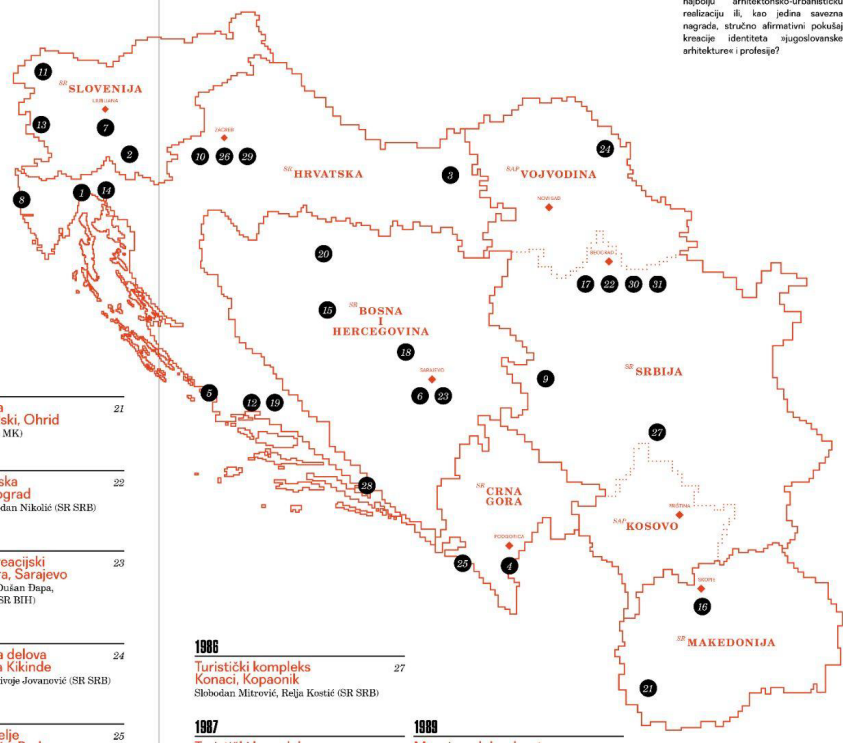


# »Od Vardara ... do Triglava«

Savezne Borbine nagrade za arhitekturu

<b>1965</b>	<b>Motel Slijeme, Preluk</b> Ivan Vitić (SR HR)	1
<b>1966</b>	<b>Osnovna škola Kočevje</b> Jože Kregar (SR SLO)	2
<b>1967</b>	<b>Urbanistički plan Split III</b> Vladimir Braco Mušić, Nives Stare, Marjan Bežan (SR SLO)	12
<b>1967</b>	<b>Robna kuća Prehrana Osijek</b> Milan Mihelić (SR SLO)	3
<b>1967</b>	<b>Hotel Podgorica</b> Svetlana Račević (SR CG)	4
<b>1968</b>	<b>Turistički kompleks Solaris</b> Boris Maguš (SR HR)	5
<b>1969</b>	<b>Skerdija Sarajevo</b> Živorad Jančević, Halid Muhasković (SR BIH)	6
<b>1970</b>	<b>Garažna kuća Poljane - T. G. h/48, Ljubljana</b> Savin Sever (SR SLO)	7
<b>1970</b>	<b>Hotel Kristal, Poreč</b> Julije de Luca (SR HR)	8
<b>1971</b>	<b>Stambeno-poslovni kompleks Zlatibor, Užice</b> Stanko Mandić (SR SRB)	9
<b>1972</b>	<b>Stambeni soliteri Veslačka, Zagreb</b> Slavko Jelinek, Ivo Linardić (SR HR)	10
<b>1973</b>	<b>Hotel Kanin, Bovec</b> Janez Lajovic (SR SLO)	11
<b>1974</b>	<b>Bolnica dr. Franca Derganca, Nova Gorica</b> Biro 71 - Štefan Kacin, Jurij Princes, Bogdan Špindler, Marjan Uršič (SR SLO)	13
<b>1975</b>	<b>Muzej revolucije Rijeka</b> Nevan Šegvić (SR HR)	14
<b>1976</b>	<b>Robna kuća Jajce</b> Radivoj Jadrić, Džemaludin Karić, Nedžad Kurto (SR BIH)	15
<b>1976</b>	<b>Makedonska akademija nauka i umetnosti, Skopje</b> Boris Čipan (SR HR)	16
<b>1977</b>	<b>Kongresni centar Sava Beograd</b> Stojan Maksimović, Aleksandar Šaletić (SR SRB)	17
<b>1978</b>	<b>Narodno pozorište Zenica</b> Jahid Pinci, Zlatko Uglješ (SR BIH)	18
<b>1978</b>	<b>Stadion Poljud, Split</b> Boris Maguš (SR HR)	19
<b>1979</b>	<b>Regionalni medicinski centar Banjaluka</b> Zdenko Brož, Veslo Hamšić, Bogoljub Kurajec, Raško Mandić (SR BIH)	20
<b>1980</b>	<b>Osnovna škola Kliment Ohridski, Ohrid</b> Pavel Balaban (SR MK)	21
<b>1981</b>	<b>Vojnomedicinska akademija Beograd</b> Jože Osojnik, Slobodan Nikolić (SR SRB)	22
<b>1982</b>	<b>Sportsko-rekreativni kompleks Zetra, Sarajevo</b> Lidumil Alikašić, Dušan Tapaš, Osman Morankić (SR BIH)	23
<b>1983</b>	<b>Rekonstrukcija delova gradskog tkiva Kikinde</b> Predrag Čugić, Borivoje Jovanović (SR SRB)	24
<b>1984</b>	<b>Turističko naselje Slovenska plaža, Budva</b> Janez Kobe (SR SLO)	25
<b>1985</b>	<b>Krematorij groblja Gaj urni, Mirogoj, Zagreb</b> Marjan Hršić, Žvonimir Krznarić, Davor Minceo (SR HR)	26
<b>1986</b>	<b>Turistički kompleks Konaci, Kopaonik</b> Slobodan Mitrović, Rajka Kostić (SR SRB)	27
<b>1987</b>	<b>Turistički kompleks Zenit, Neum</b> Slobodan Jovanović (SR BIH)	28
<b>1988</b>	<b>Muzej vazduhoplovstva Surčin, Beograd</b> Ivan Štraus (SR BIH)	29
<b>1989</b>	<b>Muzej vazduhoplovstva Surčin, Beograd</b> Ivan Štraus (SR BIH)	30
<b>1990</b>	<b>Akademija likovnih umetnosti Beograd, odel slikarstva</b> Branislav Mitrović, Slobodan Lazarević (SR SRB)	31



Nagrada Borba - apolitički Oskari za najbolju arhitektonsko-urbanističku realizaciju ili, kao jedina savezna nagrada, stručno afirmativni pokušaj kreacije identiteta jugoslovenske arhitekture i profesije!

