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MASTER

Pulse

a story about capitalism and subculture in Zurich

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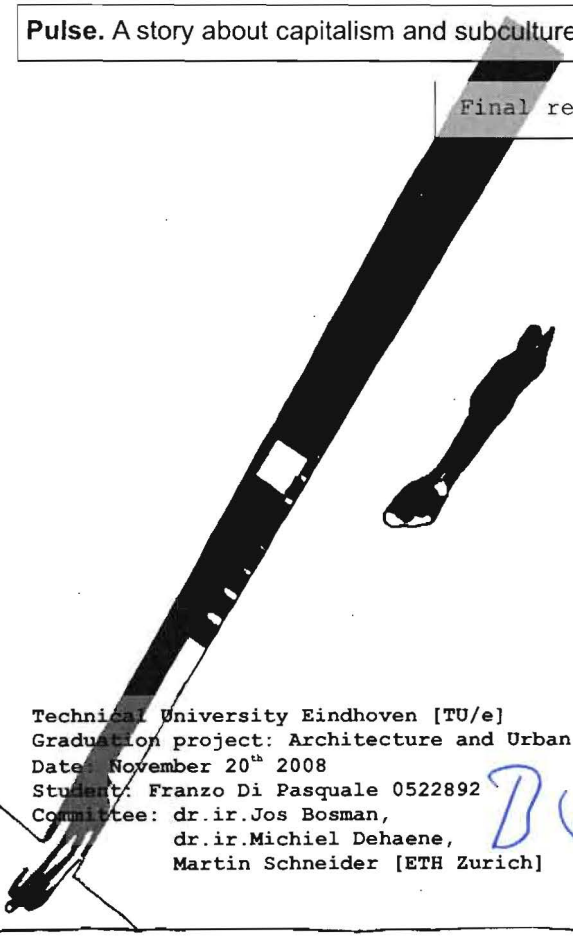
Pulse. A story about capitalism and subculture in Zurich.

Final report_



Technical University Eindhoven [TU/e]
Graduation project: Architecture and Urban Cultures
Date: November 20th 2008
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Martin Schneider [ETH Zurich]

Illustration: Franzo Di Pasquale

Who will give us an architecture based on the slime mold, the Bedouin tent, the baroque grotto, and the street festival of (say) an Afro-Brazilian spirit-cult? The answer is: -- no one but ourselves. The Supreme Architect is dead; long live architecture.

[Hakim Bey - Boundary Violations]

Preface.

_This graduation project is about bottom up initiatives in Architecture. Can people ameliorate surroundings physically and socially, thereby improving the quality of life for themselves and others, especially in areas where top down initiatives have failed?

Bottom up initiatives has been an interest of me for a long time. This is probably best clarified by my own past experience. The first 5 years of my life I grew up on a camping, in Andorra, owned by my parents, on the left page you see a picture of my first home. Then, at 5 years old, I moved for the first time to the Netherlands, after another year we moved to Sicily, before my 18th birthday we changed resident at least 15 times, all across Europe. Being used to the bottom up initiative lifestyle, keep in mind there has not been one residence we didn't rebuilt, and with a father as a workaholic craftsman, you could say I grew up with the hammer in my hand.

The project's kick off was an excursion to Zurich with 14 students, under the direction of Chairman Jos Bosman from the TU Eindhoven. Our assignment there was to investigate and redefine the topic 'parasitic architecture'. On different days we were guided around Zurich by Hana Cisar and Martin Schneider from the ETH Zurich. The illumination point in the study was our visit to a collective housing unit called Das Dreieck. The collective prevented, as a squatter movement, the housing unit from being demolished in the eighties. We learned that the collective included surrounding locals in their activities during the years, thereby strengthening the social structure at heart.

Courtesy: www.dasdreieck.ch

At the time of our visit the collective was, due to success, even in the process of expanding its own real estate.

As a result of the excursion we were offered to choose a location in Zurich for our graduation project. I chose a location where top down initiative had failed till then; a former railway yard flanking the Zurich main train station. Coen Smets and Luuk Schreiber, two fellow students, saw challenges in the same location. We could therefore collaborate frequently during the course of our projects, especially in the beginning. A collaboration that was never unpleasant, I must add.

The report consists of four parts. Chapter one deals with the design process; the used methods and media, theoretical work from John Heijduk to Bernard Tschumi, the analysis of the location in Zurich and the conception of the program; collective housing in combination with a cultural breeding ground. Chapter two discusses three 'true story' cases from collective initiatievs in Zurich, Eindhoven and Nijmegen. Chapter three, foregone by a preliminary essay, is dedicated to a fictional future narrative resulted more or less coincidently from the experimental design process. Ironically the narrative, or scenario, if you will, is the red line wherefrom the architectural commission is derived, an architectural assignment displayed and clarified in Chapter four.

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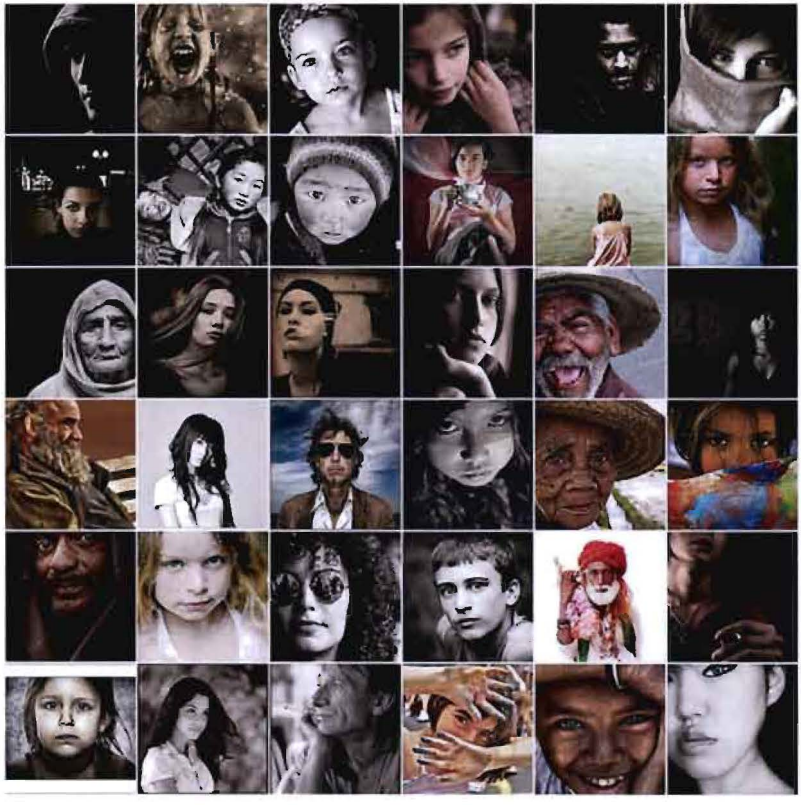


Acknowledgements.

_Humbled in the event of graduation I am thanking the following, who influenced, inspired and supported me in the process. First my family; thanks to my girlfriend Maureen for her patience, even when I was not fun to be around with, to my sister Lara for her help on the model, among other things, to my father for pushing me, endlessly, to my mother, my sister Lina and her husband Chris for their moral support. Thanks to my close friends; to Jan-Willem for his rational advices, to Jonathan for his creative input, to Remon for thinking with me and really helping me out, to Joost for his philosophical liberating view on life during informal late night sessions, to Thijs for making time for me, to Bart for testing me, to Ties for just being himself. Thanks to my friends from Florence, Niccolo and Alessio, for boosting my confidence in the beginning of the project. Thanks to my colleagues Coen and Luuk for making the process fun, thanks to the committee; to Jos for pushing me when I had the tendency to take the easy way out, and not to be forgotten, for his experimental didactic, to Michiel for introducing me to phenomenal authors and influencing me intrinsically, to Martin and Hana for guiding us around Zurich and their useful critics on the project during crucial evaluations. Thanks to Richard Wolff, a bottom up initiative expert, for his e-mail correspondence from Zurich, to Kees Christiaanse and Ute Schneider from KCAP Rotterdam for supplying us with a large amount of inside information. Last but not least thanks to Kees Verbeek for giving us a tour around The Forgotten Garden and to Jac Splinter for guiding us around The Vasim.

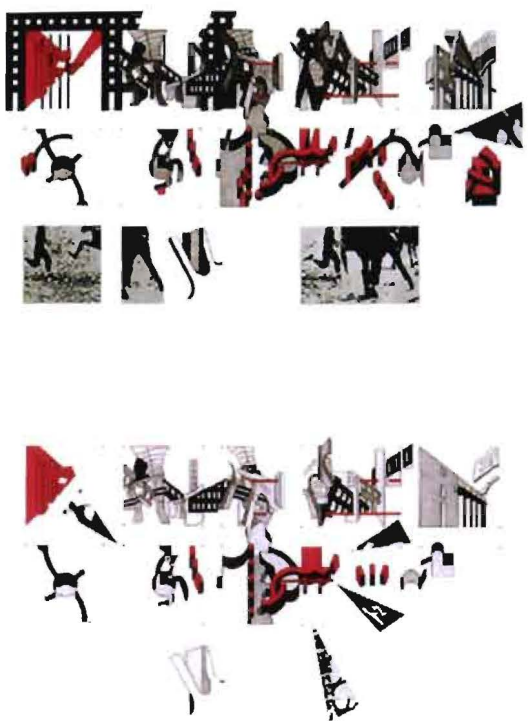
John Hejduk, Vladivostock, New York 1989. Museum of Modern Art / Guest Housing.

Chapter 1

Used methods.
Carnival, Transcripts and Atmospheres

_In the beginning of the project I felt the course ahead was open; you could say a didactic with much freedom, or to put it in one word, unclear. What was I going to do the prospective year? I decided not to worry about it and trust on, how can I describe it? Serendipity, luck, maybe faith, I don't know, just carefree.

Of course it was still to be an architectural project, so in that sense we can not speak of a totally open-endedness, I always knew sooner or later I had to design something. With the conventional end results of; a model and architectural drawings. But I was not interested in changing the medium of communication, but being influenced by Bernard Tschumi, John Heijduk and Peter Zumthor, I was eager to experiment with different didactics during the process of theory and design.



Bernard Tschumi, Manhatten Transcripts,
New York 1981.
Extract from MT 4: the block

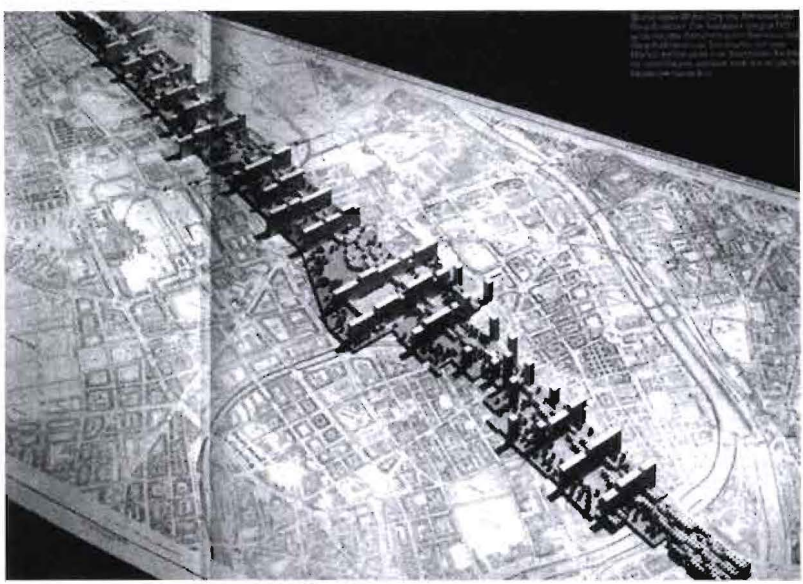
The methods that triggered and inspired me, maybe misconceived on my part, but nevertheless influencing, were in the first place that of John Heijduk. Exploring some work of Heijduk through the eloquently written essay *The Architectural Uncanny* by Antony Vidler, I was confused in the sense that his work constantly raises the question; 'is this architecture?' But whatever the answer to that question is, it touches me way more than 'usual' architecture. Through further exploration [surfing on the net] I learned Heijduk gave his students the assignment to; try to find architecture where you least expect it, e.g. on a graveyard, in a brothel, in a sewage, well you get the picture I guess, but it was totally in accordance with his own work; e.g. *Victims*, where he plans mobile homes on a former concentration camp site from the Holocaust.

Another method that caught my attention is that of Bernard Tschumi as described in his *Manhatten Transcripts.* A method with which I ignorantly experimented in a previous project, thanks to the teachings of Irene Curulli [my personal heroine]. The method proposes a cinematographic approach during the design process, not meaning the end product has to be a motion picture or scenario, it is just, at least for me, a fresh unconventional design tool, fun and fruitful to experiment with. Tschumi describes 4 variations of the tool, I chose to use the tool in a simplified way; the tool consists of 3 timelines, one timeline is the phenomenological experience of the site, the third timeline is an imaginary event that takes place on the site, I usually choose an event that I automatically project on the site, often triggered by characteristics of the site itself, the second timeline is a combination of timeline 1 and 3, the motions of the event drawn in a map of the site.

Models made with the actual building materials, in the office of Peter Zumthor.

The last method I ascribe probably wrongfully to Zumthor, but I caught him writing passionately about making models several times now, in his books; *Atmospheres* and *Thinking Architecture*. He even goes as far, at least he claims, as making only models with the actual building materials, a criteria I was not able to fulfill during this project, but doing a project without using models as a design tool intensively I can not imagine, it is coincidently the activity during which I have the most fun.

Next to literature I juggled with these 3 methods during the design process. First the cinematographic tool for the analysis of the site, accompanied by theoretical work of political writer Hakim Bey, secondly the models for creating [testing] the architecture, resulting in many workshop hours and thirdly occasional assessments to the method of Hejduk, followed by excursions to Zurich, Eindhoven and Nijmegen where I was exposed to, and later went in search of, how shall I call it; non-architecture?



Vision of 1971 for an almost endless extension of HB-Sudwest on top of railway tracks to the north. Source: Rudolf Schilling 'Ideeen fur Zurich', 1982

Location. History of Resistance

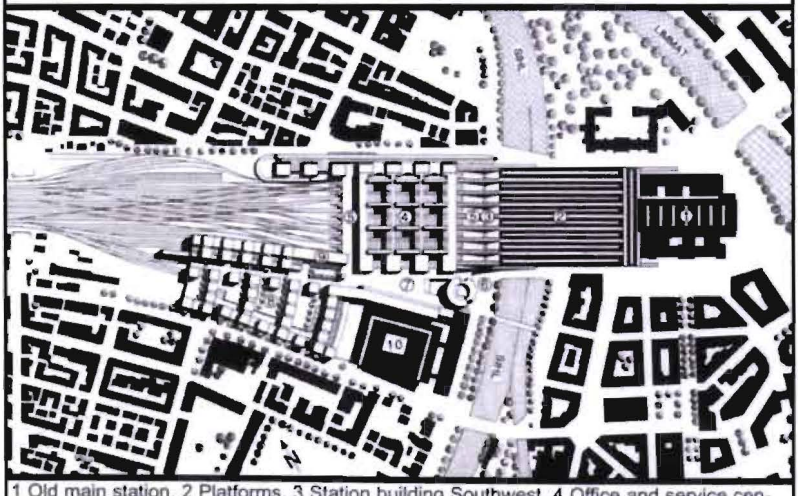
_In Zurich's growing ambition since the sixties of becoming a Metropolis the site for this project was seen as a high potential area for expansion. Due to lack of space in the densely built Altstadt Railway Lands and waterways were considered potential Real Estates for the growth of the city, this was long before de-industrialization.

The project location, a former Railway Yard, is one of those areas. Flanking the main train station [Zurich Hauptbahnhof] and the city centre, the plot betrays its strategic value. Several flagship projects, carrying names like HB-Sudwest and Eurogate, have been planned for this location since 1969 [estimated cost: 1.5 billion Sfr]. Nevertheless till today, almost 40 years later, none of them have been implemented.

In the essay: *The Rise and Fall of Great Railway Station Redevelopments The Case of Eurogate / HB Sudwest*, Richard Wollf investigates the struggles behind and resistance against these development plans, which led to the eventual impasse. In parts concluding; the site has been 'under-used' the last four decades despite its high potential.

"Eurogate was Switserland's largest-ever real estate project. For more than 30 years, it was the focus of Zurich's development process. It symbolized the city's ambition to become a truly international metropolis and was bitterly opposed." [Richard Wollf]

HB-SÜDWEST WITH HOUSING.
Situation according to recommendation of the board of advisors, 1990



1 Old main station. 2 Platforms. 3 Station building Southwest. 4 Office and service centre. 5 New pedestrian passage between boroughs Kreis 4 and Kreis 5. 6 Hotel. 7 Town square. 8 Housing. 9 Schools and shops. 10 Main post office.

Plan of 'improved' HB-Sudwest project recommended by 'board of advisors' in 1990. Source: RBAG

The continuously collapsing of new plans for the location was each time due to various causes. An anti-growth attitude in the beginning of the seventies, the acquired monumental status of the main trainstation in '72 and an economical recession in '73 were the factors that brought the first halt to the first plan; HB Sudwest [first price in the first competition of 1969].

Higher taxes, which in Zurich are directly paid to the municipality, not to the State, reluctant to a noisy construction site of 25 years, and fear for gentrification, were the main criticisms of the people living in Kreis 4 and 5 at that time, against the HB Sudwest project.

Despite a promotion of 1 million Sfr. and a majority of 50,7 % attained in a referendum in 1988, new plans came to a second halt because of conflicts with the leading Architect; he was strongly opposed to other architects working out parts of his plan. In '91 that Architect was fired and in '92 Switzerland suffered another economical recession.

