R ruzica.bogdanovic@strand.rs

To: Marija Maruna

Sat 6/3/2023 7:55 PM

Dear Marija,

STRAND is inviting proposals for presentations at the 2023 Annual Conference. The event, entitled "On Architecture - Challenges in Design", will be hosted by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and Rectorate of the University of Belgrade in Serbia on 7-8 December 2023.

We kindly ask you to take participation as an Speaker by invitation at the OA2023 Conference, with topic about urban design and your specific approach, but you are welcome to submit other proposals/projects for presentation.

Read more about the Conference at www.strand.rs

Looking forward to your answer.

Kind regards,
Ružica Bogdanović
Conference chair
On behalf Strand

11TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON ARCHITECTURE
– CHALLENGES IN
DESIGN

PROCEEDINGS

PROCEEDINGS

Preface

At the beginning of the 21st century, faced with the challenges of climate change, depletion of resources, high environmental pollution, and hints at an uncertain future, we are questioning the various roles of architecture. Whether technological development and the use of new concepts in design, the use of new materials in construction, the use of new tools in the creation of concepts can provide an answer, is the theme of the conference and exhibition "Challenges in Design".

The new concept of architectural objects and the use of materials in the isolation of objects and the concept of facade envelope are an inspiration and a challenge in creation. Is art a part or is it against the concept of an architectural work – art vs architecture. Whether architecture and new media and the use of virtual and augmented reality can be tools in architectural design is the question of the position of architecture in the digital era – from parametric design to VR and AI, as tools in design. In addition to new buildings in the transformation of the city and the change in the structure of activities, there are many huge abandoned industrial buildings, which refers to the topic of reconstruction – reworking of the city and architecture – reworking of architecture and the city – reuse of abandoned buildings and places.

The conference will explore and discuss the complexity and different meanings of architecture. These topics will consider the essence of architecture through all its dimensions, always thinking of it as an art and a philosophical reflection on architecture. The essence will be considered through different points, processes and trends that contribute to new aesthetics and functionality: globalization, new approaches to design, innovative technologies, projects, and materials. A special block of topics is focused on the challenges in architecture and urban design in terms of how we can reshape the future in creating sustainability after the pandemic and how we can reset the sustainable development goals for the challenges of the pandemic – from the perspective of research, policy, or practice.

In the past year, many conference programs were focused on that topic, such as the New European Bauhaus initiative for green sustainable cities, or the COP 27 UN conference on climate change and impacts, many also implemented educational programs at universities, as well as charters and declarations in associations. That is why it is particularly interesting how cities will be organized in future development, how to improve the quality of work and life, and how architecture can help through the organization of space and materialization. In particular, the further improvement of information technology, which has made an outstanding contribution, enabling the holding of study programs in the faculties, as well as the holding of conferences and meetings.

Editor

Contents

VI CONFERENCE POSTER SESSION

- *I Architecture – Design Challenges in Macro and Micro Scale*
- *II Technology and Architecture*
- *IV Art and Architecture*
- *V New Media and New Tools in Design*

RETHINKING CITIES: ARCHITECTS AS AGENTS OF CHAOS
POWER, PLANNING AND THE ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT IN THE DIGITAL ERA
Erez Ella

10.10 10-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE OF ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN 10 THEMES ON THE TOPIC OF
POSTINDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA BETWEEN DUNAVSKA STREET AND THE DANUBE'S BELGRADE WATERFRONT
Bojana Jerković-Babović

DEMOCRATIZING URBAN PLANNING: INSIGHTS FROM PARTICIPATORY FORUMS IN BELGRADE
Iva Čukić, Jovana Timotijević, Marko Aksentijević, Božena Stojić, Olga Andrić

URBAN EDUCATION FOR FUTURE TRAFFIC ENGINEERS – ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT MODES, ECOLOGY AND
SPACE PROBLEMS OF A LARGE CITY FACING CLIMATE CHANGES
Svetlana Batarilo, Ranka Gajić

