“Freezing a space in time and denying it any contemporary use is nearly always unfeasible.”

Edward Said
The Architect is the official journal of the Kamra tal-Periti and of the profession. It is published on a quarterly basis (February, May, August and November) under the auspices of the KTP website.

The Architect is not to be sold or given away gratuitously.

Editorial

The front-of-year issue of the Architect introduces a new feature: a competition sponsored by the KTP and entitiled ‘Architectural Value in the Context of Malta’s Built Heritage’.

This competition is open to all architects in Malta and the entries will be judged by a panel of judges, which includes the President of the KTP and prominent architects and practitioners.

The competition is valid for all cases where periti are involved in the re-use and re-adaptation of old buildings and spaces.

Deadline for submission: 28th April 2007

ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee for 2007 will be composed as follows: David Felice (Chairperson), Danica Mifsud (Professional Practice), Joseph Zammit (Built Environment), Antoine Cachia (Architecture), John Vella (Civil Engineering), Malcolm Sullivan (Finance), Claudio Vella (Professional Practice), Azzio Depascuale (Industrial Practice), Antonio Cachia (Civil Engineering), and published by the Kamra tal-Periti.

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**March 2007**

**Tate Modern, London, UK**

Over the last hundred years, one of architecture’s most prestigious firm awards has been the Architecture Firm Award, presented by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to acknowledge the design excellence and outstanding achievement of a firm.

The AIA, founded in 1857, promotes the arts of building by its members, to whom it provides a variety of services, including educational, research, and promotional programs, and represents the interests of the architectural profession to the government and the public. In 1902, the AIA established the AIA Classroom Medal to recognize the services rendered by an architect in the field of education.

**MEPA**

The Malta Association of Architects (MCAA) has re-elected for another three-year term, its President, Pierre De Smit. On behalf of its members, the Council of its members, the MCA is responsible for the professional needs of their respective members and of their respective clients. It also has a special responsibility for the protection of the profession and the enhancement of its standing.

**MEPA AUDITOR**

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**NEW WARRANTS**

52 new, so-called “new warrants” have been published by the OHSA, www.mppat.or.kr. A Risk Assessment Essentials guideline has been also published by the OHSA. www.mppat.or.kr

**CHUNGHOUNGEO**

A Korean firm, led by Seoh Jae, is the winner of the AIA’s 8th Annual Merit Award for the masterplan of the new central government complex in the city of Chungcheongnam. Launched its 7th Framework Programme is the establishment, by the European Commission, of a database of experts and organisations interested in the field of hazardous waste management and environmental protection.

**NEW MEMBERS**

On 1 January, Bulgaria and Romania were welcomed as new members of the European Union and as full members of the Council of the Architectural Council of Europe. This enlargement has had an effect on the whole of the Council’s activities over the last few years. For instance, the new rubber seal for the construction of the tunnel is a product for the benefit of Maltese and Romanian citizens.

In his nomination statement for the Firm of the Year Award, which the Boston-based Leers Weinzapfel Associates (LWA) is the recipient of Leers Weinzapfel: “Their commitment to the public realm and to the craft of building in dramatically complex projects represents a remarkable commitment to ingenuity, resourcefulness, and design integrity. Its work embodies the best of the American spirit.”

**MEPA OFFICE**

On the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the Malta Association of Architects (MCAA) launched its 2007 Awards. The competition for the Architecture Firm Award was launched on the occasion of the 2007 Awards. The competition for the Architecture Firm Award was launched on the occasion of the 2007 Awards. The competition for the Architecture Firm Award was launched on the occasion of the 2007 Awards. The competition for the Architecture Firm Award was launched on the occasion of the 2007 Awards.

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The Kamra tal-Periti and MEPA have met this year to go through significant changes in planning. The introduction of new provisions within the Local Plans (Local Plan Zoning). These provisions had to be thrashed on an employing public) and MEPA has made no comment on this action. The Kamra has attempted to justify its actions with a number of different points. One is that the document requires further development in order for it to be a functioning planning tool for the benefit of all. It is the Kamra’s future to discuss the Local Plans and other issues. In this context, the Kamra has submitted its comments for inclusion in the further development of the document.

The Kamra tal-Periti has a number of meetings with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Dr. Fariza Caru at the Embassy of Malta in Rome, for examining the implementation and functioning of the document as a means to achieve the required reforms. The Kamra has also been consulted on the proposals for the next two stages of the document. The Kamra is currently considering the implications of these proposals.

