

Hyde Park Library

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This project looks at the possibility to reinvent the typology of the public library to better answer contemporary needs in society. With the internet, there is no longer any need for an institution, like the public library, to ensure availability of information for all people. There is no longer any shortage of information, rather the opposite. However, the internet has also brought an increased polarization as to the meaning and relevance of this information.

In virtual space, people can choose their own isolated contexts for translating news and information. So-called echo chambers have emerged on social networks where people of similar views never have to be confronted with alternate ways of thinking. Social cohesion, a precondition to a functioning democracy, is eroded if we cannot even share a similar understanding of what constitutes facts and common knowledge.

In physical space, confrontation with opposing views and opinions is harder. Architecture, and the very physical nature of the library, in this sense, could play a role in facilitating a space for discussion amongst visitors. The library is located on the border between the city, which has always been a space of confrontation, and the park, a space for escaping the noise and stress of the city, with parts of the building connected both conceptually and functionally to each context.