

Light in the city: tools and methodologies for urban light projects

by Luana Blascetta and Emanuela Di Grazia

Tutors: Gabriella Peretti

Co-Tutor: Adriana Giusti, Anna Pellegrino

We started this work principally for the charm of artificial's show lighting that attracted us, that is considered a new important aspect in the professional training of an architect, and in particular to understand what elements belong to a lighting project, that is the way to pass from physic-technyc's matters to a real urban lighting plan. With this introduction, also that we well know how it's no possible to give exact rules, we wanted to supply a methodology giving prominence to interactions between the different aspects so as to make conscious the choice.

In function of this goal, we make a primary historic analysis to understand the source's evolution from the past until today. In the same way In the same way we analysed the primary characters of nightly urban lighting, and how these changed during the time in function of necessity and technological tools at disposal.

We make this analysis not only from an historical point of view, but also as expression of architectonic culture, as the light, during the time, united with the architecture becoming the same architecture.

In a second time, we continued our work through the study of principal illuminating engineering, subdividing the analysis in three parts: sources of light, lighting urban apparatus and at last the installation, as system of urban lighting, with particular reference to lighting roads.

The principal aspect of this work was the opportunity to know Roland Jeol, a French illuminating engineer, qualified at Association Francaise de l'Eclairage, that with the cooperation of a net of experts on international level, composed by Designers landscapist, city planners, is realizing from different years in different European places new urban light projects.

The first time we met Jeol was on October 2000, for the project of lighting town's walls, that the commune committed to him.

One of the first example of urban lighting in Italy was committed in Pisa, where Jeol requalified the town beginning through main urban axis of the city and in a second time focused the attention on one of the most important place: Piazza dei Cavalieri.



To analyse this urban light intervention and to become aware of his planning's philosophy, we went to Pisa starting to walk around the streets making photos to the environment during the night and interviewing town-dwellers from the river to the centre until Piazza dei Cavalieri.

We also moved in the same perceptive way in Cremona, where, in different places we could admire his original manner to light buildings, monuments and spaces. In all, the most discussed by AEM and Comune of Cremona but the most important too, is the Cathedral of the city. Just this debate stimulated us the growing interest in lightings matters to induce us to go in Cremona a second time to discover new documents.

Meanwhile also in Turin the new light installation of Piazza Vittorio, Via Po, Piazza Castello, Teatro Regio was in a stage of completion. Also in France we could admire numerous show lightings of Jeol especially in Lyon, where he lives and where his atelier is located. In his atelier, that we visited, his staff realize sketches and maquettes of lighting projects.

This experience in the atelier let us to approach him and his style in urban light plans more.



Our sensibility so matured in that, induced us to collaborate with him to a new light project: to create a show light for the walk on the surrounding wall of Lucca.

The lighting drawing ideated from the atelier of Jeol was the base of our intervention: to reconstruct the environment by means of some simulations realized with a technical software of calculations, concentrating the attention especially above two aspects, Porta Elisa and the stretch of the walk of the wall above that.



The final objective of our work was supply guide lines of a lighting project. For that we believed necessary, to have different point of view, to refer to

other examples of lighting designers. During the drawing up of this work we had, in fact the opportunity to learn the philosophy and the professionalism of an American lighting designer, Leny Swendinger, who, from years, lights urban spaces with a particular sensibility and attention for green areas. The second reference we contacted was the Bartenbach L'chtLabor, in Innsbruck, that deals natural and artificial urban light. Thanks to this comparison, we was able to supply at the end, some methodological guide lines for a urban lighting project.

For further information:

Luana Blascetta , e-mail: bubulu@katamail.com

Emanuela Di Grazia, e-mail: nuel75@hotmail.com