

# Critiques of architectures

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The actual dynamics of the editorial market, characterized by the transfer of certain discursive functions from the printed to the digital sphere, are causing a deep transformation of architectural discourse, having opened, indeed, the way to new paths of experimentation, that several independent editors are now developing on web and social platforms, but also having brought to marginalization practices that, until few years ago, seemed inseparable from our system of production and transmission of knowledge.

One of the most sacrificed of these practices is, with little doubt, the critical review of the work of architecture, which today seems to have lost its former role of verification of the real and steer wheel of future researches, having been progressively exchanged for narratives that are mostly functional to the logics of entertainment. The literal and acritic transcription of the studios' press releases, become routinary not only in the majority of online platforms, but even in some well known printed magazines (see the curious case of Domus), is one of the most evident symptoms of a crisis that is structural to the whole editorial system, the subsistence of which seems now to depend more on the speed of contents transmission, than on their elaboration.

First consequence of such condition, the diffuse withdrawal from critical writing is playing a negative influence on architectural design itself, which, due to the scarcity of narratives capable of making explicit the volume of intelligence contained in the best works, and under the continuous pressure of digital images, is being literally flattened

down to the surface. At the same time, it is becoming more and more difficult to establish value gerarchies that allow to define what architectures, being capable of representing their time in a paradigmatic way, should be considered as references for the near future.

It is therefore in reaction to these problematics, that the present issue of Viceversa is dedicated to the "critiques of architectures", using both terms in plural in order to stress the prolific diversity of the points of view that are expressed in it, as well as the necessity to return to the investigation of the single works. Each contributor has been invited to choose one project (or a group of projects) built or unbuilt, belonging to the first fifteen years of the XXI century, and thought to be highly representative of its historical period, as well as an important reference for the dynamics that will characterize the architecture of the near future. For each work, an in-depth analysis has been requested, in order to bring to the fore both its specific characteristics, and the relations it establishes with its (social, cultural, economic...) context.

Then, fortunately, the invited authors did what they wanted.