

Why are we condemned to live in mass cages, multiplied to towers and slabs? Why should we want to live in profit-driven spaces that reduce our options in life to limited variations of the same basic floor plans? Where is our freedom?

How can we improve on this? Can architecture take on our egos and shape a future with more and more responsible options?

(w)Ego investigates the freedom of designing and building our dream home in the dense city.

(w)Ego explores the potential of desire-based design processes, prioritizing residents' wishes in the process of constructing and adapting housing and the city itself. It expands the possibilities of individual fantasy in a dense world by means of negotiation with our neighbours and the environment. In short, freedom and imagination meet responsibility and collaboration.

Ego becomes (w)Ego. Moving from fear to curiosity, rigidity to adaptability, egoism to (w)Egoism, (w)Ego explores and pushes the limits of domestic architecture, looking for new ways to live together in density.

(w)Ego is the thirteenth book in The Why Factory's Future Cities series, and follows *The Why Factor(y)*, *Visionary Cities*, *Green Dream*, *Vertical Village*, *Hong Kong Fantasies*, *City Shock*, *We Want World Wonders*, *Barba*, *Absolute Leisure*, *Copy Paste*, *PoroCity*, and *Towers of Choice*.

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The Why Factory

(w)Ego

(w)Ego

Dream Homes in Density

nai010 publishers



How can we turn every dwelling into a desirable home? *(w)Ego: Dream Homes in Density* investigates participatory processes and applies them to housing design. These processes establish a negotiation between the desires of each of the residents of a housing block and help determine the design of their units. *(w)Ego* explores these negotiations through the development of gaming processes that leverage the specific dreams of each resident and transform them into spatial requirements. This way, novel housing typologies emerge within a truly human-driven, dreamy architecture.

This book brings together research undertaken by students from The Why Factory at TU Delft and students from IIT Chicago, RMIT Melbourne and Bezalel Academy Jerusalem who collaborated with The Why Factory. This research explores the co-creation and negotiation of architecture through computational models, progressing from an experiment with social media users to reveal their dream homes, to the development of a video game through which a group of future residents negotiate their housing desires in real time, to the subsequent implementation of software to manage conflicts. Each pedagogical experiment asks: How can gaming facilitate and visualize the beauty of the individual dream within a collective context? How can we build a dream living space that can adapt with us as individuals and as a collective as time goes by?

Why? We believe that this intensity of desires, diversity and density, when applied to housing, can optimize land use, help combat social inequalities and counteract the centrifugal forces condemning urban development to urban sprawl. This book is an invitation to keep on exploring housing futures and, together, build collective processes that recognize individual needs while imagining ways in which those needs are met in new, responsive and responsible models for the production of collective spaces.

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From Me to We

Winy Maas

Part 1

Ego

What's the impact of most of us wanting to live in cookie-cutter versions of an ideal home? Imagine what our world would look like if its nearly eight billion inhabitants all lived in a detached house...

The population of the planet is projected to reach 11.2 billion by the year 2100. By that time, according to the World Economic Forum, we will need to build 2 billion new homes. This is an opportunity to reshape how the architecture of housing impacts the way we live (and vice versa) – and how it shapes the world we live in. How can we best live together in the coming 10, 50, 80 or 100 years?

This chapter investigates the impact of egoism at a planetary scale. The paradox of our current urban challenge is that although living in the city remains the best solution to diminish our impact on the environment, we all want to live a life that is not standardized. How can we solve the seemingly unsolvable conflict between freedom and density? Can architecture, via new design processes, come up with solutions that satisfy our individualistic desires while mitigating our footprint?

Landscapes of Egoism

Egoistic, selfish, private, personal... the built environment often expresses our nature in a very coercive way. All over the planet, detached houses, private driveways, gated communities, malls, SUVs, golf courses, parking lots and other everyday trappings are the physical manifestations of an egoism that has become generic. We live in a shared state of excess and saturation that verges on the absurd.

This visual essay looks at 18 cases of extreme glut and how that impacts our cities, the way we live, consume, share or privatize spaces and resources on a planetary scale. Each case sets out the statistical evidence of the environmental, social and ethical cost of egoism.

Egoism doesn't make our cities better places to live in. On the contrary, it makes cities less innovative, less accessible, more congested, more polluting – and increases fear and inequality. This collection of facts and images depict the ugly face of an impossibly egoistic world.



My Jumbo Jet

Jumbolair.
Ocala, USA

Jumbolair is a private airport for an exclusive gated community, Jumbolair Aviation Estates. With a

runway capable of accommodating a Boeing 737, Jumbolair has the longest private runway in the United States. John Travolta's estate is one of 17 ultra-luxurious properties with runway access. The house has been designed around jets, with two taxiways leading

directly to its front door. It can accommodate five airplanes. John Travolta's own, a Boeing 707, is parked in his yard.

- 222 ha community
- 17 developed estate lots with runway access
- 2 taxiways
- 2,300 × 64 m of asphalt runway
- 1,110 × 30 m grass runway
- 10.5 million USD (8.67 million

EUR) selling price of John Travolta's house



My Personal Suburbia

Palazzo Steyn, Steyn City.
Johannesburg, South Africa

Steyn City is a private residential development initiated by a South African billionaire, Douw Steyn.

The estate is two and a half times the size of Central Park in NYC, or four times the size of Monaco. It is an exclusive residential development, with a private water reservoir, private schools, and sport facilities such as a golf course, rugby field and riding stables.

Palazzo Steyn is the billionaire's personal home within his own city. The sprawling mansion is the most expensive residence in South Africa.

- 810 ha of land
- 6 billion ZAR (0.36 billion EUR) initial investment in 2015
- 5.5 billion ZAR (0.33 billion EUR) second investment in 2019
- 3,000 m2 floor area Palazzo Steyn mansion
- 2.5 ha Palazzo Steyn property

- 250 million ZAR (15.11 million EUR) value of Palazzo Steyn property
- 1 personalized city



My Dead End

Section Seven.
Las Vegas, USA

Cul-de-sacs are non-through roads with only one inlet and outlet, and usually a circular

shape at the end to facilitate the turning of cars. Since the 1950s, there has been extensive use of cul-de-sac in suburban land subdivisions, worldwide. Cul-de-sacs were supposed to increase traffic safety, but they actually rely on and encourage car

transportation. These days their selling point is a sense of privacy that adds value to a property; developers love them for their low cost compared to a grid, and how flexibly they can cram more properties onto any topography. They have dramatically negative

consequences for environmental, health and social issues.

- 10,845,867 dead-ends in the world (as mapped on OpenStreetMap)
- 5% of American commuters use public transit, 3% walk, 1% ride a bicycle; the rest drive
- Residents on gridded streets drive 26% less than residents on cul-de-sacs

Dream Homes?

What's your dream home? You've probably been building one in your mind since you were a child. How different is your dream home now? And how different is it from mine?

Dream homes are often depicted as single-family villas with a private garden. This image projects the innocence of a child's sketch, but its ubiquity is alarming. It suggests that the range of options from which we patch together our dreams of a home is limited, perhaps constrained by our lack of references, but more likely by trends, speculation and advertising. How free are our desires of what is already commonplace, or of what our neighbours dream of?

Through this experiment, we explore the potential of social media to be a liberating environment for creativity and the realization of individual desires. It focuses on Pinterest, a popular social network launched in 2010 that quickly evolved into a search engine and participatory image database. This chapter explores ways of translating generic images and data analysis into architecture. Starting with a survey of Pinterest users compiling images as reference for their dream home in their 'home feed', the research proposes a methodology for quantifying the importance of constituent parts of the dream of each 'Pinner'. Individual items are compared, assigned a weighting in the definition of the dream home, and collaged into personalized architectural visions. How different are these composite visions from the norm, and from each other?

This exercise challenges the generative power of AI and the use of personal data for targeted advertising through the medium of user-generated collages. Can we take back control of dreams aggregated by machines?

I wear?'; 'What should I like?' In short: 'How should I live, and what does that look like?'

Recently estimated to be worth 21 billion USD³, this dream bank is fed by the clicks of 450+ million monthly active users – potential consumers. From a consumerist point of view, the platform is very close to becoming a catalogue of products, but if we look at it from a collaborative point of view, it's also a tool for creation. With it, users can become designers and describe their dream home with images sourced from others. What if the real transformative potential of Pinterest is its use as a *participatory design engine*? And what can we learn from this collective mosaic of desires?

The previous figure shows 1000 images selected by the eight Pinterest users as a way of enriching their personal dream home collection. We used this set of images as a collective database to analyse the desires of these users by sorting, counting and categorizing these images, then transforming the sets into spatial propositions.

