

Practices in Research

Practice-based research conference
Booklet of abstracts

Un- disclosed

Exposing the Dirty Documents, the
Controverses and the
Confession, the Back-site of Design
Processes in Architecture

20th of May 2026

Kanal Architecture - rue de l'Ermitage, 55 - Brussels

UCL LocI Brussels - rue Wafelaerts, 47-51 - Brussels

Kanal Architecture - rue de l'Ermitage, 55 - Brussels
UCL Loci Brussels - rue Wafelaerts, 47-51 - Brussels

The abstracts in this collection are not peer-reviewed articles; they are intended solely as supporting material for the Practices in Research conference.

Front & back cover ©Michiel De Cleene

KANAL
ARCHITECTURE

KU LEUVEN

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Program

09:30 Door at Kanal Architecture rue de l'Ermitage, 55 - Brussels

10:00 Welcome introduction

"Practices In Research #07 -
Un-disclosed

10:20 Four parallel sessions

Session 1 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 1

Benoît Burquel (AgwA, ULB) - chair

The building as a model - Thomas Finch (Moralex Finch)

Not to be confused - On translation, abstraction
and interpretation - Ieva Davulyte & Jean-Marc

(Tang davulyte.tang)

Wall talks - Archiving architecture's anonymous co-
authors - Maria Espinoza & Shirley Dongwei Chen

(DoZa University of Colorado Denver)

Session 2 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 2

Matteo Robiglio (TRA Toussaint Robiglio, Politecnico di
Torino) - chair

A fireplace chronicle - Layered authorship in a
collaborative design process - Sarah Becchio-Paolo

Borghino, Davide Tommaso Ferrando & Stefano Pujatti

(ErranteArchitettura, Politecnico di Torino Libera Università di
Bolzano ElasticoFarm)

Design as sequence, competition as ritual -
Transnational back-offices in a shifting chinese
landscape - Edoardo Bruno (Politecnico di Torino)
Negotiating the ceiling in - The careful introduction
of a hanging ceiling during the negotiation phase of
a tender procedure - Saartje Arnout & Tilke Devriese
(Ugent BAS bvba)

Session 3 - Emotional labor & professionnal identity 1

Tine Segers (UAntwerpen) - chair

ACME the first year - An interim story of
experimentation, failure and reconfiguration - ACME
Being young architect - The “Young Architect” as a
professional construct : Emotional labour,
representation and identity formation in the
contemporary architectural field - Dávid Smiló
Pain - A catalyst for credibility or meaning ? - Tobias
Rabold (Technische Universität Berlin)
Nothing was built, everything was learned - Can
unbuilt work build architects ? From Academic
position to collective practice - Jakub Biernacki, Mikołaj
Cichocki, Marianna Moskal & Bartosz Teodorczyk (unnamed
collective HUB architecten Civic architects ono architectuur)

Session 4 - Emotional labor & professionnal identity 2

Christine Fontaine (UCLouvain) - chair

Stop answering in order to ask - Lost competitions as
places of productive friction - Romain Lucas & Belén
Ramos Jiménez (LOCI atelier)

The intimate gree box - A quiet witness of unspoken
artistic research as architectural practice - Viktorija
Bogdanova & Iris Andersson (Aalto Visual Communication Design)
Who builds architecture ? - Control, conflict and
compromise - Luigi Olivieri (Studio Traccia IED University)
Future archaeology - James Aston Lansbury & Lucia Concetta
Vincelli (La Sapienza Università di Roma)

12:00 Lunch Break

13:30 Four parallel sessions

Session 5 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 3

Wouter Van Acker (ULB) - chair

A continuous project altered frequently - An aesthetics
of architectural indeterminacy - Lars Fischer
(common room)

Before it is made presentable - An atlas-diary of the
unfinished - Gino Baldi & Serena Comi (Vacuum Atelier)
Manil - Fermette ohn eigenschaften -

Tomás Barberá Ramallo (Linto)

Umbauleitung - Towards safeguarding low-emission
building principles - Vincent Matzmorr (KU Leuven)

Session 6 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 4

Johannes Berry (KU Leuven) - chair

Completed ? - Undoing a design process - Sébastien
Bonnerot (Super Bueno Studio)

