LOCAL VALUES
in a
NETWORKED
DESIGN WORLD

ADDED VALUE OF COMPUTER AIDED
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

DUP Science

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An inclusive 'work-method' and a specific search for fully supported solutions through subject-oriented design (instead of object-oriented)!

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KEYNOTE PAPER

Abstract

This paper talks about the hardness of CAAD.
And it talks about the necessity to develop 'soft' CAAD.

A lot of architectural adventures are stopped in the beginning or the middle of the road. Because of decisions far away from the designers or the clients. These decisions break in against some aspects of the design. Small details often kill a whole design-process.

Does architectural design only belong to architects and planners ?
To a "Me, myself and I"-world ?

For the last 10 years, we have gained a lot of experience of designing architectural landscapes in a specific way. We design in such a way that developing projects can change or evolve strongly within themselves without losing their typical spirit. Change because of external and non-predictable events, change because of unexpected or changing circumstances, change because of the participation of new intervening people….

New housing projects in Apeldoorn and Dordrecht,
Rehabilitation projects in Gennevilliers (Paris) and Hellersdorf (Berlin), …
Schools and hospitals in Amsterdam, …

Each time very local aspects are incorporated in the different design-spirits.
The networks are similar because of specific design-methods.

This paper wants to explain something about this process-spirit.

Friendliness

"Local" and "networks" are concepts or notions that always should lead to **friendliness**.
To some kind of straightforward design, to some kind of honest integrity in architecture or urbanism.
Friendliness as the only way to get the most large and powerful public support for decisions and formal results.
In today's mostly complex environments and unclear conditions, planning-methods and spatial contexts should be designed in the most carefully way.
Decision-makers are not clear in their desires. Users can not be defined. Clear future visions on most urban areas are missing.
Because our society is based upon division of labour and is thus fragmentary, agreement on what is intended, and necessary, has to be reached beforehand, and must complement the process of design.
These processes should thus be thoughtfully, gracefully.
To end up in friendly architecture, a style which can not be called with another name.
Friendly, not in the way of for instance earth-friendliness, not just Eco-friendly or Forest-friendly. Nor can it only be linked with friendly building products. Associations with vernacular architecture can only work in some precise and specific areas or regions.

Straightforward design

The image below is what you will find when you "google" to 'straightforward design'

This is a view of "A Mansion":
From the sturdy cedar craftsmanship to the stylish touch of a chimney, this model is perfect for medium to large sized dogs. The amply sized house comes complete with a spacious front porch surrounded by beautiful lattice work, to allow your dog both warmth and comfort. It also offers a window covered by downward sloping horizontal shades to allow for ventilation, while keeping out the sun and rain.

This example clearly shows how irrational straightforwardness can be. It shows the super-importance of design-tradition. And the non-avoidable presence of sentimental aspects.

Connectivity

This is how for instance Jon Jerde (Jerde Partnership, Los Angeles) puts it:
"Much work needs to be done to repair the damage wreaked by the cultural and physical disconnections of the last decades.
Humankind has been disengaged from the whole by the effects of modern urban planning and design. Cities were ruptured. Urban infrastructure imposed exclusive rather than inclusive systems. Cities slowly became formulas.
Separate entities for housing, office, retail and institutional space were designed and built on sites that urban renewal policies had reduced to blankness. Sophisticated market analysis and development pro-formas made solutions generic. Singular structures unrelated to one another and to their context were built, changing the urban experience. The cohesive, experiential fabric of the older order had been destroyed.
A competitive attitude toward context, a resistance to integration, insured that building design reinforced the very conditions that contributed to society's breakdown. They lacked an inclusive cultural measure. Architectural works that have in the past contributed to an isolated, combative world are now no longer viable.
Our new age requires inclusivity and connectivity as design premises. After many rupturous years, we are finally re-awakening to a return to the communal. There is no question but that the direction is toward unity. How to assist this "becoming" is the architect's challenge."

Community

The Jerde Partnership International is attempting to answer a desperate need. Their adventure has been to reinvent the authentic urban experience. They design the appropriate vessels for a renaissance of the human communal scene -- communal settings that renew a public life of richness and complexity.

"The communal experience is a designable event..."

The creation of authentic community is not an automatic result of this process. Instead, isolated conditions emerge that resist connectivity. Fortunately, communal experience is a designable event. The challenge is to inspire-to trigger-unity out of the dismembered, disassembled parts of the once-cohesive city, within the abbreviated time frames of our fast-paced world.

*Jerde Partnership
(Japan & LA)*

Co-Creativity

The work has to be process-oriented. This working method could be called "co-creativity".
In the design of large-scale, short time-frame places, sequential layering of individuals and institutions are guided. They inform the final collage. This method allows access to a collective voice and energy which accelerates the evolutionary process. The design process embodies the same pluralism that exists in cities, with accidents and surprises contributing to the complexity of the final work.

And what if nobody is there, such as in a district where future residents are not known, with whom one can discuss things before the furniture truck arrives at the door?

Someone is always there! One never begins at zero. There are people in the area.
One always hears something useful for the work in hand: how they live and would like to live, what their cultural options are, what customs are practiced in the place.
Workshops have to be organized to get this information. And to develop not-yet-existing information.
Even spontaneity has to be organised

Method ?

