



QUESTIONS

Which are the features of our times? How can present tensions be expressed? Which visions sustain contemporary aspirations for the future?

OBJECTIF

The etymological meaning of the word Architecture is **"building following principles"**, i.e. giving a shape to the artificial environment to make it a visible sign of invisible, complex, wide and profound realities. The inherent nature of architecture is translating thoughts into shapes. From this perspective the term architecture includes town planning, landscape, environment, built-up and not built-up structures and infrastructures; It is synonymous with innovation and transformation, as architecture has always introduced new qualities into pre-existent spaces.

Being the synthesis of instable, continuously moving economic, social, ecological realities, , space must change over time. Once built-up, a sustainable space must be able to change and be transformed following the needs of its future life. Space transformations result from complex interactions amongst those who promote, request, design, authorise, supervise, implement and use the transformations themselves. Namely, more than any other form of human expression, interest in architecture is related to the way it reflects a social system and is affected by its rules rather than to the work of individual architects.

The lack of satisfaction for the present way of working requests momentum towards opposite visions, able to give a new sense to contemporary city, while fitting together the different scales of intervention.

Where does the individual work begin and the collective one finish?

LANDMARKS

The values for the physical nature of our territories, landmarks of our civilisation - **environment / landscape / heritage** - have to be supported by a single cultural and methodological approach.

Degeneration of functionalism has instead generated a prevailing interest in individual interventions, in their internal rules to the detriment of a context-based approach; the result being the sprawl which is the major feature of our environment. Currently the fragment logic must be set against the building unit syndrome: it avoids "monads" floating in the space, views any element as part of a whole. This approach - regardless of the territory or building scale - is evident in the concept design, the one which defines its DNA and makes it suitable to be part of a wider system.

Architecture is characterised by a blameworthy logic which does not accept dialectics of intersections and co-existence: buildings only fit their needs; interventions neither bring any "gift" to the pre-existent context, nor introduce any new quality into it.

Actually any intervention, not only an individual building is a fragment of a wider context from which it gets its roots and within which it develops: by rejecting monads - buildings conceived as isolated units - it is necessary to move toward a combinatorial process of "informed fragments".

In the new landscapes, space between buildings becomes the focus of our attention; when relationships prevail objects lose their importance until they completely disappear. The architectural quality of squares, streets, connection systems create opportunities for a dialogue among buildings, for a pervious fabric. The aim is to interpret space as a system of places, to introduce identity and aggregation principles.

IMMERSION VS PROJECT RULES

Last century has enhanced the culture of separation, of specific optimisations. Conversely we are at present searching for interconnections, hybridisations, complexities; we have the proper tools not to view them as negative factors.

The point of reference of contemporary culture is integration: keeping together, intersecting diversities.

When immersion rules prevail over internal rules, it is possible to design interventions capable of being fragments of a system, not mere answers to the needs originating them. Surely enough these requests have to be fulfilled, but - first of all - they have to be an opportunity to improve the quality of the surrounding context.

We need a new social agreement aimed at accepting transformations not only not generating any pollution - either from the traditional environmental point of view, or from the context quality point of view - but also, and above all, contributing to shape increasingly interesting and positive realities. This social agreement should involve all the actors of the process. A social agreement on the principles to be outlined as new reference standards - new requirements to be met - guarantees (allowing for the various expressive languages) that, in the formal framework of any intervention, priority will be given to landscape and environmental values and to a better understanding of the topological meanings of the context.

At the same time "shared democracy" and "generative programmes", which found their roots in the thinking of Geddes and which characterize a growing number of experiments in Europe, must produce an important social and environmental transformation: actually we have realistic experiments rich in opportunities going on with an always larger number of projects in Europe. The question is how can we define the programme of a project together with future users? how can planners, landscape architects and designers manage the partnership which characterises their work.

WHAT TO DO?

Despite the ineluctability of deterioration - the 2° Principle of Thermodynamics - it is widely recognised that there are some areas where this principle is not confirmed: "life rafts", high quality restricted areas, playing a role quite similar to the one played by the convents hosting monastic communities in the Middle Ages.

