

4th Concrete Design Competition

MONOLITHIC

20092010
EXPLORING
VERSATILITY

curated by

Valerio Olgiati

www.concretedesigncompetition.com

ASSIGNMENT

The 4th Concrete Design Competition seeks to receive design proposals that reflect a comprehensive investigation of any notion on MONOLITHIC; to explore and exploit the versatility of concrete in generating monolithic architectural objects, structures and systems; leading to proposals that unveil – potential - properties of concrete addressing various functions and appearances in one material.

This competition is open to students of architecture, engineering, design and affiliated disciplines. It does not prescribe a specific location or program; participants will choose a context of their own that supports their fascinations and ambitions and that fits an acute presentation of their ideas and solutions. The design proposals may range from objects, furniture and architectural details to housing, landscape interventions, complex buildings and structural systems.

Participants are asked to submit a maximum of two A1-size panels containing their proposal. There is no prescribed set of regulations concerning the content of these panels. They may include plans, sections, perspective renderings, and so on. Participants should choose a form of presentation that communicates their ideas and solutions in the most effective way possible. The competition runs during the academic year of 2009 – 2010. The competition entries will be reviewed by national juries. The awards consist of prize money and participation (free of charge) in an international master class in Istanbul with Valerio Olgiati (August 2010).

For detailed information visit our website.

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MONOLITHIC – exploring versatility

DICTIONARY

Webster's Third New International
Dictionary

mono-lith-ic **1a:** formed or carved from a single block of stone **b:** made up of monoliths **3a:** of a concrete structure: cast as a single piece **4:** constituting one massive undifferentiated whole exhibiting solid uniformity often without diversity or variability

ver-sa-tile **1a:** marked by a tendency to change : fluctuating readily : changeable, variable **2a:** adapted to or embracing a variety of subjects, fields, or skills **b:** having a capacity for turning with ease from one thing to another : having a wide range of skills, aptitudes, or interests : many-sided **4a:** having many uses or applications **5:** diversified

EXPRESSION

Concrete does not have a material-inherent material expression (texture). The production process, the choice of materials for the formwork and the treatment of the formwork together with application of additives, defines the appearance of objects. Concrete can obtain almost all tactile expressions. From abstract expressions like in very smooth surfaces to a concrete with the 'memory' of craftsmanship (beton-brut).

FORM

Concrete does not have a material-inherent form. It is the production process of concrete objects that defines its form. Because of this, concrete (reinforced concrete) can take any form/shape. (Contrary to modular construction materials; e.g. bricks)

STRUCTURAL

From a structural point of view concrete has a further, singular property; in collaboration with reinforcement it can bear up both tensile and compressive forces. Lightweight (foamed) concrete floats, 'dämmbeton' insulates, concrete can be produced under water, concrete structures can be filigrane or robust. **Concrete as and in itself does not have a quality, it can however be transformed (simply by applying it) into almost anything.** Concrete is omni potential. Concrete offers architects the possibility to construct a building out of one material, a monolith.

TOTAL

Valerio Olgiati has built numerous projects in concrete. These do not have a specific formal expression. Nevertheless, the signature of the designer can be clearly read due to the efforts to base a building on one idea; to maintain a 'total' in which each element of the building is indispensable and crucial to the whole. Concrete is the ideal building material to succeed in this, it does not contain in itself a specific expression. It offers possibilities to construct all building elements out of the same material, a monolith.

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REFERENCES

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- **Valerio Olgiati**, Edited by Laurent Stadler, Mario Carpo & Bruno Reichlin, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Köln, Germany, 2008, ISBN: 978-3-86560-5108 UK / 978-3-86560-491-0 DE (Fifty-five images, Laurent Stadler, pp 20 - 73)
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