



MANIFEST Architecture unlimited?

Architecture is more than just building square meters. It has more to offer than a pragmatic answer to a practical question. It can provide, or at least hint at, a possible future, an unexpected potential. Beyond its sheer volume and mass it does have the capability to influence its economical, social and cultural context. But sometimes architecture is not enough. Sometimes solutions lie beyond architecture's capabilities, no matter how big the desire to change the world. During the 2011 edition of the Sofia Architecture Week we are going to investigate into the transformative power of architecture.

Stretching limits. SAW 2011 will present practices, and not necessarily purely architectural ones, which are seeking to transgress boundaries, formulate new task and discover new fields of action. Practices that sometimes offer unsolicited architecture, an architecture which does not need a commissioner in order to exist.

Accepting limitations. SAW 2011 will also give platform to architects who seek their freedom by exploring the conventions and traditions within the limitations of their discipline. Designers who experience the liberating effect of accepting constraints and within them achieve to create high quality environments. In the first approach architecture is sometimes truly capable of changing what one expects from it. In the second architecture is meeting one's expectations, albeit sometimes in an unexpected way.

Each of these two approaches treats differently one of the great ambitions of architecture: its capability to project, to look forward, to bring change. Architecture might be limited, but architectural imagination never is. SAW11 will deal with the extent, in which architecture can (still) function as a transformative tool for the urban environment in an age in which utopian ideals are replaced by city marketing, and making improvements in the cityscape is often subordinated to making profit.

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