

Another Architecture

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MARK

Room for Imagination

Centre for literature in Prague

***'The US election
killed social
media for me'***
Mimi Zeiger

***'I thought
games would be
the bliss zone of
architecture'***
Nick Leavy

***'From a plant's
perspective,
manmade borders
don't exist'***
Kentaro Kurihara

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Light Like a Bird

Arkpabi contemplates the relationship between construction and air.

Text Lauren Teague
Photos Roland Halbe

Interfering with nature is an accepted repercussion of building new architecture. Eight elevated volumes make up Gardens Beyond the Clouds, a complex of residential and office structures in northern Italy, by local firm Arkpabi. Raised above a concourse comprising a public basement and commercial facilities, every apartment – each with its own garden – is able to look out over many green roofs, as well as further beyond to the historical town centre. The project shows

how the impact of the built environment can be reduced by gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between the things we build and the space that will contain it.

Beginning with a foundation of land, the firm tried to 'explode' and then reassemble the green spaces. 'We imagined how we could reinstate them at different levels on the roof to create a stratification that, from a bird's-eye view, seems once again to become a single, large field,'

explains lead architect Giorgio Palù. The volumes are systematically placed perpendicular to one another at a variety of heights. 'The buildings seem to be thrown into the sky and the project focuses on rebalancing the relationship between architecture and open space.'

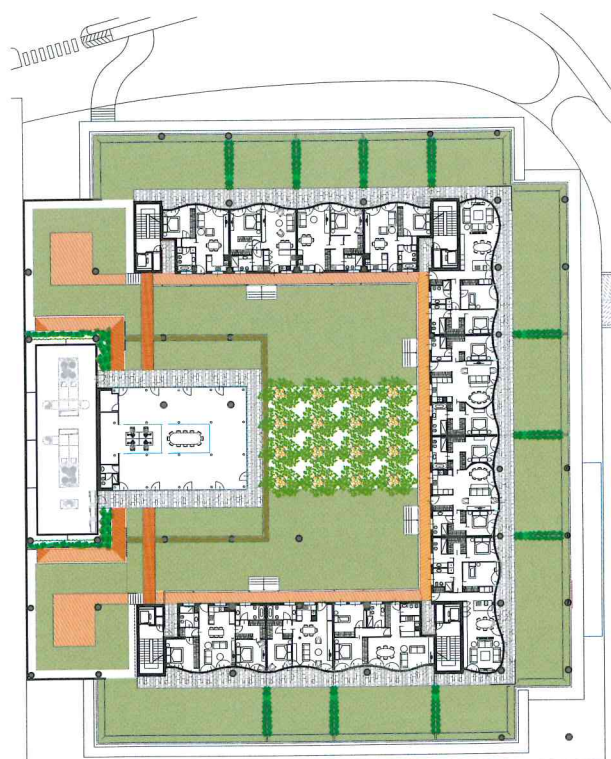
Despite their blockish forms, there is a sense of weightlessness and freedom to each of the apartments. Palù sums up the project's *raison d'être* by quoting French poet Paul Valéry: *Il faut être léger comme l'oiseau et non comme*

la plume. Translated literally: 'One must be light like a bird, not like a feather.' This describes the way that the physicality of the architecture consciously interacts with the air but does not disturb it. In the way that the feather is powerlessly swept along haphazardly by nature's course, the precise placement of the structural volumes is like the bird, which moves through the air with control and resolve.

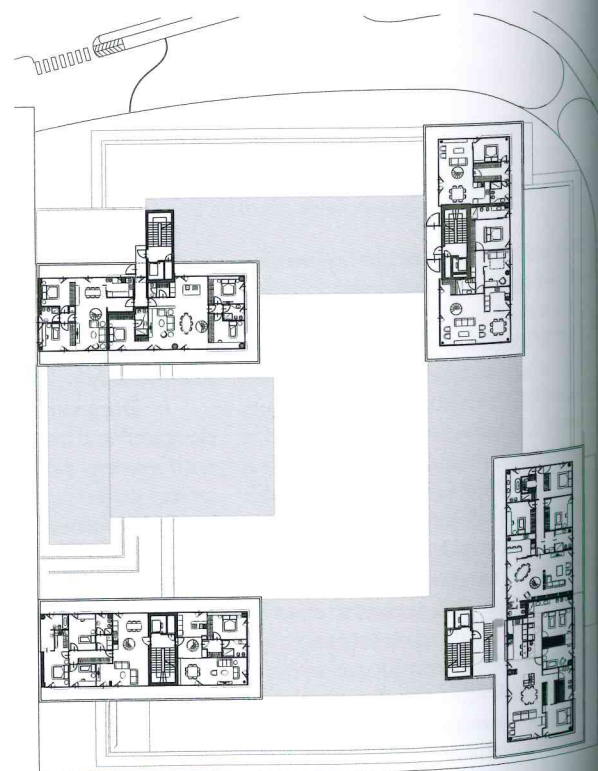
arkpabi.it



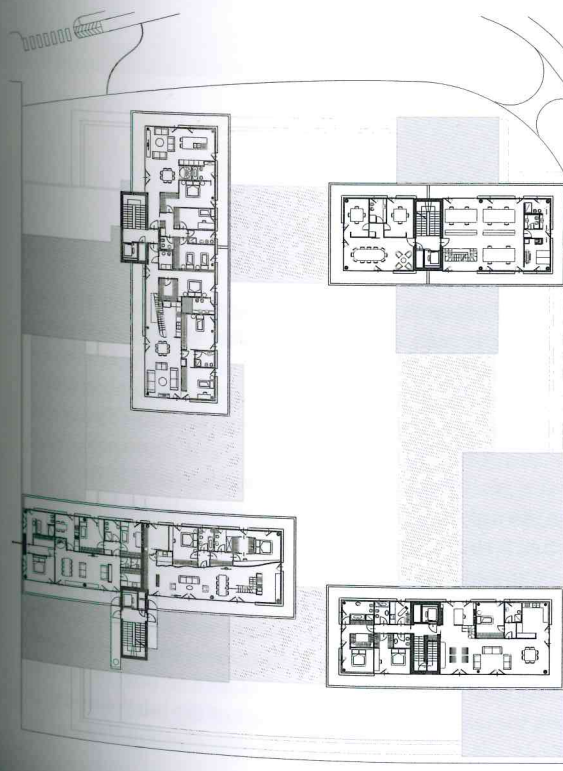
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Cross Section

