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GLOBAL award FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

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LOCUS

GLOBAL AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE™

Energy to Act
FOUNDATION
GDF SUEZ

SUMMARY

2012, 6th EDITION, GLOBAL AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

5 ARCHITECTS AWARDED

Portraits by Marie-Hélène Contal

Salma Samar Damluji, London, G.B. - Daw'an, Yemen

Anne Feenstra, AFIR Architects, Kabul, Afghanistan - Arch i
Platform, Delhi, India

Suriya Umpansiriratana, Bangkok, Thailand

Philippe Madec, Paris, France

TYIN Architects, Yashar Handstad, Trondheim, Norway

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The Global Award for Sustainable Architecture is awarded every year to five architects who are committed to the notion of sustainable development and to a participative approach to the needs of society - whether in the Northern or Southern Hemisphere.

The award was created in 2006 by the architect and professor Jana Revedin, and with the support of a range of French and European partners: the Cité de l'architecture & du Patrimoine, responsible for the cultural valorisation and the members of the international Scientific Committee.

The work carried out over these six years has given the Global Award undeniable international recognition. In 2010, Jana Revedin created the LOCUS Fund as a means of assuring the awards' scientific independence and of federating the Global Award winners in urban renewal projects in developing countries.

2012, GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY

After six years is it finally possible to reveal the Global Award's hidden agenda? The truth is that, rather than just a prize, it was conceived as a rallying point and an instrument of federation.

The Global Award is one stage of a long process. This process starts by asking new questions about global architecture and then highlights the architects who answer these questions innovatively before gathering them together, year after year, on a stage which is both a highly visible part of the global debate and offers its members their own space for discussion, transmission and experimentation.

In the postmodern period it was fashionable to judge architecture as a product and by its effect. The Global Award, on the other hand, is interested in architecture as a process and in how this process addresses the great issues of the future – resource management, fair access to development, the definition of progress, urban migration and the future of unplanned settlements. The Global Award considers that an architect is only truly contemporary when he or she addresses – and attempts to answer - such questions.

And as these questions are of this century they concern neither hypermodernism nor postmodernism. These are the questions of altermodernism.

The first of these questions - which are the very essence of the Global Award – were asked in 2007. On ecology: “how should we use resources?” On globalisation: “what are the cultural spaces of a project?” On progress: “how should progress be defined today?”

Further questions have subsequently been asked (and this is one of the positive surprises of the Global Award) by the award winners themselves who, stimulated by their own questions, then contribute further to the debate:

- “After everything else has been destroyed is architecture in the position to give people back their culture?” Wang Shu, 2007.

- “How can we build a city for a million people every week for the next 20 years with a budget of \$5,000 per unit?” Alejandro Aravena, 2008.

- “Is the West an example to be followed?” Francis Kéré, 2009.

- “What is good growth?” Snøhetta, 2010.

- “How to translate the resilient self-development of the favelas into a strategy of urban intervention?” Teddy Cruz, 2011.

The 2012 winners of the Global Award are continuing this reflective tradition. Some address questions which have already been raised and others open up new areas of debate.

The debate about globalisation in the 21st century and, in particular, how this differs from the westernisation of the 20th century is taken further in 2012, not only by architects from the South who understand the ways of the North, but also by such architects as Anne Feenstra who have chosen to leave Europe in order to acquire another culture, an approach which remains rare but could be a sign of a coming inversion in traditional exchange.

And the issue of our future use of resources continues to be raised by such architects as Philippe Madec and Suriya Umpanisiratana who confirm that architecture could provide the basis for the establishment of a new relationship between man and nature.

Emergency architecture, on the other hand, is a new area of investigation in 2012. For the architects Andreas Gjersten and Yashar Handstad, urgent intervention has developed from a single event into an ongoing global issue which is central to the development of peoples and cultures. And Salma Samar Damluji explains that the very future of civilisation demands that the same urgency that we show in providing minimum shelter should be shown in saving the architectural and spatial culture of societies.

The Global Award for Sustainable Architecture was put under the patronage of UNESCO in 2011.

The GDF SUEZ Corporate Foundation supports the LOCUS FUND.

