

## **JURY REPORT**

**MEDIA ARCHITECTURE PRIZE 2016, HUNGARY, 31 October 2016**

**Indira van 't Klooster (chair), Anna Yudina, Eva Belezney and Florian Heilmeyer**

### **Introduction**

Architecture in Hungary for sure is cutting edge. The longlist of 91 buildings and 67 plans proves that architects and clients alike know how to navigate cleverly and with a good sense of the prevailing winds of modernism, contemporaneity, traditionalism and craftsmanship through the stormy tides of a post (?) -crisis, multi-faceted European landscape. On top of that, there is no fear to address the burning issues of the society, responding with well-thought out and sustainable solutions too. For us, the jury, it was a wonderful and educational task to select five finalists in the Buildings section, and five finalists in the Plans section. The high overall quality as well as the exceptional variety of the submitted projects turned this into quite a challenging task, and, especially with the built projects, we could only regret that we had to limit our final selection to five projects only! After a thorough research, each jury member came up with their personal top 10 in each category, which already showed an unanimous mind. But, it took us two Skype-meetings and some heated yet constructive e-mail debates to finally bring that down to two solid unanimous selections.

We used different judging criteria for the built projects and for the plans. The five buildings share, although quite different from each other, a few characteristics. They all address important topics today, ranging from transformation to heritage, housing, sustainability, and craftsmanship. By going above and beyond the client's brief (and in one case self-commissioned) the architects have found highly original and innovative solutions that added value to the existing situation. All buildings can claim a certain boldness, a lack of fear, a big gesture that is at the same time immensely sensitive and sometimes even poetic in its details.

For the plans we looked not so much for whether or not the design could turn into a good building. We focused first and foremost on the awareness they raised to important topics like nuclear waste, unemployment and inequality, (the excess of) heritage, and local gentrification. With a lot of competition entries in this category – and three out of five finalists – being architectural students' graduation projects, what particularly interested the jury were the issues these future architects chose to focus on; the questions they asked – and, of course, the quality of the proposed responses. The final selection consists of wild and refreshing ideas that present nonetheless highly convincing solutions. A lot of debate went into whether or not the ideas showed a real sense of ownership, awareness and care for the problems that really need imaginaries to get a grip on their vastness and importance.

It is worth a special mention that a considerable number of the submitted plans explored the various aspects of health care and related social work issues. The growing interest in these topics from the Hungarian architectural community is a very positive and encouraging sign. A more profound, thoughtful and case-specific design approach to this incredibly important subject will surely be the next, and highly desired step.

Overall, we present six buildings and five plans that we believe show the best and the strongest of this year's entries.....

## NOMINATED BUILDINGS MEDIA ARCHITECTURE PRIZE HUNGARY, 2016

### Ózd

#### **Digital power plant and National Film History Theme Park**

architect: **Györgyi Csontos DLA**

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/digital-power-plant-the-ozd-project>

Ózd, a village of 34.000 inhabitants developed into an important center for steel industry after the Second World War. All factories have been closed since a fatal hydrogen explosion killing several people in the early nineties, although the radical shift in political systems was the real reason for its decay. The Digital power plant and National Film History Theme Park is located in one of the former factories. Architect **Györgyi Csontos** and her young team have preserved the original Art Nouveau structure while using contemporary materials and elements. As of today, the city lacks a genuine center, and its geographical focus is still occupied by the ruins and remnants of the factory plant. A growingly ambition of the local government to rehabilitate the zone was marked by the transformation of an old school building into a new museum. Now the whole town is part of a major renewal. The relics of local industrial history are backed by the very heart of the development. The Blower-house stores 200,000 boxes of film rolls of the National Hungarian Digital Archives and Film Institution. The Powerplant has an education and exhibition center. The whole project was implemented so as to perfectly preserve the original Art Nouveau structure of the Blower-house and the Powerplant, including their exterior and interior surfaces. The jury is impressed by the thorough, yet simple way in which this project is handled. Working with little budgets, all interventions show careful consideration of what to keep and what to demolish, without a hint of theatrical or shallow display of the powerful architectural features that convene in this concrete buildings from the Art Nouveau era.

