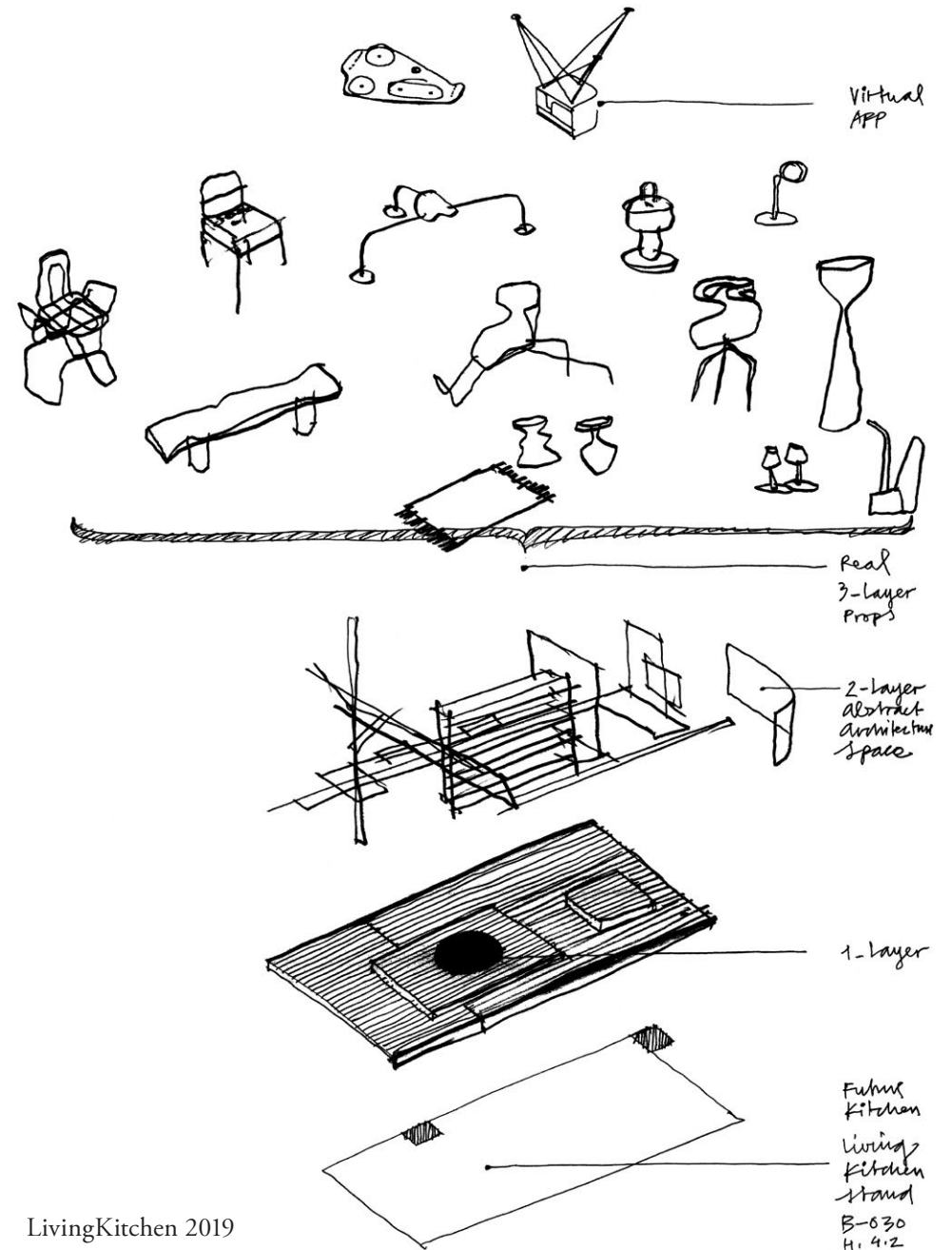


SENSE & SENSUALITY

A kitchen for the near future by Alfredo Häberli

SENSE & SENSUALITY

A kitchen for the near future



SENSE & SENSUALITY

A kitchen for the near future

«In the near future, *food* will continue to stand as a symbol of *life*, since the harvesting of food, its preparation and consumption is shaped by cultural and social rules and is seen as man's very own cultural act; it is the beginning of all crafts and most clearly reflects the evolution of our civilization. Today, however, we are already confronted with an increasing population, climate change and resource scarcity, which raises delicate and critical questions about nutrition: how will sensuality be preserved if, in the future, food is produced in laboratories and reduced to the supply of protein? What happens when the act of cooking mutates into pure self-expression and hedonistic luxury? What will the kitchen of the future look like if we need to find solutions for preventing food waste?

