



# icam print 06

international confederation of architectural museums

an organisation of architectural museums,  
centres and collections

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# editorial

Architecture does not provide its own mediation. Institutions like architecture museums and centres have been making endeavours to provide effective architecture education for years. Exhibitions are among the 'classics' for communicating with the public, while as a medium they have also long been helping to define the architecture discourse. Interestingly, to this day there has been no well researched survey on the subject of architecture exhibitions. So I have compiled a fragmentary, selected bibliography on the subject (see p.29). At the last conference, chaired by Barry Bergdoll, the widespread impact and consequences of The Pressure of the Contemporary on and for architecture museums was discussed. Architecture faculties are increasingly offering educational programmes in the fields of architecture criticism, publishing, curating, exhibiting, writing, and research.\*

Two curators have the word in this issue whose approaches are diametrically opposed. Architecture historian Wolfgang Voigt supports an 'old school', research based curatorial praxis that holds on to the today almost frowned upon monographic format. Pedro Gadanho regards himself as an architectural practitioner who consciously adopts a non-historian's perspective, he regards his curatorial praxis as a continuation of criticism of the discipline of architecture. Two approaches that appear to address different recipients: the political implications for culture and education policy of the Humboldtian model of higher education, and criticism aimed at a redesign of architecture as a discipline. Both approaches combine to provide the means to mediate architecture in museums through curating.

Exhibitions have the power to frame architectural discourse by exploring the larger cultural conditions that shape the discipline. This and other related topics, like cases of how researchers are using the exhibition as a driver for their own research projects, or cases of architects' curating exhibitions to explore their fascinations and new ideas, and cases of contemporary curatorial practices that explore new formats. As pursued at the Jaap Bakema Study Centre's second annual conference in 2015, entitled *Research on Display: The Architecture Exhibition as Model for Knowledge Production*. Bart Tritsmans participated in the conference, and provides a summary of the contributions and discussions for this issue.

Due to the great success of the previous member survey, we have again addressed a question to our icam members: How to mediate architecture to a broad audience through curating. In this issue you will read about 15 examples of how icam members try to engage with their audiences. I should like to thank all of my colleagues who participated and shared their insights with us.

icam 18 is pending and the conference will be back in Europe, in Slovenia. Ljubljana is characterised, among other things, by the architecture of Otto Wagner student Jože Plečnik. The monumental buildings, squares, memorials and parks designed by Plečnik are intended to raise the sense of Slovenian nationality and to transform the provincial town into a representative capital city. Matevž Čelik and his team at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) are welcoming us in Ljubljana and have prepared a stimulating programme.

From this issue onwards we have a new editorial board, and I am delighted to have the current and future support of Jolanta Gromadzka and Triin Ojari. Finally, I should like to express my thanks to all of the authors who have contributed to this issue.

*Monika Platzer, editor*

\* Critical, Curatorial, and Conceptual Practices in Architecture. Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University  
[www.arch.columbia.edu/programs/critical-curatorial-conceptual-practices](http://www.arch.columbia.edu/programs/critical-curatorial-conceptual-practices)

Making Exhibitions in Architecture Today (MEAT) is a three and a half week summer programme introducing individuals to intellectual and curatorial potential in architectural exhibition practices. SCI-Arc Edge, Center for Advanced Studies in Architecture Seminars in Contemporary Cultural Practices  
[sciarc.edu/academics/summer-programs/making-exhibitions-in-architecture-today](http://sciarc.edu/academics/summer-programs/making-exhibitions-in-architecture-today)

# letter from the president

In November 2015, UNESCO published its *Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society*. Many of these recommendations – ‘equal opportunities for education for all’, ‘the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth’, ‘the free exchange of ideas and knowledge’, ‘an ever-increasing role in stimulating creativity’, ‘providing opportunities for creative and cultural industries’ and ‘contributing to the material and spiritual well-being of citizens across the world’ – have been at the forefront of the minds of your Executive Committee as we debate the present and future for architectural museums.

As the representative of **icam** on the ICOM (International Council of Museums) Advisory Committee, I present our work and engage in discussions, such as the one that contributed to the UNESCO Recommendation.

As architectural museums, we face challenges when our institutions take on new forms, often in new territories. We are tackling the preservation and presentation of the digital in our collections, considering our relationship with the creative industries and, most predominantly of all, reappraising and revolutionising our relationships with the public. In my own institution – now called Historic Environment Scotland – we have grown tenfold in both remit and staff, which has challenged all our notions of priority, public and purse-strings.

Following a stimulating debate, the Executive Committee identified a virtuous circle. In this circle, which has no defined beginning or end, architectural museums undertake and facilitate research from a critical position; selectively and systematically collect and preserve for the future; present our research, position and collection; and identify, interact with, and grow our audiences. Architecture museums provide the stimulation for critical debate, defending and promoting the value of architecture, and working to ensure that our collections are available to all who want to enjoy and learn from them. We do all of this in changing political, economic, urban and social contexts.

This virtuous circle is what we will explore at **icam18** Ljubljana, where we aim to advance our understanding of the potential of this interdependent cycle, and where we will explore what models of structure and organisation serve it most effectively. In addition to considering the different forms our member institutions take now and in the future, we must also consider the form of **icam** itself. As an Executive Committee we are expending much effort on what underpins and shapes us as an organisation – exploring how to give **icam** a firmer legal, administrative and financial footing – and seeking to modernise aspects of our governance.

This issue of **icamprint** exemplifies the virtuous circle, focussing as it does on exhibitions: their basis in research and collections, how they are shaped by the individuals and institutions that curate them, and the audiences that they engage. As UNESCO states, ‘museums are vital public spaces that should address all of society... building citizenship, and reflecting on collective identities. They can constitute spaces for reflection and debate on historical, social, cultural and scientific issues.’ Through collaboration and innovation, we can work to ensure that all our members are at the forefront of museum practice, whatever their scale and structure.

*Rebecca Bailey, president*

# 18 years at the Deutsches Architektur- museum

**Wolfgang Voigt**

It is the narrative that counts,  
the means can be simple.

When I took up my post at the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in the summer of 1997 the then still young institution was in a challenging phase. The conditions for our work had worsened significantly since the founding phase at the start of the 1980s. What had things been like at the outset? To answer this I have to go back a little. The incongruity between the museum's local communal mandate — it is still officially run by the City of Frankfurt today — and its national-sounding name, and a corresponding public image, did not pose a problem at the time. Reminder: The founding in 1997 decided upon in committee by the City was embedded in a change of cultural policy on a political level in an attempt, by the banking metropolis that it then was, to escape its dubious reputation, which it succeeded in doing. The city's image changed in 1979 with the Museumsufer initiative on both sides of the river Main. Major investment was made to bring the existing museums up to date and to found new institutions, and to furnish the latter with spectacular new buildings commissioned from internationally renowned architects (Hans Hollein, Richard Meyer, Günther Behnisch, Josef Paul Kleihues). In the course of this transition, the Art of Building received a home, adapted by Oswald Mathias Ungers and opened in 1984. This new type of Architecture Museum was a world-wide first, combining exhibiting and its collection with the functions of a forum and a communication centre for architecture — and it started a trend for founding similar institutions in other countries.

Conditions in the early years were such that one couldn't have wished for a better situation. We had an iconic building by a famous architect, and it housed this wonderful little museum with 1200 square metres of exhibition space. And to top that off, the City of Frankfurt gave the founding director of the DAM, the art historian Heinrich Klotz, a budget of one million Deutschmarks for acquisitions. So he went





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Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt am Main // photo Thomas Rieck

on a spending spree with this budget, and amassed a unique collection of drawings and models, most of which he was able to acquire directly from the leading architects of the time in Western Europe, the USA and Japan. There has never been a budget just for acquisitions since then.

So, to this day there is no better or more comprehensive collection documenting the history of the architecture from the 1960s to the 1980s than at the DAM. In the early years this treasure trove was drawn on extensively for spectacular exhibitions. The DAM's inaugural exhibition *Revision of the Modern – Postmodern Architecture 1960–1980* went on a world tour.

At the time Frankfurt was evolving from a national financial centre to an international one, and tax revenue from the banks was so high that it was no problem to finance the cultural upswing from the local budget. Admission was free to the DAM and over 100,000 visitors were coming every year.

The situation was different after the fall of the wall in Berlin and the reunification of West and East Germany. Vittorio M. Lampugnani, who followed Klotz as director, successfully managed to bring debate on Berlin's future to the DAM. At the same time, however, the financial cushion that had been the basis of the Museumsufer's prosperity – and with it the DAM's – began to melt away as Frankfurt was not profiting much from the reunification. Cutbacks were made in all of the municipal departments, culture was no exception here. The annual city grant to cover the DAM's operating costs stopped, and sponsors had to be found for all of the temporary exhibitions, catalogues and events.

That was the situation when Wilfried Wang took on the post of director in 1995. Two years later I was offered the post of vice-director. Compared to those golden initial years, they were clearly feeling the difference. The programme was less extravagant,



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Exhibition view, Gottfried Böhm, DAM, 2006 // photo Wolfgang Voigt

admission fees had been introduced and correspondingly fewer people could afford to go to the museum so visitor numbers fell; they fluctuated between 37,000 and 50,000 until 2000.

Wang's achievement was that he continued to fill the building with a high calibre programme despite the situation, and found potent sponsors. In connection with the annual Frankfurt Book Fair, he revamped the concept for their national expositions: Inviting the Guest Country featured at that year's Book Fair to give us a comprehensive presentation of the architecture completed in the 20th century in the country concerned, which was developed with the DAM but without straining our budget. The series was so popular that exhibitions and catalogue projects were also even undertaken without the Book Fair. We hosted a total of eight such introductions to a nation's architecture.

### **Finances**

The financial challenges here remained. The posters and invitation cards were designed by the director himself, there was no money for anything else. I brought my own computer in from home, and my curator colleagues were still working on electric typewriters. In the meantime the rooms looked battered, too, but renovation was inconceivable due to the expense involved. Even though the "German" Architecture Museum's situation was dire, no aid could come on a national level as according to the German Constitution culture is a decentralised issue to be addressed on a state level, and not to be interfered with by the federal government. Shortly before I came to the DAM the situation had been exacerbated by local politicians with no interest in culture, when they proposed that the city should save money by closing down a number of the newer museums, among them the DAM.





Exhibition view, Dominikus Böhm, DAM, 2005  
// photo Wolfgang Voigt



Exhibition view, Helmut Jacoby, DAM, 2000 // photo DAM



Model making at the University of Stuttgart for the Gottfried Böhm exhibition // photo Wolfgang Voigt

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Even though it was only a desperate measure without a political majority, it was a public relations disaster. The institution's reputation had been damaged; the press took every opportunity to remind people that its existence was threatened. This was the situation in 1999 when I made my first exhibition, on the architect Heinz Bienefeld, who has also been called the German Scarpa because of his breathtaking attention to detail. With resources so scarce it was hardly possible to do much more than put the models on pedestals, and frame the drawings and hang them on the white walls. Although the quality of many of the exponents was so exceptional that the minimalism of the concept did not have a negative impact on visitors. At that time, as the responsible person for the project you were also everything else: curator, editor, PR man and registrar. In this context my position was sensitive insofar as I was both vice-director and the apprentice who still had to learn the exhibition business in what was sometimes a less than gentle crash course. But the success of the Bielefeld project made up for all the extra effort I had put in. The catalogue had to be reprinted twice, and achieved an unbeaten print run of 7500. The general situation did not change until the City government realised that the basically correct austerity plans were better not applied to culture, as the damage to the city's overall image cost them more in lost revenue than they saved. A couple of million more to give the museums grants to cover running costs, and the atmosphere in the media and in the individual institutions changed overnight. This was the situation when Ingeborg Flagge took over as the next director of the DAM in 2001, and it meant a new beginning. She not only undertook the long overdue renovation of the exhibition space, a website was also setup, and the first café was installed in the foyer of the building. Media reporting on the DAM was positive and visitor numbers rose once again.



Wolfgang Voigt at the opening of the Ferdinand Kramer exhibition, DAM, 2015 // photo Fritz Philipp

My role in the building consolidated itself around 2000. As an architecture historian who had worked primarily on research for the DAM, I was responsible for the topics for the history of the 20th century. Without having planned it, a series of monographic exhibitions arose, starting with the architecture draftsman Helmut Jacoby (1926–2005). He had emigrated to North America after WWII; with his clear strokes, between the 1950s and 1958 he produced the most influential renderings while working for the most respected offices in the USA. On his return to Europe, he worked a great deal for German and British architects, although primarily for Sir Norman Foster.

That now, 15 years later, we have acquired his estate as a donation from his heirs is a source of particular joy to us. I made one mistake back then, with the title of the exhibition: *Helmut Jacoby. Master of Architectural Rendering*. Nobody from the media had heard of this Herr Jacoby, so journalists presumed he was not very interesting and wrote about other events in the culture sector instead. So there was almost no media coverage, and visitor numbers were only moderate. If we had extended the title with, for example, “from Mies to Foster”, everybody would have come. We learned that journalists have to be led by the hand, just like the general public. Not long afterwards Frau Flagge engaged the first PR specialist.

A topical issue among my exhibitions was in 2007, *Neu Bau Land. Architecture and Urban Restructuring in the Former East Germany*, which provided an introduction to a selection of architecture completed in the east of Germany after the reunification. However there was a marked contrast between the good examples and the large majority of the miserable but ubiquitous examples of everyday architecture, the existence of which we did not want to negate. We resolved the issue by sending a photographer to the region with the task of recording all those new buildings that



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Model of Stuttgart main station, Paul Bonatz, DAM, 2011 // photo Uwe Dettmar

the architecture critics turn away from in horror. We printed these images onto sheets of plastic covering the entire floor of the exhibition space, while the carefully selected exhibits went up on the walls. Like this we came closer to the current reality than most exhibitions ever do.

The digital revolution in architecture production came parallel to my time at the DAM. The time when projects were drawn or sketched by hand, on paper, had been over for decades. The time when paper based archives of significance can be brought to museums continues, but it will come to an end soon. It is the generation now active in the architecture collections who started to compile the first digital archives. Although at the same time this generation is responsible for ensuring that we do not lose the last relevant paper archives.

A small but important acquisition was successfully made in my first year at the DAM, and I had the privilege of bringing the estate of an architect and urbanist who once worked in Berlin and then later in Israel, Alexander Klein (1879–1961), from California to Frankfurt. We owe the most significant acquisitions of those years to Ingeborg Flagge's good contacts. In 2003, with the aid of a number of foundations, the DAM purchased the drawings, plans and several models by one of the two Germans to have been awarded the Pritzker Prize, Gottfried Böhm (born 1920). After a little coaxing, Gottfried also donated – without an additional financial transaction – the remaining estate in family hands of his father Dominikus Böhm (1880–1995), who had been a key pioneer of early Modernist church building. Both father and son were, or are, talented draftsmen with a true mastery of the occasional dynamic charcoal sketches. So it was possible to organise not just one but two major exhibitions from this new stock.

Prior to this acquisition the Böhms had handed large quantities of plans and documents over to the Historical Archive of the City of Cologne. In the spring of 2009 the archive building collapsed and fell into the underground railway shaft in front of the building, along with all its treasures. The contents of the archive have since been rescued but it will still take several years before they can be used again. For Böhm researchers the Böhm stocks held at the DAM will be the only accessible ones for a long time to come, which already means that there are frequent enquiries at the DAM archive for these holdings in particular.

Under the title *Sacred Space and Desire. The Church Architect Dominikus Boehm 1880–1955*, we successfully opened the exhibition on Dominikus Böhm. The media response was astounding, which was linked to the death of Pope Johannes Paul II a few days before. There was a media rush for religious topics. The timing of our exhibition with an accent on sacral architecture was perfect and the press was only too happy to give it coverage.

