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the Architect

"Nobody who has followed the evolution of local architecture over the last decades can have failed to notice how depressingly ugly many of our buildings have begun to look, frequently to the point of repulsiveness. It is incomprehensible how certain designs go past the drawing board."

Perit Joseph M. Spiteri (see pages 14-17)

In this issue ...

The late-1950s and 60s witnessed the advent of modern architecture in Malta. The vast construction program of schools, tourist hotels and factories was the ideal opportunity for local architects to translate their modernist architecture creed into stone and concrete. This issue of 'the Architect' pays tribute to Perit Joseph M. Spiteri who, throughout his career as an architect and educator, was at the front line of this surge of modern architecture together with the likes of other periti; Joseph Huntingford, Joe Consiglio, Edwin England Sant-Fournier, readily come to mind.

Perit Joe Spiteri was one of Malta's leading post-war architects who was instrumental in promoting modernism in an era when modern architecture was still viewed with suspicion if not outright derision. His main architectural works ranging from his Corbusian-style house on pilotis at Ta' Xbiex, the spiritually-uplifting Balluta parish church, the dignified John F. Kennedy memorial at Qawra, and the urban planning of the Santa Lucija housing estate are all testimony to his wide-ranging talent in architectural design and urban planning. His legacy goes well beyond the built works for he mentored and was a formative influence in the education of countless architects in practice today. For more than two decades, Perit Spiteri was a formidable design tutor and educator at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering at our university. During my own student days way back in the 1980s, Perit Spiteri was the leading design tutor, his reputation preceded him as I recall the times we all waited with some trepidation in the design studios to gain invaluable feedback on our projects. He was a true artist, at heart and in life. Although he may have appeared aloof at times, he possessed a humble and sensitive character, and when he shared his thoughts with us students they were most of the times, precious lessons on humanity and values to cherish in life.

When I last visited him over a year ago, although in poor health, his mental faculties were undiminished and astute as ever and he was still keen to debate the latest developments on the Valletta entrance project. Many of us are indebted for having had the privilege to benefit from his knowledge and values. We lovingly salute his memory. Sadly, Perit Spiteri passed away in September, after a lengthy battle with a degenerative illness that deprived him of the tranquil retirement he deserved. The editorial team of tA salutes his memory and conveys its condolences to his family members.

On a happier note, architects in their vast majority remain active and socially-engaged in architecture and related visual arts. Perit Godwin Cassar after a long, distinguished (and, one can safely add, stressful) career as Director General of the Planning Authority, has taken up watercolour drawing and is currently displaying his works in his first exhibition. A feature in this issue highlights his artistic endeavors, which we look forward to seeing more of in the coming years.

October is a hectic month as summer fades from our memory and everyone settles back into the usual home-work-school routine. On the occasion of World Architecture Day, which is celebrated internationally by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-HABITAT, the *Kamra tal-Periti* has once again organised an extensive program of events addressed at both practitioners as well as different segments of local society. The events, under the umbrella title of "Time for Architecture, were well attended, and will certainly serve to raise the profile of architecture among the general public. An overview of these events, together with various other activities organised by the *Kamra tal-Periti* over the last few months, feature in this issue.

A staple feature in our journal is the People and Projects section, which provides a number of snippets of news and information about various happenings in the architecture and civil engineering spheres, both locally and internationally. We welcome contributions to this section of the journal from all our readers, in particular for the Letters to the Editor section.

Another stimulating article in this issue is that by Perit Edward Said who, following his recent well-attended public lecture, highlights the sad plight of the historic residence and former gardens of Hookham Frere in Gwardamangia. Safeguarding our architectural heritage is always high on our agenda.

Enjoy!

Perit Dr Conrad Thake
Acting Editor



THE PROFESSIONAL CENTRE
SLEIMA ROAD
GZIRA GZR 06 - MALTA
TEL./FAX. (+356) 2131 4265
EMAIL: info@ktpmalta.com
WEBSITE: www.ktpmalta.com

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 2013 consists of Perit Stephen Farrugia, President; Perit Christopher Mintoff, Vice President; Perit Amber Wismayer, Honorary Secretary; Periti Sarah Anastasi, Ian Camilleri Cassar, Sandro Cini, Keith Cole, Etienne Fenech, Anthony Fenech Vella, Joseph Galea, Malcolm Gingell, 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 MaltaToday 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.

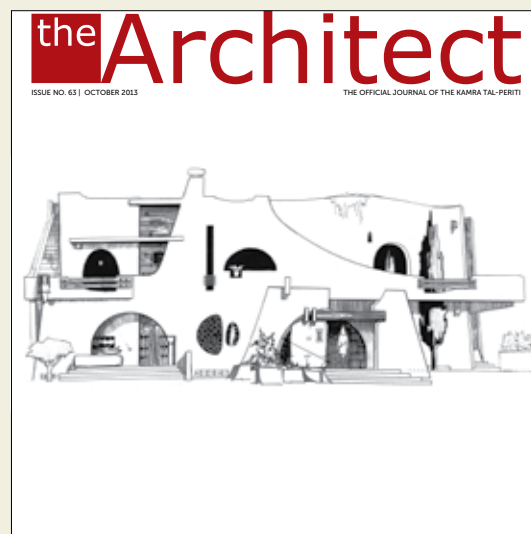
Acting Editor: **Conrad Thake**
Design: **Kevin Grech - MediaToday**
Sales: **Adriana Farrugia** Tel: **21 382 741** ext. **126**
Chris Sacco Tel: **21 382 741** ext. **122**
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Vjal ir-Rihan, San Gwann SGN 4016, Malta
Tel: +356 21 382 741, Fax: +356 21 381 992
Email: admin@mediatoday.com.mt



COVER:

Sketch of artist E. Cremona's private residence at Mdina Road, Balzan by Perit Joseph M. Spiteri, designed and constructed of Cremona's private residence (1970-77). Spiteri was instrumental in translating Mr. Cremona's complex painterly concepts into a feasible architectural design and was also responsible for preparing the working drawings, and executing the villa's construction. Read more on pages 14-17.

Periti Act

The *Kamra tal-Periti* is currently reviewing the proposed amendments to the Periti Act (Chapter 390 of the Laws of Malta), Subsidiary Legislation and Tariff K. Revisions focus on pertinent issues including the following: professional indemnity insurance, period of liability, continuing professional development (CPD) and the *Kamra's* statute. Discussions are on-going with the objective of submitting a draft proposal at the upcoming December AGM. The *Kamra* welcomes the feedback of the profession and solicits periti to submit their comments and concerns.

Board of Professional Conduct

A new Board of Profession Conduct has recently been constituted, the composition of which is as follows: Perit Stephen Farrugia, Chairman; Periti Anthony Fenech Vella, Damian Vella Lenicker, Hector Zammit, Shirley Cefai, Tano Zammit, Anthony Stivala and Alan Saliba as members. A priority of the Board is to formalise the disciplinary procedure and formulate a revised Code of Professional Conduct to be endorsed and ratified during the next AGM.

Design Review Panels and CABE

The *Kamra* has long-championed the introduction of Design Review Panels as a means of raising the awareness of the importance of good design and quality in our built environment. The *Kamra* has also long-promoted the establishment of a Centre for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) for the better appreciation of our built heritage and for a more sustainable development in future years. The implementation of both has been a priority of the *Kamra* and the new Council shall be retaining this stance. Discussions with Government are underway on both counts.

Compliance Certificates

During a preliminary meeting with Hon Dr Michael Farrugia, Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Administrative Simplification, the *Kamra* was requested to provide feedback on Government's proposal for Compliance Certificates to be issued by periti. As part of the consultation process, the *Kamra* held a Discussion Meeting to obtain the broadest spec-



Compliance Certificates Discussion Meeting

trum of opinion from the profession and offer attendees the opportunity to raise concerns and put forward suggestions. Following the seminar for periti held on the 17 June, which was well-attended by the profession, the *Kamra* finalised its position and presented this to the Hon Dr Michael Farrugia, MEPA Chairman Perit Vincent Cassar and MEPA CEO Mr Johann Buttigieg during a meeting held on the 03 July. The *Kamra's* proposals, which were largely accepted, included the setting up of a working group comprising of Government representatives, MEPA officials, and representatives of the *Kamra* with the scope of analysing the proposal and addressing concerns. The *Kamra tal-Periti* will continue to keep its members updated on progress in this regard.

KTP Representatives

The *Kamra* is pleased to announce that it is well-represented on a number of Boards and Councils. Perit Philip Grech has accepted a nomination to represent the *Kamra tal-Periti* on the Building Regulation Board, which is presently addressing the Masons' Act, amongst other issues. Perit Sandro Cini is the Chamber's representative on the Building Industry Consultative Council, and Perit Ian Camilleri Cassar is the sub-representative on the same. A primary concern of the BICC board, chaired by Perit Charles Buhagiar, is the issue of vacancy and a total of five working groups [tackling Building Regulations and EU Directives, the Property Market,

Regeneration of Property, Research & Innovation and Education/Training and Registration/Classification] have been set up to this end. Following a call of interest, the *Kamra* has nominated two representatives for each working group and, as technical coordinator of the KTP-BICC sub-committee, Perit Amber Wismayer is collating reports on all aspects being addressed. The *Kamra* has recently been requested to nominate a representative on the General Services Board. Subsequently, a call for interest was issued to the profession and, as this issue went to print, the Council was in the process of receiving submissions for its consideration.

Standing Committee to address to the December 2012 AGM Motions

A standing committee has been established to address the motions proposed by Prof. Alex Torpiano and seconded by Perit Keith Cole during the December 2012 AGM. The sub-committee addressing the motions is composed of Periti Keith Cole; Malcolm Gingell; Joe Galea; Alex Torpiano; Edward Bencini; and David Felice. The team hopes to present a report of their findings during the upcoming December 2013 AGM.

Periti Discussion Board

Periti, as well as students of the Faculty for the Built Environment, now have the space to discuss pertinent issues with colleagues, put forward observations, raise

concerns and simply pose queries which may be addressed by fellow members of the Profession; all this through a private group page on Facebook entitled "Periti Discussion Board". The page was launched by the *Kamra tal-Periti* last June and has currently attracted a total of 275 members. It is administered by Council Members Chris Mintoff and Amber Wismayer. The *Kamra* invites all periti and students to join the closed group and utilise it as a platform for discussion and informal enquiry.

Development Planning (Use Classes) Order, 2013

Last August, the *Kamra tal-Periti* was invited to discuss the proposed Development Planning (Use Classes) Order, 2013 which is intended to replace the current Development Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1994. During the consultation meeting it was agreed that, in order to facilitate the transition process, the MEPA would chair an Information Session once the draft document had been finalised but prior to it being officially published and launched. The meeting was hosted by the *Kamra* and took place on Friday, 6th September at the Professional Centre Conference Hall. Representatives from the MEPA explained the document and the floor was opened for a Q&A session. Shortly thereafter, the proposed revised use classes order was issued for public consultation. The *Kamra* is currently in the process of submitting its formal position paper to MEPA on this matter.



Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, designed by Frances-Jones Morehen Thorp & Archimedia.



Barrakka Lift, designed by Architecture Project. Photo by Sean Mallia.

WORLD ARCHITECTURE FESTIVAL AND INSIDE FESTIVAL

Following three eventful days at the sixth edition of the World Architecture Festival (WAF) held at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore between the 2 and 4 October, the festival's super-jury awarded the prestigious World Building of the Year Award to Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, New Zealand, designed by Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp and Archimedia. This Gallery consists of an extensive public project that includes the restoration and adaption of heritage buildings; a new building extension which more than doubles the public exhibition areas; extensive basement storage and support areas; and the redesign of adjacent areas of

Albert Park. The design creates an openness and transparency to allow views through, into and out of the gallery circulation and display spaces into the green landscape of Albert Park.

Commending the winning project on behalf of the festival's super-jury, Paul Finch, WAF Programme Director, said "The winning project transcended category types. You could say it is about new and old, or civic and community, or display. It contrasts the man-made and the natural, and the relationship between art and science. This is a major design achievement in a seismic zone, providing an example of design pragmatism and a careful reworking which does no more than it needs to until it is required. Balancing many different elements, the resulting design



New Farsons Brewhouse, designed by Architecture Project. Photo by Tim Ellis.

is a rich complex of built ideas."

Two other major prizes were awarded, namely the "Landscape of the Year" which was awarded to The Australian Garden, Australia, designed by Taylor Cullity Lethlean + Paul Thompson and the 'Future Project of the Year', won by the National Maritime Museum, China, designed by Cox Rayner Architects.

This year's edition of WAF saw two shortlisted Maltese projects participating, both presented by Architecture Project. The Barrakka Lift project participated in two categories: the Transport Category of the WAF, and Transport Category of the Inside Festival, which runs alongside the WAF. This recently completed twenty storey high panoramic lift, commissioned by the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation plc, is located on the edge of Malta's historic fortified capital city of Valletta. Where once the sixteenth century fortified walls of the town served to keep enemy ships at bay, they are now under conservation order and provide an unbeatable new access for visitors and residents flocking here. Valletta is being given a new lease of life as the island prepares to host the presidency of the European Union in 2017 and the city having recently been named European Capital of Culture for 2018. The Barrakka Lift, one of the projects aimed at increasing accessibility to the capital city, came out the winner in its Category in the Inside Festival, beating off stiff competition from other projects such as the Marina Bay Cruise Centre in Singapore, designed

by RSP Architects, Planners & Engineers, as well as the Sydney Cruise Terminal in Australia, designed by Johnson Pilton Walker Architects.

The new Farsons Brewhouse was also shortlisted to participate in the Production / Energy / Recycling Category of WAF. The new Brewhouse builds on the traditional values of the beer manufacturer ("All the best from Farsons") and mission (to produce best quality beverages for local and foreign consumption). It attempts a partial reconnection of the fully mechanised brewing process to its agricultural genesis. The Brewhouse responds to its setting and orientation, as well as its celebratory and representational role as a new icon for the company, projecting Farsons' image into the future and reinforcing the company's status as one of Malta's most important enterprises, one that takes its social and economic role seriously and values the public's respect for its products. Other entries in this category included a District Heating Plant in Italy, a Winery in Australia as well as "A Simple Factory Building" designed by Pencil Office in Singapore, which won this category of the WAF.

This edition of the WAF welcomed over 2100 architects and designers from 68 countries, attending for three days of speeches, presentations and exhibitions. Projects entered in this year's festival awards, against a challenging economic



Astley Castle, Architect: Witherford Watson Mann Architects, Client: The Landmark Trust, Photos: Helen Binet

climate, reflected the festival's theme of 'Value and Values' demonstrating the core factors that inform the relationship between perceptions of financial value and the values that architects typically hold regarding their work.

This year's super-jury was chaired by Ken Tadashi Oshima of The University of Washington. The highly esteemed international judging panel also includes Ken Yeang - Llewelyn Davies Yeang; Patrick Bellew - Atelier Ten; Jeanne Gang - Studio Gang Architects and Dietmar Eberle - Baumschlager Eberle.

More information on the festivals and the participating projects can be found at www.worldarchitecturefestival.com and www.worldarchitecturefestival.com.

RIBA STIRLING PRIZE 2013

Astley Castle, a groundbreaking modern holiday home inserted into the crumbling walls of an ancient moated castle, in Warwickshire and designed by Witherford Watson Mann Architects has won the 2013 RIBA Stirling Prize for the best building of the year. This sensitive scheme places the new building at the heart of the old, demonstrating creativity, preservation and conservation. In a 12th century fortified manor, further damaged by fire in 1978, the architects have created a new house that allows Landmark Trust guests to experience life in a near thousand-year-old castle with distinctly 21st century mod cons. Astley Castle demonstrates that working within sensitive historic contexts requires far more than the specialist skills of the conservation architect:



SUSTAINABILITY SNAPS KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE JARGON AND WHAT'S GOING ON



STUDENTS INSTALL THE WORLD'S FIRST SOLAR PAVEMENT PANELS IN VIRGINIA

Studio39 Landscape Architecture just teamed up with students at the Solar Institute at George Washington University to install the world's first solar panel walking path. The students and designers installed a total of 27 durable photovoltaic panels to create a street level Solar Walk that generates roughly 400 watt-peaks of electricity.

Onyx Solar, a building integrated photovoltaics specialist from Spain, designed the semi-translucent panels, which look like smoked acrylic sheets. The walkable solar panels are integrated as a small section of the public sidewalk that sits flush with the surrounding cement. The Solar Walk spans a short distance between the Exploration and Innovation Halls at the intersection of George Washington Boulevard and University Drive.

The photovoltaic pavers can produce a peak energy output of 400 watts, which is used to power 450 LEDs installed underneath the panel pathway. The walkway also connects to a solar-powered trellis designed by Studio39 Landscape Architecture. The trellis installed at the end sidewalk creates energy that feeds back into the University's Innovation Hall building. Hopefully the project will lead to more solar walkways around the world, making our streets a whole lot more energy-efficient.

Source: www.inhabitat.com

this is an important piece of architecture, beautifully detailed and crafted. The decision to put the bedrooms and bathrooms on the ground floor and the communal spaces above makes the experience of the house very special as perhaps the most impressive spaces are the outdoor Tudor and Jacobean ruins. Now in its 18th year, the RIBA Stirling Prize is

the UK's most prestigious architecture prize. The presentation of the RIBA Stirling Prize trophy to Witherford Watson Mann Architects took place at a special ceremony on 26 September at Central Saint Martins, King's Cross, London. For more information visit www.architecture.com

REASONABLE DREAMS VALLETTA FROM RENAISSANCE TO RENZO PIANO

Reasonable Dreams represents the identification of an architectural firm with the visions and inspirations that fed the most influential architectural projects in Valletta. Conceived by Architecture Project, the exhibition is a thoughtful journey through the city's transformation, linking past and future seamlessly around three main axes: historical dreams, realised dreams, and the fragmentation of time-space through artistic dreams. Changes to the urban fabric of Valletta as a capital city are revealed through an empathy with the origins of planned and realised capital projects that have contributed to the transformation of Valletta from its Renaissance beginnings to its current revival through projects such as the on-going City Gate project by Renzo Piano Building Workshop, or the Barrakka Lift by AP.

"Dreams" are understood here not merely as manifestations of an oneiric state, but, rather, as the origins of the creative process that find their way into the founding myths of the city. These will be expressed through the tensions created by the juxtaposition of historical and modern-day urban dreams, and the questioning of their contemporary relevance. The exhibition includes drawings, models, video installations, sculptures and historical plans, that describe realisations and suggestive traces in order to further our understanding of their inherent architectural process, and, more especially, to serve as an inspiration for new explorations and proposals. Reasonable Dreams will take place at La Galerie d'Architecture, Paris, France between the 6 December 2013 and the 11 January 2014.



Unité de vie des Soeurs de la Charité du Sacré-Coeur de Jésus, Sherbrooke

LUBETKIN PRIZE 2013

Cooled Conservatories, Gardens by the Bay by Wilkinson Eyre has won the RIBA Lubetkin Prize 2013 for the best new international building. The RIBA Lubetkin Prize is named in honour of the Georgia-born architect, who worked in Paris before moving to London in the 1930s to establish the influential Tecton Group. The Gardens by the Bay are an outstanding example of sustainability in action, not only representing best practice but also communicating important messages about these issues to a wide public. Two contrasting glass-houses covering more than two hectares (making them the biggest climate-controlled greenhouses in the world) feature a dry Mediterranean climate in the shallow inverted bowl, and a cooler, moist environment in the conical structure complete with a 'mountain' down which a waterfall descends, raising humidity levels and supporting the lush vertical planting – and a helical walk that winds in and out of a series of exhibitions about climate change. Both biomes comprise a superstructure of radial steel ribs paired with a steel gridshell forming the substructure. Low-energy glass lets in 64% of the light but admits only 38% of the corresponding solar gain.

For more information visit www.architecture.com.

YOUNG ARCHITECT AWARD, CANADA

Architecture Canada (RAIC) recently selected Maxime-Alexis Frappier as the winner of its 2013 Young Architect Award. Graduating from the University of Montreal School of Architecture in 2000, he won the prestigious Canadian Architect Student Award of Excellence for his thesis work.



Cooled Conservatories, Gardens by the Bay, Architect: Wilkinson Eyre, Landscape Architects: Grant Associates, Client: National Parks Board

From 2000 to 2006, he worked for Saucier + Perrotte architects on a number of significant projects. In 2006, he co-founded ACDF ARCHITECTURE, which is now comprised of 35 passionate professionals. Since its creation, he has worked on projects throughout Canada, in the United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, and Indonesia. His design approach is based on the precise understanding of the user's needs. The jury was impressed by the quality and breadth of work achieved by so young an architect. In addition, Maxime-Alexis Frappier shows a remarkable engagement to the profession and contributes tremendous energy to training future architects

within his studio and at the University of Montreal.

BUILDING REGULATION BOARD

Following the March General Elections, a new Building Regulation Board has been set up. The Board is chaired by Perit Samuel Formosa, while Mr Anthony Camilleri is Vice Chairman. The Board Members are Perit Philip Grech representing the *Kamra tal-Periti*, Ing Johan Psaila representing the Chamber of Engineers, Mr Sandro Chetcuti, and Periti Carmelo Barbara, Michelle Piccinino and Simone Vella Lenicker. Mr Emanuel Psaila was reappointed as Board Secretary.

