

# Disclosing the Value of Makovecz's Work.

The Value of the Contribution of Architecture to Cohesion and Social Engagement: Imre Makovecz's Work within the Faluházak Project During the 1970s and 1980s.

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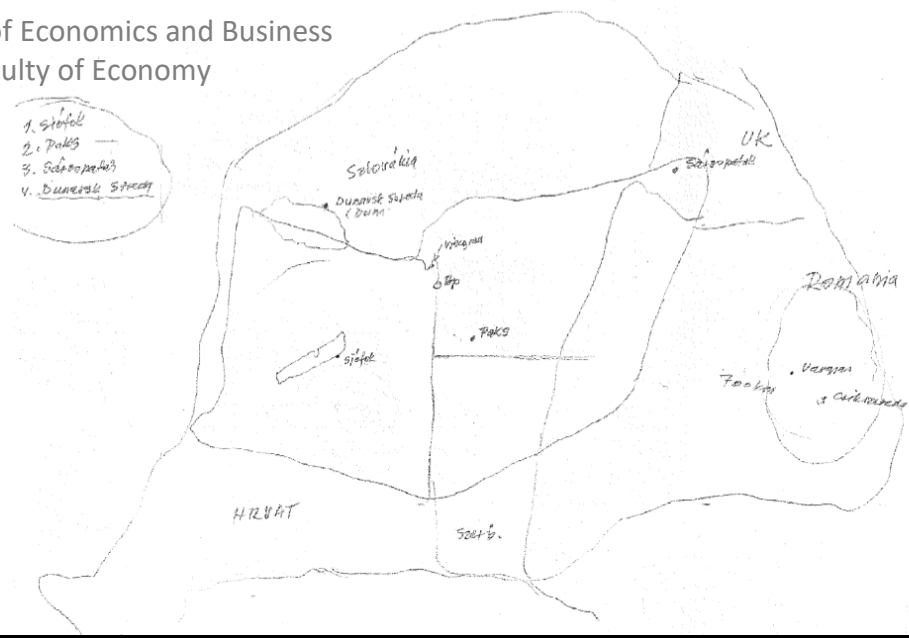
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## References