Decoding Dreams

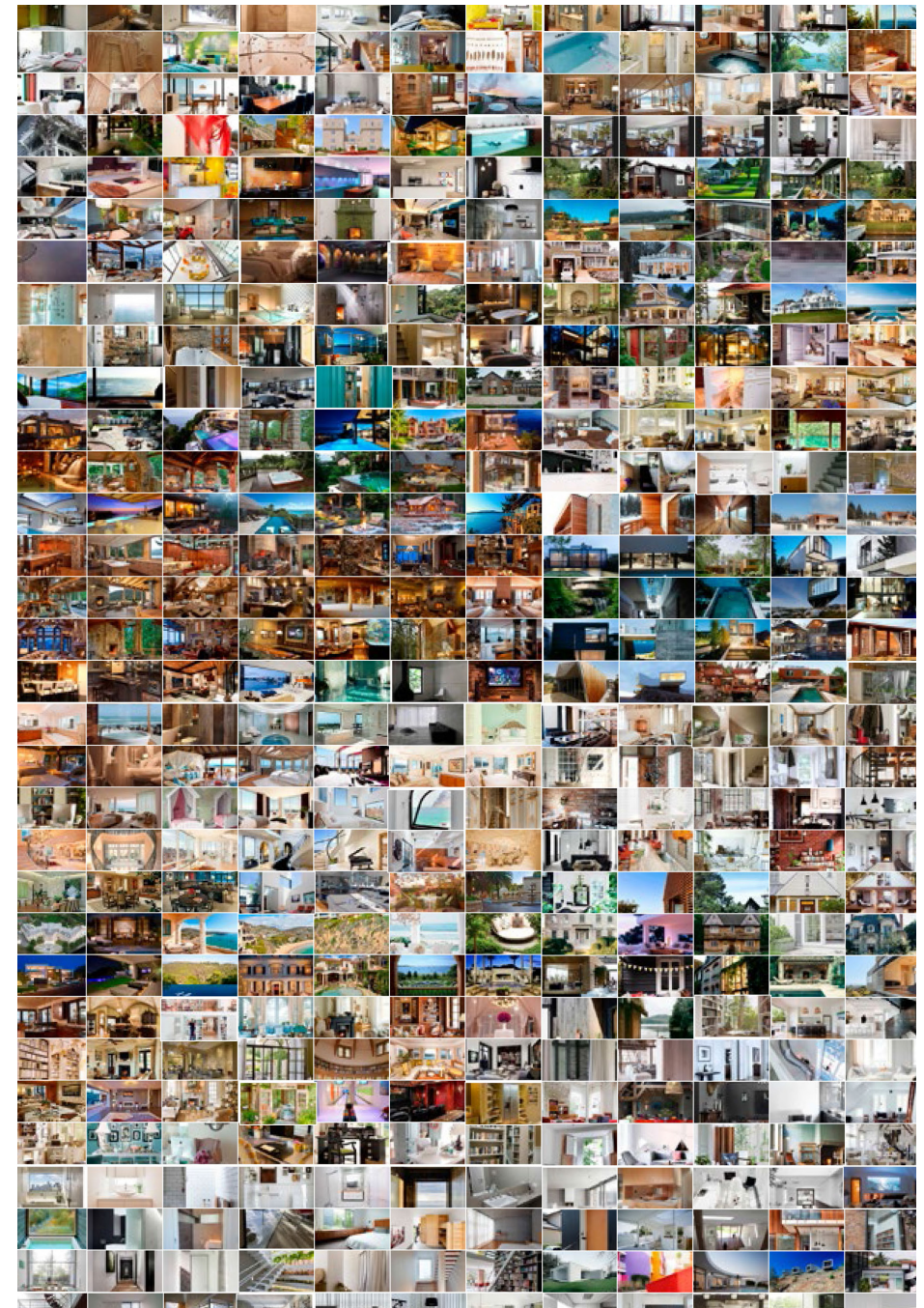
Even though our brains grasp things visually, we often use words to describe these images to others, or search for them online with a written approximation. But words are rarely enough to describe your dream home.

This experiment set out a methodology for reconstructing dream homes based on Pinterest data. To transform each dataset into an input for the design of a house, we set out to decode and sort the meaningful elements of each image according to criteria which we could then use to inform an architectural and programmatic arrangement.

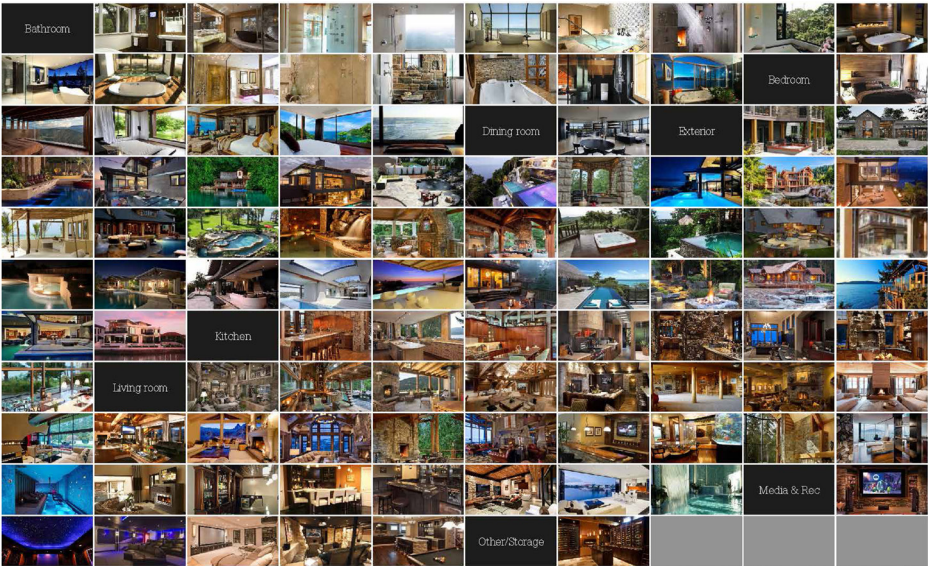
We began by tagging the 1000 images collected from Pinterest according to 56 categories, which include type of room, architectural elements that define spaces (such as a pitched roof, vault, mezzanine, columns, etc.), types of window, materials, objects and surrounding environment. This series of tags were used to create a resident profile card, compiling all the design information to generate a person's dream home.

Recent developments in machine learning and artificial intelligence mean that software is increasingly able to take on a role similar to that of the architect, translating words or other datasets, such as numbers, incomplete sets of images or metadata, into 'complete' images. What if this experiment were coded into a data-harvesting design program? For example, in the picture of a bathroom shown on page 79, a computer program developed out of this exercise would be able to automatically recognize and identify a series of elements, and extract them from the visual composition. Image recognition in computer sciences is based on a series of algorithms able to identify objects, places, and other discrete visual data, and match that with an existing database. By doing so, the script will recognize that this is a picture of a bathroom, because of other references present in the database as well as the identification of towels and a bathtub in the image. Further, a program – much like our researcher – would recognize the bathtub at the bottom left of the image and calculate its presence and the space it takes up in the composition.

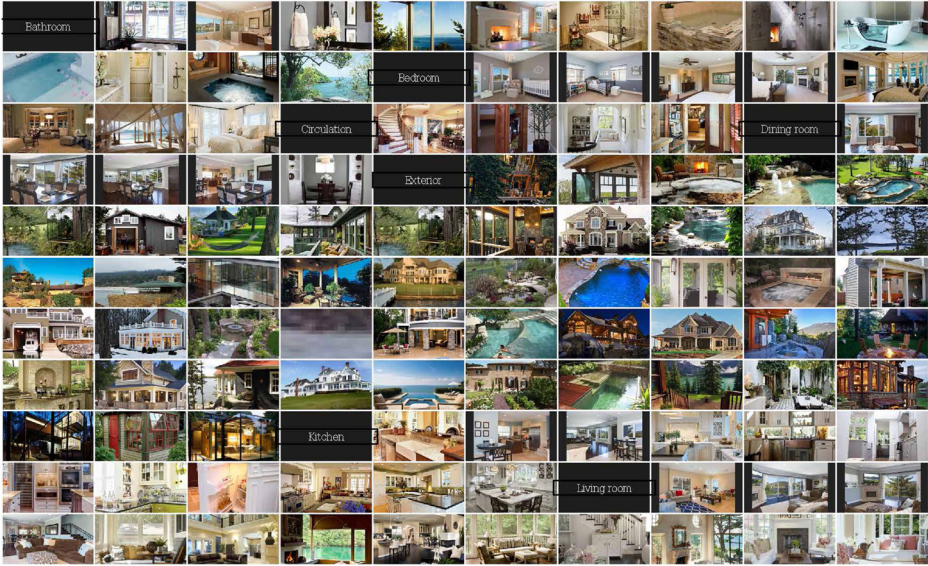
What else matters in this image? In this typical Pinterest image, what is architecture, and what just décor or clutter? And how would a program



Collective mosaic of dream home of eight Pinterest users



User C – The Attic – Dream Home Images Collection



User D – The Chalet – Dream Home Images Collection



User C – The Attic – Dream Home Blend



User D – The Chalet – Dream Home Blend

I-City

What sort of city results when everyone chooses to live by themselves? This visual essay builds on the individual desire of owning a detached house and expands it to a city of one million inhabitants.

The study begins by showing one million capsules for individuals that never interact with each other: in other words, this is the most egoistic approach to urbanism and housing. By taking users' egoism as a starting point for our research, then challenging it, this chapter speculates on what happens to the egoistic ideal when two users get close to each other. What happens next when they are connected? And when more join? How does a system of users emerge? The essay speculates on how interactions between individuals, groups and collectivities can shape the future city. When do individuals become part of a collective? When, and where, do they fight? When, and where, do they share? When does collective intelligence happen?