Ideally, a successful acquisition can subsequently be presented in an exhibition. Occasionally it has happened the other way round, the DAM has organised an exhibition with the heirs of an architect as lenders without any clear intention on the part of the museum to acquire even desirable objects for the archive. However we came to know each other well during the production of the exhibition, resulting in a mutual trust which proved fruitful years later. On this basis, and in combination with the required dose of patience, we succeeded in acquiring the estate of Paul Bonatz (1887–1956) for the house as a donation. With Jacoby we also made equally outstanding acquisitions many years after the exhibition; Helge Bofinger's mediation played a decisive role in that. And it looks like in 2016, 17 years after we held the exhibition on Heinz Bienefeld, the DAM will also successfully acquire an extraordinary treasure trove of drawings and models from his estate.

We are familiar with Roland Barthes' thesis on *The Death of the Author* and to amputate literature from the individual. Applied to our discipline, this means moving attention away from the architects. I have never adhered to this. Almost all of my exhibitions have been monographic formats on architects of the 20th century about whom there had still not been any exhibitions and catalogues that did them justice. The general public prefers exhibition formats where the subject matter provides a narrative that follows the life of an architect. This format is an excellent means to embed the buildings and designs in a narrative that includes a broader history and establishes the context.

What the exhibitions also have in common are a number of simple, actually banal principles:

. First, make the impact with original works and their aura.

. Second, contrast the two-dimensional presentations on the walls with a three-dimensional feature as an eye-catcher in the space, typically architecture models. However original models are rare because there was usually not enough space in the architects' offices to store them. So we have always had attractive models made to our own specifications at universities, it is inexpensive and the universities are proud to have these on display at the DAM.

. Third, an appropriate addition of visible – and not too complicated – text. As we have a mandate to educate we aim to communicate the results of research connected with the exhibition to folks. Appropriate, because the average visitor can only absorb so much. Today's sometimes entirely text-free presentations, where pamphlets are given out and the relevant explanations for each exponent have to be found in its pages, are an imposition on the public. The acoustic alternative with audio guides is very costly, and the DAM does not have the budget for it.

. Fourth, having documents and further reading matter available in showcases for the particularly interested visitor wanting a deeper experience.

. Fifth, keep the presence of staged displays down. The main thing is to emphasise the work and the architect and nothing else, especially not the individuals who design and curate the show. It is better to use available funds, which are often difficult to obtain, for the contents than for the packaging.

Empirical analysis should always go before theory. The criteria and the hypotheses are best found in the material — so avoiding any temptation to fall into a scheme that adheres to a preconceived theory.

Another comment on the selection of narrative: It is no longer a secret today that the master narrative of the history of modern architecture based on Bauhaus and various avant-gardes only covers part of the story and omits attractive works and individuals of the 20th century. One has to liberate oneself from it. I expect an architecture historian at a museum to have the capacity to treat various and in comparison contradictory oeuvres with the same objectivity. In my exhibitions the scope has ranged from the modern avant-garde, with Ernst May and Ferdinand Kramer, to overt adherents to tradition, such as Paul Schmitthenner and Paul Bonatz. It would be impossible to communicate the complexity of the built environment without them.

Not only does the tunnel-vision narrative of classical modernism have to be broadened: Today we have a Unified European policy and take it seriously, leaving any view prejudiced by national perspectives behind us. We have done this at the DAM, as is demonstrated in exemplary fashion by our collaborations with the Musées de Strasbourg in France and under the management of Jean-Louis Cohen and Hartmut Frank in the 2013/14 exhibition *Interférences. Interferenzen*: Two centuries of Franco-German history in architecture and urban development were examined by a mixed, bilateral team of authors for different interconnections, mutual impact and interdependences, and brought together in a new, shared narrative.

The basis for the success of the project was the DAM's reconsolidation, which began with Flagge as director. It continued under the management of Peter Cachola Schmal from 2006. The institution is in an excellent position today, and visitor numbers are between 70,000 and 80,000, which is not bad for a small museum like ours.

This success has its downside: The DAM does what other museums do to entertain large audiences and satisfy sponsors, it produces more exhibitions than it can handle with in-house personnel. A market has emerged to do this extra work while I have been at the DAM, with freelance curators who are forced to compete with one another by this situation. This has led to a two-tier system with properly paid curators in permanent positions at museums, and those who go from project to project doing the same work but without any social security and for significantly less money. A fairer situation here would be my wish for the future.

*Wolfgang Voigt, Curator and Deputy Director (1997–2015),  
Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt*



# Curating

**Pedro Gadanho**

Architectural Practices in Institutional  
Settings and Elsewhere:  
A Non-Historian's Perspective

As an architect with a decisive penchant for writing, the activity of freelance curating came to me as a means to an end. Curating was always seen as a research tool to investigate critical issues in the realm of practice, a lively instrument of enquiry that preceded and prompted the production of a certain body of thought. Simultaneously, the end product of such research was also seen as embodied with the potential to produce cultural statements for broader audiences – it provided an opportunity to immediately test the results of an investigation before a given public. In a provocative sense, the activity of curating appeared to be a rather expensive process for arriving at an informed text about a given topic. However it was also a way to produce a reflection that was not restricted to the realm of abstraction and description, but was permeated and informed instead by issues that arose from the need to 'display' – i.e., the imperative to build a public statement that, while articulated through objects, images and verbal messages, should demonstrate a position vis-à-vis its theme or subject.

From this perspective, the practice of curating architecture, initially developed through a mix of freelance initiatives and opportunistic endeavors, was influenced by a strong proximity to practice and, in close relation to what was happening in the field of contemporary art, was also presumed to depart from the more classical view of this practice as the study, care, and arrangement of objects in a given collection. I've used the defence time and again<sup>1</sup> that curating can be a continuation of criticism by other means. This was regarded as particularly needed at a moment when criticism is being voided of its capacity to reach a significant audience, either because it has been progressively confined to academic circles, or because it has been reduced to an insignificant role in specialist publications. While the criticism that reached generalist media ended up mostly serving conservative or populist



Pancho Guedes, *An Alternative Modernist*, Swiss Architecture Museum, Basel, 30 September 2007–10 January 2008 // photo Christian Hiller

1 Pedro Gadanho: 'Curating is the New Criticism', in: [www.domusweb.it/en/interviews/2012/05/14/pedro-gadanho-curating-is-the-new-criticism.html](http://www.domusweb.it/en/interviews/2012/05/14/pedro-gadanho-curating-is-the-new-criticism.html)

Pedro Gadanho: 'Is Curating the New Criticism', in: Preiser, Wolfgang F. E., Aaron T. Davis, Ashraf M. Salama, and Andrea Hardy. *Architecture Beyond Criticism: Expert Judgment and Performance Evaluation*. Routledge, 2014.

Pedro Gadanho: 'Curating Architecture as Critical Practice', in: *Abitare* 506, Sept. 2010  
2 Porto 2001

3 *Metaflux* was the Portuguese representation at Metamorphosis, the IXth Architecture Biennale in Venice 2004, under the curatorship of Pedro Gadanho and Luis Tavares Pereira

4 British Council London in 2002

5 Guimarães 2012 European Capital of Culture

6 Swiss Architecture Museum, Basel, 30.9.2007–10.01.2008

7 Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, 15.10–20.11.2010, Lisbon

views, if not the hunger for celebrity of critics themselves, the production of critical knowledge about architecture seemed to demand new vehicles. Exhibitions, with their mix of multiple media, wide-ranging appeal and immediate effect seemed to provide an interesting answer.

Out of personal interest, or simply the desire to understand emerging trends in architectural practice, I explored this curatorial approach in independent endeavors that benefited for over a decade from partnerships with welcoming, exceptional cultural programs, such as biennials and national exhibitions, or from spontaneous collaborations with institutions such as museums and professional associations. This approach to an independent, critical form of curating emerged even in the form of publications, events and competitions.

The projects I was engaged with alternatively attempted to identify the characteristics and impulses of regional practices, as in *Post-Rotterdam*<sup>2</sup> or *Metaflux*<sup>3</sup>; tried to relate the demise of old modes of architectural classification with the impact of new urban environments, as in *Space Invaders*<sup>4</sup>; or even bid to ascertain new theoretical references for current practice, as was the case of *Performance Architecture*.<sup>5</sup> In a few situations there was also a willingness to dig into the past so as to produce historical enquiries on characters or themes that could retain renewed relevance to contemporary activity, as happened in *Pancho Guedes, An Alternative Modernist*,<sup>6</sup> or *Interiores*.<sup>7</sup>

When, however, this activity was slowed down by the effects of Europe's cultural sector economic crisis – when initiatives or institutions no longer provided for a continuous flow of effective opportunities for freelance curators – I inevitably came to a crossroads. Abandoning the practice of curating in favor of full-time dedication to architectural practice momentarily became a possibility to consider. This was

precisely the occasion that led to my application for a position as a curator of contemporary architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Unlike those who had developed their curatorial skills in an institutional context, I perceived the option to enrol in the museum world as the last resort to maintain an activity that I had previously moulded to my personal needs. I thus brought a practice-oriented curatorial approach to an environment which, I soon realized, was almost entirely dominated by a strict, not to say conservative, art historical perspective on the protagonists, movements, and objects of architecture. At the same time, I was to engage for the first time with the prevalent definition of the curatorial activity as oriented towards the treatment, consolidation and exhibition of a collection. If my approach to freelance curating had encountered its own limitations, namely in the literal exhaustion of the possibilities and energy required to launch a new project, I was soon to be confronted with the very different nature of the limits and challenges that institutional settings also present to curatorial practice.

While I felt profoundly welcome at the Museum of Modern Art – and there I found the opportunities to both pursue personal projects and explore unexpected possibilities related to the richness of the museum's collections – I also felt privileged to be able to sense and evaluate the effects and impact that a reputed and much-admired institutional setting can have in the realization of curatorial endeavor. This is the main theme of a personal reflection, here subdivided under four headings:

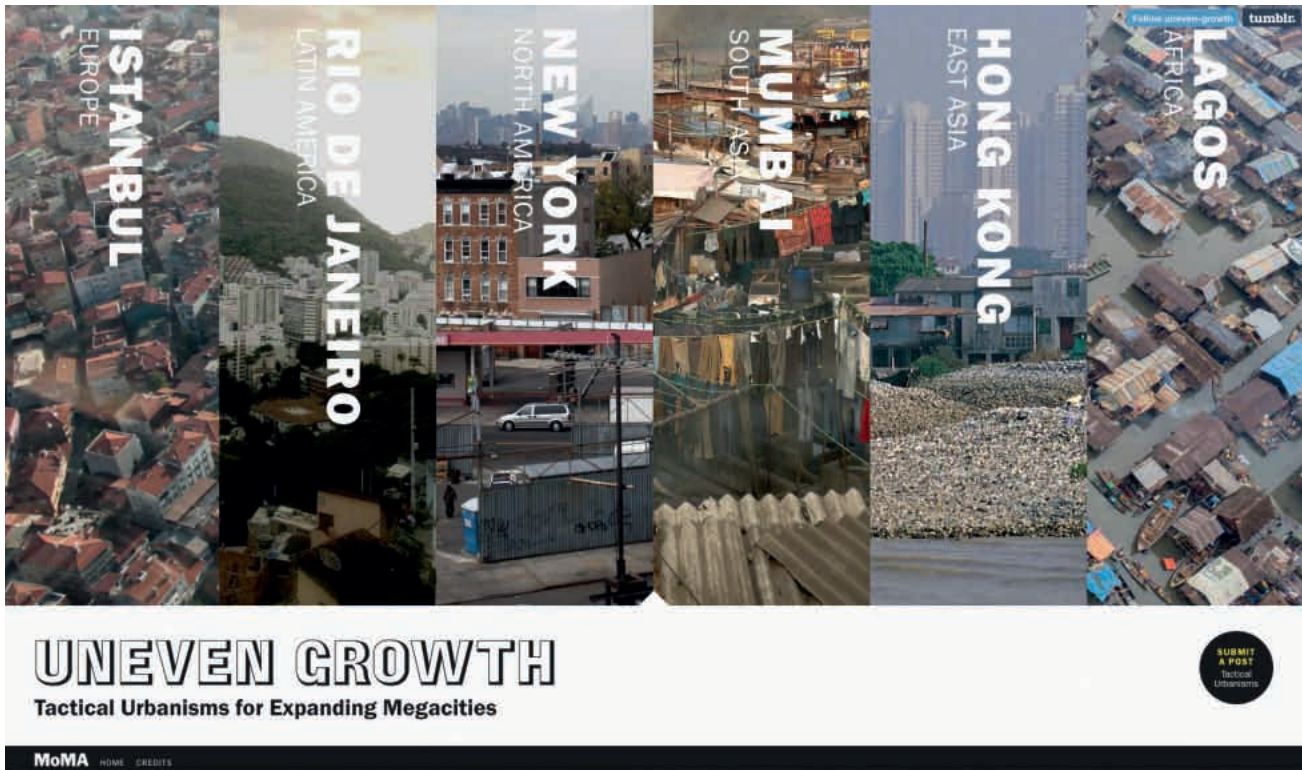
### **1. Time and Timeliness**

Even if psychological duration may be felt in different terms, the times required to accomplish a curatorial endeavor inside or outside an institutional setting are curiously similar. Timeliness should be of the essence when one wants to produce a

curatorial statement that may resonate with current preoccupations and concerns. And yet the time consumed to pursue an idea that supposedly reflects the present condition is usually painstakingly long.

When acting as a freelance curator, time is mostly consumed securing partnerships or finding the venues to realize the curatorial endeavor. If this time can be usefully employed to mature the thinking behind the curatorial pursuit, once this stage is passed successfully, the realization of the project can be extremely swift, and is often pursued in haste, potentially imperilling the quality of the project. Even so, a sense of actuality is retained in so far as the idea has to slowly adapt to different constraints, demands and even the evolving sensibility of the curator.

In contrast, in an institutional setting curators are asked to pitch and inscribe very precise concepts in a schedule that, in most cases, will take 4 to 5 years to accomplish. Curators and institutions alike maintain that the curatorial projects adopted in this fashion are open to transformation and evolution. Working on this slow-track gives people the impression that scholarly research may be taken to new depths, which is obviously important to the sense of self-importance that comes with the academic ambition of art-historical endeavors. The fact is, however, that more often than not the development of curatorial concepts is kept in a state of suspended animation by everyday priorities, and will be revisited only when the project needs to take shape, i.e. one to two years prior to its conclusion. If one may be justly concerned with the actuality and pertinence of this sort of re-heated curatorial concept at the time of its public appearance, one also has to add to this doubt the initial anxiety of devising a theme or approach that will bear some sort of divinatory relevance in a relatively distant future. For someone who is interested in emerging trends in architectural practices, as I am, it seems particularly difficult to



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*Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities*, MoMA, New York,  
22 November 2014 – 25 May 2015

guess what will be the important issues of the day in four to five years from now. This, of course, favors the art-historical stance within most art and architecture institutions. When working at such a distance, it is safer to go for the atemporal theme, and it is easier to achieve success by merely guaranteeing a 'new perspective' on the consecrated protagonist. In contrast, it is considerably more difficult to predict who will be emerging in two or three seasons, as it is even riskier to bet on the values that are still pertinent to discussion and appreciation in a few years' time. Aware of these paradoxes, institutions such as MoMA do occasionally attempt to promote fast-track projects. However these attempts are normally impeded by the complexity and intrinsic slowness of the organization. A vast number of teams need a regular workflow and tight planning, and fast-track projects disturb such an imperative. Only lighter, smaller organizations will allow themselves the risks and rewards of the fast-track adventure.

