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28EAP28E
AP28EAP2
8EAP28EA
P28EAP28
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KWARTIER VIER

Participant info

Name: Léon Nypels
Institute: MMA+ Maastricht

Project info

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Architecture and the logic of creation

The former hospital of the state mental asylum in Oud-Rekem (Belgium) has been out of use for the past thirty years. Since, the building has been abandoned, with all the consequences that come with it. The contradiction between the decay and at the same time its beauty make this abandoned location in the centre of the village very mystical. Other buildings belonging to the former asylum have been repurposed in the meantime. The former hospital is a building that still leaves traces of the emotionally loaded history of this location.

This element is the foundation for a way of renovation which can be described as “building with space for decay”. By analogy with the work of an archaeologist, the design for the reuse of the hospital reveals its history. After which new layers are added. To make a clean statement all new layers are made out of one material which will react differently to its surroundings both on the inside and outside of the building. Which results in a new spacious palimpsest.

- Léon Nypels

