



[above]: Diocletian's Palace in its original state / OMA, Programmatic Lava / Archizoom, No-Stop City / Le Corbusier, New Venice Hospital / SANAA, Rolex Learning Center / Diocletian's Palace today

LIVING MONUMENT

Mat-Organization and Diocletian's Palace

Research based on 'What if' extreme scenarios

Summer Workshop in Split, Croatia / 2016

Institute of Art History - Centre Cvito Fisković / University of Split FGAG Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture And Geodesy

Diocletian's Palace constitutes the historic core in the city center of Split. Once built as the retirement palace for the Roman emperor Diocletian, it evolved into an industrial and residential complex in the following millennia. Through continuous densification the Palace developed its current particular urban form of layered architectural and urban organizations, immersing visitors into hallucinations of past events, societies, and cultures. The intricate organization of urban patterns and fabric manifests through a palimpsest-like layering of historical traces, the palace continues to serve as a thriving nucleus within Split.

In many ways the palace operates like a mat-building with its dense horizontal fabric and circulatory systems.

Traditionally characterized by flatness and horizontality, Alison Smithson described mat-buildings as "close-knit patterns of neutral collectives open to growth and changes" analogous to urban formation characterized by interplay of horizontal part to whole relationships and an ever expanding system. Through tracing of urban patterns, tectonics, historical layers, influence of tourism of the Palace, distinctive systems of organization will be extrapolated from the urban fabric beyond two-dimensional nature of figure and ground.

The workshop seeks to investigate Diocletian's Palace as a living monument. By researching the urban attributes of the Palace as systems of mat-organization, the workshop will identify and experience the Palace as highly complex spatial conglomeration. The investigation will provide a conceptual framework for design speculations addressing contemporary issues of tourism, conservation, and modernization within the city.

I. Dates and Locations

The 11 day workshop will take place in Split, Croatia.
July 5th (Tuesday) - July 15th (Friday) 2016.

II. Instruction and Organization

Mentors

Leslie Lok, HANNAH, Cornell University, AAP Department of Architecture
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Damir Gamulin, di.di., freelance designer
Ivan Jurić, Porticus, University of Split, FGAG

Mentoring team

Hrvoje Bartulović, University of Split, FGAG
Branka Juras, Ured BJ, University of Split, FGAG
Bruna Kovačević, Arhitektonski biro Lukšić / Visković, University of Split, FGAG
Ana Krstulović, 312 arhitektonska radionica, University of Split, FGAG
Ana Kuzmanić, University of Split, FGAG
Viktor Popović, University of Split, Art Academy in Split
Iva Raič Stojanović, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
Irena Šimić, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
Ivana Vlaić, University of Split, FGAG

III. Participants

Bruno Bartulović
Marin Bodrožić
Luka Čakić
Inka Černić
Stjepan Dragoja
Diana Jukić
Stefani Maša Majčica
Nikola Mihaljević
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Ivana Pamuković
Samantha Vanessa Pavić
Marija Petričević
Dora Stupalo
Karlo Ugarković
Ena Vladislavić
Domagoj Vučinović
Katarina Vuletić

IV. Background and Relevant Issues

Historical Fabric

In 1979, Diocletian's Palace, part of the historical core of the city of Split, was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List. In the early medieval period, within the ancient walls of this compact industrial-cum-residential structure, a city had developed. In the course of time, the city spread outside the framework of its fortifications – first ancient, and then medieval, Baroque, today having reached its topographic limits.

The original Roman structure of the Palace was built at the turn of the 3rd and 4th centuries, in the shape of a trapezoid, sized 175-181:216 m (in line with the topography and the existing settlement within which it fit, in a protected bay on the southern side of a little Adriatic peninsula, beneath Marjan Hill. It has to be said that the Palace was not completed at that time. And during the building process, it underwent a change of purpose, and it is in this original incompleteness and adaptability that the root of its vitality is to be sought. Later periods were to show that not a single moment was powerful enough to erase this adaptable ancient form, but would anatomise it into a number of places connected with different times within the same spatial framework.

