WHOLE MAAG CATALOGUE

tools and strategies for alternative living ideas

Spring 2020
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The catalogue is concerned with the conceptions and definitions of the conventional model of everyday domestic life and architecture in context to contemporary cultural, financial and political administration.

The authors believe in sharing being a new form of luxury rather than a compromise. They propose alternative tools and strategies for your home.

By challenging anonymous living behaviours that are indeed determined by architectural attributes of your home, you will start to celebrate the benefits of communal living.

The authors are convinced of their instructions and guarantee benefits. However, they are not liable for failure.

Use the catalogue to stimulate your alternative thinking. It does not form a universally valid model.

Adapt the tools according to your personal needs. Domesticity is no longer an artificial construct. It is a representation of your identity.

Question existing social power relations, family structures and gender roles that architecture implements and claim your spaces.

Start to reconfigure your home according to your everyday domestic activities up to what household appliances you really need.
People of Maag Areal

Zölly Tower, Zürich, 2014
by Moltzer

- Site area: 6,819 m²
- Gross internal area: 16,710 m²
- Height: 77m
- Floors: 24
- Number of flats: 134
- Commercial space: 1
- Condominium ownership: ~ 90%

What's behind the cover
by Cerfeda, Jobin, Klak, Kochhäuser, 2020
The “diverse” flat types in Zöly

The Zöly Tower is composed of individual flats, communal facilities and technical rooms. It compromises private and anonymous living within a collective existence. A wide range of apartment types promises to create a diverse community, yet all “luxury” apartments address one target group. This obsession brings no benefits in focus and is not needed in the domestic space.

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The classical floor plan

Every apartment consists of variable but a finite number of rooms. Each room has a particular function. It is determined by the architecture, its proportions, light conditions and atmospheric qualities. The room names on floor plans imply gender roles and family structures.

Interior renders with different furniture and styles manipulate you into buying a specific constructed role. A home can be capable to accommodate more than it is determined in a floor plan.

Social demographics in Maag Areal

Detach yourself from prescribed conventions

Strategy: Own your spaces

Strategy: Rearrange your flat according to atmospheric qualities

Strategy: Kitchen-drobe

Strategy: DIY: Change your mind set

Components:
- a mirror, time, honesty, yourself

Instructions:
1. Stand in front of a mirror and look deep in your eyes.
2. Take a deep breath in and out.
3. Question your consumer behaviour.

The flat: Reconfiguration

The bed

The bed has become the most important object in the home. It is a place for production and reproduction, relaxation and play. Since most activities happen from the piece of furniture one might start to rethink what pieces are really needed in the domestic space.

In ‘Bed-Fashioning’ by Livia Cerfeda and Natálka Klíč a photographic series presents various settings of a bed illustrating different scenes, characters and contexts. The bed interventions are called ‘bed-fashioning’ as reconfigurations of the same objects on the bed evoke new meanings and function.

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Maintenance and cleaning

When sharing objects the most important attitude is to take care of the items. Visit following link to find advice on cleaning products and procedures.

Alternative shopping

Bauteilklick.ch is a platform for purchase and sale of used components and furniture. It provides an alternative and more economically sustainable model. What one might not need anymore can be someone else’s treasure. Share your happiness and make some extra cash.

Link to the website.

The practical efficiency of sharing

We are victims to the market seducing consumers to keep purchasing newer and better domestic appliances. Therefore one accumulates a varied collection of items, yet there is always something missing. To share less frequently used or expensive items is an alternative for a more economically and financially sustainable approach. Further, if costs of more expensive appliances are shared they will become more affordable and everyone will benefit from common resources.

Benefit from common resources

The mentality: Shared assets and values

Honeywell, I’m Home by John McGuirk

An entertaining short essay in which the author explains the consequences of smart home technologies on domesticity. This text will force you to reflect on your surrender to consumerism and what and why we are willing to sacrifice privacy for technological progress but what does it really promise?

Link to article.

Real Foundation by Jack Self

“Communal storage suggests new ways of sharing personal objects, a transport structure questions our relationship with everyday domesticity. When we combine resources, the result is more than the sum of the parts.”

For further inspiration visit the website.

