

ANALOG

constructed

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GP

The building which houses the editorial office of Głos Pomorza daily was erected in the north-east part of the former old town. Considering an irregular development, this is a special fragment of the town encircled with old city walls. This irregularity was the result of the fact that a Cistercian convent existed in this place when the town was located; after the convent had been secularized, a residence of Kamień bishop was situated here. The only element which remained is the former castle chapel, which is now an Orthodox church.

The design of the new seat of the editorial office of Głos Pomorza daily was treated as an opportunity to heal the whole area by the city walls in this part of the town. The chief deficiencies of the present state are as follows: lack of clear lines of the development, an undefined context of the Orthodox church and an accessibility of the Town Park.

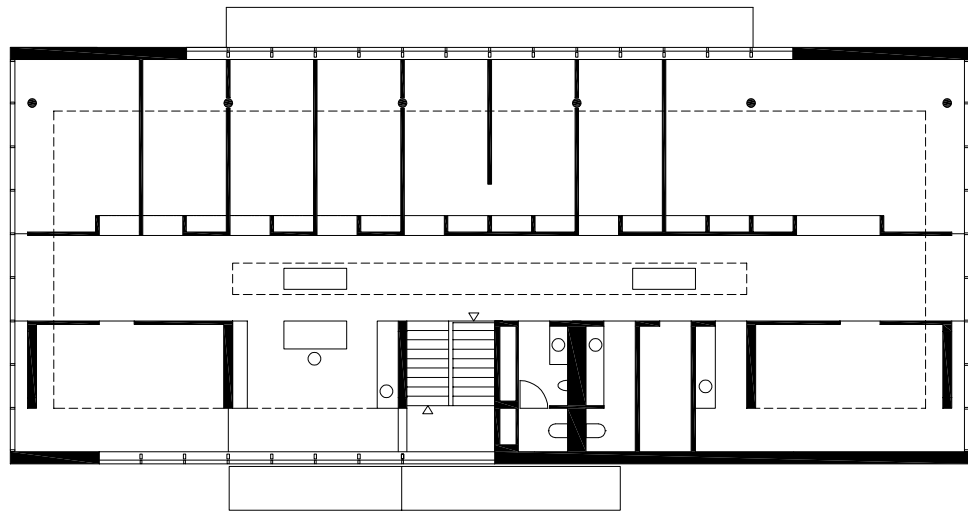
Owing to the direct location of the building by the street of Mickiewicza, it was possible to organize the area by the church and restore to its former position in the urban planning context. A square is the main spatial element which organizes the area around the church. The building of Głos Pomorza constitutes the north frontage of this square. It is also here, from the side of the square, that the entrance to the building was located; this additionally emphasizes the function of the square. The axis of the square is at the same time the axis of the church. More important passages were designed parallel to it between the street of Mickiewicza and the Town Park.

A simple form based on a rectangle projection was the starting point of the body of the building; its height was limited to the cornice of the church. This form reacts with its structure, cut-outs and the facade composition to the urban-planning context of the place. Efforts were made to limit formal procedures only to the change of the material in the same plane so that the facades could have a maximum smoothness.

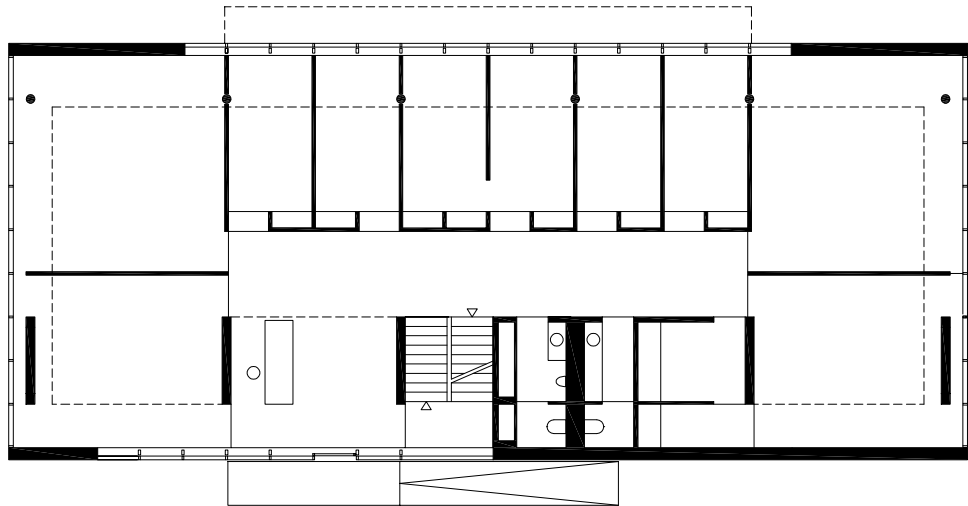
With its materiality, the building of the editorial office intentionally emphasizes its novelty in this area: see the monochromatic facades (steel sheet, aluminum window sections and sun shutters). Nevertheless, it is its location, scale, and proportions which permanently link this building to this place. These are elements which do not follow fads. The purpose of resigning from the contextual use of materials for the facade is to focus on these timeless values in architecture.

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 1997-2001





3RD FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR





Sacristy

The Koszalin Cathedral is the town's most precious monument. Although it lacked sufficient space for an adequate sacristy, the architects refused to directly add onto the cathedral's finite form. The decision to add an underground expansion connected to the existing sacristy by a stairway provided a solution that would also eliminate any elements that may tarnish the monument's historical character.

The concept of a somber, narrow corridor leading from an ascetic sacristy to the altar reinforces the symbolism of "per aspera ad astra, ad augusta per angusta." The climate and atmosphere create a setting for the priests' moment of preparation in the sacristy and the meeting of sacrum at the Lord's Table.