Nonetheless, while at MoMA, and due to various circumstances, I was lucky enough to be able take advantage of the fast-track lane for some of the curatorial projects I undertook. When responding to the challenge of producing a new iteration for the Issues in Contemporary Architecture series – workshop-based exhibitions initiated by the Chief Curator of the Architecture and Design Department at the time, Barry Bergdoll – I was able to address a theme that was felt to be emerging at the time of the proposal, namely the rise of urban inequality on a global scale, and still achieve some topicality when *Uneven Growth*<sup>8</sup> opened a mere two years later, in 2014. On the other hand, with *9+1 Ways of Being Political*,<sup>9</sup> I was able to tackle a pressing theme – and, I daresay, set an agenda – because of the special nature of so-called 'collection shows' at MoMA. Such shows being exclusively based on the institution's holdings, and lacking the bureaucracy and time-consuming processes of having





*9+1 Ways of Being Political*, MoMA, New York,  
12 September 2012 – 9 June 2013

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8 MoMA, New York, 22.11.2014 – 25.5.2015

9 MoMA, New York, 12.9.2012 – 9.6.2013

pieces on loan from other institutions, allow for a shorter preparation time. Thus it was proven that an exhibition of considerable impact could be conceived, organized and installed in about nine months – and this was actually the third most viewed architecture exhibition in the world in 2012, with over a million visitors.

## 2. Collections and Statements

When assuming my position as a curator of contemporary architecture at MoMA, I had the opportunity to work with a collection for the first time in my career. Unlike in art institutions, where sometimes freelance curators or even artists are invited to ‘look’ at their collections, in the architectural world it is rare that other than resident curators are given the privilege of working with an institution’s collection.

As my curatorial pursuits had been mostly directed at contemporary issues, the idea of working with an architecture collection had never been on my horizon of ambitions. I also had had the feeling that collections were mostly used to produce purely historical arguments and periodizations – such as, let’s say, ‘Soviet Housing Between 1945 and 1960’ – and so were of remote interest to my own practice.

Only when I came to MoMA and started delving into its archives, did it dawn on me that the collection could indeed be ‘used’ to produce statements on contemporary issues. If one was able to make the collection ‘talk’, this could actually prompt quite an attractive curatorial feat. In a way, this was the perception of a practitioner who had only previously used historical knowledge for its own purposes – i.e. to inform practice – and not as an end in itself.

Unfortunately, if a museum institution is stuck with a limited art-historical perspective – in which the accumulation of historical knowledge is, in fact, the only purpose – this approach will seldom happen. In a competitive arena where academic laurels

may easily supersede true curatorial talent, it may prove difficult to create the space to innovate and experiment with historical materials so that they establish new connections and offer novel insights on our present concerns.

In the end, following this different whim, a show like *Cut 'n' Paste*<sup>10</sup> indulged in the inevitably successful display of every single photo-collage that Mies van der Rohe had left in MoMA's collection, but it did so only because that shed new light on the transformation of architecture into a visual culture that relies on the imperative of assemblage, and the substitution of once-prevalent spatial depth for equally interesting notions of juxtaposition and added meaning. Fortunately, an institutional collection does admit modes of curating that may have consolidated outside the museum logic and its more traditional art-historical habits.

It is also true that working with a collection constitutes a fascinating challenge when it comes to continue and enrich the scope of its holdings. When it comes to the role of the curator as collector, the remaining impression from my experience at MoMA is that in an institutional setting there is a natural yet contradictory anxiety in devising very clear 'strategies' that will orient new acquisitions in sometimes dogmatic fashion. Again, I suspect that the ability to expand a collection in interesting directions depends more on random encounters and circumstantial possibilities than any art historian would want to admit. Subsequently, the nervous need to establish strict directives for a collection seems to come in contradiction to the openness that is needed to operate a permanent and delicate balance between 'filling the gaps' and 'taking a bet on new values' in representing relevant production from a given artistic field.

On my part, I joyously embraced what others perhaps considered only ashamedly, i.e. deploying the demand of every new thematic display of the collection as a kind of research filter for new objects that could integrate well with the museum's holdings. This would allow me to identify practices and projects that appeared to deserve a place in the collection precisely because they addressed historical issues that would otherwise remain invisible or misrepresented. Rather than following in the footsteps of the art market or the projections of celebrity, the contemporary holdings of the collection have been augmented with new subjects of discussion just because these did exist and demanded representation through specific practices and practitioners.

### **3. Money and Means**

In contrast to the meagre means with which the freelance curator or less influential institutions are faced, MoMA can be said to be an institution where the means, the professionalism, the human resources and the financial support are available to produce an extraordinary level of excellence.

This is, of course, a privileged situation. I could not expect to have realized a project such as *Uneven Growth* – with its twelve participating teams scattered around the globe, and with its focus on six cities spread across five continents – in many other institutions. As I sometimes muse, this ambitious, long-dreamt project was perhaps the reason why I had to be at MoMA at this point of my life.

This is not to say that there are not contradictions in the everyday management of an exhibition's creation. Where there's a budget, there are constraints and disappointments and struggles. As Foucault has certainly hinted at, large and dominating institutions have a way of developing irrational processes, and when it comes to the deployment of money one can always expect unevenness and surprise – but also a great training in the art of creatively surmounting sudden budget cuts and other inevitable constraints.

What most people tend to forget nowadays is that, in fact, the production of exhibitions has become a tremendously expensive affair. Akin to the production of feature films, exhibitions involve large teams, lengthy research, long design processes,

costly set productions. If one adds to this the increasing costs of professional art transport and accompanying insurance, we are faced with undertakings that, in many cases, become questionable in terms of the large investment they represent. So only institutions that are expected to be 'too big to fail' may engage in certain curatorial endeavors. Thus, a tendency arises to focus on the few blockbusters – and reassuring subjects – that will justify the venture, even within contexts where scholarly distinction remains the rule.

This is perhaps the arena in which we are more violently faced with the need to rethink the pertinence, ambition, preciousness and real purpose of architectural curating. If confronted with fewer resources, architecture exhibitions could still be undertaken and directed at specialist audiences – and so continue to deliver a critical instrument for disciplinary discussions.

However when curating architecture there is often the plausible ambition to reach out for broader audiences and conquer a new public for a discourse and a production that has a considerable impact on the built environment. The problem with this ambition is that, at this point, architectural curating has to engage with the scale of endeavor that connects large resources with certain audience goals. This is where architecture curating has to face the spectacular, the experiential and the celebrity factors that are slowly taking over the art museum world. Entering the realm of large scale cultural entertainment will certainly entail specific problems.

#### 4. Reception and Audiences

An awareness that certain museums have the power to cater for massive audiences is inevitably present when one is considering what curatorial endeavors to invest in within those institutions. With audience comes responsibility, and the awareness that today, more than in previous times, the museum can be understood as a platform for informing and shaping opinion, and creating cultural difference. Beyond money, there is also a cultural mission to maintain.

With these notions, though, I am not referring to the educational aspirations of early museums. I am suggesting that, particularly in the realm of architectural curating, the museum can be defined today as a platform for activism, namely in regards to the pressing issues facing cities and urban settlements around us. More than an educational tool, the museum and its contents may be taken as a stage and a trigger for debate.

This was certainly the drive behind projects such as *9+1 Ways of Being Political* and *Uneven Growth*, even if such projects run the risk of a critical reception marked by conservative backlashes. That such projects could have happened in a museum such as MoMA is telling of the motivation of the institution to welcome such new positions. It was certainly curious to see audiences moving seamlessly from the aesthetic comfort of the Picassos and the Matisses, to the hard questions raised by an exhibition such as *Uneven Growth*. For me the question nonetheless remained of what was the true reach of such initiatives, how influential could they be in the midst of the weight that the image of the institution itself had on viewers. How transformative could they possibly be if their reception was informed by the critical perception of the institution as a provider of mass entertainment, and even as an implacable slayer of cherished architectural heritage? While such interrogations seem to be very particular, they tell us that architectural curating, like any other form of curating, is not autonomous in terms of the symbolic facets that the museum institution projects at any given moment.

*Pedro Gadanho, Curator of Contemporary Architecture at The Museum of Modern Art MoMA, New York, 2012–2015; 2015 artistic director, Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology MAAT, Lisbon, due to open in the summer of 2016.*



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The Faculty Building in Delft // photo [spatialplanningtudelft.eu](http://spatialplanningtudelft.eu)

# Conference Report: Research on Display

**Bart Tritsmans**

The Architecture Exhibition  
as Model for Knowledge Production  
The Second Annual Conference  
of the Jaap Bakema Study Centre  
TU Delft & HNI Rotterdam  
30 November – 1 December 2015

During two dark and stormy autumn days, a group of researchers, curators and architects from various international institutes gathered at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment in Delft to discuss the interrelation of research, innovation and exhibition design.

The organizing committee (Dirk van den Heuvel, Jaap Bakema Study Centre; Tom Avermaete, TU Delft; Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, Yale University; Guus Beumer, HNI; Dick van Gameren, TU Delft) composed a program consisting of five sessions, two round tables and two keynote lectures addressing three central issues:

- . Which formats and typologies of display establish a profound relationship between exhibition and research?
- . What is the relationship between archives, newly produced exhibition materials and knowledge production; and how can research be compatible with the exhibition format?
- . How can exhibitions combine the accumulation of historical experience and analysis with speculations about the future?

The leading questions all contribute to the evaluation of the connection between research and architectural exhibitions, and to answering the question of where the discipline is heading and which challenges and opportunities lie ahead.

## **Laboratories of Architectural Ideas**

The first session, moderated by Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, Laboratories of Architectural Ideas, portrayed architectural exhibitions in an unusual light. The session collected case studies of architects curating exhibitions to explore their personal fascinations and ideas. The papers clearly pointed out that 'something happens when architecture is on display,' as Pelkonen concluded, 'even if the exhibition does not show anything





Tom Avermaete welcoming the audience  
 // photo Bart Tritsmans



Conference programme // Jaap Bakema Study Centre

that resembles a building.' The first lecture, by Jasper Cepl (Hochschule Anhalt, Dessau), 'An Exhibition in Need of a Name,' unraveled the myth behind the iconic name 'die Gläserne Kette' or 'the Glass (or Crystal) Chain.' This utopian correspondence on the future of architecture took place between November 1919 and December 1920, and was initiated by Bruno Taut. Cepl shows that the name 'die Gläserne Kette' was consolidated in 1962, when Oswald Mathias Ungers made a research exhibition and catalogue on the topic. He illustrated how an exhibition is able to conceive and spread new concepts. Stefaan Vervoort (Ghent University) elaborated on the idea that models can have an artistic or conceptual existence of their own. In his paper 'Idea as Model and its Discontents' Vervoort argued – based on Eisenman's ideas on exhibitions, models and their meaning – that a model is not a representation, but a reality in itself, and that objects like models can bridge the gap between art and architecture. Ana Ábalos Ramos (Universidad Politécnica de Valencia) presented the case of Alison and Peter Smithson. For the Smithsons, exhibitions served as laboratories for new ideas. By emphasizing that everyday living patterns and objects such as advent calendars and Christmas decorations are works of art, they emphasized the social ground of exhibitions, which is to persuade citizens to be involved in the planning of their living environment. Exhibitions thus constitute a parallel between life and art; they form a microcosm where architecture can be presented autonomously, and where the interaction between inhabitants and their living environment is addressed. Eva Branscorne (University College London) brought the story of the unusual encounter between Joseph Beuys and Hans Hollein. (The former asking the latter to become professor of architecture in Dusseldorf, when knocking at his door one day in 1967.) The two men shared their interdisciplinary attitude; Beuys felt that everyone is an artist, while Hollein claimed



'Alles ist Architektur' (including rocket science, sex, the human body, ancient structures etc.). Thanks to Johannes Cladders, the ambitious director of the Städtisches Museum in Mönchengladbach, Beuys had his first retrospective in which he displayed a collection of debris, among which were a chocolate Easter bunny and an old sausage. In 1970, Hans Hollein made the exhibition *Alles ist Architektur. Eine Ausstellung zum Thema Tod*; an 'archeological site' where visitors could dig up plastic objects, as an allegory of Western consumer society. Then, an interesting strategy unfolded: Hollein used the provocative exhibition to convince the museum board that he was the right architect to build the new museum; an assignment which he was given in 1972.

The first sessions immediately highlight the broadness of the conference theme by questioning the relationship between the architect as a curator and the architect as a building professional, and by showing the dialogue between the artistic aspect of architectural exhibitions, the collecting of existing archival material, and the development of an architectural practice. The different approaches towards the topic emerged in the discussion: the architect as an artist on the one hand, and as a scientist on the other.

### **Motors of Research**

This second session, chaired by Marie-Thérèse van Thoor (TU Delft), presented cases of researchers using the exhibition as a driver for their research. A first case was presented by Aleksandra Kedziorek (Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw). She reconstructed Oskar Hansen's strategies of display. Hansen was a member of Team X, and is known for his research on closed and open form. He was in favor of architecture reflecting everyday uses and perspectives. Hansen, who worked in Pierre Jeanneret's studio, was not allowed to design government-commissioned projects, but he could experiment with the design of pavilions for exhibitions. Exhibitions were the testing ground for his open architecture. Hansen's methods were applied to the creation of the exhibition *Oskar Hansen. Open Form* at the MACBA. During the building of the exhibition, new theories were discovered and explored; the exhibition shows itself as a process of learning, as a possibility to test ideas and concepts. In her paper 'Bauhaus, Spain, America,' Laura Martinez de Guerenú (University of Madrid) showed ongoing research on the connection between architecture in Spain, and the Bauhaus. The author reconstructed the journey of the Bauhausers who visited Spain in 1929, and investigated the cultural exchange between Spain and the Bauhaus. Luis Burriel Bielza (ENSA, Paris) based the research for his exhibition on Le Corbusier's collection of 2300 postcards. The exhibition presents a dialogue between postcards, drawings and sketches, books and texts, and highlights that postcards are one of Le Corbusier's sources in his research on tradition, culture and contemporary architecture. Claire Zimmerman (University of Michigan) made a comparison between the project for the Hunstanton Secondary Modern School (1949–1954) and the exhibition *Parallel of Life and Art* (1953) by Allison and Peter Smithson. The research that preceded the exhibition revealed the parallel of photography as a mediator for both the exhibition and the building. The research thus focused on the role of photography in society, and led to the idea that 'photographs make one see connections.' The exhibition showed a large collection of projected photographs, revealing similarities between the two projects, such as the impact of framing (photographic and architectural), pattern making, montage/collage, transparency, and the importance of viewing. A question that came up from the audience, and which would re-emerge during the continuation of the conference, was that of the public. Architecture, it was argued, is about understanding the world, which is the main reason why one should try to open research on architecture up to a wider audience. But how to select and to show material in order to reach the audience you intend? The speakers agreed that

the audience should be challenged to think, that the exhibition format and the audience depends on several conditions, but that exhibitions offer a new perspective to show research. Tom Avermaete added a topic of debate by asking about the particular role of the researcher-curator. He brought up the unique possibilities of an exhibition as a format which allows the researcher to present his material in a different way. This leads to the challenge of how to transform research into an exhibition.

### **Media Environments**

The aim of the round table preceding the session on the exhibition as a medium, 'Research Online – a conversation on Open Access, Virtual Museums and Digital Story-telling,' was to highlight and discuss the future possibilities of Open Access. The conversation between Frank van der Hoeven (TU Delft), Frans Neggers (Het Nieuwe Instituut) and Sandra Fauconnier showed that the use of Open Access is not widespread; not many people (want to) publish in Open Access journals. A plea was held to encourage the use of Open Access research with the arguments that public funded research should be public; that there is increased use of the research outcome; that it provides better access to all; and that the researcher has a moral obligation towards society.

