



Filmstill, *Stranger Than Paradise*, Jim Jarmusch (1984)

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## Top of Europe

### - In the Shadow of Masstourism

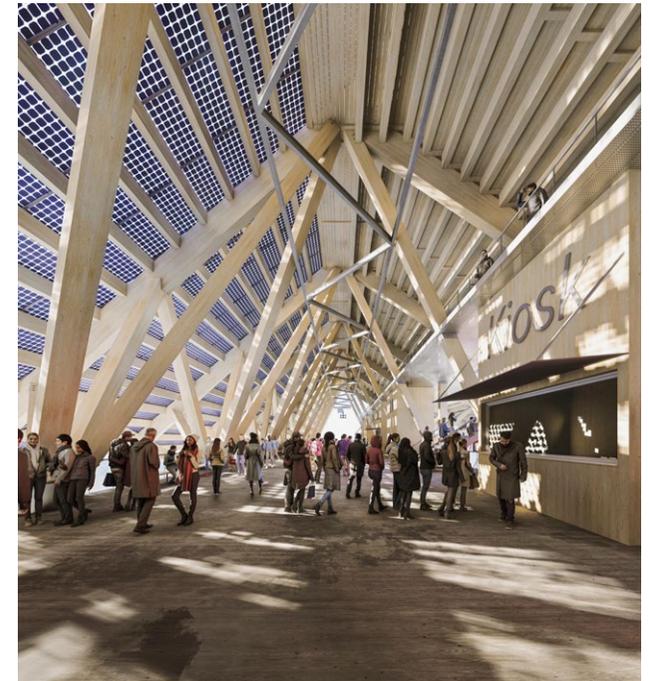
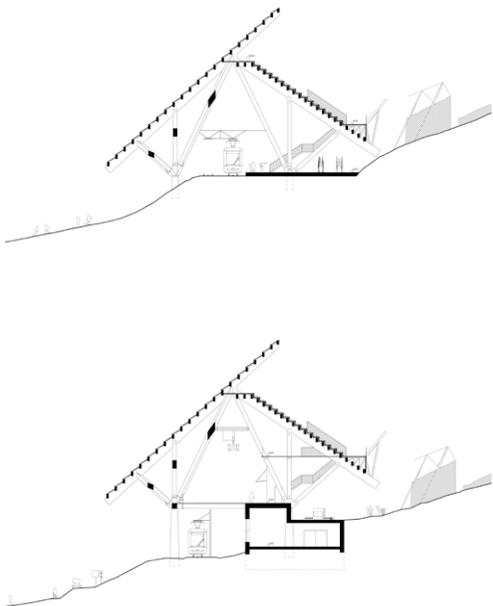
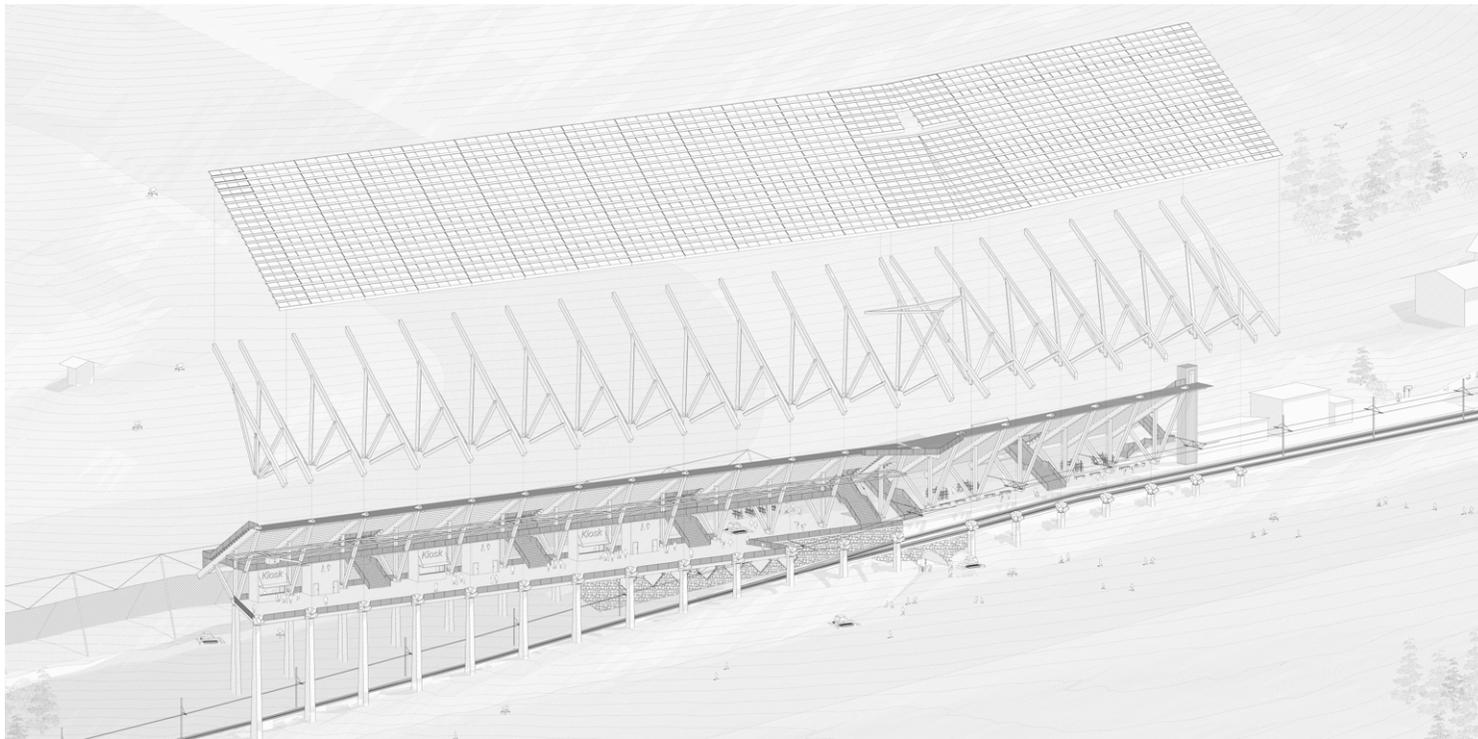
Tourism has become one of the most powerful global industries, shaping landscapes, economies, and everyday life. Long before today's debates on overtourism, Hans Magnus Enzensberger observed that "tourism destroys what it seeks by finding it." This paradox is particularly visible in the Jungfrau Region, one of Europe's most iconic alpine destinations.