5 AWARDED ARCHITECTS, GREAT-BRITAIN, YEMEN, AFGHANISTAN, INDIA, NEDERLANDS, THAILAND, FRANCE, NORWAY



SALMA SAMAR DAMLUJI **DAW'AN MUD BRICK** **ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION** **LONDON, U.K – DAW'AN, YEMEN**

This year the Global Award recognises renovation work for a second time. The 2011 award to the Peruvian NGO Q'Eswachaka honoured both the renovation of a piece of *world heritage* (the Inca routes of Qhapac Nan) and also the decision to trust the work to local villages and encourage them to manage the resulting flow of tourism for themselves. Q'Eswachaka seeks to reverse the dominating model of the major heritage sites in which, in order to protect them (from whom?), societies are dispossessed and the sense of history is destroyed.

Salma Damluji's work in Yemen also raises the cultural and political stakes. The Iraqi architect created the Daw'an Mud Brick Architecture Foundation in order to renovate the mud built towns of Hadramut, which she has been working for thirty years. "Until the mid 1990s Hadramut was a preserved country, the last reserve and kingdom of mud brick architecture"¹. Since then, society has been ravaged by conflict. The elites have left for the Gulf and the people have abandoned their houses and mansions which were the matrix of their material lives and culture, sculpted by generations of gardeners, builders and hydraulic engineers with immeasurable tacit knowledge.

In Yemen, World Heritage has named several sites, granting them a future as golden as that of Venice. But visitors will see empty fortresses in the midst of a dying civilization. The Daw'an Foundation, on the other hand, acts *in situ*, surveying villages, palaces and houses in order to not only save and transmit knowledges to architects or students but also to the inhabitants, in order that they remain.

"I was the first architect to set my eyes on these sites"

Born in Beirut in 1954, Salma Damluji studied architecture at the AA in London. But she was bored - until she read Hassan Fathy's book about his project at Gourna.² "I suddenly discovered that I had been studying the wrong type of architecture."³ She began to study mud architecture and self-development and, in 1975, left to work with Fathy in Cairo. Qualifying in 1977, she became a lecturer in Islamic Art and Architecture at Beirut University College and the Lebanese University.

Her life changed course in 1980 when she joined the UN Department of "Human Settlements". "And for my first posting I was sent to Yemen, to Hadramut. (...) I was a woman, I was young and I was good looking so it was very difficult to manage my way around there, it was extremely difficult terrain. But I was the first "architect" *per se* to set my eyes on these sites. So I felt I had a very important role, to convey this, study this, institutionalise this and create centres of learning"³.

Salma Damluji then pursued her career as an expert in Islamic architecture (mostly based at the RCA in London) and as a consultant for large projects in Arab countries, while continuing her work on Hadramut. In 1988 she became an advisor to the Governor on the renovation and development of mud brick and stone architecture.

She studied the towns of the Wadi Daw'an, convinced that their tacit knowledge could contribute to the growing international debate on sustainability. "Do you know something? Apart from trying to be philosophical or sounding scientific about the ecology of these buildings, the fact that this architecture has worked so well for hundreds of years for its inhabitants, and can identify as a culture, as a deep, profound culture which is very closely related to the socio-economics of communities that have lived there and that have mastered, and been the masters of, this civilization for so long should, I think, in itself acknowledge its importance - ecologically and otherwise"².

«But all of this is being gently eroded»

But Yemen was mired in conflict and disinterest: «20 and 30 years ago, one wanted to create institutions to change how people thought. And I remember thinking that I could convince the Yemeni officials to come and continue building and adopt this traditional building as part of their housing policies... This was all fine when they didn't have money. But now money is gushing in, because they have a bit of oil, because they get a lot of subsidies from the Gulf, etc. And suddenly, there's so much money, that it has to change hands. And then you see all these buildings that are being constructed in cement and concrete and that are absolute rubbish, next to the original stuff they have. (...) When you've got seven, eight and nine floors constructed in sun-dried mud brick, it's already a huge feat, both engineering and construction-wise. Why, and what has made this so incredible and amazing? It's just that the current commercial professional sector isn't interested, because you don't make money out of mud bricks anymore.»³ In 1995, Salma Damluji stopped visiting the country.