This chapter ends with an impossible vision of an endless three-dimensional suburb, exploring the potential of a more porous density based on both our boundaries and the bonds that bring us together.



The Unit

Sometimes I wonder how I would behave if our current society fell apart. What would happen if I had to start from scratch? Would it be completely from scratch? Like with Adam and

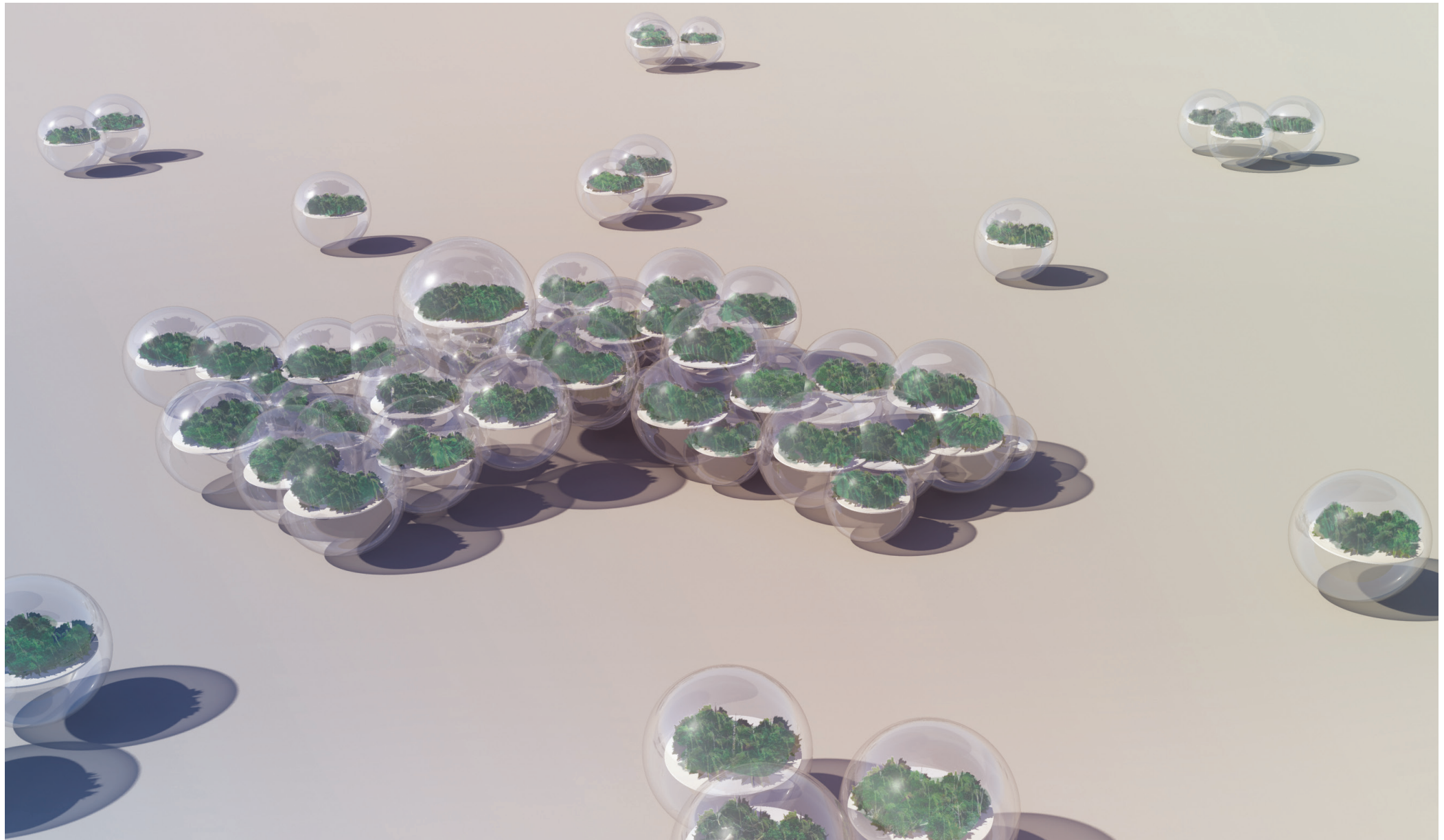
Eve? Or could I rely on some of the teachings of our civilization? Of thousands of years of development? Would my equipment still work? Could I rely on help?

If so, what would my contemporary survival package then

be? What is the minimal architecture that I need? What is the 'Existenz' Building?

I-City starts with a survival unit containing all the basic elements which are needed to survive individually. It provides a small

semi-artificial ecosystem as a safe haven in which to live, grow food and produce energy, allowing everybody to organize all their needs individually and be fully autonomous, independent from others.



Sharing Units

The Bubbles' Transportation Amenities make it possible to connect or move to another neighbourhood.

It allows you to connect with other units and share your space and amenities, whenever and wherever you want.

Part 2

(w)Ego

The history of housing presents a large and diverse collection of housing models and typologies. However, all over the globe, housing experiments remain exceptions to the norm. The standardization of housing production over the last century has led to the widespread repetition of typological solutions: from the detached and semi-detached house, to the row house, the slab, the tower or the perimeter block.

How can we halt the extrusion of generic floorplans and move away from relentless urban sprawl? Can we make space for true typological diversity in dense urban contexts? Might 'Tetris' – a game where, even though every piece must fit together seamlessly, possibilities are endless – have something to teach the design professions? Could a video game help us design more innovative housing, spatially, typologically and sociologically?

Housing Dialogues

(w)Ego is a pledge for density. It suggests that the spatial organization of housing has to be three-dimensional and that neighbours are the key for such development. But what are these shared spaces – flexible, public, social, bottom-up, top-down, incremental, reused and experimental – like in real life? What built examples of housing reveal the potential of living together in density?

In these conversations on housing, we engage with six housing experts from the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Delft University of Technology. From the Netherlands to the Global South (and back), this chapter looks at the precedents, trends, hopes, designs, developments and policies that have shaped innovative housing models across the world. Considering housing as a right and not a product, how can we make housing more affordable globally? How can architecture express diversity? What are the social and environmental impacts of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ housing on our cities? What approaches can we learn from the Global South? This discussion reflects on current and future housing urgencies, affirming a necessary optimism for the planet.

Flexibility is a very old idea

Interview with Dick van Gameren
by Javier Arpa Fernández

Javier Arpa Fernández: How far do you think The Why Factory's (w)Ego research is from reality?

Dick van Gameren: The ideas of flexibility, adaptability and customization are not new ones. How can we create dwellings adaptable to users' needs? How can everybody have a house as an expression of their own wishes and desires? How to start combining that in an urban situation? I think that, in the end, the idea of adaptability is the main issue. Can a building still change over time? This has never been really solved. There have been many projects where the internal layout was completely flexible. But in the end, they became rigid solutions. The mechanical services or installations are always the issue, especially in the Dutch context. In the Netherlands, the use of concrete structures, which allow for very little change, is widespread. Housing

construction in the UK is based on a structural frame plus drywall, which allows for some more flexibility. Housing flexibility thus depends on building cultures.

At the same time, there are many examples of people coming together with a precise idea of the house they want to build so as to suit their needs. This is the case with cooperatives. There are beautiful examples, like Thalmatt 1 in Bern (Switzerland) by the architecture collective Atelier 5, where 18 completely different units were built together as one project by a group of individuals working collaboratively.

There are many other examples, probably not as extreme as what The Why Factory proposes, but they are there. Especially during the last crisis, when the housing market ground to a halt ten years ago, the cooperative model was embraced not only by individuals, but also by municipalities. When housing corporations and

commercial developers stop building, it's time for cooperatives to take over, and that leads to really interesting projects. In any case, the reality is that cooperative housing remains kind of 'niche'. Many users are still not interested in it at all, as they are more interested in pursuing the standard than reaching the exception.

Building collective housing where each unit is entirely customized is an old ideal that has never been fully solved. It keeps being addressed, just like (w)Ego is doing.

JAF The Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Delft University of Technology is engaged with the 1M Homes Initiative⁴, aimed at pushing the construction of affordable housing in the Netherlands. What is your opinion about this initiative?

DVG Programmes to build large numbers of new housing have happened in the past many times, and with success. What should be new is to better reflect on what we are actually building. That's why (w)Ego is very interesting, since there is a tendency to focus on the total numbers (one million homes in this case), but not on variation and customization.

Over the last one hundred years, people could afford more and more personal space, but nowadays units need to be smaller and smaller so as to remain affordable. At the same time, more and more people live a more individual life, resulting in the need for dwellings for households of only one or two persons.

In this sense, it's quite a pity that many post-war housing interventions were demolished in the 90s. This was because the technical quality was not

so good anymore, but also because we all thought they were too small and nobody wanted to live there anymore. And now, the housing being built is actually smaller than the demolished post-war projects. Such mistakes should really teach us that we need to develop an approach where housing size is not fixed and where you have possibilities for change and adaptation over time.

