29</sup>

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This exhibition presented the creations of the early Surrealists, architects, filmmakers and artists. It was an intergenerational project that aimed to explore the collective imagination about the house's mysteries, its importance in Surrealism, as well as the significance of Surrealism for architecture. 'The Surreal House' was presented for exploration through paintings, photographs, models and many other objects. It represents a vessel for dreams, fears and desires and is thus the opposite of all the functional modernist houses of the 20th and 21st centuries.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Alison, J. and Caws, M.A. (2010) *The surreal house*. New Haven ;: Barbican Art Gallery in association with Yale University Press.

<sup>30</sup> Alison, J. and Caws, M.A. (2010) *The surreal house*. New Haven ;: Barbican Art Gallery in association with Yale University Press.



Fig. 13: Lyndon, D. (2010) *The Surreal House*. Available at: <https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2010/event/the-surreal-house-architecture-of-desire> (Accessed: 20 November 2022).



One exhibited work that particularly resonated with my perception of unhomely is the self-portrait of Francesca Woodman titled 'House#4' presented as a 1976 Gelatin silver estate print 25.4x20.32 cm. It was displayed in an exhibition room named 'Panic Space' which captures the human condition as one in which the physical body is in the process of dynamic interaction with the surroundings and undergoing internal drives.<sup>31</sup> Francesca Stern Woodman (3 April 1958 – 19 January 1981)<sup>32</sup> was a photographer who produced more than 800 works in her lifetime, reflecting the spirit of Surrealism. Her results are magnificent and unique in that she expressively uses her body and, like a performance, introduces it into various architectural settings where she becomes surrounded or enclosed by parts of the house. Sliding under the house's skin, she reveals the meanings of appearance and disappearance and life and death, where she is part of the experience.<sup>33</sup>

This work derives from the House collection, where she has applied long exposures to blur her figure, which in resonance merges with her surroundings in the house, adopting the form of a spectre and seeming to be absorbed by the architecture. How she inhabits, the house conveys the disruption of mental and physical boundaries and the absorption of the ego by the sinister surroundings.<sup>34</sup> This photograph first evoked a strong sense of unease in me, followed by an understanding of several aspects. These include the setting in which the photograph was taken. The house looks as though it has been abandoned for a long time, with visible traces of the decay of the fireplace structure and the paint detaching from the walls, which reflects the transience and gives me a sense of disembodiment. A house that once probably had a vibrant life and a domestic function has become unhomely through abandonment and non-habitation. By going under the skin of this house, the author identifies herself with this decaying shell and feeling of being abandoned and somehow becomes a part of it.



<sup>31</sup> Alison, J. and Caws, M.A. (2010) *The surreal house*. New Haven ;; Barbican Art Gallery in association with Yale University Press.

<sup>32</sup> *Wikipedia Contributors* (2019). Francesca Woodman. [online] Wikipedia. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FrancescaWoodman>.

<sup>33</sup> Alison, J. and Caws, M.A. (2010) *The surreal house*. New Haven ;; Barbican Art Gallery in association with Yale University Press.

<sup>34</sup> Alison, J. and Caws, M.A. (2010) *The surreal house*. New Haven ;; Barbican Art Gallery in association with Yale University Press.

Fig. 14: Woodman, F. (1958-1981) *House#4*. Available at: <https://www.widewalls.ch/artists/francesca-woodman> (Accessed: 20 November 2022).

The following case study, Shelter for Battered Woman in Tel Aviv, concerns how architecture can address the unhomely in cases of domestic violence in women. I think to some extent, Francesca Woodman's work captures the feeling of uncanny in a way that involves seeking to escape, hiding behind the skin of a building and being trapped, which allows for a closer understanding of the feeling of victims of violence who often feel trapped in the home. It is necessary to examine the needs architecture should respond to understand how it can assist in this susceptible area.

Referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs in relation to domestic violence victims allows for noticing their needs and concerns. Physiological needs would enable the person to reach a standard of living she considers minimum accessible if only the economic conditions are sufficient. Then there are the needs for security, acceptance, love and belonging, usually disturbed by physical coercion and domination by the aggressor. Finally, the need for self-fulfilment, or personal development, is usually made impossible by the economic and physical constraints that the aggressor causes.<sup>35</sup>

Shelter for Battered woman was designed for client No 2 Violence in collaboration between London based practice Amos Goldreich Architecture and local Jacobs-Yaniv Architects in 2015. Its location is Tel Aviv-Yafo in Israel, and it fulfils the role of a new home fit for mothers and children who desperately need a home to live safely. In order to accommodate all the needs of its occupants in the best possible way, this shelter was built in consultation

<sup>35</sup> Mazur J., *Przemoc w rodzinie- teoria i rzeczywistosc*, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Zak, Warsaw 2002

with the staff who run and occupy it.<sup>36</sup> This is important because of their in-depth knowledge of the needs of the people for whom the place is being designed, and it will help them to create a sense that this is a place that can be called a house away from home.

No2Violence was founded in 1977 in Herzliya and aims to rescue women and children suffering from domestic violence. It enables them to build their independent lifestyle by offering vocational training, legal aid and, most importantly, shelter. Women usually stay in the refuge for six months to a year and then have the opportunity to move to a transitional housing unit, which is usually located near the shelter and brings them closer to full integration into social life.<sup>37</sup> This organization, at the present moment, has three shelters where each of which can house 12 women and 30 children, which has helped so far 6.899 women and 9.742 children. Within the building's programme, we can find activities such as lectures, seminars and workshops for different organizations, such as the Israel Defence Forces, high school students, police officers, medical personnel, women's groups, and students.<sup>38</sup> All of them are carefully organized to support refugee inhabitants.

The leading concepts of the architect Amos Goldreich when designing the shelter were guided by the art of the artist Eduardo Chillida, who combined

<sup>36</sup> *Shelter for Battered Women*. Available at: <http://www.jacobs-yaniv.com/projects/shelter-for-battered-women/> (Accessed: Nov 17, 2022).

<sup>37</sup> *Transitional apartments for women leaving shelters*. Available at: <https://no2violence.co.il/en/transitional-apartments-for-women-leaving-shelters/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

<sup>38</sup> *Building a new shelter*. Available at: <https://no2violence.co.il/en/building-a-new-shelter/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

sculpture with architecture in his works.<sup>39</sup> And in particular with his work 'Okamoto', for which he planned to hollow Mount Tindaya on the island of Fuerteventura.<sup>40</sup> Following the inspiration and the brief given by the organisation's leader Ruth Rasnic, in which the word home was repeated, the architect designed the building as a hollowed-out stone with the outer façade as protective as a shell and the inner façade as delicate and homely. Following the idea of a house away from home, the building's surroundings resemble a small micro village with streets and a communal space at the heart of a therapeutic garden.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence*. Available at: <https://agarchitecture.net/portfolio/shelter-for-victims-of-domestic-violence/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

<sup>40</sup> *Eduardo Chillida Mount Tindaya*. Available at: <https://www.arup.com/projects/eduardo-chillida-mount-tindaya> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

<sup>41</sup> *Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence*. Available at: <https://agarchitecture.net/portfolio/shelter-for-victims-of-domestic-violence/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

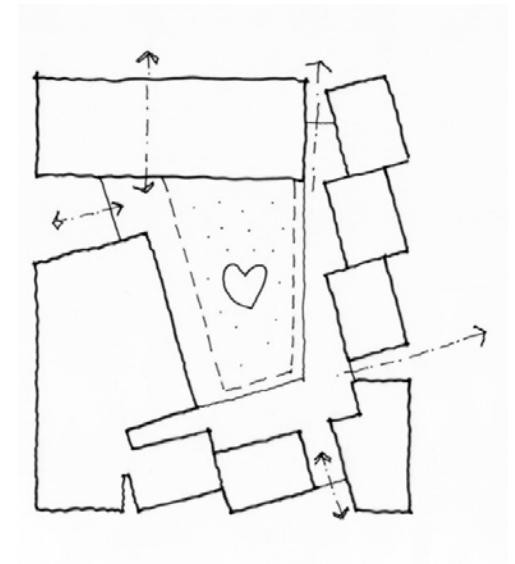


Fig.15: Amos-Golderich Architecture (2016) *Concept Sketch*. Available at: <https://www.archdaily.com/773055/firms-from-london-and-israel-design-a-shelter-for-domestic-abuse-victims-in-israel/55e85618e58ece8b2e0000c5-firms-from-london-and-israel-design-a-shelter-for-domestic-abuse-victims-in-israel-image> (Accessed 20 Nov 2022).