These thoughts are an important part of today's discourse about how to feed the planet. With my concept, I would therefore like to bring the kitchen and the preparation of food back into focus (= *hearth in Latin*). As a workshop and the soul of the house, the kitchen is the link to the adjacent zones of the home, as well as the cultural activities connected with it – and thus forms the space for *Sense & Sensuality*.

On the basis of these thoughts, I designed a kitchen for the special exhibition *FutureKitchen*. The design deals with the subject of *degrowth* both plastically and architecturally. In order to kindle a different way of thinking and create vivid proposals for a kitchen, the installation was divided into four layers:

The first layer is the floor, which consists of loosely laid bricks. They divide the space and create different zones of different heights. The noise generated when walking on the bricks and the archaic nature of the material are intended to slow the visitor down in a sensual way.

The second layer is the abstract architecture. Its strong colour is a deliberate choice: it provides a visual separation from the surrounding exhibition hall, is a striking eye-catcher and separates the various areas and their functions in a living situation.

The third layer is that of everyday life. Here, familiar objects such as furniture and accessories are presented, expressing the presence of humans. However, the objects are curated with a slight twist and arranged in a way that confuses the observer, and may inspire him to question his usual behaviour.

The last layer consists of a concentrated number of newly invented kitchen utensils and aids that can be discovered in the zone of the actual kitchen. However, rather than being shown in reality, these objects only become visible thanks to an augmented reality app.

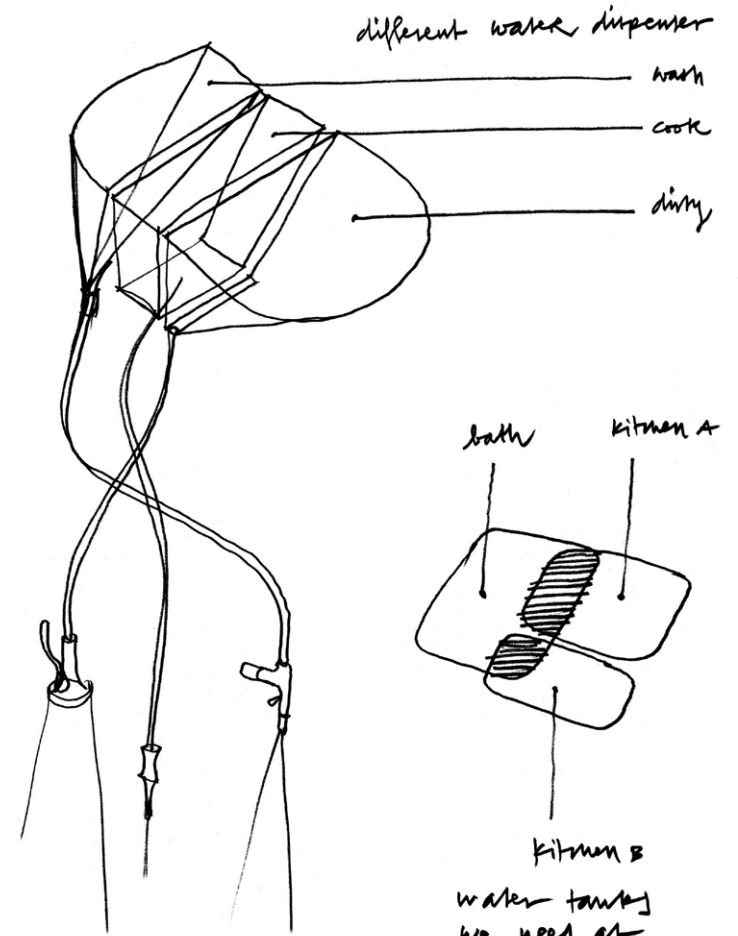
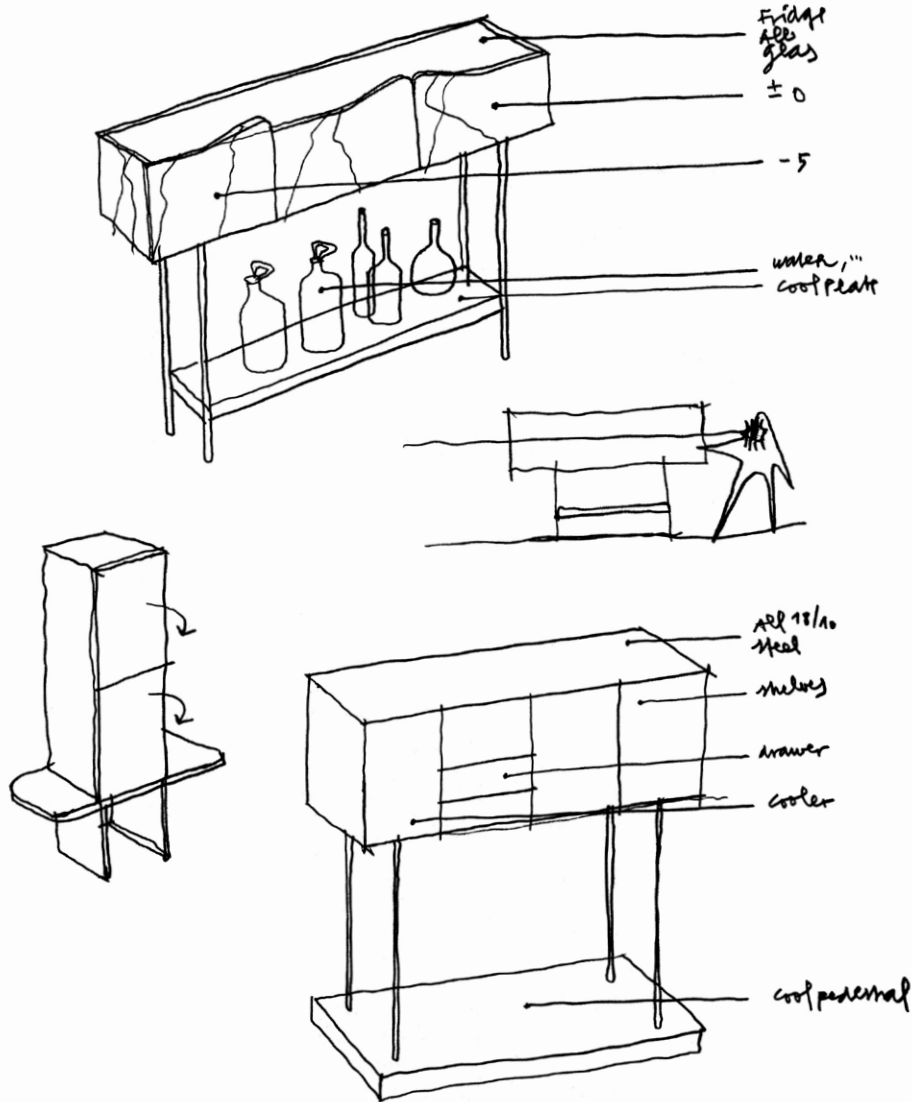
The project as a whole is intended to be a stimulus and, thanks to its radical abstraction, to encourage reflection. My aim is to show a glimpse of the near future through historical knowledge, real proposals and digital presentation techniques.»