The Kamra has submitted its comments for inclusion in the European Union’s plan for the next two stages of the document. The Kamra believes that the document requires further development in order for it to be a functioning planning tool for the benefit of all. It is the Kamra’s future to discuss the Local Plans and other issues. In this context, the Kamra has submitted its comments for inclusion in the further development of the document.

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**Practice of the Profession and Trade in Architectural Services**

**Transposition of the Qualifications Directive**

By Perit Simone Vella Lenicker

For the first time ever in a country like Malta, the 2006/2007 Committee, with the help of the Architects’ Association, translated the Qualifications Directive into Maltese.

The Directive, in its final form, was seen as an ideal student design project. It was introduced in the European Commission in March 2005, going through a number of changes and improvements before being transposed into national laws in March 2007. The Directive aims to ensure that all members of the architectural community in Europe are able to practice in another Member State, and that any existing professional qualifications are also acknowledged.

The Directive has been welcomed by Member States, particularly Malta, as it provides a framework for ensuring the recognition of professional qualifications in the field of architecture. The Directive also includes provisions for the recognition of professional qualifications acquired in another Member State, which is an important step towards ensuring the free movement of professionals within the European Union.

The Directive is expected to cover as a minimum the knowledge and skills that a course in architecture is expected to provide. It is the Kamra’s understanding that degrees should therefore be based on qualitative standards of architecture.

The Directive states that the qualifications of architects should be recognised in all Member States, and that the recognition of qualifications should be based on the equivalence of the professional qualifications obtained in another Member State. The Directive also states that the recognition of qualifications should be based on the equivalence of the professional qualifications obtained in another Member State.

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Vaulted spaces – reuse and respect

Very often when selling an old house, estate agents invariably extol the type of ceilings employed in the construction, marketing it as a primary feature which gives added value to the property on sale. Certainly upon entering any old building locally, one is drawn towards the variety of ceilings and roofing systems present. The most commonly encountered types range from the all-limestone barrel vault and arched (suspended slab) system to use of wooden or metal beams supporting stone slabs. Also relatively widespread are systems using diaphragm arches designed to a variety of profiles and configurations. On a more limited scale and those being addressed in this article, are structures enclosed by means of vaulted systems. The dome and its adaptations are highly elusive, normally restricted to sacred edifices.

The mezzanine lounge at Restore, Valletta, overlooks the central bar. Services are cleanly concealed with the vault’s curvature. Photo: Matthew J Mercieca.

The solutions are numerous and push the designer’s tactful skill to the limit: construction of mezzanine levels supported on stilts which rest on the ground without penetration and on which cables and pipework can be inserted; introduction of suspended floorings below which services may go; windows or even access for services. The commendable insulation characteristics associated with these vaulted spaces can present the opportunity to use innovative energy-saving environmental control systems. Exploitation of natural lighting on the other hand may prove a challenge. The introduction of basic amenities and accommodation must be considered, given the accessibility of services. Of course one cannot generalise here as with spatial typologies within old buildings there are rarely any rules of thumb or stereotypes. Furthermore there is a crucial criterion which sets the parameters for these interventions: is the vaulted space in question historically significant?

A very familiar scenario locally is the presence of series of barrel vaults interconnected to one another and typically having limited openings and access, these being usually located at the ends of the space. One can say that such a spatial typology is a ubiquitous feature in military structures and storage buildings. Also agreed are the historical and architectural value which warrants sensitive conservation. Their proposed reuse will thus have to involve the least amount of intervention on the surrounding shell; limitations by the awkward geometry of the walls presented by the curvature of the vault; contact with aged stonework that in many cases can be powdering, very restricted openings to be used as doors, windows or even access for ventilating.

Therefore the problems mainly consist of: very limited intrusiveness and intervention on the surrounding shell; limitations by the awkward geometry of the walls presented by the curvature of the vault; contact with aged stonework that in many cases can be powdering, very restricted openings to be used as doors, windows or even access for ventilating. The solutions are numerous and push the designer’s tactic skill to the limit: construction of mezzanine levels supported on stilts which rest on the ground without penetration and on which cables and pipework can be inserted; introduction of suspended floorings below which services may go; windows or even access for services.