Letters to the Editor

Letters from our readers to be considered for publication are most welcome. Letters for inclusion in Issue 64 are to reach us by the 30 December 2013. Please write to: The Editor, "the Architect", Kamra tal-Periti, The Professional Centre, Sliema Road, Gzira GZR1633, or send an email to thearchitect@ktpmalta.com. All contributions will be acknowledged.

NOW TO 01 DECEMBER 2013; MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, USA

CUT 'N' PASTE: FROM ARCHITECTURAL



Ralph Schraivogel. Archigram 1961-74 (Museum für Gestaltung). 1995. Silkscreen, 50 3/8 x 35 5/8" (128 x 90.5 cm). Gift of the designer

ASSEMBLAGE TO COLLAGE CITY

The ethos of collage shapes every aspect of contemporary culture, from the glut of signs and images to the many layers of digital information to the art of sampling. This installation revisits early uses of collage to trace its evolution as both an aesthetic technique central to architectural representation and a cultural practice of layering, juxtaposition, and remix that configures the city. Opening with the seamless digital collages that dominate contemporary architectural practice, Cut 'n' Paste pairs the early photo-collages of Mies van der Rohe with avant-garde experiments in photomontage, graphic design, and film. Architectural thinkers Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter's Collage City (1978), an urban manifesto for the medium, provides a backdrop through which to reframe contemporary uses. As an architectural tool, this wide-ranging medium mixes high and popular references and offers a dynamic, inventive connection to cultural context. www.moma.org

NOW TO 17 DECEMBER 2013; NEW LONDON ARCHITECTURE, LONDON, UK

GREAT ESTATES: HOW LONDON'S LANDOWNERS SHAPE THE CITY

Much of the story of London's development can be traced through the historic ownership of large pieces of land which, through the on-going ownership of freehold assets and their lease terms, have created a resilient cycle of change and renewal. Today this



long-term attitude to investment, development and management has influenced the development of new large-scale and mixed-use areas of the capital, such as King's Cross, Canary Wharf and the Olympic Park. This exhibition will examine the evolution of London's Great Estates and their impact on the development of new large-scale areas of the capital under a single ownership. www.newlondonarchitecture.org

NOW TO 31 DECEMBER 2013; FONDATION POUR



L'ARCHITECTURE, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

THE CHILDREN'S TOWN

Designed for children and their families, this exhibition aims to increase awareness of the architecture and planning of Brussels among the widest possible public. It offers an interactive and educational approach to the city and its components - its shops, houses and apartments, leisure facilities, offices and parks - organised into four sections: "living", "learning", "playing" and "working". With plans, drawings, models and photographs from the Archives d'Architecture Moderne, the exhibition will present the city in a way that is of interest to children as well as adults. In particular, a series of games and an educational booklet will allow young visitors to participate in the exhibition experience to the full. www.fondationpouirlarchitecture.be

NOW TO 04 JANUARY 2014; DESIGN MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

EXTRAORDINARY STORIES ABOUT ORDINARY THINGS

Discover key designs that have shaped the modern world and be inspired by this fascinating exhibition of memorable objects from the Design Museum Collection. Six



design stories offer a diverse look at design tracing the history and processes of contemporary design. The show includes furniture, product, fashion, transport and architecture alongside a selection of prototypes, models and specially commissioned films. www.designmuseum.org

NOW TO 10 JANUARY 2014; BRITISH ARCHITECTURAL LIBRARY, RIBA, LONDON, UK

RIBA STIRLING PRIZE WINNERS IN THE ROBERT ELWALL PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION

In celebration of the RIBA's ever-popular Stirling Prize Award, this display presents a diverse selection of outstanding images of buildings from RIBA Stirling Prize winners, past and present. Highlighting the breadth of the Robert Elwall Photographs Collection, the exhibition features a selection of works by practices ranging from David Chipperfield Architects and Wilkinson Eyre Architects, to Foster & Partners and Zaha Hadid. www.architecture.com



Gateshead Millenium Bridge, 2001. Winner of the 2002 RIBA Stirling Prize. Wilkinson Eyre Architects. © Steve Mayes / RIBA Library Photographs Collection.

NOW TO 24 FEBRUARY 2014; VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

BUILDING MEMORIES: THE ART OF REMEMBERING

This display offers alternative ways of understanding the "art of remembering", explored by Hari Kunzru in his narrative for Sky Arts Ignition: Memory Palace. It features historical mnemonic approaches to developing memory skills: from classical texts (printed in the European Renaissance) to Victorian manuals and card games, and also presents contemporary visual interpretations of home – an emotionally resonant space where you may mentally store what you want to recall. www.vam.ac.uk

NOW TO 01 JULY 2015; NETHERLANDS ARCHITECTURE INSTITUTE, NETHERLANDS

DUTCHVILLE: FEEL THE CITY

In a remarkable approach to architecture, Dutchville is an exhibition that intentionally inspires conflicting feelings. At the NAI, you can explore your love-hate relationship with the urban environment and discover how the city shapes and affects the way you feel. Six residents will tell you their stories, sharing their own views of the city – and they don't pull any punches. Architectural features that one person describes in glowing terms are



his neighbour's pet hates. And the roles are reversed when the residents talk about other aspects. In this exhibition you will discover that architecture and urbanisation permeates the world around us, discover your likes and dislikes, and get a taste of how the city might look in the future. <http://en.nai.nl/>

NOW TO SEPTEMBER 2017; NETHERLANDS ARCHITECTURE INSTITUTE, NETHERLANDS

TREASURY: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS



The NAI Treasury is divided into six thematic clusters that refer to the Dutch architectural tradition. One of those typical Dutch traditions is social housing. The unique cooperation between government, private housing corporations and architects repeatedly led to new and unexpected solutions, such as the housing blocks by De Klerk (Amsterdam School) that were also called 'palaces for the workers'. Another tradition is the experimental urge of Dutch architects that has led time and again to innovations in the architecture of the last two hundred years, such as the world-famous experiments of De Stijl. <http://en.nai.nl/>

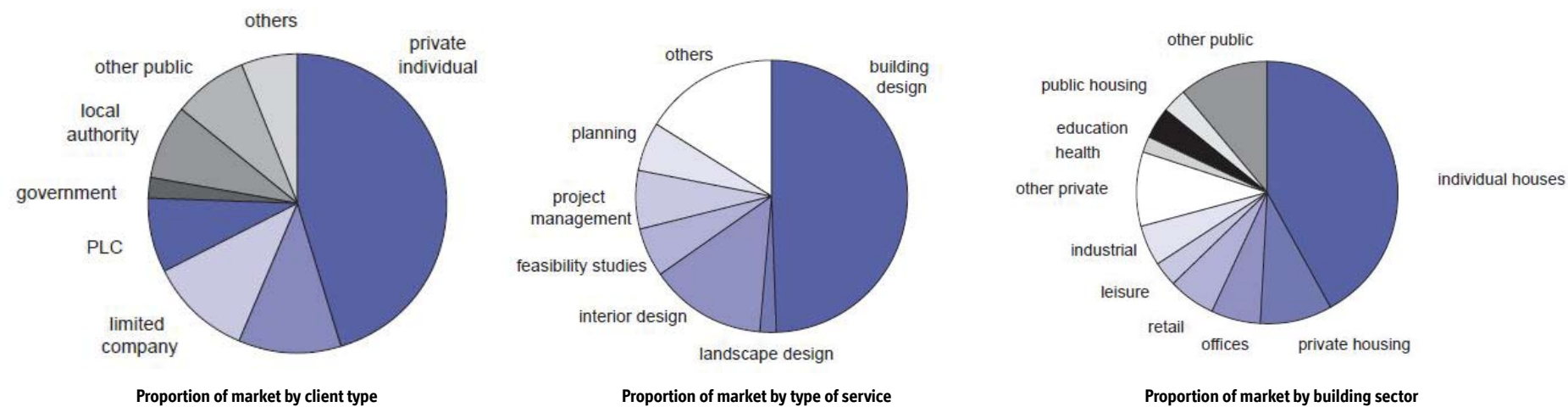
ONGOING; THE LIGHTHOUSE, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

UNBUILT MACKINTOSH

The Lighthouse celebrates the Creative Mackintosh Festival with the unveiling of an exciting new exhibition, showcasing stunning architectural models based on the unbuilt designs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The models produced by Glasgow-based model-makers Ozturk, are fantastically accurate and help us to appreciate Mackintosh's architectural vision. www.thelighthouse.co.uk



The Architectural Profession in Europe 2012



The Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) recently published the results of its third biennial survey of architecture in Europe. The data series is establishing itself, and year-on-year shows a consistent response profile from participants. This suggests that the data quality is good and can be viewed with increasing confidence. All large countries now participated in the survey including, for the first time, Spain. The survey now covers 95% of the profession in Europe, substantially up from the 53% in 2008 and 84% in 2010.

The survey report is split into four main sections. "the Architect" reviewed the first part of the report titled "Architects in Europe" in its previous issue. This issue reviews the second section of the report, titled "Architecture – the Market."

The total value of the European construction market based on the participating countries was estimated to be worth €1,657 billion in 2011, including civil engineering and infrastructure work. The five countries

Participating Countries:

Austria, Belgium, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.

with the highest output - Germany, UK, France, Italy, Spain - account for two thirds of Europe's total output. Construction output for 2011 measured per head of the general population averages €2,755 per person. The highest output per head in 2011 is in Luxembourg and Norway - over €7,000 per person. According to the survey, Malta has an output per person of €1,192.

Private housing accounts for more than half of the market. Housing includes work to individual homes - the largest sector accounting for 42% of all work - and 'other' private housing, including flats and housing developments; another 9% of work. So, 51% of architects' work is from private sector housing. This makes housing an even more dominant sector than in previous years, having increased its share of the market from 44% in 2010 and 45% in 2008. Commercial work (offices, retail, industrial, leisure, etc) accounts for 29% of all work, about the same as in 2010. The public sector accounts for another 20%, down from 26% in 2010. The highest shares of individual housing are to be found in Greece (57% of all work), Italy (53%), Belgium (41%) and Luxembourg (40%). 'Other' private housing is highest in Bulgaria and Turkey (23 and 22% respectively). Office work has the highest share in Sweden and Estonia, while the highest share of retail

work is found in Lithuania and Portugal. Education accounts for over 10% of the market in Denmark and Germany, while public housing is at least 10% of the market in Austria and Finland.

The single most important client group for architects is individual clients, accounting for 45% of clients. The proportion is highest in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Belgium and lowest in Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Denmark. The next most important source of clients is the public sector, accounting for 18% of clients. The proportion is highest in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, and lowest in Greece, Lithuania and Portugal. Compared with 2009/10, the client base has moved away from public sector and more towards individual clients. Currently, public sector clients account for 18% of architects' clients, compared with 23% in 2010 and 22% in 2008.