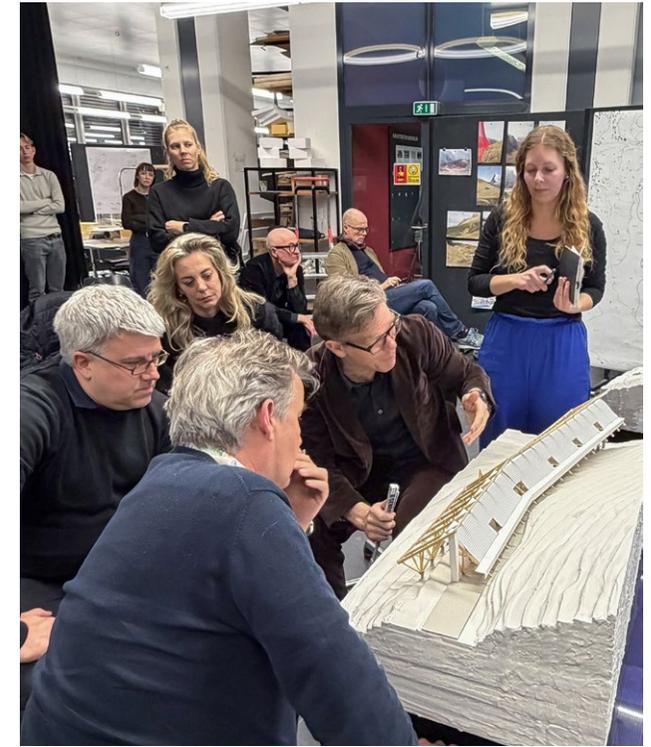
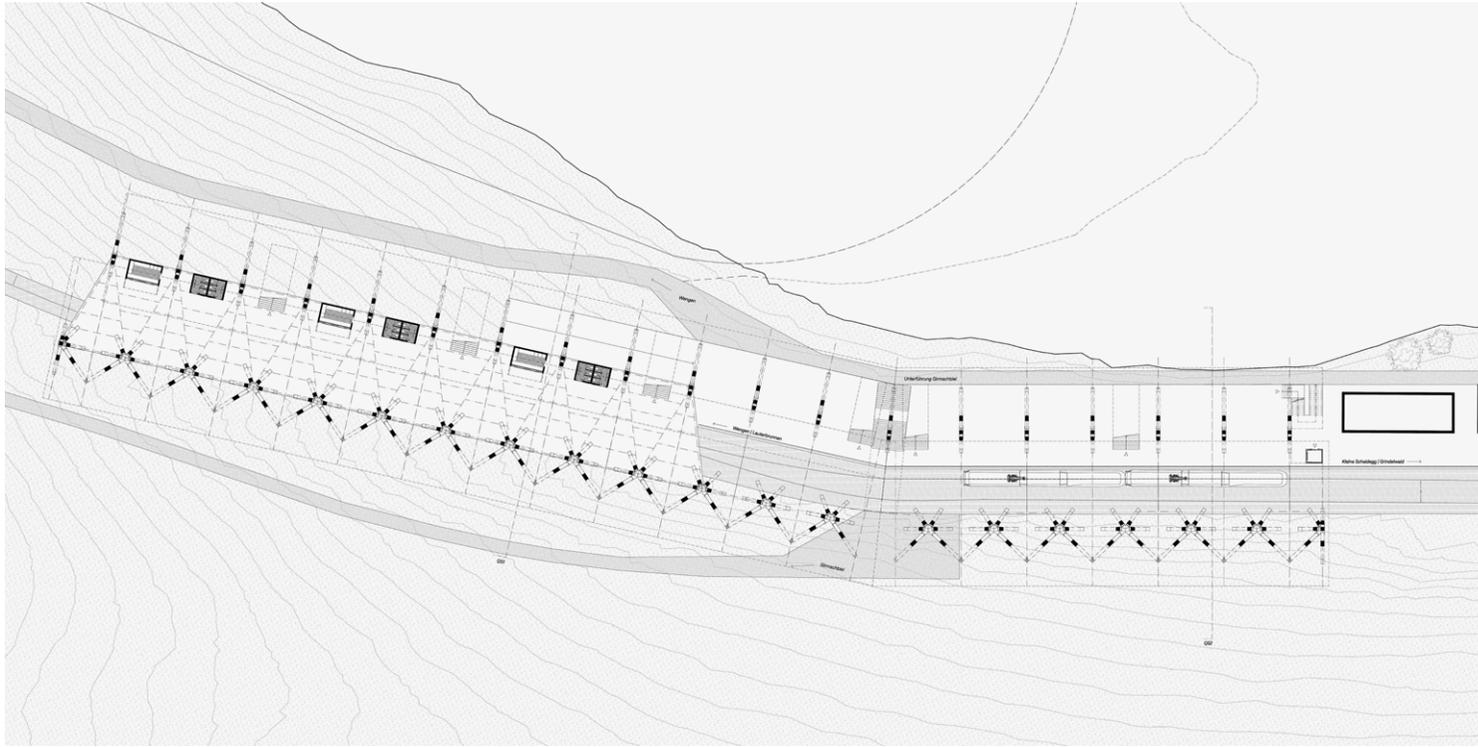
At 3,450 meters above sea level, the Jungfrauoch—marketed as the "Top of Europe"—formed the symbolic peak of a highly coordinated tourism machine. Each year, more than a million visitors travelled to the highest railway station on the continent. Interlaken, positioned between Lake Thun and Lake Brienz, served as a global gateway to Grindelwald, Wengen, Mürren and the Lauterbrunnen Valley, framed by the panorama of Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. Behind the impressive imagery lay an infrastructure system continuously expanding to sustain growth.

