



the Architect

The official journal of the Kamra tal-Periti

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KAMRA TAL - PERITI

NEWSPAPER POST

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**“A genuine, fresh,
professional,
studied approach”**

Minister Louis Galea

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140, AND COUNTING...

It seems as though the country has launched itself onto a rollercoaster ride of proliferation of projects. September saw the proposal by government of 20 projects for the Grand Harbour area, followed in November by the proposal of another 20 projects for the Marsamxett and Fort St Elmo area. Less than a week after the announcement of these latter proposals, the Opposition presented its proposals for no less than 100 projects spanning across a number of regions. Why not 19 and 21 projects, or 101 (oops, yes that's obvious...!) you may well ask? Have we gone mad?

The 2005 Census results indicate that over 53,000 dwellings are vacant, not counting commercial premises, garages and offices. The country appears to be over-saturated with building stock. One can therefore only but question the rationale behind the proposal of these 140 projects – are these being put forward simply as part of the run-up propaganda to the general elections? Is there any serious study behind all these proposals? True, none (to my knowledge) of the proposed projects are residential in nature, but nonetheless they will result in an increased incidence of construction projects concentrated in one part of the island. Has there been any assessment of the impact of these projects on our infrastructure, on mobility in the regions, and on the social impact these projects would have if implemented? What credentials do the persons drawing up these proposals have to suggest the implementation of these projects that will certainly have a major impact on the regions within which they are intended to be sited? Where does MEPA fit into all of this? Are the proposals in keeping with the just over one-year old local plans? Or have our politicians decided to take matters into their own hands and override the role of MEPA as the planning regulator?

Strangely enough, or maybe just by chance, the last two spates of projects were announced during the same week that the Kamra tal-Periti launched its position paper on the built environment, now aptly titled "The Urban Challenge: Our Quality of Life and the Built Environment." This visionary document takes stock of the current situation of the urban landscape within which the majority of Maltese citizens live, work and play, and proposes directions for change. And, admittedly to the Council's surprise, it made the front page of a local daily newspaper, alongside reportage of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Malta!

Certainly a lot of the onus of the quality of the built environment lies on periti. Quality in design and quality in the services provided by warrant holders are imperative if we are to achieve the goals of the document. It is with this in mind that the Kamra tal-Periti has, concurrently with the preparation of this position paper, embarked on an intensive exercise to propose changes to the legal frame-

work within which it and its members operate. Periti have a duty of care towards their clients and towards society, and their work has a profound, long-lasting effect on the community at large. With this in mind the Kamra is proposing a number of amendments to the Periti Act (Chapter 390 of the Laws of Malta), the Regulations governing the Kamra, and the Code of Professional Conduct which all periti are bound by. It is also proposing the introduction of standard forms of contract between periti and their clients, as well as putting forward a proposal for Professional Indemnity Insurance to its members. All these proposals were presented to members of the profession at a day conference held on the 7 December. Following a period of consultation, the Council of the Kamra will put together a complete package which will serve as the basis of a Quality Charter for the profession.

"The Urban Challenge" also makes public one of the projects that the Kamra has been working on for the past year, namely the setting up of a National Centre for the Built Environment. The role of such a Centre would be to create a 'home' for architecture and the built environment and to provide a platform for the Kamra, its members and society to better engage in the production of a better quality built environment.

The role of the media in all this cannot be undermined. For a number of years the Kamra has striven, even with its limited resources, to contribute by means of opinion articles to the national discussion on matters relating to the building industry and our architectural heritage. It is felt that informed citizens are essential in the achievement of good quality in our built environment. After all it is they who are the clients of all that is built, and it is they who also have an important part to play in the quality of the design and construction being provided. The media thus have an important role to play here as educators of the masses.

2008

It is therefore with many aspirations that the Council of the Kamra tal-Periti looks forward to 2008, and beyond. The consolidation of "The Urban Challenge" through the formulation of a National Policy for Architecture, the setting up of a National Centre for the Built Environment, and the promulgation of a Quality Charter for the profession are but some of the challenges it faces, and which it gladly takes on in fulfilment of its mission statement "to support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community."

Perit Simone Vella Lenicker
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KAMRA TAL-PERITI

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

The Council of the Kamra Tal-Periti in 2007 consists of David Felice (President), Pace (Past - President) and Council Members: Keith Cole, Anthony Fenech Vella, Al Farrugia, Danica Mifsud, Antoine Zam Vella Lenicker, Vincent Cassar, Malco Ruben Sciortino and Philip Grech.

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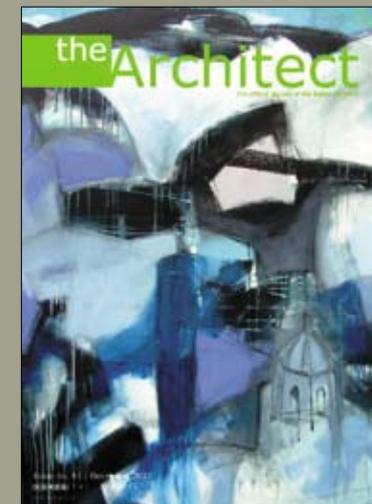
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COVER: **JAMES VELLA CLARK: It's B**

The term of the Council of the Kamra tal-Periti for 2007 has come to an end, with a new Council for 2008 being elected during the Annual General Meeting of the 07 December. At the time of going to print, the composition of the new Council was not yet known. However this is an opportune moment to thank the Council members whose term has now ended for their sterling work for the Kamra, its members and the profession. These are Periti Anthony Fenech Vella, Antoine Zammit, Ruben Sciortino, Malcolm Sullivan and Danica Mifsud. Perit David Pace also ends his term as Past President, thus closing a thirty-year long chapter of service to the Kamra. On behalf of the Kamra's members, the Editorial Board augurs him a well-deserved break.

KTP CANDIDATE ELECTED TO ACE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Perit Vincent Cassar, KTP Council Member, was nominated by the Council of the Kamra to contest the elections for the Executive Board of the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE). The elections were held on the 30 November in Brussels during the ACE's General Assembly. Perit Cassar placed third out of the five candidates who were elected onto the Board. These are Olgierd Dziekonski of Poland, Jordi Querol of Spain, Jean-Paul Scalabre of France and John Wright of the United Kingdom. Juhani Katainen of Finland was elected as President.



The Executive Board of the ACE consists of 11 members, six of whom are elected and five of whom are nominated on a rotational basis in accordance with the rotation of the Presidency of the EU. Among the six elected members is the President of the ACE who chairs meetings of the general Assembly and of the Executive Board and who acts impartially of all national concerns during his two years mandate. The Executive Board manages and administers the day-to-day affairs of the ACE and pursues the policies set out by the General Assembly. The ACE comprises 44 Member Organisations from all EU Countries plus Norway, Switzerland and Candidate Countries, and represents about 450,000 practising architects.

This is an important achievement for the Kamra tal-Periti and for all members of the profession locally. It will mean that the Kamra will be more in touch with what is going on at European level, as well as ensuring that our voice will be there among those of the larger EU countries. Congratulations to Perit Cassar, and good luck in the coming year of work within this sphere.

ACE CIS WORK GROUP

A CIS (Cost-Information Systems) Work Group meeting, chaired by Mr. Philip Ridgway, was held on the 27 September at the Offices of the ACE, in Brussels. Perit Damian Vella Lenicker, Chairperson of the Professional Practice Standing Committee represented the Kamra during this meeting. Items discussed included time management software, EC funding for SME tools and progress on the collection of information for CIS. A follow-up meeting was held in Rome, but no one from Council was able to attend.

ARCHITECTURE CENTRE

The KTP Council sent a letter to Prime Minister, Dr. Lawrence Gonzi, in which it emphasised the importance of having an Architecture Centre for Malta. The main aim of such an institution would be to bring architecture and urban planning issues closer to the general public while at the same time advancing the profession and obtaining an upgraded design process. It is hoped that a meeting with the PM will be arranged soon in order to discuss this venture further.

UMAR

At its 40th meeting held in Marrakech on the 22 October 2007, the Executive Bureau of the Union of Mediterranean Architects (UMAR) decided to support the proposal by the National Order of Architects of Morocco (ONAM) and the Superior Council of Architects' Colleges of Spain (CSCAE), both of which are co-responsible for the UMAR "North-South" Commission, for the creation of a Mediterranean School of Architecture in Tangier (MSAT). The project for its creation will be finalised after ratification by the UMAR General Assembly which will take place in Beirut in January 2008. The majority of tutors and students will be coming from Mediterranean countries, but it will be open to all



those from outside the Mediterranean basin who share the same cultural and architectural concerns. By its very nature the school will contribute to the spreading of Mediterranean culture in the world, and also to the 'rapprochement' of neighbouring countries in the "Mare Nostrum". Perit David Pace, KTP Past-President and present Secretary General of UMAR, attended the meeting.

COURT EXPERTS

Further to the Kamra's call to its members to identify those interested in serving as court-appointed experts in the field of Architecture and Civil Engineering for 2008, a list of periti was forwarded to the Assistant Registrar Civil Courts and Tribunals. In a letter to the Chief Justice, the Council pointed out that it has been approached by some warrant holders who have expressed their concern at the fact that despite having registered their interest in serving as Court Experts for a number of years they have never, or rarely, been called upon to deliver such service, although it appears that the amount of work required by the Courts in this respect could well be distributed among a larger number of experts. The matter will be followed up.

MEMBERSHIP 2008

Membership fees become due on the 01 January 2008. Application forms may be downloaded from www.ktpmalta.com. Membership of the Kamra tal-Periti offers a number of advantages including reduced entrance fees at the various events organised throughout the year and the participation in various benefit schemes that the Kamra may enter into from time to time.

WARRANTING BOARD

As prescribed in Chapter 390 of the Laws of Malta, the Kamra tal-Periti appoints two representatives to sit on the Periti Warranting Board. One representative is appointed each year, for a term of two years. Following the end of term of Perit Lawrence Mintoff as the Kamra's representative for the period October 2005 to September 2007, the Council unanimously agreed to re-appoint Perit Mintoff for another term. Perit David Pace is the other representative of the Kamra, and his term will end in September 2008.

BICC

The Kamra also has a representative on the Building Industry Consultative Council (BICC). Following the end of Perit Lawrence Mintoff's term as the KTP's representative on the BICC, the Council agreed to appoint Perit Philip Grech as its representative for the coming term. Perit Grech is the Vice-Chairperson of the Kamra's Built Environment Standing Committee.

SIM DIRECTIVE

The Council of the Kamra tal-Periti has participated actively in meetings with representatives of the Ministry for Communications and Competitiveness, the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure, the Works Division, the Chamber of Engineers, the Engineering Board and the Periti Warranting Board, with the main aim of understanding better the implications of the Services in the Internal Market (SIM) Directive on the profession. The meetings were also aimed at identifying aspects of local legislation and regulation that may need to be assessed in view of the coming into force of this directive in 2009. The Kamra will continue to keep abreast of developments in this field and will continue to update its members accordingly.

STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2004-06

The Kamra tal-Periti has been successful in acquiring funding through the European Union's Social Fund in order to carry out a project that will involve the organisation of two further education seminars, one on Energy and one on Design for Disability. Following a call for applications, the Kamra appointed Atelier – Culture as the Project Manager, and in the coming weeks will be forwarding further information on these seminars.



QUALIFICATIONS DIRECTIVE

Further to the Kamra's insistence for action to be taken with respect to the Europe-wide recognition of the Bachelor degree in Architecture and Civil Engineering conferred by the University of Malta, the required notification of the course by the local Mutual Recognition Coordinator was followed through. This led to the successful recognition of the course, meaning that now all students acquiring a degree in this field can rest assured that their qualification is on the list of automatically-recognised qualifications.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS

The 01 November saw the coming into force of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations. These regulations are aimed at reducing the inconveniences caused by the building industry, in particular those related to dust generation and waste generated by building sites. The implementation of these regulations will be done over a two year period. Up till November 2008 they will be applicable to sites that have or will have a built up footprint exceeding 1000sqm, those with an overall height exceeding 13m and those having excavation depths of over 4m. They will further apply on all sites within the localities of Marsalforn, Marsascale, Gzira,



Mellieha, Sliema, St Julian's, Swieqi, St Paul's Bay and Valletta. After November 2008 the regulations will apply for all construction sites.

The regulations include a number of measures such as the appointing of a Site Manager, the control over the amount of dust generated by the construction process, the obligation to use hoarding and restrictions permissible working hours. The regulations may be downloaded from www.mrae.gov.mt/construction.asp.

LIVING STEEL COMPETITION 2007

Living Steel has announced the three winners of its second International Architecture Competition for Sustainable Housing. The consortium of steel companies challenged participants to design innovative, resource-efficient housing solutions using steel. The competition targeted locations for affordable-housing prototypes, namely Recife in Brazil, Wuhan in China and the Thames Gateway area on the east side of London. Brazilian firm Andrade Morettin Arquitetos Associados won for its Recife design, Knafo Klimor Architects of Israel won the China

component of the competition, and British firm Cartwright Pickard Architects won for its Thames Gateway prototype. The worldwide need for sustainable housing is staggering. According to Living Steel, an average of over 4,000 housing units would need to be constructed every hour for the



*Essential Architecture by Andrade Morettin Arquitetos Associados.
Image: Andrade Morettin Arquitetos
Courtesy: Architecture Week*

next 25 years to meet needs of the burgeoning world population. Potential benefits of steel include recyclability and suitability for precise prefabrication off site.

