




Designer as a critic

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- Is an architect only a problem-solver, or also a thinker?
 - Can design exist without a critical position?
 - Is every building an argument?

What is Architecture Criticism

- Is a critique of a completed building, or in some cases a published design proposal, assessing the architect's success, in meeting his aims and objectives and those of others. Architecture criticism is a bridge between the architecture profession and the public. It is concerned with opinions, values, and value judgments with the qualitative aspects of individual buildings, groups of buildings, and the built environment as well as with design, taste, cultural values with communities, and of course most importantly with the communication of ideas.

Pillars of the criticism process

- First: the critical person (Critic)
- Second: The object of criticism
- Third: The method of expressing criticism
- Fourth: The conditions of the critically process.

Contemporary Context (Discussion Section)

- Can architects still be critical within market-driven systems?
- Is “starchitect culture” compatible with critical practice?
- Does social media aesthetics weaken architectural criticism?
- Is sustainability today a genuine critique or a branding strategy?

First: Critic

One who expresses a reasoned opinion on any matter, especially involving a judgment of its value, truth, beauty, or technique.

Critic: taster, reviewer, reader

- Music critic
- Drama critic
- Theater critic
- Newspaper critic
- Literary critic
- Art critic
- Architecture Critic

Critic

A critic is one who likes or dislikes a book, a movie, or Art.....

A literary critic is usually a professor of literature.

The critic, should be flexible, tactful

To be active in Criticism, the critic should be educated, and be able to explain his way of criticism

Critic

- Generally, Criticism depends on the critic's ability to distinguish and the method used for criticism
- Criticism is affected by
 - 1. time
 - 2. place
 - 3. The method used
 - 4. culture

Criticism is a relative problem, not absolute

Historically it has been associated with what is beautiful or ugly, and beautiful or ugly may be relative.

Second: object of criticism:

It is the specific Art, Design or architectural work under criticism, and criticism here is on several levels:

Thought criticism:

- ✓Criticizing ideals, objectives, principles and theories.
- ✓It is concerned with thought more than it is concerned with the architectural work itself.
- Output (Production) Criticism
- It aims to describe the work, explain its elements and symbols, judge the quality of the Work compared to others, as well as study the effect of the work on the receiver.

It studies the relationship of work to thought, principles and rules Methodology criticism :

- design methodology, mechanisms and methods

Third: Method of Expressing Criticism:

- The oral method, which uses a verbal conversation with the designer or other evaluators, is carried out either in academic institutions or in the real worlds of design, such as architecture and offices.
- Written method: Criticism in a descriptive, interpretative, or evaluative form.

Fourth: Conditions of the critically process

- The viewing angles of the work are an important aspect that may emerge positive or negative aspects in it, and actually change the reality of its criticism, its meanings and its interpretation.
- Time factor the role of this factor in changing the nature of criticism directed at the work.
- Prevailing theories and ideas: the prevailing intellectual context plays a role as one of the conditions affecting the critical process.

The image shows several architectural blueprints and rolled-up plans. One plan is unrolled in the foreground, showing detailed technical drawings with dimensions, annotations, and symbols. The drawings include various lines, circles, and text such as 'S.01', 'S.02', 'S.03', 'S.04', 'S.05', 'S.06', 'S.07', 'S.08', 'S.09', 'S.10', 'S.11', 'S.12', 'S.13', 'S.14', 'S.15', 'S.16', 'S.17', 'S.18', 'S.19', 'S.20', 'S.21', 'S.22', 'S.23', 'S.24', 'S.25', 'S.26', 'S.27', 'S.28', 'S.29', 'S.30', 'S.31', 'S.32', 'S.33', 'S.34', 'S.35', 'S.36', 'S.37', 'S.38', 'S.39', 'S.40', 'S.41', 'S.42', 'S.43', 'S.44', 'S.45', 'S.46', 'S.47', 'S.48', 'S.49', 'S.50'. The background shows more rolled-up plans, creating a sense of depth and focus on the architectural profession.