In a certain period, often only a single type of housing is produced. In the late 2000s, for example, during the financial crisis, the production of student housing became dominant. It was built in large numbers, and is nowadays often occupied by young starters. The units are very small and can't accommodate growing families. This approach doesn't have a great future. If you build neighbourhoods lacking typological diversity, where everything is the same, they will be outdated after 20 years, as users' lives change. Residents' needs will change and they will be forced to move out.

This is now a problem in the typical Dutch suburban neighbourhoods built in the 70s. If you analyse Tanthof in Delft, the residents really like it. But there is only one typology of single-family terraced housing, which forces the elderly to move out, as they need smaller, more comfortable dwellings on one level.

This is just an example, but I think that what we should really look at now, with the 1M Homes Initiative, is not so much the quantity but where and what we want to build. If you leave housing in the hands of the market, developers will go for the average to minimize risk. They will keep building two-bedroom, 80 m² homes, increasing the endless repetition of suburban terrace houses and extending the city throughout the countryside.

As soon as the ambition of building one million homes within 10 to 12 years was announced, a debate on how we are going to do it immediately emerged. Will we build them within the existing city limits or will we keep building new Vinex-like⁵ areas on the polders? Of course, many developers are against building them within existing cities: they find this too expensive and are keen to produce new towns like Almere. Many people, especially in this faculty, are against that, and would rather build towers in the city. But only building towers is also a danger: in my opinion, building just towers with too many small units is again only proposing one kind of housing typology.

So that's why the (w)Ego experiment is interesting: can units be more customized, and especially, can they change over time? As I said before, flexibility is a very old idea, and there are many examples from the past. I don't mean it as a criticism, but let's not forget customization is an old architectural ideal. We designers keep thinking about it, but it may not necessarily be the prime goal of people looking for a place to live in the city.

JAF 600 million homes need to be built in the world to meet current demand. Do you think that Western Europe's affordable housing policies are exportable to other places, mainly to the Global South?

DVG I think the 'European approach' has a very limited role to play there. Africa, India, Bangladesh, etc., are places where I work with my team at the Global Housing research group at Delft University of Technology. There, we address the enormous need for affordable housing. We really don't talk

about customization. In a way, you're just happy if you can achieve a certain quality in the unit itself, and especially within the urban setting, because that is often where things go wrong.

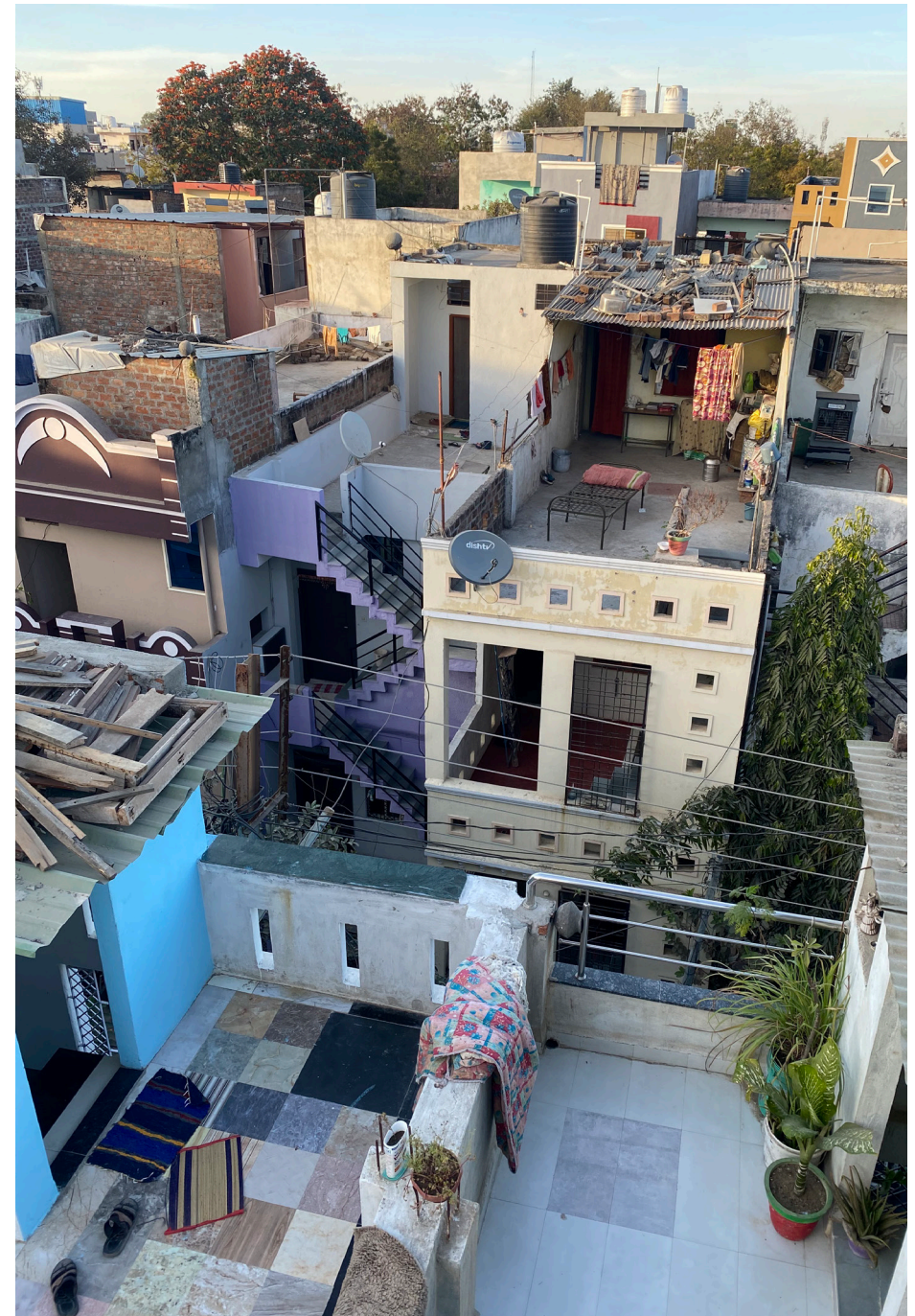
I am concerned about the failure of certain projections in those areas of the world. For example, a few years ago India planned the construction of 15 million new housing units in five years. It didn't happen. During the first year of the programme, they didn't achieve even 1 per cent of that ambition. And they will never manage to do it. Because 15 million units, even in a country as big as India, is enormous. It's not realistic; nevertheless, the need is there. If you look at Africa, you can come up with the same figures.

Another aspect of concern is how, in places like Mumbai or Dhaka, where half of the population live in informal settlements, slum replacement projects often create a kind of vertical slum condition. There, the question is once more how to create a decent living environment for people with minimal or no means at all.

JAF You just mentioned decent environments. Standards can vary enormously from the Netherlands or Austria to India or Bangladesh, although people are the same anyway. What, then, is adequate housing?

DVG Yes, that's true. Changes to standards go step by step, also here. For example, at the end of the nineteenth century, places like London or Amsterdam were slum cities. They changed gradually. But the number of inhabitants was much smaller, and there was more time to do it.

Now everything is going so much faster. That is the big problem: can we



Incremental housing Aranya, Indore, India. Designed by Balkrishna Doshi (Photo: Dick van Gameren)



