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The Austerity Chic Interior, Gen Z, and Millennials' Domestic Dream

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Abstract

This paper reviews domestic spaces completed in the last ten years to address the following research questions: How do Australian Gen Z and millennials in Sydney, who are currently shaping their future life, imagine their home? What are the domestic values and hopes of two generations that had their coming of age in the Information Era, and who naturally embrace digital technology and social media? What do size, scale, material, and technical innovation mean for a climate-conscious group of people that have lived through COVID-19 confinement, an endless real estate bubble, and recurrent economic crises? Grouped in five categories—sharing life, managing climate, naturalised interiors, reusing new materials, and austerity chic—the analysis of the study cases outlines these generations' emerging architectural interests. The five categories also inform a proposal for an interior constructed with fragments of the study cases that illustrates the paper's conclusions and imagines a possible domestic space for Gen Z and millennials.

Keywords: shared domestic life, interior climate, naturalised interiors, domestic materials, austerity chic

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Introduction

Picture this image. The observer appears to be inside a wooden chamber that, on its left, opens to the outside. Cross-laminated timber (CLT) beams and a substructure traverse the ceiling held by large columns of the same material. Similar in proportions to those in Studio PER's *Vittoria Tracino House* in Sicily, Italy (Studio PER, 1975), two of them can be seen on the left, on the edge of the room. Together with the ceiling cornice line, they define the threshold between interior and exterior. There is no other enclosure, nothing preventing the air from getting in.

Two main elements compose the image. On the front, to the right of the empty centre, a silver thermal curtain hangs precariously from a light stainless-steel structure. Just like in the many interiors of the French office BAST (BAST, 2019; BAST, 2020; BAST & Littoral 2020), it encloses a cylindrical room tempered by a ceiling fan. A young man, probably in his early 20s, holds the curtain. It is unclear if he opens it to access the space or closes it after leaving. A polycarbonate partition occupies the background and blurs the objects behind it. It appears that someone is working at a table on the other side. The partition includes an attached sink and a light stainless-steel structure that holds a shower. It can be closed with a translucent veil reminiscent of Toyo Ito's 1980s designs (Toyo Ito & Associates, 1984, 1985, 1989). The polycarbonate partition does not touch the ceiling, exposing a white curtain and a chrome pipe above it.

Outside, connected to the top of a column, a chrome basin-shaped receptacle opens to the sky. It seems to collect rainwater and funnelling it into a network of pipes that keep reappearing at different points in the image. Below the basin, six plants akin to the Sydney region's temperate rainforests—a *Grevillea oleoides,* a *Banksia ericifolia,* a *Casuarina equisetifolia*, and two *Callistemon* 'silver clouds'—are potted in a range of cylindrical containers, obscuring the view and protecting from the direct sun-light. Four rocks of various dimensions coexist with them, like in Albert Frey's *Frey House II* in Palm Springs (Frey, 1964). Nine more potted plants—a *Cordyline stricta*, a *Platycerium* spp., a *Lomandra longifolia*, a *Schefflera actinophylla*, a few cooking herbs and several cacti—have been randomly distributed across the floor, leaving a large empty area in the centre of the image—a sort of stage like the living room of Aldo van Eyck's own apartment in Binnenkant, Amsterdam (van Eyck, 1947).

On the edges of the image, fragmentary views of several pieces of furniture complete the scene. A red steel frame bed has been casually covered with a grey and brown duvet. Behind it, a stand-alone green

closet shows a selection of normcore clothing, similar to those the young man by the curtain wears. In the front, the *B22*, a lamp designed by Maarten van Severen has been left turned on (van Severen, 1997). To the left, a red terrazzo low-table that could have been designed by Besler & Sons SSL as part of their *Props* collection (Besler & Sons, 2018), holds heterogeneous objects: kitchen utensils, a bottle of Aesop soap, canned food, a white box of paper tissues, a large blue water tank, and several tiny puddles. This relaxed attitude toward occupation, akin to Sam Chermayeff's *Creatures*, extends to the rest of the room (Küng, 2020). Traces of life appear in the disorganised piles of unopened cardboard boxes, books and magazines, and objects randomly left behind after being used, such as the watering can and the lit light bulb.