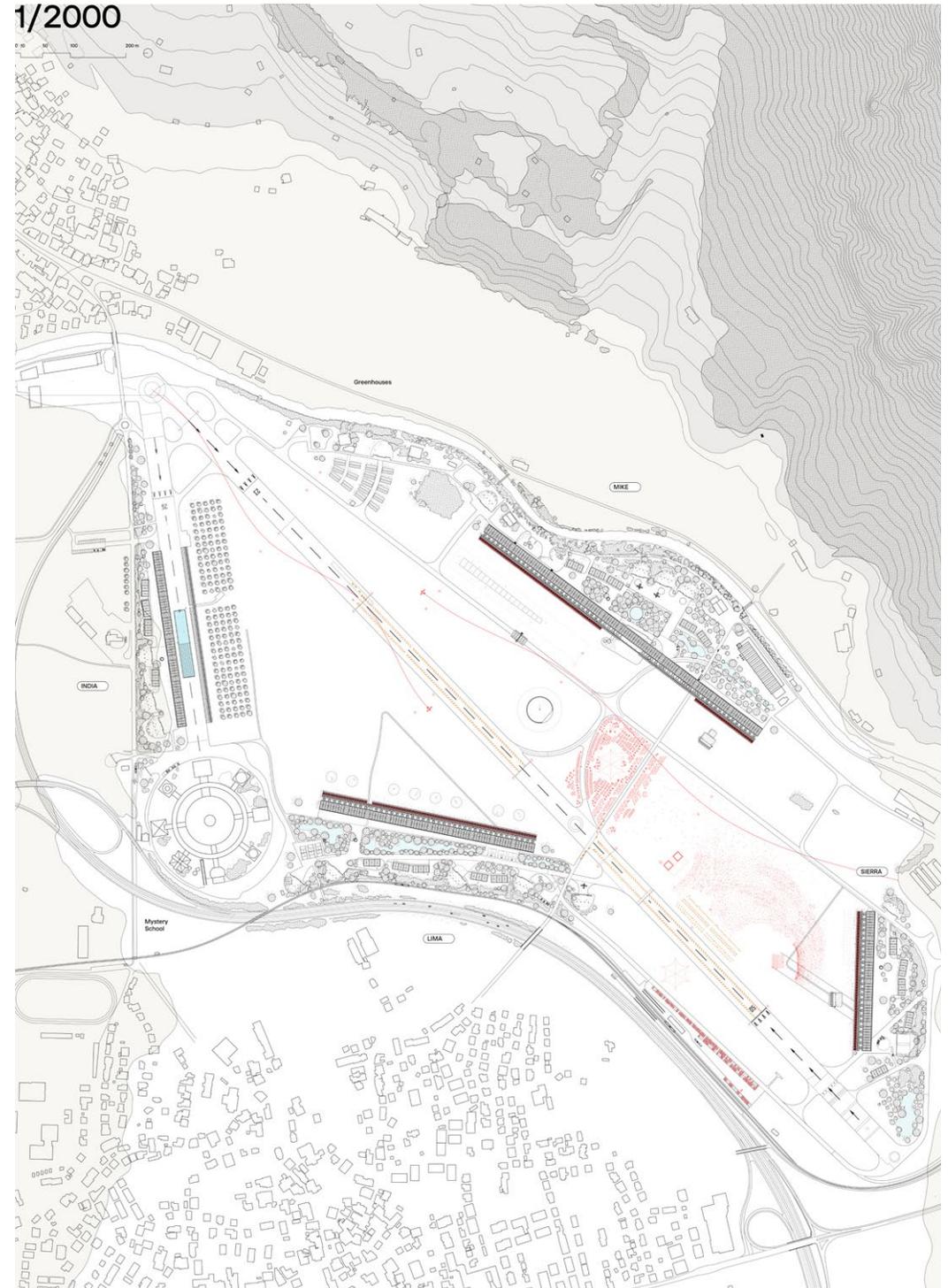
While tourism promised prosperity, it also produced spatial, social and ecological tensions. The region was not only a stage for visitors but a place of work, logistics and everyday life. Hidden from view were worker housing, waste streams, technical infrastructures and the growing pressure on local communities negotiating between economic dependence and loss of control.

