

Revitalization of BPT TRŽIČ

trAILs - Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation

Project Studies in the winter term 2017/18
Chair of Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscape
Prof. Dr. Udo Weilacher
Department of Architecture at Technical University of Munich







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Revitalization of BPT TRŽIČ

Project studies on the pilot-site in TRŽIČ, Slowenia, Slowenia

High chimneys, steam, dust, noise and dense railway tracks: In the peripheries of big cities, post-industrial areas have often already been transformed, due to the pressure of resources exploitation. In non-urban and rural regions such abandoned sites pose new challenges for planners and communities. This is the case for the former Textile industry in Tržic located in the south-eastern Alps - a geographic area which is usually disregarded when it comes to post-industrial transformation. The influence of industry in the economic, social and spatial transformation of the

Alps through the last two centuries has been revolutionary. The functional link between industry, hydroelectric energy and the railway was, at least in the beginning, a major driving force for the modern development in several Alpine areas. The Bombažna Predilnica complex in Tkalnica Tržic, D.D (BPT), the Spinning and weaving Company TRŽIC, is a good example: It was positioned at a bottleneck of an already narrow valley in order to use the hydroelectric energy of the Bistrica river, and separates the Alpine village in a younger and a historical part. The textile and clothing

industry in Slovenia have a long tradition and reached high-quality standards. The relatively small enterprises could not successfully compete in price with the production sites of low-wage countries. The decline of the industry in this particular topographic situation offers a big opportunity for the development of the village. By breaking up the spatial barrier of the industrial complex, it is possible for the first time to connect the separated parts of the village. The former Spinning and weaving site in Tržic is one of four pilot areas of the research project trAILs (Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation, see following page) and is also the focus area in the master studio at the Chair of Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscapes of the Technical University Munich in the winter term 2017/18.

The task for the master studio was to develop a transformation concept considering landscape architectural design on the relevant scales and addressing a perspective for the social, ecological and economical development of the region at the same time. In order to get in touch with the subject, a group of eleven international landscape architecture students visited together with Prof. Dr. Udo Weilacher, and teaching assistant Diana Böhm the site in October 2017. During their stay the students had the opportunity to thoroughly analyze the site. In a cooperative workshop the students did also elaborate first visions for the site transformation and shared them with the project partner.

Five teams of Master students worked on suitable transformation concepts. The results show different approaches ranging between minimal and maximal intervention, from gradual re-use of all existing buildings on the site to the complete demolition of all existing structures preparing the ground for new future development and investment.

The projects will be integrated in the trAILs Test-Design workshop foreseen for June 2020.



trAILs

Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation

The decline of traditional heavy and manufacturing industry is occurring nowadays even in peripheral and less urbanized regions, such as the Alps. Here, in the so-called "green heart of Europe", this process is leaving behind impressive former productive landscapes of relevant size and complexity: Alpine Industrial Landscapes (AILs). The potential value of AILs in terms of sustainable development is strongly connected to Alpinewide ecological, economical and social key challenges, such as the regeneration or improvement of blue and green infrastructures, the reactivation or upgrade of regional economies and the promotion of local identity and cultural heritage. However, at present only few AILs have been reused and transformed for these purposes, mostly those located in proximity or within large Alpine cities and urban agglomerations, where good accessibility and a rather developed socio-economic environment have allowed so. The majority of AlLs are indeed to be found in small municipalities and economically marginal contexts, burdened by financial, technical and planning limitations.

The project trAILs - Alpine Industrial Landscapes Transformation, initiated in 2017 by the Chair of Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscapes of the Technical University of Munich and officially approved by the Interreg Alpine Space Committee in April 2018, aims to generate significant knowledge about AILs and to develop and test sustainable transformation strategies applicabile and replicable in the whole Alpine space.

To achieve these objectives, the project builds on a strongly multidisciplinary and transnational partnership combining proved expertise in the fields of landscape architecture and environmental sciences (Technical University of Munich, University of Ljubljana), spatial planning (Polytechnic University of Milan, Vienna University of Technology) and socio-economic sciences (University of Verona) with regional and local Alpine



The transnational partnership of trAILs around the Alps

communities represented by regional development agencies in Austria (VESTE/Styria), Italy (LAMORO/Piedmont), France (CAUE84/PACA) and Slovenia (BSC KRANJ/Goreniska).

The foreseen activities are structured around four work packages. The first one (Map AlLs) deals with the implementation of an AlLs database starting from the data available in the project pilot regions and the subsequent development of an interactive GIS web-based platform to visualize the current situation across the whole Alpine Space. The second and third work packages (Assess AlLs and TestAlLs) are based on the project pilot sites (Eisenerz/AT, Borgo San Dalmazzo/ IT. L'Argentière-la-Bessée/La-Roche-de-Rame/FR. Tržič/SLO) and focus respectively on the comprehensive and multi-criteria assessment of AILs actual conditions and the development of a test-design procedure for AILs transformation. Test-design, in particular, represents a core activity of the whole project, since it will bring together project partners, regional stakeholders, experts and international observers in a participatory planning process taking place on-site through a workshop format of several days. The last work package (Manage AlLs) will transfer the generated knowledge to end-users through the establishment of an AlLs knowledge exchange, information and decision support platform as well as the publication of a methodology handbook and a learning module for advisory and training activities.

With this approach, the project will support local and regional stakeholders in the complex process of sustainable AlLs transformation, providing them with clear strategic planning tools for the future as well as with hands-on experiences. Several institutions have already expressed their interest in the project activities and outputs, and thus joined the project as observers. Among them, the Regional Authorities of Bavaria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Auvergne Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte



Representatives and project partners guided the students and teachers of the design studio on site

d'Azur, the Slovenian Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment, Alpine-wide organizations such as the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and CIPRA International, and the universities of Graz, Zürich, Bergamo, Grenoble and Lugano.

