

Geometry and symbols in Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza in Rome

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Abstract

The survey of the complex of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza in Rome was a golden opportunity to analyse the relationship between form and meaning in architecture. It was even more unique because it was part of a course in a doctoral school where survey is considered a process of critical analysis taught in parallel to technical and operational learning.

The church is located within the complex of the University of Rome founded in 1303; it is one of Borromini's most important works and therefore well suited to be used to provide a critical interpretation of its geometric and syntactic structure. While the spatial solution of the dome subverts its primary design, the relationship between the structure of space and its decorations betray its strong communicative force. Use and comparison of multiple measurement and visualisation techniques provided the in-depth information required to identify the possible geometries behind the design plan.

Keywords:

sant'Ivo alla Sapienza, dome, morphogenesis, symbology.