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Borislavka Centre Auli'k Fiser Architects as Architects



New and permeable city block becomes a focal point for the Prague 6 borough, exploiting the prime location directly over the Borislavka metro station. Four crystal shaped volumes rise from a common two-story plinth, the shape of the plinth responding to the narrow and irregular building site. The new-build features retail shopping, cafés and restaurants, office space and basement parking. BoysPlayNice The building site is located directly over a metro station, right next to one of the city's major radial roads, Evropská, which connects the city centre to the airport. The site has an elevation difference ranging from 7 up to 14 meters and is immediately surrounded by heterogeneous development, with a neighbourhood of family villas followed by mid-rise apartment buildings and even a socialist housing estate further away. BoysPlayNice In 2012, conscious of the significance and complicated character of the site, the KKCG REG investment company held an international architecture workshop to find a suitable solution for its development. The main challenge posed by the workshop was the inadequacy of a sizable vacant plot, close to tram and metro stations, with a prominent place in the Prague panorama and views to the Prague Castle. BoysPlayNice Vision for the Site / Vibrant Urban Environment A tight functional linkage between architecture and public space, serving both local citizens and visitors, was envisioned by the client. A complex, unique and respectful solution was required. The design had to be confident and conscious of the urban context at the same time, responsive to the surrounding development. Public space improvement, pedestrian access routes, urban design and landscaping were all emphasized as main aspects of a successful solution. A requirement for sustainable building operation went hand in hand with the A-rated office space requirement. The main assignment of the architecture workshop was to take advantage of the existing topography and to do so in such a way that a small local shopping centre (approx. 9,000 m²) is created in the underground part of the project (on Kladenská street level) and then several (minimum three) individual volumes are added on top of this platform, providing office space (approx. 26,000 m²). Our entrepreneurial vision doesn't end with good investments, we want to consider our projects from a much broader, and above all, a long term perspective. (Petr Pujman, CEO, KKCG Real Estate Group) BoysPlayNice Significant urban development was happening all along the Evropská street during the 20th century. Company headquarters and other imposing buildings were being erected here. Unfortunately, most of these only strengthened the streetscape character, but did nothing for the residential development further beyond the street. What we considered the greatest strength of the design brief was the ambition to reach out and help improve the neighbouring areas. (Aulík Fier architekti) For both the developer and the architect it became a common goal to provide local residents with a vibrant urban complex offering amenities, cafés, restaurants and shops in the form of a refined public space. BoysPlayNice Besides the office and business functions of the complex, our main goal was to supplement public services and amenities in the catchment area, and improve access to the metro station. (Petr Pujman, CEO, KKCG Real Estate Group) BoysPlayNice Architecture Corresponding with the Site / Fractal Self-Similarity Principle While studying available historical maps, we realized the irregular shape of the building site, resembling an elongated triangle, is actually a record of old roads leading to the Prague Castle. Their acute angle makes sense due to different elevations. We used the existing geometry, developed it further, and reopened passage through the site. Then we subdivided the site into self-similar fractal segments. (Aulík Fier architekti) BoysPlayNice The four individual volumes of the building are shaped according to the fractal self-similarity principle and derived from existing site geometry. This approach generated a responsive building shape changing with the character and elevation of the perimeter streets, while still meeting the demands of the office space typology. The irregular shapes of the volumes are not arbitrary external design features, in fact they match closely the interior layout and the building function. Each of the four volumes is similar to the other ones, and all are bound together in one composition. Carefully assembled from the irregular crystals, the form of the permeable city block emerges. BoysPlayNice Permeability and Connectivity We drew on our ongoing research of new urban fabric types for the contemporary city. Our goal is to reinvent the traditional city block so that it would evoke the same quality of public space as the historical centre, but would meet our current requirements for indoor environmental quality and allow individual architectural expression at the same time. (Aulík Fier architekti) The scope of the design went beyond just individual buildings' aesthetics and rational floor layout the space around and in between buildings was equally important. The four crystalline volumes stand on a low two-story



