

# Living in Basel



Herzog & de Meuron:  
Plywoodhouse, Bottmingen, 1985

Basel, nestled along the Rhine and at the intersection of Switzerland, Germany, and France, has long been a city shaped by trade, industry, and culture. Its historical significance as a trading post brought wealth and prosperity, which left an indelible mark on the city's architecture. Over centuries, the single-family house—Switzerland's most enduring housing typology—evolved in Basel as a reflection of its economic fortunes, cultural aspirations, and architectural ambitions.

The 19th century marked a critical shift, as Basel's rise as a global center for the chemical industry and a general trend of urbanisation catalyzed new forms of domestic architecture. Simultaneously, Basel emerged as a modernist laboratory for social and workers' housing, where pioneering experiments in collective living sought to tackle the challenges of urbanization and industrialization. These efforts ultimately laid the groundwork for Basel to evolve into Switzerland's architectural capital over the course of the 20th century.

During this seminar week, we will trace the development of the single-family house in Basel across different periods. Through daily walks and site visits, we will explore the evolution of these houses, examining their forms, materials, and relationships to their surroundings. By engaging with these dwellings through historical research and on-site drawing, we will gain insights into the enduring relevance of the single-family house in Basel's dynamic story.

This seminar will be related to the topic of HS2025 Kaijima Studio „House Behaviourology in Switzerland“ for 2nd year students. The Chair of Architectural Behaviorology strongly recommends students who plan to take the course to apply for this seminar week.

## Seminar Week, FS 2025 Single-family Houses & their Environment

March 17–21, 2025  
Cost category B, max. 16 students

Chair of Architectural Behaviorology:  
Prof. Momoyo Kaijima,  
Barbara Bergamaschi

Chair of Theory of Architecture:  
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