## Appendix 1.

### Project 1969 – 2011:

#### - Public and Cultural Buildings

Cultural Centre, Sárospatak 1972-76

Funerary Chapel, Farkasrét Cemetery, Budapest 1975

Community House, Tokaj 1977

Centre for Environmental Education, Mogyoróhegy, Visegrád 1984-88

Cultural Centre, Szigetvár 1985

Village Centre, Bak 1985

Gym of the Junior High, Visegrád 1985

Village Centre, Kakasd 1986

*Árpád Vezér* Secondary School, Sárospatak 1988

Hungarian Pavilion for the Expo, Seville 1990

Theatre, Lendva 1991-93

Municipal Swimming Pool, Eger 1993

*Stephaneum*, Catholic University Auditorium, Piliscsaba 1995

Theatre, Makó 1996

Bus Station, Makó 2008

Thermal Baths for the City, Makó 2009

#### - Religious Buildings

Lutheran Church, Siófok 1986

Catholic Church, Paks 1987

Catholic Church II, Százhalombatta 1995

Catholic Church, Csíkszereda 2001

Ecumenical Chapel, Devecser 2011

#### - Commercial and Touristic Buildings

Department Store, Sárospatak 1969

Restroom and Shops, Szentendre 1973

Bungalows and Camping Site in Mogyoróhegy, Visegrád 1976-77

Ski Lift House, Dobogókő 1979

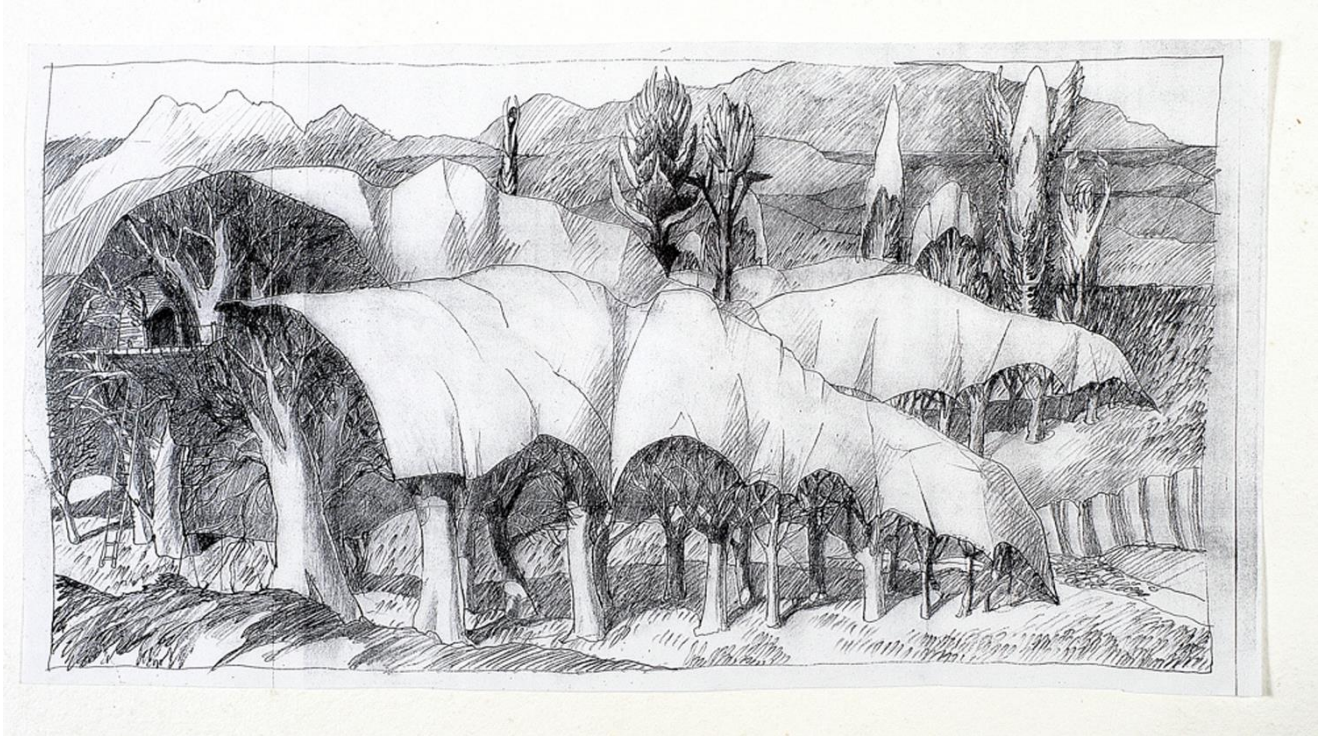
#### - Private Houses

Richter House, Budapest 1983

Imre Makovecz Foundation House, Budapest 2010

## Special Acknowledgments

### A Biographical Note on the Author



**On the first page:**

Imre Makovecz's freehand drawings.

The first time I met Makovecz, he drew me a map of Hungary, marking the most significant places through which I could get closer to his work. With the promise that I would return, we said goodbye.

From this map, my research began (Giustra, M., 2014).

**On this page:**

Imre Makovecz's freehand drawings.

## 9. Findings and Conclusions

The original goal of our kind of architecture is to create a connection between the sky and the earth, while, at the same time, interpreting and expressing the movement and place of human beings. A building should be magic. A building should have a secret effect on its surroundings. We are working towards a mythical period in architecture. It is our goal to balance out the imperceptible, magical strengths of a technical civilisation with other imperceptible, magical forces. The individual, the community, the nation, the world, are, for us, overlapping layers of flower petals swirling out from one stem. Like the leaves of a rose, they cannot be torn from their place or replaced by something else. This is why our kind of architecture and buildings that are connected to people, to the landscape, to the nation, to Europe and to Earth (Gerle, J. and Makovecz, I., 2005).

1.

The contribution of Imre Makovecz's Architecture is an integral part of a dynamic and virtuous governance system aimed at creating identity and social values.

The Organic Architecture of Imre Makovecz, far from promoting self-referentiality, is representative of traditional figurative heritage and of the language of patterns and signs, as well as the memory of places and local communities.

To his architecture we can confer fundamental values for the life of a community such as artistic, cultural, identity, social, sustainability and architectural values, among others.

The participatory approach - that accompanies all phases of the project of the *Faluház*<sup>1</sup>, from the conceptual genesis of the floor plan to satisfy both the needs and aspirations of the community and also serving the functions and activities that will take place in the buildings, till the construction processes - is also an integral part of the governance policy and cultural activities programs proposed within the buildings.

