

ARCHI - TEACHER

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The world as we know it is disappearing incredibly fast.

As the human race is the one to be blamed for the climate change, it is only fair to say that it is our duty to change our attitudes. Not only for the thousands of species, both animal and vegetal, endangered because of our behaviours, but at least for our own sake. I want to invest in how architecture could become a real tool provoking fundamental changes that need to occur in our society.

To address these issues, I decided to find a way to give people consciousness of what they gain, loose, give and take in the actions that take place in their everyday life.

It seemed to me that to teach people how to change easily their behaviour, I had to start by making them conscious of their actions in the place which gives them most of the bad habits they have: their homes. That's why I am choosing as a program a housing complex, which includes a public area to welcome people from

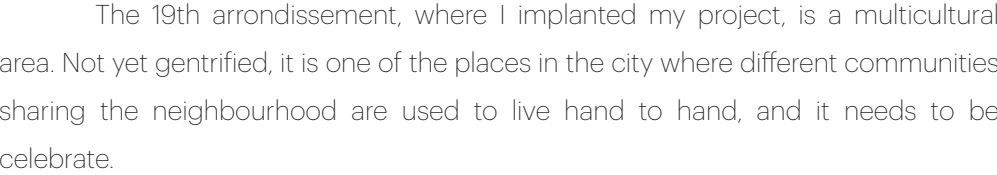
other neighbourhoods to experience it in the idea of raising awareness. The whole is in an hyper-urbanised area, Paris, which is nearly loosing its link with nature. As the planet earth is getting more and more urban, it is getting very urgent to get ideas of how to get a good quality of life in the cities while being respectful towards our environment.

This complex is an experiment of how you could live differently, based on the idea of a "close loop", so that all the things you do will have an almost immediate impact on your everyday life's environment. More than a "zero energy building", the idea is to make the users become "zero energy people". In this way, the building will not impact only its users but a lot more people through communication and social changes. Indeed, to respond to the usual "what I am doing is a drop in the ocean", the sociological aspect of this work leads towards acting together and then impact the society.



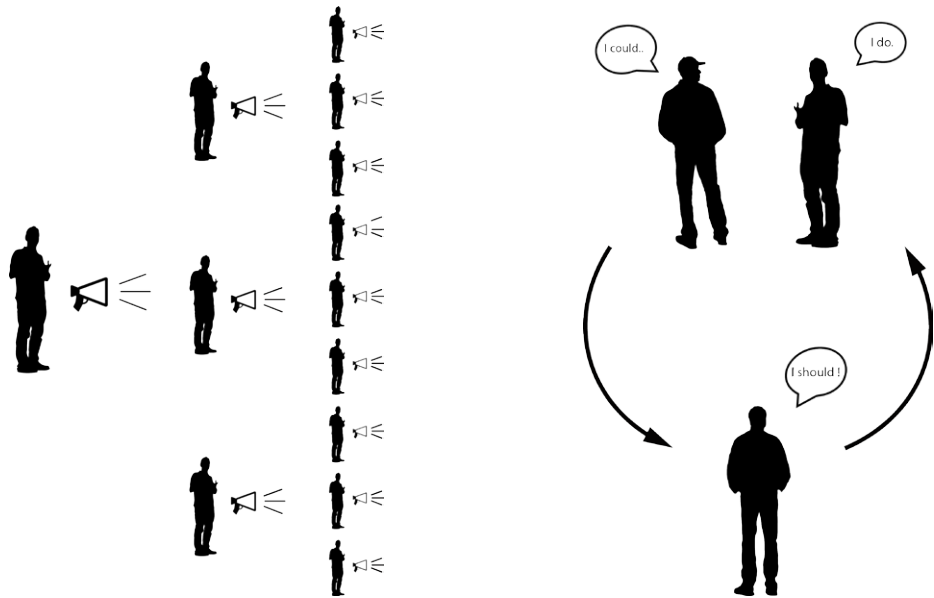
In the developed world, especially in big cities, people are becoming more and more self-centred, disconnected from nature and consumerist. Even if you crave to live differently, it can appear hopeless in the world we live in.

Paris is an excellent example of these problems. Extremely dense and close by its frontiers, people are living in narrow spaces, the air is becoming less and less respirable, and consumption is the biggest concept in the city. Even if it is undeniably one of the most beautiful town in the world, a change of lifestyle could not hurt but help people. Through my project, I want them to be able to connect back together, feel their homes as a qualified space to spend some quality time and to reconnect to nature.