Figure 1
The future of Gen Z and millennials' living (Image by authors)

The image (Figure 1) is, of course, a construction, a computer-generated image. It was crafted by the authors to advance this paper's research questions. It combines a three-dimensional virtual model with a collection of material textures using ray-casting and ray-tracing processes to produce a photorealistic depiction of an interior domestic space. It is also a construction that accumulates multiple architectural references: ad hoc furniture, interior projects, unbuilt models, competition entries or images of exhibitions. The strategy is similar to what the historian Craig Buckley has described as a graphic assembly by addition (Buckley, 2019)—in this case, a seamless one, thanks to the smoothing effects of computer-generated imagery (CGI) algorithms. It is not a photomontage but rather a montage. As Buckley (2019) reminds us, the former is the composite of two or more photomechanical images while the latter admits multiple media and, as its etymological origin refers to, supports the act of assembly, the *chaîne de montage*—French expression for an assembly line in manufacturing.

Easy access to photorealistic rendering has been around since the late 1990s, thanks to the popularisation of digital tools in architecture schools.[1] Mashing up large numbers of references has become tandard procedure in the field for the last 15 years.[2] The image described above combines these two attitudes. Its photorealism differentiates it from the historical postmodernism pastiches of the 1970s and 1980s. The fragments it collects are not ironic references but the things themselves—literal reproductions. They integrate disciplinary codes into the image, but they are also accessible and legible to broader audiences. In fact, beyond the technical and compositional techniques and technologies, this image is primarily a discursive construction. While using architecture references, it tautologically discusses the effects of constructing domestic interiors with literal fragments of other interiors.

Therefore, the resulting seamless fragmentation is an aesthetic choice with its political implications. The image was designed as a research project to present the interior of a prototypical Australian house for Gen Z and millennials situated in Sydney. The research methodology involved gathering and combining fragments of other houses to answer the following research questions: How do Australian Gen Z and millennials in Sydney, who are currently shaping their future life, imagine their home? What are the domestic values and hopes of two generations that had their coming of age in the Information Era, and who naturally embrace digital technology and social media? What do size, scale, material, and technical innovation mean for a climate-conscious group of people that have lived through COVID-19 confinement, an endless real estate bubble, and recurrent economic crises?

To answer these questions, this paper extracts lessons from contemporary architectural projects. The study cases are recently completed projects for domestic spaces that share innovative approaches and a sensibility towards Gen Z and millennials' aesthetic interests. The conclusions are organised into five groups, sharing life, managing climate, naturalised interiors, reusing new materials, and austerity chic. Starting from the logistics of everyday life—how Gen Z and millennials live together—the argument moves to the materials their domestic spaces are made of, to close

[1] The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) has traced this history through a series of thematic exhibitions (Lynn, 2013a, 2014, 2016) and publications (Lynn, 2013b; Goodhouse, 2017).

[2] Clear signs of the contemporary wave of the resource to historical references can be found in Marklee (2017) and Lapierre (2019). Yet, its origins have to be traced back to the art practices using mash up digital means (Bourriaud, 2006).

with a definition of these generations' emerging architectural interests. The image (Figure 1), combining fragments of all the case studies, functions as the paper's table of contents—a summary that shows all the pieces together and helps navigate the argument. By the same token, its fragmentation also demonstrates how Gen Z and millennials might be imagining their domestic spaces.

