

THE DREAM  
APPLY  
CHALLENGE  
PROJECT

FACING UP TO THE CRISIS IN RESIDENTIAL LIVING

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# **THE DREAM – PLAY – CHALLENGE PROJECT**

FACING UP TO THE CRISIS IN RESIDENTIAL LIVING

Edited by  
Wiltrud Simbürger and Sarah Rivière

**jovis**



# **NORDIC GREETINGS**

In June 2021, the Nordic Embassies in Berlin had the pleasure of hosting the international symposium **DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE: the Future of Residential Living**. As part of the Women in Architecture Festival Berlin 2021, the event took place at the Felleshus, the common house of our embassies. The word 'felles' stands for togetherness and, in many ways, the shared building complex is a good example for our vision: its architecture indeed reflects a core theme of our strong Nordic cooperation - togetherness in diversity.

In that sense, we were happy to provide a suitable venue for a symposium in which togetherness played a central role in two respects: on the one hand, questions of community figured prominently when the participating group of architects, academics and planners - many of them from the Nordic region - discussed the future of housing. In order to

feel at home in a certain place, most people need a sense of belonging. In a series of thought-provoking panels and through a female lens, the symposium explored what role this need for togetherness plays for imagining, planning and building residential houses. On the other hand, the working format of the symposium itself was 'felles' in the best sense: with plenty of room for creative processes and playful takes on the topic, it created a collaborative space to develop ideas and to make sustainable professional contacts. We like to think of our Felleshus as exactly this kind of open space, where everyone can become part of the ongoing societal debate. This, of course, is only possible with the support of strong and dedicated partner organisations. Therefore, we want to thank the Women in Architecture Festival WIA Berlin 2021, for the cooperation, especially the organisers and initiators of the symposium: Sarah Rivière, Wiltrud

Simbürger and Daniela Urland. Thank you also to the Nordic Council of Ministers for the generous support.

We are excited to see what the future of residential living looks like and, in particular, what kind of visions female perspectives can offer.

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**Royal Danish Embassy**

ANNE SIPILÄINEN  
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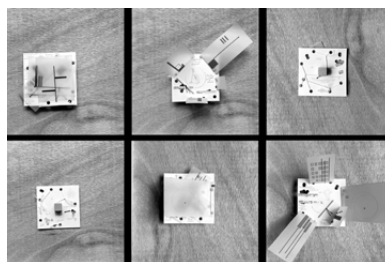
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# THE DREAM – PLAY – CHALLENGE PROJECT

## Facing up to the crisis in residential living

*Residential living is in crisis. Socially engaged architects find themselves trapped in an industry held hostage by structures predicated on short-term financial gain. An industry thus unable – or unwilling – to respond adequately to shifting demands. As a result, our built environment too often fails both the communities and the individuals that it purports to serve.*

*A home, a community and space to dream are human rights. To have a roof over one's head and to share common ground with others are necessities for a life from which dreams can be launched. But demands for homes that can support the diverse constellations in which people wish to dwell, as well as the individual lives we wish to lead, echo in the hollow space of late capitalism. Voices within the architectural profession are calling out for design that meets our changing needs, but – beyond the exclusive luxury sector – this call remains generally unrealised. And socio-political players, while surely aware of the signs of community breakdown highlighted by data on escalating levels of loneliness and a mental-health crisis of heart-breaking social cost, seem unable to instigate real change.*

*So, is architecture truly stymied in the face of these challenges? The history of early modernism tells of architects who tried to take their responsibilities seriously towards users of their spaces, but with limited tools at hand they struggled to meet social and ethical demands. Since then, we have learned to be sceptical of the idea of a sole architectural 'genius'*

*offering answers in the short-term, only to be faced with a new set of problems in the longer-term. But what other options are available?*

*DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE suggests a different game, setting up opportunities for equitable creative exchanges that go beyond traditional academic discourse. It aims to create spaces where concerned stakeholders can dream together, playfully developing alternative processes of co-creating a fairer and more vibrant built environment, and challenging industry players to get on board.*

*As the first expression of DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE, the Future of Residential Living symposium took place in Berlin in June 2021. It was conceived as a platform to enable feminist architects and industry professionals to face up to how we are housing – or failing to house – today's contemporary lives. Our aim was to build a space of creative exchange between individual protagonists with common concerns. DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE is part of a 'movement of socially engaged and often participatory feminist practice' that includes 'approaches which aim to transform or alter, by practicing "otherwise" or "otherhow"' (Rendell 2022, citing Doina Petrescu). Such practices do not, by definition, rest on certainties, and that is why, as the symposium opened on the morning of 24th June, we found ourselves optimistic and yet unsure as to what would arise here: just how generative might DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE become?*

## **OUTDATED DOMESTIC TROPES**

In 1978 Kerstin Dörhöfer criticised ongoing residential planning as predicated on the male working day, with life in the home oriented on supplying the main breadwinner with nutrition, relaxation, sleep, and the care of both body and clothing, as well as with affection and sex – all, she set out, ‘necessities’ to ensure the maintenance of an effective labour force. Meeting such demands, women primarily continued in their traditional domestic roles of housewife and mother, including even those women who had careers outside the home. Their input thus ensured both the daily reproduction of male labour as well as the generational reproduction of the workforce of the future. Yet in both roles, as Dörhöfer reminds us, women remained financially unacknowledged as well as socially undervalued (Dörhöfer, 1978).

In early 1980s Berlin women architects responded to the ongoing domination of male voices in planning the 1984/87 International Building Exhibition (IBA) by setting up the feminist organisation FOPA e.V. (Organisation for Feminist Architects and Planners). The IBA Berlin thematised housing, and FOPA's campaign for gender equality across the building profession naturally extended into residential planning and construction. Under pressure from women architects – both in FOPA and in the international UIFA (Union Internationale des Femmes Architectes) – the Berlin Senate and IBA management finally allocated the IBA Block 2 to be designed by women architects. And there, in the centre of Berlin, projects including Christine Jachmann's residential complex (completed in 1992) designed for emancipatory living came to fruition.

In parallel, a group of women architects set up the Feminist Design Collective in London in 1978. Later renamed *Matrix*, the Collective reclaimed female agency by engaging with the physical fabric

of their homes in an activist way, ‘shaping and adapting [their built environment] both at the level of the household and the community’ (Wall, 2017). This critique of the urban and domestic ‘man-made’ environment found expression both in such feminist dwelling practice and through writings and publications. While architectural discourse acknowledges such precedents for residing ‘otherwise’ the question remains: how much – in terms of dwellings being constructed today – has changed on the ground? Not much, it seems. To a major extent, both in terms of process and product, outdated hierarchical social and spatial models still extensively inform the architecture of residential living today.

On top of this, and accelerated by pandemic realities, public and private space increasingly overlap within our homes, not only in living rooms and kitchens but even in bedrooms and bathrooms. In fact, any space within the home may, at any moment, be drawn into a digital hub of engagement. In addition, in the face of a climate emergency the architectural profession is only slowly – too slowly – beginning to address how the design and construction of residential architecture can respond to the present crisis, including concerns about resourcing and carbon footprints.

Let us face the fact that we have hardly begun to address how to design homes that can properly accommodate these concatenated demands: redefined models of domesticity, struggling communities and precarious ecological conditions, together creating huge frictions for current modes of living. But, at the same time, the fundamental notion of the residential lures us with its echoes of stability and permanence, conjuring the desire for a home within a society that finds it more and more difficult to provide one. How can we design in response to such an array of challenges? How ambitious do we dare to be?



## **ARCHITECTURE AS THE SCENE OF THE CRIME**

To paraphrase our DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE-participant, Andrea Prins, our homes pinch our lives like badly-fitting shoes. They pinch us not only in terms of causing pain, but also in terms of pinching away from us other, potentially more vibrant, lives. Because residential life is just that: life, and as such it is, by definition, ever-changing. Any architecture designed through and for static modalities is an architecture designed to halt the changes that ongoing life involves. Faced with extensive stagnation in the building industry and the architectural profession it becomes difficult to imagine – let alone realise – different methodologies of design, procurement and construction.

We know this: just as the constellations within which we wish to dwell shift, and as the programmes we demand of our dwelling spaces transform, our design methodologies for these homes must also change. But how can we instigate such change?

## **BECOMING 'AT HOME' IN THE WORLD**

How we reside at home, how we reside in our work and how we reside in the world can no longer be separated. The climate crisis and the interlinked pandemic force us to take a hard look at how we inhabit space, and to acknowledge that our current modes of dwelling have wider and even frightening consequences. Architecture based on the exploitation of assumed unlimited resources is unethical, and the short-termism that is hard-coded into that approach has become brutally clear. We need to start to inhabit this planet that both houses us and sustains our lives in a very different way.

When we discuss how we can feel at home in terms of residential living we have to address how we can equally feel at home in our working lives. DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE suggests that different methodologies for

future residential living, other ways of practicing design and new understandings of how we come together within our world should, all three, be developed in parallel.

## **DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE: AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT, THINK IT AND DREAM IT ANEW**

In her article 'Women Architects and Architectural Activism,' Lori Brown, architect, academic, and co-founder of ArchitXX, the feminist organisation for change, describes how, 'increasingly we envision a discipline that supports and celebrates who we are, how we work, and the world we seek to construct – creating a different future altogether' (Brown, 2017, p.271).

Within this framework, questions of who takes part and how we work together become integral. We cannot construct change in the architectural profession without first enabling a representative set of voices to come together to work in a way that suits them, that is, in a way that can support the unique *modus operandi* of each participant.

Just as we are constricted if we are forced to live as we lived in the past, we are equally constricted when we discuss and interact through inherited processes and practices without questioning them. Alternative forms of exchange, modes of connection that are differently informed, and more generous constellations of voices, enable us to imagine more nuanced expressions of who we are and how we work within our industry. Architectural and urban space is informed, stamped and integrally moulded by the processes and the voices that take part in producing it; the 'who' and the 'how' crystallise into physical form, becoming the environment within which our communities either thrive or fail.

With the DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE project we work out one possible way to



*maintain equitable voices and generative processes, and then we play it out in practice. The symposium and the present publication have enabled forty architectural practitioners and researchers from across the world to come together in such a way. The results of this event are gathered in the present publication. We hope it shows how DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE is a place of cheerful exchange that can give form to alternative, joyfully unexpected, and previously impossible dreams.*

*By playing them out in active exchange through a shared project it becomes possible to invent and imagine different cooperative futures. It makes real our parallel dreams of what could become possible in future residences: not as places designed primarily for respite, and not as places that support only some members of the group while stifling others, but as places of safer, more respectful and challenging exchange based on real equity of voice for all involved.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

*We would not have been able to organise the symposium without the generous support of our partners at the Nordic Embassies. In particular, we would like to thank Birgitte Tovborg Jensen, Cultural Attaché of the Royal Danish Embassy in Berlin, for her constant encouragement and joyful collaboration. We would also like to thank our partners at n-ails Berlin who organised the WIA Festival Berlin 2021, and gratefully acknowledge the financial contributions of the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Lotto Stiftung which enabled both the symposium and the present publication.*

*We are grateful to Katarina Bonnevier, artist, architect and researcher, who joined our team as co-host, leading the panel on collectivity. We also warmly thank Daniela Urland and Josepha Fliedner, our colleagues on the symposium organisation team. Thank you to Elsa Kuno and Anja Matzker for their wonderful work: Elsa as editorial designer of this publication, as well as for running the publicity for the symposium; and Anja for the symposium graphic design.*

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*by Sarah Rivière &  
Wiltrud Simbürger,  
Berlin/Hamburg,  
January 2023*

# The Dream – Play – Challenge Methodology

## When we **dream**...

*...the limitations of the 'real' world can be put aside and another way of doing things can be envisioned. As the given constraints of one reality are allowed to dissolve, possible trajectories for the future can be made possible. This is generative: it gives licence to idealism. Some of us share ideals for a different way of living, for others our dream is to join a constructive exchange in a welcoming, equitable and intersectional context. Still more of us dream of having our voices heard, or our work engaged with on a fair basis. Living a dream, if only for a brief time, can strengthen and empower those who are beginning to lose hope. Getting a glimpse of another reality, another way of coming together, can be essential to the ability to, as Sara Ahmed says, 'keep on going on' (Ahmed, 2017).*

*And a dream is both personal and communal. Springing from past experiences of hardly-daring-to-hope as well as but-that's-just-not-fair, a dream rarely conceives the world in a self-serving way. Instead, dreams are so often social and generous, touching on how things could be kinder and more just, and on how caring and equitable the world could be. There is much courage in daring to dream.*

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## Let's **play**...

*...there are rules, but they are different to those of everyday life. Play is fun, but as every child knows, it is never a trivial thing. When we play we set up given terms of engagement and play them through to see what evolves. We become matched protagonists, all committing to the same codex, taking up individual positions to jostle with each other in creative ways. A game locates itself apart from everyday life for a limited time: it sets out a framework and an etiquette for an exchange, initiates a certain equity between players, and then it sets the ball rolling. What can come out of this? Anything is possible. Once we start to dream, playful processes can keep our dreams alive, filling them out into less abstract forms. In the enabling space of play dissenting protagonists compete without danger, often bringing welcome results to light.*

## A **challenge** can be positive...

*A challenge can mean quietly challenging oneself to act in a new way, or it may push us to unite with others to set out a shared dissent. In organising the symposium and the publication we put the onus not only onto ourselves but also onto every participant to step up, to communicate their message and to raise their voice. This is voice beyond the acoustic: a voice can be raised through drawing, singing, writing a letter, playing a board game – in response to a challenge any medium can be used to raise a voice.*

*Both the symposium and this publication are, in themselves, a challenge. They set out a challenge to our architectural profession to bring together more representative voices from our communities in more creative ways, in the hope that a more fitting residential future has a chance to come to life.*





## Intersectional feminist exchange through generosity and demands

*The Dream-Play-Challenge project is grounded in our ambition to perform architectural practice and exchange through inclusion, equity and mutual respect. As part of this project we set up the symposium as a shared space where each and every one of us feels able to exist in full. As only through lived processes where we all feel that we belong, can we enable a built environment where everyone, as individuals and as part of our own communities, can feel strengthened and 'at home'.*

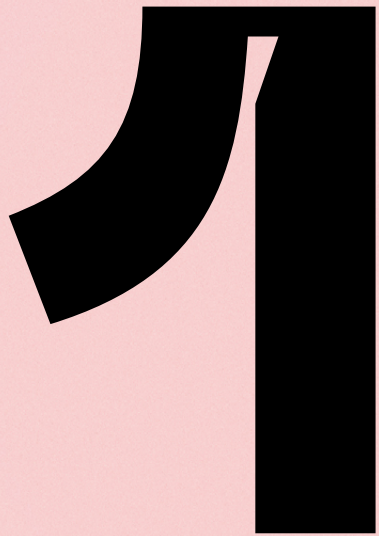
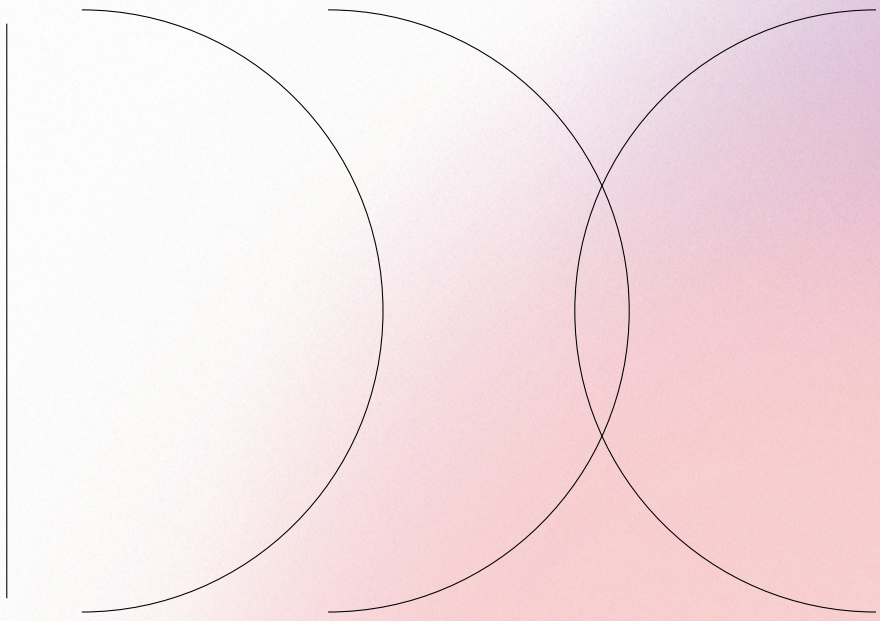
*Referencing Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality, we recognise that every person on this planet brings a unique set of talents and experiences to the global conversation, but also lives with an equally unique set of delineations to their power, opportunity, and voice. So, as we meet to forge commonalities, we also prioritise difference. The driving concepts of commonality and difference highlight how we are playing out intersectional awareness in two ways: through generosity and demand.*

*Intersectional feminist exchange involves the generous mutual care that comes with acknowledging shared ground and ambitions; but we must also go further to combine the space of kindred empathy with the space of challenge, where we make demands of ourselves and of others.*


*As if what each of us has to say is unique, then each of us must take responsibility to voice our particular message.*

**SO, STEP UP!**









PANEL I

## Collectivity – Dreams and challenges

Moderator Katarina Bonnevier

Respondents Shivani Chakraborty and Verena von Beckerath

*Is it naively utopian to dream of dwelling collectively? What is the role of the architect within this dream? The idea that a 'genius' architect can provide a top-down spatial solution for happy-ever-after communal living has rightly been discredited, but what alternatives do we really have?*

*There is value in those commonalities of experience enabled by collective dwelling; this dream is worth pursuing and even holds the potential to transform lives. But how can we maintain both dreams and realism, continuing to strive for the pleasures of collective life, while also confronting the dangers that limited resources, collective responsibilities and commercial pressures bring?*

*As feminist architects we step up as negotiators, enablers and participants within this field, looking to maintain an awareness for all those directly or indirectly impacted by a project. We realise that the richness of the architecture of collective life can be found in a more nuanced performance of the architectural process at every stage. And so together we delve into the tools available for maintaining such collective processes and the resources that such work demands.*



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## Katarina opened with a game...

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**Rules:**

*Think of a place which is the best place ever for you at this moment. Where on this earth would you like to be right now? Which place does your body most need? Think of a place where you really feel you belong.*

**Goal:**

*By sharing our dream spaces we give every participant a voice in the room. We build a collaborative space in which everyone can feel that they belong.*

**Method:**

*Repeat everyone else's place first, before adding your own.*



**Players:**

**Katarina Bonnevier • Shivani Chakraborty • Verena von Beckerath  
Anwyn Hocking • Simge Gülbahar • Ioanna Piniara • Anna Hope**

Player 1 Katarina\_\_\_\_\_ *My dream place for today is on the **shore of Sqorna in Southern Sweden.***

Player 2 Shivani\_\_\_\_\_ *Katarina's dream place for today is on the **shore of Sqorna, Southern Sweden.**  
Mine is also on the **seaside, with mountains behind.***

Player 3 Verena\_\_\_\_\_ ***On the shore of Sqorna, and on a shore with mountains at the back,** and my place would be an **imagined garden.***

Player 4 Anwyn\_\_\_\_\_ ***The shore of Southern Sweden, the seaside with mountains behind, an imagined garden.**  
My dream place is **my grandparents' house along the beach in Queensland, Australia.***

Player 5 Simge\_\_\_\_\_ ***On the shore of Sqorna, the coast with mountains behind, an imagined garden, the grandparents' house.**  
My place is at the **seaside of the Aegean.***

Player 5 Ioanna\_\_\_\_\_ ***The shore of Sqorna, the seaside with the mountains at the back, the imagined garden, the grandparents' house in Australia, and the seaside of the Aegean** which is very familiar to me.  
But at this particular moment I would pick **Berlin, a summer club on the Spree.** This is a place where I have lived before, a place I have in my heart, and I regret that I am not able to be there physically today.*

Player 6 Anna\_\_\_\_\_ *Well, I was thinking, great, I get to go last, but then I realised I have to remember everyone's dream place!  
So, we have the **shore of Sqorna, the coast with the mountains in the background, an imagined garden, the grandparents' house on the beach in Queensland, the coast of the Aegean, and a summer club in Berlin.**  
And my place for today would be lying in **my hammock on my balcony.** That is my favourite place.*

Panel I	COLLECTIVITY – DREAMS AND CHALLENGES
Author	<b>Anwyn Hocking</b> University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

## SOCIAL ROMANTICISM

# The lived experience of a co-living community

Human connection is a fundamental and pervasive desire, yet one undeniably fraught with **challenges**.

Schopenhauer used hedgehogs to illustrate this very point. In the winter, he supposed, hedgehogs sought the warmth of others, but they couldn't avoid hurting each other with their sharp spines (Schopenhauer, 1851). The hedgehog dilemma advocates for a balance between community and the individual. Models of collective living, including co-living, are uniquely positioned to foster both community and individuality. Yet as the concern around loneliness intensifies with the rise of solo living (Snell, 2017) and the social consequences of COVID-19 (Groarke et al., 2020), it is important to consider the role co-living plays in bridging these contrasting needs and the value of designing for not only connection, but also solitude and reflection.

The emergence of the commercial co-living model across urban centres, particularly in the UK and Europe, reflects the unprecedented rise in solo living (Snell,

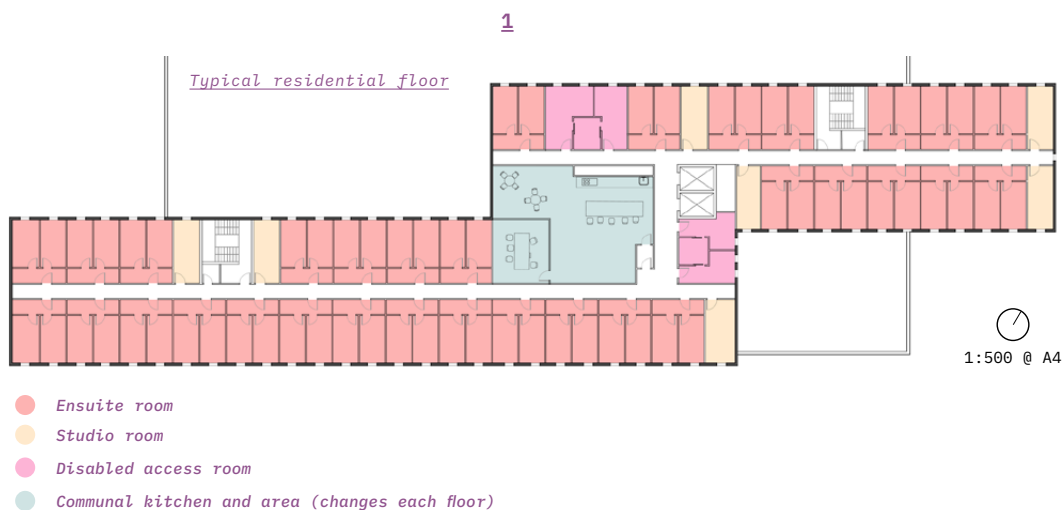
2017, p.7). This build-to-rent residential model offers solo dwellers – those living alone without friends, partners or children – a subscribeable lifestyle including fully-furnished small private rooms, communal spaces, amenities, services as well as community events and activities. Alongside the rise in solo living runs the sociocultural romanticisation of community (Hocking, 2020) and the so-called loneliness epidemic (Greater London Authority, 2019). In 1977, sociologist Richard Sennett described the normative belief in the good of social interaction as the 'ideology of intimacy' (p.259) which reinforces and emphasises the importance of community. As he described, 'the reigning belief today is that closeness between persons is a moral good' (1977, p.259), warning that we have become 'social romantics' (1977, p.221) in hoping that community will be the solution to a plethora of social and urban ills. This observation continues to ring true in urban

discourses as well as self-help literature (Hari, 2018; Pinker, 2014). Indeed, in the case of collective living, the conversation tends to favour positive narratives of potential socioeconomic benefits over the interpersonal difficulties and challenges inherent in living closely with others (Tummers, 2016, p.2023). This cultural celebration of togetherness has birthed the presumption that merely maximising social encounters will ameliorate loneliness and restore social cohesion (Snell, 2017, p.22).

Following this logic, past research on the architecture of traditional forms of collective living has focused quantitatively on design features that increase frequency of social interaction (Hocking, 2020). Williams' (2005) oft-cited study, for instance, analysed two communities to determine the link between design principles and the degree of social interaction. The study affirmed other research suggesting that limiting private space increased social interaction where kitchen and laundry facilities were removed from private units. In line with this thinking, the architecture of many commercial co-living buildings minimises private space in favour

of maximising communal space to increase incidental social interactions. Consequently, despite limited research on the lived experience of such residential design, emerging commercial co-living models have been touted as a potential solution to urban loneliness (Kichanova, 2019, p.10).

My research sought to address this limitation by qualitatively exploring the lived residential experience of one of London's largest and most established commercial co-living buildings, *The Collective Old Oak (TCOO)* (Hocking, 2020). The 10-storey building in North West London accommodates 550 people in fully furnished micro-units (fig 1 and 2), which are supplemented by an array of collective spaces across the building (PLP Architecture, 2016). Between January and May 2020, I conducted site visits and semi-structured interviews with ten residents. In using a method of *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, my research did not seek to generalise the empirical experience of solo dwellers in co-living environments, but rather theorise the implications of my ten participants' experiences at *TCOO* on contemporary notions of community.



## **THE LIVED EXPERIENCE**

The importance of private space was a central theme in my interviews with residents. With fully furnished rooms and regulations around use of space, a sense of being expected to live minimally was common, with one participant moving possessions into storage and another feeling forced to sell possessions on eBay. Beyond the practical difficulties of storage, a more prominent narrative emerged of the wellbeing challenges of the body in confined private space. The room size provides space for a body glued to a laptop, asleep, or showering, it cannot physically accommodate a moving body. Many participants described not being able to stretch or do yoga in their room, which they preferred to do alone. For others, in not having enough space to paint, draw, even silver craft, they felt stifled in their creative pursuits.

As one participant said;

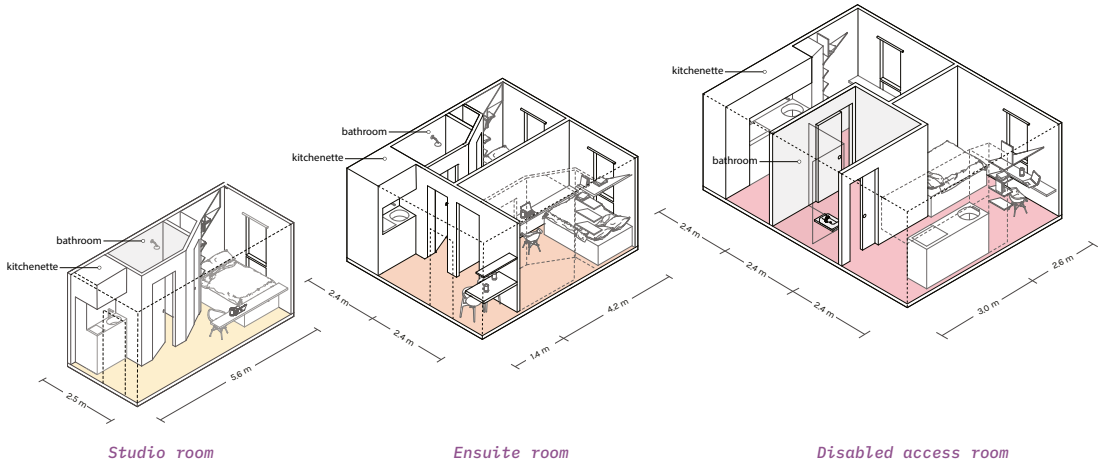
*'I do a lot of craft at home and all I need is a table, but I don't think I would have been able to do it at The Collective. So [the room size] limits your ability ... to do other activities in your room ... if you do those things for your wellbeing because you need a creative outlet or relaxation, you can't do it in there.'*

The tension of the minimised private realm continued at the spatial intersections between

private and communal, as residents' desires for privacy conflicted with the compulsory togetherness of the architecture. For instance, participants described the unwanted intrusion of noise and smells from their neighbours, and participants who shared ensuite rooms were quick to perceive misbehaviour in their room mates, leading to conflict, avoidance and an unlikely environment to create friendships. Within the threshold between private and communal, rather than facilitating social connection, the presence of other residents often interfered with individuals' daily habits, creating tensions in what many participants would prefer to be a purely private realm.

In considering the communal spaces, a participant's comment that *The Collective* is 'dealing with 500 people's different perspectives of what community living is' seems exactly right – what exactly is community? Despite over a century of sociological debate as to what community is and whether it exists, three characteristics do seem to emerge across the literature; **1**) identification with place, **2**) common ties, for instance, to purpose or experience, and **3**) regular social interaction, which ideally should be emotional, supportive and enduring (Driskell & Lyon, 2002; Hillery, 1955; Rubin, 1969, Tönnies, 1912/2001). To some extent, TCOO does provide opportunities for these three characteristics of community. First,





a place can be readily identified as the building itself. However, the second element of common ties or purpose is less easily identified. Participants described how a shared purpose was difficult to feel or create amongst residents as residents are motivated to move in for a diversity of reasons and often without knowing any of their 549 neighbours.