plinth. The purpose of the plinth is to address the different elevations of neighbouring streets. Narrow alleys and small open spaces are formed between the crystals, reminiscent of the public spaces typical for compact historical city centres. BoysPlayNice The design also introduces a small piazzetta, located at the site of a similar pre-existing historical square. Compared to many large-scale, low-activity public open spaces built since the second half of the 20th century, small city squares usually have a much better feeling. (Aulík Fier architekti) The piazzetta also provides barrier-free access to the whole building complex and the metro station vestibule. A Federico Díaz sculpture underscores the place's significance. For both the interior and the exterior, the scope of possible movement through the complex could be likened to that of an anthill. BoysPlayNice Glazed Façade Expressing the Block Composition The technologically complicated, fully-glazed curtain wall system represented the best option for formally expressing the block composition it was not an end in itself, nor was it meant to demonstrate the sovereignty of the office typology. Sufficient accuracy of the crystalline shapes could only be achieved with a structural glass façade. Specifying the light transmission characteristics for the glass used for the project made it possible for the outside observer to take in the complex geometry of the buildings, while avoiding, to a large extent, any strong reflections or sun glare, undesirable in the given urban context. The final design strikes a delicate balance between the technical solution and the emphasis on natural daylighting, even for workspaces located deeper into the plan. BoysPlayNice The solid and more traditional formal expression of the two-story plinth helps to integrate the building with the surrounding urban context of the Kladenská street. At the street level, solid walls of light stone cladding are punctuated by large display windows. The more regular, vertical parts of the glass curtain wall use a prefabricated modular façade, while the more complicated, angular and three-dimensional parts use a stick system façade. During the project development, full scale 3D printed models were made to test some of the most complex structural elements. An extraordinary part of the building envelope features a glass ceiling stretching between buildings I a II. The three-dimensional steel load-bearing structure includes a service cavity for peripheral wiring at the steel profile bottom flange. BoysPlayNice Public Space and Vegetation / Balancing Built-Up Surfaces and Green Spaces For the most part, new public spaces receive ample daylight and are sufficiently shielded from the noise of the Evropská radial road. Individual buildings crystals are set into stepped green gardens, their entrance lobbies and courts filled with lush vegetation, with creepers growing up through the buildings. An experimental form of indoor vegetation, quite unlike the typical green wall, was designed for this project. Several large, three-dimensional structures from rough-hewn wooden posts were erected to carry epiphytic plants. Following that, an open green park with grown trees was designed in the eastern part of the site, balancing the built-up surfaces and the green spaces. BoysPlayNice A more significant use of greenery would, in the case of Borislavka, go against the architects' vision. Individual volumes symbolize crystals and crystals tend to be clean. In the Borislavka project, the scale of the greenery is in a harmonic relationship with the overall design. The Epifyt (Epiphyte) forms the focal point, arrived at after a thorough search for a unique way of utilizing interior plants. The singularity of this solution is in the form of the installation itself, but also in its close connection to architecture. It is not just vegetation, but an artwork that is alive and changeable. (Zdenek Sendler, landscape architect) BoysPlayNice Integrating Art in the Architectural Program From the beginning, the architects of the Borislavka Centre envisioned several unique artistic interventions as integral parts of the design concept. For their realisation, two possible stages in the project development were considered. First group of artworks would be finished at the time of the building's completion and installed at predetermined locations (in the piazzetta, in front of the main entrance, or in specific interior positions). BoysPlayNice The artworks were always understood to freely express the artists' vision, the only thing the architects specified was their location. There was no brief asking for a common theme or a starting point for the intended artworks, and no indication as to how they should be integrated or juxtaposed to the architecture of the building. Since the design and development of these artworks preceded the completion of the building and the surrounding public space, in consultations with the artists, a certain timeless quality was preferred to contemporary social commentary. The long-term effects these artworks would have on individual public spaces had to be taken into consideration, too. (Petr Pujman, CEO, KKCG Real Estate Group) BoysPlayNice However, all the sculptures in the first group (Aerial by Federico Díaz, Ledovec (The Iceberg) by Maxim Velcovský, Planeta (The Planet) by the architects of the Centre Jan Aulík, Leo Horák, David Zalabák and the sculptor Pavel Filip, and Proudění (The Flow) by Jan Poupe) were finally conceived as closely relating to basic natural principles, thus manifesting an unintentional, but all the more remarkable synergy between the artists and the environment they entered, and the artists among themselves. I was tasked with designing a piece for the main lobby, serving as an entrance hall to one of the crystals. The several hundred square meters space posed a great challenge, when striving to create an artwork that would become an integral part of the building and its architecture. In fact it was a piece of gesamtkunstwerk, which means the