DISTANT MOMENTS CONDENSED: MNEMOTECHNICS OF THE CITY.
CASE STUDY: THE WEDDING INSTALLATION
Nora Lefa

"SOUNDSCAPE OF FEMALE EXPERIENCE" – TRANSDISCIPLINARY ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY OF PALIĆ LAKE
Jasna Jovićević

THE ARCHITECTURE OF FLUIDITY
VISUALIZATION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS OF FIGURATIVE AND NONFIGURATIVE INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF THE FLUIDITY PHENOMENON IN ARCHITECTURE
Bojana Jerković-Babović

ARCHITECTURE –
– DESIGN CHALLENGES
IN MACRO AND MICRO SCALE

Strategic Urban Design for the Just City

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Abstract: Planning professionals are becoming increasingly vocal in calling for the development of cities and urban environments distinguished by fairness, equity, and social justice for all. Complex challenges and growing inequality in urban areas, compounded by issues of resilience and energy dependence, emphasise the need to ensure equal opportunities, access to resources, and quality of life for all residents, regardless of their social and economic status, race, gender, or other characteristics. It is therefore clear that the impact and longevity of interventions by architects require a cross-cutting approach and a structured process whereby a balance must be struck between space and form, on the one hand, and social, environmental, and economic issues, on the other. As such, planners' responses must seek to integrate knowledge from strategic thinking on equitable development, spatial planning, and urban design.

Strategic urban design has been applied continuously for the past 18 years as an approach to shaping space in the Urban Design Studio offered as part of undergraduate architecture studies at the University of Belgrade. This method was developed over the years through the various formats of the Studio in co-operation with many members of the Urbanism Department, student demonstrators, and visiting academics and professionals. The results of work done in the Studio were collected and presented in numerous publications and national and international exhibitions.

In addition to using this particular methodology, the Studio approach was oriented towards themes and issues relevant to the local community and sought to find modes of improving local quality of life. It was rooted in an understanding of urban design as an activity of especial importance for the quality and way of life in cities and effecting positive change in society. The method emphasised the creative role of design, combining it with a more socially conscious and politically responsible approach to develop effective techniques for facing complex urban issues.

This paper presents a comprehensive overview of work done in the Urban Design Studio and showcases extracts from its methodological approach to learning.

Keywords: strategic urban design; just city; local community; architecture; higher education

1   Introduction

Strategic urban design has been applied since 2005, with a brief hiatus, as an approach to shaping space in the Urban Design Studio offered as part of undergraduate architecture studies. The Urban Design Studio was introduced into the architecture curriculum as a learning format after large-scale reforms launched as part of the Bologna Process when the architecture course received accreditation in 2005. In the first accreditation cycle the Studio was made part of the third year, or fifth semester, of the undergraduate course, only to be moved subsequently to second year, fourth semester. In some accreditation cycles the Studio took the form of a bachelor thesis at the end of three-year undergraduate studies.

The first to introduce strategic urban design in urban planning studies was Professor Dr Nada Lazarević Bajec, who also headed the course in its first few years, managing it together with Marija Maruna, who was initially her associate but subsequently took over the leading role, continuing to apply and refine the concept. More recently, the model has shifted to a joint studio approach, with Docent Dr Danijela Milovanović Rodić also teaching the course. Notable associates involved with the Studio throughout its existence have included Danijela Savkić and Aleksandra Miovanović, as well as Vladimir Mihajlov and Jelena Radosavljević, alongside numerous staff of the Faculty of Architecture Urbanism Department. A major feature of the Studio has been its openness to guest lecturers and trainers with a variety of professional and academic backgrounds.

The Studio's output has been showcased in monographs and at scientific conferences and national and international exhibitions. Particularly noteworthy has been the 2009 monograph *Strateški urbani dizajn i kulturna raznolikost*, authored by Nada Lazarević Bajec and Marija Maruna, and the *Dobro mesto* blog, where articles were published between 2016 and 2018 by Danijela Milovanović Rodić, Marija Maruna, Aleksandra Milovanović, Jelena Radosavljević, and Predrag Milovanović.

