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To the dean of the Architekturfakultät Universität Innsbruck
Feedback 22, 23 October 2014
External examiner Nanne de Ru

Over the course of two days, I have seen and evaluated a very wide range of exam projects. From more theoretically orientated research based projects to more practically orientated design works; from free-form shaped objects that seem to exist solely in a CG world to very straightforward proposals for structure that could be built tomorrow; for designs that are more geared towards urban space to designs that are purely architectural. This width of projects could easily have been seen as a lack of focus, but since most projects also managed to go in to the depth of their topic, it showed an enthusiastic and necessary exploration of the possibilities that are contemporary world offers.

The quality of the work was overall good. Of course there were a few very weak projects, but they were counterbalanced by a number of projects that were far above average. The majority of the projects were somewhere in-between, mostly above average and radiating with the enthusiasm and passion of the students that worked on it. The only critical point I would add here, is the situation in which we found one project. It was a very bad project, and for me it was clear that this could not pass. The reasoning to let it pass anyway, because the student had been at the school so long already and would not be able to do better for me is invalid. I believe, and would recommend, that it is important for a school to maintain a clear level of quality. Even if it means that some students keep on trying to graduate ad infinitum.

In terms of the presentation method, I was impressed with the completeness of the presentation. Almost all projects had models, panels, books and good verbal presentations which made the evaluation very enjoyable. What added to this, was the model in which the different professors and me (as a censor) interacted. It led to interesting discussions, where in some cases, the work of the student started of a broader discussion about the profession in general. For me, this an important part of a graduation work: connecting the student's work to a wider discussion and thereby bringing it into the general debate.

This brings me to the debates we had amongst each other, with all the professors. I very much enjoyed these joint sessions, walking around and seeing the diversity of works but also hearing a great diversity of opinions and points of view. I believe that this diversity in opinions and directions of thinking and doing makes for interesting places of learning and researching. The heterogeneous intellectual climate I encountered in Innsbruck was very pleasurable, I very much enjoyed it.

Overall, I very much enjoyed the session,

best regards,

Nanne de Ru

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