These architectures have been fundamental for local communities as an alternative and meeting opportunity for people, for their self-determination as individuals and groups. Inside these spaces, people were able to experience a small democracy, a micro-democracy, in a historical period in which dictatorship and authoritarianism had prevailed over a complex political democracy system.

Through his work and architectures Makovecz gave and still is giving an important and fundamental contribution in terms of social cohesion to local communities.

Imre Makovecz remained devoted for the whole of his professional life by constantly committing to spread strong values through his work, conferring to the architect's full responsibility of his role, and to

architecture an educational role toward society (Sasso, U., 2006) and an ethical dimension for the sustainable development of human citizenry. The data collected regarding the history of selected case studies, the organization of the cultural activities that take place within the buildings, the outcomes collected through the various consultations with local administrations and users regarding governance and community involvement, show us how the practice of participatory architecture is capable of generating and maintaining social cohesion and engagement. These buildings are conceived as nerve-centers for the cultural life of communities; an extension of homes, wherein relationships can be made through activities, confrontations and direct encounters. The design of the structures for these buildings allows the creation of a versatile spatiality that adapts to the continuous change of activities, cultural offerings and users, during the hours of the days and through changing of the seasons. The elements of traditional architecture, as well as the natural elements that Makovecz used (among others, the trunks of barked trees that branch up to roofs), which are perfectly integrated in the buildings, refer to the history of the community, revive the sense of belonging, and become tangible signs of people's memories, constituting intergenerational values. The practices of participation are extended from design to governance; the themes and goals of cultural life and the calendar of activities are also an expression of the collective will, of which cultural operators, local administrations, and volunteers at various levels, are interpreters. Finally, the fact that these buildings have continued to operate without interruption for decades suggests that Makovecz had an awareness of the most original founding elements of the local community.

2.

Architecture and Heritage building can constitute strategic drivers for the development of society and territory.

This research investigates architecture as a driver, the effects of which are relevant and measurable pieces of evidence.

Through the selected case studies, we are studying architecture as a practice capable of generating and maintaining social cohesion and engagement within local communities.

The Cultural Heritage, whether internationally recognized or of proximity to the territories and local communities, through managerial choices, can constitute a strategic driver for the development of the territory and generate economic and social impact whose value can be measured (Catalfo, P., Giustra, M., 2020).

Governments, Cultural Heritage Offices and local Institutions transpose the guidelines set out by the main European Conventions and international agreements on cultural heritage

(some of the more relevant EU Conventions) - such as: 1954, European Cultural Convention, Paris; 1985, Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, Granada; 1992, Convention for the Protection of the Archeological Heritage of Europe, Valletta; 2000, European Landscape Convention, Florence; 2005, Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Faro; 2017, Council of Europe, Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property; - and implement them by putting in place adequate

policies and measures for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Cultural, Archaeological, Architectural and Landscape Heritage, promoting their use also for cultural initiatives and events.

In fact, if on one hand the continuous work of maintenance and conservation of the Cultural Heritage generates an enormous cost for local Governments, on the other hand, a management that foresees its use for cultural and artistic purposes, as in the case of events, shows and live performances, can constitute revenue in economic terms and determine a direct and indirect socio-economic impact of broader scope in favor of the local industry.

This *modus operandi* certainly guarantees greater prestige in the cultural offer and a more effective involvement of users in the scheduled events, and must necessarily take into account the specific features, often of the fragility and intrinsic rules that the use of the cultural asset imposes. Only in full respect of the complex balance between economic, managerial and protection and enhancement interests can the combination of Cultural Heritage and cultural business be sustainable and constitute a real resource for the territory and the population. (Lorusso, S., et al., 2016; Lorusso, S., et al., 2018)

The impact generated and its measurable value constitute valuable informations for the continuity in strategic planning and the governance of the territories and local communities.

Measuring this impact guarantees transparency with respect to the work of the Administrations, Bodies and Institutions involved and returns the measure of change, facilitating the understanding and communication of strategic management choices at local, intra-territorial and transnational level.

The Bak Faluház case study represents a virtuous example and a model in which we meet relevant issues such as management complexity, strategic choices for the use for artistic, cultural and recreational purposes of Heritage building and virtuous work of an administration.

