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Plečnikova aktualnost

Plečnik je v zadnjih desetletjih, predvsem pa po letu 91, postal slovenska nacionalna figura, o čemer je do začetka tega leta pričala tudi njegova podoba na slovenskih bankovcih. Tolarje so zamenjali evri, leto, ki se izteka, pa je bilo poimenovano Plečnikovo leto. Petdeseta obletnica arhitektove smrti (1957 - 2007) je še spodbudila zanimanje za njegovo delo, ki je že sicer v zadnjem desetletju skokovito naraščalo. V seriji dogodkov pri nas in v tujini je izšlo brez števila člankov in knjig, med njimi tudi nekaj dobrih, predstavljene so bile nove študije njegovega dela, poslušali smo predavanja in tv oddaje. Pojavila se je celo ideja o njegovi beatifikaciji. Javno mnenje ga je sprejelo kot »največjega slovenskega arhitekta vseh časov«, arhitekturna teorija in zgodovina pa si z njim še vedno ne znata veliko pomagati.

Plečnik je po njima, navidez dokončno, umeščen v arhitekturno zgodovino kot »sopotnik moderne«, genialna, a nekoliko hermetična figura iz obrobja Evrope, s samosvojem arhitekturnim izrazom, ki ga označuje termin neoklasicizem. Tistemu, kar uhaja iz takšne recepcije pa se prilipejo etikete, kot češ, Plečnik je bil iracionalist, ali pa celo ekspresionist.

Ta podoba Plečnika je izrazito površna in krivična, saj jo določa nerazumevanje, ki se ne razlikuje dosti od nerazumevanj, ki jih je bil deležen v predhodnih obdobjih. Ta so segla najprej od zavračanja, nato hipokrizije do današnje mistifikacije in glorifikacije.

Linija, recimo, umetnostnozgodovinskega razumevanja, je precej preciznejša in je z oddaljenostjo 50 let dobila akademski in poznavalski značaj. Premalo pa tak pogled pove o živem jedru Plečnikove arhitekturne dediščine, ki je preko Ravnikarjeve šole v Sloveniji danes najpomembnejša posebnost, lastnost in priložnost sodobne slovenske arhitekture. Ob tem pa njegov vpliv in pomen presegata generacijske, kulturne, geografske in stilistične meje.

Njegov pomen so najbrž še najbolj prepoznali profesorji arhitekture, predvsem pa tudi urbanega dizajna, iz številnih evropskih mest, ki svoje študente vodijo v Ljubljano, da bi jo obravnavali kot primer, na katerem se da nazorno pokazati možnosti, metode in principe arhitekturnega oblikovanja pri gradnji mesta. Na ljubljanski arhitekturni šoli pa je Plečnik še vedno, kot tudi sicer arhitekturna zgodovina, prisoten na nesistematičen in od individualnih preferenc profesorjev odvisen način.

V tem ab-ju se približamo Plečniku iz pozicije današnjega, predvsem mladega arhitekta in arhitekturnega kritika, ki se ukvarja s sodobno arhitekturo. Ta nova luč razumevanja osvetli njegovo aktualnost za celotno sodobno arhitekturno kulturo, misel in prakso. Njegovo delo je prava enciklopedija arhitekturnih principov in znanj. Njegova vizija arhitekture in filozofija ukvarjanja z njo je danes aktualna bolj, kot kdajkoli prej. Plečnik je bil izrazito kreativen in v eksperimentiranje usmerjen arhitekt, ki je združeval tradicionalne principe, oblike in materiale s sodobnimi idejami. Imel je nešteto plasti in obrazov, ki se razkrivajo pri odprtem in zvedavem raziskovanju brez predsodkov. Niso mu bili tuji igrivost, duhovitost in humor. Razvijal je

Plečnik's relevance

During the past few decades, and particularly after the independence of 1991, architect Jože Plečnik has become a Slovene national icon, complete - until the beginning of last year anyway - with a banknote sporting his image. The national currency was succeeded by the Euro and the year that has just run its course was christened Plečnik's Year. The 50th anniversary of the architect's death (1957-2007) further increased the interest in his work that has been enjoying an intense renaissance already throughout the last decade. The anniversary was marked by a string of events both in Slovenia and abroad, countless articles and books were published, including some good ones, new studies of his work were presented, lectures were attended and TV broadcasts tuned into. It was even suggested that he should be declared a saint. In the eyes of the general public, Plečnik has become accepted as the "greatest Slovene architect of all time", while architectural theory and architectural history are still rather at a loss with him. Plečnik's role in architectural history was - seemingly permanently - agreed to be one of a "fellow-traveller of Modernism", a brilliant yet somewhat hermetic figure from the fringe of Europe, possessing his own kind of architectural expression termed Neo-Classicism. Anything not covered by such reception is in turn dealt through labels, such as of him supposedly belonging to Irrationalism or even Expressionism.