connection of all artistic and design disciplines in such a way that the entire building works in harmony. Working with the whole and having to constantly consult other professionals on the project was a very interesting and important design process. (Maxim Velcovský, Art director, Lasvit) BoysPlayNice A second group of art interventions will continue to be commissioned and installed in the public open space after the building's completion. The interventions will be selected and positioned contextually with the existing artworks from the first group, reacting to existing spatial relationships. Both long-term installations, co-existing in the given space, and short-term installations or exhibitions are acceptable, opening the doors for current art pieces as well. Indoor Environment Office Space Contemporary office interiors are inevitably filled with unified products, for a comfortable everyday use it is therefore very important to supplement them with individual, custom-made, and craftsmanship solutions. The individual and the unified elements work together in a strong, natural and balanced composition. Colors and textures of raw substances and natural building materials also serve as important interior design tools. BoysPlayNice Sustainability For its rainwater management solution, extensive green roofs and the building energy management system (energy recovery from elevators, heat exchanger), among other things, the building complex has been awarded the internationally recognized LEED Gold environmental certificate. BoysPlayNice Visual style The selected logotype is based on the idea that the architecture's determinant feature is the space and the interconnectedness of the individual buildings. The letter B is hollowed out, with its shape defined by strong shadows, inspired by the building's glass envelope. The Borislavka font, appearing in the visual style and also in the building orientation system, has a geometric character and many architectural allusions, too. The creator of the font is Toman Design in cooperation with typographer Vojtech Ríha. BoysPlayNice Exterior Artworks Studio Federico Díaz: Aerial Aerial is a monumental installation reminiscent of an old path once crossing the area. Its concrete sculptures were made using a specially devised robotic fabrication technology. The objects include dripping water features that cool the area during summer season. In addition, there is also an augmented reality layer accessible to the visitors through a mobile app. Jan Aulík, Leo Horák, David Zalabák, Pavel Filip: Planeta (The Planet) A water feature consisting of a 1:1,000,000-scale, stainless steel model of the southern spherical cap of our planet. Water flows across the surface, symbolizing the ocean. BoysPlayNice Interior Artworks Maxim Velcovský: Ledovec, Lasvit (The Iceberg) A light object in the entrance lobby and also the biggest Lasvit product in the Czech Republic. It comprises 120 pieces of flat, fused glass plates. The plates are set into a corrugated wooden ceiling of the entrance lobby. Zdenek Sandler, Jan Aulík, Leo Horák, David Zalabák and Radka Táborová: Epifyt (Epiphyte) A unique solution combining interior and exterior garden architecture. The rainforest-inspired piece was designed for the entrance lobby space, with corresponding size and shape. Epiphytic plants are placed on 76 posts of conditioned acacia wood standing in a pool of water. Jan Poupe: Proudění (The Flow) A large scale painting in the entrance lobby of Building 4. Using a 3D model of the building and a digital air-flow simulation of the area, a hand-drawn sketch was superimposed with an array of glass pyramids, reflecting light and space orientation. The resulting system was transferred to canvas in the form of a structural oil-painting. A respected Prague based architecture studio, Aulík Fier architekti focuses on the planning of large urban development areas and the design of complex office and residential projects. AFA is always looking for appropriate and contextual solutions from large scale to small and detailed studies, interiors and exhibition design. AFA was the architect behind the BB Centrum business park in Prague Michle. Their long-term engagement in this area counts among the major feats of Prague's urban development led by a single architecture studio. Another significant project completed recently is the Borislavka Centre building complex. Since the foundation of the studio in 2007, AFA has worked for developers, institutions and private clients alike. Its projects are recognized and published in Czech and international media. Both its directors, Jan Aulík and Jakub Fier, are active in the broader