

h u m a n

The word 'human' is rendered in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a dark, textured material. In the center of the word, between the 'u' and the 'a', there is a silhouette of a group of people sitting around a table, engaged in a discussion or meeting. The silhouettes are dark and blend into the dark background of the letters.

mediators

# The Architecture of Hospi

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Hospitals are among the most complex buildings confronting architects. The heterogeneity of their users and needs makes planning difficult. Hospitals need to accommodate rapid changes in organization and medical technology. Thus far, the solution has been to consolidate operations, to stress operational rules and procedures, to rely on specialist knowledge and to build for flexibility. This has resulted in complex organizations housed in labyrinthine islands in the city, their architectural form as inscrutable as the processes that led to it.



The Free Market Hospital at the Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam

Yet health is not viewed anymore as simply a risk to be covered, but, with so-called wellness, a commodity to be consumed. Individuality, alternative medicine and sustainability, but also high technology, specialization and especially deregulation are changing the context of hospital design. The research studio worked with the concept of "performative typologies," which could be considered spatial and organizational ready-mades, as kinds of prototypes used as bases for innovation and metaphors for communication. The aim was to define the knowledge and approach unique to architects, thus allowing them to innovate and communicate in a complex and

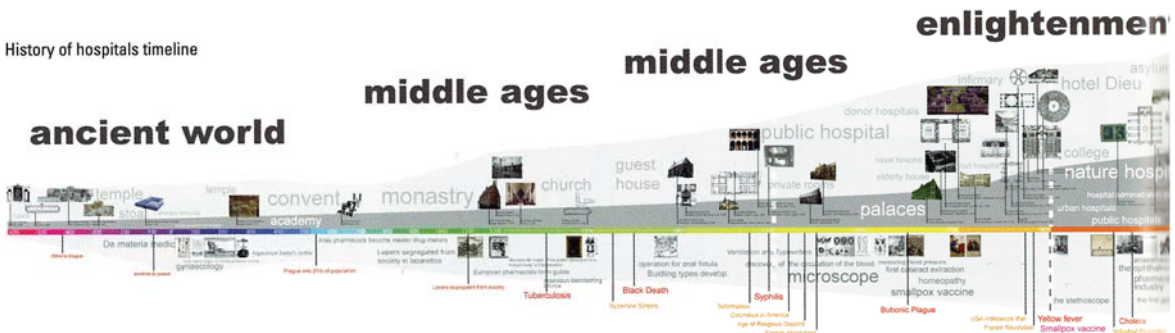
highly specialized field.

### Grafting typologies

What if a hospital could be organized like an airport, a large piece of infrastructure full of amenities surrounded by a choice of different specialized service providers? One could consider the airlines as technology providers in the arena of the hospital. Technological obsolescence of specialized services and the trend to increase amenities would take care of themselves in the market,

