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**Room and form:
an elementary poetics
of architecture**
Jean-Christophe Quinton,
architect

exhibition
18 06 → 25 10 2026

inaugural lecture
18 06 2026, 18:30
Jean-Christophe Quinton

guided tours
visite@arcenreve.eu

arc en rêve centre d'architecture presents the exhibition **Room and Form: An Elementary Poetics of Architecture**, by architect Jean-Christophe Quinton, in arc en rêve's Galerie Blanche, from 18 June to 25 October 2026.

Through a spatial arrangement comprising a series of rooms, this installation offers a sensory exploration of the fundamental resources of architecture and invites visitors to experience the gallery space in a new way. It showcases the Quinton practice's proposals by making accessible a design culture grounded in form, function, and material.

Every architectural project seeks to achieve an ideal in terms of function, space, materials, light, and its relationship to its surroundings. It is possible to come closer to this ideal by examining architecture and its inherent resources. The room, the plan, the form, geometry, and construction can thus evoke a powerful and immediate experience through unexpected architectural configurations. In this way, architecture creates a surprising link between a sense of beauty and the experience of feeling fully at one with the world. The enduring nature of these resources in practice serves as a guide to navigating the world's growing complexity and the many challenges of inhabiting it. Ultimately, architecture is always about use, materials, the relationship between interior and exterior, and about form, rooms, and space in which human activities can flourish.

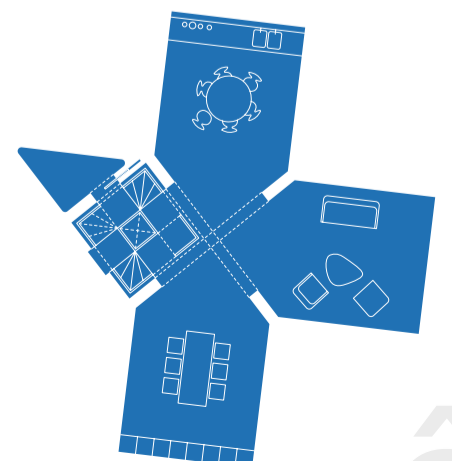
It is this optimism that Jean-Christophe Quinton conveys in the exhibition Room and Form: An Elementary Poetics of Architecture. Twelve architectural elements are presented through a spatial arrangement of interconnected rooms that transforms the exhibition galleries in a unique way. The architect invites visitors on a poetic journey to engage with these essential elements of design. Through models, drawings, photographs, and plans, he makes his approach accessible to all. Through modular constructions that generate new spatial experiences, visitors are invited to engage directly with architecture and grasp its full potential. This exhibition embodies the conviction that linking form, beauty, and ideal produces an architecture that enables us to live better—with ourselves, with others, and with the world.

Florent Schwartz and Jean-Christophe Quinton

Room and form, an elementary poetics of architecture

Jean-Christophe Quinton
architect

arc en rêve centre d'architecture bordeaux



Founded in Bordeaux in 1981, arc en rêve is an architecture center presenting exhibitions, workshops, talks and publications focused on architecture, the city, and more broadly the built and natural environment. Since its creation, the center has worked to broaden the perception of architecture in society beyond the mere construction of buildings or urban planning. arc en rêve is therefore a space for dialogue and critical reflection on the ways we inhabit and transform the world.

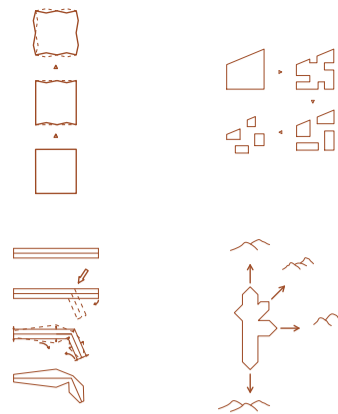
arc en rêve
centre d'architecture
Entrepôt, 7 rue Ferrère
F-33000 Bordeaux
+33 5 56 52 78 36
info@arcenreve.eu
arcenreve.eu
f @ c



Construction

Architecture reveals its presence and identity through the fundamental elements that compose it: the wall, the opening, circulation paths, materiality... It becomes an intentional language of built forms, made up of clear, identifiable, and inherently architectural signs that speak directly to everyone.

