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WHEN ARCHITECTURE BECOMES AN IMAGE AND THE IMAGE IS READ AS ARCHITECTURE

GDY ARCHITEKTURA STAJE SIĘ OBRAZEM, A OBRAZ CZYTANY JEST JAK ARCHITEKTURA

Abstract

The interdisciplinarity of space creation opens up the opportunities for multifaceted research into sources, objectives and methods of expression. The reciprocal nature of relationships between illustrated visions and forms that capture imagination is an introduction to the subsequent design decisions. It is an excuse for transferring technical graphs into painting or drawing planes, which are closely linked to the quality of the design composition. Pure, abstracted artistic message inspires and encourages a different look at architecture while pointing to the unlimited possibilities for promoting architectural ideas. It also emphasises the importance of the impact the image has on viewer's imagination, as well as stimulates and provokes further dialogue. "Architecture becomes an image – the image is read as architecture".

Keywords: plan, view, representation, interpretation, image

Streszczenie

Interdyscyplinarność kreacji przestrzeni otwiera możliwości wielopłaszczyznowego poszukiwania źródeł, celu i metod ekspresji. Zwrotny charakter relacji pomiędzy zobrazowanymi wizjami i anektującymi wyobraźnię formami stanowi wstęp do implementacji kolejnych decyzji projektowych. Jest pretekstem do transferu technicznych grafów na malarskie czy rysunkowe płaszczyzny, powiązane ściśle z jakością kompozycji projektowej. Czysty, wyabstrahowany przekaz plastyczny inspiruje oraz zachęca do innego spojrzenia na architekturę, zwraca uwagę na nieograniczone możliwości upowszechniania idei architektonicznych, podkreśla wagę oddziaływania obrazem na wyobraźnię odbiorcy, uaktywnia i prowokuje do dalszego dialogu. „Architektura staje się obrazem – obraz czytany jest jak architektura”.

Słowa kluczowe: rzut, przekrój, zapis, interpretacja, obraz

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you record the space
 with the line of proportion
 shaping the object
 dressed in future
 you compose the place
 with the context of colour
 and the texture of emotion
 so that one day
 you could decode
 this inspiration for continuation
 you record the space...

“The form is the foundation; the conception of art depends on thorough understanding of the form”¹.

In the field of art the form defines those characteristics, which are related to shape (sculpture, architecture) and the structure of representation, notation (poetry, novels, music). Although the form itself does not have a direct impact on the content of a work of art, it determines the way the work of art is perceived. The concept of form can be considered in two ways: as a composition and as a shape. In ancient times, the composition was associated with harmony, symmetry and compositional order. The Pythagoreans maintained that there can be no art without proportion and proportion is expressed by numbers. Thus all art is created with numbers. There is a certain ratio in sculptures and in paintings. Thanks to the proportion, the absolute correctness of a work of art can be achieved. Generally, all art is a system of perceptions and the system is expressed in numbers, so we can rightly say that “thanks to numbers everything looks beautiful”².

Rudolf Arnheim wrote: “When perceiving a shape we always, consciously or unconsciously, assume that this shape represents something and, as a result, it is a form of a certain content”³.

The normative nature and the visible shape of content can be encapsulated in a series of drawings and paintings depicting the space represented by technical notation – floor plan, plan view – in the form of an independent artistic message. The dualism combines architectural composition (based on proportions, modules, numbers) with the shape of the outer shell, which is a sculptural element enhanced by the technical content of the function. Interpretation – an original graphical record of technical notation, which is the vehicle for engineering ideas – acts as an incentive to exploring the area of individualisation of defining a named space. It points to the unlimited possibilities for promotion of architectural ideas, emphasises the importance of the impact an image has on the viewer’s imagination,

¹ A. Osęka, *Spojrzenie na sztukę*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1987, p. 8.

² W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia estetyki. T. I.: Estetyka starożytna. Estetyka pitagorejczyków. Teksty pitagorejczyków i Heraklita*, Wrocław–Kraków 1960, s. 103-105.