This architectural unit underwent just such a huge transformation at the beginning of the 7th century when it served as a bolthole for refugees from nearby Salona fleeing from the assaults of the nomadic tribes – the Avars and Slavs. Like an abandoned shell, the Palace afforded protection to the refugees, as well as a chance for the integration and organisation of social relations: the framework for a city. The appearance of the Palace's architecture today is witness to the many layers of past human activities, which is enabled by its potentials for transformation and adaptability to new contents. The adjustment of form to change in living conditions, and in line with new spatial and functional needs, preserved the sequence of historical layers within the ancient walls of the Palace.

Diocletian's Palace - The Living Monument

The original programme of Diocletian's Palace had no single meaning. As continued settled the Late Antique Palace is today the historical core of a city of Split. Preservation of the spirit of the city is a process that is constantly built upon, developed. Jacques Derrida writes in the essay "Généralités d'une ville: mémoire, prophétie, responsabilités"(1998): "A city is a whole that always has to retain an unsaturated structure, which has to be open to its own transformation, to expansions that distort it to the minimum or dislocate the memory of its heritage. A city has to remain open to what is known. And it knows that it does not know what is yet to come. This respect for nescience has to be inscribed as theme into science and into architectural and town planning competence", developing the spatial logic of incompleteness.

A Confluence of Contradictory Interests: Tourism, Conservation, and Modernization

Diocletian's Palace has retained both its residential and public character to this day, when, as dominant part of the historical core of Split, split off from the rest of the growing city. In its cramped framework the Palace has been forced to yield to the pressures of tourism. Notwithstanding its positive effects – such as a remarkable increase in the standard of conservation of individual heritage buildings, and the upgrading of museums and the commercial features of the town – tourism involves even more negative consequences: the reduction of the permanent population within the city's nucleus, the distortion of the balance of public, semi-public and private functions, and other similar consequences that derive from a necessary adjustment to the requirements of mass, short-term tourism concentrated almost exclusively in the summer. Diocletian's Palace does not provide a coherent image of a complex urban-architectural unit, but is fragmented by the domination of just a few of the most attractive scenes from antiquity, isolated from urban context. The reason for this impression of isolation is precisely due to the distortive effects of singling out individual monuments of the Palace rather than considering the Palace as a whole, including its 'neutral' urban tissue.

Mat-organization

The effects of Mat-Organization proliferate into architecture, infrastructure, urbanism, and landscape. While mat-organization absorbs all scales, it maintains a framework of part to whole relationship and various interrelated organizational systems to remain malleable and transformable in respect to growth and changes. The framework provides rule sets for expansion, contraction, and densification to re-establish new architectural relationships depending on shifting needs and functions. The Diocletian's Palace operates like a mat-building at an urban scale through its adaptability and transformation in

function, program, form, and spatial organization. The sequence of historical layers manifest at various scales merging architecture, infrastructure, and urbanism in the form of mat-organization.

V. Rationale and Aims

The workshop poses the question of architecture and urbanism's efficacy when faced with a piece of architecture of such immense historical lineage. It seeks to explore the Diocletian's Palace by shifting the perception of monument to interconnected, living mat-organization. Investigation on how smaller orders are engrained within the palace's urban fabric will inform how these orders might reciprocate the effects of the palace as a living monument, thereby discovering the potential of the palace as an organization of systems for progressive architecture and urban speculations.

In order to attain the preconditions for as good as possible an understanding of the potentials of Diocletian's Palace as a live and adaptable spatial and functional system, the workshop starts with research into dystopias, that is, with the negation of the thesis of the interconnectedness of the parts of the Palace at various levels of form and function, as precondition for its vitality, by testing out extreme counterfactual ("What if") scenarios.