Indeed, the communal spaces and the density of residents provides the social environment for the third element of community – regular social interaction (*fig 3 shows a participant's daily experience*). Such contact is certainly a vital requirement for creating emotional, supportive and enduring relationships. However, forming close enduring relationships takes time through the gradual accumulation of intimacy and shared experience (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p.500). While some residents are able to form long-term, meaningful relationships, as the average tenancy at TCOO is six months, what often characterises relationships is transience. Regardless of this, participants often reported finding value in the relationships they formed at TCOO. Most participants described not expecting 'anything from the friendships,' rather 'you just enjoy people's company.' Others also described the friendliness and sense of welcome they felt from the staff at reception.

Gender played a notable role in the experience of communal spaces. Perceptions of safety and experiences of gender-based violence and harassment continue to be a significant concern for women and gender-diverse people across urban landscapes (Beebeejaun, 2009). Indeed, the younger female participants affirmed this in their discussions of past housing experiences and noted the attractiveness of the security and surveillance provided by TCOO; a narrative which was missing from participants' motivations for moving in. The disparate gendered experience also manifest within the building itself, as captured by the vastly different experiences of the communal sauna. While for male identifying participants, the sauna was viewed as a great place to visit at the end of the day, for several female participants it was seen as an uncomfortable and unsafe place where others would openly proposition them. This experience bled into other communal spaces, too, forcing several female participants to withdraw from social events and avoid certain communal areas within TCOO. In bringing such gendered experiences into the interior of the building, the domestic realm became more limited for those who did not have the same access and freedom to communal spaces.



## **AN ISOLATED COMMUNITY**

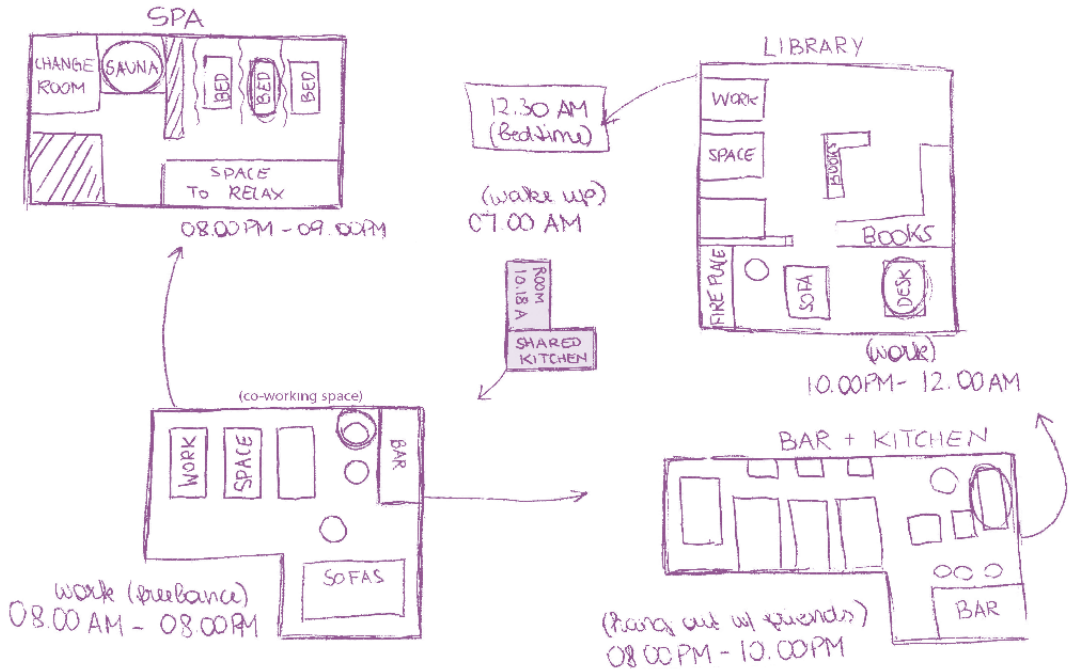
In undertaking this research during a period of quarantine, the normal density and conditions of transient occupancy were able to be compared to conditions of lower-density and relative occupant stability. During the lockdown in early 2020 about a fifth of the residents (100–150) remained and social distancing measures limited the number of people allowed in communal spaces. Socially, participants felt this reduced the community to a ‘more manageable level’, in comparison to the ‘intensity’ of the normal full-occupancy conditions. The remaining participants described connecting more with others than ever before. For one participant the lockdown allowed him to feel ‘more at home in many ways since lockdown than before,’ and another described that the lockdown ‘has been the best thing ever.’ With fewer people, no new residents and the restrictions of lockdown, people were largely confined to the building and, as a result, were more willing and able to spend time with one another with, as one participant put it, ‘no excuse to run off.’

## **THE DANGERS OF SOCIAL ROMANTICISM**

Whilst the co-living environment offered opportunities for socialisation, the participants at *TCOO* appeared to lack an integrated sense of community. The described experiences of residents and the comparison allowed by COVID-19 suggests that the nature of the community at *TCOO* is largely shaped by a lack of common purpose, limited tenancy periods and maximised density.

As the trend toward solo living continues to rise globally alongside interest in new modes of living together, it is foreseeable that a greater diversity of individuals, motivated by both social and economic factors, will see co-living as a viable option. The argument for ample private space to support a balance between solitude and socialisation becomes all the more urgent when considering these predicted increases. Concerningly, the new *London Plan* (GLA, 2019) sets no minimum standard for co-living room units, outlining just that they ‘should be appropriately sized to be comfortable and functional for a tenant’s needs’ (p.236). We as architects, theorists and city builders, therefore, need not be ‘social romantics’ (Tönnies, 1912/2001) in confining the individual and encouraging undesired and compulsory conviviality, but rather we must spatially acknowledge a more nuanced spectrum of daily rhythms and personal preferences, as well as recognise the everyday geographies of different identities in the residential environment.

## Participant's daily routine sketch



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Panel I	COLLECTIVITY - DREAMS AND CHALLENGES
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# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN TURKEY

## The viewpoint of Turkish female architects

***Equalitarian voices in society put the issues of women's rights and the right to housing together when discussing the process of residential development. This study aims to show the current expectations of residential space from the perspective of female architects. In this context, housing projects designed by female architects in Turkey from 1980 onwards were assessed through the concepts of neighbourhood and personalisation.***

At the beginning of the Republican era in Turkey a political shift led to many social-revolutionary attempts, including a new view of housing production based on traditional housing knowledge. The evolution of housing can be used to emancipate women because of the specific role they play in society (Kan Ülkü, 2018). Their role, both as users who spend their lives indoors and as designers, contributes to the development of residential space. The study is therefore motivated by the relationship between the evolution of women's rights and housing.

Women served the modernisation and growth of society by fighting in revolutions and for enlightenment in the Republican era (1935–1970) (Görgül, 2018). The first female architects became visible at that time with Leman Tomsu, Münevver Belen, Mualla Anhegger and Harika Söylemezoğlu, although compared to their male associates they remained in the shadows of the discipline (Erkarslan, 2007). After the 1980s, the emancipation of women led to reform protests that enabled them to free themselves from the bond of male-dominated structures. Women started to fight for their

rights and to open up to organised movements. They also began to participate in architectural projects as freelancers, architects in government institutions, academics and so on. Today, nearly half of the professionals in the discipline are women; however, only 35% of female architects in Turkey have actively participated in the profession (Sunay, 2018).

In fighting for equal rights in society, housing is another crucial topic, in parallel with women's emancipation. Over the two decades (1935–1955) of development of the new regime, industrial and agricultural production was promoted in the country; thus, mass production of housing began to meet the demands of working families. Standard plans were used to produce mass housing blocks in order to meet urgent housing needs. In addition, conservative tastes and a 'live in' style were demonstrated in female architects' projects (Erkarslan, 2007).

In 1950–1980 the need for housing increased due to migration into cities. 'Gecekondu', illegal and rapid construction, was a consequence of this uncontrolled rise in urban population. Renting the units in

existing apartments to new city residents provided the solution to the housing shortage; thus the housing industry focused on producing 'apartman' blocks. In these units, the technological development of domestic equipment creates new spatial needs in the type of house plans. Based on those needs, interior spaces run by women changed and expanded. In addition to the domination of women in domestic space, they were also the main target of marketing on housing projects in advertisements from 1950–1980.

After 2000, the housing industry in Turkey changed in scale. Although the apartment is one of the archetypes of Turkish housing construction, the percentage of apartments realised by women architects is lower than for other housing types. In this framework, the study aims to explore housing development after 1980 through the perspective of female architects who led architectural project teams, either with a partner or individually.

### **A CHANGE IN THE MEANING OF THE HOUSE**

At the beginning of the Republican era, we see housing projects in Turkey beginning to improvise with a different representation of the concepts of neighbourhood and personalisation. The concept of *neighbourhood* delineates the opportunities offered by housing in order to establish social interaction between the user and other users of the building or space. It also describes the design decisions in modern housing projects regarding the social and guest culture of the country. The concept of *personalisation* describes architectural interventions made in order to construct an identity for the building. These architectural interventions are inspired by characteristics such as era, politics, residential culture or location in the country.

Migration into the cities changed all of these conceptions and became the major concern for housing development after 1980. An increase in population caused new investments which were promoted to produce architectural projects on a larger scale. The understanding of social housing production aimed to enable low and middle income classes to own a house. This policy approach solved housing problems in terms of their quantitative rather than qualitative dimensions (Alkan, 2014). Housing rights are reduced to numbers.

Owning a house has become an investment method instead of being a shelter with a personal meaning. Due to the promotion of housing production as an investment method, housing types have begun to produce their consumers. Thus, recently constructed housing complexes and residences reflect a concern for profit and loss. The main issue is the calculation of the tradable square metres for each unit.

As for the results of this chronological retrospective of housing development, the transformation of neighbourhood and personalisation are analysed in the new typologies of housing designed by female architects. Four types of selected projects are examined here to explain the current understanding from the viewpoint of architects looking at media interviews and the architects' own writings. (fig 1)

## PERSONALISATION

### SINGLE HOUSE

TÜTÜNCÜ AND HADI  
SUMMER HOUSE



Furnishings inspired by examples from the traditional Turkish house



Traditional construction techniques



Details made possible by the use of local materials

### APARTMENT

SAHRA APARTMENT



Transferring traces of an old building to the facade of the new building

### HOUSING COMPLEX

OLIVEPARK  
HOUSING COMPLEX



Situated according to the landscape



### HIGH-RISE RESIDENCES

SAPPHIRE



New face in the city to build contemporary identity

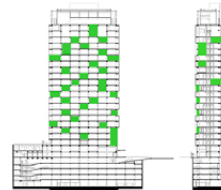


Creating indoor gardens

LEVENT  
LOFT GARDEN



New face in the city to build contemporary identity



Providing opportunity to create indoor gardens

ONURLAR HOUSE



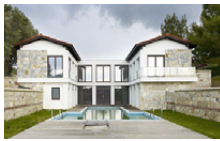
Establishing relations between interior space and landscape



Here isolation is of highest concern



Isolated single housing units



NESTORTAKÖY HOUSING COMPLEX



Creating meeting points for users in the building or on-site



Meeting points to provide opportunities for social interaction



Balcony arrangements as a second facade to increase interaction among users

(1)  
*Mapping examples of housing types according to concepts of personalisation and neighbourhood*

## **HOUSING TYPES DESIGNED BY FEMALE ARCHITECTS**

The **SINGLE HOUSE** type has an isolated character providing high privacy to the user. Besides, users' demands are easily put into effect in terms of the spatial requirements through the design process. One example is the *Tütüncü and Hadi Summer House* (1983) in Tuzla, a coastal area where people spend the summer. The architect of the project, Sevinç Hadi, explains that the main aim was to create an alternative lifestyle, different from the life in the city (Salt Online, 2014). The design of the house was also influenced by its future user during the construction phase. The ability to establish an active contact with the clients during the construction process of single houses can help to meet their expectations, both functionally and aesthetically.

The other example, the *Onurlar House* (2010), was built to internalise the specific characteristics of the user in the design. The context also provides a sense of personalisation for the house. Houses with different formal and spatial characteristics developed under different conditions become specific and autonomous while supporting a sense of individuality and belonging (Usta, 2020).

**APARTMAN** is another housing type that becomes dominant in the Republican era. Aydan Volkan states that this apartment concept is her favorite, in regards to the relation that the building creates with its surroundings and the user (Arkitera.com, 2016). *Sahra Apartmanı* (2001), a unique expression of the vernacular form of the Turkish house, was rebuilt by Volkan. The project preserves the idea of its original design by proposing a new façade. The idea of personalisation in this project was preserved, improved and sustained.

An example of a **HOUSING COMPLEX**, *Nestortaköy Housing Complex* (2015), is based on the idea of 'encounter, meeting and neighbourhood'. Feedback from the occupants shows that the project has achieved this aim successfully. Its architect, Aydan Volkan, argues that by creating social meeting points in this housing type, it becomes easy to define and maintain social relations between the building occupants (Arkitera.com, 2016).

In the *Olivepark Housing Complex* (2007), designed by Dürriin Süer, the building elements and the repetitive layout are considered to create a common language between the buildings. This approach can support the idea of personalisation. However, the project has a weaker character in terms of neighbourhood compared to the *Nestortaköy Housing Complex* since the units are single houses.

**HIGH-RISE RESIDENCE** is a suitable type of housing allowing both mass production and meeting the needs of high-income groups in terms of luxury and satisfaction. The main point of this housing type is investment, its ability to be converted into money as an investment. In addition, there are stark visual contrasts to be seen in the areas where these high-rise residences are built due to the strong differences in building typologies that are present there. This is interpreted as beginning to create a new landscape in the city.

Melkan Gürsel states that neighbourhood is a significant element in the city (TED× Talks, 2013). In her projects – *Sapphire* (2011) and *Loft Garden* (2010) – she tried to evoke this notion by creating gardens on certain floors of the building blocks. Both projects have meeting points in the building that provide facilities where people can socialise, spend their leisure time and even work.

## CONCLUSION

This research has been focussed on the work of female architects on contemporary housing types through the lens of personalisation and neighbourhood. It shows that women architects give priority to these concepts in their work. Although the concept of neighbourhood is less dominant in some of the types due to the specificity of the house compared to others, it nevertheless shapes the characteristics in the design of each building type. Following the concept of neighbourhood, not only housing units but also the entire architectural structure is designed to allow to establish social relationships among users.

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Panel I	COLLECTIVITY - DREAMS AND CHALLENGES
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# WOMEN BUILDING COMMUNITIES

## Care as a feminist practice of cooperative living

It has been over a century since feminist theories, initiatives and experiments entered the architectural discourse by underlining the feminist struggles against the dominant forms of urban living in western culture. The dawn of the twentieth century saw female movements claiming housing reforms that would address the housing question as a feminist question (Hayden, 1982; Terlinden and von Oertzen, 2006). In the 1940s Simone de Beauvoir's feminist discourse advocated for the liberation of womanhood from its 'biological fate' and the need to project private sphere values into the public sphere or, as will be argued in this essay, into the sphere of the commons (de Beauvoir, 2011). During the 1970s–80s the housing commons was theorised through the feminist perspective in the work of Silvia Federici and Maria Mies (Federici, 2012; Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1999). Their framing of feminism has been essentially premised on the recognition of living as a collective project and the need for the social reproduction of the commons, which they identify among the main casualties of the neoliberal era of capitalism (Federici, 2012, pp. 138–48). Indeed, what the neoliberal rationale did was to accentuate an idea of

private living as a form of freedom achieved through the market, which promoted social relations and class subjectivities based on private property and individualism. The daunting failures of this housing model in terms of economic inaccessibility and alienation of care in the urban domestic realm have negated private living as an affirmation of essential autonomy.

This essay builds upon my PhD by Design research which critiques neoliberal housing as the apotheosis of a problematic narrative of the private as it is represented by the nuclear family apartment as structural and proprietary unit (Piniara, 2020). If the concept of domesticity is to continue to echo notions of stability, permanence and resilience, it is perhaps about time that these notions are addressed collectively rather than individually. What the feminist aspect contributes to this search for the commons relies on processes that generate mutual bonds and collective interest to posit housing within a field of resistance to patriarchal and capitalist exploitation (Federici, 2012, pp. 115–48). This objective stems from the recognition of the capitalist and patriarchal oppression of women through the assignment of reproductive labour as

(1a)



*The service corridor  
as a space for the  
socialisation of care.*

‘care’ within the private, nuclear-family apartment in the twentieth century (Giudici, 2018) and, at the same time, from the identification of feminist struggles against this typology. To this end, this paper documents and analyses how daily practices of care beyond the sphere of the household performed by women in a historical community block settlement in central Athens are able to inspire and (re)produce forms of collective organisation and living. The socio-spatial analysis as a result of my field study of the community provides a methodological tool to pose broader questions. How can a twentieth-century legacy of feminist domestic practices inform the twenty-first-century commons discourse as a radical model of autonomy through sharing (Eberle, D., Hugentobler, M., and Schmid, S., 2019; Dardot and Laval, 2019)? How can feminist praxis be instrumental in building communities and conceptualising cooperative models of urban living?

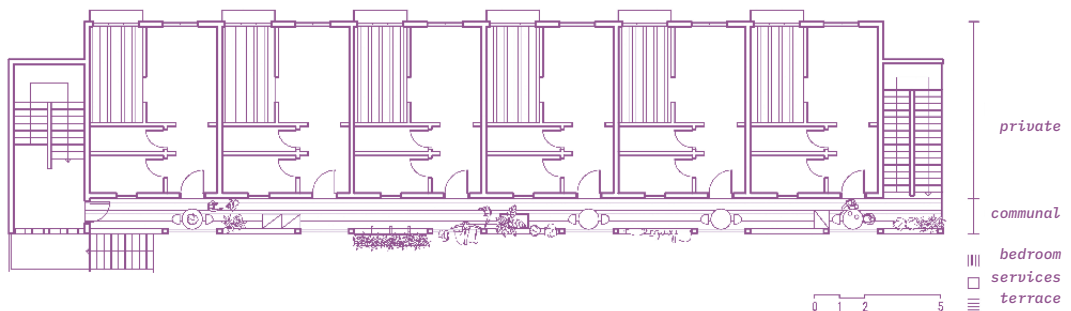
The *Trigono settlement* in Kessariani, Athens, belongs to a cluster of so-called ‘refugee block settlements’ which were part of a state housing program designed in the 1930s to accommodate a massive influx of Greek refugees from the coastal cities of Turkey in 1922. The settlement’s urban and housing design took inspiration from its contemporary famous counterparts in Frankfurt, Berlin and Vienna, which had established the prototype of minimum dwelling for working-class nuclear families as a system of communication within the capitalist society of the time (Piniara, 2021). Due to its unique model of tenure combining state-owned land and privately-owned residential units, the *Trigono settlement* has managed to resist the dominant developmental logic of Greek urbanisation and privatisation from the 1950s, from the time it was implemented until today. Consequently, it manifests itself as an extraordinary case study within the overbuilt tissue of Athens: a system of low- to medium-rise apartment blocks, arranged in clusters within a green park and preserving a sense of neighbourhood that seems long lost in the city centres.

The historically charged social and humanitarian aspects of this programme have definitely contributed to the forging of bonds among the uprooted original population. However, what I find paradigmatic in the *Trigono settlement*, is how practices were developed to integrate subsequent waves of immigration and social reproduction, and how these practices have been able to perpetuate a long-standing community, thus revealing the social and spatial forms where the resilience of cooperative living resides.

The study focuses on the smallest flat type in the settlement presented in a unique apartment block and initially designed for childless couples or any other combination of two people. (fig 1b)

Although this flat type is the least responsive to the pertinent market mantra that advocates for typical nuclear family apartments, as a block structure it is today one of the most popular and liveliest spaces in the area. Interestingly, its liveliness is not the outcome of a policy preference toward young families, but rather of an established ethics of sharing among its predominantly single middle-aged and elderly female population. The investigation into their living pattern reveals a configuration of private and communal spaces on each floor which ignores the pre-determination of the original layout for the privatisation of living spaces and dedicated service-only communal spaces. The block demonstrates a linear arrangement of six small flats (35m<sup>2</sup>) per floor and two communal staircases, one internal and one external or public, united by an external service corridor. The flats belong to the so-called 'one-and-a-half-room' flat type, named after Gropius's 'two-and-a-half-room' type launched at the Siemensstadt settlement in Berlin in 1929, where the half-room (private room) is designated as a bedroom while service spaces – bathroom, kitchen, hall – are individualised with minimal dimensions.

(1b)

*Floor plan of the apartment building*

The lived experience of the block shows that the arrangement of the private rooms towards the back side allows the rest of the activities to spill out onto the corridor. For the longest part of the day and the year, as I have observed on my various site visits, the corridor becomes a terrace – an essential element of Greek domesticity, a dining and living room, a storage room, a laundry room, and a garden. Although a few of its oldest members with demanding health conditions have live-in carers, it does not negate the fact that this terrace is effectively their living space where caring acts are performed: the sharing of cooked food, the watering of flowers, the hanging of the laundry to dry in the sun, the welcoming of guests, and most importantly, the sharing of company, laughter and hopes as a form of mutual stewardship and everyday solidarity. A closer look at the living patterns of these female residents attests to what this socialisation of care means to them and how radical a practice it is to be undertaken by women who were born and raised in a context that considered it immoral or unsustainable for single women to live alone or together.

Mrs. Despoina Tsourapa (85) is one of the original refugee resident-owners in the block who moved in here with her husband in 1966, brought up their daughter and lived together for forty years until his passing. Since her daughter, Mrs. Vaso, had already got married and moved out, Mrs. Despoina decided to have the partition wall between the one-and-a-half room partly demolished and the space to be unified as her private room to sleep, rest, pray and watch TV. Mrs. Vaso, who is now divorced and lives nearby, often visits and cooks for her mother, and they spend most of their time on the terrace (corridor) eating and chatting. (fig 2)

Mrs. Despoina Flessa (92) is a resident-owner who bought her flat from its original refugee owner in the 1980s. She and her husband maintained the existing layout and lived together until his passing. Five years ago, Mrs. Despoina was diagnosed with advanced dementia and has since hired a live-in carer, Mrs. Bahar, an immigrant from Turkey. The existing subdivision provides each with a room separated through sliding doors; a clinic for the necessary privacy and quietness for Mrs. Despoina and a room for Mrs. Bahar to sleep while she can watch her. Although Mrs. Despoina has lost capacity to communicate properly, she enjoys spending most of her time on the terrace and playing with Mrs. Elpida's (55) dogs from next door. (fig 3)

This ethics of sharing was extended to me in support of my design research on the settlement. They would let me into their homes and lives, made it possible for me to carry out the analysis, they were open to listen to the commons discourse (which was all too familiar to them) and to suggestions of spatial interventions that would enhance it, and they taught me about the inclusive and participatory nature that lies at the core of any meaningful community project. This was also a lesson in terms of the approach to the architectural discipline itself: the necessity to get out of the comfortable office and respectfully address the transformation of ageing housing estates in our cities when it comes to working with existing communities and long-standing living habits. This block layout and its potential became paradigmatic for proposed interventions to the rest of the apartment blocks of the settlement in my project.

2



*Mrs. Vaso, daughter of Mrs. Despoina Tsourapa, sitting in the corridor while waiting for the dinner to get ready she cooks for her mother and Mrs Flessa.*

*Mrs. Despoina Flessa playing with Mrs Elpida's dogs while waiting for her dinner to be served on the corridor.*



It acts as an organisational principle that can variably accommodate not only a currently recognised need or a predetermined social form, but 'the observed varying conditions of those in need of dwellings' (Walter Gropius quoted in Gorgas, 1930, p. 9) brought on by choice or by the course of life itself: single living or single parenthood, the departure of adult children, the loss of a partner. The observed development of care practices facilitated by the typology may serve as an inspiration to develop instructions for collective living where the provision of an individual unit for privacy and solitude is not based on the assumption that the burden of loneliness, affective labour and financial sustainability is to be undertaken by a nuclear family structure (or individually). Thus, this model offers a radical response to questions of affordability and sustainability of urban housing by suggesting that a community is not an end but rather the means to achieving equality and justice in the city.

Care as the basis of cooperative living is not viewed as a feminist practice by addressing exclusively female housing communities, but rather by addressing the economic and social struggles of single living – regardless of gender – within the patriarchal capitalist system. This close reading evaluates the possibilities that emerge from everyday small-scale sharing practices for the design of cooperative housing that considers the residents' changing needs and life phases. Architecture, then, becomes a tool to conceptualise and facilitate female empowerment in the twenty-first century, which may include the role of the wife and child-carer but is not socially and spatially limited to capitalist and patriarchal stereotypes. The socialisation of care as a practice and ethics of cooperative living transcends the narrative of a caring person with special obligations to family and kin (care-giving) to favour the disposition to perform caring acts as the basis of community building.

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Panel I	COLLECTIVITY - DREAMS AND CHALLENGES
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# GRASSROOTS HOUSING PROJECTS

## Who do they benefit, and why should we care?

### THE CONCEPT OF 'COMMUNITY' WITHIN GRASSROOTS HOUSING PROJECTS

Grassroots housing describes a diverse assemblage of housing types and delivery models, whose common feature is involvement of residents and/or non-professional stakeholders in design, delivery, ownership and management of homes. Described as 'community-led housing' in the UK, 'collaborative housing' across most of Europe and 'deliberative development' in Australia and New Zealand, it includes community land trusts, self-help housing, cohousing, housing cooperatives and intentional communities (Lang and Mullins, 2020). While each has its own distinct historical roots and has developed in response to differing circumstances and needs, there is increasing overlap between 'niches'. Since around 2000 there has been a resurgence and growth in all forms of grassroots housing, both in the UK and internationally.

My current research explores the role and enactment of 'community' within grassroots housing projects. There are at least two ways of viewing community in this context: (1) as a wider entity that produces homes for a subset of its members or (2) as the group of residents that end up living in the homes. To put it another way, community can be an input and/or an output.

An 'input' community might either be geographically-based within a neighbourhood, or a community of interest drawn from a wider area – e.g. a community of homeless people or seniors. There may be interactions between 'input' and 'output' communities, including decisions on design and allocation of homes and how financial surpluses are spent. The membership criteria and decision-making structure of the organisation leading the project will affect who is involved and the balance of power between residents and wider community members. This is important because it relates to wider issues such as equality, diversity, inclusion and increasing 'responsibilisation' of grassroots housing groups to deliver on local and national policy targets (Scheller and Thörn, 2018).

The diversity of community types within grassroots housing, coupled with the well-documented observation that 'community' can have different meanings and implications to different stakeholders (Jewkes and Murcott, 1996; Boda, 2018), suggests that this is a rich topic for exploration.

## **WHO IS IN CONTROL AND WHO BENEFITS?**

As noted above, different groups will have different conceptions of their community and their intended beneficiaries. Community land trusts (CLTs) have inclusive decision-making processes, including the neighbourhood, public authorities and future residents, and aim to support the wider local area. The strong emphasis on community empowerment, democracy and stewardship helps engage local people, building social capital, and can include community members as providers, producers and users. Where CLTs diverge from other forms of collaborative housing is that their primary responsibility is the wider community rather than individual residents. This can create potential tensions between communities and residents of CLT homes: who, in the end, has final control? (Field and Layard, 2017).

In contrast, resident-led forms such as cooperatives, cohousing and collective self-build are generally led by, and accountable to, the residents themselves. Such projects can offer multiple benefits to participants, including enhanced personal wellbeing and social capital, reduced loneliness and ability to adopt preferred lifestyles (McClymont et al., 2019; Labit, 2015). They frequently use innovative designs, technologies and behaviours to maximise sustainability (Daly, 2017) and may create useful learning and innovation (Jarvis, 2015). However, they often attract like-minded people and may struggle to achieve real social diversity due to the level of time commitment required (Bresson and Labit, 2020). As a housing co-op employee in Switzerland told me, 'participation is a privilege for people with more education, experience or time'. Differences in individual capacity to participate can result in unequal distribution of costs and benefits to different parts of the community (Boda, 2018).

In general, projects with more active engagement from participants – whether as organisers or residents – may be more challenging but show greater benefits. Active community leadership within a neighbourhood can result in greater advocacy for the rights of local people – a political act. Playing an active role in owning and managing homes (and other community assets) can help lower-income people achieve a sense of agency (DeFilippis et al, 2018). Supporting grassroots models that involve and engage community participants should be a priority, but needs to be balanced with promoting inclusivity and access for people that are less well-resourced in time, skills and confidence.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are now being addressed more seriously within the sector. There is an argument that unconscious bias can result in founder members of grassroots projects attracting other people that 'look and think like them'. This may come from a desire to minimise challenges within the project, but misses opportunities for creating projects that are open, resilient and truly representative. Transparent membership and resident selection criteria are key ingredients for accountability of housing projects to their communities.

In the following section I present and discuss some of my observations from interviewing participants and policymakers in in Europe, North America and Australasia.



