
BELGIAN ARCHITECTURE BEYOND BELGIUM

With Belgian Architecture Beyond Belgium, A+Editions provides the first overview of the export of Belgian architecture. The book is aimed at both amateurs as well as architecture and building professionals. A critical synthesis of the history of Belgian architecture on the international stage since the 19th century and the opinions expressed during a round-table discussion by key figures currently involved in export provide elements of response to some important questions: What are the stakes, difficulties and specificities of Belgian architecture? Why, how and where has the know-how of Belgian architecture been disseminated? How do architects take into account local and cultural features in international projects?

To shed light on the specificities of work produced abroad, this issue also presents a general survey of this production through a selection of 25 Belgian architectural firms, among which 51N4E, Art & Build, Bruno Albert, Buro Il, Bureau Greisch, Dethier Architectures, JDS Architects, Ney & Partners, Office KGDVS, Robbrecht en Daem Architecten, Charles Vandenhove, Stéphane Beel Architecten, V+ Bureau vers plus de Bien-être and XDGA. A key export project by each of the selected firms is analyzed through interviews, photographs and plans.

The selection reflects the formal diversity that is currently to be found in Belgian architecture abroad: it includes architectural firms of various sizes, which have either conducted a one-time operation on foreign soil or, on the contrary, are seeking to develop their foreign portfolio. It also includes firms that have built in Europe and/or the rest of the world; firms which have responded to direct commissions, to international competitions, or to invitations from non-governmental organizations; firms whose export enables them to highlight their very own expertise, or to tread new ground by taking on commissions of an entirely new nature or scale, commissions not usually found in Belgium. It would indeed seem unlikely that a firm could here work on a plot measuring 155 hectares, build a winery, or set a villa atop an island cliff at an altitude of 159 metres above sea level.

Lastly, in an attempt to detect what drives foreigners to call on Belgian architects, the editors in chief of six international reviews that publish regularly on Belgian projects ? A10, Bauwelt, d'A, de Architect, Mark, and werk, bauen + wohnen ? were invited to express their views on the highlights and characteristics of Belgian architecture.



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