Marcello Modica Prof. Dr. Udo Weilacher The project is founded within the EU-Interreg Alpine Space Programme (Priority 3 - Liveable Alpine Space, Specific objective 1 - Sustainably valorize Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage) with 2.187.400,30 Euro and will last until April 2021.

More information, news and events can be found on the project website: https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/trails

Background information

TRŽIČ lies 15 minutes north of the capital Ljubljana, between the foothills of the Slovenian Alps, close to the Austrian border. Coming from the northern Dovžan gorge, the river Bistrica flows through the village, contained by walls. Some zones with urban character such as a former cotton weaving mill and the Neuhaus manor characterize the listed townscape. The once-important leather and textile production and the traditional cobblers' trades have not survived the end of Yugoslavia. Today, Tržič is known as a good starting point for tours, especially for skiers, climbers and climbers. The old town has been listed as historic monument for decades, as well as the former cotton mill, which is centrally located in the city.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS

Tržič lies on the edge of the Southern Limestone Alps, between the mountain ranges of the Karawanken and the Steiner Alps (slov: Kamniško-Savinjske Alpe). The region is characterized by karstic, chalky rocky areas and a correspondingly diverse limestone-loving flora. Immediately north of Tržič lies the picturesque Dovžan Gorge on a valley road. The area around the gorge is also known for its fossils and there is a geology nature trail that draws attention to the



Location of Tržic in Slovenia



The site is situated at a bottleneck of an already narrow valley of the Bistrica river, it separates the historic Alpine village in North-East and the younger citydevelopment in South-West.



50 m.

fossils. These potentials, the peculiarities of the natural aspects, are of great importance with regard to the development of gentle tourism.

Tržič is located in a touristically important area. The entire region attracts numerous hiking tourists and climbers with challenging hiking trails. The alpine cultural landscape can be experienced well and opened up for tourism. The region is also considered an excellent ski area. There is an appropriate infrastructure for numerous other sports such as BMX and mountain biking and the slopes around Tržič are suitable for paragliding and hang-gliding. Contrary to these existing potentials, tourism in Tržič itself seems to be still expandable.

TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN TRŽIČ

"The cobbled spinning and weaving was established in Tržič at the confluence of Bistrica and Mošenik in 1885. The main partners were E. Glanzmann and J. Wachter. Due to the spinning, migrants began to migrate to Tržič, on the one hand, foreign experts on the other, domestic workers, and began to develop an industrial, urban pulse of the city, which significantly shaped the development of the last 250 years.

In socialist Slovenia, the textile industry was an important economic factor. After the disintegration of the Yugoslav multinational state, the industry experienced its continuous decline. Unlike the steel or mechanical engineering industry, for example, the textile industry received no public support from the government. The city has recently been endeavoring to achieve structural change, supported by cooperation with research projects and funding programs from the European Union.

FIRST CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE REUSE OF THE PROJECT AREA BPT (2017)

Unanimous the market municipal council decided that the municipality will buy a good hectare of land on the 4.5 hectare large area of the former Cotton spinning mill and weave Tržič (BPT) 2017, according to Mayor Borut Sajovic, the first concrete step towards the regulation of this area.

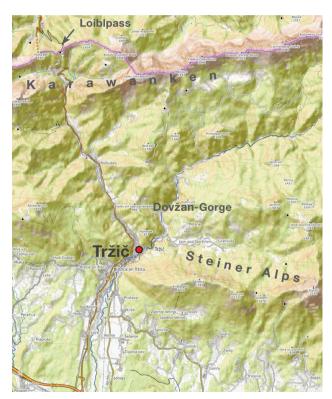


Postcard of the Spinning and weaving Company 1900



3D-study for reuse and transformation of the area (2017)

The municipality intends to regulate public areas in the BPT area (parking, roads, cycling routes), said Mayor Borut Sajovic at a recent conference in Tržič, adding that with the owners - Vojo, the majority owner of real estate in the BPT area, the Institute for Protection Cultural heritage of Slovenia and municipal councils brought the matter so far that content can be discussed at all. Because the complex is too crowded and very dense, the municipality would demolish one of the buildings that was built after the war, in order to get space for traffic needs.



Location of Tržič in the Southern Limestone Alps (Karawanken und Steiner Alps).

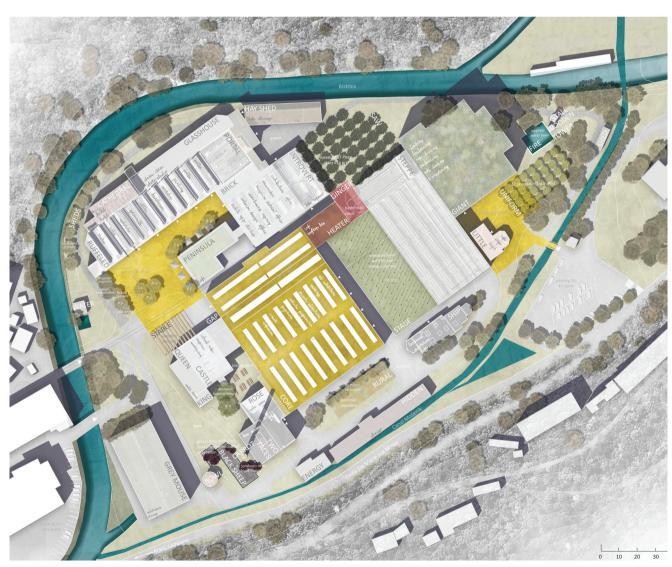
Giant Meets King

Valentyna Fnukalova, Mira Groos

The quality of the former textile mill BPT is constituted by a high diversity of characteristics that were translated into a complex, intertwining and overlapping network: 50 existing "micro-characters" were identified that define the strong personality of the closed-down area. The aim of the project is to keep the diversity of the area under any circumstances.