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**ARCHITECTURAL “YUGOCOSMOPOLITANISM”**

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## ARCHITECTURAL "YUGOCOSMOPOLITANISM"

### ABSTRACT

The research "Borba za arhitekturu" not only tries to assemble, showcase and consequently analyze the wide variety of architectural production and its tendencies in socialist Yugoslavia but also, through conversations with architects who were active in this milieu, for the first time, it provides an authentic, direct insight into the affirmation and social role of the architectural profession in correlation with its current position in Western Balkans society. It demonstrates how architecture and urbanism co-created the collective identity of Yugoslav society, and vice versa, by highlighting important milestones, such as social and professional events, media coverage, as well as industrialization and mass urbanization, subsequently followed by numerous public republican and federal open architectural and urban tenders which brought forth exceptional original space concepts and works. The exceptionality of socialist Yugoslavia's architectural production can also be well identified through the media popularisation of it, both within Yugoslavia and beyond its borders and especially revealed through the prism of the one and only federal Yugoslav architectural Borba Award (1965-1991), established by the editorial board of the then-prominent Borba newspaper and the Association of Architects of Yugoslavia.

The Borba Award was not only the highest professional recognition but also a broad, popular public media award. It also represented one of the first postwar institutionalized awards for architectural achievements in Europe and the world. Since neither the Borba nor the Association, after the furious disintegration of the country, were ever able to collect the complete documentation of nominated and awarded works, this research gathers in one place an extensive range of reproductions of original photographs and plans, showcasing an extraordinary set of architectural creations from all over the former Yugoslavia between 1960 and 1991. Simultaneously, it delves into the social mission of Borba and provides an overview of professional juries and their interesting critiques. As an authentic insight into the practice and affirmation of the architectural profession, the research also introduces personal interviews with 19 renowned architects from all republics who were active during this period and, among other prizes for their creations, received the Borba Award and were a part of its jury. "Borba za arhitekturu" thus aims to raise new questions and provide a reason for further analysis of the "Yugoslav architecture" phenomenon, which still remains insufficiently known to both the domestic Western Balkans and the international public, and tries to encourage awareness of the rich shared heritage of the Balkans prompting questions about the current role of the architectural profession, social culture, and contemporary spatial development in comparison to the milieu of former socialist Yugoslavia.

**Key words:** *(collective) identity, media popularization and affirmation of architecture, architectural heritage, social role of architecture, architecture and society*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Architecture is not just the art of creating space; it is the skill of shaping a society. The man-made spaces that surround us represent new worlds of material and perceptual values, which should primarily contribute to a better and, above all, genuinely humane life for people, fostering our activities and relaxation. Architecture not only plays a role in shaping our lives; it should fundamentally be a form of social and democratic creativity since it is undeniably indispensable for humanity, directly and indirectly influencing people, the development of culture, social perception and participation, and the formation of the collective identity of society. Consequently, architecture can be confidently labelled as one of the most authentic and tangible witnesses and recorders of mankind, representing not only aesthetic and functional but also socio-psychological, technological-technical, economic and ethical tendencies.

In comparison to the situation in the field of architectural creativity before the disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia, one could, through the opinions of interlocutors in the research, assume that architecture in SFRY used to play a vital and significant part in building up the image of the state and collective social identity. This influence was not only shaped through architecture and spatial planning in practice but also through endeavours of (professional) journalism, mass media, and various social and professional events of the time, popularizing domestic achievements, which reflected a growing understanding that architecture and its creators have a crucial role in society and its modernization [1].<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1 and 2. Spreads of the publication "Borba za arhitekturu" (Archive of the author)

Since only detailed studies of different events and tendencies in architecture with the help of authentic journalism and visits to various archives all around former Yugoslavia did not seem competent enough to form a realistic impression and opinion in this research, or in general, to obtain the possibilities of architectural creativity in socialist Yugoslavia, the process also in 2021 included first-hand points of view through interviews with 19 renowned architects from all the republics who were active since the 1960s until the country's dissolution in 1991, and further in their professional careers experienced the post-disintegration transition too. These architects received numerous professional awards for their creations, including the highly regarded federal or republic Borba Award. The targeted uniformed questionnaire, which strived to enable a comparison of their opinions and experiences from the practice, provides an authentic insight into the role of architecture

<sup>1</sup> From the interview with Trajko Dimitrov, Skopje, Mar. 24, 2021.

"In Yugoslavia, architecture and the architect were considered a social public common good. As professionals, we worked hard to ensure greater public recognition, yet at times, we found ourselves in the background [1]."

and urbanism in shaping the Yugoslav society, discussing the architect's social role, engagement, their creative freedom, as well as the trends and tendencies in postwar architecture in the Western Balkans in correlation with the social, economic and industrial influences of specific regions within the former Yugoslavia, both then and today. The selected interlocutors were Lidumil Alikaljić (Sarajevo), Dragoljub Bakić (Beograd), Trajko Dimitrov (Skopje), Marijan Hržić (Zagreb), Janez Kobe (Ljubljana), Gregor Košak (Ljubljana), Stanko Kristl (Ljubljana), Dinko Kovačić (Split), Mirko Krstonošić (Novi Sad), Janez Lajovic (Ljubljana), Branislav Mitrović (Belgrade), Marko Mušič (Ljubljana), Pavle Popović (Podgorica), Branko Siladin (Zagreb), Aleksandar Stjepanović (Belgrade), Bogdan Špindler - Biro 71 (Ljubljana), Zlatko Ugljen (Sarajevo), Aleš Vodopivec (Ljubljana) and Panda Zografska (Skopje). The questionnaire also encouraged them to discuss their potential definitions of "Yugoslav architecture", the state and political attitude towards the profession at the time, domestic and foreign professional journalism, the media's popularization of architecture, the Borba Award, and, last but not least, the process and creation of their particular works.

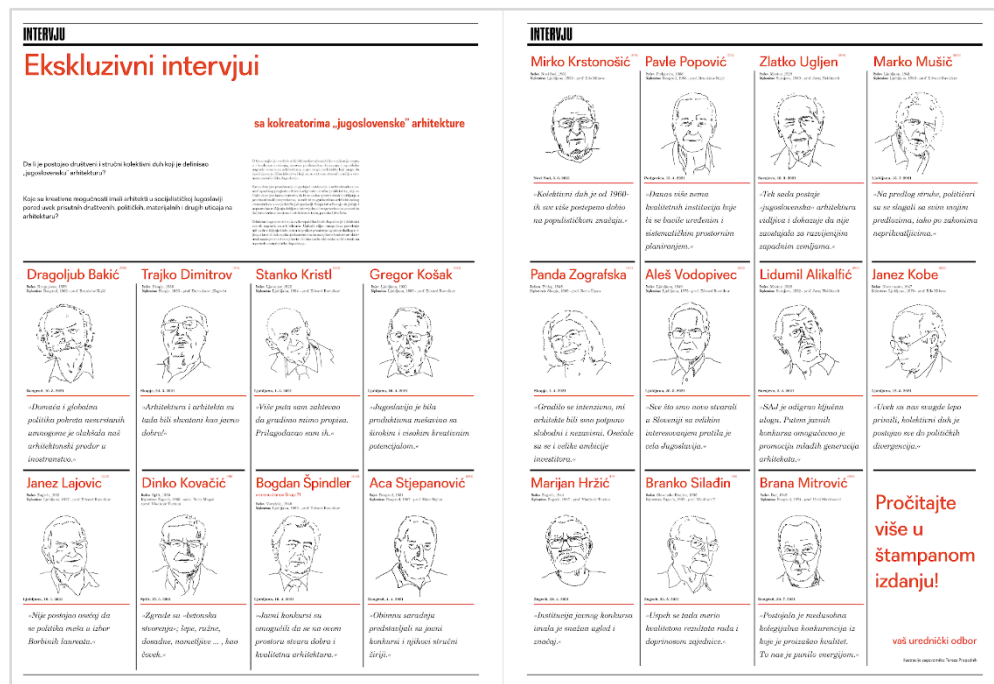


Figure 3. The research included interviews with 19 prominent architects of the milieu from all republics of the former Yugoslavia (Archive of the author)

Based on these dense yet extensive first-hand gathered and published pieces of information, the research entailed a review of architectural works publicly acknowledged by various awards and events within the milieu as examples of vital and socially significant architecture.