Fig.16: Amos-Golderich Architecture (2018) *Shelter for Battered Women*. Available at: <https://agarchitecture.net/portfolio/shelter-for-victims-of-domestic-violence/> (Accessed 20 November 2022).



Every family is provided with a small home embedded in the body of the sheltered building, designed to reflect the daily routine of the outside world. For example, the nursery is a separate building so that mothers can walk their children there in the morning and pick them up in the evening.<sup>42</sup> This seems like a simple activity, but it is a beneficial function because, after their stay in the shelter, it will be one of their daily routines and will reduce the stress with thoughts of coping alone in the environment, which is often a problem for those seeking to escape from the circle of violence.

The residential areas are separated from the communal facilities by a wide passageway, which links the internal and external parts of the building and allows contact with the staff.<sup>43</sup> In my opinion, it functions as a secure shell that enables one to re-learn how to function and connect with other residents. In addition to the residential area, there are a nursery and staff facilities in the building, including a psychologist, social workers and places for volunteers such as beauticians, hairdressers and others who can help the residents to call residence their second home.<sup>44</sup>



Fig.17: Amos-Golderich Architecture (2018) *Plan Shelter for Battered Women*. Available at: <https://www.dezeen.com/2018/05/05/amos-goldreich-architecture-completes-purpose-built-refuge-for-domestic-abuse-sufferers/> (Accessed 20 November 2022).

<sup>42</sup> *Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence*. Available at: <https://agarchitecture.net/portfolio/shelter-for-victims-of-domestic-violence/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