³ R. Arnheim, *Sztuka i percepcja wzrokowa, Psychologia twórczego oka*, Oficyna s.c., p. 54-76.

stimulates and provokes further dialogue, at the same time creating a new quality. The new quality here is a kind of a mediator whose task is to put the viewer into a desired state of mind, with the emphasis on emotions, cognition and identity⁴. The illustrative architecture – a visual commentary on plans and views of a specific construction, in a form of drawings or paintings – is a part of the creative process as well as the confirmation of relationship between the value of a design structure and the value of an artistic image. The purity of shapes, proportions, the genuineness of materials. Simplicity resulting from well-considered, perused assumptions. The non-obvious in the obvious. The perfection that encourages continuation of the already partially completed plans. Architectural plans and views as a representation of space in a planar form, a carefully composed cohesive whole, with a great attention to detail, is an intriguing proposal for further development of the subject, broadening the spectrum of the designer's expression. The prerequisite here is the quality of the captured-designed space of architectural interiors and urban spaces, which developed into 3D accompany us in everyday life. They give us a sense of security while comforting us both physically and mentally. The perfection of architectural creation is an indicator in terms of composition, colours and execution of the main object. Architecture becomes the fabric of the image, causing the image to be perceived as architecture. Every stroke of brush is a piece of information, the combination of colours is a result of the observation of structure and detail, shades create depth and space, an ambiguity in the subjective perception of interpretation. The system of norms, numbers, line-connected shapes presented in the form of an artistic message, translates into relationships between craft and pure art. The art may have many incarnations and each one of them has their own *raison d'être*⁵. Its multidimensionality allows for crossing symbolic borders, bringing to life new means of cognition. Collections of graphs create a transposition into the planes of imaginary worlds, recorded on paper or canvas. The existence of these in different contexts and environments leads to a new quality of impressionistic perception. This is a reflexive relationship. The consequence of this in the process of space creation is taking inspiration from painting compositions. There are known examples of translating parts of a painting into the initial concept phase of a retail-banking complex, after previous studies, analyses and research on correspondence and interdependence of the meaning⁶. The simultaneity of events highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the architect's work, caught up in the macro and micro scales, in relationships between them and conclusions drawn from them. An architect "who is born with an innate duty" to promote the culture, to create a functioning beauty, and who is obliged to find a compromise between higher values and investor's satisfaction. And, finally, the "craftsman-artist" architect, independently developing their technique. Following the thought of Peter Zumthor who says, "Architecture has its own area of existence. It is neither the message nor the sign, but the frame and the background for the transient life, a sensitive

⁴ S. Gzell, *O Architektury, Szkice pisane i rysowane*, Wydawnictwo Blue Bird, Warszawa 2014, p. 55-66.

⁵ A. Osęka, *op. cit.*, p. 97-109.

⁶ K. Śluchocka, *Centrum Biznesu, Dyplom magisterski*, Instytut Architektury i Planowania Przemysłowego, Wydział Budownictwa Lądowego, Politechnika Poznańska, Poznań 1991.

vessel for the rhythm of steps, for the focus at work and the silence at night”⁷, you can add that architecture as a representation also provokes the creation of artistic visions through painting and drawing, which is the confirmation of the vibrancy of life in real spaces, adding to the impressionistic perception and viewer’s field of visual perception, visions which can also be an excuse for both future project implementations and formal discussions on numbers and shapes.