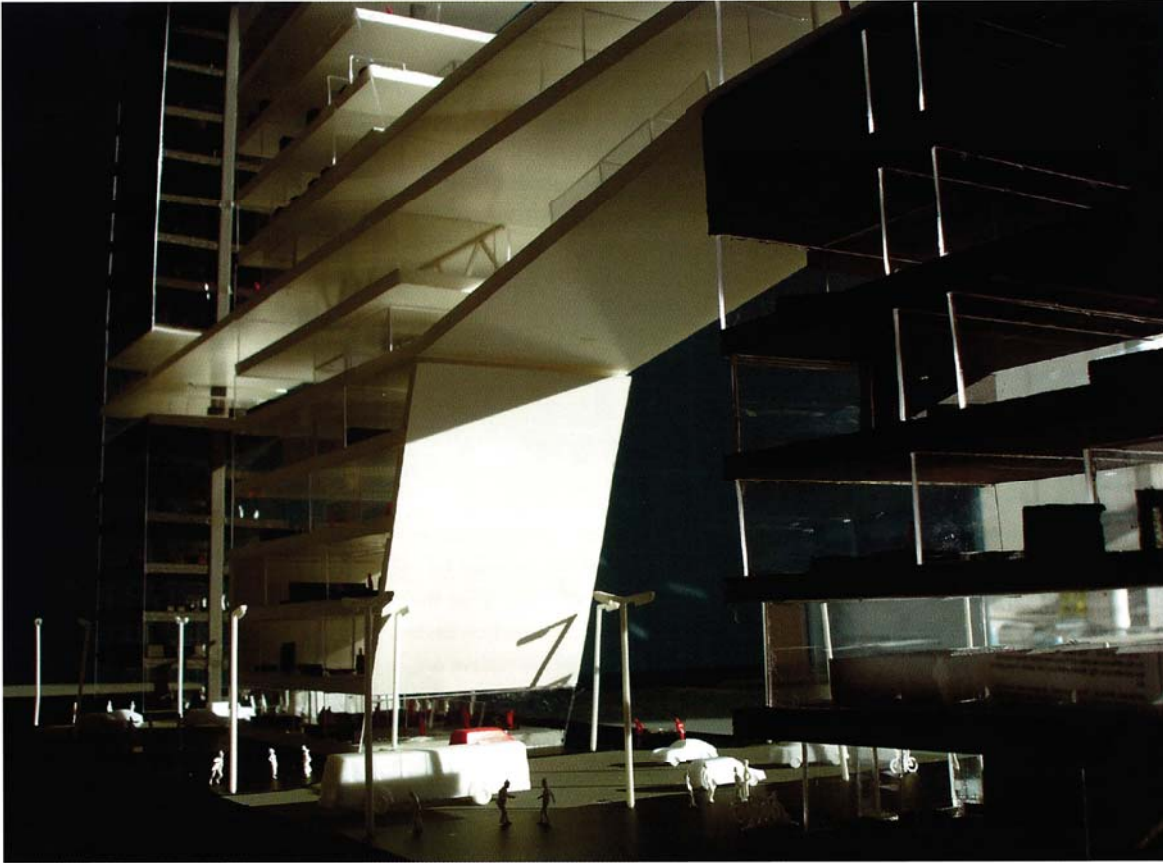
whereby the building itself would be divided between a hospital side (airside) and a public side (landside). What if a hospital could be like a theme park, a blend of technology and landscape able to define clear identities and experiences for patients and staff alike? What if the hospital could be a network of small, agile stations embedded in the city, like the cybercafé *EasyEverything*? Sharing logistics, brand and digital infrastructure, such a network could better combine the individual

History of hospitals timeline





# tals



Hospital re-urbanization

and local services of house doctors with the knowledge sharing and efficiencies of a larger institution. What if the hospital could be built as a large wellness center with a spectrum of public functions and services at its periphery like the old Roman bath? Why do hospitals have to be segregated worlds in the city?

### Writing scenarios

The students were hospitalized for 24

hours in the University Hospital in Groningen, the Netherlands, some as "patients," others as observers. Based on these experiences, existing scenarios were analyzed and new ones were defined.

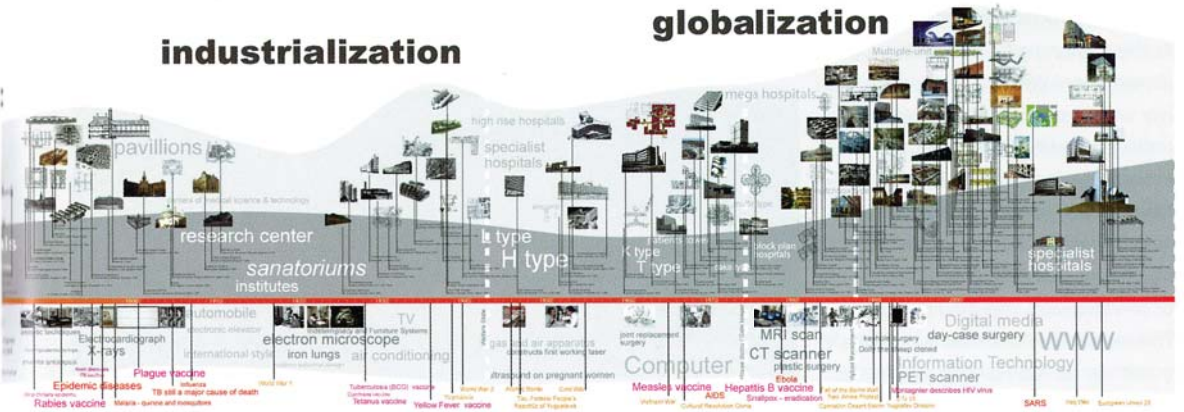
### Erasmus Medical Center

The final assignment was to define a project based on the first two exercises that would address the

criticism developed by the students and propose alternatives. We worked with the site and the program of the Erasmus Medical Center (EMC) in Rotterdam, The Netherlands that will be rebuilt in phases through 2025. The aim was less to define an architectural solution for the EMC than to test the concepts developed in the context of a real project.

## industrialization

## globalization



advertising hunch