

Light Architecture. Reinventing architectural aesthetics from what already exists

Maddalena Ferretti

Università Politecnica delle Marche, Department of Construction, Civil Engineering and Architecture

Keywords

Light architecture; Built heritage; Place reactivation; Architectural aesthetic; Habitat

What if we are to reinvent the aesthetics of architecture in marginal places? How would it look like? And what could be our contribution as designers - in terms of professional ethic and formal aesthetic - to this incremental process of building, layer above layer, on what is already there? How can heritage become a reference for new strata to come, without constraining the creativity and regenerative capacity of architecture? And, most of all, how to create a space for the community that inhabit the place, for its well-being, for its happiness?

These open questions form part of a research reflection developed over years in the inner marginal territories of central Apennine, in the Marche Region, Italy. The research stems mostly from Branding4Resilience (B4R), a project of relevant national interest (PRIN) and several other connected research investigations and design explorations.

Through a transcalar, design-driven, collaborative approach derived by the above-mentioned research projects, Light Architecture tries to trace guidelines and addresses for architectural design in marginal contexts, proposing a compositional method that works through precise and measured architectural interventions capable of reactivating resources on a broader scale. In fragile places such as inner territories, practicing architecture is often an invisible, tailored, non-authorial action, built with as few resources as possible but with the aim of maximizing and amplifying potential, in order to generate quality, beauty, and social well-being. As a metaphor inspired by Calvino's Six Memos for the Next Millennium, lightness becomes a measure of precision and depth, guiding an architecture that is at once delicate, resilient, and incisive, because it engages in dialogue with communities, the layers of history, the identity of the built heritage, the local resources, the habitat as the multi-dimensional ecosystem that connects them all.