<sup>43</sup> *ibid*

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*

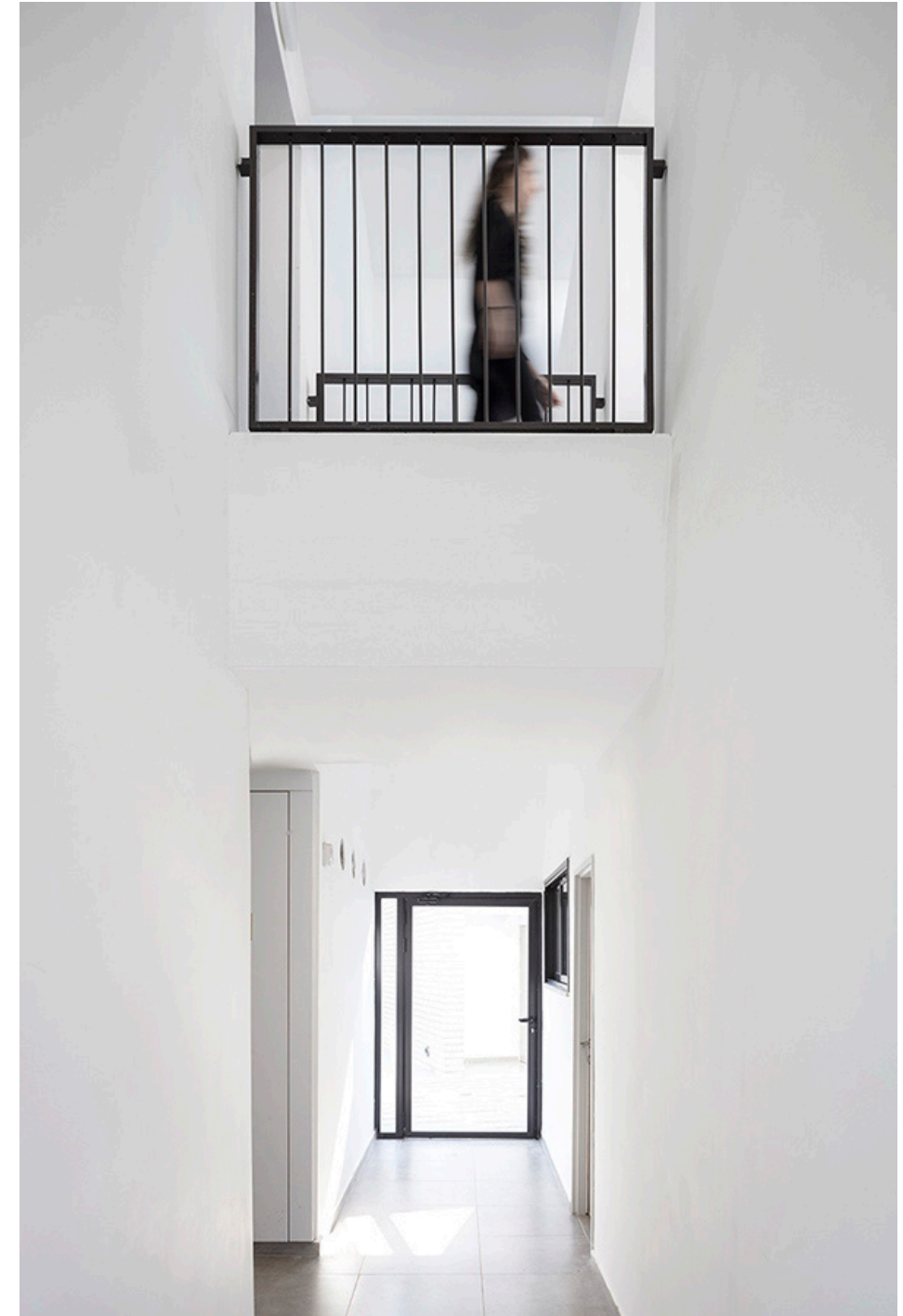


Fig.18: Amos-Golderich Architecture (2018) *Shelter for Battered Women*. Available at: <https://www.dezeen.com/2018/05/05/amos-goldreich-architecture-completes-purpose-built-refuge-for-domestic-abuse-sufferers/> (Accessed 20 November 2022).



## INSTEAD OF HOME

In view of the fact that home is also defined as a place of origin or with which we have strong connections, I would like to present a case study that addresses the problem of experiencing a sense of unhomeliness by children in Djibouti.<sup>45</sup>

Djibouti is a small country on the northeast coast of the Horn of Africa. Its city is home to a long-established community of Yemeni Arabs and houses a sizable delegation of French technical advisers and military personnel.<sup>46</sup> It is as well place of residence for many kids but does not enable them to feel at home and even, in some cases, requires them to find a substitute residence.

Despite humanitarian actions that made progress within the country, its Children's Rights Index is 6,68/10, which indicates a difficult situation where one of the factors is a 58% mortality under five years old. The main challenges are human trafficking, limited resources, strong migratory flows and the presence of traditions not compatible with the rights of the child.<sup>47</sup>

Education is compulsory for Djiboutian children between the ages of 6 and 16. However, despite improvements, the right to primary education is not guaranteed for all because Djibouti suffers from social divisions between urban and rural areas, citizens and migrants and sedentary and nomadic people, as well as access based on living in distant locations. There is a

<sup>45</sup> "Home" (no date) Britannica Dictionary. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/home>. (Accessed: December 21, 2022).

<sup>46</sup> Schraeder, J. Peter. (2022) *Djibouti*. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Djibouti#ref37634> (Accessed: 03 January 2023).

<sup>47</sup> *Children of Djibouti*. Available at: <https://www.humanium.org/en/djibouti/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

severe problem with birth registration in Djibouti, and almost a quarter of births are not registered. It is a significant issue because a birth certificate guarantees access to education and health care and protects against child labour, exploitation and trafficking.<sup>48</sup> 42% population lives in extreme poverty, which causes child labour, and Djibouti children become the most vulnerable to child labour throughout the nation.<sup>49</sup> It must be unimaginably difficult as a child to be put to work and to experience the pressure of having to look after yourself financially because otherwise, it will be hard to survive.

<sup>48</sup> *Children of Djibouti*. Available at: <https://www.humanium.org/en/djibouti/> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

<sup>49</sup> Berman, A. (2020) *Combating child labour in Djibouti*. Available at: <https://borgenproject.org/child-labor-in-djibouti/> (Accessed: 03 January 2022).



Fig. 19: digital illustration by Iwona Porebska [Porebska, I. (2022) *Child Unsafe* -digital illustration]

Djibouti's first SOS Children's Village was built in Tadjourah, where the majority of people are pastoralist farmers and are facing drought and high food prices that have led to acute levels of malnutrition, especially among children and pregnant women. Many children, especially girls, miss school because they are busy fetching drinking water, for which some have to walk up to 30 kilometres in one day. The aim of SOS Children's Village is a Family Strengthening Programme that identifies children in need and supports families with difficulties. It strengthens families by teaching them how to generate income and giving children access to health services, education and nutrition. The organisation's priority is that families remain together. Still, if children can no longer live with their parents, the SOS Children's Village can provide a home for 100 children cared for by SOS mothers.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *SOS Children's Village Tadjourah*. Available at: <https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/where-we-help/africa/djibouti/tadjourah> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

In this instance, the Urko Sanchez Architects have done an excellent job designing the village, so it feels like a home for the children from this region.

