

Press information

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Degelo Architekten, Basel

Making it their own

More than thirty artists have moved into the live-in studio house on Basel's Erlenmatt-Ost site and individually furnished their new homes.

The live-in studio house by Degelo Architekten, which lies on the Erlenmatt-Ost site in the Swiss city of Basel, has been completed and is now occupied by the residents. This new build is characterised, among other things, by the fact that the floor plans are individually adaptable and the studios initially come unfurnished. The residents had blank spaces with high ceilings and unrendered walls to work with; even the sanitation units fitted with the necessary kitchen and bathroom elements could be placed wherever desired. Since then, everyone has moved in and fitted out their new home. The studios have turned out as fundamentally different as the people living within them: the spectrum ranges from the subdivided, cosy family apartment to the busy workshop, all the way to the generous loft. As a result of the flexible floor plans and the minimal finishing the rents are also very affordable. But the main advantage lay in the fact that the residents had the greatest possible freedom to appropriate the formerly unfamiliar spaces and make them their own.

As a rule, the rooms we move into when we take up residence in a new rental apartment are initially unfamiliar. We can only make them our home by individualising them with furniture and by perhaps hanging some pictures on the walls. Those who are fortunate enough to be able to build their own homes can realise their dreams and ideas. But often enough external influences, limited means and the long time until the date has come to move in lead to some of the initial euphoria fading away. Often enough the dream becomes a nightmare.

The concept behind the live-in studio house goes something like this: how about not being a private client, but still being offered the possibility to do so much more than just hang some pictures on the walls? If one can also determine where this wall should be, if it is made from wood or plaster - or is a wall even necessary? Or how about moving in first, getting a feel for things and then perhaps realising that the good old wardrobe makes for the best room divider setting the sleeping area apart from the rest of the studio?

These possibilities were given to the residents of the live-in studio house on the Erlenmatt-Ost site. They are members of the cooperative society *Coopérative d'Ateliers*, and therefore joint owners of the house, but at the same time renters with an unlimited right to residence. After the first phase of getting acquainted with, and fitting out of the spaces, the members of the cooperative have also become residents of the 17 live-in studios since March 2019. "It is fascinating, how diverse and imaginative the furnishings have become. The enthusiasm with which the residents have made their homes and appropriated the spaces is something that impresses me every time I come for a visit" says Heinrich Degelo, the architect behind the project.