In 2005, she accepted an invitation from the University of Sanaa and met a descendant of a Daw'an family from the Incense Route, Abdullah Bugshan, who had been familiar with her work for 15 years. He organised her return to Daw'an and that is when she visited the site of Masna'ah, a fortified town at the foot of the mountain. Upon returning, Salma Damluji told him of her ideas about renovation and the transmission of knowledge – and the Daw'an Foundation was launched. Its preamble is clear: “Wadi Daw'an in Yemen is one of the most attractive locations not on the World Heritage List.(...) The landscape of the Wadi however is changing rapidly, threatened by commercial contractors, and its coherent ecological structure and identity is being eroded. As a result, the integrity and sustainability of its settlements and landscape is already at risk. Natural resources, skills and agricultural wealth are declining, with a detrimental effect on the economic and historical heritage and future of the region.

The Foundation is dedicated to consolidating the urban and cultural wealth of Hadramut and Wadi Daw'an and to sustaining the natural and built environment. We set up projects in order to preserve and develop the architecture, urban culture and extraordinary heritage so that it may continue to flourish in the future”⁴

The co-founders are concentrating on the renovation of Masna'ah to make it ready to host an Institute for Mud Brick Architecture, a hotel, a visitors' centre etc.: a site as laboratory. For Salma Damluji, Chief Architect of the Foundation, there is much to do: diagnosing buildings, creating workshops for the young and defending her vision of *restoration*: “To be successful, any architectural, cultural and artistic mission has to engage with the community it is interacting with and serving, the town and future urban and rural development. It deals with the infrastructure, agriculture, water systems and the points you mention above. Therefore the aims are socially committed and economically viable from the livelihood of the community and larger context to the quality of the environment.”¹

Has the battle been won? «We're running out of time. I often come back from Yemen and say to myself, «That's it, I can't go back anymore.» I've done that on a couple of occasions. I've stayed away for five or six years at a go, and then I tend to go back. But the clock is ticking. And I think it's time, I've done my bit... Truth is, having invested my life there, I must return, and race time. I owe it to the land and to the architecture”.¹

M.H. Contal

The Iraqi architect Salma Samar Damluji was born in Beirut in 1954 and studied in London: firstly at the AA (Diploma 1977) and then at the RCA (PhD 1987), where she then taught until 1996. She teaches and researches into mud brick architecture – and Islamic architecture across the globe. She led the Technical Office of the Chairman of the Works Department of Abu Dhabi from 2002 to 2004 and has been working since 2005 as the architect for rebuilding the site of Masna'at Daw'an, in the Hadramut in Yemen. In 2007 she co-founded the Daw'an Mud Brick Architecture Foundation of which she is the Chief Architect with responsibility for managing the foundation's renovation and revitalisation works. Main areas of involvement: North Africa, Middle East, Arabia (Yemen, Oman, Qatar and the Emirates), Bangladesh and India.

Amongst her works: A Yemen Reality; Architecture Sculptured in Mud and Stone, Reading 1991; The Architecture of Oman, Reading 1998; The Architecture of the UAE, Reading 2006; The Architecture of Yemen from Yafi' to Hadramut, London 2007.

To appear: Hassan Fathy, the Unpublished Works



1. Interview of S.S.Damluji by M.H. Contal 01-03-2012
2. Hassan Fathy, *Gourna, a tale of two villages* (first edition 1969)
3. Interview of S.S. Damluji by David Sheen, *First Earth Review*, 05-03-2012
4. in *Daw'an Mud Brick Architecture Foundation*



PHILIPPE MADEC PARIS, FRANCE

Philippe Madec is one of those few French architects not afraid of being labelled an ecologist. Over the past two decades he has proven that *he knows his subject* by building subtle, user-friendly architecture. His office enjoys true respect – but this is not to say that the path that he has chosen is an easy one.

The French establishment is uncomfortable with ecology. *The institutional rationalism* inherited from the 1960s is deeply suspicious of the vision and methodology of the ecologists – and especially of such terms as *interaction, process* and *mediation*.

So far, the Land of Reason has been slow to embrace the new complexity. A stop-and-go series of national *Plans Verts* has stuttered, gone into reverse or changed direction completely. The people, it is argued, have other worries - but powerful lobbies who also know something of political sustainability have certainly played a role. In summary: Ph. Madec shares with F.H. Jourda¹ and P. Bouchain¹ a concrete if somewhat distant level of public recognition which has always sidelined them from the “leading roles”.

