

Jury report Euregional Prize for Architecture 2011

by Tim Vekemans

Over the past 2 days, we have been presented with a variety of projects, in terms of brief, methodology, program and scale. This variety has increased our interest not only for the quality of the projects themselves, but also for the process behind it, in as much as it reflects the diversity in the working procedures of the five participating universities, which we found very enlightening.

Indeed, the spectrum of the working process varies from a full year with weekly tutor contact to 3 months of solitary and very compact work without any coaching at all.

The jury felt that this second method especially resulted in projects that were presented in a more readable way. The other projects demonstrated the commitment and compact work done by the student but often did not synthesize, at least for the external viewers, all the information essential to allow a full understanding of the main concept of the project and the major elements leading to the choices made.

Judging the 30 participating projects, the jury paid special notice to the following aspects:

- Can one clearly feel the strength of personality, the passion and the devotion of the designer?
- Is there a coherence in the project – from start to finish?
- Does the student make clear decisions and is he or she able to address priorities?
- How does the project deal with the urban context or the landscape?
- Is there a “curiosity” that accelerates the designing process?
- Do we feel that the right questions are asked at every level?

We all know that graduating is an important moment in life because you turn from a student into an architect. Graduation gives you the ability to investigate things very intensively.

It is definitely not the last project of your career but hopefully, the initial curiosity will always remain.

Architecture is a strange profession and making a good plan is a difficult job. It demands both a mature approach and the curiosity of a child. We found these two attitudes in the projects we selected.

We saw many projects dealing with complex urban setting, complex programs and very large scales. The jury wondered whether this was the most adequate approach, given the time available for the projects.

We were especially attracted by the projects that carried a meaning and told us something. In that case, architecture carries a reflection; a reflection on the history of architecture but also a reflection on themes we will work on in the future.

Reflection is a form of concentration that the jury discovered in various projects.

The projects we appreciated most, were the projects that managed to keep that concentration till the end.

Keeping this in mind, it is now time to start with the **honourable mentions** of the 21st Euregional Prize for Architecture.

“Psychiatric Hospital Laboe” by Juliane Greb / FH Aachen

This project has captured the attention of all the jury members who appreciated the strength of the idea and the beauty of the layout. It is evident that the program has been intelligently thought over. The jury discussed the enclosure of the project with the choice of a location close to the seaside. We wondered whether the idea might have been carried a little further to bring out the full strength of the concept.

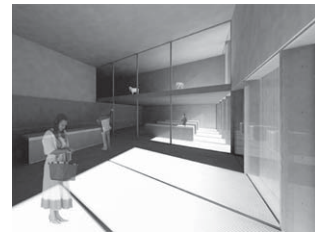
The jury was seduced by the ability to translate complex parameters into a clear ground floor plan with basic forms.



“Care Farm - Aldeneik” by Digna Hansen / PHL Hasselt

The jury appreciated the purity of the proposed implantation, its inscription within the landscape. Its a very poetic project. The jury found the programmatic proposal interesting. It is an intelligent translation of the traditional form of a care farm. The uniformity in the expression of both parts of the program, however, was not convincing.

All the same, it is a small and very sharp intervention.



“Locus Ludens” by Matthias Hoffmann / RWTH Aachen

The jury found the choice of the subject pertinent. The site is culturally and politically very complex. Yet the project manages to propose a playful solution. The strength of the project resides in the ability not to rebuild one part of the history but to show the history.



We now come to the most important part of the evening. The three prizes.

3rd prize

“A psychiatry beyond the horizon” by Andrea Carmen Kuhn / RWTH Aachen

The project is clear and powerful and at the same time romantic. The jury found the non-compromising position of the project fascinating. However this extreme position led to a lot of discussion and polarized the jury. Some members found the ideology dangerous whereas others found it intriguing in its maximization of the chosen idea.

The presentation was found brilliant and in total coherence with the project.



2nd Prize

“Outremeuse’s door” by Florence Modave / Faculté d’Architecture Université Liège

This project deals with an actual problem, taking a historical building into the 21st century. Despite a certain weakness in the presentation, the jury appreciated the elegance and the simplicity of the added volume. It creates an interesting new space which reactivates the old building. The connection between the old and the new is well mastered.



1st Prize

“Flussbad und Bootshaus an der Adler, Köninggratz” by Frieder Scheuermann / RWTH Aachen

There was no doubt in the mind of the jury that this project stands out as the most coherent one. The jury highly appreciated the commitment, preciseness and poetic reflection of the project. This project shows a maturity at every level, from its conception till its presentation. The precision of the drawing matches the precision of the design. It embraces the simple moments of live.



Liège, 5th November 2011

Jury: Joost Hovenier (chairman), Almut Grüntuch-Ernst, Li Mei Tsien, Peggy Winkels, Liesbeth Vander Waeren.

Jury secretary: Tim Vekemans.