First to present in the session on Media Environments was Dhruv Adam Sookhoo (Newcastle University), who held a plea for the urban room as a driver of planning imagination, city foresight and place-based decision-making. He argued that every town and city without an architecture center should have an urban room; a physical space where people debate and get involved in the past, the present and future of where they live, work and play. He illustrated this with the example of Newcastle City Futures 2065, a pop-up urban room which attracted more than 2,500 visitors in a short period of time. The interactive exhibition project showed the possibilities of a dialogue between the public and the planner as a curator, as an advocate, as a designer of the future. Another way of interacting with the public was tested with Theo Crosby's 1973 exhibition *How to Play the Environment Game*, presented by Salomon Frausto (TU Delft). The exhibition was a critique of post-war urban planning, but also an analyses of the possibilities of the exhibition as a medium. Crosby presented input from different stakeholders and addressed subjects such as the need to value history and especially monuments in the urban environment, the impact of craftsmanship and the search for identity. He aimed at waking people up about what was happening to their surroundings. With a cheap penguin paperback as a catalogue, he hoped to reach a large audience. An 'interaction van' allowed him to reach people in different areas of the city. The project with a strong educative perspective shows an inventive use of mass media. Carola Hein (TU Delft) also discussed the educational functions of exhibitions through the case study of building exhibitions as a means of research at the societal level. In an overview from 1889 until today, she elaborated on the main question of how the events as examples of 'curating the city' establish a connection between architecture research, exhibitions and knowledge dissemination. The exhibitions led to changing architectural culture, and sometimes served as initiators for societal change. Questions one could ask is how the building exhibitions were perceived then, what they brought about, and how they are perceived today. An entirely different approach to the exhibition as a medium was shown by Oliver Elser (DAM, Frankfurt).

'The discovery of the photo model' discussed the model collection of the DAM and pointed out that models generate research. DAM experimented with lighting, positioning, juxtaposing several versions of the same model to highlight the extent that the photo or the image of the photo-model counts, and not the model itself.



// photo Bart Tritsmans



Swedish Museum of Architecture, 1968  
// photo Bart Tritsmans

**Keynote: In the 'Zone' between Theory and Practice:  
Three Exhibitions by Reima Pietilä, 1960-1972**

Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen staged the atypical, fascinating figure of Reima Pietilä in the context of Team X and their cross-media approach toward exhibitions. Based on the exhibitions, *Morphology-Urbanism* (1960), *Zone* (1968) and *Space Garden* (1971), Pelkonen showed how Pietilä was part of the thought collective Team X, a group of likeminded architects who gathered in back gardens and used exhibitions as a platform of communication. Articles, journals and exhibitions resonated their thoughts. Team X reacted against the CIAM-idea that an exhibition or a conference was to fit into a matrix. Team X re-identified the CIAM-grid: it was used as an anti-method, as a pattern for developing ideas. Challenging the idea of taking a universal approach and applying it to case studies, they used a bottom-up approach, and showed how human life and environment could not fit into a grid. Architecture, for them, had to capture temporality. The guiding ethos was that an exhibition would lead to open-ended research, associations, new connections. Anything could be shown in an exhibition, anything could be combined; an exhibition was meant to let your mind wander through space and time. Architecture was not to be looked at in a vacuum, but should be reunited with all aspects of human and natural life. These kinds of architecture exhibitions spread over Europe. Reima Pietilä entered the debate in 1958, when he built the Finnish pavilion for expo 58 in Brussels. In the three exhibitions – of which the first one, *Morphology-Urbanism* (1960), was held in an art gallery in Helsinki where it could be free from the constraints of architecture – Pietilä opposes all boundaries between art, architecture and nature. He considered the medium of the exhibition as a platform for popular polemic and public debate. It made it possible to oppose the established architecture and urban planning.



Gary Boyd and John McLaughlin // photo Bart Tritsmans



Thordis Arrhenius from the Swedish Museum of Architecture  
// photo Bart Tritsmans



Round table: Exhibitions Reviewed // photo Bart Tritsmans

### Curating Knowledge

Moderated by Tom Avermaete, this session assessed the limits of the exhibition as a means of producing knowledge in the context of a postmodern society. Nader Vossoughian (New York Institute of Technology) looked into the *Constructa Building Exhibition* (1951) as a case study of how Speer's octometric scale, which would replace the decimal system, was displayed in the 1951 exhibition in Hannover by implementing it in the scale of the interior and the floor plan of a house, and linking it to an idea of modernity through the introduction of the first domestic washing machine. Thordis Arrhenius and Christina Pech from the Swedish Museum of Architecture illustrated how a series of exhibitions between 1962 and 1985 initiated an atypical view of exhibiting architecture. The museum (opened in 1962), which had a mandate to represent Swedish architecture, chose a different path. In 1968 models were collected for the visitors to jump in, and in 1980 an iconic exhibition showed a very pessimistic view of housing and the welfare state. The exhibition consisted of a critical study of 20th century Swedish architecture. Visitors had to follow a very strict path through the exhibition, showing a bright image of the 1930's and a dark, audiovisual experience of the 1970's. With the expansion of the museum, its aims and premises were connected. Design, ideas, history, and building form an ensemble, and make the museum into a valuable built heritage. The case provokes questions about the dichotomies between national and international representation, historical and contemporary issues, and the difference between architecture as art and as societal enterprise. In the United States, a similar discussion arose on the status of architecture as a form of art. Martin Hartnung (ETH Zurich) shows that in the late 1970's, architects became better known, several architecture institutes were formed, and architecture was seen as a form of art. The idea of an architect as a

persona, and the accessibility of architecture for a wider audience evolved. By means of a case study of the coffee and tea piazzas by Alessi, he shows the success of an exhibition of microarchitectures, little domestic landscapes. The success of the exhibition was due to the fact that the discipline of architecture was present and absent at the same time. Hartnung questions the borders between art, architecture and commerce. Lea-Catherine Szacka (AHA, Oslo) also focused on the second half of the 1970's, when architectural exhibitions started telling different stories than before. Touching on Pelkonen's keynote lecture, Szacka looks at how exhibitions produce knowledge, and how they serve as thinking tools. By means of six exhibitions as a form of simulation, she shows how exhibitions evolved into a more free format, and how they became more political. All the exhibitions Szacka studied, such as *Signs of Lives* (1976), *Archéologie de la ville* (1978), *Roma interrotta* (1978) and *Transformation in Modern Architecture* for MoMA's 50th birthday, were unconventionally performative. *The Present of the Past* at the Venice biennale of 1980 showed (with a return to the street as a representational and social space by showing façades built by film decor makers) that the exhibitions formed a laboratory to develop postmodern architecture. The period was a break between modern and postmodern society, a period in which the boundaries between representation and reality disappeared.

The discussion reflected the many possible functions of the exhibition as a format: propaganda, marketing, but also collecting and distributing knowledge leading to critical results and questions. Tom Avermaete made the remark that exhibitions possess the possibilities to generate propaganda and critique in a way newspapers, radio or television never can. In the case of Sweden, the space was part of the propaganda, and for Speer who had an image problem in post-war Germany, the exhibition served to show that the octometric system could go beyond National Socialism, and provide possibilities for the future. The immersive quality of the exhibitions was also stressed; exhibitions bring people together in a room where they provide a way of showing architecture to an audience that does not buy architecture books. Exhibitions are able to create new meanings and generate awareness, they make people more critical of their surroundings.

### **New Curatorial Approaches**

In his introduction, Dirk Van den Heuvel emphasized the need to explore new exhibition formats, to look for new ways of presenting architecture, and alternatives for reaching the public. Charles Walker (Auckland University of Technology) introduced New Zealand's exhibition for the Venice biennale of 2016. *Future Islands: Unsettled Archipelagos of Research and Practice* shows the diversity of cities in New Zealand in 55 projects (referring to Calvino's invisible cities) in an open, critical and optimistic exhibition. Gary Boyd and John McLaughlin (Queen's University Belfast) presented the Irish exhibition for the 14th Venice biennale, addressing modernity in Ireland. The research for the exhibition resulted in a scenography as an assembly rather than a structure, and a flexible, light, transformable, easily shippable exhibition. Three papers in this session strongly focused on developing and experimenting with new exhibition formats. Andres Lepik (TU München) presented *AFRITECTURE*, an exhibition project serving as a platform for the exchange of knowledge with the audience. Lepik claimed that the public is bored of the stories that architects tell about architecture. Instead, the exhibition challenged the visitor to interact on different levels. The floors were used for display, so visitors were asked to take off their shoes. Comics were used to address children, and visitors could respond with comments on stickers, in booklets, on a chalkboard, and to a camera in a photo booth. An exhibition, according to Lepik, should look different after a while, because of the interaction of the visitors. With the information from the visitors, the curator was able to improve the public-friendliness of the exhibitions. Jérémie Michael



McGowan (AHO and National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo) presented the idea of Jukebox curating: questioning the role of the curator, and the interaction between the public, the curator and the exhibition. The idea of the exhibition was to invite the visitor to rummage about in archives. A twenty-meter-long archive wall with moving panels undermines the idea that the curator decides on the content of the exhibition. On the one hand, the visitor makes new connections and can explore new perspectives and hidden treasures, on the other hand, the building of the exhibition stimulated new research. The *Out of the Box* exhibitions series, presented by Giovanna Borasi (CCA, Montreal), shows a similar intention to provide a distinctive approach towards exhibiting archives.

CCA, which started collecting archives in the 1990's, owns a rich, research-based collection, and presents itself as a research museum. With *Out of the Box* they provide unusual and unexpected exhibition formats. An experiment from 2003 linked four non-inventoried archives to four scholars. The archives were accessible in the exhibition. Visitors could browse through the material, and were allowed to comment or suggest items for inclusion in the exhibition. Captions were fixed to the wall with tape or magnets, so the information in the exhibition could evolve. After the exhibition, the archives were catalogued. *Out of the Box 2015* centers around the question of how to deal with contemporary archives. Recently, the Ábalos & Herreros archive arrived at CCA. The idea of a monographic exhibition – one subject and one author – was challenged. Instead, three groups of practicing architects were invited to reflect on the work of Ábalos & Herreros, resulting in three exhibitions. They conducted research in the archives, and organized seminars, lectures, and interviews (oral history) in the archives. In the exhibition, visitors were invited to regard the material as an archive and also as a changing collection of items.

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The interaction between the curator, the public and the exhibition led to several questions during the lively discussion. Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen wondered how to decide where the participation of the visitor ends, and how much the visitor can or should dictate. Lepik and Borasi both agreed that they had not reached the boundaries yet. Although they had expected to encounter some bad interaction, they had not done so yet, either. Lepik argued that an exhibition should always be curated. Just as every airport needs an architect, and cannot be made by public participation, every exhibition also needs a curator, while public participation comes in later. Avermaete made a comparison to the press: everyone is making news, but people are in need of curated news. As a curator, he argued, it is a thin line when it comes to redefining your own role, and by taking feedback from visitors too seriously.

McGowan stressed the importance of the social, national and institutional context. Since the audience can be very diverse, the communication towards the public takes different forms in different contexts. Borasi agreed and pointed out that many of CCA's visitors are scholars and experts, so their input should be regarded as valuable or even crucial to the exhibition. Maarten Gielen added that very strongly curated exhibitions can cause more debate in society than very loose ones. In an institution as important as the CCA, he argued, a strongly curated exhibition can be as important as one with a high degree of participation.

## **Round Table: Exhibitions Reviewed**

### **A Conversation on Research and Architecture Exhibitions**

The conclusion of the conference was organized as a round-table discussion with Stephan Petermann (OMA/AMO), Max Risselada (TU Delft), Marina Otero (HNI) and the conference organizers. The panel members shared and discussed some concerns and topics for debate: the temporality of an exhibition, the question whether research should always be displayed, the specificity and the requirements of the format of the exhibition, the responsibility of the curator, and the connection between research and society. Stephan Petermann addressed the tragedy of the temporal character of an exhibition. In opposition to this temporality, research asks for continuity. Petermann gave the example of the Venice biennale, which should be regarded as a moment of feedback, a chance to find further collaborations and to re-analyze the research material. Marina Otero also touched upon the existing dichotomy between exhibitions and research, but with regard to the communication and presentation. She felt a lot of pressure to put research on display all the time, but she also recognizes that the exhibition is one the few possible media for showing research. Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen argued that research is an ongoing conversation, which should stay away from the universalist notion of the production of knowledge. She suggested keeping the conversation going through cross-media encounters. Tom Avermaete felt lucky to be a scholar and to be asked to make exhibitions at the same time. The fact that an exhibition is commissioned, that it takes place in a certain space, and is made for a specific audience, challenges the curator to think of new perspectives on his research. An exhibition serves as a platform and crossing point for viewpoints and discussions; it realizes this kind of interaction between knowledge production and display like no other medium of communication. However, according to several panel members, there is mounting pressure on institutions and exhibitions from 'the outside world'. Measuring the impact and interaction of an exhibition is a difficult task because of its very particular role. An exhibition not only provides information, but offers an alternative to the information overload, argued Avermaete. An exhibition needs a solid research basis, Otero argued. It provides an opportunity to create new connections, but it should not all be measured and weighed. Maarten Gielen (Rotor), who gave the final lecture of the conference at the Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam, brought up the barrier between research within the academic world and outside. Avermaete argued that the research field is widening, and that many more players besides researchers from academia are involved – as the example of the journal *Oase* illustrates. Academic researchers can also initiate qualitative research networks involving architects and curators since, according to Petermann, some very bad research is being done by private companies. So academics have the task of providing good research, being provocative, or raising sensitivity, and so of building bridges between research, exhibitions and architectural practice.

*Bart Tritsmans, exhibitions and publications,  
Flanders Architecture Institute, Antwerp*

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# a survey of the public sphere

by **icam** members,  
edited by Jolanta Gromadzka,  
Triin Ojari and Monika Platzer



Exhibition at the Museum of Architecture in Wrocław  
// photo Jarosław Ceborski

The following survey is the outcome of a call for entries from the members of **icam**. The main concern of architecture museums and centres is to engage with a broad audience. To mediate architecture, **icam** member institutions can rely on a large number of activities, interfaces, or what are generally called “operating platforms”, ranging from exhibitions, public events (lectures, symposia, workshops) to publications, web-based activities and other modes of dissemination for engaging with the topic of architecture.

15 **icam** members supplied us with examples of their most innovative or successful activities from 2007 onwards.

To give an overview of the different formats we grouped the entries in three categories, arranged chronologically:

- . exhibitions,
- . new formats,
- . collection, outreach and research.



Exhibition at the House of Art in Ostrava/GVUO  
// photo Antonín Dvořák, Kabinet architektury



Exhibition at the House of Art in Ostrava/GVUO  
// photo Antonín Dvořák, Kabinet architektury

## exhibitions

### Monographic

Space Packing Architecture: the Life  
and Work of Alfred Neumann  
2 April – 7 June 2015

*Institution: Tadeáš Goryczka and  
Jaroslav Němec, Kabinet architektury,  
Ostrava, Czech Republic.  
[www.kabinetarchitektury.cz](http://www.kabinetarchitektury.cz)*

**Description:** As a Cabinet of Architecture (once SPOK), we have had an official mandate since 2009. As a main medium of communication with the public we opted for the language of exhibition installations. The most successful exposition with an exceptional response was the one dedicated to the rediscovery of the great architecture figure Alfred Neumann, who has been almost forgotten not only in Bohemia but in all of Central Europe as well. His life story provides an almost precise chronology of recent unsettled times in Europe, between both World Wars, and the arrival of new totalitarian systems. His resolution, will and creativity provide a good and an inspiring example to contemporary visitors of this exhibition in the Czech Republic and Poland in 2015. It is the first ever exhibition on the work of Alfred Neumann (1900–1968). Educated in Brno and Vienna in the 1920s, Neumann gained international recognition for his highly original architecture in Israel in the 1960s that departed from the canonical International Style of modern architecture of that time. Eschewing functionalist and orthogonal expressions, Neumann instead conceived of architectural space in terms of spatial patterning, appropriating polyhedral geometries that blended traditional architectural principles with new modes of expression. His oeuvre constitutes another strand of modernism: sensitive to human scale and invested in local conditions, his thinking anticipates concerns that inform architectural design today.

**Reasoning:** We actively seek opportunities to expose this unique body of work, to disseminate it to a broader audience. The materials gathered and created for this exhibition have been conceived to communicate and guide the visitor through the design process. As such, this exhibition offers both an insight into Alfred Neumann's designs and theory, but moreover a lesson in the creation of architecture itself.