The area can be transformed flexibly without losing its face, as long as the defined characters are always preserved. For this purpose, the site's various "personalities" are categorized by the strength of their character. After the activation of the area through acupunctural interventions, the process is initiated. Starting with the transformation of the weaker characters, a (symbolic) new layer will be added in each phase. Each building can be used and transformed at any point of time, as long as the given character is still readable. As the untouchable characters are necessary for the readability of the history of the landscape, they will not be questioned in the course of the whole project.

The area will be brought to life by an artistic approach based on the characters "Welcome", "the Core", and "the Plaza". These three key points are interconnected and form a fundamental character that is well visible from the outside of the area. Each phase of transformation starts with a new level of paint on the ground of the key points. Artists and artisans are the initial group of users, that will enliven the area for locals of Tržic, the surrounding villages and Ljubljana. The developed strategy should not provide a finished complete solution, but rather act as guide through a complex and long-term transformation process.

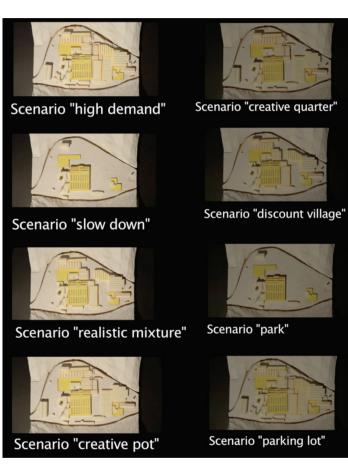




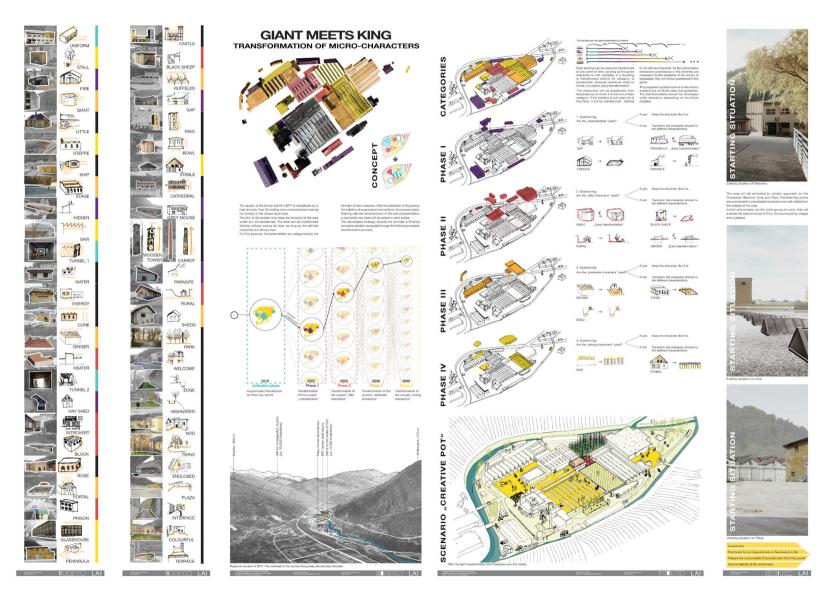




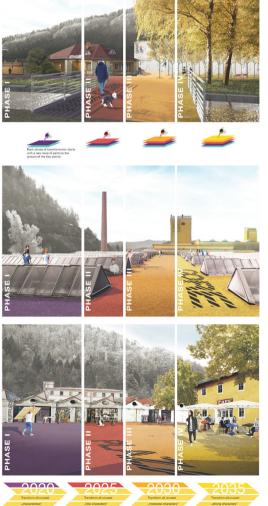




The project allows to react with high flexibility to changing demands over time, shown here in scenarios.











FIŽIČ ALPINE PRODUCTION

Lena Bonengel, Martin Rehm

The area of the former Cotton Spinning and Weaving Fabric (BPT) in Tržič is a cultural heritage site with great potential for fish and energy production.

In 1885, on the plot with 4.6 hektares the factory complex was built. in 1886, the main building was already centrally located and a turbine plant was in operation. Almost ten years later the premises were expanded. A fish basin in the north-eastern area is available.

1928 the Francis turbine, which is still preserved today, got built. With 700 mega watts of power almost the entire population of the old town can be supplied today. Since the closure of the company in 2005, the area is hardly used. Today there is a fish basin south of the canal, operated by the company Voje d.o.o.

Considering the world-wide fish consumption has increased steadily since 1960, tendency rising. The proportion of caught fish from aquaculture exceeds that of conventionally caught fish. In addition, the growing world population must be involved. If the former BPT site is converted into an aquaculture facility with an annual fish weight of 575 tonnes, a contribution can be made locally in Tržič, which can be regionally marketed and also be used for export.

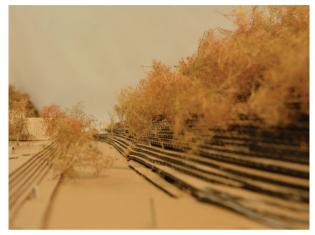
The design is based on a logistic grid of production and is completed by an organically shaped grid. This combination will enable flexible reuse in the future.