This paper will briefly outline the notion of the just city as the key thematic backbone of the Studio. It will then showcase the key aspects of the strategic urban design concept in an extract from a broader discussion published in the monograph of the same title. This is followed by a timeline of the Studio's activities from its inception to the present day, together with a comprehensive overview of the outcomes of the learning process published and

presented to the broader scientific and professional community. The paper concludes with an explanation of some aspects of the methodological approach to urban design applied in working with students in the Studio.

2   The just city

The issue of urban justice is not a new one. The late 18th and early 19th centuries saw a proliferation of critiques of the industrial society and its adverse societal, economic, and political impacts, under the influence of the economic and philosophical ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. These criticisms spurred the creation of suggestions as to how cities ought to be designed and organised, resulting initially in utopias and ideal cities. The major advocates of this line of thinking included Edward Bellamy, William Morris, Thomas More, Tommaso Campanella, Charles Fourier, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Etienne Cabet, Peter Kropotkin, and Robert Owen. Even though these utopian ideas were inherently far distant from the reality of their day, they did lay the foundations for a consideration of the visions of a desirable future based on a comprehensive critique and rational explanation of conditions and relationships (Šoe, 1978; Lazarević Bajec, 1987).

Exceeding the bounds of utopian thinking, the notion of the just city continued to be a feature of speculation, from Marxist philosophy to communication theory. Although the concept has been contemplated for centuries, a single definition of a 'just city' is yet to emerge. An increasingly common idea is that the issue of the just city ought to be resolved through the practice of urban policymaking, meaning the reality of city planning and construction. Placing planning at the centre of efforts to find ways to overcome unjust outcomes in spatial solutions shifts the topic of deliberation from individual and societal freedoms to issues of spatial justice.

It is important to distinguish between two dimensions of spatial justice, the distributive and the procedural. Distributive justice concerns the spatial distribution of public goods, resources, and services in a city, whilst the procedural dimension is about the way in which decisions are made to distribute public goods (Rocco et al., 2021). The two dimensions of justice are mutually inseparable and must be viewed together; according to Soja (2010, p. 60), 'the spatiality of (in)justice [...] affects society and social life just as much as social processes shape the spatiality or specific geography of (in)justice'. This implies that the emphasis is on looking at the local level as the spatial scope which allows diverse, democratic, and equitable urban policymaking (Fainstein, 2010). Any new approaches must be aimed at fostering co-operation between stakeholders of differing social and economic power, building new, more inclusive institutional structures and empowering the most marginalised groups amongst us (Goh, Loukaitou-Sideris & Mukhija, 2022).

The decades-long impact of the global capitalist economy and neoliberal ideology has made it apparent that economic growth takes place at the expense of social benefits, producing large-scale economic inequalities and injustices (Harvi, 2012). The complex challenges posed by urban environments, compounded by issues resilience and energy dependence, emphasise the need to ensure equal opportunities, access to resources, and quality of life for all residents, regardless of their social and economic status, race, gender, or other characteristics. In recent decades, the planning and architecture communities have witnessed an increase in the awareness of a need for different approaches to urban development that will promote fairness, equity, and social justice for all residents (Fainstein, 2010; Campbell, 2013; Rocco et al., 2021).

The impact and longevity of interventions by architects require a cross-cutting approach and a structured process whereby a balance must be struck between space and form, on the one hand, and social, environmental, and economic issues, on the other. As such, planners' responses must seek to integrate knowledge from strategic thinking on equitable development, spatial planning, and urban design. They must also encompass issues of social relations, institutional structures, public policy, political economy, and other structural components (Goh, Loukaitou-Sideris & Mukhija, 2022). This further implies the need to seek answers in the social sciences, as well as in the historical and local context of any given urban area (Khosroshahi, 2015).

