

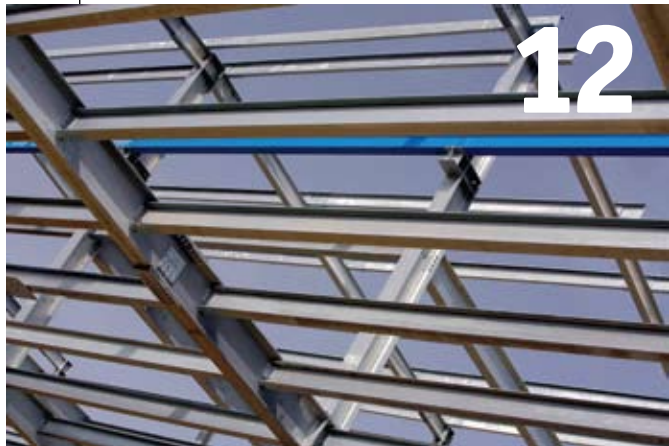
# the Architect

ISSUE NO. 53 | JULY 2010

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE KAMRA TAL-PERITI



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the Architect

"As architects we pride ourselves in having a direct role to play in the shaping of our environment and in the process, improving our everyday quality of life."

*Dr Conrad Thake (see page 16)*

# Who's interfering?

Revealed a few weeks ago was a heartfelt letter from Prince Charles pleading with the Qatari prime minister to abandon a £3 billion property development in London. Signing his name in Arabic at the end, the Prince underlined words in thick black pen to emphasise his opposition to the modernist design for the Chelsea Barracks site in London. "I only mention this," he wrote, "because, quite frankly, my heart sank when I saw the plans that have been proposed for the old Chelsea Barracks site, opposite the Royal Hospital, by Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment. I am so sorry to have to write to you on this subject, and thus to be so interfering, but it is a site of great importance in London and therefore deserves something that is appropriate to its context and worthy of its position next to the Royal Hospital." With the letter, Prince Charles attached what he called "alternative plans for the site" designed by another architect. Charles's intervention is alleged to have pushed the Qatari royal family into withdrawing the original design for the site.

Without going into the merits of the project, it is interesting to note two things: firstly the fact that a person of such high profile and 'political' significance has taken the time to speak up, whether justifiably or not, on a matter of architectural quality and design (and this not for the first time); secondly the impact that such intervention can have on architectural proposals. Locally, sadly, this debate on architecture seems to be relegated solely to the architectural profession and to those organisations that have our built heritage at heart. Rarely, however, is such debate initiated or taken up by the political class. Perhaps the only instance in recent history that comes to mind is the current Prime Minister's stance on the ex-Rediffusion Broadcasting Complex where, following a plea made by the Kamra tal-Periti, he instructed the Public Broadcasting Authority to withdraw a planning application to demolish and redevelop the building. While commendable, this is however one time too little.

Notwithstanding this lack of political debate on the quality of architecture in Malta, Chapter 356 of the Laws of Malta (Development Planning Act) makes provision for a call-in procedure, whereby the responsible Minister may refer an application, submitted by a department of government or a corporate body, on which an appeal has been lodged, directly to Cabinet for a decision. On the presumption that the original decision, taken by professionals and individuals with training and knowledge in their field, was justified, then the fact that this can be overturned by Cabinet opens up the discussion on whether Cabinet is indeed competent or not to take such decisions. The lack of a national debate in this regard does not bode well in this scenario.

This topic was indirectly referred to by MEPA Chairman Austin Walker during a recent interview conducted by Vanessa Macdonald, editor of [www.di-ve.com](http://www.di-ve.com). Walker com-

mented about the "awkward situation" MEPA is placed in each time government tenders are awarded for large national projects prior to the issue of a permit. Is government, therefore, "rubberstamping" these projects before even beginning to go through the planning process? Or is government using the Authority as the "rubberstamp" and placing undue pressure on it to issue the respective permits? Who is really taking the decisions? Walker went as far as to suggest that in the case of national projects, a system should be devised whereby parliament or government would be able to approve such projects.

Amid this discussion, the proposed MEPA Reform is still ongoing. The official process, which began just over a year ago with a National Conference held in June 2009, has been a long one, and it is hoped that a conclusion is in sight. The Kamra has, on the invitation of the responsible Parliamentary Secretariat, been involved in the various discussions on the matter, and many of its contributions have indeed been taken on board. The Kamra notes this with satisfaction and hopes to be able to contribute further in ensuring that this process reaps the results it is hoped to achieve.

During the parliamentary discussions on the MEPA Reform, the issue was raised on whether or not Malta should move from a structure planning approach to a spatial planning approach, which latter methodology is becoming the norm in Europe. Following this debate, the Kamra immediately took the initiative to host, in collaboration with the Chamber of Planners, a seminar on this topic. Although possibly biased, I feel the need to emphasise that this was possibly one of the most level-headed, informative and thought provoking discussions on planning in Malta I have had the pleasure of attending. It was refreshing to be able to sit in a room with other professionals and to be able to discuss a matter of such national importance in a calm and non-confrontational ambience. A number of important points were raised during that meeting, and I trust that those present who are in a position to act upon them will indeed take the various suggestions and comments on board in the interest of the planning process.

A short report on the discussion that took place during this seminar is carried in this issue of the Architect, together with a number of other articles that deal with a range of topics. Among these are interviews with the two teams of professionals entrusted with the design of the temporary stands that were erected during the Pope's recent visit to Malta, a review of the work of Italian architect Enzo Eusebi, and an article by Dr Conrad Thake aptly titled 'Quo Vadis Perit?'

**Simone Vella Lenicker**  
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KAMRA TAL-PERITI

*To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community*

The Council of the Kamra Tal-Periti for the year 2010 consists of Vincent Cassar (President), David Felice (Past President), Simone Vella Lenicker (Honorary Secretary) and Council members Ruben Paul Borg, Jacques Borg Barthet, Keith Cole, Philip Grech, Anthony Fenech Vella, Danica Mifsud, Anton Valentino and Damian Vella Lenicker. The Architect is the official journal of the Kamra Tal-Periti. It is published on a quarterly basis and distributed with the Business Today newspaper. The Architect is not to be sold separately. The contents of this journal are copyright. Reproduction in part or in full is forbidden without the permission of the editor. The opinions expressed by writers of signed articles and letters appearing in the magazine are those of their respective authors, and neither the Kamra Tal-Periti nor MediaToday Co. Ltd is responsible for these opinions or statements.

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**COVER:**  
Architecture fit for a Pope  
*see pages 14-15*

## Events

The second quarter of 2010 was another busy one for the *Kamra tal-Periti*, and included two lectures in the series Architecture Nights. A new series of events titled Civil Engineering Encounters was also launched, and aims to address the more technical aspects of the profession. A seminar which debated the pros and cons of the structure versus the spatial planning approach was also organised by the *Kamra*, this time in collaboration with the Chamber of Planners. Refer to pages 18 and 19 for full details.

## Central Registry Act

Discussions are underway with the Department of Land Registry regarding the draft Central Registry Act. Members of Council met with representatives of the Department in order to discuss the proposed Act, in particular with respect to its impact on the profession and to the duties of the *perit* in this regard. An information session outlining the new Act is in the pipeline and will be announced shortly.

## Autodesk

The Council of the *Kamra tal-Periti* held a meeting on the 26 May 2010 with Mr Kostas Samaras, the representative of Autodesk inc together with their local agent, Learnkey Cad. This meeting was prompted by a number of reports of problems regarding the purchase of software from the previous local agent. Following the positive meeting, Mr Samaras sent a letter to the *Kamra*, which was sent out to all *periti*, stating that Autodesk inc was ready to address all the problems faced by local purchasers of their products, and to ensure that customers got the products they had paid for, while ensuring that these were indeed the full versions of the products as purchased. The *Kamra* notes this outcome with satisfaction.

## World Cup and all that!

Now that the frenzy of the World Cup is over, it is time to celebrate a local victory. Following the match held on the 26 October 2009 between a team of Maltese *periti* and a team of Austrian architects, which the Maltese won with an impressive score of 4-1, a return match was held earlier this year. This

time, the teams drew 2-2, which meant that the Maltese Team won on aggregate. The matches were organised as fund raising for the Community Chest Fund. Congratulations to all involved!

## Mies van der Rohe Award

The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award - is a biennial prize granted by the European Union and the Fundació Mies van der Rohe of Barcelona. The principal purpose of this award is to recognise and commend excellence in the field of architecture. In doing so, the prize calls attention to the important contribution of European professionals in the development of new architectural concepts and technologies and is a means by which citizens as well as public institutions can come to a better understanding of the cultural role of architecture in the construction of cities and communities. The *Kamra tal-Periti* has once again been asked to participate in this Award by nominating projects for consideration. In the coming weeks, members will be informed of the details of participation.

## Members' Directory

One of the features on the *Kamra's* website [www.ktpmalta.com](http://www.ktpmalta.com) is a Members' Directory. A section has recently been added to include also details of partnerships of warrant holders. All members interested in having their details listed on this page are invited to contact the *Kamra* for further details.

## World Architecture Festival

The third edition of the World Architecture Festival is taking place in November in Barcelona. As a media partner of the event, the Architect invites all *periti* to consider participating in this three day event which showcases a large variety of projects from a large number of firms and countries. The Architect was also a media partner during last year's edition of the event. This Festival seems set to become one of the most important Architecture Festivals during the year. Anyone wishing to attend this year's edition is invited to log onto the website and to quote the Priority Code CACEMAL when submitting their booking. Further information in the ad below.



## Architectural excellence – LIVE!

To book your place, and for information on planning your whole journey visit [www.worldarchitecturefestival.com](http://www.worldarchitecturefestival.com) Quote CACEMAL

## Meet hundreds of architects from all over the world

World Architecture Festival offers architects from all over the world the chance to meet, share and learn. Since 2008 we have welcomed architects from over 80 countries, and urge you to take advantage of this three day opportunity to network and gain information and inspiration.



Judges this year include:  
Arata Isozaki, Barry Bergdoll, Stefan Benisch,  
Richard Hassell and Sophia van Ellrichshausen



Don't miss out!  
Network with  
architects from  
80 countries



## ICOMOS MALTA

The International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is an international association of people working in the field of conservation to promote the conservation of cultural heritage sites whilst applying scientific techniques and new methodologies. In this light, it acts as an advisory body to UNESCO. ICOMOS Malta committee collaborates with over a hundred other national committees, having the constant support of the International Secretariat of ICOMOS that is based in Paris. It strives to increase awareness of the national sites as a tool for improving their protection. It aims to collaborate with other non-government organisations in the field, increase collaboration amongst various disciplines in the field, and above all - sharing knowledge. Perit Maria Mifsud has recently been elected to the post of President of ICOMOS Malta, succeeding Dr Ray Bondin. The other Committee members are Dr Jevon Vella, Dr Claude Busuttil, Mr James Licari, Mr Anton Catania and Dr David Mallia.

## CORPORATE VILLAGE MALTA

The currently vacant and derelict site formerly housing the ex-Dowty factory in Mrieħel is set to house a new venture: Corporate Village Malta. Carrying an investment that is estimated to range between €150 and €200 million, this urban regeneration project intends to achieve the Government's vision of excellence by becoming the focal point within the central business district in Malta. It seeks to respond not only to Government's strategic vision, but also to the window of opportunity that arises from the demand for high quality office and commercial space in Malta. With Malta envisaged to take over the European Union Presidency in 2017, Corporate Village Malta is expected to be one of the main hubs of activity for the events taking place during the six months' tenure, when it will be at the centre of European and worldwide attention. It will also serve as Government's



Images: Virtual Image Barcelona.  
Architect: Architecture Project

single point of contact for business, as it will host the main regulatory and business support agencies and departments.

