LIVING CITIES 2

THEME E17:
LIVING CITIES 2

REIMAGINING ARCHITECTURES BY CARING FOR INHABITED MILIEUS

The 17th session of Europan has set itself the goal of pursuing the same theme than Europan 16, *Living Cities*, taking these changes in the content and methods of design further.

The aim is to explore the regenerative capacities of living milieus amidst new architectural, urban and landscape ecologies that attempt to overcome the opposition between nature and culture and anthropocentrism during times marked by natural disruptions and a climate emergency.

The very possibility of living is now in doubt for all, given the excessive consumption of natural resources by certain human groups to the detriment of the needs of the global population, exceeding what planet earth can replace.

Climate emergency, overexploitation, pollution, inequality and iniquity —all these disorientations demand actions of care that address the coexistence and interrelationship of all the elements of the living world, and thus mandate a radical shift in paradigm. Joan Tronto, one of the chief political theorists of the "ethic of care", defines care as "the characteristic activity of the human species which includes all that we do in order to maintain, perpetuate and repair our world so that we can live there as well as possible."

This demands an awareness of the affiliations and interactions at work in the situations put forward for the competition. For Europan 17, the contexts demand a change towards a more immersive approach to the conception and production of space, an approach founded in care for living milieus. The habitability of Planet Earth is in question associated both with issues of metabolism (new ways of managing flows of natural elements, materials and human beings with the aim of developing circular economy) and issues of fairness and solidarity (inclusivity of actors in processes) which were already partially operative in the contexts in Europan 16.

Reimagining architectures that are embodied in "visions" and "narratives" of the evolution of sites between present and future

In response to these territorial challenges, it is more than necessary to create complex, global and dynamic spatial reconfigurations in damaged inhabited milieus in order to revitalise biological and human communities.

The care-based approach will lead to a necessary interplay of innovative, dynamic and varied project processes:

- Producing an active understanding of what is already in place, a situational intelligence;

- Repairing mistreated territories/spaces by subtraction and recreation;

- Engage in sober urban projects (reduced land consumption) and in architectural projects that are economical in terms of materials, technicality, energy, attentive to resources in their impact on the Earth;

- Reinforcing, regenerating or creating qualities of hybridisation between nature and culture;

- Linking the scale of strategic and dynamic reflection on territories (the large-scale structuring ecological challenges) with the scale of local spaces and their re-conception (everyday spaces and shared spaces);

- Imagining / creating architectures with a view to the connection between present and future and therefore their production and adaptability over time (sustainable development);

- Tackling projects with a readiness for design and production processes that involve all actors with their diversity and their differing roles.

In order to achieve this complexity, the situations that will be chosen for the Europan 17 competition must be such that the projects submitted can activate in different contexts and at different scales:

- Symbiotic links between the living world and the cultural world, vital relations between human and nonhuman beings;

- Spatial synergies, natural and cultural reconnections at different scales;

- Taking into account temporalities (cycles and rhythms of the living world and the social world) in process-projects.

How to select these inhabited milieus (situations)?

Mixing nature and culture, the Europan 17 sites can be located in numerous environments:

- City centres and suburban areas;

- Big cities and small towns;

- Peripherical sites and rural spaces.

All of them, however, will need to include the two dimensions of nature (natural elements) and culture (inhabited spaces).

They need to combine two scales: the territorial and geographical scale of the study site (which raises the big issues around ecology, mobilities…) and the smaller scale of the project site (which may range from a single building and its immediate environment to larger fragments).

WHAT IS EUROPAN?

Europan is shaping the idea of a Europe of the young architectural, urban and landscape design by federating European countries around competitions of urban-architectural projects and professional exchanges in these fields of design. Europan does so within the framework of the sustainable city and the qualitative changes that it operates, and taking into consideration the economy of resources, new mobilities and the enhancement of natural spaces.

- Europan addresses European cities in search of innovative urban answers to the evolution of lifestyles and environment.

- Europan offers young European professionals of the architectural and urban design the possibility to express new ideas in projects that contribute to the development of the European cities, and we help implement operations that materialise these ideas;

- In this context Europan sets up professional and cultural exchanges so as to better share what is common to the European countries and cities, and to benefit from each other's experiences while asserting the national, regional and local specificities.

CALENDAR

03.2022	PREPARATION research of sites	12 months
03.2023	COMPETITION projects	4 months
07.2023	EVALUATION	5 months
12.2023	IMPLEMENTATION of the processes	

Which sites for Europan 17?

E 17

SITES: SCALES AND DEFINITION

The sites can be on 3 different scales corresponding to different interests of the site actors, and linked to the different processes after the competition.

Europan wants to propose sites in each of these 3 categories:

S-Scale: Impact Site

Small sites, that nevertheless should always develop larger effects on the urban scale.

L-Scale: Articulation Site

Medium-size sites —between the urban and the architectural scale— which should respond to the site's specific logic, yet articulating it with its larger surrounding.

XL/S-Scale: Trans-local Site

Extra-large sites, considering the co-evolutions of geographical, ecological, infrastructural and cultural issues on the large scale of a territory, yet articulating them on smaller scales.