3   Strategic urban design[1]

Strategic urban design is a research-oriented approach to urban design aimed at translating public policy into high-quality urban forms and a value-based, procedurally- and process-oriented analytical framework for creative expression. It starts from an understanding of urban design as an activity of great importance for the quality and way of life in cities and the achievement of positive change in society. It emphasises the creative role of design, combining it with a more socially aware and politically responsible approach to develop effective techniques for addressing complex urban problems. In a wide variety of ways, it operates at the very centre of

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[1] The text of this chapter is an excerpt from the book Lazarevic Bajec, N., Maruna, M. (2009) Strategic urban design and cultural diversity. Belgrade: Faculty of Architecture

often conflicting forces that act on the urban community, requiring a change in attitudes towards the professions of planner and designer to meet the challenges brought about by ongoing urban and regional transformations.

As an integral approach, strategic urban design seeks to explore the relationships between a rational, comprehensive planning approach to various areas necessary for revealing under-appreciated relationships, on the one hand, and, on the other, project-oriented urban design, which highlights the importance of features at the micro-level and both individual and group experiences with the immediate environment. Strategic urban design combines process and product management and is more integrated, being focused on understanding both the specific environment and the space-related values and interactions between stakeholders and issues inherent in developing policies and programmes.

Strategic urban design attempts to integrate planning, governance, and design and overcome the 'painful separation' between architecture and planning. This entails focusing on the connections between people, behaviours, structures, places, and the city. Its transformation of the shaping-oriented approach and its connection with more abstract planning methods allows a translation of policies and objectives that can only take place through a better-informed, altered approach to design.

Acceptable answers obviously necessitate a critical re-examination of all stages in the design process, from assessing the problem to proposing and evaluating the solution. It also seems important to shift focus from an exclusive orientation towards solutions to giving equal weight to addressing the problem. This makes urban design at once a means of analysis and an instrument of action, a tool for strategizing spatial intervention. This is particularly important in projects based on the principles of the just city, where it is necessary not only to explore alternative solutions but also to zero in on the problem itself, which requires constant restructuring if it is to be understood.

4   Outcomes of the strategic urban design course

Figure 1 shows a timeline of the results of undergraduate Urban Design Studios over the decades. This summary highlights some key features of the Studio concept:

a)   **Thematic focus.** A key characteristic of the Urban Design Studio has been its focus on particular themes and issues. The site selected for the project in its first year, Yuri Gagarin Boulevard in New Belgrade, inspired the choice of Cultural Diversity as the topic, where the Studio addressed the Chinese community centred on the Block 70 shopping mall. This theme was subsequently developed in the Studio and tested in a variety of locations. Spotlighting the local community and its characteristics from the perspective of social justice, the theme underwent modifications over the years to reflect the dominant issues of the sites that were explored. In addition to cultural diversity, later Studios also considered the topics of neighbourhood, interactive communities, the learning city, and green-blue urban communities.

b)   **Involvement of guest lecturers and associates.** Its thematic focus made it possible for the Studio to bring in academics or professionals working closely on the issues at hand and so allow the participants to broaden their knowledge. For instance, for the New Belgrade Block 70 project, which looked at issues facing the Chinese community, the guest lecturers were sinologist Dr Ivana Prica and her husband, the architect Vladimir Jereminov, whose area of interest has been the study of physical patterns of traditional Chinese communities. The topic of interactive urban communities was explored with Dr Ana Džokić and Marc Neelen of STEALTH.unlimited, who contributed their long-standing experience in researching urban development in the Western Balkans. For the learning cities topic, the Studio brought in Professor Dr Violeta Orlović Lovren of the Adult Education Department, University of Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy, who presented her expertise in education for sustainable development. Other notable guest lecturers included Serbian civil society organisations advocating community participation in urban development, with Ministarstvo Prostora represented by Iva Čukić and Jovana Timotijević and Nova Planska Praksa by Ljubica Slavković, Jasmina Đokić, and Ana Graovac.

