

pri arhitekturi si lahko zelo oseben

intervju z Maruša Zorec

Maja Vardjan, Matija Bevk

you can be very personal through architecture

interview with Maruša Zorec

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Foto: Peter Krapež

Ali mora arhitekt delovati predvsem kot instrument za reševanje konkretnih potreb ljudi ali še vedno obstaja njegova posebna, višja vloga?

Ne bi rekla, da gre za vlogo na višji ravni, ampak predvsem za to, da stvari vidi bolj celovito, kot jih določa sama naloga. Tako z vidika prostora, pomenov in v končni fazi tudi novih vidikov trajnostnega razvoja, sodobne uporabe materialov in energije. Pomembno je, da ljudem ponudi več, kot so sposobni videti sami. Arhitekt lahko vidi dlje, bolje razume prostorske probleme, prostor lahko sprost bolj, kot si ljudje v svojih konkretnih predstavah znajo zamišljati. Pomembno je, da zna povezati notranji in zunanji prostor, da odpira stare strukture, da uporablja staro na nov način, ki ni toliko ekstenziven, kot je lahko intenziven navznoter. Arhitekt lahko projektu da tudi osebno noto in ljudem pokaže nove načine bivanja, drugačne, boljše, kot so jih ljudje skozi svoje konvencionalne poglede sposobni videti.

Veliko sodeluješ na natečajih in večinoma izbiraš projekte z močnim obstoječim fizičnim kontekstom. Ali je ta izbira intuitivna ali zavestna?

Takšne projekte sem začela delati po naključju. Morda zato, ker prihajam iz takega okolja. Delala sem v biroju, kjer je bil kontekst zelo pomemben, čeprav se je morda to manifestiralo drugače, kot v svojem delu zdaj počnem sama. Morda takšne projekte izbiram tudi zato, ker se mi zdi, da to bolje znam in da imam na tem podočju več izkušenj. Ta način dela mi je blizu, občutek imam, da lahko naredim in pokažem več, skozi to se lahko bolj odprem, lažje se izražam v takih prostorih.

Jacques Herzog in Pierre de Meuron sta prenavo muzeja Tate Modern primerjala s strategijo borilne veščine aikido, moč starega sta uporabila za krepitev novega. Ta taktika vodi k novi celoti, ki ima dvojno moč. Kako se ti odločiš, kaj je vredno ohraniti in kaj se lahko izbriše? In kaj pomeni novo, dodano?

Situacije niso preproste, večinoma v začetku ne veš prav jasno, kaj imaš. Dobiš fragmente obstoječega, ki so valorizirani. Konzervatorski program ovrednoti, kaj je pomembno, ti pa skušaš iz teh fragmentov sestaviti novo celoto. Pogosto jo organiziramo tako, da je povezovalc starega in novega prav prazen, fluiden prostor, saj vsega ne moreš vedno fizično povezati. Nove, dodane plasti morajo biti enako močne kot je staro. V primeru

Should an architect primarily act as an instrument, providing solutions to real-life needs of people, or is there still some special higher role?

I don't think it's actually a higher role but chiefly the fact that an architect sees things in a more holistic way than a specific task may stipulate. I'm talking about insight in terms of space, meanings, as well as the aspects of sustainable development, contemporary use of materials, and energy. It's important for an architect to offer people more than they're able to see for themselves. An architect can see further, understand spatial problems better, liberate the space more successfully than people who only have their practical notions to work with. It's important for an architect to be able to connect the inside and outside space, to open up old structures, to use the old in a new way, which is not as extensive as it can be inwardly intensive. An architect can leave a personal imprint on a project and show people new ways of habitation, different, better ways than people are able to see with their conventional views.

You take part in many competitions and you mostly choose projects with a strong existing physical context. Is this an intuitive choice or a conscious one?

I've started doing such projects quite by accident. Maybe it's the environment I came from. I used to work in a practice where the context mattered a great deal, even though this might have manifested itself differently to how I do things myself now. Maybe I also choose such projects because I feel I'm better at them and have more experience. I'm fond of working this way, I feel that I can do and show more, I can open up more in this way, I can express myself more successfully in such spaces.

Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron compared the renovation of the Tate Modern with the strategy of Aikido, the Japanese martial art. They used the power of the old to strengthen the new. This tactic leads to a new whole with double the strength. How do you decide what's worth preserving and what may be erased? And what does the new, the added mean?

Such situations are not straightforward, you often can't really tell what you'll be working with in the beginning. You get fragments of the existing that have a degree of value attached to them. The conservation programme assesses what's important, and then you try to piece together a new whole from these fragments.



prenove Naskovega dvorca v Mariboru je bilo staro tkivo sestavljeno iz več različnih časovnih obdobj. Ni šlo le za lupino, ki bi jo napolnili z novim jedrom, ampak so obstajali le prostori in fragmenti različnih časovnih razdobj, v katerih je stavba nastajala in se dopolnjevala. In prav to odčitavanje zgodovine stavbe in razmišljanje, kako vse nastavke povezati v novo celoto, je pri takšnih projektih najbolj razburljivo. Zaradi razgibanosti in obstoječe substance je težko rešiti problem z enim samim zamahom. Pri tovrstnih projektih je težko vleči velike poteze. Na primer v knjižnici na Ravnah na Koroškem smo imeli vse nove elemente med seboj povezane s ploščadjo in skupnim stropom, a se mi zdaj po mnogih drugih izkušnjah zdi, da je prav praznina enotnega knjižničnega prostora tista, ki povezuje. V Mariboru so očiščeni in prenovljeni obstoječi prostori zelo lepi, izjemna je svetloba, ki vanje prihaja z dvorišča, z južne strani in jih osvetljuje. Zasnova organizacije prostorov omogoča, da lahko vse prostore obvladaš v različnih zankah. V njih se pojavljajo nove intervencije, v enih bolj, v drugih manj, vse so močne, izrazite, so črnorjave in poudarjajo nove posege v staro - nove stopnice, mostovž, servisna jedra.

Tvoje nove intervencije so v estetskem izrazu precej drzne, kontrastne staremu.

Se strinjam, tudi pri prenovi Naskovega dvorca smo bili v dilemi. Verjamem, da na ta način bolj dosledno pokažemo staro, da staro tako bolj izluščimo iz celote. Tega ne delamo zato, da bi izpostavili novo, forma, ki jo vstavljamo, pri tem ni pomembna, niti elementi sami, pomembneje je kako prostor po novi organizaciji zadira skozi vse te nove intervencije. V Mariboru se je sprva razmišljalo, da bo vse stekleno in transparentno, mi pa smo novo naredili zelo polno, odpirali smo poglede le na določenih mestih in želeli na ta način izpostaviti predvsem staro. Sprva smo imeli namen določene elemente tonsko približati starim, potem pa smo se odločili, da bodo prav zaradi temne barve delovali bolj enotno.

Ali niso tudi popolnoma novi projekti v nekem smislu preнове? Vsak projekt je obnova obstoječega prostora.

Ja, vsak projekt je v prostorskem smislu prenova. Če to pomeni, da obstoječemu prostoru nekaj dodaš in ga s tem prenoviš, se v tem pogledu strinjam. Prostor, v katerega posegamo, je za nas vedno pomemben dejavnik zasnove, ker se naše hiše z obstoječim prostorom vedno povezujejo. Zame je zelo pomembno, da se parter objekta dobro poveže z okolico. Naše zasnove so zato odprte, tudi stari prostori se čim bolj odpirajo v zunanji prostor. V knjižnici na Ravnah na Koroškem si na primer pred prenovno nenehno hodil po stopnicah, iz prostora v prostor, zdaj pa je pritrilje neposredno povezano z notranjim dvoriščem, navzven pa s parkom. Prostore med zunaj in znotraj skušamo vedno čim bolj povezati. Zato dodano potem konstruira neko novo, večjo in bolj odprto celoto.

Se ti zdi, da je danes premalo naložb v zunanji, javni prostor? Ali se morda tudi zaradi tega ne udeležuješ natečajev za velika stanovanjska naselja oziroma natečajev, kjer so v ozadju komercialni investitorji, ki svojega parterja praviloma ne razvijajo v smeri javnega interesa?

