COEXIST
LIVING TOGETHER IN THE CITY

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In my diploma I have looked at the theme adaptability in relations to how a building adapts to the existing city, and how a building can adapt to the way we live our lives today.

As a result of population growth and changing living conditions there is no doubt that we have to reconsider the way we build and live today. We need to live closer on smaller space. In Oslo there are several leftover and remainig sites in the city structure. I have mapped some of these and choosen three sites that I wanted to look further into. The sites are all located in a historical context and surronded by apartment buildings from the 1890s. How can the buildlings adapt to their suurroundings?

In Oslo today over 50 % are living alone. People in all life situations live alone and there is a change in the way we live our lives. There are more single parents, part-time parents, elderly who live longer and people who choose to live alone. Loneliness is often mentioned as a result of living alone, but there is also an econominc issue. There are higher expenses, and one can argue that economy restricts the social life. There are several benfits of living together both social and economic. As a reaction to this, more projects with smaller units and shared areas are needed. Can architecture adapt to these changes in peoples life situations, and create a more social and inclusive everyday life?
EXAMPLES OF LEFTOVERS IN THE CITY STRUCTURE

My mapping is based on a virtual tour in google maps, looking for gaps in the city structure. Then I visited these sites by foot.

The majority of the leftover sites I have found, relate to the surrounding structures in these following ways: NEXTTO, BETWEEN and ONTOP.
MY SITES

NEXTTO  Holsts gate 4
BETWEEN  Schouskvartalet
ONTOP    Schweigaardsgate 55B
NEXTTO
Holsts gate 4
Torshov / Sagene

BETWEEN
Schouskvarteret
Grünerløkka

ONTOP
Schweigaards gate
Gamlebyen
I started looking at each of the sites and their possibilities. I wanted to respect the Directorate for Cultural Heritage wish for adaption to the surrounding architecture. Therefore I did not want to go higher than the surrounding buildings or "grow" too much out from the existing frames.
Process

DEVELOPMENT

I started to develop the inner life of the buildings. I looked at them as individuals, that did not connect with the surrounding buildings. They needed a fire escape and elevator since they had possibilities to be over three floors, hence technical regulations. My process started with drawings of “regular” apartments with traditional shared areas as kitchen and livingroom. I came to a point where I felt I made secluded homes with little connection to the other residents, which was not what I wanted. I therefore decided to collaborate with the nextdoor buildings on the sites NEXTTO and ONTOP, by connecting to their existing fire escapes. This gave me more freedom to add more open staircases, that could function as a connection and meetingpoint for the residents. In BETWEEN I achieved the same qualities by placing the fire escape outside the building volume.
At first I looked at traditional co-housing as a solution for the program, but when I looked at the references of architectural qualities I wanted to achieve, most of them where from single family homes, or the traditional dwelling. I had to ask myself what it was with these references that I liked. The answer were the semi-private areas, the small corners of the home, where you can both be part of a community and be alone. The thought of the stair as a connection and creator of the degrees of publicness, were developed.

When you enter the building you are home. In Norway one of the first things you do when you come home is to take of your shoes. Therefore you enter a common wardrobe in each of the buildings, which incurs you to take of your shoes, and walk around as you would in an “traditional” home.
Process

CONSTRUCTION / MATERIALITY

The surrounding buildings I am adapting to are bearing brick buildings with rich details towards the street facade. They are all listed since they are part of the history of Oslo's early masonry settlement. I want to follow the same language as these buildings. My buildings will also be in bearing brick. The interior bearing walls will be in brick, and the other walls in wood. The floor is concrete with wooden flooring in all rooms, besides the shared areas on the ground floor. Here there will be a more durable flooring like tiles and epoxy. The facades will be in exposed brick. I have worked with the use of brick as a continuation of the details of the surrounding buildings.
NEXTTO looks at the possibility to go into a collaboration with the nextdoor building, Holsts gate 4. Together they create a coexisting house with splitlevels, as a result of the elevated basement in Holsts gate 4. An elevator is installed in the old volume, using space former used as bedrooms. The flexible and general rooms in the old structure is transformed into dorms, and you can find smaller apartments in the new addition. Together they share different semi-private and more public areas. Playrooms, reading corners and kitchens are some of the facilities. The connector to these spaces and the splitlevels are the new staircase which is located in the new addition. In the backyard an old shed is replaced by a new one-storey building with a shared kitchen and roof garden for all the users of the backyard. The thought is that this can be rented and used for get-togethers.

Total area, new and old: 760 m²
Area, new addition: 360 m²
Floors: 4 + roofgarden
Units: 14 + guest room
The use of color is inspired by the old brick buildings around Oslo which can be seen with a rich use of colors.
EXISTING GROUND FLOOR

DEGREES OF PUBLICNESS
PRIVATE
SEMI-PRIVAT
SHARED
DEGREES OF PUBLICNESS

PRIVATE

SEMI-PRIVAT

SHARED

To see plan 4 - 5 see additional drawings
INNER LIFE
BETWEEN exist by itself when it comes to the inner life. In this building you find 5 spacious units with their own bathrooms and loggias. They share a kitchen and living room, and have semi-private areas, all connected by the central staircase which creates splitlevels, and a visual connection throughout the building.

Total area - 420 m²
Floors - 6 + rooftop garden
Units - 5
Since this building is a meeting point of the two surrounding buildings, the white details on their facades inspired the use of white bricks.
To see plan 4 - 7 see additional drawings
ONTOP collaborates with the nextdoor building. The existing staircase is transformed and thereby gives an entrance and room for an elevator in the new addition. Hence the generality of the rooms in the old structure, you will find smaller apartments in the new addition and dorms in the old structure. In the new addition there is a new staircase which creates opportunities to take short-cuts throughout the building. The staircase also creates semi-private indoor and outdoor areas for its residents.

- Total area, new and old: 650 m²
- Area, new addition: 250 m²
- Floors: 3 + roofgarden
- Units: 13 + guest room
The use of yellow exposed bricks is a direct continuation of the language and the color of the nextdoor building.
To see plan 4 - 5 see additional drawings
MODEL PHOTOS