Evolver is an inhabitable sculpture erected for the Zermatt Festival, the renowned annual event for Chamber Music featuring the Berlin Philharmonics and many others. As an architectural artifact Evolver intervenes spatially on the panorama surrounding Zermatt and was designed and executed by a team of 2nd year architecture students from the ALICE studio at EPFL in Lausanne, Switzerland. In an effort to take full advantage of the site’s extensive and astounding views, the project sits strategically next to the lake Stelli at an altitude of 2536m. Its structure mainly consists of a succession of 24 rotating frames supporting an enclosed space that visitors are encouraged to enter. As he or she progresses through the space, a concealed but uninterrupted 720° movement is unraveling along a transformed panorama. This transformation occurs while inside a person is moving along a selective string of openings only to be caught peeling off a sequence of unexpected views from the original landscape. Wobbling below and above a distant horizon, ground and sky have been re-orchestrated into an orbiting panorama by a journey that has already culminated to where it started: A loophole on the skyline.
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 2536m as a part of the Zermatt-Festival.

This booklet shows the studies on geometry, scale, materiality and structural performance. The Entrée Alpine group of 10 students finally settled on a design based on the figure-8 Klein bottle equation. The project was erected in summer 2009.
Studies on scale Physical models First mock-up
Conceptual model of opening
Physical model 1/10

Mock-up at EPFL
Evolver was partially prefabricated in Lausanne at EPFL+ECAL lab and at EPFL. The trusses were then transported to Zermatt Stellisee to an altitude of 2536 meters above sea level. The Entrée Alpine group erected the structure in a joined effort in a three weeks period in August and September and was inaugurated at the Zermatt Festival 2009.
Transport

The first trusses erected. Evolver evolving
evolver
zermatt stellisee 2009/2010
Photos by Joël Tettamanti
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alice students 2008/2009
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