Odgovorila bom na podlagi osebne izkušnje. Ne morem trditi, da se v središču Ljubljane in tudi v Mariboru nič ne dogaja. A v resnici ljudje javnega prostora ne uporabljajo le v središču mesta, ampak tudi tam, kjer živijo. Na ulici, kjer živim, po srečnem naključju ni veliko prometa. Ta ulica spomladi zelo zaživi. V kaosu avtomobilov in ljudi se odvija življenje na cesti. Stanovanje smo uredili tako, da se odpira na ulico in komunicira z ljudmi, ki hodijo mimo. Te prednosti seveda izkoriščajo predvsem otroci, a tudi odrasli smo se postopoma povezali v nekakšno skupnost. V šestdesetih letih so se arhitekti veliko več ukvarjali z odnosi med javnim in zasebnim, danes pa smo na ta dejavnik skoraj popolnoma pozabili. Pri stanovanjskih naseljih so se iskale inovativne rešitve javnega in poljavnega prostora, danes, pa se vse preveč gleda le na profit. Tako mora arhitekt poiskati določene načine, da prepriča investitorja in omogoči stanovalcem tudi kaj več kot le bivalni minimum. Funkcioniranje skupnosti je seveda odvisno tudi od strukture stanovalcev, ki

We often organise this new whole in such a way that the link between the old and the new is actually the empty, fluid space, because you can't always connect everything physically. The new, added layers have to be as strong as is the old.

In the case of the renovation of Naskov dvorec in Maribor, the old tissue originated from several different time periods. This wasn't only a shell waiting to be filled with a new kernel, there were spaces and fragments from different time periods in which the building was being created and added to. And it's precisely this reading of the history of the building and figuring out how to piece all these traces together into a new whole is the most exciting thing about such projects. Due to the heterogeneity and the existing substance, you're unlikely to solve the problem in just one go.

With such projects you can't make big strides. In the library in Ravne na Koroškem, for example, we had all the new elements connected with a platform and a common ceiling, but now, with all the projects I've since done, I feel that it's precisely the emptiness of the unified library space that does the connecting. In Maribor, the cleaned-up and renovated existing spaces are very nice, the lighting is exceptional - it enters the spaces from the courtyard, lighting them up from the southern side.

Due to the way the organisation of spaces has been conceived, it's possible to get all the spaces under control through different loops. New interventions appear in them, more in some, fewer in others, but they're all strong, full of character, black and brown in colour, and they emphasise the new interventions into the old - new stairs, courtyard galleries, service kernels.

Your new interventions are quite audacious in terms of their aesthetic expression, marking a contrast to the old.

I agree, we also had this dilemma when we were renovating Naskov dvorec. I believe this is a more consistent way of exhibiting the old, bringing it out from the whole. We don't do it to expose the new, the form that we insert is not important, nor are the elements themselves, what's important is how a space, after having been organised anew, breathes through all these new interventions. For Maribor, they had the idea earlier on to have everything in glass panels and transparent, but what we did with the new was to make it very ample, we opened the views only in specific places and wanted to expose chiefly the old in this way. At first we intended to match the tone of some of the new elements with that of the old, but then we decided that the dark colour will give them a more unified appearance.

Wouldn't you agree that even brand-new projects are renovations in a sense? Every project is a renovation of the existing space.

Yes, every project is a renovation in the spatial sense. If this means that you add something to the existing space and renovate it in this way, I can agree with that. The space in which we make our interventions is always an important factor of the design because our houses always connect to the existing space. For me, it's very important for the exterior of a building to properly connect with its surroundings. Consequently, our designs are open, we make even the old spaces open into the exterior space as much as possible. In the Ravne na Koroškem library, you were constantly walking up and down the stairs, from one space to another, but now, the ground floor is directly connected to the inner courtyard and to the park outside. We always endeavour to connect the spaces between inside and outside as much as possible. This is how the added then contributes to the construction of a new, bigger and more open whole.

Do you feel that there is too little investment into the exterior, public space nowadays? And is this one of the reasons that you don't take part in competitions for large residential communities, i.e. competitions issued by commercial investors, who rarely develop exterior of their buildings with the public interest in mind?

