

Cultural identity lab.

Intervention on a project by the Lens°ass office in an old farmhouse with a courtyard, typical of East Flanders (Gors-Oppleuw, Looz).

The intervention (re)generates a link between a courtyard and a valley landscape that carries the values of a beguinage culture. The intervention focuses on a reconfiguration of the distribution of the owners' dwelling and the rental part. Three intentions underlie the project.

To generate a clear entrance to a porous (4 entrances), fractured (division of the farm into 3 dwellings) and ill-defined site.

To restore the fundamental link between the courtyard space (core of the community) and the landscape by generating an open distribution space - previously broken.

To highlight the ambiguity existing in the building complex between the original and contemporary identity by means of spatial and phenomenological devices.

Project
Entrance & distribution of a former farm unit

Total surface
20 m²

Location
Gors-Oppleuw, Looz (BE)



Existing situation.

In the centre of the image, we can see the *farmhouse* in which the intervention is set and the break that they make between the *courtyard* (privatised in 3 parts) and the *outbuilding* - a marker in the landscape of the project's primary identity.



Projected situation.

The intervention is opposed to a fragmentation of the built environment with the sole aim of profitability. *Rejection is no longer an option.* Only the *spatial arrangement* and the *materiality* are the last bastion of the identity of the place and its collective memory.



Landscape specificities and identities.

The *projected entrance device* frames the outbuilding (the previous oven) in its strong relationship and identity with the surrounding landscape. The *outbuilding*; the *primary identity of the project in the landscape*. In its original state, it allowed the residents to personalise a codified habitat by the beguine culture, to make it their own; it fixes the projected situation on the territory.



“Dismantle and reassemble to intensity” (Bresson R., 1975)

The threshold space is materialised by fragments of cultural identity that were dismantled during the construction phase by the Lens°ass office. Let us constitute the fragments of a new ambiguous identity layer.

Source : Bresson, R. (1975), Notes sur le cinématographe (Folio) (French Edition). Gallimard Education.



North-East entrance : erasing the device... PROJECTION!

The sole limit is the landscape. The intervention puts us in tension with the surrounding elements, from which a beguine culture glitters. Its only limit is the landscape. It is a beginning that contributes to questioning peri-urbanisation and the notion of centrality within the village.

