

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Architecture
Honors theses

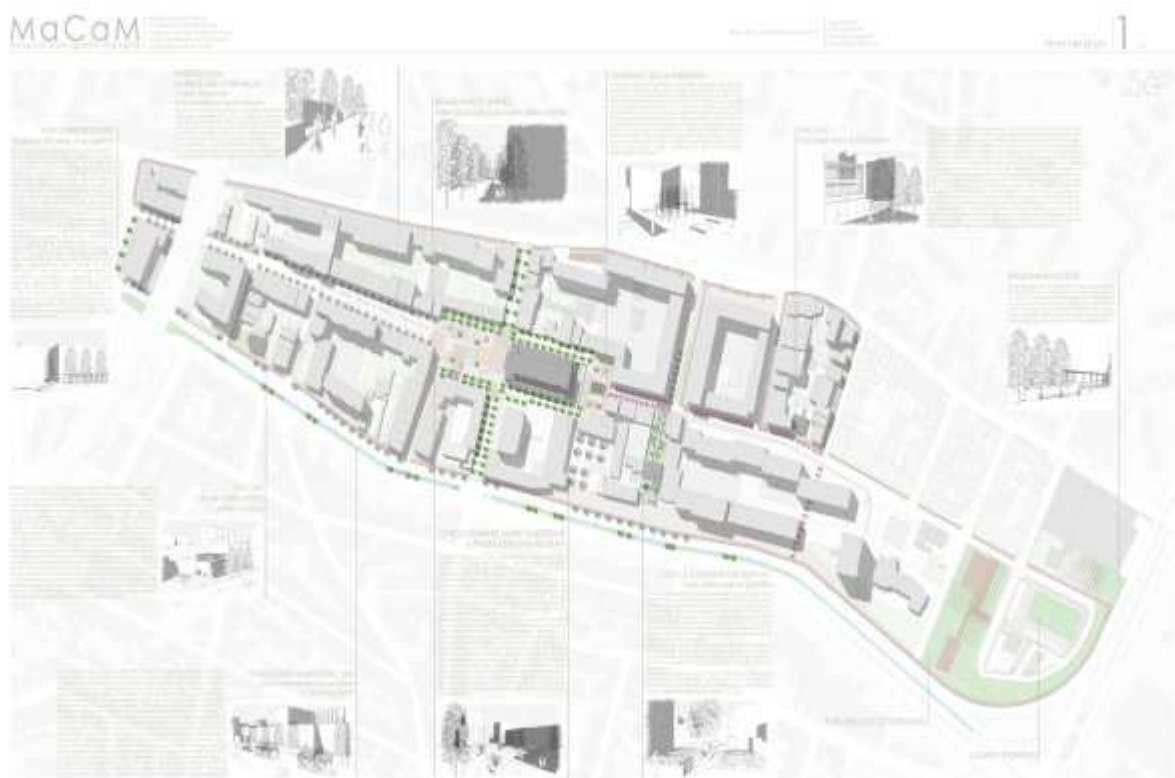
**The Carthusian desert in the city today: the Chartreux district in Marseille
Analysis of the urban layout, on the trail of the boundaries of the old monastery,
project processing targeted to improve the cultural values of this district**