Alfredo Häberli, designer

«The project is designed from the inside to the outside, from the kitchen to the whole house.»

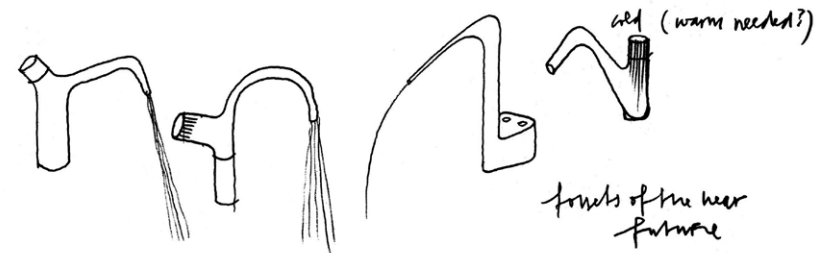
«The kitchen of the near future is the soul of the house and doesn't need show character!»

«If the preparation of food is reduced to nothing but the supply of nutrition, the kitchen of the future should provide the environment for the preservation of sensuality.»



kitchen B
 water tanks
 we need at
 home

«Water remains the most important element of life. Let us express the value of this resource.»



DESIGN IS PART OF A SOCIAL PROCESS

Interview with Alfredo Häberli

You seem to have a special relationship to the kitchen – to the kitchen as a product as well as a living space – and are now to design a holistic ensemble of rooms with a future character for LivingKitchen, with the kitchen at the centre. Was this a kind of home game for you?

«The project encourages new ways of thinking.»

For me, of course, the LivingKitchen request is an honour; at the same time, it takes me back to my childhood, because I grew up in a restaurant and hotel – I spent more time in the kitchen than in the living room. Looking from the past into the future is enormously exciting for me.