In Prague, the design of the prefabricated pink concrete balconies, curved to fit the scale of each unit, creates a distinctive architectural expression that conveys the domestic scale of the units within a project that is both monumental and unified.



Formalizing processes

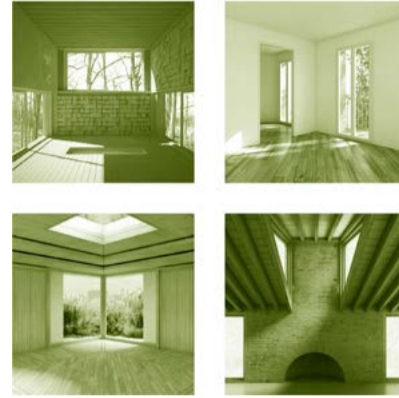
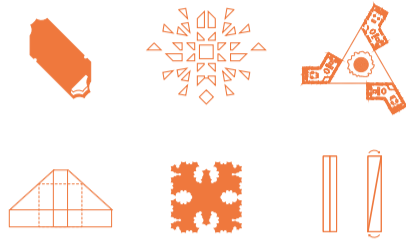
Each project takes on its own unique form through formal rules that resolve the specific complexities of each situation.

The Ti housing development is the result of a dual formal rule. The fold in the body of each house ensures the division of the ground floor and the privacy of each garden. Their arrangement around a triangular square establishes a close relationship between the dwellings and recreates the spirit of a Corsican village neighbourhood.

Geometry

The use of geometry lies in the belief that simple forms can establish close relationships between the various parts that make up the project. The geometric tension that arises between these different parts creates strong spatial relationships between rooms, between buildings, and between the natural and built environments.

In Pego, the theatre is composed of four porticoes of identical geometry. The linear arrangement of their openings provides a continuous spatial experience from the town, through the theatre, to the enclosed garden.



Interior / exterior

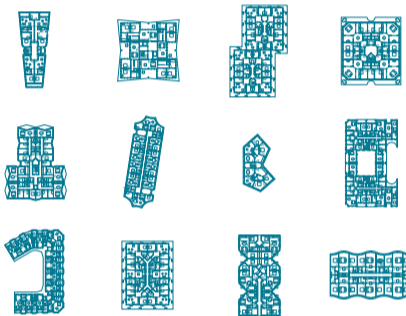
One of architecture's primary purposes is to shape the relationship between its users and their environment. Architecture can offer an existential, immediate experience—that of being, through the relationship between interior and exterior, in a closer and more measured connection with the world.

La Petite Agora is designed as an architectural device that enhances the relationship with the contrasting landscape of its site: the mineral horizontality of the château and the vegetal verticality of the Avenue de Paris.

Plan

The plan is the result of the convergence of questions of construction, rooms, assembly and site. It consists of a series of interconnected spaces that define a controlled spatiality and its close relationship with the environment.

The plans projected onto the wall are presented in two modes of representation. The first is a sequence of plans of one hundred projects, arranged by floor area, from smallest to largest. This sequence reveals the richness and diversity of their forms. The second mode of representation is an axonometric drawing derived from the plan, which brings it into close relation to its section. It captures the formal and spatial strangeness of the project.



Assembly

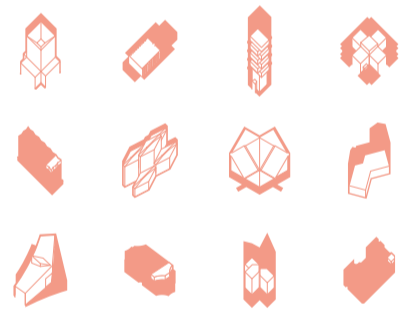
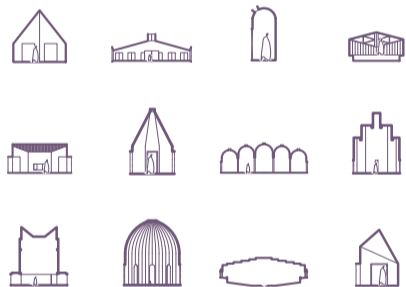
The assembly describes the organisational principle that brings the pieces together. It devises various strategies to ensure striking, confident and unexpected connections between them. Every juxtaposition of one piece with another stems from a deliberate intention that creates a clear direction and brings out remarkable spatial qualities.

