

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Architecture and the Politics of Ideas

Rick Meghiddo · Wednesday, August 14th, 2019

The world is at a critical moment

Architecture by itself can not generate the many solutions that is able to offer without a politically supported global plan. Enlightened and moral leadership is badly needed.



Thomas Jefferson's Checkboard Towns

“The only safeguard Democracy can have is a free, morally enlightened fearless minority. Fear is the real danger in any democracy.” – Frank Lloyd Wright



“Change does not depend on us (architects); change depends on you (the people). – Luigi Pellegrin



Why “Architecture and the Politics of Ideas”?

Frank Lloyd Wright believed that architecture was a crusade on behalf of human civilization rather than a mere profession. In this sense, Thomas Jefferson was an architect, and so were Mahatma Gandhi and David Ben-Gurion.

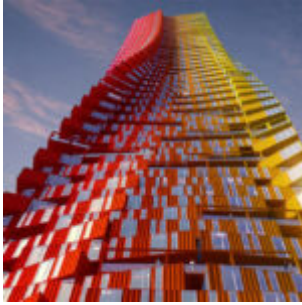
Bruno Zevi thought that architecture and political ideas are indivisible, so much so that, at one point, he became a member of the Italian Parliament (Radical Party, 1987-1992) and a co-founder of the Liberal-Socialist Action Party in 1998.

Donald Trump's ascension to power sounded a screeching alarm. It echoed the rise of Fascism with Mussolini, the ascent of Nazism in the early 1930s, and Fascist-Communism as led by Stalin in the Soviet Union and by Mao Tze-Tung in China. It echoed George Orwell's 1984: “War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength. Big Brother is Watching You.”

Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren bring leadership qualities that could help to invent the future with a wide vision and with greater optimism. Their cabinet may include people like Kamala Harris as Attorney General, Joe Biden as Secretary of State, and other intelligent politicians, such as Amy Klobuchar, Julian Castro, Marianne Williamson, Pete Buttigieg... It could include a still-to-be-found “new Daniel Patrick Moynihan.” It may also include a Republican such as John Kasich.



One Santa Fe, Los Angeles, 2015. Michael Maltzan Architecture.



Container Skyscraper for Mumbai, 2015. CRG Architects.



Dwelling for Seniors, Amsterdam, 2016. MVRDV Architects.



Mirador, Madrid, 2001. MVRDV and B. Lleo Architects.



Mixed-use Building, Oslo, A-Lab Architects



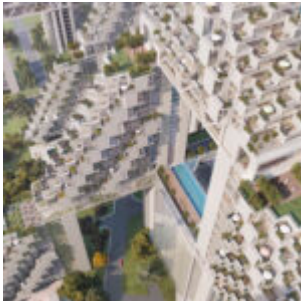
Oasis Terraces, Singapore, 2019. Serie and Multiply Architects.



One Central Park, Broadway, Sydney NSW



CentralSt. Giles Court, 2010, Renzo Piano and Fletcher Priest Architects.



Habitat for the Future, 2018, Safdie Architects

Why Bernie as number one? Because he thinks like a statesman. His broad agenda fits not only America's long list of needs but also a world starving for leadership and direction. Climate change, sustainability, inequality, the arms race are not just American issues; they are global. If approaching them creatively, the planet could be transformed positively beyond anything we can think of today. Architecture could then play a pivotal role.

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