The precise location of the building is adjoined to an old railway called "La Petite ceinture" (The small belt), This railway is abandoned nowadays and closed to the public. Thanks to this absence of human influence on this path, nature has taken back its rights and it is in some places a lush greenery.

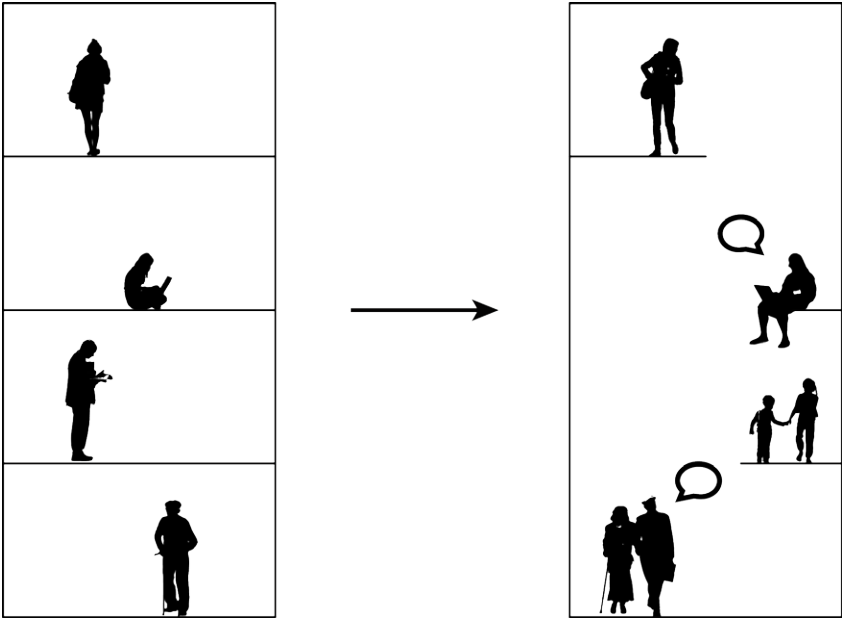
However, as French people love to bypass the rules, it is really quite common to see people strolling on it, and it is thought by many to adapt it to be accessible again, eventually as a green promenade through Paris.



The complex is accessible from the street via an arch passing under the railway while it is closed from the small belt but highly visible thanks to the huge windows of the greenhouse. Even from the street across the small belt, the building is showing its shape and some of the greenhouse's trees.

This particular location has been chosen to increase the propagation of the new lifestyles the building carries. In fact, this specific construction looks different from any other and you can enter it without living in it. Therefore, people can satisfy their curiosity and come inside to get instructed. After they have been in connexion with it, they can start thinking of doing something similar, or even better !

