Drawing Millions of Plans (Copenhagen, 1–3 Nov 17)

Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (KADK), Copenhagen, Nov 1–03, 2017
Deadline: May 15, 2017

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This conference invites scholars and practitioners to investigate and discuss contemporary architectural drawing and, in particular, the drawn plan. We will consider various types of drawing ranging from the sketch to the working drawing as an epistemic and/or generative device, and look at the role of drawing in relation to 3D techniques and drawing in the spectrum between representation and simulation. What types of contemporary plan drawing practices do we know exist today – or should be developed – in relation to architectural education, as well as to design work and actual building practices situated in professional offices?

“A plan calls for the most active imagination,” wrote Le Corbusier in "Towards A New Architecture". To Le Corbusier, the plan was essential to any architectural project and its agency comparable to that of a generator. Indeed, historically speaking, plans, whether they are floor plans, site plans or others, have been of unquestionable importance to the discipline of architecture. Yet, what is the agency of the plan today? May we still consider it a generator, a promotor of our imagination, or with the advent of digital design possibilities, has it merely lost its previous status as a privileged tool for developing and communicating about architecture?

Traditionally, the architectural plan was executed through the process of analogue hand drawing supported by geometrical tools. What are the implications for drawn plans and the processes of design and conceptualisation connected to plan drawing given that many professional architects today consider computers their privileged (drawing) tools? Do architects still use tracing paper (or napkins!) for sketching, and has the role of the sketched plan become purely diagrammatic, or turned into prototyping?

In a digital context, how have architectural offices changed their practice of drawing plans? What new kinds of drawing have been developed, and do they still possess the same aspects of ambiguity often associated with the hand-drawn sketch? Moreover, architects look at buildings orthogonally through plans. This projective way of looking is closely linked to traditional geometrical drawing tools. Yet, when tools change and projections persist, as with a lot of design software today, what are the consequences?

Drawn architectural plans may be considered as aesthetic objects worth contemplating and even exhibiting. They may be described as beautiful, which would imply that the plan possesses certain graphic and/or organisational qualities. This points to the plan as an object of meaning and imagination, and apt for interpretation, as stated by Le Corbusier. Such immaterial, almost existential aspects of the plan were emphasised by John Hejduk, who argued, “the plan shows the death of

the soul of architecture. It is an X-ray of the soul." Just as actual X-rays require skilled interpretation, what sort of hermeneutic measures does the drawn plan call for?

We invite scholars and practitioners to submit proposals for papers and/or to submit actual drawings. The conference will consist of academic and work-based sessions, with the latter including presentations of submitted drawings. The drawings will be installed in a pop-up exhibition at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture (KADK). Selected papers and drawings will be published in a peer-reviewed catalogue after the conference.

The conference will be hosted by the School of Architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (KADK) in Copenhagen, Denmark. Organising committee: Jacob S. Bang, Associate Professor, Anna Katrine Hougaard, PhD and Martin Søberg, PhD, Assistant Professor (martin.soberg@kadk.dk)

Reference:

CFP: Drawing Millions of Plans (Copenhagen, 1-3 Nov 17). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 8, 2017 (accessed Nov 8, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/14914>.