

¡HEY!

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Don't call me an Architect

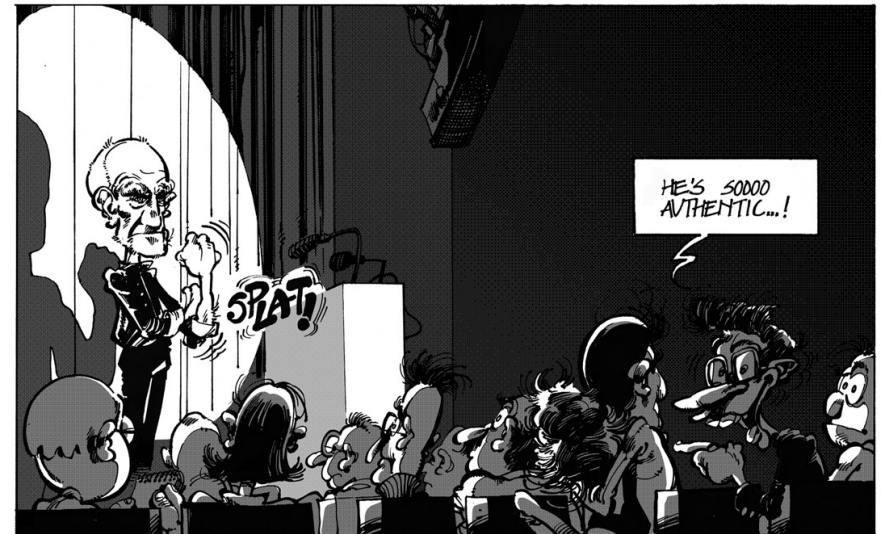
There is currently in the collective imaginary a figure of what we tend to call an "Architect", this philosophical character, of abstract thinking, formalist and eccentric, always in the company of his black mantle of intellectual pride. If becoming this character means to be an architect then DON'T CALL ME AN ARCHITECT, because it is this character, narcissist by excellence, the responsible for the image and shadow that is projected in others, although it is not surprising either since we as students enter on our first year to a parenthesis, a world alien to the reality that surrounds it, as every project, every assignment during the whole studies feels almost as an anecdote. The "bubble" in which we are formed doesn't allow the evolution of our abilities neither the complete vision of our responsibility as future professionals. We continue

to acknowledge, studying and "analyzing" different thinkers from past times, such as the Smithsons, Cedric Price, Archigram or Archizoom, just to name a few, but ¿Do we really understand what we study? ¿Or we just memorize words to answer for personal aspirations fed by the EGO for the 10? Because these people dedicated their entire careers to question the act of living, and their work as professionals, they studied and analyzed their surroundings to understand them better and perhaps they even got it wrong, but at least they tried, and that is something that everyone of them has in common: they had concerns and doubts but they went after the answers. It is precisely these references that tell us how we should be, or at least to where our aim should be as to our personal aspirations, and in not talking about following their lines of study or extol their life and work as an unwavering dogma but to learn from their tenacity, their observation capacity and the constant critic to what they knew as architecture. ¿Is that OUR reality doesn't matter any more?

KEY WORDS:

- Ego
- Social responsibility
- Bubble
- Education
- Self-criticism
- Acknowledgment

PETER ZUTTHOR ACCEPTS PRITZKER PRIZE 2003



Source: <https://klaustoon.wordpress.com/>

We propose projects alien to our responsibility, away from our environments, because the fact that the University has become our comfort zone, invite us to "solve problems with real clients" to work for a cityhall or a private that in most cases chooses to work with the faculty to obtain a better income at a lower cost.

If we are not even trying to get out of the fictional box imposed by a few and reinforced by the academic bubble on which we are surrounded, ¿What happens with our social labor? ¿With our responsibilities?.

We perform "analysis", develop projects, and pass by our assignments, we do all of that from the commodity of our desk, we are thought to convert the so claimed user in another one of the numbers that we work with, one more data so it would look good on our presentations so we can keep on fattening our egos with the valued 10, but ¿When did we forget about ourselves to think about the others? because, that number that you put on your panel, it could well be yourself, with your problems and joys, needs, routines, family and friends, and it is then when I wonder where did we left our social responsibility spirit.

