



la Biennale di Venezia

12. Mostra
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di Architettura

Partecipazioni nazionali

BEYOND COLOR

ALBANIAN PAVILION at the 12. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura
BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2010

Comissioner/Curator: Gjergj Bakallbashi, architect, Boston/Tirana

Deputy Curators:

Enida Mitro, architect, Vienna/Tirana

Egest Gjinali, architect, Geneva

BEYOND COLOR is the theme of the first albanian participation at the Venice Biennial of Architecture.

There was almost no color in Tirana before the project of painted facades, initiated and conceptualized by its mayor, Edi Rama. Now there is color almost everywhere in Tirana. We feel that the time is ripe to ask ourselves how we can move beyond color, while maintaining the tremendous momentum that the project of coloring the facades has created. Prompted both by the theme that Kazuyo Sejima has set for the biennale: PEOPLE MEET IN ARCHITECTURE and by our curiosity to speculate about Albania's most potent urban phenomenon: TIRANA, the team of curators decided to open up the pavilion to contributors from other countries and other fields.

Through site specific proposals, film, photography, interviews and discussions as well as student work we create a topography that can serve as future territory for collaborations on architecture and design for Tirana and, we hope, other contexts.

PROJECT CATEGORIES:

The projects shown here demonstrate that both physically and conceptually Beyond Color is a place and a conceptual possibility.

But why Beyond Color? Why not beyond walls, concrete, mass, density, beyond the boulevard, the streets full of cars, beyond now? Is there such a place? We chose to look at Tirana, Albania's capital and most potent urban phenomenon to begin to answer our curiosity and questions.

We wanted to be methodical in answering our questions and structured the pavilion into sections.

I. LOOKING AT COLORS

Through the colors project, Tirana has placed itself in the network of those young cities in Europe and elsewhere that want to reinvent themselves. As the projects shown in this section demonstrate, the use of colors and motifs is not place, time or city specific. They want to show that the concepts, styles and devices used go beyond the use of just color.

TIRANA OFF MODERN/TIRANA ART NOUVEAU - **Svetlana Boym**, Professor, Harvard University

FACADE PROJECT IN TIRANA - **Helidon Gjergji**, Artist, New York

FISHERMEN HOUSING, Tyre Libanon - **Hashim Sarkis Studios**, Harvard University

NEW GEOGRAPHIES - publication of Harvard University Press, Issue 3, **Gareth Doherty**, Editor

II. LOOKING AT THE BOULEVARD

Tirana's boulevard is its main public space. At one point in time it was imposed as an opening in the middle of an existing urban fabric. Its unfinished end, Tirana's derelict train station, invites us to think « What will happen with the boulevard ? »

We look at Zagreb to see how its Green Horse Shoe (Zelena Potkova) was planned in parallel with Vienna's Ringstrasse, how it was used by the city's planners and architects and, most importantly how it was extended beyond its original boundaries.

We look at Stuttgart to see the relationship between open space, its use, temperature gradients and natural cold air supply in order to cast the question about the future of the boulevard in the context of its relationship with Tirana's climate and topography.

CASE STUDY03 The Green Horseshoe: The Unfinished Figure pg58-75

PROJECT ZAGREB: Transition as Condition, Strategy, Practice, **Eve Blau** and **Ivan Rupnik**

FIGHTING THE HEAT ISLAND EFFECT IN TIRANA

Transsolar Klimaengineering, Munich Stuttgart New York

III. LOOKING AT SPACES

Once we step out of Tirana's main streets and out of its boulevard, we find spaces that at first look extremely chaotic. Different layers of history, different scales, activities and forms coexist together without any particular claim to order or established forms. The analytical projects and the short movie are attempts to understand these spaces and their accidental character.

The student proposals show the potential of such spaces and the power they have to inspire a variety of projects.

EXTRA & SMALL ARCHITECTURE, TIRANA CASTLE - Cinematographic Essay, **Eled Fagu**, Architect, Tirana
KINOSTUDIO SQUARE - **Armand Vokshi** with students from FIN (Faculty of Civil Engineering, Department of Architecture) and POLIS University

IV. 2 PROJECTS

Projects by 51N4E and Virginia Studio are chosen to show the scale of contemporary architecture in Tirana. Each project is located in landmark areas of Tirana. Each addresses different zoning regulations, urban conditions and programmatic requirements. They both employ formal gestures and cladding strategies to create focal points for the fragmented urban conditions in which they are located.

TID Tower, Sulejman Pasha Square - **51N4E**, Brussels, Belgium

Johan Anrys, Peter Swinnen, Freek Persyn

TANGENT, Zogu i Zi - **Virginia Studio**, Tirana, Albania

Arch. Spiro Bakallbashi, Arch. Ihsan Prushi, Arch. Renato Konomi

V. LOOKING FOR THE STATION

The rise of capitalism brought to Albania dreams and paradoxes. Owning a Mercedes as opposed to using public transport, over-invest on the private at the expense of public, grey through concrete as oppose to green through trees are all phenomena which belong to Tirana. The Tirana train station is a place where the monumental, the infrastructural, the public, the informal, the natural, the derelict all overlap.

We think this site to be a perfect opportunity for the city of Tirana to begin to imagine the potential of complexity of this multilayered overlap and the interesting interactions it may generate. Through different levels of temporality and scale, the projects/ideas propose visions for Tirana's citizens, in a climate of rapidly declining public space.

SINGING BIRDS - **Egest Gjinali, Zeinab Aghamahdi**, Geneva

TIRANA LOCAL - ALBANIAN CULTURAL DELIVERY ON RAILS, **GAC General Architecture** / Collaborative:

Michael Beaman, Zaneta Hong, James Setzler, Yutaka Sho, Sunmin Whang, Jessica Yin

TIRANA TRANSECT - **OFICINAA**: Alexander C. Häusler and Silvia Benedetto

TIRANA: FILLING THE GAPS - **Edgar Sarli and Tamar Loeb**, Miami/Basel
GENEALOGY OF AN ACCIDENT - **Nuno Jacinto**, Portugal

VI. LOOKING AT HERITAGE

With contributions from **Luciano Bojaxhi** and **Irida Hasa**, Institute for Cultural Monuments, The Albanian Orthodox Church,

Tirana's Mosaic, presented also in "Looking at Spaces" section of the pavilion, is an excellent reminder of the architecture heritage of Albania and of its presence in active urban conditions. Along with other images of domestic, religious architecture and of military structures,

"Looking at Heritage is a conscious effort to underline the important value of architecture heritage.

VII. CARTE BLANCHE*

A short film by **Enida Mitro** and **Dritan Mesareja**

Seen through the eyes of an architect and an artist, this an artistic interpretation of the phenomena we met while looking at Tirana.

A sensitive journey, exploring the urban topography of the city, searching for what identity is made of.

* A permission to act and take decisions without restrictions

VIII. TIRANA'S STREETS

A photographic essay by **Dritan Zajmi**, artist, Geneva

The photomontages of Dritan Zajmi draw our attention to the way buildings create cutouts of the sky and configure it. Each cutout is special and identifies a particular place. Unusual in the way they are framed these photographs draw attention towards the sky and its limitation by current Tirana architecture.