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➤ Open reply

to the open letter from the Dean of the Faculty Architecture and the Built Environment, 05-04-2017

Dear dean Peter Russell,

I have read your letter about diversity with great interest.

As an alumni of Delft (graduated 1982) I kept my eyes and ears open to find out what happened with “Vrouwen, Bouwen, Wonen”, women’s studies and the position of women at work.

In my work as an architect I had to deal with the women-fuzz that comes with it, but I focused on my work and with great joy. I founded the Scala-office with Peter Drijver and we managed to keep the number of women in our office balanced with the number of men. This balance remained a topic throughout the years. In 1989 I made an exhibition in Amsterdam in the Amazone-gallery at the occasion of 50/50 female/male students starting architecture in Delft. I had hoped that this would result in 50/50 degrees and 50/50 at work. It never did.

Nevertheless this topic became overshadowed by an other diversity issue.

From the start our work has been connected with social housing and squatting-movements.

Renovation instead of demolishing became an issue, with durability and prevention of destruction as key-items. The power of existing buildings opened our eyes to history in all its beauty.

We found clues and keys and inspiration and knowledge in the buildings surrounding our daily life. We saw drawings that spread skills and craftsmanship in every line. We saw how villages and towns had developed successful ways of organizing the public and private domain.

Recognizing this power we discovered the word ‘tradition’, as sum of successful innovations.

Designing without the handcuffs of modernism we found ourselves in an sheer boundless world of possibilities. When housing became a buyers market we often found ourselves again on the side of residents when it came to discussions about quality and style.

These developments in design require study and research to strengthen the scientific and artistic foundation. I do not want to leave this wealth to historians.

As an architect I want the full power of traditional and classical design.

I found places and institutes to study, but Delft was never one of them.

I did lecture in Delft now and then, always with the restriction to advocate the other side in pro/contra debates. Never to research or study traditional and classical design.

I will keep this letter to the statement that in the eyes of the TU Delft I find myself working in two blind spots.

Dear Peter Russel, if ever you are going to work on one, I would suggest you work on both.

Sincerely,

Mieke Bosse,

Architect, chair INTBAU-NL