But this man with many strings also has a bow on which to play them. He promotes ecological responsibility at every scale - from small buildings to large urban interventions - and as a theoretician and teacher. He is both doer and thinker - a builder of bridges between architecture and contemporary thought. And this is not the least significant of his contributions.

Theory before practice

Sometimes, if one is to build oneself, one should build nothing and, upon qualifying in 1980, Madec was in no rush. Work was plentiful due to the last wave of the thirty glorious years of state investment, but “no-one had taught me to do architecture as I understood it (...): Sure, we addressed the relationship with place, but what about culture, society and daily life?”².

His search for another way of thinking started with Kenneth Frampton’s “Towards a Critical Regionalism”, (1983). The Late Moderns saw the book as a call for a new way of inserting Modern Architecture into a context but Madec reacted by reflecting

much more deeply on “the relationship between architecture and nature, between building, site and climate”². This “pre-ecological” interpretation was central to both his subsequent researches and to his *years of travelling and learning* in the late 1980s.

As a visiting scholar at Columbia in 1983, he struck up a dialogue with Frampton, explored “one of architecture’s most beautiful libraries”² and re-read the great treatises. Then he lived and researched in Morocco before returning to France and, in 1991, moving on to Harvard where he discovered the first works on “sustainability”. Columbia and Harvard: two points defining both a straight line and its direction. The architect had discovered his theoretical line: “of appropriating regional criticism before moving on to sustainable development.”

His own laboratory

Madec set up his own office in 1989 and, in 1991, his smallest commission turned out also to be his most significant.

When he signed his first contract with the Breton village of Plourin-les-Morlaix (population 2,000) he was not aware that this would give him the rare opportunity of having a long-term laboratory. A series of micro-projects at Plourin allowed the young theoretician to slowly develop and refine his approach: “We had to create a centre for this municipality with its three characters of countryside, centre and suburb. Firstly, we used the town hall and mediatheque to define the central squares and gardens and then we addressed other public places: streets, alleyways and the square before the church and the cemetery where we created a columbarium and a canopy for civil ceremonies. We worked hand-in-hand with the people, their elected representatives and the municipality’s technical experts (...), learning to work with both ergonomists and the local people as a means of sharing both the responsibility for and resources of the project.”² The experiment lasted until 1996. “The engaged, ecologically-responsible and dialogue-based approach developed at Plourin is one which I have used ever since.”²

Plourin is the model for an urban design approach further developed by Madec in the EcoQuartier, EcoCité and territoire durable. Seeking responses to the environmental crisis based on use, collectivity and fairness he is, for example, addressing the

outmoded and almost abandoned issue of “very social housing” with the complex aim of integrating such housing into his eco-districts –showing a level of engagement rarely seen in France. The debate is being fuelled by the ecological building which new regulations (HQE, BREED...) are finally encouraging in France. A frequent expert contributor to policy development, his input is notable for its attitude to “constraints”, although “I don’t actually like the term. (...) If your aim in life is to build buildings which are sustainable, inhabitable, desirable and fair, then everything which helps you to achieve this should be regarded as an extra tool rather than a constraint.”²

Architecture and complexity

This debate about ecological building will eventually be settled by architecture – a cause which Ph. Madec defends with his talent, having built a series of major works in the past decade whose sense of completeness can only increase over time. He addresses *every aspect* of architecture: his *promenades architecturales* have a near-fluid perfection and his ecological building is positively didactic – the former proving that his architecture *knows what it is talking about* and the latter, perfect in even the smallest detail, is as accessible as it is intelligent.

For Philippe Madec, ecological responsibility means responding to every requirement and accepting the complexity which inevitably results. To achieve this, he employs a notion of *composition* which he certainly found in pre-modern architectural treatises. Rather than reducing complexity, he unfurls it in the act of composition.

His insertion of new elements into an ancient context – exemplified by the Archaeological Museum he created in the Château de Mayenne in 2008 - combines the theme of memory with a demonstration of ecological *subtlety*.

ViaVino de Saint-Christol, Ph. Madec’s visitors’ centre for the vineyards of Hérault, will be a masterwork. Twenty years after Plourin, he has rediscovered his preferred *milieu*: engaged local politicians, a topic (winemaking) rich in both technique and culture and a project based on dialogue. The complex programme which threatened to overwhelm the site was broken down into seven elements - reception, exhibition, cellars, etc – which he shaped into a collection of ecological architecture; well-oriented, scientifically built and inserted into a viticultural garden... A dense message, unbound by the process of composition.