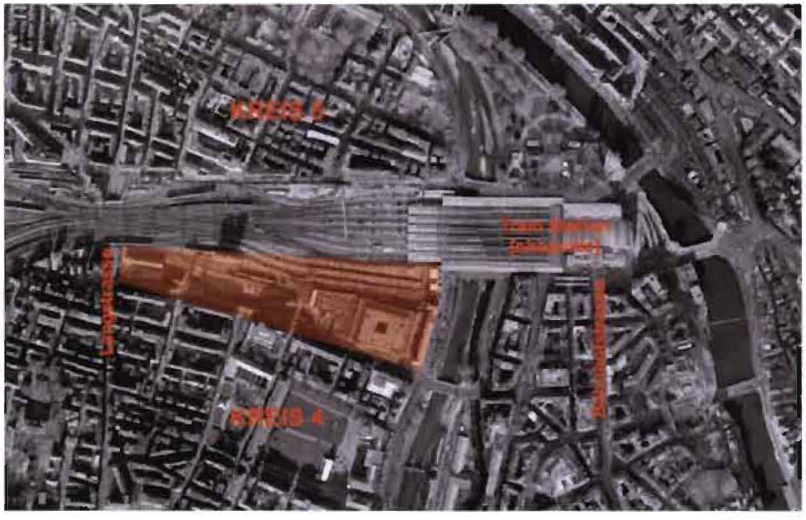
By continuing the lobby behind the scene, the same Architect revitalizes the same plan under a different name, this time called Eurogate. In May 1997 the plan reaches the first ever full approval, were it not that this time there was a political opposition, personified in a Zurich City Council called Ursula Koch, she contested the plan by demanding more than 200 conditions the plans had to meet. Almost needless to add the plan came to a third halt.

'Growth above everything? HB-Sudwest No'. *Advertisement for second referendum in 1988. Source: FabrikZeitung 45 / Sept. 1988 special section for 'Citta Frontale'.*

But the saga continued. One of the three largest and most powerful Real Estate developers of Switzerland [UBS], decided to join the table, in combination with a thriving economy and a need for offices, the plan reaches its second approval in July 2000. This time opposition came from the VCS [Verkehrsclub de Schweis] by beginning a lawsuit against Eurogate, demanding the condition put up by Ursula Koch concerning the parking lot policy is met. The Eurogate plan proposed 891 parking spaces, while the condition allowed a maximum of 643. A 15 minutes late arrival of UBS representatives, at a deadline meeting on April 30th 2001 at 14:00 put up by the landowner SBB, is the cause of a fourth halt of the plan, and a lawsuit victory for VCS.

"It is simply unimaginable, that one signature by VCS, 15 minutes, and a few hundred parking lots should have decided the fate of Eurogate and a 1.5 billion Sfr. Investment after 30 years of planning." [Richard Wolff]

This terrain and its desirable location has been the target of several large scale projects since the 1970s that were lauched but never realized. In contrast to the interim city, it could be said of this "network hub" in the centre of the city: so much planning, so little action. [Source: Zurich Baut - konzeptionelle stadtebau 2007]

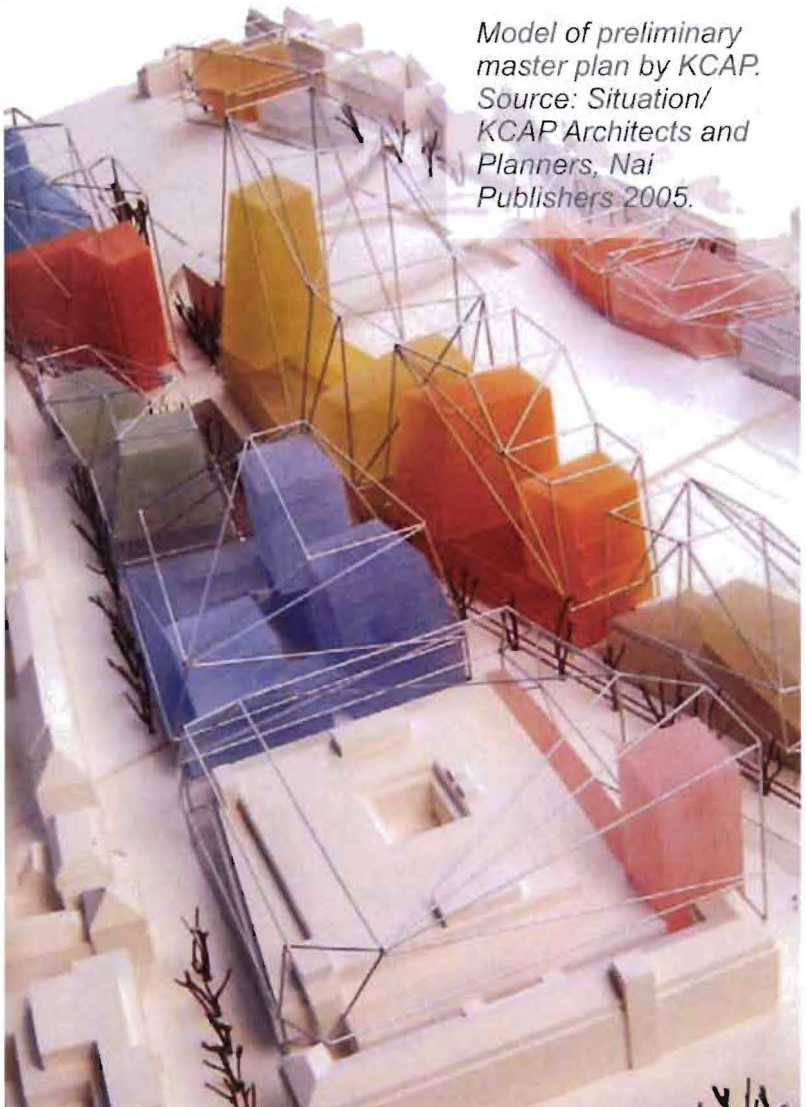


Analysis illustration highlighting the location [a former railway yard], and the surrounding context, which stretch up the tension field the location suffers.

Context. Two Worlds

_Zurich today has become a city with two faces, one being a successful financial business district and secondly a city with several cultural hotspots. The coexistence of these two worlds almost grazing resulted in the cosmopolitan ambiance of Zurich today.

The tension field of these two seemingly incompatible parties creates the vacuum of the location. On the east the central business district with the famous Bahnhofstrasse and the underground Schopville. Flanking north and south Kreis 4 and Kreis 5; districts containing a lot of subculture and de-industrialized sites transformed into popular cultural hotspots. Closing the gap on the west is the Langstrasse, also called 'Little Rio' by locals, this street can be seen as a sort of counterbalance to Bahnhofstrasse. The population of the flanking districts and Langstrasse represent much cultural diversity statistically. On the home exchange market, the way of life of these districts function as a popular crowd puller, despite some drugs and prostitution issues in the area.



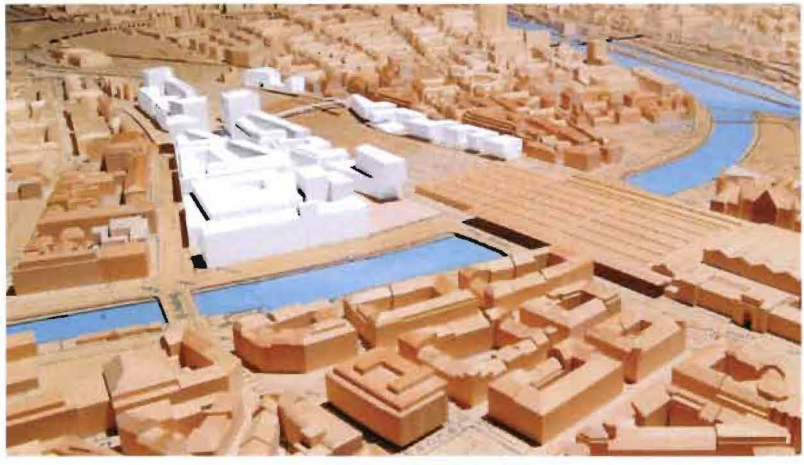
Model of preliminary master plan by KCAP. Source: Situation/ KCAP Architects and Planners, Nai Publishers 2005.

New Plan. Kees Christiaanse and Partners

_The current Master Plan for the location is by KCAP [Kees Christiaanse and Partners], again with UBS as main Real Estate developer, offering building plots for a majority to offices and shops, and on smaller scale, 400 houses for 1200 people, 2000 student places and parking for 700 cars. The determent plots prescribe an invisible envelope; with mostly a maximum building height of 22 meter, and at some important junctions 40 meters.

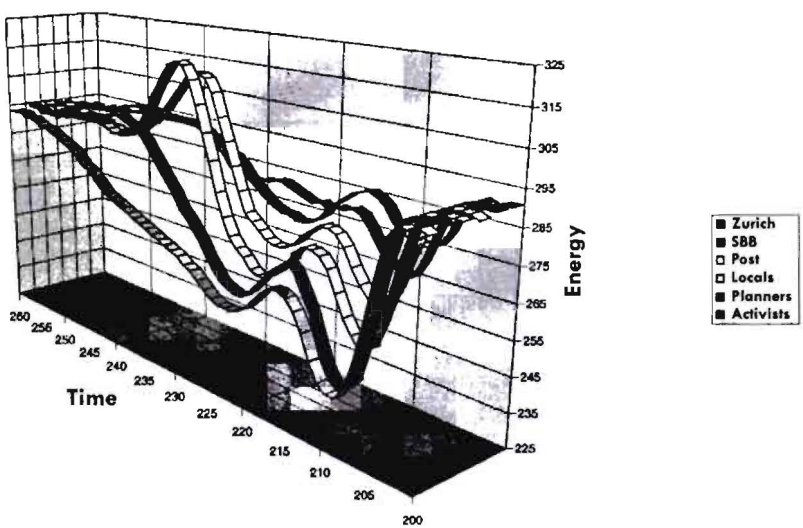
Also this plan has had his share of resistance; the initial concept [model: left page] prescribed, varying building heights up to 110 meters, 3 bridges over the tracks connecting Kreis 4 and 5, and a lowered dug out square opening the underworld of shopville up to the public space above. All are cancelled in the current version. We cannot conclude otherwise [without connecting a value judgment to it] that the current master plan is compromised.

Probably best declared by history, current residents of Kreis 4 and 5 distrust the new plan. They feel it, like previous plans, is purely based on maximum economic profit, giving nicknames to the plan, in the past, like 'Little Manhatten' and 'Neurogate'.



Model of adjusted master plan by KCAP. Source: www.sbb.ch

For a long time the name of the master plan has been Stadtraum HB, recently it is renamed to Neue Innestadt. To prevent confusion in the continuation of this report, the location will always be referred to as 'the Yard', when meaning the 'under used' railway yard, and the new master plan will be referred to as 'Neue Innenstadt' or NI.



Conceptual illustration visualizing the invisible forces that charge the Yard.

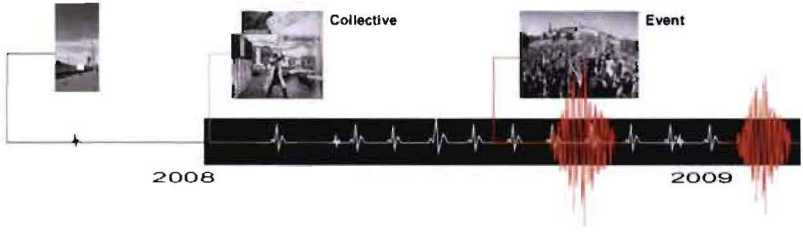
Vision. Present Presents

_The goal of this project is to address the vacuum the Yard suffers, which strategy can be applied to give it a pulse? Soon! How can the energies of the planners, protesters and activists be translated into physical architecture? Can architecture function as mediator in between al these tension fields and transform ideas into action?

Before plans and design proposals were made the Yard was analyzed with the methods mentioned before. Because of its former function, the spurs of the location appeal to the imagination, in other words, we could say; these are the presents of the site, this project highlights 3 of these spur presents: the unused train tracks, platforms 51-53 and the Zentralstellwerk by architect: Max Vogt.

"Here we have an aesthetics of the borderland between chaos and order, the margin, the area of "catastrophe" where the breakdown of the system can equal enlightenment."
[Hakim Bey - TAZ]

Pinpointing the present quality of the site gives us a free architecture were upon we can anchor minimal alterations complementing the already existing.



Conceptual scheme illustrating periodic energy fluctuations of two programs on one site.

Program. Re-program

_New programs for the site are intended to create the spark for further future development. Research resulted in a projection of the following programs: housing for a collective of about 50 people and a cultural breeding place.

Collectives with an alternative life style are gaining momentum on other locations in Zurich; examples are Karthago, Dreieck and Kraftwerk I. These groups operate as their own property developer and radiate a positive signal to their surrounding districts. Even in the Netherlands small signs of this momentum appear to be unveiling itself.

Another common development in big cities are the gaining momentum of the cultural breeding grounds, organizing events and festivals. Because of the periodic nature of these festivals the terrains are 'empty' most of the time. An example of this is the cultural breeding ground 'Vasim' in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. Combining [collective and cultural breeding ground], both tendencies could be supplementary to each other, in times of low activity the collective can function as social control, in periodic high activity the collective can retreat to a compact form.

In the following chapter, three 'true story' cases are discussed to form an understanding in relation to the projected programs on the Yard.

Photograph from the excursion to the 'Vasim', Nijmegen.

Chapter 2

Introduction.

_This chapter discusses 3 'true story' cases, first 'Das Dreieck' in Zurich, then 'The Forgotten Garden' in Eindhoven and finally 'De Vasim' in Nijmegen. These cases have in common that they are run by a collective group. Observations made during excursions to these occasions, and some analysis after, are dealt with in this chapter. The goal is to develop an understanding of some vicissitudes encircling bottom up initiates. Those familiar with these specific cases can skip this part and continue reading Chapter 3 on page 37.

Protest against demolition plans. Activists tie visiting architects, commissioned by the municipality, together in a fishing net. Source: www.dasdreieck.ch

Das Dreieck / Zürich.

_It is the year 1987; *residents make a case for the preservation of 'Das Dreieck'* [a decayed housing unit]. *Architects who joined the competition for 'Das Dreieck' and who came to visit the area, are tied together as a form of protest* [photograph: left page]. *The Zweierstrasse 50 house is occupied by a group of people and is eventually removed by a massive police action. Models for the competition from the architects mysteriously disappear. The competition is eventually adjudicated, but the results remain disappointing.* [Jouri kanters, Par. Arch., Eindhoven 2008]

_Text above is an extract from a booklet made after our excursion to Zurich, titled 'Par. Arch.', brief for Parasitic Architecture, all 14 students collaborated in the realization of the booklet. The visit to Das Dreieck was initially meant as a small addition to the study as a whole, but in retrospect, all students agreed, it turned out to be the illumination point of it. We felt we found a new perspective to 'parasitic architecture'; we could now define it as a bottom up insurrection against top down policy concerning real estate.

Starting out in the beginning as an uprising, opposing sentiments turned over completely from hostile to friendly, the following decades. The story unfolds when in 1988 the collective of Das Dreieck make a counter proposal, assisted by friend architects supporting the cause. The city council abandons their demolition plans in 1993, under the condition further decay will be prevented.

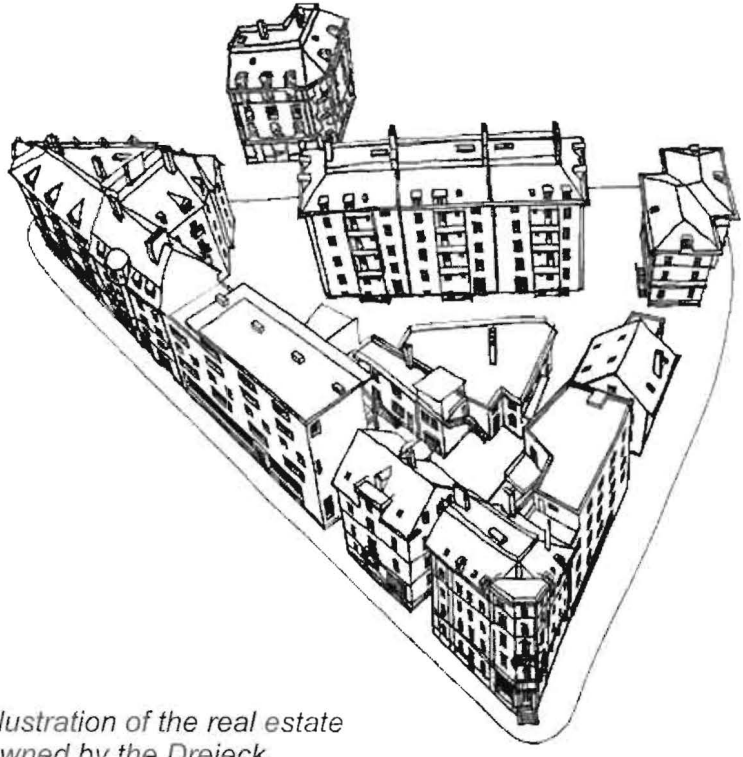


Illustration of the real estate owned by the Dreieck collective. Source: www.dasdreieck.ch

The first redevelopment activities in 1996 are; a workshop, collective kitchen and some shops. In a second phase in 1998, a bar is established in the old butcher's place, and the earlier started kitchen grows into a successful restaurant.

This kitchen, later turned restaurant, played an important role in the social structure of the collective. It is located within the central courtyard, and operated as a focus point during BBQ's, parties, diners, and what not. Festivities during which, often surrounding locals from the district participated. This tendency of participation resulted in a radiation of a positive fibe, originating form Das Dreieck towards the neighboring districts. A development, which in the end, even led to favourable spirits of the Zurich municipality today.