Corporate Village Malta, designed by Architecture Project, was voted the best Smart City Europe project in the Real Estate Awards held in Milan, Italy, after being shortlisted together with Moscow's \$4 billion Metropoliya Business District and the Varyap Meridian in Istanbul in the category of international projects. These Awards, known also as the Golden Brick Awards, were given to the best projects in different categories across Europe. Amongst others, categories included awards for architecture, initiatives in favour of the environment, as well as best service, best tourism and best consultancy projects. Corporate Village Malta was awarded best project for the creation of future cities built on sustainability and urban integration. The project was also shortlisted in the World Architecture Festival 2009 held in Barcelona in the Future Projects category.

Malta Enterprise issued a call for expressions of interest for the detailed design, development, operation and marketing of Corporate Village Malta in June, with submissions being received up to the 3 September 2010. Further information can be obtained from [www.corporatevillagemalta.com](http://www.corporatevillagemalta.com).

## WHITE ROCKS SPORTS AND LEISURE VILLAGE

Another project recently launched by Government is the White Rocks Sports and Leisure Village. Comprising an investment of €200 million, the project will provide a venue for a wide range of local sporting activities (rugby, tennis, beach sports, BMX outdoor track, etc), hosting of international sporting events, commercial and leisure facilities, a hotel to support sports tourism and a multi-ownership complex to complement the sporting activities. The project will also feature considerable landscaped parklands and pedestrian areas which will also serve as a family leisure park as well

as a multi-purpose indoor facility with the capacity of hosting 15 simultaneous training sessions of different sports disciplines including basketball, volleyball, fencing, table tennis, table football, snooker, billiards, pool, handball, judo and other martial arts. The project will further include a Sports Science Centre to enhance local and foreign athletes' performance and also to



Architect: Faulknerbrowns Architects

monitor the rehabilitation of injured athletes as well as commercial facilities. Through White Rocks Sports & Leisure Village, Government is pursuing the following objectives:

- to promote a national sport culture through facilitated access to sports events and sports programmes for all sectors of society, irrespective of age, sex or ability;
- to promote a healthy life style in a sport oriented family park comprising of landscaped parklands, pedestrian areas, outdoor gym, adventure park, a walking and jogging track and a cycling track;
- to accommodate the increasing demand for facilities being made by Maltese sporting organisations;
- to create a sports village of an international standards to better exploit the economic potential of sports tourism through the hosting of competitions, training camps & sports related conferences;
- to enhance the performance of local athletes through the provision of international standard facilities and a sport science centre;
- to set up a sports college geared towards both the academic and sporting needs of promising athletes.

White Rocks Holding Company Limited (WRHCL) has set up a project team made up of Faulknerbrowns Architects, Gleeds,

PMP Genesis, Mott MacDonalds, Cushman & Wakefield and Land Use Consultants, collectively experts in sports design, sports management, development and construction. White Rocks Holding Company Limited and Resolution Property plc will fully finance the construction, operation and maintenance of the project.

## 2010 RIBA AWARDS

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) recently announced the winners of the 2010 RIBA Awards. RIBA Awards for architectural excellence were presented to 93 buildings in the UK and 9 buildings in the rest of the EU. The award-winning buildings range from a small circular loo for bus drivers in London to the Neues Museum in Berlin, from a zero-carbon house to the energy substation for the 2012 Olympics. The high arts have done well with galleries, museums, theatres and auditoriums winning many awards (including the Ashmolean Museum, Nottingham Contemporary and Aldeburgh Music Campus). Education buildings have also flourished with 17 of the 93 UK awards going to schools and universities. Another feature of the RIBA Awards this year are public spaces - pavilions, monuments, Liverpool Pierhead and the Infinity Bridge in Teesdale have all picked up an award.

Amongst the architects there are some multiple winners, with the highest number of RIBA Awards going to Rick Mather Architects (4 awards). Many of the UK's prominent architects are awarded this year for their work outside of the UK with Zaha Hadid, David Chipperfield, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners





and Tony Fretton all winning an RIBA Award for buildings in the EU. First-time winners include Carmody Groarke who have won two RIBA Awards this year. RIBA President Ruth Reed said about the 2010 RIBA Award winners: "The RIBA Awards reflect not only the state of British architecture but also that of its economy. In the midst of the deepest recession in the 45 year history of the RIBA Awards, this year's awards demonstrate that although times might be hard for architects, there are still great buildings being built throughout the country and overseas. The RIBA Awards always give an opportunity for gem-like small projects and less established practices to shine through and this year is no exception. Far from being a size prize, the RIBA Awards are for buildings that offer value to people's lives. I am looking forward to seeing an exciting RIBA Stirling Prize shortlist." More information can be obtained from [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com).

### DIN I-ART HELWA AWARDS

Din I-Art Helwa has announced the launch of its 2010 Award for Architectural Heritage as well as the Built and Natural Heritage Journalism Award Scheme for journalistic work that has made an outstanding and significant contribution to the better appreciation of the built and natural environment of the Maltese Islands within the last year.

"The Award for Architectural Heritage has been designed to encourage better architecture by rewarding any building project which made an outstanding and significant contribution to architectural excellence in a Maltese context and that the project sends a clear message

that old buildings can be successfully restored and converted to modern use whilst retaining their character and intrinsic value. Eligible projects include the restoration or conservation of buildings, the adoption of buildings to new uses, building additions or alterations, or new building projects in conservation areas. The projects can relate either to a single building, a complex of buildings, or historic urban environment or townscape. The project will be judged on the quality of the work executed, its historic, cultural, educational and social relevance, the preliminary research conducted and the aesthetic and visual merit. The project may be on a scale ranging from small to large, and should display a standard of work which would be outstanding in a Maltese context.

The Din I-Art Helwa Award for Architectural Heritage has now established itself as a worthy and prestigious annual event which brings well-merited recognition not only to the architects rewarded, but also to their parent firms and the architectural profession more widely." In a statement, Din I-Art Helwa stated that "in the course of the last year there has been a most encouraging increase in conservation and restoration of old buildings and monuments in Malta - both in the private and the public sector. The heritage organisation therefore feels that these greatly deserve encouragement and public recognition."



This year the Din I-Art Helwa award scheme for Built and Natural Heritage Journalism will also be accepting entries from television and radio as well as from on-line publications. This scheme consists of two awards: the first will deal with written articles or television or radio broadcasts regarding Malta and Gozo's built environment including historic buildings, monuments, archaeological sites and the vernacular character of the towns and villages. The second award will be for written articles or television or radio broadcasts dealing with the natural heritage covering the appreciation of Malta's natural environment and landscapes, including its open spaces, maritime heritage, flora and fauna and natural resources.

Journalistic entries for the Built Heritage Award may refer to a single building, a complex of buildings or a historic urban environment or townscape. Entries for the

Natural Heritage Award may refer to any aspect of Malta's natural environment and landscapes.

The Awards are open to all journalists working in the written or broadcasting media in Malta and Gozo. To be eligible for inclusion the work or series of works or productions must have been published or aired in Malta within the twelve months period up to 31 August 2010. Submissions are received by Din I-Art Helwa up to 30 September 2010 and the announcement of the winners will be made in November. The Din I-Art Helwa Built and Natural Journalism Award Scheme is organised with the support of the Malta Institute of Journalists.

### AIA GOLD MEDAL

Peter Bohlin has been named the 66th recipient of the AIA Gold Medal by the American Institute of Architects, an award that has previously gone to such prominent architects as I.M. Pei, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Santiago Calatrava. Unlike many of his predecessors, Bohlin's body of work does not fit into any single style or other simplistic characterisation. In fact, his supporters praise him not only for his sensitivity to site, materials, and clients' needs, but for avoiding stylistic disputes. In Bohlin's low-key and characteristically non-confrontational manner, he downplays the issue by describing himself as a soft modernist. Bohlin cofounded the firm Bohlin Cywinski Jackson (BCJ) in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1965. Educated at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and then Cranbrook Academy, he returned to Wilkes-Barre, the place of his upbringing, to practice. His father had been president of the pencil manufacturer Eberhard Faber — how appropriate for an architect (and Bohlin still draws using colored pencils)! BCJ has since grown to 200 architects lead by 12 principals. Four additional offices are located in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Seattle, and none of the five is designated the headquarters. In nominating Bohlin for the Gold Medal, Andrew L. Metter, FAIA, of Epstein/ Metter Studio praised him as an "original American architect" who is "not married to any one style."

### Letters to the Editor

Letters from our readers to be considered for publication are most welcome. Letters for inclusion in Issue 54 are to reach us by the 25th September 2010. Please write to: The Editor, "the Architect", Kamra tal-Periti, The Professional Centre, Sliema Road, Gzira GZR 1633 or send an email to [thearchitect@ktpmalta.com](mailto:thearchitect@ktpmalta.com). All contributions will be acknowledged.



### SUSTAINABILITY SNAPS

Keeping in touch with the jargon and what's going on

Water shortage and droughts are a growing problem in many parts of Europe. Climate change and increasing water demand, if not properly addressed, will make matters worse. The Environment Council on 11 June urged all member states at risk to set up water scarcity and drought management plans. It called for stepping up water efficiency in all sectors. Fresh water should no longer be taken for granted. Ministers supported the further development of the European drought observatory, now at the prototype phase. It will be tasked with forecasting, assessing and monitoring droughts and promoting the exchange of best practices. They also stressed the need to promote water saving and water demand management through a suitable mix of tools. These include water pricing, smarter irrigation, water efficiency in buildings, agriculture, industry and tourism, as well as awareness campaigns. Where preventive measures prove insufficient, it may be necessary to resort to additional water supply infrastructures, such as desalination and rain water harvesting. Investment in the development of new sustainable technologies to supply clean water should be encouraged. Climate change is likely to magnify regional differences. More frequent and more severe droughts can be expected, particularly in southern Europe. Some member states have begun to suffer permanent scarcity across the whole country. As many rivers and lakes in the EU cross borders, risks and challenges are shared and solutions need to be coordinated.

Source: MEUSAC



# Architecture and Sustainability – ACE Policy

**In a recent publication entitled “Architecture and Sustainability,” the Architects’ Council of Europe (ACE) declared its position on the relationship between Architecture and Sustainability. In the previous issue of “the Architect” the full text of the Declaration was reproduced. What follows is a synopsis of the ACE Policy on Architecture and Sustainability (freely copied from the original text).**

## Introduction and Background

The building industry has a key role to play in any agenda for sustainable development for the 21st century. The built environment represents a substantial and relatively stable environmental resource. Most buildings survive for several decades, and many survive for centuries. As the community’s principal physical asset, getting good value requires that the building’s full life cycle be considered, avoiding short-sighted attempts to merely minimise initial cost. A strategy on sustainable development will seek to prolong the life of existing structures, and indeed to prolong the utilisation of the materials with which they were originally constructed. Adaptation is usually preferable to new building, and upgrading of performance usually represents an efficient deployment of resources.

Buildings impact on the environment at several levels. It is important to consider the full life-cycle dimension. A sustainability ethos in building will require the consideration of environmental implications associated with design, construction and operation of buildings. The appropriate use of local construction materials will be indicated as first choice. The logic at the macro level lies in the conservation of fossil fuels and the avoidance of associated pollution and global warming. At the local level, favouring indigenous production helps to sustain livelihoods, crafts and trades. Generally speaking, the use of local resources also contributes to a regional expression of buildings, thus fostering a sense of place in the built environment.

Energy is a key part of the sustainability issue. Buildings account for close to half of all energy consumption in the EU. Considerable opportunities exist to improve the energy performance of European buildings. Many of the opportunities will not be exploited (especially in existing buildings) if primitive market forces alone are relied upon to determine the optimal investment in energy saving and the full costs of external impacts remain unstated.