Sharing Life

Two topics guided the first section of the research: Australia's unaffordable city real estate market and the gradual dissolution of the nuclear family. In Sydney, hundreds of thousands of people live in shared apartments. Many students, workers, and young professionals can only afford a house by sharing costs, life and space.[3] Sharing a home is more common among Gen Z and millennials. Friendship, new family structures, informal agreements, and collective dinners outline ownership models yet to be translated into the marketplace. The following contemporary projects explore new forms of sharing life, propose alternative ownership models, and question who might cohabitate and how they could arrange a life together (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Sharing life (Image by authors)

The playful distribution of plants and ad hoc objects associated with shared apartments in the image (Figure 1) reproduces the floorplan organisation of the installation *Rolling House for the Rolling Society* from 2009 by the New York-based architecture office, Andrés Jaque / Office of Political Innovation (Andrés Jaque / Office of Political Innovation, 2009). Jaque's project explored how shared apartments challenge the traditional notions of hedonism, definitions of gender, ideas, and family models (Andrés Jaque / Office of Political Innovation, 2015). The objects arranged on the floor of the image remind us that Gen Z and millennials in urban centers routinely move from the family house

[3] For a broader discussion of the increase of shared apartments in Sydney, see Nasreen and Ruming (2019).

to shared apartments due to the Australian real estate bubble. These spaces challenge normative domestic notions as they shape early adulthood experiences. Sharing life with others that are not part of the family's hierarchical structure implies one encounters otherness and builds up association within it. This otherness expands to the objects that define the interior of the domestic space. They get reimagined as ways to share everyday life activities.

The empty space in the centre of the image (Figure 1)—reminiscent of a theatrical stage waiting for an event to happen—refers back to the excess of common areas in the project that the Spanish architecture firm, LACOL Arquitectura Cooperativa, built in Barcelona in 2018 with the name *Cooperativa d'Habitatge La Borda* (LACOL Arquitectura Cooperativa, 2018b). *La Borda* is a self-organised housing cooperative promotion that proves that participatory design is essential to collective living. Designed through workshops that adapted each unit to the needs of its users, the willingness of the community to share increased the percentage of shared space, reducing the overall unit sizes (LACOL Arquitectura Cooperativa, 2018a). This logic shapes Gen Z and millennials' shared apartments. Private spaces are reduced to the minimum, with thermal curtains, translucent enclosures, transparent veils, and recycled fabrics temporarily dividing the open plan, always ensuring that the majority of the space will need to be shared.

The occupation of these shared spaces by elements collectively shared and collectively taken care of, like potted plants and water tanks, can also be found at *the Commons*, the development completed in Melbourne in 2013 by the Australian firm Breathe Architecture (Breathe Architecture, 2013). This collective housing became the prototype for many of the ideas inherent to the successful Nightingale co-housing model, including the cost-effective reduction of finishes, the increase of shared facilities and the reliance on environmentally and energy-efficient technology and design (Geer, 2015). It also shifted the funding model into an ethical development by introducing limits into the resale process (Balch, 2016).

Service provider models, such as the Collective in London (https://www.thecollective.com/) or Quarters in Berlin (https://www.quarters.com), have substituted traditional ownership for a membership model in recent years. Users pay a weekly fee for the amount of domestic space they use. Membership contracts define levels of access, facilities, and personal space.[4]

[4] The shortcomings of these models and the downfall of *WeLive* have been broadly discussed in popular media. See Coldwell (2019).

Alternatively, collective ownership eliminates the sole owner and distributes initial investment, risk and decision making among a group of members. Cooperatives like the *La Borda* and *the Commons* explore how design decisions intertwine with the economic models behind their development.[5] They also prove that participatory processes develop community bonds and define—and often increase—the amount of space that members agree to share.

Managing Climate

The second section of the research tackles energy consumption and climate comfort, a significant concern in Gen Z and millennials. The image (Figure 1) lacks a unified facade. Instead, it shows multiple layers that protect discrete, acclimatised spaces. Plants, thermal curtains, polycarbonate, stone, wood, air, heating, and cooling appliances seem to play a role in maintaining the comfort of the home. As the man by the curtain in the foreground shows, they all require dwellers to participate in controlling the internal climate actively, that is to say, in the management of the house's energy consumption (Figure 3).