It must be a great challenge to foresee something in design that society hasn't adopted yet and that might not even be technically feasible yet?

I am constantly working on developing this kitchen of the future. I would like to consciously bring it to a certain level of abstraction, because the time we live in is advancing at an incredibly fast pace. This kitchen will focus on the near future.

What is really important in the kitchen of the future?

For me, as the soul of the house, actually the hearth around which you sit, the kitchen has an extremely important social component. On the other hand, the idea of degrowth, i.e. reducing growth, will be a central theme. We are currently seeing initial effects in various areas of the car industry and mobility, particularly in connection with the sharing idea: sharing – such as sharing space, actions, mobility – will become very important. And I believe that will affect the kitchen too.

«The kitchen of the near future cannot ignore the theme of degrowth.»

In other words, a change of direction away from the selfishness that is common in some areas of design. Will this lead to a downgrading or reevaluation of design and its function?

I am convinced that design will always play an important role. But I also think that we no longer have to talk about design today because it is part of a process. The decisive

point is not so much the aesthetic, i.e. the beautification, but rather that design is an attitude, and it's becoming increasingly more important and stronger.

How far does this development go?

I think we will have to redesign our lives. I can already see from my children just how powerfully this development is progressing, and I don't mean the aesthetic aspects so much. It's about character questions. Design is increasingly becoming a question of the attitude one adopts.

What possibilities are there for designing the kitchen?

In recent years, I have mainly been concerned with the aesthetics of the whole, the storage and the integration of appliances in the kitchen. These are very complex requirements – similar to those in the bathroom – which mean that current developments have to prevail over a relatively fixed canon of forms and are less dynamic. But there is now a great openness for change in this area, partly due to new technologies. Suddenly the designer can make completely new suggestions.

«Preparing a meal together with friends will be the true luxury of the near future.»

What are the challenges when it comes to adjusting the kitchen's space and function to current and future needs?

In recent decades, the kitchen has undergone major changes. It has opened up to all living spaces and room situations – again, similarly to the bathroom. We're also seeing a tendency to view the kitchen as a protective zone where you can feel at ease, especially when cooking, serving or eating. At the same time, we have the kitchen during the week and the kitchen at the weekend – and they take on quite different functions! At weekends you have more time, you act more consciously when preparing and eating in a social environment, with family and friends. During the week you deal with it in a completely different way. In addition, the kitchen will absorb the tension arising from the relationship of analogue to digital even more strongly in the future.

Will the kitchen's role change radically as a result of digitalisation?

The kitchen is a good demonstration of how things that are really important will always endure. For me, the home is pretty much the best example of that. Food per se is actually the earliest of all motivations for us humans. We don't differ so much from animals in that respect. Like them, we're always wondering when we'll get to eat, how we'll get to eat, what kind of food we'll get to eat. That in itself is enough to ensure that the kitchen is and always will be a core area of the home.

How will the role of the kitchen as the hub of family life change in view of the general trend towards individualisation?

I've always seen the kitchen as the connecting link. That's why I say the kitchen is the soul of the house. For me, the dining table is also part of the kitchen. Even back in our student days, we developed the best ideas, the best models at the kitchen table. You don't even need a particularly large table – even the simplest, smallest kitchen table is enough for sketching or making a model. And the same table is used for serving food, playing or doing homework. For me, the kitchen is docked directly onto this table. The kitchen is the central place and key element of the home and will remain so.

