Among the 22 architectural projects selected from the call for innovative urban projects launched by the City of Paris, ‘REINVENTER PARIS 1’, our EDISON LITE project proposed a new housing model, based on three main principles that we established:

- The creation of ‘made-to-measure’ housing units, whereby the future residents were able to participate in establishing the brief as well as the design of their home;
- The provision of 20% extra surface area, defined and shared with the residents; this provides access to space and facilities that would not otherwise be available to individual residents;
- To welcome residents into an existing landscape, largely planted during works, the architectural project includes 75 m³ of soil, divided between 290 planters and a large 150 m² allotment on the roof.
These plants have had time to establish themselves and grow before the arrival of residents. Residents are thereby greeted by an established natural environment, for which they will have responsibility. The project thus proposes a sort of ‘permacultural’ way of life: residents will produce some of their own food, learning the pleasure of watching food grow; a means of encouraging them to participate in the collective effort that we must all undertake to reduce supply chains and move towards a landscape of edible permaculture as near as possible to home.
With regards materials, the project set itself the principle of ‘the right material in the right place’. The result is an optimised combination of concrete, timber and metal. It should be noted that the apartments are sold at a fixed price of 7,990 € incl. VAT per square metre, around 30% lower than the market rate. All sales and marketing was conducted online thanks to online platform HABK. Nearly 2,000 applications were received for the 15 open-market units. The buyers were selected according to a variety of criteria aimed at ensuring a community of residents both diverse and compatible.

A CRAMPED SITE IN PARIS’ 13TH DISTRICT

The site is right next to the Place d’Italie in the 13th arrondissement of south-east Paris, a tiny residual space of 415m² abutting the site of the Maurice Ravel school of music. This tiny plot is entirely enclosed in the midst of extremely dense urban fabric, both in terms of architectural treatment as well as the imposing height of the built masses that dominate it. Thus dominated by these constructions and enclosed by the site’s restrictive perimeter, we designed a project that aims to outmanoeuvre these constraints.
We quickly became aware that this site is representative of the challenges of tomorrow's cities, where densification has to be approached very carefully, developing good manners with regards the different buildings in close proximity. Rather than dismissal, the occasional densification of certain sites must rather bring a kind of renewal and retribution here, in this existing site of only a few hundred square metres, the construction of a new project must add value and literally embellish it.
20%以上的空间由居民共享
第二大创新是建造了20%以上的公共空间，由居民集体使用。这些公共空间被设计成一条线路，伴随着居民，为他们提供从架空一层一直到屋顶的聚合场所，成为他们提供了一个无法单独创造的区域和功能。

MORE THAN 20% OF SPACE SHARED BY RESIDENTS
The second major innovation is the construction of more than 20% of communal space programmed and shared by the residents. These communal spaces were designed as a route, accompanying the residents and providing them with meeting places from the basement level right up to the roof. This provides them with areas and functions that they would not individually have been able to create.
CLOSE TO NATURE

Abundant planting in the communal spaces continues into the private spaces, constituting another major undertaking of the project. Situated on a narrow plot surrounded by buildings, some unforeseen, we designed facades that were both largely glazed but also largely planted, in order to create a kind of filter to mask direct views. Thus 280 large planters punctuate the windows of the facade, with an average of 14 planters per unit, which, along with the shared allotment, equates to 10 m² of soil per apartment. The planters have been planted with 110 passionflower plants, which ‘belong’ to the collective, along with 4,436 bulbs and 1,418 ruhs (Lilium) in the residents’ private planters.
THE ALLOTMENT ROOF

The project replies to the objectives set by the City of Paris in 2001 to become a new landscape of urban agriculture, with the emergence of new urban-rural exchange. The City's aim is to reach 100 hectares of planted walls and roofs, of which 23 hectares of urban agriculture; this aim is detailed in the '100 hectares' charter published in 2015. On the small scale of our project, whose footprint is only 387m², no less than 148 m² of this is covered in soil, i.e. nearly 40%. The 150 m² allotment is thereby divided up so that each resident has their own plot, in which they can plan and plant a vegetable patch.
'MADE-TO-MEASURE' HOUSING CO-DESIGNED WITH THE FUTURE RESIDENTS

Edison Lite is first and foremost a building of 'made-to-measure' housing, that is to say co-designed with its future residents. Residents were selected from a great number of applications, organised and managed by the HIROK platform. Once the residents had been selected, we worked with them initially to orientate them in choosing the position of their unit within the building, and then to guide them in the interior fit-out of their apartment. The residents present a range of family situations, all different: we took care that on each floor the various families would have things in common but also complementarities; a real alchemy was sought to create, step by step, a solid community of residents.

"Design by Partnership, Co-Design"
THE RIGHT MATERIALS IN THE RIGHT PLACE

The structural principle of the project is based on a combination of materials, concrete, timber, metal. In the facades, timber is the predominant material (55%). The building is organised around a concrete core (stairwell, lift cage and landings) and a series of concrete piers on the facades, breaking the floor plane from any intermediate structural elements. Between the facade piers (at every 1.7 m) the spandrel panels are timber framed and alternatively in concrete to take the loads.
A 'PERMACULTURAL' WAY OF LIFE

The Edirion Lito project attempts to invent a new kind of density, a density mixing nature and Man, where nature is established before the residents move in. Its preexistence imposes a respect, establishing it as a resident of an existing ecosystem, within which residents must take their place with humility. On its minute scale within the City of Paris, the project aims for a kind of 'permacultural' way of life. Residents will produce some of their own food, learning the pleasure of watching food grow, whether in the allotments or the planters. A means of familiarising them with a certain resilience, of encouraging them to participate in the collective effort that we must all undertake to reduce supply chains and move towards a landscape of edible permaculture as close as possible to home.
PROJECT EDISON LITE
Design firm: MANUELLE GAUTRAND ARCHITECTURE
LOCATION: 71 avenue Edison, 75018 Paris.
PROGRAMME: Apartment building containing 23 units: 13 units for the open market, 6 controlled rental units, 2 social housing rental units, with a crèche and a retail unit on the ground floor.
MAIN OBJECTIVES: - 20% of the living areas are ‘shared living spaces’. - Creation of a green vertical landscape made of 200 big planted flowerpots. - Custom-made housing.
CLIENT: SCP EDISON LITE (LOmaxme + NFU / HABEX)
MANUELLE GAUTRAND ARCHITECTURE: Architects
BUREAU BAS SNETS: Landscape
SIT: M&E and Structural Engineers
VPFAS: Quantity Surveyor
MAIN CONTRACTORS:
GTM BÂTIMENT: General contractor + HVAC + plumbing + electricity + cladding + external joinery
KETANOR (sub-contracted): Roof - waterproofing
FRACER (sub-contracted): Planters
VSOFA (sub-contracted): Curtain wall + frame
SURFACE AREAS: Total floor area 2,667 m², of which 1,519 m² housing and 528 m² commercial, 385 m² of shared and programmed areas: Urban farming 150 m², workshop 69 m², solarium and outdoor common kitchen 78 m², multi-purpose room 47 m², bicycle storage, 41 m².
CONSTRUCTION COST: 4,300,000 € HT
DATES: Competition: 2015
Design phase: 2016-2017
Construction phase: 2018-2019
Completion: 2020
Photos: BUIK Boogly
Drawings, text, and plans: © Manuelle Gautrand Architecture