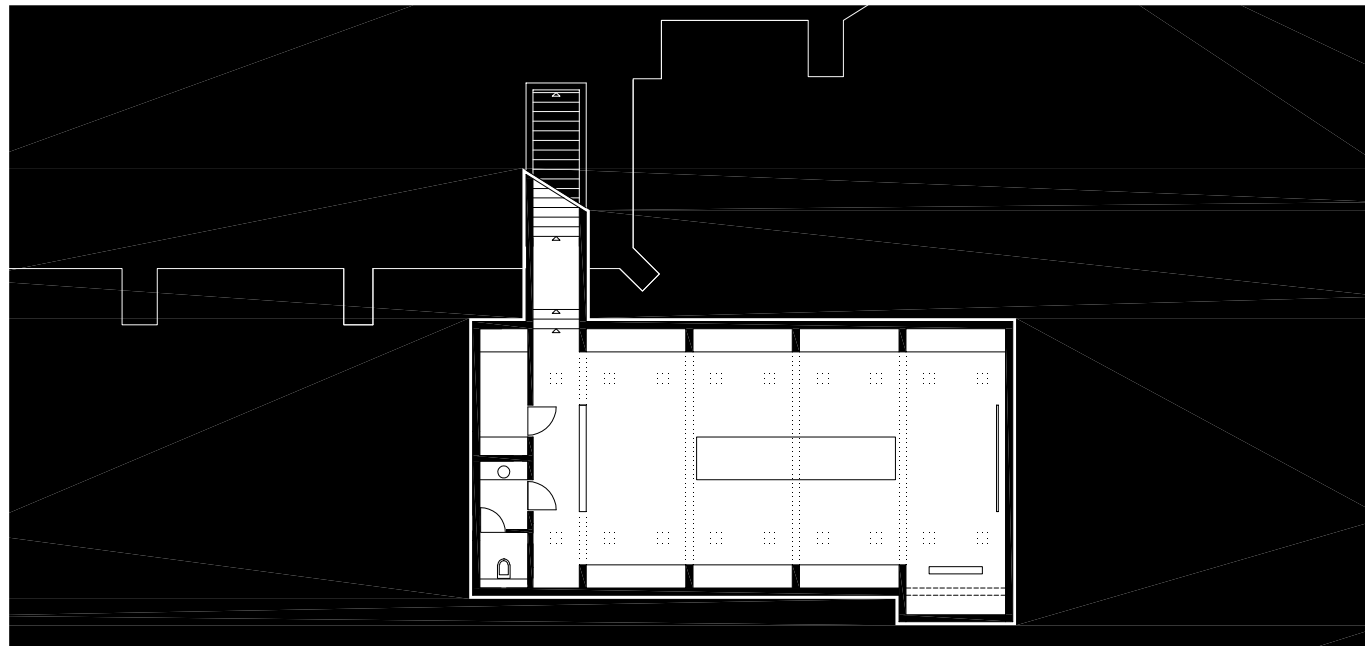
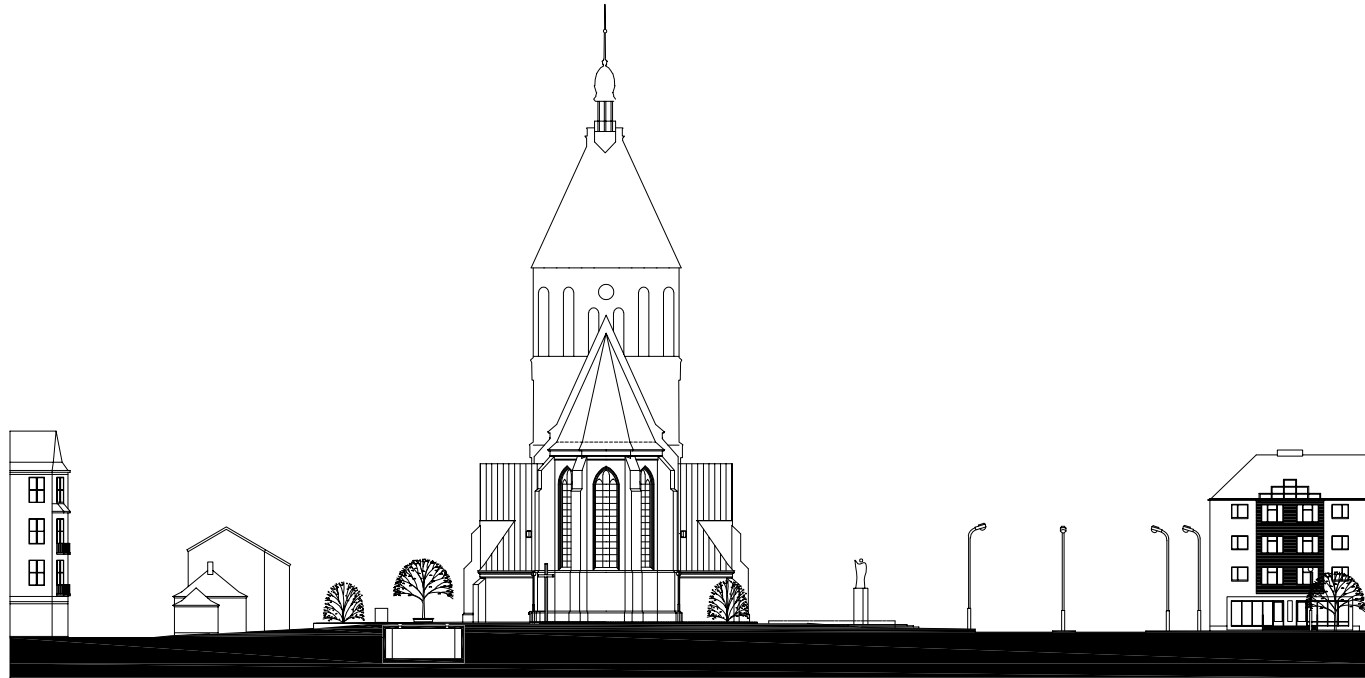
The underground structure is divided into three main zones. The first zone an extension of the stairs that leads to the adjacent wardrobe and restrooms that constitute the second zone. Here valuable liturgical vessels are kept behind armored glass. The third is the sacristy proper that contains the priests' wardrobes built into niches of the structural retaining walls.