Therefore, the primary objective of this article is to provide a short introductory yet comprehensive context of how professional affirmation was pursued through the media's popularization of architecture, aiming to shape an image of modernization and collective identity of socialist Yugoslavia through spatial creativity. This contribution is thus only the first step towards a further detailed discussion of the tendencies and influence of the media

popularization of certain awarded and nominated architectural works gathered in the research, many of which undoubtedly set new guidelines and trends in the architecture of SFRY and its individual republics.

## 2. “YUGOSLAVARCHITECTURE”?

Lately, there has been an increasing discussion, re-examination, and re-evaluation of the architectural phenomena of the former socialist Yugoslavia. The architecture, often referred to as “Yugoslav” or “socialist”, elicits a wide array of opinions, interpretable through collective and individual perspectives. This leads to the question: What might define the term “Yugoslav architecture” within the diverse tapestry of cultures and traditions that constituted the former federation? Namely, this rich ethnical, cultural, topographic and atmospheric diversity on which socialist Yugoslavia was based and built also ideologically as a state undoubtedly served as one of the most valuable foundations across all fields of creativity within this unique milieu.

The phenomenon of “Yugoslavianness” in the architecture of socialist Yugoslavia also stirred architects and art historians at the time, who frequently engaged in discussions on similar topics at various events. Furthermore, this prompts us to question whether a common social and professional collective spirit existed, defining the so-called “Yugoslav” postwar architecture, in other words, how “Brotherhood and Unity” might be identified through architectural creativity and its events. Exploring the creative possibilities of architects within the context of this milieu, amidst the complex and multifaceted influences of socio-political, economic, material, and other factors impacting architectural creation, reveals, according to interlocutors, the most common aspect in the architecture of socialist Yugoslavia. This aspect emphasizes the institution of public tenders for urbanism, architecture, and design. Despite different situations in individual republics within a common federal system, these tenders undoubtedly provided architects with total freedom in architectural creativity<sup>2</sup> [2], [3].

Architects of these generations were shaped during a period of significant socio-political upheavals and transformations, not only in the global context but also within Yugoslavia. This spanned from the challenging years immediately following World War II through the partial liberalization of politics in the mid-1950s and the further opening up of the country in the 1960s. During this time, Yugoslavia industrialized and, through its bold move in the creation of a non-aligned movement, also asserted its position in international politics, which opened up new possibilities for the activities of our architects abroad as well<sup>3</sup> [4].

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<sup>2</sup> From the interview with Marko Mušič, Ljubljana, Jul. 15, 2021.  
“Politics receded into the background during calls for tenders and the evaluation of received projects, leaving full implementation and decision-making to the profession. This was particularly evident during my first realizations in Yugoslavia, where politics, although naturally present in the official management of projects and constructions, never interfered with the work and creativity of the architect [2].”

From the interview with Bogdan Spindler, Ljubljana, Apr. 14, 2021.

“Since all our realizations at that time were accepted in competitions, all investors fully respected the decisions of the architectural profession and we had no problems with the realization. The clients were respectful to the authors, we only had to satisfy their demands regarding deadlines and quality [3].”

<sup>3</sup> From the interview with Dragoljub Bakić, Beograd, Apr. 9, 2021.

“Through the activities of our architectural practice abroad, we also transferred a kind of “Yugoslav” architectural and construction idea. The domestic, and indeed global, policy of the non-aligned movement greatly facilitated our penetration abroad [4].”

Furthermore, the 1960s witnessed the adoption of reforms aimed at revitalizing the domestic economy and transitioning towards a market-based economy. This era introduced a sort of Yugoslav social upheaval, featuring domestic consumerism, tourism, art, sports, film, music, and the emergence of domestic pop culture, which marked a turning point where an uprising of all that enhanced the daily lives of people contributed value to society and created a rapidly evolving Yugoslav identity that, in some aspects, still persists today<sup>4</sup> [5], [6].

Consequently, there was a substantial demand for new, modern infrastructure with previously unexplored functions, ranging from housing to educational facilities, sports and recreational institutions, cultural venues, leisure-oriented tourist complexes, spaces of consumerism, and many more<sup>5</sup> [7]. Through the tendencies in the architecture of this milieu, one can discern that the "revolutionary war-liberating initiatives" of the state gradually gave way, and Yugoslav society endeavoured to establish a form of a new modern and prosperous "social normality" by actively cultivating a contemporary "promising vision of the future", especially through architecture and urban planning<sup>6</sup> [8].

Yugoslavia began to embrace the world and Europe, which also led to the formation of new professional connections, knowledge acquisition, and educational opportunities in different fields. Individual architects, including those who were still students at the time, started to pursue internships abroad in the West and as well stayed current with global architectural tendencies through foreign professional journalism and visits to Scandinavian countries, Italy, France, West Germany, England, the United States, and Canada which became more frequent during this period. The diverse environments within Yugoslavia shaped by the strong and distinct identities of domestic schools of architecture in Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, and the two established after World War II in Sarajevo and Skopje, along with their specific potent personalities<sup>7</sup> [9], coupled with increasing pulses of foreign influences through international professional journalism, provided these emerging generations of architects and designers with a broad and creatively transdisciplinary range of creative opportunities. As declared by the Italian architect Ernesto Rogers in 1952 in the Athens Charter, this could be marked as a spectrum that extended "From the spoon to the city". Consequently, during that time, many creators were able to discover their niche or

<sup>4</sup> From the interview with Mirko Krstonošić, Novi Sad, Mar. 6, 2021.

"The collective spirit has generally taken on an increasingly populist meaning since the 1960s and has endeavored to develop further in the 1970s [5]."

From the interview with Lidumil Alikalčić, Sarajevo, Apr. 2, 2021.

"In the period just after the World War II, the tasks of architects were primarily focused on the development of the economy, infrastructure, and social care for the population. Social attention in the construction of facilities for social, cultural, and sports programs became crucial later in the following decades. During this time, Yugoslavia increasingly opened up to the world, and the focus of interest expanded to new content in culture, sports, and entertainment [6]."

<sup>5</sup> From the interview with Stanko Kristl, Ljubljana, Mar. 1, 2021.

"When I think of the term "Yugoslav architecture", I think first of all about new programs and functions of buildings that we did not know before [7]."

<sup>6</sup> From the interview with Zlatko Ugljen, Sarajevo, Mar. 10, 2021.

"The former Yugoslavia represented a "golden age" for many architects of my generation. After the period of socialist realism immediately following World War II and the subsequent easing of pressures in architecture and culture, a time soon emerged when we architects could pursue our visions and work prosperously and creatively [8]."

