

Untimely Meditations or: How We Learn to Live in Synthesized Realities

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“Untimely Meditations or: How We Learn to Live in Synthesized Realities” was a collaboration of POLIS University and the organizers of the Albanian Pavillion at the Biennale of Architecture in Venice. As a result, the focus was to reinterpret the main objectives of the pavilion from the students’ perspective. The main objective of the workshop was to build different storytellings for one of the selected sites: Dinamo Stadium or Artificial Lake, as two sites that despite changes in the urban context, have become hybrid entities with their space-time realities. Thus, these two spaces become a laboratory of the future for new ideas and concepts to emerge by focusing on one of the problematics of the existing condition and describing a complex human-technology-environment system. These narratives were created through the use of photography, photo collage, and written text.

Methodology

The focus of the workshop was to reinterpret the main objectives of the Albanian pavilion from the student’s perspective. The main objective was to explore co-existing authentic spaces in the city, by understanding the boundary between the natural and the artificial landscape. Such perspectives were elaborated by building different storytellings for one of the selected sites:

Dinamo Stadium or Artificial Lake, as two sites that despite changes in the urban context have become hybrid entities with their own space-time realities. Thus, these two spaces become a laboratory of the future for new ideas and concepts to emerge by focusing on one of the problematics of the existing condition and describing a complex human-technology-environment system. These narratives were created through the use of photography, photo collage, and written text.

The workshop was developed in two weeks and in two locations. The first week was organized in Tirana, where the students primarily visited the two sites, the Artificial Lake of Tirana and the Dinamo Stadium, in order to get the first inspiration for their concepts, based on the main problems faced on sites. It was necessary for the students to provide good documentation of the existing situation and the key visual elements to elaborate their concepts which were later discussed during a brainstorming séance. Later on, the students developed their personal narratives, presented through texts and photo collages. The second week took place in Venice at the Venice Biennale of Architecture and the students visited all of the pavilions in order to find similarities or contrasting narratives in order to enrich their discussion. The second phase provided the students the possibility to be introduced to the work of international architects, an important aspect of their evolution as future professionals. The implementation of the second phase was based on and presented on the Albanian Pavillion 2023 space.

Conclusions

Through this workshop, the students were able to understand the importance of the contact with site to build a narrative that is an inseparable aspect for the architect to develop a concept. The participants are now capable of easily building a storytelling in architecture, in order to reinforce their arguments for the design ideas and solutions for urban spaces. These different narratives of the complex human-technology-environment system built by the students give an important insight into the fragile conditions of the two sites in Tirana, rethinking of the importance of architectural thought for the future of our urban spaces.



Workshop Process Image