A lightwell tucked into a deep alcove illuminates a timber figure of the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of the parish. This small chapel is the place of prayers and concentration for the priests before the Holy Mass.

Concrete, wood, stone, and glass are the only materials used for the construction and ornamentation. Proportions and detailing are articulated consistently throughout the space. The construction module is carried into the layout of the stone floor tiles, wooden furnishings, and lighting fixtures. Light emitted by the frosted artificial lighting takes on the same quality as the soft light coming from the square skylights. This unity establishes the calm, humble, and reflective nature of the new sacristy.

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 1998-2001







CINiBA

The Silesian University is currently housed in a complex of buildings adapted from the facilities of the former Teachers' Training College. This unpremeditated development did not suitably reflect the prestige of this institution which is well-renowned throughout Poland. Thus, the design of the new library has become a catalyst for establishing a new campus redevelopment plan to be implemented in the coming years.

Located at the intersection of the east-west axis that forms the spine of the campus, and the north-south axis which connects the recreational grounds by the river to land set aside for further university expansion, the library reinforces the axial organization which has so far been poorly articulated. A central university square at the foot of the library, the FORUM, generates a civic gathering place that opens onto the library's grand three storey atrium.

The height of the library has been determined by the average height of buildings on the university campus. The north elevation surpassing this height is directed towards the FORUM and houses the library's closed stacks. This elevation emphasizes the rank and function of the FORUM and is in dialogue with the existing tall buildings which close the east-west axis.

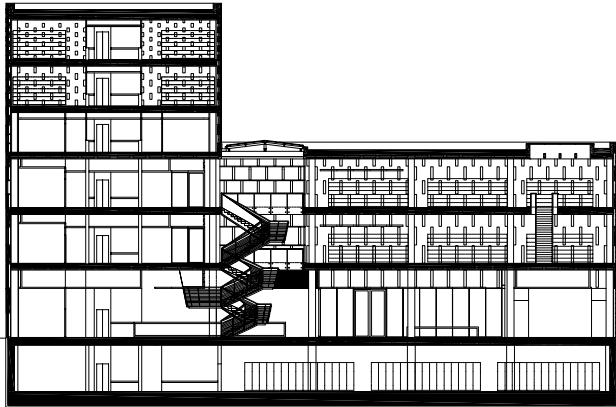
The facades, clad in a repetitious fabric of rich kahan red sandstone, relate to the raw clay bricks on the neighbouring buildings without the connotation of scale inherent to a singular brick element. The exterior treatment abstracts the building's function of organized book storing while introducing a notion of mystery inseparably connected to books. The lack of discernible scale produces a monolith when seen from afar that is gradually familiarized. Details such as the decreasing proportions of the façade tiling, the irregular cut of the sandstone slabs, as well as the windows carefully nested inside become visible.

The fenestration projects a stunning patchwork of light onto the FORUM at night, yet in the daytime allows diffused light to permeate into the library's reading rooms. The resulting strongly introverted interior composition of the library floors focuses one's attention onto the books while calming the space. Partial isolation from the external world not only influences the atmosphere within but also introduces a flow of time detached from the pulse of the surrounding city.

