



Architecture, Style, and the Design of Energy Efficient Buildings

The EEB Hub is working to address how energy consumption influences architectural style. This work is focused on a key question: Should energy-efficient buildings look different and can that 'look' be used to explain or enhance their performance? To explore that question, a team of hub investigators organized the Architecture and Energy Symposium on January 27, 2012, where an international group of architects and theorists participated in discussion about the relationship between high performance building function and aesthetics. Invited experts presented an article on the topic written for the symposium.

An invitation-only morning session was held in the EEB Hub Immersive Construction (Icon) Laboratory to allow Hub performers time to interact with the experts directly. Participants, who came from as far away as England and Taiwan, introduced themselves and staked their positions on the question at hand. The underlying theme of architecture, sustainability, and an uncertain future generated opinions that ranged from the pessimistic yet hopeful, to a critique of contemporary architectural typologies, to an anthropological view of ecosystems and the built environment.



In the afternoon, the group moved to the University of Pennsylvania PennDesign building for an engaging and fast-paced public symposium. Marilyn Jordan Taylor, Dean of PennDesign, opened the event, followed by principle organizers William Braham of the University of Pennsylvania and Dan Willis of Penn State. A video of the welcome can be viewed at <http://vimeo.com/36059152>. The symposium was divided into three themed sessions: Systems, Style, and Performance. Each of the three sessions featured four speakers and concluded with a moderated segment for questions, answers, and expansions on the presentations. Video recordings of individual lectures and the entire symposium can be found at <http://vimeo.com/album/1824487>

Outcomes

The public symposium was attended by 240 students, faculty and professionals. Students from five schools of architecture attended, including Cornell University and the Rhode Island School of Design. The symposium was also viewed by students via a live streaming video. Architecture and Landscape Architecture students at Penn State University Park viewed the presentations on a large screen display set up for that purpose. Following on the success of the Architecture and Energy Symposium, a book will be produced that examines precedents of regional responses to climate and architecture with specific implications for the EEB Hub's service mandate.