	<b>RESIDENTS OF HOMES</b>	<b>WIDER COMMUNITY</b>	<b>PUBLIC BODIES</b>
<b>SOCIAL</b>	<p><i>Desire for connection, counteracting social isolation, recreating the 'village'</i></p> <p><i>Activism/commitment to principles of cooperation and collective living</i></p> <p><i>Wanting to live in close community with family or friends</i></p>	<p><i>Promoting social cohesion, equality, diversity and inclusion</i></p> <p><i>Preserving social identity of the neighbourhood in response to gentrification or holiday homes</i></p> <p><i>Tackling poverty, social exclusion and homelessness</i></p> <p><i>Promoting local democracy and empowerment through ownership and management of assets</i></p>	<p><i>Tackling social problems (homelessness, etc.)</i></p> <p><i>Creating more liveable, diverse, well-functioning neighbourhoods</i></p> <p><i>Promoting compliance with equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and policies</i></p>
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	<p><i>Lower rents/alternative to buying/resist gentrification</i></p> <p><i>Smart way of investing money (for privately funded self-builds)</i></p> <p><i>Alternative to capitalist housing market</i></p>	<p><i>Creating an alternative to capitalist housing market</i></p> <p><i>Bringing more economic activity to an area, supporting local businesses and employment</i></p> <p><i>Creating increased value from local assets</i></p>	<p><i>As a supplement to traditional forms of social housing, at minimal public cost</i></p> <p><i>To boost economic activity within a neighbourhood - especially as part of major regeneration schemes</i></p>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	<p><i>Ecological lifestyle, car-free communities</i></p> <p><i>Space for growing own food</i></p>	<p><i>Concerns about climate change and resource consumption</i></p> <p><i>Creating radical alternatives</i></p>	<p><i>Where grassroots housing projects support environmental goals of public bodies</i></p>
<b>OTHER</b>	<p><i>Quality of life/wellbeing</i></p> <p><i>Quality of home</i></p> <p><i>Choice in design, location, etc.</i></p>	<p><i>Wanting to give something back to the community/ create a better world</i></p> <p><i>Having a background in activism</i></p> <p><i>Vision - having an idea and wanting to make it happen</i></p>	<p><i>Where they are seen to contribute to good urban design</i></p> <p><i>Where the 'status quo' is not threatened too much</i></p> <p><i>Prestige of association with a flagship project</i></p> <p><i>Personal motivation of a politician or officer</i></p>

(1)

*Range of motivations of three classes of stakeholders in relation to grassroots housing*

## **INITIAL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

*Table 1* shows a range of motivations that may be present within each class of stakeholders. Each individual and each project group will have its own unique set of motivations – some projects may be more oriented towards ecological living, others towards training and skills development, etc. It is usually the makeup and motivations of the founder group that influences how a project develops over time, including who else is attracted to join the project as it grows – hence the importance of establishing principles of equality, diversity and inclusion from the earliest stage of the project.

Motivations of different stakeholders are not necessarily directly aligned. In fact, within some projects the motivations of the (future) residents and the wider community may be quite different. Setting up the right organisational structure for the project group, including membership criteria and how different groups of members and stakeholders will be involved in decision-making, is therefore essential.

Both residents and wider community members are clear about the benefits they are seeking to achieve through their initiatives, and successful projects cite a wide range of benefits delivered. However, ability to access public support such as grant funding, land and planning permission is dependent on public authorities being able to evidence and align these benefits against their own delivery priorities. Moreover, how community is imagined by these entities can shape which types of project are supported, and bureaucracy often trumps ideals. For instance, public funding may impose restrictions on whether and how prospective residents can be involved in design and build processes (Jarvis, 2015), hindering development of strong resident communities through early and ongoing participation.

We need to continue expanding the evidence base for the multiple social, economic and environmental benefits delivered by different types of grassroots housing projects. This will be key in demonstrating that such projects can help to support delivery of public goods across a wide range of outcomes, broadening the possibilities for collaboration with public bodies and other institutional stakeholders. More importantly, it will increase momentum to challenge existing norms and assumptions within standard models of (affordable) housing delivery, overturning outdated constraints and enabling the development of new paradigms where grassroots housing brings innovation to the mainstream.

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## ON CHALLENGES. We often talk of housing **solutions**.

We have to get this term out of our heads since it is so much related to the neo-liberal idea of capital in the city.

I would rather follow Martha Rosler who in 1989 presented her project **Housing as a Human Right** on the Times Square façade.

Housing is connected to human living,  
**so why should it be seen as a product?** (Verena von Beckerath)

### Cities are over-built.

Environmentally speaking, **we cannot afford to continue building and concretising the urban environment.**

We can reconceptualise living by intervening in existing structures.

(Ioanna Piniara)

### **In these top-down models [of shared housing], behaviour is very much controlled -**

you are meant to watch movies in the movie room,  
you are meant to make lunch in the kitchen -  
**people try to carve out their own space.**

But it becomes hard when the management resists.

(Anwyn Hocking)

When designing their homes or their communal spaces, people make choices very different from those a commercial developer would make. We chose not to have street lighting because we wanted to create a more natural ambience at night.

You might think that people would feel fearful, but it is a really pleasant experience to be in a city and not to have these bright lights shining at you. (Anna Hope)

**In the traditional Turkish house there was a common room with other rooms built around it.**

It was multi-functional.

Today spaces have become much more separated into

living room,

dining room,

bedroom -

people in the house might not see each other all day,

even though they are living in the same house. (Simge Gülbahar)

### Designing spaces that can evolve - that's the key thing.

Our house has clear-span floors, no load-bearing walls,

so that in the twenty years we have been living here

we were able to change things in response to our changing lifestyle.

(Anna Hope)

**It is important not to make rules for everything,** but rather give opportunities to the space.

If you give people the opportunity to start

**thinking - dreaming - and doing** something,

to get empowered by the other people who are working with you.

That can be transformative

in your own life and also in the community. (Shivani Chakraborty)



## ON FEMINIST PRACTICE.

My work very much ties into  
an **intersectional feminist approach**:  
thinking about **different identities that exist in space**,  
and how people relate together in space.

This is perhaps the only possible approach  
if you want to create spaces that are  
**safe, inclusive and equitable to everyone.**

(Anwyn Hocking)

Let me share my field-work experience with you:

The women on the block

opened up their homes and their lives to me.

I was amazed by their readiness to think through the model I was talking about.

They were **happy to experiment with it.**

(Ioanna Piniara)

A feminist practice approach in **architecture is possible.**  
It is not that all women architects work in the same way,  
but I notice that there is a way of going  
from the **inside to the outside**,  
from the **individual to the bigger community**  
and then perhaps **to the city.**

Perhaps women are more capable and willing **to see the nuances,**  
**the different themes**  
that need to be addressed, and some of  
them try to bring this into their work.

(Shivani Chakraborty)

## ON STEWARDSHIP.

If you want to create an alternative society  
**you can't just put people together**  
in a commercial way.

When we talk about collective housing,  
it is much more about **stewardship and empowerment,**  
it is an **ethics of care.**

(Katarina Bonnevier)

Talking about **community** within the housing projects and within the neighbourhood:  
the projects create **social space and an energy** that can help

all the residents

to be involved in their neighbourhood.

When I presented our collective project, things came up like:

'I feel a sense of belonging' or

'I feel a sense of pride and care for my community.'

If people walk down the road and see rubbish, they pick it up,  
they do not wait for someone else to do it.

**You take action.**

**And that feeds through into other areas of life.**

(Anna Hope)

# **Inter mezzo**

CO-DREAM

# Happenings of a home through cosmological play

Authors

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*The timeless notions of 'homelessness', 'abroadness' and 'alienation' construct paths for both built and imaginative spaces of desire and dream (Agamben, 1996; Hypnerotomachia, 2003; Synesius, 1888; Freud, 1997). The question of the future concerning these notions can be pursued through spontaneous and ambiguous possibilities which can relate to the unpredictable nature of this future.*

*Our project seeks to trace these non-discursive possibilities through dreams and desire by offering a position among unpredictables.*



In this project the tactics of fortune-telling as practices of hermetic reading (Roob, 2015) and narration are adopted in the form of a **cosmological co-play** (Huizinga, 2016). Thus, multiple readings come together into a multi-layered atlas of potential futures. Within the scope of this cosmological play, the pasts are as equally vital as the futures being potential generators of home. Home evolves into a possibility of grasping the volatile experience of ubiquitous spatial archetypes kneading pasts and futures.

The cosmological co-play is initiated by reading and imagining the coffee stains left on a cup as the agency of interpreting the implicit knowledge of spatiality. These stains trigger the excavation of spatial archetypes from which a possible generative notation-alphabet is derived. The notation-alphabet mediates between the interpretation of the archetypes and the constitution of potential hybrid sections (Hejduk, 1993; Jung, 1989; for the process of the project see <https://codreams-happeningsofahome.hotglue.me/process>).



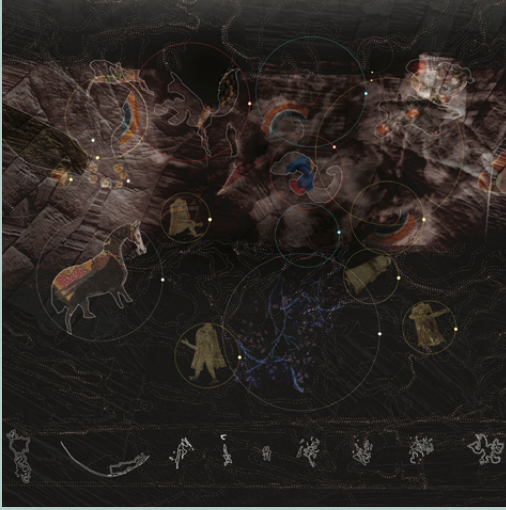
These hybrid sections will serve as a generator of instant experiences among the multitudes of atmospheric possibilities. Even a single section contains a poetic gathering of spatial manifolds as a catalysator of imagination. Thus, these sections are non-representational since they do not result in one ultimate signification (Haralambidou, 2007; Pérez-Gómez, 1997; Vesely, 2004). Thus, it is the 'unbuilt home' itself which is sought after (Abraham, 2011). The media of the embodiment of this 'unbuilt home' are drawings conceived in playfulness.

The project commenced with a series of co-dream sessions between four friends and was embodied in multiple drawings. They were eventually condensed into four drawings: The first drawing is an atlas of the initial coffee stains (1). The second drawing is a notation-alphabet (2) derived from the coffee stains in relation to the archetypal spatiality indicated by red, black, yellow, blue. The third drawing is one of the possible hybrid sections (3). And the last drawing is one of the atmospheric recordings (4).

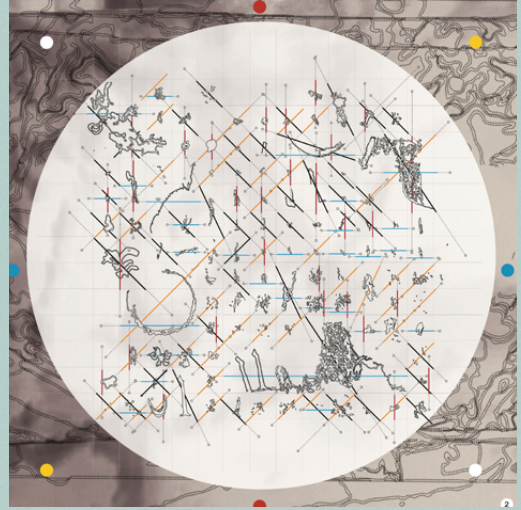
This hermetic reading practice transformed slowly into a play box and a digital platform for online playing and archiving the previous plays. Both the physical and the digital play consist of a set of cards that invite the players to co-dream together, and an alphabet of sections of unbuilt homes waiting to be suspended upon the atlas of coffee stains. As the play commences naturally with the playful interpretation of the manifold stains, textual fragments, archetypal references and sections on the cards, the players are invited to select one or more sections from the alphabet of sections in relation to each individual card.



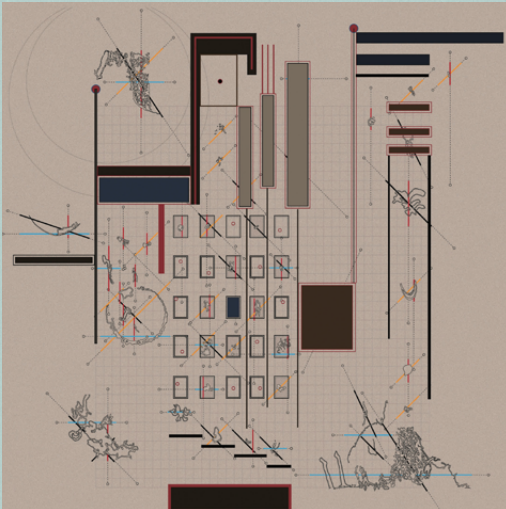
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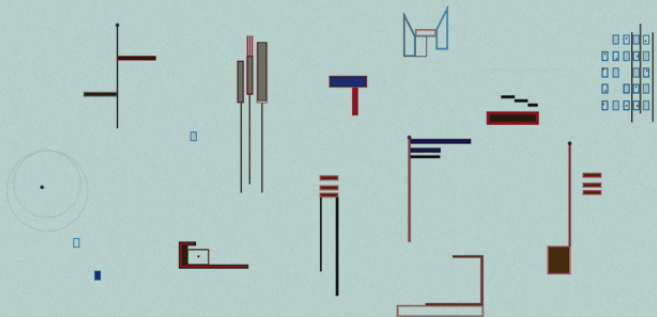
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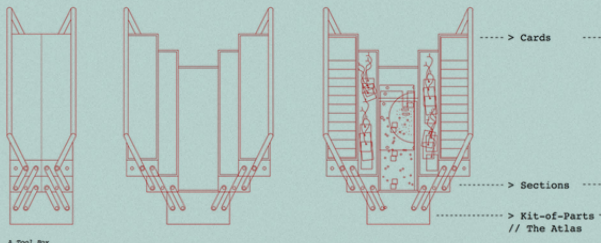
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As part of **co-dreaming a happening of a home**, the players are then invited to suspend each selected section upon the atlas. As the play unfolds in time with the interpretation of each card, a hybrid section is slowly conceived on the atlas.

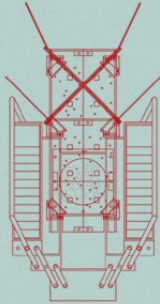
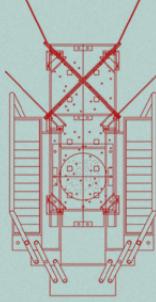
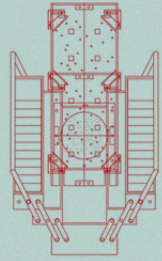
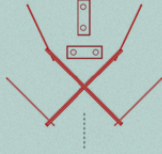






A Tool Box

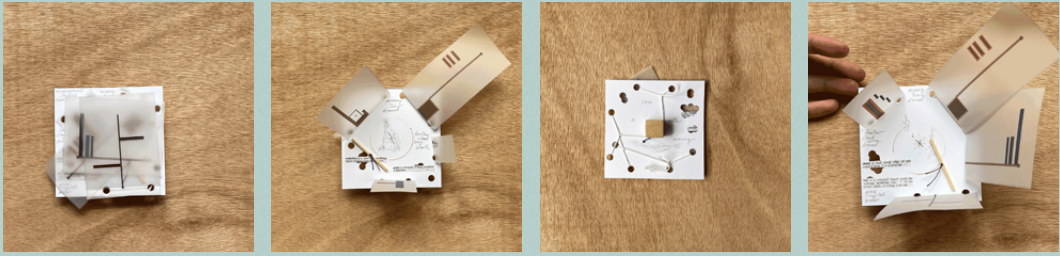
> Assembly.06  
place the sticks.



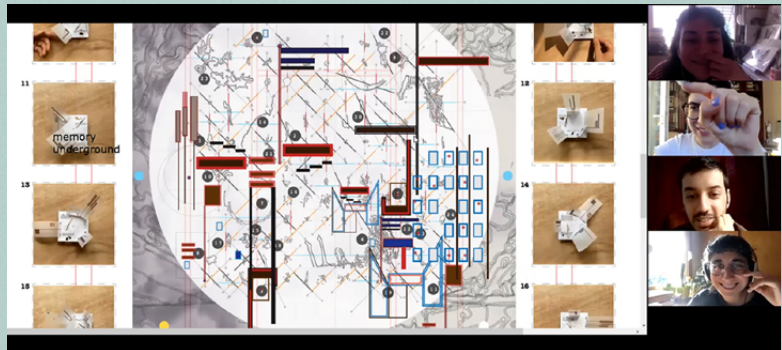
Around this structure, the physical and the digital play unfold differentiated embodiments and engagements between players. The physical play box wittily unsettles the instrumentality of a regular tool box. When folded, the tool box is carried with ease, to be unfolded and set up where and whenever requested. When unfolded and assembled, the tool box transforms into a poetic playmaker inviting the players to sit around, chat and co-dream together. As the cards, each lined up on the first row of the box at the beginning, slowly take their place on the crystal skin during the course of the play, the box transforms into a 'paper palace'. Meanwhile, the sections suspended upon the atlas contribute to the happening of an un-built home.







An open play session was performed on a digital platform during the DREAM-PLAY-CHALLENGE symposium in June 2021.



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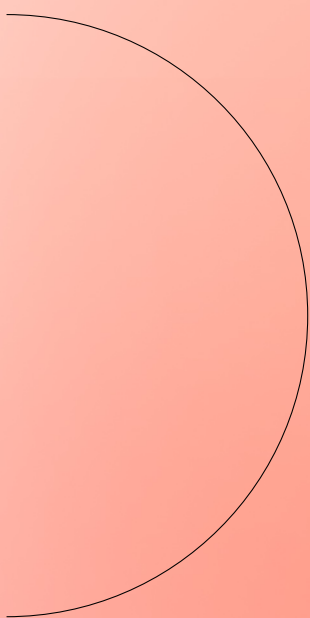
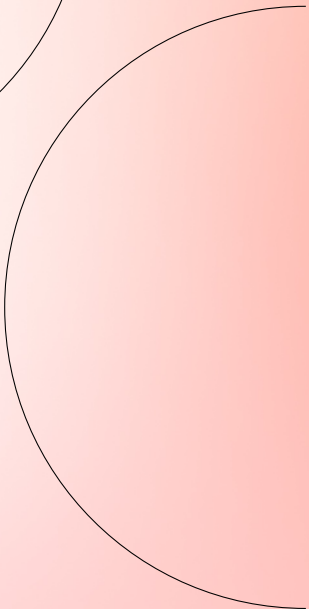
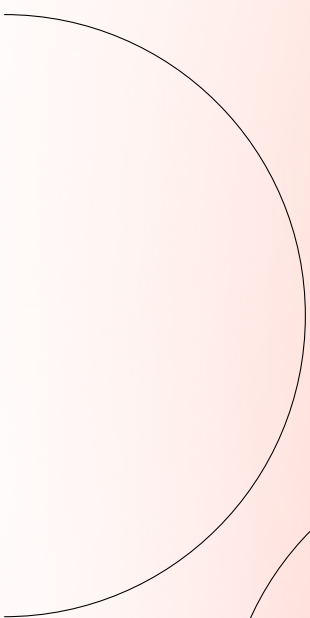
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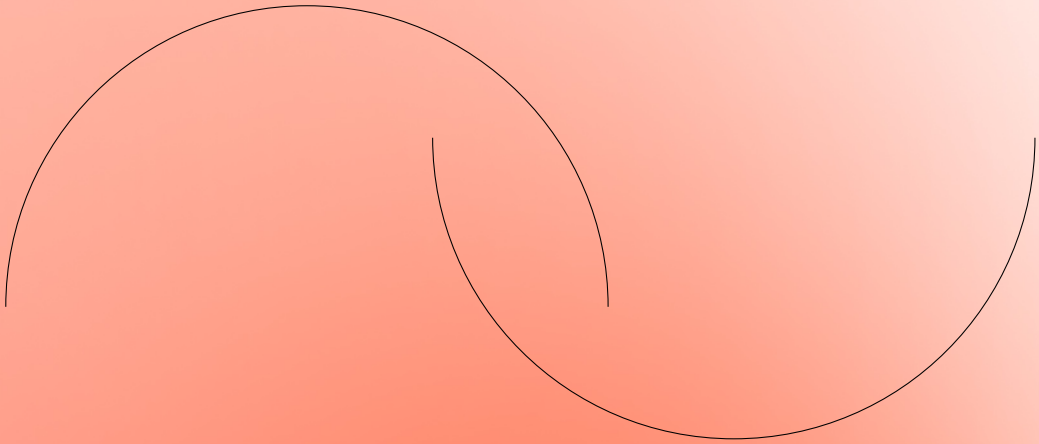
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For details on the development of the project see <https://codreams-happeningsofahome.hotglue.me/process>

For details on the digital platform see <https://codreams-happeningsofahome.hotglue.me>

**2**





PANEL II

## Spatial Agency – Burning down the house?

Moderator Sarah Rivière  
Respondents Sigrún Birgisdóttir and Jane Rendell

*Whether forced to cross borders seeking residence in other countries and cultures, or simply when electing to move house, every re-location brings different degrees of unsettledness for some, and danger for others, reminding us what it is to be uprooted. Voluntarily or not, we find ourselves in strange new spaces that challenge us to adapt or even reinvent aspects of our lives.*

*Residential space has agency, and this reality demands of architectural theorists and practitioners that we address the political. The challenges of the twenty-first century have turned traditional concepts of the residential on their head. We see that residing – an act so fundamental to humanity – must step up and address a multitude of concerns including precarious ecological conditions, forced up-rootedness, re-defined concepts of gender and family, and culturally diverse models of domesticity.*

*The exchange in this panel addresses spatial practices of making and maintaining oneself and one's community through ongoing processes of acceptance, refiguration and refusal that necessarily intertwine the poetic with the political.*

Panel II	SPATIAL AGENCY – BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE
Author	Ghita Barkouch Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium

# ARCHITECTURAL CHANGES AND EXCHANGES

## Moroccan lounges in Brussels and western living rooms in Marrakesh

*In the current climate, characterised by major immigration issues, the question of housing arises more than ever. Beneath the social, economic, and legal questions raised by the access and the right to housing for immigrant populations, this research addresses, from a purely architectural point of view, the underlying question of adapting non-native ways of residing to native housing types. It studies, describes and explains the architectural operations through which non-native inhabitants adapt, transform and reinvent the native traditional habitat and the uses they make of it. It also aims to highlight the adaptations and architectural inventions produced by inhabitants, by identifying innovative schemes and emerging practices that could be advantageously reproduced.*



The following text presents the results of the architectural analysis of two complimentary yet different cases: the installation of the Moroccan lounge, or living room, also known as a *sedari* (typical furniture, originally laid out following the contours of the room), in a Brussels's traditional house (a typology of the bourgeois single-family house, with rooms placed in a row) (fig1a) and the installation of the western living room furniture (lounge and dining rooms) in the traditional *riads* of Marrakesh. (fig1b)

Through the various graphic material collected, the case study shows how, on one side, Moroccans import their traditional oriental furniture and incorporate it in the typical bourgeois houses in Brussels and, on the other, how Belgians, and more generally Europeans and Westerners integrate their traditional furniture in the typical 'patio houses' or *riads* of Marrakesh.

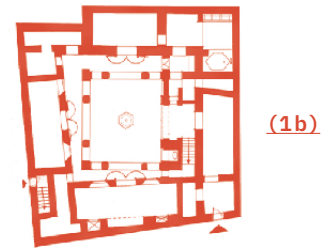
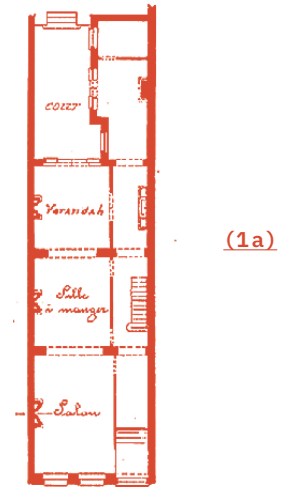
### **THEORETICAL GROUNDS**

To be able to study the modifications and adaptations from an architectural point of view, we need to first consider them as architecture rather than 'home décor' or 'interior design'. Ergo, one of the starting points of the research was to clearly define the word and the act of architecture itself.

An 'anthropological' definition of architecture, proposed by Renaud Pleitinx in his mediationist *theory of architecture* identifies architecture with a rational moment, proceeding from a specialisation of the ability to produce artefacts, where the forms and things of the habitat are synthesised. Architecture, as the rational skill of 'habitat formulation', is characteristic to human beings and thus differs from the animals' capacity of building shelter (Pleitinx, 2019).

Although asserting that 'architecture' as a human skill may seem controversial and, overall, reductive to the work of licensed architects and other architecture-related professionals, it is here to be considered in its larger context, as architecture being the production of 'habitat'. The theoretical advantage of such a definition relies in the broadening of the architectural research field to include every kind of built work designed for inhabiting, from bridges to stools.

The research is thus based on the hypothesis that every inhabitant possesses a technical-industrial rationality, and by extension an 'architectural skill' that allows them to produce their own habitat, either by furnishing or transforming the premises, or by defining the uses and the location of the domestic activities.



*Ground floor plans of a bourgeois house in Brussels and a riad in Marrakesh*

## **TESTING GROUNDS**

Choosing migratory contexts as a testing and verification ground for this theory allows a clear observation of the architectural skill displayed, when challenged, in the process of adjusting to the local culture, of adapting dwelling habits to forms, and forms to dwelling habits. The cases studied here are fundamentally phenomena of spatial acculturation. The displacement experienced in migration situations leads to attempts of formal, functional, and lifestyle adaptations. Immigration contexts highlight the architectural skill of the inhabitants through the changes they make to both the home-country furniture and the living environment.

## **THE CASE STUDY**

Moroccan immigration in Brussels started between 1964 and 1974 through recruitment campaigns for unqualified workforce. At the same time, rich bourgeois families in Brussels were abandoning the downtown area with its typical houses, for suburbia.

In parallel, European immigration in Marrakesh started in the 1960s with a few artistic elites buying large residences in the *medina* (old city) and continued with foreign middle classes and wealthy investors in the late 1990s and early 2000s. At the same time, Marrakshi families were massively leaving the old city and their traditional *riads* for modern villas located in what used to be the French colonial neighbourhoods and other recently built areas in Marrakesh.

By leaving aside the sociological considerations and the implications of these two different contexts, the research has increasingly been refined to focus solely on the spatial or architectural compositions resulting from the cultural exchanges between the Moroccan and the western living rooms.

What is commonly referred to as ‘Moroccan living room’ or *sedari* is broadly present in the Arab world and beyond, from Morocco to Iraq. The tradition of sitting on the floor or on carpets has been increasingly replaced by the use of low banquettes running along three sides of the room (Hibbits, 2009). From light mattresses on the floor, to thick ones supported by a decorated wooden frame, with a round table in the center or small ones all over the room, *sedaris* exist in different compositions. As they usually come with no back, they are placed directly against the wall. Historically, in Morocco, the living room or ‘salon’ is a long and narrow room around which the *sedari* mattresses are layed out. It is, at the same time, a living room for family or larger gatherings, a bedroom for children or guests, and a dining room.

In 19th century Brussels, domestic habits within the bourgeoisie put the family at the core of society, and the family home as guarantee to its unity. The traditional ‘*maison bourgeoise*’ features two sets of spaces, main and secondary, arranged in two separate spans in a  $\frac{2}{3}$  –  $\frac{1}{3}$  ratio. The main rooms are large and have high ceilings, the secondary ones usually take the form of corridors. The ground floor – called ‘*bel étage*’ – usually hosts reception and family living areas.

The well known ‘*pièces en enfilade*’ (suite of rooms) traditionally exist in the constellation, living room, dining room and veranda.

The living room is a visibly important room due to its position at the street front, its large window, and its rich decoration. Traditionally, it opens through large glass doors to the dining room. Both rooms hold a fireplace. Finally, the veranda, a major invention of the end of the 19th century (Ledent, 2014), opens the interior of the house towards the garden and allows direct sunlight into the middle room (dining room).

With both the typical bourgeois Brussels house and the Moroccan lounges having such traditional layouts, the question of adaptation is quite inevitable. For use in Brussels, the Moroccan living room combines, in one location, the living room and the dining room. The combination of the Brussels typology and the Moroccan *sedari* raises architectural problems that call on the architectural skills of the inhabitants and challenge them to find, sometimes original, solutions (Barkouch, 2020).

Some cases, for example, revealed the existence of a double living room furnished with two types of *sedari*. Where the Belgian traditional layout would host a living room and a dining room, the inhabitants chose to install an open double Moroccan living room. (fig 2) The first one serves exclusively as a lounge for special occasions and family gatherings, the second one hosts other daily family activities like watching TV or dining.

The results of a large-scale survey conducted amongst Moroccans in Brussels showed that architectural choices were made to integrate the Moroccan *sedaris* into the house, sometimes favouring the integrity of the *sedaris*, at other times, that of the house.

In some cases, existing architectural elements like doors or stone fireplaces that block the installation or use of the *sedari*, were removed. (fig 3) In other cases, those same elements were integrated into the traditional layout. (fig 4)

Occasionally, other architectural elements, like low walls, were built to support the *sedaris* and draw the room's spatial boundaries. (fig 5)



(2a)



(2b)



(3)



(4)



(5)



Another challenge to adapt to a new architectural typology pertained to the furniture. The *sedari*, which traditionally leans against the wall, gained a back and an armrest to guarantee its perfect integration into house. (fig 6)

On the other end of the migratory line that this research follows, in Marrakesh, the cases of western living rooms studied were as typologically various as the *riads* in which they settled. The *riad* (patio or courtyard house), is the most dominant domestic architectural type in the *medina* of Marrakesh. It presents, in formal terms, a series of long and narrow rooms, arranged around a central courtyard that not only connects all the rooms, but is also their only source of light. (fig 7)

The rooms of the *riad* do not have a dedicated purpose, their use is versatile and often seasonal.