Braem's kindergarten at the Sint-Gummarusstraat, Antwerp  
// photo Anja Van Eetveldt, Maurice Nyhuis.



Cover of the Braem Architectuurroute



// photo Anja Van Eetveldt, Maurice Nyhuis

## exhibitions

### Monographic

Renaat Braem 1910 2010

1 October 2010 – 9 January 2011

*Institution: Ellen van Impe, Centrum Vlaamse Architectuurarchieven (Center for Flemish Architectural Archives), part of the Vlaams Architectuurinstituut (Flanders Architecture Institute), [www.cvaa.be](http://www.cvaa.be) [www.vai.be](http://www.vai.be) [www.braem2010.be](http://www.braem2010.be)*

**Description:** A monographic exhibition on the Belgian postwar modernist architect Renaat Braem (1910–2001) was at the center of this project. It was, moreover, embedded in a broad, innovative programme, encouraging and supporting local partners to develop their own Braem activities during the Braem Year 2010, consisting of:

- . Developing and distribution of a Braem Route (both printed and online) along buildings by Braem in the Antwerp region (City of Antwerp, VRT – the Flemish public broadcasting company, Onroerend Erfgoed, the government service that owns the Braem archives and published a monograph at the time of the exhibition)
- . Re-edition of *Het lelijkste land ter wereld*, an iconic pamphlet by Braem from 1968 (ASP publisher).
- . Guided tours of the exhibition for the general public as well as for specific groups, such as the current tenants of Braem's social housing complexes (Kiel) (Antwerpen Averechts, Antwerp city guides, deSingel)
- . A design competition for architects, in which they were given insight into the Braem archives to propose a redesign of the defunct boiler room and director's house of the Kiel social housing complex. Results were shown in the Braem exhibition and debated at the closing event
- . Communication of all Braem activities with a common logo and a shared website.

**Reasoning:** While attracting many visitors to the exhibition, the project was especially innovative in the mobilization of many different partners and target audiences and the concentration of many Braem centenary celebration endeavours: contemporary architects, inhabitants of social housing, architectural visitors to Antwerp, local organizations and governments, city guides, professors and students, architects, owners of architectural archives etc.



// photo Museum of Estonian Architecture



Thematic folder // graphic design Margus Tamm

## exhibitions

### Thematic

Unbuilt. Visions for a New Society  
1986–1994  
24 April – 7 June 2015

*Institution: Triin Ojari, Museum of  
Estonian Architecture,  
[www.arhitektuurimuuseum.ee](http://www.arhitektuurimuuseum.ee)*

**Description:** The exhibition presented for the first time a selection of architectural projects and conceptual designs in the period from the launching of Perestroika until the first years of the newly independent Estonian Republic. During this time, an unprecedented number of open and invited entry competitions took place while ambitious businessmen of the transitional economy commissioned many projects on their own as well. However, the majority of these plans remained unbuilt. The outrageous visions have been forgotten, the clients have ceased to exist, and many designs have been lost irretrievably. The time has been called both a transition and a disruption – concepts and projects addressing the new constructed world departed radically from what had been experienced before; the borders of the free world were probed, and architects ignored the young country’s actual impoverishment. Keywords from the era included the Western metropolis, high-rises and the technological revolution, rediscovered faith in urban construction, and glittering downtown business architecture.

One of the aims of the exhibition and the catalogue accompanying it was certainly to achieve an overview of the materials that have been preserved. There were several public programs accompanying the exhibition: public discussion, guided tours, and an educational programme for the schools.

### Reasoning:

- . A significant project in mapping out the architectural history of this period;
- . Majority of the material was presented and conceptualized for the first time;
- . Innovative and contemporary theoretical interpretation of the theme;
- . Accompanying popular public programs and media attention;
- . Complementing the museum collections with the material of the period;



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// photo Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine

## exhibitions

### Thematic

1925, Quand l'Art Déco séduit le monde (1925, When Art Déco Dazzled the World)

16 October 2013 – 17 February 2014

*Institution: Corinne Bélier, Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine, [www.citechaillot.fr](http://www.citechaillot.fr)*

**Description:** With its sleek, powerful geometric lines, Art Déco style (1919–1940) stands out thanks to its lively appeal, and has gained a lasting popularity. In 2013 the Cité de l'architecture – housed in the last Art Déco architectural masterpiece in Paris, the Palais de Chaillot – presented the first major retrospective in France to pay tribute to this widespread aesthetic style. Born of the impetus driving French artists, such as architects Henri Sauvage, Robert Mallet-Stevens, Roger-Henri Expert and Pierre Patout, designers André Véra, Louis Süe, André Mare and Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann, fashion designers Paul Poiret and Jean Patou, and sculptors Martel, Janniot and Sarrabezolles, Art Déco is the product of a vision shared by various artistic spheres. The exhibition illustrated what lies behind Art Déco's international success: how it developed in the 1920s against a backdrop of technological progress and modernity (aviation, the automotive industry, radio and silent film), the tremendous impact of the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, followed by the spread of this style in France for major public buildings as well as in architecture and design for daily life. Lastly, the exhibition focuses on the global resonance of this aesthetic movement in New York, Chicago, Madrid, Brussels, Porto, Belgrade, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Shanghai, Saigon, Tokyo, so truly becoming an international style.

**Reasoning:** This exhibition on a famous worldwide style was one of our most successful, with 215.000 visitors and a catalogue reprinted twice. The topic: interdisciplinary and international, the collections – bringing together architectural archives, mostly of the Cité, as well as furniture and works of art – and the highly didactic sequencing of the exhibition greatly contributed to this success, engaging with the awareness of architecture and heritage for a broader audience.





// photo Frode Larse, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design



// photo Frode Larsen, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design



// photo Thea Tønnessen, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design

## exhibitions

### Permanent

BUILDING IDEAS. From the Architecture Collection, 1830 to the present since 2014

*Institution: Nina Berre, The department of Architecture, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, [www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en](http://www.nasjonalmuseet.no/en)*

**Description:** The exhibition is based on an understanding of “the collection” as active and influential systems. Thus, the intention was not to tell an authorized edition of “The History of Norwegian Architecture”, nor to provide a three-dimensional mini version of the established Norwegian built reality. Instead, the exhibition provides visitors with a range of overlapping and interconnected insights into the breadth and diversity of architectural production as it has occurred and continues to occur in a Norwegian context. With an emphasis on process and the circulation of ideas, the exhibition traces an intentionally meandering path through both history and the present. The result is a selective cross-section through the National Museum’s architecture collection. Visitors are given the opportunity to be interactive: Drawings are mounted in sliding glass doors to provide different juxtapositions. The intention behind the ‘idea bank’ from the office of Bjercke og Eliassen (1914–1960) is to connect the present and the past by using the visitors’ experience: It contains over 1,600 postcards, prints and photographs. This ‘idea bank’ is displayed as part of an interactive installation where the public’s pictures, shared via Instagram, are shown together with material contained in the architects’ original archive of inspiration. Photographs contributed by the public cast the historical material in a new light.

**Reasoning:** Any lingering concepts of neutrality, of exhibitions acting simply as sites for the display of architecture, are now largely consigned to the past. The most persistent cliché about architecture exhibitions has similarly been abandoned by most: that of the inherent disconnect between “real architecture” happening “out there”, and the poor substitutes of simulations shown in exhibitions that attempt to document the “missing work”, and inevitably fail. The exhibition’s notion of experimentation, and the flexible sliding door system, allow a continuous praxis of re-curation.



Nanotourism // photo Ana Kovac, MAO



Hidden Crafts // photo Ana Kovac, MAO

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### new formats

BIO 50: 3, 2, 1 ... TEST,  
24th Biennial of Design, Ljubljana  
18 September – 3 December 2014

*Institution: Maja Vardjan, Museum of  
Architecture and Design (MAO),  
Ljubljana, [www.mao.si](http://www.mao.si)*

**Description:** During a period of six months, 120 international designers and multi-disciplinary agents engaged in a large-scale collaborative effort to devise possible futures of design. Working on eleven themes that impact on diverse aspects of everyday life, they were brought together by *3, 2, 1 ... TEST*, the experimental framework that shaped BIO 50, the Biennial of Design in Ljubljana. Different groups tackled the themes of Affordable Living, Knowing Food, Public Water Public Space, Walking the City, Hidden Crafts, The Fashion System, Hacking Households, Nanotourism, Engine Blocks, Observing Space and Designing Life, creating specific projects to be implemented during Biennial and Beyond.

Founded in 1964, BIO was the first design biennial in Europe. In 2014, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, it undertook an ambitious transformation, from a traditional industrial design exhibition into six-month collaborative process. In its experimental approach and ambitious goals, the 24th edition of the Biennial became a case study for what design and design events can be in the contemporary world. BIO 50 was shaped by the exhibition *3, 2, 1 ... TEST*, which presented the process and projects developed by each of the groups. It was further enhanced by the retrospective exhibition *The Biennial of (Industrial) Design over Fifty Years*, and complemented by BIO 50: NOW, a lively program of parallel events.

**Reasoning:** BIO 50 was a complex, transformative endeavour that managed to fulfil its aims: to strengthen local and international design networks, to develop alternatives to implemented systems of everyday life, and to create resilient structures, collaborations and projects that are developing over time, beyond the duration of the Biennial. In this sense a museum is not only a treasury of artefacts and knowledge but also an active facilitator of thinking and making.





Archi-box 06 // photo Piotr Gardecki

### new formats

Archi-box. Alternative Search Space  
since 2013 (7 editions)

*Institution: Michał Duda, Museum of  
Architecture in Wrocław,  
[www.ma.wroc.pl](http://www.ma.wroc.pl)*

**Description:** Archi-box is a cycle initiated in 2013 and devoted to the most recent phenomena in contemporary architecture. Its subtitle, The Alternative Search Space, relates to the project's essential guidelines: experimental research in different areas of modern architecture and auto thematic afterthought on the museum's activities, new forms of presentation, communication and active participation.

The cycle does not restrict itself to the presentation of architects' work. It is more concerned with the factors that lead to its creation. Instead of simply showing architecture, the exhibitions intend to spin a tale around it. The aim is to actuate the discussion on architecture and to enhance the public's architectural awareness. It is complemented with catalogues broadening the content of the exhibitions, the expositions are accompanied by workshops and events, and the presentations themselves are becoming more and more daring in leaving the walls of the museum and taking the form of installations in public space.

The consecutive instalments included, among others, the architects' working methods, employing advanced digital tools, the relations between architect and investor, the contextuality of architecture, or alternative strategies to revitalize public space.

**Reasoning:** The Archi-box cycle turned out to be a successful way to discuss subjects that are usually absent from our more traditional exhibition programme. It also managed to attract a new public, especially young people. Each instalment of the project strives to use different tools and develop the abilities of our institution – we invite architects to residential workshops, and collaborate with sociologists, city activists, DJs, acousticians, traditional craftsmen, and experts in cutting-edge technologies.



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// photo Nicole Pruckermayr, GrazMuseum



// photo Nikolaos Grigoriadis, GrazMuseum



// photo Nikolaos Grigoriadis, GrazMuseum

## new formats

Freiräume – Freuräume  
(Unclaimed Spaces – Joyful Spaces)  
13 June – 2 September 2013

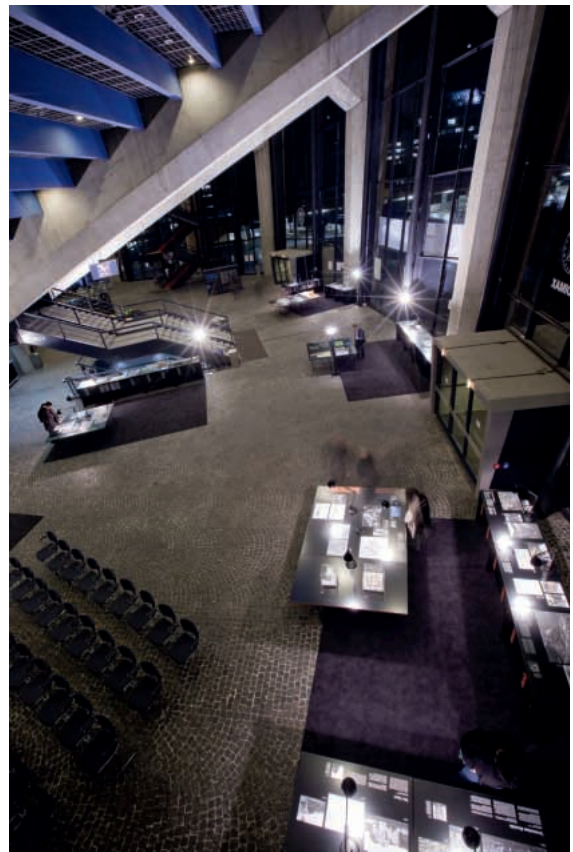
*Institution: Christina Töpfer,  
GrazMuseum, [www.grazmuseum.at](http://www.grazmuseum.at)*

**Description:** Not only in Graz do we live in an environment that has been worked out to the last detail. This order, realised by urban planning and architecture, is crucial to keep a complex world working. But it can also result in too much regulation. Who doesn't have any romantic need for the unsystematic – the free spaces, the fallow fields and other niches of the city? And who does not also feel like sounding out things and doing things together with others in the city once in a while? Free spaces open up time and time again between the areas of consumerism, accelerated transit traffic, and the zones of restriction.

Fallow fields are such spaces, and can be physically experienced. Taking the exhibition as a point of departure, the project Unclaimed Spaces – Joyful Spaces aimed at inspiring visitors to participate in explorations of the city and field trips to its more fleeting spaces. The starting material for this was the research project and book *Gaps in Urban Space. Research on Time in the City Based on Fallowfields in Graz* which deals with both actual places within the city and more global contexts in the form of texts and projects.

**Reasoning:** Unclaimed Spaces – Joyful Spaces can be regarded as an innovative and lighthearted way of mediating architecture in museums. By combining a multimedia exhibition at GrazMuseum with various field trips for children, youths and adults alike (e.g. MühlGANG, a walk through the temporarily drained riverbed of the Mühlgang, Looking for Plants & Creating a Herbarium, A Tour for Our Ears, Food from the Fallowfields etc.), the project offered new perspectives on the perception of the city and inspired visitors to take a closer look at the gaps that open up within our built environment.





Lecture hall, Ruhr University, Bochum // photo Peter Breuer

### new formats

Architecture on the Move  
Planning and Building in the 1960s  
Liebfrauen Church, Duisburg,  
24 August – 18 October 2009  
Audimax, Ruhr University Bochum,  
25 October – 29 November 2009  
City Hall, Cologne  
12 October – 3 November 2011

*Institution: Ursula Kleefisch-Jobst,  
M:AI Museum of Architecture and  
Engineering Art North Rhine-  
Westphalia, [www.mai.nrw.de](http://www.mai.nrw.de)*

**Description:** The trigger for the development of this exhibition has been the increasing public debate about our present interaction with the architecture of the 1960s, a discussion which revolves around the question of conservation or demolition. The driving forces behind the repositioning of German architecture – architecture on the move – were a belief in progress, enthusiasm for technology, the economic miracle (Wirtschaftswunder) and the new role of Germany on the international stage. The exhibition was shown at three different locations in NRW in buildings from the 1960s. So the venues for the exhibition also functioned as accessible exponents. The location of the Liebfrauen Church in Duisburg is a typical example for church construction of this time. Here, the exhibition was extended with a special section on the topic of the conversion of church buildings without religious purposes. The exhibition at the main auditorium of the Ruhr University – one of the most important post-war university buildings in Germany – further addressed the topic of the refurbishment of buildings from the 1960s.

**Reasoning:** The exhibition attracted widespread public interest, because visitors could identify with the topic on the basis of personal experience and opinion. Furthermore, the exhibition highlighted a variety of aspects of the architecture of the 1960s. This approach helped to reflect upon hasty and blanket judgements. The direct experience of the architecture in the different exhibition sites played a major role.



