



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 26 - 27 - 28 NOVEMBER 2009

# METAPHORS IN/ON ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM

In light of recent critiques of metaphors in architecture – Diller and Scofidio reject any "metaphoric associations" for their blur building (2002) – and in urbanism – Atelier Bow-Wow wants to get away from "the attitude that the city can be summarized by metaphorical expression" (2001) – the question arises about the origins, the nature and the consequences of metaphors in these contexts. However, there is little theoretical work on the subject. Among the few exceptions are "City Metaphors" by Oswald Mathias Ungers (1976) and the work of Denis Hollier on Bataille in "Against Architecture" (1989).

The absence of theoretical responses is surprising, considering that Leon-Battista Alberti, in addition to his famous "large house/small town" metaphor, already utilized organic metaphors. Additionally there has been an explosion of metaphors in urban descriptions – networks, organisms, archipelagos – symptoms of the complexity of urban environments. The absence of such theories is on the one hand not surprising if we consider how the metaphor has been associated with rhetoric, which has long since been reduced to an ornamental dimension, forgetting its original richness and complexity. On the other hand, it is surprising, considering how metaphors have been reevaluated since 1940 in scientific discourse, through the research of I. A. Richards or M. Black (without forgetting the work

of K. Bühler and W. Stählin, or, further back, Friedrich Nietzsche). It is in this context that Zradko Radman speaks of a "metaphorical turn". Hence, we hope that this conference will address the discussion brought forward by science on the cognitive and model-making nature of metaphors.

The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the implications of metaphor for architecture and urbanism, both from a theoretical and a historical point of view. The goal will be to explore the term, to open future perspectives, to understand the difference between metaphor and analogy as well as to consider the differences between metaphors about and metaphors in architecture/urbanism. Architecture, like urbanism, is never neutral. Both disciplines are always in search of legitimacy outside their disciplinary borders: they push and question their limits "from inside" or are affected "from the outside" and try to understand this challenge to their limits. Metaphor, as an instrument of translation, appears to be fundamental to understanding the "transitional" nature of architecture and urbanism. In this regard, Peter Collins' "Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture" (1965), is interesting in that it identifies four major analogies that influence architecture: biology, mechanics, gastronomy and linguistics. It is revealing, that

Collins speaks of analogies and not metaphors. At the same time, advances in programming and the application of algorithms in design in architecture and urbanism, question the nature and role of architecture. One of the most powerful and reoccurring metaphors being the biological metaphor.

The conference will last three days and will focus on three main topics: Metaphors as instruments of knowledge, metaphors in projects and metaphors in discourse. Each presentation will last 30 minutes and at the end of each day, a round-table discussion will connect the different presentations. Unless specified, papers will be presented in English. Synopses of the papers will be available in both French and English during the conference.

The conference is organized by Andri Gerber, Ecole Spéciale d'architecture de Paris.

THURSDAY 26.11.2009 / ECOLE SPECIALE D'ARCHITECTURE  
METAPHORS AS INSTRUMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE  
AMPHI CINEMA

13H REGISTRATION

13H30 INTRODUCTION  
Andri Gerber  
WELCOME  
Odile Decq, directeur de l'Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture

14H30  
Richard Coyne (Edinburgh)

15H  
Holger Schurk (Winterthur)

15H30 COFFEE BREAK

16H  
Benedikte Zitouni (Brüssels)

16H30  
Didier Faustino (Paris)

17H COFFEE BREAK

**AMPHI D**  
17H30-18H30 ROUND TABLE  
Chair: Andri Gerber, Chris Younés

FRIDAY 27.11.2009 / ECOLE SPECIALE D'ARCHITECTURE  
METAPHORS IN PROJECTS  
AMPHI CINEMA

9H30 RESUME  
Andri Gerber

10H  
Gernot Böhme (Darmstadt)

10H30  
Johannes Binotto (Zürich)

11H COFFEE BREAK

11H30  
Bernardo Secchi (Venezia)

12H  
Stephan Günzel (Berlin, Potsdam)

12H30 LUNCH BREAK

14H  
François Roche (Paris)

14H30  
Marcelyn Gow (Stockholm)

15H COFFEE BREAK

15H30  
Philippe Boudon / presentation in French

16H  
Chris Younés (Paris) / presentation in French

16H30 COFFEE BREAK

**AMPHI D**  
17H-18H30 ROUND TABLE  
Chair: Andri Gerber, Brent Patterson / French-English

18H RECEPTION

SATURDAY 28.11.2009 / CENTRE ALLEMAND D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART  
METAPHORS IN DISCOURSE

10H WELCOME  
Andreas Beyer, Director Centre Allemand d'Histoire de l'Art  
RESUME  
Andri Gerber

10H30  
Matteo Burioni (München)

11H COFFEE BREAK

11H30  
Susanne Hauser (Berlin)

12H  
Caroline Van Eck (Leiden)

12H30 LUNCH BREAK

14H  
Elisabeth Bronfen (Zürich)

14H30  
Georges Teyssot (Québec)

15H COFFEE BREAK

15H30  
Ingeborg Rocker (Harvard)

16H  
Jelle Feringa (Delft)

16H30 COFFEE BREAK

17H-18H ROUND TABLE  
Chair: Andreas Beyer, Johannes Binotto, Andri Gerber

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CENTRE ALLEMAND D'HISTOIRE DE L'ART

GERDA HENKEL STIFTUNG

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