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The Productive Metropolis

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Project info

Different economic eras are reflected in their architecture and structures. Over the past decades, the renewal of the European Metropolis has marginalized industrial architecture and driven it out of the city centers. Old factories have been demolished or reused and have lost their function and identity. Big cities are turning into places of consumption, without production. It causes economic and social imbalance. A post-industrial city is not a complete one.

London has a long and proud manufacturing tradition. Craftsmen and light industry still play a significant role in the economy of the region. With the shift to cleaner and more compact production technologies factories can be integrated into the mixed central parts of the city in ways that were previously unacceptable.

»The Beautiful and Sublime. Productive Metropolis« examines the possibility of a contemporary industrial typology which would reintroduce local production into the landscape and social life of London. In order to create a prominent building, I explored the aesthetic categories of beautiful and sublime. Modernism sacrificed the search for beauty in architectural practice for calculated efficiency. The early factories however successfully combined progressive functionality with utopian ideas. This duality resulted in beautiful and symbolic landmarks.

The two main criteria for the successful implementation of the urban factory are representation and density. Multistoried organization of production spaces is a sustainable alternative to expanding city infrastructure and exploiting cheap country land by multiplying anonymous industrial sheds. Vertical factory conserves land, time and resources. The monumental volume tapers upwards emphasizing its tallness and reacting to the requirements of different production processes and to the structural concept. The central location calls for a powerful identity and a public character of the building, which proposes a new way of interaction between manufacturers and city dwellers.

