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Spring, news, and forthcoming events

Our newsletter is back – together with the return of spring and blossoming nature. Since spring is an inspiring time, we have introduced a new regular column – devoted to masters of architecture whose achievements and personal attitude provide us with inspiration in both professional and personal areas of life. We will start off with a few words of advice from two renowned architects – Stanisław Fiszer and Peter Zumthor.

The forthcoming issue will present a new project prepared for a competition for a “Meeting of Cultures” cultural centre in Lublin. The project is a joint work of architects from Gray International and Dedeco. It is certainly exceptional due to its sheer magnitude and the approach and solutions proposed. According the press, 24 projects from across Europe have entered the competition. The winner will be announced in early May.

We have also updated and improved our website (www.grayinter.pl), which now features a record of our achievements and awards. With feelings of pride and modesty, we kindly invite you to have a look at our successes.

Inspirations

In a recent interview, Stanisław Fiszer – Jury Chairman for the “Meeting of Cultures” architectural competition – answers the question if architecture is art or craft: “It is certainly craft, not art. It corresponds to the needs of the ordering party. It would be impossible to start on a project and say that this will be a work of art. Such an approach is unacceptable both from the ideological and technical point of view.”

Peter Zumthor, winner of this year’s Pritzker Architectural Prize (the “Nobel Prize” of architecture), commented on winning the honoured distinction: “This should give much hope to young professionals that if they strive for quality in their work it might become visible without any special promotion.”

Explaining his work philosophy in “Thinking Architecture”, Zumthor writes: “In a society that celebrates the inessential, architecture can put up a resistance, counteract the waste of forms and meanings, and speak its own language. I believe that the language of architecture is not a question of a specific style. Every building is built for a specific use in a specific place and for a specific society. My buildings try to answer the questions that emerge from these simple facts as precisely and critically as they can.”

And:

“Why do we have so little confidence in the basic things architecture is made from: material, structure, construction, bearing and being borne, earth and sky, and confidence in spaces that are really allowed to be spaces.”

“To me, buildings can have a beautiful silence that I can associate with attributes such as composure, self evidence, durability, presence and integrity, and with warmth and sensuousness as well; a building that is being itself, being a building, not representing anything, just being.”

Modesty, enormous talent, and a respectful approach to the site, local culture, history, needs and the environment, so evident in the works of the above architects, combined with the mastery of their achievements – these qualities form a valuable lesson for us, teaching us to adhere to the values that respect the people in their integrity and in relation to their environment.

Spring is here, work in progress

Our architects are keeping the pace. Having completed the project for the “Meeting of Cultures” cultural centre competition, they immediately started working on a new competition – this time for the Lublin Congress Centre and the Marshal’s Office, which are to accompany the Meeting of Cultures Centre in Lublin. The competition will be fierce as over 100 design agencies from all over the world have filed in their applications. The deadline has been scheduled for 15 June 2009. It looks like spring will indeed be a busy time for Gray International.

Agreement between Gdańsk authorities and Gray International concerning the Granary Island

On 26 March 2009, the President of the City of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, and the President of Gray International, Ryszard Leśniewski, signed an annex extending the validity of the Letter of Intent concerning the cooperation of the two parties on the development of the Granary Island in Gdańsk.

Works on the adoption of a new master plan for the entire Granary Island by the Municipal Office in Gdańsk are drawing to a close. This process has been inspired by the urban concepts developed for the Granary Island in 2006 and 2007 by Gray International, acting in cooperation with the best European specialists on waterfront developments.