The western furniture studied here refers to the set that combines the furniture of the lounge and that of the dining room, generally called the 'living room' (primarily the sofa, coffee table, dining table and chairs). Moveable to suit the occasions and circumstances, the living room furniture is formally relatively independent. On the other hand, it is functionally predefined and hardly allows for functions other than those for which it was initially intended.

In a *riad* in Marrakesh, the installation of western furniture raises architectural problems, such as the lack of space to install a proper dining area in the narrow rooms, and comes with challenges regarding the use of the open spaces of the *riad*. However, the versatility of the rooms and the mobility of the western furniture allow for some innovative schemes to emerge.

In some cases of architectural exchanges studied in Marrakesh, for example, the dining room was installed in the open spaces of the *riad*, on the patio or the roof. (fig 8)

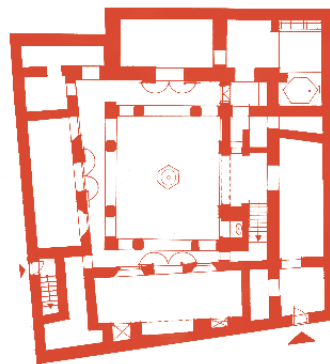
In other cases, new architectural forms were born, such as the hybrid dining-table *sedari*, as an answer to the narrowness of the rooms (fig 9), or the hybrid *armchairs-sedari lounge* composition. (fig 10) Other inhabitants took advantage of the length of the rooms to create a library (fig 11), or, in one particular case, to install a built-in, full-size organ. (fig 12)



(6a)



(6b)



(7)



(8)



(9)



(10)



(11)



(12)

In most cases, the inhabitants reshaped the spaces and created a harmonious composition together with the existing architecture (multiple doors and low windows), resulting in the typically European island-shaped use of spaces (sofa, TV, and dining table zones, etc.).

## **CONCLUSION**

The overall aim of the research presented here is to report on the architectural intelligence of the inhabitants. By studying the particular case of immigrants reinventing local architecture, their architectural skill is revealed in the solutions they adopt in response to every constraint and challenge. Just like architects, inhabitants invent, or reinvent, their homes by modifying, adapting, and adjusting both buildings and lifestyles. The anthropological definition of architecture inspired by the mediationist theory of architecture as laid out at the beginning states that 'architecture' and 'architectural ideas' are not only to be found in the great built works but also in the fine lines of the most 'ordinary' architectural realisations, as they remain manifestations of the production of habitat, in its broadest meaning.

Another aim can be made explicit here: this work suggests new ways of studying immigrant habitat, through a strictly architectural perspective, which would highlight the forms and their intelligence rather than the social circumstances that might have generated them.

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Panel II	SPATIAL AGENCY – BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE
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## ITALIAN NEOREALIST AND

## NEW MIGRANT CINEMA

# On challenging the stereotypes of national and gender identities

***This paper explores the place of women and migrants in Italian Neorealist and New Migrant cinema. It intends to render explicit how an ensemble of films challenged the stereotypes concerning gender, national and cultural identities. Among the figures that are scrutinised are the borgatari, extracomunitari, popolane and terrone. The main objective is to demonstrate how the cinematic expression of these figures in Italian Neorealist and New Migrant cinema enhanced the reinvention of italianità and the generalised understanding of gender. It also aims to explain why the cross-fertilisation between migration studies, urban studies and gender studies is indispensable for comprehending the reinvention of nationhood and womanhood in Italian Neorealist and New Migrant cinema. Particular emphasis is placed on the shared interest of Roberto Rossellini's ROMA CITTÀ APERTA and Vittorio De Sica's IL TETTO in the plight over housing and the special character of the urban landscape of Rome. Pivotal for the reflections developed here are the roles of Anna Magnani in Rossellini's ROMA CITTÀ APERTA, Visconti's BELLISSIMA and Pasolini's MAMMA ROMA.***

### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper examines the reconceptualisation of the relationship between the vividness of cities and that of female and migrant roles, which was among the most effective *dispositifs* of the endeavour of Italian Neorealist cinema to reshape the dominant narratives concerning nationhood and womanhood. Urban dynamics played an important role for Italian Neorealist cinema's endeavour to challenge female and national identities (Charitonidou, 2021; 2022). The paper crosses a range of disciplinary boundaries, involving migration, urban, and gender studies. It pays particular attention to certain films that aimed to problematise migrant roles in relation to diaspora, citizenship, national, gendered and sexual identity, community, and history. Numerous scholars, such as Noa Steimatsky (2008), John David Rhodes (2007) and Mark Shiel (2006) have analysed the connection between gender and urban representation. Despite the fact that urban dynamics were a common theme in several post-war films of European cinema, the authenticity of how quotidian reality of Italian urban landscapes is depicted in Neorealist films distinguishes them from other films of post-war



European cinema that focused on urbanity, placing at their centre the special characters of metropolitan cities such as Paris or Berlin (Shiel, 2006, 66). Gilles Deleuze understood cinema as ‘a whole “psycho-mechanics”’ (Rodowick, 1997, 176; Deleuze, 1989), shedding light on its capacity to affect our senses. Relating Deleuze's understanding of cinema to Homi K. Bhabha and Benedict Anderson's analysis of national narratives, what I argue here is that the aesthetic apparatus of cinema mediates the emotions of the public, reconfiguring the national narratives. (Bhabha, 2013; Anderson, 2006).

Central for Italian Neorealist cinema is the polarity between northern and southern Italy. Two other issues at its core are the transformations related to internal migration and the housing shortage problem caused by the increase of the population that became homeless during the war. The lack of sufficient housing remained unresolved, even during the years of the so-called *miracolo economico* – the period of strong economic growth in Italy after WWII from the 1950s to the late 1960s. Italian Neorealist films aimed to address the housing shortage problem: ‘in Rome, by 1951, almost seven per cent of the population was living homeless or in temporary accommodation, and a further 22 per cent in unacceptably crowded conditions’ (Shiel, 2006, p.76). According to a survey on insecure dwellings and their resident population, ordered in 1957 by the city council, 13,131 dwellings occupied by 13,703 households consisting of a total of 54,576 people, or 3.75 per cent of Rome's resident population were insecure (Salvucci, 2014). Stefano Chianese, in *The Baraccati of Rome: Internal Migration, Housing, and Poverty in Fascist Italy*, refers to the ‘huge migrations that crossed the country between the two wars’ (Chianese, 2017, 3) caused by the large numbers of Italians moving from the countryside to the big cities of central and northern Italy. In order to grasp the impact of internal migration we should bear in mind that ‘[f]rom 1958 to 1961 Rome received more than 200,000 immigrants, growing from 1,961,000 to 2,181,000’ (Bertellini & Giovacchini, 1997, p.95).

Many Neorealist films aimed to address the urgency of the housing shortage through the motif of the *borgatari*. The issue of these illegally built slums within the Italian post-war context was a central theme in Vittorio De Sica's *IL TETTO* (The Roof, 1956) and Pier Paolo Pasolini's *ACCATTONE* (1961). Examining the ways in which the situation of their inhabitants, the *baraccati*, in post-WWII Rome were presented, one can understand how migrant incorporation triggers processes of place-making opening up new social and conceptual spaces in the city.

According to Stefano Chianese, the term *baraccati*, which refers to a kind of informal dwelling, was not defined in a clear way ‘in the Governorate’s census’, but useful for understanding the status of the *baraccati* is the fact that the ‘census [aimed] [...] to pinpoint the slum settlements in order to proceed to the successive demolition of unlawful constructions’ (Chianese, 2017, p.9; Forgacs, 2014, p.61). The cinematic representations of working women and migrants in Italian Neorealist cinema reveal filmmakers’ perception of a new conception of Italy. Within this context, the roles of *borgatari* and women function as devices for reconceptualising Italy’s identity, providing a fertile terrain for reflecting upon the intersections between migration studies, urban studies and gender studies. At the core of this paper is the intention to shed light on the importance of representations of women and the migrant experience in Italian Neorealist cinema. Italian Neorealist cinema aimed to address the migrants placemaking mechanisms through the reinvention of the subjectivities of the *extracomunitari*, which, in contrast with the terms ‘immigrants’ and ‘foreign workers’, have a negative connotation.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the term *borgate* was used to refer to the areas that were created under the decision of the *Governatorato* of Rome and the Autonomous Institute of Popular Housing (*Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari*) in the suburbs of Rome that aimed to host low-income internal migrants (Berlinguer & Della Seta, 1960; Greco & Petaccia, 2016). To better grasp the term *borgate*, it is useful to bring to mind the German term *burg* that refers to a ‘small settlement in rural settings’. However, within the Italian context, *borgate* referred to a ‘quite large satellite of a metropolis’ (Cecchini, 2020, 207) and to ‘a section of the city that does not have the completeness and organisation to be called a “neighbourhood” [and to] [...] a piece of the city in the middle of the countryside that is neither city nor countryside’ (Insolera, 1962, 144). During the fascist years, a large part of the inner-city working-class communities were forced to move to the *borgate*. During the postwar years, numerous Italians decided to migrate from rural to urban areas searching for a higher quality of quotidian life. The relocation of these internal migrants in the *borgate* provoked a considerable increase of their populations, which ‘expanded, and progressively absorbed former rural towns (*borghi rurali*) into the boundaries of the newly enlarged cities’ (Bertellini & Giovacchini, 1997, 96). Neorealist cinema was interested in depicting the post-war urban crisis that was the outcome of these internal migrations.



(1-2)  
*Scenes from Vittorio De Sica's Il Tetto (1956).*

### **VITTORIO DE SICA'S IL TETTO**

In Vittorio De Sica's *IL TETTO* (*The Roof*), which was the result of a fruitful collaboration between De Sica and Cesare Zavattini, a young couple decides to build a single room with a roof. <sup>(fig 1)</sup> Several scholars, for example Mira Liehm, consider *IL TETTO* the final neorealist collaboration between De Sica and Zavattini. According to Liehm, the film aims to address the impossibility of resuscitating the past (Liehm, 1986, p.139). A central feature is the contrast between the Fascist city and the regions that were characterised by poor living conditions. Another noteworthy characteristic of the film is the intention to shed light on the contrast between the informal housing and the newly constructed middle- and upper-class housing blocks <sup>(fig 2)</sup> through which the social arguments of the film are made evident.

One particular scene of the film which makes the contrast very present shows a vehicle passing through the *borgate*. The scene was shot from the front of the bus and displayed an ensemble of newly constructed endless housing blocks. As the vehicle passes, Luisa shouts: **'Goodness, so many houses!'**

*IL TETTO*, first screened at the Cannes film festival in 1956, was based on a sketch by Zavattini for a documentary about Italy (Curle, 2000). The film narrates the efforts of the young couple to find a place to live. It takes into account the phenomenon of building informal housing in the uncultivated land in the suburbs of Rome. As film critic and historian Arthur Knight has remarked, '[t]he apprentice bricklayer and his young wife [...] are so real because De Sica has seen to it that every incident, every detail in every shot contributes to a sense of unstrained, unforced actuality' (Knight, 1959, p.23). During his work on the film, De Sica conducted careful research on the housing laws of the time (Curle, 2000, p.210). The authorities that controlled these areas would order the immediate demolition of the illegally constructed informal housing. This obstacle could be overcome if those who constructed the informal housing could manage to cover it with a roof within a single day. The plot of *IL TETTO* revolves around the efforts of the young couple to construct a roof for their illegal housing in a single night before the arrival of the police. At the end of the film, Natale and Luisa celebrate the construction of their new home, after having paid a small fine.





3

Scene from Roberto Rossellini's  
Roma Città Aperta (1945)  
showing Anna Magnani as Pina

### **ANNA MAGNANI AS POPOLANA: BUILDING A CONNECTION BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND THE VIVIDNESS OF URBAN LIFE**

Neorealist films aimed to transform the tension between forgetting the national past and conserving its memory into the very force of cinema making. In many Neorealist films, the significance of male characters is related their political autonomy, while the female characters are depicted as having a victim status (Cottino-Jones, 2010). Between 1940 and 1965, the figure of the prostitute featured in more than ten per cent of Italian-made films (Hipkins, 2008; 2016). Within this context, the figure of the dynamic woman who struggles with the problems of daily life acquired a very central place in the strategies of cinema making. It is exemplified in the filmic personas of Anna Magnani, including her roles in *ROMA CITTÀ APERTA* (Rome, Open City, 1945) (fig. 3), *BELLISIMA* (1951), and *MAMMA ROMA* (1962). Magnani performed roles that aimed to challenge the stereotypical roles of women in cinema. O'Rawe, in *Anna Magnani: Voice, Body, Accent*, refers to the '[c]ritical discussion on Magnani [...] around her passion and authenticity', and her spontaneity, not only in the case of her role as Pina in *ROMA CITTÀ APERTA*, but also in her 'performances as feisty mothers in Luchino Visconti's *BELLISSIMA* and Pier Paolo Pasolini's *MAMMA ROMA*.' (O'Rawe, 2017, p.158).

Magnani's legendary performance in *ROMA CITTÀ APERTA* was interpreted by Luigi Chiarini as the expression of 'a collective soul called society' (Chiarini, 1979, p.141). The film treated the struggles of daily life during the post-war years as the *dispositif* aiming to reinvent 'otherness'. As Stephen Gundle has remarked, 'Anna Magnani poured every possible

dose of humanity into this figure whose personal tragedy turns her into an emblem of the suffering of the ordinary Italians' (Gundle, 2019, p.154). Gundle has also shed light on Magnani's '[r]ich, larger-than-life personality, her ability to play women outside of the clichés of the cinema of the Fascist period and her capacity to inject emotional intensity into her performances in a way that made it seem as if she was emptying herself into them' (Gundle, 2019, p.152). In order to better grasp the importance of Magnani's performances for the transformation of gender stereotypes in Italian cinema, we should recall the definition of *popolana* as the 'woman of the people' (Culhane, 2017). Magnani's embodiment of the figure of the *popolana* and her identification with post-war Rome is a representative example of how female roles symbolised the vividness of the city in Neorealist cinema. The strategy of mapping Magnani onto Rome's cityscape reinforces her performance as a *popolana*. The urban fabric of Rome functions, in the case of *ROMA CITTÀ APERTA* as a site par excellence for the everyday practices of the *popolana*. Through filming Magnani in familiar urban contexts and placing emphasis on her mundane practices, an identification of the spectators with Pina was achieved. Moreover, the vividness of her play further reinforced the connection between her authenticity and the vividness of urban life.

André Bazin, in *Cinematic realism and the Italian school of the liberation*, maintains that Neorealism as a film movement rejected the star concept (Bazin, 1997). Anna Magnani, as the opposite of the Hollywood star, was compatible with the anti-heroic narratives that Neorealism wished to promote. She promoted Neorealism's collectivist ethos. Magnani's place within the institutional discourse of Neorealism should be understood in conjunction with the notion of authenticity (Rigoletto, 2018), which, in neorealist films, 'was the result of an "amalgam" of players: non-professional actors and film stars such as Aldo Fabrizi and Anna Magnani, who became famous for their informal, unassuming self-presentation both on-screen and off-screen' (Bazin, 1997, p.35–37). Magnani's image has been heavily shaped by the aesthetic, political and ethical concerns of Neorealism. Within this context, she has often been seen as the embodied cinematic sign of a national identity, which cinema was called on to reinvent during the post-war years. Regarding the filmic persona of Magnani and how she embodied the culture of Neorealism, Catherine O'Rawe has shed light on her authenticity as Pina in *ROMA CITTÀ APERTA*, with her becoming a 'critical topos' (O'Rawe, 2017). Mark Shiel has also underscored that this role is representative of the endeavour of Neorealism to reflect upon the suffering of Italian citizens during the post-war years. Pina could be interpreted as an embodiment of the post-war face of Rome. In a similar way, Silvana Mangano in Giuseppe De Santis' *RISO AMARO* (1949) had an important impact on the reinvention of gender roles in post-war Italian cinema.

Bernadette Luciano and Susanna Scarparo's remark that 'Neorealism defined a place for women on the screen rather than behind the camera', producing 'its own star personae' can help us better understand the representation of women in films by directors such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Bernardo Bertolucci, Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Roberto Rossellini, and Luchino Visconti.

The representation of women in many of the films of the aforementioned directors differed 'from the glamorous images of both the diva of the silent era and the Hollywood star who had come to colonise Italian cinema' (Luciano & Scarparo, 2017, p.431; O'Rawe, 2010). Pivotal for understanding Pier Paolo Pasolini's effort to challenge the stereotypical roles of

women in cinema is Anna Magnani's performance in *MAMMA ROMA* (1962). Pasolini focused on the story of the prostitute Mamma Roma who decides to move to a new neighbourhood with her son Ettore. Marga Cottino-Jones has highlighted 'the recurrent concern of Italian cinema with gender issues', claiming that '[t]his concern is a demonstration of the centrality of gender issues in both Italian society and art' (Cottino-Jones, 2010, p.7). Other female icons within this context, apart from Anna Magnani, were Gina Lollobrigida, Silvana Mangano, and Sophia Loren, who 'were configured as youthful embodiments of a new national landscape' (Luciano & Scarparo, 2017, p.431; Small, 2009; Bruno, 1990).

### **COMBINING THE METHODS OF GENDER AND MIGRATION STUDIES: REINTERPRETING ITALIAN NEOREALIST CINEMA**

Migrant incorporation triggers processes of place-making, opening up new social and conceptual spaces in the city. Neorealist films in Italy aimed to address this. They also examine matters of society, paying an almost documentary attention to the struggles characterising daily life. As it has become evident, migrant and gender roles are central in Neorealist cinema in Italy. For this reason, bringing together methods of both migration and gender studies to examine the films under study here could reveal aspects of the Italian Neorealist cinema agendas that remain understudied until today (Hipkins, 2008; 2016). Taking into consideration methods that come from both migration and gender studies to better analyse the way Neorealist cinema addressed questions related to gender and the problem of homeless people and *borgatari* would help us better comprehend how the cinematic reinvention of the concepts of gender, inhabitants, domesticity and citizenship challenges stereotypes dominating Italian society. Danièle Bélanger and Andrea Flynn can help us shape methods aiming to merge migration studies and gender studies. A remark by Bélanger and Flynn is particularly enlightening: 'the feminist reading of migration allows for the inclusion of gender as a central aspect of migration flows, labour patterns, trajectories, and experiences.' (Bélanger & Flynn, 2018, p.185). Another aspect relevant to a better understanding of how Italian Neorealist cinema challenged an ensemble of stereotypes concerning Italian society is the relationship between cinema and social change. Natalie Fullwood, in *Cinema, Gender and Everyday Space* (2015), has investigated this relationship during Italy's economic boom of the 1950s and early 1960s.

An article pivotal for any research aiming to address the relationship between gender studies and film studies is Teresa De Lauretis' *Technology of Gender*, in which gender is understood as a product of various social technologies, including cinema (De Lauretis, 1987). Caroline Bainbridge's *A Feminine Cinematics: Luce Irigaray, Women and Film* (2008) is also useful for exploring gender issues in Neorealist cinema in Italy, given that it draws upon the work of philosopher Luce Irigaray to suggest a new understanding of the debates around the relationship between women and film.

Rosi Braidotti's *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (2011), on the other hand,

could help us establish methods aiming to bring together gender and migration studies. Braidotti explores the possibilities of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of 'becoming-minoritarian', arguing that 'Deleuzian becoming is the affirmation of the positivity of difference, meant as a multiple and constant process of transformation' (2011, p.246). Important for endeavours aiming to merge the methods of gender and migration scholarship is the intention to draw upon approaches of social science, on the one hand, and to treat gender as an institutional part of immigration studies, establishing legitimacy for gender in migration studies, on the other.

## Acknowledgments

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# **Elastic floor plans as a solution for today's housing crisis Do you want to dwell like your Granny?**

***What do dwellings that allow versatile use by literally giving their residents 'space to live' look like?  
To understand what 'living together' means, in this graphic essay the author reflects on her own dwelling history by merging embodied experience with cultural readings and architectural knowledge. Multi-interpretable, equivalent rooms, she concludes, have the potential to provide more future-proof residences.***



**Maybe I do want  
to dwell  
like my Granny.**  
A graphic essay

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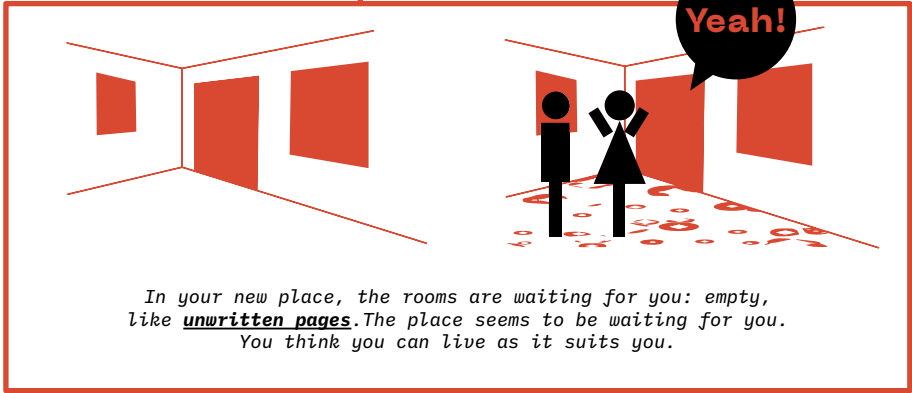
More than we might realise, our homes define how we live together. Usually every room is strictly tied to one function, an unquestioned condition that makes use other than planned nearly impossible. How do dwellings look like that allow versatile use?

**BUILDING WORK IS BOOMING...**



*After a long radio silence, housing is back in the spotlight.*

**IMAGINE YOU'VE JUST MOVED IN.**



## **We do not dwell. We are dwelled.**

Our housing schemes are remarkably one-sided, rooted in conservative ideas of living together and tailored to one group of residents: the stereotypical family, the student, the elderly, and so on. What does a living space look like which can be used for multiple ways of cohabiting?

**THE OCCUPANT HAS TO ADAPT.**

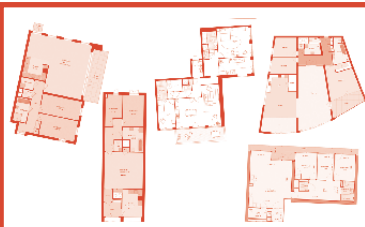
...NOT ONLY DWELLINGS, ALSO PROMISES ARE PILING UP.

**YOUR IDEAL HOME**    Something beautiful is on the horizon.

WANT TO GO EVEN BIGGER?

*Joy unlimited!*

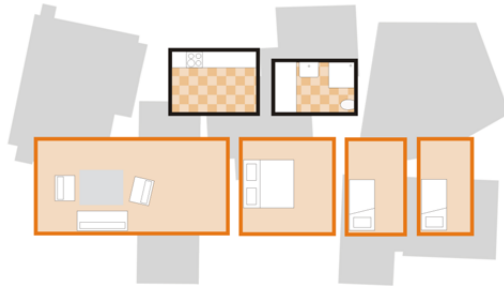
**HOME IN HARMONY**



Look at these three- and four-room floor plans.

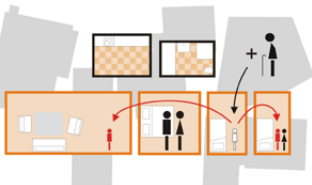
**WHAT A VARIETY!**

For the variety is deceiving. In essence, all plans come down to one **standard configuration**: a kitchen, a bathroom, a large living room, a master bedroom and some small bedrooms.

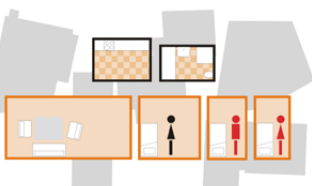


YOU THINK YOU HAVE A FREE HAND.

THAT SOON TURNS OUT TO BE AN ILLUSION.



For example, if you want to take in your elderly mother.



Or if you want to live together with friends.



You can only use the place exactly the way it was designed.

**UNLESS YOU CAN AFFORD TO LIVE VERY SPACIOUSLY, YOU SOON DISCOVER WHERE THE SHOE DOESN'T FIT.**

First, we look at a concept that seems so common that we hardly give it a second thought. Once a 'function' was 'the holding of an office', a responsibility and even an honour. Later a 'function' became 'a task, which has to be performed'. Notice the shift: now the function is imposed – and then must be fulfilled. The same happens during the design process. Each room is given one function, such as 'living room' or 'bed-room'. Tailored to this function, the dimensions of the room and its position within the house are determined.

*Of course, there were very good reasons for creating rooms with defined functions. Instead of the previously one- or two-room accommodations...*



*...some 150 years ago, the northwestern European middle class invented homes with distinct chambers. For the first time, rooms became homely, intimate and private.*



*The concept of rooms tailored to one function was not widely questioned during the Modern movement. On the contrary, it provided an effective strategy for designing humane homes for small purses.*

## One room – one function.

Is functionalising the only strategy for designing compact homes? What happens when we look at the use of rooms instead? Worldwide, in homes roughly the same activities are taking place: resting, getting together, eating, cooking, caring for our bodies or homes and working.

*In western homes, every activity is translated one-to-one to a room. We experienced the consequences of this when increasingly housebound due to Covid-19. **MANY HOMES PROVED TO BE INFLEXIBLE.***

- living room ..... • get together
- bedroom ..... • resting
- dining room ..... • eating
- kitchen ..... • cooking
- utility room ..... • working
- bathroom ..... • caring

**IMAGING LIVING IN JAPAN**

*In Japan, people look at living spaces differently. The specific and exclusive use of rooms that is common here, is rare in Japan.*

*For example, there is not one bedroom, but one can rest and spend the night in **four different rooms.***



Contemporary Japanese architects still use these design methods. And it's well known: Japanese homes are not only famous for their imaginative use of space, they are also compact.

In Japan, rooms are used for multipurposes, with little furnishing, which lead to compact homes.





# Elastic use



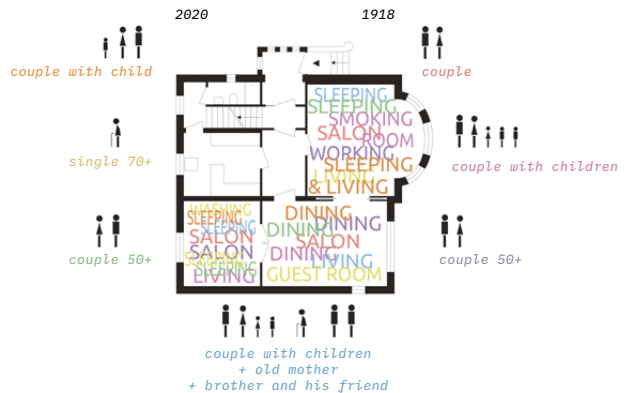
Let's look a little closer to home. In 1918, my great-grandparents were able to purchase a beautiful villa. To this date, parts of my family still live there.

The showpieces of the villa are three salons en suite. Whilst researching what the previous residents used these rooms for in the past, I made a surprising discovery.



## THE SPACES WERE USED EXTREMELY DIFFERENTLY OVER TIME.

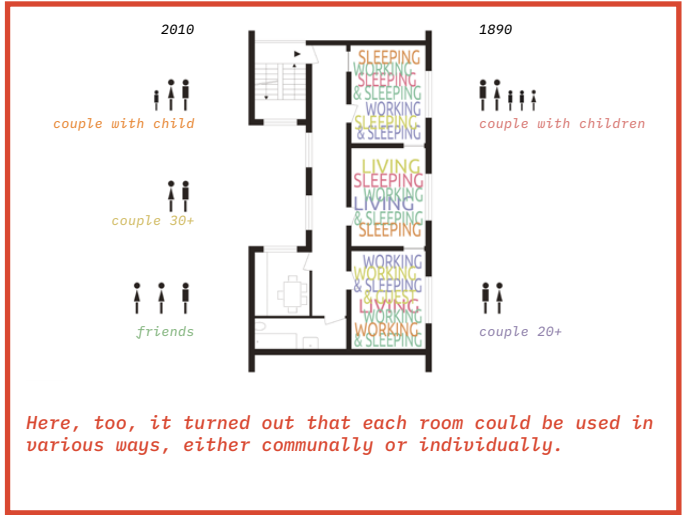
The formerly representative salons were used as family and dining rooms, gentleman's and smoking chamber, study or library, and toddler, teenagers' or guest rooms.



THE USE WAS NOT FIXED, BUT CHANGEABLE OR ELASTIC.

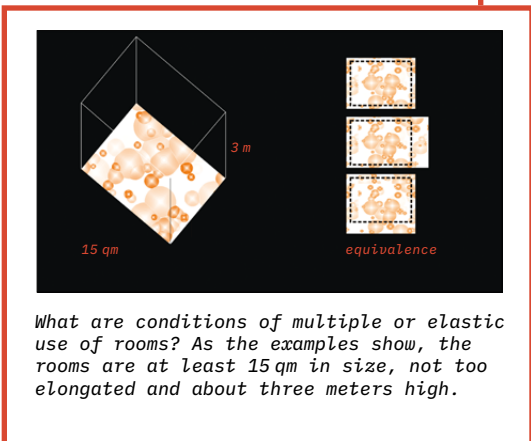


This apartment in Berlin, built in 1890, had several equally sized rooms. We lived in a commune, but later the apartment became a family home again.



