

Urban Episodes: Derivé before Design

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1 ABSTRACT

Architecture and urban design primarily focus on visual aspects. Students are trained to produce compelling images showing innovative ways to develop existing cities further. The importance of the pictured scenario has become clear over the past decades. However, another essential skill that belongs to architects like Italo Calvino and Rem Koolhaas is to articulate what urban design means to its users. The aforementioned architect first studied to become a script writer and is now teaching how architecture should follow the logic of scenario planning. In a similar fashion, Urban Episodes maintains a project encouraging students to present a literary reflection on the urban landscape. As such, their analytic skills are trained and the results made public. By sharing these 'urban episodes' from different cities on-line, a wider audience could engage in reading the minds of young urbanists. These literary snapshots could help to see the bigger picture of postmodern cities.

Urban Episodes is an education program, nomadic by nature. The project aims to develop analytical skills of future urbanists in a playful yet pragmatic way. Sharing the results of a creative exercise will also contribute to a better understanding of contemporary cities in Europe.

Key words:

semiotics, creative writing, paranoid criticism, situationists, urban design

References:

Italo Calvino, Rem Koolhaas, Robert Venturi, Roland Barthes