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Virtual bookshelf, Canadian Centre for Architecture

## collection, outreach and research

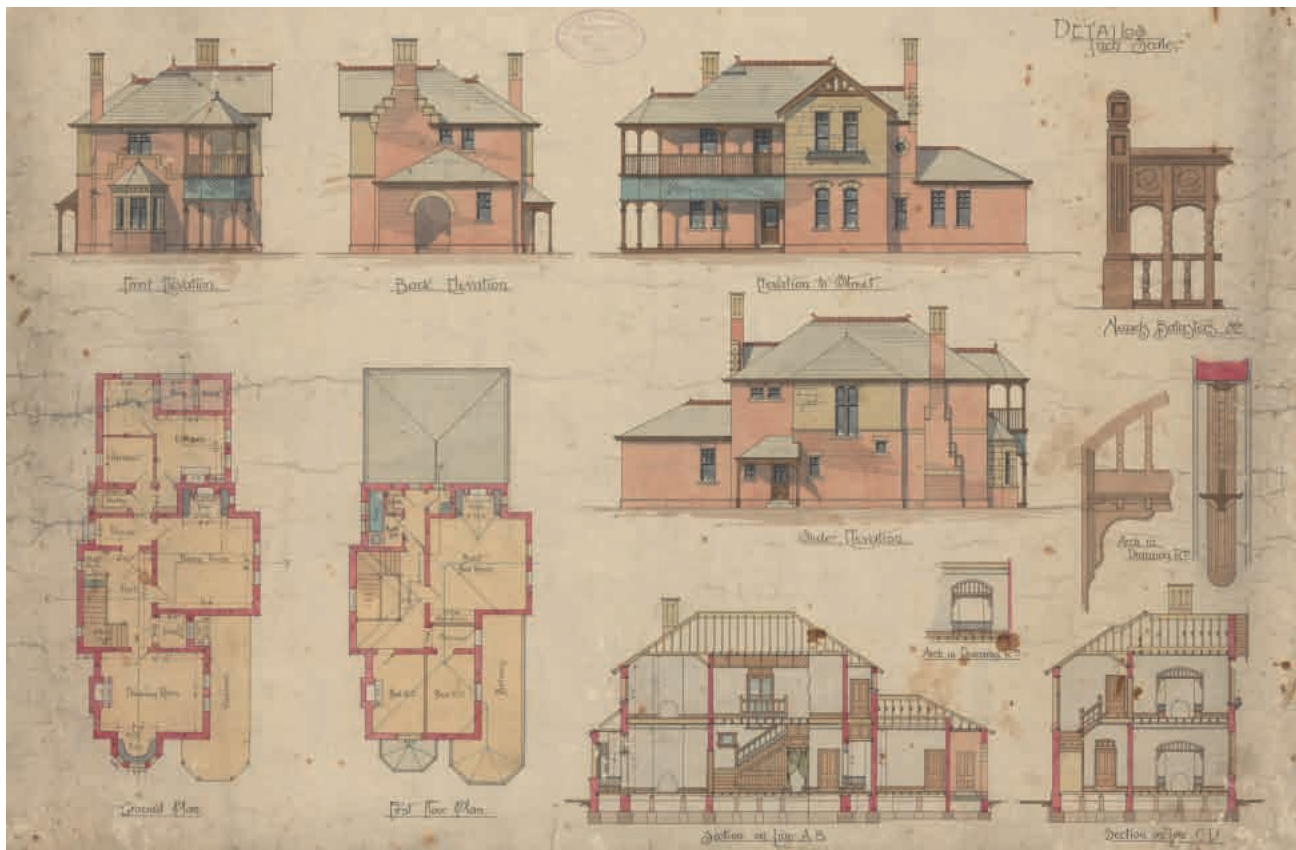
### e-publication series

Archaeology of the Digital  
March 2014 – October 2016

*Institution: Mirko Zardini, Canadian  
Centre for Architecture (CCA),  
www.cca.qc.ca*

**Description:** Publishing at the Canadian Centre for Architecture has shifted from a print-only practice to an integrated strategy with online, digital and paper formats. Archaeology of the Digital, a research program initiated by the CCA in 2012 and curated by Greg Lynn, was based on the acquisition, cataloguing and exhibition of twenty-five projects that incorporated digital technologies in their design and production processes from the late 1980s through to the early 2000s, the development of the programme is consistently documented on the CCA website, and print publications present research findings and reflections. But the main component of the publishing strategy is a monthly e-book series that stresses the specificity of the born-digital material in the way it is created, disseminated and experienced. Each e-book is a focused monograph on one project, and consists of a conversation between Greg Lynn and the architects of the project as well as a selection of material that is entering the archive and is being published as digital files for the first time. The inclusion of videos, audio files, interactive 3D models and scalable vector graphics and other kinds of image files tests the limits of the epub platform. The digital format allows the reader to encounter material more directly, in a way that is closely connected to the original design process and that expands the vocabulary of documenting and disseminating contemporary architecture practice.

**Reasoning:** Archaeology of the Digital is a transformative internal force for the CCA to rethink the approach to the challenges posed by digitally produced and archived material. It is the first step in a new strategy of collecting and documenting digital material, and of facilitating access to and experience of archives through digital publications. These publications advance the boundaries of architectural publishing and have initiated new debates across broad audiences.



Laver Fick & Vance, Design for a Brick Residence for Peter Rodger Esq Williamstown, 1913  
 // Source: State Library of Victoria, WD/HOU/237/1 <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/335290>

**collection, outreach and research**

**Web-based projects**

Cataloguing and digitising two collections of architectural drawings since 2012

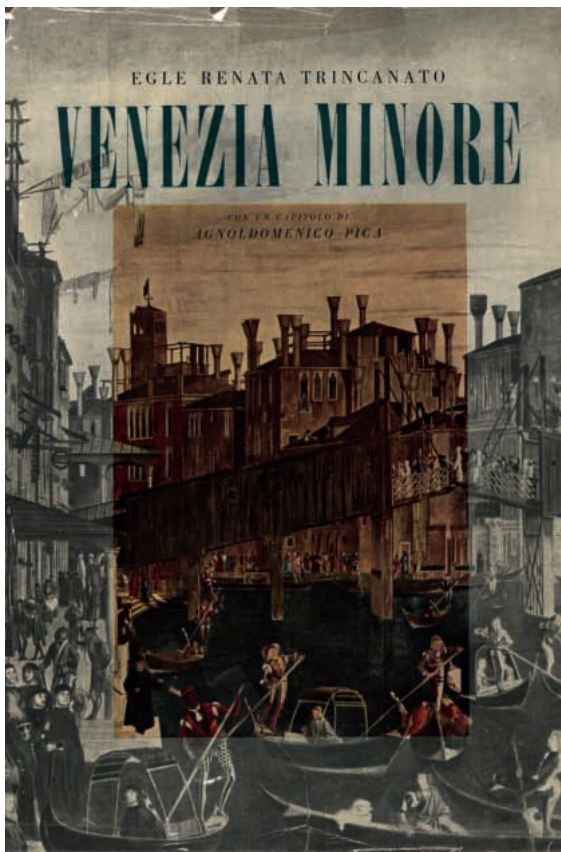
*Institution: Mary Lewis, Librarian, Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria, [www.slv.vic.gov.au](http://www.slv.vic.gov.au)*

**Description:** Collection of 19th and 20th century architectural drawings (A: LTAD 137): The collection contains over 2000 original drawings by Victorian architects from the 1850s until the mid 1960s. Over fifty prominent architects are represented, including 19th century theatre architect William Pitt and United States architect Walter Burley Griffin with his designs for the Capitol Theatre, Melbourne. To ensure that all Victorians have ready access to this unique resource, each project is being researched and catalogued online, starting with banks and houses.

Alistair Knox collection (B: YLTAD 28): The collection of 713 commissions, documents the use of vernacular building construction in the 20th century. After the Second World War, shortages of conventional building materials such as bricks and terracotta roofing tiles meant that some designers turned to alternative construction methods. In the hills of Eltham and Warrandyte, suburbs in the bushland east of Melbourne, mud costs nothing. Builder-designer Alistair Knox perfected mud-brick construction. Today the current environmental and sustainable architecture movement finds inspiration from Knox's work.

**Reasoning:** Access to original materials from the Heritage Collections is principally via our web based catalogue. Our policy is to attach tiff files or jpegs of original items from the Pictures Collection to the catalogue records free for download, when they are out of copyright or when the Library has assigned rights from creators. We are now able to attach images of architectural drawings using zoom software, Ex Libris' DigiTool online image viewer. This means that architectural detail and annotations on the drawings can easily be viewed online. Our copying service is now provided online. Not only is the reader provided with immediate access through digitizing but fragile drawings are protected from extensive handling.





// photo Archivio Progetti-SBD, Università Iuav di Venezia



// photo Archivio Progetti-SBD, Università Iuav di Venezia



// photo Archivio Progetti-SBD, Università Iuav di Venezia

## collection, outreach and research

### Web-based projects

Egle Renata Trincanato project  
15 February – 16 March 2008

*Institution: Teresita Scalco, Archivio Progetti-SBD, Università Iuav di Venezia, [www.iuav.it/archivio-p](http://www.iuav.it/archivio-p)*

**Description:** Egle Renata Trincanato was the first woman to have graduated from the Royal Institute of Architecture in Venice, in 1938; she was a leading figure in the Venetian cultural scene, and the author of important studies related to Venetian architecture and its significant architectural changes. The donation of Egle Renata Trincanato archive in 2004 to Archivio Progetti, Università Iuav in Venice, launched a fruitful project. In 2006 we started with the complex reorganization, conservation and research phase on the extraordinary documentation, which led to the establishment of a solid network among other Venetian institutions (such as Querini Stampalia Foundation and Venice Municipality Women's Cultural Center) with the aim of spreading, to a broader audience, Trincanato's achievements on the architectural and cultural context.

The outcome was a publication of a book, a solo exhibition and several initiatives presented in 2008, such as: seminars; collaboration with students of photography and video courses who re-read and reinterpreted her architecture and illustrations; educational activities for kids and adults; finally, a virtual tour through the online catalogue of her archive ([oberon.iuav.it/trincanato](http://oberon.iuav.it/trincanato)).

Website: [www.iuav.it/archivio-p/mostre/egle-renat](http://www.iuav.it/archivio-p/mostre/egle-renat)

**Reasoning:** All the outcomes of this joint inter-institutional and interdisciplinary project promoted the opening of the architectural and cultural heritage, as kept within her archives, both from an academic perspective and in the engagement of a variety of publics, while digitally based access enables it to be kept permanently as a life-long learning tool.



// photo Architecture Museum, University of South Australia

## collection, outreach and research

### Monograph Series

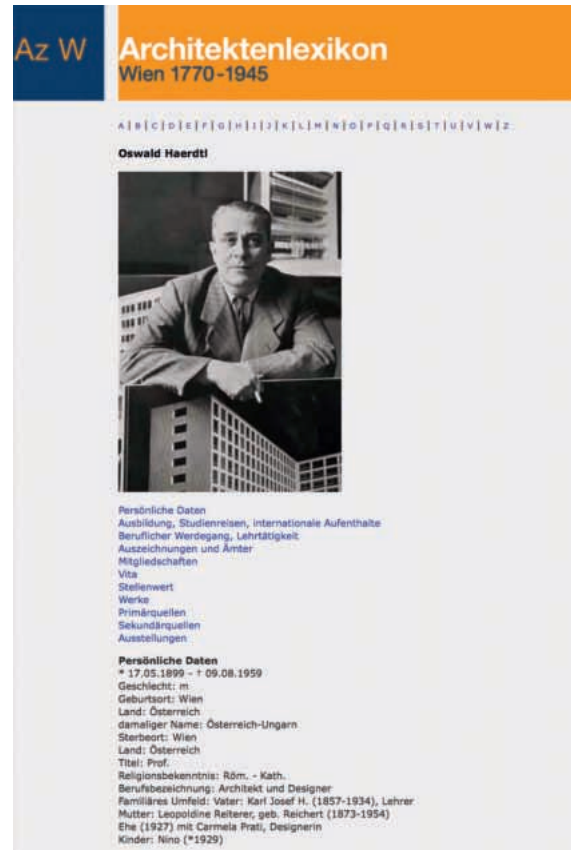
monographs series on South Australian architecture since 2007

*Institution: Julie Collins and Christine Garnaut, Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia, [www.unisa.edu.au/business-community/galleries-museums-and-centres/architecture-museum](http://www.unisa.edu.au/business-community/galleries-museums-and-centres/architecture-museum)*

**Description:** The Architecture Museum at the University of South Australia endeavours to generate research based on the records it holds. As part of a University, its mission is not only to produce research which is disseminated through the academic peer-reviewed journals and conferences, but also to engage with a range of communities.

Since 2006, one of the focuses of our public outreach program has been the development of a series of monographs of around 6,000 words aimed at a lay readership and amply illustrated with items from the collection. Several of these have been funded by the Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources Heritage Research Fellowship, and others with government grants or funding from private architectural practices.

**Reasoning:** All monographs have a focus on South Australian architecture. The monographs are a small, square, full colour format of approximately 60 pages. We have found that making connections with the state government through its heritage arm to be a fruitful way of bringing research out of the academic sphere, and one from which all partners as well as the wider public can benefit.



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www.architektenlexikon.at

www.architektenlexikon.at

## collection, outreach and research

### Research

Encyclopaedia of Architects, Vienna  
1770–1945  
supported by the Austrian Science  
Fund (FWF)  
2003–2013

*Institution: Monika Platzer,  
Architekturzentrum Wien, www.azw.at*

**Description:** With the 'Architektenlexikon Wien 1770–1945', for the first time there is a comprehensive online reference work available on the architects, master builders, town planners and theoreticians whose impact on the urban fabric of Vienna can still be seen today. The criteria taken into consideration relate to biographical details, architecture aesthetics, architecture history, urban development and style, providing a holistic insight into the material concerned that extends well beyond the scope of standard reference works in the field. The lexicon does not only pay tribute to 'great' personalities among the Vienna architects, such as Theophil Hansen, Heinrich Ferstel, Friedrich Schmidt, Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos, Camillo Sitte or Clemens Holzmeister, to name but a few, but also includes all those whose biographies and works have remained largely unknown or inaccessible. Included are those Austrian or international planners who were able to complete either several projects in Vienna, or at least one public monumental building, as well as those architects who were primarily involved in teaching or productive as theorists.

**Reasoning:** With the completion of this supplementary project in September 2013, the encyclopedia now contains entries for around 1050 architects. The numerous enquiries and responses from national and international researchers of different fields show that a serious gap in architectural research has been closed with the 'Wiener Architektenlexikon 1770–1945', and that a series of new research work has been inspired by the information published for the first time in the lexicon.



Content Line (Info-Raum), Haslbeck Schneider Designer, Munich // photo Wolfgang Thöner



Marianne Brandt room, Atelierhaus, Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau // photo Wolfgang Thöner

## collection, outreach and research

### Iconic sites

Bauhaus Dessau, site-specific interior multimedia information system including installations, shop, exhibitions and dormitory 2011–2015

*Institution: Wolfgang Thöner, Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, [www.bauhaus-dessau.de](http://www.bauhaus-dessau.de)*

**Description:** Dessau is the city of Bauhaus architecture. Nowhere else is there so much Bauhaus in such close proximity. The Bauhaus building (Walter Gropius and staff, 1925–'26) is a UNESCO World Heritage site. From 2011 to 2015 a new concept for mediating the special architectural qualities and the life in this most important design school of the 20th century was executed. In the former rooms of the furniture workshop and showroom, director's office, and sports we installed so-called content lines with small screens – beside spaces for exhibitions and a shop. Visitors can compare the images and other information directly with the current situation inside the building. In one room is a multimedia art installation in adaption of a 1930 idea by László Moholy-Nagy: *Dessau Reflected* was made with two mirrors mounted on an open truck, functioning as a projection surface for a film shooting in Dessau.

