

A10



#54

NOV/DEC 2013

€ 9.50

ISSN 1450-0068 / DOK 75.00 / KfW 25.000
www.a10.eu

On the spot

Berlin's next level
Baugruppe

Start

Why Sweden believes in
uncertain urbanism

Eurovision

Form and reform
in Slovenia

Ready

Rotterdam campus
finds new focus

Section

Shigeru Ban's
wood-framed Zurich
office dissected

MI Tour Guide

Naples underground

Malta gives an
old city a lift

→ page 10





Meandering facade, Sarajevo

With simple means, Studio nonstop conceived an office building that connects to the city while maintaining the existing green structure.

BY BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA — TEXT: ELŠA TURKVIĆ, PHOTOGRAPHY: ANĐA KREČO

Marjin Dvor, the natural point of articulation between the historical and the new (modernist) parts of the city, became Sarajevo's main urban centre in the mid-20th century, and has since remained incomplete in planning and programmatic terms. Initially conceived as an administrative and cultural centre, it is now largely commercial.

In the late 1990s, the demilitarization of the central barracks and the demolition of warehouses and run-down buildings gave rise to significant, valuable urban spaces within the inner zone of Marjin Dvor, which became extremely attractive to private investors. Over the past few years, most of the building activity has been concentrated in the zones between the main city avenue and the Miljacka river and comes from the private sector, which prioritizes either profit or inventiveness of aesthetic expression — usually designed to achieve visual and spatial dominance — in lieu of architecture.

A significant number of urbanists, architects and individuals are critical of the current urban policy for the city centre, in particular regarding the loss of open public space and of the multifunctional nature of the centre, the lack of visual harmony, and the fact that the area is becoming excessively built-up. All of this is part of the complex transition process in which urban planning authorities have not yet managed to mediate successfully between public and private property.

Given this imbalance of values and priorities, it is very difficult for architects who want to remain true to the principles of their profession to do so in practice, particularly in light of the current economic crisis. Sarajevo-based Studio nonstop, led by husband-and-wife team Igor Grozđanić and Sanja Galić (see Interview, A10 #40), has once again demonstrated its ability to find the right scale in space and content with a new office building on Vilsonovo Šetalište (Wilson's Promenade), also within the context of market requirements and social realities.

Though at first glance this simple, cubic architecture with a low parapet and windows appears passé and something of a misfit, a brief analysis reveals that this contemporary architectural concept and all its features derive primarily from the nature of its setting.

Vilsonovo Šetalište, which runs alongside the Miljacka river for two kilometres, with a double avenue of trees on either side, is a precious green artery for the city, and is thus extremely sensitive to building works of any kind. It is closed to traffic in the afternoons and on weekends, making it a favourite place for relaxation, recreation and socializing, particularly for the young people of Sarajevo.

The architects are already familiar with the urban centre, having entered a couple of planning competitions and executed two of their designs: the Alta shopping centre on the main city crossroads and a hybrid building, the Important Centre (see A10 #36), opposite the new office building. However, each new project presents a different challenge,

directing their lines of research; in this case, they had to find a way to remain true to the idea while respecting their client's demands to use the plot to the fullest possible extent while working within a very limited budget. The client is a construction company which, in order to maximize its savings on building materials and labour, insisted on the simplest possible rendered facade.

The building has an underground garage, ground floor and three upper storeys. The interior is very simple and rational — a corridor system with offices on either side, plus a central stairwell. The architects inserted vertical, transparent sections into the partition walls between the offices and corridor to provide the best possible views from the offices.

The unbroken strip window that wraps the building from bottom to top through all four storeys creates a meander, a reference to the formerly meandering Miljacka before it was channelled in the late 19th century, while the vertical, unevenly (barcode-like) profiled facade plane recalls the surrounding trees (the mouldings were made of styrofoam and then rendered). This, of course, also creates certain dynamism on the facade through the play of light and shadow which, with the unbroken glazed strip that reflects changes in its surroundings, enhances the dynamism of the experience.

The architects thus successfully achieved a simple, cost-effective facade with a design



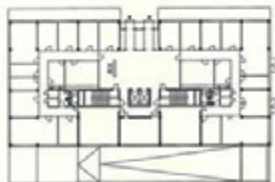
that retains sensitivity to the setting and maximizes the building's transparency.

Using the principle of the meander and the interfusion of transparent and solid elements, Studio nonstop has created a building with the characteristics of a semi-permeable membrane between a quiet and a busy part of the city, between green and built-up space,

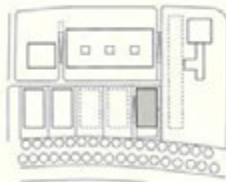
natural and artificial. Essentially, this has enabled them to avoid creating a break in the existing urban fabric. ←

OFFICE BUILDING, 2010–2013

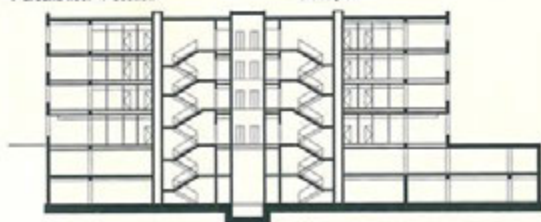
Architect: Studio nonstop
 Client: Uninonment d.o.o.
 Address: Zmajeva 10, Beograd
 Info: www.studiononstop.com.ba



↑ Ground floor ↓ Section



↑ Site plan



↑ An uninterrupted strip of windows winds its way over the entire facade.



↑ The exterior facade continues into the entrance. ↓ The interior's simple corridor system with offices.