<sup>7</sup> "The architects who left their mark on the so-called "Yugoslav architecture" were primarily our professors who had studied in European centers of architecture. Many of them were students in places like Prague or colleagues of leading architects of the time, including figures like Le Corbusier. In turn, they selflessly transmitted the impulses and influences of new, modern tendencies to our generation. It was on these foundations that so called "Yugoslav architecture" emerged. Subsequent generations of students continued to shape this phenomenon, introducing the spirit of their own time and ambience [8]."

specialize in various fields. This specialization was not limited just to urbanism and architecture with their specific functions but also extended to industrial, graphic design, marketing, and other domains.

Despite the sudden dramatic turns evident in the increasing development of the industry and economy and subsequent intensive construction in the socialist Yugoslavia at that time, many architectural realizations bear witness to significant turning points aimed at improving the quality of life for society and co-creating a vision (for that time) of a more modern and humane standard of living for the entire population of socialist Yugoslavia<sup>8</sup> [10]. This can also be obviously recognized through the set of architectural designs awarded with the Borba Award and the opinions of all interlocutors, which were, along with the important role of public tenders, also emphasizing a close and mutually beneficial relationship with domestic industry and the economy, intensively contributing to their development and vice-versa<sup>9</sup> [11]. Together, they were prosperously establishing the aesthetic criteria of society and undoubtedly played a significant role in shaping the image of everyday habits and life.

## 2.1. PUBLIC INTEREST IN “YUGOSLAV ARCHITECTURE”?

In Yugoslavia, most separate events and prizes were established in individual republics during the 1950s and beyond. These awards primarily aimed to recognize achievements in science and art, occasionally extending their recognition to include high-quality architectural contributions. However, from the early 1960s, when the country effectively transformed into a vast construction site, they were no longer sufficient for the affirmation and popularization of architectural production and its creators in the social context of Yugoslavia. Architecture and its creators, despite the endeavours of domestic professional journalism and the efforts of the Federal Association of Architects of Yugoslavia, were not receiving adequate public attention during this period. This sentiment could be evident in one of the opening editorial lines of architect Oliver Minić in 1960, the first long-term editor-in-chief of the journal “Arhitektura i urbanizam”, where he exposed that domestic Yugoslav architecture and its creators, despite their crucial role in the society, are unfortunately still remaining in the shadows of our public [12].

Architectural creativity in socialist Yugoslavia, amidst the increasing construction and urbanization, was apparently striving after an event or a public platform to capture the attention of a broader audience which would encourage the affirmation and participation of architectural creators from all the republics, fostering new professional connections and the promotion of high-quality architectural contributions from across socialist Yugoslavia.

Already even during a challenging decade marked by economic and socio-political reforms, particularly in the first half of the 1950s, when the Association of Architects of Yugoslavia gained official independence in 1952 namely, prior to that, architects were part of the Union

<sup>8</sup> From the interview with Aleksandar Stjepanović, Beograd, Apr. 4, 2021.

“There was a significant difference in the approaches and importance of the procedures adopted in our country compared to the Eastern Bloc countries at the time. In Yugoslavia, we endeavored to address spatial problems primarily through diverse solutions and the creation of a humane space, shaped by the physical and natural environment [10].”

<sup>9</sup> From the interview with Stanko Kristl, Ljubljana, Mar. 1, 2021.

“The emergence of industry was decisive, followed by the construction of residential buildings and other infrastructure. Industrialization likely occurred for political reasons as well. The government at the time was clearly aware that the country could only progress by establishing its own industry and needed to be competitive. Otherwise, it risked remaining in a subordinate position compared to other countries [11].”



of Engineers and Technicians Associations of the Federation, professional journalism began to emerge. Journals such as Zagreb's "Arhitektura", "Čovjek i prostor", and Ljubljana's "Arhitekt" made valiant efforts to report on domestic and international events in architecture, urbanism and design despite facing financial constraints at that time. It was not until 1960 that a significant institutional transformation took place within the Federal Chamber of Architects and the introduction of the new pan-Yugoslav professional journal, "Arhitektura i urbanizam". This period was marked by a productive phase of new endeavours aimed at creating events dedicated exclusively to architecture and, most importantly, recognizing and affirming the field and its creators publicly.

Thus, in 1960, the Federal Association also played a pivotal role in establishing the first Prize for the best contemporary architecture in the country. The inaugural awards of the Association of Architects of Yugoslavia recognized the achievements of Slovenian architects Stanko Kristl for the Block for Assistants of the University of Ljubljana and Danilo Fürst for the Elementary School Stražišče pri Kranju, which definitely set new guidelines in the design of residential and educational buildings. Despite the Prize (1960-1965), during the start of extensive urbanization and construction, architecture, being a form of creativity that the public interacts with daily, actually faced a big challenge. These and similar efforts in establishing some events in individual republics dedicated to architecture even later in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, such as the Zagreb Salon (1965), Plečnik awards in Ljubljana (1972) or the Belgrade Salon of Architecture (1974), could be interpreted as "the profession's earnest endeavours for the profession" in separate regions of federation, what can be evident in Ivan Štraus's statement during a 1981 discussion about architectural production in Yugoslavia in the 1970s, organized in Zagreb, where he exposed the public common disinterest in the field of architecture even among the domestic profession itself, describing that we are primarily interested only in achievements in the construction of local individual cities and regions, while other spatial efforts of the federation remain outside our perception [13].



Figure 4. Stanko Kristl and Danilo Fürst, winners of the 1st Prize of the Association of Architects of Yugoslavia and their awarded works - Block for assistants in Ljubljana and Primary school Stražišče ("Aktuelnosti," Arhitekt, no. 2, p. 9, 1960)

## 2.2. ARCHITECTURAL “YUGOSLAVIANNES”?

A common topic of discussion among architects in Yugoslavia consequently also revolved around the inefficiency and the lack of systematic documentation and popularisation of quality domestic architectural production, which was, despite the professional journals, typically not published in an organized way and critically enough, even at the republican level, let alone at the federal level. Additionally, there were frequent debates and inquiries regarding the notion or definition of “Yugoslavian architecture”.

The known art historian Ivo Maroević, who, in addition to Mihajlo Mitrović, Ivica Mlađenović, Ivan Štraus, and Stane Bernik most closely followed and published the architectural production in their individual republics in the 1970s and 1980s, at Zagreb’s discussion in 1981 also instigated the potential definition of Yugoslavianness in the domestic architecture with an emphasis on not understanding the Yugoslavism as a state, social or territorial designation, but as a synthesized community which derives from different environments [14]. Most of the architects from all parts of Yugoslavia present there tried, though not very successfully, to define themselves based on this statement, as well as the interlocutors in the research, who were often explaining and linking their definition of “Yugoslav architecture” with the industrialization of the country, mentioning arrivals of new materials, construction technologies, and development of new functions or programmes of the buildings<sup>10</sup> [15]. Similar was Mihajlo Mitrović’s remark at the discussion on how our ‘Yugoslavianness’ in architecture can be recognized in practice, which also involved exposing specific materials such as brick, eternit tiles, and the import of Italian ceramic tiles, which unintentionally, through some authors and their creations on which they were used for the first time, triggered and influenced design trends and tendencies throughout Yugoslavia [16].

