The Program

An urban apartment building in the city center of Oslo.
With general apartments* of a larger size (100-200 kvm),
and a not yet specified public/commercial program on ground floor; cafe, office space etc.

*General apartments; I do not intend to limit it for families, students, collectives etc. as I do not consider it relevant for my project.

The household patterns and preferences will be changing components. Architecture is a slow medium, but when built the reality is dramatic. The permanence of a building and the temporality of contemporary preferences is an issue to consider when designing an apartment building. It is a way of being sustainable. When organizing the plan for everyday life, the level of generality should be taken into consideration. In my project I wish that the plan for living will have the capacity to answer to contemporary as well as future preferences.
 - to handle the issue of permanence within architecture and the temporality within society.

Size wise I will work with rather generous apartments. They will not satisfy the housing marked, but that is not what I intend on doing. In the task I will look forward and study how we would like to live spatially.

Interior picture from Osterly Park (1761) London, by Adam Robert.

Spatial Idea

The picture is of a living room at Osterly Park design by Robert Adam in 1761.
A picture of a bourgeoise home. A space of comfort and robustness.

A sense of comfort

I want to address the issue of comfort, which in my opinion is an inherent issue within architecture. It is kind of banal, but I think it is a siginificant issue that should be mentioned more often within the architectural discourse.

I perceive the living room at Osterly Park as a comfortable space. It portraits a room in balance, with good proportions and dimensions. The consideration for how the doors and windows are positioned within the room, how the height of the celling measures according to the floor area, it all results in a space that is easy to inhabit as a home.
The presence of the doors and windows within the room also play a part. They are familiar architectural objects we immediately recognize and understand, representing architectural features with a reassuring and comforting effect.

The robust

The underlying quality of the space is a robustness. I perceive it as a durable space, able to withstand time and work with time. This quality provides an atmosphere of comfort, security and protection - all traits I want my project to possess.

(I find it a bit troubling to choose a picture that illustrates the spatial qualities that I am aiming for. I do not want to be misunderstood as nostalgic, too romantic or bourgeois. I am a bit nostalgic, romantic and fond of the bourgeois culture, but I believe I have a critical distance to what I like.)
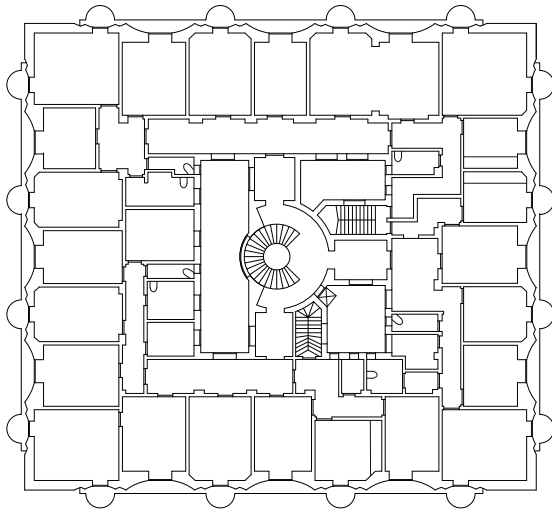
Pietro Aschieri, Palazzina de'Salvi, Italy 1929-30

The Plan

The plan shows a rich organization of rooms, a central staircase and small, internal courtyards in a rather compact building body. It is a dense building block made livable and porous.
The living spaces are positioned along the perimeter of the building, while utilitarian rooms are organized around the wells. The two sides are connected by hallways/gallery spaces.
Each floor has three apartments, the separation between the apartments are meandering and not immediate.

A distribution space; hallway, corridor, gallery, central space

I see qualities in prioritizing a distribution space. In order to achieve generality the rooms should be accessible from not just one determined sequence.

Untitled rooms, avoid fixing their use

Before we used the designation værelse/rom - today rooms are often specified and named after their function. Bedroom. Living space. They are fixed. I wish to not do that. I want to make a plan, a division of the plan, where a freeness of use is offered. Rooms that has technical inquires such as kitchen, will however be fixed. Rooms will not be drawn and sized based only on their function. Today there are many small bedrooms, 7sqm, that are just a space for sleeping, not living. This I do not want

The positioning of the spaces

The living spaces, the representational rooms, are facing the street. The utilitarian spaces will be positioned in the back, around internal courtyards as they do not have the same requirements for daylight as the living spaces.