Building design is the dominant service offered and accounts for exactly 50% of the market. It is above 60% in more than half of the countries surveyed and lowest in Denmark, Italy and Malta. Interior design accounts for 14 per cent of the market, while project management, feasibility studies and planning each account for between 6 and 7% of revenue. Maltese respondents indicated that building design makes up 33% of their revenue,

33% by project management, 23% by other services, and the remaining 11% is income generated from interior design and feasibility studies. It is to be noted here that the profession locally practices in the fields of architecture and civil engineering, rather than just architecture as is the case in many other European countries.

43% of respondents anticipate 'no change' to their workloads in the next year, while nearly 35% expect workloads to fall, and 21% anticipate a rise. The highest levels of pessimism are expressed by architects in Greece, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Italy - where at least half of architects predict workloads to fall. At least 37% of architects in Turkey, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, the UK and Denmark say they expect workloads to rise. Greatest stability is anticipated by architects in Estonia and Germany, where more than 60% say they expect "no change". The 'balance' figure - which reports on the difference between optimists and pessimists - is negative in 12 out of 25 countries. The balance figure for Malta was -15 (25% predicted an increase; 35% predicted no change; 40% predicted a decrease in workload).

Further results from the survey will be reviewed in future issues of "the Architect".

EASA 2013

400 architects and architecture students, 30 workshops, 2 weeks, 1 location; this is EASA - European Architecture Students' Assembly. This huge annual event brings together architecture students and architects from all corners of Europe, and some even farther than that, to live together and spend two weeks designing and constructing a particular installation or structure in connection with the theme designated for the event. This year EASA was held in Slovenia and seven architecture students from the University of Malta had the privilege of part taking in this amazing event. Here is what each one had to say about this experience.

Lesley Mintoff, 24 years old - 5th year student

The organisation of EASA is no small feat, and this year the dedicated organisers hosted it in the town of Žužemberk, Slovenia, a paradise of rolling green hills and glimmering rivers akin to a scene out of The Sound of Music. In the middle of this country scenery, Žužemberk Castle rises majestically, and it was here that four hundred architecture students ate, socialised and planned their various architecture workshops. The choice of which workshop to participate in took great thought as the projects ranged from lighting, social intervention, 3D mapping, construction and photography; basically everything that an architecture student could be interested in. As I had just completed my fourth year of studies, having chosen the structures stream, I was extremely excited to participate in a construction workshop specialising in concrete. Our aim was to create an outdoor concrete structure on the bank of the river which runs through the middle of the Žužemberk valley, as a place to



shelter and meditate. The design possibilities of the interior were unlimited, as we had taken the decision to burn the formwork out so as to be able to create an unlevelled patterned effect that reflected the texture of the timber used as formwork.

Nadine Türscherl, 22 years old - 3rd year student

My initial expectations of EASA were sky-high, with friends telling me that it was one of the best experiences one could have as an architecture student. I can safely say that my friends are not liars; on the contrary, I feel they undervalued it. It is not the best experience, but better than the best. It may sound whimsical, but one feels like they have been transported into a community made up entirely of creative, fun people with common interests. Unlike many architectural gatherings, where somehow the attempt to impress is always hanging in the air, at EASA one is allowed to breathe and let go, with the sole purpose of making friends, having fun and learning a thing or two about architecture. I was lucky enough to join the Endor workshop, which entailed building a

tree house by the river. The project was ambitious to say the least, but we managed to complete it. It felt special to be a part of this workshop, as it made a difference to the inhabitants of Žužemberk. I would recommend EASA to anyone who likes making friends, partying, learning a thing or two about power tools and does not mind getting a little dirty to create something amazing. EASA is a family, and I feel honoured to be added to the family tree.

Mark Cauchi, 24 years old - 2nd year student

This year was my first experience on EASA in Slovenia, I was part of the Light Parasite workshop, where as a team we experimented with renewable materials to create light installations around the town of Žužemberk. Working with people from different nationalities was great; you overcome the language barrier and learn a lot from different cultures. The workshop however is only a small part of the EASA experience, the rest of the time was filled with fun events and the opportunity to meet and make connections with people from all over the world, which left me with memories and friends which I will not forget any time soon! EASA is such a great experience that you almost forget you lived in a tent for 2 weeks!

Samuel Cremona, 22 years old - 3rd year student

This was my second time participating in the assembly and I have to say that it was twice as incredible as my first one. This year's location created the perfect backdrop for EASA - workshops by the cool river, parties and events in a medieval castle, and tented accommodation, all situated in the tiny but humble town of Žužemberk. Though the workshops and location only play a small part of the EASA experience - new friendships and a great sense of community are the glue that bonds everything and everyone together during these intense two weeks. The friendships and camaraderie created at EASA are like nothing I've experienced before, and it is definitely something that will keep me going back year after year.

Jean Vella, 21 years old - 2nd year student

Officially the best two weeks of my life! Anyone who has already been to EASA told me repeatedly that it was going to be an amazing experience but I never expected it to be such a great one. Two weeks of roughing it up along with another 400 architects and architecture students proved to be a truly sensational experience. The experience of meeting new people from all around the world, living and working with them is something that one has to experience to believe its enriching benefits. The town of Žužemberk also proved to be a perfect location to host such an event this year as its remote untouched beauty makes you appreciate life experiences more.



IMPRESSIONS

Many people, especially those who would have led an active and intensive professional life, view retirement as daunting, and wonder how they will pass their time away once their days begin to belong mostly to themselves. Some continue to be active in professional spheres, others focus on their family, while others decide to make the most of their days by taking up a hobby or two.

Godwin Cassar falls into the latter category; after an intensive career as an Architect & Civil Engineer, as well as a planner, upon retirement from his post as Director General of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority in January 2009, he first published "Planning Matters," a compilation of technical articles and essays concerning planning issues. Following this, he took up art as a hobby. "I took a short summer course on drawing in pencil, doing portraits and preparing bird profiles in ink and coloured pencils, and everything developed from there," he explains. "Watercolour is a fantastic medium which can produce a very unpredictable final result."

Here, the Architect takes a closer look at Cassar's paintings and delves into those aspects of his hobby which give him the most satisfaction, as well as what inspires him most.

Your paintings exude a sense of calm, restfulness and romanticism. Do you think this reflects mainly your character, or your frame of mind at this stage in your life? Or maybe both?

Well, this is how the art curator of the current solo exhibition described me and I think he was accurate in his analysis of my character. I do tend to be calm and reflective but sometimes I could build up an inner tension because I rarely share my frustrations. Painting in watercolour requires speed as once it dries it loses its flexibility to move around on paper. So painting absorbs all my attention and tends to help release any inner tensions.

Your collection includes landscapes



Old Mint Street, Valletta, 2013, 54 x 48cm

of Valletta, your birth town, as well as Mdina, local fishing ports and harbours, Delft, Lausanne, Venice and small towns in Italy.

Do you think that your professional career as an architect and planner influences your paintings? Does your technical eye assist you to discover beauty in your surroundings, and transfer it onto canvas? And conversely, does your viewing of our streetscapes with the eye of an artist give you further insights into how urban planning can be better improved?

Obviously my training and professional skills has a great bearing on my choice of subjects to paint and their interpretation. I tend to paint mostly urban scenes although I have also done a number of landscapes. I like to depict different hues and tonalities which give character to streetscapes and evoke a variety of impressions of their urban character. Colorful shadows juxtaposed against strong light draws the viewer's attention to the main focal point. We tend to take



Republic Street, Valletta (evening scene), 2012, 42 x 57cm

our heritage for granted and recording particular aspects of our heritage perhaps contributes in a small measure to improve



Venice canal & bridge (1), 2010, 40 x 55cm

awareness. Given artistic license I can remove elements from a scene which detract from the overall character.



Venice canal & bridge (3), 2011, 47 x 61cm

You are currently holding your first local exhibition at the Hilton Hotel in St Julian's, which runs up to the end of October. What inspired you to set up this exhibition of



Valletta waterfront, 2012, 54 x 48cm

watercolour paintings, and what has the feedback from the public been so far?

The art curator E. V. Borg, an established art critic, encouraged me to work for this exhibition when he viewed my watercolours about 2 years ago. I was fortunate enough to have had a generous sponsorship from Hilton Malta and Deco manufacturing besides a small grant from the Good Causes Fund as otherwise it would not have been possible to set this up. Being at the Hilton, I got a lot of positive feedback mainly from tourists particularly appreciating the use of colour, perspective and interpretation of local scenes. I am glad that after this exhibition my works will be embellishing homes in Malta, Sweden, Belgium, London, Germany, America and Japan.

The exhibition is called "Impressions". What led you to choose this title?

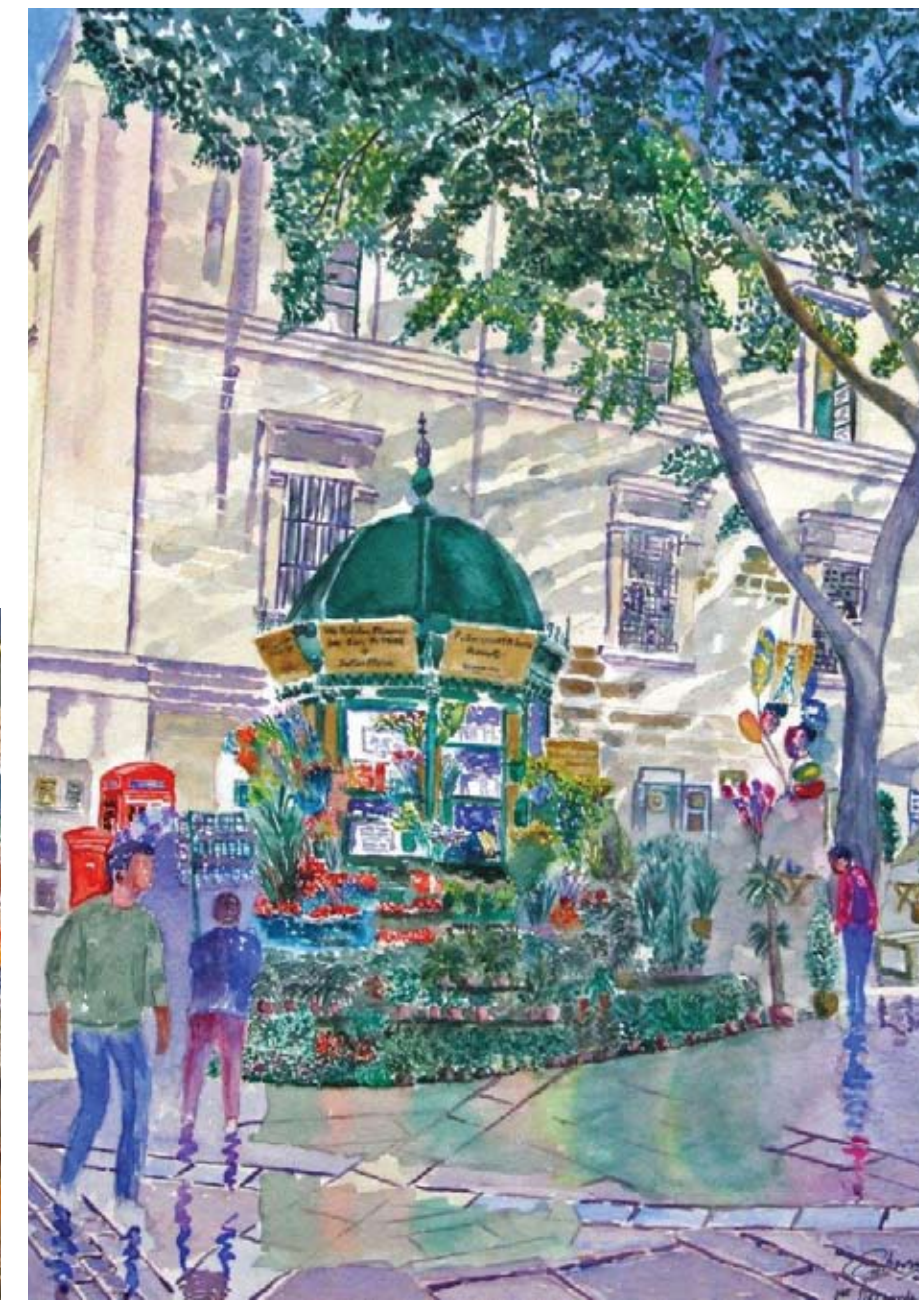
As you go through the exhibits you will notice a subtle development over time in technique, the more recent works being less detailed. "Impressions" tends to define better what I am trying to achieve in my own style - impressions of various scenes leaving the viewer enough room to fill in

