ALPINE MOTEL
alpine motel
swiss mountain passes / 2009
One of the key ideas underlying the ALICE design approach is the constant discourse between the conceptual framework of an architectural idea and its translation into an actual project. This means on the one hand the conception of the architectural project, and on the other, the development of a coherent program according to this architectural idea (this of course also vice versa). For example: How can the specific panoramic condition at a given mountain pass transform or interpret the known typology of a motel into a unique spatial experience while at the same time offering the function of an alpine motel?

The second semester of the academic year 2008/2009 was a continuation of our investigations on altitude.

We developed a project in a mountainous, alpine condition in several resolutions at different scales. First, a series of mountain passes were looked at and transformed into panoramic site models. Subsequently the program of Entrée Alpine has been introduced as a first step towards a project proposal: the design of an Alpine Motel.

After the Entrée Alpine phase 16 proposals have been evaluated in a jury with external experts in a public review. Several proposals served as the basis for a ‘one to one’ structure to be erected in Zermatt at an altitude of 2536 m as a part of the Zermatt-Festival. At the same time the Entrée Alpine venture informed the projects of the Alpine Motel: A close relationship between the Entrée project and design projects for the motels were maintained throughout the semester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mountain Pass</th>
<th>Elevation</th>
<th>Location Details</th>
<th>Passable Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Croix pass</td>
<td>1776 m</td>
<td>Diablerets to Bex</td>
<td>passable 05-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forclaz pass</td>
<td>1527 m</td>
<td>le Châtelard to Martigny</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grand-St-Bernard pass</td>
<td>2469 m</td>
<td>Martigny to Aosta</td>
<td>passable 05-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Simplon pass</td>
<td>2005 m</td>
<td>Brig to Domodossola</td>
<td>passable 01-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Grimsel pass</td>
<td>2165 m</td>
<td>Innertkirche to Oberwald</td>
<td>passable 05-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Furka pass</td>
<td>2429 m</td>
<td>Andermatt to Oberwald</td>
<td>passable 05-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nufenen pass</td>
<td>2478 m</td>
<td>Ulrichen to Airolo</td>
<td>passable 06-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>San Gottardo pass</td>
<td>2106 m</td>
<td>Airolo to Wassen</td>
<td>passable 05-11</td>
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</table>
In the first week, the studio prepared in groups of 2 students a panoramic site, i.e. a model which brings to evidence the specific location and condition found at a given mountain pass.

The model described the panoramic condition encountered, as well as addressed an idea of ground and/or topography.

As the given mountain passes are not accessible in winter time, Google Earth in 3d mode was used to construct:

A) a digital model addressing the panoramic condition

B) a physical model translating panorama and an idea of ground and/or topography into physical form

The material for the physical model was 1mm aviation plywood.
Panoramic Site: Furka Pass, Gabriela Schar, Korab Rameeani
Panoramic Site: Grand-St-Bernard Pass, Nicolas Feihl, Francois Nattermod

Panoramic Site: San Gottardo Pass, Ahmed Belkhodja, Adrian Llewelyn Meredith, Panoramic Site: Croix Pass, Julien Proudhomme, Carole Westhoff
Towards an Entrée Alpine: Forclaz Pass, Eveline Job, Lukas Manz
In weeks 2 to 5, we developed a project for an Entrée Alpine. It was located at a chosen site along the road of each mountain pass. In parallel, the work on the panoramic site model continued. The two models formed complementary parts of the project and informed one another.

Entrée Alpine was invented as a place of introduction or initiation to a view of the natural environment. Entrée was considered a space of transition.

For example:

a) the transition of a state of driving towards a state of temporal residing,
b) a transition from a moving position of the observer in the car to the movement of the body,
c) the transition from a moving position of the observer in the car to the movement of the body,
d) the transition from the containment of the concavity of the valley towards the convexity of the alpine panorama and the double curvature of the geoid, etc...

Entrée Alpine was considered a space of transition. For example: a) the transition of a state of driving towards a state of temporal residing, b) a transition from a moving position of the observer in the car to the movement of the body, c) the transition from a moving position of the observer in the car to the movement of the body, d) the transition from the containment of the concavity of the valley towards the convexity of the alpine panorama and the double curvature of the geoid, etc...
WK 14 01 APR
Entrée Alpine: Simplon Pass, Alexandria Ming Aerni, Augustin Clement

WK 15 08 APR
Entrée Alpine: Croix Pass, Martin Lepoutre, Hadrien Tricaud
Entree Alpine: Nufenen Pass, Olivier Di Giambattista, Samuel Maire
The projects were further developed in several resolutions. While one proposal for an Entrée Alpine was brought to fabrication at a ‘one to one’ scale, the other projects took the proposals as an initiation into the project for an Alpine Motel. In common critiques both projects were the subject of continuous discourse.

The panoramic condition further informed the projects for an Alpine Motel: How can this panoramic quality of a sweeping, unbroken view be confronted with an interiority of space and how will fragmentation address a framing de/framing of the formerly unbroken condition of the presence of an all-encompassing landscape? How will the concepts found in Entrée Alpine further be developed to become both structure and programmed space?
WK 18 29APR
Alpine Motel: San Gottardo Pass, Stage 1, Denny Te Kloese, Youcef Mezzour

WK 19 06MAY
Alpine Motel: Furka Pass, Stage 1, Fabian Roth, Simon Wälti
The final phase was devoted to physical production: A 1:1 mock-up of the Entrée Alpine was constructed and a series of physical models for the Alpine Motels were fabricated.

The projects for the Alpine Motels entered a phase of intense model building at the scale of 1/33. For the final presentation the focus was lying on these models. Model building crafts, conceptual stringency, spatiality, as well as site specific translation of the particular project into a physical artifact formed the main criteria for the evaluation of the projects.
WK 21 20MAY
Alpine Motel: Grimsel Pass: Grimsel Damm, Julien Prudhomme, Carole Westhoff
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