Pressures for change include security of supply, fuel prices, environmental considerations and consumer demands. This is resulting in more stringent and more extensive building performance standards, among other responses designed to ensure that the EU will meet international treaty obligations to limit greenhouse gas emissions and for other reasons of public policy.

The design and construction of a building which takes optimal advantage of its environment need not impose any significant additional capital cost, and although it may require somewhat increased resources to design compared to more highly engineered ‘conventional’ buildings it should be significantly cheaper to operate.

The present environmental and energy situation and the need for sustainable urban development demands an approach to planning and architecture that addresses both the city and the individual building as complex interactive systems which have symbiotic relationships with their wider surroundings, and which utilises methods such as ecological footprinting to make explicit the relationships between urban resource use and the available supporting productive land.

## The Context for European Architects

For several years the ACE has been actively involved in a process of analysis and action at the European level that, among other things, has been aimed at promoting architecture as an important part of European citizens’ quality of life, through diverse economic, social and cultural elements. Another purpose of these actions has been to reassert the central role of architects in helping to ensure sustainable, high-quality construction that satisfies the aspirations and needs of clients while preserving the public interest. Among the key messages of the ACE policy book ‘Architecture and the Quality of Life’ is: The sustainability of public and private buildings and the security of public spaces strongly influence the well being of citizens and thus the social structure of society. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all aspects of sustainability – socio-economic, cultural and environmental – are taken into account in the development of the living environment.

## The European Context

In its Green Paper of 2006, “A European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy” the European Commission proposed

a common European energy policy to enable Europe to face the energy supply challenges of the future and the effects these will have on growth and the environment. The Commission asked the Member States to do everything in their power to implement a European energy policy built on three core objectives:

- sustainability - to actively combat climate change by promoting renewable energy sources and energy efficiency;
- competitiveness - to improve the efficiency of the European energy grid by creating a truly competitive internal energy market;
- security of supply - to better coordinate the EU’s supply of and demand for energy within an international context.

The first is of special relevance to architects and the construction sector.

## The adopted package of the European Union is based on three central pillars:

**1. A true Internal Energy Market:** The aim is to give real choice to EU energy users, whether citizens or businesses, and to trigger the huge investments needed in energy. The EC argues that the single market is good not just for competitiveness, but also for sustainability and security.

**2. Accelerating the shift to low carbon energy:** The Package proposes the maintenance of the EU’s position as a world leader in renewable energy, by setting a binding target whereby 20% of its overall energy mix will be sourced from renewable energy by 2020. This will require a massive growth in all three renewable energy sectors: electricity, biofuels and heating and cooling. This renewables target will be supplemented by a minimum target for biofuels of 10%. Research is also crucial to lower the cost of clean energy and to put EU industry at the forefront of the rapidly growing low carbon technology sector. To meet these objectives, the Commission proposed, and Council adopted, a strategic European Energy Technology Plan. The European Union will also increase by at least 50% its annual spending on energy research for the period 2007-2013.

**3. Energy efficiency:** The Commission reiterated the objective of saving 20% of total primary energy consumption by 2020. If successful, this would mean that by 2020 the EU would use approximately 13% less energy than today, saving 100 billion euro and around 780 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year. The Commission

also proposed a new international agreement on energy efficiency. Since the adoption of these binding targets, progress has been made by the re-casting or revision of several key EU Directives on the energy performance of buildings, on the eco-labelling of energy-related products and on the ecodesign of energy using products. Furthermore, the European Economic Recovery Plan, adopted in December 2008, foresees substantial investment in the construction sector and specifically in the energy efficiency upgrading of existing buildings. In this context all the actors from the construction sector have come together to establish, with the European Commission, a European Initiative in the form of a Public-Private Partnership that will steer investment in research and development in the field of energy efficiency of buildings.

## Architect’s Council of Europe

The ACE committed itself, in terms of that which concerns it directly, as well as in conjunction with other interested organisations, to an active promotion of the principles of sustainable development and to the formulation of proposals for concrete action, and to contribute to the implementation of agreed proposals. Spheres which will be addressed by such actions will include

- At the institutional level European Commission, the European Parliament and Member States (joint actions at the European level), including through the Council
- At the level of the building sector
- (ECF) European Construction Forum
- (ECCREDI) European Council for Construction Research, Development and Innovation
- (ECTP) European Construction Technology Platform
- (E2B-EI) Energy Efficient Buildings – European Initiative
- Cooperation with related professional organisations (town planners, engineers...)
- At the level of the Member Organisations Member architects and students.

Specific early measures will include the inclusion of energy and environmental performance information as an assessment criterion in all architectural competitions and competitive selection processes, the encouragement of similar information to accompany all published architectural reviews, and a recommendation that such information form an additional criterion in selection processes for public architectural awards.

# SACES updates

As the summer months drag on, SACES is gearing up for a number of activities culminating in the October workshop which will open the next academic year.

Following elections in April, the new SACES board consists of David Camilleri as President, Cheryl Ann Bonello as Vice President, Francesca Chircop as Secretary General and Sarah Jane Bilocca as the new Treasurer. Emma Warrington is the new Activities Coordinator, Nicolo Bencini is the Public Relations Officer and first years Kurt Vella and Kim Cassar Toreggiani are KPS Representative and Cultural Activities Officer respectively. It was most encouraging to see a great deal of interest by the first year students, several more of which contested in the election, and whose support

we know we can rely on over the coming year. Following the gradual increase in activities over the past few years, where SACES has veered its focus away from the October workshop and tried to engage students more actively through a series of smaller events spread throughout the year, we've certainly got our hands full ensuring that the year's upcoming events will all go off without a hitch!

An extension of last year's debate and lecture series will certainly help to reinforce SACES' cultural and educational policy which seeks to enrich academic life at the faculty while bridging the distance between students at the faculty and professionals, periti or otherwise, in the field. Anybody willing to offer their assistance in this regard is kindly asked to contact SACES at [saces@um.edu.mt](mailto:saces@um.edu.mt) with suggestions for future lectures and debates, as well as expressions of interest in leading or participating in discussions.

The now well established Easter workshop will hopefully continue to grow in its scope and impact. The last edition produced proposals for projects which are being contin-

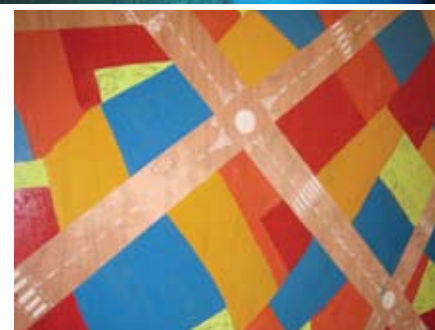


Images from the last SACES workshop

ued throughout the summer months with the aim of having construction plans ready and the projects built at the university. Relations with KSU have improved greatly over the past year and SACES is striving to remain active at inter-faculty level. It is with great pleasure that we announce that for the second year in a row, an architecture student is sitting on the KSU board, and while fifth year Samaria Bezzina leaves her post as KSU's culture and entertainment co-ordinator, Francesca Scicluna, previously a member of the SACES board has now settled into her role as the KSU international officer.

The relationship between architecture students and the general public has seen an increase through the continuation of the Designs exhibition and by always doing our best to exhibit and promote student work to the best of our ability. It is also heartening to see that for the second year in a row the faculty has, independently of SACES, exhibited a number of student projects and that the number of exhibitions has increased over the previous year.

Furthermore, summer activities such as the



sandsculptures event and a host of social events continue to bring students at other faculties and those at the Faculty for the Built Environment together for a good time. Anybody wishing to be kept informed about upcoming events is more than welcome to join the SACES Facebook group, membership of which is not restricted to students at the faculty.

Finally, as it is always our aim to involve as many students as possible in the events which we hold, we would like to encourage any students wishing to participate in the organisation of any events, or who would like to suggest new events, to contact us on [saces@um.edu.mt](mailto:saces@um.edu.mt). In the meantime, we would like to wish everybody a well deserved restful summer!



# NOTHING ... OR

MAKING NEW ACQUAINTANCES IS ALWAYS AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE, MORE SO WHEN THE PERSON ONE MEETS IS ONE WHO SPEAKS PASSIONATELY ABOUT THEIR WORK, THEIR LIFE AND THEIR OUTLOOK ON SOCIETY AND WHERE THE WORLD IS HEADING! SIMONE VELLA LENICKER MET WITH ITALIAN ARCHITECT ENZO EUSEBI, WHO WAS IN MALTA PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THIS FIRST LOCAL PROJECT.

I met Enzo Eusebi a couple of months ago - immediately he came across as one of those people with whom you could chat for hours on end, on anything from food to architecture to the meaning of life! His relationship with Malta began when the Berloni family introduced the Italian architect to the Vassallo Cesareo family, who then commissioned him to work on the design of the new Domestica showroom in Msida, which aims to celebrate the traditional craft of carpentry while at the same time looking to the future with new materials, trends and technology.

Working with a team of Maltese periti, namely Christian Spiteri, Pierre Farrugia and Mark Camilleri, together with an interior design team led by Carlo Schembri, Eusebi proposed the architectural theme for this 3,000sqm showroom which incorporates extensive display areas, a show apartment and parking facilities. A glass structure which is based on the concept of integrating indoor and outdoor living provides the perimeter for the new showroom, which is home to a number of exclusive brands. The design concept revolves around accommodating and celebrating its

high quality contents, while at the same time speaking out as an architectural work in its own right.

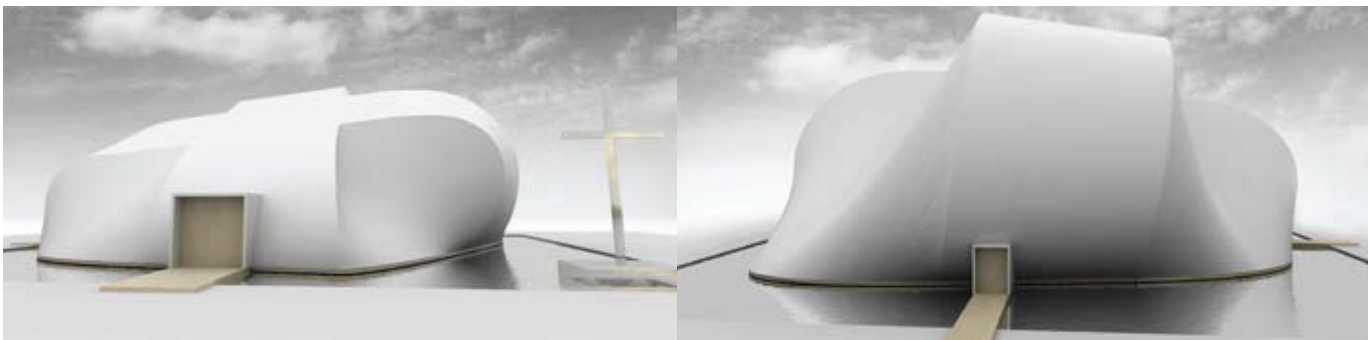
Eusebi may be a new name to Malta, but he is certainly not a new name on the international scene. In 2000, he founded 'Nothing studio', an architectural studio which is engaged in exploring different fields of design including information design, graphic design, lighting, furniture design, interiors, architecture and urban design. With offices in Italy and China, Eusebi spends most of his time commuting between the two, often working in transit, like a bird which never stops for a rest. In fact, the name of the studio is inspired from just that - the idea of flying through, not touching anything, but stopping only to insert a building in the landscape which nature eventually takes over and embodies as part of the landscape. Oddly, he muses, he must have flown over Malta hundreds of times, never stopping, until the Domestica commission landed him here. One of his more recent projects is the 'zero impact' structure for the Chiesa della Resurrezione in L'Aquila, Italy. Designed in homage to the 307 people who perished in



the quake of the 6 April 2009, this structure is made of fibreglass, reminiscent of the temporary structures that emerged as part of the relief efforts after the quake. Commissioned by the Ecclesial and Local Authorities of L'Aquila, this church is conceived as a memorial to the lost members of the community. It also has

the unenviable role of acting as a catalyst for the regeneration of the disaster stricken region, and of serving as an icon for the social, economic and spiritual rebirth of the community. Extensive research was carried out into the availability and properties of the materials proposed to be used in this building, together with the integration of passive environmental design aspects. The church is also conceived as a structure that can be replicated in other communities requiring relief following similar disasters.