the details in his mind rather than producing a 'photographic' reproduction of the scene.

What is next in the pipeline? Do you plan to continue to focus on your paintings?

Whilst working up to this exhibition, I felt a bit constrained in experimenting further with the medium since I wanted to

achieve results which could be exhibited. Now I hope to build up again the momentum since while the exhibition is running I spent long hours at the Hilton meeting people and managing the exhibition, so I had to slow down in my painting activity. I have already been approached by another hotel to put up another exhibition next year but I have not decided



Flower kiosk, Republic Street, Valletta, 2011, 44 x 59cm

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH M. SPITERI, (1934-2013)

Joseph M. Spiteri graduated from the University of Malta in 1958. During 1956 to 1975, he worked as an architect in the Public Works Department, as it was then known; he then worked as Senior Architect with MaltConsult, for three years, until in 1979 he joined the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering. He taught architectural design to generations of architects, between 1979 and 2002, during a very tumultuous and difficult period for the Department, and, subsequently, new Faculty. Amongst his many works, the ones that I have always admired, even before I knew the architect who had designed them, were the towers at Qawra Point, the new town at Santa Lucija, and, most of all, his villa, at Ta' Xbiex. He was a strong believer in sketching and drawing, as a means of communicating ideas, and a skilled water colourist. His passionate concern with the built environment, which he incessantly transmitted to his students, is encapsulated in this essay, written in 1991 for a Faculty publication, but never published, and which I uncovered in my many papers. His analysis of the "State of the Environment", and his heartfelt "j'accuse", remain completely applicable to day. Students of the built environment would do well to listen to his words.

Prof. Alex Torpiano
Dean, Faculty for the Built Environment

VISUAL LITERACY

BY PERIT JOSEPH M. SPITERI,
1991

Walking in many of the streets in a recently developed area, be it residential or otherwise, it is more likely than not that the visual crassness encountered is of such a degree, and carried out with such unabashed nonchalance, that the sensitive eye will, in no time, demand some response.

Hastening to one's car and fleeing to the countryside would be an instinctive reaction. Out there, one is, in turn, shocked by the rash assault on the landscape, not to say anything of the staggering number of rubbish heaps, as the reckless dotting with incongruous intrusions shows no sign of abating.

But it was not inevitable that it should be so; indeed, it is the knowledge that a great deal of harm done to the surroundings was

avoidable, which brings forth the heartfelt lament.

Notwithstanding the pace that building development had managed to attain, particularly in the 70's and 80's, the demonstration of public concern about the whole question of the environment was too tepid. Those of us who were in "Development Control" as far back as the 60's, had sensed the considerable environmental problems looming ahead, but the majority thought we were over-reacting.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we had to reach the mid-80's before concern about environment was to become a main topic, and consequently drive political parties to study planning legislation about the environment's guardianship, afresh.

In previous years, governments have hesitated and procrastinated, and though some measures were formulated, these remained

inadequate and incapable of coping with the ensuing situation.

By the late 80's the topic of environment evolved into having universal importance, although for different reasons, and with different issues. This undoubtedly led to an increase of the public awareness of the problem.

Visual Atrocities

As an example of the minimal concern about the environment in the 70's, I can relate my experience of series of public "dialogue" sessions held in 1981. I had chosen to attend the one reserved for professional people, and which had the cultural needs of the Islands as its debating theme. Many issues were discussed – from the dubbing of films in Maltese for TV, to the state of ballet teaching facilities – yet not a single person brought up for discussion anything

that had to do with the environment, built or unbuilt.

Noting the omission, I drew attention to four aspects of the problem, namely (1) wastage of land; (2) amount of sprawl; (3) despoliation of landscape; and (4) proliferation of visual atrocities.

I concentrated in particular about the last mentioned aspect, the one which constitutes the greatest threat to the appearance of our towns and villages.

Nobody who has followed the evolution of local architecture over the last decades can have failed to notice how depressingly ugly many of our buildings have begun to look, frequently to the point of repulsiveness. It is incomprehensible how certain designs go past the drawing board.

Ugliness in buildings is not a problem which is peculiar to any one country. In Europe, America and other countries, the great criti-



cal debate has tended to be aimed at the Modernist Movement, and ugliness seen primarily as direct effect of its ideology.

Modernist must not be confused with modern. Architect L. Krier writes "Twentieth century historians and critics endemically confuse the terms modern and modernist(ic). The term modern merely indicates period and time, whereas the term modernist(ic) has clear ideological and moral connotations. When historians write about 'the Modern Movement', they clearly mean by this term 'the modernist movements' as opposed to the traditionalist movements."(1)

Until the early 70's the tenets of Modernism, as developed in Germany and France held sway, and Modernism still provided to many architects a ready gauge for judging whether a building was right or wrong.

As soon as Modernism was questioned, other new trends appeared (e.g. Post-Modern) and the battle about styles has since never ebbed away. Only a couple of days ago, Richard Rogers, in one of a lecture series at the Tate, reiterated that the 'most interesting part of architectural crisis of the Modern movement has been the recognition of the new and different approaches to design.'

Ecstatic enthusiasm for technology provided the roots for modernist theory. It is therefore understandable that local architecture was destined to respond to the movements' ideas in a slow and unsure manner.

The abundant supply of stone, a versatile and load-bearing material, and the introduction of structural concrete that was largely adopted as roof slabs, accounts for the survival of a system of construction which though not ignoring use of modern aids, has in essence remained dependent on old ideas.

No doubt the mannerisms of leading Modernist architects were imitated, but rarely was there a grasp of the movement's underlying philosophy. Aping of the superficial frills did appear, but no great thought was spared on the essential new spatial possibilities. A building is recognised as Modernist if it succeeds to express clearly the structure on the outside and yet still



Presentation drawing of proposed law Courts in Valletta, showing front elevation on Kings Way (Republic Street)

manages to manipulate ingeniously the internal space. What really counts is a more than skin-deep solution.

Whoever has stood inside, and admired, such buildings as Hans Scharoun's Concert Hall for Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, or MVR's Museum also in Berlin, will understand what I mean without need of further information.

The spatial effects in both cases are calculated with extreme care, at once dramatic and subtle, simple and complex. In both cases the spatial effects were only possible because of technological feats.

The Flaws of Modernism

Despite the occasional masterpiece, Modernism had its flaws. An important one lay in the newly discovered freedom which technology encouraged. Architects could design to criteria other than those known at the beginning of this century. This laid heavier responsibilities on the architects' shoulders since the sole arbiter of good or bad was now their artistic conscience.

In a lecture delivered in 1957, John Summerson referred to this problem when, he said, "(the architect) has to face up to the ordering of a vast number of variables and how he does this is a question. There is no common theoretical agreement as to what happens or should happen at that point. There is a hiatus; one may even be justified in speaking of a "missing architectural language". Gropius has stated the difficulty as the lack of an "optical key", as an objective common denominator of design – some-

thing which should provide "the impersonal basis of as a prerequisite for general understanding", which would serve "as the controlling agent within the creative act." That is a precise description of the functions served by antiquity in the classical centuries. The dilemma is really an enlargement of the flaw already apparent in the mid-eighteenth century theory – the flaw that while antiquity was eliminated as an absolute, nothing was introduced which took its place as a universally accredited language of architectural form."(2)

Criticism of the movement was eventually to be on two fronts – aimed at ideology as well as its grammar. This development was unavoidable, as it soon became apparent that a full measure of success remained resolutely elusive, unless the skill in handling basic design principles, like proportion, scale, relation of part to whole, sense of detail, etc. was inherently present in the end result.

In commenting on Quinlan Terry's Riverside Development at Richmond, Roger Scruton, a professor of Aesthetics at Birbeck College, London asks, "Is there something wrong with the height of this door, the breadth of this arch or window, the length of this façade? Do these steps descend too steeply, turn too abruptly, or end with too great an anti-climax? ... For when was it that a modern building last gave you the opportunity to ask them, let alone to find comfort in your answers?"(3)

He elaborates further on these lines, in his review of the book 'Dilemma of Style' by J. Mordant Crook. "In the battle between the

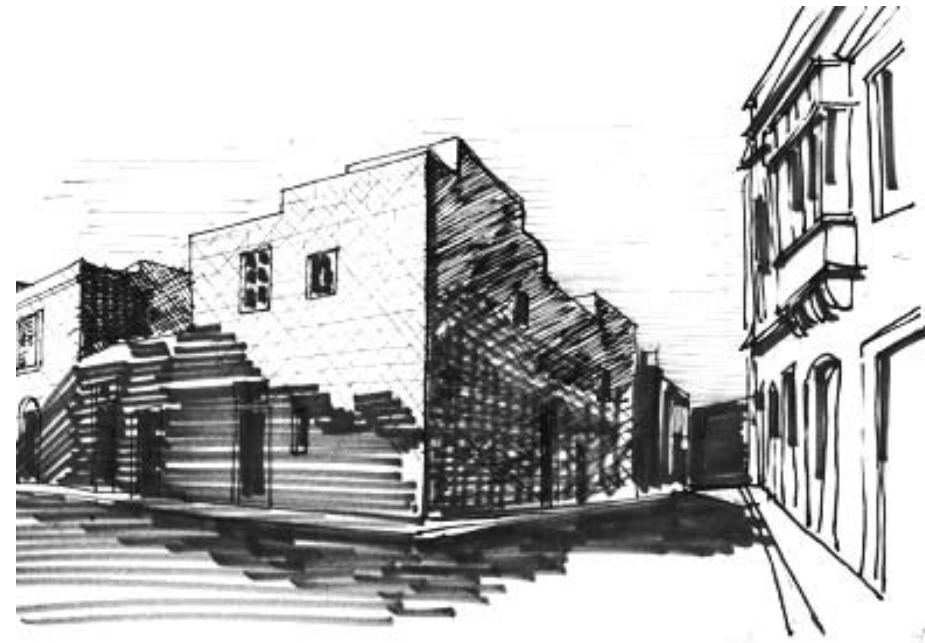
Classical and the Gothic, both sides were agreed over the most important point, that nothing matters more in a building than its public appearance. Facades, towers, roofs and pinnacles are the essence of architecture, and the duty of the architect is to compose them successfully.