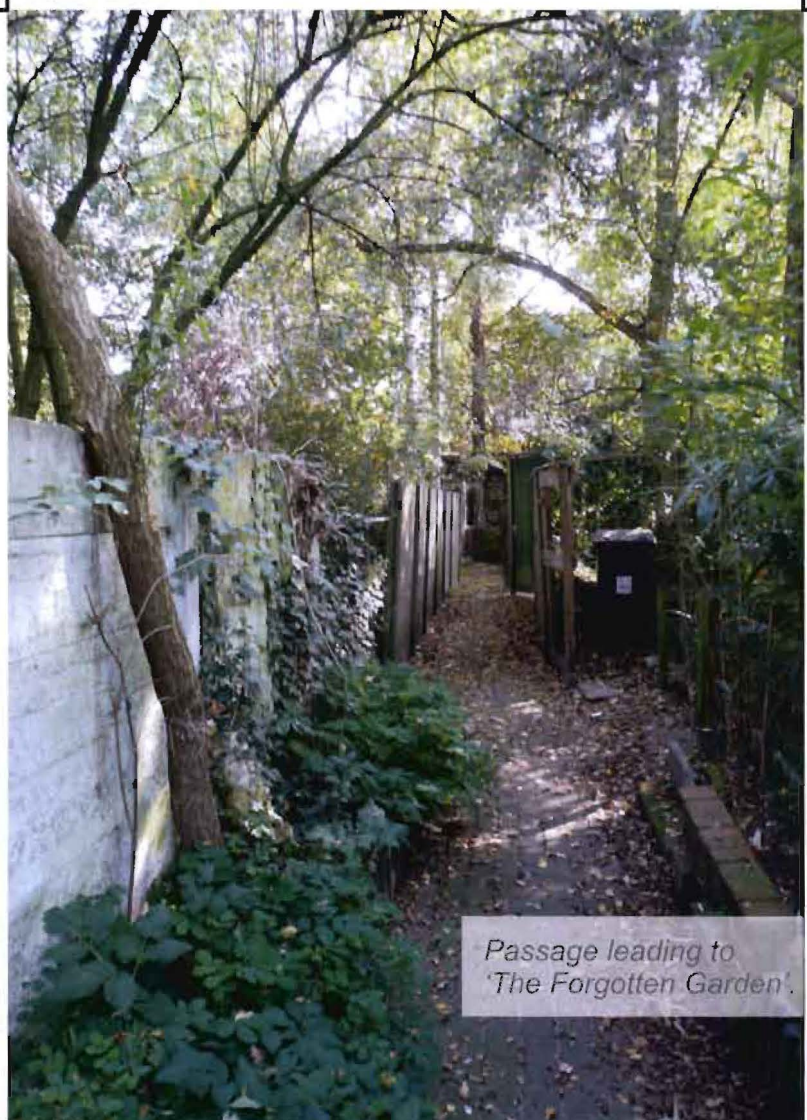
The cluster of trees marks the location of 'The Forgotten Garden'. Source: VirtualEarth

The Forgotten Garden / Eindhoven.

_As part of the study to 'parasitic architecture', after returning from Zurich, we were given the assignment to compare our findings in Zurich against a test-area in Eindhoven. Although the research premises foresaw total different goals, we coincidently found 'The Forgotten Garden'; a collective bottom up initiative. We found out about the wilderness garden through word of mouth, after interviewing some locals from the area.

Except for the first Sunday of each month, coinciding with Sale Sunday in Eindhoven, the Garden [1800 m²], in principle, is inaccessible to public, to preserve the botanic balance on site, established there by volunteer work. The Sundays it is open, people can visit the garden, drink a cup of coffee there, and learn about the botanic specifics present.

We were able to convince a volunteer, named Kees Verbeek, to guide us around the Garden. He began by telling us the ground we were standing on; 'The Forgotten Garden' [photograph: left page], was property of the municipality. They [a group of surrounding locals] decided to take responsibility of the terrain, in the form of a secret coup, they were fed up with the negligence from the municipality, and decided to transform the terrain into a Botanical Garden.



Passage leading to 'The Forgotten Garden'.

Suddenly the case became very interesting to us, leaving us stunned, and overwhelmed with question marks. What were the forces causing this chain of events? How could the municipality be so careless with its own property; this big terrain near the city center? Why did they, and are they still, tolerating the take-over?

Research revealed the terrain is heavily polluted by a factory between 1959 and 1978. At the time the municipality bought the terrain, the province was responsible for the costs of remediation. But shortly after the transaction, a changed law, conditioned; the municipality became responsible themselves to decontaminate the polluted ground. After calculation of the possible profitability's, this turned out to be not lucrative. Thus was decided at that time [1978] to put the case in the freezer. Up until 2001, the year of the take-over, a botanical wilderness garden emerged almost automatically on site, till volunteers actually baptized into one.

The residences of the volunteers flanking the terrain with their backyard were on the demolition list since 1980, the same typology houses across the street have already been replaced. The chain of events resulted in an understanding between the volunteers [160 members] and the municipality today. The terrain can remain a botanical garden, governed by the members, and the houses are removed from the demolition list, additionally the members have a first option to by the dwelling they rent.

'The Vasim' Nijmegen.
Source: VirtualEarth

The Vasim / Nijmegen.

_Deriving from the festival scene, and responsible for the tent designs of festivals such as Oerol and Lowlands, the collective supervising the factory called 'The Vasim', initiated a cultural breeding place inside the factory, and on the surrounding terrain. The former textile factory, a design from architects Zantra, Giesen and Sijmons, built in 1949, is located in Nijmegen within an Industrial area. The breeding ground is home to more than 30 small artist entrepreneurs, renting work and storage space inside the 'The Vasim'.

After a tip from a friend [Remon Kappen] I made an unannounced visit to 'The Vasim', accompanied by partner in crime; Luuk Schreiber. Surprisingly we could freely sprawl the whole area for hours, were it not we approached somebody after one. In conversation with Jac Splinter we learned not all is well that starts well. The municipality tolerates the happenings on site, but only till 2010, when 'The Vasim' has to be cleared for a new infill. Jac explains, that for the moment, they deal with pro and con city council politicians, thus leaving future development uncertain.

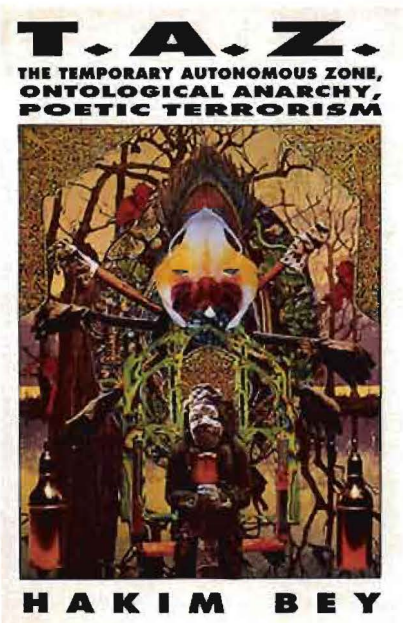
Another hitch they cope with is the zoning plan, which does not allow them to reside there, making the supervision over valuables difficult. Theft incidents are therefore not uncommon. Entrepreneurs are present on the site 24/7 in shifts, in an attempt to ward this theft problem off.

Chapter 3

Introduction.

Accumulations of all the impressions from excursions, analysis's, inspirations, fascinations and influences, in short; all the mass input acquired during the research and design process, resulted in the strategy of describing the architectural commission by way of a narrative. The narrative addresses the real location and the real contextual forces at hand, as well as the real physical and political context, the narrative itself however is fictional. It is not intended as a real proposal, it is mere a medium to provoke and test strategies as a thesis.

Foregoing the narrative a paragraph is devoted to an essay, in which the cult theoretical work THE TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONE by Hakim Bey, is mirrored against the realistic specifics surrounding this project, the Yard, the cultural and political context.



Front cover of the anti-copyright published cult book: The Temporary Autonomous Zone by political writer Hakim Bey

The heart of Zurich.

_Political writer Peter Lamborn Wilson writes in the eighties under the pseudonym Hakim Bey the cult book THE TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONE. In the book he describes among other things the Paleolithic model of mankind [the nature of humans to live in clans or bands of about 50 people]. Further historical research reveals that mankind lived according this Paleolithic model for 99% of its existence. The Neolithic model is a modern invention, according Bey. The base unit of this model is the unit family [father, mother and children]. In the book he suggestively links alternative lifestyles to this inborn Paleolithic nature. 20 years after writing TAZ Bey explains not to have invented the heterotopic free zone inhabited by alternative collectives, he just noticed it.

"The TAZ is still a good idea because it is not my idea, I just noticed it." [Hakim Bey / www.youtube.com]

Bey writes in TAZ that the nuclear family is a trap, propagated by the State, to be able to better control us. Originally people lived in groups, or 'bands' as Bey calles them,'bands' or 'clans' of about 50 people. To this he ascribes the tendency of community forming that strive for an alternative, more social and freer lifestyle.

Various group forming tendencies in Zurich proves this vision not to be infeasible, several of these bottom-up initiatives by bands have managed to survive as a coop collective. The social structure of these collectives could be acknowledged as being Paleolithic in nature, a sharing of a central kitchen and facilities are common characteristics of these groups.

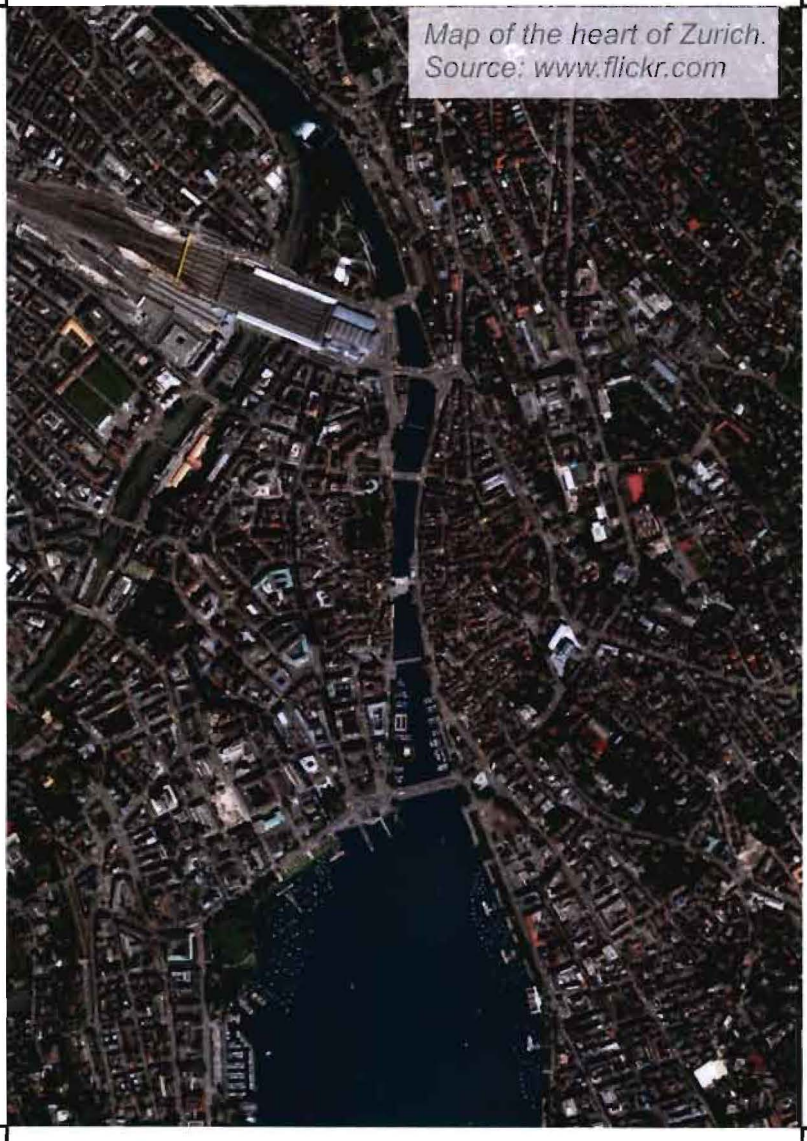
Extract from: The Contested Metropolis, Zurich 2004.

The presence of this kind of band collectives seems to have an infectious influence on their surrounding districts, manifested by the appealing effect of their active communal life. Often shared collective domains are open to external public, regularly small and large events, diners and BBQ's are organized within these environments.

On the account of where these phenomena emerge, Bey declares that we are the first generation without a 'terra incognita', all the pieces of land are mapped, there is not one square inch left open, all is controlled and policed, at least in theory. The abstract grid of the State doesn't have a 1 on 1 accuracy with reality. Therein is where the strength of the temporary lies, in concordance with invisibility, not real invisibility, but invisible on the abstract grid of the State. Bey introduces the term 'psychotopography', which would enable us to create 1 on 1 maps of reality, because only the human brain is able to fathom the complexity of reality.

These holes in the abstract grid are excellent locations for heterotopias, free zones and alternative lifestyles. Origination of these holes differs in cause; negligence by the State, a strange parceling policy or political mumbo jumbo. But how does this 'psychotopography' actually work? Best is to quote Bey himself:

"Lay down a map of the land; over that, set a map of political change; over that, a map of the Net, especially the counter-Net with its emphasis on clandestine information-flow and logistics--and finally, over all, the 1:1 map of the creative imagination, aesthetics, values. The resultant grid comes to life, animated by unexpected eddies and surges of energy, coagulations of light, secret tunnels, surprises." [Hakim Bey - TAZ]



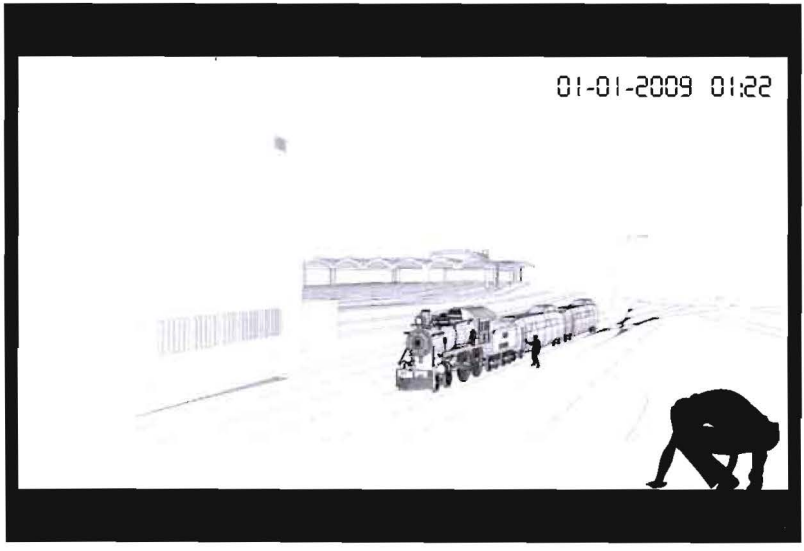
Map of the heart of Zurich.
Source: www.flickr.com

The former railway yard in Zurich answers to before mentioned phenomena, according to me at least. A hole in the abstract grid! Extra painful is the fact; it is located right in the heart of Zurich. A similar emergence here could strike like a virus or a thrust of adrenaline right in the heart of one of capitalism's most ancient bastions. Either negative or positive dependent on which glasses one wears.

Undeniably united with this alternative lifestyle is the aspect of 'festival'. Collective dinners, organizing parties etcetera etcetera, events that, according to Bey, lie outside the dimension 'time'. Not time is the instrument of measurement but the intensity of the experience.

Considering the skepticism of the Zurich plebs, several organizations and politicians toward the Capitalist agenda, such an emergence could establish a healthy counterbalance, without, by the way, dismissing the Capitalist world, in which I happily reside.

"Let us admit that we have attended parties where for one brief night a republic of gratified desires was attained. Shall we not confess that the politics of that night have more reality and force for us than those of, say, the entire U.S. Government? Some of the "parties" we've mentioned lasted for two or three years. Is this something worth imagining, worth fighting for? Let us study invisibility, web working, psychic nomadism--and who knows what we might attain?" [Hakim Bey TAZ]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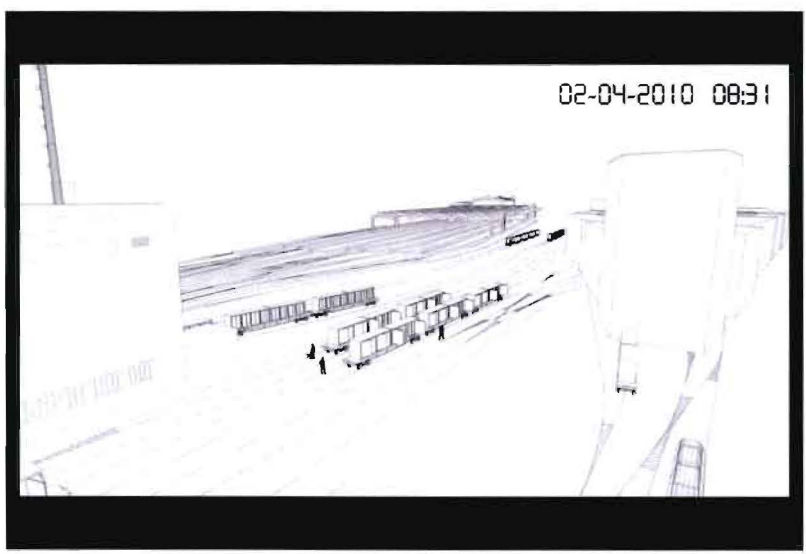
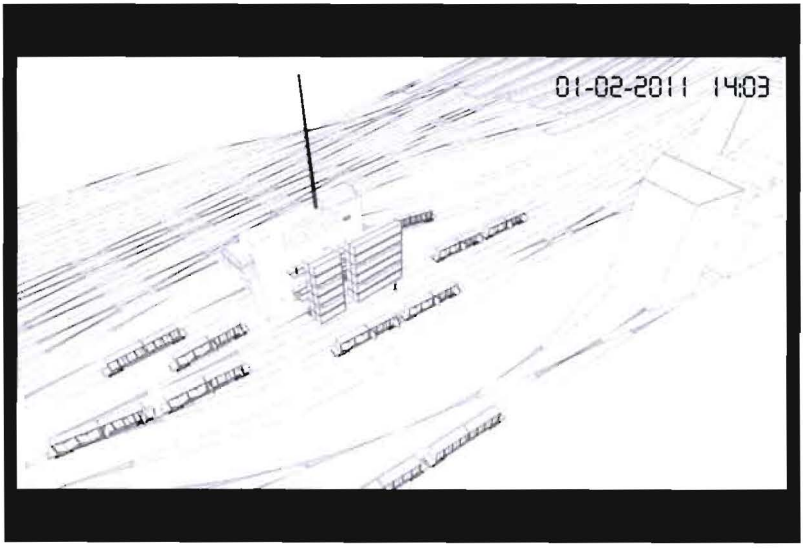
Narrative. Squatting the Yard

2009 A collective of about 50 people, with a bohemian lifestyle, squat a former railway yard in the center of Zurich. During the event abandoned train and freight wagons are converted into residences.


