The Power of the Plan: conflicts in Renaissance Architecture

Washington D. C. (RSA, 58th Annual Meeting), Mar 22–24, 2012
Deadline: Jun 12, 2011

Niebaum, Jens, Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Münster

The Power of the Plan: conflicts between project and reality in Renaissance Architecture

The session focuses on the relationship between a building and its urban or landscape environment. The relationship could be one of conflict when a single monumental building or a complex of buildings was planned as an entity on its own and according to its own rules. Although this kind of conflict existed since the beginning of urbanism, it became increasingly important at a time when architectural coherence and conformity (expressed by the symmetry, orthogonality or proportionality of a building) became a principle and prerequisite of good architecture not least on the basis of theoretical reflection. Therefore the plan tended to assume a reality of its own, potentially leading to conflict in other areas of the project. The possible reactions, ranging from major interventions into the environment by way of changes in the plan to the temporary or definitive interruption of a building campaign, offer numerous points of departure for research in many fields and disciplines.

We encourage the proposal of contributions, more general ones as well as case studies, focusing on all problems related to the subject outlined above. Various questions could be asked, such as: How did patrons or architects deal with the uncertainty of whether or not a building could be completed within a reasonable span of time (e.g., modular planning, defining the plan as obligatory for followers)? Which strategies were used to reconcile the irregular environment with the regularity of the plan (e.g., false facades or openings)? How frequent are architectural projects executed according to plan, how frequent are striking examples of failure? Since every project has an ideal aspect, is it possible to define a border between real and utopian projects in architectural history?

Please submit an abstract of no more than 150 words and a short CV to Jens Niebaum (niebaumj@uni-muenster.de) or Georg Schelbert (schelbert@biblhertz.it); the deadline is June 12th, 2011.

Reference:
CFP: The Power of the Plan: conflicts in Renaissance Architecture. In: ArtHist.net, Jun 1, 2011 (accessed Nov 2, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/1473>.