M.H. Contal

Philippe Madec, was born in Brest (Brittany) in 1954 and graduated from UPA 7 in Paris in 1979. He researched as a visiting scholar at Columbia University from 1983 to 1984 and taught landscape design at the ENS du Paysage in Versailles and at Harvard University from 1985 to 1991. Appointed a Professor of Architecture in 2000, he set up the first Department of Sustainable Architecture at ENSA Lyon and teaches Town and Country Planning at the ENSA Rennes since 2010, dedicated to “the invention of the sustainable urban and rural context.”

A theoretician and author, Philippe Madec publishes lectures and articles on his own website. His works include Boullée, Hazan 1986 and Birkhäuser 1989, L’indéfinition de l’architecture, with Benoit Goetz and Chris Younès, La Villette, Paris, 2004 and L’architecture et la paix, Nouvelles éditions Jean-Michel Place, Paris (2012).

Philippe Madec has acted as an expert in the development of French environmental policy (Grenelle de l’Environnement: Comop 9) and as a member of the national jury for the EcoQuartiers/ecoCités process. In 2001 he received the Prix du Projet Citoyen for the centre of Plourin. He has been a member of the European Chapter of the Club de Rome since 2010.



1. Françoise-Hélène Jourda was a winner of the Global Award in 2007 and Patrick Bouchain in 2009
 2. *Parcours d’architectes*, Pierre Lefèvre and Jimi Cheynut, Éditions Le Cavalier Bleu, coll. Comment je suis devenu, 2012.



**ANNE FEENSTRA
AFIR ARCHITECTS, KABUL,
AFGHANISTAN – ARCH I PLATFORM,
NEW DELHI, INDIA**

The Global Award has been presented several times to architects from emerging countries with a deep understanding of globalisation (Wang Shu, B. Jain, F. Kéré...). “We are globalisation!” wrote the US analyst Thomas Friedman in 2005 in a book¹ which was brilliant but western-centred to the point of being *friendly* towards the talents emerging from the South. These architects from the “new New World” are showing us that globalisation is far more complex than 20th century westernisation. Examine how the African Kéré lines up western ecology, a very real local experience of dwindling resources, European architecture and African economic solidarity on the sands of Gando² before adapting the act of combining this know-how to each project. Such critical synthesis is new – a unique skill for architects with two cultures. And it creates an architecture which is as rooted as it is universal.

Could the future belong to these architects with more than one culture, even if those architects with a single culture own the dominant one? Perhaps Anne Feenstra’s story is a sign of the times. Like Laurie Baker, he is a western architect who turned towards another culture, leaving Europe in order to question the very basis of his vocation. A Dutchman, he opened his office AFIR in Kabul in 2004 and since 2009 he has also been working in Delhi where he established Arch i, a platform for design research, architecture and debate.

London - Kabul, a one-way ticket?

“After my Masters studies at Delft, I wanted to build and join a ‘design & build firm’ to understand the building process better. When William Alsop asked me in 1999 to come to London, his practice had nearly 40 people. I enjoyed the work: Will is a great expressive, sculptural architect. We won the Stirling Prize for the Peckham Library and the competition for the Rotterdam Central Station Masterplan, we grew to over 100 people. Bigger, but I was not sure if it was better. I became an

Associate and accepted a post at the Academy of Architecture in Groningen. I liked that. But many architects were becoming stars; more and more exclusive. Like a luxury brand. I did not like that. Time to start something completely new; try to bring design closer to people, work with them and realise architecture together. After my first visit to Kabul in August 2004, I wanted to see more of the country, its people, to discover this ancient culture. I committed myself to teaching at Kabul University. Working on small residential projects, slowly I built up a team that not only could design, but could also get it built.”³

With his 10-p team in India, he just completed a Learning Centre in Kashmir on 4200 m. altitude and construction work of a community based project is going on in Sikkim. AFIR now has a team of 17, three of whom are based in Kholm, in the far North. The conditions are challenging: “Afghanistan is re-defining itself in a search for its own cultural identity. After 30 years of invasions, wars and conflicts, architecture is an important part of the reflection of that identity. The people, the children, the different communities are the most valuable stakeholders in this process. They have to be part of the re-definition of the culture. They need to be involved and in this way ownership of the physical output is being created from ‘the inside’. Not via one guru master architect.”³