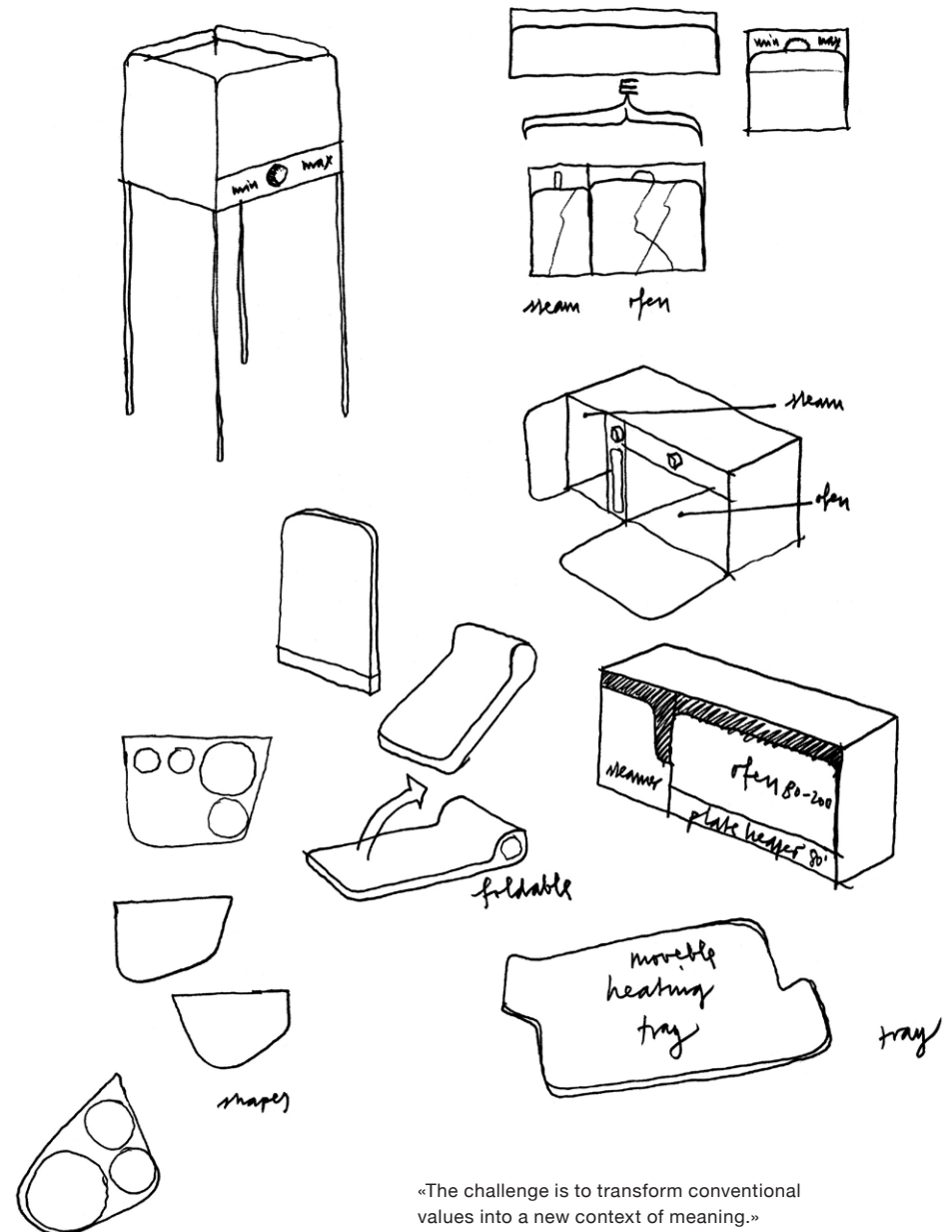
If you think about new housing options like the micro apartment, which also seems to be in line with the degrowth idea, would you say they support a lifestyle that turns us into members of an interest group connected not by the spaces we share but by the media we use?

We spend enough time alone with our smart communication tools. People need to exchange ideas, to talk, to be human. That's important. Even if the media are currently pushing us to be individuals, I believe that we humans are not meant to be alone. And my FutureKitchen won't encourage that either.

What do you think people could learn when they walk through your FutureKitchen at LivingKitchen?

I would say there's no rush. But there *is* time.

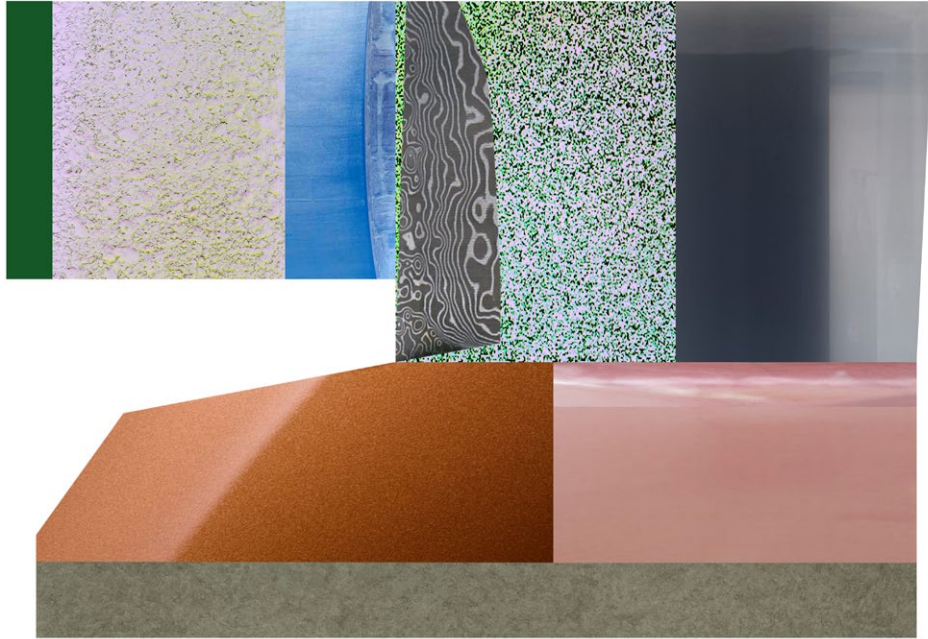
«The kitchen has long since been opened up to the dining and living room. Will this unification now extend to the bathroom and bedroom as well?»