Figure 1 Timeline of courses and learning outcomes

c) **Collaborative joint studio format.** For a number of years, the Studio has been led together by Marija Maruna and Danijela Milovanović Rodić in a spirit of shared understanding of the strategic approach to urban design and issues of social justice in spatial development. The urbanism course initially envisaged two studios operating in parallel in the fourth semester, and these two were combined in a joint studio. Even though this arrangement proved highly demanding due to the challenges in managing the large group, the

collaborative approach resulted in many and varied benefits, primarily the synergies of knowledge available to both teachers and other associates throughout the learning process, from designing studio projects to teaching classes, holding one-on-one consultations with students, to reflecting on the work produced, and, ultimately, to presenting the work to the broader academic and professional community.

d) **Linkages with scientific and research projects.** One major feature of the Studio has been its ability to help teachers and associates enhance their knowledge by engaging in research, with this approach being valuable primarily due to its ability to promote a methodology for constructing scientific knowledge that entails reasoning based on in-depth knowledge of a particular domain. The choice of neighbourhood as the key aspect for investigation in the Studio was largely informed by the knowledge of Dr Milica Milojević, who gained her expertise producing a doctoral dissertation on this topic. In addition, a long-standing climate change research project funded by the Serbian Ministry of Science helped shape an entire body of knowledge important for investigating green-blue urban communities. Lastly, the Studio's exploration of interactive communities was closely linked with Towards Collaborative Governance, a research initiative undertaken together with Ljubica Slavković and the Nova Planska Praksa team.

e) **Presentation of results to the academic community.** The results of applying this methodological approach to teaching in each individual year were presented at four international academic conferences and one local one, as well as in two chapters in national monographs and one monograph of national significance.

f) **Presentation of results to the planning community.** The work produced in the Studio was showcased at two Urbanism Salons, one Architecture Salon, an event to mark World Cities Day, the Serbian Business and Tourism Forum, and the Ranko Radović awards ceremony. Projects developed by four generations of students who attended the Studio were also presented on Dobro Mesto ('The Good Place'), a blog created thanks to selfless efforts by Dr Aleksandra Milovanović, a teaching associate at the time.

5   Methodology highlights

The methodological approach to strategic urban design is a dynamic process that is created and modified as studio projects are developed. In essence, it is an open system of principles that are further refined depending on the chosen annual topic and site. The methodological approaches used in any given academic year were systematised and arranged, as a self-contained teaching package, for various occasions and presented to the broader public, as noted above. This section will showcase two highlights from the methodology deployed in working with students over the years.

(1) The first highlight comes from the approach used in the 2009-10 academic year, when the topic was 'Neighbourhood'. Here the methodology consists of four steps designed so as to follow the trajectory of research leading to a spatial solution in the final outcome: (a) re-examining the notion of neighbourhood; (b) reinterpreting the notion of neighbourhood; (c) neighbourhood values; and (d) Developing an attractive urban image. These steps are illustrated by conceptual diagrams that contain key research topics, which are at the same time the aspects from which knowledge is collected to inform the foundations of the future concept.

(a) Re-examining the notion of neighbourhood (Figure 2), the first step, is aimed at analysing the local community of one defined territorial area by learning about its complex network of social relationships. The focus of observation here are the values, activities, and convictions shared by the stakeholders. In this context, the project assignment includes identifying the rapport of the local community with pre-existing values, such as preserving the character of the environment, preserving readability and meaning, retaining spatial patterns, facilitating social contacts, and preserving the diversity of street life.
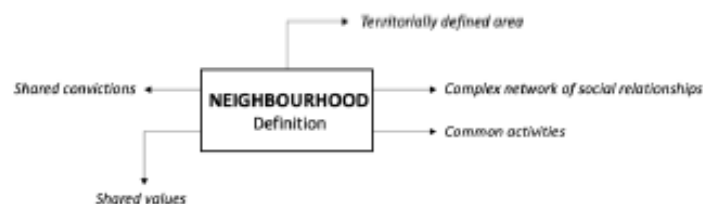