WARRANTING BOARD

Article 6 of Chapter 390 (Periti Act) of the Laws of Malta establishes the setup of a Warranting Board for Periti. Some of the functions of the Board are to consider applications for the issue of a warrant, to regulate the conditions of practical training abroad, to organise and regulate the appropriate tests and periods of practical training, and to keep a register of warrant holders. The term of office of the members of the board comes to an end on the 30 September of each year, with three members being appointed on alternate years for the duration of two years. The current make-up of the board is as follows: Dr. Ramon Rossignaud LL.D. as Chairman, Periti Anton Valentino and Fortunato Said as appointed by the Minister for Resources and Infrastructure, Periti David Pace and Lawrence Mintoff nominated by the Kamra tal-Periti, and Periti Joseph P. Falzon and Josianne Camilleri elected from among all warrant holders.

AGA KHAN AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURE 2007

A diverse group of projects from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe have been honoured with the prestigious Aga Khan Award for Architecture for 2007. This year, nine projects were recognised for architectural excellence in places where Muslims live. The triennial award program was established by His Highness the Aga Khan,



*Colourful cotton drapes in doorways add visual softness to the mud-walled rooms of the School in Rudrapur, Bangladesh, which recently received the 2007 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.
Photo: Birol K.S. Inan
Courtesy: Architecture Week*

Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, to enhance the understanding and appreciation of Islamic culture as expressed through architecture. The independent jury for the 2007 award program placed special value on meaningful collaborations and exchanges of ideas. The awarded projects were the following:

- Samir Kassir Square, Beirut, Lebanon
- Rehabilitation of the City of Shibam, Yemen
- Central Market, Koudougou, Burkina Faso
- University of Technology Petronas, Bandar Seri Iskandar, Malaysia
- Restoration of the Amiriya Complex, Rada, Yemen
- Moulmein Rise Residential Tower, Singapore
- Royal Netherlands Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Rehabilitation of the Walled City, Nicosia, Cyprus
- School in Rudrapur, Dinajpur, Bangladesh

BALCONIES GRANT

The Malta Environment & Planning Authority (MEPA) is offering a one-time grant scheme to all property owners who wish to restore their wooden balcony or replace their current balcony with a wooden one, provided their property is located in an Urban Conservation Area or is a scheduled building. This refund incentive is available for all localities in Malta and Gozo. All approved requests will receive up to 60% of the submitted costs but not more than LM600.00 (€1397.62). Applications are to be made on the relevant forms and will be accepted up to the 15 January 2008.



DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Architects' Council of Europe, of which the Kamra is an active member, will be holding a conference on the 10 April 2008 titled "Designing for the future: The Market and Quality of Life." This Conference is intended to demonstrate that the quality of the built environment is of fundamental importance to the achievement of sustainable growth and development in Europe. It is therefore necessary that equal attention is devoted to the three pillars of sustainable development, social, economic and environmental, with culture as a cross-cutting and essential element as underlined, on several occasions, by Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, who has given his patronage to the Conference. The main idea of this Conference is that concrete results can be achieved through an informed exchange and debate on the issues under examination as experienced by policy makers and stakeholders.

NEW WARRANTS

Neil Attard, Alan Griscti Soler, Sarah Pace, Alexia Rausi, Edward Said and Chris Sammut were awarded the warrant to practice as a Perit on the 23 November. Congratulations to all and good luck in your professional work!

KISHO KUROKAWA

Leading Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa passed away last October in Tokyo at the age of 73.

His last years were spent fighting the authorities to save his iconic Nakagin Tower from demolition. He even ran for the post of Mayor in a last-ditch attempt to save the building. In the end, the building outlived its creator. The capsule tower, as it has become known, was a visionary concept



when it was designed in the early 1970s and has since become a major Tokyo tourist attraction but its future still hangs on a thread. In 2005 a WAN poll showed 95% of architects from

around the world believed the tower should be saved. Kurokawa, who made his world debut in 1960, led a style known as the Metabolism Movement, advocating a shift from "machine principle" to "life principle." His major works include the National Ethnological Museum in Tokyo, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Malaysia that encompasses palm trees

and rain forest, the National Art Center in Tokyo's posh Roppongi that looks like a wavy curtain, as well as the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. Kurokawa received the Gold Medal from France's Academy of Architecture in 1986, and most recently the Chicago Athenaeum Museum International Architecture Award in 2006.



DIN L-ART HELWA HERITAGE AWARDS

There were four entries for this year's Din L-Art Helwa Heritage Awards. These were 2-22 Restaurant in Great Siege Road, Valletta; Sarria Church in Floriana; the medieval chapels of St Basil and St Michael, Mqabba; and Palazzo Falson, Mdina. The Silver Award was awarded to Palazzo Falson. Diplomas of merit were also awarded to 2-22 restaurant and the Sarria church. The adjudication panel was chaired by Mr Martin Scicluna. Perit Conrad Thake was the official representative of the Kamra tal-Periti. The results were announced on the 30 November 2007.

STIRLING PRIZE 2007

The RIBA Stirling Prize is given for the RIBA Building of the Year and is run in association with The Architects' Journal. It is presented to the architects of the building which has been the most significant for the evolution of architecture in the past year. The Museum of Modern Literature in Marbach am Neckar, Germany, designed by David Chipperfield Architects, has won the 12th RIBA Stirling Prize, 2007.

There are many things to praise about this building. The architect's control and discrimination in the choice of materials has by now become a signature, but above all



Copyright: Christian Richters

it is in the handling of the 'difficult whole' that the building excels. This is a building that is simultaneously rich and restrained, a trick Chipperfield pulls off as well as any architect working today. To draw people to look at books and manuscripts they cannot read more than a page or two of (except by arrangement) was a tough brief. Chipperfield has responded by making a building that is in itself a half of the visitor's experience; if not a temple then a shrine to the soul of a literate nation.

WEEKEND EXHIBITION

Set in a 17th century vaulted space in Valletta which was especially rehabilitated for the occasion, Perit Chris Briffa opened his untitled exhibition on the weekend between the 24 and 25 November. Here he



presented his quirky ideas on furniture design, together with an innovative and amusing way of framing his art pieces.

Figure sketches in pen, pencil and charcoal were framed with an incorporated function, such as light

fittings, key hangers, small shelving, mirrors and wall cabinets. Two new products, a coat hanger named 'Hang Three' and the adaptable 'El cubo', were also launched at the show, while rotating prototypes grabbed the viewers' attention.

ROYAL GOLD MEDAL

Edward (Ted) Cullinan was announced as the RIBA's 2008 Royal Gold Medallist. The



Ted Cullinan

medal will be presented to him at an event to be held in February 2008. The official citation reads:

"Over four decades of inspirational practice and teaching Edward (Ted) Cullinan has shown us how a keen awareness of the

natural environment, and a deep engagement with those who use and experience buildings, can generate compelling and poetic architecture. Long before they became widely accepted, Cullinan had made his own versions of 'sustainability' and 'consultation' central to his highly original and inventive approach to putting buildings together. His oeuvre of over 110 buildings generously exhibits these qualities but it is perhaps the RMC Headquarters (1986-90) that exemplifies most clearly the path finding quality of Cullinan's work through its innovative low energy naturally ventilated offices, pioneering workplace design and a brilliant response to the existing buildings and landscape."

'FORTIFICATIONS' PROJECT FOLLOWS 'FONDOUNQS'

Following the success of the project on the 'Khans' or 'Fondouqs', the General Assembly of the Union of Mediterranean



Architects (UMAR) has approved another project dealing with a building typology commonly found around the Mediterranean – the fortress. Whether guarding a stretch of coastline or a port or providing shelter and security to a city's population, the fortress is synonymous with the colourful and rich history of the Mediterranean, symbolising

turbulence, wars and the rise and fall of civilisations. The project aims at creating an interchange of information and learned research on fortress building techniques. The study will include the influence of local building techniques and materials on the design and construction of military architecture around the Mediterranean basin in the pre-industrial ages.

The data gathered will serve as a source of comparative study in how military architectural design philosophy was influenced by local conditions of materials, resources and building techniques. A first call has been issued to all member sections, asking for the nomination of a representative who would coordinate the project in his/her country. The project has aroused much interest since all UMAR members possess an immense stock of such buildings, and research is widespread. Anyone interested in contributing should contact the Kamra tal-Periti on secretary@ktpmalta.com.

CAMP NOU STADIUM

FC Barcelona's Camp Nou Stadium, one of the world's greatest football venues, is to be extensively remodelled. Following an international competition, Foster + Partners



Image courtesy
worldarchitecturenews.com

have been selected as the architects for this renewal of the stadium, which is cel-

brating its 50th anniversary this year. The stadium, already the largest in Europe, will be enlarged to accommodate over 106,000 fans, together with extensive new facilities including hospitality and public areas. A new roof will also be created to shelter the fans. The stadium will be enclosed by a brightly coloured mosaic outer skin that wraps around the building and continues over a new roof. The multi-coloured enclosure comprises overlapping translucent tiles in the club colours. The myriad of tiles can be seen as symbolising the loyalty and devotion of FC Barcelona's fans worldwide. The remodelled stadium retains the essential elements of the original Camp Nou, designed by architects Francesc Mitjans-Miró, García Barbon and Soteras Mauri, which was inaugurated in 1957.

QUARRY REHABILITATION

Nearly six million tonnes of construction waste were disposed of in quarries across the island between May 2003 and last September, according to a report by the waste management agency Wasteserv. The disposal of such waste takes place through a contract operated by WasteServ, with three quarries at Lapsi, Dingli and Qrendi being currently in use by contractors registered to dispose of clean inert material. Other quarries are also being operated for the purpose by the private sector. The Magtab dump has not been accepting inert waste since July 2003.

A five-year contract was awarded to a



A quarry at Kirkop that was rehabilitated by being filled with clean inert material



privately extracted, one is lowering the risk of contamination of the water table through other uses, since the lower levels of many of these quarries are close to the water table. WasteServ CEO Vince Magri said quarries that have been an eyesore for years are being rehabilitated into fields for agricultural use. Persons who wish to dispose of clean construction material at the quarries may call WasteServ on freephone 8007 2200, or obtain more information by visiting www.wasteservmalta.com.

RICHARD ROGERS EXHIBITION

During November, huge retrospective exhibition of Richard Rogers' work was launched at the Pompidou Centre in Paris. The exhibition is timed to coincide with the 30th anni-

versary of the completion of the building. The commission to design the Pompidou in the early 1970's in the centre of historic Paris was one of the bravest ever in recent times, particularly as it nestled in amongst classic Parisian architecture, mostly from the 17th or 18th centuries. This building established Rogers' early trademark of exposed services (water, heating ducts, and stairs) on the exterior, leaving the internal spaces uncluttered. The building is now a much admired Parisien landmark, but at the time critics were mixed, some dubbing the "inside-out" style "Bowellism".

The exhibition at the Pompidou Centre, arranged and curated by Abe Rogers, presents a detailed survey of the work of Richard Rogers and his partners over the last 40 years. From Lloyd's of London to Madrid's Barajas Airport; from the Zip-Up House of 1968 to the proposals for Shanghai's Lu Jia Zui's urban development, the exhibition presents a wide range of projects - from past to present - through models, drawings, photographs, films and specially-written text. Occupying 1,150 sqm of gallery space



it presents a detailed overview of Rogers' extensive career.

The exhibition runs until 3 March 2008 and will then move to the Design Museum, London, in the Spring of 2008.

letters

Wignacourt Fountain



Is it at all possible for the authorities to restore the Wignacourt Fountain back to Palace Square? This architectural and sculptural baroque masterpiece is presently located in the secluded St. Philip's Garden at Floriana. Secluded in this rarely visited location this fountain is fast deteriorating and soon many of its sculptural details will be lost forever. If bringing it back to Valletta raises the ire of those who contend that it's past relocation or modifications ought to be historically respected and must not be altered, then the authorities might consider creating a replica, (after duly conserving the original of course).



Reinstating this forgotten landmark complemented with an adequate car-less embellishment of Malta's most eminent piazza, will provide the sensual delight of beauty, sound and touch, a quintessentially baroque characteristic. The urban gain for Palace Square and indeed Valletta will be immense. One only has to look at



the impact that fountains have on the streets and squares of Rome. A poignant inscription found on the long-gone Fleur-De-Lys arch stated "HAC VALLETTA TENUS FUNCTUM JACUISSE CADAVER

VISA EST" (Hitherto this city of Valletta without water is like a corpse).