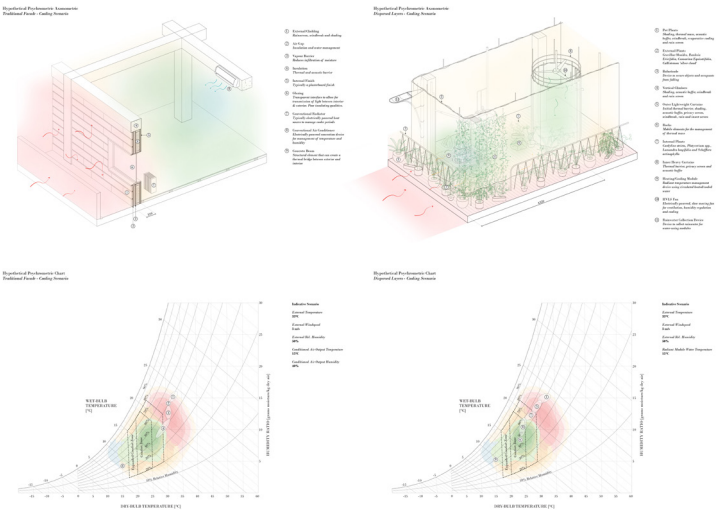

Figure 3
Comparative performance evaluation of the proposed enclosure systems and traditional facades in the Sydney's Inner West Suburbs (Image by authors; performance data by BAC Engineering and Aiguasol)

The combination of passive climatic systems like thermal curtains, polycarbonate greenhouses, or the slab thermal mass, and traditional active solutions, such as ceiling fans and exposed water cooling, are common in many of the French office Lacaton

[5] Co-housing has a long history in Scandinavian countries. The cases in Barcelona and Melbourne are part of larger international recent success, including cases in Europe such as the *R50 – Cohousing* project (ifau and Jesko Fezer, & Heide & von Beckerath, 2013) and *Im Gut* (Märkii, 2012)—both have been discussed in Jasper's piece (2019).

& Vassal's collective housing projects, such as the *96 Lodgments in Chalon-sur-Saône* (Lacaton & Vassal, 2016). Lacaton & Vassal used industrial materials like corrugated polycarbonate and exposed concrete to optimise the climatic performance of the housing unit. The slabs collect heat during the day and release it during the night. The translucent facade opens during the hot season and closes to become a greenhouse during the cold months (Druot et al., 2007; Lacaton & Vassal, 2020; Ruby & Ruby, 2013).

This combination of passive climatic systems and traditional active solutions is essential to improve domestic spaces' energy performance. The way these systems are arranged in the house's plan is critical for their functionality. The *Antivilla*, a retrofitting of a 1950s warehouse on the outskirts of Berlin completed by the German offices Brandlhuber+Emde, Burlon in 2014, is a typical example (Brandlhuber+Emde, Burlon, 2014). In the cold weather of Berlin, only a third of the *Antivilla*'s total area is acclimatised by mechanical means. Climatic comfort is reserved for areas such as the toilet or the kitchen. Around them, a series of onion-ring-like layers of curtains capture the dissipated heat and organise the rest of the house according to its climatic requirements.[6] The *Antivilla* proves how domestic activities permit variations in temperature and humidity and can be distributed according to their proximity to sources of heat and moisture.

In 2014, Baracco + Wright, based in Melbourne, organised its *Garden House* in Westernport as a verandah (Baracco + Wright , 2014). The holiday house is a deck, a raised platform covered by a transparent shed.[7] Baracco + Wright's building illustrates how the climatic solutions tested by Lacaton & Vassal in France or Brandlhuber in Germany can be successfully translated into the Australian context. The mild climate allows for even more radical solutions than in European experiments. In Sydney, weather conditions allow for showers in the sun, but bedrooms require protection from the wind in the winter. In the image (Figure 1), the guides hanging from the ceiling and the collected curtains remind us that once closed, the house is divided into onion-ring-like acclimatised areas, optimising climatic performance and energy consumption.[8] In this way, this