The Architect as Critic

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- An architect-critic is often an architect.
 - They have a better ability to explain building design issues.
 - A knowledgeable and confident critic can provide valuable insights.
 - Their criticism should come from a deep understanding of the design process.
 - Good criticism should be useful to:
 - The original designer(s)
 - The readers
 - The critic

CICA/ Critic Union/ CICA/ History

- Name and Foundation
- CICA stands for the Comité International des Critiques d'Architecture (International Committee of Architectural Critics). It was established in Mexico City in 1978.
- It is closely linked to the World Congresses of the International Union of Architects.
- Early History
- The first official CICA meeting took place in the Joan Miró Foundation (July 1979).
- Prof. Bruno Zevi (Rome) was elected the first President.

CICA/ Critic Union/ CICA/ History

- Purpose and Approach
- CICA is a pluralistic organization, welcoming diverse views.
- It provides a platform for architectural critics to participate in international events and architectural competitions.
- It emphasizes that the critic's role is separate from the designer's but still requires close collaboration.

The Architect as Critic

- Bruno Zevi has argued that critics should be installed in architectural offices: this would give architects an opportunity to test their ideas on an objective and neutral person at the outset of a project.
- Many CICA members are, architects themselves who have also chosen to be involved with criticism. In that way they continue a wholly respectable line of individualistic professional architectural criticism.
- Some of them have developed specialist interests in aesthetics, in urban planning, in architecture and theory, in history and in wide multi-cultural aspects of the disciplines and ideas that form part of the environmental arts and sciences.



The advantages of the architect as critic

- The advantages of the architect as critic, the critic who comes to architecture trained in another discipline is disadvantaged. The weaknesses of the "journalist-critic" have been exposed many times in the past through lack of awareness of architectural history or context.
- In order to understand architecture however the critic must know how it is made. The centrality of the design process must be acknowledged. The critic must have a notion about how it works and how a design is conceived and made.
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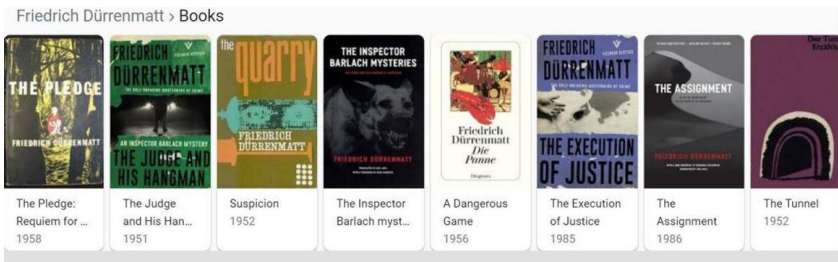
Popular Critics

Friedrich Dürrenmatt



Friedrich Dürrenmatt

- Friedrich Dürrenmatt was a Swiss author and dramatist. He was a proponent of epic theatre whose plays reflected the recent experiences of World War II. The politically active author's work included avantgarde dramas, philosophical crime novels Born: January 5, 1921, Konolfingen, Switzerland Died: December 14,



Friedrich
Durrenmatt
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- who expressed serious reservations about critics in his little essay Chat about criticism in front of the press he said, "no writer is ever quite sure that he can master his own job ...". As a writer and architect myself I know exactly how he felt. In his essay he went on to define four classes of critics. He described them thus: The first can neither write nor criticize. The second can write but cannot criticize. The third cannot write but can criticize, The fourth can write and criticize! Most critics", Durrenmatt said, "are to be found in the first class, the most famous are in the second, and in the fourth are those who know something about the subject being criticized. Nobody is to be found in the third category -those who cannot write but can criticize it is purely hypothetical!"

John Ruskin: one of the famous Critics (1819 –1900)

- Who was John Ruskin?
- An English critic of art, architecture, and society, as well as a talented painter and writer
- Born on February 8, 1819, in London, England.
- Died on January 20, 1900.
- His Views:
- He criticized the "laissez-faire" approach and opposed industrialism.
- He believed that mass production took away the joy of doing work well.
- On Architecture:
- Ruskin defended Gothic architecture as the noblest style.
- He admired the Gothic design and the medieval society that created it



