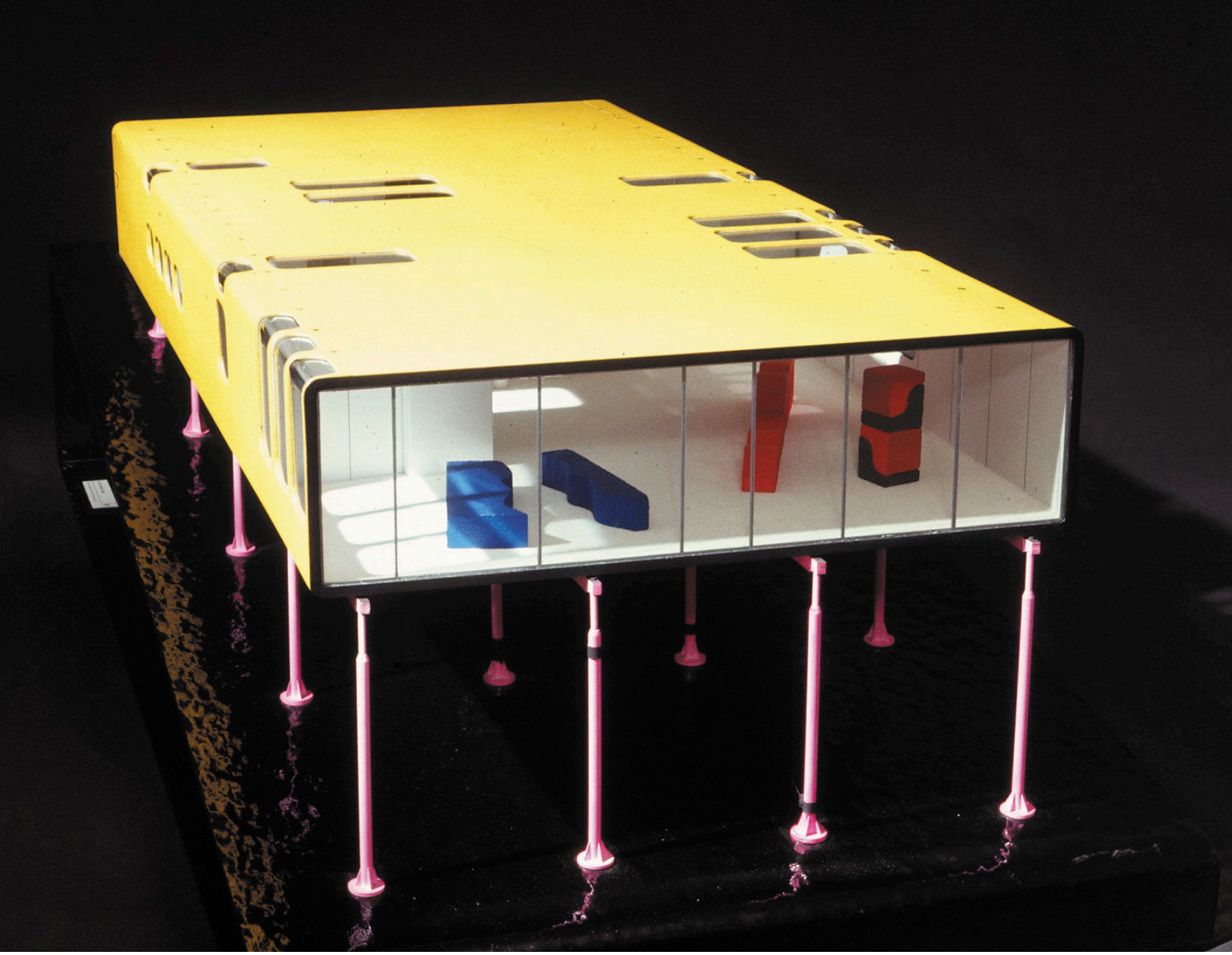
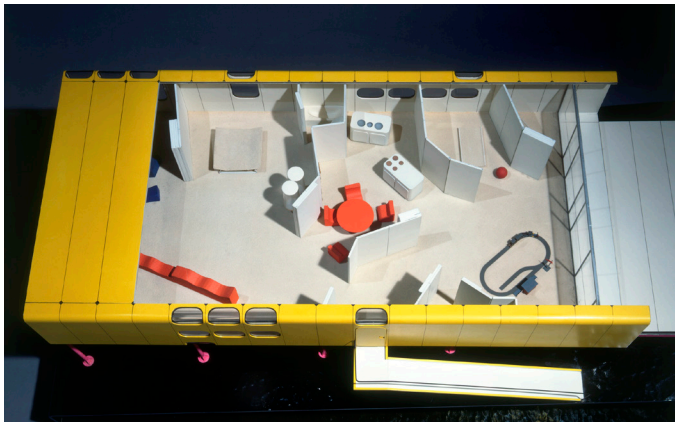


