STAY A

Atelier Camponovo Baumgartner
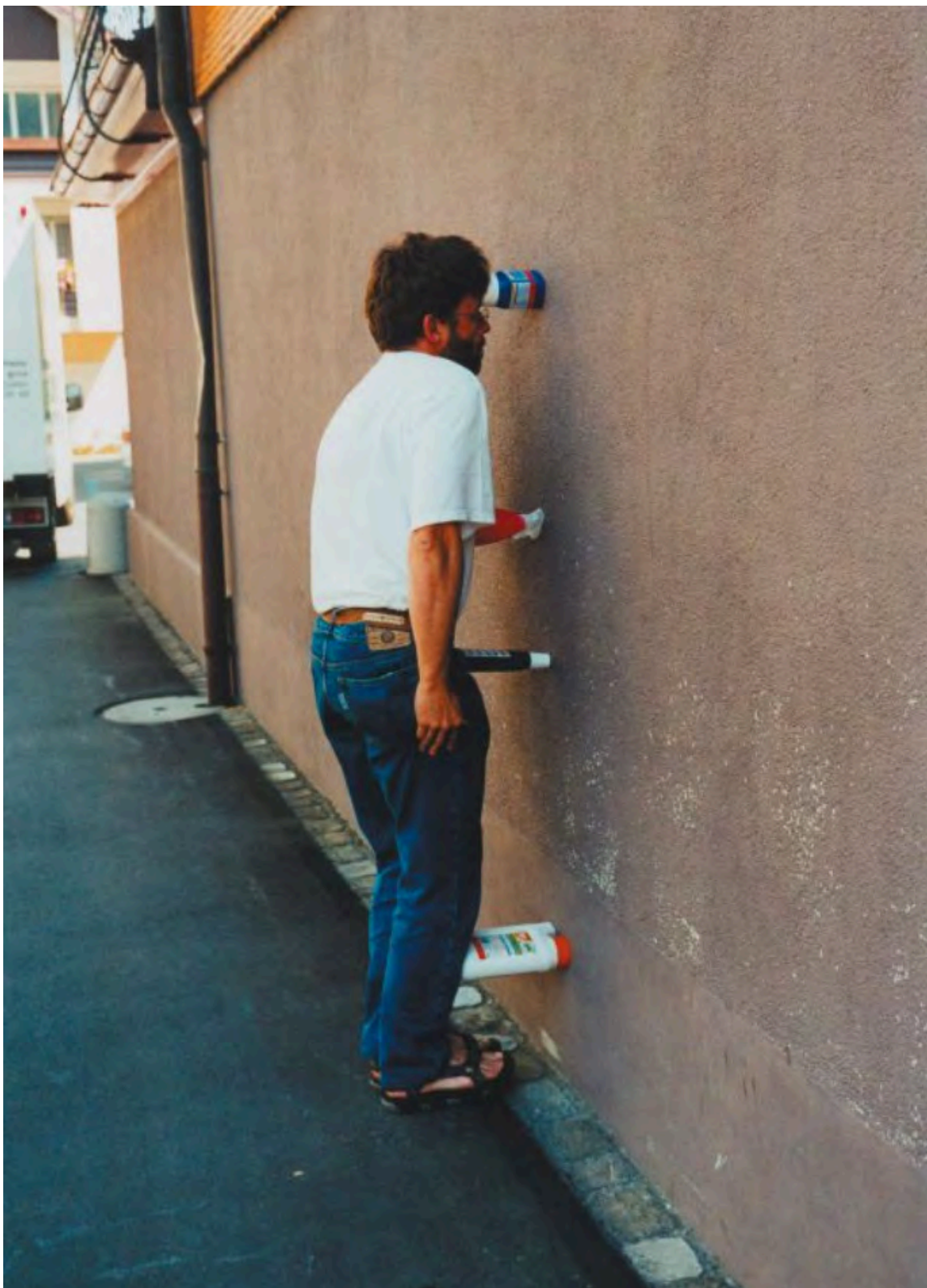
Erwin Wurm, Outdoor Sculpture, Appenzell, 1998

LITTLE

LONGER

Social change and climate change

In our current economic, social and environmental context, the built environment is under pressure to adapt to new challenges. Factors such as demographic and social change, changing lifestyles, global warming and resource scarcity are placing new demands on the design of our built environment. Existing buildings are subject to pressures from capital investment strategies and the knee-jerk renewal reflex, often resulting in the demolition and replacement of buildings and the attendant loss of material and energy resources and historical and cultural value as well as an exacerbation of sustainability issues. Moreover, demolition leads to the destruction of functioning neighbourhoods and the displacement of the existing population.