I'll base my answer on personal experience. One can't really claim that there's nothing happening in the centre of Ljubljana or Maribor. But the fact is that people don't only use the public space in the centre of the town but also where they live. Thankfully, there's not much traffic on my street, and in spring, the street becomes very alive. Life in the street is happening in the midst of chaos of cars and people. We set up our flat so that it opens onto the street and communicates

jo pri načrtovanju nove sošeske težko predvidiš. A možnosti je treba ponuditi in verjamem, da bi jih ljudje potem tudi izkoristili.

Dejansko se pri načrtovanju sošesk vse manj pozornosti usmerja na oblikovanje skupnosti. Zdi se, da to ni več zaželeno.

Mislím, da je bilo v šestdesetih in sedemdesetih letih to zahtevano. Danes bi spremembe lahko dosegli le sistemsko, vnešene bi morale biti v urbanistične pogoje. Verjamem, da pozitivni zgledi vlečejo, a danes se vsak prostor privatizira, ljudje so zelo zaprti. Vsak odprt prostor mora biti nadzorovan in določen. Arhitekti večinoma samo sledimo nekemu »briefu« in ljudem ne ponudimo nič drugega, slepo sledimo omejenim zahtevam. Stanovanjem je treba dodati nove kvalitete, na primer možnost odpiranja, povezovanja in spreminjanja, saj imamo ljudje različne želje in potrebe. Arhitekt lahko s svojimi zasnovami veliko prispeva k odnosu ljudi do prostora – notranjega prostora hiše ali stanovanja, k odnosu med zunanjim in notranjim prostorom in navsezadnje tudi k oblikovanju priložnosti socializacije ljudi, ki v njegovih hišah prebivajo.

Tvoje predavanje na piranskih dnevih arhitekture je bilo zelo senzibilno, projekte si pokazala skozi svoje intimno doživljanje sveta. Kaj je najbolj zaznamovalo tvoj pogled na arhitekturo?

Težko je predavati pred domačim občinstvom, saj se mi zdi, da moje delo že vsi poznajo. Zato sem želela povedati kaj osebnega. Zadnje čase pogosteje razmišljam o osebnih izkušnjah prostorov in vzdušij iz otroštva, na katerega imam močne in lepe spomine. Zdi se mi, da si skozi arhitekturo lahko zelo osebni, tak kakršni zares si, da gre v arhitekturi kljub konkretnim zahtevam vsake naloge pri projektu za zelo osebne reakcije avtorja, ki so zato tudi vedno zelo različne. Mene osebno je zaznamovalo okolje, kjer je bilo zelo veliko odprtega, praznega prostora. Rob vasi in velik, odprt travnik, vsa ta narava in gozd. Ta svoboda prostora in dimenzija praznine. Obenem pa tudi socialen prostor vaškega okolja, ki ga tukaj, v mestu in današnjem času, precej pogrešam.

Kasneje je močno vplival name tudi Vojteh Ravnikar s svojim svetovljanskim pogledom na svet. Ta arhitekt jasnih konceptov, ki se ni nikoli ustrašil vehementnih potez in velikih praznih prostorov, je bil moj mentor in me je veliko naučil, ko je bil čas, pa me je nekako poslal na samostojno pot, za kar sem mu neizmerno hvaležna.

Sčasoma sem spoznala, da videnemu in naučenemu ne slediš dobesedno, temveč lahko vse te izkušnje prevajaš v svojo arhitekturno govorico.

Kaj ti pomeni narava? Kot si že omenila, vedno brišeš meje med zunaj in znotraj, prostore povezuješ z naravo, če ne fizično, pa s pogledi.

Narava mi je zelo blizu. Narava me velikokrat tako fascinira kot nobena arhitektura. Gre za moje osebno videnje. In potem se velikokrat vprašam, ali z arhitekturo ne moreš ustvariti prostorov, ki bi te tako močno prevzeli, ki bi jih tako začutil. Morda lahko to dosežeš z enostavnostjo zasnove, močjo koncepta, s strukturo ali tudi z odprtostjo prostora in s svetlobo. Zelo zanimivo mi je bilo predavanje kitajskega arhitekta Wang Shuja v Piranu. Govoril je o tem, da ni nujno, da arhitektura v prostoru nastopa kot abstraktni artefakt, temveč, da se lahko z njim zliva. Arhitektura je lahko popolnoma zlita z naravo, z njo se povezuje preko notranjih prostorov. To se mi zdi zelo lepo videnje, zelo sveže. Mi namreč prihajamo iz prostora, kjer je že od klasike naprej arhitektura prisotna kot abstrakcija, kot bela kocka v naravi. Wang Shu pa pravi, da je arhitektura lahko kar pokrajina, da je od znotraj navzven lahko ena sama narava. Zanimivo. Njegovi projekti so res lepi, na primer lebdeča streha kot pokrajina porušeni hiš po kateri lahko hodiš, a nanjo v resnici ne moreš stopiti.

