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ARCHITECTURE AND VISUAL ARTS IN THE YUGOSLAV CONTEXT 1918-1941

ARHITEKTURA I VIZUELNE UMETNOSTI U
JUGOSLOVENSKOM KONTEKSTU: 1918-1941.

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Architecture and Visual Arts in the Yugoslav Context 1918-1941 is an international art history monograph published in the year 2021. The subject of the study, together with a clear historical and geographical framework, is made precise by the title itself: the publication is dedicated to manifestations, phenomena, and concepts that defined and delineated the architecture and visual arts in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later known as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) in the interwar period. Since the selected topic is particularly wide and complex, a team of eminent experts from all over former Yugoslavia was assembled for its thorough analysis and scrutiny. Among them, we can emphasize respectable scholars from Croatia: Jasna Galjer, Ana Separović, Lovorka Magas Bilandžić, Vinčo Srhoj, Antun Baće and Petar Prelog. By dealing with various related topics, they made a joint scientific contribution to understudied areas, actualizing them, and affirming new knowledge, moreover, encouraging certain questions and polemics.

The scientific monograph is systematized in 378 pages and consists of 45 authors' studies, classified and structured into two thematic units according to the subject of study. It is written in Serbian, except for one work written in Slovenian. The entire publication is embellished with carefully selected black-and-white photo documentation, which complements the presentation, and assists the understanding of narratives. Subsequent contributions are arranged according to the conventional scheme of preface systemization in two exhaustive thematic chapters, ensuing from comprehensive scientific material and content. The first thematic block, *Architecture*, includes twenty-six observations, additionally classified in three subsections: *Architects and Institutions*, *Architects and Art Groups*, and *Architecture and the Public*. This segment focuses on the explication of circumstances, opportunities, and stylistic orientation of Yugoslav architectural practices, interpreting its specific phenomena, tendencies, and participants. With well contemplat-

ed and carefully selected subjects and cases, the researchers examined and clarified a wide range of aspects and facets. They questioned crucial architects and their practices in the interwar period, with a detailed morphological and stylistic analysis of works, including peculiar aesthetics, as well as certain exhibitions, publications, art groups, critics, periodicals, legal framework, and the urban-architectural evolution of the Kingdom. Furthermore, *Cultural Context of Visual Arts*, the second thematic chapter, aims to assess various phenomena and eminent individuals in the field of visual arts through nineteen comprehensive articles. It also strives to accentuate the delicate sociopolitical habitus of the observed period, which inevitably reflects on the artistic domain. Through numerous complementary focal points, it has shed light on multifarious problematics. The deliberation and proposal of pertinent matters, from influential artists, their associations, collaborations, and tendencies, to theoretically-philosophical positions, conception and the manifestation of the Yugoslav idea and its manifold ideological occasions, explore Yugoslav visual arts during the interwar period truly to the bone.

The thought-through and elaborate monograph of *Architecture and Visual Arts in the Yugoslav context 1918-1941* is a precious contribution to the research and understanding of the architectural and artistic scene between the two world wars, making it a focal starting point for all further related art history studies. The dynamics, content, and erudition in the approach of all the included observations contribute to the re-actualization of certain issues, correcting previous irregularities as well as reconsidering and revising questionable opinions. All studies feature adequate scientific argumentation, foundation, and consistency in presenting knowledge and observation as the authors combined scientific-synthetic and competent historiographical methods, with necessary descriptive and comparative analyses, excursions, and digressions.

By analyzing numerous phenomena, important individuals, and artistic production, in fusion with the concomitant social, political and cultural habitus, the book offers remarkable insight into the interwar period of the art and architecture in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes / the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Therefore, it is also relevant to the broader audience. Although some researchers chose closely related themes for their contributions, this does not diminish their significance at all, because they have accessed them from various positions of view, thereby further enriching and illuminating the perception of the subjects and accentuating their unmistakable complexity. Another value of the monograph is its actuality, integrity, and completeness, which are a consequence of an adequate choice of scientific methodology. Certain studies are slightly polemically intoned, with valuable impulses for opening up different questions and provoking scientific dialogue. Furthermore, the use of much-needed comparisons and analogies of styles, tendencies, concepts, and ideas should be encouraged on the domestic art scene, as well as outside it, without excluding the European cultural sphere. It is necessary to emphasize the editorial emendation and editing that made the monograph consistent and homogeneous in terms of the conceptual-language style and instructive character. A conspicuous corollary of the mentioned is that, apart from the content quality, the publication has apparent methodical merits and a structural-thematic coherence. Finally, the systematization of the known and the provision of new knowledge have enabled the book to reactualize and reaffirm certain views, and elaborate some problematic subjects more accurately. Because it clarifies, illuminates, and evaluates the composite field of architecture and visual arts in the aforementioned Kingdoms in such a stimulating manner, the monograph can by all means be observed as a foray into the primary literature on this multi-disciplinary field of interest.