### Rudabánya

#### **Ten million year stories between the monolithic blocks**

senior architect designer: **Zsolt Vasáros DLA** with **Zsolt Megyesi, Gábor Nagy, Áron Sasvári, Anikó Somlai** (Narmer Építészeti Stúdió), **Gabriella Antal, Veronika Borzsák, Piroska Varga** (BORSOD2050 projekt – BME Építőművészeti Doktori Iskola), and **Emőke Bandur-Juhász, Ágnes Eiszrich, Anna Kőnig, Bence Török**

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/ten-million-year-stories-between-the-monolithic-blocks>

The existence of the Rudapithecus Hungaricus was unknown until 1965, when a geologist found a fragment of a jawbone in the iron ore mine of Rudabánya, that turned out to be the remains of a creature that lived 6 to 10 million years ago. Even though very little remained of the industrial heritage, overgrown as it was by the beautiful natural environment of Monkey Island, the decision to build an exhibition space here was made in 2011. The clever combination of exhibiting the archeological and industrial history, while fully celebrating the beautiful landscape in which it is situated, reaches its full potential in the bold and meaningful shapes in which it is set. The joint scientific and architectural efforts, with the aid of many experts as well as students, present the unique story of its ancient history. The result is a building constructed of monolithic reinforced concrete, shaped as much by **Narmer Architecture Studio** and the **Doctoral School of Architecture at BME** as by the numerous debates and information communicated by geological, industrial, historical, and paleontological experts. The buildings, the look-outs and even the minor details evoke the former industrial area in their appearance and the archeological history in spirit: monolithic reinforced concrete, exposed concrete surfaces and the colour of iron ore. All in all the unusual and yet simple forms represent timelessness.

## **Budapest**

### **CEU Phased Redevelopment of CEU Campus – Phase 1**

Architects: **Sheila O'Donnell, John Tuomey, Mark Grehan, Ciara Reddy (O'Donnell and Tuomey)** together with **Mate Hidasnemeti**, and **Bence Varga**

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/ceu-phased-redevelopment-of-ceu-campus-phase-1>

The Central European University (CEU) has been transformed by **Sheila O'Donnell, John Tuomey** and local architects **Máté Hidasnémeti** and **Bence Varga** from a disconnected and disparate set of buildings into an open campus. The master plan provided for adding and updating classrooms and faculty offices, creating common spaces for group work or quiet study, introducing new mechanical systems, improving library environment and technology, and in general striving to create a higher user and community comfort level university-wide. In line with CEU's sustainability policy, the plan also calls for implementing building technologies and systems that are expected to reduce CEU's energy consumption by approximately one-third. While doing that the architects have succeeded in promoting a sense of integration and innovation that wasn't there before. The existing complex has been transformed from a closed and confusing space to interconnected spaces between departments, facilities and clusters within CEU. Glass-roofed courtyards provide social and educational spaces in a connected campus plan. The master plan uses the advantage of the building located in the historic centre of Pest, and proposes the main entrance towards the connection to the Danube waterfront. The well-tempered environment of the covered courtyards, combined with a practical approach to natural ventilation aims to ensure a low-carbon economical strategy for long-term energy conservation. The proposed landscaped gardens on the roofs will form an accessible roofscape that will play an important role in reducing heat in the buildings. The result is an organic and playful connection between old and new with much better energy reduction and sustainability scores than before. The wonderful brick detailing and light spaces are a delight to the city and the users alike.

## **Eger**

### **æctivators: locally active architecture**

architects: **Gábor Fábrián** and **Dénes Fajcsák's [arkt]**

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/aectivators-locally-active-architecture>

How can a group of young architects find their home in today's world without money and commissions? **Arkt** has found a way to create a suitable environment for themselves, from which the local community can also profit. After contacting the local government they were granted a 15-year lease of a decaying state-owned building located in the middle of a park, which they gave a cultural function in order to create an open community space for creative projects. Looking for basic technical requirements and maximal functionality they only used already available resources. This meant a flexible design solution for whatever building material became available by sponsors or found on site. They also involved students of a local polytechnic high school and convicts from the local penal institution. Thus, the planning process gained new meaning, and the construction became a collective activity, which maybe pushed the building itself a little into the background. The greatest added value of the project turned out to be the growing social network of organizers and collaborators. Owing to the architectural intervention, a building that was once considered worthless became a space full of life. The jury is impressed by the major progress made in such a short time. This project is a vibrant and powerful example of the flexibility of an architect's mind, of pragmatism making valuable spaces, of the power of community and of the will to make a difference.