AFIR were asked in 2006 to design the Visitor Centre and Gate House within a holistic vision for the first National Park. More projects of national importance followed. And other projects of national importance which, despite having no more resources than others, are central to the reconstruction process. Faced with such expectations, “we practice an open design process in which listening and the sharing of ideas becomes the starting point, instead of dictatorial commercial clients who are more interested in a ‘marketing-leaflet-billboard-building’. The open process continues during the execution and does not end with the handing over of the final design drawings to a randomly selected mediocre construction company. In this intense process, space for the use of traditional organic building materials, passive solar energy principles and contemporary graphics (to name a few) becomes available and it will be possible to include these in a new sustainable architecture”³

Emergency architecture / slow architecture

The European architect in Kabul came to the notice of Unicef in 2008 for its programme of Maternity Waiting Homes. Feenstra's approach was to become an anthropologist: "It is an amazing project that started with workshops to actually define the idea, concept and typology. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan and Unicef as the maternal and child mortality rates are shockingly high. As the typology of MWH did not exist for Afghanistan, we developed it first with a large group of midwives, specialists etc. After that we worked for 5 MWH's⁴. Each design is different as the climates of the places are very different. Bamyan has an altitude of 2,500m and a metre of snow, while Kandahar and Mehtar Lam are very hot in summer. For Herat we used yellow bricks, in Bamyan we used a local stone and a special plaster pattern."³

Faced with such urgency, Anne Feenstra explains his step-by-step approach: "Working a lot with communities and people, we do about 70% of our projects in Afghanistan and all our work in India is without a building contractor. Just client, architect, crafts people and skilled and unskilled labour. Good for the result, local ownership, quality of the work and good fun. I believe that one can see in a building if the architect and builders enjoyed building it. Definitely SLOW architecture works well and lasts longer."³

"How long are you going to stay?"

Anne Feenstra has heard this question countless times in the villages of Afghanistan. It highlights the huge scepticism about western experts who come and build hastily and not particularly well attempting to neither use the know-how nor embed the skills and experience from the local population.

He is still working on renovations – of the National Museum in Kabul and also the Bagh-e Jahan Nama Palace at Kholm which has been awaiting repair since the Russians left. AFIR is busy rediscovering Pakhsa techniques and training local craftsmen in situ. This is a long-term approach which embodies Feenstra's vision of sustainable architecture: local people have the best understanding of their climate and resources so there is no substitute for working with them.

MH Contal

Born in Holland in 1967, Anne Feenstra graduated from the T.U. Delft in 1993. He divided his time between office and the building site and built a dozen projects. In 1999, he joined William Alsop in London. In 2004, he left to live in Kabul in Afghanistan, teaching architecture at the University and establishing the office AFIR in 2004. In 2008, he opened a second office in Kholm, to work on the restoration of Bagh-e-Jehaan Nama palace and its gardens, in the North of Afghanistan. Feenstra was recruited in 2009 by the School of Planning and Architecture in Delhi (India) where he teaches to this day. In 2009 he established Arch i -exploring design-, a platform and design centre for research, architecture and debate in an attempt to realign the urban and architectural debates on the sub-continent. DELHi2050 a brainchild of his and is an unique process to envisage more sustainable urban environments for the capital of India.



1. In *The World is Flat, A Brief History of the Twentieth Century* Thomas Friedman, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005

2. Francis Diébédo Kéré, Global Award 2009, lives in Berlin but his principal country of activity is Burkina Faso, where he builds facilities financed by the NGO Schulbausteine für Gando. The village of Gando is the focus of his experiments; see *Sustainable Design II - Portrait of Francis Kéré*, MH Contal and J. Revedin, Éditions Actes Sud, 2011

3. Interview of Anne Feenstra by MH Contal, 21-2-2012

4. Bamyan, Herat, Faizabad, Mehtar Lam and Kandahar



SURIYA UMPANSIRIRATANA BANGKOK, THAILAND

Suriya Umpansiriratana is already an important participant in the cultural debate in Thailand due to his work on the monastery of Wat Khao Buddhakodom in Chonburi, a province better known for Pattaya and its resorts than for the beauty of the jungle where the monks have made their home. Today, however, he represents the future: “His design approach also emphasises the lightness of structure and spacious plan in order to create the sense of calmness guided by Buddhist philosophy.”¹.