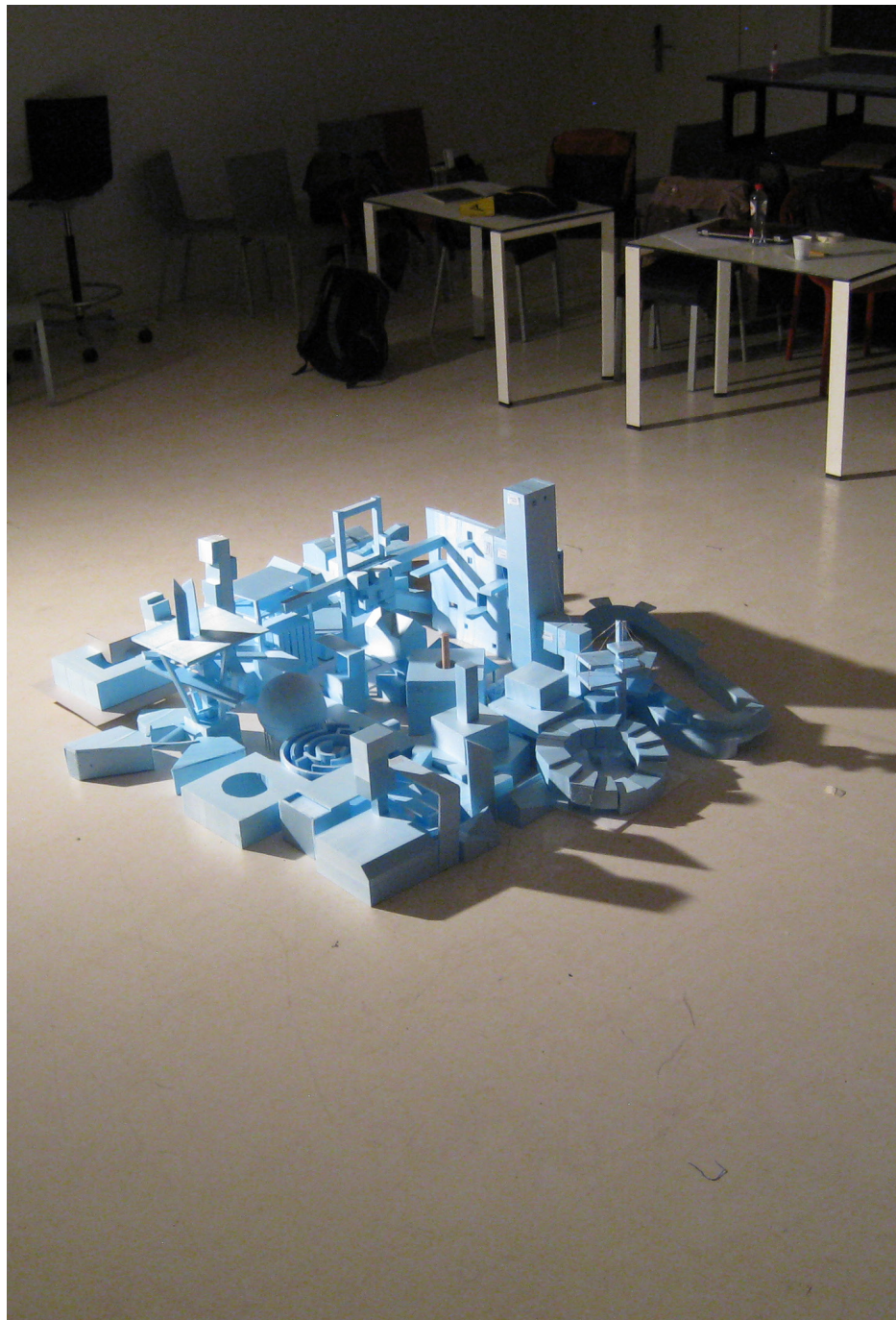
View of a street in Aranya township, Indore, India. Designed by Balkrishna Doshi (Photo: Rohan Varma)

Better Together!

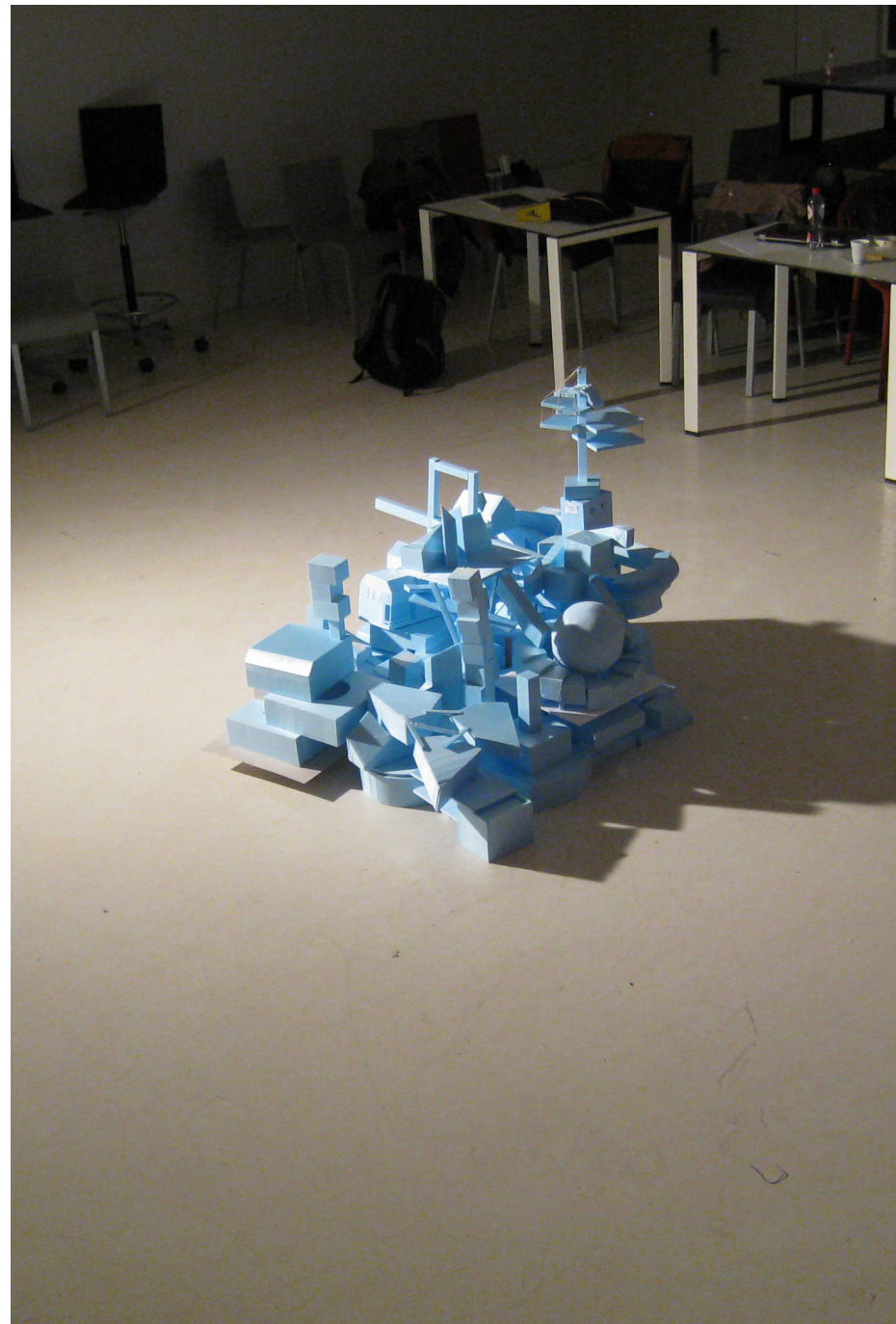
There are housing solutions for all tastes within the realm of collective housing. Yet, the pursuit of the single-family detached home, the suburban dream, has led to the production of monotonous suburban landscapes that are endlessly repeated and far from dreamy. Growing private car use and increasing air pollution, high energy consumption, loss of habitat and dwindling water supply are just a few examples of the consequences of sprawl.

Density is an alternative to this model of sprawl and its dramatic impact – exacerbating climate change, land consumption and socio-economic disparities. However, under the pressure of the housing market to maximize profit, density has often resulted in a mere maximization of housing units inside a given envelope, leading to the production of low-quality standardized housing products.

Following design research into the individualization of high-rise urbanism, this experiment explores alternative densification models that can integrate the qualities of life in a village into dense, compact, and affordable interventions. Imagine that all the villas, detached houses and any other houses of your dreams could come together to create something more than they would on their own.



But when they gradually are brought closer to each other in this model, stacked or compressed inside a smaller envelope, their uniqueness is revealed and their compatibility unlocked. How far can our dream homes be compressed, squeezed, jammed in, and interlocked with others, and still retain their essence?



We believe that densification can be a catalyser for the empowerment of individual dreams and the fulfilment of collective creativity. Living together in density doesn't necessarily mean a standardization of lifestyles.

The (w)Ego Game

There are many possible dream homes, as many as the dreams of what makes a home. But how do those dreams coexist when placed next to each other, inside a predefined envelope? The (w)Ego Game explores the process of fitting many dream homes inside a conventional urban typology in a competitive but also playful and compatible way.

What tools are needed to make multiple dreams into a built reality? Video games already offer a huge range of participatory alternative versions of the world we live in. What if a video game could offer its players increased agency over their dreams... in real life?

Students developed a video game which allows a group of users to negotiate their desires in real time and in 3D. The game offers players a toolkit enabling them to replace the architect in the design of their dream apartment, resulting in a multitude of user-based design solutions. (w)Ego then integrates the competing desires, or egos, of each resident into a standard housing block. In this game, there are no winners or losers. The aim is to facilitate an equal degree of satisfaction in the fairest possible way.

The Why Factory (TU Delft)

Tutors: Winy Maas, Felix Madrazo,
Adrien Ravon, Arend van Waart

Guest Critics: Jeroen Zuidgeest,
Ekim Tan, Huib Plomb

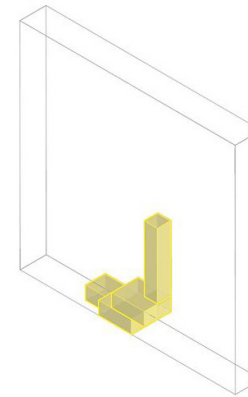
Students: Niels Baljet, Francesco
Barone, Félix Borel, Charles
Ducrisier, Lucile Dugal, Chun
Hoi Hui, Tarryn Leeferink, Zichen
Liu, Javier López-Menchero Ortiz
de Salazar, Prokop Matej, Marek
Nosek, Matteo Pavanello, Woo
Soojung, Iason Stathatos, Wen Jun
Tan, Olina Terzi, Loes Thijssen

Text by Adrien Ravon

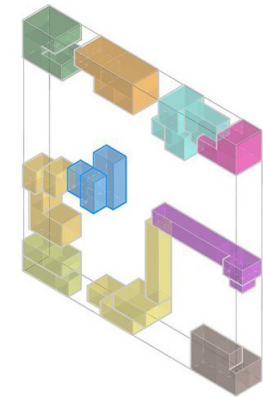
The Blind Game

The Blind Game is based on some information about your opponent that is missing. In this game, needs and desires are placed voxel by voxel, not knowing what kind of facilities your neighbours are placing next to you. This supports a fair negotiation based on co-creation, co-design, competition and collaboration without knowing the missing information.