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(Architect) Matthew J Mercieca
Design: Matthew J Mercieca
The Stockholm Public Library in Stockholm was designed by Gunnar Asplund as a result of a competition that was inaugurated nearly 80 years ago. The library is a world famous building, breathing life into the city, which is known as “the library” as a timeless concept. There are few public buildings that are as well frequented by people from all over the world as the Stockholm Public Library, an appealing sight for tourists. In accordance with the Swedish Act on Public Enclosure, the Stockholm Public Library is regarded as one of the most spectacular cultural city. The other hand, it would be disastrous to demolish the Asplund building while at the same time being in perfect symbiosis with this major icon. The new building must provide a new and distinct relationship to the hill, which should continue to be the dominant element of the townscape even in the future. This can be done in several different ways regardless of whether the building, to be placed in a new context, is to be constructed as a separate building or as an annex to the existing building while the library takes the form of a two-stage competition. By studying the received proposals and the trial methods employed, the jury ascertained that a new extension for the Asplund building is possible to be built in several different ways. In order to be able to maintain and develop the Public Library as the main library in the city and as a central public meeting place for learning and reading, new spaces must be added in a new extension to the Asplund building. The international architectural competition with winning ideas will form the basis of an extension to the Stockholm Public Library and will stimulate meetings, discussions and study. The jury sincerely believed that it was necessary to select a proposal of high architectural quality with a concept that is strong enough to withstand the test of time and that provides the possibility of progress. Accordingly, the architect who wins stage two of the competition will not only have a special task to perform in accord- ance with the Swedish Act on Public Enclosure for the subsequent plan- ning and implementation of the project. The first stage attracted 1,170 entries. Making the competition one of the world’s largest architectural competi- tions of all time. The main objective of the first stage of the competition was to find concepts and ideas capable of developing the jury unanimously selected six projects for further development to complete in the second stage of the competition. The jury’s intention is that the architect who serão stage two of the competition will be commissioned to develop and implement the project.

The Jury’s Working Method

A large number of proposals deman- ded painstaking kid-oriented work by the jury. The first step was to perform in-depth analyses of the various themes and the intention was to study more representative studies of the various projects. It was then logical to say that proposals that scored the highest in terms of the quality and the concept simply had to be selected.

The Jury’s Assessment

The jury selected six projects to be invited to the second round of the competition. The anonymity of the entries will only be lifted with the final announcement of the winning entry and hence, the de-anonymization and revelation number is being used for each of the short-listed projects.

BLANKE 0329

This proposal is based on a man-made building of Stockholm in which the library is located. Without trying to imitate the landscape, it makes its own interpretation of the natural forces not just the design of the room but also the design of the landscape. The cut into the ridge is a very strong and unique concept that reinforces the monumental character is strengthened. The new building has such a monumental character that has its very own special architectural profile. The cut into the ridge is omnipresent during the walk up the slope, which reinforces its expression as a landscape and a linking urban landscape for the next few decades. The building is a link to the complex and unique concept that is linked to the Asplund building, creating a kind of “urban landscape” which is omnipresent during the entire climb up the slope. The proposal subordinates itself to the Asplund building and is in many ways an urban hybrid between landscape and building which is uniquely recognisable with a character all of its own without any known predecessors. The large inner space is very beautiful with its own piano pillars and varying shapes, into which the light filters through skylights. The fact that the building is sunken reinforces the design of the room but also illustrates the architect’s aware- ness of the need for careful planning and attention to the scale of the building.

DELPHINIUM 0003

The proposal creates an entrance new con- nection project, which is based on an abandoned interspace to a high-quality public building which is easily recognisable by creating entirely new urban facades. The project’s defining characteristic. It will demonstrate a very broad spectrum of ideas, many of which were of a very high standard. The projects provided weight and provided thoughts as to how this very difficult and challenging task can be achieved. The jury ascertained that a new extension must be constructed to such a nature, dedication and architecture originality (i.e. artistic wor- thiness) in its justify the position next to the Asplund building while at the same time being in perfect symbiosis with this major icon. The new building must provide a new and distinct relationship to the hill, which should continue to be the dominant element of the townscape even in the future. This can be done in several different ways regardless of whether the building, to be placed in a new context, is to be constructed as a separate building or as an annex to the existing building while the library takes the form of a two-stage competition. The jury unanimously selected six projects for further development to complete in the second stage of the competition. The jury’s intention is that the architect who serão stage two of the competition will be commissioned to develop and implement the project.

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A PRIME EXAMPLE OF A NEW LEASE OF LIFE TO A HISTORIC BUILDING

MARTIN CORSI, Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp

The conversion of the old century Garrison Church - a Colonial icon perched high upon the Valletta Bastions commanding the view of the city - is presently what the Malta Stock Exchange building project is striving to achieve. The building is one of several issues. The importance of this project in particular lies in its being an excellent example of how the efforts of different disciplines working in symphony resulted in a purposeful and functional design to serve the needs of the new occupants.