Questions among professionals also frequently arose regarding access to up-to-date information about contemporary architecture, urban planning, and spatial developments across all regions of Yugoslavia. The profession and the general public obviously had a much better awareness of architectural trends in Europe and around the world compared to their counterparts in other domestic regions of the former Yugoslavia [17]. Despite the high-quality architectural production of many domestic Yugoslav architects, it was also a common sentiment among professionals even later in the 1970s and 1980s that their work and names were not adequately recognized and presented beyond the country’s borders. Occasionally, some architectural works were featured in foreign professional journals, but these often appeared just as part of advertisements for prominent Yugoslav companies, with the actual authors often remaining in the background of these corporate ventures [18]. Despite the international successes and the strong reputation of certain Yugoslav design and construction bureaus, with Energoprojekt from Belgrade being particularly renowned, and the high recognition of specific architects with their projects in international competitions, such as, e.g. Ravnikar’s Tronchetto, the high-quality Yugoslav architectural production unfortunately, was not receiving the recognition it deserved in foreign professional evaluations. Consequently, Yugoslav architects were not widely affirmed beyond the borders, and interpreted through Arch. Živko Popovski’s words from 1981, we

<sup>10</sup> From the interview with Janez Lajovic, Ljubljana, Jan. 18, 2021.

“Trends in architecture throughout the entire Yugoslav area mainly followed domestically available technological capabilities. The Yugoslav industry was developing quite well during that time, and those in charge often allowed experts to travel abroad for tours and training. This facilitated the transmission of new technologies, construction methods, and materials to our environment [15].”

were missing a great opportunity to affirm Yugoslavian "big star architects" abroad [19]. Echoing this sentiment, the interlocutors in the research exposed that the architecture of Yugoslavia has actually only now, after several decades, begun to gain broader international attention, triggered very late with the exhibition *Towards a Concrete Utopia* in MoMA New York in 2018<sup>11</sup> [20].

### 2.3. "YUGOCOSMOPOLITANISM"

During the postwar transitional period to a gradual opening of the country to the world, architecture in Yugoslavia, both domestically and internationally, obviously did not receive the level of recognition, promotion, or public exposure that it deserved. It did not garner as much attention as other art forms, such as music or film, which were equally vital in shaping societal trends and co-creating the cultural identity and ambience of the Yugoslav society. Namely, in the late 1950s, the country embarked on an ambitious journey to construct a new and modern collective identity, which could be marked as "Yugoc cosmopolitanism". As an example, inspired by the Cannes Film Festival, the Yugoslav Film Festival was initiated in Pula in 1957. A year later, the first Yugoslav Music Festival in Opatija was also organized, seemingly influenced by the Italian music festival in San Remo. This period also witnessed the gradual establishment of numerous newspapers, journals and radio and television stations in the republican centres following the foundation of the Yugoslavian Radio Television (JRT) in 1957. Consequently, the media significantly contributed to the formation of identity and pop culture in socialist Yugoslavia, but amidst all these rising popular happenings and festivals, there was an evident absence of a public event and award dedicated to architectural creativity<sup>12</sup> [21].

Recognizing that the Award of the Association of Architects of Yugoslavia failed to attract the attention of the general public, a new concept finally emerged in 1965—a more popular and publicly visible award for architecture and its creators. This new award aimed to systematically encompass contemporary architectural realizations from the entire Yugoslav territory from each republic and later, after the constitutional changes of the SFRY in 1974, from the two socialist autonomous provinces as well.

## 3. BORBA: THE BIRTH OF ARCHITECTURAL "YUGOCOSMOPOLITANISM"

The Borba Award for Architecture was established through collaboration between the Federal Association of Architects of Yugoslavia and the editorial board of the esteemed Borba newspaper to raise awareness of this significant social, creative field with a specific focus on institutionalized encouragement of equal participation for creators across all republics while ensuring the broadest possible federal publicity and media attention. With the assistance of individual republican Associations of Architects, the best contemporary

<sup>11</sup> From the interview with Dragoljub Bakić, Beograd, Apr. 9, 2021.

"Despite creating very good architecture at the time, perhaps due to our socialist social system, it remained under-recognized abroad. It was only when Rem Koolhaas happened to walk past some of Energoprojekt's buildings in Lagos, Nigeria, that it sparked worldwide interest in our architecture. A rather extensive exhibition in New York's MoMA has only now shown that in Yugoslavia, we worked with quality architecture deserving of international recognition [20]."

<sup>12</sup> From the interview with Mirko Krstonošić, Novi Sad, Jun. 3, 2021.

"The Borba award was like a 'beautiful bride' for unscrupulous politicians and individuals insensitive to architecture. Until then, newspapers primarily featured articles offering opinions on good theater performances, art paintings, statues, and literature, leaving everything else, including architecture, somewhat in the background [21]."

achievements, as determined by their professional judgment, were nominated each year. Above all, the primary mission of the award was to bridge the gap between architecture and the general public, highlighting the significance of this creative field within Yugoslav society<sup>13</sup> [22].

The main proponents of this award included Stane Stanič, who served as the editor of the science column in the Borba newspaper, and the representatives from the Federal Association of Architects Mika Janković, Stanko Mandić, and Mihajlo Mitrović. Moma Marković, the chief and responsible editor of the Borba newspaper between 1963 and 1969, expressed that this award and event significantly started to contribute to the improvement and affirmation of this important branch of social activity, which is creating a better standard and more compassionate relationships within our society [23].

The Borba Award was established with a specific purpose: providing architecture and its creators with media recognition and expert evaluation on a federal level. Through the award and its associated events, one could recognize a nurturing sense of “Yugocosmopolitanism” within the architectural creativity of Yugoslavia during that era. In fact, the Borba Award somehow dogmatically embodies the synthesized term “Yugoslav architecture,” promptly showcasing and evidencing the rich yet common diversity of “Brotherhood and Unity” through one of the highest expressions of contemporary architectural production from all ambiances of the federation.

Although the axiomatic Yugoslav professional collective spirit was fostered through attempts to connect the professional circles of creators at that time through the federal Association, domestic journalism, especially with the pan-Yugoslav journal “Arhitektura i urbanizam” in the 1960s, and the Borba Award, the real unity in practice that truly personified this professional collective spirit of “Yugoslav architecture” was according to the interlocutors, simply the freedom of creativity which was embodied by public federal (and republican) architectural and urban planning competitions<sup>14</sup> [24], where the juries were consistently composed of experts (from different republics). On the other hand, interlocutors also significantly highlighted the Borba Award, considering it one of the best providers of media recognition among citizens and the professional community, offering them opportunities for new connections. Therefore, one of the fundamental definitions of what, besides the social connotation, “Yugoslav architecture” was the freedom of creativity within the institution of many public tenders where architects interpreted their visions of establishing new human relations of modern society and its future.

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<sup>13</sup> From the interview with Aleš Vodopivec, Ljubljana, May 20, 2021.

“If the award remains confined to the profession, it becomes irrelevant. Borba's award had a significant resonance, covered by almost all media outlets. This is incomparable to current award ceremonies, which receive modest media coverage, causing these events to pass by unnoticed. During that time, architecture was much more socially present due to such extensive media coverage [22].”

<sup>14</sup> From the interview with Branislav Mitrović, Beograd, Jul. 30, 2021.

“There was a shared atmosphere of collegial competition from which quality emanated, energizing all of us. I believe that competitions were the main professional connecting factors, where like-minded architects could meet [24].”