The lived maquette - A real-scale model serving as

an operative environment for experimentation,
negotiation and reflection - Tim Simon-Meyer, Luise Leon
Elbern & Julius Tischler (KEE Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)
My dear ones - A love letter to the unseen projects -
Lilla Árkovics

Session 7 - Emotional labor & professional identity 3

Alessandro Armando (DAR architettura, Politecnico di Torino)
- chair

Behind the scenes - Tosca, paper tablecloths and
sketchbooks - Sara Caruso
Hybrid drawing tools - Uncovering the layered
production of architectural sketches across analogue
and digital media - Sofie Devriendt (AgwA, KU Leuven)
Architecture of movement - How to design space
while defining it ? How to design open and relational
architecture ? - Hera Van Sande (JUNO architecten)

Session 8 - Controversies & Confessions 1

Juliane Greb (Büro Juliane Greb, UAntwerpen) - chair

Incompatible commissions - Desperately looking for a
common language - Pedro Duarte Bento (FAUL-Lisboa)
(Un)adapted chair - A lookout on finished authorship -
Yann Courouble & Bert Stoffels (voor·als·nog architectuur)
Re-sign - Material scavenging as a design catalyst -
Marco Zanini (Re-sign)
On vitality - Drawing on the accidental - Katrin Brünjes
(BrünjesTyrra Architekten)

15:10 Break

15:30 Four parallel sessions

Session 9 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 5

Stijn Cools (aNN0, KU Leuven) - chair

The prototype, a project within the project, between control and loss of control - 27 social housings by Atelier Rita and Vida architecture in Pantin (Paris) - Margaux Darrieus (ENSA Paris-Malaquais)

The drawing - Based on the process of building the slovenian pavilion at the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia -

Ognen Arsov & Ana Kosi (KIP Arhitekti)

Workface details - Drawing on the wall, from cave to cavity - Michiel De Cleene (Hasselt University)

Session 10 - Dirty Documents & Unspoken Aesthetics 6

Elodie Degavre (UCLouvain) - chair

Sent to back / bring to front - Layered depth in the space of design - Andreas Nonneman (KU Leuven)

Meaningful mistakes - Subtitle, descriptive text on situational overwhelm and context exposure - Luise Leon Elbern (ByAK)

Aesthetic draft - Architecture in the age of content - Technè

This is not the building we designed - Reconstruction of the cinema, Fosses-sur-villiers (Paris) - Mathieu Berteloot (HBAAT, ENSAPLille)

Session 11 - Emotional labor & professional identity 4

Tomas Ooms (Studio Tuin en Wereld, KU Leuven) - chair

The architecture of exhaustion - An auto-ethnography of systemic failure and the search for structural multi-vocality - Carmen Osten (ostenarchitecten)

The rebirth of the student council - How can we (re) organise ourselves ? - Luc van Basten Batenburg (KU Leuven)

Schödinger's cooperative - An (un-)finished architectural practice - Onur Öztürk

"You guys always buy the most expensive doors just get one that works" - Agency, space, inhabitation - Stephanie Davidson & Georg Rafailidis (Davidson Rafailidis)

Session 12 - Controversies & Confessions 2

Benoît Vandenbulcke (AgwA, ULiège)- chair

Binding together a project - The hidden role of material artefacts in establishing the trust required to build experimental work - Rachel O'Grady & Chris Upson (OGU Architects Queen's University Belfast)

Playful architecture as a way of act - Behind the scenes of a public square - Notes of a ten-year project - Louise de Froidmont (Existenzminima UCLouvain)

Negotiating heritage - Power dynamics in the transformation of a historic square in Tuscany - Emanuele Barili & Olivia Gori (ECÒL studio)

17:20 Plenary Session

Tine Segers (UAntwerpen) - moderator

Bart Hollanders (Eagles of Architecture)

Albena Yaneva (Politecnico di Torino)

Matteo Robiglio (TRA Toussaint Robiglio, Politecnico di Torino)