Height proportion and form are rendered intelligible by detail and the true discipline of architecture, therefore, lies in a sense of detail, how to see it, how to draw it and how to combine it in a harmonious totality.

That discipline was destroyed by the modern movement, and replaced by a false paradigm of artistic expression, by a rhetoric of Titanism, and by the cool mathematics of the engineer. Thus arose the 'new nude style' as Lutyens described it, "grammarless and cheaply adjectived". Our present need is not for the congeries of uncoordinated parts which the postmodernists would wish on us, but for an architectural grammar."(4)

Whilst not necessarily agreeing fully with the views expressed, the two passages do ably draw attention to the importance of visual literacy. The nature of disenchantment with contemporary design is therefore twofold. Apart from the stylistic shouting match, there is awareness of a marked decline in visual qualities.

In the climate of disillusionment that has developed, a rise in hankering for past styles has become evident, even among technologically advanced societies. It would be wrong to interpret this reaction as a show of sentimentalism. It is better explained as the sensing of the need for visual aesthetics, ▶



Studies in Maltese village and town streetscapes - freehand ink sketches.

which are more than an optional extra. Author K. W. Smithies, in his book 'Design Principles' writes: "If people say they like the work of the Elizabethan or Georgian periods, it is not to say that they like only that period of design in that form. They are expressing a liking for the visual qualities they see in those works and find lacking today. An assertion in favour of the eternal verities should encourage us to find why they are lacking today, not to attempt to create past styles!"(5) All this means that there are fundamental lessons about visual literacy that are

learned best from our ancestors, and the importance of study of historic examples can never be underrated. "The principles discoverable in the works of the past belong to us, not so the results. It is taking the end for the means", writes Owen Jones in 'Grammar of Ornament'.

Lowering of Visual Standards

In Malta, the bulk of architecture has remained largely traditional in outlook, and therefore the profound uneasiness felt elsewhere about stylistic trends hardly applies to us. Modernism's influence on our architecture is marginal.

Appreciation BY PERIT ANDRE' ZAMMIT

When the celebrant at the Carmelite church of Balluta announced the death of architect Joseph Spiteri, I instinctively thought of Sir Christopher Wren's memorial tablet at St Paul's Cathedral in London: Si monumentum requiris circumspecte (If you want a memorial look around you). For the Carmelite church is probably Joe's most iconic and memorable work. Joe was a very talented architect and a very unassuming man. I had the honour of having him in my section for a year or so when he first joined the Public Works Department as a student engineer in 1956. I found him a great help, especially when I started designing factories and industrial estates. I kept calling on him for inspiration when he moved on, even after I left and went into private practice. Our paths crossed again when he joined the teaching staff at the University where he was a senior lecturer and particularly appreciated as a design tutor. We also met on various boards where his advice was always given without fear or favour. Unfortunately, poor health cut short his professional career but his wide-ranging output remains very remarkable. It could have been prodigious.

To his loving wife and children I hasten to offer my deepest condolences.



The spread of ugliness, in our case, is to be pinpointed more accurately on the general debasement in visual literacy. Our greatest problem is that we seem to have lost all sense of the basic visual standards which are essential components of the designer's vocabulary. The worrying upsurge in the execrable visual quality of the built environment is the outcome of several factors, but the important three, readily identifiable are:

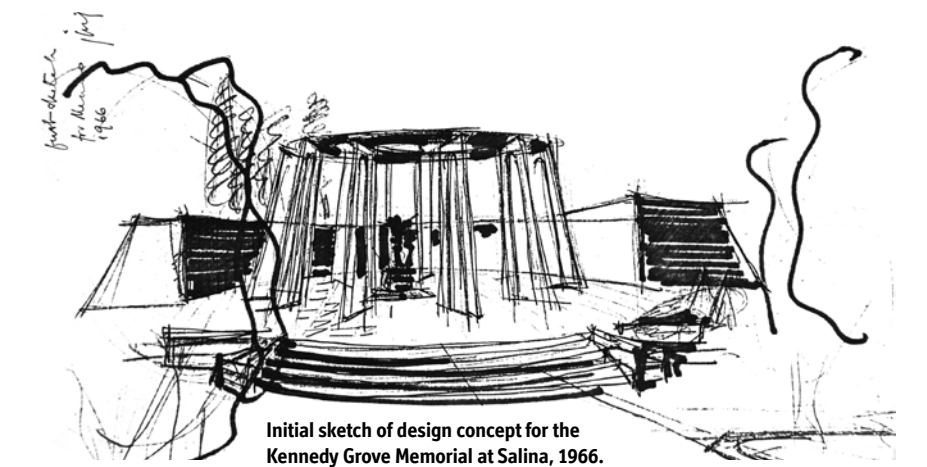
1. ignorance of design principles by architects and public alike;
2. bad manners resulting from the neglect of principles of deportment, in turn caused by an absence of a general standard of good taste and;
3. application of alien planning measures.

The lowering in visual standards is eloquently exemplified by the modern versions of the

traditional balcony. In the past our forefathers handled the balcony with a sure eye for correct proportions, details and its placing in relation to other features.

The old timber balcony, now replaced by its modern stone or aluminium variations, was nearly always one hundred per cent visually successful and contributed positively to adornment of our streets. Today this national feature has been transformed with its crude details galore, into a coarse parody of its elegant prototype. The fake, puny, ill-placed corbels are shaped to a weak profile, ridiculously shallow depth, and left to fall short of the cantilever's edge. The whole composition is a general mess. Complete loss of visual discipline can best be seen if one looks at the way these balconies are treated, design-wise, as they sweep around corners. It is not just balconies that look sloppy. No feature from arch, window, balustrade, flight of steps, columns etc. down to detail of mouldings is free from the vagaries of the untutored builder's or designer's mind. Columns from the historic styles twirl and swirl to house owners' hearts content, ignoring the rules of proportion – diameter to height, and the inter-columnar spacing, oddly enough, is determined by the concrete lintol.

And one must not forget the foreign mannerisms. An influence which has left an indelible mark on recent buildings first appeared in the 60's, and has remained fashionable to this day. It is a motif consisting of a vertical band, shaped from a slightly recessed plane and which groups superimposed doors and windows all kept to constant width. The band begins at ground level and ends at top, right at parapet's edge. Since emphasis of vertically is rare in past buildings, this motif has no resonance with our traditional architecture. On the contrary, our buildings have a profusion



Initial sketch of design concept for the Kennedy Grove Memorial at Salina, 1966.



Water colour painting. Sketch of Fawwara Church.



Studies in Maltese town streetscapes and balconies - freehand ink sketches.

of horizontal accents. Even when a building rises to a height which markedly exceeds the width of frontage, the horizontal fascias are discarded.

These vertical shallow bands first appeared at St. Andrews, and later at the University in the early 60's. Ever since, they have been applied ad nauseam, obviously without much thought regarding their appropriateness. These vertical bands provide a ready way of rubber-stamping elevations. The fascias look ghastlier when painted in colour.

When Sir Basil Spence used this vertical treatment in his buildings, critic D. Pryce Jones described it as consisting of "recessed vertical lines which just stopped in the air, suggesting that more floors could be mounted when more funds were available"(6)

Architectural Balance

Good manners and observance of the correct planning formulae are not only inseparable but serve to complement each other. The popularity of fully and semi-detached villa accounted for introduction of layouts that relied on inclusion of villas on a lavish scale. Apart from swallowing up precious land at an alarming rate, these villas normally do not exert much of a unifying force on their surroundings. Instead, they create visual repercussions which

need to be controlled and held in check. They make the design of streets that is comparable to the work of our forefathers, in any sense, almost impossible.

The front garden which is essentially a foreign influence, and which by no means is found only in villas, was originally introduced as a means of embellishing our street. It has, more often than not, done the right opposite. All these negative effects were, strictly speaking, fairly predictable, as many designers and planners had drawn attention to the problems such developments generate.

The following written in 1924 is an example: "The quality of our culture is expressed far more completely in the built-up common thoroughfares than in the detached houses, which rich men may choose to erect in rural surroundings. The main school of good building has always been the town, for it is in the town alone that architectural merits can be studied and acquired ... A training in urban values will help the architect to design a dignified house which is fit to take its place in a rural landscape; but if he makes the detached building his first and principal study, it is extremely improbable that he will be able to contribute worthily to the architecture of a city"(7)

In the past, streets had an architectural balance and serenity, because they were composed



Design of a proposal to create an enclosed and paved seating area in Piazza Regina, one of the most beautiful and monumental squares in Valletta.

of buildings which relied on use of common features, and asserted individuality principally through subtle variations in the arrangement of these features, which, in turn, differed slightly, but retained closely related detailing. The wild and undignified scramble for attention by new buildings destroys the visual unity of street, inserting in its place undesirable visual fragmentation. With an abundance of unrelated bits and pieces, restraint and harmony suffer and in their place an impression of near-disarray induces predominance of an unnerving feeling of visual tensions.

Doubtful Values

The greatest dilemma we may be facing is that in the development of new attitudes there is a genuine desire to create beauty. We all need beauty. The problem is that our notion of beauty can be flawed. Visual literacy, not unlike language literacy, requires no small extent, but sound and assiduous study. The uninitiated cannot be judges of beauty, and architecture is far too serious an activity to leave it in unskilled hands, unless we want to court disaster. The architectural debacle, of no small proportions, that we are experiencing is the logical consequence of having far too many buildings displaying the whims and fancies of the layman. The prevalent notion of beauty is, by and large, based on a brief in spurious values, one which is spiritually superficial and unifying.