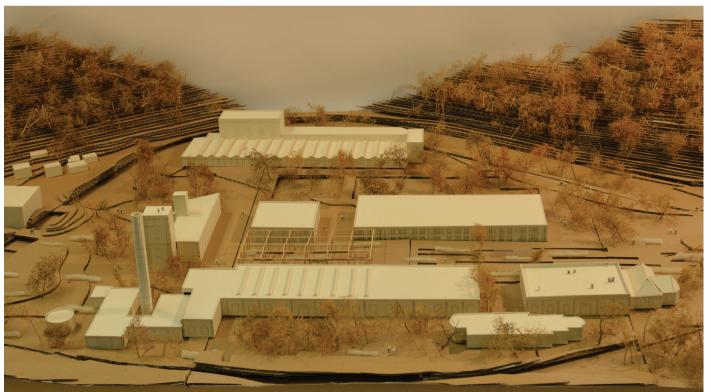


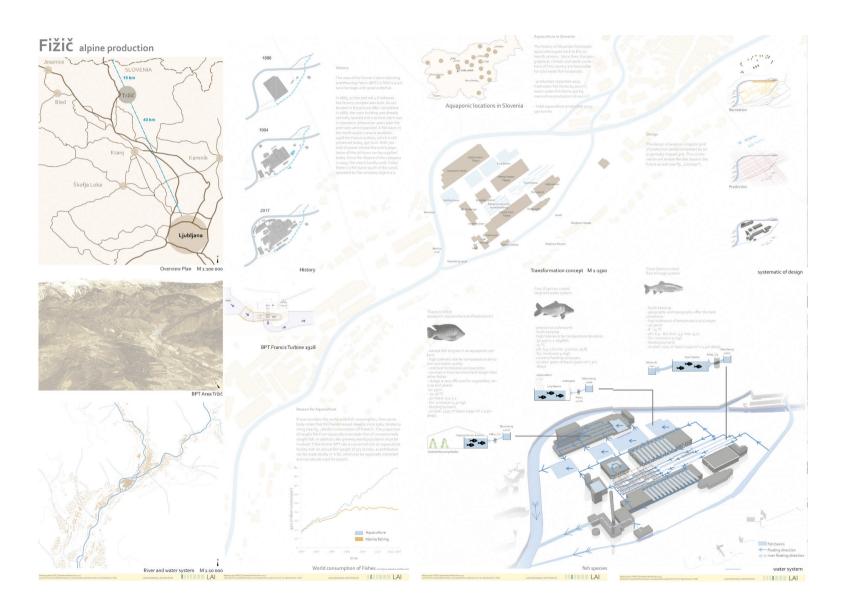
























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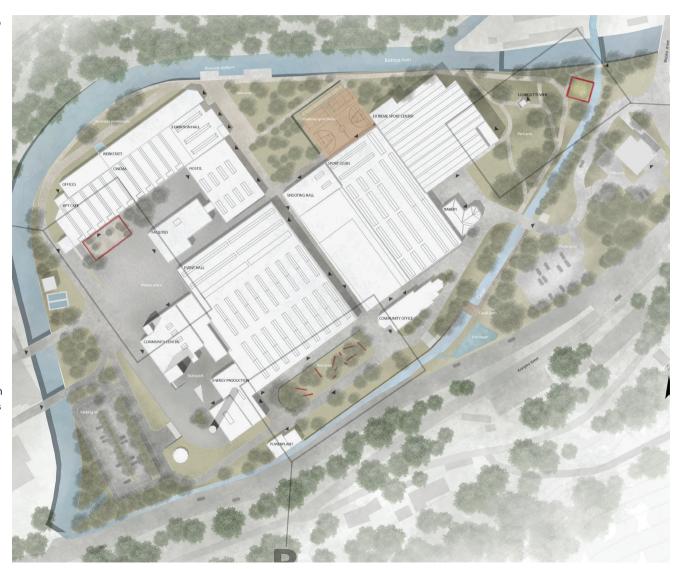
MIND THE GAP

Linan Sun, Nikola Pohl, Noémi Pap

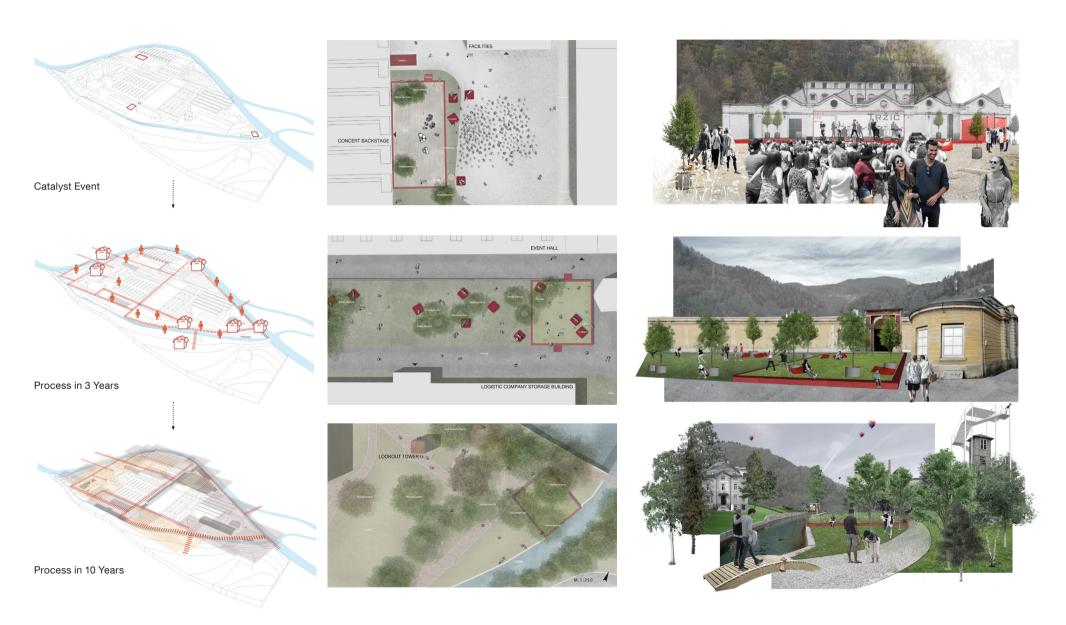
When the BPT factory was closed it left a gap in Tržič. This gap divides the historic old town on the northeast and the newer parts on the southwest. The old town is very heavily built-in, it lacks open spaces in adequate quality. In contrary the newer residential area mostly has detached houses with private gardens. On these two sides of the town we get two very different situations but the outcome is very similar. Tržič does not have enough open spaces for the population, especially if we consider that most of the open areas are used as parking lots.

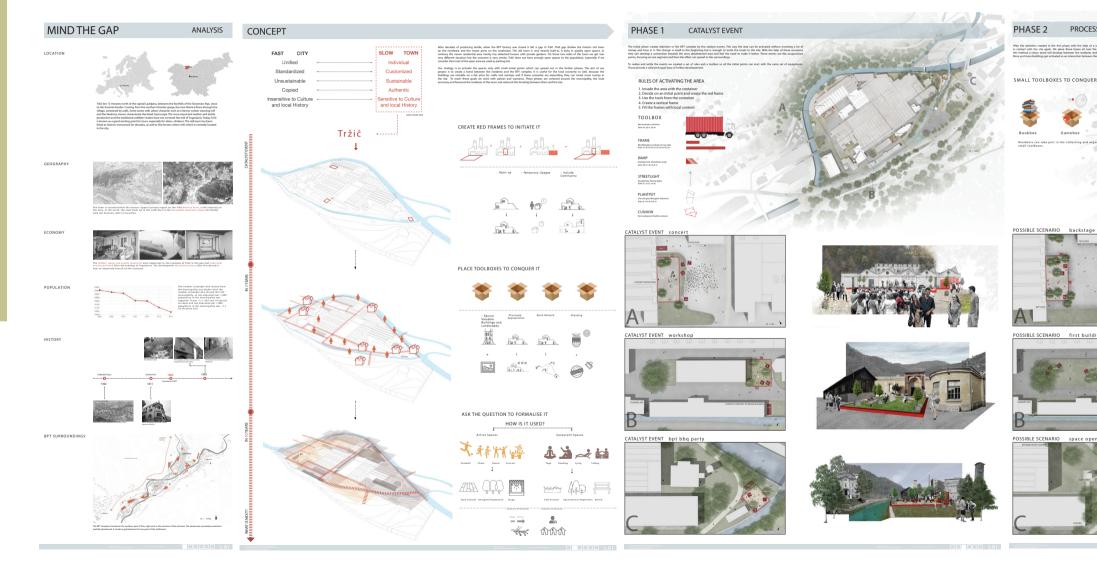
The strategy of the design is to activate the spaces only with small initial points which can spread out in the further phases. The aim of the project is to create a bond between the residents and the BPT complex. It is useful for the local economy as well, because the buildings are rentable on a fair price for crafts and startups and if these comanies are expanding they can invest more money in the site. To reach these goals we work with phases and scenarios. These phases are centered around the municipality, the local economy and foremost the residents of the town and redound the bonding between them and the site.

The initial phase creates attention to the BPT complex by the catalyst events. This way the area can be activated without investing a lot of money and time in it. In the second phase with the help of a set of small toolboxes we encourage the residents to get in contact with the site again. We place these boxes all over the BPT complex so the people can easily conquer it. The design of the certain areas are defined by the usages and the atmosphere. In the last phase if the atmosphere is active, then the design is more artifical (hard pavements and clean lines), if the atmosphere is quiescent, the design operates with natural lines, soft pavements and spontnious vegetation.















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RIBBON AT THE FOOT OF THE ALPS

Xiaoxue Li, Xiya Sun

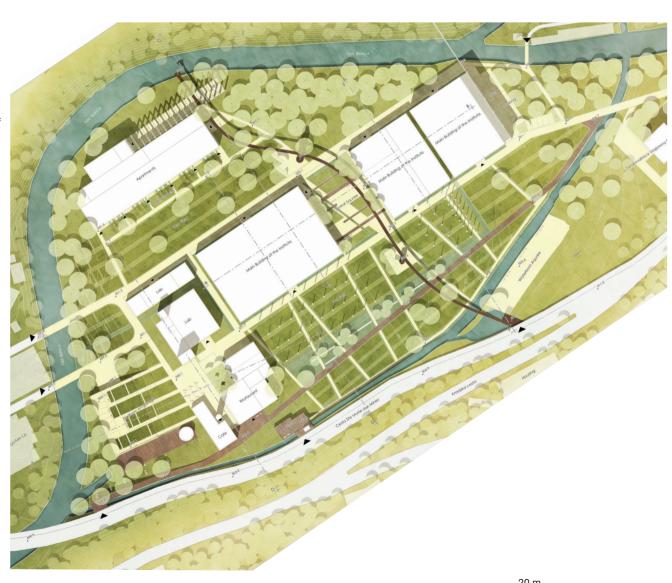
The transformation of the former industrial site to an open research campus studying climate-change-effected agriculture and water can be a future-orientated catalyst for the further development of all aspects of the currently stagnated town of Tržič.

