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The citadel of tides

Participant info

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Project info

Atlanticwall second chance as citadel for subcultures?

The project site is situated in Ostend, more specifically on the seafront. The city is struggling with infrastructural problems. Heavy storm floods can happen every 10 years. Due to the rising sea level the flood risk after a storm increases tremendously. Therefore it is necessary to invest in buffer basins in the short term. This building is a linear interference in the existing landscape. The Venetian and Royal galleries are the structural inspiration for the design of the building. The alternating walls and columns rise up from the ground. Waterbassins are integrated in the thickness of the walls. This system can be used as a strategy to protect the entire seaside from extreme high tides.

The construction itself is inspired by the tidal change of the sea, in which ebb and flood are a reflection of the political world. The political realm is presented by the refugees of today. As stowaways in ferries they try to navigate from Ostend to England. The space in between (the walls) is empty. Emptiness creates possibilities and stimulates creativity. Like that we can upgrade the temporarily character of a refugee's stay in Ostend and we add an incredible value to the pragmatic necessary infrastructures. What if a refugee gets the opportunity to play the main role in a new metropole of subcultures? It will give a huge impulse to the harsh city life.

As the sand blows trough the openings, the building is permanently in alteration. Little by little the hollowness is filled by sand, as the refugees gently continue their travel. Before summer arrives we use the captured sand to reconstruct the Belgian beaches, with sight on England we think about our lost visitors.