One of his most precious furniture design ventures is the 'NOT for food' concept he created for the kitchen manufacturer Berloni. 'NOT for food' is designed to be placed in the centre of a large open space and aims to satisfy the needs of those who want a 24-hour piece of furniture, serving the daily functions that the



The 'zero impact' Chiesa della Resurrezione

# R SOMETHING?



The new Domestica showroom in Msida



Kunlun Towers exterior view



San Benedetto del Tronto (Ascoli Piceno) - extension of school

space is intended to be used for. It is really a domestic 'piazza', where food and its rituals attract the users, while at the same time acting as a living area, dining area, and workspace. The piece incorporates what one would expect to find in a kitchen (sink, cooking surface, etc) together with other commodities such as I-pod port, LCD screen, computer ports, and internet connection that could allow one, for example, to research recipes online while cooking. The piece weighs less than 100kg, providing a total of 35sqm of surface area.

Another of his more recent projects is the extension to a school in San Benedetto del Tronto (Ascoli Piceno) in Italy. Located on the coast, it consists of four volumes that emerge from the original structure, and which frame

the sea, creating a link between the urban fabric and open marine space. Constructed mainly in lightweight materials, the organic forms deliberately confuse the user, allowing one to explore the interior spaces fluidly and without inhibition. This project was selected to participate in the first "Festival dell'Architettura di Parma" in 2004, and also received a mention in the International Section of the Barbara Cappochin Prize.

The Kunlun Towers in Beijing, China, is probably his largest project to date. I asked him about the main differences he sees in designing for a client in Italy and for one in China. "Of course the cultures are different", he says. In the design of the award winning Kunlun Towers, an added dimension to the proj-



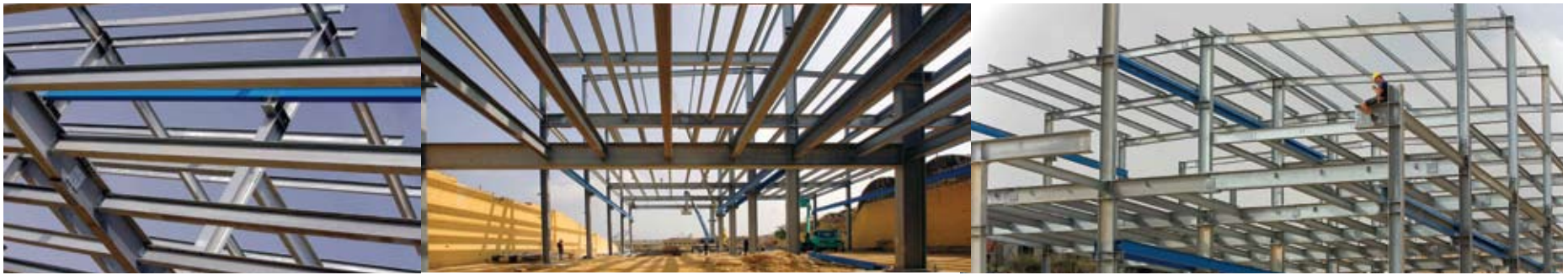
Inside the Kunlun Towers

ect was the creation of new urban spaces, and the safeguarding of the landscape and streetscape. "In China it is difficult to have a human scale - everything is larger, and there is more quantity." The challenge remains the creation of internal spaces which allow people to interact within - "Our first mission (as architects) is to confront social issues with sensitivity." Freely inspired from the Kunlun mountain range, sacred in China, the two towers reach a height of 115m, rising above a four-storey

plinth clad in stone and glass which imitates a rocky mountain face.

On being an architect, Eusebi has no hesitations: "Architecture allows me to create a container to explain what is beautiful. Architecture allows me to exchange ideas with the people I meet and work with. It also allows me to get to know about contemporary society."

For further information on Enzo Eusebi and Nothing studio visit [www.nothing.it](http://www.nothing.it).



DIS Group factory in Kordin

# STEEL STRUCTURES

## – increasing design flexibility

### DIS GROUP TALKS ABOUT ITS EXPERIENCE OVER THE YEARS

The use of steel as a construction material has seen phenomenal growth in the last few years. Although steel buildings have typically been used in the commercial and industrial sectors for a long time, they are increasingly gracing the skylines of countries worldwide. Modern technologies have also influenced the growth of the steel building systems industry since they can be used for better and more flexible design and fabrication. It offers quality, cost and energy efficiency, as well as speed of erection for both residential and commercial buildings.

The new Intercontinental Tripoli is set to open its doors later on this year. The hotel was designed by InterContinental Hotels Group International's architects who put forward the design for a breath-taking tower that included a large scale open plan area on both the ground and first floor. In order to cater for the large clear span required, a steel structure for the two floors was an obvious choice.

Following an international tender, DIS Group was brought on board to supply and erect the steel structure. With over 50 years experience in metal works with their original brand Dolphin Forge, ten of which included experience in large scale heavy duty metal works and steel construction, the DIS team kicked off works on the project towards the end of 2009. Together with their engineers, DIS worked on the architects' plans and put forward the technical drawings and specifications. Within two months the steel was sourced and delivered to the site, following which a team of about 20 people began works on erecting the massive steel structure.

With over 650 tonnes of steel supplied and more than 4,000 metres of steel decking, it took over 65 trucks to transport the material from the port of Misurata to the construction site in Tripoli. By April this year the enormous steel frame was in place, complete with fire protection coatings.



Intercontinental Tripoli

Steel structures offer many advantages. They are usually constructed much faster than buildings using other materials and the construction costs are usually lower compared to traditional building methods. They are lighter in weight; they are easier to maintain; and they carry a reduced risk of fire.

As in the case of the Tripoli hotel one of the most important benefits of steel is the increased design flexibility it offers as clear large spans, cantilevers, skewed walls, sloping surfaces, curved framing, atria, floor openings, special aesthetic features, and unusual loadings are all easily and economically accommodated. Moreover, steel columns are smaller than concrete columns, which results in more useable space and less visual obstructions. Steel also allows for simple modifications and renovation so if additional loads are added to the structure some time in the future, steel can be easily reinforced to handle the weight. Likewise, new floor openings for elevators, stairwells and architectural or mechanical requirements can be easily accommodated.

Steel is 66% recyclable, which makes it an especially cost-effective and environmentally sound alternative to any other construction material. Strength is a major plus for steel. Steel structures can withstand unfavourable weather conditions such as hurricanes, high winds, and even earthquakes.

Situated on the waterfront near Green Square



in the heart of Tripoli, the 351 room InterContinental Tripoli will offer attractive views across the city and the waterfront. With its prime location close to Tripoli's central business district, the property will appeal especially to those visiting the city on business.

Intercontinental is the first overseas steel construction project DIS

have successfully completed in Libya. Locally, one of their largest projects has been their new state of the art factory in Kordin. The factory, which was constructed entirely of steel, opened its doors in 2009. The 1,650 square metre building was completed in a year, the erection of the entire steel structure taking only two months. 220 tonnes of steel were used.

The company started off producing brass mascots for ships at its Brass Foundry at the turn of the twentieth century. Since then, metal and steel fabrication have been the main pillars of DIS Group's business and over the years, the Group have established a brand and household name across Malta for the quality of work it has provided its customers with products ranging from ornate wrought iron works, gates, railings and spiral staircases, as well as wood and aluminium works for both domestic and industrial requirements.

Over the last 10 years, the DIS Group has undertaken a number of overseas projects in metal works and finishings, including projects in Germany as well as Palm City in Libya.

# DENNIS SHARP

## APPRECIATION

**DENNIS SHARP, INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED AUTHOR, PEDAGOGUE, CRITIC AND ARCHITECT RECENTLY PASSED AWAY AT THE AGE OF 76. RICHARD ENGLAND WHO SHARED A CLOSE FRIENDSHIP AND LONG ASSOCIATION WITH PROF. SHARP PAYS TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY.**

The death of Dennis Sharp on 06 May 2010 has robbed the architectural world of one of the most eminent and prolific authors, critics and commentators of the 20th century architectural scene. Born in 1933 into a family of building contractors, architects and surveyors, he initiated his architectural studies at the AA in London and later at the University of Liverpool under Dr. Quentin Hughes. Dennis Sharp's writing was particularly impressive, not only for the scholarly approach he gave to his material, but also for the clear and erudite language with which he expressed his ideas in the many areas of his expertise. In contrast to much of contemporary journalistic and woolly archispeak writings, his contributions stood out for their lucid, articulate and clear vocabulary, constantly producing intelligible, coherent and comprehensible texts. Always, he approached his tasks with total dedication and commitment and his cultural baggage on the 20th century architectural scenario remains unsurpassed.

His rich and vast bibliography demonstrates his scholarly command of the subject. His many books include *Modern Architecture and Expressionism* (1966), *A visual history of 20th century architecture* (1972, 1991, 2002); a sort of illustrated Bible of the new testament of architecture, and in conjunction with Sally Rendel, a comprehensive survey of the work of Connell, Ward and Lucas (2008), the *Modernist British practice of the 1930s*, a period on which, without doubt, he was the leading authority. Apart from other books such as *The Picture Place* (1967), *Sources of Modern Architecture* (1981) and *The Bauhaus* (1993), he also produced publications on the work of Manfredo Nicoletti, Kisho Kurokawa and Santiago Calatrava.

With close to 50 published books to his credit, his bibliography also includes innumerable contributions to international and UK publications. The 1968-1982 AA Quarterly Journals which he founded and edited remain to this day an outstanding reference series with valid contributions from many architectural luminaries of the period. As executive edi-

tor of fifteen issues of *World Architecture*, *The International Academy of Architecture Journal*, between 1990-1992, he introduced to an international audience the work of many outstanding practitioners such as Clorindo Testa, Giancarlo de Carlo, Gustav Peichl, Reima Pietila and others. For his qualitative writing, he enjoyed a world-wide reputation which earned him many prizes including the Silver Medal of the French Academie d'Architecture and the UIA Jean Tschumi Award. One must also highlight his cogent contributions to CICA (The International Committee of Architectural Critics) and DoCoMoMo, and his valued input as Vice President to RIBA (1991-1993) and the AA (2007-2009).

Sharp was also an outstanding lecturer. His commanding physical presence combined with the knowledge of his subjects made him a particularly impressive and imposing speaker. A never tiring and over-enthusiastic workaholic, he leaves behind him a unique testament of architectural writings. Students and future architectural historians will surely benefit from his legacy and, for this, his place in the history of architectural literature is secure. He was without doubt, one of the leading evangelists of architecture of the 20th century.

Dennis Sharp was also a successful practicing architect who, through his firm DSA produced a number of notable buildings. He was particularly proud of the conservation work carried out on the London Chandos House by Robert Adam and the restoration of a number of works by one of his favourite Modernist practices Connell, Ward and Lucas. DSA were also involved in many other projects, including the renovation of the listed buildings at Ascot in collaboration with HOK Sport.

My own first encounter with Dennis took place in Malta in 1968 through our mutual friend Quentin Hughes, who at the time was running the architectural school at the University of Malta. Dennis had been invited as a visiting lecturer and it was then that I was first introduced to him. Soon, he became not only an invaluable mentor, but also a close and cherished friend. As a historian, critic, teacher

and architect, and most of all as a friend, I am proud to have had the privilege of sharing precious time with him. Always, I emerged from our meetings, intellectually enriched and enlightened.

