



BASIC IDEA

A female boarding school built by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity next to their main convent was converted to a residence for 131 people who are far from home. The building was renovated and a staircase extended. The facade, which looked like a military barrack was opened up with more windows and balconies added. That was to lighten up the original strict character. With regard to the external appearance, the residential function should be readable as such. Under no circumstances should it give the impression of an „emergency shelter“. To get the most from the building budget, the architects spoke with companies about cost effective products. The final surfaces were not based on principal design wishes. Communication and interaction between involved parties relating to available building materials led



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COLLECTIVELY TOGETHER

The building costs were covered by a loan from the convent and should be payed back over a period of 25 years by renting out the residence to the County of Tirol.

The furniture was organised by the architects using local sponsorship. It was designed, so that local carpenters could make „Ikea“ kits for „do it yourself“ assembly by volunteers. After announcements in the media and churches we deployed, during one weekend, more than 200 volunteer helpers on the building site. Spanning all social classes and ages, people carried, built, drilled, screwed and cleaned enthusiastically. Through the giving of time and manpower the HERberge got its last, useable and emotional components. This unique act in the building process makes the HERberge a wonderful example of social interaction.

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COMMUNAL AREAS

On 5 floors live communities of 25-27 people. Each community shares kitchen and sanitary rooms. The heart of each floor is the livingroom. The original layout of the building defined the room sizes. On principal the rooms are for 3 people. Should a family unit be bigger, the neighbouring room can be combined. In the new part of the building there are 4 people rooms with balconies. The old corridors with long parallel walls were expressing the original character of a strict institution. In the middle of the corridors the walls were softened with plastic glazing and sliding doors. The quality of the community living is based on the diversity of the communal rooms

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LUXURY HERberge

From the large number of volunteers, who were working together during the one weekend, a circle of „Friends of the HERberge“ developed. Consequently the 131 refugees are getting support in their daily life from these almost 80 volunteers.

The HERberge is sometimes called „Luxury HERberge“. As long as the principle of not populating the building with too many people is kept, thus maintaining the quality of community and interaction. The sisters are proud to identify themselves with HERberge. The luxury of the HERberge does not exist in material terms. It is, compared to other refugee centers, an architecturally optimized quality, to create, with less financial resources, a basis for a harmoniously community of

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