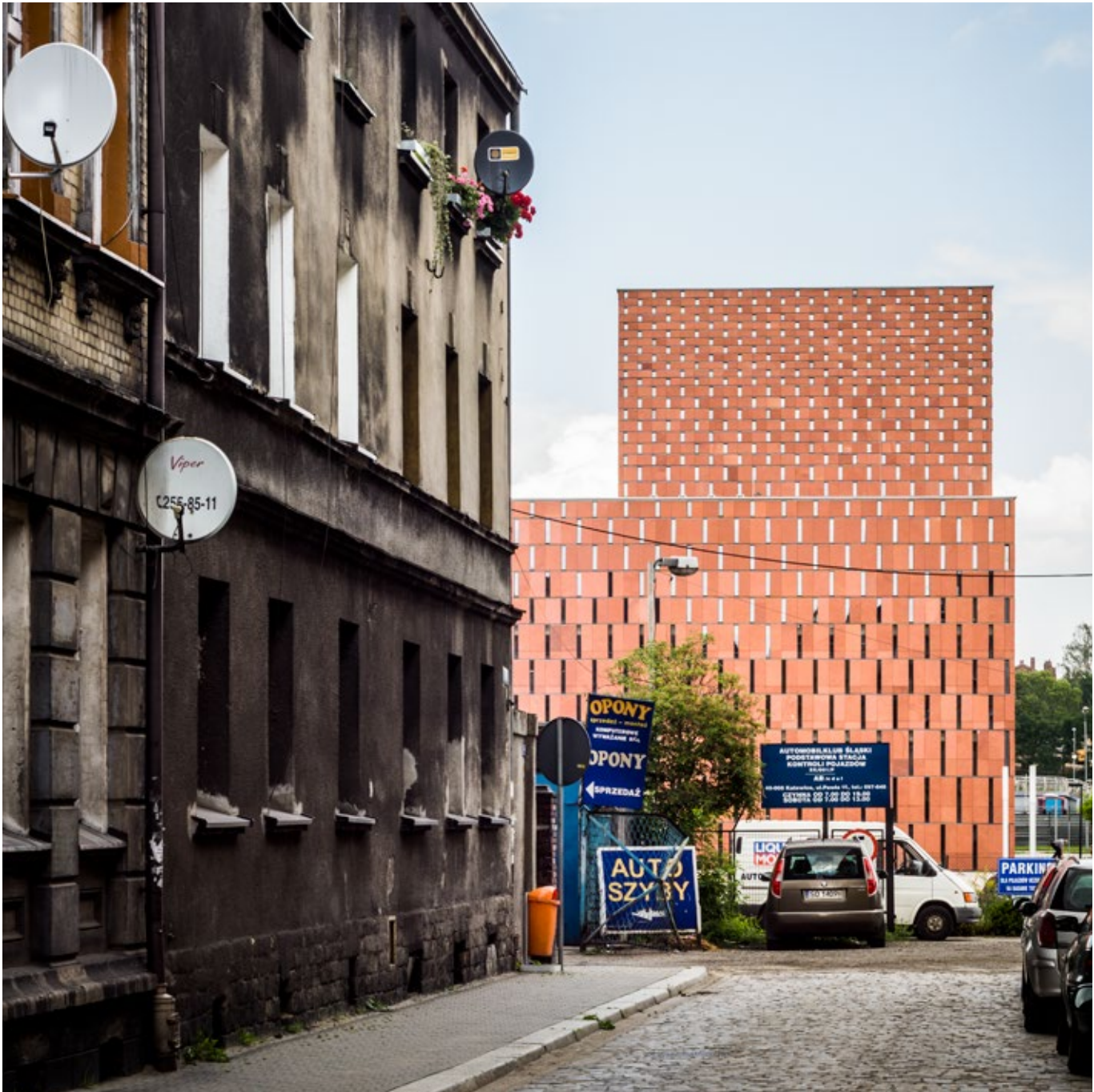
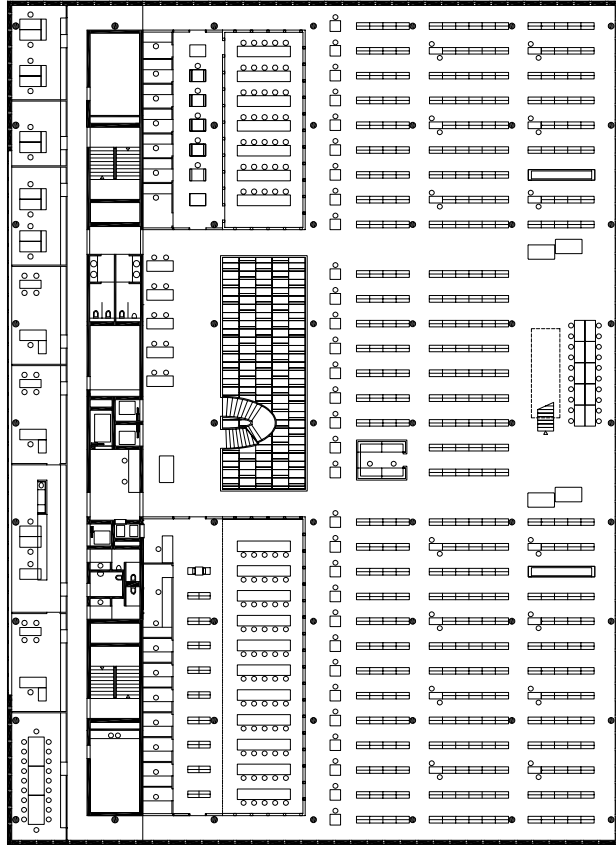
P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, W. Subalski, 2002-12



SECTION



2nd FLOOR





PR01

PR01 terraced houses were meant as a proposal attainable for an average family dreaming of their own house. The place of execution – a city in the province, the cost of execution – cheap house instead of an apartment in the block of flats, areas of the plots – a minimum in the provisions of the plan, the size of units ? reasonable management of square meters – all of this was to determine the tailor-made design, well-suited to the financial capabilities of a local customer (PLN 2,700/m² with a basic finish level) and to their optimized needs.

Polish construction law and zoning plans are very wasteful with regard to the financial resources of citizens, forcing high ceilings, large dimensions of stairs, dictating the types and angles of roofs, the size of plots, etc., heedless of the cost of designs prepared according to these assumptions. WWWhy are much richer countries less strict in these assumptions?

The design stripped down most of the requirements under the regulations to a minimum, and only where additional values could be achieved without abusing the resources of investors, decisions were made to allow for “modest extravagance” – the height of living rooms, durable façade and roofing, wooden blinds.

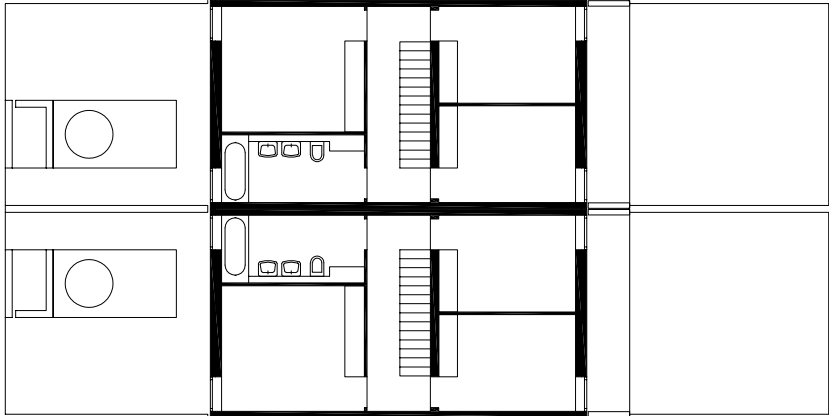
PR01 is also the voice of the authors on the quality of housing in the city. The compact terraced development makes full use of scarce resources of land available for development, while allowing for a sense of intimacy by residents.

