

The Museum of Modern Art

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11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

ITALY: THE NEW DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE

Design as Postulation

Director: Emilio Ambasz

Mobile Environment

May 26, 1972 - September 11, 1972

Designer: Studio Zanuso, Marco Zanuso and Richard Sapper

Patron: ANIC, FIAT

Producer: FIAT, Rio, Kartell, with the participation of Boffi, Ideal Standard

When confronted with the problem posed by the Museum, Zanuso-Sapper rather than design the "Newest Solution" decided rather to use existing components of our industrial society, recycling this time not "bidons" as in a "bidonvilles," but rather the larger containers which are used for transatlantic freight.

The two long walls of the container are in part hinged and may be folded down to form terraces. Two large plastic capsules, one containing the bed, the other the kitchen, slide out from the interior of the capsule onto the terraces during normal use. Two further plastic capsules in the interior contain respectively toilet and wardrobe. This solution not only answers the requirements of a mobile home -- since with a big enough stamp it should be possible to mail it from door to door-- but the redesigned container can be seen as a component element of a housing scheme, since they could be stacked one on top of another, or arranged along the contours of the land.

Material: steel skeleton and fiber-reinforced plastic panels;
plastic capsules

Color: white (container)
yellow (capsules)

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Preliminary Design Concept for a Mobile Environment

The project aims at treating the topic of a mobile environment on another scale than that of a trailer or camper in order to be able to deal with the following problems:

1. emergency housing, which means environments to be used not for weeks but perhaps for a year. This calls for more space and less provisory appliances than provided by a camper type solution.
2. rapid and massive relief action in cases of calamities avoiding the delays connected with the acquisition of territory and obtaining construction permits, unavoidable in all systems of permanent construction;
3. physical and ecological hazards of road traffic by using the possibilities of integrated transport which the container concept offers;
4. the semipermanent second residence.

Conditioned by this destination, special emphasis is placed on low costs of construction and operation.

The project is based on a housing unit which is mobile, expandable and aggregable. Mobility is obtained by designing the unit so that in closed position its measures and structural specifications correspond to those of a standard freight container, which permits the unit to be transported in

Expandibility is obtained by dividing the unit's structure into two categories:

- 1) a chassis structure, built with partly modified standard steel and alloy container components, equipped with wing-doors and thermoisolating skin;
- 2) a series of independent internal modules each of which corresponds to a domestic function. These modules are contained within the chassis structure during transport. On destination, some of them penetrate the perimeter of the structure through the wing openings thus expanding living space.

Aggregability is obtained by the possibility of combining the unit with another container element, which may be equipped with similar internal modules according to necessities, thus enlarging the original capacity which is calculated for a couple to the requirements of a family with children.

Evidently the concept of aggregability may be developed for containing such communal services as school, hospital, church, or by the forming of macrostructures.

The development of interior space in the unit is defined by a dialogue between

(over)

the desire to create a room as large as possible, permitting to walk and to move without being hindered by obstacles, which means -- given the dimensional restrictions -- to create an open space, -- and the need for privacy, of being not disturbed, left alone.

This dialogue will be developed in the project by dividing the unit in various areas not rigidly by walls or doors, but through a different treatment of forms, materials, dimensions and equipment integration as common or private; substantially a dialogue between the central space limited by the rectangular structure of the container and the periferical, intimate, smaller spaces formed by the expandible alcove modules.

Following areas can be distinguished: food preparation and dining (common), living (common), work and study (private), relax and sleeping (private-common), bathroom (private).

During the development of these differentiated areas, the relations between objects and behavior will be the guideline to design.

Actually this project is sponsored by FIAT for the chassis structure and by ANIC for internal modules, furnishings, and equipment.