... to be confirmed

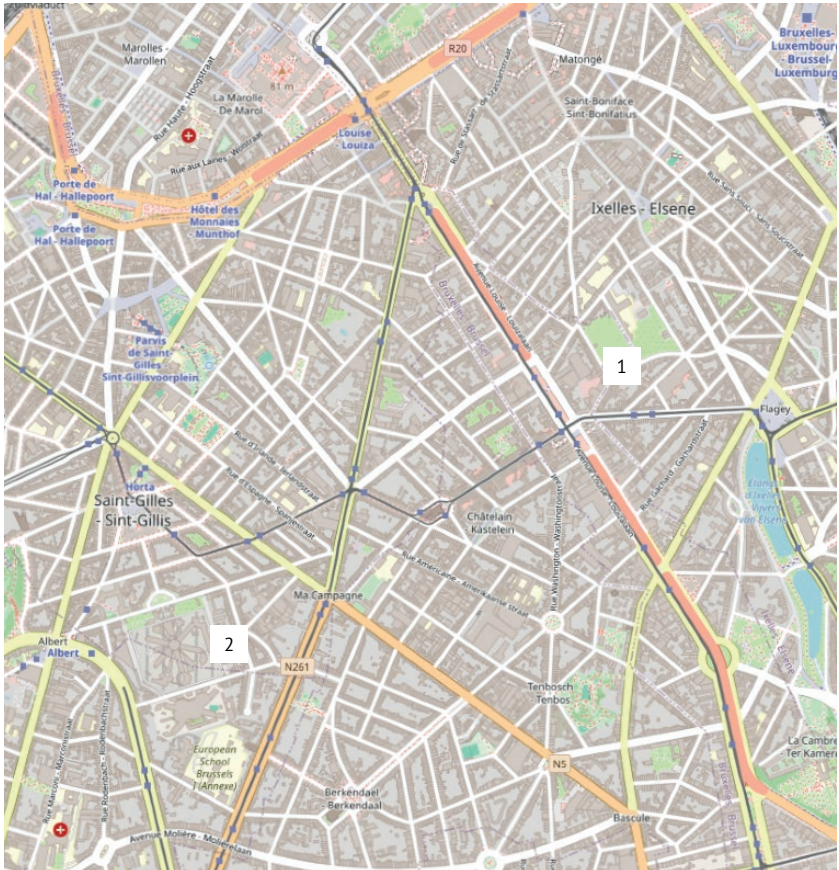
19:00 Keynote Lecture at UCL Loci Brussels

rue Wafelaerts, 47-51 - Brussels

Bart Hollanders (Eagles of Architecture)

Albena Yaneva (Politecnico di Torino)

PRACTICES IN RESEARCH #07



1
9:30 - 18:30
Conference venue - Kanal Architecture
rue de l'Ermitage, 55 - Brussels

2
19:00
Keynote lecture venue - UCL Loci Brussels
rue Wafelaerts, 47-51 - Brussels

UN-DISCLOSED

In architectural discourse, what is shared is often polished: the final render, the built result, the curated narrative. Yet behind every project lies a dense, messy, and often invisible terrain of effort, negotiation, failure, and persistence. PiR #07 – Un-Disclosed invites contributors to turn the spotlight toward this “dark side” of practice—the backstage, the back-office, the back-and-forth.

Architects, designers, researchers, and educators gather to share the unseen labour of their work: the annotated spreadsheets, the marked-up plans, the failed competitions, the internal debates, the moments of doubt and discovery. These are not just remnants—they are critical sites of learning, where practice is shaped, challenged, and redefined.

This issue seeks to uncover the undisclosed processes that rarely make it into publications or exhibitions yet form the backbone of architectural production. We are interested in the documents of struggle and negotiation: the iterations, the revisions, the test models, the internal emails, the contracts, the whispered questions of “are we still relevant?” or “is this still beautiful?”.

At the same time, **Un-Disclosed** opens space for reflection on architectural taboos and tensions: the aesthetics of failure, the politics of visibility, the ‘fashion’ cycles of design, and the emotional labour of staying having a societal impact and

surviving in a shifting professional landscape . What do we choose not to show, and why? What does this say about our values, our vulnerabilities, and our ambitions?

Contributors engage with the following themes while focusing on the representational and explorative instruments (drawings, models, sketches, spreadsheet-files, wastebasket content...) that reveal the undisclosed layers of practice:

Dirty Documents and Unspoken Aesthetics: What happens behind the scenes? How do architects document, reflect on, and learn from the messy, iterative, and often frustrating parts of their work? How do spreadsheets, notes, sketches, and internal communications become instruments of design thinking? What visual languages emerge from the unpolished, the incomplete, the unresolved?

