Project

Residential Complex Broëlberg I, Kilchberg

The land around Broëlberg manor house consists of a 57,000 square meter park bordering onto open landscape in the community of Kilchberg. The land was zoned for single family houses and the initial project called for single storey detached homes, which would have entailed the development of the entire site. An alternative plan was devised in which controlled density of the inhabited plots made it possible to preserve the parkland character of the premises.

Six sites were selected – within clearly defined boundaries – for the construction of concentrated, volumetrically distinct three storey buildings with varying concepts of habitation; Broëlberg I was constructed in 1996.

The beautiful location with an unobstructed view of the Lake of Zurich, the countryside and the old town of Kilchberg, as well as the price of the land and the tax advantages of Kilchberg clearly predestined the site to accommodate high quality apartments.

A base, which is mainly used for parking, connects the three buildings to form one volumetric whole. The base itself forms a raised courtyard or podium which provides the entry areas for the buildings. Two of the buildings each accommodate four apartments and a penthouse, the third consists of a row of four units. In most of the apartments, the kitchen and dining area face the podium while the living room with its projecting conservatory and the bedrooms are orientated towards the landscape.

The podium itself – a large surface of poured concrete slabs, glass bricks and gravel – is subdivided into a public access area and semi-private outdoor seating by means of pavilion-shaped steel structures with plywood planking.

Large windows, like huge eyes, are indicative of the luxurious setting, as they afford a magnificent view of the lake and the surrounding parkland. The windows have no external bars or railings. A broad aluminium frame, somewhat like a cornice, encases the blinds, guide rails and wooden window frames. The free distribution of the floor-to-ceiling openings responds to the different types of apartments. The aluminium clad facades of the penthouse apartments are set back to allow the creation of roof terraces. The main facades consist of masonry with exterior insulation and a fine, evenly coloured stucco that encases the building like a smooth skin.

The dark brown of the outside walls enhances the volumetric appearance of the structure, evokes ploughed fields, tree trunks and anonymous agricultural buildings, and also establishes a connection with the soft, organic structure of the facade. In close collaboration with the artist Harald F. Müller, the brown tone was selected and juxtaposed with the light orange walls of the courtyard, generating intense colouring in this space that varies with changes in the natural light. The orange and brown tones are related: brown being a darker form of orange, and orange being a brighter form of brown. The colours are mutually intensified where they meet at the edges of the buildings, while their effect on flat surfaces is extremely distinctive. The brown tone has a calming, integrating, natural, reserved and yet handsome feel to it as opposed to the shrill, artificial, alien, and blissfully beautiful feel of the orange. The glazing reflects the landscape, the surrounding buildings and the sky, while the finely grained coloured stucco has a matte appearance. These two opposites result in an interplay, which reacts intensely to different light conditions.

G/G, May 2011
Credits

Project: Housing Complex Broëlberg I, Kilchberg

Address: Im Broëlberg 2–7
          8802 Kilchberg, Switzerland

Spatial Programme: Housing Complex of three three storey buildings with varying concepts of habitation; fourteen living units in total: two buildings each accommodate five apartments, the third consists of a row of four units; the base is mainly used for parking, it forms a raised courtyard providing entry areas for the buildings.

Masterplan: 1990


Client: Dr. Otto P. Haab, Küsnacht

Architecture: Annette Gigon / Mike Guyer, Architects, Zurich in collaboration with R. + E. Guyer Architects, Zurich
Collaborators: Matthias Stocker (Project Manager), Ivana Vallarsa, Andrea Roth

Construction Management: R. + E. Guyer Architects, Zurich
Collaborator: Carmelo Hochstrasser

Gross Floor Area (SIA 416): 4'097 m2

Landscape Architecture: Neukom & Neukom Landschaftsarchitekten, Zurich

Structural Engineer: Aerni + Aerni Ingenieure AG, Zurich

Electrical Engineer: Bühler + Scherler AG, Chur

Building Services Engineer: 3-Plan Haustechnik AG, Winterthur

Graphic Design: Trix Wetter, Zurich

Colours: Harald F. Müller, Öhningen, Germany

Photography: Heinrich Helfenstein, Zurich
Harald F. Müller, Öhningen, Germany