Fruit Salad
Riverside urban infrastructure redeployment, Manaus, Brazil

Summary and appraisal by the jury

Flooded along the waterfront is one of the major problems for the city of Manaus, Brazil, as the levels of the Amazon River greatly vary between the dry and rainy seasons. As a solution, the project proposes to transfer the activities currently on the fragmented waterfront to a floating platform in the river. A large roof offers protection from sun and rain. The reforestation of the river edge and the creation of a retention lagoon are part of a strategy to delay flooding. The platform, linked to the dry land by footbridges, is used both as a harbor and market—a meeting place connecting the activities of the river with those of the city.

The jury greatly appreciates the idea to conceive of a project as a reflection on an important subject matter—in this case, the question of how to inhabit the region without disrupting its ecosystem. Addressing urbanization processes in harmony with nature, the investigation deploys a design as a means to explore the role of markets as a form of common infrastructure along waterways and rivers. The market platform—a kind of architectural “fruit salad” mixing manifold everyday activities—is intended to take on the role of an agent nurturing public and civic life in the vast territory of the Amazon Basin.

Sustainability concept

Until the twentieth century, housing infrastructure has been mono-functional and single-scale. As a result, large fragmented urban territories have been produced and still exist in the twenty-first century, a new hypothesis suggests the division of borders between infrastructure and urban territory: generating multifunctional territorial networks that multiply by promoting the development of inclusive relations between citizens and cultural integration. The city extends along the banks of Amazon River, and is crossed by streams meeting the riparian fringe. It cannot be a hub of a development plant for greater trade across the continent.

The city is formed as a landscape of services infrastructure with mixed architectural uses, revealing a strategy to create an effective urban project able to address the fragmentation of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA).

The project: Manaus has a tropical climate, with an average annual temperature of 27°C, relatively narrow temperature fluctuations, and monthly average relative humidity of 90%. The wet season spans from December to May and the dry season from June to November. Thus, an understanding of the climate enables specific architectural strategies to be generated that foster Manaus’ development with socially, economically, and environmental balance in a balanced interaction. The project provides habitable conditions through passive climatic conditioning systems, which save resources in the short and long term.

The floating construction generates a morphotype by means of a large cover that shades the material area and the absence of enclosed sides allows for free ventilation. The morphology of the cover resembles an inverted umbrella that collects rainwater. This water is later used for sanitation and maintenance purposes.

The floating construction is built with a repeated module as a means to explore the role of markets as a form of common infrastructure along waterways and rivers. The jury greatly appreciates the idea to conceive of a project as a reflection on an important subject matter—in this case, the question of how to inhabit the region without disrupting its ecosystem. Addressing urbanization processes in harmony with nature, the investigation deploys a design as a means to explore the role of markets as a form of common infrastructure along waterways and rivers. The market platform—a kind of architectural “fruit salad” mixing manifold everyday activities—is intended to take on the role of an agent nurturing public and civic life in the vast territory of the Amazon Basin.

Further authors

Christian Barreira, Alejandro Gerardo Alainz, Ivan Gabriel Base, architects and Patricia Francisco Coelho, student, Universidad Nac. de Córdoba, Argentina

Project data

Project group Landscape, urban design
Client Municipality of Manaus
Project background Public commission

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