

Atmosphere in Architecture

What is atmosphere? Well according to Wikipedia, it's a sensory quality that a space emits (sorry for referring to Wikipedia, automatic default page). It can be seen, felt, heard, smelled and so on. It is one of the most important aspects in architecture because it is what gives the user a sense of comfort and awareness to the space. In the text, it is mentioned that atmospheric design is in itself the product of a particular atmosphere. This goes to show the vital relation between the interior and exterior spaces, both will always go hand in hand. The surroundings will define the kind of atmosphere an architect will create in relation to the structure.

This is a rather complex topic, since atmosphere itself cannot be controlled nor completely defined; there are so many factors to be taken in because it is also taking into account social, emotional and cultural aspects. People themselves complete the atmosphere of a space, what we do, what we feel, what we say all combine with the spatial atmosphere and project these sensory experiences. As architects, we often play with these different levels of sensory qualities; it is what gives the structures life. Peter Zumthor, is a Swiss architect who basks in the notion of 'creating an emotional space'; he believes that light, materials and atmosphere are the most important things in architecture, and the form just follows. He said that architecture should be free from symbolism and all about the experience. I think that we need more architects like him, because if you prioritize atmosphere in architecture, you prioritize the user and his overall experience, which is one of the main purposes of architecture.

View House

The architects of the view house wanted to achieve a design blending in the exterior and interior spaces, while framing the landscape and in turn still preserving privacy from the neighbors. It was designed to have a compact footprint and followed a cylindrical shape in which certain geometric subtractions were made. The design is quite interesting because the intention was to have no primary façade, making the whole structure distinct on every angle. But I didn't find the design fitting to the surroundings since it didn't maximize the space of the landscape. It seems like a shell or a cocoon placed on a huge plot of land. Also, the sense of privacy will be omitted once more neighbors will build around the structure.

For my future research, I'm interested in delving into vernacular and sustainable architecture, I believe integrating vernacular architecture in today's modern society can be vital in preserving one's traditions and history. In this time of rapid technological advancement and urbanization, there is still much to be learned from the traditional knowledge of vernacular construction. I believe technology and tradition can be integrated together to form a rather multi-scalar outcome.