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A SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Bruno Messina | Dean of S.D.S. Architecture Siracusa

"I think of a school as a space for learning. Education began when a man, sitting under a tree, without knowing what teacher means, started a discussion with people, who on their turn, ignored the fact that they were students"

The unique metaphor of Louis Kahn defines the essence of the school as an institution. This ideal and primal vision of the relationship between the teacher and the student provokes a reflection on the actual meaning of education. Every school, seeks strategically to determine its own identity, based on some features that set it apart from the rest.

In our case we can speak of two fundamental features: being a school of architecture and being located in Syracuse. Many schools have been questioned on the teaching of architecture, on its specifics and methods. Alvaro Siza recently raised an issue that has a significant impact on the model education that we are planning to experiment with in our school: the architect is not an expert.

Our idea of the course of studies actually has always been oriented more towards the figure of the designer, able to perform a synthesis from the diversity of subjects and knowledge, available in a labour market that is ever so dynamic and fickle. In order to determine this particular point of view on education and teaching, various factors should be taken into account. On one hand, the young age of our school, which has the necessity and possibility to develop a course of studies that is distinctive and profiled. On the other, the presence of teachers with different educational backgrounds, who further contribute to the definition of our school's identity. A place of diversity, where both teachers and students look for a continuous juxtaposition with institutions and the region, a testing ground for each teaching or research project. Teaching architecture in a city like Syracuse means that advantage should be taken of its exclusive historical background and geographical location. On its territory there is a high number of UNESCO heritage sites and the city takes pride in its barycentric position with regard to the Mediterranean basin, area that turns out to become nowadays a new focal point for the delicate contemporary geopolitical balances. The future of our School of Architecture is therefore related to the capacity to define its peculiar identity by initiating dialogue between authorities, institutions and diverse subjects within the framework of a common project.

THEMES OF RESEARCH

Elementary architecture

Keeping in mind how quickly both the town and contemporary society are changing, research is defining a new centrality in architecture, by considering time as the fundamental subject of the project. Minimal architectures get a new meaning thanks to their features of instantaneity, adaptability, and openness to unexpected changes. Architecture that is interested in impermanence manages to acquire a new role in shaping urban and socially emerging phenomena.

Crisis/ Emergency/ Abandonment

Present conditions testify our speedy perception of natural and artificial disaster. Research is exploring a new role in architecture for post-disaster and risk reduction interventions, through a rethinking of security beyond control limits. Research is questioning itself on how waste debris can be turned into new materials for projects, so that new architectures can keep traces of disastrous events even for the future.

Archaeology and cities

Archaeology conceived as closed and inaccessible represents a breakdown in urban continuity. By imagining architectures defining new scenarios of contemporary life through different insertions, research is exploring the possibility of multiplying relationships and customs. Architecture acts as a transcription and rewriting technique, aimed at moving materials from the past to the future, strengthening their character and history.

Recycling/ Reuse/ Suburb

Reuse is a new paradigm focusing on innovation and rethinking of traditional production cycles, aimed at defining a new urban scenario starting from abandoned and disused property. Suburbs become a privileged field for experiments, with goals to identify methods of transformation from the inside and re-define the modern town.

	Annual		Semestral				
	CFU	H	CFU	H			
1st year	LABORATORIO DI COMPOSIZIONE ARCHITETTONICA 1		12	144	10	80	Istituzioni di matematiche
	LABORATORIO DI RAPPRESENTAZIONE E GEOMETRIA DESCRITTIVA		12	144			
	STORIA DELL'ARCHITETTURA E DELL'ARTE CONTEMPORANEA		12	96	6	48	Lingua inglese
2nd year	LABORATORIO DI COMPOSIZIONE ARCHITETTONICA 2		12	144	6	48	Diritto del governo e del territorio
	LABORATORIO DI DISEGNO E RILIEVO DELL'ARCHITETTURA		12	144	10	80	Tecnologie e sistemi costruttivi per l'architettura
					8	64	FONDAMENTI DI MECCANICA E STATICA Statica
3rd year	LABORATORIO DI PROGETTO III				4	32	Fisica
	Composizione architettonica	12	120	10	80	Storia dell'architettura antica e medievale	
	Progettazione urbana	6	60				
4th year					6	60	Tecnologie del recupero edilizio
					8	80	Scienza delle costruzioni
					6	60	Diritto dell'urbanistica e dell'edilizia
5th year					6	60	Teoria e storia del restauro
					8	80	Storia dell'architettura moderna
					8	80	Fisica tecnica e impianti
6th year					6	60	Pianificazione territoriale
					6	60	Laboratorio di tecnica delle costruzioni
					4	40	Tecnica delle costruzioni Progetto di strutture
7th year					6	60	Laboratorio di progettazione del paesaggio
					4	40	Architettura del paesaggio Progettazione del territorio
					6	60	Laboratorio di costruzione dell'architettura
8th year					4	40	Progettazione esecutiva Meccanica delle strutture
					6	60	Laboratorio di restauro
					6	60	Restauro Consolidamento degli edifici
9th year					8	80	Economia ed estimo ambientale
					6	60	Diritto dell'urbanistica e dell'edilizia
					8	200	Tirocinio
					15	180	Attività di Tesi