02-04-2010 08:31

2010 After contested discourse, the municipality of Zurich tolerates the invasion, on the condition the collective will contribute actively to the cultural scene of Zurich. Friend architects support the cause by inventing a mobile building system which can be placed on the tracks.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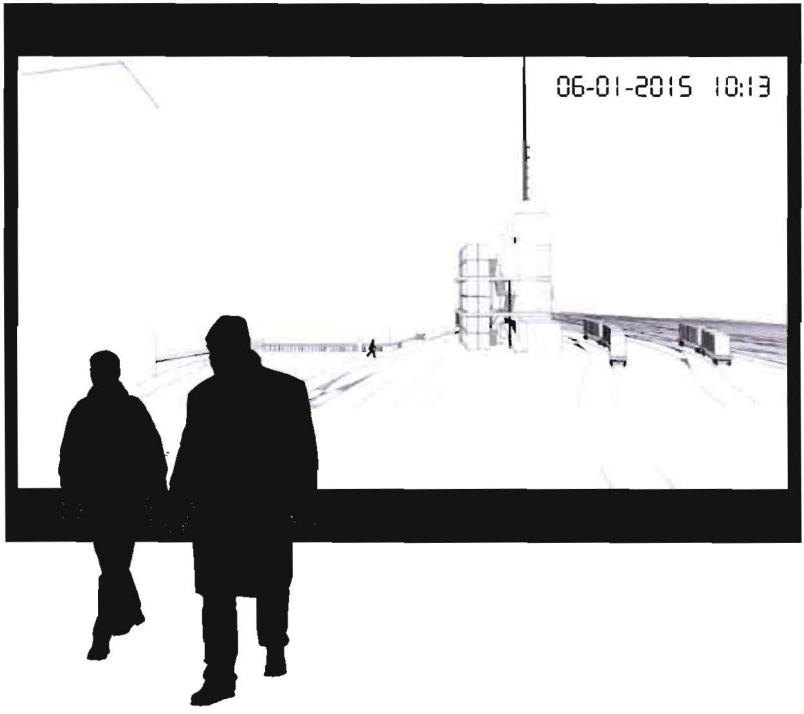
2011 During the first year the collective successfully organize a variety of cultural events, generating a positive impulse to the surrounding districts. The revenues are enough for the collective to earn a living.

The City Council decides to stimulate the cultural scene by making a plot available to house vest the collective more permanent.

03-03-2012 17:00

2012 Expanding developments of the KCAP masterplan begin to graze the activities of the collective. During negotiations the collective manages to make a deal, they are allowed to build a basement for work and storage space of 1000 m², where upon in a later phase offices can be built on top. As a result of the revenues, the collective is able to operate as their own real estate developer.

By cause of the phasing, the roof of the Basement can be used temporarily as a podium or other polyvalent uses. In addition to answer popular demand, area is reserved for indoor cultural happenings within the basement.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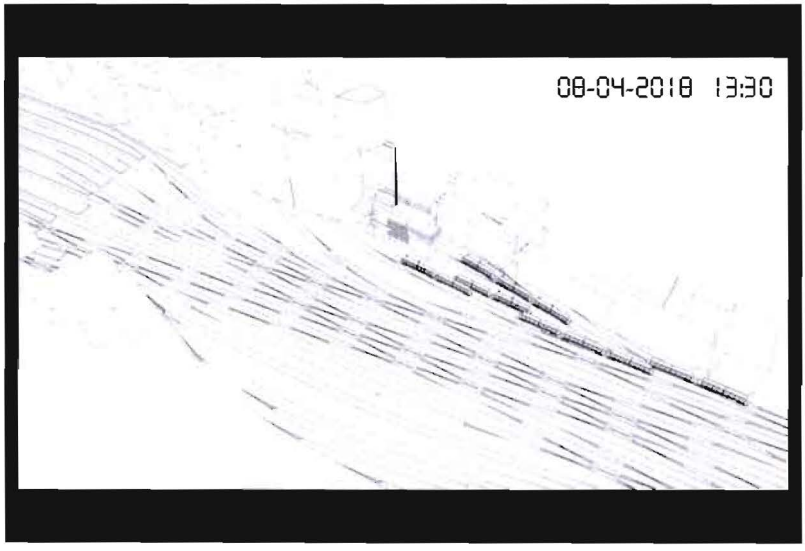
2015 On top of the basement a 40 meter high office building is added, highlighting the cross-over coexistence of project Pulse and the KCAP masterplan.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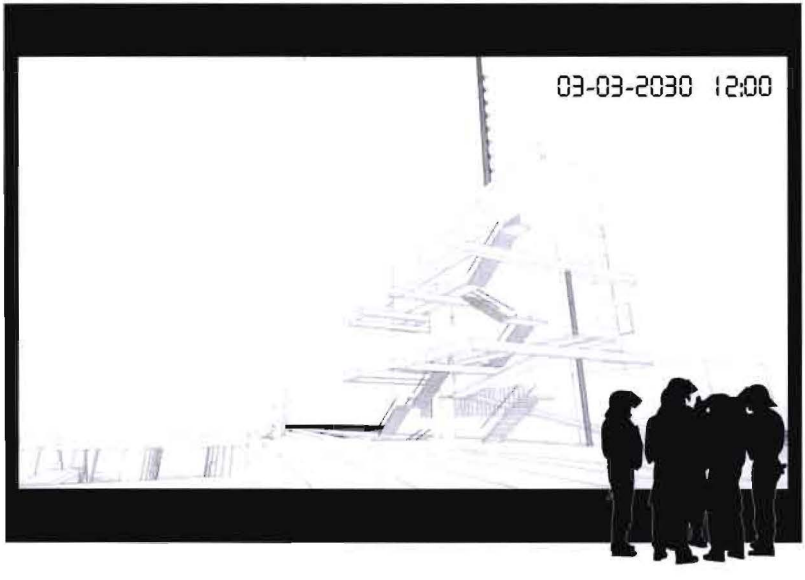
2018 The KCAP masterplan has reached its final stage. Because of its popularity place is reserved for the Encampment on the border of the site.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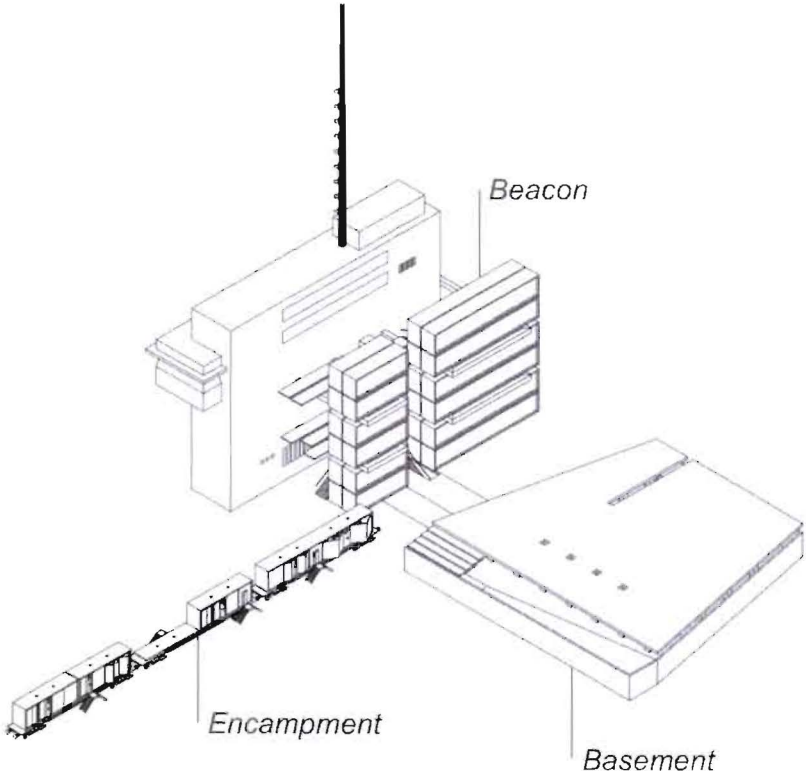
2030 The politics in Zurich makes a drastic shift. The new leaders are not happy with the gaining popularity of collective housing initiatives, correlated to cultural events with a high concentration of obscenities. Big groups are difficult to control; it's harder to keep the desired order.

A strategy is prepared to divide the collectives into little groups and disperse them over different locations around Zurich.

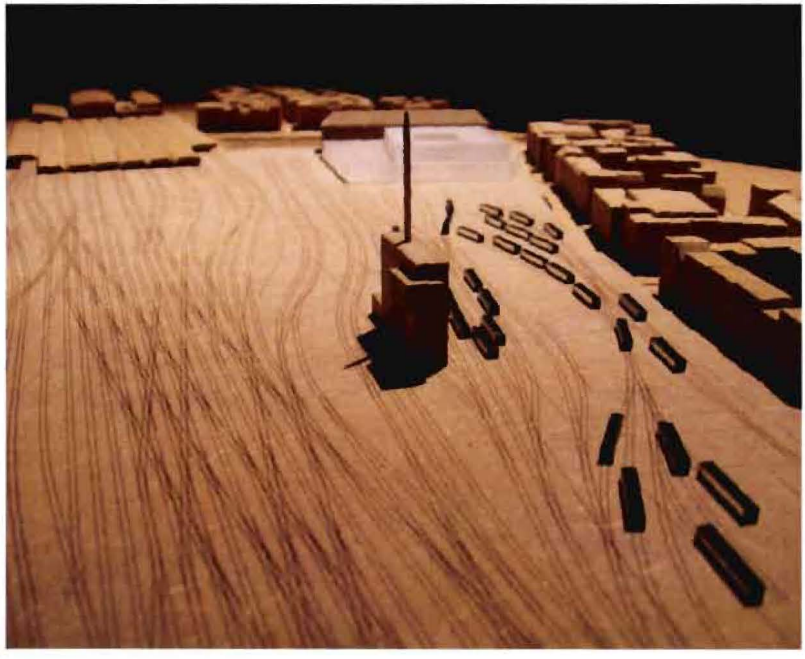
The encampment has to be removed completely from the Neue Innenstadt. The residence units from the beacon are to be removed also, only the gallery with the staircase is to be preserved. Finally the Basement is converted into parking for the offices above.


Beacon
Encampment
Basement

Chapter 4

Introduction.

_In this chapter the architectural commission, as derived from the narrative is displayed and clarified, beginning with the Encampment, followed by the Beacon and the Basement in chronological order.



Urban model displaying the Encampment utilizing the tracks of the Yard.

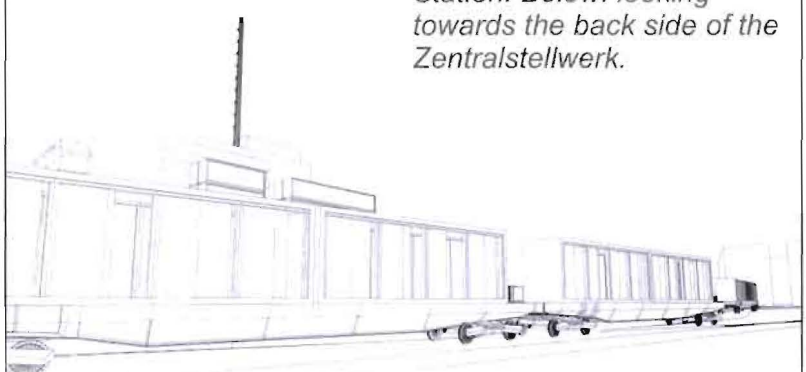
Encampment.

2009. *After contested discourse; the municipality of Zurich tolerates the invasion, on the condition the collective will contribute actively to the cultural scene of Zurich. Friend architects support the cause by inventing a mobile building system which can be placed on the tracks…*

_In a 2006 interview at the Storefront, New York, Lebbeus Woods expresses his thoughts about a basic instability in our culture. He pleads for a new kind of architecture parallel to contemporary architecture. He pleads for an architecture witch engages people differently than as mere spectators, it has to engage them as creators. He refers to the Design Advocacy of the sixties who failed in reaching this goal. According to Woods this new architectural movement has to involve people interactively. The new role for the architect is to design the conditions and the element with a set of game rules. He compares this with playing poker.

"You can't just start throwing cards around. So, you give them the basic rules of the game, and then you give them some basic techniques: this is how you move this here, and this is how you move that there. You don't say where you are going to move it. And then, if you're really starting at a rudimentary level you show them some examples. You say, now it could look like this, or it could look like that, if you follow these rules." [Lebbeus Woods]

Above: view within Platform 51-53 towards Main Train Station. Below: looking towards the back side of the Zentralstellwerk.



Woods acknowledges that his ideas and theoretical work hasn't really gained momentum yet as an architectural movement, but stays passionate in putting this kind of works out there. He believes it is a matter choice.

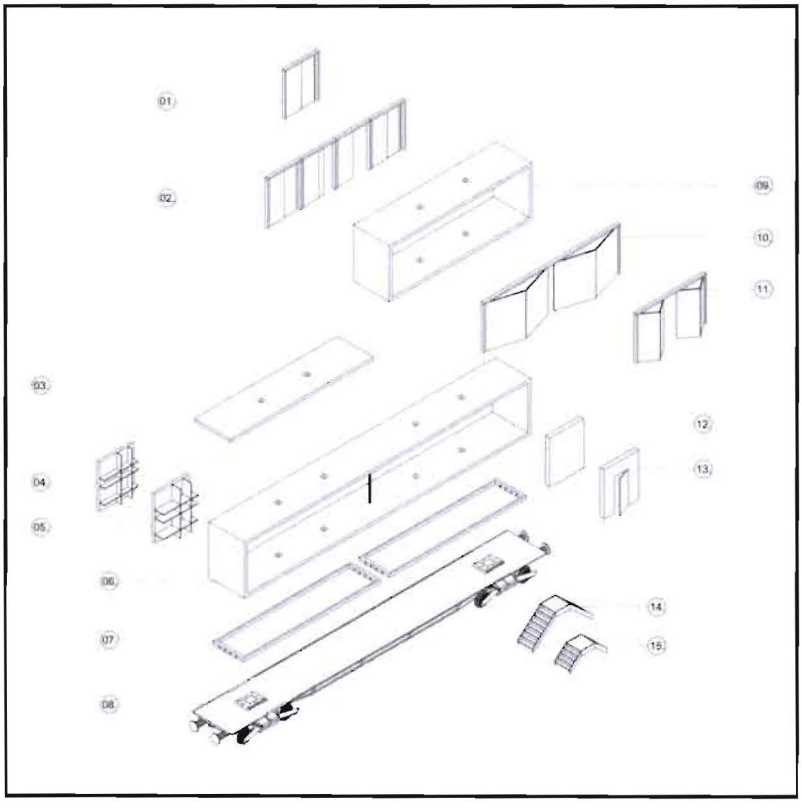
"I believe people have to *choose* to do it. I don't think this is something that should be imposed from the top down. They have to want to do it this way. They have to want to participate." [Lebbeus Woods]

With this tension field in mind, as described by Woods, the concept for the Encampment is conceived.

The proposal is a concrete unit, with dimensions of a train wagon, on top of a ready made freight wagon flatbed. Using the tracks, the coaches can be easily in- and exported to and from the Yard. A number of additional coaches operate, aside residence for the collective, as carriers of the cultural program. Examples could be: festival events, podia, [cheap] guest stay, concerts, workshops etc……

Different configurations can be made with the system. A variety of elements can be chosen from the exploded view [page 64-65]; walls, windows, stairs and cupboards in different sizes are optional. The system is accompanied by some example assemblies of possible coaches, to stimulate imagination.

The infrastructures of pipelines, facilitating the Encampment, have a linear logic. Every hundred meters, following the grid of the tracks, a plug-in point is present. Wherefrom it is possible to shackle a chain of connected coaches, each one equipped with a pipeline compartment in between flatbed and unit.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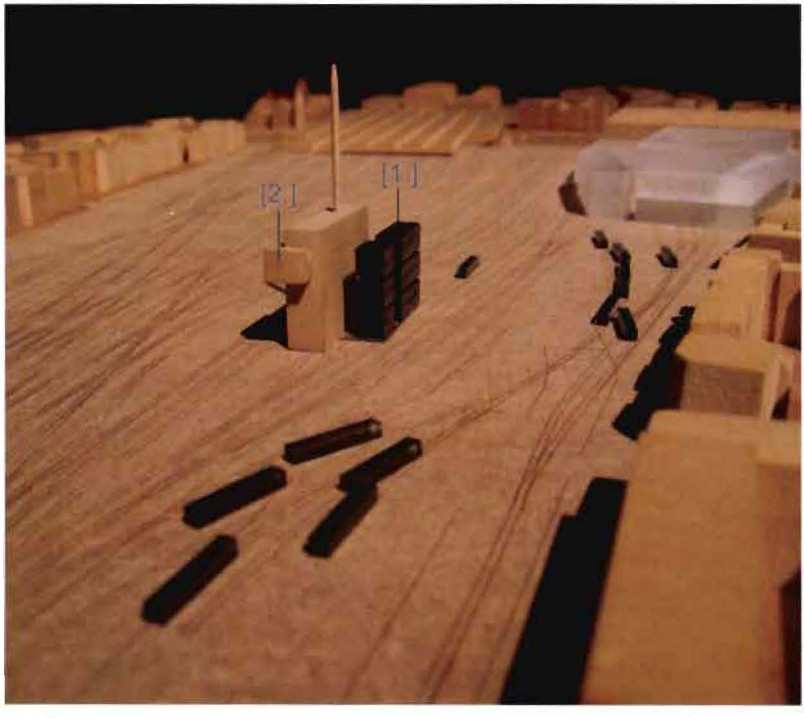
01. Sliding door 2400mm
02. Sliding facade 9600mm
03. Plain plateau 10m x 2,5m
04. Wall cupboard 30
05. Wall cupboard 60

06. Luxury coach 20m x 3m x 2,5m
07. Frame for pipelines
08. Sggnss 72'4-axle container wagon
09. Economy coach 10m x 3m x 2,5m
10. Folding facade 9600mm

11. Folding door 4800mm
12. Closed wall 2400mm
13. Closed wall with door 2400mm
14. Stairs, height: 1290mm
15. Stairs, height: 590mm



Urban model displaying the location of Beacon [1.] *mirroring the Zentralstellwerk* [2.] *towards the Yard.*

Beacon.