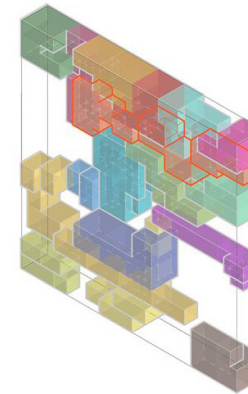
- 1 Players pick an avatar and start playing for their dream home.
- 2 Players choose a function, specify the dimensions, place voxels in the slab and freeze the desired space.
- 3 The negotiation occurs in 6 blind turns.
- 4 Players expand their house by two functions per turn. Once a player has claimed some voxels, those disappear from the usable grid, so no overlapping is possible.
- 5 During the game, player can only see what they produce (their voxelated apartment). Motivations for expansion are therefore entirely selfish.
- 6 Only once the game is over, players discover their neighbours and the configuration of their apartments in relation to others'.



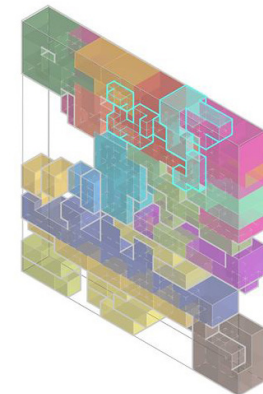
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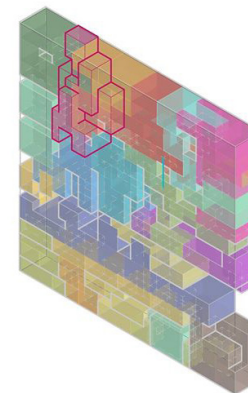
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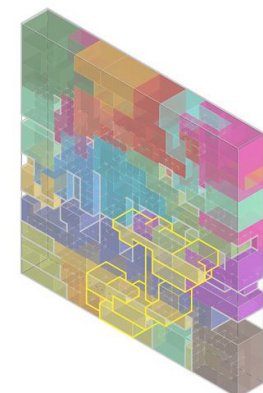
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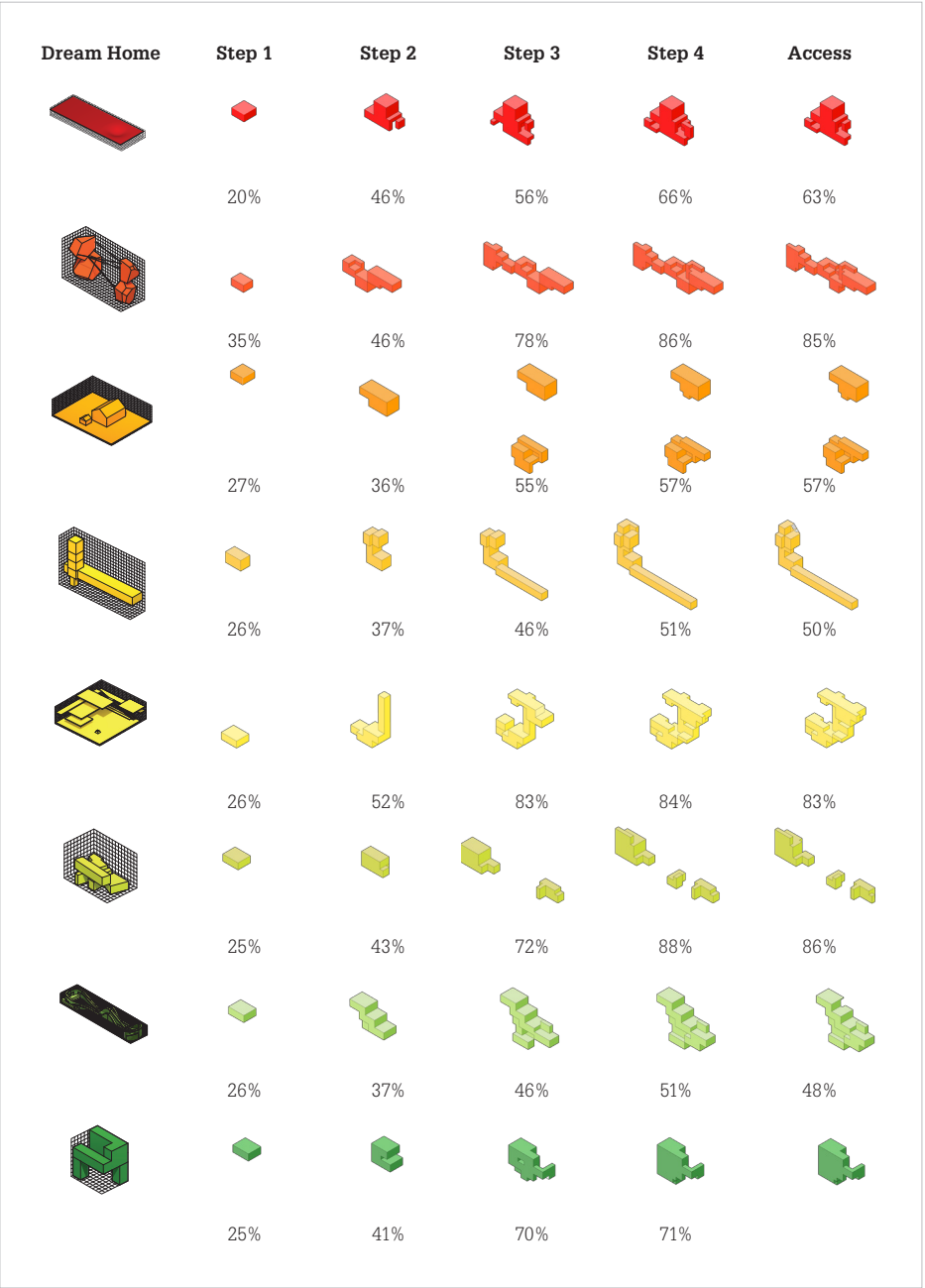


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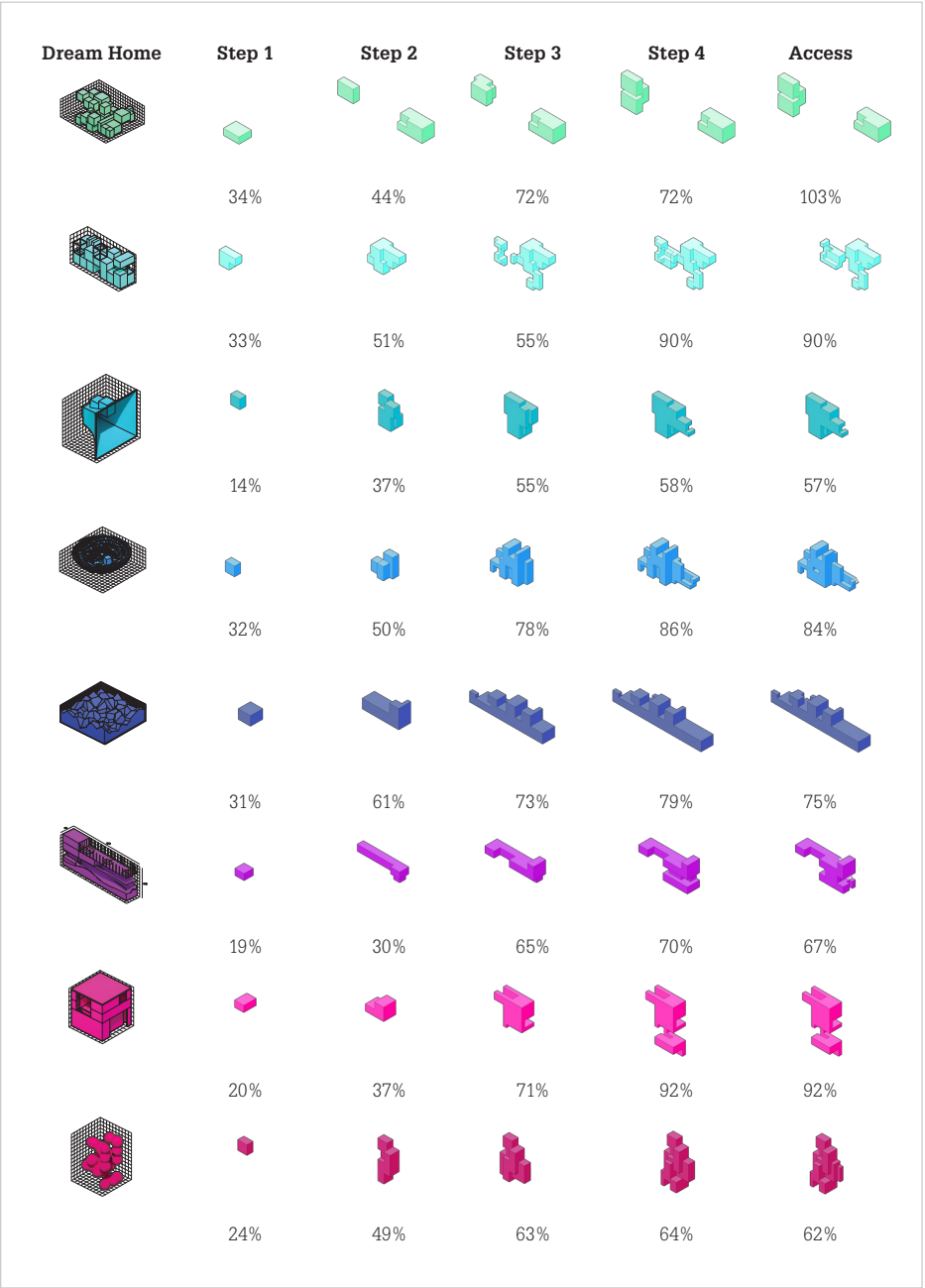
6

