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ZURICH TAPES (#1) INCENTIVISING CHANGE OF PRACTICE

Disclaimer: If you are looking for your dream escape you might be wrong here, but if you are out for a different kind of journey, join us.

This seminar week is the first edition of the Zurich Tapes, a show and tell discursive event, following historic formats such as the Charlottesville Tapes. A group of practitioners discusses and negotiates the dependencies and consequences of theoretical positions on How to incentivise a change of practice? Together with you, we aim to document these discussions, compress the arguments, and translate them into communicable formats. Thus, the seminar week includes the (co-)planning of the conference, its realization, documentation and translation into a trailer (or short documentary) as well as an accompanying publication (reader).

IT IS ALWAYS A GOOD TIME FOR A REALITY CHECK!

The evidence seems clear: with 38% of global CO2 emissions, the building sector is one of the main drivers of climate change. ⁽¹⁾ Demands to transform our practice towards a non-destructive one are omni-present and growing louder, and with them the question: How can we incentivize the change of our discipline? To do so, one must identify leverage points and acknowledge (market) reality: With a volume of 2.513.000.000.000 (2.513 billion) Euros, the European construction sector is one of the most important players.

Seminar Week
FS 2023, Zurich
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Around 20 million people are working in this sector and generate around 10% of the European Gross Domestic Product (GDP). ⁽²⁾ A value and measurement that itself is put into question by a growing part of society, as the unequal distribution of wealth, unpaid labor, as well as the damage to humans, animals and nature are completely disregarded in the GDP. Instead, disruptions such as natural disasters, accidents, or even war have a positive impact on these metrics⁽³⁾, as the repair is reflected as economic growth, which allows the GDP to increase even in times of humanitarian emergencies.

In fact, with 68 % of global net worth, the built environment is the most important financial asset. With 46 % private residential real estate (including land) accounts for the largest share of it. But housing is not only the biggest field of investment, with 56 % it is also the main building task for European architects. Almost every architecture practice works in this sector. 89 % of European offices are active in that field, which makes the quest to change perspective and practice within the building industry essential to almost all of the 700.000 European architects. ⁽⁴⁾

As architects, in teaching and practice, we are interested in the underlying power structures and forces that shape our environment. A change of practice involves the construction industry, lobby and union, as well as the financial industry, investors and developers. In order to understand and identify the exact levers for change, we invite a range of voices to the table: *An (corporate) architect, a developer, an investor, a politician, a unionist ao.*

Severin Bärenbold, Arno Brandlhuber, Olaf Grawert, Alina Kolar, with Ludwig Engel, Pan Hu, Bing Liu, Jolene Lee and Meghan Rolvien

5 DAYS, 1 CONFERENCE 5 VOICES, 1 TRAILER

We understand the process of doing an event, planning the context, designing the discussion, constructing the content, translating the arguments and compressing them into different formats, as an architect's task that can only be achieved collectively. Thus, students will take on different roles, from planning, organizing and managing to executing, filming and editing. The idea is to give insights into the different aspects of event management, production and communication (incl. documentation). Therefore, the seminar week is structured around practical thematic inputs and outputs.

Film plays a central role in this process. The documentation of the conference itself will be one of the main tasks in order to compress the arguments and communicate them to an outside world in the form of a trailer (or short documentary). Thus, students will attend the film class "Access to Tools" which focuses on a) Filming and Postproduction and b) Storytelling and Editing.

*The seminar week will take place in Zurich
20.03.2023 – 24.03.2023
Cost Category A (<250 CHF)*

Sources:

- (1) UN environment programme – Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction: 2020 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction – Towards a zero-emissions, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector, S. 4
- (2) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0433&from=EN>
- (3) https://www.endlich-wachstum.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Kapitel-1_Medaillen_BIP.pdf
- (4) Council and Sector Study of the European Union