Sticking to the principles above, it was possible to create a complex of modern houses, modest in form and function and economical in construction and use. Tailor-made.

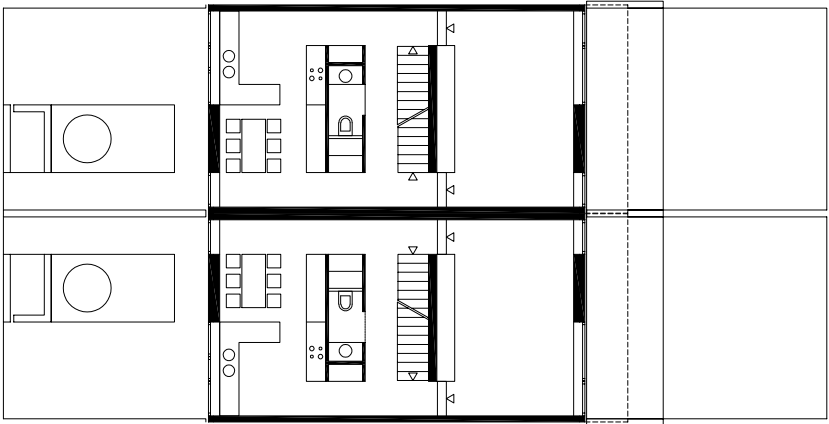
P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 2004-2008



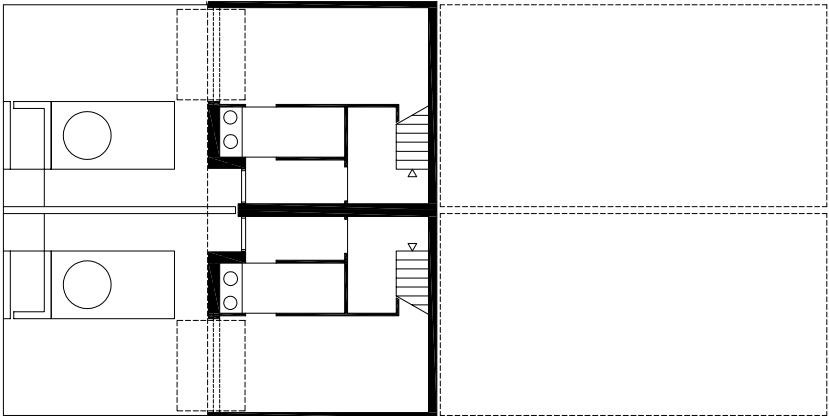
3rd FLOOR



2nd FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR





H9

*The first line on paper is already a measure of what cannot be expressed fully. The first line on paper is less.
Louis I. Kahn "Form and Design"
(in "the Voice of America Forum Lectures", 1960)*

It was not to be an exceptional house. The architect's own house was treated as any other design in hs99 studio, and as any other designs, it received its number. In principle, this was to be a small, light and one-storey house with a clearly defined functional programme and budget.

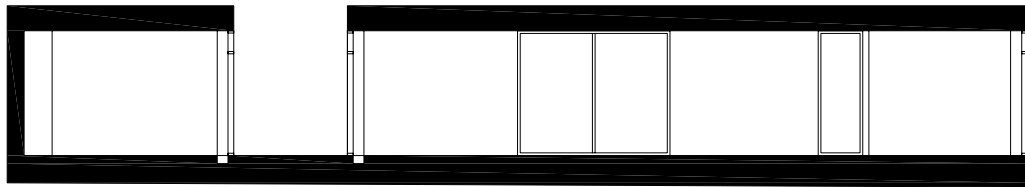
The house was designed in a suburban district of Koszalin, which as recently as till the mid 1990s was a village with a partially preserved buildings characteristic for this region. Located parallel to the road, the house divides the external area into public and private spaces. A garage was given up, and parking spaces for two cars were located directly by the road, outside the fence surrounding the plot.

The chief purpose of the design was an attempt of a new interpretation of the type of a house with "detached maintenance rooms", which dividWe the interior into various functional areas. The internal space was organized on a plan of three squares. The middle one, not divided by walls, constitutes the central part of the house, which centres the daily life of the occupants around the kitchen, the table and the fireplace. Two side squares include the connecting area comprised of patios and maintenance rooms, which separate the central part from the individual rooms. Fully glazed in walls adjacent to the patios provides a visual contact between the living room, the bedroom and the study. This also allows a smooth penetration of the internal space, making the relations between these zones different from the commonplace ones.