The result of these measures, balances and alliances has set up over the years a wide and very rich cultural offer, capable of generating a great impact, at different levels, on the local community and therefore on the territory.

3.

The House of Village in Bak generates a significant impact both for stakeholders and users.

The Social Impact Maps and the values of SROI RATIO results show us how the House of Village in Bak generates a significant impact both for stakeholders and users. These data are important and confirm a positive return in terms of social impact on the investments made by the Stakeholders to guarantee the conservation and functioning of the building, recognized in the recent years as Heritage building, and a continuous, rich and varied cultural offer.

Furthermore, as a result to stay in the building and take advantage of the cultural and services offer, users rated the outcomes highlighted and detected during the research phases and through interviews and surveys as +33% wellbeing, +21% building relationship, +28% social cohesion, +37% high quality of cultural offer, +31% high quality of service offer, in a scale from -100 to +100.

4.

SROI (Social Return on Investment) is an important tool in strategic planning.

The result shown also through the calculation summary tables – Impact Maps - indicate that the SROI, despite its methodological limits and a certain laboriousness, has balanced different needs such as that of sustainability of the calculation, that of simplicity of method, that of considering data coming from different information system, and above all, that of acting to identify the value of the strategic choices made and identify new indication of future interventions, together with that of supporting relevant and clear accountability processes.

The systemic project of the *Faluházak*<sup>1</sup> buildings and their governance policy within time generated a dynamic system for the creation of values. The described changes and impacts can be measured and through a 'financial language' better shared within the scientific community and stakeholders involved, both to constitute an example to look at for future interventions and to generate feedbacks on strategic decision taken and future ones, on a political, social and economic level.

The Social Return on Investment - SROI methodology responds to needs that go beyond economic evaluation, such as measuring the social value impact in the built environment. The Social Return on Investment method is designed to measure the outcome of an intervention, rather than merely tracking outputs, and its monetization technique facilitates the comparison of otherwise incommensurable benefits across different activities, producing a transferable evidence base that can be communicated to a wide range of audiences. The results are distributed using 'return-on-investment' language that is familiar with investors and commissioners, and is based on real data collected through qualitative stakeholders' engagement, to ensure that what is being measured is what matters to end users.

It therefore has potential as a novel post-occupancy tool to capture the impact of design for building users, and disseminate the findings in a more powerful way across the variety of actors in the design and construction sector (Watson, K.J. and Whitley, T., 2016). The intangible impact of design on building users cannot be understood without consideration of the social context that mediates user experience, yet existing post occupancy methods measure predetermined criteria about building performance. A shift in evaluative focus is required, away from measuring building performance from a user perspective towards measuring the outcomes experienced by building users as a result of the dynamic interactions between buildings, users and the social context that mediates them. The need to capture post-occupancy feedback from building users in a more meaningful way shares a considerable overlap with the concept of social value and the impact-evidencing activities of mission-led organizations and programmes. Recognizing the subjective, malleable, and variable nature of social value is key to the development of metrics suited to its capture and measurement.

The multidisciplinary approach proposed by this research suggests how methodologies belonging to apparently distant fields, can be implemented in new research, offering new perspective for investigation and constitute a wealth to represent and detect phenomena, data, fundamental elements for strategic planning, also in terms of saving of resources and sustainability.



5.

Good practice in one place may not be transferable to another – but it may inspire an action that will work in another place.

The aim of the research is also to bring to the attention of the scientific community and the international community of architects, through the case study object of the analysis, good practice in architecture.

Focusing on the chosen case studies of this research, due to the specificity of the architecture and the socio-political context in which these buildings were built and the purpose for which they were built, now more than thirty years ago, these buildings can represent an interesting example of good practice.

The outcomes of the research show the effects and tangible evidence of certain good practices and multidisciplinary approaches in architecture, aiming at improving social and spiritual relations both amongst people, and between people and places. The design approach, together with specific governance of buildings devoted to social engagement, may help to solve conflicts within communities, or contribute in determining virtuous attitudes, and may also contribute to the creation of good policy based on a community's intangible assets/resources. The relationship we have found between architecture and social engagement constitutes an immaterial asset that is extremely important for a community. That asset comes to life from the very genesis of the architectural project, of which participatory approach constitutes an intrinsic feature, and of which the inclusion of fundamental values for the community represent its collective wealth.