Zip-Up House

Various locations

The Zip-up house system offered perhaps the ultimate in the flexible use of space. Internal partitions could be easily repositioned, the bathroom and kitchen were serviced from below and could be relocated over a weekend

Anthony Hunt, Structural Engineer



Place
UK

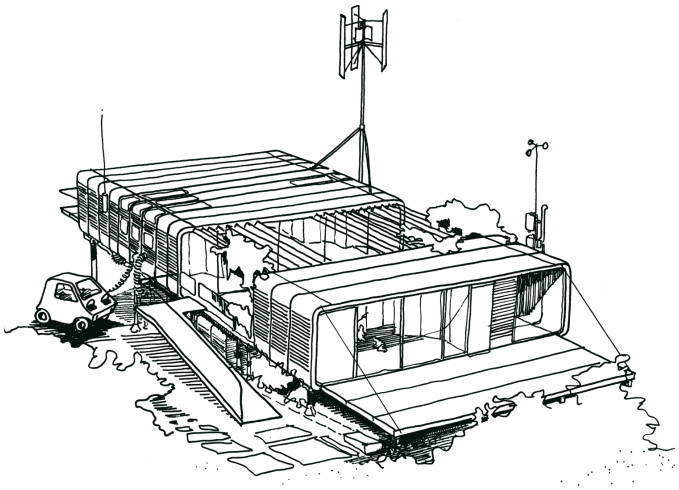
Date
1968-1969

Architect
Richard + Su Rogers

Structural Engineer
Anthony Hunt Associates

Services Engineer
Max Fordham

Quantity Surveyor
GA Hanscomb Partnership



Awards

1970
RIBA Research Award

1968
Prize winner 'House for Today' Competition

Richard Rogers' interest in adaptable, affordable housing has persisted over four decades of practice. His work in this field is closely linked to the exploration of themes, notably those of flexibility and energy-efficiency, that emerge equally strongly in commercial and public project, such as Lloyd's of London and the Nottingham government offices.

The Zip-Up House was designed in response to a competition, sponsored by Dupont, for 'The House of Today' and was exhibited at the 1969 Ideal Home Exhibition in London. The aim was to offer the user a wide range of choice at low building costs with minimum maintenance and running costs and a high degree of environmental control. The structural panels had an insulation value seven times that of a traditional house so that one 3 kilowatt heater was sufficient to heat the whole house.

The name 'Zip-Up' derived from the choice of a mass-produced panel system for the roof and walls that could be rapidly assembled into 'rings' using Neoprene 'zips' as fastening, up to a maximum nine-metre clear structural span. Within the basic container there were no fixed divisions. The interior layout could be rapidly changed and the house extended simply by adding another section of the system. The use of adjustable legs rather than conventional foundations allowed it to be located anywhere and easily removed to a new site.

The designers also intended the Zip-Up concept to be applicable to factories, offices and even hotels – all of which could be assembled using standard parts at a fraction of the time and cost required for a conventional building.