Environmental impact of the construction sector

The construction and operation of buildings contribute significantly to energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and waste generation. The urgent need for design to address environmental issues such as climate change, resource scarcity and ecological degradation cannot be asserted strongly enough. The growing understanding that resources such as land, energy and materials are becoming ever scarcer impels us to work with what we have. The unsustainable practices of the past must be reappraised. The great challenge of our time is to reconcile economic pressures with the built fabric, without succumbing to the destructive impulse of past decades. We need to fundamentally rethink the way we build with a view to minimising environmental impact and contributing to a more sustainable future.

Working on existing buildings

This paradigm shift is an opportunity to explore new architectural design paths in the broader spectrum of the pre-existing (black), the demolished (yellow) and the new (red). We regard the studio as a vehicle with which to negotiate heritage and adapt it to changing needs. Only when we know how to conserve, rebuild and expand the existing stock do we have the right arguments to defend it.

Diocletian's Palace in Spalato, Niemann, Tables 19 and 20, South wall facing the sea, 1906

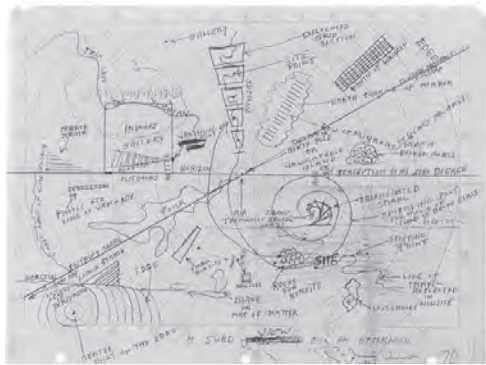Restitution of the Porta Ferrea of Diocletian's palace in Spalato, 1912.

Tokyo Roji City Map

Lucius Burckhardt: A car drivers' stroll, Kassel 1993. (Photo: Bertram Weisshaar)
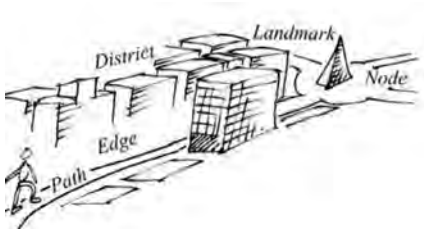

Hans Hollein, Concepts of an Exhibition, „Doors", 1989

Robert Smithson, A Surd View For An Afternoon, 1969

Care, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969

Kevin Lynch: The City Image and Its Elements

Existing (black)

The existing is a broad category, including the built environment and the spaces in between, the material and the concrete as well as the immaterial and the vague. The existing is represented in the conversion plan by the colour black, which stands at the beginning and is the starting point of a project. Existing fabric must be maintained and cared for in order to prolong its life. Could mere maintenance itself be a creative act? How can we preserve old materials into the future and extend the life of buildings? How do we properly appreciate the cultural value of a place and ensure its lasting significance? These questions require sensitivity as well as close observation of what is there.

Context

Our aim is to get to know the conditions of the site and its surrounding context. This includes an attention to the topography, the nature of the soil, the sunlight and various aspects of the climate. Additionally, we will pay attention to traces of human presence. We will carefully look at the characteristics of the site, its built structure, design, construction and historical significance. By doing so, we aim to gain a holistic understanding of the site, reflecting both the influence of nature and the imprint of human activities over time. These traces are the sum total of our social interaction and are all 'written' in the terrain. A site, then , is always a social construct.

Layers

In built envornments, traces are deposited in layers. When you dig, you set out on a journey into the past. Over time, the superimposing of layer on layer results in a kind of palimpsest; an overlay of different architectures from different eras. Interwoven, mutually beneficial, a new image emerges, a collage that renders history legible. In a building, the layers are deposited on the walls and floors. A crucial factor in the design of the new is to understand them in yerms of their function: as a static element, as an installation or simply as a layer of colour in the millimetric range. In the black, yellow and red colour canon of the design, the existing represents the constant in the process of change.

