MSX01981 History and Theory 2 Exam

Question 27

Are architecture awards important? What, or who, do you think architecture awards are for? Discuss (25 marks available)

There are five different architectural awards/prizes that can be won, these are;

- AIA Gold Medal
- RIBA Medal
- UIA Gold Medal
- Pritzker Prize
- Praemium Imperiale

The AIA Gold Medal is awarded by the American Institute of architects conferred by the national AIA Board of Directors in recognition of a significant body of work of lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture and is the Institutes highest award.

The RIBA Medal is awarded anaually by the Royal Institute of British Architects to a student or recent graduate of Architecture for their work.

The UIA Gold Medal recognises outstanding architectural achievement by an architect or group of architects, taking into account all aspects of a body of work constructed over an extended period.

The Pritzker Prize is awarded annually to honor a living architect or architects whose built work

demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

The Praemium Imperiale is a global arts prize awarded annually by the Japan Art Association. Since its inaguration in 1989, it has become a mark of the arts, with six nomination committees, each are chaired by an International Advisor.

To most architects in practice, an architecture award has symbolic relevancebut also an impact on day to day decision making. Over the years of all five architectural pizes, 96% have been awarded to male candidates and the other 4% to just female candidates, this has shown that throughout the years females have pretty much been shortlisted to males and that gender plays an important role with being awarded a medal.

As we come into recent years more female architects are becoming awarded with the medals, this shows that architectural awards can be seen to be an importance as it gives architects the chance to prove that their designs are important and also gives them the freedom to create something spectacular.

Question 3).

Discuss the origins and characteristics of 'Organic architecture'? (10 marks)
Is the term 'Organic architecture' relevant today?
(15 mark available).

Organic architecture has a long and celebrated history, from Ancient Greece to Art Nouveau. Organic architecture is rooted in a passion for life, nature, and natural forms, and is full of the vitality of the natural world with its free flowing curves and expressive forms are sympathetic to the human mind, body and spirit.

The word Organic was first introduced within architecture by frank Lloyd Wright around 1908, it was derived from Louis Sullivan who talked about "form follows function', frank Lloyd Wright took that and changed it to "form and function are one"

Organic architecture involves a respect for the properties of the materials.and is also an attempt to integrate the spaces into a coherent whole which can be seen as a marriage between the site and the structure and a union between the context and structure.

Egyptian and Ancient Greek civilizations studied natural forms and human body and abstracted them as geometry. They used the circle, ellipse, triangle and rectangle to derive harmonious proportions for their shrines and temples and so promote harmony between themselves and their elemental gods and spirits of earth and cosmos.

In Organic designs simplicity stands for synthesis of the different qualities of a structure which create an effortless effect.

Organic is a term that is widely used today, in architecture however this term has a long history and is still a defining element in many of contemporary designs. Its look has changed slightly overtime, from more philosophical to purely aesthetic.

Today, the term is broadened by aesthetics of curved lines and forms which resemble irregularities and shapes present in any landscape. As architects strive to either try and copy natural forms or to try and create modernist buildings where people can develop, think and grow. This, however does not mean that the aesthetics are put aside, organic architecture incorporates both requirements equally, making contemporary buildings into succesful works of art.

I believe the term 'Organic Architecture' is still relevant today due to the organic forms and symbolisation is still used within buildings, this is because you can then link the building to a architectural style and give it relevance to the time and environmental landscape that it fits in.

Question 4.)

Is ornament and embellishment architecturally important for a bystander, to understand the language of a building? Discuss (25 marks available)

~~Oran~~

Ornament is incorporated into a building to sometimes entertain us or give it symbolic meaning or to show that it is a very important building. for example, if we look at prisons and courts you will notice that on those type of buildings around the UK they will have an image placed above the entrance of each building, making sure that the public that will enter this type of building either know what they are entering and who owns the building.

Ornament can include many forms such as symbol making, illustration, or articulating local space and structure. with this in mind ornament is able to engage multiple grounds at the same time by being erotic, soft and uncertain, by knowing this ornament can address the physical building and the physics of the natural world around it.

Ornament is able to create space by settling and enlarging the transitions between elements such as, wall to ceiling, inside to outside, etc. you could say the purpose of ornament is to accomplish the conceivable of the architectural design in the public field.

When a building requires more attention than others we can involve ornamentation, whether this is to take your attention from particular parts or if its to emphasie other features of the building. Sometimes ornament will be used for places such

as when a door meets a wall or when the facade touches the ground, these parts will then define the limit of a shape or object that has been well designed. If the designer uses construction methods that are hard to hide away, then ornamentation can disguise the apparent details that comes from them.

Ornament is not neccessarily needed within architecture but architects, designers and the public do continue to enjoy its presence within the buildings. Ornament in classical architecture was best known for crowning the magnificence of the building that it was on or in, during the classicbl period ornament was essential to be a part of the designing process. However, in the modern movement you had architects trying not to use ornament within their buildings as they also tried to move away from the classical building designs to try and come up with something ~~new~~ newer.

Ornament isn't neccessarily important for a bystander to understand the building but more to understand why the architect would want to incorporate ornament in the beginning and why it would be neccessary for it in the design.

Question 5.)

In what ways did the work of Alvar Aalto and Jorn Utzon demonstrate the idea of 'Critical regionalism' in their work by briefly describing the commonalities and distinctive qualities of the architecture and design approach of both architects (15 marks available).

In your opinion, give examples of buildings that best display their work in this regard? (10 marks available)

Critical regionalism is an approach to architecture that strives to counter the placelessness and lack of identity of the International Style, but also rejects the whimsical individualism and ornamentation of post modern architecture. Its not simply regionalism in the sense of vernacular approach, it is a progressive approach to design that seeks to mediate between the global and the local languages of architecture.

Jorn Utzon had a nordic sense of concern for nature which, in his design, emphasized the synthesis of form, material and function for social values, this then developed into what Utzon later referred to as additive architecture, comparing his approach to the growth patterns of nature.

The principle that is fundamental to the architecture of Jorn Utzon, is that he draws inspiration from nature for organic form and creates an architecture that is predominatly experimental in character. The character which is most prominent about the Sydney Opera House

is that its being free in the centre of the Sydney Harbour, free from all sides, visable from all sides. The position on a peninsula, which is overlooked from all angles makes it important to maintain an all round elevation.

Alvar Aalto's 'organic line' within his furniture and glass objects helped Scandinavian design to conquer the living rooms of Western society.

Alvar Aalto bears hallmarks of influences from Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and other modernist figures. He initally practiced classical style of architecture but later began to blend ~~materials~~ modernist design approach with classical architecture.

Alvar Aalto did not dwell on abstract theory but emerged himself in the particularities of the site, the texture of materials, forms and quality of light as well as the mood, atmosphere, and intensity of life.

The Saynatsalo Town Hall is a multifunction building complex, the design of the town hall was influenced by both finnish vernacular architecture and the humanist Italian renaissance. While the main program of the building is housed ~~with brick~~ within a heavy brick envelope, the courtyard is ~~bearder~~ bordered by glass.

It was important to Alvar Aalto that the design represented democracy and the peoples ~~regi~~ relationship with the government which is why he included a large public space