"Architecture and urban planning are the direct expression of a particular social pattern. They express in a clear way the values and the very nature of the society which creates them. The way buildings grow into cities and their own relationships to landscape is very likely to be relative to the degree of order and integration of the society itself"(8) This was written some years ago. More poignantly, I would add that architecture is the outward sign of an

inward and spiritual culture. It appears paradoxical that our ancestors, who were, on one hand, considered illiterate in matters of language, had, on the other hand, displayed an uncanny sense of visual judgement.

A mood of despondency will certainly grip those who are obliged to search for the forces responsible for the unhappy shaping of our built environment, which is not only composed from an arbitrary agglomeration of kitsch, but which also lacks the delicate touch visible in our forefathers' work.

The ugliness which has assumed such pervasive proportions in our buildings may be understood as a sign and symptom of degeneration in vital, enduring values. Indeed, the indications are that we may well be engulfed in the throes of a galloping social and cultural malaise! It is to affect a change in this state that a healthy and vigorous discussion has to be unrelentingly and continually stimulated.

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All sketches are by Perit Joseph M. Spiteri, and have been reproduced by courtesy of his son Stephen C. Spiteri.

Time for Architecture 2013

The ties that bind architecture and culture together are a constant subject of analysis and discussion, probably because both are such vibrant fields in and of themselves. This year the International Union of Architects (UIA) chose "Culture-Architecture" as the theme for the 2013 World Architecture Day, which fell on the 7 October (World Architecture Day is celebrated every first Monday of October). Through this theme, the UIA hoped to generate a wellspring of interpretations and illustrations of architects' diversity, richness, imagination, and capacity for invention through their designs and realisations.

World Architecture Day is celebrated worldwide each year, concurrently with World Habitat Day, which is organised by UN-Habitat. The theme chosen for this year's World Habitat Day was "Urban Mobility". The purpose of World Habitat Day is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world that we all have a responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. The United Nations chose the theme Urban Mobility because mobility and access to goods and services is essential to the efficient functioning of our cities and towns as they expand. Accessible cities encourage a shift towards more sustainable modes of transportation and draw more and more travellers out of cars and onto trains, buses, bike paths, and sidewalks. Mobility, however, is about more than just the mode of transport we use. Urban planning and



At the Turkish Cemetery

design should focus on how to bring people and places together, by creating cities that focus on accessibility, and optimal urban densities, rather than simply increasing the length of urban transport infrastructure.

The *Kamra tal-Periti* joined its counterparts in other parts of the world by organising Time for Architecture, a series of events held to commemorate World Architecture Day. Time for Architecture 2013 forms part of a strategy to create space for reflection and debate about architecture and the importance of the quality of our built environment, as well as transmitting architecture and creating awareness about such topics among the general public.

The *Kamra Tal-Periti* chose the theme "The importance and value of good design: Is

it too late?" for this year's events, focusing on housing and the urban environment in which we live. How does design quality impact the urban environment? What is its value in a context of a historic built environment and limited land and resources? Is it too late? The events provided an opportunity to reflect on the state of our urban environment, the value and role of architecture and good design, the importance of valuing our built cultural heritage, as well as allowing all those who attended to consider some of the challenges which impact the quality of our urban environments.

The events, which took place at The Fortifications Interpretation Centre in Valletta, kicked off on the 5 October with a children's workshop in the morning. This year's work-

shop considered the past, present and future of housing in the different continents, setting a task for the children to think about future dwellings in different countries. An exciting morning ensued with the children building models of their interpretation of the house of the future.

In the evening, the *Kamra* hosted an exhibition of thesis projects executed by the group of students graduating in Architecture & Civil Engineering this year. The launch was part of the *Notte Bianca* events and attracted a good crowd of architects, students, as well as the general public. Addressing those present, Prof Alex Torpiano, Dean of the Faculty for the Built Environment, spoke about the importance of the introduction of a culture of design competitions, a matter which the



Kamra tal-Periti has been advocating for a number of years. He noted the need to focus on more quality in architecture, and that it was certainly now time for better discourse on architecture to take place as well as the need for a better understanding of the issues of the future.

On Sunday morning, 6 October, Time for Architecture continued with a guided tour by Dr. Conrad Thake. The tour visited three cemeteries, and presented an opportunity to explore parts of our heritage which are not usually open for public viewing. The Msida Bastion cemetery was established around 1806 along a segment of fortifications overlooking Marsamxett Harbour. It was the first Protestant cemetery in Malta and was used mainly for the burial of British nationals residing locally, with one notable exception of Mikiel Anton Vassalli, one of the leading Maltese intellectuals and father of the Maltese language, who was buried here as he was not on good terms with the local Catholic church at the time of his death. The tour also visited the Ta' Braxia Cemetery, Pieta, which was constructed around 1856 to provide further burial grounds for non-Catholic burials. It was initially designed by the Maltese architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia, then still in his mid-twenties and in the employment of the public works department. By the end of the 19th century, the cemetery had undergone further extensions to accommodate more burial sites. One of the main features of the cemetery is the funerary chapel that was built in 1893 in honour of Lady Hamilton-Gordon, to the design of the British architect John Loughborough Pearson (1817-1897). The chapel is built in a revivalist neo-Romanesque/Gothic style and we will have the opportunity to appreciate its enchanting interior spaces. The third cemetery visited was the Ottoman military cemetery in Marsa, one of the finest examples of Orientalist architecture in Europe. The Muslim cemetery was constructed in 1874-1875 to the designs of Emanuele Luigi Galizia (1830-1906), who was commissioned by the Ottoman Sultan Abdülaziz Khan. The cemetery complex combines elements from Indo-Mughal and Moorish Islamic architecture, with its picturesque skyline of bulbous onion-domes and pencil minaret towers.

We will appreciate the fine Arabesque stone carvings that decorate the entrance pavilion, the prayer/burial lodge and main façade of the cemetery complex. This is a fine example of a neo-Ottoman cemetery representative of Islam and the Orient in a nineteenth-century British island-colony.

On Tuesday, 8 October, UK renowned planner and urban designer Stephen Gleave, who is chairman of IBI Taylor Young, gave a talk titled "Making better places - buildings and space." This event, which attracted a 100-strong audience, delved into a number of issues. MEPA Chairman Perit Vincent Cassar gave an introductory speech wherein he questioned whether, as a country, we are managing to achieve quality in our built environment as the *Kamra tal-Periti* had so strongly advocated in its seminal publication "The Urban Challenge." He urged the *Kamra* to continue to issue public statements, and to organise events and CPDs with the aim of sensitising both periti and the general public to the need for quality in our surroundings. He further stated that MEPA, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority, is committed to achieving a step change in the approach to quality in design and indicated his support of the *Kamra's* intention to set up a system of Design Review.

Stephen Gleave then took over the floor and delved into a number of thought provoking issues focussed around the theme of what makes a city? What makes a great place? How do we achieve memorable design? What are contemporary design drivers? Is it possible to 'control' design? How does great design add value? Who is responsible? One of the issues raised was that of land ownership, which locally is becoming more and more fragmented, thus rendering it more difficult to achieve cohesiveness in our urban landscape. Gleave also gave his impressions after having visited different parts of the island during his short two-day stay - he commented on the fact that the Maltese urban centres are steeped in history, yet forward looking through sensitive interventions which have rendered historic buildings more suitable for contemporary needs. In concluding, he stated that "buildings must never be selfish" but must reflect and complement the context



At Ta' Braxia Cemetery



At the Msida Bastion Cemetery

within which they sit.

On Thursday, 10 October, the *Kamra* screened the Gary Hustwitz film "Urbanized", a feature-length documentary about the design of cities, which looks at the issues and strategies behind urban design and features some of the world's foremost architects, planners, policymakers, builders, and thinkers. Over half the world's population now lives in an urban area, and 75% will call a city home by 2050. But while some cities are experiencing explosive growth, others are shrinking. The challenges of balancing housing, mobility, public space, civic engagement, economic development, and environmental policy are fast becoming universal concerns. Yet much of the dialogue on these issues is disconnected from the public domain. Who is allowed to shape our cities, and how do they do it? Unlike many other fields of design, cities aren't created by any one specialist or expert. There are many contributors to urban change, including ordinary citizens who can have a great impact improving the cities in

which they live. By exploring a diverse range of urban design projects around the world, *Urbanized* frames a global discussion on the future of cities. "Urbanized" is the third part of Gary Hustwit's design film trilogy, joining "Helvetica" and "Objectified."

The events came to an end on Friday, 11 October, with a debate on the situation of vacant properties in Malta. Unfortunately this journal went to print a couple of days before the event, and therefore tA will report on it in more detail in the next issue. The main aim of the debate was to attempt to understand the definition of property vacancy and the reasons for different types of vacancy. This event was followed by a closing reception.

The Time for Architecture Events were sponsored by DEX Workspaces, Signs Systems, The Ministry for Education and Employment, MEPA and Transient Light & Sound and are open to the general public. The *Kamra tal-Periti* also thanks the Restoration Directorate for their support through the use of the Fortifications Centre for the events.



Children's Workshop



Saving Villa Frere: a National must

BY PERIT EDWARD SAID

Readers who are or were students of architecture will surely recall admiring the Pietà tempietto lauded for its Neo-Classical character, loosely attributed to the style's local pioneer Giorgio Pullicino. Few would succeed in actually getting to the building today, which stands as a total misfit in the present stop-gap site that was formerly St Luke's Hospital. Fewer still would guess that this masterpiece in stereotomy was one time a centrepiece set in a landscape rich in symbolism, laid out at the whim and expense of one of the most genial and enlightened men to have lived in Malta in recent history.

And what a site this once was. Indeed, Guardamangia and the fishing hamlet of Pietà were favoured by both Knight and English gentleman as a quiet, wholesome seaside retreat, away from the bustle of Valletta. It was in this spirit that Villa Frere was conceived in 1833 and subsequently developed. For over a century, the grounds, clearly inspired by the English landscape garden movement which Frere was so familiar with, were the most acclaimed in the Maltese Islands and even overseas. At the end of the 1930s Captain Edward Price, who followed Frere by investing in further extensions and embellishments, left the property in pristine condition. By then Villa Frere had been visited by three queens and prominently featured in the revered *Country Life Magazine*. It boasted a Japanese Garden complete with an exquisite shrine to Buddha, a Dutch Tulip Garden and even a Maltese Wilderness.