Figure 2 Neighbourhood re-examined

(b) Reinterpreting the notion of neighbourhood (Figure 3), as the second step in this urban design methodology, aims to re-assess the concept of neighbourhood in a modern city. Here the starting point involves understanding the local community as a group of people with multiple identities and underscoring the differences in their interests, habits, and lifestyles. Social ties between individuals are a major pillar of this concept, and their dynamics suggest the direction of thinking about any future spatial organisation. These insights inform options for building the local identity through different spatial responses and in support of new lifestyles.
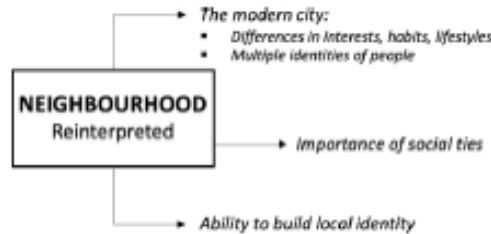
Figure 3 Neighbourhood reinterpreted

(c) Neighbourhood values (Figure 4) aim at identifying the elements making up the community's social and spatial identity. The key values here are a healthy and safe environment and the openness of the community to diversity. The goal of spatial values is to achieve high-quality housing and public amenities, as well as to create a recognisable urban environment. The method for investigating how these requirements can be met entails: (i) focusing on the characteristic fusions of local activities and lifestyle mixes; (ii) striking a balance between spatial and form-oriented topis, on the one hand, and social and economic ones, on the other; and (iii) achieving a detailed understanding of the site and its places where various groups and individuals communicate to create characteristic environments.

Figure 4 Neighbourhood values

(d) Developing an attractive urban image (Figure 5), the final step in this methodology, looks at how the image of the urban environment is created. In essence, doing so requires nurturing differences and explicitly respecting others' ways of living. This entails recognising the social dimension of the local community and developing an attractive urban image that involves real people and not merely an empty physical stage. It also requires forging links with the economic aspects of community development, a key pillar of sustainability for an urban environment.
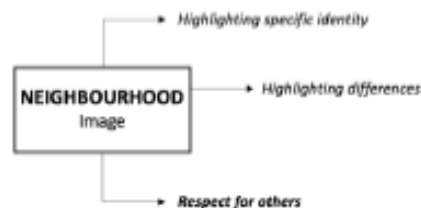
Figure 5 Developing an attractive urban image

(2) The second methodology highlight deals with assessing the likelihood of implementing a solution, which is a discrete step in the development of a design concept (Figure 6). This assessment is informed by an understanding of the importance of the conditions and circumstances that affect development and construction in any given space. The design focuses on the identification of the various social and economic features of the site and the powers that shape development patterns, and their translation into concrete physical variables. The students are expected to identify key stakeholders and their interests underlying spatial transformations. This provides insight into ongoing developmental processes and the power dynamics that underpin particular stakeholder groups and the objectives they seek to attain. This step helps develop awareness of urban design as a means to address problems by advocating various interests, making predictions, finding new solutions, making decisions, and communicating proposals with the aim of achieving desired results. This step is part of an initial stage of any urban design.
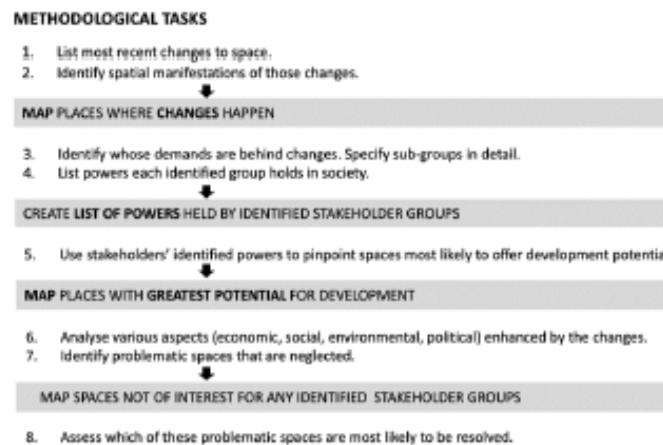
METHODOLOGICAL TASKS

1. List most recent changes to space.
2. Identify spatial manifestations of those changes.

↓

MAP PLACES WHERE **CHANGES** HAPPEN

3. Identify whose demands are behind changes. Specify sub-groups in detail.
4. List powers each identified group holds in society.