This workshop provides an opportunity to study mat building systems in an expanded scale and context as well as in a smaller scope zooming into selected areas within the palace for temporary intervention such as the south-eastern quadrant. The section is an extremely valuable site that lost its relationship with the context following the process of purification during the 20th century. Revitalization of the south-eastern quadrant can be tested by introducing new programs that could serve as the basis for attempts to discover optimal design solutions for that area. The goal is to restructure the existing space for its temporary experimental exposure to new topics. Testing of the site may include proposals for temporary contemporary intervention. The theme of the provisional intervention or pavilion is simultaneously universal and local. The experimental expression by which such a pavilion could establish communication with the given context and help find the language of stability between the new spatial interventions and sensitive locations.

VI. Format and Procedures

Walking Tour

by Goran Nikšić, Head of the Service for the Old City Core, City of Split

The tour begins with a short introduction to the historic core of Split, with an overview of the recent research and a new interpretation of Diocletian's Palace, discussing its original use, planning, building site organization, changes of design during the construction, and the reasons for mistaken, incomplete or clumsy details. In the course of the visit to the most significant buildings within the Palace – the substructures of the Emperor's apartments, the central square Peristyle, the Mausoleum (transformed into the medieval Cathedral), Jupiter's Temple (converted into the Baptistery) and Porta Aurea (the main gate to the Palace) – their meaning shall be examined under the light of discoveries made during the recent restoration works and archaeological research.

In the past centuries Diocletian's Palace has inspired local master builders and craftsmen, and has also attracted the attention of many visitors, among others a number of distinguished artists and architects. We shall try to explain how the perception of the Late Antique building by Adam, Clérisseau, Cassas, Hébrard and Niemann influenced the modern understanding and evaluation of the site. Apart from the imperial palace itself, the lively historic city with its superposition of historic layers, often in reverse order, with dramatic perspectives worthy of Piranesi, has kept its fascination until today.

Lectures

The workshop will offer a series of lectures to introduce mat-organization, historical and contemporary context of the Diocletian's Palace, and contemporary architectural issues in Split. The lectures will be vital in understanding the keys forces and influences as ways to analyze and to design intervention on site.

Analysis

Students will analyze and conceptualize architectural and urban influences as systems that are performative / operational/ organizational: accessibility, climate, tourism, street patterns, structure, zoning,

circulation, materiality, collage, etc. Analysis will experiment with the paranoid critical method to produce a set of obsessive and focused drawings of the selected system.

Design speculation

Design exercise will begin by establishing novel correlation between different layers of system through mapping.

Students will develop micro-design narratives that test the architecture and urban logics of the palace with "What if" scenarios by testing extreme conditions/transformations. Design will be done at the scale of urban, building, and material.

Examination of 'What if' possible futures is carried out on the whole of the Palace, through four dominant types of extremes (each of them being tested by one of the four groups of students):

- function (mono-functionality)

extreme simplification of purpose: examination of an intensive cultural or educational purpose within the Palace; examination of intensive residential / tourist orientation, with no public contents // the Palace as campus; the Palace as multi-residential building; the Palace as hotel //

- form (purification)

conservation as purification: examination of extreme preservation of elements of marked heritage value that have clear signs of belonging to a given style, combined with a purging of the neutral architectural stock of the 19th and 20th century // the Palace as archaeological site and museum //

- circulation (restrictions)

extreme versions of public accessibility or inaccessibility; total privatisation of the developed parts of the Palace; clearly restricted area of public use; total accessibility of the ground floor level of the Palace // Palace as a house in the scale of the city and city in the scale of a house //

- contact areas (force of the effects of marginal conditions as against total isolation)

changing the urbanistic-architectural character of the immediate marginal conditions (Waterfront / Market/ park / medieval extension of the city) and the effect of such a change on the Palace:

testing out self-sustainability as isolated urbanistic and architectural system // the level of influence of the marginal conditions on the character of the Palace – every context is part of a higher order context //

in which each extreme will have an effect on the other parameters.

