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Editorial

Magdalena Celadyn

Architectural education requires constant updating of learning methods and the related professional knowledge as innovations are an intrinsic feature of this discipline. The transmission of this type of expertise into the learning process by way of published original research papers is a valuable procedure, offering architecture students an easily accessible source of substantial improvements in the acquisition of professional skills at this early level. Innovations in architecture, or an innovative approach to conventional and traditional problems in this discipline, seldom come about in a harmonized way, in terms of when they appear. Therefore, there is no way to create a coherent image of the relevant progress for the adepts of architecture. This necessitates they take a broad synthetic view, to effectively keep track of the increasing bulk of related knowledge enhancing their competences. The same refers to the readers of professional architecture periodicals.

The articles presented in this issue of ALFA journal discuss architectural design problems from both theoretical and practice-oriented perspectives. First, they consider the problems related to the architecture learning process, with emphasis on the improvement of the quality of higher education accomplished through the encouragement of the second-degree students' mobility, as well as through the promotion of an interdisciplinary approach to the architecture teaching framework. Secondly, they examine sustainable design strategies of providing occupants well-being along with a healthy indoor environment, created with environmentally friendly, natural renewable resources, and stimulating the users' cognitive and emotional as well as aesthetical experiences. Finally, they examine science-based and technology-driven questions associated with the forthcoming professional practise of architecture.

Dimitra Konstantinidou in the paper '*Architectural studies in the European Higher Education Area: Criteria for student degree mobility'* analyses criteria the undergraduate students of architecture apply when choosing among European higher education institutions to continue their studies. The study programmes offered, quality of the teaching process, renown of the chosen universities, and possibility for entering postgraduate study are considerations equally valued by potential students with the opportunity to establish and then continue their professional practice on site.

In her research for '*On the Edge - future adaptation challenges: The role of futurology, scenario planning methodology and off grid design in architectural and urban teaching'* Zdeňka Němcová Zedníčková investigates the possibilities of the enclosure within the teaching process of architecture and urban planning of the discipline of futurology, presented in the context of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the UN Habitat III initiative. The author identifies the futurological method of scenario planning, and then examines the conditions of its presence in the adjusted architecture teaching framework. The article points at the off-grid design scheme as the most stimulating for the design of architectural and urban planning systems focusing on environmental sustainability issues.

In '*Linking virtual reality, architecture, and crime prevention for educational purposes*' Lucia Benkovičová refers to the digital technology-aided teaching process in the architecture discipline. The author investigates in particular virtual reality and augmented reality as learning and designing tools offered to architecture students. This research paper concentrates on the specific possibilities of these design tools as advanced instruments, enabling both architecture students and professionals to

make prior assessments of the quality of a built environment in terms of proper security measures for occupants and for crime prevention. Therefore, the article, in introducing the innovative objective of the VR as design tool, indirectly refers to issues of the positive perception of the building and its surroundings by its occupants, with place attachment effects.

Questions related to the shaping of a high-quality indoor environment through consequent introduction of natural resources are present in the article '*The positive impact of wooden material on educational processes in the environment of Slovenian wooden kindergartens'* by Jakub Hanták and Danica Končeková. The authors examine benefits from the vast implementation of wood as a building material in conceiving interior components of high formal and functional values, while providing users with psycho-physical comfort and multisensory experiences. The authors investigated the multidimensional impact of exposed wooden building material on children's cognitive, aesthetic, and emotional perception, in the context of stimulating educational processes in the complex learning and playing environment of selected kindergartens recently conceived in Slovenia.

'*In the pixel zone: Perception of digital design'* by Kateřina Tesařová is a continuation of the digital technology discussion. It concentrates on analysis of the term postdigital, which in the author's opinion is necessary to perception of digital design. The latter, covering the products and services forming the separate disciplines already an integral part of the present reality, gives users access to data resources through different digital interfaces. Considering the plenitude of constantly developing design disciplines of different character, the author postulates so as to create clear boundaries between graphic design and the theoretically and technically advanced version of digital design.