

Venice 2016



TIME

SPACE

EXISTENCE

ATELIER MARTEL

Collaboration with artist Mayanna von Ledebur

Epilepsy residential care home

The site is located between pastures and activity areas in the semi-urban fringe located at the outskirts of the small town of Dommartin-lès-Toul. It extends on a gentle slope in front of the parking of the former American hospital and opens up to the panorama of the Moselle valley.

Even if it is unable to produce any urban quality, the so called “activity area”, continues to be, most of the time, the place of work of contemporary architects.

The healthcare facility is a project enriched by these landscapes and proves that the answer can be poetic, a strong image which finds its source in these big, simple and autonomous objects, in the way one can access them, in the sobriety of architectural processes, in the compactness of the objects answering to the landscapes. The challenge of this type of sub-urban project resides in its capacity to use the lexicon of fragmented cities to make warm, caring, and permanent objects.

The building initiative of such a house for people with epilepsy originated from a patient association. A collaborative and participatory method of work has been implemented at the very beginning of the project including with doctors, patients, architects, and the artist Mayanna von Ledebur. The crossing of experience and point of views as a result of this collective work has strongly impacted the project itself: the selection of the location, the material, the rationalization of the plan, and the creation of a protective and open environment. This work has defined the level of domestic services, sweetness, and comfort this big isolated structure should offer.

The economic constraints governing the current construction world have forced the Atelier to design a working method aiming at eliminating the superfluous and concentrating on the essential; the idea of discipline as

an art of building. That way of thinking should be perceived as a memory, a culture, the reminiscence of an attention to details, the material, the hand, the craft. A powerful catalyst making us want to build timeless buildings while examining the questions architects have always raised. This building is an excellent example of this radical method aiming at doing always more with less means, thereby demonstrating a strong willingness to ease unbalanced situations.

Create a ground floor building, open it with four large planted patios, soften the rough concrete through a curved matrix, use the walls to hang colorful wool tapestries; these typological and constructive measures are enough to blur the boarders between the worlds and summon a succession of images adding to the complexity of the project: it is a shed but also a cloister, a house, a public place, a school, a playground, a garden.

Our social commitment has allowed us to develop a very broad network of expertise and tap the human potential giving all its value to a building with poor means. The collaboration with an artist, which the Atelier systematizes, in the very early process of each project design, has facilitated the dialogue between all the actors and promoted the appropriation mechanisms. This project advocates for a process of creating urban objects based on the pooling of experiences in order to redirect the ordinary shapes into specific and poetic places.



TIME SPACE EXISTENCE

This publication accompanies the exhibition TIME.SPACE EXISTENCE, the first architecture exhibition of the European Cultural Centre in Venice, in the context of the 15th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2016.

TIME SPACE EXISTENCE presents more than 100 architects and architecture photographers, from over 40 different countries. The exhibition shows the commonness and differences between Europeans, in dialogue with works of Non-Europeans.

In addition the exhibition stimulates a more conscious relationship from the spectator towards his daily surrounding aiming to increase the awareness of their own personal Existence as human beings influenced by a specific Culture within Space and Time