For over a decade, Umpansiriratana has been carrying out a rare experiment, creating, step-by-step, a monastic settlement based on an almost natural synthesis of Buddhist and ecological concepts. Most significantly, his approach embodies the way in which ideas are being generated at this moment in that (large) corner of the civilised world. The work also echoes that of other winners of the Global Award – a comparison which becomes clearer if one frees the term “vernacular” from the contradictions and vagueness which have rendered it almost useless.

A disciple of Prayudh Payutto

Suriya Umpansiriratana was born in 1969 in the province of Phattalung and studied architecture in Bangkok. He still has three books from that time: “The Turning Point, by Fritjof Capra, The Art of War, by Sun Tzu and Sustainable Development, by Prayudh Payutto”². Payutto is a monk, theologian and great Thai intellectual whose book studies the parallels between Buddhism and ecological sciences.

The young architect established himself in Bangkok without a definitive *career plan*: “I have been in love with planting, drawing and painting since childhood. From 1980 to 2001 I drew perspectives for many architects in Bangkok. In 1998 I started my landscape design career and founded my own studio, Wallasia. In 1999 we had the economic crisis and, in order to survive, I got a contract to paint traditional Thai patterns like Jim Thomson. I was also hired to design and produce some events and exhibitions. So, you can see, I used to do so many

things without trying to define my art. I don't mind what kind of art I am doing; I just do it and keep practicing. (...)

In 2002, I went to the Wat Khao Buddhakodom temple to study meditation after a confusing moment in my life. It was an important turning point. I started to study Buddhism in order to better understand life. This also influenced me to design religious buildings. In 2003, I built a monk's cell there for my nephew who just taken orders. The monastery had no room so I asked the Abbot for permission to build. We got help from the monks and the novices with the wooden doors and windows found in the temple. It was very cheap and I was very happy because my nephew had some shelter. Since then I've built lots for both this monastery and my religion.”³

“This religious architecture which resembles psalms or chants”

The monks and the architect continue to this day slowly building the monastery on the hill. The costs of the work – little though they are – are covered by donations. The architect works voluntarily, dividing his time between his fee-earning office Wallasia and this philanthropic work.

Since 2004, the monastery has gained a school, new cells, a library, a meditation pavilion and a small museum ... using very simple materials. The architect always creates structures on light, regular steel or timber pilotis. The internal spaces have no tangible limits, being defined by opaque and translucent panels of timber, aluminium, cement or curtain. The museum was built above a reservoir of cold water which refreshes the space - whereas the other buildings are cooled by the movement of the air.

This frugality has little to do with traditional religious architecture, in a country not lacking in the “neo-traditional”. The architect's position is clear: “I try to understand how users behave in religious buildings and about their rituals, in order to orient them and relate them to the environment and the climate. The idea is to transform the abstract essence of Buddhism into architecture.”³

Buddhist rules place great emphasis on the harmony with nature, something which this disciple of Prayudh Payutto uses with di-

ligence and poetry. The impact on the jungle has been minimised. The network of cells winds between the oldest trees and the volumes, structures and furniture all obey the rules of simplicity. Nature can be seen from the verandas. These light elements combine into a whole which, according to the architect, resonates with the surrounding nature, the human presence and, according to the architect, the divine.

His most recent project is a cell which organises the life of a monk – sleeping, meditating and walking, eating and praying – in a circle: a circular walkway on thin stilts in the treetops with a few timber screens, a form which enables the monk to follow his daily ritual perfectly by following the movement of the sun.

The freedom of the vernacular

The beauty of this work is partly due to the clear if paradoxical creative freedom which comes from the limited resources: “the Abbot and the monks gave me great opportunities to design buildings. I have to listen for them. But the manners of priest would never attach to any aspects. So they open and let me do what I believe proper for them. They need very economic, recyclable materials.”³

This freedom can also be explained by the fact that this same relative poverty means that the work is free from the constraints of the market. The voluntary commitment of both the architect and his workforce of monks create a different form of production. One might think that this approach was timeless but that would be to ignore the work of one of the great thinkers on the 21st century and... the economy of the vernacular.