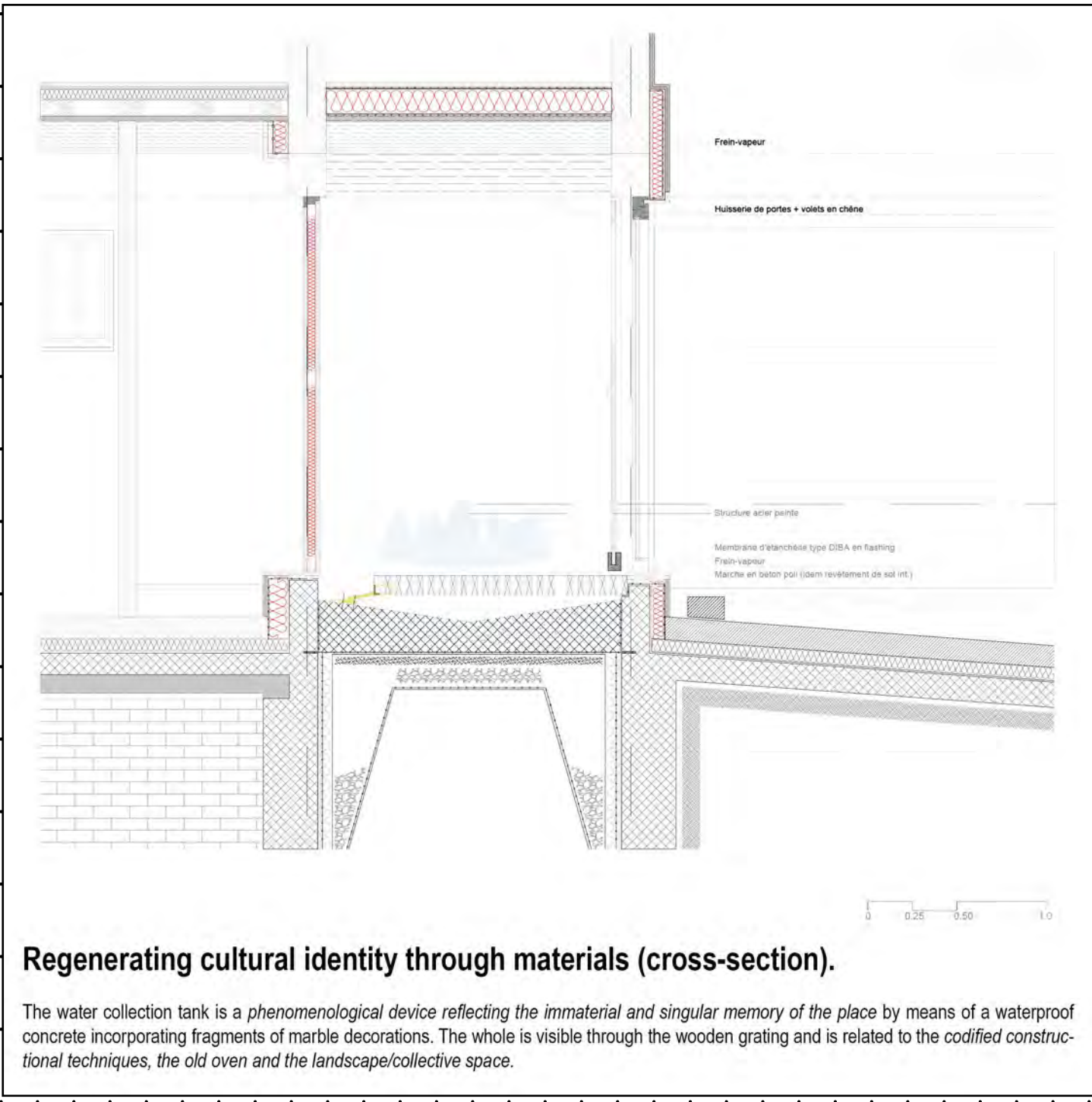
