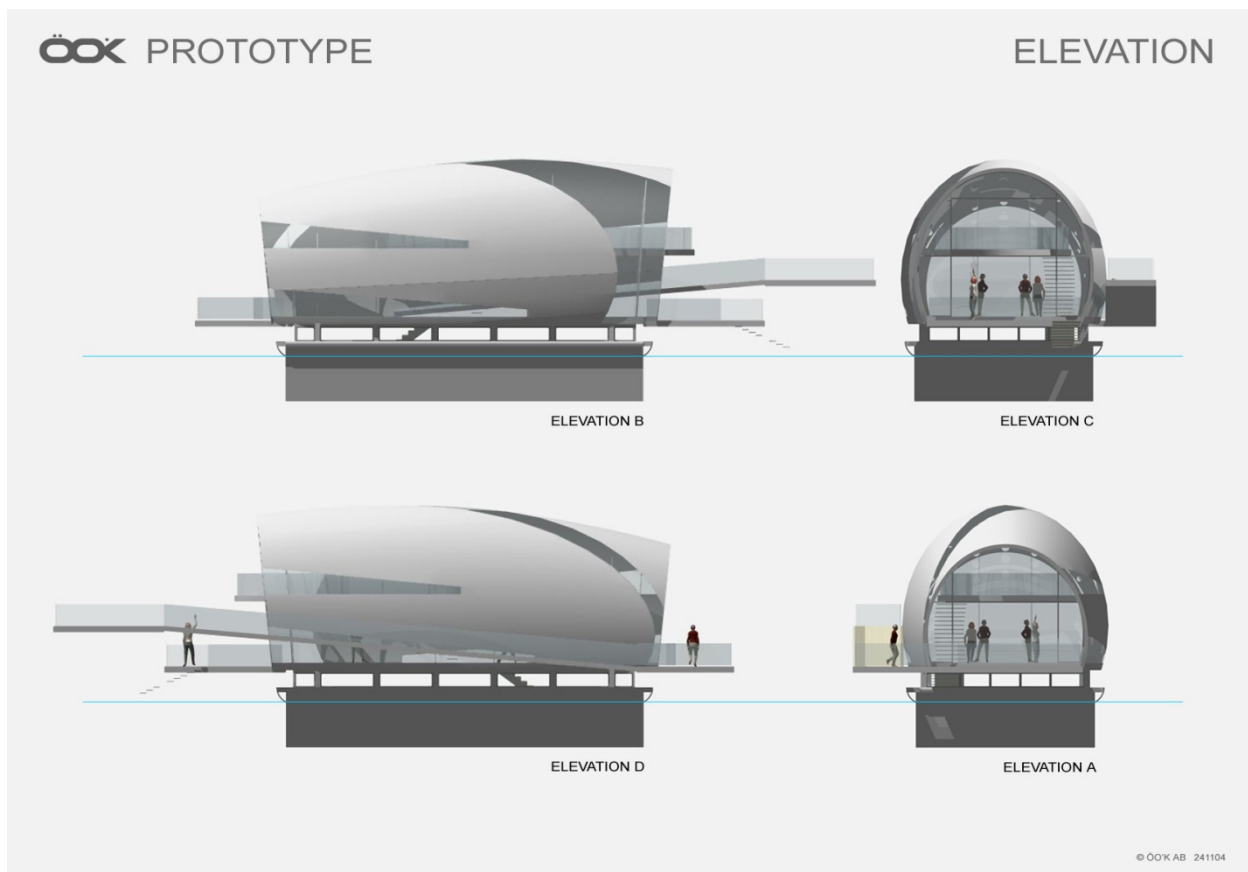


THE MODERN VERSION OF NOAH'S ARK

In 2003-2005, ÖÖ'K Aquatic Structures AB (www.ook.se) designed a technologically advanced, sustainable houseboat prototype. The superstructure of the houseboat was designed in collaboration with the engineering firm ARUP, in London.



ÖÖ'K Houseboat prototype, elevations

In the design, we wanted to use the vocabulary of the sea, which resulted in studies of dolphins, to obtain the desired shape of the double curved superstructure. A number of thin slits are delicately cut into the side, to take light in. Most light enters at the ends. As heavy and solid as the concrete basement seems, the shell appears light and elegant, due to the sophisticated construction of the self-bearing, carbon fibre superstructure, inspired by the auto and aviation industry. The shell is the energy creator, with an integrated solar membrane in the superstructure. The vessel is a living-breathing organism, which can adapt to different climatic demands.

The vision and the design was a success, published in several magazines, websites and on television. When it came to the actual production, however, it was a bit more problematic. The combination of not being able to obtain a final mooring location, the timing, and the risks involved with constructing an expensive property on water, made it difficult to attract and secure the right investors.