room	room	room
distribution space		

toilet	kitchen	bathroom	storage
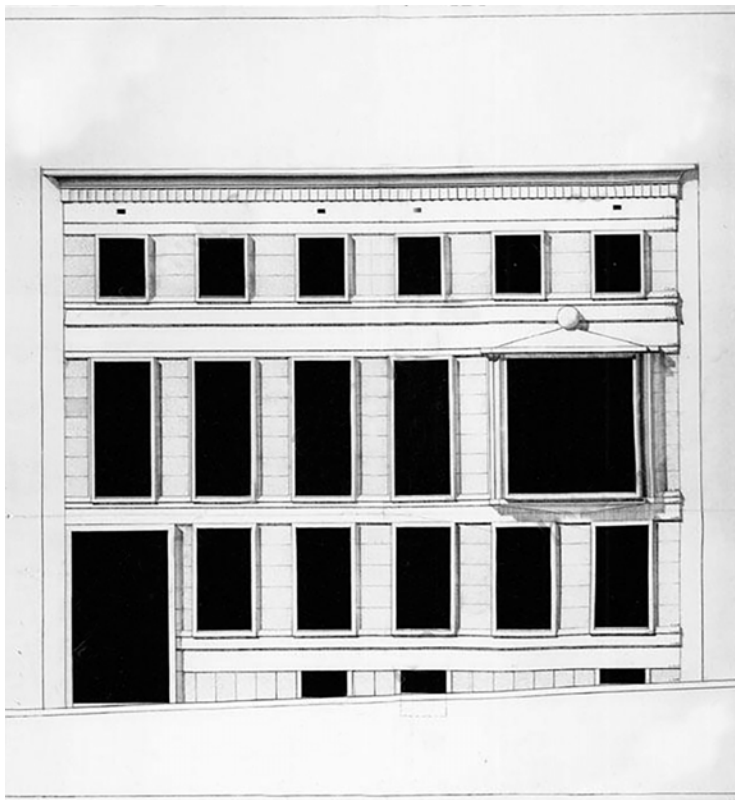
August Perret and Gustav Perret , Hôtel particulier du docteur Périgord, France, 1934-35

The Facade

The facade is the wall between the privacy of an apartment and the public space outside. It is a two-way monologue; the mediator of the issue between public versus private. A matter of negotiation between the inside and outside. It has to add to the quality of the city as well as providing the comfort of life within an urban apartment.

A unity

Many of the urban facades built today are mere results of a construction or a composition of technical and separate layers. The building body can be perceived as fragmented and difficult to read as a whole. I want to search for a facade that envelopes the building as a unity. The building should be perceivable as an object - with a top and a bottom, a plinth and a cornice.

The window

As for the interior as for the exterior, the moment of the window is crucial.
It is a significant architectural element in the expression of the facade. How it is dimensioned, horizontal or vertical, and what the the rhythm is - it all has a great impact on the building as a whole and for the space it creates inside. The moment of the window is when the resident is exposed to the city outside.
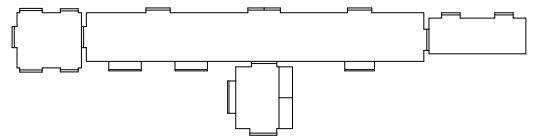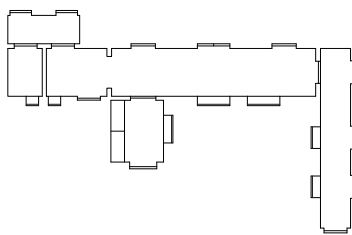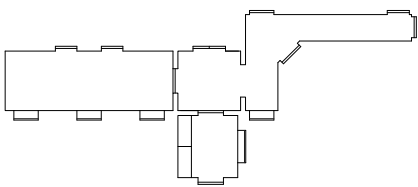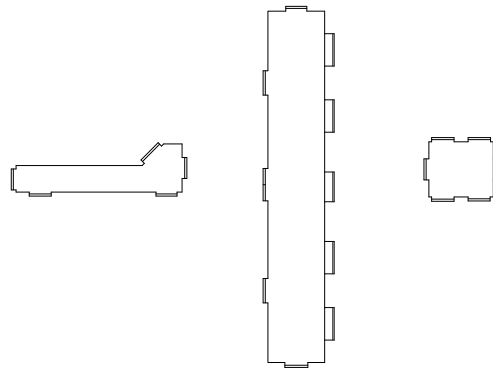
A selection of investigations in 1:20 model and drawing of spatial sequences in an apartment - all based on the ideas presented in booklet.
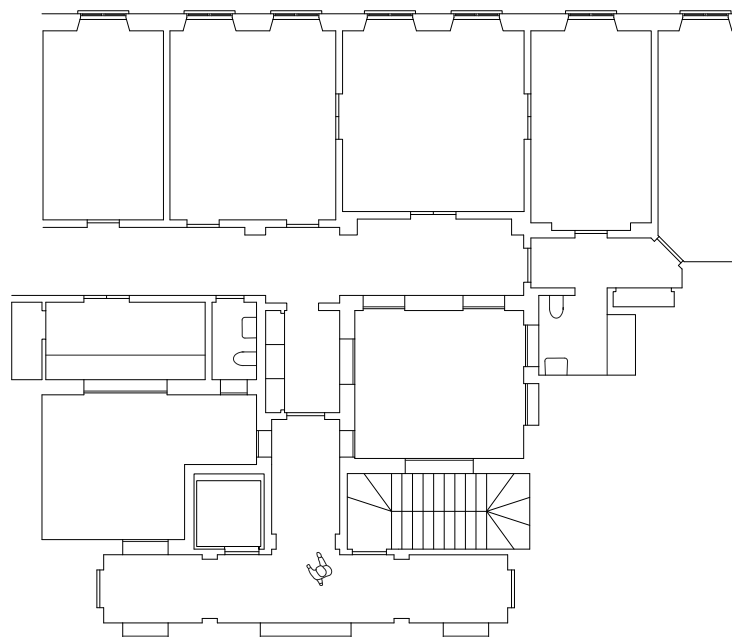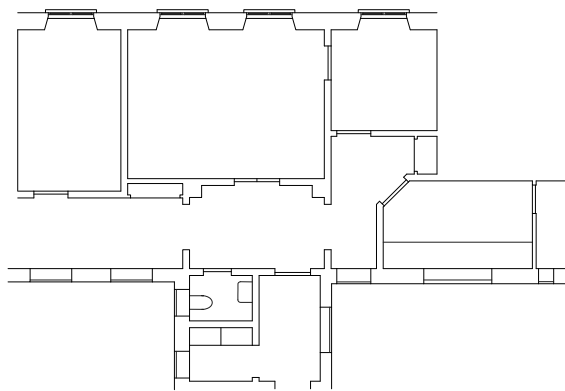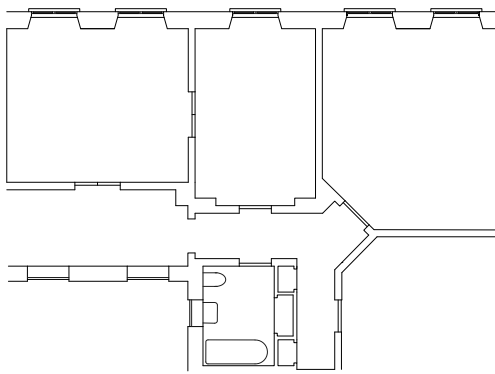