Home Economics, British Pavilion 2016


Link to the website.
Embrace the communal life

Strategies:

- Communal Laundrette
  DIY: Dismantle your private washing machine and contribute it for the common good

Instructions:
1. Unplug the connection cable from the socket.
2. Loosen the securing of the supply and the drain hose and unscrew both.
3. Place the supply and the drain hose for draining into the sink or bathtub.

- Lobby Fleamarket

- Mise-en-role rooms

- The lift

This strategy offers the resident a way of not only using the infrastructure in the common way. Instead of using the lift only for access, they can start to transform them with various temporary alternatives. On Fridays, people meet for an after work drink at the “Bar Lift”. Or for the more stressed among the residents, the “Massage Lift” can provide the necessary relaxation and for those who prefer to be more playful can jump into the “Twister lift” and enjoy a funny ride.

Dear architects and planners.

- Collectively repurpose existing unused spaces

Dear architects and planners. The large areas on the ground floor are not efficient enough. They would be better used if the residents could appropriate them more easily by not having a prescribed programme or function and instead of making them more accessible through adaptable alternatives which can be used temporarily. In this way the community can create further places for coming together and socialising.

- The whole:

Species of spaces and other pieces by Georges Perec

The author contemplates about the many ways in which we occupy the spaces around us, their functions, meaning and the familiar items they occupy for everyday life. It is an entertaining and humorous book that varies in form and style and presents a generous selection of Perec's non-fictional writings and puzzles.

Purchase for CHF 13.99 here.

Ground floor Zölly: currently used as unsuccessful large commercial spaces and ateliers.

2nd floor Zölly: currently used as private storage spaces in a much higher number than required.

Dear architects and planners. Individual storage spaces will no longer be needed. These spaces can be activated to promote communal living across the inhabitants. To balance consumerism and the accumulation of unnecessary "luxurious" objects one can propose libraries of domestic shared objects, communal laundrettes that function as meeting places, in-house workshops for DIY activities and much more.

The communal revolution
Bed-Fashioning by Livia Cerfeda and Natalie Klak, photograph series plus memory game, 2020
Tool: The window
The window is a threshold between privacy and public. In the Zölly Tower the size of the window represents luxury and the status quo, a breathtaking view over the city of Zurich. It should not stop you however from personalising the opening according to your needs. Feel free to intervene with its transparency, cover it or leave it as it is.

Tool: xeThe wall
A wall defines a space. However, it doesn’t need to be a permanent enclosure. As a tool it offers gradients of enclosure, from private to public. If you don’t want to permanently define your space, as it changes over the span of your life, start with a soft and fluid intervention, such as the curtain.

DIY: Build your own wall
Components:
- Fittings for wall or ceiling, 3 screws per meter, metal profiles, gliders, curtain textiles

Instructions:
1. Find your appropriate combination. Start by marking the position of your rail on the ceiling.
2. With the help of someone else screw the profiles onto the ceiling. Make sure they are stable.
3. Once done, insert gliders into the rail and hang your curtains.

Personalise your living space

Post-Poo Drops by Aesop
Sharing a bathroom can be tricky. However, this botanical bathroom deodoriser that effectively neutralises disagreeable smells with crisp notes of citrus peel and discreet florals, saves marriages and friendships.

Lo spazio minimos by Bruno Munari
Abitacolo is a habitable module that has been conceived to satisfy all the living requirements of young people in a small space. Abitacolo can be fitted with shelves, baskets and reclining table. A legendary design for a multifunctional bed.

Electrical and sanitary connections
This strategy proposes an approach to the home being a shell that offers protection and the most important electrical and sanitary connections for the inhabitant.

Individual oasis
This type of home will be capable to allow the inhabitant to curate and inhabit their personal spaces according to their needs throughout changing lifestyles and situations.

The architect’s task

The home:

Individual oasis

39m² per person initiative Zurich
The average living space in the Maag Areal is significantly higher than in the rest of the city of Zurich. One of the main reasons is the private ownership of the flats which as a result generates a target group. It defines luxurious living in the middle of the city in great style and divides social classes even greater. The city of Zurich proposes an alternative: the 39m² living space per person initiative. The message: For the common good.

For more information click here.
Contribute to the next issue.
Submit your ideas here.