

## ***Behind the Curtain. Architect Marta Staņa***

5.11.2010 - 19.12.2010

exhibition and conference

### **Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga**

Curator Ieva Zībārte

Exhibition architect: Mārtiņš Pīlēns

Graphic designer: Edgars Zvirgzdiņš

Organisers: AVF (Architecture Promotion Foundation), Dailes Theatre

The exhibition provides insights into a creative heritage of the Latvian architect Marta Staņa (1913 – 1972), putting a special accent on experimental projects and works from various contests of her time; the presented works belong to the archive of Latvian Museum of Architecture. The building of Daile Theatre (Dailes teātris) is the most important project by Marta Staņa; the architect herself never saw it finished (year of finishing 1976). Notwithstanding the changes, which appeared in processes of projection and building the theatre, the architect's main idea has prevailed: including the functionally divided volumes and the broad, transparent glass hall on the first floor of the building. It is an emotionally active building in the very centre of Riga. This year, celebrating 90th anniversary of the Daile Theatre, it will finally turn into what architect had originally planned, when drawing people in their eveningwear spending a time before a spectacle in conversations in the glass hall, itself being a light, shining event in the evening life of the city. The exhibition also concentrates on the feministic discourse and on architecture critic in the Soviet era in Latvia during 1950ties – 1960ies.

The curator of this exhibition is Ieva Zībārte, architect; she has made the exposition together with an architect Mārtiņš Pīlēns and a graphic designer Edgars Zvirgzdiņš. Their cooperation has resulted in a retrospective exhibition, which creates an experience of synergic communication of space, content and visual communication. Several architect offices like "MARK arhitekti", "MADE arhitekti", "Jaunromāns un Ābele" and "NRJA" take a significant part in the exhibition – with a visual and verbal critics on significant projects by Marta Staņa.

The context of the exhibition will be visualized by exciting fragments from films and documentaries, and "cinema-journals", created in the 1960ties, representing the architecture and the design of that time in Latvia.

### **Conference**

#### **Extreme Makeovers. Preservation and Conversion of Post-war Architecture**

**November 23, 2010**

**Kim? Contemporary Art Centre**

**Riga, Spiķeri, Maskavas ielā 12/1**

In order to mark its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, Dailes Theatre in cooperation with Architecture Promotion Foundation (AVF) organizes a broad exhibition about the life and work of Ms. Marta Staņa (1913-1972), a distinguished Modernist architect and the author of the present Dailes Theatre building (1958-1976), the most significant cultural building of the period in the Baltic region. The exhibition will take place in contemporary art museum *kim?*, Riga, Maskavas iela 12/1 from November 5 till December 19, 2010. It is accompanied by a number of co-events leading up to an international architecture conference *Extreme Makeovers. Preservation and Conversion of Post-war Architecture* on November 23. This one-off event features high profile practitioners from Latvia, United States, Great Britain and Denmark, and applies to a professional audience throughout Baltic states, since the legacy and present status of the post-war architecture is now an issue of emerging importance in the region.

Yet recognized merely by professionals the vast legacy of late Modernist architecture is an inevitable and influential component of both the architectural theory and appearance of contemporary urban space to be dealt with. There were however different approaches of applying Modernist ideas on both sides of iron curtain.

Post-soviet space is not yet emancipated from former ideological connotations of Modernist architecture generally primed for industrialization and mass masterminding that usually resulted in vast, socially distressful developments of a poor construction quality. Nevertheless there were devoted Modernist masters whose vivid, elaborate and sustainable spatial concepts are worthy of reestablishment and reinvention. The conference will introduce the expertise in rediscovering and preserving supreme examples of post-war architecture as well as successful conversions of soviet industrial heritage featured by architects Ms. Zaiga Gaile and Mr.Andris Kronbergs (Latvia), Ms.Dorte Mandrup-Poulsen (Denmark), Mr.Mark F.Sexton (United States) and moderated by Mr.Tim Abrahams (United Kingdom).