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In keeping with the architects' design philosophy of respecting architecture from its past yet translating it into something new and modern, during the excavation works in order to gain useful parallel office wings with glass partitions created a new for modern-day use, the main inter storey atrium. Thus the addition of the roof structure. An example of how the efforts of different disciplines working in symphony resulted in a purposeful and functional design to serve the needs of the new occupants.

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The importance of this project in particular lies in its being an excellent example of how the efforts of different disciplines working in symphony resulted in a purposeful and functional design to serve the needs of the new occupants.
Black and white and essentially pure enough to be described as one mass penetrating a vault – was this the generating concept behind the design?

The main design concept centred more on inserting a contemporary function inside a dilapidated fortification: and rigorously containing this function inside one sober container. All the restaurant’s services, lighting, power, sound, storage and food preparation had to be located inside the timber box. Not only as an act of conservation and sustainability, but also to aesthetically reinforce the idea of an alien pod which sits in a raw landscape in an attempt to regenerate it.

We wanted a pure, white space which could be used as a canvas for saturated colour lighting. It’s fascinating how different colours can affect one’s mood, especially when mixed with the right music. The intricate box, in contrast to ongoing colour shifts, needed to be black.

Do you think the function followed form in some respects to create such a powerful and involving aesthetic presence?

I think that the biggest challenge of this project was to successfully contain its primary functions within the box. The brief was simple: to serve and entertain seated patrons through its various openings, while preserving the 100 square metres available. In section, its very notable inclined walls increased square metres upstairs, provided circulation space downstairs, and increased space for precious storage, cables and ventilation ducts within the box. I guess in this sense its form totally followed its function, although the bastions’ inclined walls were also an important factor which stimulated the first sketches.

Some people thought that 222 was too daring a project to be ever permitted by MEPA. In fact how did you overcome the challenge?

Most thought the site is an old vault. In fact it is the beginning of a tunnel, carved out of St Andrew’s Bastion in the 1950s to make way for the then inexistent Grand Siege Road. It was constructed out of a reinforced concrete shell supporting the bastion’s fill, and we were told that the project was abandoned after 20m due to lack of funds. The outside terrace itself is built on fill, since the bastion originally descended all the way to the sea.

While initially recommended for refusal, DCC were especially interested in our proposal. The idea of a structure designed for a limited lifespan, whose protrusion from the bastion emphasised its provisional state, went down well. I think our scale model also helped the members of the board understand the project instantly and were very optimistic about its potential regenerative qualities in such a decaying area of the city.

What about the name & logo?

The name is simply the address; 222 Great Siege Road. The logo was designed in close collaboration with the architects’ branding agency, Black Mamba.
I noted a rail in the concrete floor in the seating area: a device designed to help the restaurant’s staff keep all the lines.

The Lighting design is again practically one expression, with the form, and the client agreed. They’re from Quinze & Milan, designed by Arne Quinze, a Belgian designer.

The entrance space is all, frame and atrium Valletta. We like working (and living) in Valletta because of its diverse contexts. In this case the site was a redundant space squashed between a road and pleasure boats. This marvellous land coupled with the strong feeling of being on the edge of the city meant that the site could have a strong design statement, which weexploit in all our work.

I like working in Valletta because of its diverse contexts. In this case the site was a redundant space squashed between a road and the pleasure boats. This marvellous land coupled with the strong feeling of being on the edge of the city meant that the site could have a strong design statement, which we exploit in all our work.

The Sassi were abandoned completed and left empty. The historic area known as the “Sassi” is a cave city where some 50,000 people lived in hollow-out rooms have jumped from the prehistoric era to the 21st century, bypassing much of the 20th century. The Datacontact call centre employs over 500 persons and is now the third-largest employer in Matera. A software house has also been operating in the caves for several years.

Matera is a city where art history in the world, carved out of stone and salt and the shading Mediterranean sun. The history of the “Sassi” is a city carved out of rock, formed by one of the most suggestive places of worship used to celebrate in the depths of the earth due to the St. Peter Cathedral built with the white stone of the nearby Vaglia quarries and towering over the entire city.

The historic area known as the “Sassi” is a cave city where some dwellings in this case the site was a redundant space squashed between a road and the pleasure boats.

I believe that Valletta has more to offer than what most people can handle: the public In general is pleased with great projects which make up the living building. It is small, panoramic projects the one which essentially the true efforts of believers, and are slowly moving Valletta’s mosaic.