Whichever the scale —S, L or XL/S—, their site transformation must allow the different scales to entwine.

A SITE = REFLECTION AREA + PROJECT AREA

The sites must clearly define two different areas in relation to their scales.

The reflection area (defined with a red perimeter) includes the larger context of the project site with the main parameters that impact it —natural elements, mobility infrastructures, environmental and programmatic frame… It is not an obligation for competitors to propose a project for the whole reflection area but they can do so if the interventions proposed are connected to the project area.

The project area (defined with a yellow perimeter) is the one on which a more detailed project should be developed. Competitors must propose a project on this area.

Both areas —the red and the yellow one— are complementary and have mutual effects on one another.

TYPES OF SITES

1. Living in Nature in an Age of Climate Change

In preserved sites with predominant nature or spontaneously renaturalized, how to repair by strengthening biodiversity and inserting small-scale architecture into the living?

E16 Schwäbisch Gmünd (DE)
Winner — Viriditas ante portas

E16 Carouge (CH)
Winner — Gold Line

2. Creating a Coexistence of Humans and Non-Humans

In sites where built-up areas and natural fragments are juxtaposed, how to maintain or strengthen reconnections, how to repair or intensify biodiversity while making it habitable?
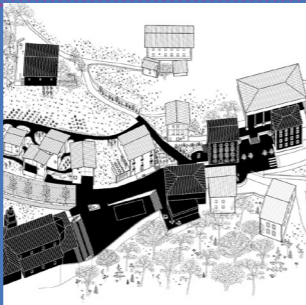

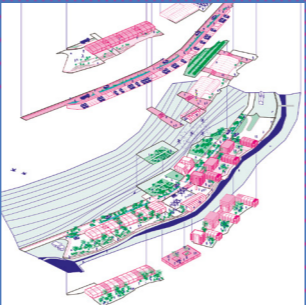E16 Niort (FR)
Winner — Niort, Port terrestre

E16 Fagerstrand (NO)
Winner — Living City, Living Sea

3. Transmission and Creation, Tuning Rhythms

How to revitalize sites with traces of obsolete uses (industrial or rural heritage) through multi-scalar connections and to adapt heritage to life cycles and rhythms?

E16 Beizama (ES)
Winner — Ongi Etorri

E16 Pont-Aven (FR)
Winner — Beatmatching

4. Restoring Scales of Proximity and of Territorial Continuity

In hybrid sites mixing productive spaces, residential spaces and natural fragments, how to create a close common ground and connect it to the territory?

E16 Klagenfurt (AT)
Winner — 5 Squares of New Learning

E16 Risøy (NO)
Winner — Ripples in the Water

5. Common Grounds

In sites to be regenerated, how to involve the inhabitants in the ecological transition of their districts?
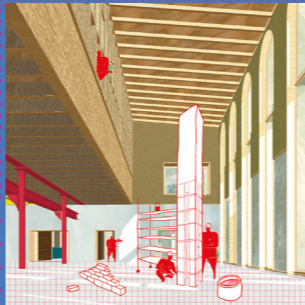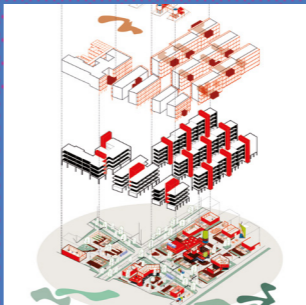

E16 Västerås (SE)
Winner — Vitality!

E16 Bitonto (IT)
Runner-up — An Atlas of Rituals

6. Second Lives

How to reinvest places that are already inhabited and where spaces are degraded, poorly adapted or obsolete, with "eco-solidary" projects?

E16 Brussels (BE)
Winner — Architecture Centre for Regenerative Materials

E16 Almendralejo (ES)
Winner — La increíble historia…

BRIEFS AND SYNTHETIC DOCUMENTS

The Briefs must be clear and the site representatives must correctly express the types of innovative answers they are looking for.

An introduction page in the Brief —with one short text and 2 pictures only— will summer up the site problematic and its relation to the session theme.

The presentation of the site and the context must be done on the 3 different scales, explaining the site's spatial policies: the scale of the territory (XL), of the city (L) and of the site itself (S).

The Brief must make understandable the ecological, sociologic and cultural frame the site transformation is included in —i.e. the context's natural, human and symbolic dimensions.

The site must come with a programmatic frame negotiated with the site representatives. It must nevertheless give some flexibility to the competitors.

The layout of synthetic presentation (a summary in 4 pages), the integration on the website, and the Brief itself must communicate, not only technically, but also mentioning the challenge on each site (context), the research of innovation (idea) and the way to do it (process).

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

It is important to define the type of post-competition implementation process with the actors involved on each site.

The Brief should define the different potentialities of the missions —which are specific to each site and should be communicated to the teams when they are already known (partially or in total) at the start of the competition— and should give a presentation of the actors and their roles and positions in the process.

If the local actors are still considering which process to develop after the competition, they should explain how to involve the winning team in the elaboration of the process.

The sites representatives should also mention in the Brief whether they expect competitors to propose a process together with their project.