

**Berlin Kunstindustrie: project of a new creative building**

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Berlin, better than other contemporary metropolis, brings together contradictions of history, exalting and setting against each part. Urban fragmentation is a characteristic that starts from its foundation and comes nowadays amplified by recent events. This has allowed to maintain a freedom of choice between the poles that have developed a specific and uncompromising way. Every reality differs from others while retaining a mixture of elements within it. It is a metropolis made up of independent but heterogeneous entities.

Unlike other world capitals, Berlin has managed his problems as a point of visibility, attracting people from around the world in search of an experience that only a city "*Arm aber Sexy*" (poor but sexy, slogan coined by Mayor Klaus Wowereit) can give. Since the alternative movements born in the *Kreuzberg* of the sixties and then spread throughout the East after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the city has seen a widening of occupations and redevelopment projects from the bottom. From these situations it has developed what is now called creative class.

The image of the metropolis is given, not by the leader classes or by his institutional role, such as other capitals, see Paris and London, but by his creative lifestyle and "*billig*", cheap with a slightly negative meaning.

At the urban level, the project come to the definition of a creative network that connects the different realities and push the collaborations between artists and studios. Of role is taken by the existing infrastructure, alongside the system of water, establish physical connections between the creative polarities.



View from the street

At the architectural scale, the building can be seen as an example of development as "infrastructure" for the creative class.

The project is based on the principles already used for the fourth unit Big Space Low Budget, made during a period of study at the *Technische Universität Berlin* with Professor Finn Geipel. This experiment was adapted first to the social economic realities of Berlin and secondarily to a specific site. The functional program is based on flexibility to accommodate housing and working space in order to support a new microcommunity of artists.

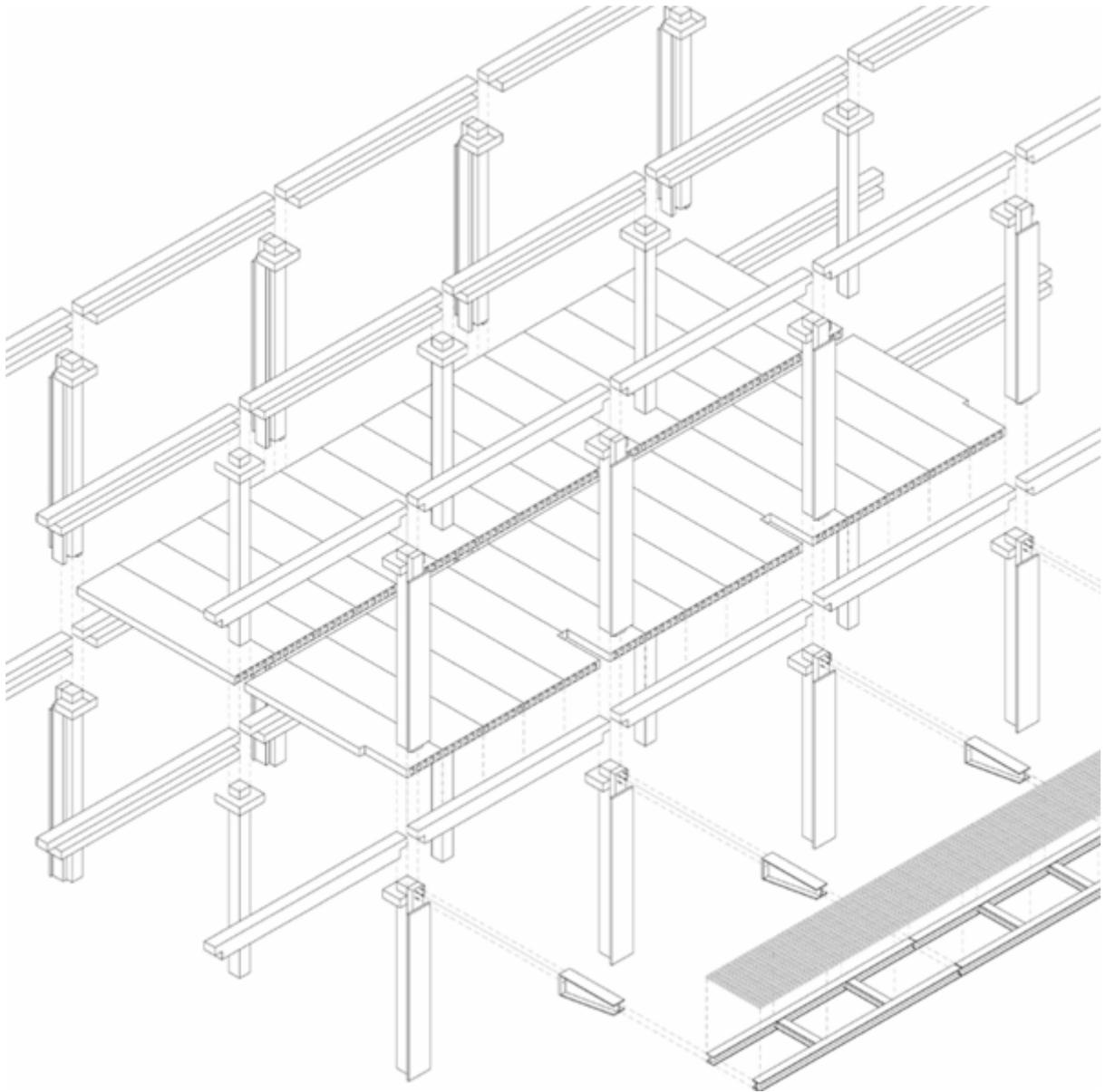
The building consists in a revisiting of the typical patio structure. Paths are connected with half-private terraces in order to establish a smooth transition between private and public space.



Views of the building

Inside space is developed with two types of 55 sq.m. and 110 sq.m. expandable thanks to the inside height of 4.5 meters. The internal facilities are a prefabricated unit block "bathroom-kitchen" exploitable as the basis for a mezzanine, and a steel staircase on wheels. This element allows to use the mezzanine, even expanded, as well to be used as a working tool.

Important was the research on technological and structural solutions, aiming a low-cost of the system and speed of construction. This has led to define a prefabricated building method that allows to obtain lower costs and maximum flexibility of space.



Prefabricated structure

The definition of a specific case study was an opportunity to investigate many aspects that characterize a flexible building. The project doesn't want to be a unique case but returning again to the idea of initial prototype. The ending proposals are four different situations with specific interests where the building type can join the context, leading to new adaptations and solutions.

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