2010 *During the first year the collective successfully organize a variety of cultural events, generating a positive impulse to the surrounding districts. The revenues are enough for the collective to earn a living.*

The City Council decides to stimulate the cultural scene by making a plot available to house vest the collective more permanent...

_Considering the activity of the encampment differs every moment, especially in the case of low to non cultural activities of the encampment, the guardian role of the collective is desirable.

The housing location offered to the collective is chosen strategically behind, the still operational Zentralstellwerk [Architect: Max Vogt], the building from which logistics of in- and outgoing freight and passenger train wagons is supervised.

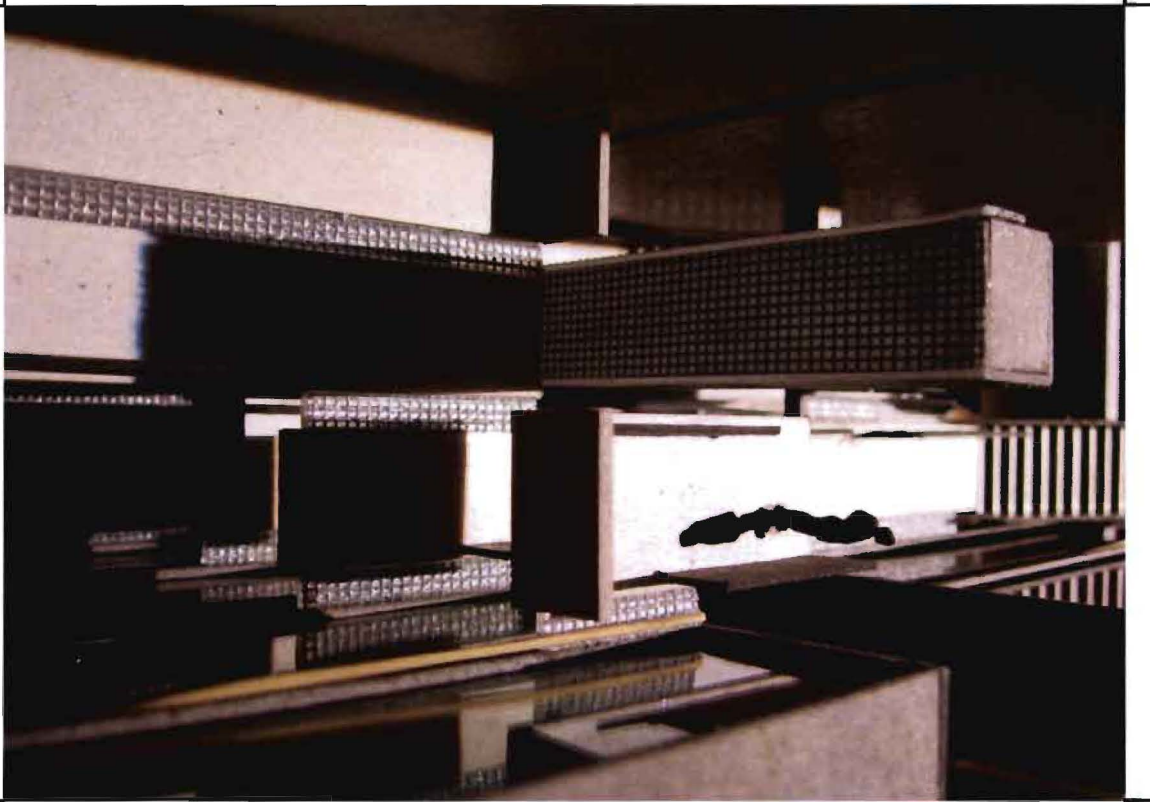
This building, and its characteristic Kommandoraum, is orientated north, it faces south, to the Yard, with a blind wall. The collective, in collaboration with the municipality, settle with the proposal of positioning a rack against this blind wall. Wherein the same units can be stacked, as proposed for the Encampment. In between the 'sandwich' of the stacked units, and the Zentralstellwerk, room is left open for circulation and collective stay areas.

Zentralstellwerk [architect: Max Vogt]. Left:north facade, overlooking the railway lands entering the Zurich Hauptbahnhof. Above: south facade, with its 'blind wall' towards the Yard.

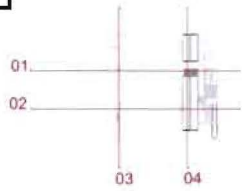
Max Vogt (1925) ist ein Schweizer Architekt, der als Hofarchitekt der SBB unzählige Bahnbetriebsgebäude entworfen hat. Bauten wie der Bahnhof Altstetten oder das Stellwerk beim Zürcher Hauptbahnhof haben massgeblich dazu beigetragen, dass die SBB 2005 den Wakkerpreis für beispielhafte Ortsbilder erhalten haben.* [www.wikipedia.org]

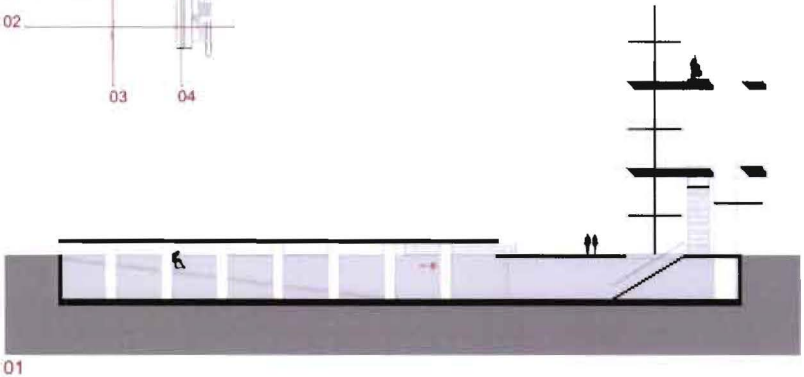
Max Vogt (*1925) is a Swiss Architect, who as leading architect of the SBB designed an uncountable amount of Railway related buildings. Buildings like the Bahnhof Altstetten or the Signal Box for the Zurich Hauptbahnhof contributed eminently to, the SBB receiving the Wakkerpreis in 2005 for exampletary surrounding buildings.

The configuration of Beacon tries to respects the architectonic articulation of the Zentralstellwerk.



View in between Beacon and Zentralstellwerk.





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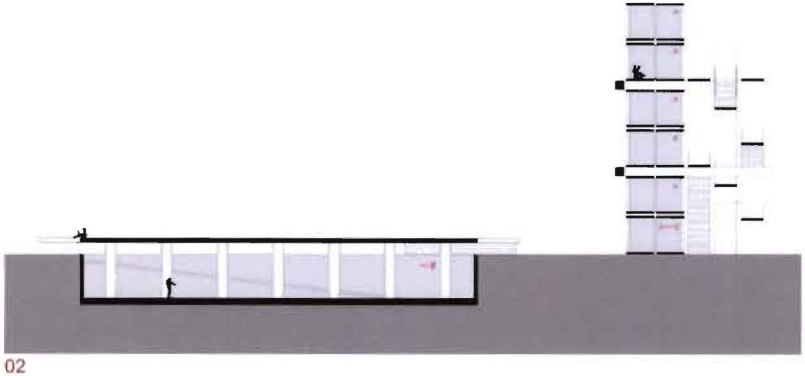

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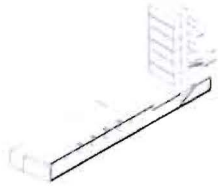
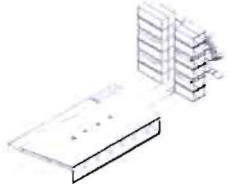
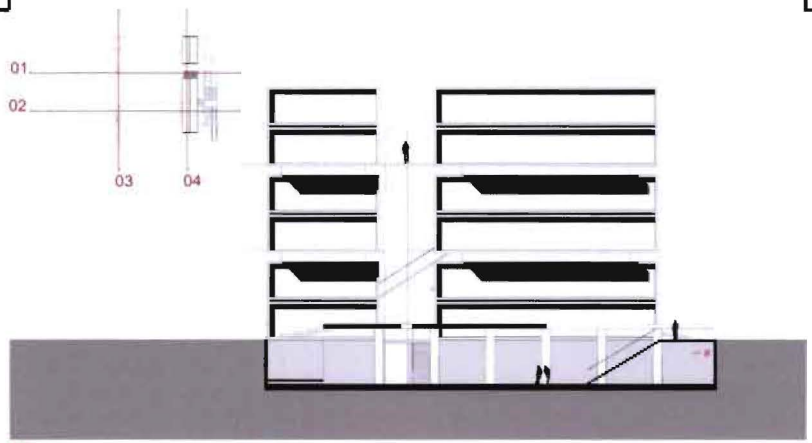




Sections.



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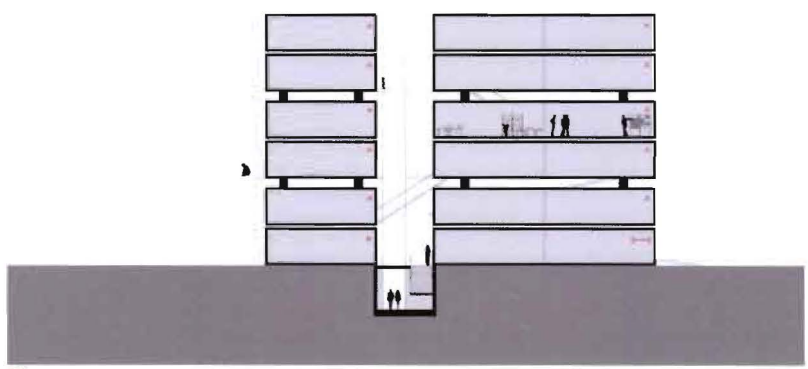

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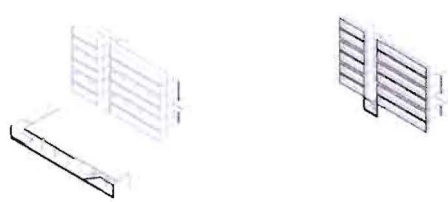
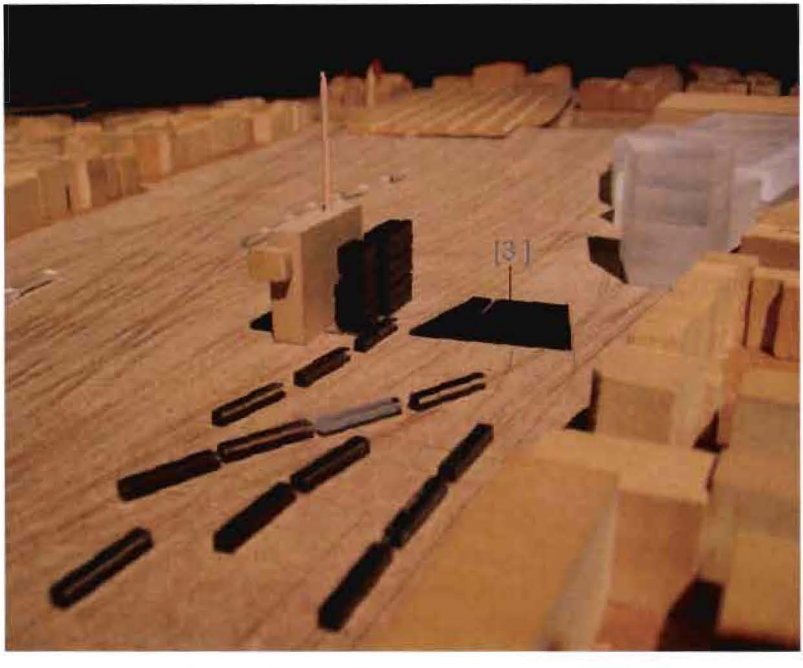


Beacon: collective housing 900 m2

dwellings 750 m2 [total] max.50 people
collective canteen/kitchen 100 m2
technical service center 50 m2

Basement: work-and storage space 1000 m2

event space 400 m2
work-and storage area 600 m2



Above: model displaying the location of the Basement [3.] *Left: model displaying the coexistence of Pulse with Neue Innenstadt.*

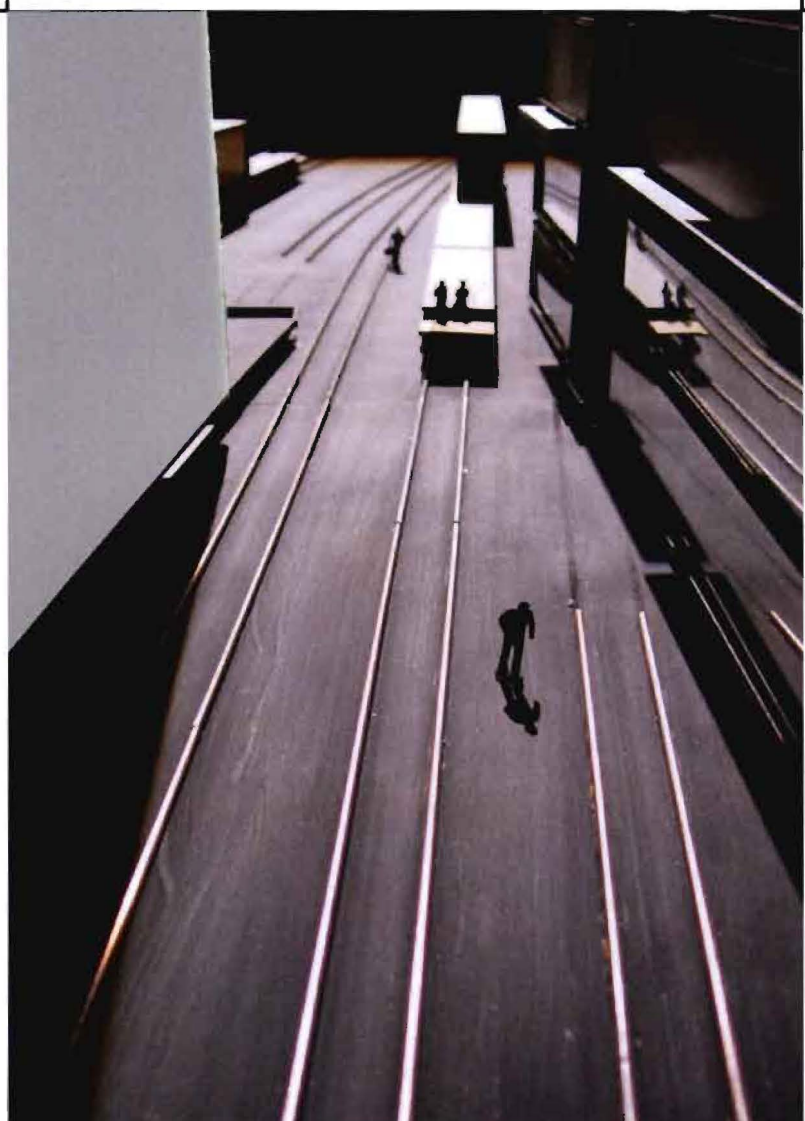
Basement. The cross-over

2012 *Expanding developments of the KCAP masterplan begin to graze the activities of the collective. During negotiations the collective manages to make a deal, they are allowed to build a basement for work and storage space of 1000 m², where upon in a later phase offices can be built on top. As a result of the revenues, the collective is able to operate as their own real estate developer.*

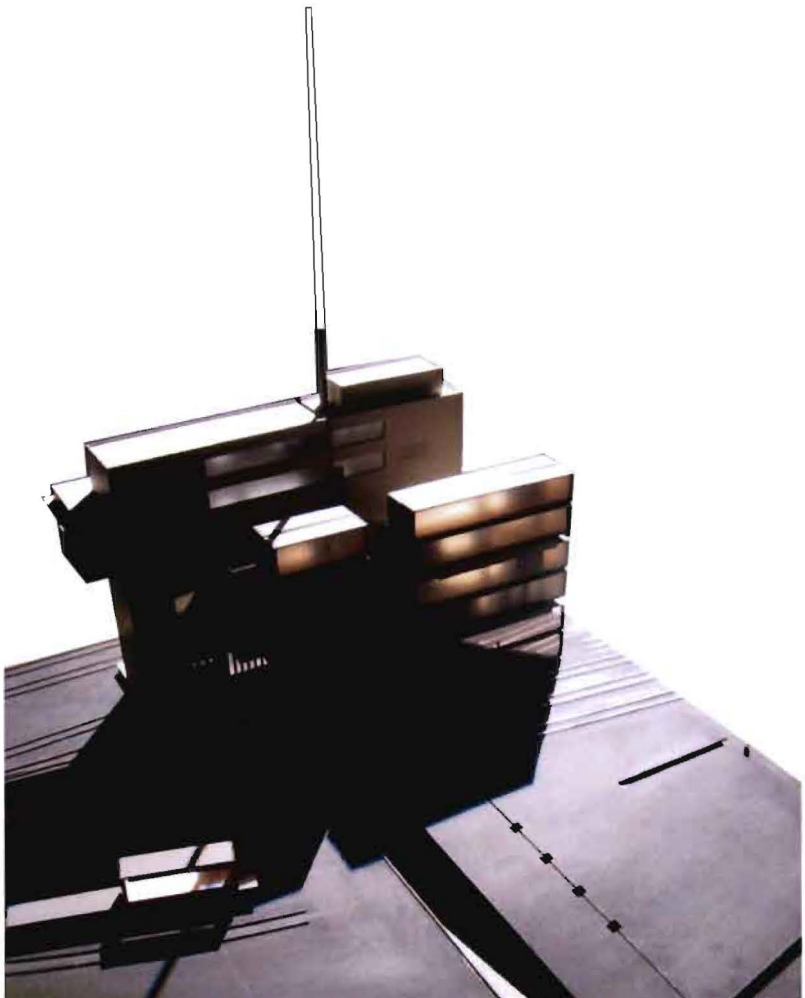
By cause of the phasing, the roof of the Basement can be used temporarily as a podium or other polyvalent uses. In addition to answer popular demand, area is reserved for indoor cultural happenings within the basement...

