On Reuse

Anne Lacaton

Continue the story, re use, re invent, re compose, cling, graft, extend : the way of future, a new intelligence for architecture

In the workshops and studios, we have worked on re-use projects at different scales, in different situations and with different programs.

These projects generated reflection along with pertinent and inventive ideas that made it possible to overturn the situations in a positive manner, to change the approach and bring forth interesting solutions, a new situational intelligence and a new intelligence towards thinking about architecture and the urban situation.

In these projects, what is initially seen as obsolete and as a constraint or restriction through an opening of the mind and a change in outlook and approach, becomes an opportunity, a chance and an asset.

If you look at a situation without a frame or filter and with an open spirit, a building that no longer has purpose and is a hindrance becomes a liberty. The students adhered to this specific approach:

No longer looking at something existing as imperfect, constraining, obsolete, not beautiful etc., but instead as a resource, a component, a stratum/layer and a basis for creativity.

The idea of drawing value from everything existing, producing richness with less money but with the greater means and parameters offered by existing situations. Extending the story to do better and more of it. A process of regeneration, extension, adaption and re-use rather than replacement.

This way of seeing, thinking, projecting is not really widespread. Making new, remove and replace, restarting from the empty remains mostly the way of doing; whereas the superposition, addition, combination, overlapping, infiltration, appear accurate, contemporary, rich, innovative.

Therefore, with regard to this work of the semester and to conclude the guest invitation, I think it's important to collect and publish these ideas and positions by students and teachers involved with the semester's work.

We hope that this booklet will leave a trace and a lasting material for reflection and discussion.