[6] The *Antivilla* has become a global icon of adaptive reuse, famously featured on the cover of the New York times Magazine in 2016. See Williams (2016).
[7] Baracco + Wright has described its work as a continuation of the Australian architect Robin Boyd's understanding of the building as a roof and a platform that lets the landscape pass through (Barraco & Wright, 2017).
[8] This acclimatising strategy was first described as the 'thermal onion' at *OostCampus* in Oostkamp, The Netherlands (Carlos Arroyo Architects, 2012).

large verandah adapts to changing weather conditions. For example, Sydney's summer period requires an architecture that reduces heat and decreases humidity. Curtains increasing shading can control the temperature and shelter from the rain. They have an effect only in the areas that require a stable climate. This kind of comfort is closely linked to energy consumption. Constraining climate control to reduced areas decreases the house's carbon footprint, which is essential for Gen Z and millennials, the first generations fully affected and aware of the environmental effects of our overconsumption and carbon dependence (Tyson et al., 2021).

Naturalised Interiors

The third section of this investigation explored the domestic interior as a site for encounters between multiple species, promoting an empathic relation with the biosphere. In the image (Figure 1), scattered potted plants and the lack of enclosure indicate care for the world of insects and birds. The plants not only play a role in the house's climatic performance. Placed under the cornice line, they function as a facade, a diffuse barrier that reduces wind velocity, blocks the direct sun, and filters pollutants.

The Japanese architect Junya Ishigami has explored the possibility of living in a garden in several projects. *His House for A Young Couple*, completed in Tokyo, is perhaps the most relevant project (junya.ishigami+associates., 2013). The house welcomes the garden into its living room, literally. A small-scale forest grows in its interior, transforming the room into an organic playground for its inhabitants (Ishigami, 2008; Ishigami et al., 2008). The explicit openness to the local ecology is also present in the *Edificio Jardín Hospedero y Nectarífero* completed by the Spanish office Husos in Cali (Husos, 2012). The Colombian building uses local vegetation and an open facade to ensure that the endemic butterflies of Cali use the building as much as its human inhabitants.[9] Instead of displacing local nature, it constructs a symbiotic relationship with it. The houses are extensions of the biosphere that insert a microcosm of nature into the artificial environment of Cali. The selection of local species ensures optimal responses to the climate since they perform similar roles within their native ecosystem. The context demands that species thrive in lower light levels, and the increased humidity—induced by domestic programs such as bathing, cooking

[9] Husos' exploration of buildings intended to be a means of communication with multiple uses and users that establishes new lines of dialogue between the various human and non-human communities involved is described at large in some of their projects (Husos, 2017, 2019, 2020).

and washing—explain the presence of *Cordylina stricta, Platycerium spp., Lomandra longifolia,* or *Schefflera actinophylla.*

Living with nature at home has been recently explored by the Australian office Partners Hill in the *Daylesford Longhouse Residence & Working Farm* completed in Daylesford (Partners Hill, 2019; Neustein 2020). The building reimagines the agricultural shed as a home where the difference between a garden and living quarters no longer exists. It shows how the Australian environment is already a home in which only a few limited interventions are required to accommodate human life. The Partners Hill's house appropriates local agricultural technologies and historical precedents, like Robin Boyd's *Featherston House* from 1969, nesting the attitude towards interior nature in a lineage of houses conceived as extensions of the Australian landscape (Boyd, 1969).

Living in a garden entails welcoming flowering plants, seasonal cycles, blooming and dormancy into the domestic realm along with a diverse ecosystem of pollinators and microorganisms. Climatically, it introduces thermal mass through a palette of local rocks, minerals and organic materials. The image (Figure 1) illustrates a complex ecosystem that includes architecture, users, and organic and inorganic matter. Native plants, rocks, and fauna replace traditional insulation and reconnect with local ecologies with species such as *Grevillea oleoides, Banksia ericifolia, Casuarina equisetifolia*, and *Callistemon* 'silver cloud' that will tolerate the pressures of a warming climate. It hints at the playfulness and the responsibilities that come with living within a garden. The traces of plant-related incomplete activities, like the ponds of water on the table or the forgotten watering can on the floor, suggest that caring for the potted plants is an everyday activity.