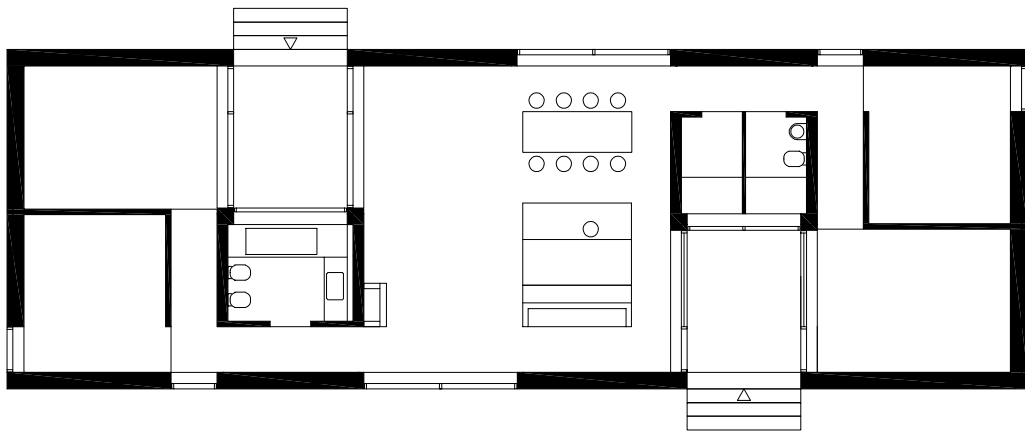
It was deliberate choice not to accent the entrance and to resign from a porch and a canopy. In spite of a lot of glazing, the house has a rather introvert nature. While inside, you are in a slightly different and orderly world, the exit from which is not so obvious. The materials used for the realization is the brick typical for this region, combined with wood, as well as cobblestones with irregular shapes, resembling the ones put on the main road in the village. As a rule, the design does not posses any refined details; it limits itself to defining only those things which are essential for it to exist. Not enough?

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 2005-07





SECTION



GROUND FLOOR





SP06

Though often damaged during the last war and neglected later, the cities from the so-called areas of Recovered Territories differ significantly from their counterparts in other Polish regions. The previous political system has destroyed in them what constitutes the essence of each city: its ownership structure. It has enabled every city to rebuild after each disaster. The image of a lack of identity of these cities was compounded by their almost total replacement of residents. The new ones began to learn about their city only after 1990.

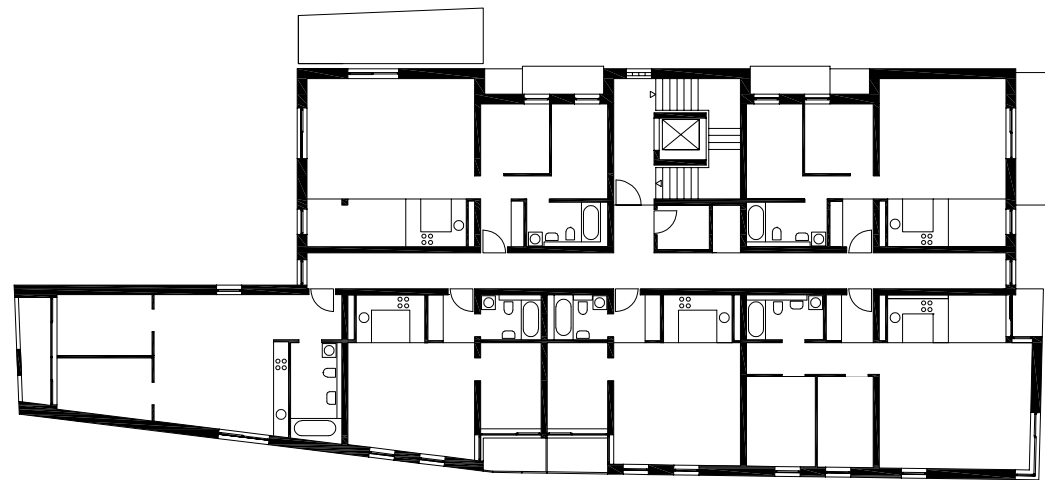
In this context, „patching holes” in the city is still one of the main tasks of design offices. Modest, balanced architecture bringing order to the chaotic urban space appears to be most needed.

The project site consisted of two plots. The plot adjacent to ul. Szpitalna for unknown reasons, was to have been excluded from the Urban Zoning Plan and provide the mode of access for the plot located further in. Both the manner of the plot development, withdrawn from the street and windows placed against all logic in the gable wall of the neighbouring building, as well as the building height recorded in the plan did not allow for the complete filling of the quarter.

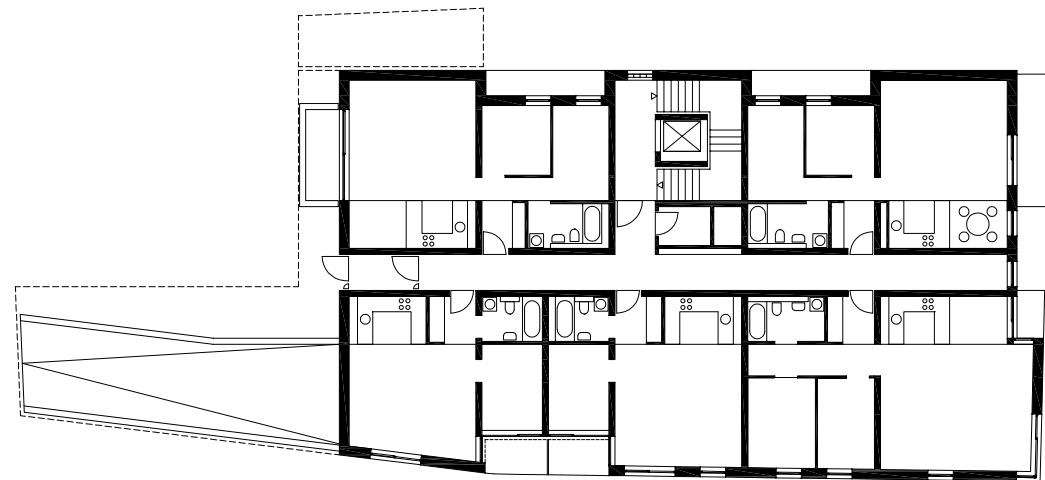
The plan was to construct a simple building, which in the best possible way would complement the existing development. The result is an affordable building (sales price approx. 4000 PLN/m²), which, despite the erroneous records of the zoning plan has completed the history of this part of the city, interrupted by World War II. Maybe it is not much, but on the scale of a city like Koszalin it is already quite a lot.

