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Exploring Future Architecture - On the Threshold between Education, Research and Practice

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Master's Theses Architecture

Citation for the published paper:

Nilsson, F. (2015) "Exploring Future Architecture - On the Threshold between Education, Research and Practice". Master's Theses Architecture pp. 4-5.

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EXPLORING FUTURE ARCHITECTURE — ON THE THRESHOLD BETWEEN EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

In my view, a master's thesis in architecture is a balance point or threshold between education in an academic environment and practice in the concrete building of society. But in both cases, constant development and production of knowledge are involved.

Through the master's thesis, one should demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to work as an architect; one should have knowledge of the artistic and scientific foundation of the area, and have insight in relevant research and development. The work should prove skills to critically, independently and creatively formulate architectural problems and questions, as well as to systematically integrate knowledge and to use adequate methods.

From this point, the new architects could dive into architectural practice or deepen academic skills through research and teaching. Or to actually combine both, which has become increasingly common within architecture—to consciously work both in design practice and research. Since a couple of years, the interest for research and development of knowledge in architectural offices has strikingly increased, which probably is because of the more complex tasks and contexts architects have to deal with today. I would also argue, that it is an elucidation of that architectural work always to a large extent involves constant exploration and knowledge production—not only of what is or has been, but above all about what could become, about our possible future materialised. Architects are trained in using several methods and media that both analyse current situations and test new proposals for the future.

We face gigantic challenges in creating healthy, fair, inspiring and long term sustainable societies and built environments. We need new approaches and ways of thinking to manage the complex questions and give new knowledge to create alternative solutions. Much of this can be found in the master's theses.

What I see in this year's master's thesis exhibition are works that span a broad field of interests and questions, but that are permeated with a will to practically act to create a more sustainable society. With energy and empathy, new futures are explored and proposed for us to learn from and to try to realise—works that from many years of education now are between research and practice. Let us be inspired!

Fredrik Nilsson

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