Yours truly,
Perit Edward Said

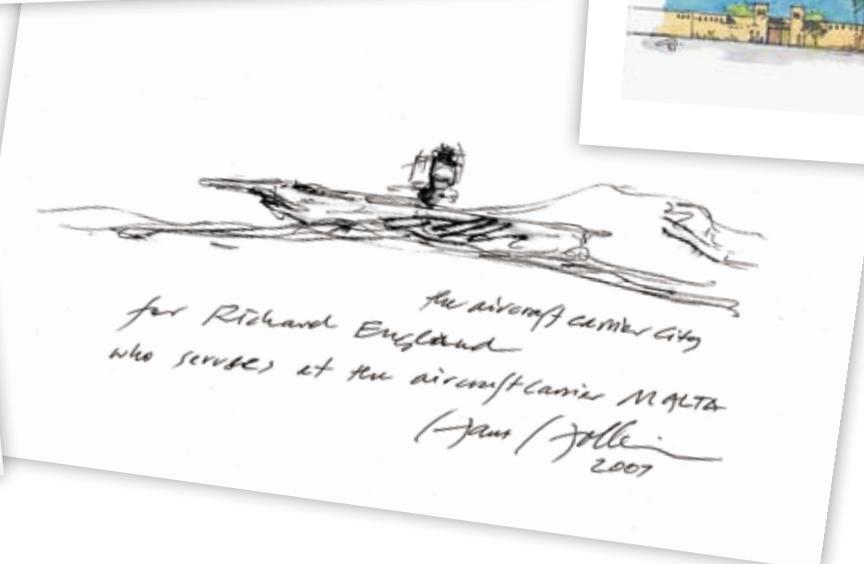
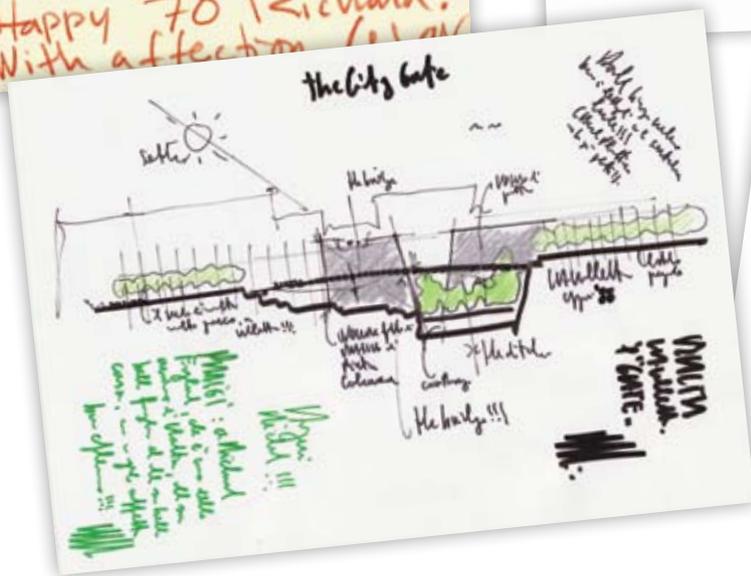
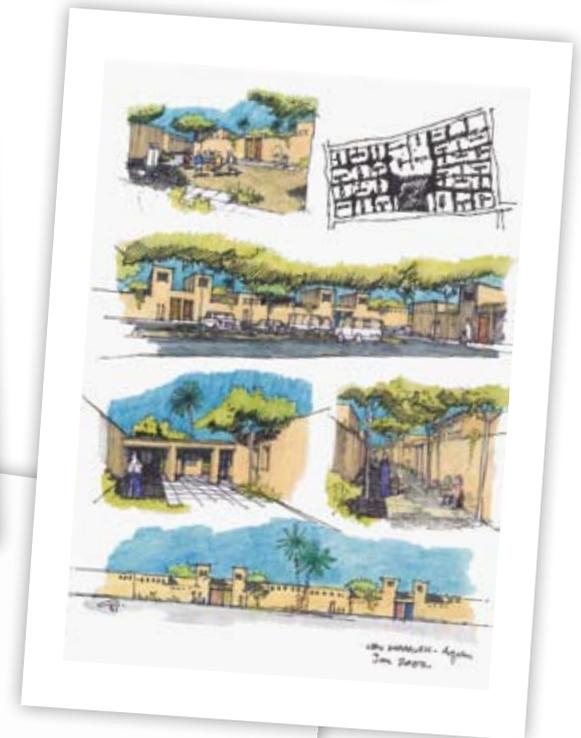
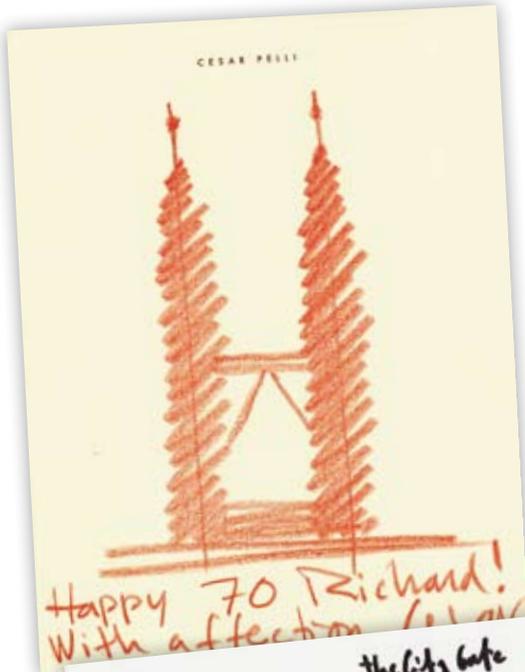
100 at 70

A Celebratory Album for Richard England

On the occasion of Richard England's 70th birthday on 3 October 2007 his wife Myriam, has together with Charles Knevitt and Conrad Thake, compiled this personalised Festschrift. More than 100 contributors – including architects, artists, colleagues, family and friends – have sent in their tributes, from around the world, and in many different media. Designed by photographer Daniel Cilia, the book is a fascinating album documenting personalised contributions by many outstanding

personalities of the contemporary international architectural scene. The Festschrift is a veritable treasure trove compiled from contemporaries, near-contemporaries and peers, including the likes of Takefumi Aida, Emilio Ambasz, Mario Botta, Giancarlo de Carlo, Rifat Chadirji, Richard Demarco, Norman Foster, Massimiliano Fuksas, Ricardo Legoretta, Richard Meier, Victor Pasmore, Cesar Pelli, Renzo Piano, Gio Ponti, Moshe Safdie, Basil Spence, Stanley Tigerman, and Robert Venturi.

The album is above all an apt and lasting accolade to the more than 40 years of activity of this prolific architect-artist-poet, once described by Charles Knevitt as "a poet who builds". Collated by Charles Knevitt and Conrad Thake. Published by MRSM Ltd. (Malta); Printed by Alsaba Grafiche, Siena, Italy, 2007 ISBN 978-99932-0-553-1



Top left and clockwise, contributions by Cesar Pelli, Antoine Predock, Jafar Tukan, Hans Hollein and Renzo Piano



CIT-U-M

Citizens' Urban Mobility

At the Meeting of the Urban Development Group in Lisbon on the 30 October 2007, State representatives discussed the implementation of the Leipzig Charter. The presentation by Malta referred to the implementation of policy through the Transit Orientated Strategy, Brief development and Area Action Plans. The presentation referred to the set-up of the Project Development and Coordination Unit (PDCU) managing regeneration projects, participation on EU programmes and interfacing with other agencies on 'best practice', design, social inclusion and urban development.

The PDCU in collaboration with Valletta Local Council (VLC) has recently completed its participation in a urban planning project partly financed by the EU known as 'CIT-U-M' as part of the URBACT Community Initiative Programme. CIT-U-M, 'Citizens' Urban Mobility', was a pan-European Thematic Network designed to demonstrate how local mobility problems can be dealt with through an open democratic procedure involving the active participation of the users concerned within deprived urban areas, namely local SMEs and work force, local authorities and patrons in connection with urban centrality and sustainability.

This network operated for two years, during which the Ministry of Urban Development and Roads (MUDR) provided technical knowledge and financial assistance of €20,000 for the project on behalf of VLC. The project came at a crucial moment for Valletta and acted as a barometer to test urban mobility and accessibility measures which the city of Valletta was applying, namely the introduction of the Park and Ride, CVA, Electric Taxis and the Valletta Vertical Connection projects.

UrbAct – CIT-U-M dynamics

The CIT-U-M project was led by the ASDA (the Municipality of West Athens) Greece, along with eight other partner cities including Larnaca (Cyprus), Valladolid (Spain), Budapest-Csepel (Hungary), Alexandroupoli (Greece), Sevilla (Spain), Catania (Italy), Kalisz (Poland) and Szekszard (Hungary). The Partner Cities organised a number of workshops at each partner city, which investigated and analysed policy frameworks in the EU States:

- Transport & Urban Development: How these are interlinked

- Assess Implemented Practice: Review of current operations in the cities

- Alternative Transport Means: Alternative systems which the city could possibly implement

- Citizen Participation: How local residents are engaged in the transport planning process

Within each of the above workshops the CIT-U-M focused on the following deliverables: enhancement of the centrality of the urban fringe through improved accessibility; enhancement of the attractiveness and safety at peripheral urban core areas; integration of innovative technologies in mobility planning and management; use of inner-city mobility as a means of upgrading disadvantaged areas; enhancing adequate public transport and alternative transport modes such as walking and cycling to complement heavy public transport infrastructure such as metro, regional rail and tramways; ensuring safer accessibility for citizens with impairment.

Each Partner City had the obligation to assess transit and urban development needs. These would be in turn assessed by the CIT-U-M Technical Experts appointed by the Commission, who would conclude and identify areas of 'best in class practice' highlighting areas for improvement as part of the project's conclusion.

Valletta together with the areas of the Grand and Outer Harbours provided a case study to review and analyse against the other European city partners in the CIT-U-M project. The PDCU carried out an analysis of the urban context of Valletta in both planning and transit demands as part of its contribution to the project, delivering these through a benchmarking review of the current methods and processes regarding urban transport systems as a tool for urban development.

As a Partner City, VLC in collaboration with the MUDR was required to carry out a cross-sectional core survey using a common tool focusing on the Urban and Mobility problems facing the residents of Malta. This survey was undertaken prior to the implementation of the Valletta Transport Strategy, which included the replacement of the limited V-Licence system. However, with the impending strategy coming into place, the survey also considered these plans, yielded some valuable results and covered the following aspects:

- The analysis of the different types of trips to Valletta, whether business or leisure related

- The preferred type of transport used, whether by car, motorbike or public transport

- The way incoming changes would affect peoples' traveling habits.

- The types of alternative transit systems people would use if available in Malta

The lessons learnt from these results have been evaluated by the MUDR, ADT, VLC and other stakeholders as part of the future policy improvements to public transport.

The CIT-U-M project was also used to assess the impact of two policy instruments being devised by Government. One was the launching of the Valletta Transport Strategy by the Cabinet Committee for National Projects, which brought a 'networking approach' to resolve the complex mobility problems of the Capital. The other was the importance of one Ministry (MUDR) being formed to address the pressing commitment of Government to integrate transit and regeneration and the adoption of the Transit Orientated Development (TOD) as a National Strategy also applied to the Outer and Grand Harbour Context.

The adaptation of TOD concept applied locally has been sought to create a synergy between all the major regeneration projects in Malta that involve transit, whilst revitalising urban and suburban neighbourhoods, communities and ultimately making the local economy sustainable. The MUDR's policy delivered by the PDCU has been devised as a flexible tool that incorporates both transport and urban development projects in Malta on a National and Regional level (Harbour Area).

Deliverables

In December 2006, the CIT-U-M network met in Valletta, as part of the project's policy development process. International planners converged on our historic city with local stakeholders and actors to analyse the status of the project. The network meeting also included a site visit to review the current urban regeneration work undertaken by the MUDR within the Grand Harbour and also to assess the impending traffic improvements for Valletta.

Following all of the network meetings in the various Partner Cities, the results generated from this network resulted in the publica-

tion of two policy documents: 'The CIT-U-M Good Practice Guide' and the 'Pan European Technical Manual', highlighting the project's conclusion and policy recommendations for the future.

PDCU officials were also asked to highlight the TOD policy model advocated, which was showcased in the final international CIT-U-M two day conference in Athens, Greece as a model of excellence, and to publish the final results of the CIT-U-M network.

Officials from the PDCU were further requested to present the Thematic Network: 'Interface Urban Mobility and Urban Planning'. Dr. Malcolm Borg delivered a technical presentation illustrating the application of the TOD model in European Cities, the benefits of applying the TOD model, and its application for creating a more sustainable planning context whilst highlighting its application and suitability in the local context. Mr Rafael Orsini applied conclusions and suggestions from this theme of urban mobility and planning towards the future needs of the cities post-CIT-U-M network.

The Good Practice guide highlighted in the final conference advocates that the other partner cities of the CIT-U-M project should be looking to follow the Maltese TOD model and the benchmarking approach to policy framework, research and development. Professor David Chapman (UCE - Birmingham), one of the international experts invited to the conference, also endorsed this recommendation on the measures to adopt.

Policy Development and Forward Planning

The application of the TOD model has now also been adopted by Government's publication 'Operational Programme 1: Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life', as the policy for Urban Regeneration. The PDCU has further supported TOD policy through the signing of the Leipzig Charter, which will be now delivered through greater collaboration with European partners possibly through the new wave of project calls under Interreg IVC and Urbact 2. The importance of benchmarking and collaborating with international partners is allowing new measures to be implemented into new policy frameworks and action plans for Malta.

*Projects Development and Coordination Unit
Ministry for Urban Development and Roads*

Over 120 students and architects participated in 'Superventions', the seventh annual SACES workshop. Participants were assigned to various public spaces in Sliema and were asked to design and build an intervention to improve that space. The results were built into the public sites themselves and were exhibited on Sunday the 21st of October after a week of discussion, design and construction.



Working on the Chalet platform, a group led by Perit Michael Pace of Space Studio, and third year Patty Grech, based their concept on the site's insecurity and isolation and chose to isolate the senses and selectively re-expose them to elements within the site. They built a volume in which one looked down a pipe and saw the sky through a mirror. Through a second pipe one could hear waves and smell seaweed, and as for touch there was the texture of sand combined with polystyrene. Lastly mints were provided for taste.