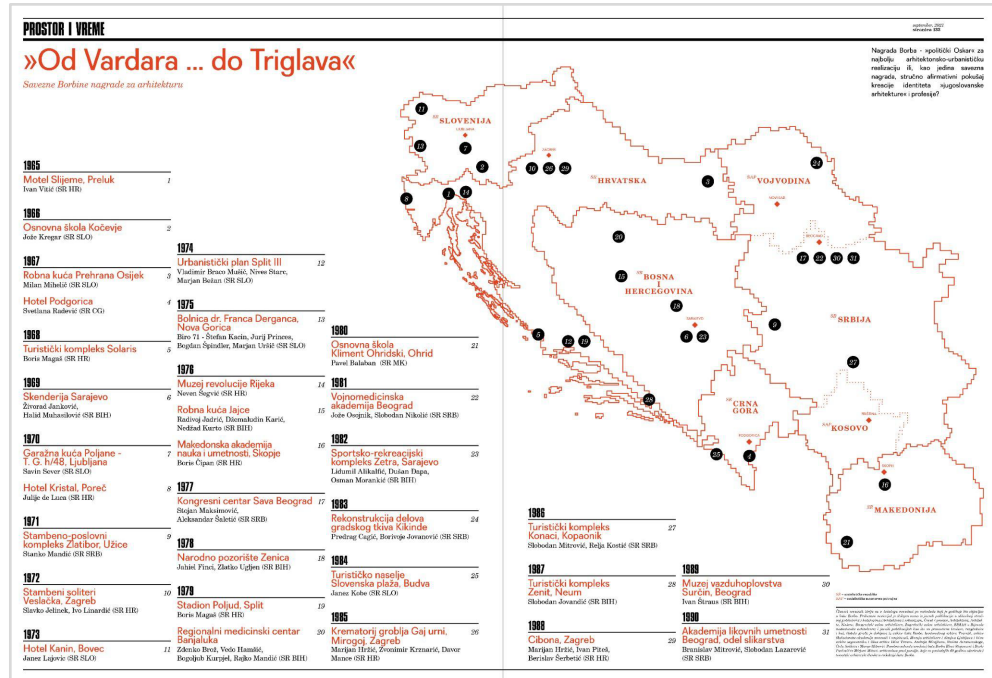


Figure 5. Map of all architectural works recognized with the federal Borba Award between 1965 and 1990 (Archive of the author)

### 3.1. POPULARIZATION OF "YUGOSLAV ARCHITECTURE"

Despite some shortcomings, the Borba Award for Architecture managed to survive until the collapse of the federation, offering, at the very least, a partially realistic portrayal of the commonalities and diversity<sup>15</sup> [25]. It showcased not just architectural design tendencies but also economic and material trends within the common yet different environments from all corners of Yugoslavia, which could be observed in the variety of proposed buildings. The award and its associated events embodied an artificial yet revealing common Yugoslav identity within the architecture and ultimately satisfied, at least on a formal level, the need for a systematic, albeit somewhat superficial, review and expert assessment of domestic architectural achievements.

The first public announcement of the award was documented in a Borba newspaper article dated February 19, 1965, and according to the regulations, only those architectural works completed during the current year were eligible for the nomination for the Borba Award. This process allowed for proposals from Republican professional juries, individual citizens, labour organizations, and actually from any citizen or organization. The list of nominees was regularly published in the column "Arhitektura - juče, danas, sutra", which was featured in the weekly supplement of the Borba newspaper. The award was presented to authors living in a specific republic whose work could be located anywhere within Yugoslavia, and a good cash prize was even provided to the best (group of) author(s). The rulebook also established that the annual announcement, exhibition of the awarded contributions, and presentation

<sup>15</sup> From the interview with Dinko Kovačić, Split, 15. 3. 2021.

"I believe that Borba's award did not carry a political message or connotation; instead, it primarily embodied a standard—a way of life, social relations, and circumstances. All these factors determined the parameters in architecture, even though the buildings might differ, for example, in Ljubljana, Bitola, or Split [25]."

of diplomas and plaques would initially take place in Belgrade and subsequently, in the following years, alternate between the capitals of each republic. The grand event was scheduled for February 19, coinciding with the jubilee day of the Borba newspaper, and in the issue released on that day, all the awarded works were published, accompanied by photos and concise reports of the jury's evaluations [26]. However, until this research, there had been no comprehensive compilation of all nominees and the awarded works made available to the public. This absence may also be linked to the previously mentioned problems regarding the lack of systematic and up-to-date reviews of contemporary architecture at the federal Yugoslav level.



Figure 6. The presentation of the architectural awards and the opening of the exhibition was often the most prominently featured news on the cover of Borba newspaper - as seen in this 1971 edition, which showcases visitors at the exhibition and federal Borba awardees of 1970 - Savin Sever for the Garage in Poljane Ljubljana, and Julije de Luca for Hotel Kristal in Poreč - in a collegial handshake (Archive of Borba Beograd)

The annual Borba Award for architectural achievements certainly made a substantial effort to increase the attention of both professionals and, more importantly, the general public to the numerous high-quality architectural creations and well demonstrated the important significance of this creative field for society<sup>16</sup> [27]. Consequently, a specific identity of the so-called "common Yugoslav architecture" with this event, even though somewhat loosely defined, began to take shape and swiftly evolved into the most eminent and prestigious recognition for the architectural profession.



*Figure 7. Borba award winners for 1969: Živorad Janković, Ognjeslav Malkin and Halid Muhasilović, authors of complex Skenderija in Sarajevo, at the opening of the exhibition in the Cultural Center Belgrade, February 19, 1970 (Archive of Borba Beograd)*

Much like how pop culture was evolving at events in other creative fields, the Borba Award for Architecture fostered an atmosphere for the popular scene of "Yugoslav architecture" and its creators (who were presented to the citizens) with a human face, but most significantly, the award educated the public to become more aware of the culture of space and the social mission of architecture. In parallel, the Borba acted as a witness to the social and economic inclinations of individual republics and, later, the autonomous socialist provinces.

Furthermore, the award facilitated the creation of new connections among architects from various regions of the country. This engagement was evident each year during the endorsement of the nominees, followed by the opening of an exhibition, which was, on

<sup>16</sup> From the interview with Branko Siladin, Zagreb, May 23, 2021. "When discussing architecture as a social need, encompassing its propaganda and the resulting education, Borba played the most crucial role compared to other awards. It held much more significance than any other award both then and even today [27]."

some occasions, relocated to the site of the awarded building so that the local communities could proudly identify themselves with their architectural achievement. Despite the initial intention in the Award Rules to have the event migrate to different centres in Yugoslavia's republics, it consistently took place only in Belgrade, where in the first years, the exhibitions were held at the Cultural Center of Belgrade, while later, the Borba press house even established its own gallery for this and other cultural purposes.

### 3.2. FELLOW JURY MEMBERS, DO WE HAVE A QUORUM?

Despite some paradoxes and irregularities within the award's institution, the Borba was, according to the opinion of all 19 architects who were part of the research, an essential, competent, and highly respected recognition. It significantly popularized architecture among the public and provided a fairly realistic portrayal of social standards, conditions, and tendencies in various regions of the country. Nevertheless, evaluating architectural creations for the Borba Award was indeed a challenging task for the members of the jury. They had to consider a diverse range of projects differing in size, function, and the socioeconomic conditions of their respective regions. Consequently, some juries might have leaned towards favouring bigger-scale projects when making their assessments, while sometimes, especially in the 80s when the tendencies towards the disintegration of Yugoslavia were increasing, even being biased toward works from specific republics<sup>17</sup> [28] [29].



