

Our ears have been blinded,
the serenity of the space we don't see

reflections over a metaphor by Juhani Pallasmaa

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Serenity is a dimension in a room that has a religious or liturgical program, like light. Serenity as awareness of space belongs to architecture and is not absence of sound, it is about the kind of presence that you will find in a concert hall when the conductor lifts his arms and calls for the concentration of the orchestra and the audience.

It is a special joy to see a building take shape, developing a quality of space, of dimensions and sizes that are out of the traditional, for example the liturgical room. It can only be created in cooperation, open and generous cooperation. Incidentally, I have colleagues and friends that are able to cooperate around such work. The carrying out of big public projects like this demands a creative space between professionals and a language that opens for participation and developing directions.

It is like examining a grotto where we search for a hidden well, where the sound of running water is clear, but the way to the well is unclear and hidden in the darkness of the grotto.

We are dreamers and as dreamers unreliable, the direction is fumbling and probing, great are therefore moments of unanimous clarity and unity, the exactness in the room and the "self-evident" place of art in space.

When art as solitary units, architectural elements, manages to tackle and summarize special qualities that we more or less carry as unclear images, milestones are created in the process. It is astonishing with which certainty we present our proposals and with which certainty we have managed to carry out the forming process this far. We have a fundamental trust in each other in the group, everybody's honesty and willingness to engage in positive critical discussion - and a belief in the intellectual and spiritual dimension of the process.

About building

There is mysticism, there are dimensions that are unknown, there is doubt, there is beauty. The maybe most important contemporary architecture critic, Juhani Pallasmaa, Finland, says it like this:

... I have been a farmhand, a construction worker, an administrator, a university rector, a graphic and product designer, etc., but I do everything through an architect's eyes and mindset. However, I don't mean architect as a professional, but as an archetype, a "-smith," as it were. A blacksmith would not be a professional, but almost a mythical person. In the same way I regard an architect as a supporter of the mythical dimensions of life, not a professional.

The approach to the task in this teamwork that I am trying to describe has something of Pallasmaa in it, not that every one of us is not a professional in carrying out his/her work, but that we for this task see ourselves as craftsmen in the same workshop, builders, that

deliver artistic material, the mythical dimension that Pallasmaa describes.

The task, without being described in text, we have understood thus: To build for an experience that reveals spirituality through beauty, as far as we understand what beauty means.

John Berger has managed to describe such a process in the book *About looking*, in the chapter *Between two Colmars*, a reunion with Grünewald's Isenheim-altar after ten years between 1963 and 1973. It is a description of discovering what couldn't be seen in the first encounter, but was possible to be read and experienced with another perspective and in another time.

John Berger:

Those who you do not love you judge by their competence ... with respect to how they fill a contour, and to describe that contour we use comparative adjectives. Their total "shape" is the sum of their qualities, such as they are described by adjectives.

A loved person is seen in the opposite way ... he/she is judged by verbs that can satisfy that person. His or her needs could be totally different from those of the lover, but they create value: the value of that love.

For Grünewald the verb was to paint, to paint the life of Christ.

An involvement that goes as deep as Grünewald's could reveal a layer of truth between the objective and the subjective.

Conclusion:

To feel a deep love for the creation of images or figures that can serve as stations for hope and empathy, ecstasy or miracles, could with Berger be called an innocence of love, love of art.

The seeing eye sees the echo of itself everywhere the light is concentrated.