The present situation is different: we criticise our reality although for billions of other human beings it is a sort of mirage, a real "life raft".

Being aware of living in a global world does not imply that we do not have to ask for a definitely better world also here, in these sites which are privileged sites from many points of view.

As architects our task is to provide proper answers to requests for transformation, however we also play our role in the formulation of these requests. Our task is transforming space, implementing physical transformations which improve human condition, facilitate behaviours Which are certainly unpredictable but express civilisation, human relationships, and a culture always aspiring to new levels.

In our attempt of generating a new "Renaissance," now, more than ever, our commitment is to implement transformations which, in the magma we are immersed in, aim not so much at producing "life rafts",
but rather at working as beneficial "acupunctures"



θεωρία πραξις

"Mistero del quadrato blu" fut, dans les années 50, l'éditorial par lequel Bruno Zevi signalait la naissance à Helsinki de cette "feuille internationale d'architecture", lieu de rencontre du groupe d'architectes se reconnaissant dans l'esprit du Team X, né après la dissolution des CIAM., et qui fut ensuite déplacée à Paris en 1962.

Jusqu'au n°1/2 2001 "Architecture H.Q.E. Méditerranéenne", le Carré Bleu a poursuivi un débat international autour de thématiques telles qu' Architecture et Société, Architecture et Ville. Aujourd'hui, dans une continuité historique et en gardant le caractère synthétique de la forme éditoriale originelle, mais supportée par une édition digitale à interaction rapide www.lecarrébleu.eu, cette feuille reprend ses publications avec l'ambition de contribuer à renforcer le rapport théorie / pratique.

"le Carré Bleu: mémoire en mouvement", une journée d'études au Centre Pompidou au mois de janvier 2006, a relancé le débat sur le Carré Bleu. Le dépliant annexe, au recto, publie une synthèse du "programme 2006/2009" et, au verso, l'édition 2006-2007 du concours "Appel international à idées - une idée pour chaque ville" qui a l'ambition de renforcer la recherche sur les qualités du cadre de vie et de contribuer à la formations des jeunes architectes.

"Fragments / Symbiose" ouvre le débat avec un cri de ralliement. Il est un appel contre:

- l'autonomie des produits de l'architecture
- les bâtiments conçus en exaltant leurs principes formels, fonctionnels, etc.
- l'égoïsme et le narcissisme des clients et des architectes

et en même temps, il est un appel pour:

- la primauté de l'environnement, des paysages, de la multiplicité
- des démarches multidisciplinaires et multiethniques
- le dialogue des fragments architecturaux entre eux et avec les espaces non bâtis même

dans l'étalement urbain (urban sprawl): une forme de $\alpha\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\kappa\tau\iota\varsigma$, la volonté de capter, d'introduire des liaisons et des significations entre les éléments séparés, d'établir des rapports de nécessité où - en apparence - il n'existe que l'hasard et le chaos.

Dans cette perspective le soudage entre théorie et pratique veut que chaque projet de transformation - dans l'ambiant, dans le paysage et dans toute stratification du contexte - soit un fragment de l'ensemble, refuse la séparation des optiques spécialisées, poursuive au même temps individualité et super-individualité.

Ce n° manifeste vise à exprimer l'adhésion à des théories actuelles et à des réalisations actuelles. L'analyse critique et l'honnêteté nous y conduisent. Exercer un esprit critique et de proposition; chercher de nouvelles orientations, de nouvelles démonstrations ou réalisations exemplaires, avec de nouveaux critères. Cette détermination, cette attitude un peu offensive, s'impose pour faire avancer ou modifier l'état des choses, en expliquant pourquoi c'est nécessaire. C'est à cela que doit servir la réflexion théorique, qui s'appuie sur l'observation critique: modifier l'état des choses, orienter autrement ou convenablement. Cela passe évidemment par la critique clairvoyante et positive.

Architectes, changez la mentalité de votre temps !

"... les villes sont nées quand les espaces non bâtis, et non pas les bâtiments, ont pris de la signification, ou mieux, quand cette signification l'a emporté sur la signification des bâtiments individuels"

2004 - MPC: "Apologie du (non) bâti"

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