

The Glamour Issue

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS *What is glamour in cities? Is it the old school - 5th Avenue, the Champs-Élysées, Rodeo Drive, Soho? Is it really only to be found in the "urban glamour zones" (Sassen) in business districts, airports? Or is glamour really the celebrated grittiness found in gentrifying neighborhoods - or both?*

Is there really any glamour outside Paris? Or outside the global cities of this planet? Can we compare glamour at all across places or are there cultural boundaries to glamour? Why do some refrain from any glamour at home and just enjoy it on vacation? Why do some consider lush interiors too much, but admire richly decorated façades? Or is there is a convergence - the global Prada shop, Japanese cuteness, the rarified grunge of creative scenes...

What is glamour about? The rich and famous? A rich suburban enclave is just that rich and boring but not glamorous. It lacks the confrontations of a city. The pleasure of seeing and being seen (or not). But also the contradictions and discomfort in the modern city that Charles Baudelaire captured so well in his poems about Paris. But how much is too much?

How does glamour emerge? Mayors and developers would kill for the recipe. But how do you do it? For some reconstructing the old glamour of past centuries brings back the glory to the inner cities of Europe. Golden stucco on baroque buildings seems to provide a flashback to the good old urban days that inhabitants and visitors alike enjoy. So we can bathe in a sense of the old glory. Or go modern and rather hire Frank Gehry? Is it about "successful" urban fabric at all - or is that just a small piece of the larger neo-liberal urban policy pie?

We don't know the answer to any of these questions nor do we know if these are even the right questions to ask. Glamour is a concept that is not easily grasped - but one that we feel is essential to what urban life is all about - for better or worse.

And so we are looking for your thoughts. Text or photo, documentations or fiction, opinions or theoretical approaches are all welcome. Please send inquires or proposals to EDITORS@MUDOT.ORG. The deadline for submissions will be end of December 2008.