«The challenge is to transform conventional values into a new context of meaning.»

IGNITING THE IMAGINATION

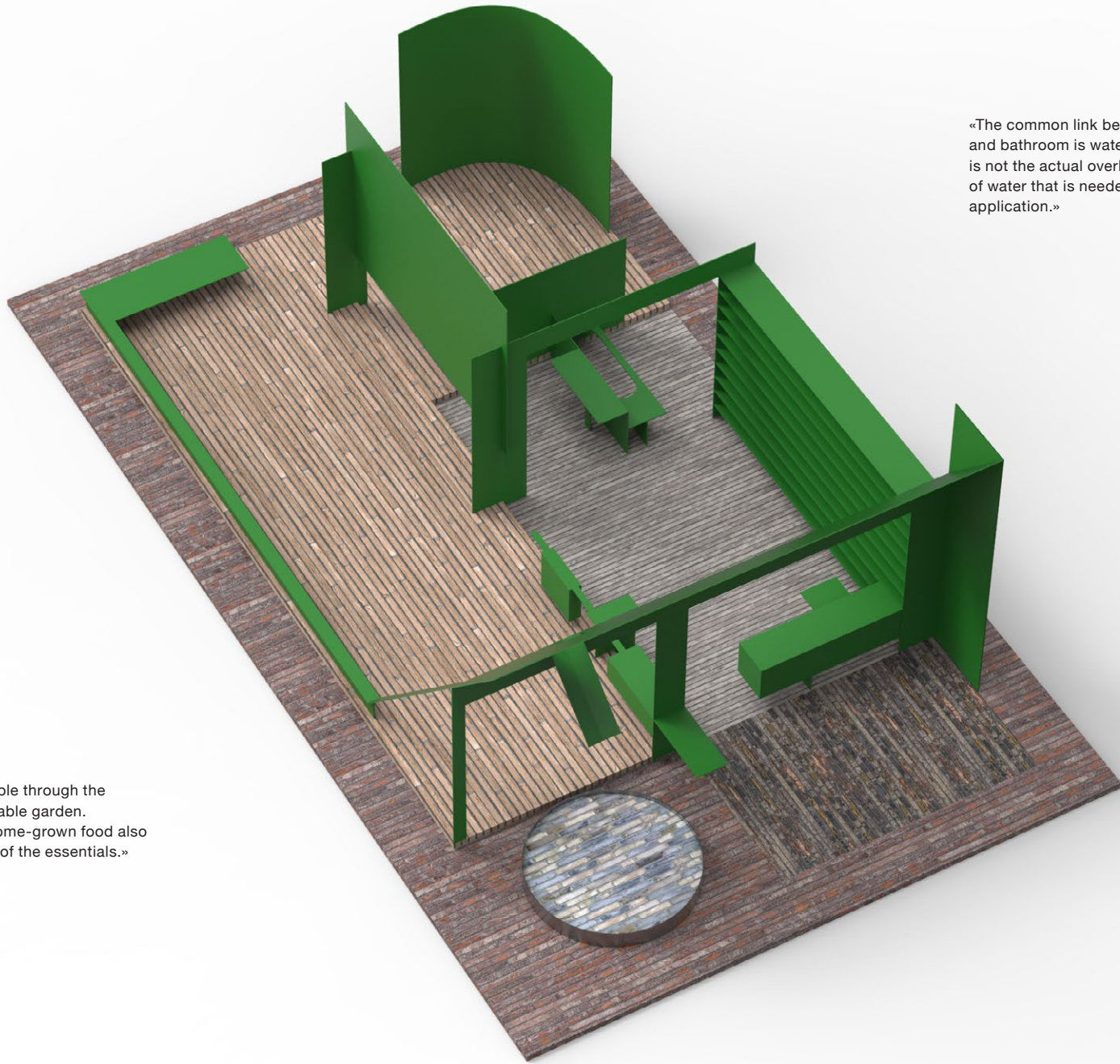
When the whisper of an idea becomes reality



«The appearance of the future kitchen will be shaped by indestructible and durable surfaces in combination with opaque yet natural materials.»