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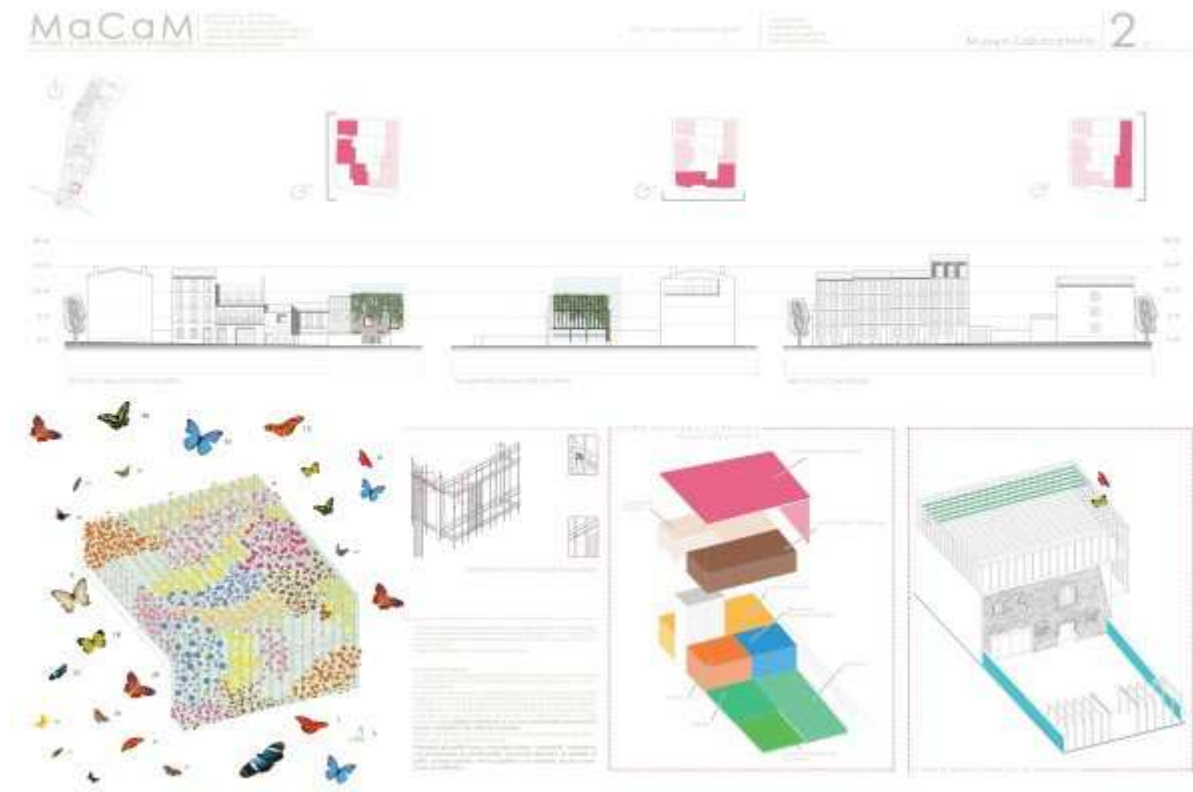
The main objective is analysing the urban layout of an area within the IV arrondissement in Marseille, the Chartreux district of which the name refers to the presence of a charterhouse within the territory of the Carthusian Order since 1633, although, as of today, many toponyms are present, there is no record of it. The aim was to tracking down the old monastery's boundaries in order to elaborate a project targeted to improve the cultural values of this district. Further to an historical analysis of the Carthusian Rule and review of some examples of charterhouses, either in Italy and in Provence, as to comparing the plants and the links among several houses built by the Order century after century, we have evaluated the concepts of the Carthusian cell into the contemporary modern architecture. Each single unit is the retreat , where, deeply immersed in his seclusion, the Carthusian monk led a sheltered life based on praying and hardworking. Since the first years after the second world war, the autonomous and infinitely reproducible concept of cell was processed in extreme projects that have brought to life the design of portable habitats and a sort of shell in which each individual is completely withdrawn and protected. The second part of this analysis introduces the description of the setting up process of the first residential living unit up to the creation of today's metropolis, through the widespread urbanization without an adequate city monitoring plan. The distinctive feature of the city, particularly in its historical centre, is the collocation of different urban contexts as often in opposition expressions of different styles that have been abutting onto one each other.

Chartreux was located beyond the surrounding walls of the city for centuries, tucked away in a countryside territory, gradually taken by the new constructions layout and then totally encompassed between the 19th and 20th century. These transformations, initially linked to the difficult process of development of the Carthusian monastery, but then abruptly stopped by the outbreak of the French Revolution, were analysed by us as starting point of our third part of this work, as part of the presentation of the city of Marseille as of today, its territorial context, new transformations and the current city planning projects. As follows, we completed the analysis of this site, its urban blight affecting its front lines on the spotlight, as well as the Church, currently named Parroisse Sainte Marie Madeleine.



The requalification project is visible within a well defined area that was once part of the monastery's cloiture and is targeted to improve the cultural values of the district through this site's rediscovery and redevelopment in consideration of its identity, nature and the historical and social matrix which has promoted this site. Thus the MaCaM, a real open-work museum that encloses the historical territory's testimony was created. We outlined the stages and the pathways through which this location's history with its different historical stratifications can be understood and acknowledged with personal educational laboratory experiences, cultural and art's events.

On visiting the MaCaM, if there's a relevant role of the supportive guidance pathways, nevertheless on approaching the exposition rooms are not as less important.



The weak point of this area is a lack of public meeting points, extensive green spaces that may put a brake on the social and local community lifestyle of the inhabitants. This intervention is currently foreseeing the project of meeting point spaces targeted to prompt to spending more time outdoors, well-living and being familiar with the local urban elements enclosed in it.



On carrying on the thread of the museum's metaphor, the public spaces may become then real ready for looking into, touching and actively living "complete works". The MaCaM is the cultural expression of this territory; this aspect contributes to reinforce the social identity and development of the local community and at the same time represents an economic opportunity as to working out as a cultural advancement factor as well as creating new urban, touristic and economic dynamics.

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