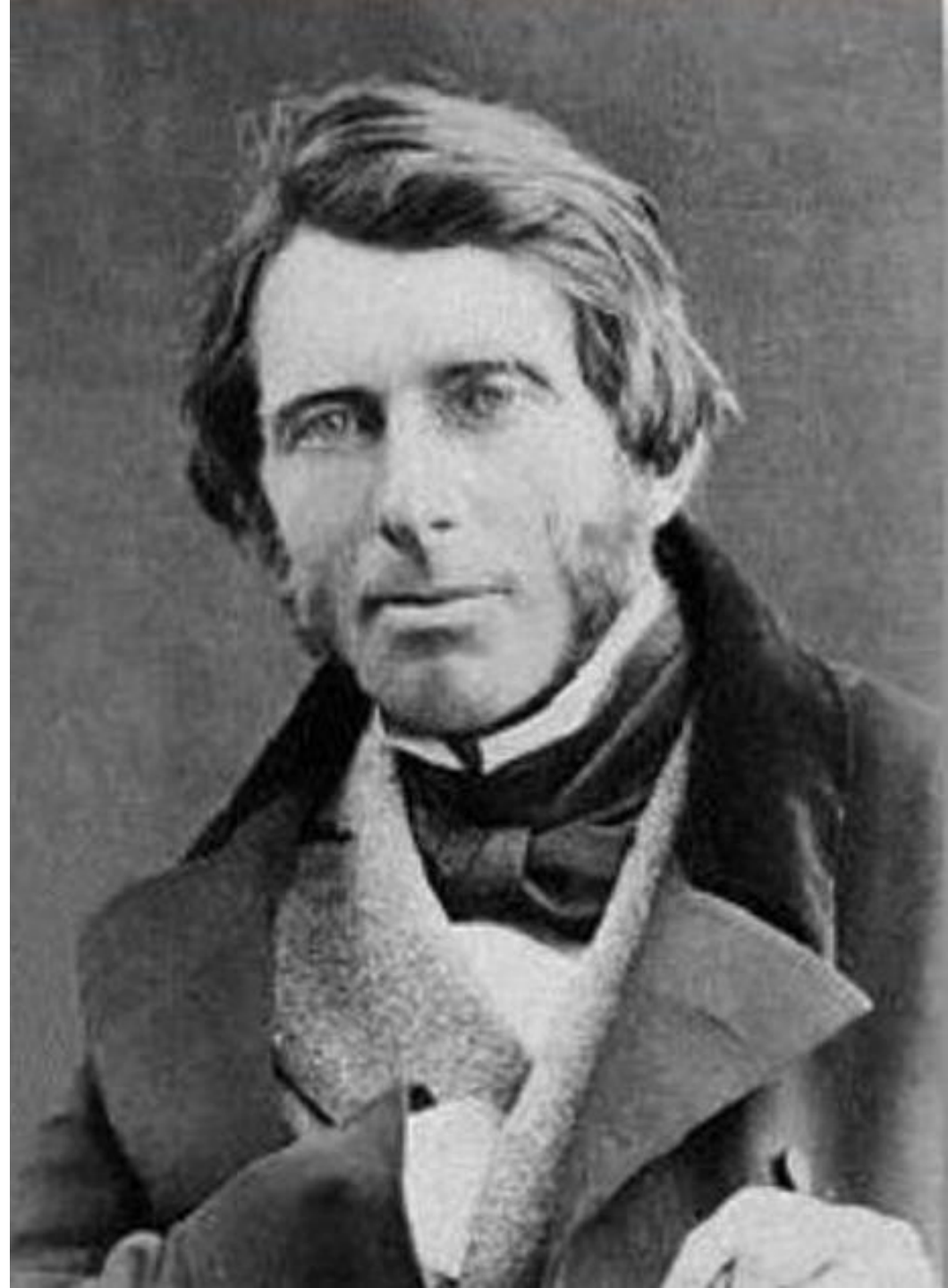
What do you think? Of his approach?

- Architecture is built on fundamental elements—mass, space, line, and color. Each generation interprets and applies these elements differently when analyzing buildings or defining great architectural styles. In other words, what is considered important in architecture changes over time based on cultural and artistic perspectives.
- John Ruskin strongly advocated for the Gothic style in architecture. He emphasized Unity and Coherence in design.



Why is Ruskin important in criticism?

- He showed how personal architectural preferences influence criticism.
- His work proves that architectural criticism is not just about aesthetics but also philosophy and values.
- He helped establish the role of critics in shaping public and professional opinions on architecture.



- Thank you