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 2007-10





2nd FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR





H13

The location of the building considering the landscape values in what was formerly the village of Lubiatiowo, the situation on a hill and the size of the lot are exceptional. The house was set parallel to the road and the lot boundary, while its height is such that it does not obstruct the view of the vast Lubiатовskie Lake.

The lot with an access from the north and tilted towards south permitted a classical division of the zones in the grounds: into a public area in front of the house and a private one behind the house. The functional organization of the house follows similar logics: the ancillary rooms (the bathrooms, the dressing rooms and the kitchen) were situated from the entry to the lot, and the residential rooms look out to the private south side.

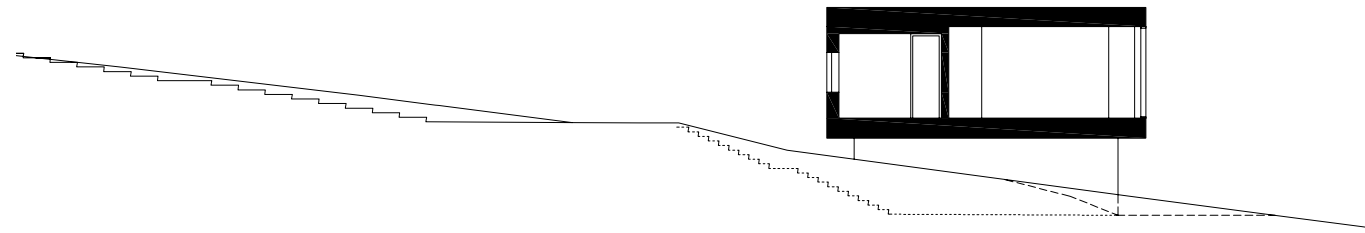
Due to the inclination of the lot, the house was lifted up over the ground, and the main storey, which contains all the residential functions, was set on pillars and a small utility section. As a consequence, a part of the house has no direct contact with the garden, which was compensated for with large patios, that are adjacent to the living area of the house, and round stairs (to be built) that connect the patio situated opposite the entrance with the garden.

The entrance to the building was located from the south in its central part, between the daily and nightly parts. The vast and glazed entrance hall offers a view to the lot behind the building long before one enters the house.

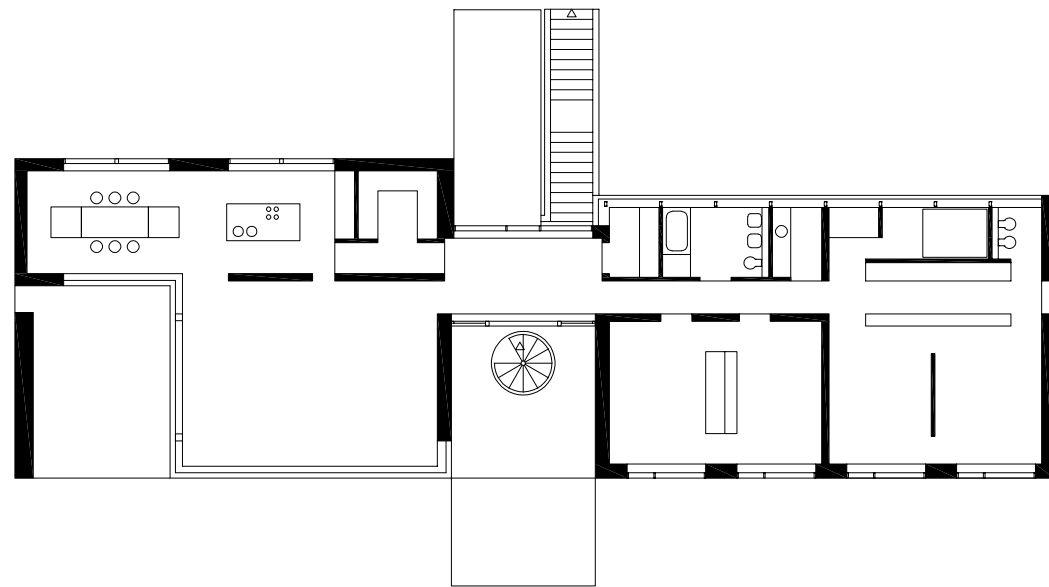
Owing to the use of mechanical ventilation, an orderly flat roof has been maintained, which is visible from the nearby road; in this way, it fulfils the expectations of the „fifth” elevation of the building.

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, 2009-12





SECTION



GROUND FLOOR





ZW109

The historical continuity of Koszalin was interrupted in March 1945, when the Russian army demolished the town, already abandoned by its inhabitants. The image of devastation was completed with the demolition of the historic urban infrastructure before the National Harvest Festival in 1975.

For these reasons Koszalin cannot boast of much architecture before 1945. It is, therefore, of particular importance for the town's identity to withhold even most basic objects from the past that in another context would simply be pulled down. The plot at 109 Zwycięstwa Street was developed with exactly such one-storey buildings whose front elevation was decided to be renovated. The residential and commercial building is the first of three buildings designed to be built on the plot located in the city centre. One of the main objectives of the project was a rational development of the estate, consistent with the structure of the space. The plot has an unusual shape resulting from random post-war changes in its ownership.