_A main point of attention is prominent, in relation to cultural breeding grounds; the parallel existence of 'the stage' and the 'behind the scene'. In first place presentation area is needed, secondly work and storage accommodations. Lots of presentation potential is present already till this phase, especially when considering the flexibility of the Encampment. Work and storage space however continues to be problematic.

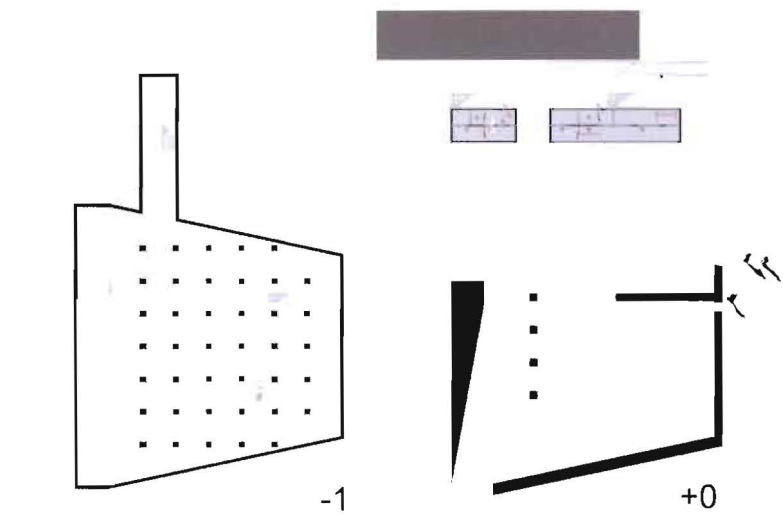
The cross-over possibility of the Basement is an excellent opportunity for the collective to address this shortcoming. Building part of an envelope of the Neue Innenstadt master plan is the next step proposal; a basement of 1000 m² orientated on the future central square. As a unifying element, the Basement and Beacon are connected with an underground corridor.



View of the passage in between Beacon [right] and office volumes [left] of the Neue Innenstadt master plan, on top of the Basement.



Model of the three expansion phases of Pulse, as an ensemble.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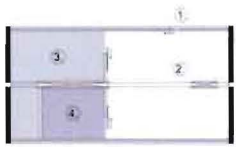
Plans.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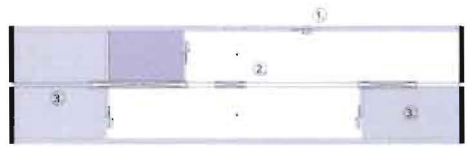
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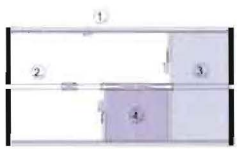
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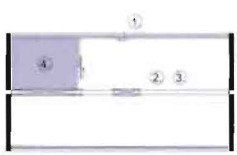
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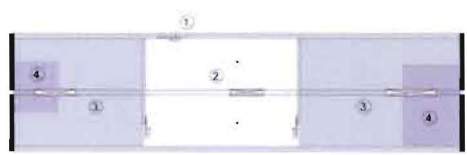
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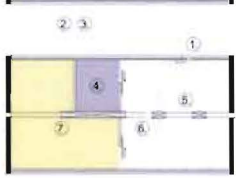
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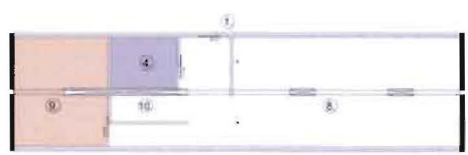
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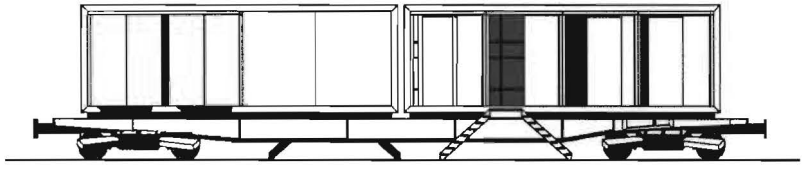
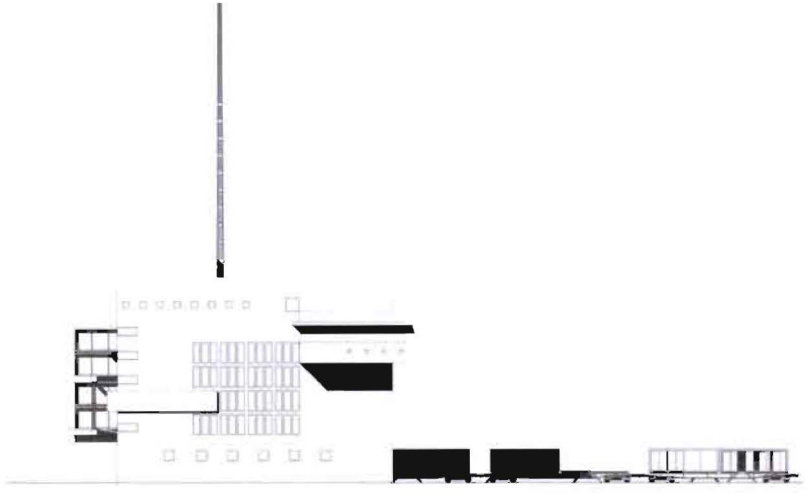
01. **Entrance [dwelling]**
02. Livingroom
03. Bedroom
04. Bathroom

05. **Foyer [technical service center]**
06. Secretary desk
07. Office space

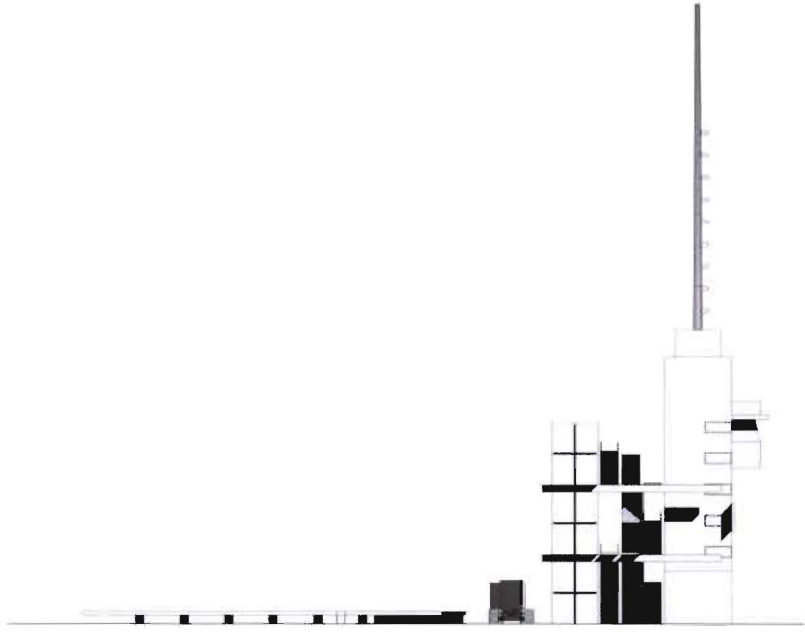
08. **Collective canteen**
09. Kitchen
10. Checkroom



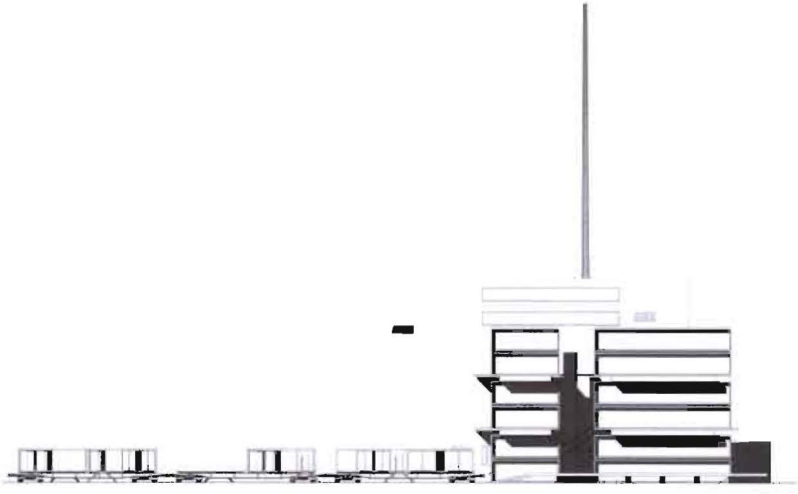
Elevations.



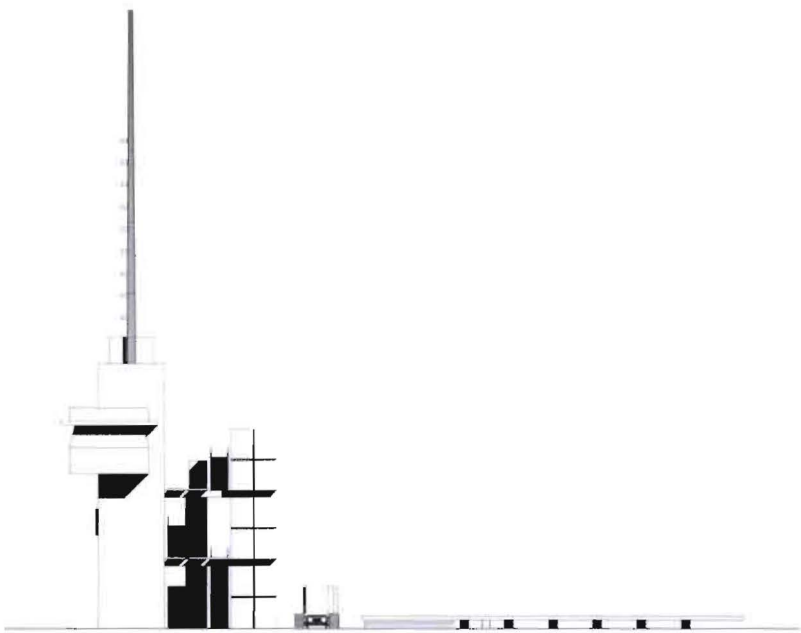
North.



East.



South.



West.

Exit.

Public space
Future public space
Project: public
Kreis 5
angstrasse
Kreis 4
P
Hauptbahnhof [shopville]
Bahnhofstrasse

Summary.

_In Zurich's growing ambition since the sixties of becoming a *Metropolis* this site was seen as a high potential area for expansion. Due to lack of space in the densely built Altstadt *Railway Lands* and waterways were considered potential Real Estates for the growth of the city, this was long before de-industrialization.

Stadtraum HB, a former *Railway Yard*, is one of those areas. Located behind the main train station [1.] and the city centre [2.], the plot betrays its strategic value. Several flagship projects, carrying names like HB-Sudwest and Eurogate, have been planned for this location since 1969 [estimated cost: 1.5 billion Sfr]. Nevertheless till today, almost 40 years later, none of them have been implemented.

In the essay: *The Rise and Fall of Great Railway Station Redevelopments The Case of Eurogate / HB Sudwest*, Richard Wollf investigates the struggles behind and resistance against these development plans which led to the eventual impasse. In parts concluding the site has been *'under-used'* the last four decades despite its high potential.

_Zurich today has become a city with two faces, one being a successful financial business district and secondly a city with several cultural hotspots. The coexistence of these two worlds almost grazing resulted in the *cosmopolitan ambiance* of Zurich today.

The tension field of these two seemingly incompatible parties creates the vacuum of Stadtraum HB. On the east the central business district with the famous Bahnhofstrasse and the underground Schopville. Flanking north and south Kreis 4 [3.] and Kreis 5 [4.]; districts containing a lot of subculture and de-industrialized sites transformed into popular cultural hotspots. Closing the gap on the west is the Langstrasse [5.] also called 'Little Rio' by the locals, this street can be seen as some sort of counterbalance to Bahnhofstrasse. The population of the flanking districts and Langstrasse represent much cultural diversity statistically. Their way of life is a popular crowd puller.

_The current Master Plan for the location is by KCAP Rotterdam, offering building plots for a majority to offices and shops. The determent plots prescribe an invisible envelope; with mostly a maximum building height of 22 meter, at some important junctions 40 meters. Also this plan has had his share of resistance, the initial concept prescribed varying building heights up to 110 meters, 3 bridges [6.] over the tracks connecting Kreis 4 and 5, a lowered dug out square opening the underworld of shopville up to the public space above. We cannot conclude otherwise [without connecting a value judgment to it] that the current Master Plan is compromised.

_The goal of this project is to address the vacuum of the site. Which strategy can be applied to give the site back a *pulse*? How can the energies of the planners, protesters and activists be translated into physical architecture? Can architecture function as mediator in between al these tension fields and transform ideas into action?

Before plans and design proposals were made the site was analyzed in an *Off The Map* strategy. Because of its former function as Railway Yard the spurs of the location appeals to the imagination, in other words we could say these are the *presents* of the site, this project highlights 3 of ~~these~~ spur presents: the train tracks [7.], platforms 51-53 [8.] and the Control Cabin [9.] [architect: Max Voght].

_Pinpointing the present quality of the site gives us a *free architecture* were upon we can anchor minimal alterations complementing the already existing.

List of Books

Allen, Jennifer, Hans Ibelings, Olof Koekebakker, Ivan Nio and Gijs van Oenen, *Parasite Paradise, A Manifesto for Temporary Architecture and Flexible Urbanism*, Rotterdam: Nai, 2003

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Vidler, Anthony, *The architectural uncanny : essays in the modern unhomely*, London: MIT Press, 1992

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P u l s e

A story about capitalism and subculture in Zurich.

Graduation project: Franzo Di Pasquale
Committee: Jos Bosman, Michiel Dehaene, Martin Schneider

Location. History of Resistance

In Zurich's growing ambition since the sixties of becoming a *Metropolis* this site was seen as a high potential area for expansion. Due to lack of space in the densely built Altstadt *Railway Lands* and waterways were considered potential Real Estates for the growth of the city, this was long before de-industrialization.

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In the essay: *The Rise and Fall of Great Railway Station Redevelopments The Case of Eurogate / HB Sudwest*, Richard Wolff investigates the struggles behind and resistance against these development plans which led to the eventual impasse. In parts concluding the site has been *'under-used'* the last four decades despite its high potential.

"Eurogate was Switzerland's largest-ever real estate project. For more than 30 years, it was the focus of Zurich's development process. It symbolized the city's ambition to become a truly international metropolis and was bitterly opposed."

- Richard Wolff -

Context. Two Worlds

Zurich today has become a city with two faces, one being a successful financial business district and secondly a city with several cultural hotspots. The coexistance of these two worlds almost grazing resulted in the *cosmopolitan ambiance* of Zurich today.

The tension field of these two seemingly incompatible parties creates the vacuum of Stadtraum HB. On the east the central business district with the famous Bahnhofstrasse and the underground Schopville. Flanking north and south Kreis 4 [3] and Kreis 5 [4]; districts containing a lot of subculture and de-industrialized sites transformed into popular cultural hotspots. Closing the gap on the west is the Langstrasse [5] also called 'Little Rio' by the locals, this street can be seen as some sort of counterbalance to Bahnhofstrasse. The population of the flanking districts and Langstrasse represent much cultural diversity statistically. Their way of life is a popular crowd puller.

"This terrain and its desirable location has been the target of several large scale projects since the 1970s that were lauched but never realized. In contrast to the interim city, it could be said of this "network hub" in the centre of the city: so much planning, so little action."

(Source: Zurich Baut - konzeptionelle stadtebau 2007)

New Plan. Kees Christiaanse And Partners

The current Master Plan for the location is by KCAP Rotterdam, offering building plots for a majority to offices and shops, 400 houses for 1200 people, 2000 student places and parking for 700 cars. The determent plots prescribe an invisible envelope; with mostly a maximum building height of 22 meters, at some important junctions 40 meters.

Also this plan has had his share of resistance, the initial concept prescribed varying building heights up to 110 meters, 3 bridges [8] over the tracks connecting Kreis 4 and 5, a lowered dug out square opening the underworld of shopville up to the public space above. We cannot conclude otherwise (without connecting a value judgment to it) that the current Master Plan is compromised.