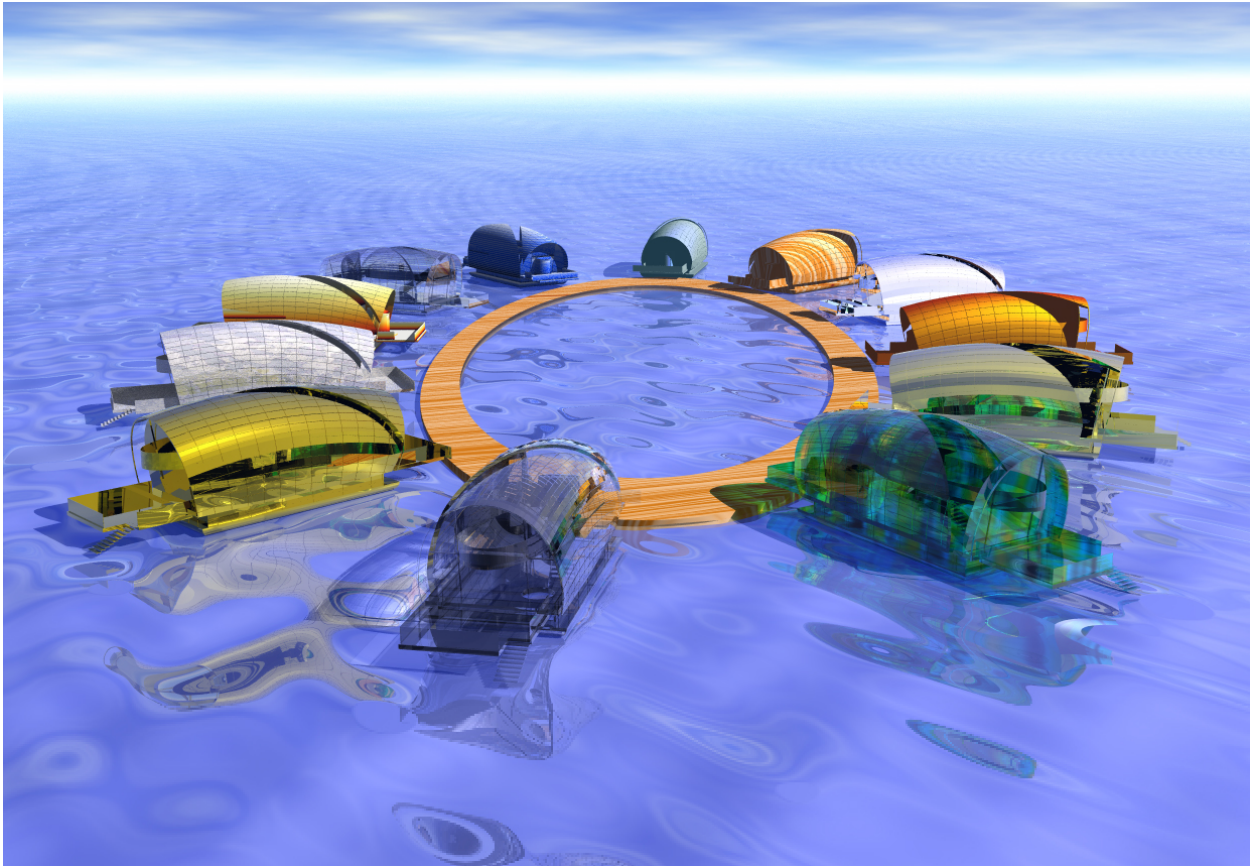
In the meantime, the world has undergone a financial crisis and experienced several natural disasters. Taking into consideration, the unsettled and rising waterline on a global level, it becomes relevant to transform the houseboat prototype into a tsunami-proof, unsinkable floating structure. Looking at our studies, e.g. 'houseboat cabriolet', it has apparent similarities to the rescue capsules, used by the U.S. Navy, as well as and some of the concrete bunkers you find, scattered along the coastline of Europe - all about surviving in emergency situations.



ÖÖK study, 'Houseboat Cabriolet'

So maybe the houseboat can be reborn, in a new meaning and context?
What would the modern version of Noah's Ark look like today, to protect us from the Great Flood?

Are we going to live in floating communities in the future? One boat may not be enough; we began to look on groups of houseboats, self-sufficient floating islands, which can be relocated to safer areas, for living or survival. This circular layout may look like the cattle around a feeding trough, but it is a sustainable solution for future living in floating villages, where they 'feed' off the core services and utility supply, while sending excess power generated by individual vessels, back into the core.



ÖO'K study, floating self-sufficient community

We have to become more confident with the water, how can we become as familiar with the water, as we are with the land? The astonishing thing, is that the surface of the water is much bigger than the surface of the earth. So in our increasing expansion of the population, as well as perhaps, an increasing number of natural disasters, we have to become more familiar with the requirements of living on the water. As there is no tradition for large scale building on the water, to work with this sort of utopia, the artistic approach is a necessity, and artistic leadership may be the most important step in making this utopia a reality.