architecture – space and emotions

The dualism represented by the geometric surface structure, marked by the emotion of gesture, enclosed in a selected range of colour – separable – in the structure of the image, constitutes a formal unity. The synergy of an assumption in the impressionistic perception enhances the interactivity and dialogue with various painting traditions as well as opens up interesting prospects for initiating diverse cultural reflections and discussions, concerning not only the potential of perfectly formed piece of architectural work. The diffusion of fascination associated with one area of culture into another, with the noticeably oppositional nature and identity, intensifies the clarity of the artistic message, which depends on time, place and context. It is also form-dependant. The transfer of architectural qualities into the medium of painting determines the direction of its own creative pursuits. The author’s statement that architectural, drawing and painting representations – are the worlds where there is a clear attempt to find the meaning and the truth, discover secret, unexpected corners of the space, it is a way leading to the new, it is the diffusion of the real world into the world of imagination, resulting in the series of paintings entitled “Interpretations”. The allusions of architectural experiences combined with painting-related composition order are an example of the interdisciplinary creative articulations where one piece of work takes advantage of solutions belonging to the areas of different media. Transformation of the autonomous considerations supported by the architect’s work experience into a language of artistic expression shows the cognitive methodology may be used here, resulting in the positive transfer in the areas of architecture and painting (practising in one area will help to improve the other). The representation of architectural drawings, the main form of communication on an engineering level, is a collection of pieces of information on compositional matrix, a precise structure. The grid of lines is a code for construction, understood by designers. As a graphic message it inspires and invites to taking a different look at architecture. It provokes, it sets the target which is to add to the two dimensions the third one, the most important one: the depth, which is based on the analysis and synthesis of a specific construction, its interior or exterior components. It stimulates imagination, initiating the journey into the unlimited world of questions and answers arising during the creation of works and finding an explanation in the works that follow.

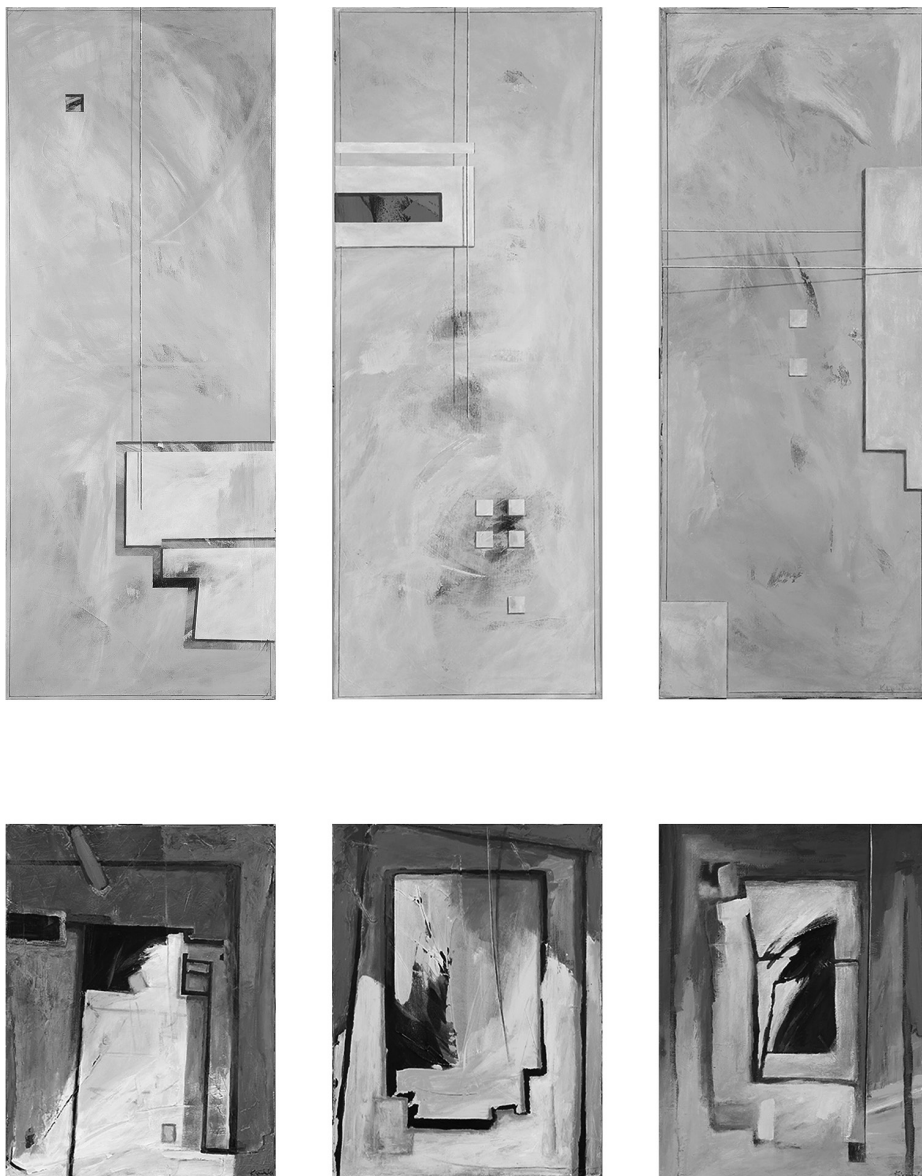
interpretation ↔ image ↔ cognitive reaction