The south-east quadrant has been selected as focus for intervention precisely to try essentially to change the paradigm formed with respect to the space as 'no man's land', as against the perception of it as a potentially vital part of the whole system of the Palace, with which it is still inseparably connected, even if it has been subjected to a particular kind of treatment during the 20th century. It is necessary, then, that the consequences of the 'what if' possibilities are tested out on the space of the whole of the palace as unit, in several different areas (square, street, public space, private space).

An approach based on dystopian scenarios and then on the formation of a strategic negation of such a future might show precisely this vacated space of the south-east quadrant, a space without any fulcral formal and functional points, as a place defined by function, form and lines of movement that derive from the contacts of this spatial sequence with the contact areas of the unit to which it belongs.

Influences: accessibility, densification, mega-tourism, luxury tourism, Dubrovnik-effect, extreme conservation, re-population

VII. Deliverables

Each team will produce an analysis and design speculations package

Documentation: Publication (fall 2017), selected deliveries for the exhibition in London T.B.D. (winter 2017/18)

VIII. Schedule (tentative)

July 5 – 8	Walking tours / lectures / analysis
July 9 – 14	Design speculations
July 15	Final presentation

IX. Readings

- Stan Allen, editor, *Landform Building: Architecture's New Terrain* (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2011)
- Stan Allen, *Points + Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)
- Stan Allen, "The Thick 2-D: Mat-Building in the Contemporary City", in *Practice: Architecture Technique + Representation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 192-215
- Reyner Banham, "Megayear 1964," and "Fun and Flexibility" in *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 70-103.
- Adam Frampton, Clara Wong, and Jonathan Solomo, *Cities Without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook* (San Francisco: ORO Editions , 2012)
- Rem Koolhaas, Hans U. Obrist, Kayoko Ota, and James Westcott, *Project Japan: Metabolism Talks* (Köln: Taschen, 2011)
- Neil Leach, editor, *AD Digital Cities* (London: Wiley, 2009)
- Christopher C. M. Lee, editor, *AD Typological Urbanism: Projective Cities* (London: Wiley, 2011)
- Winy Maas , Jacob . Rijs, and Richard Koek, *FARMAX: Excursions on Density* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 1998)
- Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978)
- Jesse Reiser and Nanako Umemoto, *Atlas of Novel Tectonics* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006)
- Hashim Sarkis and Pablo Allard, *Case: Le Corbusier's Venice Hospital and the Mat Building Revival* (Munich: Prestel, 2001)
- Rafi Segaland Els Verbakel, editors, *AD Cities of Dispersal* (Chichester: Wiley, 2008)
- Alison Margaret Smithson, "How to Recognize and Read Mat-Building" in *Architectural Design XLIV*, 9 (1974)573-590
- Alison Margaret Smithson, editor, *Team 10 Primer* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1974)
- M. Ungers, *Morphologie: City Metaphors* (Cologne, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walter Koenig, 3rd edition 2012)
- Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960)
- Herman Hertzberger, *Lessons for students in Architecture* (010 Publishers, 2001)
- Constant Nieuwenhuys, and Mark Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon : the Hyper-architecture of Desire* (Rotterdam: Witte de With, Center for Contemporary Art , 1998)
- Momoyo Kajijima, Junzō Kuroda, and Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, *Made In Tōkyō* (Tōkyō: Kajima Shuppankai, 2001)
- Peter Lang and William Menking, *Superstudio : Life Without Objects* (Milano: Skira , 2003)
- Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982)
- Ana Šverko, *A City is (not) a House. A Dialogue Between the New and the Old Split* (Zagreb: UPI2M books, 2016)
- Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998)
- Ungers, Koolhaas, Riemann, Kolhoff, Ovaska, *The City In the City : Berlin : a Green Archipelago* (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2013)
- Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning From Las Vegas* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972)
- Darovan Tušek, editor, *Split: 20th Century Architecture* (Zagreb: FGAG, 2011)