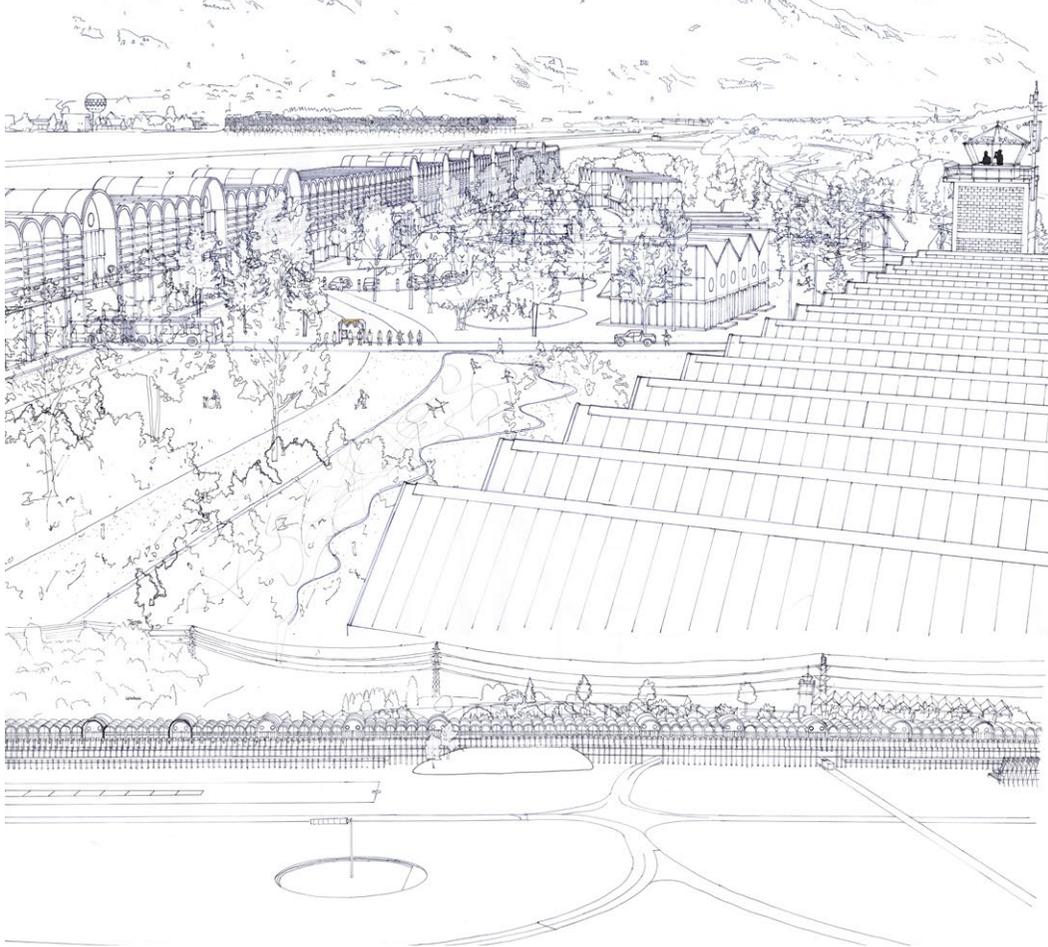
This semester we took these hidden layers as our point of departure. Rather than celebrating the spectacular viewpoints, we focused on the backstage spaces and actors that kept the system running. Through research and mapping, students developed narratives exposing imbalances and spatial conflicts within the tourism economy.