A structural frame located at the top of Bisazza Street was built by a group guided by Professor Alex Torpiano of TBA Periti, AOM's Peter Brincat and third year James Manduca. Perspex overlays allowed users to suggest sketched amendments to the site and plastic scopes complemented with comments scribbled on by group members focused users' awareness on particular elements in their surroundings.



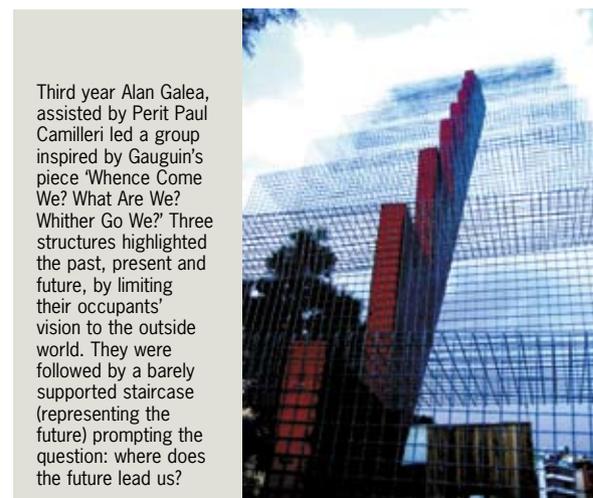
A video produced by architect Simon Grech of Architecture Project (AP) and a group of students led by fourth year Chris Zammit centred around the bland car park at the ferries. The group snuck out on Friday night to fill the car park up with pink balloons and made a video (available on Youtube.com) of people's reactions to the project.



In a side alley, amidst a jungle of air-conditioning units and pipes was an intervention led by Perit Konrad Buhagiar from AP, JjingYao Xu AOM, and third year Sean Buttigieg. Rather than eliminating the units, the group used them as tools to reverse their own unsightliness by attaching funnels and pipes to the units' fans, to propel Ping-Pong balls into the alley, and to power whistles which drowned out the units' noise.



Working with Perit Kenneth Zammit Endrich, a group led by second year Nicky Psaila-Savona constructed an oversize tilted periscope which distorted the actual orientation of the given site from that of normal view. An inconspicuous glass frame was stuck onto a nearby bollard with a distorted message on it which, viewed through the periscope, read: 'It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see.'



Third year Alan Galea, assisted by Perit Paul Camilleri led a group inspired by Gauguin's piece 'Whence Come We? What Are We? Whither Go We? Three structures highlighted the past, present and future, by limiting their occupants' vision to the outside world. They were followed by a barely supported staircase (representing the future) prompting the question: where does the future lead us?



On the promenade, architects Claude Mallia, Piotr Armatis and Mark Abela joined a group led by third year Angiolino Micallef to again reveal their site's forte- its view. An austere, open topped enclosure, with surprisingly good insulation qualities was tilted upwards to focus its occupant's attention on nothing but the sea and the sky.



A group led by Perit Mark Borg and third year Steve Scicluna added a bench to the Sliema promenade, which differed from its neighbouring benches in its ability to morph and expand (from 40 cm to 3m) to accommodate more people and twist to face several views at the same time.



A group working in Bisazza Street provided pedestrians with goods of holistic rather than material value. The group was led by Periti Chris Briffa and Reuben Lautier, and fifth year Sandro Valentino. A maze separated users from their consumer-driven surroundings, leading them to a lounge right onto Bisazza Street containing sofas, tables, plants, free food and drinks.



SACES would like to thank its sponsors, as well as MIDI for allowing the use of Fort Manoel, the Ministry for the Environment and Rural Affairs for their generous support, Professor Denis De Lucca, Perit Joe Falzon and Nikki Dimech for opening the event, the Sliema Local Council and finally all the participants for their invaluable contribution to the overall result.

The Urban Challenge

OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

On the 21 July 2004, the Kamra tal-Periti launched the newly revamped version of this journal at a business breakfast with the theme "A National Policy for Architecture in Malta – is it worth it?" The reason this theme had been chosen was no more complex than the fact that the Architects' Council of Europe had requested a copy of Malta's national policy for architecture, which of course does not exist. That seminar had created much public debate on the role of the architect and other players in the forming of our built environment and served to put architecture at the forefront of the national debate, if for a few weeks only. Although the main theme of the seminar was hardly discussed, the debate served to kick-start an important process leading towards the formulation of a national policy for architecture in Malta.

Leopoldo Freyre, former President of the Architects' Council of Europe, stated that the principal objective of a national policy on architecture "is to make politicians, decision-makers and professionals themselves aware of the pressing need to bring together major political goals that encompass economic progress and competitiveness on the one hand, and sustainability on the other, all relating to the quality of

life." On the 20 November, the Kamra tal-Periti launched its position paper on the built environment titled "The Urban Challenge – Our Quality of Life and the Built Environment." This document represents a synthesis of the Kamra's proposal for the way forward, to cause real, tangible and beneficial change, and serves as an introduction to the national policy for architecture being prepared by the Kamra. It is hoped that this position paper becomes the catalyst for a common effort to meet the urban challenge to better our environment and the quality of life of all citizens.

The Position Paper

A synopsis

Rapid change and economic development in Malta over the last few decades have led to a heightened and more widespread awareness of the need to review the way we intervene in our environment. There is a growing realisation that only through quality in the built environment will we succeed in further improving our quality of life.

The complex and sometimes conflicting demands placed on our land have dramatically altered our landscape. The substantial funds funnelled into the construction industry over this short period have led to voluminous and ubiquitous development, regrettably generally of poor quality, a result of economic expedience, but also of a faltering aesthetic appreciation and insufficient social responsibility. Despite attempts over the years to introduce elements of control to limit the damage, we have not had considerable success. The urgency now is to find alternative solutions.

Our urban environment reflects our social and economic aspirations. Our economic development will increasingly depend on our environmental standards. Only by defining an appropriate vision for Malta where social, economic and environmental objectives work together harmoniously can we achieve lasting sustainable development. This will require us to be courageous and visionary working towards strategic long-term objectives and resisting the temptation to be derailed by short-term expediency or the concerns of specific interest groups.

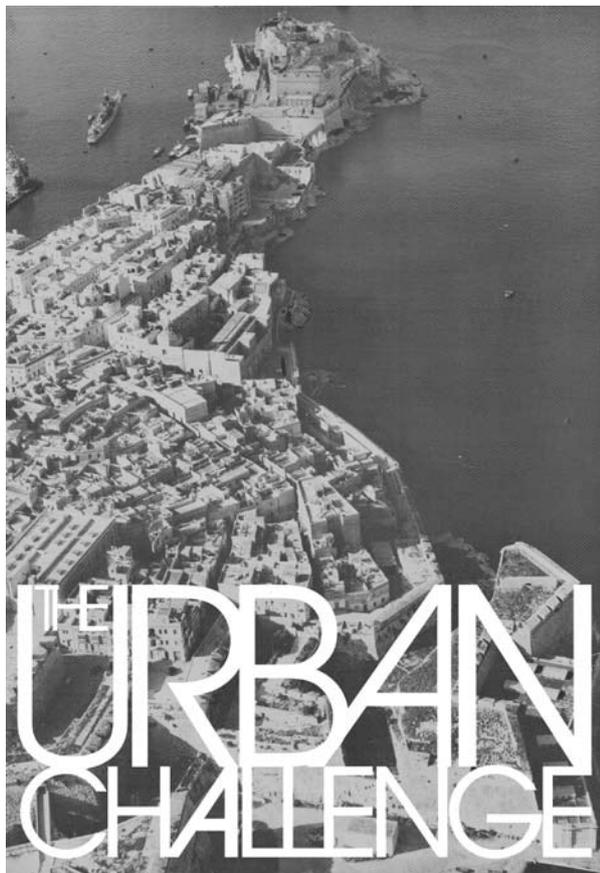
The quality of our urban open and built spaces is lacking since we often fail to appreciate the value of quality in design and planning. Our educational system ought to promote more emphatically independent thinking and innovation. Creativity must be encouraged at all ages and in all spheres, but most notably in design, architecture and urban planning. Development proposals should be assessed qualitatively (rather than solely against quantitative criteria) and appraised from the point of view of their contribution to society and the built environment. An independent Design Review Commission would be more appropriate to take on this task. It would also consult Government on all its urban

development strategies and policies. Above all, quality in architecture deserves greater attention through the adoption of a National Policy on Architecture, through improving the level of education in the built environment, and in particular, through strengthening the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering at the University.

The revised building height designations produced development frenzy in our towns and villages leading to the destruction of the very same qualities that made them attractive. Redevelopment ought to be redirected primarily towards those projects which seek to improve the condition of run-down or disadvantaged neighbourhoods. We need to continually study our condition and consider/ reconsider strategic policy decisions. The Structure Plan Review presents an ideal opportunity for an updated strategy defining objectives for urban change, reconsidering the appropriateness of past decisions within the present day context. The means and structures at our disposal today to manage the change process are unlikely to be sufficient to address some of our ills. Public participation in the process should be better structured to promote and safeguard the common good.

Rising housing costs place great strain on our family structures. Often the product does not present value for money. As the financial burden grows and dwelling sizes shrink, quality outdoor recreational space takes on added significance. The Housing Authority's initiatives deserve to be acknowledged, yet require added impetus to encourage innovative quality design solutions.

We often talk about the need to protect and upgrade our environment (both built and natural), even if, regrettably, frequently only for the benefit of a seemingly insatiable tourism industry. On the other hand, in our irrepressible drive to modernise, we fail to recognise the errors committed by not conserving what is truly representative of our culture, fruits of our forefathers' achievements. We are often faced with a widespread lack of appreciation for what is worthy of preservation. We need to identify and protect our heritage, better manage our environment, and safeguard it from exploitation for the benefit of specific market sectors. What measures



are required to increase the level of protection afforded to national heritage?

Environmentally, socially and economically the need to alter the trend in private vehicular use towards other, more sustainable modes of public and private transport is ever more fundamental. Our search for solutions to our transport needs must be holistic, uncompromising, forward looking and innovative, based on a long term vision and on the potential benefits to commuters, rather than on short term economic expediency. We must consider an effective nation-wide integrated public transport strategy conceived to improve current transport patterns, basing our decisions on a detailed assessment of key movement routes. Within our urban centres (as well as elsewhere), the strategy should, through urban design



and landscaping, provide an environment which encourages commuters to journey shorter distances on foot or by bicycle.

Quality of construction needs to be improved. New regulations are necessary and welcome but should be backed by adequate research and funding to ensure they truly provide value for money to society. The establishment of a 'Construction Platform' would provide a clearer reference point for developers, design professionals and the general public. Continual training and professional development, the certification of tradesmen and the

licensing and classification of service providers will help ensure that construction practice improves. An adequate level of protection and cover for all stakeholders will ensure clients' interests are better protected. Likewise improved site management and project administration, and a greater awareness of Health and Safety issues will help to ensure that safety risks and inconveniences to neighbours are reduced. While measures to improve the quality of construction will undoubtedly result in a higher cost which will eventually be passed on to the consumer, this will provide better quality buildings which last longer and cost less to run.

Periti owe a duty of care to their clients. Their work has a profound and long lasting effect on the community at large. As projects grow in scale and complexity, there is a growing awareness of the need for the profession to meet today's

challenges and demands and deliver its product at a level of quality commensurate with today's expectations and standards of living. The Kamra tal-Periti is working to improve its structures and those of the profession to allow its members to better serve their clients and society through their work.

A client with a commitment to quality is as important to the achievement of a good quality building or development as is a capable Perit. Quality in design and construction is the only means to a sound investment and to derive lasting value from building development. A clearer understanding of construction procurement and of the value of a well-formulated client brief and budget is crucial to the smooth process of building design and construction. The selection of architectural and other consultants should be made on the basis of quality of service. In particular, the Public Sector has a special responsibility to society, and Government's unique position makes it an ideal champion for good design. Design competitions can be used on projects of scale and importance to ensure that the public is provided with the best quality project possible. The challenges raised by our built environment can be overcome through a commitment to the development of a vision to work for better quality places that bring dignity, pride and real delight to their users. The definition of a National Policy for Architecture, championed by Government, is a critical step in this regard, presenting a clear national commitment to quality in architecture and the built environment and raising the profile of the architectural debate so as to form more informed and discerning consumers. The role of the media in forming public opinion is critical to raise the overall level of awareness of good design and to the pursuit of a healthy urban debate. The Kamra tal-Periti is working to promote the establishment of a National Centre for the Built Environment which would support research, education, heritage promotion, advisory and design review services to assist in the delivery of places that respect society's needs for an architecture and an urban and rural environment that truly uphold the maxim of firmness, commodity and delight.

Feedback

The Urban Challenge is available for downloading on www.ktpmalta.com. Our readers are encouraged to come forward with comments, suggestions and criticism since it is through your feedback that this document can be taken forward and used as the basis for the proposed national policy for architecture.

A number of reactions have already been presented from



various fronts, particularly during the launch of the document and during a discussion seminar held on the 28 November. Minister George Pullicino praised the efforts of the Kamra and stated that this document is not aimed solely at professionals and those involved in the building trade, but at all citizens, who should participate in the discussion on the document. He questioned the quality of education being given at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, and challenged the Kamra to address the situation.