The problems which rise in calling the above a method are the following:

1) When one wishes to design for, and with, those who are to be affected, the gained knowledge is not a matter of course, and can't be gained once, for ever. In the pluralistic conditions of life in our age, it also cannot be carried over from one commission to another.
Participation methods can not easily be described in analytical briefs and blueprints.

2) Individual commitment is necessary here, this is also where the problem is situated. The interaction and influences between the local context and communities and the international forum is just a personal matter.

3) CAAD can be a dangerous tool within the described design-process. It tends to show "finalised" images. Flexibility can not explicitly and psychologically be proven. CAAD should therefore never be used alone. Combinations with texts, sketches, models will always be necessary.

The formal design: creating identity

The local context remains extremely important as it gives diversity. The emergence of global cohesion does not mean we must suffer the sterility of a global design style. The lessons of the International Style taught us that in fact reinforcing identity in a competitive global market will strengthen the interactions between empowered cultures.

Projects should speak in the language of the host place, the host culture, because they are organic representations of it-they have been 'grown' from it. Each host city or town has a unique signature psyche. Each inhabitant of a city or town has a negative and positive fantasy of that place which is either bigger or smaller than real life, a collective fantasy of place. Fantasy about place is a primary perceptual method by which people form a bond with their home. Successful urban concepts will deliver on the promise of a positive fantasy in a real way.

This goes beyond mere contextual fit. Places have their own personality or persona; Amsterdam-ness, Berlin-ness, etc. This is a discoverable (if elusive) combination of relatively simple things that produce images and sounds and smells--feelings. These combine together to give a sense of persona, of place, of purpose.

In order to key a delivery on **the memory** of a certain host site, project-compositions should be made out of fragments of buildings that are already there, or the language of the city that is pre-existent.

Memory

What keeps chaos at bay is memory; our connection to the cultural continuum. Memory uses the built world as its container, and architecture should be the thread that connects our past to the future. Modernism was an abstract and imposed ideology that severed that thread.

Caudry, France

Urban functionings

It is striking that all of the urban visions of the last hundred years were based on abstract intellectual theories about the functioning of the urban fabric. These diverse concepts of urban design share one thing in common in a negative sense: their intentional departure from the traditional European city - the kind of city increasingly seen as a very desirable place to live or work that attracts tourists like a magnet.

None of these familiar cities and towns originated in our century. They are not "brain-children" or the products of an abstract idea. Rather, they derive from a basic universal principle, namely perimeter block development (in its various forms: open, semi-detached, closed). This type of development results from the placement of like individual units in a row, on parcels of property.

European cities have demonstrated throughout the centuries their ability to be flexible and accommodating, attractive and valuable, by means of their pattern and layout as well as through their buildings.

Architecture's history offers viable models for a city in the form of the classic European city cited above. It is often argued that these cities, together with all of their acknowledged qualities, have "grown organically" and thus can no longer serve as a precedent for urban design today.

This is an odd statement, implying that the cities of our ancestors were products of chance and not the result of determined artistic and political activity. Today the two essential functions of urban design - city planning and architecture - must be quite determinedly fulfilled by all participants in the planning process, since the single private builder is hardly involved anymore.
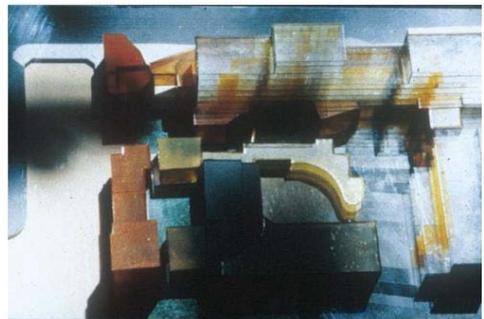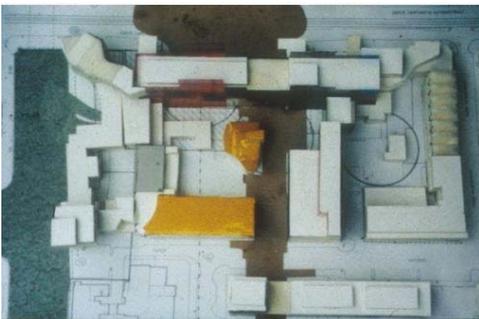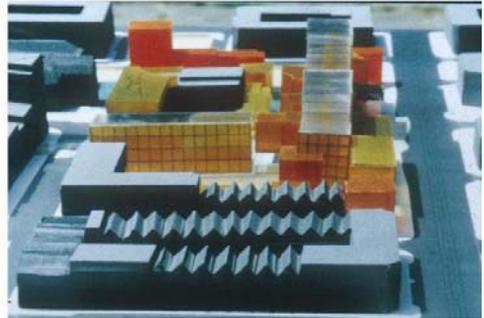
Instant history

Rob Krier and Christoph Kohl, the 'New Urbanism'-architects, the 'New Traditionalists' search for typological architectural design and neo-traditional urban design to implement some of the above statements.
Others look for academic aestheticisms, often very remote from the workaday world.

There are other ways:
- (Instant) History has to be simulated within design-workshops.
- Contradictions should never be recognized as 'unsolvable'.
- Decision-making procedures have to be re-invented.
- CAAD should be developed to gain better understanding of users.
- And finally one has to know the following: "Complexity is a virtue, simplicity not".

Workshops in Amsterdam

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