Blind Game Evolution



Evolution of the degree of satisfaction per user during a Blind Game session

Blind Game Evolution

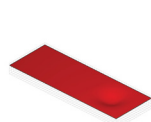


Evolution of the degree of satisfaction per user during a Blind Game session

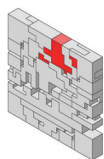
Blind Game Results

■ The Zen House

User: The Minimalist
 Home: The Zen House
 Desired activities: a giant tatami
 Area: 75 m²
 Volume: 282 m³



Dream Home Version



Resulting unit



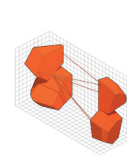
63%
 SATISFACTION

The dream of The Minimalist was to have a house with a giant flat tatami. This version keeps the same principle of organization. But instead of a flat and continuous tatami, the negotiation process led to a new topography. The multilevel tatami doubles as circulation throughout the whole apartment, connecting different functional entities. All domestic activities are placed under this blanket, while the upper part remains dedicated to meditative space. The ceiling has been usefully deformed by the negotiation process with the neighbours; in the centre of the apartment, a generous volume provides a perfect place to meditate.

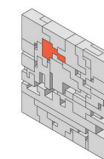
Blind Game Results

■ The Stretching House

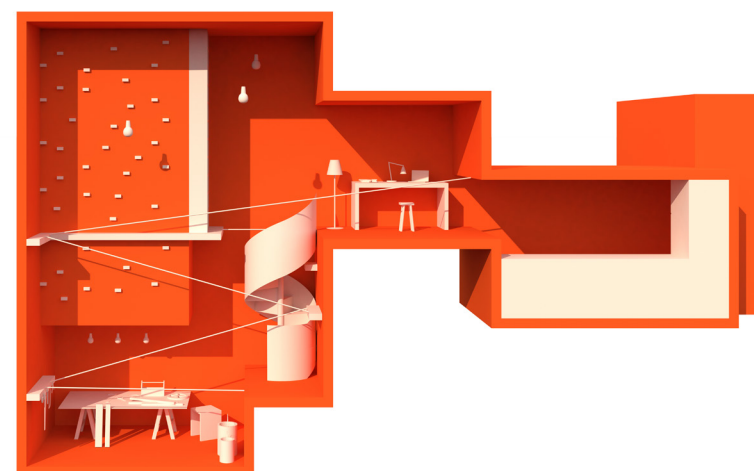
User: The Funambulist
 Home: The Stretching House
 Desired activities: Climbing and funambulism
 Area: 144 m²
 Volume: 333 m³



Dream Home Version

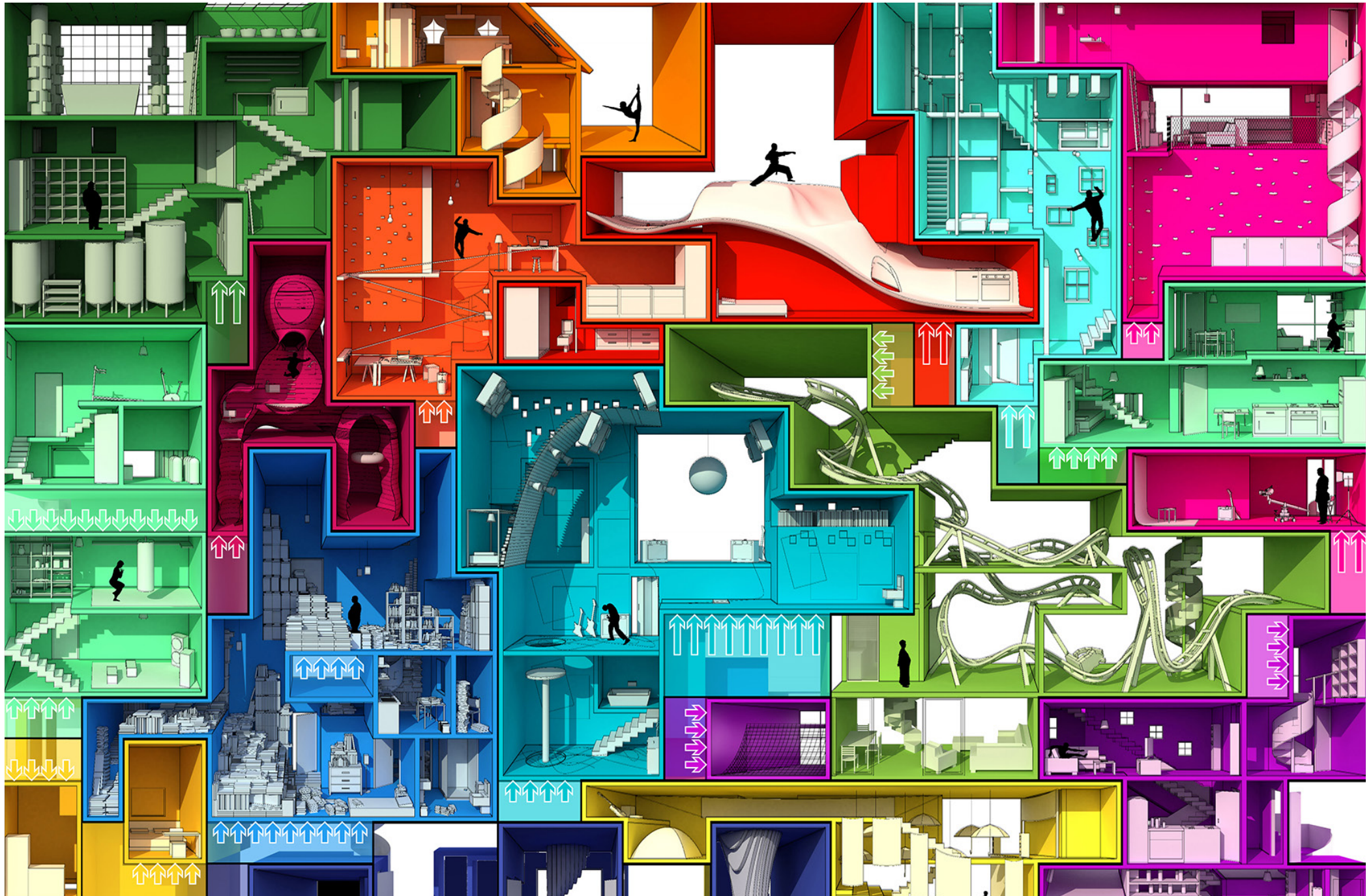


Resulting unit



85%
 SATISFACTION

The Funambulist wanted to live in a house where he can climb and walk on a tightrope. The house therefore had to stretch to provide enough length for the desired activity. He didn't need traditional circulation. In this game, he got a satisfaction level of 85 per cent. The house stretches through the slab, providing the required length for his activities. There is no traditional circulation, making the apartment inaccessible to anyone else but him. The house is not one long line but rather a multilevel space, with gaps and a corridor of different heights through which he can climb, crawl and balance.



Longitudinal section of the Blind Game result – part 1

Building (w)Ego

Every autumn, the city of Eindhoven turns into an international stage for design, hosting 350,000 visitors during Dutch Design Week. In the context of Winy Maas' ambassadorship for the 2017 edition, The Why Factory and MVRDV collaborated to bring the (w)Ego research to life on the streets of Eindhoven. For nine days, visitors were invited to climb through, sit on, lie down in and experience a 1:1 model of the (w)Ego House. The nine-metre high slab block was made up of nine unique units, each fulfilling the egoistic demand of its imagined inhabitant. When squeezed together, the collection of rooms become more than a sum of egos: they are structurally interdependent and, collectively, can offer something more to their host city.

Later that year, the (w)Ego House was built again for the Shenzhen Biennale, held in the urban village of Nantou Old Town, an event that received more than 550,000 visitors. Both iterations of this 'frozen' design experiment opened up questions about resolution, changing desires and what adaptable architecture could bring to urban settings.

This chapter reflects on (w)Ego as a performative housing prototype that invites the public to reflect on the future of collective housing: Could the (w)Ego experiment point the way to a more sustainable and equitable way of living, and to more communicative, human-centred built environments?