One of the fondest memories which I particularly cherish was the time we spent together as visiting tutors for the IAA at the splendid Santo Kiriko Monastery in Plovdiv, Bulgaria in 1991. It was then that we were both elected full time Professors of the Academy. Dennis' scholarly cognizance and pedagogical expertise was highly appreciated by all who attended his lectures and seminars. It was during this period that I discovered his passion for Jazz and the old 78 recordings of that genre's great exponents. Often we spent hours discussing our different musical tastes, mine being a penchant for the operatic tenor voice on recordings of the same era.

Among other personal recollections, particularly gratifying, remain the many literary and critical articles he devoted to my work. Of specific significance is his *BookART publication Richard England Architect as Artist* (2007). The collaboration and interchange during the working period on that book with him and graphic designer Malcolm Frost were among the most pleasant encounters of my whole architectural career.

Also much valued was the Foreword he contributed to the Charles Knevitt Monograph on my work *Connections* (1984) and later that same year his opening of my Exhibition at the Building Centre in London. I also appreciated his presence as a speaker at the 100 at 70 Celebratory Album and Richard England Architect as Artist local book launch in 2007. In his Foreword to the Quentin Hughes – Conrad Thake Malta War & Peace (2005) publication he wrote "my own interest in the (Maltese) islands was later reinforced by a long and fruitful association with the architect Richard England..." In my case, I shall always remain grateful for not only what Dennis, as an ever flowing font of knowledge, has contributed to the world of architectural literature, but more so for over four decades of association and friendship. I feel it is appropriate to express my gratitude to him for the information and wisdom he has passed on to me, not only through his extensive publications, but more so during our many personal encounters. I therefore take this opportunity to thank you Dennis for your didactic influence, encouragement, guidance and advice ... memories I shall long treasure.



I last saw Dennis in hospital only two days before his demise ... a touching and difficult occasion, yet immensely satisfying and rewarding. Even then, although weak, he was still enthusiastically talking about future publications, typical of his fervour and enthusiasm.

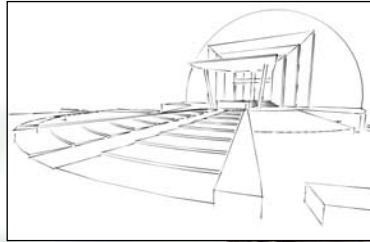
To Yasmin Shariff, his wife and professional partner, and his family, I offer my sincere condolences. As a final goodbye Dennis, I pay tribute to your unique talents as author and pedagogue and above all thank you for the privilege of your friendship.

### Editor's Note:

*The Council of the Kamra tal-Periti joins Richard England in paying tribute to Dennis Sharp and in extending its condolences to his family and friends. Dennis's love for Malta is clear in a letter he wrote to the Council after joining in the Time for Architecture events of 2005: "It was great to be back in Malta! My trip last October was soon enhanced by a quick jaunt by helicopter to Gozo in the early evening light and then back in total blackness – I sat on the wrong side of the helicopter! But what a glorious experience confirming my view that there is more architecture per square metre in Malta than anywhere except Rome!" Sharp was instrumental in the setting of the local Docomomo (International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement) section in Malta, which unfortunately seems to have met its own demise. Sharp's passing away should serve as an impetus to revive the organisation again and to achieve its aims of acting as a watchdog for important modern movement buildings, exchanging ideas relating to conservation technology, history and education, fostering interest in the ideas and heritage of the modern movement and in eliciting responsibility towards this recent architectural inheritance.*

# Architecture

IN PREPARATION FOR THE VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI TO MALTA, CARLO SCHEMBRI WAS APPOINTED ART DIRECTOR FOR THE EVENT. FOR THE STAGE THAT WOULD HOST THE MASS TO BE CELEBRATED AT THE GRANARIES IN FLORIANA, PERIT JOSEPH BONDIN, DIRECTOR OF JBARCHITECTS, WAS APPROACHED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARCHBISHOP'S CURIA TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF PROJECT ARCHITECT. THE DESIGN OF THE STAGE AT FLORIANA WAS THEN DEVELOPED THROUGH COLLABORATION BETWEEN CARLO SCHEMBRI AND THE ARCHITECTS AND DRAUGHTSMEN AT JBARCHITECTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DESIGN OF THE STAGE AT VISET, VALLETTA WATERFRONT, WAS DEVELOPED BY PERIT DANIEL DARMANIN, PERIT HERMAN CALLEJA AND ENG. JEREMY SPITERI, ONCE AGAIN IN COLLABORATION WITH ART DIRECTOR CARLO SCHEMBRI. THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT, PROGRESS MEETINGS WERE HELD ON A REGULAR BASIS, BOTH BETWEEN THE THREE DESIGN TEAMS AS WELL AS WITH THE CONTRACTORS INVOLVED. HERE 'THE ARCHITECT' SPEAKS TO BOTH TEAMS INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN, TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES IN DESIGNING FOR THE POPE.



The stand at the Granaries in Floriana. Inset: concept sketch.

## Stage at the Granaries, Floriana

### What was your brief? Did the client have any specific requirements? How deep was the client's involvement?

Initially what we were provided with was a basic scheme of how the stage should be laid out and minimum areas required so as to function properly. Subsequently we had to formulate our own brief. After the basic concept was developed, this was presented to the client and consequently the client had to seek approval from the Vatican. Throughout the design process a number of meetings were held in which the client would be briefed on developments. Once the design was finalised and prior to commencing construction, we also had a meeting with representatives from the Vatican who came over to ensure that everything was up to standard, with the main focus being functionality, safety of His Holiness and symbolism.

### What inspired you and what drove the concept of the design?

There were a number of factors which inspired us, the main one was probably that of trying to strike a balance between keeping things simple in order to have everyone's attention focused on His Holiness the Pope whilst designing an environment which would enhance the experience of the visitors. Another important factor in the design was the use of symbolism around which many

elements of the design were focused. Vision was also another factor which greatly influenced the design, vision in the sense that we gave particular importance to the view which the people standing at various points on the Granaries would have of His Holiness. In fact, the shape of the stage depended greatly on the results obtained when studying various lines of view.

### What were the main components of the design proposal? What materials were used?

With the every growing awareness towards our environment we felt that it was important that when choosing the materials for the design we would use materials which were either already recycled or which could be reused after the event. We felt that this was an important factor to consider especially since the event would only last a couple of hours. With this issue in mind we chose materials such as the OSB boards as the main cladding material which is made from strands of wood, recycled cardboard for the furniture, the flowers were arranged in such a way so as to be able to sell them to separate buyers after the mass and various other considerations.

### Designing a temporary structure is very different to designing a building. What were the main challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?

An important issue to consider was that of

reversibility, this due to the fact that the structure was a temporary one but even more due to the historical importance of the site on which it was constructed. Another challenge was that of budget - the structure would only be used for a couple of hours but would host such an important event - which had to be considered throughout the development of the design. These issues were tackled by looking at the design in detail and working closely with contractors and suppliers.

### Buildings are built to last – this structure lasted only a few weeks. How did it feel to see the structure being dismantled?

Definitely strange. After all those months of hard work which we had put into the design and construction of the project so as to finally see the end result, after the mass was over it felt awkward walking away and thinking that in a couple of days time nothing will be left on site.

### Besides the opportunity to design such a structure, what other experiences do you feel you have gained from this opportunity? What did you learn from this experience?

It was definitely a great honour to be able to contribute to the success of such an important event. We have definitely also gained a lot of experience in the process - amongst other things, this opportunity has taught us a lot about the co-ordination and effort involved in the organisation of national events.

# fit for a Pope

## Stage at Valletta Waterfront

### What was your brief? Did the client have any specific requirements? How deep was the client's involvement?

Our involvement was quite strange, as originally we started off as client representative. From the beginning the KDŽ (Kummissjoni Djoċesana Żgħażaġh, the organiser of the youth event) wanted youths to be involved in the process. Perit Daniel Darmanin, a member of the KDŽ organising committee, was asked to form a team composed of two architects and an engineer, to oversee the creative aspects of the event. Carlo Schembri extended the opportunity by delegating the actual design of the stage to this team. The brief evolved and was actually put together by the team itself. This was no easy feat as apart from the requirements for the actual meeting with the Pope which included a choir and an orchestra, a number of live acts were to happen on stage before and after the meeting. To further complicate matters, space was very limited, and there were a number of security issues. We also decided to keep expenses as low as possible.

### What inspired you and what drove the concept of the design?

The design is very site specific. We also wanted the space to be as functional and work as efficiently as possible. The quay is long and narrow - we wanted to maximise space for the participants both on stage and the quay. A major

parameter was the orientation and the sun's path - we wanted to protect his Holiness from the strong sun or possible rain. However since the span was enormous we could not cover all the stage, without an expensive structure. Thus the canopy was formed. This canopy embraces the stage and shields it from the setting sun. It also prevented people looking towards the Pope from being annoyed by the sun. The concept was driven by the values of the event: dialogue, Christian celebration, a spiritual journey and inclusivity. Thus in the relationship between the various elements of the stage we tried to embody these values.

### What were the main components of the design proposal? What materials were used?

When discussing with the teams from Carlo's studio and JB Architects, we agreed that all the stages for the pope's visit should form part of the same family. The palette of recycled materials and the presence of a white cross reminiscent of the logo's cross were to be this unifying factor. The main components of the stage were the cross, the canopy, the Papal seat, the youth themselves (on the steps) and the ramp. It was decided to put the Papal Seat to the right rather than in the centre as one would expect on such occasions, as we wanted to create a balance between the Pope and the youth, symbolising the dialogue between the two. All this is embraced by the Church (canopy) but not necessarily fully within; hence the canopy



Dwarfed by a cruise liner during construction



The stand at Valletta Waterfront during the Pope's meeting with youth

only covers part of the stage. The cross is at the centre, as it is Christ who is at the centre of this whole activity rather than the Pope. Finally a ramp which made the stage fully accessible, emphasises that this is an ever ongoing journey everyone present was experiencing.

### Designing a temporary structure is very different to designing a building. What were the main challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?

Being a temporary structure, it had to be totally reversible, however challenges were pretty much the same as other projects. Perhaps our main challenge was to convince all those involved that although this was a temporary structure, everything still had to be detailed carefully, and that the design intent to be followed carefully.

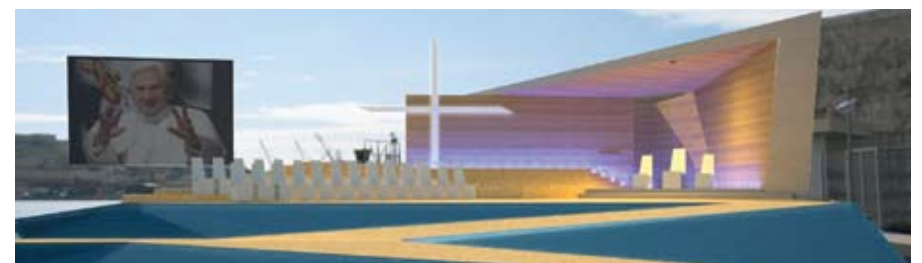
### Buildings are built to last - this structure lasted only a few weeks. How did it feel to see the structure being dismantled?

From the onset we knew this was a temporary structure. The emotion of seeing

something dissolving was surely overridden by all the positive and pleasant emotions brought about by the event and by seeing one's work serving its function as foreseen and being appreciated by its users.

### Besides the opportunity to design such a structure, what other experiences do you feel you have gained from this opportunity? What did you learn from this experience?