Minister Louis Galea described the position paper as "a genuine, fresh, professional, studied approach." He further stated that the proposals of the document are not alien to the common person's proposals, but respond to our aspirations for a better quality of life for Maltese citizens.

Dr Harry Vassallo invited the Kamra tal-Periti to work on devising a retreat from further building development, and stressed that there is indeed an urgency to act.

"I endorse this document ... and I invite the National Centre to Valletta" were the words of Dr Paul Borg Olivier, Mayor of Valletta. He stated that Valletta is the natural home for a National Centre for the Built Environment. He further stated that architecture and politics must work hand in hand in order to achieve a rebirth of our urban spaces.

Vince Farrugia, GRTU Director General, stated that Periti are the authors of both good and mediocre architecture. It is time for them to stand up and be counted. He further advocated the need to manage our built environment, with one entity being responsible for it, rather than having several small entities with a finger in the pie. Anglu Xuereb also commented on the document and described its contents as something achievable. He further urged periti to endeavour to transmit to developer the message of the importance of quality in construction and design, an investment which will certainly pay off.

Others comments included the statement that this position paper presents a culture change across the board. Consumers need to be educated "positively" in order to be able to be more informed on what constitutes good design, and to begin to demand it from the Periti they engage. All citizens have a role to play in achieving the qualities presented by The Urban Challenge, and fingers cannot be pointed at any one sector.

These initial reactions indicate that this document has been well received, and the challenge ahead is now to ensure its implementation. In the words of one Perit who sent in comments on the document, "The document reflects my aspirations and goals in my day to day practice."

Notes on Materiality

Perit Antoine Zammit, BE & A (Hons), MSc (Lond)

In the past months the Kamra tal-Periti has successfully organised the second series of architectural debates entitled 'Architecture Nights 07' with a number of high-profiled international architects delivering enthralling presentations of their work and theories to packed houses. Perit Antoine Zammit, KTP Events Chairperson, gives some thoughts on the theme that inspired this year's events, The stuff of architecture, or the philosophy behind materiality – what architecture is physically made of.

Erik Bryggman wrote, in the early 1920s, "We should understand that beauty is not a mysterious veil thrown over a building but a logical result of having everything in the right place." Architecture is as much about design and the pursuit of beauty as it is about the sensible and judicious use of the best materials that respond to context, imageability and the environment.

Architecture also has to do so much with good detailing – particularly the interface between different materials being used together composing the building fabric. Architects question 'where' and 'when' to use 'what' material, and which determinate characteristics are required of the material that is to be chosen and deployed. Importantly, they also ques-

tion the compatibility of these materials as well as the way they weather and fail.

Buildings can be compared to living organisms that adapt, interact and respond to environmental conditions. Buildings must be designed and built as the buffer between the outdoor and internal spaces in as much the same way as our skin acts as a buffer and protects our organs from harsh environmental and climatic conditions. Buildings are therefore not simply enclosures of space but living entities that respond to context and environmental conditions through their skins, or the materials that compose them.

There are different aspects to the debate of materiality. The most obvious is the purely functional aspect. This is of course a crucial and fundamental issue and revolves around the structural performance of a material, how the material performs and wears with exposure to varying environmental and temperature/seasonal conditions and, increasingly so, its intrinsic thermal performance. In this regard it is pertinent to mention that Maltese architects are now bound by a new Technical Guidance Document, based on the European Union's Energy Directive, which gives indications as to how one can meet the minimum requirements for the energy performance of buildings in Malta for separate building elements composing the building fabric and with which all architectural designs must comply (2).

Materials have always been deemed secondary to the more important notion of form, the main thrust of architecture. In the words of Catherine Slessor, a renowned architectural critic, materials have remained "silent witnesses" (3). However, they are the tangible realisations of building forms – it is only possible to achieve interesting designs through the judicious use and application of the correct materials (Image 1).

Invariably, the history of architecture is therefore to a great extent the history and evolution of materials – the invention and discovery of new materials (or of new characteristics of existing materials). These have permitted new exciting building forms that have delighted us with some fantastic architectural achievements worldwide. The Industrial Revolution was, of course, a crucial turning point in this respect. Subsequent advances in transport, labour and technology allowed for more available materials that could be carried from one place to another as opposed to solely having to use materials that were to be found in the immediate environs. As production

costs decreased further, the wider use of materials increased and they became more affordable. Technological advances in the 20th and 21st centuries have fuelled daring exploits and challenged architects to use (and abuse of) materials in new and fascinating ways. Metal is now moulded into the weirdest of forms, glass is being used in compression, stone in tension, giving us buildings some of which seem to float in mid-air.

To a large extent, materials have also become architects' signatures or distinct marks. Think of Frank o'Gehry's or Zaha Hadid's sensuous and organic forms, Alvaro Siza's or Rafael Moneo's characteristic clean lines and geometrical perfection of stonework, Tadao Ando's fair-faced concrete, Massimiliano Fuksas' structural glass achievements, Mario Botta's judicious use and appreciation of stone for its own intrinsic worth, Santiago Calatrava's metalwork and his celebrated bridge structures or Jean Nouvel's wafer-thin metal roofing applied over large spans.

The discussion cannot be only about the physical characteristics of materials. Putting materials to their best use involves both an appreciation of their technical potential as well as, to a large extent, their innate sensory and aesthetic qualities. Materials have the ability to evoke emotions and feelings. This fits in perfectly with Abraham Maslow's theories. Maslow, one of last century's greatest psychologists, proposed a 'hierarchy of basic human needs', the peak of which was self-actualisation, or the potential to be what one can be. According to him, the best-civilised societies are those in which the self-actualisation needs of citizens are fully valued through the cognitive and the aesthetic. Seeing and touching materials around us increases our sense of the aesthetic. Learning and appreciating this aesthetic around us can therefore help us make advances in life.

The Maltese context

Last century provided us with some of the worst lessons in aesthetics. The 50s to the 80s are rightly considered by many to be the Dark Ages in Maltese planning and architecture. Was this a question of bad taste? Was it an affordability issue? Or was it simply a matter of non-education or non-culture? Suffice to mention the proliferation of gold-tinted aluminium (some localities still seem to literally be a showcase of this) or the four- to five-course of horrific ceramic tiling placed on building façades to control rising damp in, more often than not, the most awful of designs and patterns not even worth being placed in the most unobtrusive of spare WCs. These are just two elements that scar our streetscapes like a sharp crack on the finest porcelain doll, and they are a continuous reminder of bad taste.

Image 1: The richness and diversity of materials





Image 2 :
Contextual composition

Thankfully things have changed dramatically in recent years, thanks to an increasing awareness of what makes good architecture. Architects are faced with clients who are more exposed to local and foreign examples of good design that makes use of interesting, and not necessarily conventional, materials. However, at what cost is this happening? Are materials being applied judiciously and contextually, or are they applied blindly irrespective of context in as much the same way as the gold-tinted aluminium on our façades was? Has architectural design been reduced to a question of image? And have we now gone to the other extreme, abandoning the very fundamentals of why certain materials are preferred to others and what particular characteristics make some materials more suitable than others?

This therefore leads us to the fundamental concept of what is good design. We should consider ourselves lucky to still have some examples of vernacular architecture left in Malta and Gozo, which we must strive to protect for future generations. The greatness of vernacular architecture does not lie in the urge to create “an image” but in the sheer delight achieved by the building forms being in context, the seamless integration of the stonework and massing; a relaxed sense of ‘appropriate architecture’ – appropriate to climatic conditions, context and topography (Image 2). It is also beautiful because the buildings are harmoniously laid out; they are quite literally ‘background buildings’. Unfortunately, sometimes architects expect each building they design to be a ‘landmark building’ that occupies the foreground rather than sitting peacefully in the background as a neutral backdrop. Instead of designing a neutral building that focuses its energies on supporting human activities and perceptions, the focus is on having a strong architectural image that fights for attention and ends up being out of context and failing to stimulate the aesthetic within us.

Back to our discussion, therefore, if materials are applied blindly without due regard to specificity and contextuality they risk becoming banal and, quite simply, pastiche. This not only results in an architecture that is completely bland and devoid of any meaning or spirituality but, in the process, it also devalues the materials themselves that become meaningless, fake and false. Materials should be therefore used wisely to be able to produce an architecture that is not only sensuous and aesthetically pleasing but is also authentic because it deploys materials that are true and that respect both the function and the form of the buildings.

Imageability and sensuality

This is not an easy argument in a day and age where image is paramount. Architecture today is experiencing challenging times – the focus is not about portraying a true and realistic picture but about bombarding people with strong three-dimensional images that can stimulate the mind and the senses and that can sell a building, just like any other product out of a glossy magazine. People buy ‘on plan’ where all they have of the building is a picture; architecture is reduced to a temporary virtual flashy three-dimensional image that seems to make the building timeless. Of course this is a false portrayal of reality.

In many cases architecture is therefore losing its permanence provided by the physicality of materials. The focus is on an image at a particular point in time, which will soon be replaced by another image of another structure - temporality, the present tense, as opposed to the gradual dimension of buildings that weather and age with time. Matter has its own true and unequivocal language; stones speak of their geological origins, they are a strong symbol of permanence and durability; newer materials, such as glass and steel, speak of the mechanical and technological processes lead-

ing to their composition and formation.

Materials can give us something no three-dimensional image will. The further deeper meaning of materials is connected to the human senses, how this relates to the sensory experience of a building and how it ultimately ties in with other senses. The ability of sensing, touching and smelling different materials and textures is what evokes sensations in us, not the mere looking at them (4). The rough wooden texture felt while stroking a piece of wood along its grain, the hand slipping over a cold glazed surface, the sensations triggered within the body when touching cold or hot surfaces, the pleasant warm feeling of walking

on real wood flooring, and the relief of walking on cool ceramic tiles in summer... all this triggers other sensations in our bodies and is sensual, to say the least.

Architecture is concerned with real sensory interaction because architecture is for, and interacts with, humans, who are sensory and sensual beings. In the words of architect Peter Zumthor, materials evoke sensuality in their colour, form and smell resulting in beautiful and unforgettable human experiences...

“... I see the rusty metal of the door, the blue of the hills in the background, the shimmer of the air over the asphalt... Everything I see... they all show traces of wear, of use and of dwelling... And when I look more carefully, the things I see start to tell me something about why, how and for what purpose they were made.

...

I like the idea that the house I build contributes to the atmospheric density of a place, a place which its inhabitants and passers-by will remember with pleasure.” (5)

This, surely, is the true stuff of good architecture.

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Through the eyes of an artist

The man in the street may walk along without giving a second thought to the urban landscape that surrounds him. Many tend to rush through the day without pausing to take in the various

aspects of our environment that influence our lives, whether positively or negatively. "the Architect" interviewed James Vella Clark, one of Malta's emerging young painters, about his views on the built environ-

ment within which we carry out our daily lives and on what he draws inspiration from in his works.

James, many of your paintings draw inspiration from the urban landscape. What draws you to seek various built up parts of the Maltese Islands as subjects for your work?

The urban landscape, especially the skyline, is a starting point; a premise intended to put the viewer in a context. The rest though comes afterwards. The concepts and messages lie within the brushwork that forms an idealised suggestion of buildings beneath these skylines. My skylines are many times dominated by the recurrent church cupola and lonely steeple. This was the starting point in my art as I started looking around me and seeking the best way to represent this community that we live in. I wanted to convey a community that is still very much dominated by religion, beliefs, parochialism, tradition and cultural expectations and the best way to communicate this was to represent it by the village skyline dominated by the parish church overlooking the village below.

In time, the cupola and the steeple became representative of the woman and the man in any relationship. It was here that my works started exploring the concept of duality with special reference to the duality in the forces in relationships between two people. The village therefore, stopped being representative of an actual particular place but in its various forms, interpretations and colours became symbolic of any given relationship I wanted to portray. Gradually, what made up the essential structure of the 'village', started taking a more abstract dimension and today, most of my works, though retaining a glimpse of the village skyline, have been reduced to an abstract patchwork of colours, free and abandoned in execution in a way that best reflects the mood I was in as I worked on the painting.

To many it may be easier to understand how one can be inspired by a scene from



JAMES VELLA CLARK: Tower Road (2006)

a Maltese village core, or a view from an old city such as Mdina. However you have recently begun to look at more contemporary parts of our built environment to portray in your paintings. What has drawn you to look for beauty in these environments, and how easy or difficult is it to find inspiration in what can sometimes be likened to a concrete jungle?

Yes. Drawing beauty from where one is less probable to find it is an even bigger challenge. But I think this is a very big essence of what art is all about – seeing beauty even in the things we normally take for granted. Or drawing beauty from what might seem negative. It is when we actually stop and look at these things with different eyes, and with an open mind that we can make the most interesting of discoveries. Within this concept, an artist that comes to mind is Rothko who drew his inspiration from human tragedy for his grand colourful canvasses so full of angst and depth.

Art sees no boundary whatsoever. There exist no limits as to what may be re-interpreted. We may draw inspiration from anything around us, from the least and most unassuming of subjects – elevating them to the high status of immortality.



JAMES VELLA CLARK: Closed Harbour (detail)



JAMES VELLA CLARK: *It's Bigger Than Us* (detail)

Just the same way as in Duchamp's classic Fountain, nothing more than a urinal, achieved world status, so can anything around us. As Jeff Koons aptly put it, "I get all the inspiration from the real world so I'm much more involved in walking down the street and finding out what's going on in the world..."