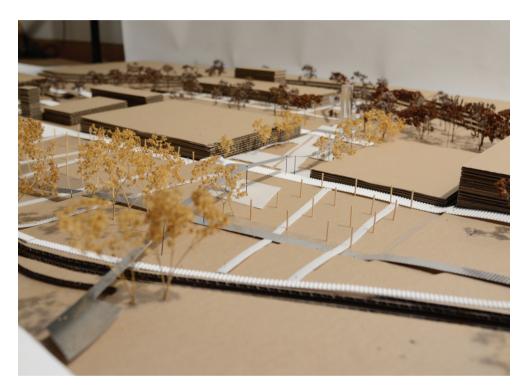
For the community: The new open campus provides a variety of easy accessible pleasant public spaces for all kinds of recreational and relaxing activities to enrich the public life. Meanwhile, the crew of the campus, can add new energy to the community. For the economy: Firstly, the research campus can incoporate Tržič to the regional cooperated economy chains as an important hub. Secondly, it will serve as a starting point of changing the traditional industrial town to a knowledge-based innovative town which is more adaptive to the global tendency.

For the ecology: The combination of naturally growing vegetation, human managed test fields, together with the water system help involve the former industrial site into the eco-systems which surrounds it as well. The site is intended to be transformed into a productive landscape where nature processes and urban activities coexist with each other harmoniously.

To adapt to the agriculture research campus, the water system should be rearranged. The water in the site has not only the fundamental function, such as energy generation, but also recreation, irrigation, and experimental testing for data.

The idea of transformation the former textile mill into a research campus originates from concerns about the climate change problem and the efforts of discovering the potential of the site. It seizes the opportunity behind the problem, an opportunity not only for Trzic but for the climate change issues as well. It can, on the one hand, revitalize the abandoned site and Trzic, while on the other hand, help the the country and the region to cope with the increasingly pressing climate change issue.