"An unpretentious house facing the waters.... That is one's first views of the Villa Frere, and it is difficult to imagine that so much beauty lies behind it ... Once through the front door and out at the back ... it is an upward pilgrimage of beauty ..." (*Country Life Magazine*)

The significance of Villa Frere not only as a monument to its creators and those who visited, but to its unique architecture and landscape design, cannot be emphasised more. Since the last war, like so much of our nation's heritage sites, the property fell into obscurity. The threats it has been subjected were flagged up by some of the most respected names in Maltese society including Prof. Donald Sultana and Prof. Paul Cassar



A general view of the garden eye-catchers and other architectural elements as they stand today.

who praised the magnanimity of Sir John Hookham Frere and lamented the pitiful condition which the State-owned property had been reduced to. In short, of the once sprawling twelve-plus Maltese tumoli of orchards, terraces, pergolas and pleasaunces, a meagre one third have been spared, although dwindling further. The house still stands but only just, with much of its fabric now structurally condemned. A geological marvel in the form of a very deep funnel-shaped cavern which had led Frere and his friend Grognet to dream of these grounds as being part of the mythical Atlantis, was in the early 1980s brutally buried beneath the hospital helicopter pad! What survives today, saved only by the timely interventions of heritage-loving individuals, suffers chronically from old age and vandalism. More ominous however is a planning application which seeks to destroy an adjacent property, itself a large garden of the formal cruciform kind and incidentally older than Villa Frere, of course, to give way to yet more blokok. If approved, then Villa Frere's delicately chosen context will be ruined for good.

All is not lost however. A group of volunteers through a recently set up organisation have made it their mission to salvage what they can of Frere's home. Daunting to say the least, proposals have been put forward to the relevant authorities to right a number of blunderous wrongs which are the result of sheer crassness over the past few decades (the helicopter pad heads the list!). Through



Bust of John Hookham Frere at the National Gallery of Canada

public awareness the Friends of Villa Frere aim at highlighting the property's qualities which are of cultural, social, literary, philological, historic, architectural, botanical, horticultural, ecological, geological and archaeological significance. Pedantic as this just sounded, it cannot however be understated. Villa Frere is a heritage site of national and to some extent international importance. In conclusion, following is a quote about English landscape gardening, the author being invited to keep Villa Frere in mind, taking perhaps the last sentence contextually rather than literally:

"Few of the owners can have lived long enough to see their dreams realised, for trees will not be hurried, and the magnificent woodland scenes which they visualised may well have come to maturity long after their



Villa Frere tempietto today. The tempietto in 1930 as portrayed in *Country Life Magazine* (inset)



Villa Frere as seen from the Pietà marina.

designers are laid to rest in their cold marble tombs, but so great was their faith in their way of life and the England for which they lived that they built and planted for Englishmen yet unborn." Anybody wishing to assist in any way is encouraged to contact villafrere@gmail.com.

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Globalsiteplans.com Rates the Top 10 Architecture Websites for 2013

www.skyscrapercity.com

Last year's number one architecture website according to globalsiteplans.com maintained its top ranked position in 2013. SkyscraperCity is an online forum for architects interested in sharing ideas, photos and information connected to their field. Founded on September 11, 2012, the independent



platform took various local forums that discuss skyscrapers, architecture and urban development and brought them together on this site. The amount of

content on the site seems endless, but to reap all of its benefits, you must register by creating an account, which gives you the ability to share your own work.

Otherwise, you are limited to the materials that have already been posted on the site. SkyscraperCity's forums cover a variety of topics, including world news, infrastructure and mobility, photos, fun and location-based information. There are also engaging sections such as "guess the city," "rate today's banner" and "one on one."

www.archdaily.com

ArchDaily was number five on last year's list, but has since moved up the rankings by being one of the best sources of information for architects around the world. The website was founded in 2008 by David Basulto and David Assael with the goal of improving the urban community for the

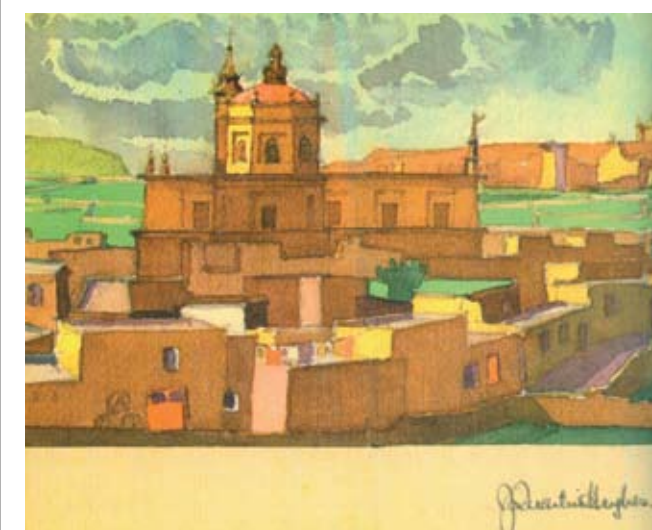
three billion residents who will be moving into cities over the next 40 years. The site provides articles, information on selected projects, interviews and even updates on software. Much of its content comes from the users, who are encouraged to submit projects, information, or even tips on how the site can be improved.



www.treehugger.com

TreeHugger, a sustainability-minded media outlet, has maintained the same ranking at third place since 2012. It was founded in 2003 by Graham Hill, and later incorporated into Discovery's Planet Green Initiative. The website publishes blogs, newsletters, interviews and consistently updates their Facebook and Twitter pages. Their range of focus

is impressive, including the following: design, technology, transportation, science, business, living, energy, slide-shows and social content. Readers can submit ideas for stories for any of the listed categories by simply sending an email. You also have the ability to submit a question about the site and search content on the site according to the author or topic.



This is a wonderful war-time watercolour drawing by the late architect and architectural historian Quentin Hughes. Can you identify which parish church is depicted in the drawing?

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 December 2013 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 62 is Mr Tano Zammit. Congratulations! The image published showed the Auberge de France before it was destroyed in the Second World War.

Solar Energy

Today, one can safely state that the age of alternative technologies and renewable energy is truly with us. Infinite sources of energy like the wind and the sun, can be considered as renewable and these resources have been used for many years. However the fact that the cost of electrical energy from solar and wind energy was more expensive than that from conventional power stations was never really appealing for the generation companies themselves or for private users and investors. It is only in the last years that these forms of energy generation have become economically viable, thanks to the many incentives that the various states around the world have given in various forms.

The incentives were targeted at industry, commercial as well as residential in various forms, from feed in tariff for a number of years to grant rebates coupled with feed in tariff, as is the case in the Maltese Islands. Still, I consider that we are in the infancy in Malta where it comes to Solar energy, and that we need to do so much more to be able to tap into the one resource of which we are blessed with all year round. This is solar energy.

Thermal Solar

Alternative Technologies Ltd are local distributors and installers of Chromagen Solar Water heaters from Israel, a market leader in the field. In Israel solar water heaters have been used since the early eighties. Every household, by law, needs to install a solar water heater. And the fact that they live in high rise buildings is not an excuse not to install. The Thermal Solar Forced loop system can very easily be used in high rise buildings if it is already integrated in the design of the building. In this way one can either have a centralised hot water system, which can then provide hot water using separate individual meters to the various apartments. Else one can even have each individual apartment with its own hot water tank. This is illustrated in the figures attached. In this manner, the common roof area can house a huge thermal array that can transport hot water system to the various tanks in the same building. The hot water tank will sit in each apartment and hence hot water is close to the user, resulting in minimal losses. If we start thinking along

these lines, we can in this way give solar access to all apartments. This way of integrating Thermal hot water systems is already widely used in many countries now. And this creates a direct saving of energy requirement. This in our opinion should be a way forward. We recommend that some form of Thermal Solar Directive should be introduced wherein new households or buildings or any building undergoing renovation should be obliged to include some sort of Thermal solar sources for the hot water needs. Needless to say this will need to be regulated so that the systems that can be used must be reliable and technically robust systems.

Chromagen's central installations for home and commercial use, provide heated water in very large quantities by using an array of collectors. These installations are the perfect solution for apartment buildings, hotels, hospitals and industrial plants. As can be seen in the diagram, such systems can be operated with large storage tanks or with small individual tanks for each consumption unit. Not only are these applications resourceful, but they also contribute to a healthy environment by preventing air pollution and energy saving.

PhotoVoltaic Systems

The same concept of building integration should start to be looked at also at PhotoVoltaic systems. Today many people are looking at this solution to cover part or all of their energy needs, be it for residential, commercial or industrial. Still legislation only refers to roof mounted systems and legislation is still very vague, with legal notices being changed continuously. There are also no particular incentives for the com-



mon areas for condominiums or flats. This should be encouraged and with high efficiency modules, like our SunPower modules, one can generate a decent amount of energy even from a small roof space. Sunpower modules hold the world record for efficiency, provide the most energy production per sq m and have the best warranty. SunPower PV panels have

- Superior Light Capture
- Broader spectral response
- Better low-light performance
- Higher Performance at Higher Temperatures Lower temperature coefficients than conventional crystalline
- No Light Induced Degradation (LID) SunPower cells does not suffer a initial ~3% degradation when first exposed to sunlight
- Higher Lifetime Energy Yield Studies show that crystalline modules degrade less year to year than thin film

Alternative Technologies Ltd are local Authorised installers of SunPower modules.

Building Integrated PV systems

It is also high time that we started to promote the concept of building integration of Photovoltaic. With the right legislation in place, it will be something that architects can start using for facades and rooftops. For this sector, Alternative Technologies Ltd can supply a solar panel that is also a waterproofing membrane hence it can serve as both waterproofing and electricity generation. It is flexible and can be walked on and it is also very tolerant to shadowing. The product we are putting on the market is Tegosolar which has quite a few advantages when it comes to building integration.

It is flexible, easy to install and ensures maximum freedom in designing architecturally important roofs in any context.

It is suitable for new or renovated roofs, on residential, public, industrial or commercial

buildings.

It is light, easy to transport and install, so it allows economies in the dimensions of the roof structure.

It is resistant and durable, without protective glass so it can be walked on for easy and rapid inspection and maintenance of the roof.

It guarantees excellent performance with direct and also with diffused light, due to its high absorption of the blue component of sunlight.

It is suitable for use on a wide range of slopes, from 5° to 60°.

It has high energy output even when its positioning is not exactly ideal, as in walls and on flat roofs.

It is tolerant to shade.

It guarantees high production of electricity with high temperature (excellent output up to 80°C) and it does not require rear ventilation.

Tegosolar achieves greater output in kWh of electricity

produced per Watt installed, even 10-20% higher than most of the crystalline modules. At Alternative Technologies Ltd, we pride ourselves in providing honest and reliable information to our clients, coupled with best in class technology in all filed we work in. Call us on 27380309 or 21380309 for a no obligation consultation on your energy needs.

Alternative Technologies... we power your future..

Ing. Mario Cachia B. Elec. Eng (Hons) is a graduate from the University of Malta in Electrical Engineering and has worked in various Engineering posts locally and internationally for the past twenty years. Ing Mario Cachia is now Managing Director of his company Alternative Technologies Ltd. Ing. Cachia is also a Registered Energy Performance Assessor of Buildings (Dwellings). Ing Cachia has been involved in the design and authorisation process of various MWp PV solar farms in Italy, the UK, South Africa, Greece and Israel.