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Photo Simone Marcolin / MAIO

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RESEARCH IN RESIDENCE #2: ANNA PUIGJANER / MAIO

Unworlding CUBEX

24.11.23 — 28.04.24

C I.II.III.IV. A
Culture — Architecture

civa.brussels

Rue de l'Ermitage 55 Kluysstraat,
1050 Brussels

CIVA

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Press preview: 23 November 2023 from 10:00 to 17:00

Opening: 23 November 2023 at 19:00

Free exhibition: 24 November 2023 - 28 April 2024

CIVA is delighted to present a new exhibition by Anna Puigjaner, professor of the groundbreaking new chair of Architecture and Care at ETH Zurich and founding member of the Barcelona-based office MAIO. Puigjaner addresses a key element of 20th century architecture: the modernist kitchen.

In 1930, **Louis Herman De Koninck** finalized the design for an iconic kitchen system; just one year later, the brand CUBEX was registered by Établissements E.J. Van de Ven S.A., commercializing and spreading modern cooking principles throughout Belgium for decades to come. Based on a functional, 60-cm modular system, its layout promoted efficiency and hygiene, while reinforcing gendered familial roles. Architecture—and domestic spaces in particular—have historically contributed to promoting and perpetuating biased social models around care practices. ***Unworlding CUBEX*** critically revisits the original design, imagining new forms of kinship and domestic labor.

Using 'plug-in prototypes', **MAIO** proposes a recomposition of the linear CUBEX modules into a multidirectional kitchen. In other words: a shift from the normative housewife laboratory to an open space that acknowledges a multiplicity of bodies and their interdependencies. Some plug-in prototypes allow users to transgress the single-occupancy character of the CUBEX kitchen, imagining complex configurations for collective care. Others turn the private kitchen into public infrastructure, seek to dismantle normative attitudes toward ableism and gender, or create possibilities for multiple usages, beyond cooking.

After artist Vincent Meessen, architect **Anna Puigjaner (MAIO)** is the second researcher to re-exhibit CIVA's collections through the **Research in Residence** program. Her project at CIVA succeeds her *Kitchenless City* research in which she explored the elimination of the household kitchen to allow for the domestication of the urban sphere. **Research in Residence** renegotiates the terrain between the often hermetic sphere of architecture collections and their public exposure. The program, started in 2022, promotes approaches beyond mono-historical perspectives and is a platform for researchers working in residence at CIVA.

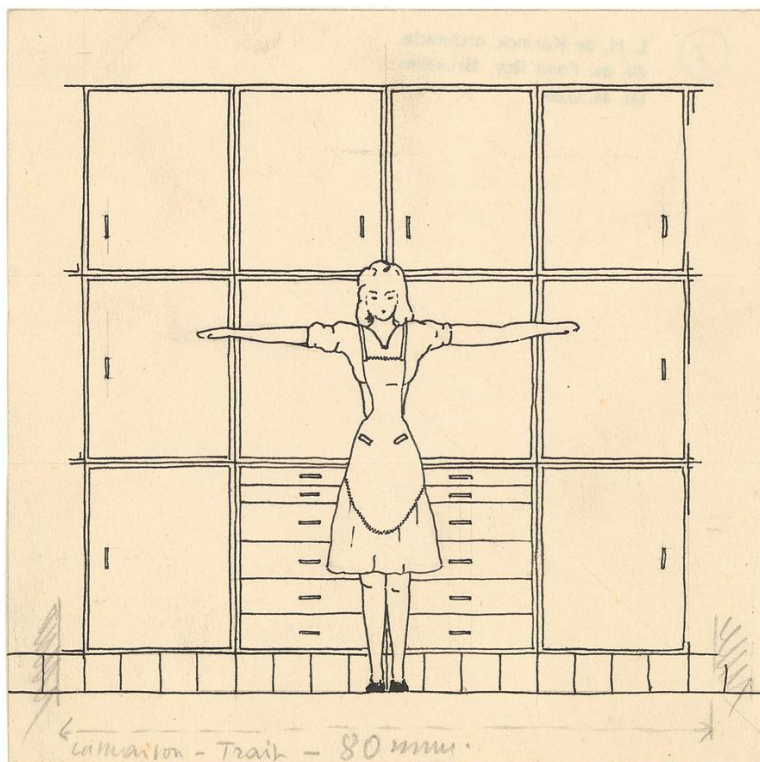
MAIO is an architectural office based in Barcelona whose work, drawing from feminist thought, focuses on the design of domesticities capable of dismantling social biases. MAIO's work includes the 40 Social Housing Units Building (Sant Feliu de Llobregat) and Urban Kitchen (Barcelona) and has been exhibited at MoMA (New York), MAK Center for Art and Architecture (Los Angeles), Royal Academy (London), Art Institute of Chicago, and Storefront for Art and Architecture (New York).



Photo by Simone Marcolin / MAIO



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Preparatory drawing and study,
1930

L.H. De Koninck
CIVA Collections, Brussels



Cuisine CUBEX 1930 // Belgique,
2004
Anke Van Caudenberg
In A+, Confort, 187, 2004
CIVA Collections, Brussels

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