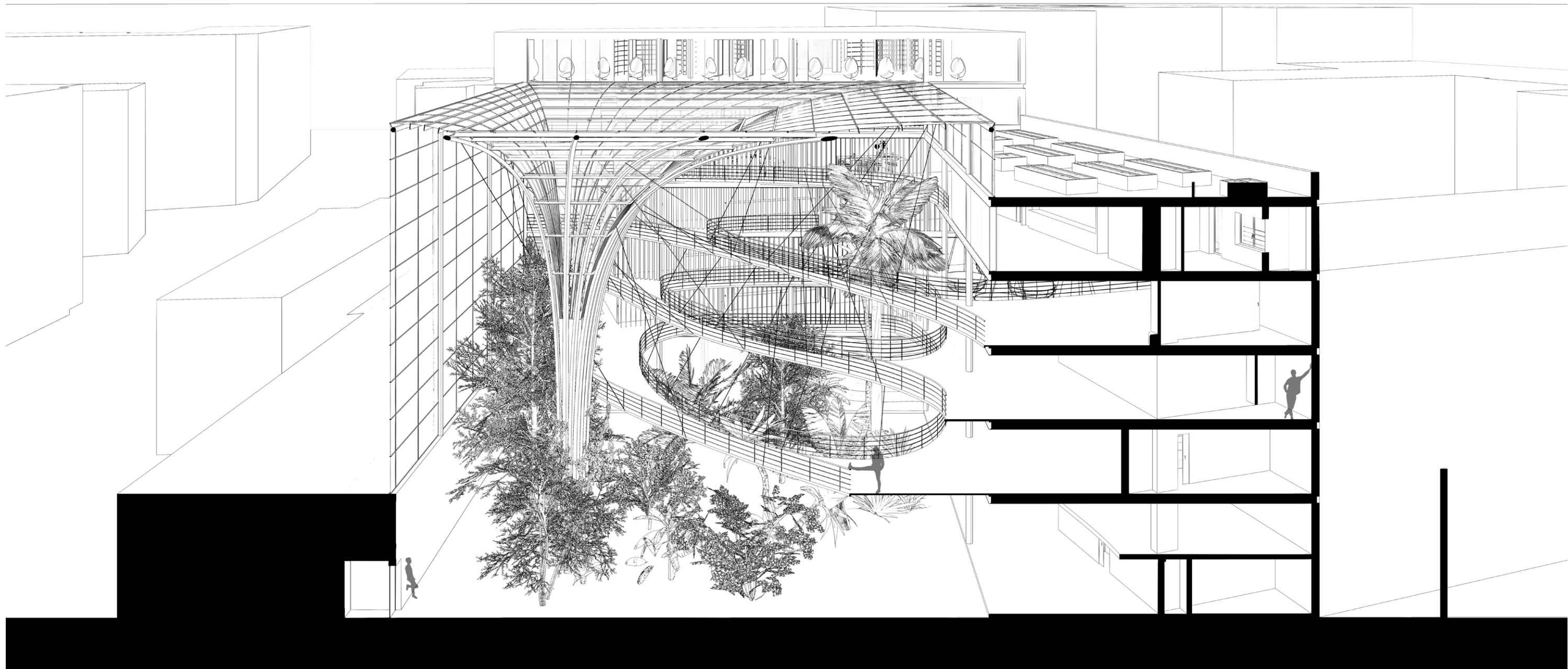
This increases considerably the number of people possibly touched by its message and then its spreading.



Despite its righteous fame, Paris is a very crowded city where one can be isolated even surrounded by people. The need of connecting people back together is essential there.

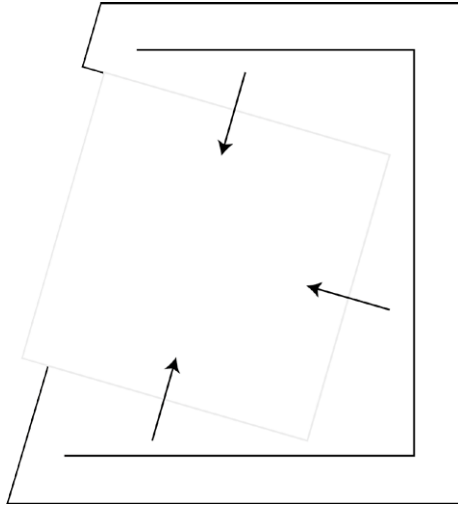
Sharing spaces is a way to interact with your neighbours and to learn to know them. Thanks to the greenhouse in the middle and the inclusion it offers, a real community can be created inside the complex.

This city is as well a place where inside spaces are exiguous and therefore it is a city where one lives outside. Thanks to the size of the shared space that inhabitants can indeed call “home”, they can feel spacious, even inside the city.



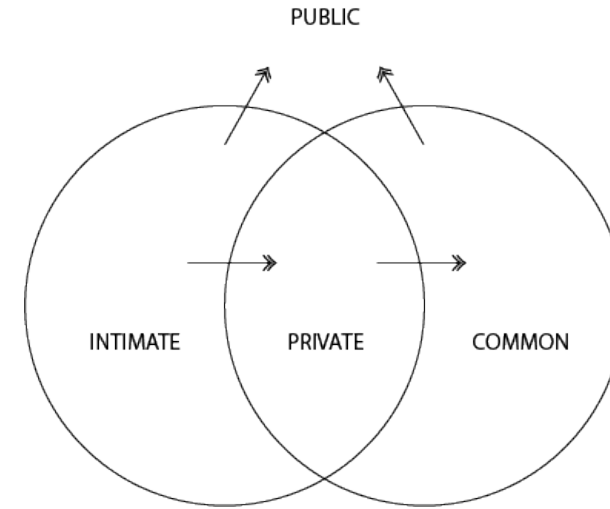
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The “U” shape of the building is meant to allow every part to be connected visually to the others, and to make each space oriented towards the greenhouse in the middle, to reconnect with nature it holds. Indeed, the system being in a “close loop”, every actions that take part in the building has an impact on its life.

