

Project Description

The theme of our project, "Cohabitation", was particularly attracting to me due to its proximity to human beings' behaviour, as well as due to personal experiences. In our current way of life, family is not anymore a clearly defined concept. It contains a big variety of different groups living together. Also, there are many important choices we have to make, in areas such as work, marriage, or domicile, which divide our lives into different phases. Those in turn provoke new needs again.

The project "Docking" that I am proposing addresses these ways of life, which demand flexibility of our living spaces. It refers to the connections built between persons, who live together for some time, and to their temporary occupation of space.

Basic concept:

The house is a "micro cosmos". The first two floors are occupied by "ateliers", a cafe, a library (artistic domain), a small exposition space in the public entrance, and some cellars for the inhabitants. The three other floors and the terrace on the roof are private. There are two floors of bedrooms (1st & 3rd) and one floor for kitchens and living-rooms in between (2nd). People individually rent a room and meet each other for cooking, eating and exchanging ideas. So there exist three social levels: individual (private rooms), family (group sharing a kitchen) and common (all inhabitants sharing the common spaces). Some rooms are rented to international visitors, who stay any time between one week and several months.

Common spaces:

The terrace on the roof is shared by the whole group. It contains a laundry and a common bathroom, with three separate tubs with view to the sky. Two cubes of wood contain a sauna (with view to the cold water of the river) and a room with four mattresses, serving as bedroom or as a space for meditation and relaxation. Two parts of this cube can be opened to provoke the experience of sleeping outdoor in summer, still protected from the morning dew.

The piazza:

Situated in the kitchen floor, the piazza is a place for common meals and gatherings. It is extended by the spaces in front of each kitchen with view to the court.

The court:

Another cube is placed in the middle of the court. It is used as a projection room. Small platforms are distributed throughout the court. They are covered by a wild vegetation and serve as outdoor working-places with access to internet.

Scenery of common life:

The rooms-floor features individuality, privacy, intimacy and tranquillity. The rooms are placed on a wooden podium and covered by a false-ceiling (nest). The public square shows the building in its pure form. On the third floor, light is introduced from the roof, which transforms the corridor into a garden-type area. The characteristics of the kitchen-floor are the opposite of the ones of the rooms-floors: community, exchange, party, "noise".

Type of rooms:

- Big rooms (20-25 m²) with bathroom
- Small rooms (9-12 m²) without bathroom
- Studio with bathroom and possibility to cook

The small room can be used as an office or a private living-room, as well as for common projects with other inhabitants. But it could also serve as a bedroom, in case the big room has another function, for example the function of an atelier. In that case the big room, including its bathroom, would be shared with another person.

Walls:

A fixed vertical steel structure and some parts of a fixed horizontal structure can be completed with panels out of wood, glass or metal (120x120 or 120x60), as well as with door-, bookshelf-, or cupboard-elements. Some wall-parts are fixed.

The scheme called "trame" (found in the dossier) shows in which interval the structure is posed. Each room disposes of three modifiable parts in the front of the corridor, and of three on each side-wall. As a consequence, each space is personalized. The corridor becomes a gallery, representing each person. The rooms can be connected or separated.

Furniture:

The toilets and the sewing system are installed fix. However, the shower and the washbasin are movable nevertheless. On a recipient furniture, different kinds of washbasins can be attached, depending on the use of a room or the lifestyle of a person. Also, the waterproofed wooden floor can be removed in order to move the sewing system and connect shower and washbasin. In this way a space can be used in multiple ways. It may contain industrial equipment and be used as a painting atelier. A different person may transform it into a "chambre-salon" with an open bathroom. Further, a couple may complete their bathroom with a second washbasin.

The kitchen floor follows the same system. Here the wooden floor is continuous and symbolises a stage. Separation between private and public is formed by glass-doors, which allow to enlarge the kitchens and living-rooms from time to time. The common "coursive" which characterises many cohabitation projects is in this case placed inside the building, to make the meetings possible in winter also.