

Explorations in Architecture: Methodology (Zurich, 13 Nov 08)

O.

Symposium

EXPLORATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE: METHODOLOGY

Date: Thursday, November 13th 2008

Time: 18:00 - 20:30 CET

Place: ETH Zurich, Campus Hoenggerberg, HIL Foyer in front of E3

With:

Preston Scott Cohen (GSD Harvard / Preston Scott Cohen Inc)

Harry Guggler (EPF Lausanne / Herzog & de Meuron)

Ursula Pia Jauch (University of Zurich)

Werner Oechslin (Institute gta, ETH Zurich)

Organized and moderated by Ole W. Fischer (Institute gta, ETH Zurich)

With an introduction by Reto Geiser (curator of the Swiss Pavilion at the Biennale di Venezia 2008)

An event featured by the Swiss Pavilion of the 11th international Biennale di Venezia "Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Research, Design" curated by Reto Geiser in cooperation with the Department of Architecture DARCH, ETH Zurich.

http://www.gta.arch.ethz.ch/d/moravanszky/veranstaltungen.php?id_veranstaltung=411

<http://www.explorationsinarchitecture.ch>

Problem Statement:

"Research" and "innovation" have become keywords in the contemporary discourse on architecture and architectural education. This results from a series of reasons, to name but a few: first "research" is nowadays a political necessity in schools of art and architecture to maintain their status as universities and academies. Second, there is an increased emphasis on third party funding within academic environments that foster new fields of "research". This challenged the traditional division between the studio system and master classes on one side and the adjunct institutes of sciences, technology, and

humanities on the other. In the past, "research" was delegated to those institutes and followed the rules of conduct of the minor subject ? historiography, sociologic field studies, material science, etc. In the past decade, there have been several attempts out of the growing interest in "research" to enlarge the scope to architectural design itself. Yet even outside academia, in architectural practice, "research" and "innovation" have become indispensable parts of the rhetoric of the discipline, claiming validity or intellectual surplus value for the client, user and society at large - maybe, because science, or better "scientificity", could be read as the last great narration of contemporary culture.

But as soon as we talk about research in design and research on design, the question arises, how can "research" be understood in respect to a creative as well as technical and yet applied activity such as architecture? The established definitions of "research" in natural sciences as well as humanities hardly seems applicable for the practice of design, but we might ask, if a transfer or translation into architecture - or a modeling of "architectural research" following these examples - would be possible and fruitful. So what about the other way around, if we think architecture as science, as a specific form of knowledge? Does architecture contribute to knowledge production (Erkenntnis) and in what respect? If so, how is knowledge generated in architecture and in architectural design? What would you regard as subject of a specific architectural form of knowledge and knowledge production, what as architecture's methods and its field of inquiry?

Reference:

CONF: Explorations in Architecture: Methodology (Zurich, 13 Nov 08). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 4, 2008 (accessed May 14, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/30996>>.