It so happened one day that I was on the Sliema front and I noticed the perspective of Tower Road leading towards the tower. Tower Road is always referred to as a landmark that has been irreparably spoilt so I argued that my challenge would be to re-interpret this landmark in an artistically attractive way. The result was a winter view of Tower Road with the row of trees bare from any leaves and the blue green sea reminiscent of the cold season. This is not

only a view of a road – it is symbolic of a journey, of life itself perhaps where we are always heading towards, a known destination represented by the orange tower in the distance.

As an artist, how do you perceive the Maltese built environment, both the traditional and the modern?

As I was noticing my style evolve, I started becoming more concerned with the spatial element in my art and my interpretation of landscapes especially when these started becoming more 'abstract' in nature. I apply this way of seeing my art in the way I perceive my immediate surroundings. My concern lies in how the traditional elements in the old architecture relate to the contemporary and how these two can be

combined together. The common denominator in the two is the space that exists in between. It is this space and how it is managed that can exalt both old and new together. It is in the intelligent planning of the resulting 'space in between' that true visual balance and perceived harmony may be attained.

However, I also believe that an even bigger challenge lies in finding ways how the contemporary can keep upholding the old. The contemporary has a moral duty of elevating the old to immortality. In time the 'new evolved contemporary' will have the same duty of upholding today's new. This though creates a new challenge – the never ending quest to create an architecture that is truly timeless. Space has never been bound by any form of time so this remains the biggest challenge in architecture – not only in Malta but anywhere really.

"Two Harbours" is the title of your exhibition currently showing inside the main hall at St James Cavalier. What is the main theme behind this exhibition and what can one expect to discover?

Two Harbours marks a distinctive and very obvious move away from my past style. The works are now about my own human experience rather than how I perceive my surroundings. The 'two harbours' represent the dualities within us and the dualities that make up our relationships both with ourselves and with those around us. These dualities come together when our conscious self, the self as we know it, meets the actual true self. We then become conscious of other dualities too – the extremes within us – and we come to realise who we really are and who we are actually capable of becoming.

Since the works are being shown in chronological order, one will notice a gradual change in style mainly the use of blacks, whites and greys. Subdued colours do not effectively represent a negative trait but are more an opportunity to seek beauty where one least expects it. This concept runs parallel with that of growing up and evolving into better persons from our failures as human beings. From these failures then comes a search for the new self and then the discovery of new opportunities. This explains the decisive step towards abstraction. I view these more recent works completed this year as redeeming and hint towards a possible new approach that I might be exploring in the coming months. For those who have known my works in

the past years, this collection may come as a pleasant surprise or simply as a shock. Either way, this does not effect me since the key elements in my expression remain there – the spontaneity with which I express myself that best reflects my emotions as well as the passion which I seek to transmit through my works. These are the two main traits that best single out my work from that of other artists. I am not meticulous and I leave detail to those who appreciate it more. I am at a point where my only concern is to convey both my achieved as well as my failed humanity, as personal, raw and abandoned as I feel it is - the very basic things that make me who I am. As long as people see these qualities in my work and connect to my humanity, I feel fulfilled.

"Two Harbours" inside the Main Hall at St James Cavalier in Valletta remains open to the public till the 6th of January 2008. For more information about the artist visit www.jamesvellaclark.com

James Vella Clark

– A Short Biography

James Vella Clark (B. 1975) had his public debut with his first exhibition 'Beyond Perspectives' in 2001 hosted at the Manoel Theatre's courtyard in Valletta which was very well received by art critics and the public alike. From then on, he hosted three other solo exhibitions in Malta, was invited to participate in collective exhibitions in Barcelona, Brussels, Duisburg, Vienna, Mannheim, Oestende and at the prestigious International Biennale of Contemporary Art in Florence, Italy. In 2005, James Vella Clark hosted his first international shows with 'Impressions' in Berlin, Germany, 'Cityscapes' in Kampen, the Netherlands and recently, 'Blu Mediterraneo' in Melbourne, Australia.



Building the future

"Periti owe a duty of care to their clients. Their work has a profound and long lasting effect on the community at large. As projects grow in scale and complexity, there is a growing awareness of the need for the profession to meet today's challenges and demands and deliver its product at a level of quality commensurate with today's expectations and standards of living. The Kamra tal-Periti is working to improve its structures and those of the profession to allow its members to better serve their clients and society through their work." This is the opening statement of the section entitled "Quality of Service" of the Kamra's position paper on the built environment, aptly titled "The Urban Challenge." And this is the main issue that will be debated at a conference being organised by the Kamra on the 7 December.

Owing a duty of care to one's client is an aspect common to most professions. Periti, however, have greater responsibility than most in that their work may well have a profound and long lasting effect on the community at large. The Kamra tal-Periti is very much aware of the burden of responsibility on the Perit towards society.

A large part of the existing local legislation regulating the profession is regrettably antiquated and often obsolete. In this regard the Kamra is committed to revisiting all regulations and to proposing the amendments it deems appropriate. These include Chapter 390 of the Laws of Malta (the 'Periti Act') and the associated Subsidiary Legislation which together establish and regulate the profession, the Code of Professional Conduct, the Regulations of the Kamra tal-Periti and the relevant section of the Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure which regulates the profession. There is a pressing need to update our laws to ensure their relevance to today's needs.

Cost Information System

To bring the practice of the profession in line with the free market economy championed by the European Union, and in

particular with the requirements of the Competitions Directive and the Services in the Internal Market (SIM) Directive, the impetus is to move away from fixed fee scales towards more open competitive tendering, with the Perit charging rates he/she considers appropriate for the work to be done. There is a point though below

which the Perit will not be able to give a satisfactory standard of service without the risk of being unprofessional. The challenge for the future is to reconsider statutory fees while ensuring an adequate level of service to the client, adjusting fees to reflect not only the volume and type of work expected, but also the nature and complex-

ity of the commission and the facilities and standard of service the Perit or practice offers. In line with the recommendations of the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE), the Kamra is working towards establishing a database of fees – referred to as a Cost Information System (CIS) – which will provide not only the professional but also his client with guidance on what may be expected.

Apart from the legal discussion within the EU, most of the fee information systems are intended to help the average customer when purchasing architectural services. As he has no specific skills and/or expertise about the service himself, the consumer needs information on average service-price relations for specific objects of the services contract. The main function of a market is to give information to the customer about price-value combinations for required goods and services. This vital market function cannot work if the customer is unable to assess the value offered to him. Therefore access to fee information helps the client to make a judgement on the architect's offer.

Standard Forms of Agreement

Consumers may often ask whether Periti are delivering what they promise and what they are charging for. Is the quality of service given by Periti of an acceptable level? Does the Perit visit the site as often as he should? Does the quality of design seek to achieve a standard of excellence that improves the built environment? Similarly the profession may ask: Does the client appreciate the type and level of service required for a particular project?

The Kamra envisages shortly being able to introduce Standard Forms of Agreement for the provision of services by a Perit. These would clearly define the services an employer / client may expect and a Perit would be requested to deliver, the fee structure and the manner in which the services are delivered and remunerated. It is furthermore understandable that the



employer is not always fully aware of the complexities of undertaking a construction project, the risks involved and the time frames, costs and procedures they face on the road to achieving their goals. Such forms of agreement would explain the various aspects of a project in order to assist the consumer in understanding such complexities.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

In general, in all Member States of the European Union architects carry liability for the work they undertake. This liability arises from the duty of care that architects owe to society in general and the ability of architects to act independently of vested interests on behalf of society. The Kamra tal-Periti believes every practitioner should have an adequate level of insurance for the benefit of both the Perit and his clients. Once again, there are several obstacles that still need to be overcome in order to ensure that this initiative is successful, and viable, not least the excessive liability period the Perit is subjected to. At present, the Kamra is engaged in seeking ways to ensure that all Periti can obtain an adequate level of PII cover.

Professional Conduct and Competence

The architectural profession has always been characterised by its ethical and



responsible approach to the provision of services to society. For this reason Codes of Conduct for the profession exist in all Member States of the EU. Article 37(1) of the SIM Directive requires that "Member States shall, in co-operation with the Commission, take accompanying measures to encourage the drawing up at Community level, particularly by professional bodies, organisations and associations, of codes of conduct facilitating the provision of services or the establishment of the provider in another Member State, in conformity with Community law."

Locally, a Code of Professional Conduct is entrenched in the Regulations comprising Subsidiary Legislation 390.01 of the Laws of Malta. The object of the Code is to promote the highest standards of professional conduct, or self-discipline, required of the Kamra's members in the best interests of the community. The Code seeks to regulate the behaviour of members between themselves, towards their clients and towards the general public, putting into words what clients would expect of the professional advisors in whom they place their trust. The revisions to the Code of Professional Conduct which the Kamra is currently contemplating are intended to renew the level of trust expected and desired between the Perit and his clients, by obliging all the members of the profession to maintain the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. The proposed document is based on the Deontological Code of the Architects' Council of Europe, a document drawn up with the intention of harmonising the Codes of Conduct between its member bodies in order to achieve a more homogenous approach throughout Europe.

Regulations of the Kamra

In 1996, the General Meeting of the Kamra tal-Periti had approved changes to the Regulations of the Kamra. These should have replaced current Subsidiary Legislation

390.01, but for various reasons the required procedures for these proposed regulations to be endorsed by government were not followed through. The Council of the Kamra has therefore agreed to review the regulations once again, present proposed amendments to its members for approval, and subsequently approach government with a revised set of regulations for promulgation through the necessary legislative procedures. The main intention of these revised regulations is to establish a streamlined structure within which the Kamra can operate, to address some aspects of the current regulations that were either obsolete or in conflict with other legislation or regulations and to ensure that the Kamra has the required backing to carry out its work for the benefit of the profession and society at large.

Periti Act

The Periti Act, Chapter 390 of the Laws of Malta, was introduced in 1996 and addressed the anomalies of the Architect's Ordinance – in particular the requirement that for anyone to obtain a permanent warrant to

provide the services of a Perit one had to be qualified from the University of Malta. The opportunity had been taken at the time to introduce other changes to address the needs of a developing profession and the introduction of a Warranting Board. Such new elements included the recognition of partnerships and the requirement for Professional Indemnity Insurance cover.

In the light of the various other proposals being presented by the Council of the Kamra tal-Periti, this Act has now been revisited and the Council will also present a position paper on the various aspects of this legislation it feels require amendment. Many of these proposals are again spurred by the impending need for Malta to transpose the requirements of a number of European Union Directives into national law. These proposed amendments

are also a result of the Kamra's participation in fora such as the Architects' Council of Europe, the International Union of Architects and the Union of Mediterranean Architects. They are also based on our working experience with the Periti Act in its current form, the Kamra's efforts to raise the profile and credibility in the profession and our commitment to provide an excellent service to our clients and the community.

Moving towards a renewed profession

Quoting from the UIA Accord on recommended international standards of professionalism in architectural practice, "Members of the architectural profession are dedicated to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and competence, and to the highest possible quality of their output, and thereby bring to society special and unique knowledge, skills and aptitudes essential to the development of the built environment of their societies and cultures." It is hoped that these proposals will continue to build on the efforts of the profession in achieving this goal.



TIME FOR ARCHITECTURE 3

T4A3

One of the main aims of the Kamra tal-Periti over the past years has been to place Architecture at the forefront of the national debate, and to expose the public at large to good Architecture. Throughout the year, the Kamra organises a number of events and participates in a number of initiatives with this aim in mind. Carrying on from the success of previous years, the Kamra once again organised Time for Architecture. The third edition of this series of events was held last October, commencing on Monday 1st October, which marked World Architecture Day, and coming to a close on Saturday 20th October. This year's program included a number of architectural events that attracted architects and architectural enthusiasts alike.

EXHIBITIONS

"Gallery of Maltese Architecture" & "Designs"

This year's events kicked off with the inauguration of an exhibition of contemporary Maltese architecture by some of the leading architects and architectural firms on the Maltese Islands, together with the annual Designs exhibition organised by SACES (Society of Architecture



and Civil Engineering Students) in collaboration with the Department of Architecture and Urban Design at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering, University of Malta. The exhibition, which promises to become a bi-annual event, was inaugurated by Minister Francis Zammit Dimech on Monday 1st October, and was held on the first



floor of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, located within the Auberge D'Italie in Valletta. The exhibition, which ran for a period of three weeks until Friday 19th October, attracted a number of participants and visitors and served as a snapshot of where Maltese architecture is heading.

LANDSCAPE SEMINAR

On the 5th October, a half-day seminar was held at the Ministry of Gozo in Nadur, organised in collaboration with the Anhalt University of Applied Sciences of Brenburg on the theme Landscape Architecture in the Design/Build Process. The seminar, very well received by those who attended, discussed best practice in Europe and its potential impact on the built and rural environment in Malta.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP

The Kamra tal-Periti decided to tie in with the theme chosen by the International Union of Architects (UIA) for the 2007 World Architecture Day, Transmitting Zero CO2 Emission Architecture, for the Children's Workshop. Throughout the morning workshop, held at St. James Cavalier on Saturday 6th October, children were asked the

question "Could we design a sustainable city of the future in Malta?", and to present their vision for such a city in art form. This workshop gave children the opportunity to understand the architectural design process that goes into a zero carbon dioxide emission city and its impacts on the environment.