Analyze
Characterize
Collect
Document
Draw
Explore
Identify
Investigate
Measure
Observe
Photograph
Record
Sample
Sketch
Study
Survey
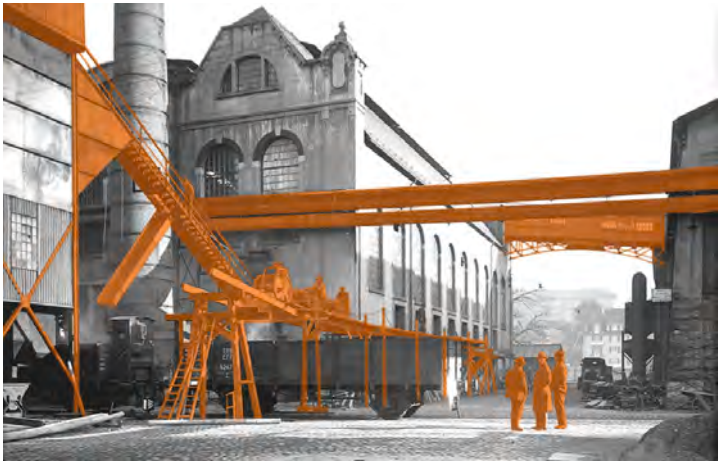
Camponovo Baumgartner, Gaswerkareal, 2021
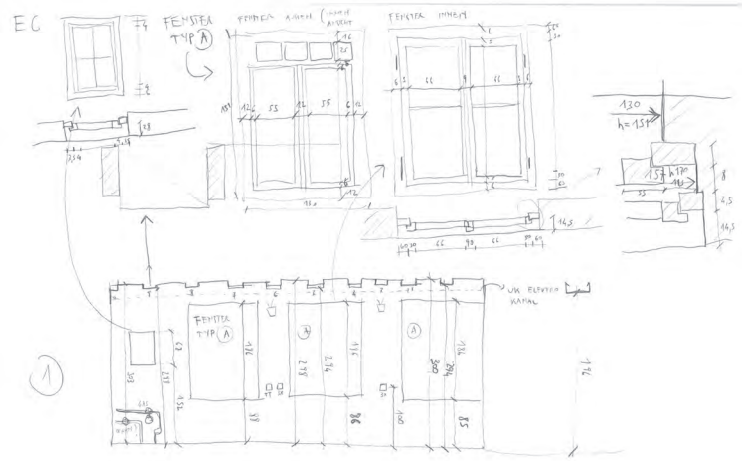

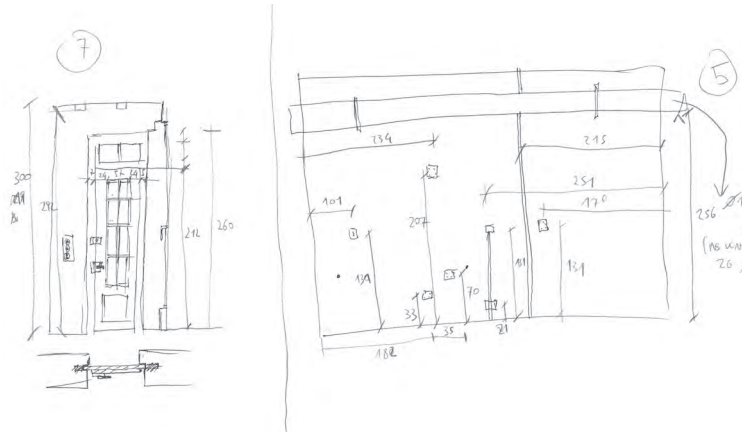Camponovo Baumgartner, Am Walkeweg, 2017-2018

Camponovo Baumgartner, Office Maintenance, 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, Gaswerkareal, 2017

Camponovo Baumgartner, Experience of a Site, Competition Mutthorn

Camponovo Baumgartner, Building Record

Camponovo Baumgartner, Schaufenster Gaswerkaral 7x7, 25 hours on site

Demolition of the first buildings at Pruitt-Igoe, 1972

Fritz Schwarz und Rolf Keller, Gemeindzentrum Mittenza, Muttenz 1965-1970

Gordon Matta-Clark, Conical Intersect, 1975

Heidi Bucher during the skinning process of Gentlemen's Study, 1978.
The Estate of Heidi Bucher. (Photo : Hans Peter Siffert)

Gordon Matta-Clark, Office Baroque
(view of second floor and removed section), 1977

Lina Bo Bardi, SESC Pompéia Factory Sao Paulo

Al Kazneh temple, Petra, Jordan, 1st century AD

'Any intervention implies destruction. Destroy consciously.' Luigi Snozzi

Demolition (yellow)
Demolition is an act of destruction which inevitably requires sacrifice. But demolition is also a relief, through which space for new creation may arise. It is marked with the colour yellow. We want to understand the creative power of demolition. Its history is diverse and sometimes tragic, and not infrequently linked to social upheaval. The apt term tabula rasa describes the scraping away of writing on wax paper, allowing for the possibility of a radical new beginning.

