IN practice

The state of committed architecture in Europe
Since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2010, Greece has witnessed the collapse of the construction sector, both private and public. The absence of new built architecture is counterbalanced by a dense theoretical activity: large numbers of lectures, exhibitions, publications and workshops seem to anticipate a "post-crisis" architectural paradigm.

The four architectural offices I selected -Bertaki-Loukopoulou-Paniyris Architects, Deca Architecture, Kokkinou-Kourkoulas Architects, Nikiforidis-Cuomo Architects- combine dynamic practices with rigorous discourses, unkeen on following ephemeral trends, and are involved in teaching and curatorial activities. Together they have produced some of the most significant recent architectural projects of public spaces, museums, apartment buildings and single-family houses in Greece.
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Thessaloniki, Greece

238,800 m²

2014 - built

Pebbled Ground, Stabilized Earthen Ground, Concrete, Marble, Gabions, Steel, Aluminium, Bangkirai, Timber

Municipality of Thessaloniki

Nikiforidis Cuomo was founded in 1986 by the architects Prodromos Nikiforidis and Bernard Cuomo in Thessaloniki, in the Greek periphery of Central Macedonia. The office deals primarily with public buildings and urban and territorial requalification projects. Thirty intense years of activity are punctuated by numerous awards in international competitions, exhibitions and lectures. The firm’s most recent and award winning works include the project for the new Waterfront of Thessaloniki (finalist for the prestigious 2015 Mies van der Rohe award).

The fruit of an international competition organised in 2000, the project was implemented in two phases (2006-2008 and 2011-2014). The result is a 3.5 km boardwalk, and a total of 240,000 square metres. The approach adopted by the office is very clear: exploiting the immense scale of the site to create 13 thematic areas that spread from the waterfront into the city like a comb.


In this urban theme the maniacal design of details became fundamental to the characterisation of each single piece. Thus, almost magically, the site has become an alternation of fountains, parks, multipurpose spaces, sculptures, water features, spaces for children, spaces of reflection and tree-lined walks.
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37 practices, one per country, representing the state of committed architecture in Europe operating outside of the so-called "starchitect" elite. This is the main goal of this book.

A way to investigate the innovative architectural practices that are cleverly (re)shaping the world and designing interesting and ground-breaking solutions to the issues faced by architecture today.

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Ideated by: