

Constructive Disobedience

Although they were not conceived as research projects, they are nevertheless epistemic objects: They embody knowledge that has been built. As prototypes, long-term experiments and in their physically spatial presence, they become milestones of constructive progress. In view of urgent climate and resource challenges, it is now more than ever true that the further development of constructive possibilities requires daring experiments in building practice.

However, anyone who formulates a proposal for reinventing, modifying, optimizing or reducing a construction based on an architectural idea is aware of the big no to experimentation on the building site. Open-ended work is the premise of all research, but it also contradicts the interests of both clients and construction firms. Whereas science demands that results from ideas be published as provisional knowledge, tested and, in the event of falsification, rewritten on the basis of one another, fault-free construction appears as the only allegedly correct procedure, inscribed in DIN and BIM detail proposals for construction. But how can we seriously recalibrate and reformulate our construction standards in the face of the acute climate crisis?

In constructive experimentation, the public interest in building with an eye to the future overlaps, as it were, with a genuine architectural design practice which, in the intensification of a spatial idea, pursues the congruence or the conscious juxtaposition of constructive constitution and architectural expression³. Here, the potential for synthesis and the often-volatile metamorphoses of architecture as the leading discipline in the development process of a solution become openly apparent. In order to illuminate the successful ways of expanding to-day's normative frameworks to include design and construction processes, the timing and context of an experiment would seem significant:

At the origin of a research question, the method—the path to—is already implicit. Typical phases in the search for solutions include interviewing reference projects, craftspeople and experts («found treasures»), design variants (exploratory), mock-ups and prototypes (inhibited experimental systems)⁴. Research casts its spotlight on the development and construction history for possible solutions and their potential for transformation into valid standards. This knowledge gap is directly «experimented into» from project to project. In the context of building regulations, it may be necessary to obtain approval in individual cases or a so-called exemption of the building owner from the valid implementation regulations. The individual case may fail or succeed—or first succeed and then fail and entail repair cycles, adjustments. The result can be scientifically evaluated through testing and monitoring. Publications, adoptions and further developments in follow-up projects testify to the success of the chosen approach.

#ConstructiveDisobedience invites architects, engineers, manufacturers and craftspeople to present a specific insight into their constructive experiments and to engage in exchange. The aim is to find instructions for action—dispositivi—on how we can enable constructive experimentation from the core of the profession, understand it methodically, establish it as design research and thus bring it into recognition academically and on the building site. What culture of risk can and

must be established in the service of responsible architectural production and how can we make a living from it?

- 1 Corrado Verga: Dispositivo Brunelleschi, 1420, Crema 1978.
- 2 <https://mosayebi.arch.ethz.ch/thesaurus/experimentalismus>.
- 3 Andrea Deplazes: Constructing Architecture, Zürich 2005, Introduction.
- 4 Michael Eidenbenz: Solving Lloyd's – Zur Rolle von 1:1 Mock-Ups im Bauprozess, 2018.

The problem of «resolving the conflict»

The process starts with a critical observation of problematic building standards, which under current market logic are becoming increasingly acute and unavoidable.

The problem of «resolving the conflict»

A design concept provokes an idea for which the realization has not yet been thought through and tested constructively, which means that the realization is regarded as open-ended.

The individual case «the value of speculation»

During the design process, seismic points appear which push the fundamental idea to the limits of what can be built and which prove to be reference points for the architectural intention in the ongoing planning and construction processes right up to the building site.

For the presentation at the conference on 15 / 16 September 2022, please apply with an abstract on one DIN A4 page with a maximum of 500 words plus illustrations (drawing / picture) and a short biography as PDF (max. 5 MB) to contact@constructive-disobedience.com

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