«Advanced material technologies will give the glossy and matt surfaces of the kitchen a new, almost immaterial look.»



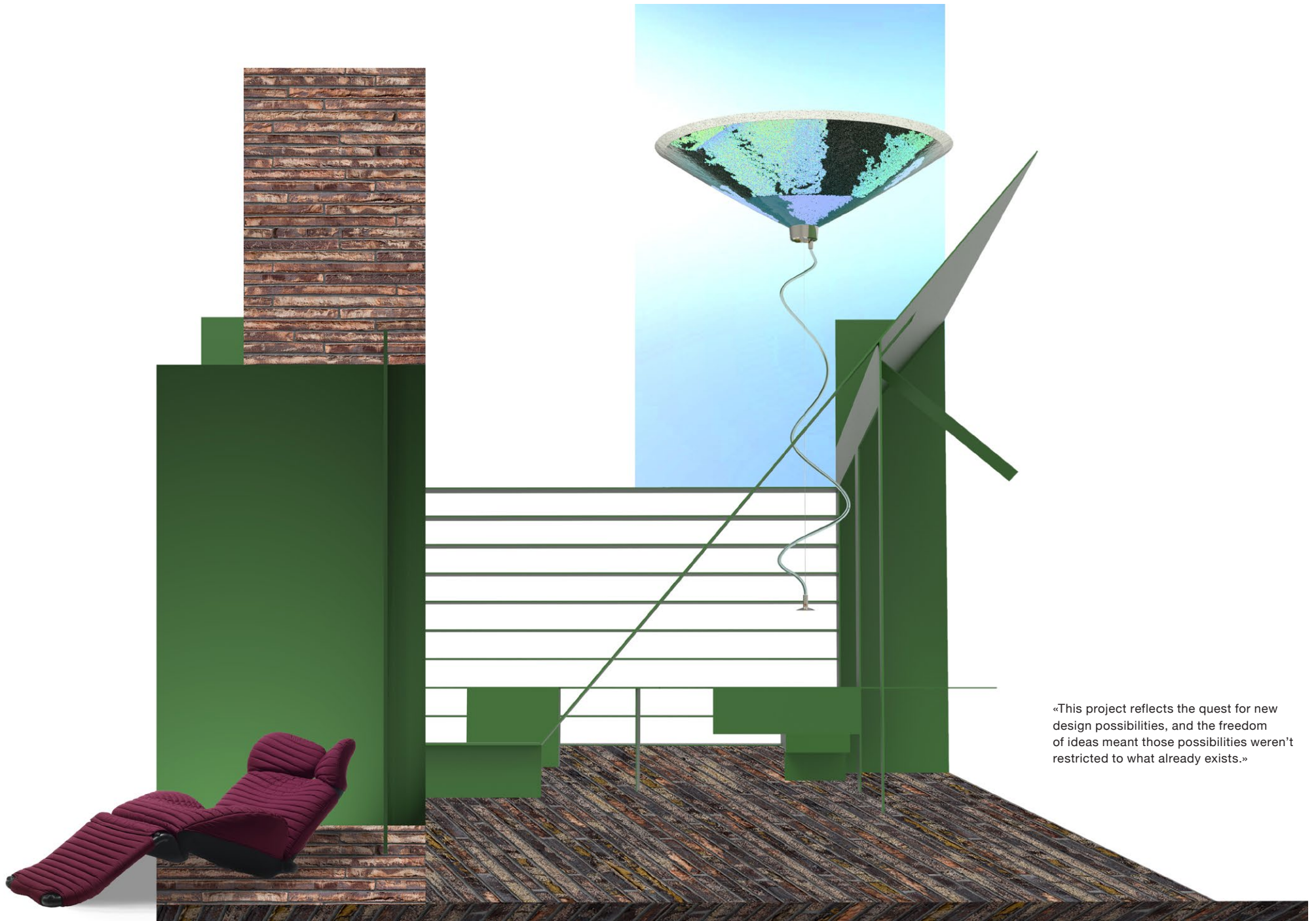
«The common link between the kitchen and bathroom is water. The important thing is not the actual overlap, but the type of water that is needed depending on the application.»

«The home is accessible through the kitchen, via the vegetable garden. This relationship to home-grown food also heightens awareness of the essentials.»