Ten projects are presented. Each project is presented through the progressive assembly of the elements that specifically constitute its plan.

Section

The section plays a role that goes far beyond a mere question of representation; through its geometry, it defines the spatial character of the project.

The sectional view of the Haute Agora breaks down and reassembles, floor by floor, space by space, the iconic spatial organisation of this skyscraper.



Space

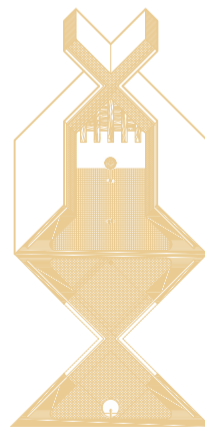
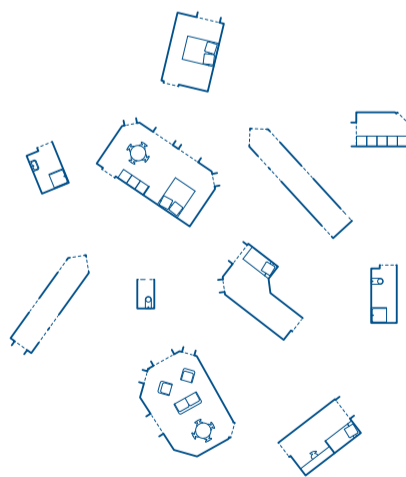
The feeling that arises from the arrangement of materials, structure, functions, and from their interaction with light and their surroundings, defines the intrinsic quality of a space. It ensures the immediacy of the architectural experience.

The ten preceding projects are then presented through perspectives that reveal the spaces resulting from their assembly.

Room

The room is the harmonious encounter between plan and section, forming a remarkable entity at a human scale. Its dimensions, form, structure, materiality, scale and relationship with the exterior are sufficiently defined to create a powerful and evocative architectural unity. Viewing the world of the project through the lens of its rooms reveals the richness of their diversity and their relationship with the world.

Through its repetitive and accumulative structure, this poem by Florent Schwartz expresses the profusion of the experience of the room and the richness of possibilities offered by the spaces that emerge from it.



Mesure

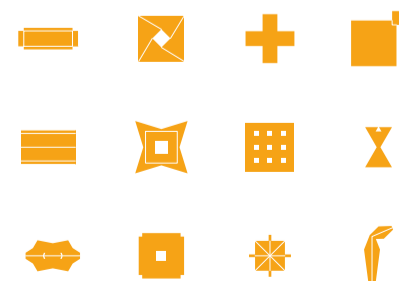
Architecture takes shape by bringing together all scales (geographical, urban, structural, functional, detailed and bodily). Each of them calls for specific interventions that the architect assembles with reason and sensitivity, never losing sight of the human scale.

Here, the significance of scale across all levels is revealed by placing models of two very contrasting scales side by side within the same display. The gaze constantly shifts from reduced architectural models of buildings to furniture models at a scale of 1:15.

Site

The site is the project's original and intrinsic foundation. It is a resource that is at once geographical, natural, built, and cultural.

The form of the Mf house results from the relationship of each room with the surrounding mountains of the site. Its construction system resonates with the local culture, particularly through the emphasis on the archaic thickness of its walls.



Figure

The project relieves the complexity of the initial situation in which it is situated through a structured, context-specific and elementary form. This form, often derived from Euclidean geometry, is immediately legible within its environment.

These projects are united by an elementary geometry, whilst each develops its own singular qualities: the artist's studio where works are suspended within a naturally lit vertical framework; the shelter composed of prefabricat-

ed timber elements accommodating body-scale sleeping berths; the large house-library offering, within the thickness of its walls, cells for sleeping and working; the cross-shaped plan of the house in the pine forest gives each room a specific relationship with the outdoors. All seek to establish, through a clear form, a strong relationship to the site and to evoke emotion through the interwinning of spatial and programmatic concerns.