Failed Competitions and Forgotten Projects: What can be learned from what didn't make it? How do we archive and represent these moments? How do they inform future practice? What narratives and insights emerge from projects that remain hidden in drawers or lost in digital folders? How do these shape the documents that are produced in design practices?

Emotional Labor and Professional Identity: How do architects navigate the pressure to stay relevant, fashionable even, or "hot"? What instruments and practices help them reflect on or intervene in these dynamics? How do these dynamics shape their sense of identity and influence their innovative

decisions? And how do they find their way into the drawings, models,...

Controversies and Confessions: What are the tensions, contradictions, or ethical dilemmas that remain unspoken in architectural practice? How do architects confront or conceal these issues, and what do such moments reveal about the profession's values, responsibilities, and vulnerabilities? How does this lead to the production of new drawings, models...

And, obviously how all of this contributes to intriguing architectural projects. Submissions reflect on these critical practices through concrete examples, staying close to the methods, documents, and outcomes of this work, with a clear focus on the observational, explorative and creative media nourishing the practice and informing design.

Contributions range from case studies and reflective essays to visual narratives and experimental documentation.

The editorial committee reviewed submissions based on short abstracts. The extended abstracts are here published as part of the conference proceedings (unreviewed).

After the conference, selected contributors and possibly additional guests will provide their complete contributions subjected to a double-blind peer-review, to be published in the upcoming journal issue: **Practice in Research #7 – Un-Discovered Practices**. Unreviewed contributions may also be included upon invitation, with review statuses clearly identified.

A satellite university

Politecnico di Torino

As Practices in Research continues to grow as a platform for interdisciplinary exchange, we introduce the concept of a Satellite University: a strategic partnership with an affiliated institution that plays an active and visible role in shaping both the conference and the journal. As such, the Satellite University contributes across multiple levels, including keynote participation, editorial involvement (guest editing and peer review), the organisation and chairing of sessions, and the publication of research, while also engaging its researchers and students in the event.

Conceived as both collaborative and temporal, each edition engages a different partner, fostering a rotating yet potentially lasting network of academic relationships; for this year's edition, the Satellite University is **DAD – Dipartimento Architettura & Design, Politecnico di Torino** (Turin, Italy). This initiative extends the mission of *In Practice*—an interuniversity research group uniting the Faculties of Architecture at KU Leuven, ULiège, ULB, UAntwerpen and UCLouvain—to position architectural practice at the core of research.

Through the Satellite University model, we aim to broaden this collaborative framework, welcoming new partners into an expanding European network of practice-based architectural research.

Calendar

16th of December 2025 - call for contributions
14th of February 2026 - submission of short abstracts
6th of March 2026 - notification of acceptance (conference)
24th of April 2026 - submission of extended abstracts
20th of May 2026 - conference in Belgium
9th of June 2026 - invitation for publication
7th of August 2026 - submission of full articles for peer review
25th of September 2026 - double-blind peer review available
30th of October 2026 - submission of final articles
27th of November 2026 - publication of PiR#07

Publication

After the conference, the editorial committee will select contributors to develop their extended abstract for the fourth issue of Practices in Research, the annual online open-access double-blind peer-reviewed journal for practice-based research in architecture.

The selection will be notified by the 9th of June 2025.

All complete articles need to make use of the InDesign template file available on the website of the In Practice interuniversity research group:

www.architectureinpractice.eu/pirjournal

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In Practice

In Practice is an interuniversity research group of practicing architects – and related disciplines – engaging their practice(s) at the heart of their research. In Practice explores the multiple ways in which the professional practice can be engaged in academic research and reciprocally. In Practice seeks to open a space for architecture practices in research through the development of doctoral and postdoctoral research projects, conferences, publications, and pedagogic projects.

www.architectureinpractice.eu/pirjournal

session 2
Dirty Documents &
Unspoken Aesthetics (2)

A FIREPLACE CHRONICLE

Layered Authorship in a Collaborative Design Process

Sarah Becchio-Paolo Borghino
ErranteArchitetture
Politecnico di Torino

Davide Tommaso Ferrando
Libera Università di Bolzano

Stefano Pujatti
ElasticoFarm

The paper presents an architectural experiment in which the design of a house has been framed as a curatorial project on shared authorship. The clients (an architecture critic) and his wife (a landscape designer) commissioned two architectural practices - ErranteArchitettura and ElasticoFarm - to design their future family home in Turin, Italy. No instructions on how the work should be split were intentionally given, forcing the architects to design their collaboration system. Throughout the process, decisions were shared by the studios and then discussed with the clients who, at times, assumed an active mediating role between seemingly irreconcilable proposals. The design process was documented in order to trace the negotiations that shaped it as well as to render visible the agency of external actors¹ in the definition of the house's final built form.

