NEVER DEMOLISH
Curated by Ilka Ruby and Andreas Ruby
In the 1960s and 1970s, large-scale housing complexes were built all over the world as a bold solution to satisfy the need for housing. Five decades later they are largely considered as ideologically outdated, urbanistically failed, and ripe for demolition. Against this backdrop _Never Demolish_ claims that these projects can have a second life that’s better than their first, through sensible renovation – enlarging the spaces and improving living standards. The installation at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion features the spectacular transformation of 530 dwellings across three high-rise buildings of the Cité du Grand Parc in Bordeaux, designed by the architectural offices of Lacaton & Vassal, Frédéric Druot and Christophe Hutin as a potential model for the social and physical rehabilitation of the mass-housing estates of modernism.
Cité du Grand Parc in Bordeaux before and after the transformation.
The addition of the winter gardens extends the total living space of the apartments.
A ONE TO ONE STAGING OF SPATIAL TYPES

The exhibition in the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion communicates the transformation of Cité du Grand Parc through a direct simulation of the two spatial “types” of the project—the apartment interior and the newly added winter garden. An almost 10-metre-long wall is placed between the famous Onyx wall and the glass facade of the pavilion. It displays 1:1 scale images from the project in Bordeaux: On one side of the wall one can see a selection taking from the living spaces looking into the new wintergardens. On the other side the view from the wintergarden into the living spaces is presented.

Additional props such as thermal curtains, sunscreen curtains and pieces of furniture help to convey the ambiances of the two spaces, whilst the images allow a visual connection to be maintained.

(1) new wall with 1:1 photos from Cité du Grand Parc
(2) thermal curtains
(3) sunscreen curtains
(4) furniture
(5) plants