Taking away - a creative act
The act of demolition can be liberating. Clearing the air in order to start afresh has long seemed a just demand. With knowledge of the grey energy in building components, this demand looks retrograde, yet removal is still necessary and legitimate today. Removal, however, should be seen as a design tool with a fine blade and not as a wrecking ball for a radical new beginning. The questions 'why' and 'what' are immanent in demolition. On one hand, we demolish to make room for the new; on the other hand, demolition can be an end in itself. Subtracting, like adding, is a creative act that inevitably enters into a relationship with the existing.

Revealing potentialities
During demolition, existing buildings may have mass removed or be cut free to create new empty spaces. These empty spaces establish new relationships between different parts of the building and create connections inside the structure as well as to outside spaces, reuniting what was previously separate. Additionally, during the demolition process, existing structures are uncovered, revealing their underlying structure, statics and layers. This exposure allows the history of these elements to be seen and understood, revealing potentialities for architectural interventions.

Break
Connect
Cut free
Deconstruct
Demolish
Discover
Disassemble
Expose
Highlight
Remove
Renew
Reveal
Strip
Uncover
Unveil

Camponovo Baumgartner, Rustico Semione, 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, traces of the demolition, Semione 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, Rustico Semione, 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, Silvrettaweg, Ongoing

Camponovo Baumgartner, breakthrough of the enfilade, Haus des Kupferschmieds 2017

Camponovo Baumgartner, removal of a color layer, Stettbach 2021

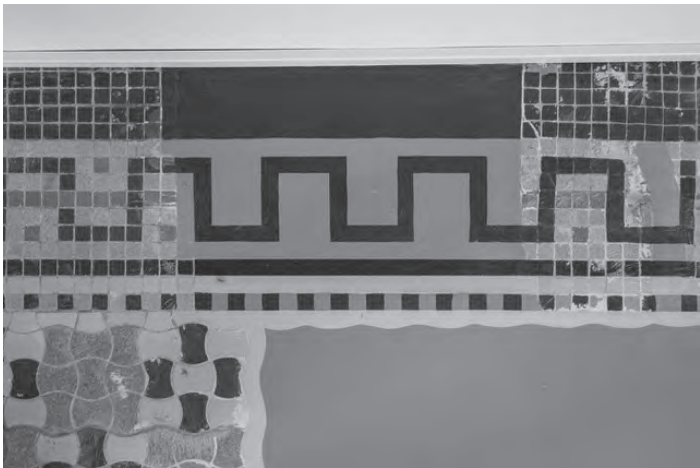Upper lawn pavilion, Alison and Peter Smithson, 1962

Aldo Rossi, Monumento ai Partigiani, Segrate, 1965

Handle for fauteuil for Swiss Re, Hermann Czech, 2000

Hans Döllgast, Old Pinakothek, 1957

Burkhalter Sumi

Huis Visser (Bergeijk), Gerrit Rietvelt, Aldo van Eyck, 1955/1968/1974

New (red)

The colour red represents everything new that is added to the stock. It completes the chromatic canon of the preceding colours, black (stock) and yellow (demolition). There may or may note be a connection between the new and the demolition. New things can be created without any prior demolition. Or the new may have no structural expression of any kind, being simply a new idea for a new use, an altered claim. In every case, however, the new enters into a relation with the existing, a relation that may be balanced and reciprocal, mutually enriching and complementary. The new can also enter into open rupture, engender contrast or turn parasitic, as when it penetrates the existing to use it and where necessary destroy it.

Needs

What do we add, and what are our reasons for adding something? The new arises from a need of a programmatic, spatial or material nature, programmatic in the sense of a new use. Spatially, in the sense of fixtures, connections, subdivisions or new routes. Materially, in the sense of energy upgrades, technical renovations or new layers. This last layer in the house is what we perceive. The material that encloses the rooms and generates a mood or atmosphere. In every situation, it is important to sound out which compromises are to be made between what is there and what needs to be added. Sometimes, an existing building offers the possibility to leave conventions behind and to translate programmatic, spatial or material needs in innovative ways in terms of design.

