Refuge II
Temporary Barrier-Free Dwelling

We were asked by our client, diagnosed with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), to adapt the house with an eye on the future. After meeting with the elderly couple, we knew we had to come up with something considering the aggressive nature of the condition.

Refuge II is a temporary project. The existing concrete structure was chosen for the project as a result of the limitation in adaptability of the existing house. Of course a barrier-free four plan was a major concern, but what came to be as being even more important was mental accessibility.

There is no hope to heal. There is a need for a universal hope, helping each other, involvement, engagement, friendship beyond limits.

How can we make architecture with this? Why not building with friends and family?

With materials everybody knows from their childhood. Snow and sand referring to the playground, the smell, the memory.

SUMMER
More than a 100 friends and family contributed in constructing

SPRING
Outside with turning from hard more complicated jobs done by professionals like the sustainable heating and ventilation (with heat recovery) system or the domotics to manage the doors, curtain, lighting, ... controllable by the client. While building, coffee, tea, food, beer and wine, were served to celebrate life.

FALL
Everyone involved recognized hero/heroine in Refuge II. They were part of it. It created a mental accessibility. The focus changed from sickness and death to hope and future.

A WINTER

Everything will be taken away.
83% of the project (snow and loam) will be spread out over the landscape as fertilization.
Technical equipment (sponsored) will be returned to the professional. Glass, metal, wood... will be recycled.
Parallel to this attitude, and above all there is a human investment. The built. The cycle of life.
Summer: Altogether more than 100 friends and family joined in the ritual of building Refuge II.

Fall: The curtains allow different configurations of the space depending on the user’s privacy needs.