

24 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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The Growing House

Participant info

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Project info

Under the title "the growing house", the thesis is concerned with how the expansion of the inner city reconciles itself with the requirements of adaptable, successively expandable housing forms. The research project, "Das wachsende Haus", called into being in 1931 by Martin Wagner, heralded a return to nature through rural, economical housing, citing expansion as the growth of families. Growth as an increase in family numbers is insufficient for the present time.

Urban growth can arise from comfort, patchwork families, work practices, and urban contraction from separation, single households or personal finances. Therefore, the design should create new possibilities and offer a contribution to solving today's urban housing situation, considering the ever- arising need for affordable living space. The perception of living as a process and the variability of living space suiting the user was the motivation to research the potential of forms of urban expansion in current housing.

The concept is based on a co-operatively administrated building, in which members are allowed to lease a space within a large complex, a framework reacting to existing boundaries.

The structure, the circulation, the core facilities, as well as ceilings and floors, create the starting point for growth. Occupants are given the opportunity, with consultants, to carry out upgrading according to their requirements.

A co-operative regulation book „Das wachsende Haus – Gilbachstraße e.G.“ defines rules for growth. The consolidation of the co-operative promotes public funding, borrowing capacity and a resistance to profit and speculation. Each unit is like a tent in a camping park. The tent is the property of the individual, but the space is owned by the cooperative. The self-administration of the co-operative strengthens communication. Collaboration with consultants, an on-site workshop and a co-operative contact point mean problems that arise during the growth-process can be resolved.