Encounters

We determine how old and new meet with the design method, with the narrative of the project we want to tell. In certain scenarios, the traces of the new are blurred, aligned. No clear new and old can be discerned. Rather, the two interweave to form something third. The breaks are deliberately painted over, concealed. Or on the contrary, the rupture is revealed, the new contrasts with the existing. In other situations, new functions or building services stand out in clearly defined bodies that presents themselves object-like entities in the room.

Uncertainties

Regardless of the strategy adopted, adding into an existing stock is always about the encounter of different bodies. Especially in transformation projects, where bodies reveal themselves progressively as the project unfolds. Therefore, working with the existing fabric requires to deal with uncertainties during planning, and even more, to explore the creative potential of tolerances, such as a gap, break or a blurred edge. Considering the subject of reuse, it is essential to incorporate allowances. Additionally, renovations remind us that all usage is destined to evolve, necessitating a programmatic interpretation of new requirements that goes beyond mere functional considerations.
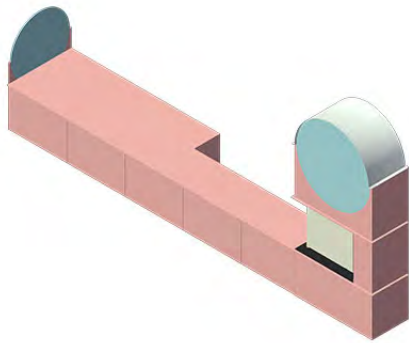
Adapt
Add
Complement
Connect
Counter
Distinguish
Enlarge
Extend
Imitate
Join
Juxtapose
Merge
Oppose
Rearrange
Replicate
Transform
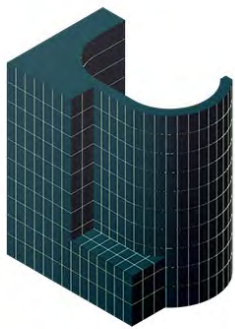
Camponovo Baumgartner,
micro-architecture building service, CIAHAD,
2020

Camponovo Baumgartner, New skin, old facade,
CIAHAD, 2020

Camponovo Baumgartner,
micro-architecture fireplace, Sonnenweg, 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, Transition from old
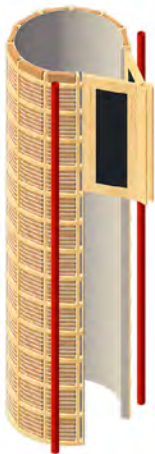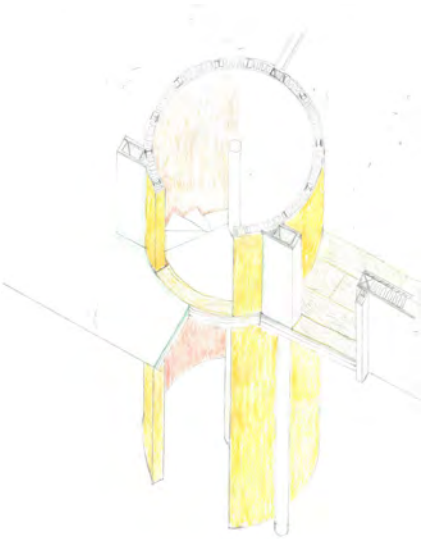and new, Intra Muros, 2021

Camponovo Baumgartner, Transition from old
and new, Intra Muros, 2021

Camponovo Baumgartner, replica of the door
in concrete, Intra Muros, 2021

Camponovo Baumgartner,
Micro-architecture, staircase/
heating,
Semione 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, where the new meets the
old, Semione 2023

Camponovo Baumgartner, corner with building
services, Semione, 2023

„Crusch Alba" - Lavin U.- Eng.

Crusch Alba, Lavin
The autumn semester takes place in Lavin, a mountain village in Graubünden facing the challenge of retaining committed talents who contribute to the community's vitality, especially as the housing crisis and high rents drive them out. There is a need for a home that offers security, relaxation, and a supportive environment for living and collaborating. Meanwhile, Crusch Alba, an closed-down hotel in the village, has the potential to address this need.

