

Clever design and affordable comfort something (in)different?

Introductory remarks for Round Table Discussion “Case Studies – from Theory to Practice“

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During the procedure of producing architecture many convenient adjectives are often invented. The reason for this is that architecture is such an ambiguous affair that can be interpreted in so many different ways with very little dependence on any given set of rules.

Thus, during the passing of time, adjectives such as classical, baroque, functional, modern, post modern etc. etc. have been used. In more recent times with the growth of awareness about the plight of our planet terms such as energy efficient, solar, passive, bioclimatic, green, sustainable etc. have been used. These all have some value and to some extent serve the purpose of expressing some special characteristic of the process involved in design or the end-product, the building itself.

On the other hand, I believe the negative side to be that it implies that architecture of this nature is something different from the other architecture. Furthermore it allows the architect and the others involved to declare their (in)difference to these issues in the sense that they are not part of normal architectural design and can be ignored, or in the best cases, corrected by heavy doses of remedial engineering.

My position is, that there exists only one architecture, made up of ten main components (which admittedly can be regrouped, rearranged or added or subtracted to) as follows:

1. History/Culture
2. Social considerations
3. Symbolism
4. Function
5. Place/topos
6. Sustainability
7. Climate
8. Laws of Physics
9. Time
10. Cost/Benefit

If we arbitrarily decide to pick and choose from the above, then it can only be architecture incomplete or interrupted.

In my opinion Architecture is like a mathematical equation of a most sublime nature, in which the end-product is the result of the composition of all its parts. However, only when the end-product is more complete and beautiful than the sum of all of its parts, only then is it Architecture.