Rooms that are open to multiple interpretations do not necessarily have to be completely the same, but equivalence does make the difference. These are conditions of surprising simplicity.

Rooms that are as equivalent as possible allow spaces to be used in different ways. By the way, this does not mean that those rooms are free from architectural or societal intentions. On the contrary, rooms were designed with a clear purpose in mind, but their use could easily be adapted. Nothing suggests that this would be different in the future.



# Which dwellings restrict versatile use and which ones give residents literally 'space to live'?

Rooms that are open to multiple interpretations are the opposite of the conventional rigid, hierarchical configuration: living room - spacious bedroom - small bedroom.



THE CHALLENGE IS TO COMBINE EXISTING KNOWLEDGE WITH RE-DEFINED CONCEPTS OF 'LIVING TOGETHER'.

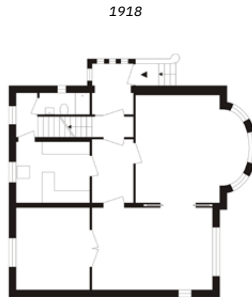
To achieve future-proof residences for a diverse society, it is not per se necessary to invent new concepts.



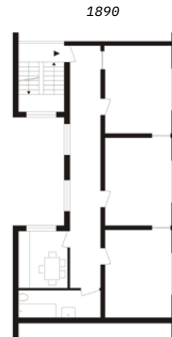
young adults



elderly adults



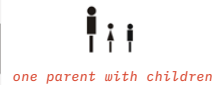
1918



1890



family



one parent with children



granny with children

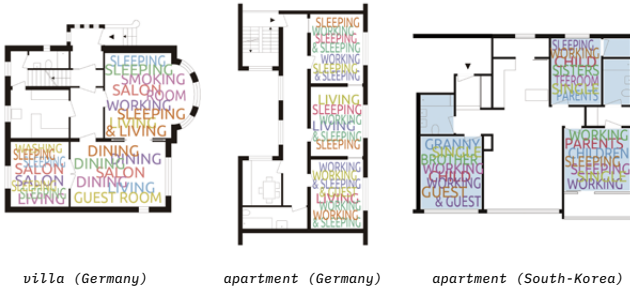


senior citizen & help



patchwork family

Clustered bedrooms:



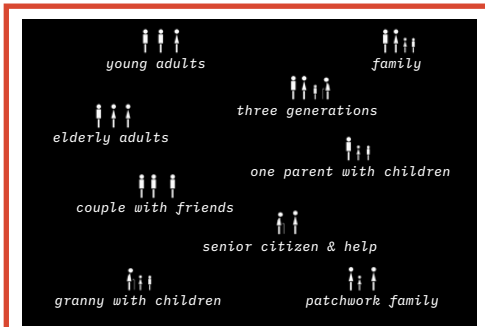
villa (Germany)

apartment (Germany)

apartment (South-Korea)

To fully understand what 'living together' means, I reflected on my own 'dwelling history' in Germany, The Netherlands and South-Korea, where I discovered compact apartments with clustered bedroom spaces. Re-exploring the way in which we live is, of course, only the beginning. We should go further: in terms of building methods, legislation and financing.

**BUILDING WORK IS BOOMING...**



But residing is **more** than just the residence.



After a long radio silence, housing is back in the spotlight.

**RESIDING IS AN ACTION.**

This text is an edited version of a video which discusses one part of my book *Wonen. De fascinerende gelaagdheid van een alledaagse bezigheid* ('Dwelling. The compelling layering of an everyday activity'), published by Walburg Pers, Zutphen 2021 (<http://bit.ly/Wonen-PRINS>).

Research and publication were supported by the Mondriaan Fund, the municipality of Rotterdam, De Gijselaar Hintzenfonds and the J.F. Jurriaanse Stichting.

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Panel II	SPATIAL AGENCY – BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE
Author	<b>Karl Kvaran</b> Sp(r)int Studio, Reykjavik, Iceland

## WORLD IN PROGRESS

# The premise of a Dialogue Manifesto

***With reference to the French author, poet, and philosopher Édouard Glissant, an attempt is made to re-imagine the world as one shared residence, where the notion of 'relation' is introduced as a fundamental feature of communities around the planet, setting up the basis for a future Dialogue Manifesto for architects and urban planners.***

In our modern times, globalisation has had an increased impact on our daily lives around the world. This is not the first historical phase of globalisation and surely not the last. However, it is one of the more dangerous and intense phases that the world has seen, leading to irreversible destruction, both through ecological degeneration and the disappearance of cultural identities. Referring to the French author, poet, and philosopher **Édouard Glissant**, this project presents his concept of the *Theory of the World (Théorie du Monde)*: a global dialogue that, as opposed to globalisation, does not homogenise culture but produces a difference from which new things can emerge. From within Glissant's philosophical framework, an attempt is made to set up the basis for a **future manifesto for architects and urban planners.**

In a political atmosphere that has become increasingly isolationist and retrogressive, architects and urban planners must be at the forefront of dialogue, contribute to the exchange of ideas, cross cultural frontiers, and re-imagine future societies. Today, we observe political actors around the world profiting from the promise of a return to an unattainable past that never took place. This nostalgia is based upon the false belief that cultural exchange is a part of modernity that will lead to the loss of identity. It is the responsibility of those of us working in the field of architecture and urbanism to resist this erroneous idea and demonstrate that progress

is achieved by sharing culture and exchanging knowledge. Rather than focusing on a phantasmagorical past, we should advance toward a new future. This brings up the need for a future manifesto. The notion of a manifesto for the twenty-first century is complex and should avoid taking the form of a pronouncement or declaration charged with the idea of imposing something on the world. By referring to Glissant's *Theory of the World*, a work that confronts and defies homogenised globalisation, while encouraging or facilitating global exchange, the future manifesto could be more like a conversation or communication, a **Dialogue Manifesto.**





**I find it quite pleasant to pass from one atmosphere to another through crossing a border. We need to put an end to the idea of a border that defends and prevents.**

Borders must be permeable; they must not be weapons against migration or immigration processes.

– Édouard Glissant in  
**ONE WORLD IN RELATION**

## Dialogue

### **Theory of the World** (Théorie du Monde).

What makes Glissant's vision so central and subtle is not only its resistance to homogenised globalisation and its desire to connect people and cultures, but also its relevance to the world today. The key subjects of his works such as **Mondiality, Relation, Creolisation, Commonplace, Unity and Diversity** could be a potential path to follow when envisioning the **Dialogue Manifesto**.

### **MONDIALITY** (Mondialité)

*We cannot make an abstraction out of the place, the unavoidable space to which we belong, and we cannot confine it. We are encouraged by the force of our imagination to know and understand all the places of the world, because today they all meet and confront each other in the form of wars, massacres, epidemics, famines, natural disasters etc. But something new has happened: Mondiality. Whether we like it or not, we all feel that we are living in the same dimension, and that our destinies, our futures are inseparable. But what is exciting is that we cannot decide mechanically on destinies and futures that are inseparable and inextricable. It takes great intuition and creativity to try to understand Mondiality, where we all have a common destiny, and how it may be able to bring us together in a more practical sense one day.*

### **THE RELATION** (La Relation)

*In today's world, the complex notion of the universal can be misunderstood and misused to hide or forget realities. Rather than using the term universal, we should therefore speak of the 'Relation', because it captures all the particularities of the world, without forgetting a single one. Relation is today's universal. It is a way for all of us, wherever we come from, to go towards others and to try to change ourselves by exchanging with others, without getting lost or denaturing ourselves. Without this vision of Relation, we will continue to endure the sufferings of today's world.*

## **CREOLISATION** (Créolisation)

*Originally a Caribbean concept, Creolisation describes the mixing together of different people and cultures to become one. The genesis of Creolisation was not due to a voluntary or planned act, but rather the result of people's desire and intuition. Due to contributions from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, amongst others, the Caribbean archipelago became a space of multi-relations merging into one identity. Today, the term Creolisation is sometimes used to describe the cultural complexity of the world in which we live, and of the many diverse societies that exist within it. Caribbean people know instinctively that their identity is not singular in origin, but has several roots. It is therefore possible to conceive identity not as isolation or seclusion. Identity can be sharing. The notion of Creolisation, which is characterised by sharing, does not indicate that the world is becoming creole. It means that the world is entering a period of such complexity and intertwinement that it is difficult for us to foresee the consequences.*

## **THE COMMONPLACE** (Le Lieu Commun)

*Glissant does not use the term 'commonplace' to describe a platitude or norm that we can ignore. To him, a commonplace - the place where a worldly thought intertwines with another worldly thought - has become one of the conditions of our current world. This interaction of sharing and touching each other while being far away has plunged us into a new situation of the modern world that invites us to re-think our common platform and approach to each other in the process of creativity and inventiveness.*

## **UNITY AND DIVERSITY** (Unité et Diversité)

*When observing a forest, we often feel that it is a unity and at the same time a diversity. This relation between the tree as an individual and the forest as a collective intrigues and fascinates us. Planet Earth is both unity and diversity. It is individuals and these individuals together - individuals who share a common ground. Nowadays, more than ever, we have this strong and urgent feeling: that the world and those in it are both a unity and diversity. If a tree, river, mountain or ocean disappears, mankind disappears. As a consequence, we have this feeling that did not exist before: an intuition of the the world as totality.*

## **ÉDOUARD GLISSANT AND RICHARD BUCKMINSTER FULLER**

When confronting the current crisis, it is important to realise that we might find certain initiatives from the past which we can use and reinterpret. The project *World in Progress* brings together, with an interdisciplinary approach, the philosophy of Édouard Glissant and the futuristic vision of American architect and author, Richard Buckminster Fuller.

### **WORLD IN PROGRESS**

Based on Glissant's conception, the world is re-imagined as *one shared residence*, where the notion of Relation is introduced as a fundamental feature of communities around the planet. These ideas are expressed in drawings in the form of maps. But maps are not copies; they are projections. They represent imagined or analytical worlds that exist partly in the minds of their makers. They project a hypothetical idea of what the world could, or should, be like now or in the future. Projections are not neutral, natural or 'given': they are constructed, configured, derived from various conventions. In this way, they contradict the traditional function of a map: to record the accurate topography of a place that someone has actually visited in the past. Nowadays, there are no longer unknown spaces or blank zones on a map. *Terrae incognitae*, the unknown lands, have ceased to exist. We have mapped everything, but it is not the end of mapmaking, since for every 'official' map, there are counter-maps. The project *World in Progress* refers to two types of maps, representing different periods in the history of map-making: the *Mappa Mundi* and the *Dymaxion Map*. The term *Mappa Mundi* derives from the Medieval Latin words *mappa* (cloth or chart) and *mundi* (of the world), literally meaning 'sheet of the world'. *Mappae Mundi* are maps of the world produced in the medieval and early Renaissance periods, typically depicting Jerusalem at the center and the East at the top. They were never meant

to be used as navigational charts, and they do not pretend to show the relative areas of land and water. Rather, they are schematic and were meant to illustrate different principles featuring details of cosmology, mythology, and history. They became minor encyclopedias of medieval knowledge.

The *Dymaxion Map* was created and published by Richard Buckminster Fuller in 1943. Fuller's *Dymaxion World* embodies his effort to resolve the dilemma of cartography: how to depict as a flat surface this spherical world, with true scale, true direction and correct configuration at one and the same time. The *Dymaxion Map* does not have any 'right' way up. There is no 'up' and 'down', or 'north' and 'south': only 'in' and 'out'. Fuller attributed the north-up-superior/south-down-inferior presentation of most other world maps to cultural bias. The continents are one single island, one system, all connected to each other, challenging the dominant nation-state perspective with a more holistic 'total world' view. The methodological use of the *Mappa Mundi* and the *Dymaxion Map* results in a visual depiction which highlights relationships between elements of space, building on the premise that due to spatial information through observation, narration and interpretation, reality can be modelled in various ways. These depictions – or maps – will produce new realities just as they seek to document current ones.

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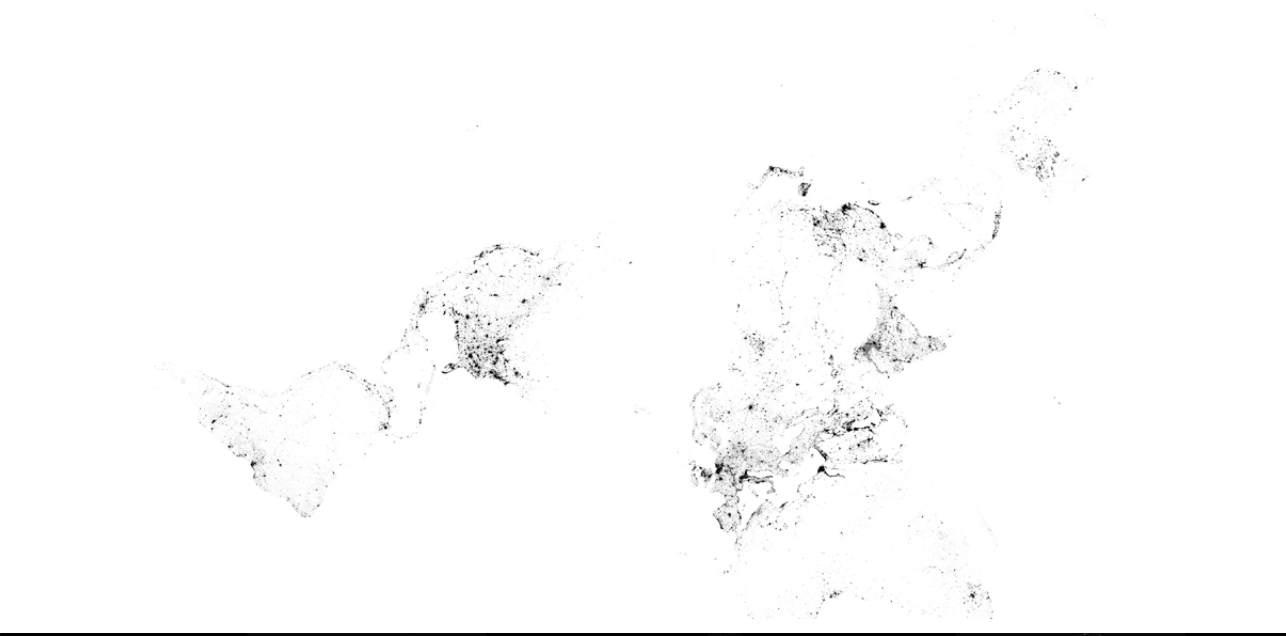
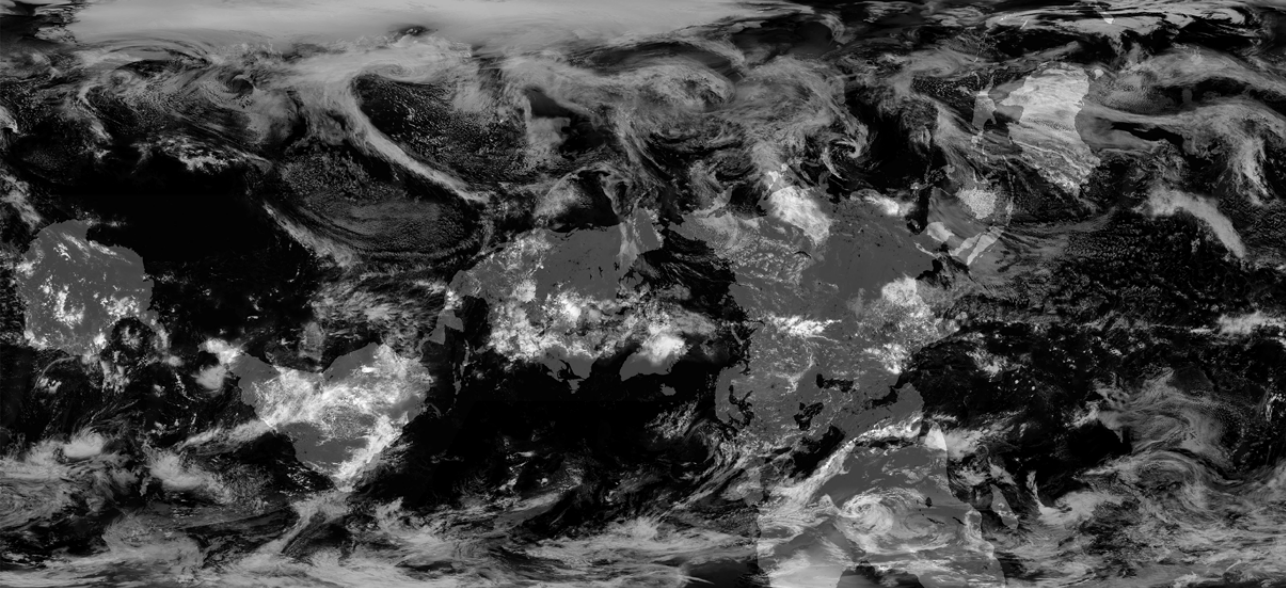
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**UNSETTLED AGENCY.** *Space has agency, processes have agency, and the media that are set up to discuss these things – as we have seen today – also have their own agency.*

**What is the potential of being unsettled within these spaces of agency?**

*We architects need to consider how being a little destabilised within our spaces of agency can create a more generative space for discussion, for design, and for creating architecture:*

*becoming more unsettled and more flexible*

**agents of change, agents of play, and agents of dreams.**

*(Sarah Rivière)*

**I think about the rigidity of floor plans,** *the tyranny of the history of the Modernist house, where we started to design a rigidity of social relations.*

*In Robin Evans' analysis of 'Figures, Doors and Passages' he talks about the fluidity of spaces being optimised by the openings between them: **the best room was the room with many doors.***

*But at some point we retreated into spatial layouts*

*that had much more controlled access and perimeters.*

*And this had to do with the desire*

*to direct social interaction. (Sigrún Birgisdóttir)*

*Returning to Andrea's idea of the **shoes that don't fit** as a metaphor for homes and communities: perhaps we all have to step up and get a little bit less comfortable in our 'shoes'.*

*To start finding ways to modify these shoes: these homes, these communities.*

*To take responsibility, and to create new processes through which we can*

**carefully modify existing environments that pinch us.**

*To create spaces in which we can flourish, even when life brings change. (Sarah Rivière)*

**FEMALE NOMAD.** *It struck me how important the figure of the female migrant is, a woman representing different ideas of nationhood.*

*And the transgressive figure of the moving woman.*

*I am thinking about Rosi Braidotti's book 'Nomadic Subjects', when she is not only talking about a spatial state of gendered movement,*

*but she is also talking about an epistemological condition*

**like an unknowingness that happens when one refuses fixity.**

*The tension between being settled and being unsettled,*

*whether one resides through choice as a place of safety*

*or whether one is made to reside as in being controlled or trapped.*

*How male philosophers in some histories of philosophy have placed women, confined them, within male symbolic systems*

*and constructed dwellings for themselves with their bodies.*

*So what that suggests is, for women to dwell and remain alive,*

*we need to **reconceptualise women's relation to space and time** and in a sense, there are lots of possibilities for doing that:*

**nomadism, generosity, multiplicity, fluidity. (Jane Rendell)**

**MIGRATING THE HOME.** When we start something, we should always be aware that **all the parameters are dynamic.**

In Ghita's presentation, aspects of different identities are combined in migrant homes, a new identity is created, one that remains in the process of becoming.

**The non-static character is very present**

in the way that furniture is combined and the way space is inhabited.

(Marianna Charitonidou)

What started to come through in the work presented was

how **generational experiences make a difference**

in terms of how home is remembered or not. (Jane Rendell)

Being half French and half Icelandic, the **relation between immigration and spatial composition in architecture** has always interested me. Let's look for example at the first-generation immigrants in France. The approach of this generation was **based upon temporality**, meaning they were living in France, but they were sure that they were going to go back to their home country.

They approached the spatial arrangement of the house almost in a **nomadic way**.

They would simply start by putting things here and there in a very intuitive way, hoping to return to their families and homes at some point.

With time, this new home in a new country would grow, becoming a hybrid space between the past and the future.

Do you see a different approach in temporality in the new generation?

Does this generation have a more static approach, because it does not look back?

They live in the present society,

but do they take elements from their parents' culture for perhaps nostalgic reasons?

(Karl Kvaran)

I assumed that the first generation is almost nomadic.

But when I looked into the houses, I discovered that

they put much more effort into making their Belgian house Moroccan.

The effort put into the furniture and the decoration was very prominently Moroccan.

On the other hand, the second and the third generations tried out some sort of **hybrid models**.

The first generation was not as integrated as the second and the third one, because they came as adults and as workforce.

When you meet them in Brussels, their outfit, their clothes are very traditional Moroccan compared to the second and the third generation.

**Clothes - l'habit in French - as part of habiter - to inhabit.**

They are **shelter for our body, as is the house**, on another scale.

(Ghita Barkouch)

It is about **interconnectivity**, I think.

It is important for people to wake up and realise that immigration is not only someone else's problem, it is also my problem. The same is true for social equality, gender equality, feminism.

**It means: I am also concerned.**

We are all related, so it is not an isolated problem belonging to someone else.

**We have to solve it together.** (Karl Kvaran)

**W e - a r e -  
i n - t h i s  
- t o g e t h e r -  
b u t -**







**w e - a r e -  
n o t - o n e  
a n d - t h e -  
s a m e .**



**Rosi Braidotti**

# Inter mezzo



Five homes for five women by seven female architects  
and educators in imaginary conversation with

BARBARA HEPWORTH

AGNES MARTIN

MADOLON VRIESENDORP

ORLANDO/VIRGINIA WOOLF

JOSEPHINE BAKER

*The project is supported by The Dreyer Foundation.*



# The metaphorical house

## Imagining female residences

Authors

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Maria Mengel, Anne Pind, Anne Romme, Tine Bernstorff Aagaard  
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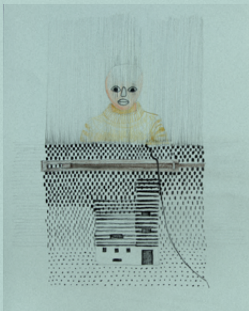
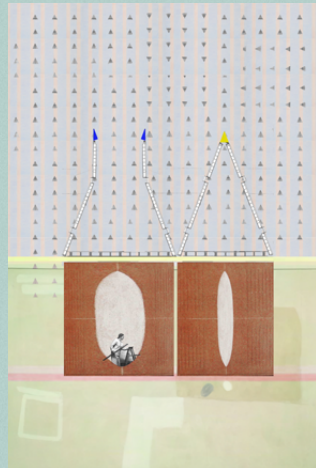
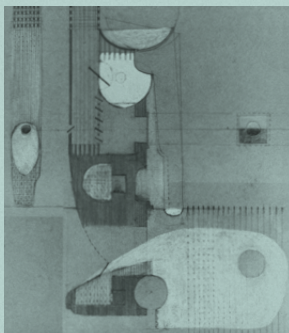
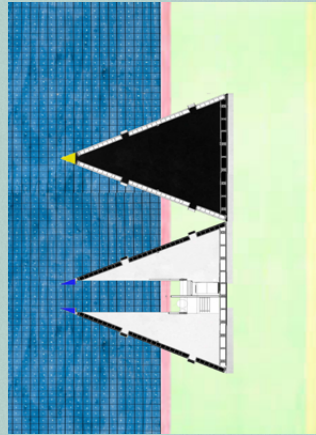
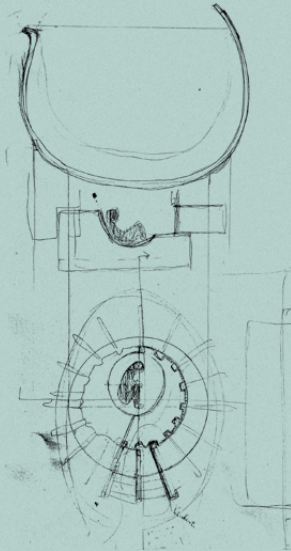
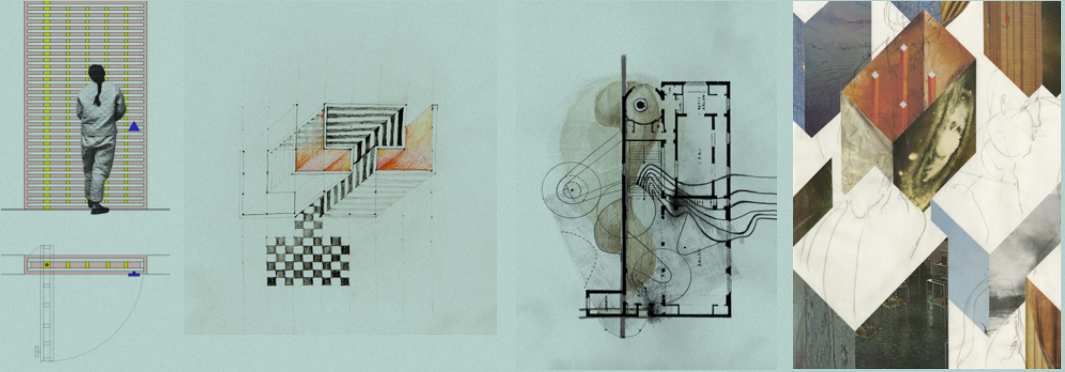
### **Housing conversation: how we build together**

*We share the same everyday activities. We teach together in various constellations. We are concerned with questions on gender, architecture and the conditions under which we work, within our institutional framework. Conditions meaning that in between part-time teaching, office work, picking up children, research time, buying groceries, planning and homework, we have very limited time to meet and collaborate.*

*Finding ourselves working from our dinner tables and bedrooms in spring 2020, we felt an urgent need to re-establish a shared space for making. A delicate space. A strong space. A playful space. A forgiving space. A space where we could listen to each other and the material among us. This is how we started collaborating. We committed ourselves to build together.*

**WE SAW, DRAW, LIE ABOUT, LAUGH AND WEEP. WHEN ONE OF US STOPS, SOMEONE ELSE TAKES OVER. WE BREW TEA. WE ARE NOT ALONE. TOGETHER, WE WORK IN AN INTENSE, CARING AND DEDICATED SPACE WHERE INTIMACY IS PARAMOUNT.**

# DRAWINGS



Ida Flarup, Camilla Hornemann, Mathilde Lésenechal, Maria Mengel, Anne Pind, Anne Romme, Tine Bernstorff Aagaard

Authors

The project consists of:  
 a series of drawings for each house (mixed media, digital, watercolour, crayon, pastel, thread, collage and more), five houses (basswood, paint), scale 1:20, and a letter 'She has a pen' reflecting on the conditions under which the houses have been built.



The five houses were conceived as a series of interconnected assignments which we took turns writing. Initially, we were all given a character and a series of words to work from. We produced five drawings each and sent them to one another. It was intriguing to send and receive these first visual contours of each house, learning about each house – and its creator – through the interpretation of the character and the method of making the drawing.

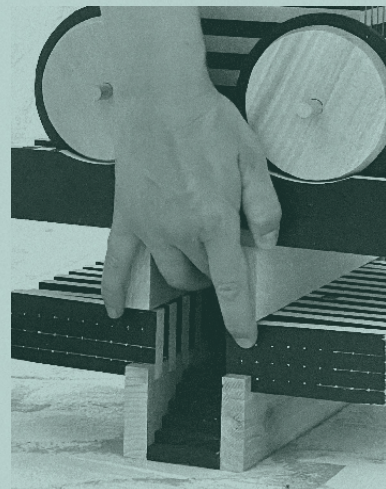
A way of engaging in conversation about the houses was to have a matrix in which we assigned character traits, typologies, and physical appearances. The matrix developed as a scaffold and a conversation paper – and a way of relating the houses to one another by enhancing their differences. The matrix reveals the houses as complex, with inherent conflict, and it becomes a tool for exploring the complexity of human traits through the metaphor of the house.

HOUSE OF	THE MOTHER	THE PROPER	THE FIGHTER	THE DREAMER	THE MUSE
Metaphor	consoling	ambiguous	striving	dreaming	playful
Idea	mothering/ smothering	rational geometry	hung	hour glass	the muse/ the man's gaze on the woman
Quality	rocking	order	heavy ground/ light construction	fantasy	movable
Action	balancing	mirroring	matriculation	stacking	dependent
Time	rhythmic	(a)symmetric	grid	eternal	prison
Handicap	instable	bipolar	self-conscious	pathetic	restless
Ground	circular	square	pedestal	reversed	on wheels
Roof	pillow/stone	steep triangle	unfinished/ under construction	portal/funnel	adopted/bend
Door	blinded	2	4 doors below	exchange	involuntary/ locked
Scale	intimate	concrete	city	furniture/ miniature	child
Window	inner eye	vagina	imagined	portal	cracks
<b>CHARACTER</b>	<b>BARBARA HEPWORTH</b>	<b>AGNES MARTIN</b>	<b>MADELON VRIESENDORP</b>	<b>ORLANDO/ VIRGINIA WOOLF</b>	<b>JOSEPHINE BAKER</b>



## HOUSES

For the next parts of the relay, we jumped straight into the woodworking workshop, sketching directly in the material. We started with five pieces of basswood, a base dimension, and a scale. We swapped houses along the way, working on the door of one house one day, and the roof of another house the next. The relay format forced us to work fast, encouraging misinterpretations and bold moves, such as overwriting, cutting up, painting over and **killing darlings**.