## **Calugareni, Romania**

### **Time Box Twins, temporary exhibition pavilions**

Architect: **Gergely Sági**

<http://architectforum.eu/gallery/time-box-twins-by-gergely-sagi/196646>

This project by **Gergely Sági** tackles a whole range of timeless issues that transcend the project's humble size and auxiliary character. What are the place and the tools of contemporary architecture in a highly conservative environment? Which traditional elements should it preserve and thus save from extinction? And how does one introduce a completely new, unfamiliar function in an environment where it has neither roots nor a natural location? The pavilions are the first step in a large-scale project, the future Mures County Museum in an area where archeologists have recently discovered Ancient Roman fortifications and settlements. Fuelled by two increasingly popular annual events, the Barn Theatre and the Roman Festival, this has a potential to transform the area into an important tourist destination. For Calugareni, a depopulated village in which, according to Sági, "time seems to have stopped 100 years ago," such turn of the tide promises to be a real life-saver. With this kind of program, it could have been easy to fall into the trap of meaningless stylisation or create a sleek contemporary piece that would have felt totally alien to the local people. For Sági, "connection" became the keyword for the entire project – between present times and ancient history; traditional and contemporary. The pavilions morph from an iconic gable-roofed shape to a bolder, faceted geometry. The use of local materials and techniques adds a comforting sense of familiarity. Most importantly, a lot of thought went into creating an emotional connection between the "newcomers" and the "locals". Winning the community's acceptance and sense of ownership was the only chance for the pavilions' survival as they are meant to be used for limited periods during the year. Sági and his team have successfully achieved this by relating their design to local building traditions and actively involving the villagers in the construction process.

## **Debrecen**

### **Catholic Church**

<http://architectforum.eu/house-of-worship-in-debrecen>

**Architect: Zoltán Gyórfy and his team** intended to design a building for 200 people which is complementary to its rural surroundings, and which is suitable for its future use, appropriately articulating its divine nature for the time to come. The site has been allocated by the city of Debrecen to the Catholic Church on the fringe of a forest belt and a housing estate. The building itself has been positioned away from the entrance in order to make space for an area suitable for multi-purpose congregation as well as to allow the entry into the building to feel like a ritual. The homogenous looking mass of the church depicts the archetype of a home. Every detail of the building was produced, manufactured or worked on by local craftsmen and artisans. From a distance the building appears to be an outline only, but from closer inspection the details that have been left on the fabric by the craftsmen are very much noticeable. These details tell further stories to the informed admirers. For example, the bricks have been pointed with slurry, a typical local technique. The light, the materials and the forest all became organizing elements. The continuously changing illumination of the mass of the building - inside just as much as outside - advances, together with the liturgical events, into dramatic power as intended. The jury acknowledges the importance of this building for the community and admires the simple, but effective architectural gestures that give the church its natural (symbolic) authority. The use of local materials, arts and crafts underlines the genius loci, but nonetheless results in iconic design.

## NOMINATIONS MEDIA ARCHITECTURE PRIZE HUNGARY 2016 – PLANS

### Place for photography in Magdolna-quarter

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/place-for-photography-in-magdolna-quarter>

This project is located in the notorious Magdolna-quarter in the 8. district of Budapest, an empty plot between two old buildings, but the design principles do not depend on it. The basic design concept of **Anita Kern's** diploma project was to create a worthy space for photography education. The main structure is based on the principle of an analog camera with six elements on both sides, the optics and the tailboard. Between these elements the moving structure creates optimal vision. On the front of the camera there is a small hole, which can be adjusted to control the amount and characteristics of the light to let in. The moving steel frames covered in canvas are another means to control light conditions. The purpose of the design-concept was not only to create an educational institution, but also to engage in long processing research and to find answers about the hierarchy between photography and architecture, the development of the artistic fields, and the free-spirited creating of the architectural spaces. The jury likes the possibilities it offers to regenerate space and to create public spaces in a community. The structure is sensible, feasible and original in its search to use light, space and man as metaphors in creating a place for cultural activities.

