

Plugin Busua

'Guests from the Future' – 18th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

Plugin Busua juxtaposes architectural fragments with contextual film footage and sound to translate the spatial effects of a realized community surf lodge. The installation examines the interplay between architectural tectonics and community inhabitation; the urban and ecological scenarios that unfold, catalyzed through architectural forms. The built community hub by architects Juergen Strohmayer and Glenn DeRoché in Busua, Ghana, integrates functional, climatic, urban, and community-driven parameters on a small footprint through the adaptive reuse of an existing building and the introduction of a new architectural 'plugin' that is characterized by innovative materiality and a playful arrangement of primary forms. In the exhibition, large-scale fragments of the built form are hung to create a three-dimensional spatial installation that communicates the tectonics and spatial complexity of the architectural realization. The tectonic fragments were built in Ghana from a salvaged fishing boat that brings the patinated material qualities of the landscape and community of Busua to the exhibition space. Screens showing moments of activity, quotidian scenarios, and community inhabitation of the structure are suspended in-between the monolithic fragments. Forms in the installation are recognized in the 14min film by artist Nii Obodai, showing scenes from the site in Busua, Ghana. Through the visual layering of the physical fragments and film, and the use of site-specific sound, the work trans-locates the effects of the architectural adaptive-reuse project into the exhibition, providing visitors with an abstract, yet descriptive experience specific to the place.

Bio

Juergen Strohmayer and Glenn DeRoché were invited by curator Lesley Lokko to be part of her Special Project 'Guests from the Future' at the Biennale Architettura 2023. Accra-based DeRoché and Strohmayer work together on long-term collaborations, including the Surf Ghana Collective house that was developed in close dialogue with Surf Ghana and the Busua community. Glenn DeRoché is passionate about engaging with region-specific artisans to upscale local materials and building techniques to develop more sustainable, contemporary building practices among communities in the Caribbean, the US, and West Africa. Juergen Strohmayer's design and research projects address material and typological approaches to climate change, community-oriented design, and land-use through long-term, transdisciplinary networks between West Africa and Europe.

Credits

Juergen Strohmayer and Glenn DeRoché

Authorial collaborator: Nii Obodai (film & sound art)

Technical collaborators: Chadi Dakmak (carpentry lead); Maher Soufi (model supervisor); Christian Amanyo Kwaku Tsey (senior carpenter); Justice Taylor, Denis Kwame Ofori, Isaac Mensah (assistant carpenters); John Mensah, Joseph Tettey Simon Tetevia, Happy Attigan (helpers); Khaled Kilanaki (senior painter); Osei Tutu (assistant painter); Patrick Ofori-Atta Agyei (metal clip fabricator).

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Part of the Curator's Special Project 'Guest from the Future' at the Biennale Architettura 2023 curated by Lesley Lokko