Figure 8. Federal jury of the Borba Award during their evaluations in 1969 (Archive of Borba Beograd)

<sup>17</sup> From the interview with Branko Siladin, Zagreb, May 23, 2021.

“Borba meant much more than any other award then and even today. Later, with the gradual transformations of the socio-political scene, the award slowly became an object of inter-republican competition and bragging. I was a member of the federal jury twice, already at the stage when the game between the republics began. In such a working atmosphere, it was not very pleasant and easy to work and fight for the real quality of the contribution of the architectural work [28].”

From the interview with Trajko Dimitrov, Skopje, Mar. 24, 2021.

“Among the republics, bias in judging was primarily manifested in 'cheering' for each other. I believe that perhaps, at that time, we were not fully able to evaluate purely in a professional manner [29].”



The process every year began at the level of the republic's or province's Associations, where professional juries closely monitored local contemporary architectural production and decided among the nominations for the one officially proposing it for the federal award. While these republic-level juries often visited the proposed works in situ, the federal jury's task, which consisted of architects, who were sometimes accompanied by artists, writers and journalists from all republics, was primarily to review only presentation posters containing photos and plans of the proposed projects. This limited their ability to experience the architecture, leading to potential challenges in making comprehensive evaluations. It is important to acknowledge the complexities involved in comparing such a diverse array of architectural achievements. These challenges could sometimes lead to decisions based on criteria like the size of the building or voting for the one that they experienced in person, for example, deciding between Marko Mušič's House for the painter Janez Bernik in Brezovica and the National Theater in Zenica by Jahiel Finci and Zlatko Ugljen (1978), or among Boris Magaš's Poljud Stadium in Split and Hospital in Banja Luka by Zdenko Brož, Vedo Hamšič, Bogoljub Kurpjel and Rajko Mandić and the Post Office and the shop in Vremski Britof by the group of authors from studio Kras - Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli, Vojteh Ravnikar and Egon Vatovec (1979)<sup>18</sup> [30].

It is also interesting to note that the Borba Award nominations and winners rarely included "ideologically oriented" works such as monuments or memorial complexes. In fact, just two - The Partisan Memorial Cemetery in Mostar by Bogdan Bogdanović and Spomen Park Vrača in Sarajevo by Vladimir Dobrović were nominated in the 25-year history of the award, which could also go against the superficial idea that the award was (only) politically motivated<sup>19</sup> [31].

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<sup>18</sup> From the interview with Marko Mušič, Ljubljana, Jul. 15, 2021.

"The largest projects, in terms of scale, usually had the advantage as they represented the greatest socio-political pride. Examples include hospitals, sports centers, apartment blocks, and, (unfortunately, many also poorly designed) hotels. The professionally based conflict of the jury in Belgrade, which would have arisen when deciding between the otherwise excellent Theater in Zenica by Jahiel Finci and Zlatko Ugljen and an individual house in Breznica, was, of course, not possible and also not desirable [30]."

<sup>19</sup> From the interview with Stanko Kristl, Ljubljana, Mar. 1, 2021.

"I never had the feeling that politics was involved in Borba's award in any way. Colleagues from other republics were very honest and did not forcefully submit projects that did not deserve recognition. The award was undoubtedly of educational importance for the society and highly valued; it represented a great tribute to the one who received it [31]."

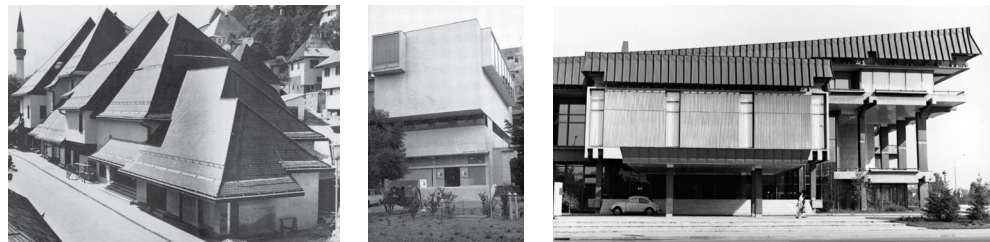


Figure 9. Visitors at the exhibition of Borba's awardees, Belgrade, 1976 (Archive of Borba Beograd)

Instead, the majority of the nominated and awarded projects actually reflected the collective burgeoning spirit of “Yugoc cosmopolitanism” and modernization, emphasizing the creation of structures that contributed to a broader higher social standard. These projects often included hotels, department stores, congress halls, sports and cultural facilities, as well as medical, scientific, educational and business buildings. However, there was a noticeable absence of nominations in the field of housing despite the significant mass construction of residential dwellings taking place throughout Yugoslavia at the time. In the first five tenders, only one appeared in the contest for the Borba - Šišenska soseska 6 in Ljubljana by Ilija Arnautović, Aleksander Peršin and Janez Vovk, which Slovenia nominated for 1968. This issue was publicly criticized by artist Edo Murtić and architect Delfin Vojteh, who were members of the federal jury in 1971 and who underscored the importance of recognizing a more diverse range of architectural achievements, including those related to housing, which played a vital role in the development and transformation of Yugoslavia during that period [32]. The absence of nominations for residential buildings and the subsequent criticism led to a more diversified selection in the following years. Although Murtić’s and Vojteh’s remark was on the spot and publicly mentioned in one of the articles published in the Borba newspaper, they never spoke about establishing a special Borba housing award again. In the following years, it looked like the institution of the award tried to redeem its reputation in this field by giving the award to the Zlatibor Residential and Business Complex in Užice by architect Stanko Mandić, one of the co-initiators of the award. May it all just be a big coincidence that a year later, the residential towers in Veslačka Street in Zagreb by Slavko Jelinek and Ivo Linardić deservedly got the award. In 1972, the Serbian Republican Jury even strongly encouraged Arch. Mandić to submit his project for selection for a national award [33]. These differences in the submission and nomination processes,

as well as the diverse presentation of proposed works, highlight some of the challenges in the administration of the Borba Award. While any citizen could make a nomination for the republican selection, it appears that many authors and their colleagues did not want to "egoistically expose" themselves and consequently did not suggest their own architectural creations for the nomination. Additionally, the organization and procedures of the republican associations of architects varied, leading to differences in how architectural works were proposed, presented and evaluated<sup>20</sup> [34]. The graphic representations of the nominees also differed among the republican candidates, indicating varying standards and approaches in the presentation of architectural projects, which was exposed by some of the interviewed architects as well, explaining that these differences have contributed to discrepancies in the federal jury evaluation and selection process, further emphasizing the need for a standardized and consistent approach to the award's administration.

Despite its media importance and educational contribution to Yugoslav society, the Borba Award was evidently not without controversies and criticisms. In some situations, the federal jury, through democratic voting, reasonably three times ended up awarding pairs of creations (for 1967, 1970, and 1979), while for the year 1976, for the first and only time, even three buildings received the federal award: the Department Store in Jajce, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Skopje, and the Museum of the Revolution in Rijeka.



