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FROM INSIDE OUT

Capacities and potentials of densification in the existing city

The studio will deal with the contemporary urban conditions, to explore optimal ways to live in the city while having an optimal use of ground and everything existing, but also the meaning of overused terms such as densification or transformation.

The cities as they are made today offer themselves a huge capacity of soils, of potentials of construction and transformation.

In a process of densification through reuse, regeneration, refurbishment, superimposition, the cities are able to provide a great capacity of permanent evolution and an exceptional quality of life: a large range of facilities, proximities and pleasures, resulting in a high quality of livable space.

At the opposite of a masterplan strategy, the process entails a strategy of case by case, from inside out. It is based on an accurate observation in situ, on inventories, as near as possible to what already exists. This will aim to detect and bring out the existing resources of each chosen location.

This will constitute a process of transformation, based on accumulation, coexistence, perhaps increase, with precision, delicacy, far away from a mathematical or a regular densification or the application of general rules. This attitude should take into consideration all the attributes of the context: spaces, programs, but also inhabitants, scales of time, uses, as well as all the sensitive details, which constitute what we could define as a neighborhood.

Based on the attention to the existing, seen positively as a resource and an opportunity which sustains the project; based on the sensitivity, on the will to reusing instead of destroying, this approach is also efficient, inventive, economical, sustainable, ambitious and involves actively people in the process.

This requires the research and the learning of new skills, of new methods, of creative and inventive ideas on the issues of adaptation, of reuse, of assemble.

This approach will take place in three different places in or near Zürich, in order to explore the capacity and the potential of the city in terms of transformation and densification. We will work by team of minimum 3 students.

Introduction: 19 September 2017, 10 am, HIL F 75