Based on these narratives, the students proposed architectural interventions as instruments of disclosure and transformation. The projects made invisible processes visible, addressed working and living conditions, reconfigured overburdened sites and explored new relationships between tourism, landscape and local life. Architecture was understood not as an isolated object, but as part of a larger territorial and social ecology.



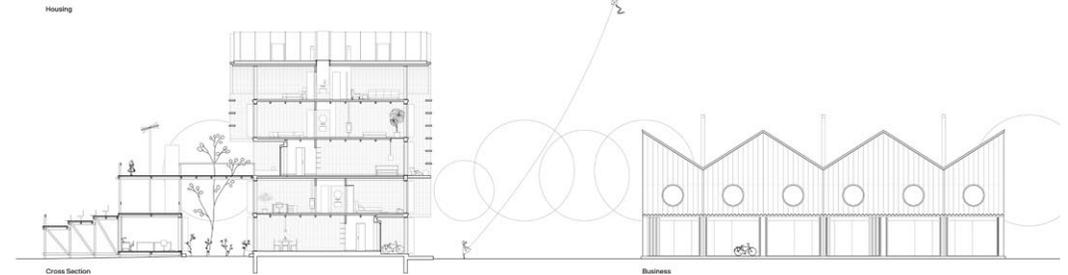
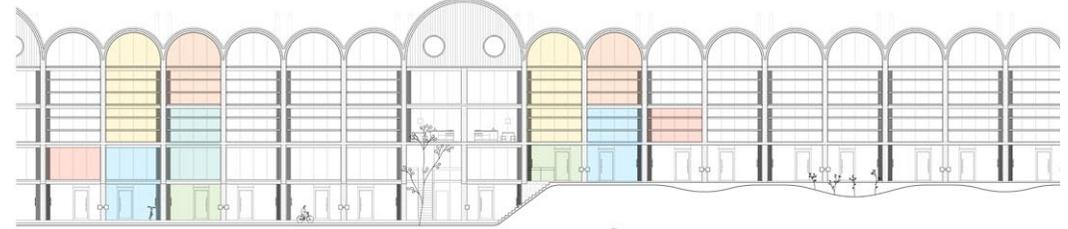
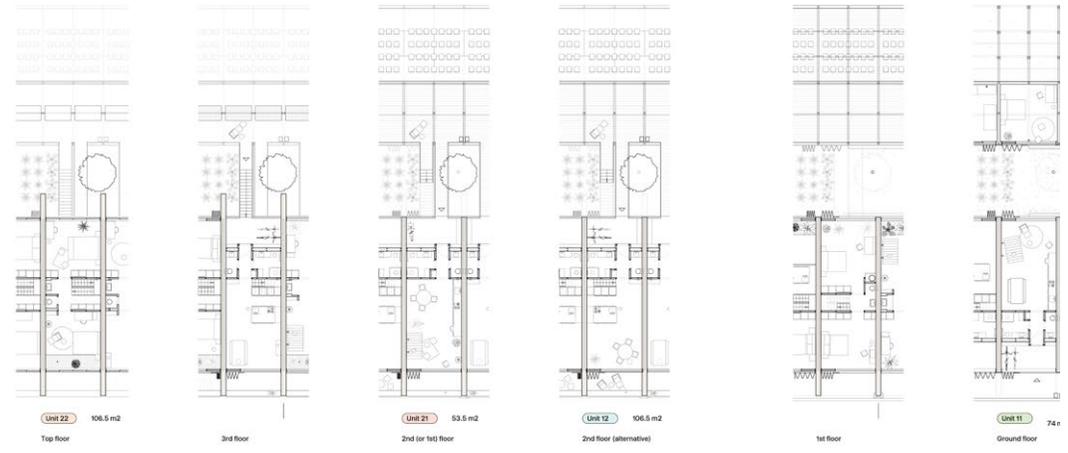
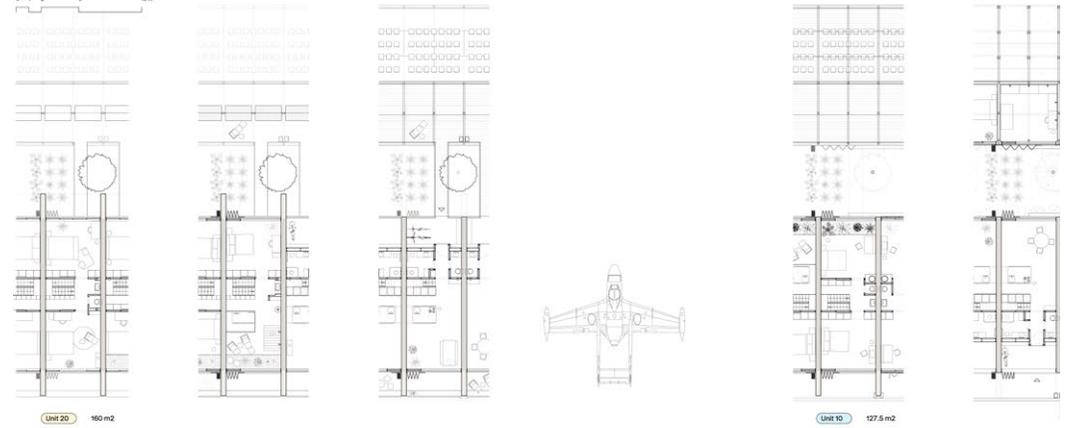


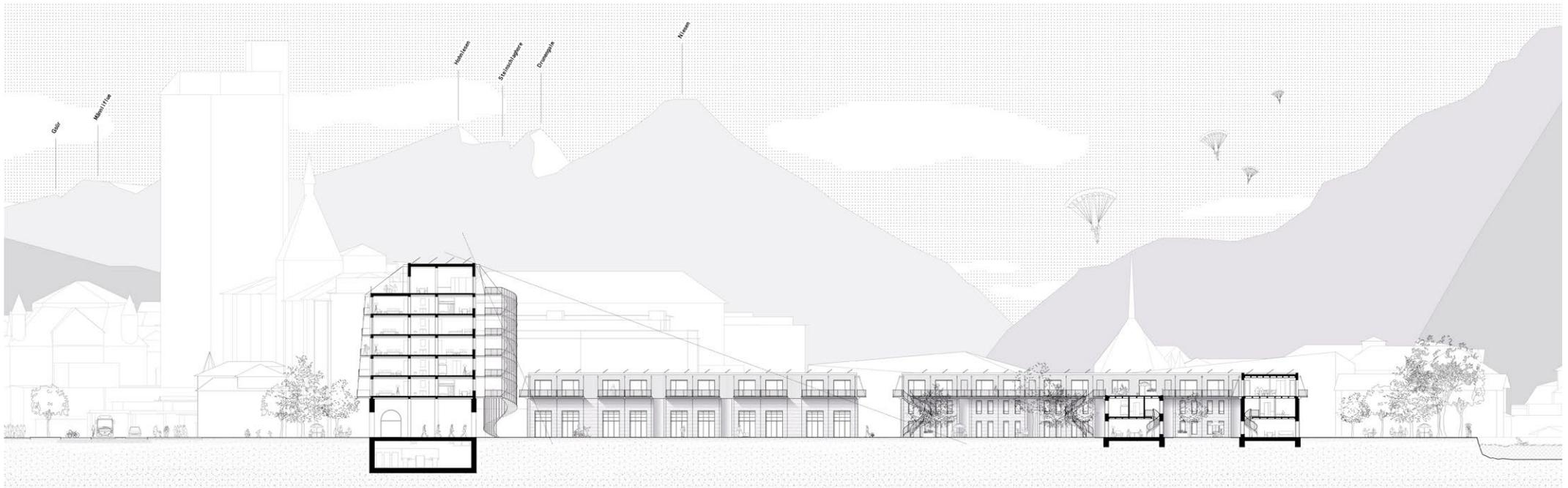
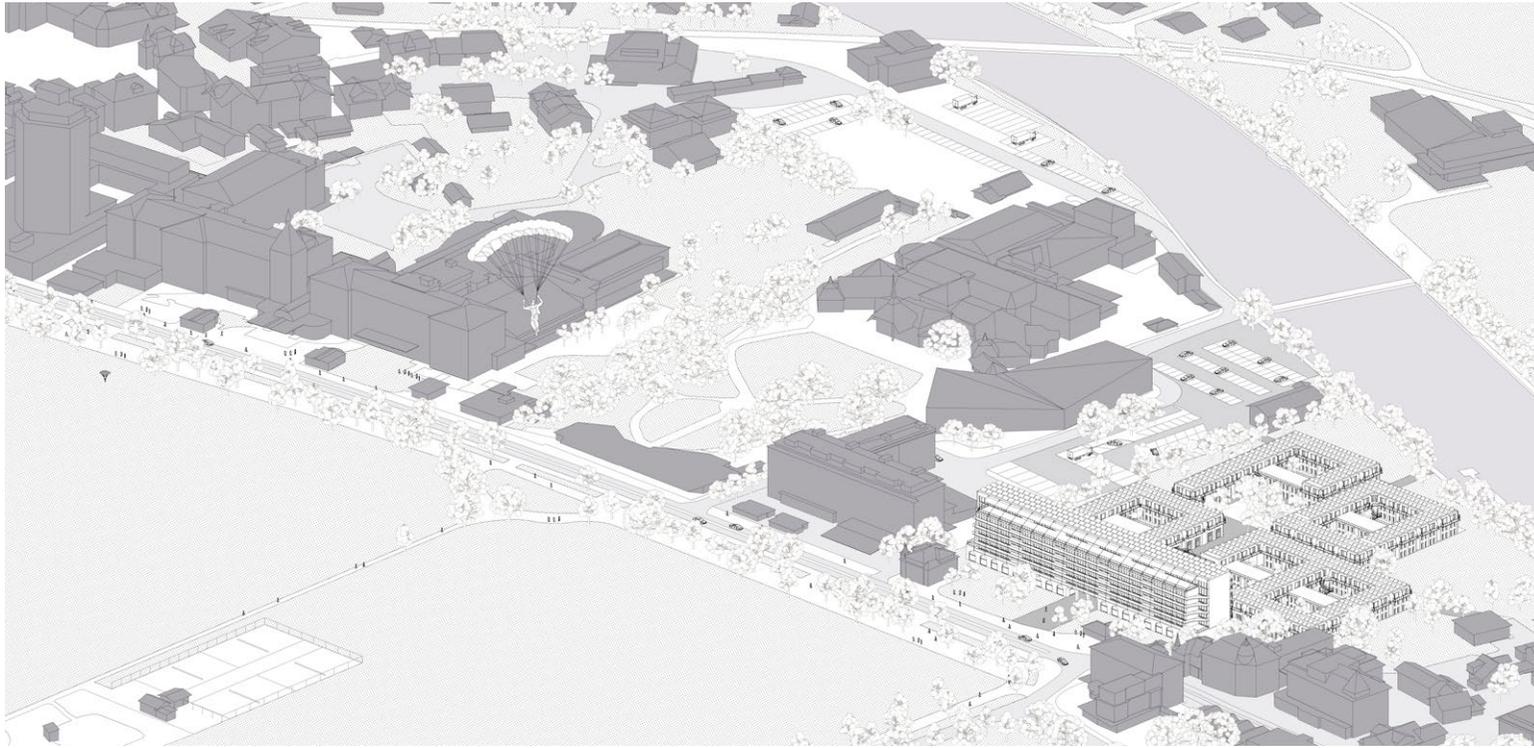