The project was completed in 2014 and consisted of 15 houses in a medina-style complex, housing six to seven children and a foster mother. Each unit is built in cement blocks and reinforced concrete structures imitating the traditional layout of narrow streets, wind towers and lattices providing natural shade and ventilation. To make its inhabitants feel homely, architects chose the sand colour for the walls, and most of the interiors are open plans that echo the lifestyle of local people, nomadic herders Afars.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *Tadjourah Sos Children's Village*. Available at: <https://the.akdn/en/how-we-work/our-agencies/aga-khan-trust-culture/akaa/tadjourah-sos-childrens-village> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).



Fig20: Jjumba, M. (2014) *Sos Children Village*. Available at: <https://the.akdn/en/how-we-work/our-agencies/aga-khan-trust-culture/akaa/tadjourah-sos-childrens-village> (Accessed 30 December 2022).

Given the extreme weather conditions in this country and the lack of a reference model for building types, the architects drew their inspiration from similar cultures and climates. By studying shadows and the winds, they developed a unique children-friendly two-storey medina with shaded alleys to allow the wind to pass through, resulting in effective ventilation and the possibility of living there despite the harsh climate. Each House is different from the rest, and there are no regular doors in the wall openings except for the bedrooms, which creates corridors that allow airflow. This is possible because rainfall in the area is negligible. Larger openings in the walls are covered with mashrabiya walls, another traditional solution to ensure ventilation and open visibility. This also allows for the integration of children, free play and supervision by SOS mothers. Each living room and the kitchen are connected directly to the open-air courtyard, the intention being to enable the inhabitants of the village to continue their traditional way of life, such as sleeping under the stars, keeping animals or cooking with firewood.<sup>52</sup> I believe that all this is a tremendous support that gives hope for a better tomorrow to the vulnerable children of the region and, through the architecture, creates an atmosphere resembling safe domesticity while preserving tradition so that the children have improved conditions and hope for a better tomorrow while feeling at Home.



Fig.21: Urko Sanchez Architects (2014) *Sos Children Village*. Available at: <https://urkosanchez.com/work/sos-childrens-village-tadjourah-djibouti/> (Accessed 30 December 2022).



Fig.22: Fig.21: Urko Sanchez Architects (2014) *Sos Children Village*. Available at: <https://urkosanchez.com/work/sos-childrens-village-tadjourah-djibouti/> (Accessed 30 December 2022).



Fig.23: Urko Sanchez Architects (2014) *Plan Sos Children Village*. Available at: <https://the.akdn/en/how-we-work/our-agencies/aga-khan-trust-culture/akaa/tadjourah-sos-childrens-village> (Accessed 30 December 2022).

<sup>52</sup> Ramku, B. (2019) *Sos Children's Village | On site review report*. Urko Sanchez Architects. Available at: <https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/media.archnet.org/system/publications/contents/14052/original/DTP106436.pdf?1586977439> (Accessed: Dec 28, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

Demonstrating how architecture can address the unhomey feeling, examining the meaning of what Home is and looking at it through the uncanny lens shows how complex and broad the subject is.

Addressing this elaborate topic was challenging because it all depends on one's personal life and environment, which evokes this feeling in them. After all, humans have different levels of sensitivity and life experiences, and this study led to some incredible insides. Understanding unhomey emotions through the self-photography of Franceska Woodman, Marc Quinn's self-cast of his body, and my own experience opened the conversation and assisted me with identifying inhabitants.

In the *Comfort of Home*, Marc Quinn's sculpture demonstrated how feeling unhomey is strongly connected to bodily experiences, which guided me to study how architecture can address this emotion in cancer patients through the Maggie's Center in Oldham. The *House away from Home* chapter looked at unhomey in the domestic setting, with Francescas Woodman disturbing photography which resonated with me feeling of being trapped under the skin of the House led me to the case study of Shelter for Battered Women and how this building helps domestic violence survivors. In the *Instead of the Home* chapter, I decided to take a different approach and focus on the children's uncanny in the more extensive area of Djibouti country and on the underlying challenges that architecture through SOS Children's Village addressed. With the reason that a home is not only the building in which one life but could also be the place of belonging and origin.

Although each case study expresses different inhabitants and typologies, they all connect for one purpose to tackle unhomey.



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