Figures 10, 11, 12. Three federal awards for the best realization in 1976: Department Store in Jajce, Museum of the Revolution in Rijeka [35, 36] and Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Art in Skopje (Archive of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Art)

This choice raised many questions and led to heated discussions and criticisms within public and professional circles. The latter, despite its successful integration into the old picturesque town, accused the Department Store in Jajce of appearing too "romantically folkloristic", the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts was criticized for exaggeration in the interior design, and the Museum of the Revolution in Rijeka was marked as an example of outdated international pure functionalism. There were also debates about the crisis of the identity of the domestic Yugoslav profession and award's rulebook, although on the other hand, those same critics, Arch. Aleksej Brkić, Uroš Martinović, Nikola Sajčić and Ranko Radović still rated it as the most important, prominent, and very successful event for architecture in the country [37].

<sup>20</sup> From the interview with Pavle Popović, Podgorica, Apr. 15, 2021.

"Montenegro did not nominate its architectural works several times, mainly due to slightly weaker architectural production and the limited engagement of the Union of Architects of Montenegro at the time, even though some very good projects were completed in those years when our republic was absent from the selection. Our engagement was more apathetic compared to some other republics; mostly, we had to nominate for the award by ourselves, which seemed somewhat unprofessional [34]."

While all the criticisms and suggestions made during several discussions about the Borba Award were well-intentioned, they always remained unanswered. The Borba, till the disintegration of Yugoslavia, continued as an institutionalized annual practice with its rules and procedures largely unchanged from its inception in 1965. Some proposals, such as Murtić and Delfin's for special awards for achievements in housing construction and Ranko Radović's idea of an individual award for contributions to architectural theory and criticism [37], were not further discussed or integrated into the awarding rules. Notably, the only submission related to architectural theory and criticism for the Borba Award arrived in the year 1980 from Slovenia, which proposed the Architect's Bulletin journal for its active role in promoting critical public debates on architecture through various events and exhibitions.

Despite some of its shortcomings, the Borba Award evidently played a significant role in popularizing the achievements of architecture in socialist Yugoslavia. Together with this special event and its mass media coverage, it helped to create an official yet superficial collective identity of "Yugoslav architecture", allowing the public to be aware of the significance of architectural creativity through everyday life and, on the other hand, also serving as a handy socio-political flagship of construction achievements showing modernization of the state. Such an award, which was also initially fostering connections, exchange of opinions and experiences among architects from different parts of Yugoslavia and providing prompt recognition of outstanding architectural and urban achievements, would be, especially now, in the times when architecture is evidently losing its basic social mission, undoubtedly more than welcome in the Western Balkans again.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on conversations with architects who were active during this period, it is evident that the architectural profession in the milieu of socialist Yugoslavia held an important and respected role in shaping a better and more modern everyday life of individuals and society. Architects played a crucial part in realizing and materializing the vision of the idea of a "more prosperous future", contributing to the improvement of living standards and the creation of a better society, and such being an integral part of nation-building and the development of a collective identity.

The mission of architecture is constantly evolving over time and varies depending on the socio-political and economic context. In comparison to the socialist Yugoslavia milieu, contemporary tendencies in the Western Balkans and many other parts of the world can reflect an obviously different perspective. Today, spatial planning and architecture are facing challenges, especially related to market-driven forces, economic constraints, and a focus on profit generation. This mostly results in a perception of architecture just as an unnecessary expense or, at the other extreme, as a luxurious service for the interests of capital and space accumulation. In this context, urban landscapes and our cities are shaped more by market forces than by a collective vision for the betterment of society. As a consequence, spaces are becoming self-exclusive, less humane, and unresponsive to societal needs and changing ecological, climatic and socio-political trends which we are facing, while the architectural profession has a crucial and critical role to play in advocating for humane and inclusive urban environments, sustainable design, and the improvement of living conditions for all of our descendants and us.

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### Timotej Jevšenak

Timotej Jevšenak was born in 1995 in Celje. He graduated from the High school Celje - Center, art department. He has been living and creating since 2014 in Ljubljana, where he received his master's degree in 2021 at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Ljubljana. He works in the field of architectural and urban planning, as well as journalism and specializes in researching the architecture of Yugoslavia. In 2022, he was enlisted as a Teaching assistant at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana and was the author of several exhibitions projects and publications, including *Tendence, Architecture and Urbanism in Celje 1955-85* (Majolka Celje, Museum of Architecture and Design Ljubljana, Architektur Haus Kärnten, 2018-2021), *Vizije so 17 - Limits or opportunities?* (Kresija gallery Ljubljana, 2022). He is also a recipient of the national Plečnik medal (2019), the Brumen Award for Design (2019), and the award of the Belgrade Salon of Architecture (2022).

### АРХИТЕКТОНСКИ "ЈУГОКОСМОПОЛИТИЗАМ"

Истраживање „Борба за архитектуру“ не само да покушава да склопи, прикаже и анализира широку лепезу архитектонске продукције и њених тенденција у социјалистичкој Југославији, већ и кроз разговоре са архитектима који су били активни у овом миљеу, по први пут пружи аутентичан, непосредан увид у афирмацију и друштвену улогу архитектонске професије у корелацији са њеним тренутним положајем у друштву западног Балкана. Она показује како су архитектура и урбанизам ко-креирали колективни идентитет југословенског друштва, и обрнуто, кроз наглашавање важних прекретница, као што су друштвени и професионални догађаји, медијско праћење, као и индустријализација и масовна урбанизација, након чега су услиједили бројни јавни републички и савезни отворени архитектонски и урбанистички конкурси који су произвели изузетне оригиналне просторне концепте и радове. Изузетност архитектонске продукције социјалистичке Југославије може се добро идентификовати и кроз њену медијску популаризацију, како у Југославији тако и ван њених граница, а посебно разоткрити кроз призму једне и једине савезне југословенске архитектонске Борбине награде (1965-1991), коју је установила редакција тада угледног листа Борба и Савеза архитеката Југославије.

Борбина награда није била само највеће професионално признање, већ и широко, популарно медијско признање. Представљала је и једну од првих послеријатних институционализованих награда за архитектонска достигнућа у Европи и свијету. Будући да ни Борба ни Савез, након жестоког распада земље, никада нису успели да прикупе комплетну документацију номинованих и награђених радова, истраживање „Борба за архитектуру“ на једном мјесту окупља широк спектар репродукција оригиналних фотографија и планова, приказујући изванредан скуп архитектонског стваралаштва бивше Југославије између 1960. и 1991. године. Истовремено, задире у друштвену мисију Борбе и даје преглед стручних жирија и њихове занимљиве критике. Као аутентичан увид у праксу и афирмацију архитектонске струке, истраживање садржи интервјуе са 19 реномираних архитеката из свих република који су дјеловали у овом периоду и, поред осталих награда за своје стваралаштво, добили Борбину награду и били дио жирија. „Борба за архитектуру“ тако има за циљ да покрене нова питања и пружи повод за даљу анализу феномена „југословенске архитектуре“, који је још увијек недовољно познат како домаћој западнобалканској, тако и међународној јавности, и настоји да подстакне свијест о богатим заједничком насљеђу, те поставља питања о данашњој улози архитектонске струке, друштвене културе и савременог просторног развоја у поређењу са миљеом бивше социјалистичке Југославије.

**Кључне ријечи:** (колективни) идентитет, медијска популаризација и афирмација архитектуре, архитектонско насљеђе, друштвена улога архитектуре, архитектура и друштво