The 28 studio flats of the studio tract were let to junior masters and promising students in 1926 (e.g. Josef Albers, Herbert Bayer, Joost Schmidt, Marcel Breuer, Marianne Brandt, Gunta Stözl). Today, the studio flats are let to visitors. One room was accurately reconstructed with original objects and furniture. The rest of the rooms will be personalized to reflect a former inhabitant.

**Reasoning:** The visitors to the Bauhaus building want to see the architecture and want to have information about the institution from 1925 to '32 and its later life, including the current work. The new idea was to use different audio and visual media between information and contemporary interpretation to make the idea, the story, the breaks, and the heritage of the building a unique experience while impacting on the atmosphere of the interiors as little as possible.





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Montreal group photograph // photo CCA

## icam 17

Montreal – New York, September 2014

The conference was hosted by the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and the Avery Library of Columbia University in New York, and after a long gap I was pleased to attend icam 17 as it provided a good opportunity to catch up with recent practice in managing and developing architectural collections. The AA is a newish member of icam and I found it helpful to meet new people as well as catching up with long-standing colleagues. I found the conference stimulating and rewarding. There was a healthy mix of formats – lectures, discussions, behind the scenes visits to collections and buildings, a pecha kucha session and roundtable on architecture publications, a marketplace and an education workshop, plus plenty of opportunities to network.

The first session on Archiving Born-Digital materials was particularly topical as the AA Archives, which the Library runs alongside collecting student work,

is in digital format. The session gave me an overview of recent developments in managing born-digital material, and showed current best practice. The opening lecture, given by Greg Lynn, who had curated the CCA's current exhibition, *Archaeology of the Digital*, showed how Frank Gehry, Peter Eisenmann, Chuck Hoberman and Shoji Yoh began to use computers, all in totally different ways back in the 1980s. He stressed that in an exhibition on digital architecture it is almost impossible to avoid the 'Science Museum experience'; and also the difficulty that curators face trying to prevent architects who want to reconstruct projects for an exhibition from using more recent software. In the same session was Ann Whiteside's fascinating talk on the FACADE project at Harvard University on born-digital records. She defined the curatorial role as acquiring projects; applying metadata and cataloguing standards; creating derivative file





Habitat, Montreal 1967, Moshe Safdie with David Barott & Boulva  
// photo Eleanor Gawne



Phyllis Lampert, opening address, icam17  
// photo Monika Platzer

formats; and dealing with intellectual property rights. She also said that one of their findings was that curators must work closely with architects, system developers, legal counsel and CAD experts as no one individual has all the necessary expertise. At the end of the session several people called for a protocol to allow icam members to benefit from recent research done in this area.

In the session on New Lessons delegates learnt about emerging architecture institutions in Asia and the Far East, some of which are still at the planning stage. Several of the speakers highlighted the benefits of collaborating with nearby cultural organisations, as well as the need to carefully identify their audiences. Aric Chen of M+ Museum, Hong Kong, a museum planned to open in 2018, explained that their strategy was to make selected archive acquisitions, not take whole collections. The museum's remit is

to collect iconic design objects together with examples of local vernacular design, such as neon signs. Another speaker in this session, Hyungmin Pai, discussed the plans to build a contemporary architectural collection in the Asia Culture Complex, Gwangju, South Korea. He pointed out that as they can't compete with European collections of 19th and 20th century Asian material, they chose to concentrate on the postwar period instead.

The third day on The Pressure of the Contemporary addressed the question of how museums, who have traditionally collected the past, should respond to the cultural shift to presentism, one of the outcomes of our fast-paced information culture. Barry Bergdoll from MoMA gave a deliberately provocative talk, Thinking Historically in the Period of Presentism, in which he discussed the bias in curating contemporary material over historical topics; he questioned

how this might affect the exhibition strategies of icam members. By contrast, Guido Beltramini showed how the Palladio Museum, Vicenza, which opened in 2012, is not a mausoleum to a dead hero or a model for architects practising today, but uses technology and contemporary material to help interpret its historic collections.

On the last day of the conference, Case Studies on Collaboration, Carole Ann Fabian's talk on the MoMA-Avery Co-acquisition and Joint Stewardship of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives highlighted the sense of openness and shared goals that the project generated. She thought that managing stewardship across bodies was a positive thing as it encouraged institutions to do the same on other projects. Another type of collaboration, partnering with a city council and the tourist board, was discussed by Jordi Falgàs of Fundacio Rafael Masó, Girona, Spain. He explained how cultural institutions



Frank Lloyd Wright Collection, Avery Library Columbia University // photo Monika Platzer

like the Casa Masó had benefitted from the drive to reinvigorate the tourist industry in Catalonia. The house museum opened when Spain was in a severe financial crisis so funds were hard to secure. One of their strategies was to team up with the Google Cultural Institute, using this to finance other initiatives, including exhibition programmes. Jordi felt that the use of volunteers was a positive thing as it diversified the workforce and addressed the needs of the local community.

The visits to see behind the scenes of collections and buildings were fascinating. Highlights included visiting the Biosphere by Buckminster Fuller and Habitat housing by Moshe Safdie, Montreal, built for Expo'67, and the neo-Renaissance Library at the University Club, New York, by McKim, Mead and White. Besides the treasures at the CCA, I enjoyed visiting the MoMA Library where we saw colourful tie-designs by Picasso from the Archives.

There was also a VIP Visitors Book which included the signatures of Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Le Corbusier and Albert Einstein. At the Avery Library it was thrilling to see annotated manuscripts in Frank Lloyd Wright's hand for some of his books and drawings for the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo. The conference was well-organised, action-packed and inspiring: the organisers (CCA, MoMA and Avery Library) and speakers deserve our heartfelt thanks. It was good to meet new colleagues, catch up with old acquaintances and have the opportunity to exchange ideas and plans for future projects.

I would like to thank the AA, ARA, icam and ICOM UK Committee for their generous support that allowed me to attend the conference.

*Eleanor Gawne, Librarian, Architectural Association School of Architecture*





Glass House, 1949, Philip Johnson, New Canaan and the installation *Veil* by Fujiko Nakaya  
// photo Monika Platzer



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Board meeting, Copenhagen // photo Monika Platzer

## secretary general's report

Board meeting in Ljubljana,  
January 2015

Board meeting in Copenhagen,  
June 2015

In September 2014, we enjoyed the very successful conference *icam17*. In Montréal and New York, the CCA, MoMA and the Avery Library offered a program of visits that showed many faces of North American architecture. We were shown inspiring examples of how to deal with architectural archives, how to open them to the public, and how to make sure future generations will still be able to appreciate the richness of our collections. Indeed, *icam*'s mission is about sharing knowledge, good practice and the results of new research in our professional field. In this sense, *icam* seems to have entered a new episode. The born-digital occupied a central place in the program, and the huge response to this aspect of the conference is a sign that member institutions are preparing themselves for future challenges.

The digital seems to present an undeniable challenge that everybody is aware of. At the same time, other

challenges our institutions are confronted with differ according to the mission statement of each member institution, and according to the different political and geographical contexts we are all working in. This is what we learned from the very interesting session about the New Voices in the field of architecture institutions, which develop mostly outside the Western world. Exchange of expertise and practices gains a new dimension in this broadened geographical context. We are happy to welcome M+ in Hong Kong, The Mokchon Kimjungsik Foundation in Seoul, Pusat Dokumentasi Arsitektur in Jakarta, Indonesia, the Institute of Asian Cultural Development in Seoul and the Asia Culture Complex in Gwangju, who all became members of *icam* after their participation at *icam17*. As such, we can continue learning from each other. We are convinced that the dynamics in Asia will enrich discussions at *icam*.





BIG Architects, Mountain Dwellings, 2008, Copenhagen // photo Monika Platzer

icam17 was also an important conference for icam as an organization. In Montréal the General Assembly elected a new board. Rebecca Bailey was elected as President, Corinne Bélier as Treasurer, Barry Bergdoll stays as Vice-President, Sofie De Caigny as Secretary General, and Triin Ojari, Christine Garnaut and Kent Martinussen were voted in as board members. The icam community expressed its gratitude to Dietmar Steiner, Mariet Willinge, Anna Tonicello and Irena Murray, who have devoted so much time and energy to icam for many years, and who promoted the growth of membership and the new directions icam has explored over the past decade. After icam17, the new board met in January 2015 in Ljubljana, where the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) introduced us to the architecture of Jože Plečnik, but also to new architectural and urban developments in Slovenia, such as the redevelopment of

the riverbanks in the city center. It was very interesting to learn how politics, city development, the architectural museum and architectural education are to a certain extent interwoven in Ljubljana. It raised questions about the place of architectural culture in society and the role the architecture museums and institutes can play in this. The board decided to make this critical issue (presenting both opportunities for and threats to our institutions) a central theme in the next icam conference, to be hosted in Ljubljana by MAO from Sunday 29 May until Saturday 4 June 2016. The opening session, chaired by Kent Martinussen, deals with The History of the City versus The Architecture Institution of the Future, and addresses the general theme of the conference. The other sessions all touch upon aspects of this changing role of the architectural institution in society. One session is about rethinking collections and archives (chaired by

Aric Chen), the critical position of the architectural institution will be the subject of a session on the architecture museums and research (chaired by Andres Lepik), how to deal with events like biennales etc. as an architectural museum is the central question of a session led by Maja Vardjan. Of course, all these changes impact on the relationship with the audiences, which will be addressed in a session chaired by Pippo Ciorra. Another important topic on the agenda in Ljubljana was the membership analysis Mariet Willinge undertook as former Secretary General. From this analysis, the enormous diversity of membership emerged, in terms of size, legal form and level of autonomy of the institutions. A good mix of different types of institutions (museums, libraries, archives) exists. Most members have collections, only a small group (less than 10 members) have no collection. The analysis demonstrated that 25% of





Future Systems and Kasper Danielsen Arkitekter, 2008 // photo Monika Platzer

the member institutions form part of a university, especially in North America. The board was convinced that it would be desirable to expand on this membership analysis by questioning the members actively in order to have a clearer understanding of the composition of the membership, particularly in light of UNESCO's work looking at the changing role of the museum today. So the board met again in Copenhagen on 22 and 23 June 2015 to develop a strategic approach to **icam**'s future development and priorities.

The need for a new strategy for **icam** was the central point of discussion at the Copenhagen board meeting. When **icam** was founded, useful documents and recommendations were produced by **icam** or by similar organizations (such as ICA-SAR...). The main focus was on cataloguing and archives. In a second phase, **icam** saw an increase in the number of members and the geographical broadening of its membership.

Today, **icam** members face new challenges, such as the digital, the emergence of new players in the field, such as festivals and biennials etc. As in the first phase of **icam**'s existence, it would be useful to put together a new consistent body of texts and recommendations, to help the members respond to these new challenges.

Issues that need to be addressed are:

- . What are the organizational models of today and how can they contribute to future developments?

- . What is our position towards the growing impact of the creative industries?

- . Are we less related to history and conservation than in the early years?

Why, or why not?

- . What are the challenges and consequences?

It is clear that these changes and new challenges have a global impact. **icam**, therefore, needs a worldwide strategy, in which the regional organization of



Henning Larsen, Opera, 2005 // photo Monika Platzer

members plays a crucial role. Examples of successful regional clusters are the *icam* Australasia network with their own annual meetings (this year in Melbourne, Australia) or the German, Swiss and Austrian *icam* members, who met in Innsbruck (Austria) this year. In November 2015, the Educational Group and the *icamUKI* met in London, and a meeting of *icamNord* was held in Stockholm. As stated, at *icam17* there was a strong focus on Asian members, and Barry Bergdoll and Mirko Zardini made useful proposals towards a possible grouping of South-American partners.

Besides these regional and thematic groups of *icam*, we also need to find different ways to collect information, knowledge, experiences or papers in-between the two-yearly conferences that can be circulated among the members. This poses new questions about the business model of *icam*, about the geographical composition of

the board, and about the instruments needed. A central aspect of this is the legal organization of *icam*, and the need for a fiscal number. The board is happy to say that the Cité de l'Architecture in Paris is willing to take on the responsibility for this, and will host *icam* as a legal organization. The Treasurer will work this out soon, in collaboration with the President and myself. To prepare all these issues in order to discuss them with all members at *icam18* in Ljubljana, the board met in Antwerp from 13 to 15 December. *icam18* will provide important momentum for all of us, to think about this together.

*Sofie De Caigny, secretary general*



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Museum of Architecture and Design in Fužine Castle, Ljubljana // photo Tilen Sepič, MAO

# icam18

Ljubljana 2016

The 2016 icam conference will be organized in Ljubljana, Slovenia, hosted by Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). When the Architecture Museum of Ljubljana, established in 1972 by the Ljubljana city government, became a national institution in 2010 and started to operate under the name Museum of Architecture and Design, it started to increase its collaborations and presence in the international architecture and design field. One of the major international events in MAO is to be the icam18 conference. It kicks off on 29 May in Ljubljana with an opening reception on Sunday evening. After two days in Ljubljana the conference, imbued with sessions and guided tours, will travel daily to different parts of Slovenia and return to the capital in the evening. The post-conference guided tours start on Friday 3 June and end on Saturday 4 June.

## Museum of Architecture and Design

Museum of Architecture and Design is the leading museum dedicated to architecture and design in Central and South East Europe. Matevž Čelik, the museum's director since 2010, has been responsible for transforming the museum into an open space. MAO has become a meeting point, but also a platform for confrontation and democratic dialogue on artistic, ecological, social, economic, political, and other issues relevant to architecture and design. MAO aims to strengthen its position by creating quality programmes, continuously developing and adding to museum's collections, making its contents fully accessible to the diverse public, and opening the museum to different forms of cooperation. The museum is the venue for a broad range of exhibitions and events with a focus on the heritage that MAO keeps in its architectural and design collection.





Exhibition view, *Open Depot*, MAO // photo Domen Pal, MAO

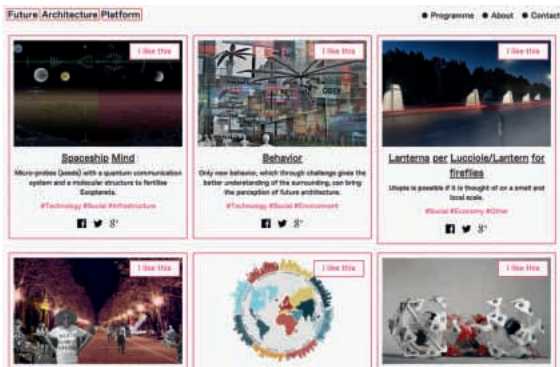
As the only Slovenian public cultural institution dedicated to architecture and design, MAO has a national mandate in the field of architecture and design and is one of the national hubs for the creative sector. MAO is the organizer of world's oldest design biennial, The Biennial of Design (BIO). Over the last few years MAO has been transforming BIO into something more than just a mere exhibition, and aims to establish it as an international platform for the exchange of ideas, research and experimentation in the field of architecture and design.

In the same manner, MAO aims to be active across borders. In 2015 Matevž Čelik set up the Future Architecture Platform, a pan-European platform for architecture museums, festivals and producers establishing a new form of critical dialogue on the future of cities and architecture. In autumn 2015 the platform announced an open call for young creatives. 291 ideas were

submitted, by 542 authors from 39 countries. The emerging generation of talents from various disciplines will explore their ideas and share their critical thoughts on the future of architecture. They will be a part of the pan-European programme that MAO has designed together with 14 organizers from 13 countries. Their ideas will be presented in exhibitions, conferences and workshops. from Lisbon to Kiev and from Tirana to Copenhagen. MAO's main priority for the near future is to complete the renovation of Fužine Castle, the museum's domicile since 1992. When the renovation is finished the museum will have the much needed additional exhibition spaces, adequate storage and other facilities necessary to carry out its programme. From the museological point of view, the castle's historical layout demands more effort in designing exhibitions, however it can also present a unique advantage because, according to contemporary

museological practice, the neutrality of space in exhibition design is no longer a necessity, or is even unwanted. The historical context of the MAO building therefore presents a unique challenge for exhibition curators.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, the museum is coordinating the project for the inclusion of architect Jože Plečnik's oeuvre in the UNESCO World Heritage list. Early in 2015 the working group coordinated by MAO successfully concluded inscription in the World Heritage Tentative List, and over the next years MAO will co-ordinate preparations for the final application and undertake different activities to promote the nomination until its successful conclusion.