The workshop, led by Ms. Lucienne Ellul and Perit Monica Audrey Galea, raised and discussed issues such as global warming, climate change and energy efficiency in simplistic terms that could be understood and appreciated by all children. It further engaged children to relate them to technologies such as wind turbines, solar panels and low carbon houses that form part of a green sustainable city. The 32 children who took part in the KTP workshop were aged between eight and fourteen. In the first part of the morning, a brainstorming session was carried out with all the children who first came up with the different elements that make up a city in order for it to work and then discussed how these elements could be altered in a way that is sustainable and of low zero carbon emission while using 'free' and available energy that comes from the sun, wind and water.

With some basic knowledge now in hand, the children were subsequently divided into two groups of 16 and were asked to pick any element that formed part of the whole city and represent it in art form using alternative green technologies. Some children chose to redesign a house using solar panels and wind turbines. Others chose to design their own forms of transport. Some of the older children also decided to design their own water heating systems and generation of electricity using hydroelectric power.

Finally, the children were teamed up in groups of three and four and together built physical models or other forms of representations that depicted zero carbon emission architecture. The models ranged from houses with solar panels on the roof, to a sustainable hotel, to models of wind turbines as well as hydroelectric wheels. All creations were exhibited throughout the evening in the Main Atrium at St.





James Cavalier, as part of the Notte Bianca celebrations. Today's children will determine the future quality of our built environment; their ability to make sound and responsible decisions is based on the knowledge they attain as students. The very same children designing a fictitious zero carbon emission city today may very well become the architects that will design and build the real zero carbon emission city of tomorrow. In the words of Gaetan Siew, UIA President, architects are directly responsible for preserving the earth's natural resources, to eliminate waste, recycle, and use local resources with the imagination and ingenuity that characterise the architectural profession.

PREHISTORIC TEMPLES

On Sunday 7th October a small but enthusiastic group of people attended the very well-organised guided tour



to the Prehistoric Temples of Tarxien, Ta' Hagraat and Ta' Skorba, an event organised in collaboration with Heritage Malta and coordinated by Ms. Katya Stroud, and one that proved to be an eye-opener in many respects for all the participants.

OTHER EVENTS

The Time for Architecture events came to a close on the third weekend of October with the SACES Architecture Workshop and the fourth in this year's series of Architecture Nights which featured world-renowned Austrian architect Peter Lorenz of peterlorenzatelier on Saturday 20th October at the Aula Magna. The Events Standing Committee was also in charge of coordinating the UIA (Union Internationale des Architectes) Region 1 Meeting held at the Capua Palace between Friday 19th and Saturday 20th October with the



participation of the Presidents of the various Architectural Chambers and Associations in Western Europe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kamra tal-Periti would like to thank the following sponsors of Time for Architecture, without whose support these events would not have been possible: Elektra, for sponsoring the contemporary Maltese exhibition; Faber Castell, Wasteserv and Spherical, for sponsoring the Children's Workshop as well as St. James Cavalier for hosting it; and the Architecture Nights sponsors Auntie Lucy, Modern Elegance, HalMann Vella, Volteco (Attard & Co.), HSBC and Steel Structures.

The KTP would further like to thank the individuals who were involved in the separate events: Perit Monique Calleja and Ms. Alexia Mercieca



who organised the Contemporary Maltese architecture exhibition, the Children's Workshop coordinators Ms. Lucienne Ellul and Perit Monica Audrey Galea and Ms. Greta Caruana Smith for helping out in its organisation, Ms. Katya Stroud from Heritage Malta who prepared the prehistoric temples guided tours, Ms. Alexia Mercieca for helping out in the logistics of the UIA Region 1 Meeting as well as Mr. Neil Navarro and Perit Etienne Fenech for their help during the Architecture Nights event.

2008

Without doubt, the Kamra tal-Periti intends to continue with the organisation of such events. It is felt that these are not only beneficial to members of the profession, but in particular that these events are of the utmost importance in bringing Architecture closer to the public in general. Thus Architecture no longer remains a topic to be studied or a work to be viewed from a distance, but becomes an aspect of our daily life which everyone can participate in, discover and contribute to.

Perit Antoine Zammit

KTP Events Standing Committee Chairperson



Another resounding success

AN07 consisted of a series of Architecture Nights organised during 2007, each of which proved to be a resounding success. The theme for these events was "The Stuff of Architecture," and the speakers were asked to develop on the art of using appropriate materials in their right context, and to discuss the sensitive and responsive approach they have adopted in their architectural designs and their decisions in choosing the most suitable materials in the process. The first four nights saw the participation of world-renowned architects Manfredi Nicoletti, Mario Botta and Cesare Casati and Peter Lorenz, all of whom have been featured in previous editions of "the Architect". The last in the series of AN07 was held in November and hosted world renowned Italian architectural theorist and historian Mario Pisani.

Mario Pisani was born in Rome in 1947. He qualified as an architect in 1973 and became interested in modern and contemporary architecture in both Italy



Cesare M. Casati

and beyond, which he analysed and studied in further detail. His research spread around Europe, focusing in particular on the Mediterranean basin (France, Spain, Malta and Jordan) and on the architectural period of the 20th century, in particular in Rome.



Mario Botta

Pisani's research delved into works by Armando Brasini and Marcello Piacentini. In the 1980s and 1990s his research gained widespread exposure, featuring in a number of architectural journals including *Controspazio*, *L'Industria delle Costruzioni*, *Materia*, *Palladio*, *L'Arca*, *Domus*, *Art Forum* (New York) and *Artics* (Barcelona), and resulted in several published books. In 2001, together with Paolo Portoghesi, he started editing a quarterly journal *Abitare la terra*.

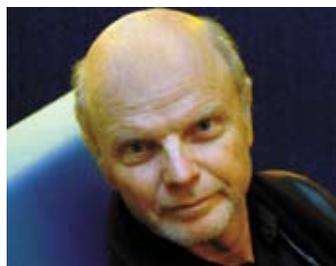
Prof. Pisani is considered to be one of the world's leading architectural historians and critics. He is Professor at the Faculty of Architecture at Luigi Vanvitelli University in Naples, and is an academic and lecturer at the *Accademia di Belle Arti Pietro Vannucci* in Perugia. He has also been a visiting professor at



Manfredi Nicoletti

the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Malta, and has held various lectures, seminars and conferences in leading Italian universities as well as in Jordan and Amman. His research papers, articles and publications, particularly those dealing with 20th century architecture, have placed Prof. Pisani at the forefront of architectural theory. In fact, a number of institutions have invited him to present his studies, organise exhibitions, and participate in debates and conferences.

As an architect, Prof. Pisani collaborated with Mr Portoghesi on a number of high-profile projects, including the Cultural and Arts Centre in Montegiordano, Piazza Spartaco al Tuscolano in Rome,



Peter Lorenz

the restoration of the historical wing of the *Ospedale di San Giovanni* in Rome as well as in a competition for the redesign of *Piazza Duomo* and *Piazza Orsini* in Benevento. He has also obtained first prize in a number of important international architectural competitions, including the expansion of the cemetery in Terni (1986, in progress), *Piazza Pagano*, Potenza (1987) and *Piazza dell'Annunziata* in Acri (2001-2003).

Pisani has published numerous books, among which *Paolo Portoghesi: Opere e progetti* (1989, third edition 1997), *Architecture Studio: Rites de Passages* (1995), *Studio Passarelli Palazzina* in Via Campania, Roma (2000), *Rosoni* in Umbria (2002),

Marcello Piacentini Architettura: Le Opere maestre (2004), and more recently, the highly acclaimed *SITE* (2006) and the newly released *L'architettura del tempo presente* (2007), which was the theme of Pisani's presentation at the Aula Magna in Valletta to a packed audience. Prof. Pisani believes that contemporary design today necessarily means a design that is contextual to its time and surroundings. It must also, however, address our predecessors' design solutions. He, therefore, strongly believes that architects and architectural students today must be familiar with 20th century design and architecture and the philosophy behind it: from Antoni Gaudì to Otto Wagner, from Le Corbusier to Frank Lloyd Wright, from Walter Gropius to Mies van der Rohe to Alvar Aalto and Louis Khan, arriving to architecture of the 1980s and 1990s with the advent of postmodernism and deconstructivism.

Each of the Architecture Nights debates was well attended, with some nights being more packed

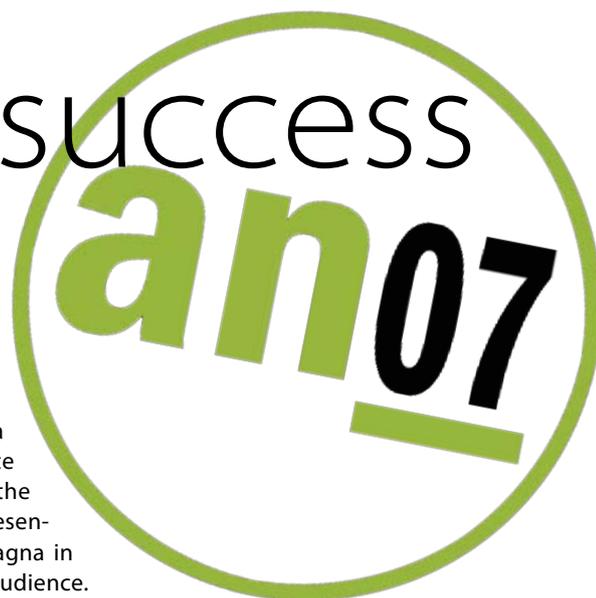


Mario Pisani

than others. It was however apparent that Architecture matters, and that people are interested and willing to participate in open debates such as these. Such open for a for discussion are hard to come by and the general impression was that the participants appreciated the opportunity to spend time listening to presentations by foreign architects of such high acclaim.

At the end of each night, participants were invited to put questions to the guest speaker. Inevitably each of the speakers was asked to comment on their impressions of contemporary Maltese architecture. It came as no surprise to hear such comments as "you seem to be caught in a time warp," or "you need to explore new materials and technologies and how these can be integrated within your buildings." It is hoped that a number of local practitioners will rise to the challenge and begin to look at ways of constructing and designing the buildings we live, work and play in that go beyond the traditional while respecting the settings within which they are found.

Architecture Nights 07 was sponsored by *HSBC*, *Attard & Co*, *HalMann Vella*, *Steel Structures*, *Modern Elegance* and *Auntie Lucy*.



DISCUSSING ARCHITECTURE

During the past months the Kamra tal-Periti has organised, participated in and supported a number of events that were varied in nature and that discussed a number of various topics. These events were quite varied in nature, one being a meeting of the UIA Region 1 representatives, another being a very informative conference on military architecture, and the other, a seminar on landscape design, being the Kamra's first event held in Gozo.

VAUBAN IN MALTA

THE CAREER AND LEGACY OF THE MILITARY ENGINEER SÉBASTIEN LE PRESTRE DE VAUBAN (1633-1707)

This two-day conference, held between the 22 and 23 November at the Phoenicia Hotel in Floriana, was organised by the Embassy of France in Malta and the International Institute for Baroque Studies within the University of Malta in collaboration with the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure, the Malta Tourism Authority and the Kamra tal-Periti, among others.



The aim of this seminar was to have an international forum in order to commemorate the trecentary anniversary of Vauban's death and his influence on the development of the fortifications in Malta during the XVIIIth century.

Although the Maltese fortifications erected between 1530 and 1798 are in some respects unique, they nonetheless constitute a representative example of contemporary European military architecture at its best. By the end of the XVIIth century the French had established a veritable corps of engineers led by Sébastien le Prestre de Vauban, and it was to France that the knights looked for their supply of engineers in the XVIIIth century. The employment of men such as Colongues, Tigné, Mondion, Maigret, Folard, Bourslemont, and Pontleroy marked not only the eclipse of the Italians as the leading military engineers of Europe, but also the transfer of the Order from the Imperial into the French sphere of influence.

The conference delved into the influence of Vauban on the development of these

Maltese fortifications and compared the conservation of his fortifications in France with the current restoration projects of the forts and fortifications in Malta.

Speakers included Prof Dennis De Lucca from the University of Malta; Alain Montferand, President of the Association Vauban; Perit Claude Busuttil, Conservation Architect; Maria Giuffrè from the University of Palermo; Dr Stephen Spiteri, Superintendent of Fortifications; the Minister for Resources and Infrastructure; Michele Virol, CNRS, France; M. Emilie d'Orgeix, military historian; Philippe Prost, conservation architect and member of the Association Vauban; Hermann Bonnici from the Restoration Unit at the Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure; Perit David Mallia from Din I-Art Helwa; Prof Alex Torpiano, MIDI consortium; and Prof Alain Montferand, President of the Association Vauban.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN THE DESIGN/BUILD PROCESS EUROPEAN BEST PRACTICE AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPLICATION FOR MALTA

On the 5 October, the Kamra tal-Periti and the Anhalt University of Germany organised a half-day seminar regarding the potential of landscape architecture in Malta. This event was held at the Ministry for Gozo in Victoria and formed part of the Time for Architecture 2007 programme. During the past three years, the Anhalt University has been conducting studio work to introduce landscape architecture



proposals and has invited leading professionals in landscape architecture to add the professional perspective to the academic one. This event was in fact, a follow-up to the one-day seminar held in Malta in March, earlier this year.