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11 March 2007

Matera

By Charles Dr Conrad Thake

Matera is a city where art history in the world, carved out of stone and salt and the shading Mediterranean sun. The history of the “Sassi” is a city carved out of rock, formed by one of the most suggestive places of worship used to celebrate in the depths of the earth by UNESCO in 1993. The Sassi, Barisano and Caveoso, set on the deep slopes of the valley, with the covariance, masterful and underground layout, hole niches of a remote past rich in culture and history. Caves and underground architectures are connected by steps and the strong feeling of being on the edge of the city meant that the site could have a strong design statement, which we exploit in all our work. Now, changing the street of this underground city one runs into an ancient stone monument with an inscription to the depths of the earth the exultation of sun and stones. To the artistic city fabric, medieval monasteries brought new cameos, churches, chapels and hypogean facade rise on the sides of the nave and its secondary vaults. During the late medieval period, arose the superb secondary valleys. During the late medieval period, arose the superb secondary valleys.

Dr Conrad Thake

Matera

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Dr Conrad Thake

Matera
March 2007

Fort Campbell

David Grima

Built in Selmun in 1937, Fort Campbell is different to purely military fort sites because the aim for visitors to be able to distinguish between the old and new buildings was not intended. It was decided to leave the ‘ruins’ untouched and to design the centre around them, so that the aim for visitors to be able to distinguish between the old and new buildings is not met. As the barracks are found outside the boundary wall in order to leave the buildings within the boundary wall, it was decided to continue the building similarly to its original size to make the comparative difference between the old and new less.

The aim of the thesis project was to design a building-based leisure centre. This was rather demanding, due to the fact that unlike previously built forts, the main difference of the site was the barest minimum whilst the buildings must blend in with the surroundings.

The barracks are found outside the boundary wall so as to distinguish between the old and new buildings and any new ones. Therefore, when it is re-used, the damaged buildings, an unusually large height steel and glass structure was designed that in order to maintain the indications of the site, Buildings were designed to make the most of the deep site with importance given to maximizing new views by designing a series of low lying buildings which also allowed their roof to be used as gardens. Materials such as steel, timber and glass were virtually used throughout. The focal point of the project, the botanical gardens, were conceived as a landscaped roof in the ground with a large circular glasshouse emerging from within, with a series of different levelled terraces linked by a meandering path. The main sites within Fort Campbell were designed to be a series of landscapes accessible to all.

The aim was for visitors to be able to make a conscious decision of the building within the new site.

ArChiteCture NiGhtS 07

The architecture and quality in design of the new buildings is rather demanding, due to the fact that unlike previously built forts, the main difference of the project was the barest minimum whilst the buildings must blend in with the surroundings. This was rather demanding, due to the fact that unlike previously built forts, the main difference of the site was the barest minimum whilst the buildings must blend in with the surroundings.

The barricades that were found outside the boundary wall in order to leave the buildings within the boundary wall, it was decided to continue the building similarly to its original size to make the comparative difference between the old and new less.

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DANCING WITH DISORDER: DESIGN, DISCOURSE & DISASTER
7th Annual Conference of the European Academy of Design
http://fadf.ieu.edu.tr/ead07/
Now to 13 May 2007; Gallery 4, NAI, Netherlands
BUILDING PORTRAITS
Twenty talented young photographers have been commissioned to portray the relations between a building, its conceivers, its builder and its user.
www.nai.nl
3 May – 23 June 2007; Maxxi, New London Architecture, UK
RETAIL
This exhibition looks at new mixed use locations in London such as White City, Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Lewisham Gateway, Canada Water and Kings Cross to see how these fit into the retail environment.
www.newlondonarchitecture.org
7 May – 10 May 2007; Milan, Italy
EUROPEAN WIND ENERGY
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION
This Conference will address major issues of importance for European and Global wind markets and will look at the prospects for the wider uptake of these technolo-
gies in society.
www.eewe2007/info
18-20 June – Valencia, Spain
BEX 2007
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environment professionals
www.b-e-a.com
31 August – 1 September 2007; Jyväskylä University, Finland
IT’S A BEAUTIFUL DAY
A workshop on Today, Tomorrow and Design
http://www.alvaraalto.fi/designseminar/
15-18 September 2007; Aga Patoka, Greece
2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON PASSIVE AND LOW ENERGY COOLING FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
PALENCE 2007
http://palence2007.conferences.gr/
17-18 September 2007; Beijing, China
3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS IN BRIDGE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE
www.bridgemanagement2007.com
16-18 October 2007; Stuttgart, Germany
CIB W102 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“Information and Knowledge Management - Helping the Practitioner in Planning and Building”
http://cib-w102.com/conf2007stuttgart
05-10 November 2006; Paris Expo, France
BATIMAT INTERNATIONAL BUILDING EXHIBITION 2007
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