

THE TWELVE LABOURS OF THE ARCHITECT

"It's time to get on with it." With BIM gaining power, increased turnover in private projects, restructuring towards design and research activities, consolidation of teams with new profiles - legal experts, development directors, R & D managers, integration of engineering offices, collective unions, and the development of a participative approach, architects are reshaping the definition of their profession to fit situational, structural and legislative change, not to mention cultural and social developments. The gradual withdrawal of public commissions in construction is experienced as a sword of Damocles threatening the very existence of the profession, but architects have not yet admitted defeat. Whether in public or private spheres, they look for - and find - paths to transformation.

In its September issue, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* has decided to examine these paths to diversification through a broad range of case studies. These offer food for thought on the restructuring of architecture practices; destined to change, but surely not to vanish. Builder of housing, no matter how modest, the architect is also a skilful analyst of the most resonant urban developments, hence the importance of ensuring his intervention in the private domain, and as early as possible in the public one. These are no small victories: in France, when it is enshrined in law that an architect is required on any project that contains a threshold or a site drop above a certain level, in housing and housing estate development*, the profession has much to celebrate and the future of cities looks brighter.

This issue dedicated to the profession offers some of the many avenues explored by architects to adapt to changes in commissions, which are the focus of many concerns. Here, let's refer to the work of the Construire architecture workshop, which is a model of its kind. When Patrick Bouchain and Loïc Julienne commission a young architect, Sophie Ricard, to renovate a neglected district, in Boulogne-sur-Mer, together with its inhabitants and living on site for the duration of the building project, they demonstrate that it is possible, and necessary, to improve the living environment of the people involved relying on their implication. Thus paving the way for other methods of practising architecture. Do the avenues we need to explore require a certain amount of effort? The architect's will is strong.

* CAP law related to the freedom of creation, architecture and heritage, dated 7 July 2016.