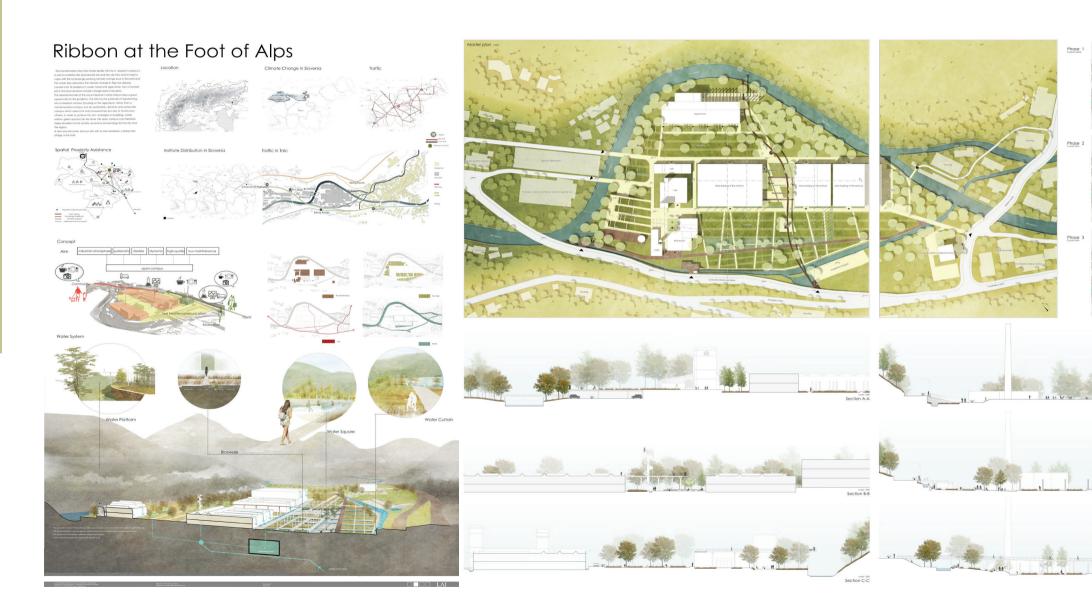


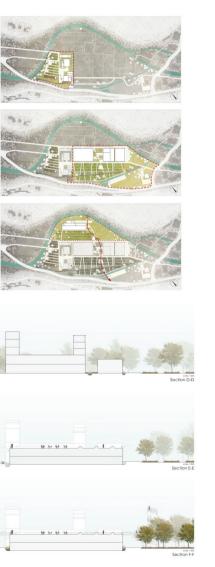


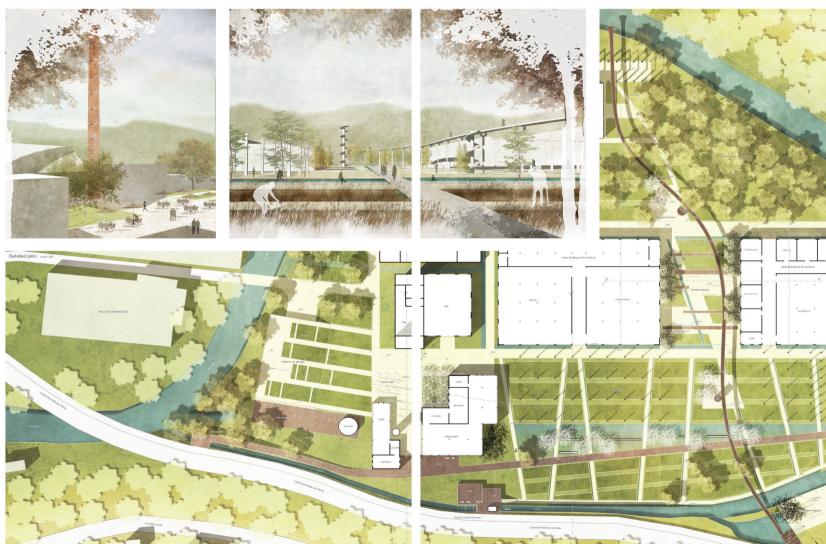












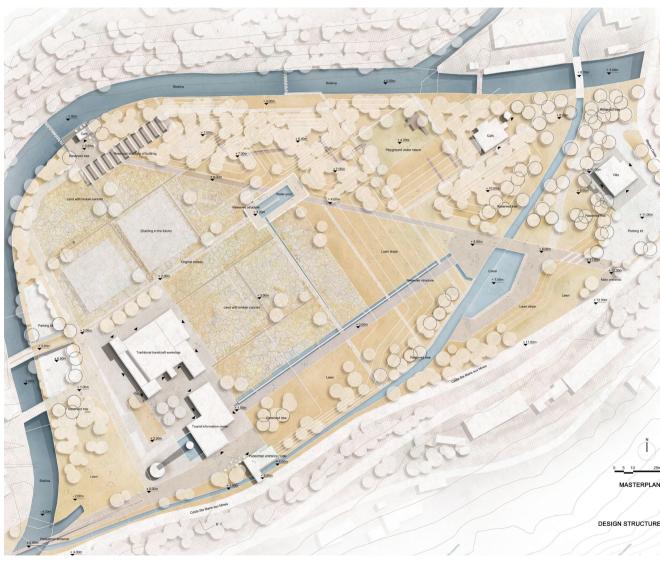
PRODUCTIVE WAITING

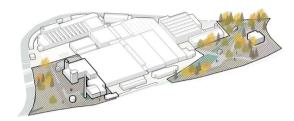
Xiang Lin, Xiaozhen Li

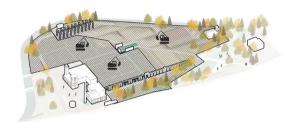
Tržič, an traditional old town in the north of Slovenia was very famous for its handicraft and manufacturing industry. However, because of political and economic changes, a industrial decline appeared about a quarter century ago. Now it is facing great challenges of economic recovery and industrial transformation. After the closure of BPT, the textile mill which once located on the project area, the whole site has been nearly abandoned. But in fact, the significant location of being right next to the old town and its precious industrial history show its great value and its potential as a key point of promoting economic revitalization and industrial transformation.

This proposal developed a "PRODUCTIVE WAITING" strategy for this area. On the one hand, building a new tourist center here would be a solution to optimize the structure of tourism system of the whole city, and thus works as an impetus to stimulate city's economic development. On the other hand, large part of original buildings are to be demolished, and the leftover space would serve as a buffer zone, allowing for city's future development. The demolished building material would be reused for landscape construction and the plants on site would be treated with a low maintenance strategy. So this land can serve the economic, ecological and social needs without consuming a lot.

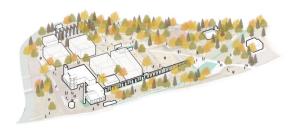
Moreover, the project aims not only for the recovery of economy, but also for improving the quality of city life by providing them with more outdoor open space of higher quality.