Reusing (New) Materials

The fourth line of enquires looks at cross laminated timber (CLT) in architecture as a sustainable mass timber new construction system. In the coming decades, the predicted growth of the Australian population is expected to accelerate housing construction and dramatically increase its carbon footprint. Mass timber embodies a new paradigm in the built environment, much like steel and concrete did in the rise of modernity. Timber has many benefits, including carbon sequestration, lower embodied energy than steel and concrete, psychological benefits for inhabitants, and more streamlined on-site construction.
Pascal Flammer's *House in Balsthal* from 2013 is an example of the possibilities of CLT technology in the domestic space (Flammer, 2013). The structure, pavements, slabs, and furniture of the entire

building use the same material. CLT is a relatively new technology that has emerged most prevalently in Europe and North America. In recent years, the market for CLT in Australia has grown considerably. Australian-based manufacturers are currently shifting toward local material production using the native species, *Eucalyptus nitens*, resulting in the pale-yellow wood texture in the resulting interiors.[10]

For durability reasons, CLT needs to be covered when it is part of the façade and can only be exposed in the interior of the building. This dichotomy recalls the Swiss architects BUREAU A's mountain hut, *Antoine*, completed in Verbier (BUREAU A, 2014). It is a hollow artificial rock that hides a wooden cabin inside. The split is a pun on CLT materiality, both natural and artificial—both the rock outside and the wood inside look, yet are not raw natural materials. As an engineered material, CLT allows for multiple shapes and finishes, leaving the possibilities of the outside condition of the interior endlessly open.

Nevertheless, more than ambiguity, CLT implies prefabrication and, in the image, it is borrowed from *Minimod Curucaca*, completed by the Brazilian office MAPA in Curucaca (MAPA architects, 2018). *Minimod* is a CLT home in a rural area in Brazil that illustrates the availability of this material and the possibilities of prefabrication. Fabricated in a factory and assembled on-site in three days, its interior differs from the limited dimensions and moody atmosphere of prefabricated housing. Several details in the image (Figure 1) demonstrate the industrialised origin of the CLT structure. The regularity of the load-bearing elements, the ironwork that connects columns and beams, and the pristine edges of every corner are finishes that cannot be easily implemented on-site. Designed with the care of a carpenter, they are pieces of custom furniture that recover crafts in the house's architecture.

Austerity Chic

The fifth section summarises the attitudes towards sustainability, new forms of sociability, energy consumption, and materiality described in the previous four. It also answers the paper's central question: How do Gen Z and millennials imagine their domestic interiors? Rather than an iconic design of pristine finishes, they deploy a sort of assemblage

[10] CLT is a relatively new technology that has emerged most prevalently in Europe and North America. In recent years, the market for CLT in Australia has grown considerably and Australian-based manufacturers are currently making the shift toward local production of the material using the native species Eucalyptus Nitens. With the ability to bypass the economic and environmental impacts of global importation, a move to local production positions CLT as a sustainable option for the next generation of buildings in Australia ("Australian-first," n.d.).

aesthetics. As an aesthetic choice, this seamless fragmentation has its political implications. Its constitutive elements are deliberately kept raw to preserve the connection between the home and more significant social, material and cultural cosmologies.

The apparent precariousness of the *Twin Arch* artist studios completed in Muswell Hill in 2015 by the London/Porto/Oslo-based office Dyvik Kahlen Architects is a perfect example of this attitude (Dyvik Kahlen Architects, 2015). The studios were built using off-the-shelf technical solutions and recycled materials. They shift from pristine finishes towards spacious, practical, and well-insulated spaces with views and proper natural light. This approach addresses urgent questions of sustainability, reducing carbon footprint by stimulating a circular economy using untreated wood studs, second-hand furniture, or silver insulation materials.