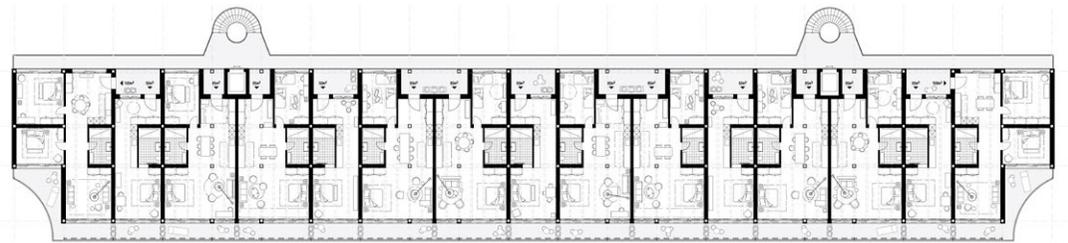
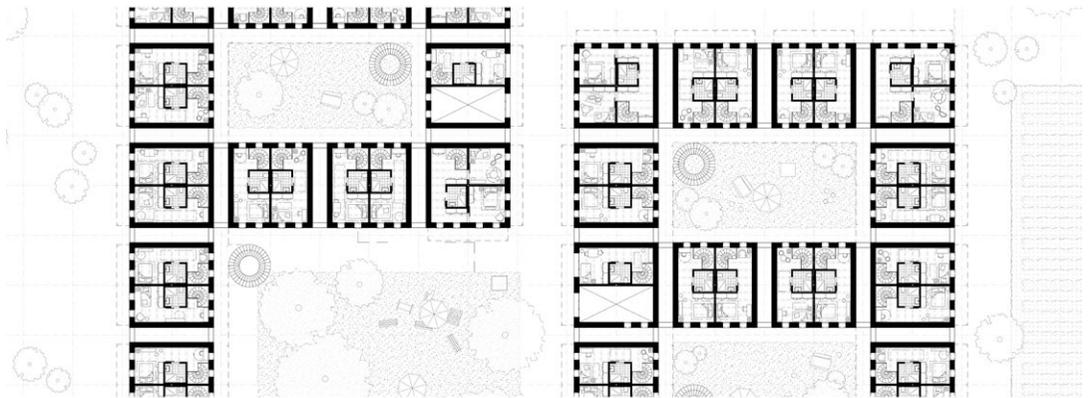
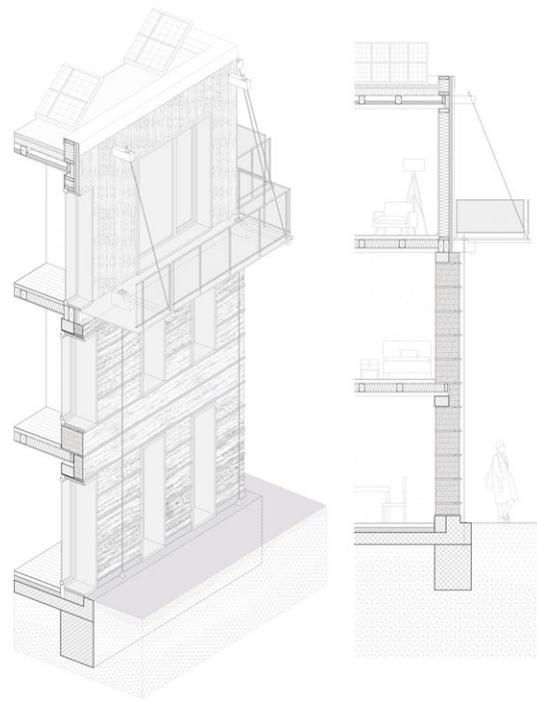
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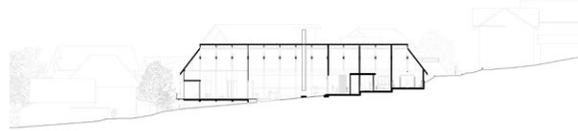
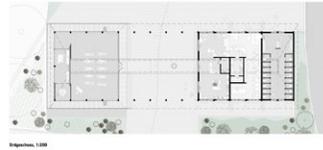
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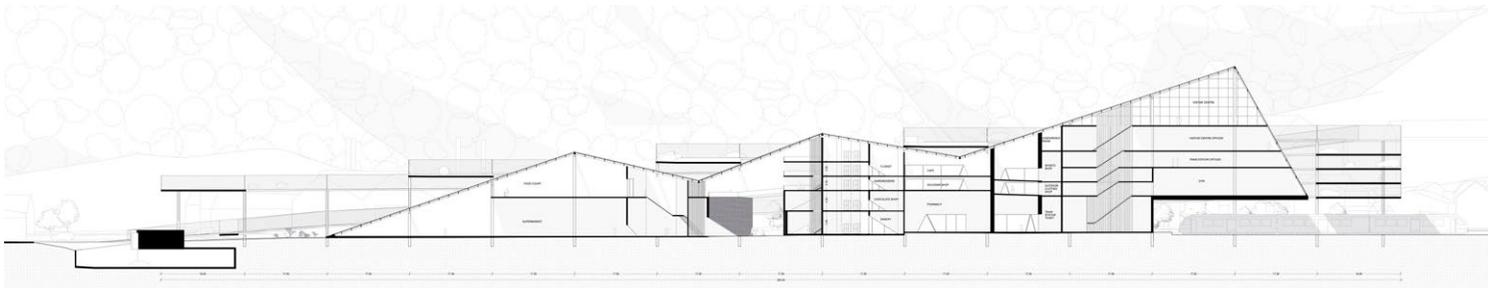
