

Jaffa Mon Amour

Researchers

A N + (Avital Gourary, Natanel Elfassy)
Tom Szwec, Shir Cholev, Nir Shveka, Alon Sarig,
Bar Blau, Maja Ifergan, Noam Burg
Computation by Amir Hertz
Photography by Aviad Bar Ness & Ori Zifroni
www.an-plus.com\jma

Project manager

Arch. Rinat Millo
Conservation Architect
Conservation Department
Tel Aviv Yafo Municipality
City Engineer administration

Research Summary

The researchers recently finished a survey of 750 listed buildings in Jaffa. All differed in their architectural styles, from Arab influences to Art Deco, eclectic and Neoclassic. The survey aimed to help the city understand the desired future of the architecture in this area. The project is called Jaffa Mon Amour.

Research Description

Jaffa overflows with anonymous buildings. Some of them are beautiful, some not. Most do not participate in contemporary architectural discourse, but instead make up the city as ordinary buildings with deformations and architectural mutations. The following study, begun in 2015, documents an ongoing investigation of Jaffa and South Tel Aviv by the Department of Conservation. Researchers surveyed 750 heritage buildings in Jaffa to catalogue. Although the individual structures have no formal classification, together, they can define Jaffa. The archive's process of collecting and reviewing the buildings together reveals the character of the urban landscape.

The removal of the buildings from the urban context into the study's archive erases its historical background, and in turn, opens up a space for research. The research examines Jaffa as an archive of buildings. Contrary to an archive of documents protected from destruction and wear, the city's documents crumble, grow old and rot. Archiving acts as the basis for intervention, enabling creative experience and design. In Jaffa Mon Amour, the work aims to rethink the architecture of the city's archive, to build a new archive that preserves its buildings through new arrangements. With an empirical study, the archive will develop methods to understand the singular urban character of Jaffa. The methods often stand in contradiction to currently accepted beliefs about Jaffa and its construction.

The survey of buildings in Jaffa Mon Amour strives both to artificially keep the past alive and also to examine the whole city in the present, where everything changes, constantly.



Assemblage

After two years of documentation and survey photographs, such a nostalgic, uniform view of Jaffa can no longer exist. Jaffa's buildings produce not harmony, but heterogeneity. Even if common values arise among archive documents, they contain a unity of particularity. The study cannot read the structures as isolated individuals, because there is no architecture with a distinct poetic pattern (such as the international style of Tel Aviv). In order to define Jaffa, research cannot surface the uniqueness of buildings, but must sew them together into one quilt.

Jaffa Mon Amour offers an exploration of the times that have passed, in the context of the present. It provides an examination of Jaffa in its separate multiplicities. A constant clash emerges between worlds of culture, form, and language over time. A city that by definition is a "relatively large, dense, permanent community of socially different individuals"³ requires complex analyt-

ical tools that deal with conflicting issues of size, density, and diversity. To examine the architecture of the city is thus to emphasize that the common existence of these different styles in a single "city" is not by virtue of acceptance and compromise. Rather, these cultural symbols merged together by conflicting paths.

The study shows that an architectural building in Jaffa can only be understood as part of a whole. Along the streets of the city, Jaffa's buildings coexist side by side.

Research Status

The researchers recently finished a survey of 750 listed buildings in Jaffa. All differed in their architectural styles, from Arab influences to Art Deco, eclectic and Neoclassic. The survey aimed to help the city understand the desired future of the architecture in this area. The project is called Jaffa Mon Amour.

1. See Mark Wigley, *Unleashing the Archive*

2. לכאורה זו אשר תממש את חלומות מייסדיה (מגליה או כובשיה), אודות חברה חדשה, הרמונית, שבקרבה הם יוכלו לחוש כחלק אורגני מסביבתם.

3. See Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a way of life", in Richard Sennett, ed., *Classic Essays on the Culture of the Cities*, New York, 1969, pp.148