Hon. Minister, Giovanna Debono delivered the welcoming address. Landscape architects Swantje Nowak from Rainer Schmidt Landscape Architects and Tancredi Capatti discussed the issues relating to "Urban Design & Real Estate Value" and "Design Competition & Public Participation in the Building Process", respectively. Antoine Gatt gave a general insight to contemporary landscape architecture in Malta. In addition Perit Dorianne Micallef from the Works Division, Ministry for Resources and Infrastructure, discussed various landscaping projects currently underway in Malta.

Professor Erich Buhmann from the Anhalt University of Applied Sciences led the seminar, which was open to all students and architects. Projects discussed also included those created by the Professor's students during their fieldwork aimed at enhancing the locality of Nadur. The seminar was held in collaboration with the Nadur Local Council.

UIA REGION 1 48TH COORDINATION MEETING

On the 19 and 20 October, Malta hosted the 48th UIA Region I Coordination meeting. The UIA is the world body representing the architectural profession with more than 1,300,000 members in 116 countries. It is divided into five regions each with its own Vice-President. The Regions contribute to the UIA's core activities as well as carry out their own programmes, normally complementing the main themes set by the Assembly in its triennial sessions. The next Assembly is scheduled for Torino in July 2008.

The KTP is the UIA National Section for Malta and had already hosted two Region

I meetings, in September 1997 and March 2001. In this year's meeting, most of the discussion, as expected, centred round preparations for the Torino Assembly.

Currently, the UIA has three permanent Commissions which are working on Education, including a UIA/UNESCO validation system, Professional Practice, and CPD.

As well as the Commissions, UIA has three committees developing a Vision and Strategy policy aimed at taking UIA and the profession into the 21st century; Finance and Promotion, dealing with the commercial aspect of the organisation, and Communication. The theme for the Torino Assembly is to be 'Transmitting Architecture', and will cover a whole range of topics on architecture and the way that it can be communicated.

The UIA also runs a number of work programmes, some of which are at organisation level, while others are run inside the regions as regional work programmes. Such themes as Heritage, Sustainability, Architecture and Children, Sacred Spaces, Hi-tech buildings, Sports and Leisure, and a number of other thematic areas all form part of the extensive range of activities that UIA organises.

As the global representative of the architectural profession, UIA maintains close working relationships with international bodies. UNESCO has already been mentioned as a partner in developing a policy on education. The Sports and Leisure Work Group collaborates closely with the IOC in relation to Sports facility planning and development. All this body of work will be up for debate in Torino, where the next triennial programme will be developed. Ever since the Barcelona Assembly of 1996, KTP members have 'registered a presence', including Beijing in 1999, Berlin in 2002, and Istanbul in 2005. Participation in the UIA Assembly and the accompanying Congress, a veritable festival of architecture, should be pencilled in everyone's diary for July 2008. Don't miss it.

Il-Gallarija

by Perit Edward Said

Many of our readers will have noticed that whilst the architectural sphere of our country is nowadays dominated by the novelty of high rise mega developments, an even more widespread phenomenon is manifesting itself. We are currently witnessing a spate of architecture whose grammar is attempting to recall the vernacular. Largely confined to Urban Conservation Areas and rural contexts developments of apartments, maisonettes, villas and terraced houses are being faced with compositions of balustrades, cornices, mouldings, corbels and countless other old world elements. Either through the insistence of the authorities or out of whim of client or architect, the use of these elements is on the rise. This fashion is coupled with the increasing trend of facadism, once exclusive to places like Sliema but now frequent all around the



Pleasing the authorities?



Is this a memory of the past or an insult to our forefathers?

country. Now, the virtues and vices of this pseudo-nostalgic-romantic style is surely the subject of an entire thesis. Their effect on historical townscapes and 21st century Maltese architecture is highly debatable. This season's piece focuses on one particular element in this vernacular revival, the enclosed timber balcony.

The Maltese gallarija is the most ubiquitous feature in local architecture, especially in the older urban contexts. Justifiably it is the most prominent constituent of the façade, so much so that estate agents ensure that their presence in a property they are advertising is highlighted. Looking at them in their hundreds in Maltese streets recalls Prof Jo Tonna's description of them as 'opera boxes overlooking the street as theatre'. It should be mentioned that the latest exhaustive study available about the puzzling origins of the gallarija and its development over time is architect Malcolm Xuereb's excellently researched undergraduate dissertation. Yet the gallarija of the 21st century is facing a very disconcerting future. Authorities such as MEPA have acknowledged their importance to the point of preserving as many as possible. Where in a UCA this is not possible, MEPA often insists on their introduction in new developments. The results are there for all to see.

Whilst a number of the examples we see are of good design, many of the balconies being produced are having a very negative effect on the streetscape. The sense of proportion, functionality and design is completely distorted, in some cases, to the point of ridicule. For example a recurring problem is the insistence on creating the timber structure on a base that is so much larger. The base itself is often a reinforced concrete cantilever clad with a limestone mould-

ing having bulky proportions compared with the rest of the balcony. The corbels are many times fashioned from one standard limestone block, again resulting in painful proportional chaos. Even worse at times, the corbels are omitted altogether.

Then there are the timber balconies themselves which very often are more akin to cheap kitchen cabinets. The panels in the lower third of the balcony are again in most cases disproportionate, too shallow or just a quick routing job. The eye-level windows in the middle third are sometimes completely out of sync with those in the upper third. Then, crowning off the entire composition is the roofing of these structures, once made from timber, torba and deffun, today increasingly being substituted by another dressed concrete cantilever, which would not be a problem if only proportions were sensitively adhered to. The once common receded arch behind the balcony and the high-level central window for added light as well as for maintenance of the balcony roof has regrettably rarely featured in any of these revivals.

With thousands of examples of balconies around the island it is shameful that these eyesores are allowed to be installed. This situation is clearly the result of two problems: lack of trade, know-how or sense of style and proportion is the first. This is not entirely accurate as there are some excellent examples of newly installed balconies around the country. Secondly developers are putting in something just to keep the authorities happy. Therefore it is the authorities that must enforce adequate adherence to a set of orders or standards such as those produced by BICC.



Excellently restored and rebuilt balconies in Valletta



On the 15th of October MEPA launched a scheme whereby it would be generously subsidising the restoration of timber balconies in Urban Conservation Areas or the replacement of those deemed beyond repair. No doubt, such a scheme for which submissions end on January 15th will have a healthy response. MEPA should take this opportunity to ensure and enforce that adequate standards are being kept and that no poor excuses for gallariji are being produced marring the streetscape and insulting this hallmark of Maltese traditional architecture.

EDUARDO SOUTO DE MOURA

A MONOGRAPH ON THE ARCHITECT EDUARDO SOUTO DE MOURA

Text by Giovanni Leoni and Antonio Esposito

Among contemporary Portuguese architects there is a large group whose members, while trained or influenced by Alvaro Siza, have embarked on an independent line of common research; one of these is Eduardo Souto de Moura (b.1952). This monograph presents the designer who has combined great attention to the 'principle of settlement' with a respect for local architecture, expressed through the use of natural materials. Souto de Moura transforms the figurative elements of classical architecture using a modern sensibility. A minimalist approach and the discreet use of local materials are the essential components of his activity.

Souto de Moura's acute intuition for the serene has its provenance in rationalist architecture perhaps especially that of Mies Van der Rohe. From this master he learned the art of reduction: reduction of materials and reduction of forms. There are glimpses, also, of the influence of artists like Donald Judd or Sol Le Witt, who have inspired him with regard to ways of slotting objects into the surrounding environments. One cannot overlook the weight of Portuguese architectural tradition either in the work of Souto de Moura. The employment of native materials, the understanding and interpretation of the climate, the land, have led him



to build such emblematic works as the house in Matosinhos or the market in Braga. The well-earned international recognition of his work is the result of his having been able to integrate the modern and the traditional, reconciling construction materials and techniques, and showing a profound respect for places themselves.

250 x 280 mm, 448 pp;
80 colour illustrations;
600 duotone images;
ISBN 1-9043-1347-7;
Electa architecture, 2003

Architype Review

www.architypereview.com



designers seeking a forum through which to promote discussion and evaluate architectural projects that are responding to a similar set of challenging issues.

Projects considered for Architype are found through an open nomination process and final selections are made by the editors of Architype Review. The projects are selected for their innovative response to a set of challenging issues within a given typology. One can search through the collection by

type of building or by architect. The site provides extensive information on each of the featured projects and allows the browser to link to various other sites in connection with the projects.

The site also includes a listing of current design competitions, as well as a section on jobs on offer.

Architype Review was created as a means through which to advance the discussion of design within specific building typologies and explore the influence that type has on the design process. Architype's prime goal is to honour those projects that are challenging the limits and redefining the norms of a certain building type. The site was created in 2006 by a group of architects, academics and

COMPETITION

Q: WHERE ARE THE RUINS OF THIS CHAPEL TO BE FOUND?
TO WHICH SAINT WAS THIS CHAPEL DEDICATED?
WHO WAS THE ARCHITECT RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS DESIGN?

The winner of this competition wins a copy of the book reviewed above: **"Eduardo Souto de Moura"**. This book is available from **Agenda Bookshop**, the sponsor of this competition and review page. 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 1 February 2008 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 building featured in the competition of Issue 42 was Casa Said, which was located in Tower Road, Sliema. The architect of this building was Andrea Vassallo. The winner was Ms Michelle Galea of Vittoriosa. Congratulations!



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London is experiencing one of the biggest investments in education and skills infrastructure since the 1960s. Architecture and construction face several challenges in this respect.

www.newlondonarchitecture.org

NOW TO MID-JANUARY 2008; DESIGN MUSEUM, GENT, BELGIUM

ETTORE SOTTASS

Ettore Sottsass (1917), Austrian by birth but Italian in heart and soul, opened his own architecture and design studio in 1947. From 1958 he was the design consultant for Olivetti for over 20 years. <http://design.museum.gent.be>



NOW TO 19 JANUARY 2008; GALLERY 1, 66 PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, UK

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Celebrating the rich building traditions and architecture of Yemen, most famously the extraordinary multi-storey buildings that constitute the heart of many Yemeni cities. www.architecture.com

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BERLIN PROJECTS: PHOTOGRAPHS BY HELENE BINET

Photographs of buildings in Berlin by Helene Binet. www.arkitekturmuseet.se



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Dedicated to Kengo Kuma www.barbaracappochinfoundation.net



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CONCRETE LEGACY: FROM LE CORBUSIER TO THE HOMEBOYS

www.csw.art.pl

NOW TO 10 FEBRUARY 2008; THE LIGHTHOUSE, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND



GILLESPIE, KIDD & COIA: ARCHITECTURE 1956-87

www.thelighthouse.co.uk

NOW TO 10 FEBRUARY 2008; VITRA DESIGN MUSEUM, GERMANY



LE CORBUSIER – THE ART OF ARCHITECTURE

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NOW TO 17 FEBRUARY 2008; GALLERY 2, NAI, NETHERLANDS

GLAMORISING THE GOLDEN AGE

www.nai.nl

NOW TO 17 FEBRUARY 2008, THE LIGHTHOUSE, SCOTLAND

MY SUST. HOUSE

This joint Sust. and Lighthouse Education installation is a model house structure demonstrating a range of sustainable building materials from energy saving insulation and renewable energy systems to 'green' products, and new ways of living. www.thelighthouse.co.uk



10 JANUARY – 23 FEBRUARY 2008; NEW LONDON ARCHITECTURE, LONDON, UK

LONDON'S WATERWAYS

The Blue Ribbon Network is a major feature of the London Plan; it includes the Thames, the canal network, the other tributaries, rivers and streams within London and London's open water spaces such as docks, reservoirs and lakes, as well as culverted parts of rivers, canals or streams. www.newlondonarchitecture.org

NOW TO 24 FEBRUARY 2008; MUSEUM OF FINNISH ARCHITECTURE, FINLAND

RAILI AND REIMA PIETILA: CHALLENGING MODERN ARCHITECTURE

www.mfa.fi

NOW TO 01 MARCH 2008; FLORENCE HALL, 66 PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON, UK

EMERGING ARCHITECTURE

Work by young architects from the annual Architectural Review Awards. www.architecture.com

NOW TO 25 MARCH 2008; DESIGN MUSEUM, LONDON, UK

JEAN PROUVE'

The radical, functional and inspiring work of the French designer and engineer Jean Prouvé (1901 –1984) will be shown in this first comprehensive overview of his work in the UK. www.designmuseum.org

NOW TO 03 MARCH 2008; THE CENTRE POMPIDOU, PARIS, FRANCE



RICHARD ROGERS + ARCHITECTS

The "Richard Rogers + Architects" exhibition presents the work of Richard Rogers and his associates: from the first projects completed with Norman and Wendy Foster and Sue Rogers as part of the Team 4 practice in the 1960s to current projects with the firm of Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners. www.cnac-gp.fr

06 – 08 FEBRUARY 2008;

ICSDC 2008: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The International Conference on Sustainable Design and Construction (ICSDC 2008) aims to bring together researchers, scientists, engineers, and scholar students to exchange and share their experiences, new ideas, and research results about all aspects of Sustainable Design and Construction, and discuss the practical challenges encountered and the solutions adopted. <http://wahss.org/icsdc08/>

15 - 17 APRIL; INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE, SINGAPORE

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29 JUNE TO 03 JULY 2008; TORINO, ITALY

XXIII UIA WORLD CONGRESS TORINO 2008 – TRANSMITTING ARCHITECTURE

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