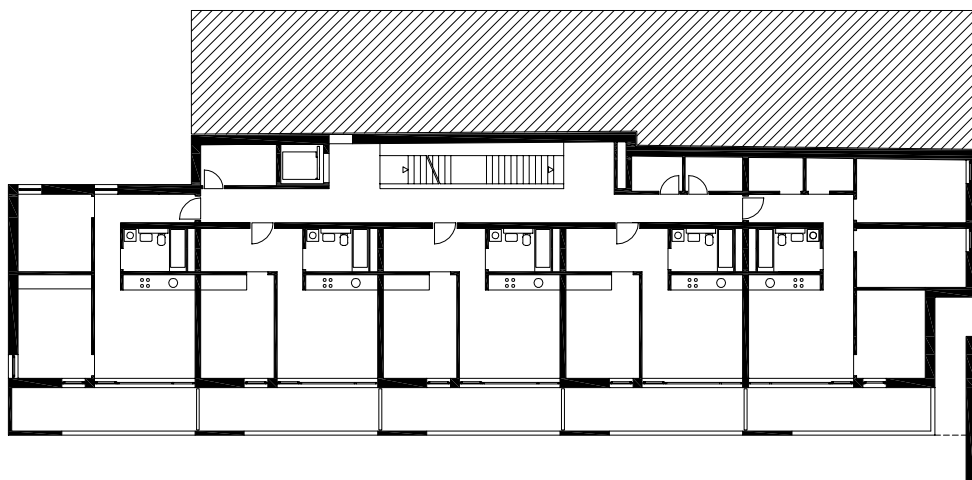
The existing spatial development plan did not allow constructing at the eastern border of the plot, which ruled out the rational development of this part of the city. Fortunately, obtaining a derogation for the location of the building on the plot border allowed to extend the narrow strip of buildings from 6 to 10 meters. The relatively small building was designed as a one-bay structure with small one-sided flats on the west side and slightly larger flats from the south and north. The eastern wall, which will be further developed in the future, was temporarily insulated and painted in gray.

Commercial units are located on the ground floor. They are not accessible from the main street, but from the internal pedestrian passage connecting the already erected object with the two buildings planned to be built at the back of the estate. The distinctive facade of the old building was decided to be reconstructed on the basis of plaster casts of the original ornaments. It features as a „gateway” to the pedestrian passage. To contrast the facade of the main façade the gate was painted white.

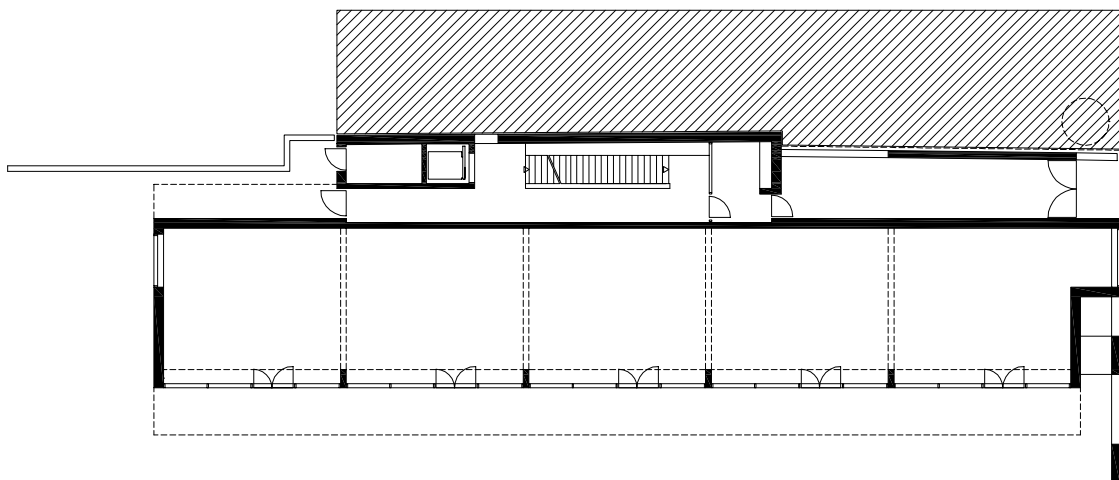
Particular attention was paid to the entrance area of the building. Two entrances were designed; one from Zwycięstwa Street and the second from the park. These entrances lead to a one-flight staircase lighted from the top, finished “in white”, as the gateway.

P. Smierzewski, D. Herman, W. Subalski, 2008-12





2nd FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR





ANALOG

ANALOG is an architecture studio run by Piotr Smierzewski. Piotr studied architecture at the TU Gdansk from 1983-1988 and graduated at the OSU, Stillwater, USA in 1992. He had been teaching assistant at the OSU and assistant at the TU Gdansk and TU Darmstadt (Prof. B. Jakubeit/Prof. D. Eberle). Since 2013 he lectures at the TU Koszalin.

Piotr worked in Germany from 1992-1999, where he run his own office Piotr Smierzewski Freier Architekt in Karlsruhe from 1995-1999. He later moved to Poland and founded HS99 with Dariusz Herman in 1999.

Their most famous projects include the underground sacristy of Koszalin Cathedral (1998-2001), the seat of the Glos Pomorza daily newspaper (1997-2001), as well as the award-winning building of the Scientific Information Centre and Academic Library (CINiBA) in Katowice (2002-2012). In 2012 this building won the Grand Prix of the President of Poland in the Life in Architecture competition organised by Architektura-Murator. This was the first architectural prize in Poland ever awarded by the head of the state.

With HS99, Piotr Smierzewski was also shortlisted for the Mies van der Rohe Award 2013 (CINiBA), won the Building of the Year 2012 in the category of museums and libraries, awarded by members of the international ArchDaily news portal, for CINiBA. For residential building ZW109 in Koszalin they won the polish Brick Award 2015.

The projects by Piotr Smierzewski stand out for a strong sense of “place” and deep knowledge of the theory of architecture, what allows to reduce architecture to its very essence.

