

house of contamination

team Markus Bader, Jan Liesegang
mit Manfred Eccli, Jia Gu, Nick Green,
Marie-Katrin Turgetto, Joakim Nyström,
Christian Göthner

typ temporary space

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Francesco Manacorda

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fotos raumlaborberlin &
Max Tomasinelli

Am Flutgraben 3
12435 Berlin

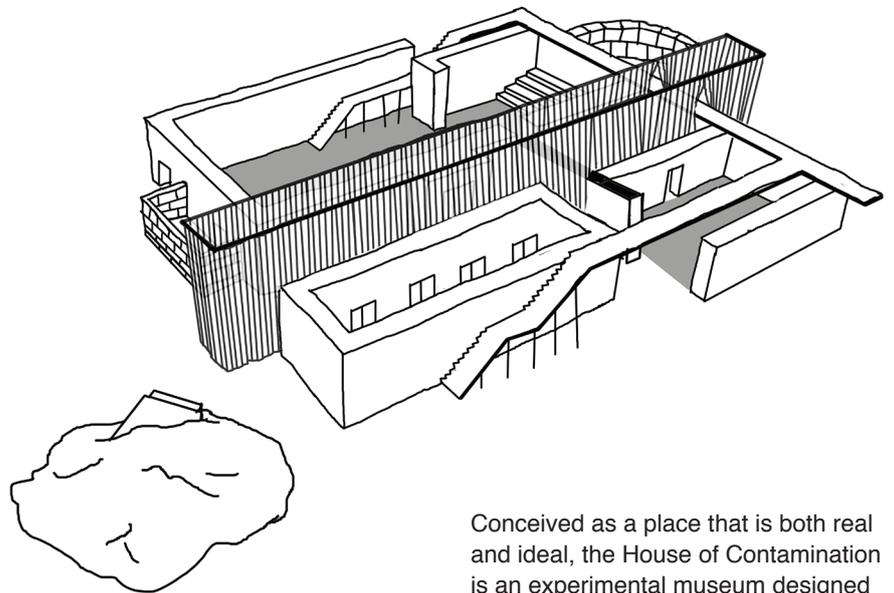
telefon +49 30 27580882

fax +49 30 2476319

internet www.raumlabor-berlin.de

raumlaborberlin





Conceived as a place that is both real and ideal, the House of Contamination is an experimental museum designed to host Artissima's curatorial programme Poetry in the Form of a Rose. Located inside the vast area of the Oval Linghotto, the large temporary structure hosts a number of spaces for each of the art disciplines investigated: dance, cinema, literature, design, urbanism and education. A 'project within a project', the House of Contamination is conceived as a model, a prototype of a contemporary cultural center.

One of the main references for the House of Contamination is Cedric Price's „Fun Palace“, a future-embracing design for a cultural centre that is multifunctional, highly technological, and adaptable to multiple needs. This expectations towards technology have changed since then. Today's keyword peak oil, standing for a range of bleak scenarios of radical change in the political and economic world that are starting to contaminate the cycles of production and consumption. The House of Contamination is an update on the 20th century cultural center.





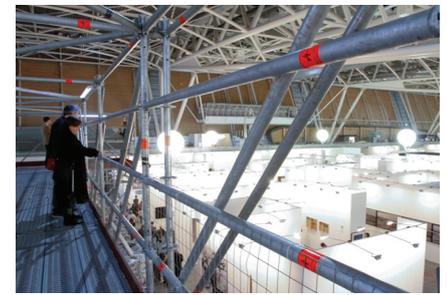
The life span of a thing as a product becomes shorter and shorter. Things are produced, traded, consumed and thrown away. As soon as a thing has been thrown away, it becomes something else: trash! The redefinition of the product / good to trash is irreversible. The thing enters a new economy and totally different regulations and laws apply. For example: trash may not be used / gathered / displayed in public

spaces. Even though access is regulated, an art fair is by definition a public space. To make "house of contamination" possible, negotiation up to the regional government were necessary to gain exemption and permission.

The house of contamination's walls are made out of trash materials, intercepted in their route through the recycling process: crushed plastic bottles, compressed bales of advertising and packaging paper, discarded wood from doors and discarded panels, compressed plastic car parts and bales of remanufactured cashmere. This last material is gained from used garments, that are shredded, bleached and re-spun.

The furniture is designed and produced from old fridges, washing machines, doors, dressers, bookshelves and chairs designated for the dump. A garage is fitted with an enormous fan to distribute wind through the art fair space; its form is covered in used clothing, recuperated from the leftover materials of an exhibition by Christian Boltanski, 1:1 recycled art.





Most architectural elements of the space are fixed and solid, but the design incorporates a sliding wall, referencing high-tech philosophies of an adaptable architecture. The wall can slide, taking away the cinema screen and take the eye to the theatre stage, or to seal the literary salon or invade the corridor. Two other elements, the skywalk and the tall curtain corridor, represent the most radical dichotomies of design.



The skywalk talks about a powerful view. It is the space of control and observation. As an alternate walkway to the entire space, its use is totally at the disposition of the individual user. An uncomfortable atmosphere of power, authority and hierarchy comes into play. On the other hand, while using the walkway to gain the raised viewpoint, it's users become part of the visual focus of the installation inside the fair hall. They become subjects of control and objects of view at the same time. The opposite is the case in the curtain corridor, a long corridor that cuts the space in half, invaded by residues of silver-plated paper, while its fabric walls are moved by cross winds. This central piece of the installation is the magic mixer, the prominent but unexpected space of indeterminacy. Its surface is created in a way that the users can diffuse through it's surface at any point and at their will.



The interior programmes of the House of Contamination permeate each other, by acoustic and visual interference and / or pollution, depending on interpretation. An extra layer of permeation exists in the relationship between the House of Contamination with the space of the art fair, with emissions between both creating a prominent sense of interdependency. In between the programmed spaces, the design incorporates spaces with uncertain use, spaces that are more a question than an answer to any kind of need or desire.



Visible in the design and use of the House of Contamination are the potentials of the collective space, the unclaimed and unintended. When materials, people and programs collide, interesting moments of ambiguity and tension lead to negotiations over needs, desires and purposes, and hopefully allow new forms of collaboration to develop. We consider this negotiation process an essential part of the production public space. New forms of collaboration spark the hope for a different and better world, for a human overcoming of the endzeit scenarios.