ARCHITECTURE – ARCHEOLOGY – Archaeological Reserve *Genius loci* in Poznan – in the pursuit of painting and drawing inspirations.

⁷ P. Zumthor, *Myślenie architekturą*, Karakter, Kraków 2010, p. 12.

Archaeological Reserve *Genius loci* is a kind of architectural frame – a contemporary illustration of ancient builders’ construction achievements, which gives us a chance for “time travels”. The architectural form of the object, developed on the basis of existing data – timber and stone defensive structure of the stronghold of the first rulers – the Piast dynasty, dating back to the second half of the 10th century and the adjoining relics of defensive walls built by Bishop Lubranski in the 16th century, is a testimony of the technical thought of the past, which we can now admire while creating the next chapters of history. The layers of the earth revealing the stages of the construction works, the use and the destruction of the stronghold can be described as carefully collected messages which we can now employ by decoding them. Exploring the secrets of the past, presented in the Archaeological Reserve *Genius loci* as well as in the further parts of the series of paintings “Interpretations”, we can find the record of the space of architectural world which treats subjectively the abstracted and re-composed in an artistic way parts of the museum plan, transferred into vertical planes of canvass. This transfer into lightly coloured but precisely formed spheres of imagination linked with the association of the actual place. The author’s provocation, putting the viewer into the “viewing from above” position, dedicates this moment to the dialogue with the creator, so that we can forget about everything else and just be “right now, right there”⁸. The focus on identifying lines, systems of the symbols and colour details automatically opens up the range of cognitive possibilities through the number and quality of the stimuli which are capturing our imagination and increasing the receptiveness of our mind, facilitating the assimilation of, in this case, historical data as well as the results of archaeologists’ work. The process of interaction imposes on us an increased perceptive and interpretative activity. The composition of paintings invites us to exploring our own areas, rich in words – terms transformed into geometrical forms. They should be read on many levels, just as the archaeological layers. The technical drawing inspiration, the plan of one of the floors, filled with grey and white, in a form of vigorously put patches of colour, opens the door into the labyrinth of the past, which is almost tangible, and at the same time playing with the recipient’s imagination, where the proverbial drawing board becomes a game board, and we are the creators of the space. Each gesture applied raises out awareness, every noticeable mark of a tool expands our knowledge, and every stroke of a brush is another piece of the jigsaw, intricately woven history of events. The colour scheme used in the series of paintings, limited to the shades of grey and ashy browns, in places saturated with red, refers to the colours of the earth and its hidden secrets, and also to the colours of glass and concrete slabs which are the finishing building materials of the object. This unification contributes to the bringing to the fore the problem of content notation, while evoking the associations with the Archaeological Reserve. It creates a well-knit series of images which could still be on the diary pages of a Poznań resident and at the same time it could be a form of architect’s artistic expression.

⁸ T. Matuszewicz, *Katarzyny Słuchockiej Malarska Zasada Nie Obiektywizmu*, VIA STUDIO Radosław Karbowski, Poznań 2014, p. 5-6.



III. 1. Personal Distance (Odległość personalna), acrylic, 130×50, K. Słuchocka

III. 2. Duality of Matter (Dwoistość materii), acrylic, 130×50, K. Słuchocka

III. 3. Assigned (Wyznaczone), acrylic, 130×50, K. Słuchocka

III. 4. Inside (Wewnątrz), acrylic, 65×50, K. Słuchocka

III. 5. Cooped Up (W zamknięciu), acrylic, 65×50, K. Słuchocka

III. 6. Layers (Warstwowość), acrylic, 65×50, K. Słuchocka

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