Senzibilnost pripisujejo predvsem ženskam. Ali arhitekturo lahko delimo glede na spol?

Ne. Veliko moških dela zelo senzibilno arhitekturo in veliko žensk dela tudi stvari brez občutka. Bolj kot vprašanje spola me zaposluje misel – kako je mogoče, da arhitekti, ki občudujemo več ali manj iste stvari, ne uspemo takšne arhitekture tudi sami ustvarjati.

with the passers-by. It's the children who make the most of these advantages, but even we as adults have gradually begun to form a sort of community.

In the 1960s, architects spent much more time on the relations between the public and the private while nowadays, we've practically forgotten about this factor. When designing residential communities, one looked for innovative solutions for the public and semi-public space, while today, everything comes second to profits. The architect thus has to look for ways of convincing the investor to concede to something more than the bare habitational minimum for the residents. How a community will function naturally also depends on the structure of the inhabitants, which is a difficult thing to foresee in the design phase. But opportunities have to be offered, and I'm certain that people would take them if they were.

There is definitely less and less attention being paid to the "community" part when designing residential communities. It seems as if it has somehow fallen out of favour.

I think that it was a requirement in the 60s and 70s. The only way to make a change today would be to change the system, the development regulations. I believe in setting a positive example but nowadays, every space is privatised, people are shutting themselves in. Every open space must be under surveillance and strictly demarcated. What we mostly do as architect is to follow the brief and offer nothing further to the people, we blindly follow constrained requirements. Flats need to be given new qualities, such as the possibility of opening, connecting and changing, since everybody has different wishes and requirements. An architect's designs can do a lot of difference when it comes to people's attitudes towards space - the interior space of a house or a flat, to the attitude towards the relation between the exterior and interior space, and also when it comes to designing opportunities for the people living in their houses to socialise.

Your lecture at the Piran Days of Architecture was full of sensibility, you presented your projects through your intimate experience of the world.

What influenced the way you see architecture the most?

It's difficult to have a lecture in front of the home crowd, I think everybody knows my work more or less. That's why I wanted to share something more personal. Lately, I've often been thinking about my personal experience of spaces and atmospheres from my childhood, which I have strong and beautiful memories of. I think you can be very personal through architecture, you can be what you really are. I also think that in spite of specific requirements for each project task, architecture brings out very personal reactions from the author, and they're also very different in each case. I was very much affected by environment where there was a lot of open, empty space. The edge of the village, the open meadow, all that nature and forest. The freedom of space and the dimension of emptiness. But parallel to that also the social space of the village, which is something city life makes I miss nowadays.

Later, I was very much influenced by Vojteh Ravnikar with his cosmopolitan view of the world. This architect of clear concepts, a vigorous decision-maker who was never afraid of large empty spaces, was my mentor and taught me a great deal, and then sort of sent me on my way when the time came, and I'm very grateful to him for doing that. With time, I realised that you never follow what you've seen and learnt word for word, but that you can translate all these experiences in your own architectural language.

What does nature mean to you? You mentioned before that you always blur the distinction between outside and inside, you connect spaces with nature, at least with views if not physically.

I feel very close to nature. I'm often more fascinated by nature than any architecture. This is my personal perspective. And then I often ask myself if one couldn't use architecture to create spaces which would have such a strong effect, which you could feel this much. Perhaps you can achieve that with the simplicity of design, the power of concept, with the structure, or maybe also with the openness of the space or with lighting.

I was very intrigued by the lecture of Chinese architect Wang Shu in Piran. He talked about how architecture doesn't have to appear in the space as an abstract