The contribution focuses on a single element, the fireplace, which, from the outset, operated as the spatial and symbolic hinge around which the house is organised. By reconstructing its formal evolution, from conception to construction, the paper addresses a non-linear process in which design intentions were continuously challenged.

As in Herman Melville's short story *I and My Chimney*², the fireplace constitutes the centre of the house. Its configuration, much like that of Melville's chimney, reverberates in the spaces it connects and gives access to,

¹ Most notably, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was followed by a sharp rise in the cost of building materials.

² Herman Melville, *Io e il mio camino / I and My Chimney* (Milan: Leone Editore, 2021). Originally published in the March 1856 issue of Putnam's Magazine.

which are distributed at different levels. The geometry of the cellar, entrance, living room, kitchen, pantry, guest room and corridor depends on what may be described as “the one great domineering object,”³ as does the external topography. Built in exposed reinforced concrete, the fireplace’s structure incorporates two fireboxes, an oven, shelves, and niches. On top of it, three black-painted metal flues pass through a double-height space before reaching the roof’s south-facing pitch.

Just as those who inhabit the house cannot avoid engaging with the chimney, so the efforts of the design team came to concentrate around its making. Several versions of the project unfolded during the design phase, mirroring not only the changed economic background of the project, but also the different perspectives from which the architects looked at the very same element. During construction, a divergence surfaced on the occasion of a site inspection, when ElasticoFarm raised doubts concerning the final version of the fireplace as developed by ErranteArchitettura. Following a series of discussions on site, ElasticoFarm sent ErranteArchitettura an email with drawings for a taller and more sculptural version of the fireplace. These doubts opened a new phase of formal investigations, conducted in parallel by the two offices, which eventually assumed the shape of an internal competition between two (incompatible) proposals. A solution was ultimately found by the clients, who

³ Herman Melville, *Io e il mio camino / I and My Chimney*, 30

suggested retaining the original design for the chimney while incorporating selected details that had emerged through the development of the new proposals.⁴

The media used by the design team to communicate during this phase show how individual proposals were considered, negotiated and modified before being validated. As these documents stand as evidence of the distinct approaches, methods, and ideas competing for their materialisation, the built fireplace gives a synthetic form to a layered authorship: neither *cadavre exquis* nor collective work. Reflecting the personal relation that each participant maintained with what the Latins called *Genius*, the god to whom one yields and abandons oneself,⁵ the documents of the project bear witness to a design process that was both competition-driven and shared, and not without intergenerational struggle.

In the end, from the multitude of unseen dirty documents results that at least three narratives coexist - those of the architects and that of the clients - which the paper will present side by side. Three stories about one fireplace.

Following page:

Figure 1 Sketch by ElasticoFarm: February 2021

Figure 2 Sketch by ElasticoFarm: February 2021

Figure 3 Collage by ErranteArchitettura: February 2021

Figure 4 Study model by ErranteArchitettura: February 2021

Figure 5 Plan proposal by ErranteArchitettura: February 2021

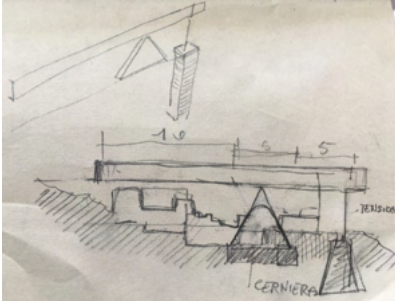
Figure 6 Permit plan by ElasticoFarm/ErranteArchitettura: December 2022

Figure 7 Study model by ErranteArchitettura: April 2023

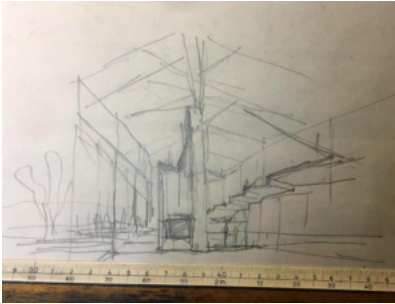
⁴The modifications to the chimney introduced at this stage, and decided by the clients with the intention of keeping the best ideas of both offices, concerned a slight increase in height - the precise dimension of which was determined by the clients on the basis of their own height - and the extension of the first step at ground-floor level to form a base for the chimney.