cultural and professional community, with design studio teaching experience from architectural schools. BoysPlayNice Ing. arch. Jan Aulík Graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University in Prague. Has co-directed the Aulík Fier architekti studio together with Jakub Fier since 2007. The Czech Architecture Foundation supervisory board member from 2002 to 2009. Faculty of Architecture design studio teacher from 2008 to 2014. He has been designing office and residential buildings since 1996, often for the BB Centrum park in Prague Michle. He is also the author of several local public buildings, for example the Community Centre or the Nová Brumlovka Sport and Wellness Centre. The mixed use city block and the manufacturing hall adaptation in Prague Liben is another one of his significant projects. Most recently he completed the Borislavka Centre building complex. Ing. arch. Leo Horák Graduated from the Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University in Prague with his Dubnica nad Váhom revitalisation project, supervised by professor Ivan Kroupa. His diploma project won the dean's award. From 2003 to 2004 he completed his international student internship at The Tampere University of Technology in Finland. He worked part-time in the Prague branches of various international

architecture studios during his studies. He joined the Aulík Fier studio after graduation and started to concentrate on urban development concept ideas in the context of Prague. One of the main themes of his work has been the development of the BB Centrum in Prague Michle, with the latest completed project called Delta. He also designed mixed-use developments in Palmovka and Ruzyne and residential developments in Kavčí hory, Vysocany and Pankrác. The last nine years he has been busy with the Borislavka Centre complex, ever since the AFA's success in the international competition. BoysPlayNice The Client A member of the KKCG private investment group, KKCG Real Estate Group was established in 2012 to manage real estate projects of the group. Its core business is commercial and residential development and facility management. The company follows real estate trends and markets, seeking and evaluating investment opportunities and offering consultation services for the parent company. The company's vision is to create lasting value by bringing together the genius loci and innovative architecture in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Apart from Borislavka Centre, the company also completed the first phase of the Prague 5 top'rezidence Pomezí project last year, and is currently moving on with the construction of its second phase. Under the top'rezidence brand, the company also built a group of fifty low-energy houses in ářecké údolí, winning a second place in the Stavba roku competition. Last December, the KKCG REG daughter company VESTINGLOG sold five manufacturing and logistics parks in Poland, which are now fully leased by renowned companies like Kongsberg Automotive, Benteler, or Sanden Manufacturing. The various KKCG REG teams are working on fifteen different development projects at this moment. In 2022, Borislavka Centre became part of the real estate portfolio of CS nemovitostní fond, managed by REICO, the Česká spořitelna investment company. BoysPlayNice Team: Studio: Aulík Fier architekti Author: Jan Aulík, Leo Horák Co-author: Jakub Fier, Jakub Hemzal, Gabriela Králová, David Zalabák, Alena Sedláková, Petra Coufal Skalická, Eva Maková, Jan Dluho Design team: Ondrej Cerný, Petra Merková, Oleksandr Nebozhenko, Vojtech tamberg, Kristýna Zámostná Photographer: BoysPlayNice Collaborators: Landscape architecture: Zdenek Sendler / Matou Hydroponie Cost management: Jan Hruše MDA Construction management: Ruby Project Management Contractors: Zakládání staveb / Feri / Metrostav Interior fitout: PBW Group / Novecon Epifyt [Epiphyte]: Zdenek Sendler / Jan Aulík / Leo Horák / David Zalabák / Radka Táborová Boardroom design: Michal Fronek, Jan Nemecek [Olgoj Chorchoj] Artwork: Aerial: Studio Federico Díaz Planeta [The Planet]: Jan Aulík, Leo Horák, David Zalabák, Pavel Filip Ledovec [The Iceberg]: Maxim Velcovský [Lasvit] Proudění [The Flow]: Jan Poupe Other artwork: Pavel Roucka / František Hodonský / Jan Kovárík / Milan Houser Glass objects: Nocní obloha: Studna prání [Night sky: The Well of Wishes]: Jan Aulík, Leo Horák, David Zalabák [Aulík Fier architekti] + BOMMA AURA: Sans Souci Chandelier [boardroom]: Michal Fronek, Jan Nemecek [Olgoj Chorchoj] Visual style: Toman Design Shopping gallery furniture collaborator: Studio Perspektiv Restaurant: Basepoint BoysPlayNice Materials Used: facades Sipral stone cladding, pavement Je steel structures skylights LLENTAB air conditioning Trox glass partitions Likos terrazzo Coming lighting Lumidee reception desk / solid surfaces Exx glass objects Lasvit, Sans Souci, Olgoj Chorchoj steel staircase STAIRS design locks and hardware EST Stage Technology furniture Vitra, Konsepti, Walter Knoll, Moroso, BB Italia, Wilkhahn, Ethimo, **La Cividina**, Mmcité, Sollus nábytek ceilings BARRISOL, Hunter Douglass, Allegro, Kovprof elevators Schindler CZ shading Purestyl, Hunter Douglass electrical installation ABB, Enika, Instalace Praha carpeting Boca turnstiles Cominfo reinforced concrete structures Feri, Metrostav plumbing fixtures Vitra, Grohe, Hansgrohe

