



WORKSHOP ON THE CZECH-AUSTRIAN BORDER

The workshop was part of the Ecology course taught by Henry Hanson, and it placed a strong focus on social ecology. Students conducted intensive, on-site research to explore and document physical, social and environmental characteristics of selected small towns and their associated landscapes, along both sides of the Czech-Austrian border.

The histories and the landscapes, of these two sides of the border, diverged at the conclusion of WW I and became even more dramatically divergent during and after WW II. These forces of change are marked into the landscape, and the workshop offered students the opportunity to explore the factors behind them and their consequences on the built, living, cultural and economic environments.

Multidisciplinary teams, of 7 or 8 members, were composed of students from three institutions of different disciplinary studies from various parts of the world. Each team was to focus on one town in the Czech Republic and one town in Austria. The objectives were to research, analyse and document the complex landscape and its urbanisation over time; to identify factors that have influenced these changes across people and landscape; and to envision future development scenarios.



MÁME OTEVŘENO - WE ARE OPEN

As part of the annual Prague 7 event, ARCHIP's studio spaces were open to the public and a special exhibition was featured. Curators, Atoosa Ghanaei, Sinan Birsal and Megi Davitidze together with Design Disco, prepared *Outside In: Prague Happiness, Part II*. The project reflects upon the reality that public space is flooded with useless symbols and messages. Why not swap them for new ones?

Using familiar elements encountered daily within the city, such as traffic signs and benches, – yet combined with new messages – the aim was to re-associate the reading of the public sign. Signage always carries an implicit tone of voice and a symbolism that goes beyond the words themselves. The signage of this exhibition aimed to encourage and to liberate by speaking in the personalised form and by representing a more human connection between the message and the reader.

"In our exhibition, we are aiming to spark humour and comfort in a large scale of a city. This way, authorities of the city would be friends of the citizens, encouraging a lighter communal spirit. We are hoping that if these short messages and questions would be on display for long periods, it would somehow be imprinted in the public mind."

LETTERS TO THE MAYOR: PRAGUE

Letters to the Mayor is an initiative that displays letters written by architects to their city mayors. Started in 2014 by Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York, it has been presented in more than 15 cities worldwide. Letters to the Mayor: Prague is the first such iteration in the Czech Republic.

The role of the architect in the political arena has often been relegated to answering questions that others have asked. Letters to the Mayor: Prague questions this dynamic and invites architects to deliver their thoughts directly to the desks of city officials, and simultaneously into the public consciousness. The project serves as an act of evaluation of the past and the present of Prague, specifically in the transitional time between two election periods; as a research into possible scenarios and visions of the city's development; and as a starting point for further discussions on the alternative futures of Prague.

Our Rector, Regina Loukotová, was invited to join other internationally recognised architects and participate. The letters will be handed over to the Mayor of Prague during an opening event, and will be displayed in installation by artist Jan Boháč, at Norma Gallery in Prague until the end of May.



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APRIL - MAY

Also in April, students and faculty joined those of the Faculty of architecture at ČVUT, at Libenský bridge, to express their opinions against its planned demolition. Students also welcomed Spring with a school picnic in Letná park. Next month, ARCHIP will have the honour of hosting a special lecture by Mr Casimir Zdanius, Associate principal / Head of Industrial Design at Grimshaw Architects.

FINALIZING PROJECTS