The southern part is lower than the others to permit the sun to penetrate the greenhouse the most while the east part is higher than the others to connect with the site's scale.

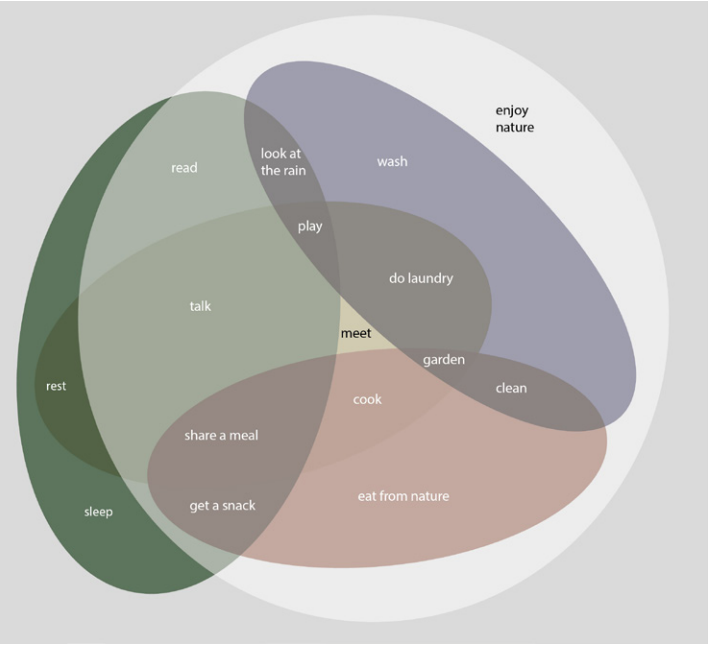


The spaces are dividable by privacy gradation.

The intimate spaces (bathrooms and bedrooms) have a view to towards the public spaces and toward the private spaces.

The private spaces (kitchens and specific meeting areas) are looking towards the common space in the middle.

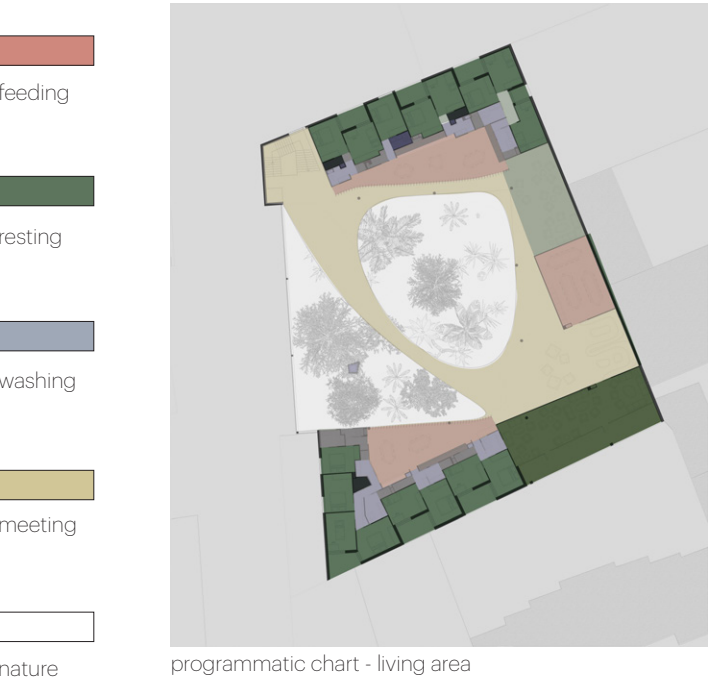
The common spaces (all the shared living areas) are open toward the public space which is located outside the building but as well at the ground floor.