First of all, it was a unique experience. We would like to thank all those who had faith in us, even though we are quite young and inexperienced, and who continued to support us throughout the process. It was also an experience to deal with a number of professional people with expertise in their field. The Architect many times ends up taking on the role of bringing all aspects of the design together, and it is at this stage that the Architect has to be confident and strong enough to achieve the consensus required to push the project forward.



3D impression

# QUO VADIS PERIT?

ARCHITECTS BELIEVE THAT NOT ONLY DO THEY SIT AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, BUT THAT IF GOD EVER GETS UP, THEY TAKE THE CHAIR – KAREN MOYER

BY DR CONRAD THAKE

As architects we pride ourselves in having a direct role to play in the shaping of our environment and in the process, improving our everyday quality of life. In designing residences, schools, offices, and public open spaces, architects have a social obligation to create living and working environments that are pleasant and stimulating, accessible to all, and that embrace sustainable environmental principles. Since our student days this moral and noble mission has been inculcated in our mindset. But how realistic and relevant is this *forma mentis* in the context of a contemporary society so conditioned by mass-consumerism?

The public perception is that the local architect has developed too cosy a relationship with property developers and that many-a-time we are perceived as being professional henchmen to ruthless speculators. This has eroded and undermined public confidence in the architect as a professional with high moral values and a visionary in pioneering more sustainable forms of development. The debate rages as to whether the architect should be loyal at all costs to his client and be willing to go to extreme lengths to secure the most economically advantageous gains. I would argue that the architect also has an important social and moral obligation that can at times be in conflict with the vested interest of one's client. From my own personal experience as a former member of the Development Control Commission and an outgoing member of the Planning Appeals Board, I have at times been baffled by certain architects who have undergone an almost complete metamorphosis into legal gurus, arguing the finest technical points of law.

It is a sad reflection of our times that with a more complex and legalistic planning process, the success of a local architect is measured on the basis of his/her efficacy to facilitate an application through the myriad bureaucracy of the MEPA process with the ultimate



'The City' by Scott Facon

objective being that of securing a permit. We have in the process, suppressed our creativity and vision and became glorified technical facilitators. The measure of success of being commissioned today does not rest on one's ability as a sensitive designer or being in tune with environmental issues but rather on how capable one is in maximising the sheer scale of development and securing a permit in the shortest possible time.

When the then Planning Authority was in its infancy, architects who specialised in urban design, urban conservation and regeneration were at the forefront in formulating policies



# RIT?

and preparing development briefs for regeneration projects. There have been a few success stories with the most high profile project being the Valletta Cruise Passenger Terminal and Waterfront, where both the development brief and the actual design project were undertaken by qualified and experienced local architects. This is not always the case today. In many instances, local architects have been side-tracked. Large-scale mega projects such as Smart City and the recently launched White Rocks Sports village have had little or no input by local architects. One even notes a recent government decision to appoint an established interior designer to act as a sort of informal design guru to oversee the implementation and design of public capital projects. An interior designer might be quite capable of designing a penthouse in an exclusive upmarket residential enclave, but designing a prime historic square in our capital city requires a totally different spectrum of skills. An interior designer does not automatically become an



Image from 'We love to build' by Paul Hollingworth

urban designer/planner just because one is exalted by political patronage. The recent MEPA reform in responding to eco-populist sentiment has continued to bypass a number of issues raised by architects. The urgent need to have an independent design review board composed of qualified and specialist professionals has fallen on deaf ears. As in the past, you could

have mega-projects which satisfy all the checklists of the planning process but then is an abysmal failure in terms of design and does not contribute anything to the quality of life of the community. A deceptive impression was disseminated in the local media that architects sitting in a part-time capacity on the various commissions, were subject to conflicts of interest and hence,

deemed unsuitable to assess applications. The presence of experienced architects on the commissions is critical to the proper assessment of an application. The argument advocating that architects should not be key players is ludicrous and is analogous to having a legal case being judged by someone without any knowledge of the law. The nature of our profession has changed significantly during the last decade. As architects we spent a disproportionate period of time navigating through the planning process to the detriment of dedicating more time on the actual design and planning, and on-site supervision to ensure that the highest standards are being upheld. We are not blameless. Many-a-time as architects we have failed to challenge the powers-that-be and the policy makers responsible for a planning system riddled with over-regulation and bureaucracy. We excel in criticising the system with its intrinsic structural deficiencies but we have failed to act and offer constructive alternatives. Ultimately, we are being constrained to operate within a planning process that is progressively becoming more alien and rigid. It is a planning regime that is anathema to the values espoused by the modern architect and where issues relating to design creativity, social inclusion and environmental factors have been subordinated to mundane matters.

*Dr Conrad Thake is an architect, urban planner and architectural historian. The views expressed in this article are exclusively those of the author.*

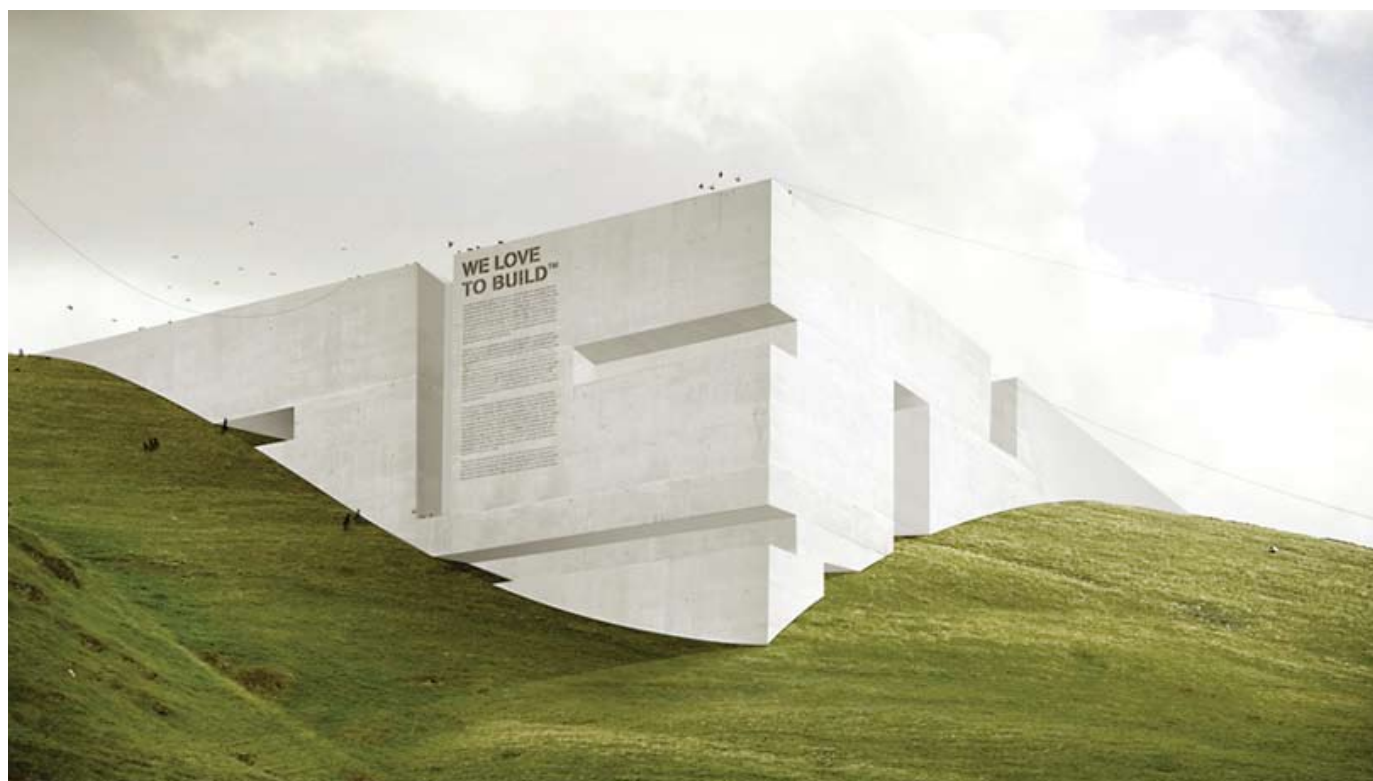


Image from 'We love to build' by Paul Hollingworth



# KTP EVENTS

## Architecture Nights 2010

The first Architecture Nights event for 2010 was held on the 14 May 2010 and addressed the theme Architecture and Sustainability. Luca Maria Francesco Fabris PhD, the guest speaker, is a journalist, architect, and assistant Professor in Architectural Technologies and Environmental Design at the Department BEST of the Politecnico di Milano, Italy, where he has been teaching since 1997. He is coordinator of the Project section of the monthly review *Costruire* and is the technical editor of the *Environscapes* series published by Maggioli Editore. He is a visiting professor at European, American and Asian Universities, including the University of Malta. His research and activity focuses on environmental sustainability and compatible technologies related to contemporary built environment and landscape. His latest book is *Tecnonatura: progetti per la rivoluzione ambientale*, published in Italy by Maggioli Editore, in the series, 'Environscapes'. During his lecture Fabris addressed the theme Architecture: from sustainability to enviroscape. He presented and carried out a critical review of various case studies of buildings and design projects proposed by different international and Italian architects and architecture studios. He discussed how sustainability and the environment can be addressed and integrated within the design process and building construction and execution. Fabris addressed the sustainability issue in design from a broad perspective, discussing how the energy efficiency analysis and the environmental performance aspects of buildings can be addressed, taking into consideration also place and the surrounding environment. This leads to a new design approach, and results in a new way of considering architecture. The presentation was followed by a discussion on sustainability, the environment and architecture with those present.

Fabris visited Malta as a visiting lecturer at the Faculty for the Built Environment of the University of Malta. During his visit, he presented lectures there on the theme Architecture and the Environment. He participated in design studio sessions with architecture stu-



Luca Fabris

dents, and discussed thesis projects with the students of the Faculty.

On the 22 May 2010, the second in this year's series of Architecture Nights featured Lebanese architect Nabil Gholam. Gholam, who started his practice in 1994 after spending several years in the practice of the Catalan architect Ricardo Bofill, studied architecture in Paris, before reading for a Masters in Urban Planning in New York. The practice is based in Beirut, with a European base in Barcelona.

Gholam's lecture, cheekily entitled *Keeping it Cool*, captivated a small but earnest audience, and dealt thematically with issues of the skin as a thermal mediator in the Mediterranean climate. Gholam introduced each of his projects through a simple wall section which detailed the critical elements of wall thickness, sun protection and internal section. He then went on to explain the development of each design solution from the formal brief to the final solution, adding richness to each of the presentations with anecdotes which displayed a deep practical sensitivity to the realities of client and context, the practical elements that give the architectural brief true meaning, and are the true challenge of many a commission. The honest practical approach to the projects was at once engaging, recognisable and amusing and the architectural results portrayed a distinguished elegance, often of an unpretentious nature, contemporary in language as well as contextual in approach, with a strong element of tactility.

Both events took place at the Aula Magna in Valletta. Special thanks go to event sponsors JMV and G4S.

## Civil Engineering Encounters

The Kamra tal-Periti (KTP) recently launched a new series of events and activities addressing themes in Civil Engineering. The KTP Mission Statement states its objective "to support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community." The Kamra addresses both architectural design and civil engineering and has been a full member of the Architects' Council of Europe for the last ten years, while two years ago it was also accepted as a full member of the European Council of Civil Engineers.

The first in the Civil Engineering Encounters series took place on the 30 April 2010 and consisted of a seminar on Seismicity and Earthquake Engineering and the L'Aquila Earthquake of April 2009. The seminar took place at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Valletta, and was officially opened by KTP President Perit Vincent Cassar, the Italian Ambassador to Malta Paolo Andrea Trabalza, and the Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Malta Dott. Bruno Busetti. A publication entitled *Seismicity and Earthquake Engineering – L'Aquila Earthquake April 2009*, edited by the event coordinator, Council Member Perit

Ruben Paul Borg, was officially launched and presented during the event.