⁵ See Giorgio Agamben, "Genius," in *Profanazioni* (Rome: Nottetempo, 2005)

A FIREPLACE CHRONICLE



1



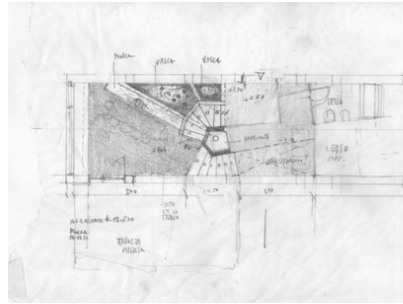
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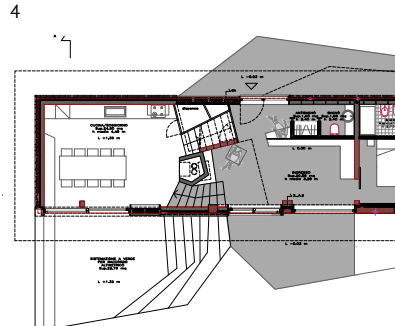
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A FIREPLACE CHRONICLE

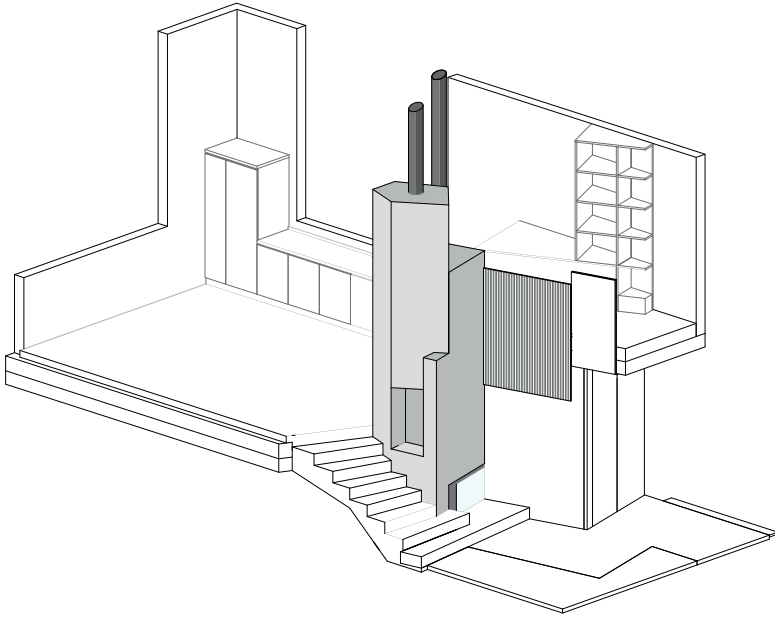


Figure 8 New proposal by ElasticoFarm: 23 February 2024



Figure 9-10 Counter-proposal by ErranteArchitettura: 26 February 2024

A FIREPLACE CHRONICLE

Da: Davide Tommaso Ferrando davidetommasoferrando@gmail.com
Oggetto: Re: CASA ONORIO, camino
Data: 27 febbraio 2024 alle ore 10:29
A: info@studioerrantearchitettura.com, Tina Damiani damiani.tina@gmail.com
Cc: ElasticoSPA info@elasticospa.com

DF

mi ero scordato di aggiungere tina nel giro di mail
rimando quanto scritto poco fa
d

On Tue, 27 Feb 2024 at 10:27, Davide Tommaso Ferrando <davidetommasoferrando@gmail.com> wrote:

Ciao a tutti,

Tina e io abbiamo ricevuto le immagini, grazie!

questa mattina abbiamo cominciato a discuterne

è evidente che si tratti di due approcci del tutto antitetici: la stele VS la stube
entrambi gli approcci sono interessanti, per quanto ci riguarda, e al momento non siamo in grado di decidere quale estetica
prediligere
ci limitiamo dunque, per prendere il tempo necessario a metabolizzare il tutto, a fare un paio di considerazioni, utili ad affinare il
progetto

