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How the world changed by Robert Venturi?

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Imagine the world without an architect? We may live in the cave or some kind of natural habitats. But luckily, architect does exist. In the world history, there are several architects that have had influence the world by their theories and their significant works. Robert Venturi is one of those influencers. He is the twentieth century American architect and the founder of the firm Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates. With his unique ideas and out-of-box thinking has changed the face of world architecture.

Robert graduated Bachelor of Arts from Princeton University.¹ After graduated, he spent his 2 years off touring and studying architecture in Italy. Since he interested in architecture of the renaissance period, he then resisted the modernism and turned to admire complexity and lively instead. Because of this reason, he published his first book, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, which has had the effect to the western architecture and led to many controversial issues among the architects.² On the first page of his book, he clearly indicated that architecture would be complex and contrast. He said architecture would prefer both-and rather than either-or which means architecture should be ambiguity more than obviousness. This outstanding idea of him had influenced the world-wide architecture.

¹ Wikipedia contribution. "Robert Venturi" "Education" Wikipedia. June 2012.
< http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Venturi#Early_life_and_education >

² Wikipedia contribution. "Robert Venturi" "Writings" Wikipedia. June 2012.
< http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Venturi#Writings >

Furthermore, from the failure theory of Mies van der Rohe, the famous modern architecture, brought Robert to interest in something mixed more than pure, meaningful more than meaningless.³ This idea of him is the beginning of post-modernism which widely appeared in the twentieth century world. Post-modernism emphasize in the complex shape which contain messages or meaning inside. Only complex shape without any meaning would not be consider as the post-modernism, in the other way it is just picturesqueness with nothing different from the normal modern architecture.

Apart from that significant writing, there is another famous one, Learning from Las Vegas, which was written by Robert as well.⁴ This book came from his studied about architecture of the Las Vegas strip which is the main road filled with casinos and five star hotels. He interested in the graphic signs that can be found along the road. This book has been separated into 2 parts. In the first part, he analyzed that sign became more important than architecture itself. Sign could communicate and show the messages to people better than the architecture could. Architecture then had been reduced its importance by located behind the big sign. In the second part, he separated architecture of Las Vegas into 2 types by using the semiotic which is the study of sign as the element of communication. The first type is “The Duck” which is the building that its shape could directly communicate or clearly show what the building has been made for. This kind of architecture is very affective to communicate with the people for instance the hot dog sellers should make their

³ “Robert Venturi: architect biography” Architect.Architecture.

<<http://architect.architecture.sk/robert-venturi-architect/robert-venturi-architect.php>>

⁴ Wikipedia Contribution. “Robert Venturi” “Writing” Wikipedia. June 2012

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Venturi#Writings>

building in the shape of hot dog which is easily to recognize. However, this type of building was clearly tell its message, Robert thought the other way. He said this kind of architecture blocked the imaginative of people. The second type is “The decorated shed” which is the normal shape architecture as simply as the box building. This type of architecture communicate with people through its symbol and sign. He preferred the second type more than the first one because the way in which the second type architecture communicate match with the concept of post-modernism.⁵ This shown that Robert studied every details around him even the signs and his studied did impact the world architecture.

Not only his writings that made him become notable, but also his outstanding works.⁶ Vanna Venturi House is the famous one of his works and also the good example to illustrate his theory. The plan of this house shown the complicated shape in many parts inside which caused many different interpretation.⁷ Another work which is also explained his theory is the Guild House at Philadelphia. This building had been designed to reflect the American’s cultural in the sarcastic way by put the hugh television pillar on the middle top of the building. This shown that the old-aged Americans were addicted with the television. Hence, this building was very successful in attempt to communicate the story via the architecture. Apparently, this 2 buildings of Robert had a key influence to many architects in the world and shaped the new way of architecture.

⁵ Hubpages team. “Learning from Las Vegas” Bundleboy Hubpages. 2012
< <http://bundleboy.hubpages.com/hub/Learning-from-Las-Vegas> >

⁶Wikipedia contribution. “Robert Venturi” “Architecture” Wikipedia. June 2012.
< http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Venturi#Architecture>

⁷ VSBA team. “Vanna Venturi House” Venturiscottbrown
<<http://venturiscottbrown.org/pdfs/VannaVenturiHouseChestnutHillPA02.pdf>>

Throughout his lifetime works, he received many awards as prove of his outstanding works and abilities.⁸ Many works of him are the inspiration for others architecture. Robert Venturi, as the father of post-modernism architecture, never stopped working and thinking the new ideas to inspire or reflect the society or even the world through his works.

As aforementioned above, Robert has become a key person that influenced the world architecture in twentieth century. Even though, his fame was fade over time, his ideas and theories of architecture were still in the history that its once affect the world architecture. The way he become remarkable is not from luck or any gift but all from himself. His successful is come from his practice and study then lots of practice will initiate the new ideas. He always uses old things to create new ideas while the others use old ideas to create new things. Thus, it is no wonder why the world has changed because of him. You should dare to express your ideas, dare to think different and the most important thing you should dare to do it. If you can do all of things, you will be no other but a successful person. The world can be changed by your hands, like Robert Venturi did.

⁸Wikipedia contribution. "Robert Venturi" "Awards" Wikipedia. June 2012.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Venturi#Awards>