

The Croatian Architects' Association is inviting you to submit your proposals for the Croatian 50th anniversary Exhibition „Zagreb Salon – architecture and urban design“.

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TENCY
ZAGREB SALON 2015

The Zagreb Salon is a renowned Croatian national exhibition of recent achievements in the arts – an annual review of contemporary creative work dedicated alternately to visual arts, to architecture and urban design, and the applied arts and design.

According to the settled sequence of events, at this year's Salon, the 50th, works from the area of architecture and urban design are going to be shown. The Exhibition *Consistency* selected by Hrvoje Njirić, will take place in Zagreb at the end of September 2015.

First time in its long tradition, Zagreb Salon is going to have a special category for international works from European Union.

Project submission by e-mail is until 5th August. You are kindly asked to communicate the date of the submission in order to fulfill requests for the exhibition.

Please send your application on the following e-mail: tajnistvo@uha.hr

To complete your submission of 3 works chosen by your National Architects' Association it is necessary to enclose the following documents*:

1. Image material (photos, renderings, diagrams): min. 5, max. 10 documents, size min. 1800 px (width or height), the size of each document max. 5 MB.
2. Floor plans / sections (vector): max. 6 documents, PDF, file a particular document max. 5 MB.
3. Essay - relevant text arguments within the 250 words maximum . Works without the required text or with the supplied "technical description" will not be considered.

International category is selection of both implemented and project works realized in the last 3 years that are answering on this year's Salon concept. The works of architects and urban designers range from the interior to the urban plan.

Consistency by Hrvoje Njirić

This year's edition of Zagreb Architecture Salon will not deal with architects nor with architecture, but with the way of reflecting architecture. From today's perspective, the specific *modus operandi* of a master-builder seems like a somewhat forgotten skill whose discursive nature places it on the other side of interpreting the reality, on the safe distance from the sheer engineering and design. This exhibition will offer a current understanding and interpretation of this phenomenon in all its diversity.

In the period since the last two editions of Salon dedicated to architecture, Croatia has been affected by an array of adversities which have significantly changed the circumstances in which architects think and work. Economic crisis on the global level is backed up by its own version of unsuccessful economy, fruitless political confrontations and clannish lethargy, so we can speak about a multitude of difficulties which influence the current state of architecture. Some obstacles are of institutional and political nature, and others are a consequence of deficiency in professionalism and education.

On the other hand, isn't it finally high time to refer to the adjective "Agramer" which gives a special significance to Salon's three-year resume, and which commits the authors and the selector to make a comparison with a positive heritage of Zagreb school of architecture? What is "Agramer" in the local culture? This doesn't refer only to the interwar and postwar "Moderna" movement on the territory of Zagreb, but also to the previous periods and wider territory of Republic of Croatia. Which are the determinants of this tradition, suggested by the *critical history* of Croatian architecture of 20th century? Promoting the specific local culture through moderately avant-garde projects, the pronounced social engagement, engineering component and contextuality are some of the aspects which we would like to be able to recognize, in a transformed and adapted form, in the work of contemporary creators. And what are the manifestations of Agramer contemporaneity?

Croatian architecture reflects the situation in which the echoes of the positive tradition are in conflict with present-day situations and other negative circumstances. In the period of the reduced amount of work and a changed structure of investors, isn't this a perfect timing to turn to promotion of quality instead of quantity? In the moment when the objective, public judgment via architectural competitions is slowly but surely disappearing, isn't it wise to turn on the *autocorrect* and start cultivating the *consistency* in our projects ourselves?

"Consistency" is a title of the last lecture by the Italian writer Italo Calvino in the series of lectures called «Six Memos for the Next Millennium»(1988)ⁱ. Conceived as a final accord of the series, not necessarily of only literary phenomena, this notion tries to encompass features such as lightness, quickness, exactitude, visibility and multiplicity. Transposing this idea into domain of architecture means that we will look for works which by their procedural and inner logic approach the ideal of easy and accurate statement, works which summarize the multiple phenomena of the present time in a clearly visible way, and which consistently apply the mental patterns on all the levels of creating an architectural piece of work. In order to be able to display sufficient number of projects at the exhibition, we will also consider those works which at least in some segments (function, role in the urban space, construction, context, sustainability – you name it...) show a certain consistency, a distinctly structured mode of thinking and innovation.

Furthermore, in Croatian cultural space we rarely find a mediation of an architectural concept through a text. Creative writing should be a constituent part of educational curriculum in the field of architectureⁱⁱ. We should strive for an inspired essay, instead of a terse „technical description“. Besides, a verbal articulation is an operational model to mediate the idea of a house into a wider

social context – academic, institutional, corporate. Significance and power of such procedure lies in the fact that abstraction of the textual expression enables the whole array of imaginable pictorial interpretations and renditions which raise the collocutor to the level of an equal participant in the process. It was difficult to resist the idea of radical application of this attitude – Salon of the texts...

„Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! Tell us in not more than 250 words why your girl is the sweetest girl in town.“ – Guy Debordⁱⁱⁱ will exclaim in his psycho-geographical, situationist edition „Fin de Copenhague“(1957). By paraphrasing Debord, we expect the applying architects to tell us „in 250 words“ why they think that their work should be exhibited at this year's Salon.

Accordingly, the ultimate ambition of this exhibition is to mobilize the latent capacities of architects to produce a concise and impressive textual presentation of their own work as the ultimate pledge of consistency.

ⁱSix Memos for the Next Millennium, Italo Calvino, Vintage International, New York 1993

ⁱⁱ Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, University of Split is curenly working on this (2015)

ⁱⁱⁱFin de Copenhague, Asger Jorn, Editions Allia, 2001