The areas addressed in the publication and discussed in the seminar are of great importance due to the effects of catastrophic events and earthquakes on buildings and also on people. Recent catastrophic events and earthquakes in various countries have led to the destruction of property and loss of lives. In the early morning (03:32 local time) of 6 April 2009 an earthquake of magnitude MW=6.3 struck the Abruzzo Region in central Italy. The historic city of L'Aquila was devastated. The dead amount to ca. 300 and the homeless to ca. 50,000. The key-note speaker Dr. Ing. Maurizio Indirli, from the Ente Nazionale per le Nuove Tecnologie, Energia, e Sviluppo Economico Sostenibile, (ENEA) Italy with his lecture *The 6th April 2009 L'Aquila earthquake; From Ruins to Reconstruction* discussed this earthquake, its effects, the destruction that took place and the aftermath leading to the reconstruction of the devastated area. He also addressed the reconstruction of the damaged buildings, in particular the situation of the historic centre of L'Aquila and its heritage, with a particular focus on the state of important churches and monuments. In addition the damage in modern



Publication cover

reinforced concrete buildings, infrastructures and lifelines was also presented. During the seminar, Dr. Indirli also reported on the field activities following the Chile earthquake earlier this year.

Dr Pauline Galea from the Physics Department of the University of Malta, gave an overview of the Seismicity and Seismic Hazard and Risk in the Maltese Islands. Dr Galea, together with Mr. Alex Vella, also presented the results of a seismic site response survey for the Maltese Islands. They reported that the Maltese islands are generally perceived as being subject to zero, or very low risk from earthquake activity. This perception is probably not justified. A historical catalogue of felt earthquakes in the Maltese islands, dating back to 1530, shows that, although no fatalities have been officially recorded during this time as a direct consequence of earthquake effects, serious damage to buildings has occurred several times. In the catalogue time period, the islands have experienced EMS-98 intensity VII – VIII once (11 January 1693) and intensity VII, or VI-VII, five times. The northern segment of the Hyblean-Malta plateau is the source region which appears to pose the greatest threat, although large Greek events and lower magnitude Sicily Channel events have also produced damage. More recent instrumental seismic monitoring is also revealing new information about the seismic activity of the Sicily Channel Rift Zone, and mapping out the sources which appear to be more active than others. Estimates of return periods for intensity  $\geq V$  were presented, and it is shown that expected peak ground accelerations justify the implementation of, at least, minimum anti-seismic provisions. The rapid and continual increase in the local building stock on the densely-populated islands warrants the implementation of an appropriate seismic building code to be enforced.

Dr. Galea and Mr. Vella reported that earthquakes like the one which struck Loma Prieta, San Francisco on the 17 October 1989 show that areas having different types of subsurface conditions will experience different ground motion due to the local site conditions. A seismic site response survey is fundamental in such situations to predict which areas are more at risk than others. Such a study has been carried out for the first time on the Maltese islands and reported during the seminar. The results obtained and presented show clear correlation between the underlying geology and frequency/amplitude characteristics. Perit Ruben Paul Borg reported that the dam-



**Faculty of Engineering and Architecture District and Irani Oxy Engineering Complex, American University of Beirut, Lebanon by Nabil Gholam. Winner of an international limited design competition for the master plan proposal of the Engineering and Architecture District and the new Irani-OXY Engineering Complex at AUB, 37,000m<sup>2</sup> for the urban plan**

age assessment of structures after an earthquake provides important information for the understanding of the response of the structures to the seismic event. The evaluation needs to be based on criteria and methods that can guarantee an objective evaluation of the damage. The paper presented refers to the AeDES survey methodology, and the MEDEA tool for the damage assessment of structures. The AeDES level I survey of damage, emergency action and usability for ordinary buildings in the post-seismic event, is intended for the post-earthquake intervention. It has been developed for the data collection of the damage of the structure, and is used to determine the emergency action required, and the usability of the structure after the event. The scope of the damage assessment tool MEDEA, is to carry out an objective evaluation of damages, in particular with respect to masonry and reinforced concrete structures. The tool is intended to assess the damages in structures and associated mechanisms. Perit Borg also referred to the field investigation and damage assessment of structures following the L'Aquila earthquake of April 2009.

The publication of the book, and the seminar were supported by Steel Structures and the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Valletta Malta. The publication *Seismicity and Earthquake Engineering – L'Aquila Earthquake of April 2009*, ISBN 9789993208792, can be obtained from the Kamra tal Periti.

### Structure Planning and Spatial Planning

Further to the recent parliamentary debate on the merits of Structure Planning and Spatial Planning with respect to the Maltese Islands, the KTP in conjunction with the Chamber of

Planners organised a public debate on the applicability of these two planning approaches to the Maltese context and their particular suitability to the requirements of the Maltese built environment. The seminar *Structure Planning and Spatial Planning: What benefits for Malta?* took place on the 26 June 2010 at the Aula Magna in Valletta.

Keynote speaker Perit Dr Paul Gauci gave an overview of the history of planning both locally and abroad, and explained the evolution of the two planning approaches. The main problem with a structure planning approach planning is that by the time a plan is researched and prepared, it is already outdated. The present structure plan has in fact been criticised for being outdated and requiring review. Many European countries have abandoned this approach to planning in favour of spatial planning. Perit Gauci spoke on the pros and cons of the two systems, and outlined the various scenarios that could arise under each system. Parliamentary Secretary Mario De Marco, who is responsible for the ongoing MEPA reform, stated that the process had begun for forming a national policy on the environment, and continued to state that MEPA did not always react quickly enough where policies were not clear or not giving appropriate results. He however confirmed Government's intent to discuss and to be open to suggestions, in particular on the issue of the approach to be adopted.

The ensuing discussion was vibrant and stimulating. The Kamra had previously invited Perit Michael Falzon, Perit Vince Magri and planning consultant Bjorn Bonello to air their views on the contributions made earlier, together with reactions from the floor. One debate that was picked up was whether some planning decisions could be devolved

to Local Councils, though this of course entails an element of training and knowledge of the planning process and policy. Former minister Michael Falzon stated that planning is a discriminatory process, but is mostly based on common sense. Applicants expect flexibility from MEPA when it comes to their own application, but expect rigidity when it comes to adjacent proposals for development. Perit Magri argued that the only measure of good planning is the quality of space that results, and not the number of permits that are processed. He urged for more training of planning officers. Planning consultant Bjorn Bonello also discussed the issue of training and knowledge, since it is important that when one departs from policy, the outcome and its justification need to be able to be quantified.

The seminar, which turned out to be a fruitful morning for all those participating, came to a close with comments from Dr Leo Brincat, Labour Party Shadow Minister, who stated that the spatial planning approach has as its basis a comprehensive and holistic approach that also ensures greater synergy between all government entities, agencies, ministries and departments to avoid duplication of work while providing for maximum input from all stakeholders to ensure that the most sustainable way forward is adopted. He noted with satisfaction that the latest draft of the MEPA reform Act does not mention either of the two approaches, thus opening the way for a discussion to ensue on the introduction of the spatial planning approach instead of the current structure plan approach.

The event, which was well attended, was sponsored by MEPA.

# WHITE ROCKS COMPLEX

## ONE OF MALTA'S MOST IMPORTANT MODERNIST MONUMENTS LIKELY TO BE DEMOLISHED

BY PERIT EDWARD SAID

For the umpteenth time, a scintillating vision has been announced for the former White Rocks complex in Baħar iċ-Ċaġħak. This time however it looks like it will be the real thing. An exciting multitude of much needed sports facilities will be built as well as (predictably) hundreds of residential units to boot. The site is being portrayed as dilapidated and infested with all imaginable kinds of anti-social activities. And rightly so. Although it must be said that such a state of affairs could have been prevented if the owner, that is the government itself, did something about it earlier. It may be early days, however the authorities must realise that this site is, despite scepticism, of significant historical and architectural meaning besides its major environmental importance.



View of Baħar iċ-Ċaġħak Barracks in 1969 (The Architectural Review)



Today, with the limestone exteriors so well weathered, the buildings are at one with their garigue surroundings (Photograph by Nicholas Farrugia)

### Architectural and historical significance

So important are the architectural and urban design merits of this complex that it featured together with other buildings in Malta and Gozo in none other than the Architectural Review only a few years after construction. The journal had focussed on the architectural and urban planning situation in the Maltese Islands which were undergoing radical development as a result of the building boom. The articles are undoubtedly regarded as one of the most important texts (some very prophetic) in this sphere which concern our Islands. Here is what was said about White Rocks: "The Baħar iċ-Ċaħaq (sic) army married quarters (by the Austin-Smith, Salmon, Lord Partnership), built just before the islands attained independence, have a simple dignity which makes them stand out, not only among other military buildings, as a group that pays careful attention to the landscape. Especially when looked at from the seaward side, this is a project of taste and quality." (1)

Exactly 50 years later, in January of last year, the Modernist Malta exhibition was opened highlighting, under the auspices of the Prime Minister, the architectural importance of this and other building projects. The historical publication that was launched at this seminal exhibition states the following: "A more tangible contribution to local modern architecture were the former Army Married Quarters serving the British services later to be referred to as the White Rocks complex in Baħar iċ-Ċaġħaq. This was the last major project to be undertaken by the British war office on the eve of

Malta's Independence in 1964. The complex designed by British architectural consortium Austin-Smith, Salmon and Lord Partnership comprises a series of clusters of three-storey apartment blocks rising above low-rise dwelling units. The layout of the units is staggered and follows the undulating rocky terrain. Following the closure of the British military base in 1979, the complex was for a time referred to as the White Rocks complex and served as self-catering apartments for tourists. The complex was recently closed down and since the government announced plans to re-develop the area the vacant buildings have been targeted by vandals and ransacked to their bones. With the impending demolition of the complex, another noteworthy example of modern architecture will be irretrievable lost" (2)

In the opening speech of the exhibition, Prime Minister Gonzi spoke these significant words: "...architecture, like other forms of art, is a reflection of society in the social, cultural, economic and political contexts of that time". No truer words could be said about the old White Rocks buildings.

### Condition

Ransacked and pillaged, the buildings appear to stand as skeletal shells. It is clearly visible that they still maintain that structural integrity with which the British administration constructed their buildings in Malta through their high standards. Apart from patches of spalling concrete, much of the structures still stand strong. The beautifully patinated stonework of the outer skins is still pristine. Given the countless conservation projects that the government has undertaken on much older, larger, more decayed and complex edifices, restoring the fabric of the Baħar iċ-Ċaġħaq barracks should be quite petty.

### MEPA

The 'White Rocks development Brief' issued by MEPA in 1995 states: "The existing complex is considered to be a good example of 1960's development and the future owners will be encouraged to retain some, if not all of the existing buildings. This is not however a requirement and the site may be redeveloped.



The boiler chimney acting as a discreet vertical element, perhaps inspired by a village church steeple that crowns the old barrack complex (Photograph by Nicholas Farrugia)

oped. The bungalow area is considered the best example of 1960's development on site."

### What must be done?

The historical and architectural importance of the site must be acknowledged. Being the last military barracks built by the British services it holds EQUAL importance to for instance Fort Tigne' being the last fortification built by the Knights of St. John. The sensitive massing introduced by the architects and lauded by AR together with the emphasis on discreet low-key landscaping is historically one of the first of its kind in Malta.

Government/ MEPA must ensure that these buildings and their context are preserved and if necessary the new project integrated around them, NOT vice-versa. Keeping one of the buildings, facades, etc is completely non-sensical as the serial regimentation of the rows and blocks positioned along the slope, now enhanced by mature Aleppo pines, is an entire composition not to be mutilated.