**(w)Ego Eindhoven**

Brought to life by thousands of visitors, the facade displays the negotiation

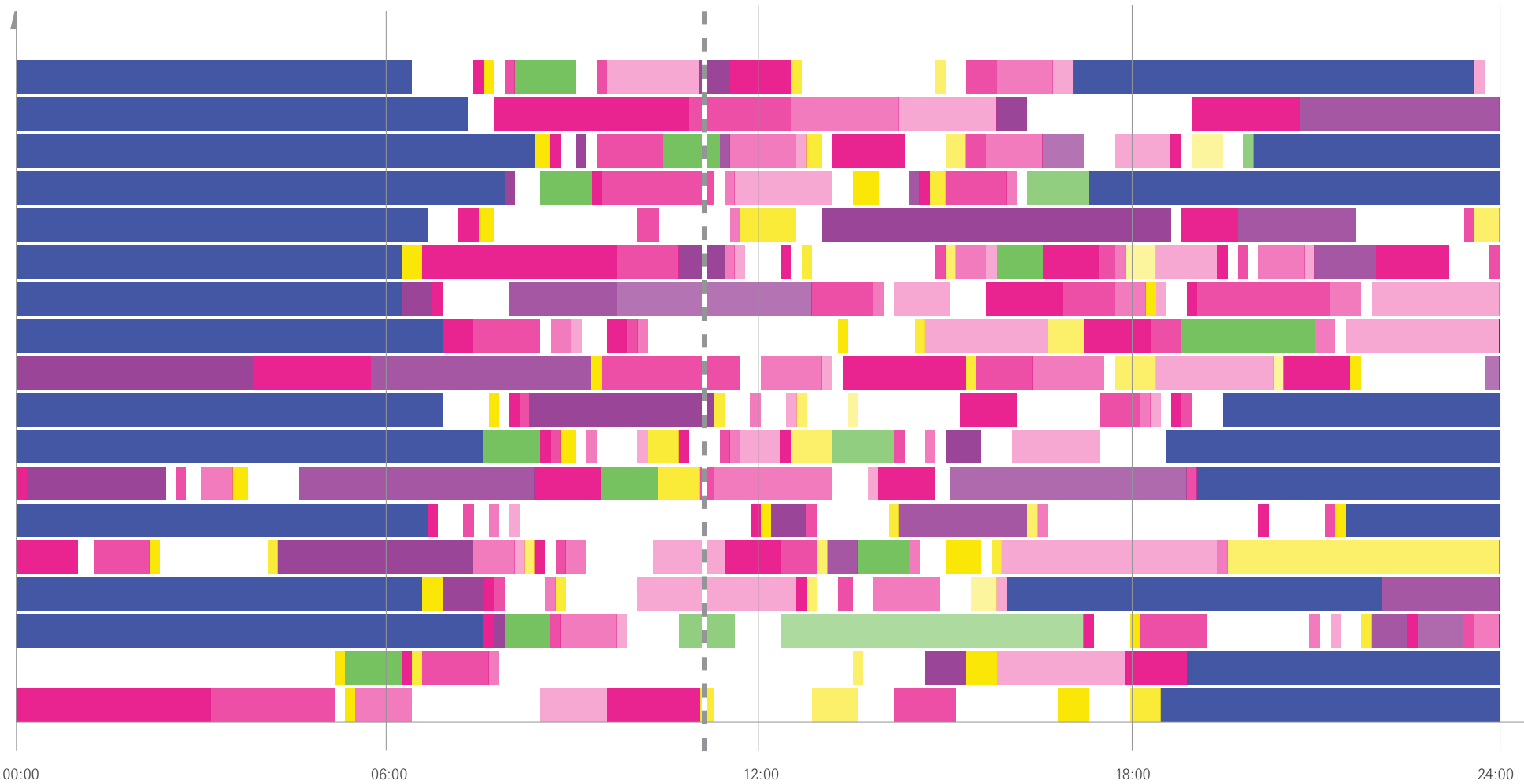
of new possibilities and new sets of questions opened up by the building of the (w)Ego slab block at 1:1.

Part 3

OntheGo

Desires are not static. The 1:1 model built in Eindhoven and Shenzhen represented one frozen version of this dynamic puzzle. But as we grow up and get older, our housing needs and desires change. Over a lifespan, the size and make-up of homes and households evolve. Based on a recent US census, the average American moves home 11 times in their life¹⁰. Even in one day, the needs and desires that make up our ideal dwelling vary drastically. During the day, most homes are vacant. While we sleep, bedrooms are generally the only space in use. And when we are throwing a party with a large number of guests, we often dream of pushing out the walls to make more space.

What if we could? As what we need from our homes changes and evolves over time, could these grow, move, shrink, reconfigure and adapt to different situations? What materials and technology could allow for such flexibility? How can we design walls that move to suit us? How would it feel to live in a home in which the layout is being constantly reconfigured? Could buildings change as fast as we do? How might adaptability make our cities less vacant? Building on visions or experiments such as Cedric Price's Fun Palace or the Schröder House in Utrecht by Gerrit Rietveld, this chapter explores the expanded and real-world potential of housing adaptability.



Users schedule generated timetables

sleeping

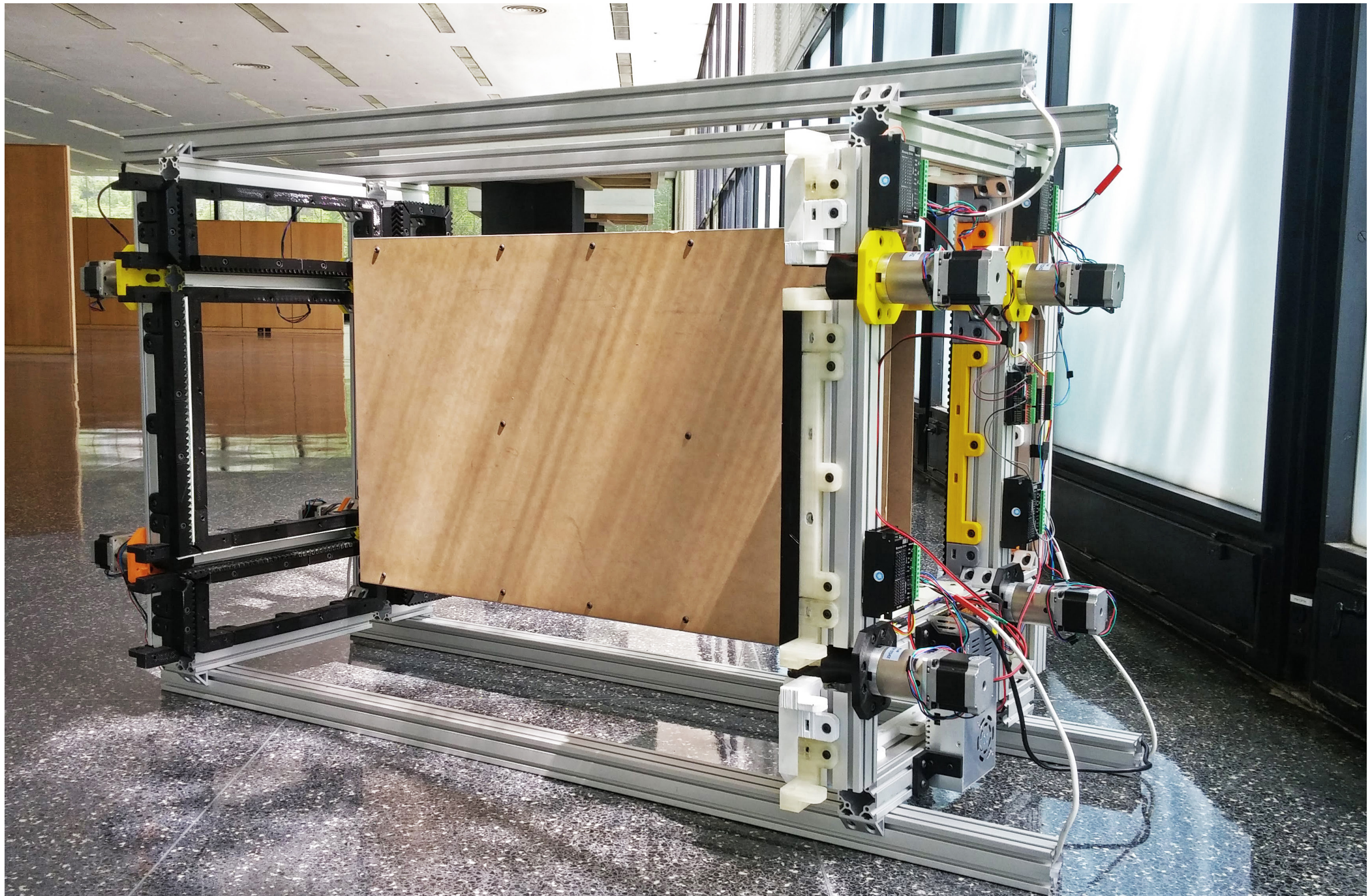
work/study

leisure

food

care

out



Prototype 3, scale 1:1, Crown Hall, IIT, Chicago, USA

Where do (w)Ego Next?

Winy Maas