

Why do we need a journal?

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The IFMA came into being at a time – the end of the 1980s – that can almost be described as the culmination of the popularity of anthroposophically inspired organic architecture – symbolised by the ING Bank headquarters in Amsterdam, by the design of the Deutsche Bahn trains by the firm BPR and by the Rudolf Steiner Seminar in Järna. The size, quantity and significance of the projects carried out by anthroposophical architects generated widespread interest in their approach. In such a situation, the need for exchange and deepening was natural, and the IFMA provided a platform for this.

Today we are in an almost polar situation, where even anthroposophical institutions often show little interest in – or even rejection of – organic design, and where regulatory and economic developments often lead to major restrictions on freedom in planning. Accordingly, the amount of requests and the number and quality of realised projects in the field of organic architecture are much more modest than in the 1980s and 1990s. Therefore, the question naturally arises as to how far and with what objectives an exchange on the topics of organic design can be interesting and appropriate on the background of the current situation. Even the further existence of a magazine like M+A cannot be taken for granted at a time when new significant organic buildings rarely emerge and can be shown.

Looked at another way, perhaps it is precisely in such a time of crisis that it is important to have the opportunity to exchange ideas about the foundations and future development of an ideal approach, in order to jointly explore new ways of developing an impulse.

In this sense, it is of great importance to also notice and discuss small attempts that try to respond to today's challenges, because in them can lie the seeds for new

approaches. The more such small – and perhaps outwardly insignificant compared to earlier impressive achievements – examples will come to light, the easier it will be for other architects to build on them to develop new ways of working.

Another phenomenon that increases the importance of an exchange platform is the growing amount of interesting examples of organic architecture in countries and continents that previously had nothing to offer from this point of view. At the same time, areas where much has been created in the past are becoming less active. One consequence of this is the ever increasing differentiation of design approaches and working methods, depending on the environment and culture. We as editors very much hope that the new online format can make a significant contribution to the development of a global awareness of the situation and achievements of the organic movement. This will be all the more successful if spontaneous reports on projects and events also flow in from various corners of the world.

The possibility of automated translation of content built into the website should serve to overcome language barriers in all directions, for both readers and authors. On the whole, the articles – compared to a printed medium – will have less pretension to perfection, in favour of spontaneity and diversity.

Our wish would be to continually expand the circle of contributors and co-writers, more along the lines of a forum than of a traditional magazine. So feel not only a reader but also a contributor to the new medium, and please send us any material – even if just pictures of a little-known project you happened to see – that you think might be of interest to others. There won't be too much!