

01/

With more than 20 years since Archikubik was founded, what are the main differences between your studio and the rest? How have the new generations influenced?

Each office builds its own path, its own reason for being. In our case we started by creating the transdisciplinary space @kubik. We work surrounded by an ecosystem that transcends the architectural discipline and allows us to acquire a systemic, transversal and collaborative vision, that differentiates us, perhaps, from other offices.

We were born as a firm with the understanding of the paradigm shift brought about by the arrival of new technologies and, at the same time, with the awareness of being part of the solution to the climate emergency in which we find ourselves. We soon understood the need to produce in other ways and we constantly question how we do things. That is, we learn to unlearn.

This continuous learning allows us to empathize and collaborate with the new generations who are highly prepared and have a committed and innovative outlook.

02/

In your opinion, if you had to define your architecture with one word, what would it be, and why?

Perhaps I would add the prefix “trans-”; trans-versal, trans-forming, trans-generational, trans-disciplinary, trans-social... because we understand that architecture and urbanism have to be done from social responsibility, from the use of a collective intelligence and common sense. That is why we conceive architecture in a sociological, multiplier, generous, responsible and relational way, where form is at the service of use, respecting the environment, life and fauna.

03/

You define your work scale as 1/heart, what does it mean?

The 1/♥ scale is the scale of the living matter as infrastructure. It tries to explain, in a very direct way, that architecture and urbanism have to be at the service of people and nature. We should go beyond the disciplinary scope of our profession in order to deploy a systemic and holistic vision in the production of our cities based on the landscape and the commonness of life to go towards a solidary architecture.

04/

The studio's professional career has crossed borders. Do you think that the future of architecture lies in internationalization?

I don't think so. The future of architecture lies in making good architecture, understanding the needs of users and their environment, creating resilient cities and respecting our planet. We would like to work even more in proximity, however architecture and urbanism as we understand it needs an ecosystem of innovation and co-creation in all areas (political, economic, social, technical, etc.) which we found abroad at the time and that we are now building here. We are clear that we must seek planetary solutions that materialize with local actions, and in these actions, which have to be an example, our architecture and our urbanism are inscribed.

05/

Related to the previous question, how do you see the architecture sector in Spain compared to other countries?

The level of Spanish architects is amazing, and they have very interesting projects which are role models with the condition of being unique. There are very interesting initiatives that open up a hopeful path to scale and extend new design tools, but at the same time we have to be more open to absorbing the differentiating and exemplary proposals we can find in other countries.

We still have some obsolete regulations and administrative procedures that are difficult to transform, and no efficient mechanisms to respond to the urgency of working otherwise. There is a need to deepen public-private collaboration and for the private sector to also take responsibility for accelerating the ecological, energetic and social transition. We believe the public sector is the one to lead and set an example in spreading out the holistic vision required to de-standardize and decarbonize the production of our cities and lives.

06/

In your opinion, what role does architecture play in building societies? Should users and designers be involved in the creation of spaces?

It is evident and surprising to us that this is still a subject of debate. The users and main actors of the city, in dialogue with our clients, are always part of the co-creation process of our projects. To achieve this, together with a sociologist, we have created a methodology consisting of "exploratory interviews" to catalyze collective intelligence and incorporate citizens in the design process.

07/

From your study you take into account energy efficiency and sustainability, what is the first thing you analyze to carry on a sustainable project?

We understand that the poetry of the living is the infrastructure on which all of our projects are built. The Greek word "poetry" means "quality of the action of doing" and it's the definition of sustainability we are interested in; responding qualitatively to the needs of citizens. We find essential to minimize the impact of technology and use intelligence and common sense to accelerate the ecological, energetic and social transition, and walk together on open paths towards urban and architectural innovation.

08/

After these hard months, where COVID-19 has attacked us mercilessly, forcing us to spend more time at home. Do you think there is going to be a paradigm shift in architecture? In what sense?

There will be an acceleration of the paradigm changes we were advancing. We state that there is an increasing demand for greater ecological awareness in all procedures. This opens a window of opportunities for us to influence the use of sustainable and social means, based on collective intelligence.

The appreciation of public space and the need to live in friendlier and healthier cities in contact with nature. The integration of reversibility of uses, the time vector and minimizing the ecological footprint we cause are a fundamental part of any project's DNA. We need to improve housing's quality, rethink the use of work spaces and the absolutely central position and voice of citizens in architecture and urban planning.

09/

And, as directors of a studio with a long history, what would you advise students who are about to finish their degree?

Anticipate, listen, share and dare. Be free thinkers, get rid of “dogmas” and don’t be afraid of making mistakes.

10/

Finally, what does the future hold for you? What projects are you immersed in?

We live in a continuous, hypertrophied present, which brings an obsolete future. Now, after swimming against the tide for years, we are enjoying the current challenges. As for the future, we hope we will continue to learn at the same time as we contribute with our experience. Right now, we keep the enthusiasm of the first day, turning each project into an opportunity for collective learning, working in a friendly and co-creative way with our entire ecosystem, our clients, developers, cities and administrations.

We are immersed in several new projects; offices, educational, facilities, urban projects... Projects for the renovation of the “Déjà là”, the city about the city. Such as the last competition won in Paris for the rehabilitation and conversion of the Garage Renault, on the banks of the Seine, where we convert a car park into housing. As well as the reversible offices in an old rehabilitated factory in the 22@ district in Barcelona, a project based on Biophilia. We are also working on projects in the ports of Barcelona and Le Havre in Normandie. In the Agrocitry of Gagarine Truillot, in Irvy-Sur-Seine, of which we are the urban planners, the first projects have already begun to develop.

The most exciting thing is being able to work on different scales, programs and territories. Projects that feed into one another, together with clients and the ecosystem of professionals with whom we work with a common goal.