



40 HISTORICAL EVENTS

during the COVID-19 lockdown and their urban consequences* for the future

LEARNING FROM QUARANTINE

Calas, David. Learning from Quarantine, 40 Historical Events during the COVID-19 lockdown and their urban consequences* for the future, Studio Calas, 2020

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**Due to the extensive consequences of COVID-19, the term 'urban' is extended to a broad range of thematic points of contact. Consequently, there are interactions with the social, the political, the economic, the digital and above all, the up-and-coming.*

'Learning from Quarantine' is based on an architectural theory paper written in 1974 by Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, entitled 'Learning from Las Vegas'. It encompasses a reflection on urban development, in which the built environment and its influence on social perception is investigated - a reflection on the city as a place of experience for the masses. Nevertheless, Scott Brown and Venturi's observations reveal a commercially reduced product that gradually appears to be separated from its urban historical quality and conception. Based on this criticism, the example of the Las Vegas 'Strip' is treated as a meaningful element of urban development and societal identification.

Viewed from a post-pandemic perspective, the 'Strip' (or our urban environment) could serve as a point of reference for current urban design trends. Products of a physical as well as a social character that are mainly generated out of neo-liberal decisions and therefore create a continuity with the Las Vegas of the 70s. The cityscape has become a product of investment portfolios and austerity measures, and to which society had and continuously has to adapt.

The pandemic, caused by the COVID-19 virus, has suspended previous utilisation schemes of urban spaces, social coexistence, digital interaction, and ultimately architecture. These temporary restrictive measures were applied over a short period of time, but direct attention towards post-pandemic action. How do we go on? What can we take away from this?

'Learning from Quarantine' uses reflections as an opportunity to think further and to act. Therefore an additional theoretical consideration, based on the model of 'Learning from Las Vegas', may seem necessary, but appears obsolete in the present context. This publication aims to focus on timely recognition, implementation and action.

From March 19th, 2020 to April 27th, 2020 we were dissecting news items for 40 days, searching for their uniqueness and unprecedented manifestation - a different form of quarantine that allowed us a deeper investigation of content. Our conclusions and reflections enabled us to allocate the present in order to envision, with guiding principles, a better tomorrow. Unfortunately, we did not always succeed in this.

COVID-19 has hit us hard and affected our well protected ,normality'. This little book wants to look ahead. For this purpose, messages which went around the world during the lockdown, are used as a starting point for so-called ,learnings'. Conclusions indicate a need for action and suggest that we must leave our comfort zone.

40 news items, each with three conclusions, form a source-based, graphical and textual narrative. The rose-tinted glasses are put away and deliberate action is recognized as an urgent necessity. The departure from ,normality' will be difficult.

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