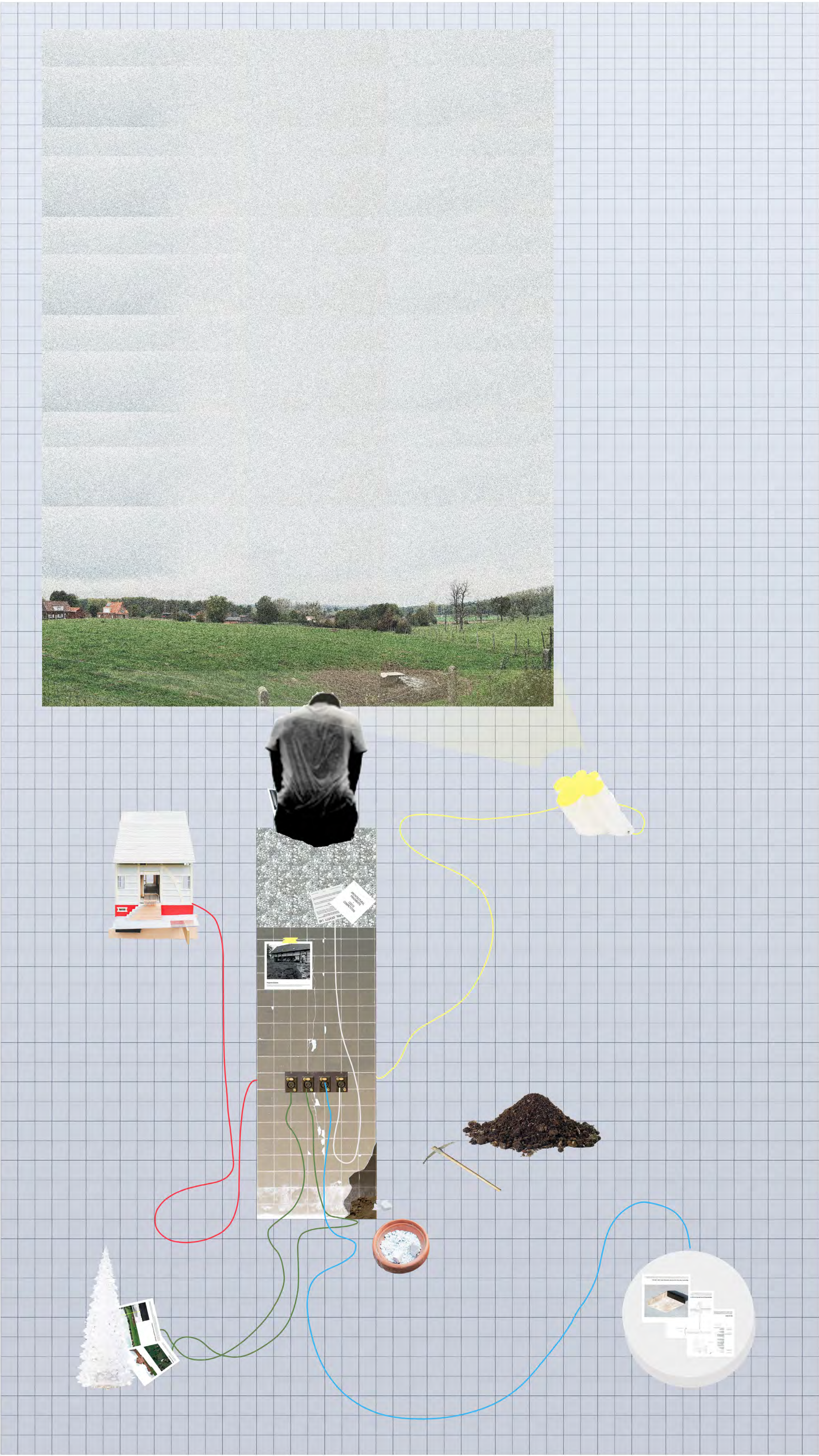