«The kitchen becomes the interface between the farming culture of the countryside and the social aspects centred around the dining table.»



«The kitchen is like a tool for exploring new worlds that have not been discovered before.»



«This project reflects the quest for new design possibilities, and the freedom of ideas meant those possibilities weren't restricted to what already exists.»



Many resources are already recycled as a matter of course. Either we collect them for further use in our own homes or we recycle them via an established system, as we do with glass, paper or cardboard. However, no such cycle has established itself for the ever more precious supply of water. In the Sense & Sensuality project, the in-house cistern gradually reduces the quality of the water it supplies: pure drinking water that has been used for brushing teeth is fed into the container for hand washing and from there to the collection basin for flushing the toilet. The cisterns are prominently and sculpturally integrated into the architecture so that the current «stock levels» can be seen at any time.

This topic covers one of about a dozen visions that can be discovered with the augmented reality app. Scan the QR code to download the app:



The modern food storage cabinet is a familiar object in vertical orientation. But if the typology were oriented horizontally, all the precious foods it contains could be presented at eye level. This would emphasise the value of our food, which will become increasingly important in the future. The transparent cover is reminiscent of the showcases seen at the bakery or butcher's shop and always shows what is in stock. The waste heat generated by the cooling process is used outside the appliance for thawing frozen goods.

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A DESIGNER WITH A THIRST FOR RESEARCH

A portrait of Alfredo Häberli



If he hadn't become a designer, Alfredo Häberli would certainly have chosen a profession such as architect or engineer and explored the limits of what is physically possible with architectural means. But on the other hand he might have become a chef, because the Swiss-Argentinian grew up in his parents' family-run restaurant and hotel business.

As a designer, he has been able to preserve a childlike view of the world and an urge to explore. His work reflects joy and energy. His designs are characterised by great expressiveness and emotionality and never fail to deliver an intelligent, subtle surprise. In Alfredo Häberli's world, a sofa is never just a piece of seating furniture, but also a workplace, and a bar stool is not just a seat but a shelf as well. Alfredo Häberli prefers to work with glass, wire and wood in his projects. He is particularly fond of designing for children: the *Kids' Stuff* series of crockery and cutlery he designed for Iittala in 2003, for instance, has become a classic. Alfredo Häberli's playful and inquiring approach is also expressed in the *Village* curtain he designed for Kvadrat in 2008, which involved printing fluorescent colours on textiles – an innovation.

Alfredo Häberli has become known for his collaborations with renowned companies such as Alias, Camper, Iittala, Luceplan, Vitra and Moroso. These projects have primarily resulted in everyday objects, including the *Origo* table service and the *Essence* drinking glass series for the Finnish company Iittala. But furniture such as the *Take a Line for a Walk* armchair (Moroso) or the *Segesta* chair (Alias) also features in the designer's high-profile portfolio. Häberli was born in Argentina in 1964 and later emigrated to Switzerland with his family. There he studied industrial design and graduated from the Höhere Schule für Gestaltung in Zurich in 1991 – the same year in which he founded his own design studio there.

But Alfredo Häberli doesn't stop at product design. In 2016 he developed an ensemble of buildings for German pre-fab house supplier Baufriz that can best be described as

somewhere between object and architecture; and in 2015 he realized a study of mobility in the near future for BMW. For Alfredo Häberli, the way people's lives continue to evolve is a constant interest. In 2008, for example, he designed a futuristic, workshop-style concept kitchen for the Italian manufacturer Schiffrini. He was inspired by the surfaces of copper boilers and created a cooking island with special extraction lamps.

Now, ten years later, Alfredo Häberli is turning his attention to the kitchen again – this time for the LivingKitchen event in January 2019: he has been invited to design his vision of tomorrow's kitchen for a new special exhibition entitled FutureKitchen. Alfredo Häberli is still convinced that the kitchen is the soul of the house – the space for *Sense & Sensuality*, as he calls his FutureKitchen. His choice of title underscores the sensuality of his exhibition concept, which breaks with conventional habits of seeing and thinking. In addition, he deals plastically and architecturally with the increasing scarcity of resources. The designs are also an expression of Alfredo Häberli's quest for meaningful reduction and thus entirely in the spirit of his role model, the illustrator Saul Steinberg, who succeeds in saying so much with a minimum of materials and a few lines. Visitors will be able to experience the kitchen equipment and a series of kitchen appliances that Häberli has designed virtually as a future scenario – in augmented reality.

PUBLISHING DETAILS

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Alfredo Häberli, designer