è importante che la dinamica di recupero legna sia il più comoda possibile

se, nel soggiorno, si può pensare di piazzare un cestino vicino alla bocca del camino
in cucina ci sembra necessario che sotto il fuoco ci sia un buco dove infilare la legna
la nicchia laterale è bella, e siamo felici di tenerla, ma non deve essere l'unica opzione per il recupero legna

è importante che il camino in soggiorno generi attorno a sé uno spazio domestico, piacevole e intimo

su questo abbiamo le idee molto chiare: il camino è prima di tutto un luogo da abitare e poi un oggetto da guardare
per cui deve essere semplice mettergli attorno, senza ingombrare il percorso che va dal soggiorno alla scala, un paio di sedute
comode
sarebbe dunque utile poter leggere le misure in pianta, oltre che in render, per capire come può essere arredato lo spazio attorno al
fuoco

è importante che l'altezza del camino in cucina sia l'altezza giusta

forse al momento il camino Errante è ancora un po' troppo basso, e il camino Elastico è ancora un po' troppo alto
forse ripetere il salto di quota tra il primo e secondo parapetto (versione Elastico) anche tra il secondo parapetto e il camino, è la
soluzione?

qualche altro pensiero

Tina trova interessante l'idea della mensola (versione Errante), perché permette di appoggiare oggetti sopra il fuoco (soprattutto a
Natale)

Davide trova interessante l'idea della scala (versione Elastico), perché "fa salire tutta la casa", facendo fare al camino più cose
contemporaneamente

Tina e Davide trovano interessante l'idea del parapetto versione Elastico

A presto con altri aggiornamenti, un abbraccio, e grazie per questa nuova iniezione di energia progettuale!

D

Figure 11 Mail from Davide Tommaso Ferrando: 27 February 2024

Translation from italian:

Hi everyone,

Tina and I have received the images, thank you! We began discussing them this morning. It is evident that these are two completely antithetical approaches: the stele VS the stube. Both approaches are interesting to us, and at the moment, we are unable to decide which aesthetic to favor.

To take the time necessary to process everything, we will limit ourselves to a few considerations useful for refining the project:

It is important that the wood recovery process is as convenient as possible.

While a basket could be placed near the mouth of the fireplace in the living room, in the kitchen, we feel it is necessary to have a hole beneath the fire to store wood.

The lateral niche is beautiful, and we are happy to keep it, but it should not be the only option for wood recovery.

It is vital that the living room fireplace creates a domestic, pleasant, and intimate space around it. On this point, our ideas are very clear: the fireplace is first and foremost a place to live in and only then an object to look at.

It must be simple to place a couple of comfortable seats around it without obstructing the path from the living room to the stairs. Therefore, it would be useful to see the measurements in the floor plan, in addition to the renders, to understand how the space around the fire can be furnished.

It is important that the height of the fireplace in the kitchen is correct. Currently, the "Errante" fireplace seems a bit too low, while the "Elastico" fireplace seems a bit too high. Perhaps repeating the height difference between the first and second parapet (Elastico version) for the fireplace as well is the solution?

Additional Thoughts:

Tina finds the shelf idea (Errante version) interesting because it allows objects to be placed above the fire (especially at Christmas).

Davide finds the stair idea (Elastico version) interesting because it "makes the whole house rise," allowing the fireplace to perform multiple functions simultaneously.

Both Tina and Davide find the parapet in the Elastico version interesting.

See you soon with more updates. A hug, and thank you for this new injection of design energy!

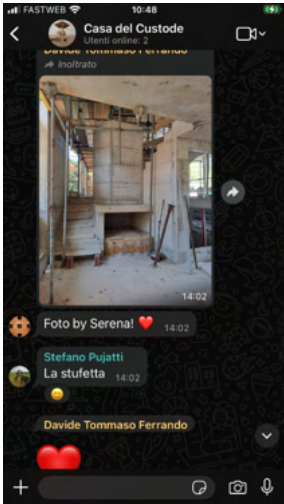


Figure 12 WhatsApp chat: 10 September 2024



Figure 13 WhatsApp chat: 22 March 2026



Figure 14 The inhabited chimney: 22 March 2026

Practices In Research
20th of May 2026
Kanal Architecture
UCL Loci Brussels

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136
153.3

EF 777

5,5 cm



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7.15.2014

156,5 + 12

156.2.4

153.6