PS692

HELSINKI (FI) GENTLE BOULDERS

Gentle Boulders are modest interventions in a fragile but robuust environment. The structures have a presence as if they were already present since the discovery of the islands. Made out of materials that could have been found on the islands itself. Resting on granite stones, allowing vegetation to grow underneath, a soft touch on the ground. A wooden system that builds further on historic and modern tradition within the architecture of Finland. Specific in time yet timeless. A modular system that can be prefabricated in advance, adapted on site, repaired and adjusted in a practical manner. An elegant architecture within ecological and economical means that adapts itself to the user. More with Less.

THE PROJECT

With the project we want to add as little as possible to each island and work with what is already present and through the process of developing the project to find out what is absolutely needed. How can we add new subtle infrastructures to this fragile composition on each island? How can we make our proposal part of this assembly of history and existing communities on each island? The ambition is to achieve an Architecture and infrastructure that posses a certain familiarity. As if it always have been part of each island, composed out of elements we can find on the island itself. Like boulders that are carried from afar and are now part of each islands body. Architecture that has a mobility to be moved efficiently without leaving any impact on its environment. Put together as a set, straight forward to disassemble and assemble again with materials that are building market standard to allow effortless repairability and adaptability. Seen as part of the existing Villa architecture, resembling elegant extensions of the Villas with the practicality and robustness of the historic factory made cabins. Fitting in harmony in the landscape with all its elements.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCES

We see this proposal as a first invitation to have several workshops with the client and its stakeholders. Our architecture proposal is not definitive, we see this trajectory as a participatory process that sharpens the program and refines the architecture by input of all the necessary actors that are involved of manifesting the project. Since each site and island is unique in its character and it needs, it would be of essence to propose as an initiale step an in depth analysis of the actual requirements for each individual site that fits in the overal vision in form of a masterplan which can be executed in steps. We are a multidisciplinary team that extends itself from a network of (local) architects, artists, chefs, curators, food labs, environmentalist and landscape architects.

We see our first landing as such, to stay on the different islands in form of short residencies where we bring specialists together to develop and research the proposal to a realistic project that is supported by all stakeholder on each island. As each island has its own habitants: permanent and temporary residents, visitors, animals, vegetation and micro ecosystems. To achieve this in our studio we work with models as tools as a gesture of creation and understanding. Models and drawings are the most important and unfiltered tool of an Architect, and the making process is fluid, constantly evolving and sophisticated. They are a tool for the client to work with. We would like to organise a series of round table discussions around the working models as a participatory process where the input of local communities, specialist and the city (client) are processed within the project trajectory. Test case can be worked out as small test interventions and mock ups on scale 1:1 to have a first visibility on the sites towards the public. To achieve a successful project on such a scale, requires a base of support from the bottom up.

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proposal: Cooking Shelter

top: Factory-made cabins, traditional granary, double column inAarne Ervi's Sauna,
bottom: Old island swimming pier with changing cabin, Alvar Aalto Column on stone

THE ARCHITECTURE: Shelters that can be claimed by its users

The architecture exists out of a modular system that is based on the market standard dimensions of Finlands timber wood production. Everything is in wood with a durable robuust and light finish for the roof in a re-usable material. Allowing effortless acces to materials for repair, replacement, adaption and extension. The architecture can be pre fabricated and transported in feasible packages and placed without impact on its natural surrounding. For smaller structures, in situ fabrication is possible, however not preferred to protect the natural environment.

Resting on granite stones, that can be either found on the island or added to this assembly of stones. Leaving behind the necessity of using the carbon impact of concrete foundations. When the structure is not needed anymore they can move along or stay on place. As granite stones are part of the landscape, they can be repurposed or left behind to blend in as a gentle trace of the once existing structure, waiting to be claimed again.

This point connection to the soil allows to minimise the impact of the structure on the vegetation and permeability of shoreline and forest floors. Structures can blend in harmony with the forest without harming the rootsytems of trees. The buildings are elevated to allow vegetation and micro organismes to continue there life underneath and around the architecture. Connections are made to the structures with duck board ramps to allow easy acces for people with reduced mobility. Platforms around the building allow people to move and use the outside of the spaces and support to minimise the impact of movements around the natural floors of the islands. The structure standing on top of the stones exist out of wooden columns supporting self supported floor and self supported roof. Roofs are inspired by the local villa architecture and are formed in shape to withstand the strong forces of nature. For larger buildings the roof can take different forms since the amount of supporting columns would increase. This gives us the space to have a freedom of filling in the structure according to the needs of each location. Giving flexibility to changing conditions over time. From a simple shelter, to a space for cooking, having a coffee in a cafe or sitting down in a hot sauna. The modular system posses the potential to contain everything that is needed according to a changing program. Making it future proof for ambitions that can go further then what is foreseen, allowing adaption and extension that is feasible within economical and ecological means. Spaces that can be claimed by its users.

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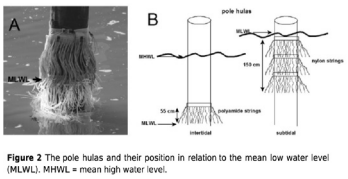

Figure 2 The pole hulas and their position in relation to the mean low water level (MLWL). MHWL = mean high water level.

Pole Hula

Pontoon Hula

Richard Long - A line in Scotland

THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE LANDSCAPE

For the infrastructure a careful study is of it essence to investigate the possibility of already existing structures and look for a possible re-use and reimplantation of usage and materials. The infrastructure in forms of Waterbus Jetty, Leisure boat pontoons and Swimming piers build further on the modular system of the architecture. Protecting the delicate shorelines, possibilities for landing with canoes and kayaks are foreseen within the pontoons itself. Duck boards are added to sensitive areas to decrease the compression of the soil. Totems are used to guide people and control the flow of people. All having all the advantages of the interchangeable structure. Allowing to melt infrastructure and architecture with each other. The infrastructure has exactly like the architecture the goal of having a minimal impact on its environment. Structures to encourage growth of micro-organisms are added (ex. Pole and Pontoon hulas on the water infrastructure) and find effective ways of ecological engineering to increase productivity and biodiversity.

renovation Ospizio San Gottardo to guest accomodation by Miller and Maranta

Jan Van Eyck Academy - Food Lab

REFLECTION MASTERPLAN

A careful masterplan is to be developed to identify current urgencies and future ambitions. As a first step, we want to research how suitable the current points of infrastructure and usages is optimal. Allowing to keep what works, to add what is missing. Some Villas can be be repurposed as artist and research residence, bringing together marine and botanical scientists, landscape architects, artists and chefs. Other villas can be used as a communal facility to allow proper infrastructure to make sleeping pods and clamping possible with minimum impact on the environment and maximal comfort. Bigger villas can be turned into ecological accommodations that allows the visitor to learn about the ecology of the island and the work of the artist and research residence. As an example to set up a food lab (exists out of resident artists and chefs) which investigates the possibility of eatable food that can be found on the island. Can these plants also help the current state and not only nurture our hunger, but the hunger of the soil by nurturing back, reinforcing the ecology of the island. Which is then on its turn as an outcome of the research presented as a menu in the summer restaurant. Enjoying the leisure of the island, becoming aware of its existence and contributing to a more durable environment benefitting mankind and nature to coexist. Making an awareness out of gestures, from us, to us, back to the island. We see the islands as an network of ecological archipelagos that generate new insights of how we interact and live within nature.

Mockup and Discussion with client and community Peter Zumthor
Werkraum Bregenzerwald

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