

E13 TH

Nicolas Reymond architect Paris FR

Winner of Europan 8 in Leinefelde DE and Europan 9 in Reims FR

He is winner also of the Albums des Jeunes Architectes et des Paysagistes 2012

And winner of the Palmars des Jeunes urbanistes 2010

Reflections on the theme of Europan 13

These few tracks are more like a feedback than a proposed topic for the next session. On reflection, it seemed interesting to "re-examine" three themes:

1 - Site of Intervention / Site of reflection

If the new theme must be new, it must be part of the "historical" extension " of the issues raised since the beginning by Europan. The trend is continuously oriented towards an expansion of the scale of intervention and reflection areas (since the housing scale off site to territorial project, through the scale of the building and the neighborhood.) Expanding the perimeters of intervention, the themes have been enriched, but sometimes at the expense of opportunities for implementation. We can consider that there is a contradiction between the long-time of projects to develop on the scale of parts of the city and the challenge of production in the shortest possible time, for a "first reference" for offices in formation. This contradiction is reinforced by the lack of credit to young designers for projects of a certain size.

Where to find a compromise that allows to include projects in a wide thought, but with operability mastered on a smaller site? Emphasizing the contrast between the intervention site and reflection site?

2 - Urbanism of crisis

Europan supports projects anchored in reality. It is therefore necessary to adapt the themes to changes of urban and societal contexts. There is currently a striking contrast between an emblematic and disproportionate urban planning booming (China, Dubai, etc.) and a brutal shutdown of major projects (Spain, Italy, etc.) . Grand gap that can be found in the production Europan in the competition step with on the same site disproportionate projects (marinas, mega-structures ...) and others with an exacerbated modesty (projects based on urban recycling or on the absence of intervention). It is a compromise between the spirit of innovation specific to Europan and the reality of urban production in Europe.

Is it appropriate to update the Europan theme in front of an "urbanism of crisis" (both economic and ecological) that affects a large part of Europe? to the risk of restricting the audacity of designers?

3 - Operationality

The third issue is the anticipation of the operationality of projects . The competition is open to young generations, for whom success is often the foundation step of the office, then the first built reference that will allow access to public order.

This step is often subject to the vagaries of the urban fabric (adaptations and successive reorientations , modification of the project site, cancellation, involvement of concertation,

program change, involvement of private clients, political time, etc..). The "adaptable city" is defined in the session 12 as "integrating the notion of time" (through the topics: chronotopie, multi-use, sharing, recycling, reversibility, etc.). Topics dependent also a lot of political will. It should perhaps encourage teams to think, in addition to phasing, to adaptability in the sense of a process, of a strategy for the project initiated by the designers (several teams in the session 11 showed already advanced strategies on the economy of means, on the urban recycling, on the progressivity, on the games of actors, on restraint in the intervention, etc.. contrasting with the majority of projects that have a stereotyped and ultra-accomplished vision of project, far from reality of European).

How to adapt, from the competition, the theme of European to these realities? The question of "how" make the city could be integrated with the reflection already in the competition step?