Call for Ideas, Future Architecture Platform  
 // [futurearchitectureplatform.org](http://futurearchitectureplatform.org), MAO



Jože Plečnik, National and University Library, Ljubljana  
 // photo Damjan Prelovšek, MGML

### The Sessions

The topics of the sessions envisaged for the conference agenda correspond to the overall theme of the conference: Architectural Institutions at the Crossroads. They address the critical issues that architecture museums and archives face today ensuing from changing relationships and approaches in the fields of collecting, research, events, audiences, and attitudes towards the city.

Out of a total of five sessions, three will be held in Ljubljana and two in Maribor. The first session, chaired by Kent Martinussen, will take place at MAO and is to address the discrepancy between the re-representation of architecture inside the institution and the built reality outside. How can architecture institutions offer a deeper understanding of the relationship between representation and lived reality? How can they interrelate with the city, its political leadership and management,

its inhabitants and visitors, thereby staging and orchestrating the co-creation and development of the city? The second session, chaired by Aric Chen, will rethink the collections and archives. At a time when architectural practices and exhibition making are increasingly focused on mediation, research, systems of production, and modes of social engagement, classical approaches to collecting seem to be less stable. The crucial question is how might museums adjust their strategies for collecting architecture – or do they need to adjust them at all? Collections and archives as the original *raison d'être* for the majority of architecture museums will also be examined in the fourth session, on research and chaired by Andres Lepik. In times of an overall reduction of resources, both in terms of personnel and finances, how can the museums of today stimulate research? The session will address the lack of research in many





Edvard Ravnikar, Republic Square, Ljubljana // photo Janez Kališnik, MAO

local collections, the current interest in research and historical exhibitions, the relationship between research and exhibition activities as well as between universities and architecture museums. The third session, chaired by Pippo Chiora, will open discussion on the crisis of the model of the institution as it emerged in the 1980s. The theme will be addressed in the format of short presentations by icam members. The sessions on Events will be chaired by Maja Vardjan, and is based on the fact that MAO organizes the oldest Biennial of design (BIO) in the world. In recent years we have witnessed an increasing number of architecture events throughout the world. Biennials, festivals and other manifestations of spectacular event culture have become significant players in the field of architectural discourse. What is the relevance and impact of such events in comparison to museum programmes and exhibitions? Can they collaborate with each other?

The general assembly will be held on 2 June at the Congress Centre Brdo.

#### **icam18 Guided Tours**

The icam18 programme of guided tours is set in Ljubljana and its environs in the regions of Styria and Carniola, as well as on the coast. Many exceptional buildings and some protected national heritage sites are being opened to icam members.

The first day of the guided tours accompanying the conference starts in Ljubljana city centre, known for its Roman remains, baroque architecture and many buildings and public spaces from the 20th century. After the earthquake (1895), the first modern urban plan was completed for Ljubljana (Plan of the Common Regulation of the Provincial Capital City of Ljubljana, by Max Fabiani), and the city became a modern capital in the new Art Nouveau style. The walking tour focuses on works by Jože Plečnik and Edvard

Ravnikar, two architects who left their indelible marks on the city and at the Ljubljana School of Architecture (founded in 1920). Plečnik's Ljubljana is one of the most important complete works of art in the 20th century, almost a global urban phenomenon. The National and University Library (1936–1941), the most significant work by Plečnik in his homeland, stands on the site of the Ducal Court, an early baroque palace demolished after the 1895 earthquake. From the outside the building looks like a huge block. Modelled in the manner of an Italian palazzo, it features a playful façade with rusticated lower levels and mixed rough Karst stones and red bricks. The guided tour also runs through new urban interventions (2015) along the Slovenska cesta Road (Dekleva Gregorič Arhitekti, 2K Arhitektonski ured, Sadar+Vuga, Scapelab). From the 1930s onwards its appearance was defined by the works of key Slovene



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Jože Plečnik, Plečnik House, Ljubljana // photo Damjan Prelovšek, MGML

architects Vladimir Šubic, Vinko Glanz, Edvard Ravnikar, Edo Mihevc and Milan Mihelič. We explore the variety of this period's architecture in terms of appearance and programme. At that time residential and office complexes (Nebotičnik, the Ferant blocks, the Kozolec building), business premises (Metalka) and public buildings (the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, the Cankar culture centre, Maximarket) were built, and complex urban-planning projects (Republic Square) were realized. Republic Square (Edvard Ravnikar, 1960–1983), with its complex of new public buildings, was a new centre for the political, cultural and economic life of Slovenes, a kind of Modern Agora.

We take a trip on a wooden boat to see not only Plečnik's monumentalization of the river bank with its bridges, terraced embankments, staircases and parks (in the 1930s), but also major renovations and new interventions along the river

from the 21st century (DANS arhitekti, Atelier arhitekti, Vesna and Matej Vozlič, Boris Podrecca, Trije arhitekti).

### **Present and Past: Social Housing and Cultural Heritage Buildings**

The guided tour on the second day of the conference takes us to Polje, a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Ljubljana where the complex of non-profit housing units built by the Ljubljana Housing Fund shows the effort put into the development of three different typologies for social housing. Designed by architects Bevk Perović Arhitekti (2002–2005; 2006–2011; 2012–), these non-profit housing units are the result of stringent urban planning along the railway line. Using the right architecture and with a thoughtful arrangement of public space, the architects succeeded in creating a quality living environment. The guided tour then returns to the city centre, where we take a look at the



Jože Plečnik, Church of St. Michael, Črna vas // photo Damjan Prelovšek, MGML

renovation of three historical cultural buildings. The overall renovation of the opera house building was designed by architects Jurij Kobe and Marjan Zupan, who were awarded the contract following a public tender announcement. This Neo-Renaissance palace was designed between 1890 and 1892 by Czech architects J. V. Hráský and A. J. Hrubý, who took their inspiration from Semper's opera house in Dresden. The opera house renovation project was launched primarily to resolve acoustic and spatial challenges presented by the old building. The building was given a new modern extension on the west side to house the backstage, access ramps, rehearsal rooms etc. A new foyer was dug under the old opera hall, and is now accessible by two side atriums, giving the building a new transverse axis. The Museum of Modern Art building is in the immediate vicinity of the opera house. Its construction started before

WWII and ended in 1948. It is the key early work by Edvard Ravnikar, and reflects influences by Plečnik as well as by Le Corbusier. While the renovation, conducted under the supervision of architects Bevk Perović Arhitekti (2008–2009), preserved all the elements of Ravnikar's building, the minimum of changes to the original floor plan helped redefine the exhibition space, which now functions as a uniform whole for the first time. Next, we take a look at the National Gallery. Until recently, the Narodni dom (National Home), as was the original name of this Neo-Classical palace designed by František Škabrouč between 1894 and 1896, was home to sports and to culture alike. With the gallery's need for more space growing, the "new wing" was constructed in 1993 (Ravnikar's last work) but was not completed in full. Ravnikar's project for a central domed hall was abandoned. Today the once empty platform between

the two wings is filled with a glass gallery designed by architects Sadar+Vuga (2011). The gallery is dominated by a visible steel construction while the whole façade is made of glass and enables glimpses into the bowels of this cultural shrine and into the nearby Tivoli park. The last extensive renovation of the old building in 2015 and 2016 will complete the overall overhaul of the complex.

### **Plečnik's House and Collection, and his Churches**

On the third day of the icam conference we visit Plečnik's House and Collection, a monument of national importance which includes authentic interiors and a garden with a lapidarium. The architect lived and worked here from 1921 until his death in 1957. The house also includes a small exhibition on Plečnik's key works. In 1972 the Museum of Architecture Ljubljana was founded in this house; since 2010 the house has





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Abiro and Studio AKKA, Nordic Centre Planica, Planica // photo Miran Kambič, Abiro

been under the management of Museums and Galleries of Ljubljana. We also visit two important churches designed by Plečnik. The Church of St. Michael (1937–1940) is constructed on marshland terrain in the Ljubljana Barje area. This presented a challenge to Plečnik, so he placed the body of the building on oak piles; he used a lightweight construction of wooden filling with windows, and placed a belfry with multiple openings next to it. The architectural layout of the church is a repetition of his central idea for the main staircase with the transversely placed hall of the National and University Library in Ljubljana.

Plečnik's design for the Church of St. Francis (1925–1927) is derived from his plans for the Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord (1921–1932) in Prague's Vinohrady district. The design resembles a classical temple; the extensive central part of the church is covered with a saddle roof and

continues on one side with a belfry ending in a cylinder with a renaissance tempietto. The façade is characterized by a monumental entry portico.

### **Day Trip to Styria**

On the fourth day we head to Maribor, the second largest Slovenian city and the centre of Slovenia's north-eastern region Styria. We take a look at the old city centre along the Drava river and at some of the city's new architectural achievements. In the late 19th century Maribor was considered a city with a lively economic and cultural scene close to Graz. During WWII it was largely destroyed. The post-war renovation period was also a period of flourishing industry, however the city itself lost its identity. After a prolonged lull during Slovenia's post-emancipation years, architecture has once again come to the forefront of Maribor's plans.

The last *icam* session is being held in the renovated Minorite Church and





Bevk Perovič arhitekti, Congress Centre Brdo, Brdo pri Kranju  
 // photo Miran Kambiž, Bevk Perovič arhitekti

Monastery (2010), which is now home to a puppet theatre. The architectural design for the renovation is the work of studio Atelier arhitekti (Jurij Kobe, Rok Žnidaršič and associates), and displays a carefully measured dialogue between the new and the old.

The Ljudski vrt soccer stadium (2007), which we visit next, is an example of the integration of tradition and innovation and of the revitalization of the modernist cultural heritage with new architectural elements. The structure is designed as a low base superimposed by an undulating ring covering the stands. The central part of the curved roof is an upgraded version of the concrete arch over old stands which were designed in the 1960s by architect Boris Pipan. The renovation project is the work of two Ljubljana architecture studios, Ofis Architects and Multiplan Architects.

### Day Trip to Carniola

We spend our fifth day in Planica, an alpine valley known mostly for ski jumping slopes. The giant jumping slope, the Velikanka, with its important arch bridge construction for the landing slope, was designed in 1934 by Slovenian engineer and athlete Stanko Bloudek. The new Nordic Center Planica was finished in 2015 according to plans designed by Abiro (Matej Blenkuš and Miloš Florijančič) in collaboration with landscape architects of studio AKKA (Ana Kučan and Luka Javornik). The basic layout of the centre is based on a fan-shaped placement of six ski jumping hills and one sky flying hill into the terrain, which has been modified as naturally as possible. The centre's unique feature is its landscaping, with the use of stone and wood as building materials.

From Planica we proceed towards picturesque Bled and its lake, one of the oldest and most prestigious tourist

destinations. It was there that in the late 19th century, in the era of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the new class of wealthy citizens wished to have more comfortable dwellings in the form of luxurious villas. Between the two wars Bled's villas were designed by many key Slovenian architects (Josip Costaperaria, Danilo Fürst, Jože Plečnik, Stanko Rohrman, Ivan Vurnik). Jože Plečnik designed the plans for the new royal residence of the Karađorđević family, however construction never began due to the assassination of King Alexander I and the outbreak of WWII. After the war the location previously chosen for the royal residence became the location of Vila Bled, a residence of Yugoslavia's president Josip Broz Tito designed by Vinko Glanz (1946–1950). After Tito's death the villa was converted into a hotel, and serves today as one of the State Protocol facilities of the Republic of Slovenia.

Vinko Glanz was also responsible for the



Sadar+Vuga, Sports Park Stožice, Ljubljana // photo Hisao Suzuki, Sadar+Vuga

renovation of the Brdo estate for use as a residence for President Tito. Today the estate is also a State Protocol facility. This renaissance castle features classical furniture, carpets, books and major works by Slovenian painters. On the occasion of the Slovenian EU Presidency in 2007 a new congress centre was built there (Bevk Perović Arhitekti). It has three floors designed as an open communication space. Its glass layout opens up the interior towards the exterior and makes the building a part of the surrounding park.

#### **Post-Conference Excursion: A Day Trip to the Karst Region and the Coast**

Our first post-conference guided tour takes us to the Karst region and the Slovenian coast. Our first stop on this excursion will be Kobdilj, the birthplace of Max Fabiani. He returned to Kobdilj in 1917 and dedicated his time to the post-war renovation of the area by

designing urban plans for numerous surrounding villages and locations. Between 1935 and 1946 he was the mayor of Štanjel, and the village once again became a place of cohabitation between different nationalities. During this period he completed Štanjel castle, the seat of local municipal government, it housed a school, a preschool day care center, a cinema theatre and a day clinic. In short, it was given a new public function, which was a unique occurrence in Europe at the time.

Our next stop is the coastal town Izola, where we have a look at the development of the University Campus Livada (Dekleva Gregorič Architects). The concept for the campus is tailored to meet the university's different needs. Special attention has been paid to landscaping in order to provide harmony with Mediterranean flora. Designing social housing can also pose a creative challenge, as we will see in one of the first significant projects by Ofis Architects



Štanjel, with Ferarri garden by Maks Fabiani // TIC Štanjel

in Izola (2005). Their housing blocks are composed of a rational, economically basic form of plaster and balconies with shades in different colours, resembling theatre boxes glued onto the plaster and reminiscent of multi-coloured beehive fronts.

The day concludes with a visit to Piran, a town whose development was marked primarily by the Venetian Republic (1283–1793). During the reign of the Habsburg dynasty and the Land of Istria (1813–1918), the medieval urban layout of the town was subject to major reconstruction, however its basic layout has remained intact until today. The ancient inner dock (Slovene: *mandrač*) was buried, and the external dock was reconstructed. A new central square was created, while the area along the waterside was filled-in with representative buildings. Between 1909 and 1953 a tram operated in the area, with tram tracks placed on the square in the form of an ellipse. The appearance

of the square today, with its elliptical platform of white stone designed by Boris Podrecca between 1987 and 1989, is reminiscent of that era.

#### **Post-Conference Excursion: Day Trip to Ljubljana – Sports Park Stožice and Plečnik’s Post-War Works**

The last day focuses on Jože Plečnik’s post-WWII architecture outside Ljubljana. But first we have a look at another design highlight by Sadar+Vuga Architects. Stožice Sports Park, incorporating a multipurpose sports hall covered by a wavy shell-shaped dome, and a football stadium, brings a new understanding and use of space to the capital, and a new experience both for the population of Ljubljana and for visitors alike.

In Kamnik and its surroundings we visit Plečnik’s late religious works, with an emphasis on his use of ornamental elements and his return to the themes

of his youth. From the baptistry of the parish church of St. Michael in Mengeš (1953–1955) we proceed to the chapel of the Franciscan Monastery in Kamnik (1952–1956), and finally to the Church of St. Benedict in Stranje (1946–1957). Our guided tour concludes in Ljubljana, where we take a look at the late-historicist villa of Matko Prelovšek, a prominent and influential citizen of Ljubljana, which was renovated by Jože Plečnik in the early 1930s. Plečnik designed its extensive gardens, front staircase and lobby paying special attention to the interior of the grand salon and the library.

*Matevž Čelik, Maja Vardjan, Natalija Lapajne, Cvetka Požar / Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana*



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because we  
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organisation,  
[but] order in  
spirit.” *Sigfried Giedion*