

Laudatio for Carla Juaçaba

Ten years ago, today 38 years old architect Carla Juaçaba finished her masters at the Catholic University after a bachelor at Universidade Santa Úrsula, both in Rio de Janeiro. Subsequently she got to be known for her wonderfully sensible and charming houses, mostly around Rio.

For a temporary pavilion for the Rio+20 sustainability conference of the UN that took place in June 2012, a theater director was asked to decorate the interior of a temporary tent structure. She in turn asked Carla Juaçaba for advice. The project started with improvisations and was wildly expanded working with existing scaffolding material on site. The Umanidade Pavilion was supposed to accommodate a program of seminars, workshops and discussions and was visited within 10 days by 220.000 people.

The final structure – a 170 m long, 40 m wide and 25 m tall pavilion – was built up of 10 walls of scaffolding. An elegant and easily functioning masterpiece of atmosphere with its interconnecting ramps and fitted-in volumes containing the program spaces, that offered wonderful views to the neighboring beaches of Copacabana und Ipanema. The huge temporary building consisted only of stacked modular scaffolding pieces that were easily dismantled after the UN summit – a totally ephemeric dream.

One has the feeling that Yona Friedman's fantastic visions have been finally realized. And from what we could experience last year at Munich's exiting Schaustelle pavilion by Jürgen Mayer H, we have a small suggestion of an idea of what the much larger original must have felt like a year earlier. Add to this the fresh sea breezes and the tropic play of light and shadows. And now it is only memory or photographs, a legend.

Charles Renfro from Diller Scofidio Renfro commented Carlas work in an interview for Document Journal:
„Sustainability is a central tenet of your practice. In particular the sensitive use of material. You design projects to use just the reight amount of amterial. To be just big enough to do what they need to do.

Carla Juaçaba was rewarded the very first „arcVision – Women and Architecture Prize“ in June 2013 in Rome, to forward the work of young female architects. The Deutsches Architekturmuseum had included the work of Carla Juacaba at last year's show Nove Novos – Nine emerging architects from Brazil, which just travelled to Brussels.

Peter Cachola Schmal, 12. November 2014