By making a series of houses and insisting on taking turns while creating them, they also become a medium through which we explore collective creativity as a method for creating architecture. Through the project we ask how we can work on erasing the concept of sole authorship without diluting the artistic nerve and the productive differences we all bring.









# SYMPOSIUM

*The collective space of exploration we have gotten to know and cherish from our working process seemed to expand and merge with the warm, embracing space of the symposium. The room and the co-participants smoothly engaged in play, enthusiasm, and conversation.*









## ***She has a pen*** **INVITATION AU VOYAGE**

By Anne Pind

*My daughter has a pen. It is no ordinary pen, mind you, like the narrow, elongated writing tools I use to take notes and write memos. My daughter's pen doesn't write in coloured ink. It writes in white. When she wants to read what she has written, she flips the pen over and presses a small button on the cap triggering a ray of light. When the light hits the ink, it turns blue on the paper.*

*'Look!' she says, teasingly, and I look at the seemingly blank sheet of paper she hands me. The room we're sitting in, her room – brimming with toys and piles of books on the floor – is suddenly illuminated by a tiny circle of light. Like when catching sight of a slug's fresh trail of slime on a flagstone in summer, I catch sight of the text. It winds its glistening way over the matte surface. Capturing the light from the window in a flash. Before disappearing again.*

*'Women's history is written in white ink,' writes professor Birgitte Possing in her book 'Argumenter mod kvinder' (Arguments against women). They exist (the stories), they existed (the women), but haven't been held onto in writing, which is why they haven't been passed on, quoted or archived. It is possible to be written into the annals of history. But written out, as well. Where does that leave us then?*

*Occasionally, I daydream about the spaces, the women we don't write about, inhabit. What are they doing? Are they waiting – drowsily, lolling about – for the door of history to open? No. They aren't waiting, they're working. I think they're whistling as they fertilise, upholster and shape the space. Can you feel it? The shape of conception. Perhaps we're not the ones who are growing; they are.*

*To my daughter, the white pen is a tool that gives her access to an undisturbed realm of text. To me, the pen's effect is ambiguous. If she loses the cap, she can't see what she has written. She thinks it will last forever. I know that the battery will run out at one point.*

*Over time, women have managed to keep watch over one another's works. The fact that we can now read the enraptured manuscripts of medieval mystic Julian of Norwich is because multiple generations of nuns have saved and copied her handwritten sheets, protected them against moisture, fire and beetles – against the destruction of triviality. Swathed in cloths, handed down from one generation to the next.*

*In the spring, I read a beautifully designed exhibition catalogue accompanying a large-scale exhibition about women in surrealism. The text starts out by describing all the famous men associated with the period by art historians. Shouldn't we be approaching this differently? Why don't we knock right on Frida Kahlo's door? Ask her if we can help hang up the laundry while she feeds the monkeys, lubricates her prosthesis, takes out her brushes, her lovers.*



For my Ph.D. scholarship interview, I'm asked whether I fear that my research project will be too private. No. I'm not afraid. I'm absorbed. Come, take a little bite of this text until its juices run down your chin, over your skin, dripping on your clothes, staining them – is there anyone home who can clean up? – and the water tap, you've forgotten to shut it off before you went into your office, and now there's water everywhere, and this wasn't how it was supposed to be. Edmund Husserl sits in another room, never actually thinking that Gerda Walther should also have a seat at the table, and once she did, why does she have to act that way – all that group phenomenology and feeling-in-common – we never said that that is what research is.

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MANIFESTO FOR MAINTENANCE ART  
Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969:

*I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife.  
I am a mother. (Random order).*

*I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning,  
cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving,  
etc. Also, (up to now separately) I 'do' Art.  
Now, I will simply do these maintenance  
everyday things, and flush them up to  
consciousness, exhibit them, as Art.*

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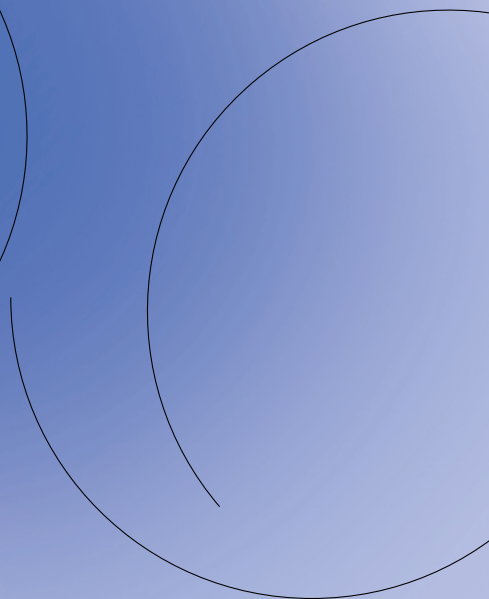
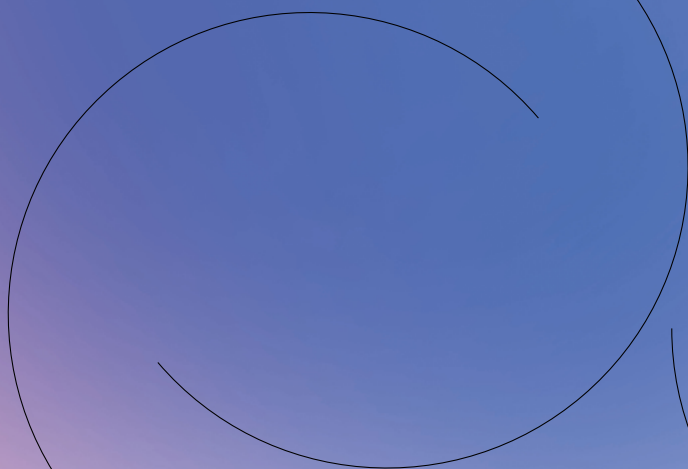
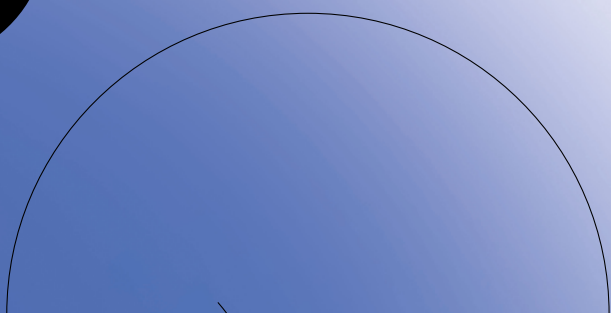
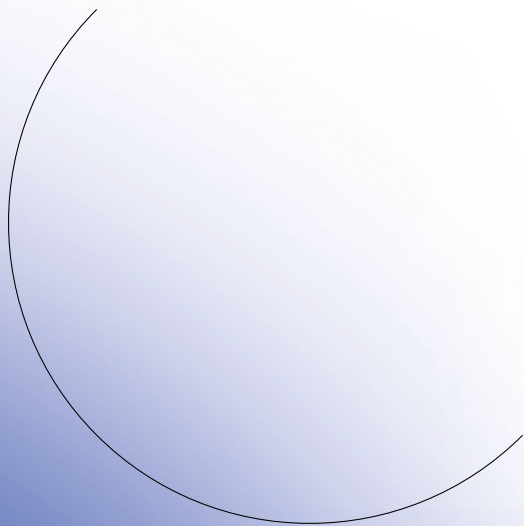
*I recently read a study showing how the  
output of male researchers rose during the  
COVID-19 crisis. Women's research declined  
equivalently. Why? Because their tables are  
filled with tasks that aren't scientific. I'm  
writing this because we've got to help one  
another find space to think. This text is filled  
with interruptions, too. Written in bed, in  
the shed next to my bike (its basket holding  
a blackbird's nest), at a series of borrowed  
desks.*

*'Think we must!' Virginia Woolf says. And in  
order to be able to think and write, we must  
have a calm space, as well as a window to the  
world and writing instruments, pen, paper,  
table, computer, back-up and someone to keep  
watch over our work, quote it and share it.*

*Writing can have serious consequences. Look  
at Orlando, skating across the frozen River  
Thames. Enchanted by its temporary stability,  
Londoners have moved out onto the ice to  
build new homes, without walls, beyond the  
norms of the city. The layer of ice denotes  
freedom, a new cold, common ground, an  
elongated field of possibilities. When the  
thaw comes, no one is prepared. The frost  
fair disintegrates into ice floes, and its  
inhabitants – in beds, on bureaus, in icy cold  
dresses – are drawn past the immobile city  
out to sea on melting rafts. In the breakup  
between fixed and flowing, ('It's a sea, a sea  
of possibilities'), the poet Orlando wakes up  
as a woman.*

*Think we must! The skater's trail, the snail's  
trail, cracks in the ice and water in the room,  
the undulations of time, the watery ink,  
saturating the text, fertilising the paper.  
Writing capable of breaking up the world.  
What happens now? I don't know, but we  
have a pen.*

3



# **Individuality – I dwell, therefore I am**

*Moderator* Wiltrud Simbürger

*Respondents* Amy Kulper and Jenni Reuter

‘To dwell’ is an active verb, where the persistence of every person's unique character becomes present through the performance of a life. The process of how each of us dwells, be it playfully or courageously, facing up to daily challenges or simply daring to dream, defines the narrative trajectory of our identities. Dwelling becomes an ongoing discursive thread through which we write and re-write ourselves in exchange with our place of residence, an exchange through which this residence can become a home.

Our homes encompass us, forming the context for our lives, but also giving compass to our sense of self, particularly in terms of locating and orientating that self within what can be a strange world. The spaces, objects, and the materials of our homes, from the well worn to the brand new, become intersections for the practice of personhood, where inner lives meet ever-changing confirmation and resistance in vital and ongoing translation.



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## Wiltrud opened with a game...

---

**Rules:**

*There are objects that stir certain feelings in us. When holding them in our hands, they make us aware of our own very presence in the world, of our memories, our life stories. They create a sense of home within our own bodies, no matter where we are.*

**Goal:**

*Each of these objects is unique and personal. By sharing them, participants – whether they are present on-site or attending virtually – evoke their own feelings of home and belonging, and build a hybrid space that eases them softly into that strange place of in-between presence. Together they establish a fertile common ground from which an exchange of ideas and thoughts can grow.*

**Method:**

*Participants introduce their objects first, then repeat the previously mentioned objects, and add their own to the list, creating a metaphorical necklace of homes.*



**Players:**

**Wiltrud Simbürger • Amy Kulper • Paola Ardizzola • Anne Marit Lunde • Jenni Reuter**

Player 1 Wiltrud An object that has been with me since I first moved out of my childhood home is a kitchen tool. My mom gave me her beater, and it has moved with me ever since, from the South of Germany to the North, from the US and back to Germany. I tried to replace it a couple of times, but this thing is so wonderfully useful, it is narrow, fits in every bowl, it is light in your hand and it just doesn't break! Every time I use it to make batter, I think of my mom and the house I grew up in. **A beater.**

Player 2 Amy I am sorry to be a bit redundant here, but my object is also a kitchen tool. A wooden spoon given to me by my mother who was a self-described subsistence cook. She cooked for ten people in our extended family daily, and every time I use that spoon it conjures that sense of all of us together.

**A beater and a wooden spoon.**

Player 3 Paola Twelve ago I experienced a major earth-quake in my home town of L'Aquila. I moved abroad afterwards and have lived in the Middle East ever since. L'Aquila is a beautiful medieval city made of limestone, and I used to live in a stone house. When I left, I took a piece of my house with me, a small limestone. First it moved to Turkey with me, then to Lebanon, and now it is in Egypt.

**A beater for batter, a wooden spoon and a limestone.**

Player 4 Anne Marit I am quite aware that this is cheating, because my object is actually not an object. It is - and if my husband is listening to this, he will probably never speak to me again - my cat. She is the most caring and relaxing being in this world, and every time I come home she is the first one to greet me at the door. So she is home for me.

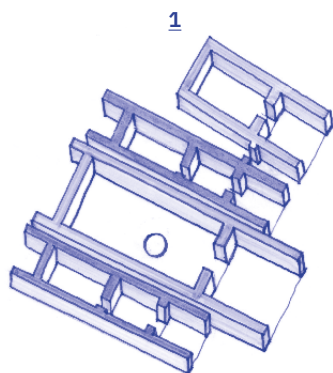
**A beater for batter, a wooden spoon, a limestone and a cat.**

Player 5 Jenni I tend to travel lightly, but I feel comfortable only when I have my worn-out clothes with me, clothes that have been used for a very long time. They are familiar to me, and I have a very strong attachment to them. I don't feel at home when I don't have them with me. I think that clothes are the first layer of architecture and the last layer of skin, so they are somehow the space we inhabit. **So a beater for batter, a wooden spoon, a piece of limestone, a cat and my worn-out clothes.**

## THE STONE-SHELL HOUSING UNIT

### For a future with possibilities

**This text presents a prototypical project that was inspired by notions of temporary stability, transitional permanence, and forced uprootedness. The challenge for its designers, Gabriele and Marco d'Oltremare together with the author, was to create a housing unit which is able to accommodate different cultural models of domesticity. This includes ideas such as flexible functionality, prefabricated modularity, temporary housing, affordable self-build elements with fixed and flexible modules. All aiming to create opportunities for the user to customise the housing unit. A new dwelling typology was developed that ensures a good living standard in a transitional lifestyle, epitomising the notions of cosiness, nesting and self-determination for one's home.**



In the second millennium BCE, a space-conceiver in Troy built a modular house through the extensive use of parallel walls. The plan emphasises how the architect focused on the creation of a main social space, the *megaron*, and how, at the same time, by creating other smaller rooms, they granted privacy for different functions. By beautifully setting up a sequence of parallel walls, they strengthened the importance of both social and private space. <sup>(fig. 1)</sup> Identifying these distinct spaces worked through doubling the parallel walls: though it would have been structurally possible, no single wall was used for identifying two different spaces. Thus, this type of house offered spaces for family members, but due to its flexibility and the independence of its units also for the ξένος, the stranger whom extending hospitality towards was a sacred gesture in ancient Greece. Today as well, each of us could be this stranger.

Within the art of residing, the ancient ways could be the future. In 1981 Aldo Rossi wrote that 'the emergence of relations among things, more than the things themselves, always gives rise to new meaning.' In order to understand the new meanings of residing we have to go through a process of decoding. Making a home in a society of transition, uprootedness and isolation, even more obscure than the *liquid society* theorised by Bauman (2000), is the new challenge for designers who are looking to deconstruct ties in order to weave a new fabric.

(1)

[Trojan house, second millennium BCE](#)

I should say:  
the house shelters day-dreaming,  
the house protects the dreamer,  
the house allows one to dream in peace.

— Gaston Bachelard,  
*The Poetics of Space*

This requires that we pinpoint the new symbolic stones we want to use for building a dwelling that reflects the temporary stability and transitional permanence experienced by individuals whose lives have been uprooted. (Perhaps an entire human existence is the slowly growing sum of events and experiences of temporary stability and transitional permanence.)

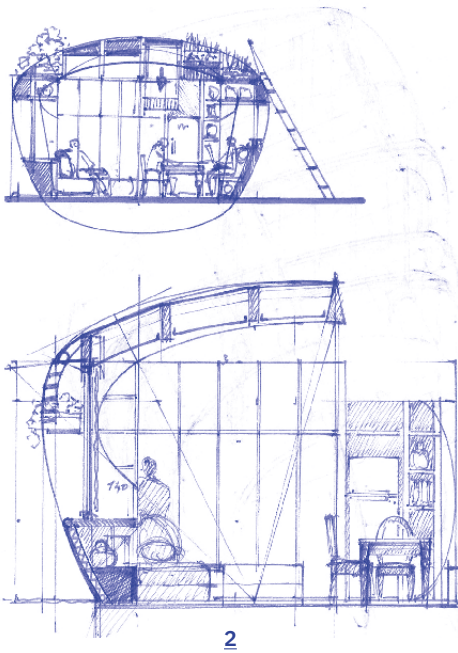
Every architect dreams of pursuing the concept of living in current times and interpreting its matrices. More often than not, however, it becomes a spasmodic search that leads to a disconnection between the ideal vision and the actual experience of the house in its essence. It is no coincidence that Heidegger (1951/1994) rejects the definition of architecture *tout-court*, but prefers to speak of building and dwelling: 'Heidegger felt that architects and historians tended to judge architecture more on the aesthetic priorities and less on the priorities of the people who create and inhabit the places for themselves. For him this was a cause for concern.' (Sharr, 2007, p.37)

In today's era of transition, of pandemics and the appropriation of new living processes, we wonder if the German philosopher was right when he tried to demystify the lyricism of the architectural form in favour of the empirical datum of *becoming home*. The true form of living is determined by those who live the domestic dimension day by day, shaping the geometries of reciprocity starting from their own inner substance.

Do not get us wrong if we mention the experience of Donald Duck to better explain our concept, aptly analysed by Giacomo Ricci (1988):

*'Pursuing the concept of "modern living". We are sure that, despite his proverbial misfortune, Donald Duck has a house that is a kind of alter-ego, through which he expresses himself and from which he feels protected. (...) despite the debts and despite the fact that his house is not, then, of "luxury", Donald dwells because, in his city, both the rich and the weak one have understood that it is necessary to maintain a continuous balance between ancient and modern, between nature and technology. And it is, of course, a naive, interclass, comic book synthesis, precisely; unlikely and unworkable in reality. But let's allow it, at least for a moment, on the level of imagination. Let's imagine that, then, metaphysics must be re-founded, in the sense that man's values and functions must be reconnected: to free him from the fear and irrationality of the ancient, but to tie him back to the sense of things that remain and, therefore, to the earth and to the sky.'* (pp. 145–146)

In order to stay connected to the things on earth and in heaven, transcendence is the ultimate need of each individual. Only if we can still experience it today, we really do inhabit the world.



### **THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY**

For centuries, many jobs requiring craftsmanship were performed at home. At that time, every tiny space was used as an effective multiple-function space for sharing experiences among members of the family community. In this kind of spatial flexibility, individualism was of no concern. Home was conceived as a space of dialogue.

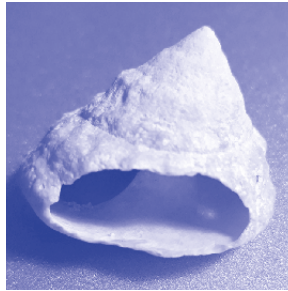
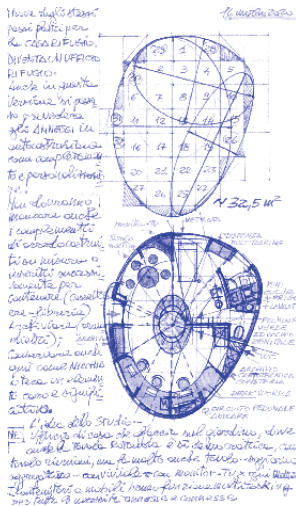
When we started to rethink a renewed need for social interaction at home in relation to the complexity of current existential necessities, images belonging to the collective imagination inspired us to conceive innovative flexible functionality, by using simplified prefabricated modules that allow to actively customise the housing unit.

A project from the years just after the Great War served as an additional precedent. When Austria was affected by serious poverty and resource shortage, the architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky (1897–2000) was

commissioned by the government to develop a possible solution. In 1922, she designed a 'core house' prototype for poor communities whose typology was based on the very first standardised kitchen with obvious reference to the importance of people's nourishment. The proposal immediately gained high social impact because the future inhabitants were also the builders of the temporary housing units. The active participation of the users, together with the creation of common spaces for socialisation, like shared urban gardens, was fundamental in Lihotzky's innovative architectural process. People's active participation was one of the determinants of success in the project for Vienna: 'a new form of organising the production of architecture had come into being through self-help and cooperation, as an immediate response to the post-war state of emergency. Settling was therefore not simply a working-class response to the conditions of scarcity, but a process (...) creating a common consciousness' (Hochhäusl, 2017, p.57).

Using ideas from this precedent, we decided to use affordable self-building elements, with fixed and flexible modules, as a way to give the users the possibility to customise the housing unit according to their specific habits and traditions through an effective participation process.





3

(2)  
Use of affordable self-building elements,  
with fixed and flexible modules

(3)  
Module's evolution inspired by  
natural entities: from a sequence of  
planes to a centripetal structure



### **THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW**

The idea that not the strongest species survives, nor the most intelligent one, but the one most receptive to change, is attributed to Charles Darwin. Put in these terms, architects and urban planners today carry the duty of creating spaces of resilience in which refugees, asylum seekers, or individuals secluded by COVID-19 can live in joy and playfulness, even in transient situations.

If we believe in what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, namely, that everyone is worthy of being accepted in their own identity and included in society, this idea transcends any differences, putting our common human identity above all. This is specifically important in the case of forced uprooting. The oxymorons of temporary stability and transitional permanence could serve as a good approximation in describing the physical and mental conditions of displaced individuals in dire need of reconstituting the archetypal *megaron* and the protection it provides. Only when protection is granted, the individual becomes an active subject within the community. Thus, this social need passes through the architectural process embedded in its intrinsic geometry.

Space is defined by its geometric entity. This is how our initial module evolved from a structurally increasing sequence of planes to a centripetal structure. In both cases, the reference to organic elements of nature, the stone and the shell, constitute the essence of a modifiable element in architecture and strong symbolism: the stone of our home country as the ultimate link back to it after being forced to leave and the shell as organic abode built step by step by its dweller, the hermit crab.

The module proposed can be conceived as a sort of space-time capsule that embeds archetypes from the past, as well as time management solutions for the future home. The informality of the cave, where the first humans organised a structured life, together with the inner mobility and flexibility are the basic concepts of the module, reflecting the idea of an independent spaceship.

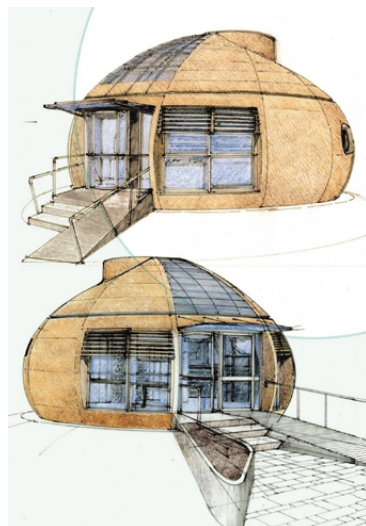
A reassuring cave-spaceship inside, at the same time the project seems disturbing from the outside. An oxymoronic value that was translated into certainty, it is based on the cavern-archetype, and on a futuristic shape on the outside. It is a comfortable capsule, adaptable, repeatable and modular in size thanks to the golden ratio that was adopted to establish all reciprocal measures, from the structural ribs to the whole proportions.

Covid-19 has influenced our thinking about the project with the idea of creating a living unit for working along an undetermined timeline. The working spaces alternating with those for relaxation, organised around the pivotal element, a vertical cylinder enveloped by a translucent staircase. The cylinder acts as a green lung illuminated by the zenith eye at the very top. The verticality of the cylinder represents the airy elements of nature, connected with the horizontal terrestrial plan of the skull-like capsule. Some windows are like telescopic binoculars for observing life out there, inspired by the 'organic eyes' of caves. The spherical cap is the epithelial tissue that separates the shelter's place from unknown space, and at the same time serves as a cranial lid designed for facilitating the noblest activity of men: thinking, before acting effectively. Far from the clichéd formalism of building a house, individuals can customise their own space according to their needs for a cosy, welcoming multi-functional space, and they can also have a multi-sensorial experience thanks to the natural elements embedded in the module such as stones, plants, flowers, herbs, and fruits.

The futuristic shell contemplates a high-tech system for optimising the energetic balance: geothermic and solar energy, hydroponic cultivation, and collection of rainwater as a precious source for daily needs. The prefabricated parts can be quickly assembled on different types of construction sites, while the finishing cladding can vary depending on the climate and availability of material. The furniture is fitted according to flexible needs, from working to home activities, whilst the mezzanine of the turret, thanks to the light cast by the skylight, is a place for reading, storytelling, and daydreaming.

The project reflects the five categories foreseen by Italo Calvino (1988) for surviving in the Third Millennium: lightness, quickness, exactitude, visibility, and multiplicity. Due to its intrinsic organic shape and technological setting, the modular dwelling can enter in a dialogue with both natural and built environments. Like a living organism eased down temporarily, it can be lightly moved from one place to another. It achieves its completion by using the Japanese concept of the *Shakkei* (Unwin, 2014), which contemplates the idea of borrowing a far element of the landscape and incorporating its view into the design. By using something already present, a complementary bi-univocal relationship between the dwelling unit and the view is established. The ornamentation of the house does not rely on heavily built elements but on the stable ephemerality of ever-changing landscapes. Either in the density of the city or the loneliness of the desert, the stone-shell home aims at conveying a sense of protection and opportunity at the same time.

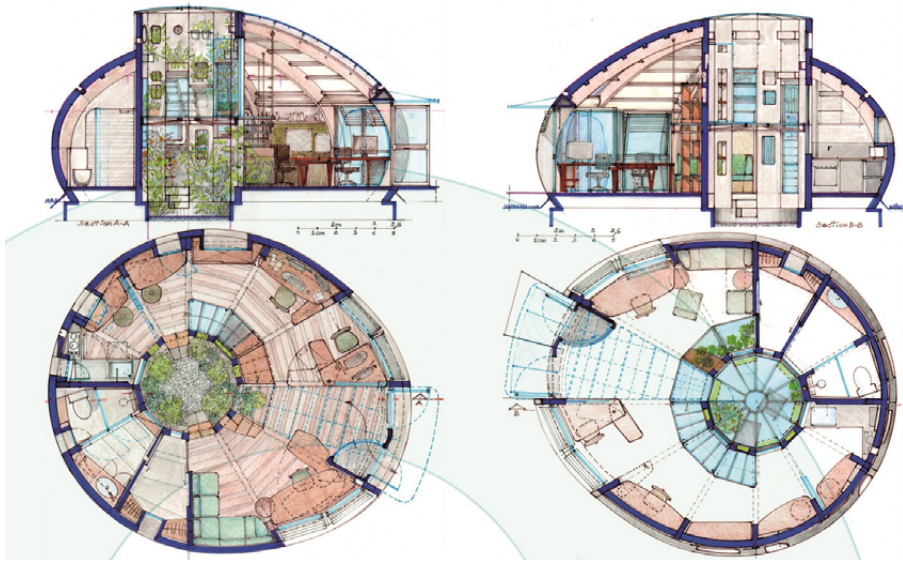
4



(4) [\*A space-time capsule that embeds archetypes from the past and time managing solutions for the future\*](#)

(5) [\*The capsule is comfortable, adaptable, repeatable, and modular in size\*](#)

5



### **CONCLUSION**

'The idea of living is what counts. Each house is a purely moral reality,' states the philosopher Coccia (2021). To find our existential order, it is necessary to manipulate things by ourselves and to transform them. The house is the form of space experience closest to us, it allows us to reach a sort of divination of experience. It is also an exercise of unconscious relationships, as well as an exercise in active cohabitation that requires not an ordered space a priori, but the definition of a place as an alchemical alembic in a continuous process of evolution.

Being forced to move or abandon a place implies the need to divide, to fragment, to choose the things to take and save. It is a painful process, but it can also be a liberating ritual that leads us to the essence of our previous life, an essence that we carry with us into the next one. In these terms, the physical space named *Tokonoma* in the Japanese culture, a niche at home where to place the most representative object of the family, becomes the physical depository of what we have saved of ourselves from the past. It is a process of anamnesis that helps to epitomise the essence of the past, on a journey back towards a sort of childhood that carries the whiteness and the regenerative strength of the self.

We need to *do home* to make our lives better. In this sense, the engine of every home is a moral engine in which life is reflected.

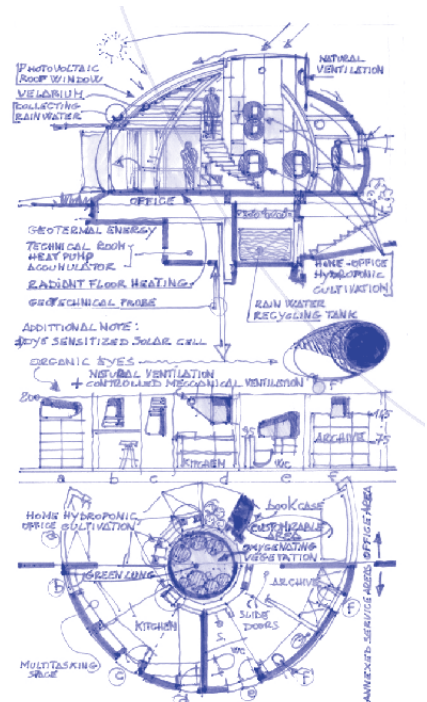
Modernity was a great bet on urban space and the city, the results of which we are still evaluating with respect to the consequences on the intimate dimension of interiorisation that the ancient concept of home, in its original typology, granted. But today the challenge is about the redefinition of domestic space which must consider the many functions that previously took place in the public or semi-public realm.

For Bachelard (1958/1994) the idealised house was a lyrical but static, immobile element, an interior domestic space that is difficult to share. Today, the house must be thought in a dynamic sense, according to an open geometry made up of possibilities. Bruno Taut conceived an archetype in the twenties, the prototype of a 'house that changes' according to the different external conditions. But now the variables are also internal and interior, and we need to rethink flexibility in terms of multi-semantics, multiple functionalities, and lightness.