Vision. Present Presents

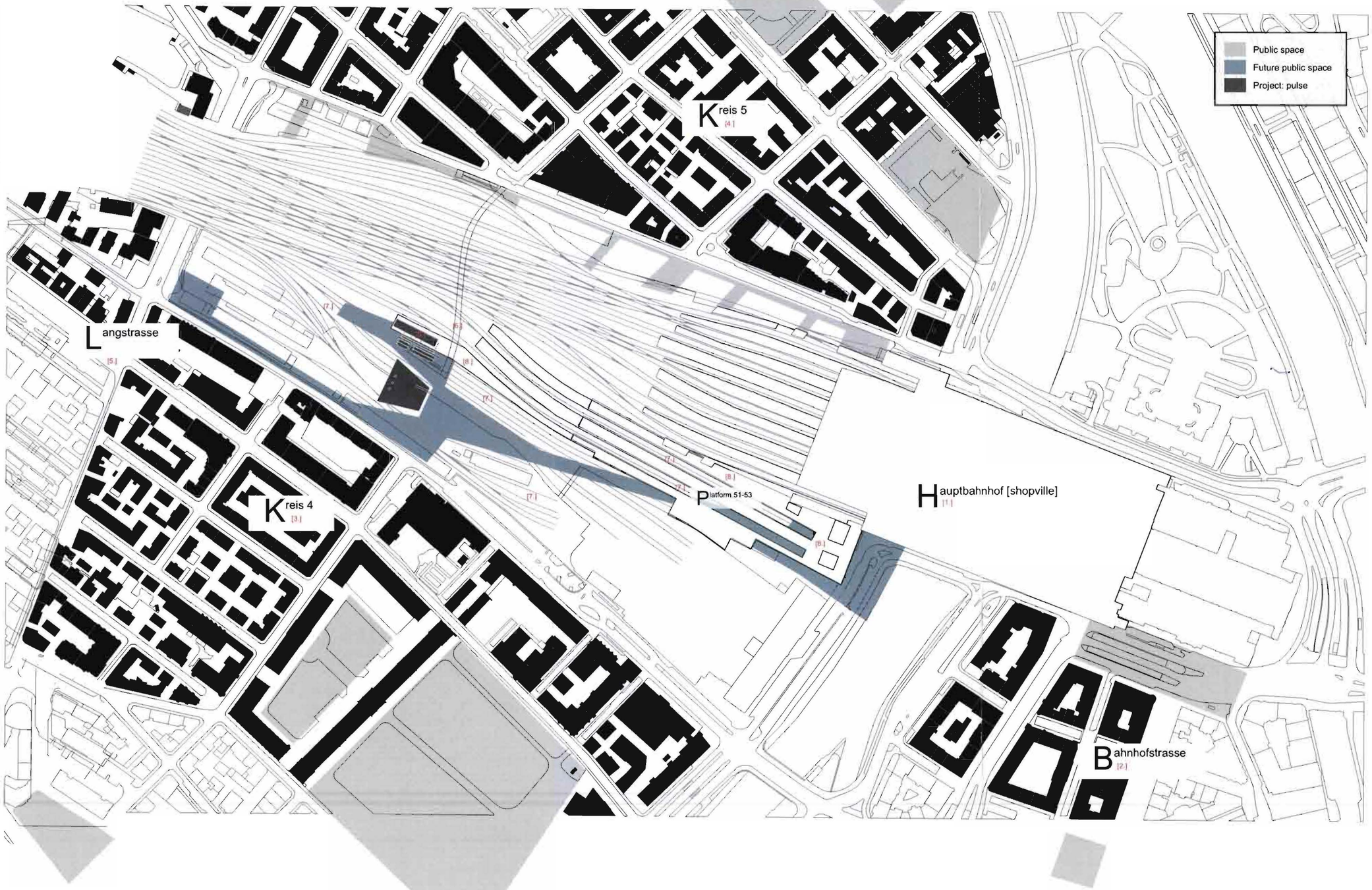
The goal of this project is to address the vacuum of the site. Which strategy can be applied to give the site back a *pulse*? How can the energies of the planners, protesters and activists be translated into physical architecture? Can architecture function as mediator in between all these tension fields and transform ideas into action?

Before plans and design proposals were made the site was analyzed in an *Off The Map* strategy. Because of its former function as Railway Yard the spurs of the location appeals to the imagination, in other words we could say these are the *presents* of the site, this project highlights 3 of these spur presents: the train tracks [7], platforms 51-53 [8] and the Zentralstellwerk [9] (architect: Max Vogt).

"Here we have an aesthetics of the borderland between chaos and order, the margin, the area of "catastrophe" where the breakdown of the system can equal enlightenment."

- Hakim Bey -

Pinpointing the present quality of the site gives us a *free architecture* were upon we can anchor minimal alterations complementing the already existing.



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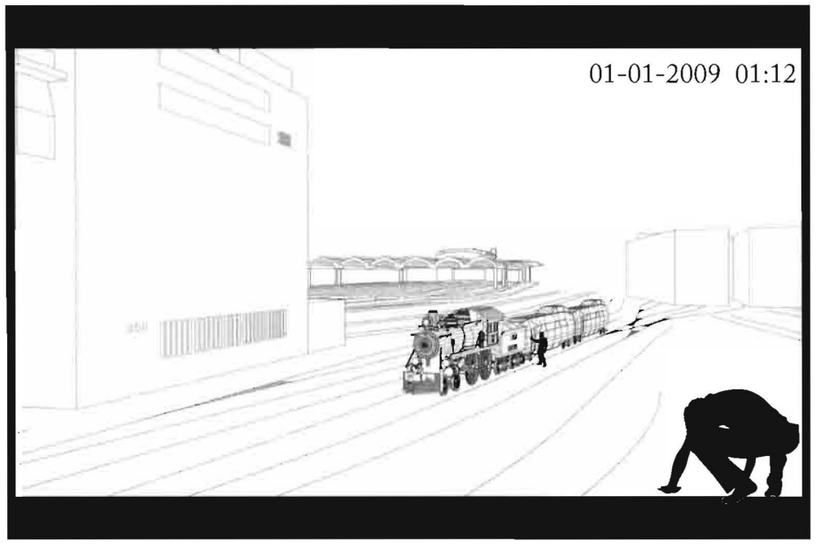
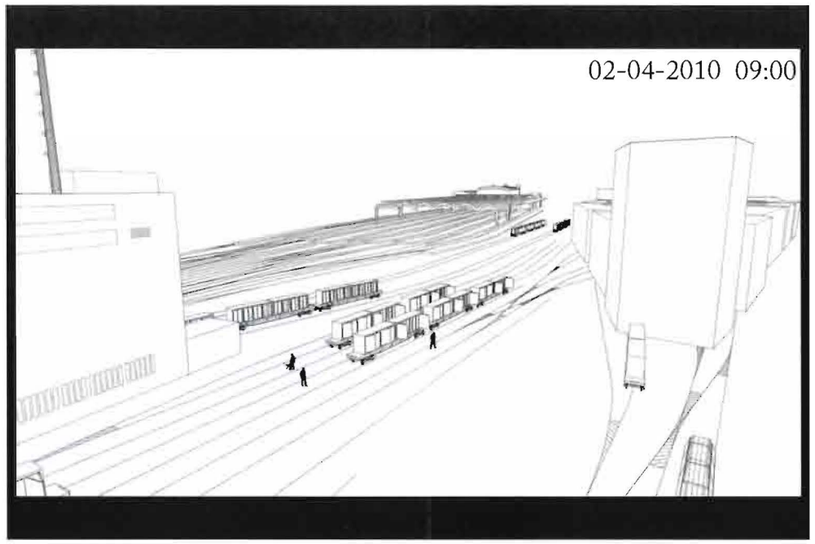
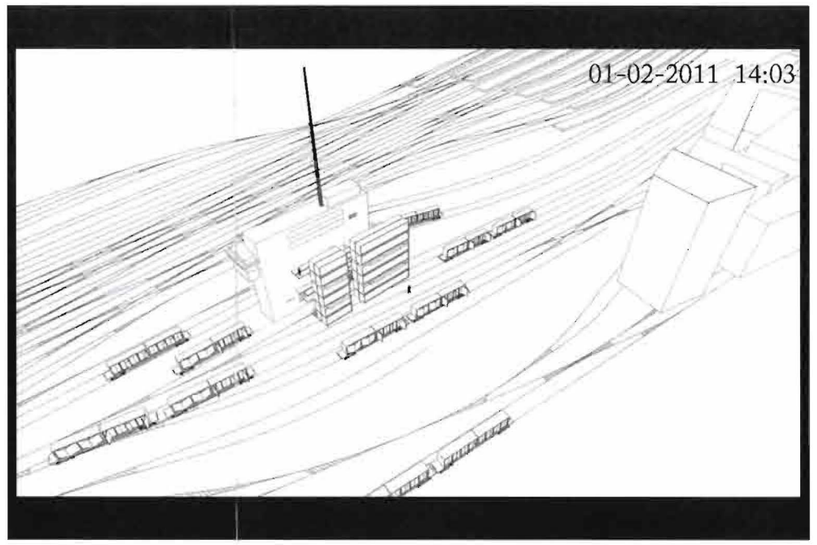


2009 A collective of about 50 people, with a bohemian lifestyle, squat a former railway yard in the center of Zurich. During the event abandoned train and freight wagons are converted into residences.

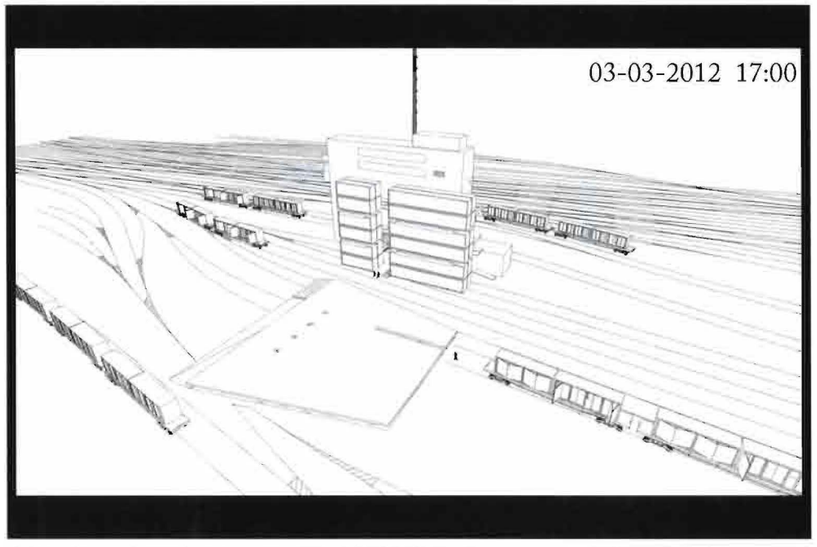


2010 After contested discourse, the municipality of Zurich tolerates the invasion, on the condition the collective will contribute actively to the cultural scene of Zurich. Friend architects support the cause by inventing a mobile building system which can be placed on the tracks.



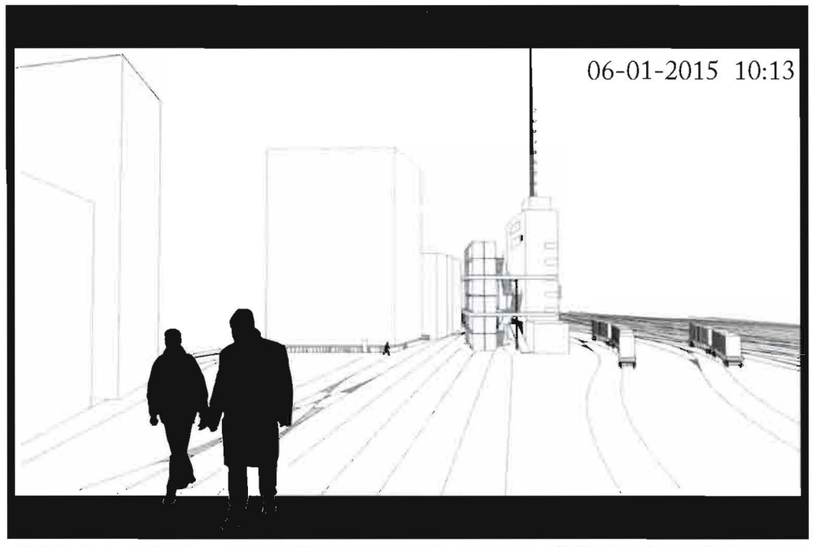
2011 During the first year the collective successfully organize a variety of cultural events, generating a positive impulse to the surrounding districts. The revenues are enough for the collective to earn a living.

The City Council decides to stimulate the cultural scene by making a plot available to house vest the collective more permanent.

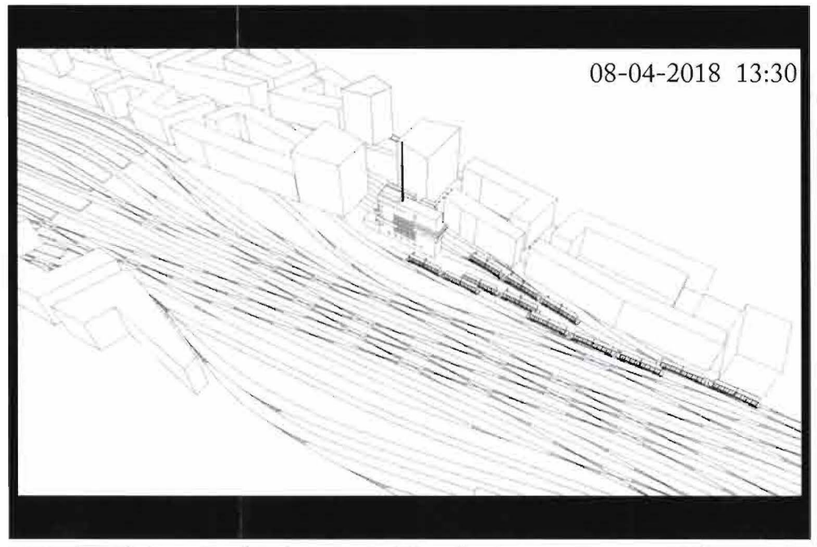


2012 Expanding developments of the KCAP masterplan begin to graze the activities of the collective. During negotiations the collective manages to make a deal, they are allowed to build a basement for work and storage space of 1000 m², where upon in a later phase offices can be built on top. As a result of the revenues, the collective is able to operate as their own real estate developer.

By cause of the phasing, the roof of the Basement can be used temporarily as a podium or other polyvalent uses. In addition to answer popular demand, area is reserved for indoor cultural happenings within the basement.



2015 On top of the basement a 40 meter high office building is added, highlighting the cross-over coexistence of project Pulse and the KCAP masterplan.



2018 The KCAP masterplan has reached its final stage. Because of its popularity place is reserved for the Encampment on the border of the site.

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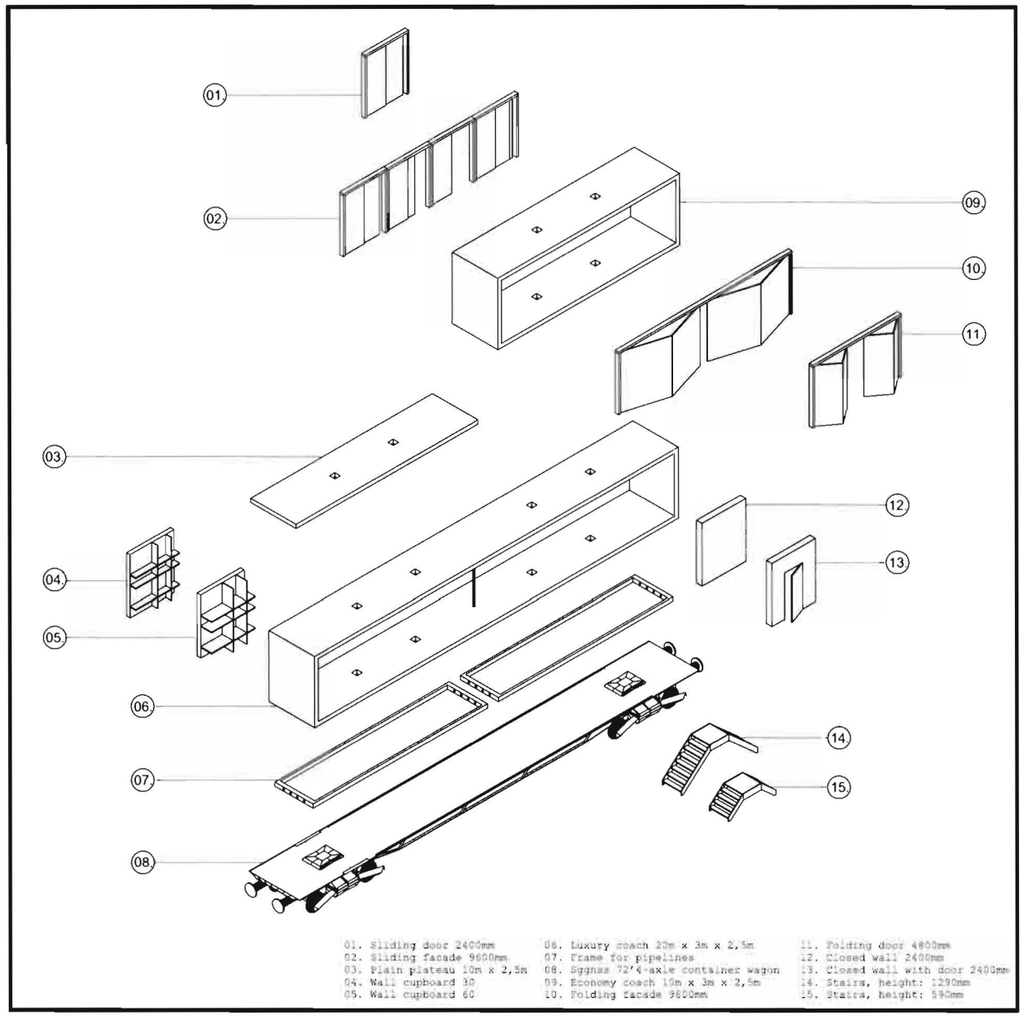
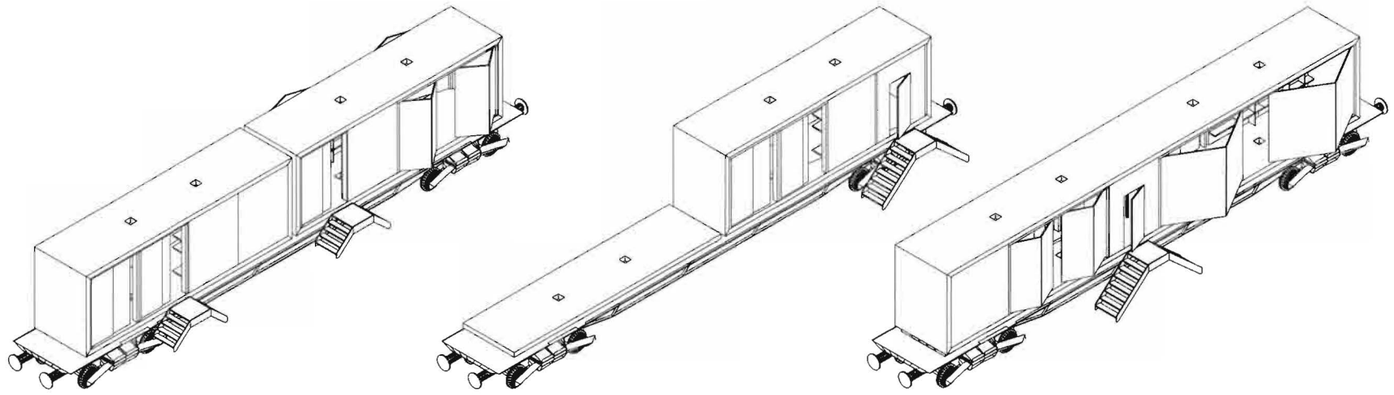
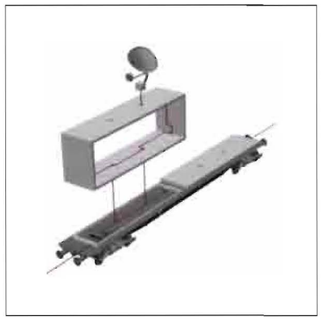