The history of Crusch Alba goes back several generations. It started out as a restaurant and in due course expanded to become a small hotel. However, changes in the context and the advent of alternative forms of accommodation such as Airbnb have made it difficult to sustain hotel-restaurant business. In addition, the village is experiencing an exodus of workers and a housing crisis.

There is an idea to repurpose Crusch Alba as a residence for the village's seasonal workers, both local and from distant lands. This temporary home would

Camponovo Baumgartner, Siteplan, 2023

cater to their respective lifestyles, aspirations, and financial circumstances. The plan involves creating small apartments for workers and hotel rooms for visitors, as well as production spaces and communal spaces, with the intention of also providing spaces to engage with the wider village community.

The focus is on the concept of inhabiting, with private, collective and public functions coexisting within the small structure of Crusch Alba. The architecture should allow for flexibility, tolerance and adaptation to accommodate different inhabitants and the uncertain programmatic future of the place, ultimately enabling residents – and the building itself – to stay a little longer.

Atelier

The atelier works as an office, with the emphasis on shared knowledge and personal development. Beginning with collaborative work at the scale of the atelier, you will gradually develop your own approach, while benefiting from the collective knowledge that is continually collected. Through drawings and models, you will explore the multiple design phases of a transformation project, structured in the following way:

I - Existing (black)

The first exercise involves exploring various aspects of Crusch Alba and its surroundings, including topography, technical systems, materials and construction methods. There will be a field trip to Crusch Alba to carry out an architectural survey of the house, document the site, and interact with the daily life of the village and its concerns. You will translate the knowledge gained from these experiences into a collective drawing and a shared library of materials. These communal productions will be continuously developed, at the same time ensuring that the accumulated knowledge is always available to everyone.

II - Demolition (yellow)

Once you have arrived at an in-depth understanding of the site, you will then begin, individually or in pairs (depending on enrolment numbers), to develop a transformative project for Crusch Alba. In working on an existing site, what is removed is an integral part of the project process. Based on the observations of the existing condition and how you imagine the spatial translation of programmatic needs, you will envisage what should be removed. What specific attributes or value of the building should be kept? What is not necessary? What are the structural implications? Can the extracted material be repurposed elsewhere in the building? As you investigate these questions, you will express your ideas by drawing yellow lines.

III - New (red)

Finally, you will imagine what needs to be added. Intervening in what already exists calls for a daring and imaginative attitude, which must nevertheless take into account many different factors, as when extracting. How does the new interact with the old? How does it serve new functions while embodying value beyond programmatic requirements? Does the new reintegrate elements of the old? How is it built, and what does it look like? How does it feel? By engaging with these questions, you will develop a project from initial sketches to construction detail, building a 1:1 model that displays your investigation of construction methods, materiality, and overall attention to details.

Teaching

Throughout this semester, consistency in attendance and work are essential. Table reviews can be conducted in groups, facilitating open discussions and benefitting from the collective knowledge generated. In the course of the semester there will be short exercises and input presentations. Full attendance is mandatory for table reviews and for mid-term and final critiques. Evaluation will be continuous and will consider the work produced throughout the semester, as well as the presentations given at the mid-term and final reviews. The evaluation will assess both group dynamics and individual engagement, production, and contribution to the studio culture. The evaluation criteria will be adjusted to differentiate between Bachelor's and Master's degree students. Written feedback will be provided after the mid-term and final critiques, and a celebratory event will mark the end of the semester.

<u>Timetable Semester I</u>

W1 / 18.09 - 19.09   Welcome Day
Introduction Phase I. Existing (black)

W2 / 24.09 - 26.09   Trip to Lavin

W3 / 02.10 - 03.10   Review Phase I. Existing (black)
Introduction Phase II. Demolition (yellow)

W4 / 09.10 - 10.10   Workshop

W5 / 16.10 - 17.10   Workshop

W6 / 23.10 - 24.10   Workshop

W7 / 30.10 - 31.10   Workshop

W8 / 06.11 - 07.11   Mid-term Review Phase II. Demolition (yellow)

W9 / 13.11 - 14.11   Introduction Phase III. New (red)

W10 / 20.11 - 21.11   Workshop

W11 / 27.11 - 28.11   Workshop

W12 / 04.12 - 05.12   Workshop

W13 / 11.12 - 12.12   Workshop

W14 / 18.12 - 19.12   Final Review Phase III. New (red)