



Hotel Marriott, Zürich (www.marriott.com/hotels/hotel-photos/zrhdt-zurich-marriott-hotel/)

Light touch, Marriott

Programmatic, performative and urbanistic inadequacies are the most common excuses for demolishing buildings. Interiors are too dark, too noisy, too cold, too hot. Façades are insufficiently insulated. Apartment plans are too old fashioned, they will never rent or sell. The quarter is simply not dense enough. All of these arguments usually conceal another deficiency, the building is not valuable enough. In fact, it is just not valued enough. Zurich's indefensible policy of Ersatz Neubau has unleashed a fury of demolition which is socially and environmentally unacceptable. With this diploma project we wish to explore alternatives to this waste, through strategies of lightweight responsiveness.

Our site for the semester will be the Marriott hotel, magnificent, if a little foreboding, on its site on Neu-mühlequai. We will imagine an ongoing programme of modifications that will better integrate this landmark into the social life of the city. We will act quickly before the model of international chain hotel becomes obsolete. The aim is to transform the under-exposed ballrooms, conference spaces and restaurants into a new kind of department store, still a location for consumption but now also a place that can accommodate the city's developing culture of sustainable manufacturing. Over time we will allow this commercial innovation to rise up the building, to effect how the hotel's rooms are used, and by whom. Eventually, the rooms at the Marriot will welcome more permanent residents and more varied house-

holds. All of these transformations will be undertaken with the minimum of means, taking seriously the complex relationships between a building's embodied energy, its energy consumption and its social value.

The Marriot is an important figure within the city, but is not yet a listed monument. We will use the first phase of the project to measure, record and assess its construction, details, material use, as well as its different values. We also will discuss different approaches of preservation with regards to their potential for the future of the Marriott. The second stage of the project will explore the programmatic, material and spatial transformation of the Marriott, building on the discoveries of the previous analysis. The means used will be fast, light and mutable, and we expect to discover a radical new architecture that is sustainable and emancipatory.

The diploma is taught jointly by the Chairs of Silke Langenberg and Adam Caruso

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