South-East entrance : emergence of the entrance device within the courtyard.

The water flows out at the very place where the community has gradually been diluted to the benefit of a privatisation of the courtyard space. But the water has no limits. The distress of a return to this community resonates through the height given to the collecting tray.

Migrazione of an immaterial heritage through materiality.

The delivered architectural fragments undertake a reflection on the 3 main guidelines of sustainability.



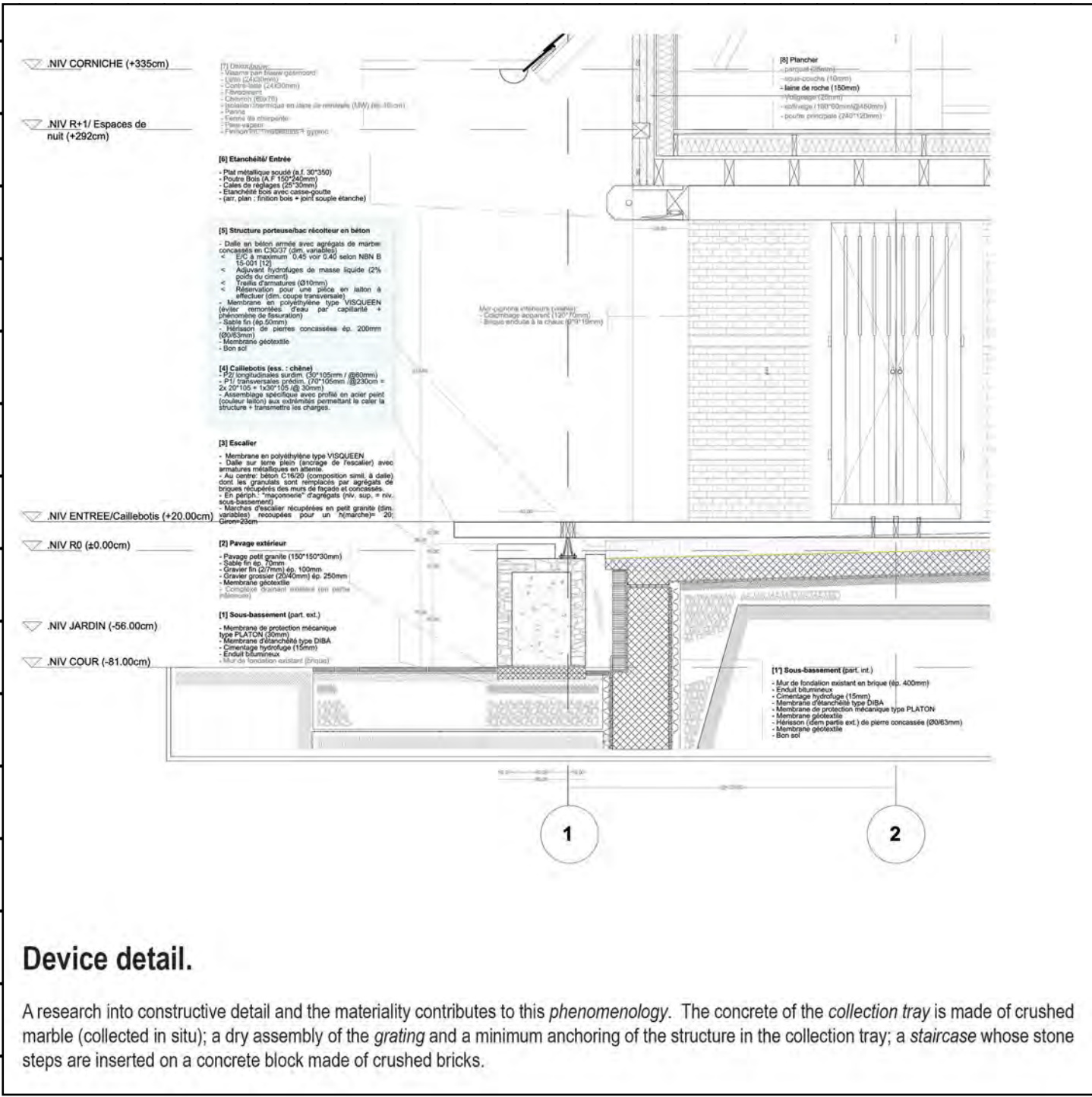
Regenerating cultural identity through materials (cross-section).

The water collection tank is a *phenomenological device* reflecting the *immaterial and singular memory* of the place by means of a *waterproof concrete* incorporating fragments of *marble decorations*. The whole is visible through the *wooden grating* and is related to the *codified constructional techniques, the old oven and the landscape/collective space*.



Materiality.

The various dismantled marble ornamental pieces are crushed and injected into the concrete. The whole is casted in *OSB formwork* for the pattern and colour of the fibre markings on the concrete.



Device detail.

A research into constructive detail and the materiality contributes to this *phenomenology*. The concrete of the *collection tray* is made of crushed marble (collected in situ); a dry assembly of the *grating* and a minimum anchoring of the structure in the collection tray; a staircase whose stone steps are inserted on a concrete block made of crushed bricks.



Approach of the final result for the materiality of the water collector.

The concrete has been sanded and polished with different granulometries from P40 to P400 and must be reworked to obtain a marbled finish. Two reference offices guided this work on the material with their work and philosophies: Caruso St-John (UK) and AM Architects (CH).