

23 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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Obstacle as architecture

Participant info

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Project info

The Kanaalkom intersects the periphery of Hasselt. The project consists of two parallel city walls which delimit this potential emptiness in the urban fabric. In this way a sacred interspace – like a Greek temenos – arises in which the context monumentalizes. This 'open' city stands in a dialectical relationship to the traditional 'closed' city.

The Kanaalkom is an autonomous obstacle with an edge, but without a seam. The two city walls transform the borders of this autonomous obstacle into border conditions, whereby the Kanaalkom becomes an architectonic obstacle that – unlike a Greek polis – doesn't include, but excludes urbanization.

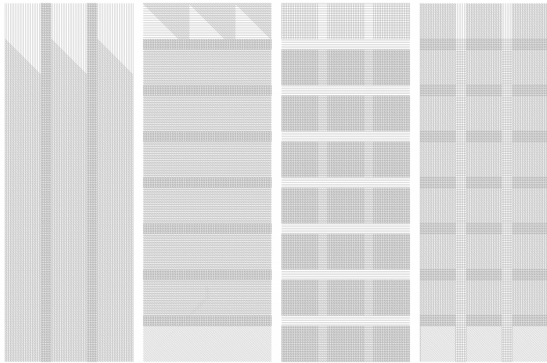
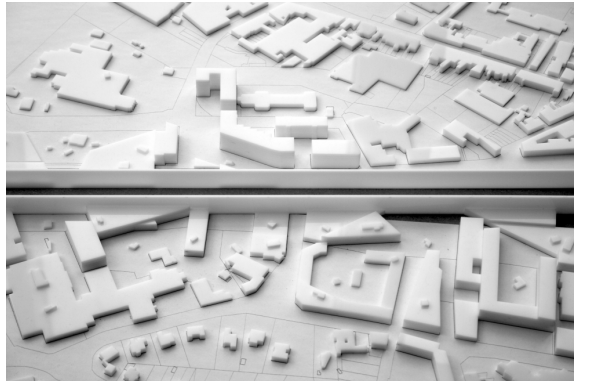
By developing the architecture's internal relationships, it becomes a non-compositional obstruction. Its articulation logically results from the subdivision of its initial form: both city walls consist of – horizontal and vertical – walls. Where these concrete walls and floors cross, they form a grid. On the one hand this grid stops buildings, on the other hand it allows programmes to continue. The grid is the proper obstacle: it doesn't only separate visually, but also physically.

The eight hundred meter long city walls act as loggias that serve adjacent buildings, while at the same time those buildings serve the loggias. The archetype of the loggia is an internal and external threshold: it both connects and separates at the same time. From these loggias as well as from the inner and the outer ring road of Hasselt, the Kanaalkom is perceptible as an urban interior.

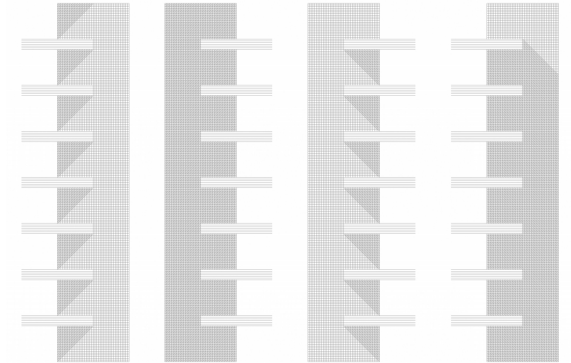
As the urbanization is specific and the city wall generic, the places where they collide are both generic and specific. These complex spatial collisions always generate different anti-typological forms and spaces.



STRUCTURE

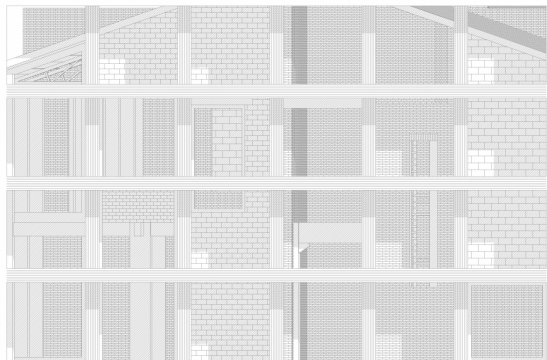


OBJECTHOOD

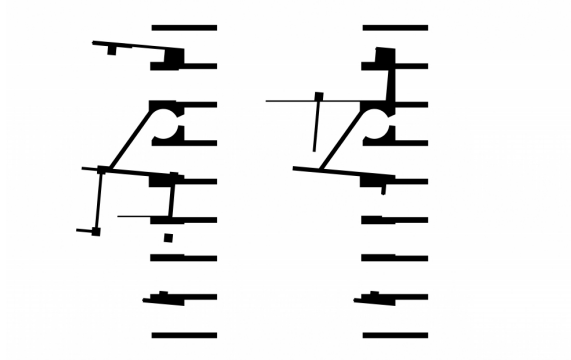


TYPICAL PLAN

TYPICAL SECTION



GENERIC SECURITY



ANTI-TYPELOGY