The *rot-ellen-berg* house, completed in Braives in 2013 by the now-discontinued Belgium firm architecten de vylder vinck taillieu, shares similar design decisions (architecten de vylder vinck taillieu, 2013). The house, an intervention in an existing cottage, uses materials typical of construction sites to enclose the areas of the house that require climatic control. The sources of heat are exquisite design objects that combine traditional ceramic stoves with contemporary industrial design (Taillieu, 2013). The resulting interiors appear unfinished as if the construction crew had left and the owners had moved in before the building was completed. That condition, exacerbated by the contraposition of high-end design furniture and construction-site materials, is not pejorative. Instead, it explores the limits of assemblage aesthetics by incorporating fragments of the building's history—like its construction process—into the montage. The raw materials and obsolete objects come together in new assemblages that combine unlikely elements, times, and materiality by assigning them new purposes.

This ad hocism of the assemblages expands beyond the objects that populate these projects, extending to its architecture.[11] Similarly, the Australian architect Andrew Power designed the *House with a Guest Room* in Red Head (Power, 2018). Built by the architect and his father, the house combines the precariousness of self-construction, a deep knowledge of architecture's history, and a collection of furniture that includes found objects and collector pieces. The

[11] The notion of 'ad hocism' was first articulated by Jencks and Silver (1973) as a criticism of purist doctrines and formal models of modernism. Grima (2012) later identified the return of these improvisatory attitudes in design.

disciplinary knowledge informs the selection of fragments and assemblages. They do not result in a fragmentary collage but rather a problematic whole negotiated through design decisions.[12]

The image (Figure 1) presents a dispersed collection of domestic fragments assembled deliberately ad hoc fashion. Discursively, the collection of curtains, found objects, water management, notions of nature, stones, appliances, heating devices, and pieces of furniture engages ecology as much as economy. The result is an ad hoc material assemblage and a mode of discourse that resists any attempt to make a consistent whole. The deliberate aesthetics of the unfinished pervades throughout the image by mixing bare material qualities with fashionable collector objects.

A name has been used recurrently to summarise these qualities. In the aftermath of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC), *The Economist* identified 'Austerity Chic' as an attitude towards the crises that both embraced and responded to the austerity measures deployed across the world ("Austerity chic," 2009; Menkes, 2009; Quan, 2009). In 2013, the architectural critic Pier Vittorio Aureli elaborated on the potential values of resistance as these values entered the field of architecture (Aureli, 2013). Further, in 2016, the Spanish architect Alejandro Zaera-Polo loosely used the term to group an unlikely range of architectural practices that shared an ambivalent relationship with architecture's complacent attitude regarding its role in the overconsumption of natural resources (Zaera-Polo, 2016).

In its different iterations, Austerity Chic has been defined as the contemporary aesthetic sensibility that best captures Gen Z and millennials' ambivalent relationship to the conflict between eternal growth inherent to capitalism and the Earth's limited resources. However, to understand the reinvigoration of Austerity Chic in domestic interiors, we need to flash forward to 2020. The emergence of another global crisis has opened an unprecedented degrowth cycle. Nurtured by a new wave of austerity measures, construction earnestness, climatic performance, and economic feasibility compete in austere neo-rationalism, cosmopolitics, and anthropocenic phenomenology to articulate the proper response to austerity policies. These are unlikely design approaches to share a list, yet they all can in our study cases. After analysing all of them, one is left wondering if the dissolution of the interior into material ecologies is the emergent space of architecture's political agency (Latour, 2004).

[12] The notion of 'difficult whole' was first articulated by Venturi (1966), but has been revisited recently in the context of contemporary practices (Geers et al, 2016).

Alternatively, one has to assume that its constitutive elements are deliberately kept raw to preserve the connection between the home and more considerable material and cultural cosmologies (Marres, 2015). The image (Figure 1) does not give us a definitive answer. Instead, it functions as a map of possible directions Gen Z and millennials' domesticities might go in.

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