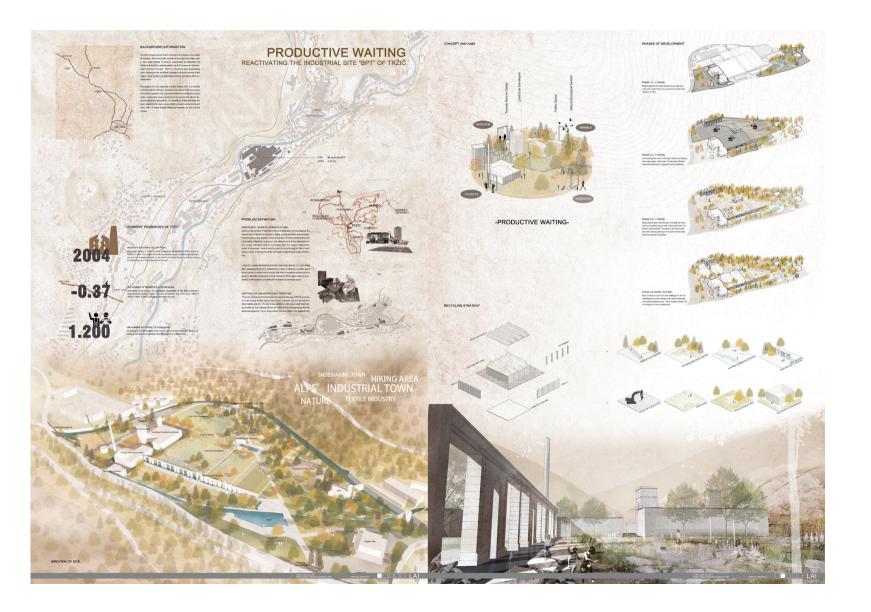




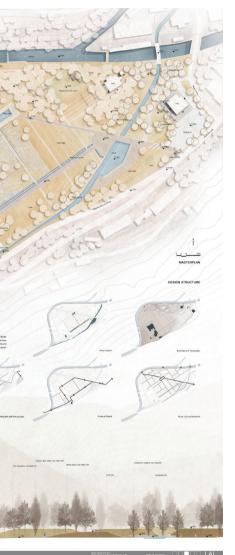




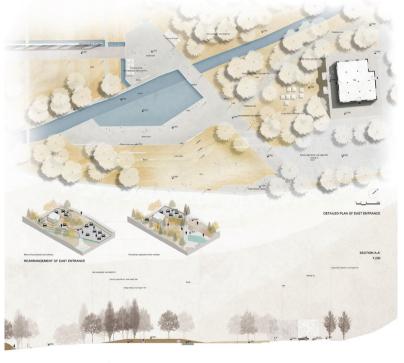




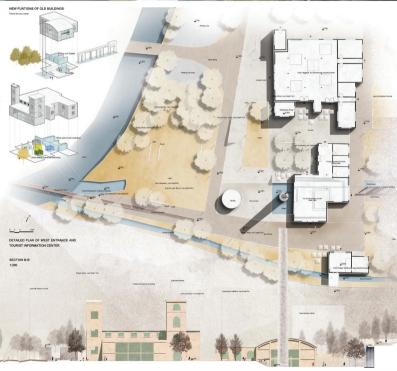












Findings and Prospect

The fascinating range of the Slovenian alpine landscape, the narrow valley area shaped by the Tržič Bistrica river and the variety of different production buildings of the former Cotton spinning and weaving mill of Tržič (BPT Co.) challenged the master students of Landscape Architecture at the TU Munich. Since some of the existing buildings are already used and some historical structures are protected by law, the site is no classical brownfield area, easy to deal with. Especially the lack of a clear program for future uses was a big challenge for the young landscape designers. One of the first steps in the project, after analysing the situation, formulating problems and aims, was to evaluate the given built structures and to decide which buildings should be preserved, which should be transformed and which dismantled. Also the question of possible functions, given the limited financial resources of the community, popped up throughout the whole design process. Spending time on site, dealing intensively with the place and talking to the

people of Tržič was important in the analysis phase. Additional information by the planning experts of the municipality of Tržič and of BSC Kranj-Regional development agency of Gorenjska helped the students to generate a solid basis for the following 3-months design process.

Within 15 weeks, the master students worked intensively in the studio, building models, drawing plans, writing texts and discussing their approaches regularly with Professor Dr. Udo Weilacher and his team of the chair Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscape LAI. A special benefit to the discussion was the fact, that the group consisted of master students from different nations: Hungary, Czech Republic, China and Germany. They all contributed their individual experiences and backgrounds to a broad and critical discussion that led in the end to a diverse range of design solutions. Although the projects may show different levels of feasibility, they definitely

encourage a valuable discussion about the future for the BPT site in Tržič.

Our special thanks goes to the mayor of the municipality of Tržič, Mag. Borut Sajovic and his colleagues for supporting this project so generously and to Ms. Helena Cvenkel from BSC Kranj-Regional development agency of Gorenjska for additional support and information. We would also like to thank the inhabitants of Tržič for their interest in our work for the benefit of their town. Finally we would like to thank Dr. Ana Kučan, Professor at the University of Ljubljana and Founder of Studio AKKA and Dr. Tomaž Pipan from the University of Ljubljana as well as Klemen Srna and Vid Meglič from the municipality of Tržič, department for economy and social affairs for being our guest critics at the final presentation of the student's projects, providing highly valuable feedback.







We hope that the landscape design projects, presented in this brochure will encourage the people and the municipality of Tržič to believe in the positive future development of their beautiful town and we are looking forward to supporting their efforts to transform the former BPT area for the benefit of their community.



The design studio TU Munich exploring the site

Jury at the final presentation: from left to right: Vid Meglič, Klemen Srna, Udo Weilacher, Ana Kučan, Tomaž Pipan

Sources

Weilacher U., Modica M. (2019). "Transforming Alpine Industrial Landscapes". In: TUM Department of Architecture (Ed.): Review 2018-2019. München; pp. 52-53.

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- Cover, The Bombažna Predilnica complex in Tkalnica Tržic, D.D (BPT) Foto: Udo Weilacher
- P. 1, (left) Picture of the former the Spinning and weaving Company with the characteristic production halls, Foto: Udo Weilacher
- P. 1, (right) Picture of the water canal and landmarks like the chimney and Tower, Foto: Jonas Bellingrodt
- P. 2, Graphic Partners involved in the trAILs project, Graphic: Marcello Modica
- P. 3, Picture Design Studio site visit, Foto: Lars Hopstock
- P. 4, (left) Map of the location of Tržic in Slovenia, Graphic: LAI
- P. 4, (right) Aerial Picture of BPT area; STUDIOARTIM 2017, provided by Klemen Sma
- P. 5, (bottom, left) Postcard of the Spinning and weaving Company 1900, author unknown, public domain
- P. 5 (bottom, middle) 3D-study for reuse and transformation ot the area. http:// www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/trzicani-imajo-ideje-investitorjev-se-ne.html (24.08.2017)
- P. 5 (bottom, right) © OpenTopoMap-Mitarbeiter, Beschriftung LH
- P. 26, (bottom, left) Final Presentation; Foto: Jonas Bellingrodt
- P. 26, (bottom, middle) Guest Critic Professor Ana Kučan during Final Presentation; Foto: Jonas Bellingrodt
- P. 26 (bottom, right) Jury at the final presentation: from left to right: Vid Meglič, Klemen Srna, Udo Weilacher, Ana Kučan, Tomaž Pipan, Foto: Jonas Bellingrodt
- P. 27, The design studio TU Munich exploring the site, Foto: Lars Hopstock
- P. 29, on site, Foto: Lars Hopstock

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