I still remember one of my first evaluations in first year, it was a simple question: ¿What is Architecture?. For my Architecture is nothing but a tacit dialogue between our physical environment and our interpersonal relationships

so our job is to LISTEN, comprehend and to translate in a way that is closest to our understanding of these manifestations. We are but simple interpreters of our context, and it's our duty to recognize the clues, become part of these dialogue once again and acknowledge our society *modus vivendi*.

obviously I failed that first test, and here is where I aim, we as professionals tend to speak for the others, define parameters and ways of living as we were kind of all-powerful creator, omnipresent and just. We plan on paper extravagant utopias of bombastic speeches to share with our similars and to feel that we belong there, we are seduced by recognition and we don't allow nobody to scape from the established rules. that is because we are thought on a competition basis, we learn by stepping on our classmates, looking over our shoulders to stand out and we forget what brought us here. maybe our aspirations or beliefs about our profession will evolve or change completely, but it also falls on us the responsibility to find an alternative answer.



Source: <https://klaustoon.wordpress.com/>

This chapter of my history begins six years ago in Santiago, Chile, but before we should contextualize a little bit. In my country, as in several others, education is treated as a "consumer good". This, added to my family economic situation became in a need to find a job since the beginning of my university studies and to try to accommodate eight or nine hours of classes daily with one or two jobs, depending on the time of the year. And even though several times I regretted not being able to dedicate to my studies at 100% as I wanted now I feel grateful for that. Thanks to that I learned to see my own world on a different perspective. I understood my personal reality, my surroundings, and saw architecture with different eyes. I was able to look backwards to the moment when I started my studies with the idea of the fancy and successful architect built from the Hollywood parameters fixed on my mind, but I learned to fall in love with restlessness, I opened my eyes to a new world of questions that I didn't have the answers for, and, even though I was swimming on a sea of abstract thinking, aesthetic questions and formalistic reasons, I was able to see the oasis through this intellectual desert. Although we continue to be trapped in our academic bubble there are some little beams of light on which we are allowed, and more impressive even, we are invited to question ourselves, to experiment, to be able to develop ourselves as professionals and as people living in community.

It's for this that now I say that I had the great fortune to NOT have the traditional following of architecture studies. I started my studies in Santiago, and at the middle of them I decided that I needed a change so I moved to Barcelona, which made a huge disaster on my regular plan of studies that meant for me to take first and last semester classes in parallel, or third and seventh semester as well in between others. This is how my last 2 years and a half were developed, a roller coaster of contents and demands. I could see the expectation and remember my own past to share the dreams of the years to come while listening to my classmates from first year but at the same time I was also witness of another part of the students already consumed by the narcissistic indoctrination ingrained in architecture schools around the world, I had the luck to arrive at a breaking point due to my change of university, which allowed me to wake up, get out of that academic bubble and demand some answers.

Accompanying my studies there was always my parallel labor life, and even though I've had performed a great variety of different activities throughout the years some of them marked a before and after for me, to work in construction for example or how I followed my self-thought woodworking path, where moments on which I learned not just work related things but discipline,



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responsability, order and they gave me a great point of reality, being able to feel the materials, their textures, smells, and being able to create something from the most rudimentary forms captivated me, the same way as leaving behind a place as Chile with a long tradition in wood construction and to recommence my life in a country on which wood industry is just starting to extend and professionalize bond to a nostalgic feeling about my country made me rethink my future and to understand in which direction i want to go for a professional projection on a short time.

I just cannot finish my studies without mentioning my disappointment regarding the current teaching of the discipline my deep concern for its future. Everyone of us is in charge of giving a solution to this problem, it is time to act, to give answer to the social problems of the current times. We learn to rise structures, to draw, and to make models, but ¿when do we learn to be humans? inside every "parenthesis" in the academic bubble that we call university we develop real state projects or people talk to us about solving problems, but ¿What happens with the institutions commitment for a better future? in urbanism for example we discuss landscape and poetry in most of the occasions, applied to real cases, Sincerely for me it seems even irresponsible by

professionals to refer in these terms to our environment; if they want real cases ¿why don't we study the massive migrations, that are a phenomenon more and more common every day around the world? We develop paper cities forgetting our role in cities

I think that having the possibility of complement my studies in two completely different universities, in addition to not following a traditional education line along with having to accommodate studies and work wasn't always easy, but it gave me another look towards my reality. Having to abandon my studies for one year due to money issues or finishing one semester without knowing if i will be able to continue the next one was a really heavy burden, but that has left me the most valuable rewards, it's been hard and i've wanted to give up many times but reached this point, i can say with complete certainty that it's been worth it. although i said before that leave disappointed on the actual academic system, i cannot but to thank everyone that has been part of this process, good and bad experiences and even some dreadful ones, all of this experiences made me become the man that i am today and although they haven't given response to any of my concerns they have generated practically all of them. In short, i do not now very well where i'm going, but i'm very clear where i'm heading.

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