Painting such an image of Plečnik means to unjustly misrepresent him; it also exhibits a lack of comprehension that is scarcely different from the lack of comprehension that dogged him in previous eras. Misunderstood, Plečnik first suffered rejection, then hypocrisy, while nowadays, he is mystified and glorified. From the standpoint of art history, for which the 50 years' gap resulted in more precise understanding, his work is now fully recognised and academically appreciated. This aspect, however, does not sufficiently cover the living core of Plečnik's architectural heritage which, through the Ravnikar school in Slovenia, represents the most important distinction, characteristic, and opportunity of contemporary Slovene architecture. At the same time, his influence and significance transcend the generational, cultural, geographic, and stylistic borders.

His significance has been perhaps best recognised by numerous professors of architecture and particularly also urban design from various European cities who take their students to Ljubljana and present it as a case study for the possibilities, methods, and principles of architectural design applied to city building. At the Ljubljana architectural school, however, Plečnik, as well as architectural history in general, is not featured systematically but only according to various lecturers' individual preferences.

In this issue of ab, we approach Plečnik predominantly from the standpoint of a young architect and architectural critic of today who concerns him- or herself with contemporary architecture. This new understanding sheds light on his relevance for the entire contemporary architectural culture, thought, and practice. His work is a proper encyclopaedia of architectural principles



izviren in hkrati univerzalni jezik arhitekture, ki mu je omogočal svobodno recikliranje oblik, pomenov, konceptov, ter njihove kombinacije in permutacije. Ta jezik je bil povezujoč, združeval je različne, tudi nasprotujoče elemente, v arhitekturo večplastnih prepletov in sinteze. Arhitekturna pripoved je inscenirana s pomočjo zamisli o celoti. Mesto, stavba, ornament in detajl so poenotena, imaginarna in imaginirana arheologija, ki vključuje zgodovino, pa tudi sedanjost in prihodnost. To ga povezuje z najboljšimi predhodniki (in sodobniki), ki so na kreativen način uporabili arhitekturno znanje in zgodovino: Schinkelom, Palladiem, Michelangelom, Albertijem... – med sodobniki pa Le Corbusierjem, Aaltom, Kahnom... – skratka arhitekti, ki so utirali nove poti.

Plečnikova arhitektura torej živo nagovarja sedanjost, treba se je le poglobiti v principe, ki stojijo za njenimi oblikami, jih razumeti, nato pa jih lahko uporabljamo, spreminjamo in dopolnjujemo.

Številko pričanja anketa, v kateri domači in tuji strokovnjaki s kratkimi odgovori na postavljena vprašanja pozicionirajo Plečnika v obzorju lastnega arhitekturnega dela. Sledi zapis simpozija Plečnik 07, ki se je odvil 30. oktobra letos v Mestnem muzeju. Eseji so osrednji sklop revije. V njih prominentni evropski arhitekturni pisci razvijajo različne nove teze o velikem arhitektu.

Še eno dodatno plast k tej številki dodajo panoramske fotografije Staneta Jeršiča, ki na tehnološko in motivno nov in inovativen način obravnavajo Plečnikove arhitekture in ambiente. Številko zaključuje poster z diagramatskim kataloškim pregledom Plečnikovega dela in njegove recepcije.

and skills. His vision of architecture and philosophy of architectural undertaking are more relevant today than ever before. Plečnik was an exceptionally creative architect with a penchant for experimentation and integration of traditional principles, shapes, and materials with contemporary ideas. He was a man of countless layers and faces that reveal themselves to an avid explorer with an open mind and without prejudice. Playfulness, wit, and humour were not alien to him. He had been developing an original and at the same time universal architectural language that enabled him to freely recycle shapes, meanings, and concepts, as well as to combine and recombine them. This was a language of integration, allowing diverse, even contrary elements to be joined into an architecture of multiple layers and of synthesis. The staging of architectural narration is aided by the idea of the whole.

The city, the building, the ornament, and the detail constitute a unified, imaginary and imagined archaeology that embodies history, as well as the present and the future. This way, he is connected with the most illustrious predecessors (and contemporaries) that employed architectural knowledge and history in a creative way, viz. Schinkel, Palladio, Michelangelo, Alberti, etc. and Le Corbusier, Aalto, Kahn, etc. of the contemporaries - essentially architects that all trod new paths. Plečnik's architecture thus vividly addresses the present - one only has to study the principles that appear behind the forms, and understand them in order for one to be able to use them, alter them, and complement them.

The issue begins with a survey in which professionals from Slovenia and abroad provide short answers so as to place Plečnik within the horizon of their own work. It's followed by the minutes from the symposium Plečnik 07 that took place on 30th October 2007 in the City Museum of Ljubljana. The essays are the central feature of the issue, with prominent European architectural writers developing various new theses about the great architect. Another layer is added by Stane Jeršič's panoramic photographs that present Plečnik's architectures and ambients through innovative content and new technological approaches. A poster diagrammatically cataloguing Plečnik's work and its reception concludes the issue.