interior images of model 1:20
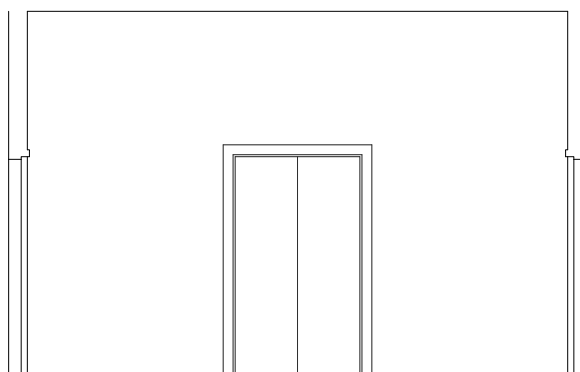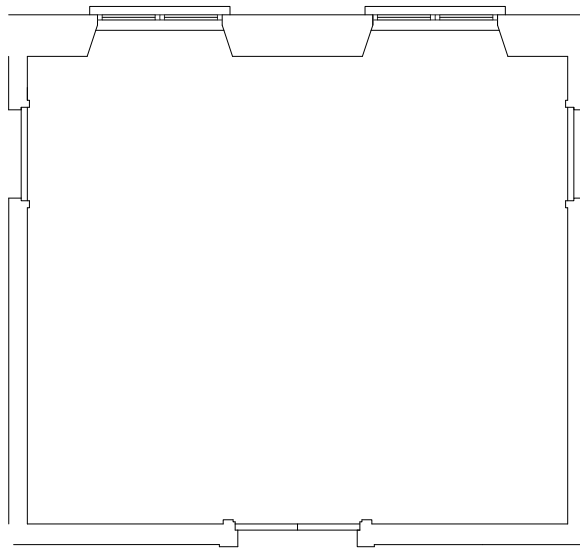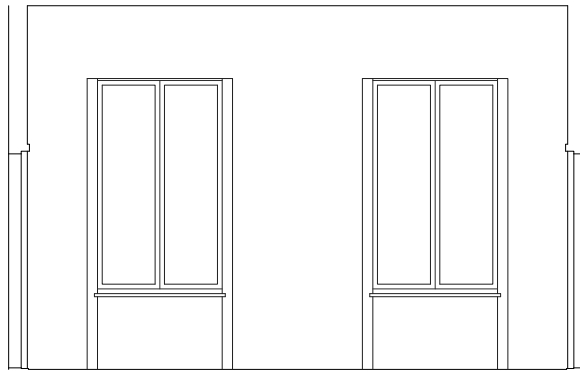
Drawings of one space; an investigation of dimentions and proportions from interior image from Osterly Park, Robert Adam.

Iidentifying the different charachter of distribution spaces found in the plan of Palazzina d'Salvie; corridor, gallery, hallway, central space.

Spatial sequences and organization of an apartment, investigation of the realtionship between the generouse spaces and the distribution spaces.