↓

CREATE **LIST OF POWERS** HELD BY IDENTIFIED STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

5. Use stakeholders' identified powers to pinpoint spaces most likely to offer development potential.

MAP PLACES WITH **GREATEST POTENTIAL** FOR DEVELOPMENT

6. Analyse various aspects (economic, social, environmental, political) enhanced by the changes.
7. Identify problematic spaces that are neglected.

↓

MAP SPACES NOT OF INTEREST FOR ANY IDENTIFIED STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

8. Assess which of these problematic spaces are most likely to be resolved.

Figure 6 Methodological step: assessing the likelihood of a solution being implemented

6   Conclusion

This paper is an initial attempt at structuring the several decades of output generated by using the strategic approach to teaching urban design in undergraduate architecture studies. Collecting the materials revealed a wealth of information produced for and in the teaching process in addition to what has already been published, excluding students' final designs. This extensive body of work requires targeted long-term research that goes beyond the scope of this paper, which presented the Studio's overall development trajectory and a selection of illustrative highlights of the teaching approach as a modest contribution to any debate on how architects can help reduce social inequalities.

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List of exhibitions of works produced in the Strategic Urban Design Studio

XV Salon urbanizma. "Multikulturalnost u bloku 70" [25th Urbanism Salon, 'Multiculturality in Block 70']. By Tanja Bajić, Jelena Brašanac, Milica Veličković, and Ivan Vukić. Mentors: Nada Lazarević Bajec, Marija Maruna, Dejan Mrđa, Ivan Rašković, Ivana Prica. Students' Designs category. Niš, 2006.

Izložba učesnika konkursa za dodelu nagrade Ranko Radović. „Strateški urbani dizajn i kulturna raznolikost" [The Ranko Radović Award Exhibition, 'Strategic urban design and cultural diversity']. By Nada Lazarević Bajec and Marija Maruna. Critical and Theoretical Papers on Architecture and Urban Planning category. Mala sala Zadužbine Kolarac, Beograd, 2009.

32. Salon arhitekture. „Urbani dizajn i kulturna raznolikost" [32nd Architecture Salon, 'Urban design and cultural diversity']. By Branka Temunović, Ksenija Lukić, and Vukašin Nikolić. Mentors: Marija Maruna, Vladimir Mihajlov, Đorđe Krsmanović. Students' Designs category. Beograd, 2010.

Exhibition of the results of professors, associates and students on five studios from the Department of Urbanism University of Belgrade Faculty of Architecture in 2010/11 year as a side session of "Serbia Tourism and Business Forum". "Contemporary Approach to Urban Design for Sustainable Tourism of Lower Danube Region": Studio 2. By Marija Maruna, Vladimir Mihajlov, and Danijela Savkić. Hol Jugoslovenskog dramskog pozorišta, Beograd, 2011.

XXVII Međunarodni salon urbanizma. „BLOG: DOBRO MESTO" [27th International Urbanism Salon. '*Dobro Mesto* Blog']. By Marija Maruna, Danijela Milovanović Rodić, Jelena Radosavljević, Aleksandra Milovanović, and Predrag Milovanović. Digital Technologies, Design, and Production in Urbanism and Architecture category. Kulturni centar „Brana Crnčević", Ruma, 2018.

Izložba studentskih radova povodom obeležavanja World Cities Day. „Održivi, rezilijentni, inkluzivni i bezbedni gradovi". [Exhibition of students' designs to mark World Cities Day: 'Sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and safe cities']. By Pavle Nikolić, Aleksa Bekić, Tijana Radovanović, Jelena Jelačić, Lara Rajković [Economic and Social Resilience – „Ovča kroz boje"] and Aleksandra Đorđević, Jelena Radosavljević [Economic and Social Resilience - „Kulturfabrik"]. Aula arhitektonskog fakulteta, Beograd, 2018.

XXVIII Međunarodni salon urbanizma. „Avenija pijaca" [28th International Urbanism Salon, 'Market Avenue']. By Katarina Naskovski and Milan Mitrović. Mentors: Marija Maruna, Danijela Milovanović Rodić, Aleksandra Milovanović, and Jelena Radosavljević. Students' Designs category. Niš, 2019.