We must learn to be at home everywhere. In the era of the Anthropocene, where everything has been inhabited, we have transformed the entire planet into our home. A click is enough for having the world in our bedroom, while most of us have been forced to live in physical isolation, a modality that reflects not only pandemic realities but general estrangement. So we have to make of our home a 'mix of different species' both physical and digital. A futuristic Noah's Ark made up of these species guarantees continuity.

Because inside that ark each individual, wherever and whenever travelling, could calmly say: this home is where I dwell.

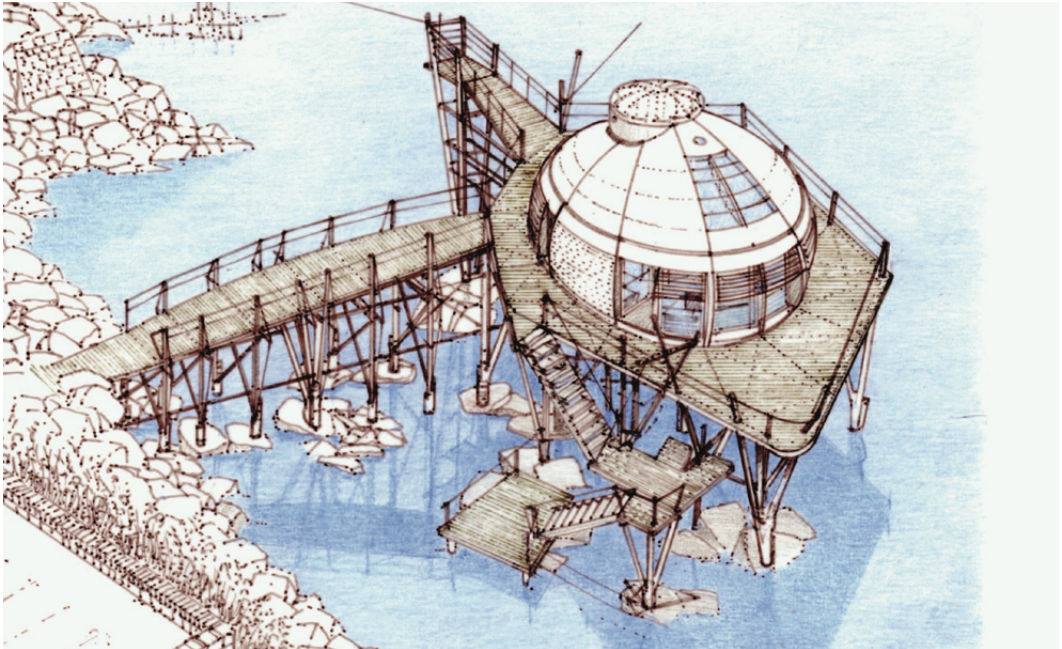
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(6)  
The futuristic shell includes a high-tech system of technologies for optimising the energetic balance

(7)  
Either in the density of the city or the loneliness of the desert, the stone-shell home aims at conveying both a sense of protection and opportunity





7

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Panel III	INDIVIDUALITY - I DWELL, THEREFORE I AM
Author	<b>Anne Marit Lunde</b> Tracing Architecture, Oslo, Norway

## A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

### The paper project 'Virginia Series'

*Beate Hølmebakk's 'Virginia Series' conceptualises a dialogue between architecture and literature by embodying speculative explorations of material and tectonic expression about how to build a narrative.*

*Paper architecture* is an architectural genre consisting of concepts that are generally not intended to be built, but rather to exist on paper only. Such non-feasible architecture is an avantgarde medium that has been used by architects for centuries to explore theories and utopian ideas through the portrayal of specific topics, locations, fantasy worlds and architectonic ideas, as well as in the practice of architectural criticism.

Recent decades have brought growing interest in paper architecture and the architectural hand drawing as such, as an independent aesthetic and as a medium of originality and artistic value. The attention attached to paper architecture is currently reflected in the collection strategies of public museums and exhibition programmes and thus affects our understanding of architecture as a discipline.

In 2020, *Norway's National Museum* acquired a work on paper entitled *Virginia Series* (1995–2000) by Norwegian architect Beate Hølmebakk.<sup>1</sup> The acquisition is indicative of the museum's interest in paper architecture, which is a relatively unusual conceptual vehicle in Norwegian architecture. At the same time, this acquisition indicates a willingness to make a structural departure from the museum's current and future collection practices by expanding the representation of female artists and architects in its collections.

*Virginia Series* conceptualises an intriguing dialogue between architecture and literature, making it one of the most important works of paper architecture in Norwegian architectural history. It pushes the boundaries of architecture as a medium, standing out within the genre due to its sensitivity, personal interpretations, architectural quality and content. Although conceived in meticulous detail, *Virginia Series* was never meant to be built to scale. It embodies speculative explorations of material and tectonic expression, about how to build a narrative and about architecture's capability to capture and reflect people's lives.

## **A TOOL**

*Virginia Series*, Hølmekbakk's first paper project, was created on her own initiative. Her Oslo-based architectural practice *Manthey Kula* has subsequently produced several series, including the work *Archipelago – Building from Solitude*, which was acquired by the French *FRAC Centre-Val de Loire* in Orléans in 2017.<sup>2</sup>

For Hølmekbakk, paper architecture is largely a tool for exploring the human condition and life-worlds, as well as an avenue for further developing the discipline per se. Paper projects and the firm's building projects are considered equal practices that influence and enrich each other. Hølmekbakk emphasises the experience she gained from paper projects as being particularly valuable for conveying complex and difficult emotions and for expressing empathy in respect of other people's lives, one example being the challenging task of designing the memorial to the 77 victims of the 2011 terrorist attack on Utøya Island near Oslo.<sup>3</sup>

## **FOUR HOUSES. PORTRAITS OF FOUR WOMEN**

*Virginia Series* consists of 23 charcoal, pencil and pen-and-ink drawings as well as models on a scale of 1:20 that demonstrate impressive artisanship and architectural quality. The houses' contemporary architectural expression and engineered dimensions enable them to straddle the line between fiction and realism. The series draws its literary inspiration from Virginia Woolf's feminist polemic in the 1929 essay, *A Room of One's Own* (Woolf, 1929). The essay deals with the significance of gender in culture and art, and with woman's need for her own mental and physical space in a patriarchal society, i.e. a space in which she can engage in her artistic work, allow her personality to develop, and achieve financial independence.

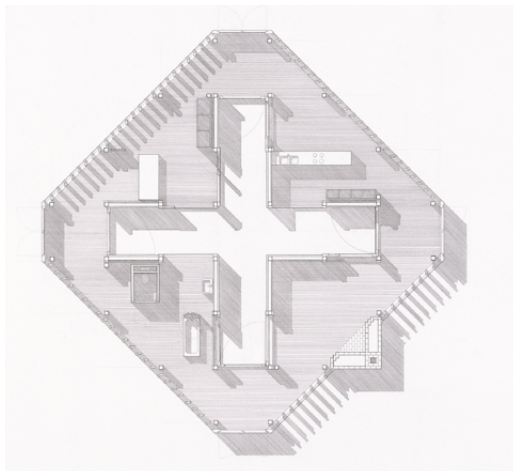
However, it is not necessarily Woolf's feminist polemical points that constitute the basis of Hølmekbakk's work. Instead, the essay should be considered a starting point and backdrop for the houses and stories she creates. The series consists of four fictional homes based on interpretations of well-known female archetypes from literature: ***House for a Young Woman, House for a Mother and a Child, House for a Housewife and House for a Widow.***

In her role as architect and narrator, Hølmekbakk designs and builds a personal architectural interpretation of these women's frames-of-mind and their lives. The four portraits are set in the home, traditionally the domain of women. The female figures are resourceful and complex characters who find themselves in disparate and challenging situations.

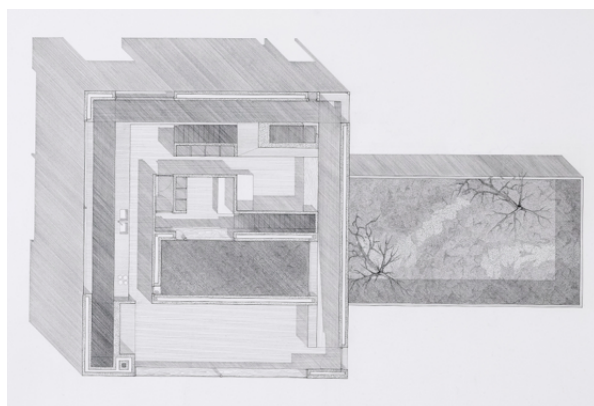
## VULNERABILITY AND STRENGTH

**House for a Young Woman** (1995) is dedicated to Veslemøy, the protagonist in *The Mountain Maid*, a cycle of poems written by the Norwegian author Arne Garborg in 1895, which describes the basic forces of human existence, including the struggle between spirit and witchcraft, and features an element of nature worship.

The cycle depicts the life of the psychic protagonist, her encounter with love and betrayal, stigma from the local community and her struggle to pick herself up and find a way forward. It is a house that changes its nature and expression, reflecting her vulnerability and isolation, as well as her acceptance of being different. The house's wooden post-and-beam structure has a secondary layer of trusses reminiscent of a cage. The exterior allows her to be visible from beyond the walls, where she is viewed and judged by the outside world. The open floor plan is an exposé of Veslemøy's life. It also includes a cross-shaped court with sliding doors that allow changes in its spatial organisation, partitioning off sections and thereby eliminating visibility. The dwelling is designed for a single woman, and every action implies new constellations of shadow and light, as the enclosed courtyard offers her protection, as well as an opportunity to make contact with the spiritual world.



1



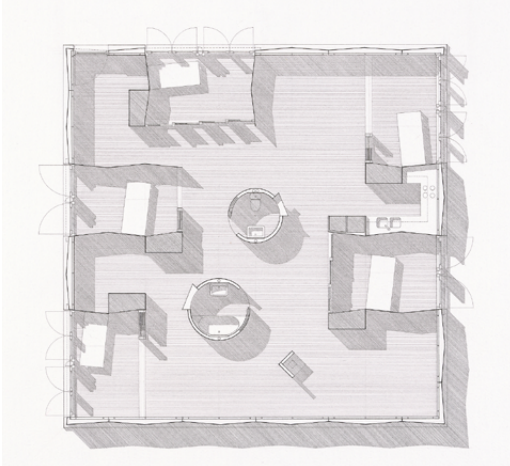
## CARE AND CONTROL

One central motif in Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* (1881) involves the exercise of power and a mother's desire to protect and control her child. **House for a Mother and a Child** is based on Helene Alving's relationship with her son Oswald, who needs to be shielded from contact with his 'immortal' father. By sending her son off to boarding school, she ensures that he grows up without his father and far away from his mother.

2

The architecture reflects the complex relationship between mother and child, and the delicate balance between love, caring and the need to control. The house is built with a protective concrete façade. It is raised up and features a ramp that is the only approach and acts as a buffer zone. The labyrinth-like floor plan contains varied and complex sections and degrees of natural light that impact the atmosphere of the house and underscore the relationship between mother and child. With the exception of the open living area and the protected courtyard, the dwelling curls around 'hidden' rooms used by mother and son in the inner reaches of the house, eliciting associations to a protective snail shell.





### **INSULATION AND DEPENDENCE**

In the novel *Fellow Man* (1929), the Norwegian author Olav Duun depicts a family conflict in which the housewife Ragnhild is driven to perform a terrible act to save her family. The book is a dramatic analysis of the human mind and its contradictory nature. Within *Virginia Series* this house most clearly reflects the main character's situation and challenges.

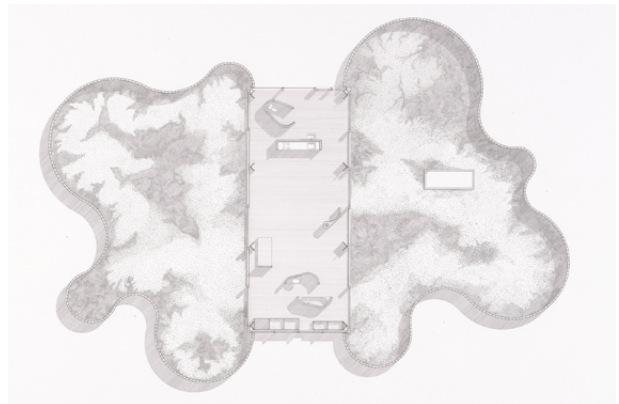
Hølmebakk has constructed a narrative in which the housewife's life is spent within the four walls of the dwelling, which accommodates the family's stories and physical actions. Similar to the *House for a Young Woman*, the architecture and the way the light falls into *House for a Housewife* reflects both

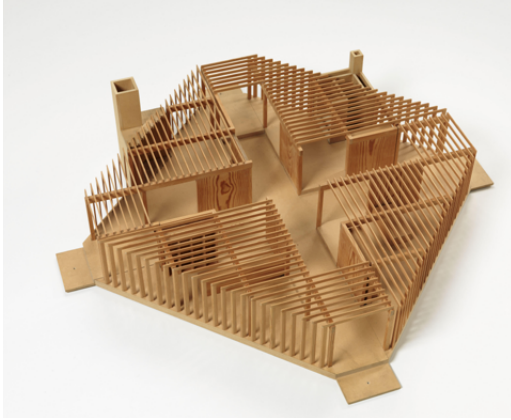
changing moods within the family and human interaction: The large surfaces of the windows ensure natural light in the bedrooms of all five members of the family. There are folding doors that partition off the shared areas such as the bathroom, kitchen and living room. When the folded steel shutters on the facade and the folding doors inside are closed, Ragnhild is isolated from the outside world as well as from her loved ones.

### **LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD**

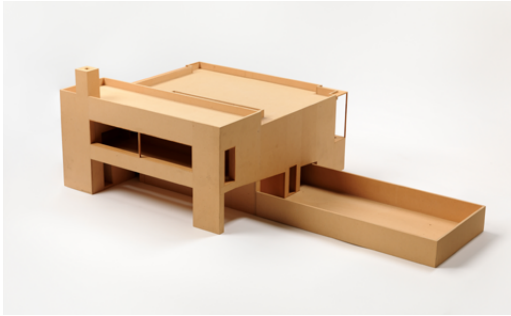
The final female portrait, *House for a Widow*, rounds off the life cycle as a whole. Based on Don DeLillo's *The Body Artist* (2001), it reflects the performing artist Lauren Hartke's grieving process and return to life after her husband's suicide.

The tiled home is located between two identical gardens and surrounded by a wavy protective wall. The space inside the wall represents the base where she performs her everyday routines and meets her most basic needs in order to survive grief and loss; it is an image of what has been and of what is yet to come. The skylights in the individual functional spaces bring daylight into darkened rooms, while the two gardens symbolise the desire to be in two places at once. *House for a Widow* is an architectural interpretation of a woman who finds herself in a conflict-ridden limbo, with one foot in the past and one foot in the future.

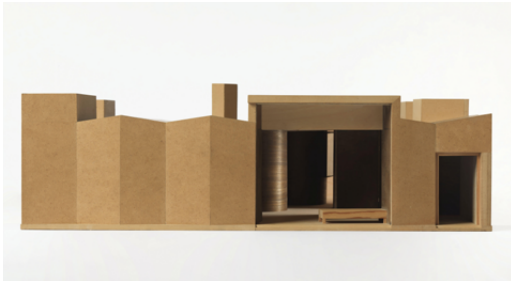




(5)  
*House for a Young Woman,*  
1995



(6)  
*House for a Mother and a Child,*  
1996



(7)  
*House for a Housewife*  
1998



(8)  
*House for a Widow*  
1996



Born in 1963, **Beate Hølmekbakk** is considered one of the most influential women in Norwegian architecture. She is a partner in the Oslo-based architectural firm *Manthey Kula* and holds a professorship at the *Oslo School of Architecture and Design*. The firm's real-life structures are characterised by their experimental approach to site and context, a process in which paper architecture serves as an important tool. *Manthey Kula's* list of merits includes the memorial to the victims of the terrorist attack on Utøya Island, Norway, on 22 July 2011, projects for the *National Tourist Routes* in Norway, power stations, landscape architecture and exhibition design for the *Frankfurt Book Fair* and cultural institutions such as the *National Museum*, the *Munch Museum* and the *Museum of Cultural History* in Norway.

The exhibition *FOUR HOUSES. FOUR WOMEN* was on display at the *National Museum – Architecture, Oslo* from 16 April to 31 October 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### References

- (1) The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design <https://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en/exhibitions-and-events/the-national-museum--architecture/exhibitions/2021/fire-hus.-fire-kvinner-englesk/>.
  - (2) Excerpted from the architect's website: [www.matheykula.no](http://www.matheykula.no).
  - (3) Excerpted from a conversation between the author of the article and Beate Hølmekbakk on 30 March 2021.
  - (4) The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design <https://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en/exhibitions-and-events/thenational-museum--architecture/exhibitions/2021/fire-hus.-firekvinner-englesk/>
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#### Images

- (fig 1) Illustration: *House for a Young Woman 1*, 1995. Photo: Børre Høstland, The National Museum.
- (fig 2) Illustration: *House for a Mother and a Child*, 1996. 1st floor. Photo: Børre Høstland, The National Museum.
- (fig 3) Illustration. *House for a Housewife*, 1998. Photo: Børre Høstland, The National Museum.
- (fig 4) Illustration. *House for a Widow*, 1996. Photo: Børre Høstland, The National Museum.
- (fig 5) Model. *House for a Young Woman 1*, 1995. Photo: Annar Bjørgli, The National Museum.
- (fig 6) Model. *House for a Mother and a Child*, 1996. Photo: Annar Bjørgli, The National Museum.
- (fig 7) Model. *House for a Housewife*, 1998. Photo: Annar Bjørgli, The National Museum.
- (fig 8) Model. *House for a Widow*, 1996. Photo: Annar Bjørgli, The National Museum.

Panel III	INDIVIDUALITY - I DWELL, THEREFORE I AM
Author	Sonja Lakić CY Cergy Paris Université, Paris, France

# THE PRACTICE OF POST-YUGOSLAV RESIDENTIAL LIVING

## Rebellious women and the pursuit of home-sweet-home happiness

***In the last three decades, hundreds of thousands of homeowners across former Yugoslavia contested the original architectural design of modernist mass housing and (illegally) self-modified their dwellings. Most of these rebellious individuals pursuing the 'home-sweet-home' dream were women. This brief visit to whatever remains from the architecture and the country that is long gone sheds light on new housing typologies, depicts what it means to reside today, and, finally, contemplates why a glazed balcony should never be taken for granted.***

Brought into the world by the marriage of the political ideology of socialism and the Western architectural vocabulary of modernism, Yugoslav architecture was based on both a promise and a premise of 'providing a better life for the masses,' first and foremost in the form of a housing provision (Le Normand, 2014). (The right to) Housing represented the basis that the country was established upon: to design, to produce, to provide, and, finally, to inhabit a dwelling, altogether aimed to additionally support the idea of 'a homogeneous, universal-happiness-society' of all the Yugoslav peoples (Steiner, 2012). To reside in former Yugoslavia meant to dwell inside 'seemingly uniform' architecture (Kulić, 2009). The latter label was due to somewhat bland facades that represented the material expression of the Yugoslav ideology of Brotherhood and Unity and



aimed to diminish differences and inequalities of any kind. Yugoslav residing experience unfolded in evidently quite unique objects, with almost every major project representing an outcome of extensive research and innovation in terms of construction and architectural design, offering far more variety than most other socialist counterparts (Jovanović et al., 2012; Kulić et al., 2012).

The good life of Yugoslavs unfolded in 'bright, well-ventilated, modern apartments' that were supposed to particularly acknowledge one's individuality (Le Normand, 2014). This meant that there would no longer be shared common bathrooms; instead, unlike in most of the socialist countries, everyday life anticipated sharing specific kinds of common spaces only – i.e. laundry rooms, building corridors, outside playgrounds, and parking lots (Le Normand, 2014). Thousands went on with their intimate lives in apartments that generally comprised two different zones connected yet separated by an entry space and/or a hallway: i.e. the daily zone, which included kitchen, dining room, and living room, and the night zone which was composed of bedrooms. Dwellings were considered flexible, wherein, in the practice of everyday life, the flexibility habitually translated into converting a living room into another bedroom. Due to high(er) construction costs, however, a vast majority of the apartments constructed state-wide (especially those built during the 1966–1975 period) took on the form of a 'protective flat', i.e. a type of 'shelter' designed for no particular user (Vezilić-Strmo et al., 2013). Built for ordinary tenants or, in other words, average consumers, these dwellings lacked a 'sense of belonging' (Vezilić-Strmo et al., 2013), providing zero opportunity for inhabitants to arrange their living space according to their own needs (Poljanec, 2001).

Privatisation of (social) housing, which went hand-in-hand with the 1990s dissolution of the country, was a game-changer. Assigning the new role of homeowner to many, the process marked the beginning of a new era of residing. Thousands of individuals abruptly became able to make personal choices and to decide for themselves (and solely by themselves) who they were and/or whoever they wanted to be within their intimate dwelling space. And so they did, finally laying claim to the decision of who envisions a dwelling space and who defines how residing should take place.

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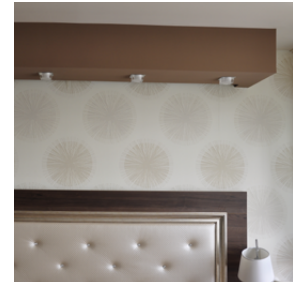
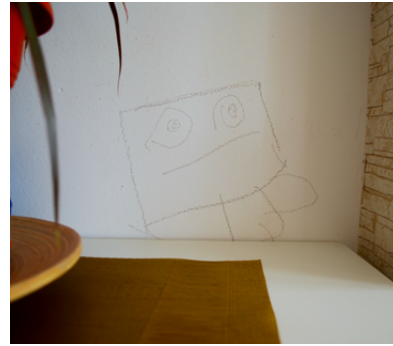
(1)  
[\*Girl power: a young ballerina living her best life in what used to be a loggia, now converted into a parents' bedroom. Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina.\*](#)

(2)  
[\*The good life in Niš, Serbia: a former fire escape corridor, today appropriated and transformed into an apartment entrance, hosting a tailoring studio and an art gallery.\*](#)

Homeowners across the former country hence contested the original architectural design in a wide variety of ways, engaging in different processes of transforming apartments, intervening across diverse scales, but always perfectly in tune with their needs and/or personal aesthetics. Suddenly, there was no place left any longer for the ordinary user: to dwell was to fulfill a dream.

In their pursuit for personal home-sweet-home happiness, these 'resident architects' (Akcan, 2018) went places, leaving their mark everywhere, regularly breaking laws or building codes, and finally, giving birth to the new spatial device of the era – a glazed balcony. During my work of exploring the effects of the post-socialist urban transformation and developing a research method called 'Apartment Biographies', I have visited dozens of families in different cities across former Yugoslavia to collect their dwelling histories. All the dwellings, regardless of the extent of transformation, were altered under the strong guidance of a 'lady of the house', always and forever according to personal aesthetics and/or household demands. Entrance doors and original windows were replaced many times; so were the original, uniformly white ceramic wall tiles and/or the flooring in kitchens and bathrooms. Architects and designers were hired to design different pieces of furniture, especially modern kitchen cabinets. Building corridors and entrances were appropriated to create another room. Balconies and loggias underwent a whole new revolution, being converted into bedrooms, dining rooms, and storage spaces. The future of residential living was bright: life was no longer (to be) tamed.

Relying on help from family and friends, as well as architects and interior designers, women across former Yugoslavia have challenged the conventional wisdom of housing production by retouching personal interiors and altering facades and rooftops for the sake of personal profit.



For these women and their families, to dwell is to play with personal taste and perception, to test the boundaries of one's imagination, if there are any at all, and to explore materials and shapes. To dwell and to reside for them is to truly, madly, deeply fall in love with the space they inhabit, and to nurture this special relationship by occasionally moving furniture around a house. What used to be an ordinary apartment that, back in the day, architects and urban planners, together with construction companies defined and conceived, no longer exists. Today, a dwelling is home to 'the individual biography' that embodies the motto '*Habito ergo sum (I dwell, so I am)*' (Pombo et al., 2011). To reside is the new '*to be.*' To be who you really are.

As far as glazed balconies go, do not let them fool you; there is more to the story than meets the eye. What may appear as a seemingly banal conversion and a somewhat parasitic piece of architecture is far beyond the visual: balconies are a new social reality and a social process in themselves. They are a quite obvious reference to new housing typologies and new means of residing, as well as a testimonial to contemporary morals and ethics. A balcony is an object, an image and a problem that lies beyond the boundaries of the discipline of architecture, and is as such much more than physical and material. It is a gateway to a universal and heart-warming story of a dwelling as an epitome of the personal universe. It is a new kind of family portrait calling for a better understanding of human lives and defending housing as home. Glazed

balconies might serve as an excellent excuse to contemplate the future role of architects, the new set of tools and the new architectural vocabulary of empathy that needs to be developed in the spirit of 'open architecture,' with architects being good hosts who allow life to happen (Akcan, 2018).

(3)

[NO to NATO, YES to a glazed balcony: the architects of their own lives in Podgorica, Montenegro.](#)

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### Images

Photos taken by Sonja Lakić.



**Meanwhile, a gentle reminder: we are all entitled to the basic right of being the architect of our own destiny, even when this good life of ours comes in the form of a glazed balcony only.**



**THE DISCIPLINE OF ARCHITECTURE.** *There is a disciplinary change going on that is long overdue,*

*and by this I mean the disciplinary shift from a status-quo practice of design to an **idea of the design of practice.***

*In other words, we need to stop revisiting the status quo, but rather **expand the modalities of architectural practice,** allowing ourselves to think about what that might occasion. (Amy Kulper)*

Architecture is a discipline that transcends its technical vocabulary.

It is something that is deeply and fully embedded in the practice of everyday life.

It is complex. Once we decide to step away from dealing solely with technical things,

it allows you to see things in a different way,

and this enables us to nurture the empathy

that lies deep within each and every one of us.

(Sonja Lakić)

I like Bruno Zevi's statement that architecture is its social content.

It is very sharp:

If there is no social content, if we do not satisfy social needs, we are not doing architecture.

In this sense, Sonja's work represents exactly this desire to put the social need for an interior realm at the centre of social life

that in the last two years took place mostly inside. (Paola Ardizzola)

Can anybody be an architect, really?

**Are we all architects?**

Or is architecture done without architects?

I am thinking about the fact that in today's architectural world some are trying to do architecture in such a way that it is not about form, but about the **use of space.**

They would perhaps dream of doing what you, Sonja, showed us.

But they are architects, so they design. (Jenni Reuter)

We have to think more about the concept of the unfinished.

Let the inhabitants customise their house.

We as architects don't have to show our imprint, we don't have to decide every detail.

**Let's leave things open,** just as good artists sometimes do, whose work is complete only

when viewers interact with or complete the work through their imagination,

their perception, their emotion. (Paola Ardizzola)

**Architecture is not a single discipline.** It is a spectrum of literally everything and everyone that has ever lived. This, coming from a person like myself who describes herself as an architect gone anthropologist, seems perhaps like a luxury that only architects gone anthropologists can afford.

But I do believe that practicing architecture is not only about delivering technical solutions and shaping the built environment with aesthetically pleasing designs.

It is about **dealing with people**. And this is something that we have all been experiencing during the last two years.

We have started to think about architecture from the point of care, not only for other people, but also **self-care**. (Sonja Lakić)

**EMPATHY.** The notion of co-authorship, of architects being good hosts of an **architectural vocabulary of empathy**, all this points to a shift to extending the design of practice. (Amy Kulper)

Our discussion made me think of the importance of **empathising with clients**.

(Anne Marit Lunde)

This made me think about the **etymology of the term architecture**

which is generally related to the very primitive way of constituting a dwelling.

**Arche** means principles, moral values, and **Techne** is, of course, the technical part.

So for the primitive dwellings,

there was no architect, in the codified sense of being an architect, but it was an **instinctive and empathic** way of setting up space that we were in need of. Somehow in this pandemic era we were forced to reconsider our shelter: we became architects again in the logic of reconsidering and manipulating the space around us in a different way,

according to new necessities that nobody else except us could have ever shaped.

I like Sonja's examples of converting balconies or loggias into a closed space.

We have to think about why especially women show a need to cancel out the inbetween spaces, so there is

**no transitional space anymore** between the private and the public realm. Thus everything becomes like city walls for protecting one's own realm.

I wonder, why do we have this problem **right now**?

Since I've been living in the Middle East for many years, and according to what I experienced every day,

I was wondering about concepts like physical barriers, walls, and fences.

I think that protection and security is granted through respect.

This is obviously something very banal.

But I think it is a

**matter of societal change and also architectural education**

rather than putting up physical barriers and fences. (Paola Ardizzola)



**My hope is  
encouraged  
when I see  
adults who  
play,**



adults who  
take their  
joy and their  
desires  
seriously.

- KATARINA BONNEVIER



**THE SYMPOSIUM**  
**AS A HYBRID HOME**  
ROUND UP EXCHANGE



**THE SYMPOSIUM.** What I am left with after these two days, is **diversity**.

We had a diversity of issues, ranging from the serious to the playful,  
taking different forms and shapes.