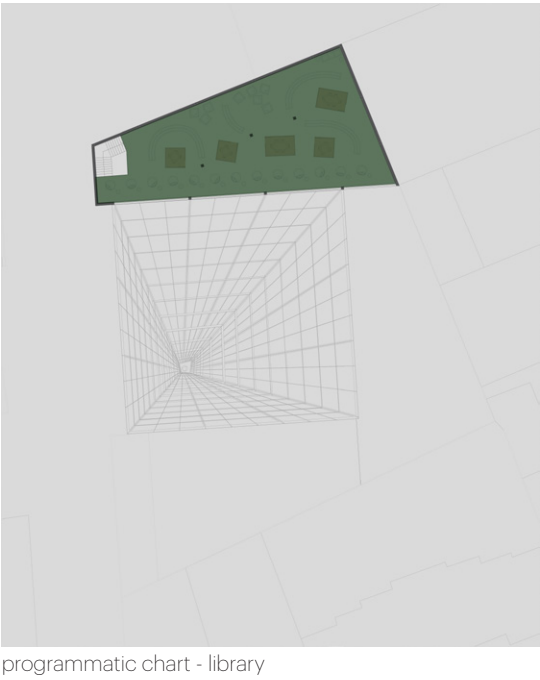
programmatic chart



programmatic chart - ground level



programmatic chart - living area

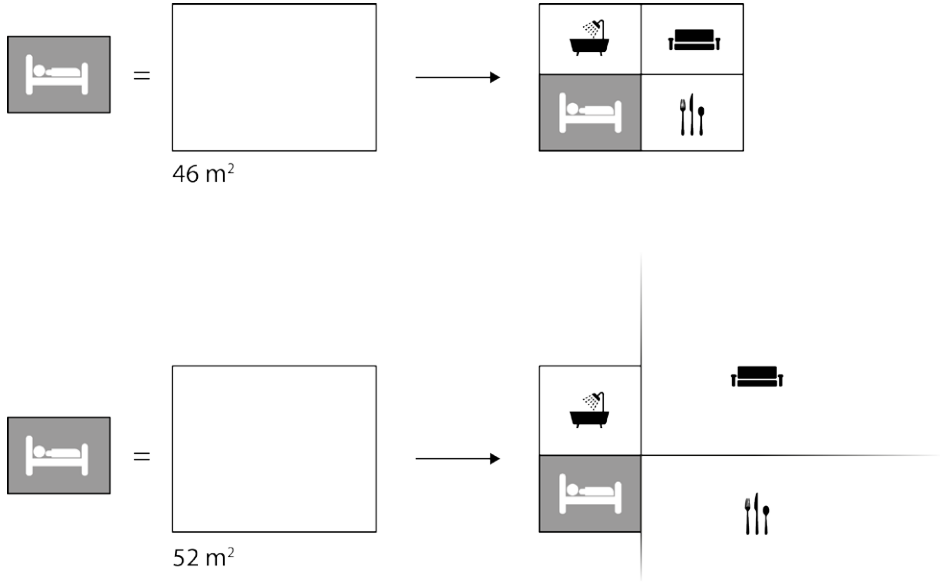


programmatic chart - library

The programmatic chart is a way to understand how to build a space according to the functions that occurs in it. Since the building here is a housing complex, the 4 major functions are washing, feeding, meeting and resting. I am introducing a 5th one, which I call nature. This stands for the consciousness and the connection that you get thanks to natural beings (animals and plants).

The intersection of these functions give the opportunity of creation to a whole new horizons of functions.

Here, the resting areas are rejected toward the edges of the building to give the most independency. They are separated from the meeting areas by a buffer zone made of the washing then feeding areas. These ones are oriented toward the greenhouse, which combining nature and meeting areas, to raise consciousness about the actions that you do and their impact.



The minimum size for a 2 rooms apartment in France is fixed at 46m2, which is equivalent to say there is 46m2 per bedroom while in this building, each bedroom has got 52m2. Considering the size difference being minimal, we can say the true difference is that in a city where people live mostly outside (cafes, bars, libraries, parcs are overcrowded) because of the lack of space in their apartment, this building offer a variety of ambiances that can't be found anywhere else. For any activity one might want to do, one will find an area for it.

According to the size of the common spaces, it seems to be a luxury to live there, but it is not !

Thanks to the size and the variety of the common spaces, for anything one want to do in the building (being alone, reading, trowing a party, hang out with friends), he will find a space that can be dedicated to it, and then keep some privacy, even with a shared space.



plan +1.50m - 1/400



plan +4.00m - 1/800



plan +6.50m - 1/800

The ground floor is accessible to the public during the day and privatised to the complex during the night. It is meant to be used as an associative space, and can host special events. It contains a sports room with a sauna, two music rooms, a small cinema, a room with kitchen to organise dinner events, and a big open space containing of course the main garden but as well a lot of spaces which can be used to play, to relax or to do what ever is needed !