If this sports complex is seen to be of national importance then by all means accommodate it nearby, but the barrack blocks, bungalows and the hierarchy of open spaces in between and around them must be preserved.

### References:

- (1) *Malta: Past, Present and Future' Special issue of The Architectural Review, no. 869, vol. cxlvi, July London 1969, p.47*
- (2) *Thake, Conrad, Modernist Malta: The Architectural Legacy, edited by Alberto Miceli Farrugia & Petra Bianchi, Malta 2009, pp. 26-27*

## www.architecturelab.net

"A great architect is not made by way of a brain nearly so much as he is made by way of a cultivated, enriched heart."- Frank Lloyd Wright

Architecture Lab is an architecture and urban design magazine dedicated to everything related to architecture, urban design, research studies, and sustainable design. This magazine is also a tool for promoting young artists, architects and designers around the world, focusing on the Middle East region. Architecture Lab is edited by Aline Chahine, architect and designer working and living in Beirut, Lebanon.

The website consists of five main sections: Features, where new projects are featured on a regular basis; News, where the latest developments in the industry are reported; Videos & Interviews, which includes various interviews with well known architects and architecture critics; Competitions and Events, where one can find the latest news on competitions around the world as well as events taking place that have an archi-



tectural theme; and Publications, which features comprehensive reviews of recent architectural publications. An archives section allows users to browse through earlier editions of the magazine, while an Image Gallery appears to still be under construction. Architecture Lab also has a fan page on Facebook, with close to 4,000 fans.

Overall this site is a good way to keep up with what is going on in the architectural sphere around the world, and especially in the Middle East.

## www.world-architects.com

world-architects.com is a network of outstanding architects, landscape architects, engineers, interior designers, lighting consultants, and architectural photographers. It aims to bring together designers, clients, and contractors together in the goal of advancing quality in architecture. In addition to the over 2,000 offices profiled from over 35 countries, job listings, a showroom of quality products, and an events calendar help support architects and others in this goal.

Selected according to criteria of professionalism, uniqueness, and quality of design, offices are profiled on easy-to-navigate pages that allow the firms to present themselves and their work, and to provide easy access to important information: What have the architects built? Which competitions have they won? Which honours have they received? Where have their buildings and projects been published?

Founded by Zurich-based PSA Publishers, world-architects.com utilises a network of editors, critics, and designers in its New York



City branch, and in all of the countries for which national pages are maintained. Via the linking of the different disciplines and countries to one another, a reference work has been produced in which over 18,000 buildings by established and emerging offices can be searched according to themes or regions.

world-architects.com is an important communication tool for building professionals and the leading medium for those who want to create and promote good architecture. More than 350,000 visitors each month are witness to this!

## www.solarpower.com

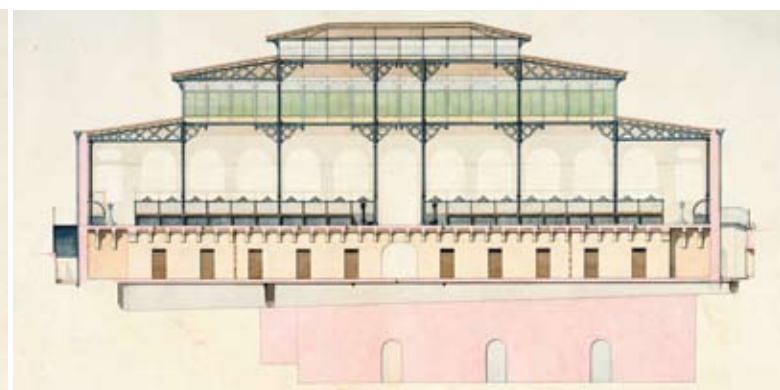
This is a US-based website, and constitutes a mini glossary on solar power, its applications and its advantages. How does solar power work? How are solar panels installed? What are the environmental benefits of solar power? What is concentrating solar power? If you have ever asked any of these questions, the www.solarpower.com is the site for you.

In simple, understandable terms, and with clear illustrations, it guides the user through the various aspects of solar power and energy generation, giving a comprehensive overview on the subject.

Although it is aimed primarily at an American audience, the principles are universal and therefore any visitor should find informa-

tion that is relevant to his/her situation and queries.

The site also includes a blog, where visitors are invited to post articles and comments related to solar energy. It also includes links to solar calculators through which one can estimate the amount of power generated by one's PV system.



### Can you identify the building subject of these two original drawings?

Drawings from the Archives of the Works Department, Floriana, courtesy of the Director General, Works Department. Photographic credits: Mr Joe Borg, MidSea Books

The winner of this competition will be entitled to a copy of the book "Modernist Malta: The Architectural Legacy." Send your entries to: The Editor, The Architect Competition, Kamra tal-Periti, The Professional Centre,

Sliema Road, Gzira, or by email on thearchitect@ktpmalta.com. The first correct entry drawn on the 30 August 2010 will win. Only residents of the Maltese Islands are eligible to participate. Members of the

Editorial Board and their families are not eligible to participate.

*The winner of the competition carried in Issue 52 was Kevin Caruana. Congratulations.*



ON PERMANENT DISPLAY;  
NEW LONDON ARCHITECTURE,  
LONDON, UK

### LONDON 2012 – OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

The Olympic Park is the defining element of the London 2012 Games. During the Games it will provide a central circulation spine and parkland setting for the sporting venues, and after, it will be transformed into the largest urban park created in Europe for more than 150 years. This permanent exhibition displays plans for the Olympic Park and the Olympic and Paralympic venues, and will be updated as plans progress. [www.newlondonarchitecture.org](http://www.newlondonarchitecture.org)



ON PERMANENT DISPLAY;  
MOMA, NEW YORK, USA

### WHAT WAS GOOD DESIGN? MOMA'S MESSAGE 1944–56

At mid-century MoMA played a leading role in the definition and dissemination of so-called Good Design, a concept that took shape in the 1930s and emerged with new relevance in the decades following World War II. This installation presents selections from MoMA's design collection that illuminate the primary values of Good Design as promoted (and disputed) by museums, design councils, and department stores. Iconic pieces by designers like Charles and Ray Eames and Hans Wegner are shown alongside more unexpected items, such as a hunting bow and a plumb bob, as well as everyday objects including an iron, a hamper, a rake, a cheese slicer, and Tupperware. [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)



NOW TO 09 AUGUST 2010; CENTRE  
POMPIDOU, PARIS, FRANCE

### DREAMLANDS

Occupying the Grande Galerie, the exhibition Dreamlands considers for the first time the question of how World's Fairs, international exhibitions, theme parks and kindred institutions have influenced ideas about the city and the way it is used. Duplicating and reduplicating reality through the creation of replicas, embracing an aesthetic of accumulation and collage that is often close to kitsch, these self-enclosed parallel worlds have frequently afforded inspiration to the artistic, architectural and urbanistic practices of the twentieth century, and may even be said to have served as models for certain contemporary constructions. This multidisciplinary exhibition brings together more than 300 works: modern and contemporary art, architecture, films and documents drawn from numerous public and private collections. [www.cnac-gp.fr](http://www.cnac-gp.fr)



NOW TO 29 AUGUST 2010;  
ARKITEKTURMUSEET,  
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

### OO-TAL – THE OO'S

What has the 21st century looked like with regard to interior design, buildings and landscape? The Museum of Architecture sums up the decade now past, essaying a conspectus of what has been important, typical and interesting over the past 10 years. Supplemented by critical commentaries, this call-over is also an attempt at understanding the present day and age. The exhibition features 50 projects selected by a jury for their good qualities, their innovative character or their novel approach to the architectural process. [www.arkitekturmuseet.se](http://www.arkitekturmuseet.se)



NOW TO 29 AUGUST 2010;  
ARKITEKTURMUSEET,  
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

### DESIGN S 2010

The Design S award singles out creative and innovative solutions to problems in all imaginable product areas regardless of their design discipline. The exhibition shows 31 entries. The award has been presented every second year since 2006 and is intended for professional designers and manufacturers. The award is administered by Föreningen Svensk Form (the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design) in collaboration with the Swedish Industrial Design Foundation (SVID), the Swedish Museum of Architecture and the Centre for Business History. [www.arkitekturmuseet.se](http://www.arkitekturmuseet.se)



NOW TO 03 SEPTEMBER 2010;  
DESIGN MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

### URBAN AFRICA – DAVID ADJAYE

One of the leading architects of his generation, David Adjaye has stepped out of his regular line of work to photograph and document key cities in Africa as part of an ongoing project to study new patterns of urbanism. Often regarded as a continent defined by underdevelopment, poverty, war and tourism, through this exhibition Adjaye presents Africa in a different light, examining the buildings and places which have a special resonance with his preoccupations as an architect. This detailed survey will reveal a unique snapshot of life in Africa today, documenting the nature of urban life in a developing continent, a unique geo-cultural survey profiling the African city in a global context. <http://designmuseum.org>

NOW TO 05 SEPTEMBER 2010; DESIGN MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

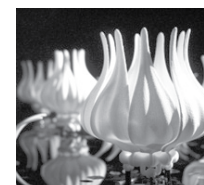
### SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

From the world's first carbon neutral city to a refrigerator which doubles as an aquarium, this exhibition explores a range of products, concepts and projects that address issues of sustainability in their design. Through prototypes, samples, products and film, you can find out more about your impact on the world and how to change it. <http://designmuseum.org>

NOW TO 12 SEPTEMBER 2010; BARBICAN ART GALLERY, LONDON, UK

### THE SURREAL HOUSE

Step inside a labyrinth of chambers, designed by acclaimed young architects Carmody Groarke, and experience The Surreal House - its haunted rooms, delirious forms, blasted architecture and cinematic dreamscapes - featuring a host of artists, architects and film makers including Salvador Dali, Marcel Duchamp, Alberto Giacometti, René Magritte, Man Ray, Joseph Cornell and Maya Deren through to more contemporary figures, among them; Rebecca Horn, Edward Kienholz and Rem Koolhaas. [www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)



NOW TO 01 OCTOBER 2010;  
PHASE 2, LONDON, UK

### CONSTRUCTING REALITIES

Constructing Realities showcases work from the new Postgraduate Certificate Course in Advanced Architectural Research, set up at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, to give students with Masters degrees the opportunity to take their work to a further stage development. The programme is supported by the Economic Challenge Investment Fund. This exhibition shows how some of the best Masters portfolios and theses contain the seeds of serious design research proposals, and how these might be taken forward to create new types of place, novel interactive building elements and new façade and structural systems. [www.arup.com](http://www.arup.com)

NOW TO JULY 2011; V&A MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

### AESTHETICISM: BEAUTY IN ART AND DESIGN 1860-1900

This will be the first international exhibition to explore the unconventional creativity of the British Aesthetic Movement (1860-1895). Featuring superb artworks from the traditional high art of painting, to fashionable trends in architecture, interior design, domestic furnishings, art photography and new modes of dress, this exhibition traces Aestheticism's evolution from the artistic concerns of a small circle of avant-garde artists and authors to a broad cultural phenomenon. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)



22 SEPTEMBER 2010 TO 30 JANUARY  
2011; DESIGN MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

### JOHN PAWSON - PLAIN SPACE

The Design Museum presents a major exhibition of the work of British architect John Pawson. Often labelled a Minimalist he is renowned for a rigorous process of reduction to create designs of simplicity, grace and visual clarity. At the heart of the exhibition is a site-specific 1:1, full-sized installation designed by Pawson to offer a direct contact with his work - the first such installation at the museum. Plain Space celebrates Pawson's career to date with models, film, photographs and architectural elements and includes some of his most important projects including the Cistercian Monastery of Our Lady of Novy Dvur in the Czech republic, the Sackler Crossing at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and the Calvin Klein store on Madison Avenue, New York. <http://designmuseum.org>