The topics were diverse,

the methods – how they were approached – too.

All the different narratives and the journeys made by every single participant  
created an **incredible richness** across the board,

because we were not looking at one school and one approach,  
but at these very diverse approaches.

There is a **hopefulness** in seeing the variety of ways of  
working. —Sigrún Birgisdóttir

Here, there is no separation between **theory and practice**.

We had panels that work across so many different registers. And the thematic and  
political questions that we are asking need this **multiplicity** of approaches, and events  
like this symposium that bring them together. —Jane Rendell

The themes were quite personal, and the dialogue could easily  
have been uncomfortable. But I had the feeling that even though we  
are not in the same space, we are sharing thoughts and life experiences  
together. It was a strong feeling...

If you hear strange voices, there are seagulls out there,  
you hear seagulls from Helsinki. —Jenni Reuter

There was a lot of **intimacy**. It is not often that we are in a space like this where we  
open ourselves so much. It is fascinating, because this very intimate feeling that we are  
trying to share here with each other will have a **collective impact**.

It was almost uncomfortable sometimes to listen to the issues because  
you felt like perhaps you should not know about this.

We are not used to this openness. —Karl Kvaran

It is so inspiring to step out of your everyday life and come here.

Today I witnessed **acts of daring**: daring to tell us about the work you do,  
to believe that what you do is good and relevant, that your ideas and views are  
interesting, and that you stand up for them.

The most important thing here is to support and to encourage  
each other to be authentic and to do what we think is right. Then we can  
go home, or go back to work, and think, yes, I'm not alone,  
I can be brave and do what I think is right.

We can **change something**. —Shivani Chakraborty

In the past few months, sometimes I felt lonely in my research and  
started to question its relevance in today's world.

Moments like this one, today, make us believe that we are  
part of a **community** again. —Ghita Barkouch

There was a feeling of courage here over the last two days.

Each of us had to really **take our courage into our hands**. And we've been able  
to do that because of everybody around us, and also  
because the situation is serious, for us as individuals,  
but for communities across the world as well. —Sarah Rivière

It feels so nice to be in a female space and to have that focus on women  
not just as architects, but as **dreamers, creators, doers**. —Anna Hope



It was an incredibly hopeful moment in shifting discourse in our discipline from the practice of design, which really just allows us to perpetuate the status quo, to this notion of architects rethinking the design of practice. And we saw some beautiful examples where architects were thinking around the porous boundaries of what we describe as the discipline. —Amy Kulper

When I finished architecture school I did a competition with two fantastic women. We designed a box, an abstract box of the home we all wanted. In that box were all the things that were important for our home. You could open it in many different ways.

There was one room that was about the view to the stars. There was another room that was about the softness of sleeping. There was a room for the possibility of storing memories. It was magical to go back today and find a lot of the other memories that I had during my career.

So next time I talk to developers, I will say, now with these big apartment blocks, we are talking about the view to the stars, or we are talking about how we can feel safe, and we are talking about how the daylight will impact in the morning when we wake up in bed, and many other things. You helped me to reconnect.

——Tina Saaby

I was thinking about how all the work that we shared in these two days valued conversation.

And we realised in our own work, the cosmological play, when we organised the play session today, how much our play values the conversation. —Hilal Menlioğlu

We realised that our game is not an object,

but rather something that we have to engage with spatially, mentally and bodily.

It is something that is open to interpretation. —Bahar Avanoğlu

## STRANGE HOMES.

I'm not sure - are you aware of it?

You should be aware of the fact that you managed somehow, at least in my case, to create this sensation and feeling of home. This entire symposium is a kind of a home to me, even though I am talking to you via Zoom. —Sonja Lakić

We live in this cyborg world now, and thinking it through in the way that Donna Haraway writes about it, with all that feminist inflection, politics and poetics, is actually really exciting.

How do we 'do' intimacy and the eye-to-eye or I-to-I in these rather strange Zoom rooms?

——Jane Rendell

My first layer of secure space and individuality is what I wear.

My first 'place' is my clothes. If I feel uncomfortable with what I am wearing - I tend to feel uncomfortable in the situation.

The same goes for architecture.

There are 'bubbles' in my life - places where I have certain memories, and speak certain languages. They open up different sides of myself.

If these bubbles mix, I can feel confused. Throughout my life I have belonged to different minorities. These have given me both the freedom and the solitude of being different. Perhaps this is a feeling that most people share in some moments.

——Jenni Reuter



While you all had coffee I ran to find an essay  
by Homi Bhabha, called 'The World and the Home'.  
Bhabha describes a line between the home and  
the world that is breaking down.

He writes: 'In that displacement, the border between home and world becomes confused  
and uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other,  
forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting.'

I thought that that moment of division and disorientation  
- remarkably he was writing this prior to the pandemic -  
is maybe even more exaggerated in our experiences  
of domestic life this year. —Amy Kulper

## THE DREAM — PLAY — CHALLENGE METHOD.

I am totally in love with the three words Dream - Play - Challenge.

I will take these words with me into my conversations with  
developers, investors and all the big offices  
where most partners are men.

But I will take these three words into that conversation.

And you can ask me later on if I did it.

I know I will do it if you press me just a little bit. —Tina Saaby

When I read the title of the planned symposium, I was so excited.

I thought, the triad **Dream - Play - Challenge** is

so interesting as, placed in a row, it is encouraging.

First you dream, then you play, then you take the challenge.

But you can also put them in a triangle, and then each of them  
contributes to something larger.

Or you can rotate them and choose your role, today, or tomorrow  
or whenever. —Verena von Beckerath

I want to quote Gloria Anzaldúa today, the great philosopher of the borderlands,  
because I think we are creating a borderland here today. She wrote:

'Nothing happens in the real world unless  
it first happens in the images in our heads.'

I think that resistance against ignorance, violence and destruction,  
and the hope for a better future is awakened when we encounter adults who play,  
who take their joy and desire seriously. —Katarina Bonnevier

I feel that during these two days we have created a network of relationships, themes,  
approaches with one common ground: the desire to open up our processes of working to the  
method of **Dream - Play - Challenge.** We have established a new way of coming together, and that  
makes me optimistic for the future. —Wiltrud Simbürger

I think **Dream - Play - Challenge** is such a productive triad,  
whether it works in three dyads or as a trialectic, I'm not sure, but for me,  
'Dream Play' is something that I have been very interested in  
from a psychoanalytic perspective - that space of intersubjectivity between  
two people, and when these two - Dream and Play - start to be put together  
in relation to Challenge, then this brings things into  
a more directly social and politicised arena. —Jane Rendell



**ENGAGING OUR BODIES.** I am thinking about the bike ride that you, Tina, talked about when I asked you how to engage with our clients and the authorities that give permissions, and the banks, all of these, perhaps I could call them patriarchal or capitalist institutions that are around us:

How can we destabilise the floor for the people in power?

Yes, perhaps by asking them to take a bike ride.

The bike is such a beautiful image: it is stable once you are in movement and you meet the surroundings bicycling through them.

But this also needs skills, and you need to engage with your body and with the surroundings. —Katarina Bonnevier

Katarina, you were just talking about the bike thing.

I am so thankful for that comment.

Yesterday I was talking with a friend about how we can use our bodies more. And now I am aware that I have been doing it all along, and that I can do it a lot more.

Now I understand what it is that I am doing, so I'm so grateful for these days.

Really, really, really. —Tina Saaby

There was this beautiful moment when I realised that, in all these different projects, people entered into the project, into the research, with their own bodies.

Several projects were like that:

you are the researcher, but you also dare your own body and jump into it.

And of course, this one moment this morning, when

we had taken our shoes off and we sat on the floor, and we were playing with these wooden models. My God, that was so serious. These beautiful wooden models that were so far away from these precious little cardboard models that

architects have been producing far too long. These wooden models communicate with us, and then we could all play together and rebuild them together into a new landscape.

For me, that was the moment of understanding

how exactly we can enter with our bodies into the field.

that we are exploring. —Katarina Bonnevier

**CHALLENGES AHEAD.** We are living in homes that constrict our lives as individuals

and damage our communities. And we so often work in ways and in spaces that simply no longer fit. When we try to be creative

in such space, we feel stifled.

But here we found a way of working that fits who we are,

and how we can best engage.

It is not about comfort, it is about dreaming, playing, and challenging,

which is so much more generative than just being comfortable.

—Sarah Rivière

This is the first time that I have been part of an all-star women panel.

It makes me think about how, as architects, we can push our practice forward by inspiring people and communities, how we can be empowering, enabling, facilitating, and leave our personal aspirations for recognition behind.

Because our cities demand it, and I think it is on our shoulders



to provide this. —Ioanna Piniara

One of the things we should take with us into the future is the question of how we can build this connection between city planners and politicians, investors and developers. It is really needed. All the beautiful things you showed us during the last days, they are so far away from what investors are talking about, what developers are doing and what all the big offices are designing. We need to mix all these thoughts and beautiful conversations into the world of home-building. —Tina Saaby

The challenge part, the call to challenge while still dreaming and playing, this is so beautiful.

I am going to keep that in mind in my own work in the days to come. —Jane Rendell

## IMPERATIVE FOR CHANGE.

I want to say something about the role of the architect.

We need to be more political. That doesn't mean that we need to be mayors, but we need to go into politics and we need to do it yesterday.—Tina Saaby

When you talked about the poetic and the political, I remembered that I've often thought about architecture as being a poetic-pragmatic work, and that you have to have both to be successful. So now I've got more Ps, personal, political, poetic, pragmatic, and all of those are foundations in architecture such as 'Dream, Play and Challenge'. —Jenni Reuter

'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.'

This is often cited as an African proverb. The idea of co-production, of symposium, of working together, can be super-challenging, but when it works, and trust is established, as I think has happened here in this space, all sorts of things become possible. —Jane Rendell

I have been working as a museum curator for sixteen years. Looking into Norway's largest architecture collection today, only four per cent of the works are by female architects. This number is really low. We have to be aware of how history gets recorded for posterity.

This is where bias is entrenched, and museums have a big responsibility to shed light on women's works. There is still a long way to go.—Anne Marit Lunde

The last two days reminded me of a Persian garden. The word garden comes from the Persian word 'paradise'.

So here we are in a beautiful garden telling stories and intriguing each other. The question then is how do we open up this garden, how do we make holes in the walls around us?

How do we manage to attract people who perhaps think they do not belong to this conversation – and here I talk about men – and how can we create some trust between us? —Karl Kvaran

Perhaps today we not only designed a new kind of practice, but we designed a separate galaxy of architecture – and I am infected by a dose of optimism here.

I'm looking forward to being more political about architecture, because architecture is a political act.

It is a matter that is very alive, and I can't wait to see what the future holds. —Sonja Lakić

My hope is encouraged when I see adults who play, adults who take their joy and their desires seriously. And that is what makes me think that, yes, we can do

the big shift in systems that we need to do in order to be able to live as a part of this planet rather than on top of it.

And my God, that's so serious. —Katarina Bonnevier





# ONE WORD.

*What is the word that comes to your mind right now?*

***Perspective***

***Comforting***

***Empowering***

***Overwhelming***

***Sisterhood***

***Continuity***

***Super proud***

***Courage***

***Triggered***

***Manifesto***

***Sunset***

***Gin Tonic***

***(you)***

## **CLOSING REMARKS**



### **Theresa Keilhacker**

President of the Berlin  
Chamber of Architects

If we want to talk about **the future of residential living**, we must first talk about the future of the family. Huge upheavals have been taking place here for some time: Our cities and suburbs were planned and built according to a family image of 'father, mother, children', but it turns out that many people no longer agree with this idea today. Increasingly, people decide not to have children or live as single parents. As a consequence, the need for smaller apartments is rising constantly, and shared flats serve now not only young city dwellers, but also the 'family of choice', whereas children who continue to live with their parents or return to them after they have reached adolescence have become the exception rather than the rule. Our increasingly mobile

society demands alternative life plans factoring in commuting, frequent changes of location and a high degree of flexibility in regards to the place of residence.

In addition, the notion of parenthood has also changed: the number of children who have more than two parents has increased due to separations and newly formed patchwork families. Also, many couples aim from the outset to distribute child care more broadly and develop appropriate models. In both form and location, the family of the future will not be static and tied to a single place, but a dynamic social construct in which distance (e.g. parents living separately) and closeness (parent-child) are subject to constant negotiation.

We also observe an increased need for autonomy: individual members of the family no longer want to merely add up to 'the family', mothers and fathers do not want to be reduced to these roles and having a relationship and children together does not necessarily mean that you want to live together in one space. Closeness yes – unity not necessarily. This is perhaps a lesson that the younger generation has learned from the wave of divorces in their parents' generation. Housing must adapt to these social changes and it might be able to offer, at best, spaces that do not prevent, but support changing constellations, new family models and 'closeness-distance' needs. In order to address these issues, it is worth taking a look at the figures for a big city like Berlin.

There are currently around 1.98 million apartments in Berlin.<sup>(1)</sup> In 2019 the highest number of new residential units was completed during the last

20 years, namely 19,000. However this number corresponds to less than 1% of the housing stock.<sup>(2)</sup> From a purely quantitative point of view, new construction is therefore unsuitable for responding to social upheavals. In fact, the future of living in existing buildings and their transformation is decisive. At the same time, this goes hand in hand with the urgent task of achieving the climate protection goals of the 2016 Paris Climate Agreement. In order to hit the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, we must not only implement climate adaptation strategies, but above all significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since a lot of 'grey energy' is tied up in existing buildings, it is worth examining the available resources.

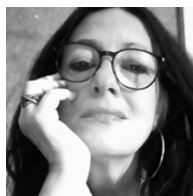
Single-family houses play a major role here. As they were clearly designed for a specific family model, they obviously became subjected to severe feminist criticism during their mass implementation. Currently, we can observe a major generational change here: as the initial dwellers age, the flaws of this form of housing become apparent. Local amenities are too far away to be reached without a car, and the population is too sparse to make a satisfying public transportation system worthwhile. These houses often waste energy due to their outdated heating systems and poor insulation leading to higher costs.

While houses in the suburbs may have been ideal for young couples during the middle and end of the twentieth century, today many are looking for a central location and a lively neighbourhood. In growing cities like Berlin, centrally located and single-family housing estates have slowly started to merge. Digital infrastructure and mobile accessibility are decisive for this development. In the past, the small-scale and thus complicated ownership structures and residents unwilling to adapt have caused planners to avoid single-family home areas. But it is precisely here where experimenting with new forms of housing, construction and ownership could be worthwhile. It is a demanding and exciting task for all of us in the planning professions – whether urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture or interior design – a task we need to take up together, without star architects or first-person shooters who wish to profile themselves.

The benefits are clear: these new forms of residential living will diminish the urban spread of big cities, centralise social services and preserve the natural landscape for a better quality of living.

(1) Wohnungsbestand in Berlin bis 2020. (2022). Statista. <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/259653/umfrage/wohnungsbestand-in-berlin/>

(2) Anzahl der fertiggestellten Wohnungen in Berlin, 1991 bis 2020. (2022). Statista. <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/259681/umfrage/fertiggestellte-wohnungen-in-berlin/#:~:text=Im%20Jahr%202020%20konnten%20in,Wohn%2D%20und%20Nichtwohng%C3%A4uden%20fertiggestellt%20werden>

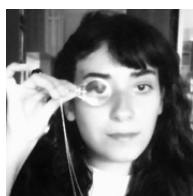


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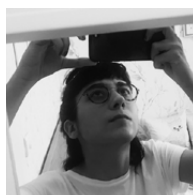


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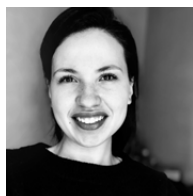
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## **Katarina**

**Bonnevier** (SWE)

Katarina Bonnevier is an artist, architect and researcher. In her practice she explores relations of architecture, aesthetics

and power, especially from gender perspectives, informed by theatricality, queerness and the more-than-human. A founding member of MYCKET Collaborations ([mycket.org](http://mycket.org)), she is currently engaged in artistic research Troll perception in the Heartlands, a transdisciplinary design project emerging out of southern rural Sweden, expanding the formal field used to generate sustainable future scenarios through site-specific crafting and crafting video animations informed by folktales and mythology.





**Shivani Chakraborty (DE)**

Shivani Shankar Chakraborty is a freelance architect based in Berlin with an M.Sc. from the ETH Zurich. Her portfolio

ranges from reconstructing a church tower to realising new buildings and remodeling houses. Shivani's foremost interest is wood architecture as reflected in her debut design, the project 'Rotstalden', a remodeling of a heritage farmhouse with a modern annex out of timber construction. Creating an ambience through ecological materials, contrasts and clever organising of space are core principles of her work.



**Marianna Charitonidou (GRC)**

Marianna Charitonidou, Architect Engineer & Urban Planner, Historian & Theorist of Architecture and Urbanism,

Expert in Sustainable Environmental Design & Curator. She is the founder and principal of Think Through Design Architectural, Urban and Landscape Design Studio. She is a postdoctoral researcher in Architecture and Urban Planning at the Athens School of Fine Arts, where she is conducting a research project on Constantinos A. Doxiadis and Adriano Olivetti's postwar reconstruction agendas in Greece and in Italy. She is the author of more than 85 peer-reviewed publications including articles in journals such as Architecture and Culture, City, Territory and Architecture, Journal of Urban History, International Journal of Architectural Computing, Urban, Planning and Transport Research, Visual Resources, Journal of Visual Art Practice, Studies in European Cinema, Urban Science and Heritage. Among her monographs are: Drawing and Experiencing Architecture: The Evolving Significance of City's Inhabitants in the 20th Century (transcript Verlag, 2022), and Architectural Drawings as Investigating Devices: Architecture's Changing Scope in the 20th Century (Routledge, 2023). (<https://charitonidou.com/>)



**Ida Flarup (DEN)**

Ida Flarup is an Associate Teaching Professor at the Royal Danish Academy, School of Architecture, in Copenhagen.

**Josepha Fliedner (DE)**

Josepha Fliedner pursues a B.Arch. at Technical University in Berlin, and currently works at a joinery focussing on build-design and furniture. She served as project assistant for the symposium.



**Simge Gülbahar (TUR)**

Simge Gülbahar is a lecturer in the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design at

FMV Işık University in Istanbul. She received her B.Sc. and M.A. degree in interior architecture from İstanbul Technical University. She worked as interior architect with teams on restoration projects. She currently pursues a PhD at Hacettepe University in Interior Architecture and Environmental Design. Her major research interests include universal design and human factors in the built environment.



**Anwyn Hocking (AUS)**

Anwyn Hocking is an urban researcher and designer based in Melbourne, Australia. She holds a Bachelor of

Environments from the University of Melbourne and an M.Phil. in Architecture and Urban Studies from the University of Cambridge. Her research interests traverse policy, design and intersectional lived experiences of community in urban environments.

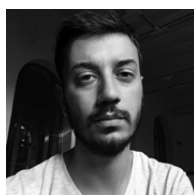
**Anna Hope (UK)**

Anna Hope brings over 20 years of personal and professional experience of working in the community-led housing sector in the UK.

After self-building her own eco home from 2002-2006, she collaborated in setting up a number of businesses and initiatives to promote collective self build, community-led housing and sustainable construction. Based at the University of the West of England in Bristol, UK, her current PhD research is attempting to explore and reinterpret the concepts of 'community' and 'benefit' within the context of community-led housing.

**Camilla Hornemann (DEN)**

Camilla Hornemann works at the Royal Danish Academy, School of Architecture, in Copenhagen.

**Çağdaş Kaya (TUR)**

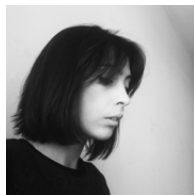
After graduating from Istanbul Technical University with a B.Arch. degree, Çağdaş Kaya completed his M.Sc. in Architectural Design with a

thesis titled Representation of Urban Spaces by Soundscapes through Sound Collages and Sound Postcards. He currently pursues a PhD and works as a research assistant at the ITU Department of Architecture.

**Theresa Keilhacker (DE)**

Theresa Keilhacker is an independent architect and co-principal of the office for Urban Design and Architecture

together with Boris Kazanski in Berlin. In 2014 she was appointed to the Commission for Sustainable Building of the German Federal Environment Agency. Since 2021 she serves as president of the Berlin Chamber of Architects.

**Duygu Koca (TUR)**

Currently teaching as Associate Professor at Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design at Hacettepe University, Ankara,

Duygu Koca received her B.Arch. and M.Arch. in Architecture from Middle East Technical University in Ankara. She earned her PhD in architecture at METU in 2012 with her research on the mutual relationship between image production/identity/residential architecture in Turkey. Her major research interests include contemporary residential architecture, universal design and design/research methods.

**Amy Kulper (UK)**

Before joining the The Bartlett School of Architecture at UCL London as director, Amy Catania Kulper headed the Department of Architecture

at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). In her work as an architectural educator, administrator and innovator, her teaching and research focuses on the intersections of history, theory, criticism and design. Her scholarly writings are published in Log, The Journal of Architecture, arq: Architectural Research Quarterly, Candide, The Journal of Architectural Education and numerous edited volumes. For six years she served as the design editor for the Journal of Architectural Education, receiving the ACSA Distinguished Service Award for her groundbreaking work repositioning the design content of the journal.

**Elsa Kuno (DE)**

After graduating in Media Art and Design with a Master of Fine Arts at the Bauhaus University Weimar, Elsa Kuno

lives and works in Berlin as an independent art director, graphic- and editorial designer.

**Karl Kvaran** (FRA/ISL)

Karl Kvaran, French-Icelandic architect and urban planner, is the founder of SP(R)INT STUDIO whose name signifies space (re)interpretation studio.

Having participated in numerous international projects, his exploration of contemporary architecture focuses on transcultural and multidisciplinary thinking, challenging the notion of interpretation of spaces. Karl lectures and teaches extensively around the world in both academic and professional settings, and is a regular lecturer at the Iceland University of the Arts in Reykjavik. He holds a M.Arch., as well as a HMONP Diploma, both from the École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Paris-Malaquais.

**Sonja Lakić** (FRA)

Sonja Lakić is internationally trained architect, urban designer and planner with a PhD in Urban Studies, currently appointed as Marie

Skłodowska-Curie-EUTOPIA-SIF postdoctoral researcher at CY Cergy Paris Université. Sonja's work evolves around the everydayness of contemporary cities and lived forms of buildings, with a particular interest in anthropological and sociological aspects of architectural design and the built environment. Topics of her curiosity include (but are not limited to) notion of home and practices of homemaking, housing and informality, homeownership, postconflict societies, architectures of trauma(s), open architecture, dialectical urbanism, buildings as living archives, emotional geographies, ethics of care, architecture and happiness. Sonja operates across different disciplines and scales, works visually and collects oral histories, practicing unconventional ethnography and storytelling mainly through photography and filmmaking, curating architecture and her own life.

**Mathilde Lésenecal** (DEN)

Mathilde Lésenecal is an assistant teacher at the Royal Danish Academy, School of Architecture, in Copenhagen.

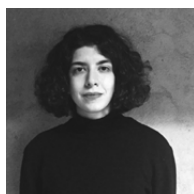
**Anne Marit Lunde** (NOR)

Anne Marit Lunde is the founder of the Oslo-based practice Tracing Architecture. She is an independent

architect, writer and curator focusing on presentation and communication of Norwegian contemporary architecture.

**Maria Mengel** (DEN)

Maria Mengel is an Associate Teaching Professor at Royal Danish Academy, School of Architecture, in Copenhagen.

**Hilal Menlioğlu** (TUR)

Hilal Menlioğlu holds a BA in Interior Architecture and a M.Sc. degree in Architectural Design from Istanbul

Technical University. Her PhD research focusses on architectural design through literary studies. Since 2015, she works as a research assistant at the Interior Architecture department of Istanbul Bilgi University.

**Anne Pind** (DEN)

Anne Pind is a PhD Fellow at the Royal Danish Academy, School of Architecture, in Copenhagen.

**Ioanna Piniara**

(GRC)

Ioanna Piniara is an architect, researcher and educator holding a PhD from the Architectural Association

(AA), London. Her research on neoliberalism and the housing question has been supported by the AA, the Onassis Foundation and the A. G. Leventis Foundation. Ioanna has taught design at the 'Projective Cities' M.Phil. in Architecture and Urban Design programme and history and theory studies at the AA. Currently she is a visiting fellow of the 'Architectures of Order' research cluster at the Goethe University, Frankfurt, where she investigates the introduction of feminist thinking in the spatial ordering of housing in the early 20th century Weimar Republic.

**Andrea Prins** (NL)

Andrea Prins has worked as an architect and architectural historian in Germany and the Netherlands. Since 2010 she builds with words instead of

brick, concrete and wood. Her expertise lies at the interface between architecture, history (of ideas) and societal changes.

**Jane Rendell** (UK)

Jane Rendell is Professor of Critical Spatial Practice at The Bartlett School of Architecture, London where she co-initiated and teaches on

MA Situated Practice and MA Architectural History, and supervises history, theory and design PhDs in architecture, art, urbanism and experimental writing. Jane's research, writing and pedagogic practice crosses architecture, art, feminism, history and psychoanalysis. She has introduced concepts of 'critical spatial practice' and 'site-writing' through her authored books: *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis* (2017), *Silver* (2016), *Site-Writing* (2010), *Art and Architecture* (2006), and *The Pursuit*

of *Pleasure* (2002), and co-edited collections such as *Reactivating the Social Condenser* (2017), *Critical Architecture* (2007), *The Unknown City* (2001) and *Gender, Space, Architecture* (1999).

**Jenni Reuter** (FIN)

Jenni Reuter is an Associate Professor in Architectural Principles and Theory at Aalto University in Helsinki. She also practices as an architect, both

in her own office and together with architects Saija Hollmén and Helena Sandman. She is one of the founding members of Ukumbi NGO, whose mission is to offer architectural services to communities in low resource settings. Her works have been honoured with numerous international awards and exhibited widely, among others several times at the Venice Architecture Biennale.

**Sarah Rivière**

(DE/UK)

Sarah Rivière, Architect, RIBA, BDA, is a German/British sole practitioner with an office in Berlin.

Her ongoing teaching practice includes the intersectional feminist 'Survival Lounge' project and the 'Berliner Architekt\*innen: Oral History' project and publication at the Technical University, Berlin. Her PhD in Architectural Design from the Bartlett School of Architecture, London, resurrects the stasis engagement from ancient Greece and develops it as a tool to initiate lively located architecture of kindred confrontation tempered by restraint. Sarah co-runs the DREAM - PLAY - CHALLENGE project and co-organised the Future of Residential Living symposium.





**Anne Romme** (DEN)

Anne Romme is an Assistant Professor, researcher and head of program at Finder Sted | Taking Place at the Royal Danish Academy, School

of Architecture, in Copenhagen. She also runs an independent architecture practice invested in critical, experimental projects. Her work ranges from theoretical inquiries into self-built housing, the commons in architecture to digital fabrication and the design of a building system based on pure plates shell structures. She holds a B.Arch. from the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture at The Cooper Union, an M.Arch. from Princeton University School of Architecture and a PhD from the Royal Danish Academy.



**Tina Saaby** (DEN)

Tina Saaby gave the keynote at the symposium, sharing her own prolific (and personal) experiences in both building homes and feeling at home

without a home in her talk 'A bed in a community.' Tina is a citymaker, placemaker and a communicator of architecture and urban development. After serving as cityarchitect of Copenhagen from 2010 to 2019, she currently holds the position of cityarchitect in Gladsaxe near Copenhagen. From 2004–2010, Tina was a partner at WITRAZ architects.



**Wiltrud Simbürger** (DE)

Trained as physicist and architect, Wiltrud Simbürger is an architectural researcher who currently pursues a

doctorate in Architectural Design at the Bartlett School of Architecture in London. Her work investigates conceptions of climate in the Late Renaissance and ties them to the contemporary discourse on architectural climate and atmosphere in the anthropocene. Wiltrud co-runs the DREAM – PLAY – CHALLENGE project and co-organised the Future of Residential Living symposium.



**Daniela Urland** (DE)

Daniela Urland is a German architect based in Berlin. She is one of the co-organisers of the symposium.



**Verena von Beckerath** (DE)

Verena von Beckerath is an architect based in Berlin and co-founder of the architecture practice Heide & von

Beckerath. She studied sociology, art theory and psychology in Paris and Hamburg, and architecture at the TU Berlin. Since 2016, she has been Professor of Architecture at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, where she holds the Chair of Design and Housing.

dream  
play  
challenge

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Residential living is in crisis. Our construction industry seems held hostage, rigidly trapped in structures of short-term financial gain, and unable – or unwilling – to respond to the necessity of addressing much-needed change. As a result, today’s built environment is failing both the communities and the individuals that it purports to serve. Demands for homes that can support the diverse constellations in which people wish to dwell, as well as the individual lives we wish to lead, echo in the hollow space of late capitalism.

A home, a community, and a dream are human rights: to have a roof over one's head and to share common ground with others are necessities for a grounded life from which dreams can be launched.

The DREAM – PLAY – CHALLENGE project seeks to respond to these desires. By setting up opportunities for equitable creative exchange that go beyond traditional academic discourse, it aims to become a space where concerned stakeholders can dream together into future ways of residing, playfully developing processes of co-creating a more fair and vibrant built environment, and challenging the industry to get on board.