



Studio Mumbai: Bridge by the Canal Groenerei

Lack of space is a fundamental problem in megapolises. Millions of people need places to live and work. Solutions that are both feasible and convivial are not easy to find. The Indian architecture firm *Studio Mumbai* is very familiar with the issue: their offices are located in the metropolis of Mumbai. For the occasion of the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015, Studio Mumbai designed a bridge house that has multiple possible functions: you can live, eat, sleep and hide from prying eyes here - but you cannot cross over the water. This architectural 'landscape' transcends the usual expectations of a bridge and brings a taste of the metropolis to tranquil Bruges.

Bridge by the Canal

Studio Mumbai's bridge is located in a hidden corner of the city on a quay along the Groenerei, opposite a medieval firebreak. It is a non-place, a spot that has lost its function.

The bridge house is conceived as a void that incorporates several potentialities: a place of contemplation, a place to eat, sleep or meet up with people. This is combined with a supporting infrastructure that is capable of bridging spaces but that does not choose to do so. The bridge is located beside the water rather than over it. The lack of doors heightens the bridge's air of ambivalence: it is simultaneously an indoor and an outdoor space.

The installation is more of an architectural 'landscape' than a uniform, functional bridge and as such transcends expectations. This layered quality and open functionality is often found in the work of Studio Mumbai. Flux, mobility and unpredictability play key roles in their concepts, along with the subjectivity of time perception and the rejection of linear, outcome-oriented thinking.

Bridge by the Canal also brings a taste of the megacity to Bruges. This type of structure is an inventive solution that could serve as a place of refuge in a busy metropolis where lack of space and adequate housing are terminal problems. But its primary function is as a secluded place where people can protect themselves from the intrusive gaze of others - a respite from the hectic pace of the city.

Studio Mumbai's installation recalls famous historic bridges, such as the Ponte Vecchio in Florence, London Bridge and Krämerbrücke in Erfurt, which also combine commercial and residential functions with the purely utilitarian one of joining two points.

Studio Mumbai is unique in its inclusive and collaborative approach to its design process. In an age of digital design, where most activities are outsourced, Studio Mumbai combines design and craft in one interactive studio. The studio not only consists of architects and designers but also of a large number of local specialised artisans. The projects are all designed and realised in its own workshop. This emphasis on the local



and the personal is further reflected in the use of locally sourced materials. *Bridge by the Canal* was also designed and made with local materials in Studio Mumbai's workshop in India, to be later assembled in Bruges.

Bio Studio Mumbai

Studio Mumbai is an Indian collective with a 'human' infrastructure of architects and artisans, founded in 1996 and headed by Bijoy Jain (°1965, Mumbai, IN). From design to execution, every project is created within the group in order to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of each member of the collective. This interdisciplinary dialogue between architects, engineers and craftsmen generates an understanding of materials and structures and a skill-set that raises the outcomes to a higher level. Ideas are explored through a process of sketches, material studies, scale models and large-scale mock-ups. With sustainability as the core practice of the group, Studio Mumbai employs a process that optimises the traditional Indian construction techniques and ingenuity that arise from working with limited resources. Studio Mumbai is essentially concerned with integrating architecture with the landscape in which it is built: in their work, the boundary between interior and exterior simply melts away. The Indian architect Bijoy Jain is the project's inspirational founder. He received his architecture training in Saint Louis (US) and worked for several years in Los Angeles (including in the Getty Center) and London before returning to India. During his absence, his home city of Mumbai experienced a population explosion, which led to uncontrolled urban expansion. Jain made the decision to go against the grain with the setting up of a collective. Jain's home is also the headquarters around which some sixty members of Studio Mumbai form a village community. While the majority of Studio Mumbai's projects are houses located around Mumbai, a number of their projects have achieved international renown. Their work has appeared at the 12th Venice Architecture Biennial (2010) and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, among other venues. The studio has received several awards, including the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture from the Institut Français d'Architecture (IFA) in 2009 and the BSI Swiss Architectural Award in 2012.

www.studiomumbai.com



Visitor information

20.05 - 18.10.2015
Groenerei, 8000 Bruges
Accessible 24/7
#BRIDGEBYTHECANAL

Further press information

pers@triennalebrugge.be
+32 (0)50 45 50 02

Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015 20 May – 18 October 2015

What if Bruges' five million annual visitors were to stay? What if a small, preserved, historic city should suddenly become a megapolis? This is the premise for the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015. Eighteen international artists create new works that form an art trail through the city centre. Three indoor exhibitions provide the opportunity to further explore and contextualise the topics. Bruges is transformed into Urb Egg: the Triennial cracks the egg of Bruges in order to reinvent the city from the inside out.

Information and programme: www.triennalebrugge.be
Facebook: Triennale Brugge 2015
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20 MAY

18 OCT

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