01. Sliding door 2400mm
02. Sliding facade 9600mm
03. Plain plateau 10m x 2,5m
04. Wall cupboard 30
05. Wall cupboard 60
06. Luxury coach 20m x 3m x 2,5m
07. Frame for pipelines
08. Sggmss 72'4-axle container wagon
09. Economy coach 10m x 3m x 2,5m
10. Folding facade 9600mm
11. Folding door 4800mm
12. Closed wall 2400mm
13. Closed wall with door 2400mm
14. Stairs, height: 1290mm
15. Stairs, height: 590mm

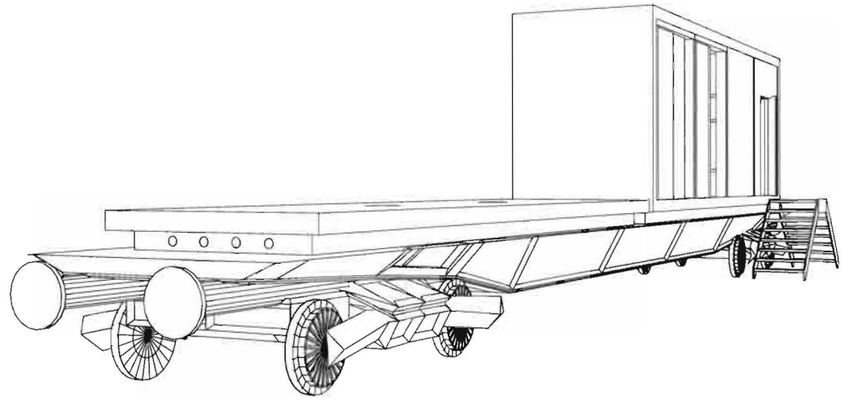
building system.



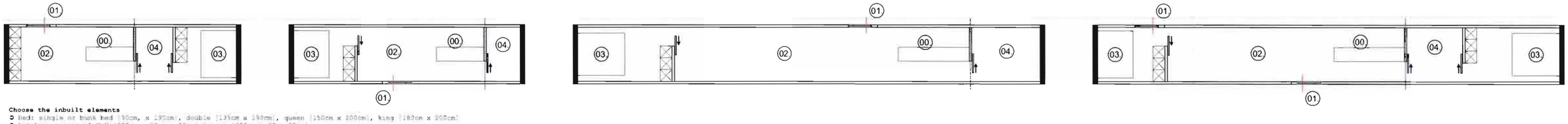
example configurations.



infra.



perspective.



Choose the inbuilt elements
- Bed: single or bunk bed (90cm, x 190cm), double (135cm x 190cm), queen (150cm x 200cm), king (180cm x 200cm)
- kitchen: economy LxWxH (200cm x 60cm x 90cm) luxury (300cm x 60 x 90cm)

00. Kitchen
01. **Entrance [dwelling]**
02. Livingroom
03. Bedroom
04. Bathroom

possible dwelling layouts.

P·u l s e

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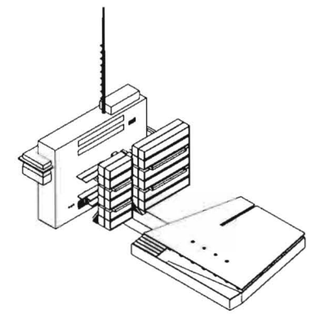
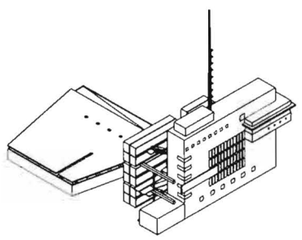
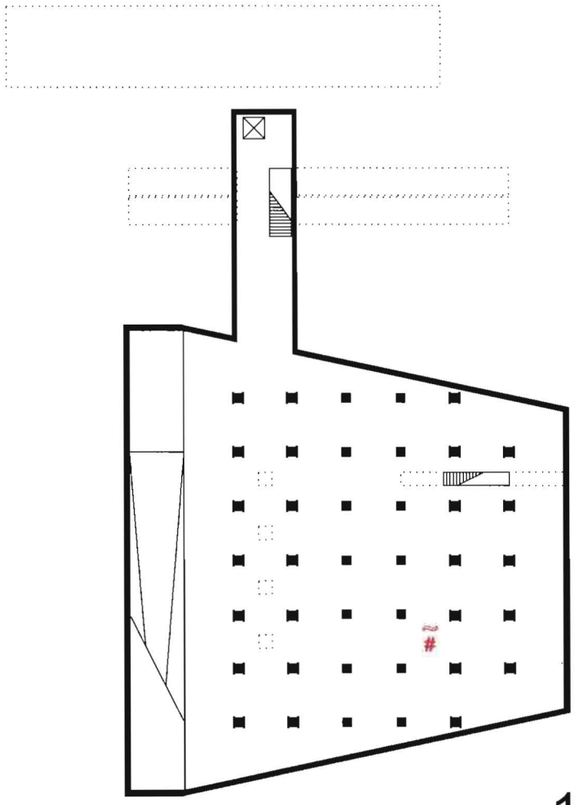
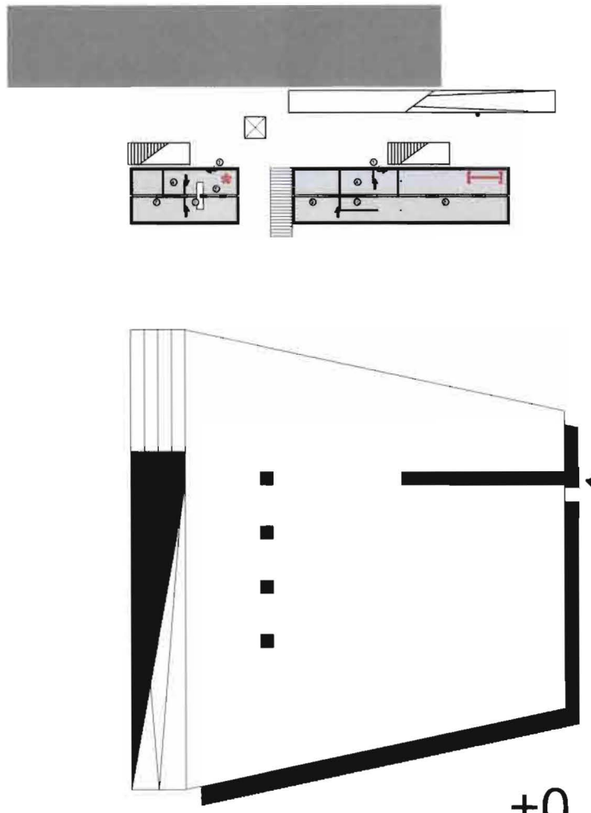




isometrics.





plans 1:200

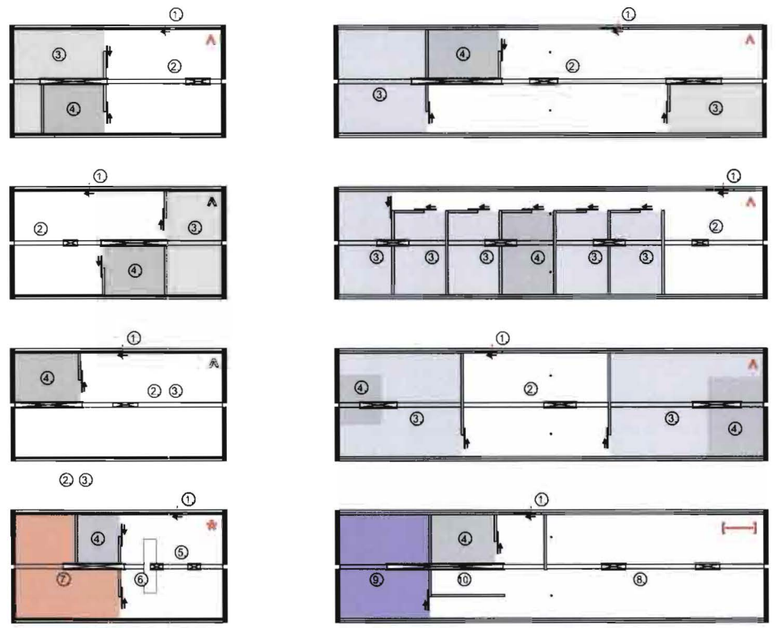
Beacon: collective housing 900 m2
_dwellings 750 m2 [total] max.50 people
_collective canteen/kitchen 100 m2
_technical service center 50 m2

Basement: work-and storage space 1000 m2
_event space 400 m2
_Work-and storage area 600 m2

01. **Entrance [dwelling]**
02. Livingroom
03. Bedroom
04. Bathroom

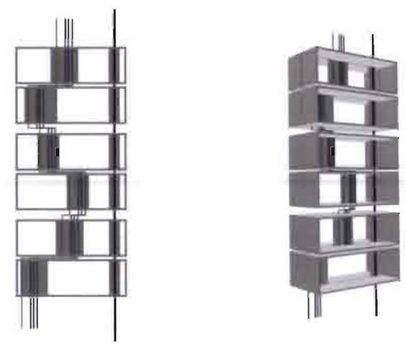
05. **Foyer [technical service center]**
06. Secretary desk
07. Office space

08. **Collective canteen**
09. Kitchen
10. Checkroom



possible layouts 1:100

plans 1:400



pipelines infra.

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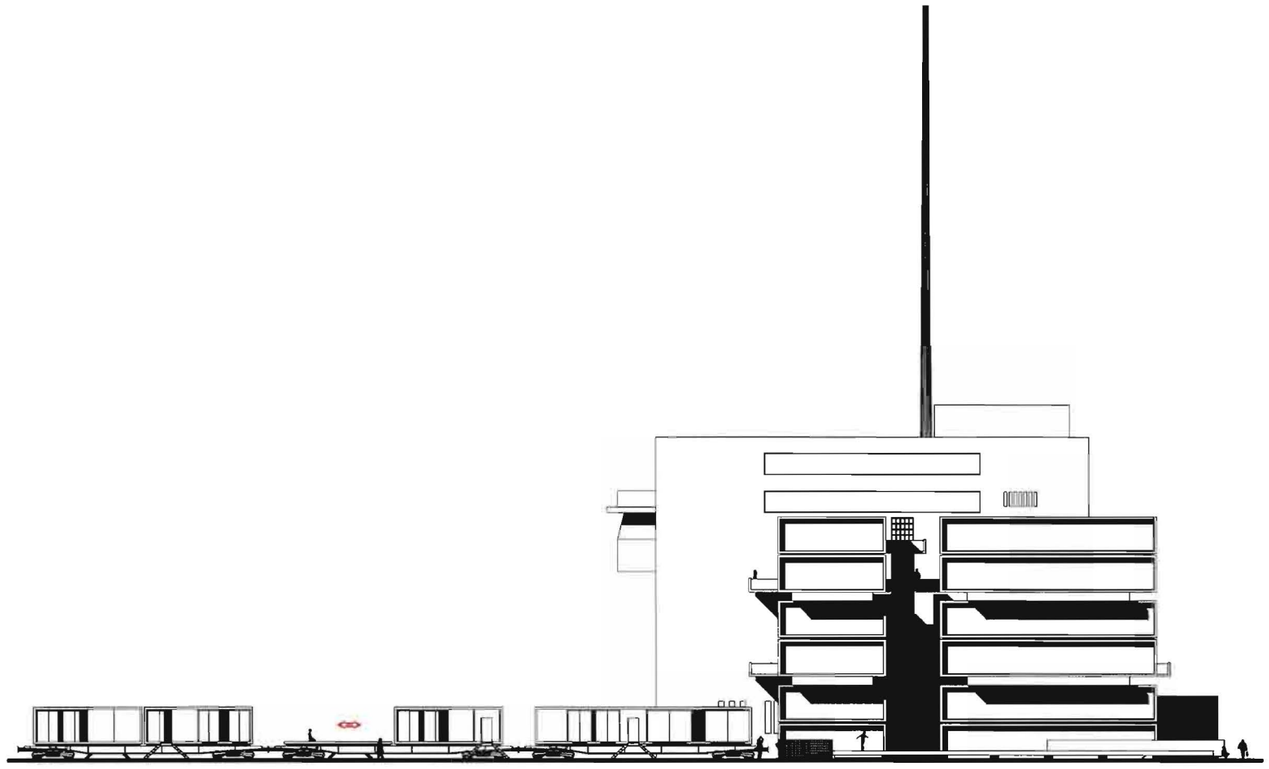
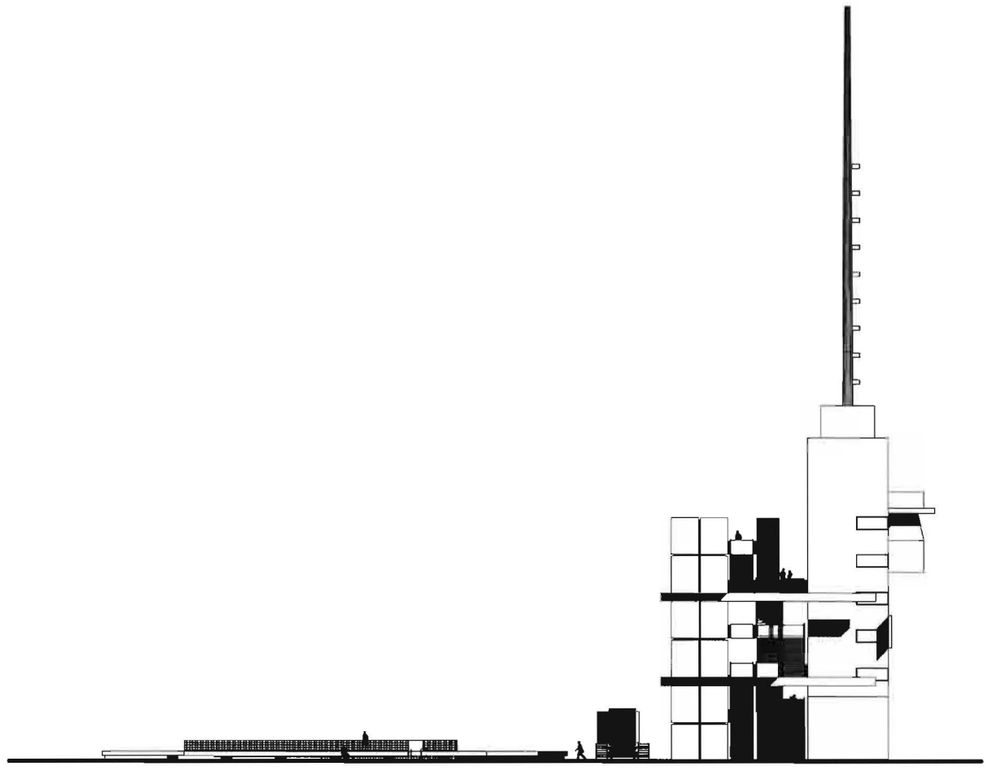
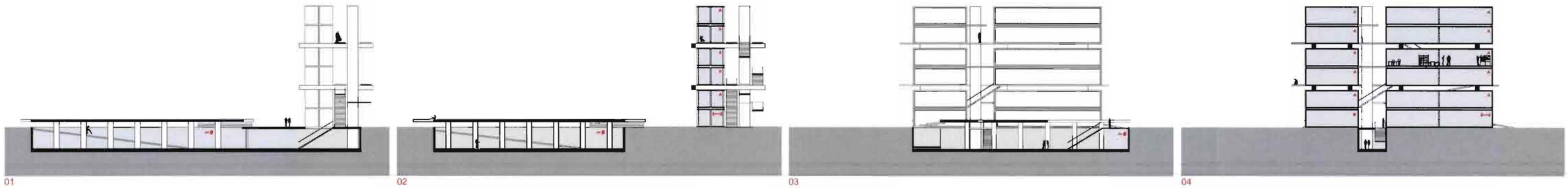
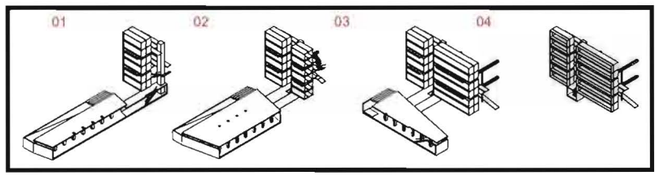


south elevation.



east elevation.

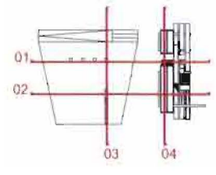




Beacon: collective housing 920 m2
dwellings 750 m2 (total) max.50 people
collective canteen/kitchen 100 m2
technical service center 50 m2

Basement: work-and storage space 2000 m2
event space 400 m2
Work-and storage Area 600 m2

Encampment: cultural breeding ground 30 units
guest stay
concerts
podia
workshops
festivals
etc.....



sections 1:400.