The rest of the building is made inaccessible by a door closing the access to the stairs and elevator going upstairs. This part contains a laundry and a common basement.



plan +9.50m - 1/400



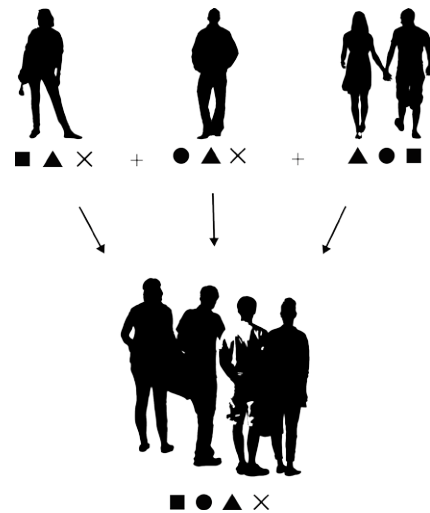
plan +12.50m - 1/800



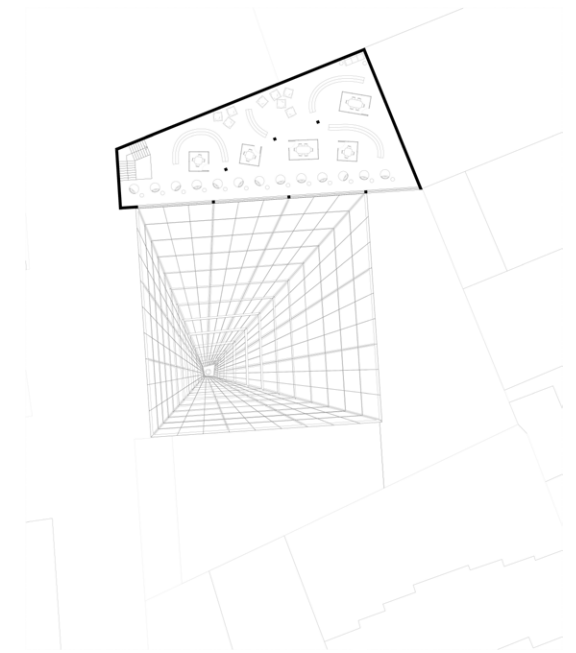
plan +15.50m - 1/800



Level 5 - kitchen - private area



plan +18.50m - 1/800



plan +21.50m - 1/800



Level 6 - library - above the greenhouse

When each one is living in their own apartments, a lot of furniture is needed. One washing machine, one fridge, one drill, one freezer, etc. for each family. In a shared system of living, a lot can be shared or borrowed from each other. There for less is bought, and this is way more sustainable !

The functionalism in the design helps this sharing. For example, all the books of the 100 people living there are in the library on the last floor, making them enjoying one of the best private library imaginable.



Level 2 - catwalks in the greenhouse

The building owns different systems to induce to change to sustainable behaviour :

- Rain water is collected through the central pillar holding the greenhouse. It will be used as undrinkable water for bathrooms, and it will be reused to grow plants inside the house and on the terraces,

- Solar panels are disposed on the highest roof of the building. The energy collected thanks to these panels is only used for the common spaces. This will induce to use more common spaces (free energy) than private ones.

- Since the grey water is reused for the plants, it is mandatory to use eco-friendly products in the everyday life. If some toxic chemicals are used, it will quickly kill the plants and impact the building's life.

- Living together and visible to each other increases the reflexion by the many different discussion that take place during the day as well as by the importance to be part of the community and think together

- The terraces are dedicated to grow vegetables and all the trees of the greenhouse are fruit trees. This way the users learn by doing, it helps realise how much energy does it take to grow food and that it is not instantaneous.



Level 1 - looking the steps and the nests

This new way of living, which is not only sharing a space but learning from it, shows how architecture has a social power that can change one's behaviour.

Indeed, the users of the building will change their lifestyles while they live there but they would have learned and understood why do they have to change their lifestyles, and what is needed to be change.

Of course this project doesn't address all the topics that need to be discussed to be a sustainable being, but it raises awareness, and the people living there will continue ask themselves question and hopefully keep the habits they have got in their greenhouse-home.



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