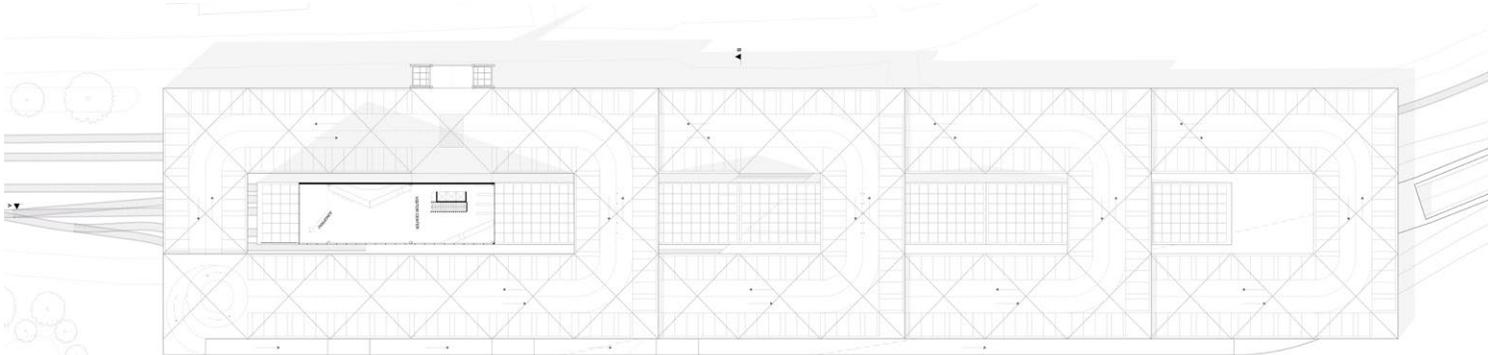
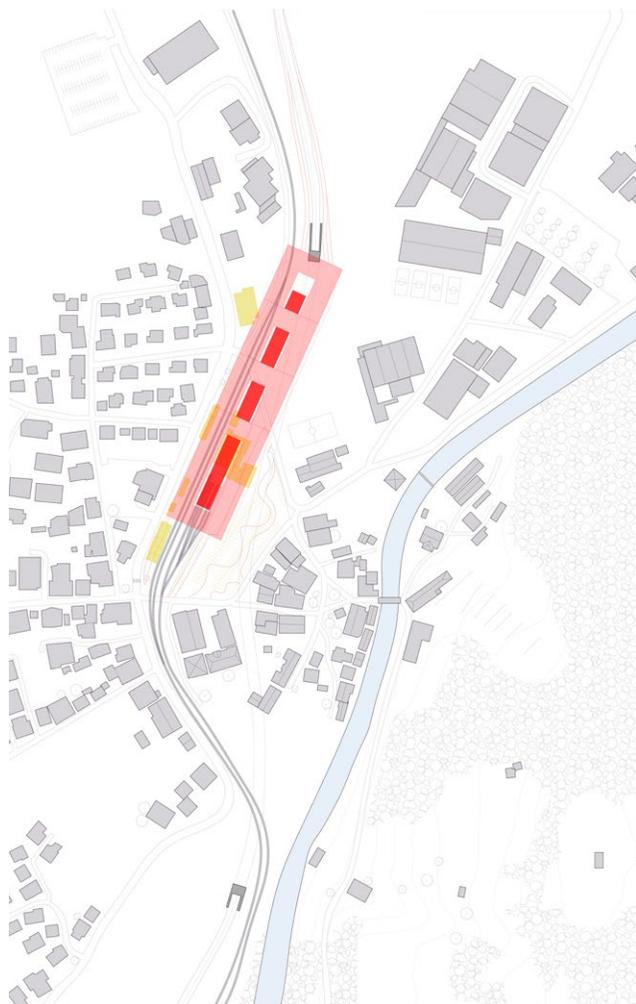
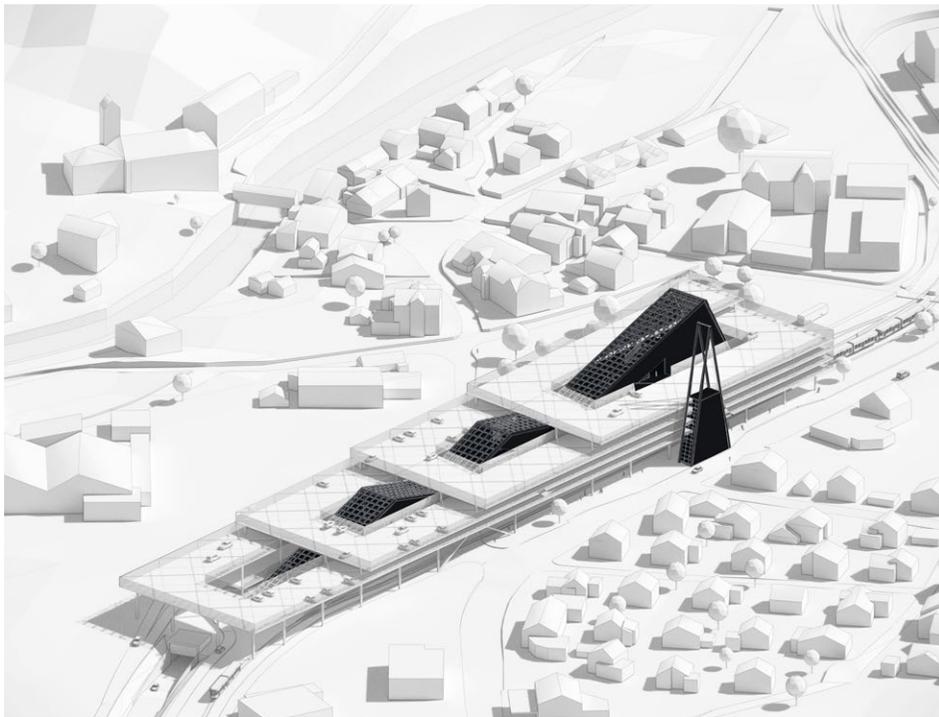
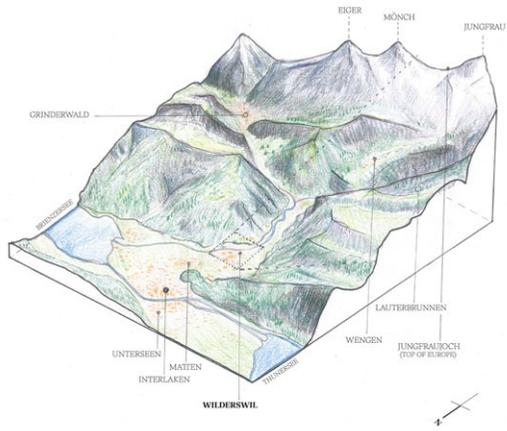
Rethinking Rental Housing in Interlaken **Alexander Mur & Simon Spitzer**





Pfrundmatte, Lauterbrunnen **Désirée Nobs**





Gateway to Jungfrau **Zoie McKenzie**