### Glossy cube on crater

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/glossy-cube-on-crater-plan-of-nartarchitects>

Csontváry is said to be one of the greatest Hungarian painter. He is not only known by his technical skills and by his importance in the development of art, but also acknowledged as a herald of spiritualism by his contemporaries. In the outskirts of Pécs, next to a lake in a crater of a former coalmine, **Nart architects** found a perfectly dramatic ambiance for the Csontváry museum. They searched for a site that is interesting and symbolic enough to become a pilgrimage destination, a location where every culturally minded person would want to travel. The crater of coalmine in itself looks dramatic: this lonely, characteristic phenomenon is situated in the woods, a turquoise lake in the middle surrounded by 70 meter high, steep walls. The white, glossy, floating cube is projected on the top of the crater, enclosing the reddish-orange "heart(h)" of the building that recalls the glittering feel of his most famous paintings. The jury appreciates the powerful effect of this cube on this location, which is a wonderful find. The idea of a glowing heart in a magic white setting all covered in fog is very convincing as a tribute to this expressive, spiritual Hungarian painter, especially if the design would be dramatized even further.

### Workshop of Trades

<https://www.google.com/url?q=http://architectforum.eu/workshop-of-trades-in-tiszavasvari>

**Anna Iszály**, the architect of the plan addresses an issue that is not only important for her, as a person who grew up in Tiszavasvári living in a divided society, but for all Hungary as the country has growing inequalities. The project raises an important question: leaders, planners and architects' role in providing spaces that builds on local qualities, helps gaining pride and identity for people, the prospects of future living independent, NOT dependent on public works program and social services. The Jury's concern was, that the Tiszavasvári gypsies were overemphasized, while the same social task is valid for most of the small towns and villages in Hungary. The plan proposes a social, educational, economic, community-building program by a building that serves as a community and counseling center while providing training for the forgotten professions like blacksmithing, basket-making, tinsmithing, broom-making and the making of adobe bricks. The location along the main road also provides an opportunity for trade. The staggered distribution of the workshops reflect the

traditional village layout, and the canvas used for the awning represents the old wandering lifestyle of the gypsies. The local material and traditional structures provide a low-cost solution, as it should be. The quality of the project presentation is excellent, the pages reflect the culture of the project it works with.

### **Highly Active Nuclear Waste Permanent Storage, Visiting Center and Demo Lab**

<http://architectforum.eu/gallery/highly-active-nuclear-waste-permanent-storage>

With his final thesis design, **Zoltán Dévai** raises an issue, as delicate as it is important: how to deal with one of the most difficult and dangerous leftovers of our modern society, something that we love to not care and not think about: highly active nuclear waste. Where and how do we store it? How do we make sure that this place stays safe for the hundreds of years in which the waste is still a threat to all life forms? The proposal how to deal with nuclear waste is as innovative and smart as it is convincing. The location is not specifically defined, but this visitors center intends to teach about the good and bad sides of nuclear technology. Although the jury is not totally convinced of the aesthetics for the mesh facades, the architecture combines in a fascinating way two big architectural topics: transparency (for the visitors center) and opaqueness/closeness (for the high-security storage facility). Beyond that, the strangely seductive images also unfold a very fitting atmosphere: one of being attractive, but at the same time giving a slight feeling of insecurity and unease. Can we really trust this building? Is it really true that we are safe from the nuclear waste here? Do we really want to go into the building and have our annual conference in the conference room upstairs? Dévai's design is a church for nuclear waste, a building that raises questions about how much we really believe and trust this technology and our ways of dealing with it.

### **Looking for our deep roots in Salgo castle**

<http://architectforum.eu/gallery/looking-for-our-deep-roots-in-salgo-castle/203124>

What exactly does a castle mean to us today? How could we give new meaning to the large quantity of (semi-)ruins that are scattered over the Hungarian landscape? **Norbert Juhász's** proposal is not a castle reconstruction or monument renovation, more like a search for the deeper meaning and redefining of the term 'castle'. This former place of community, food, safety and protection, is now usually a daytrip to a romantic semi-restored artefact based on more or less defined preserved features that survived time. What links all decades in between however is the relation between architecture and landscape. Juhász explores the past by offering an 'experience' in the modern (touristic) sense of the word, which is at the same time an honest research into the remaining features that mean most to us today. And while a path literally unfolds to the highest peak 'as a catharsis', the architect finds new functions and new meaning for the use of this location.