

**Dieter
DIETZ**

Theories of Practice

Mark
JARZOMBEEK

**Materiality and
Construction**

**Harry
GUGGER**

Michael
MEREDITH

**Five
Positions**

Inès
LAMUNIERE

in Contemporary

Ingeborg
ROCKER

Swiss

**Marcel
MEILI**

Architecture

Hashim
SARKIS

**Conference
held at Harvard GSD
Gund Hall, Piper Auditorium
November 14, 2009, 10 AM-6 PM
Open and Free to the Public**

**Daniel
NIGGLI**

Co-Convenors:

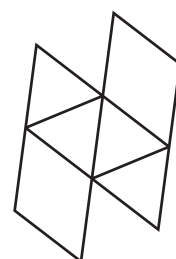
Danielle
ETZLER

Ole W. Fischer and Elli Mosayebi

swiss arts council
prohelvetia

swissnex
boston
Consulate of Switzerland

GSD Culture Club



HARVARD
EUROPEAN
DESIGN
CIRCLE
*EU BARCODE, DMA/AMG, 2001

**Dieter
DIETZ**

Mark
JARZOMBEEK

**Harry
GUGGER**

Michael
MEREDITH

**Inès
LAMUNIERE**

Ingeborg
ROCKER

**Marcel
MEILI**

Hashim
SARKIS

**Daniel
NIGGLI**

Danielle
ETZLER

Materiality and Construction

Five Positions in Contemporary Swiss Architecture

Even within a global world there persist local forms of knowledge and practices that lead to differentiation, this may seem obvious. Yet what does this mean for the theory and practice of architecture? Like the fine arts, architecture shows a long record of supranational periodization. And with the prevalence of modern architecture the discipline became a true agent of Western culture on a global scale. On the other hand local agents including the networks of clients, as well as legal, technologic and economic factors, combined with the collaboration of builders and craftsmen, shape local specificities which are enhanced by the dominance of certain "ideas" or "topics", such as "construction" and "materiality" for contemporary Swiss architecture.

Today with the dissolution of national borders (within Western societies) and the emergence of a global market for architectural design we would like to re-address the ideological framework of the „National“ challenging what terms such as „Swiss“ or „American“ mean with respect to (the discipline of) architecture and the built work? How are these preconceived notions of National differences related to architectural thinking? – From our observations there are alternative ways to pose an architectural "question" or "theme" that precede the actual design work and building production, something like an (implicit) idea of architectural action. In this case it would be possible to identify different "theories of practice" (similar to Le Corbusier's "l'art de produire"). As an example, the emphasis on construction, materiality and sensual effect differs from diagrammatic and parametric design methods. Both result in alternating concepts for teaching and research.

In order to challenge this working hypothesis on various "theories of practice" and their relation to the contested terrain of the "National" we bring together practitioners and educators from Switzerland (ETHZ, EPFL, UDSI Mendrisio) and the US (Harvard GSD, MIT, RISD) to open a dialogue on parallels and differences of the production, reflection and education of architecture.

Conference

held at Harvard GSD

Gund Hall, Piper Auditorium

November 14, 2009, 10 AM-6 PM

Open and Free to the Public

Co-Convenors: Ole W. Fischer and Elli Mosayebi

