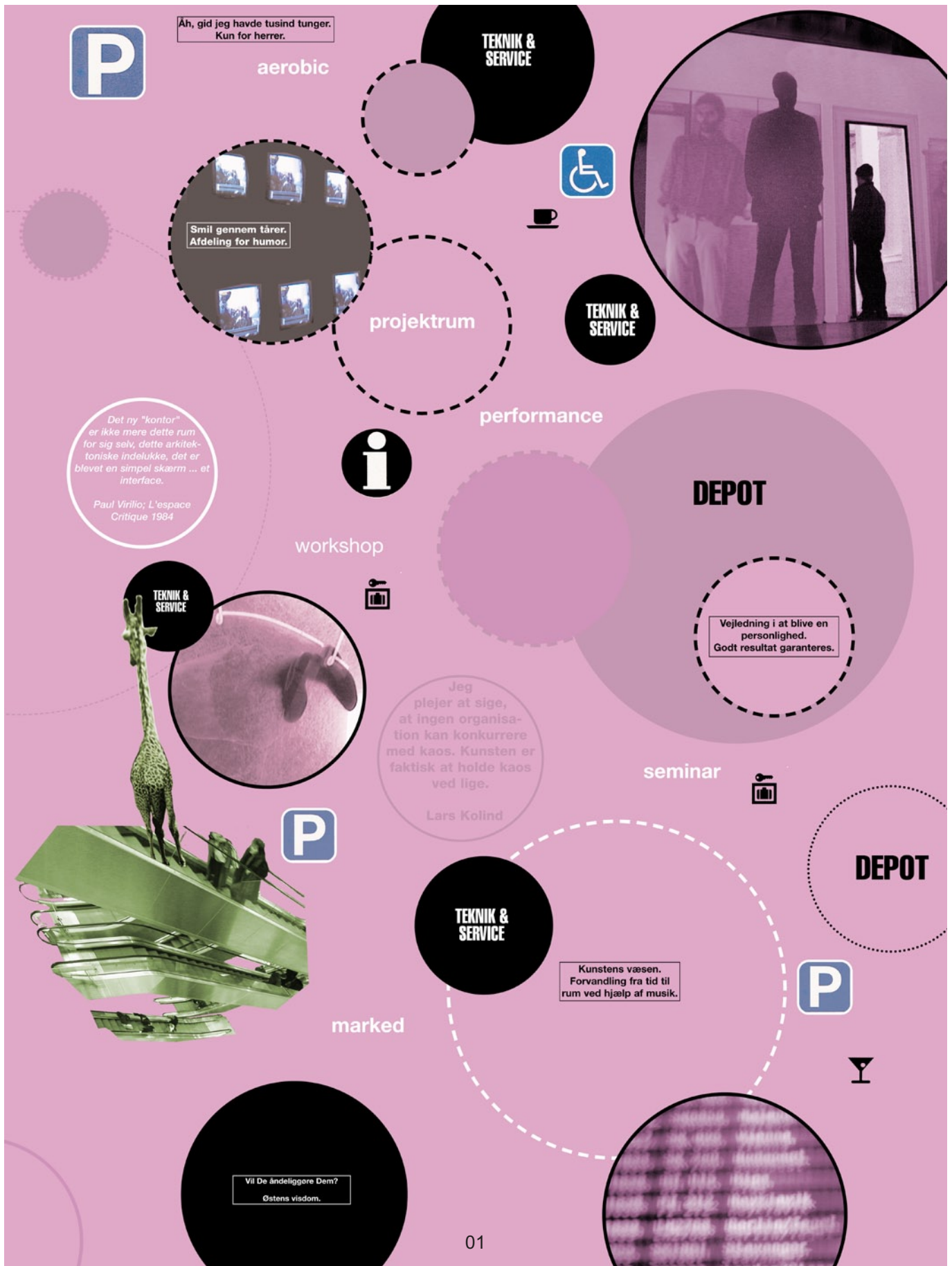


HPF prize

Prize competition on an Art Hotel for Hotel Pro Forma. Proposal by Uid / Henrik Valeur and Bent Johan Poulsen. Copenhagen 2000.



The hotel is rarely the destination in itself. As a means to be somewhere else it offers only the most basic necessities to make your stay tolerable. It usually has a number of rooms connected by corridors. Each room can be a world of its own and though this possible diversification is interesting, the guest rarely has access to more than one. Nevertheless, since guests are not encouraged to stay for too long, the generic hotel is often an ideal breeding ground for fleeting new friendships.

Guests are admitted or turned away by the manager at the reception desk. The centralised control he exercises and the compartmental way in which he distributes his guests are not satisfactory modes of organisation for an art hotel - the objective of this competition.

This hotel, which should render probable a fertile co-existence of “artistic activities, scientific absorption and commercial enterprise”, is to be located in the new development zone of the Ørestad. But apart from this the brief gave no specific site or programme. Rather, it focused on the relationship between real and virtual realities, indicating an extensive use of IT and other anti-morphologic tools.

Consequently, the art hotel has neither form nor structure. Or rather, it is able to re-form and de-struct itself. It is an open, undefined environment with a minimum of static structures supporting various service facilities. In this environment temporary spatial constructions can emerge and disappear in accordance with shifting needs. The temporary structures can be simulated, opaque, fluid, bluish, insulated, gaseous ... They may be used as rooms for meditation, lectures, work and dressing. The space leftover is open and available for a multitude of interactive uses including performances, infotainment, shopping and shows.

The art hotel is neither functionally neutral nor designed for specific purposes. It allows for artistic activities to form and it takes form after them. It is open 24 hours/ day for those who are interested or attracted. Though not all areas are open to everybody at all times. Using new smart technology accessibility can be self-regulated by the users.

Curiosity is an initial condition of crucial importance. What happens inside the temporary spatial structures can be transmitted to the leftover space via peep holes, informational displays, transparency and monitors connected to video surveillance. Thus causing the air of this space to be dense with allurements.

Users, guests and bypassers will all be encouraged to take an active part, and in this way to confuse the traditional roles of the actor, spectator and creator. Depending on their initiatives the users can activate and de-activate varying zones of the hotel. They can organise themselves in alternating groups, selecting and attracting new users and new activities. Groups that will be able to make rapid decisions, which in practice can be quickly reversed.

In this turbulent environment, where unexpected actions may occur and unknown spaces may be explored, facts and fantasy will blend and dissolve into one another. The art hotel will never be the same and nor will it equal the sum of its parts. It will operate on a new economy, in which artistic assets will be exchangeable across disciplinary borders, in new forms of collaborations that we are not yet familiar with or are still unable to imagine. An economy that may provoke short circuits in the conventional cycles from production to consumption.

The additional interfaces and realities created by the new technologies, increase the changes of random and unexpected interferences. The unknown is - as the commercial says - only a click of the mouse away.