It was Ivan Illich who noted⁴ that the vernacular is more than the pleasing mix of local traditions beloved of certain ecologists. The term “vernacular” has a precise economic meaning defining, under Roman Law, everything made and cultivated domestically (domus) exclusively for domestic use and, thus, independent of the market economy... To misunderstand this aspect of the vernacular is to confuse cause and effect.

Suriya Umpansiriratana contributes much to the debate for this reason: he is exploring a radical vernacular approach. In this sense, his apparently unique experiments are actually close to the building workshops of Rural Studio and Sami Rintala which are equally free of the market system. And how is it not possible to see the connections between Suriya Umpansiriratana and Balkrishna Doshi and to hope that they meet?

M.H. Contal

Born in 1969, Suriya Umpansiriratana studied architecture at the Faculty of Industrial Education of the King Mongkut Institute of Technology, Ladkrabang (KMITL). He works as a landscape architect with Walllasia Landscape Co. He designs and builds religious buildings, temples and convent for communities of Buddhist monks on a voluntary basis. He received the Gold Medal of the Association of Siamese Architects in 2008, the ASA Green Award in 2009 and an Emerging Architecture Award from the Architectural Review in 2010. The work of S. Umpansiriratana featured in the exhibition New Trends of Architecture in EUROPE and ASIA-PACIFIC presented in Tokyo in 2008 and curated by Sir Peter Cook and Toyo Ito.



1. in *Asaforum Review*, 24/12/2010

2. interview with S. Umpansiriratana, *RIBA review*, 27th March 2012

3. interview with S. Umpansiriratana by M.H. Contal, 25th March 2012

4. Ivan Illich, *Le genre vernaculaire*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1983, with thanks to Pierre Frey, who very appositely recalls this contribution by Ivan Illich to the debate on ecological architecture in his book, *Learning from Vernacular*, Éditions Actes Sud, Arles, 2010



ANDREAS G. GJERSTEN AND YASHAR HANSTAD TYIN TEGNESTUE TRONDHEIM, NORWAY

TYIN was set up in 2008 by two students from Trondheim, Andreas Gjersten and Yashar Hanstad, who see architecture “as a development tool for poor communities around the world”¹. It has carried out projects in Thailand noted for both their beauty and their maturity.

TYIN is contributing to the definition of a new approach - emergency architecture – which, rather than a mere fringe movement, is developing a wealth of knowledge and a vision which makes it part of the debate on *the human establishment*. According to TYIN, for example, it turns the conventional North/South relationship on its head: “there is a need for new ways of interpreting both methods and materials. Immense knowledge is hidden in traditional building cultures around the world. The western “international” style is in many ways anaemic and narrow”¹ Actors like TYIN are also engaged in the ecological debate because “our search for economy has led us to an approach which is more sustainable and better adapted to local economies.”¹ Ethology speaks of *evolutionary convergence*: even with different trajectories we arrive at the same conclusions and aspirations...

Beyond heritage

Emergency architecture has its forbears – such as Jean Prouvé’s “pavilion for the displaced” of 1945 – a portable module crafted out of metal and timber panels which synthesised Prouvé’s research into industrialised housing. And today’s international organisations also have important know-how in the creation of tent cities in transit camps that owe their efficiency to a combination of methods from the military and from the fields of sanitary and social rationalism.

But TYIN, like Anne Feenstra, is different in one key respect. Rather than shipping in off-shore solutions (prefabricated units and reproducible models) it seeks appropriate, case-specific local solutions. First refuge and then re-development ... are issues of process rather than products. Process - or indeed project - for Hanstad and Gjersten are architects, no more and no less. They respond to a programme with a project, adjust this to the available resources and then build it with care. Nothing new here, perhaps, but TYIN is innovate in seeing in emergency architecture - this luxury - as the powerful lever due to its ability to embody the collective memory.

Sources and resources

TYIN was created on a whim to help an NGO working in Thailand with ethnic Karen refugees fleeing persecution from Rangoon. A representative of the NGO who was in Norway in 2008 raising funds for the enlargement of an orphanage met Gersten and Hanstad. “He needed help and, in particular, of architectural input.”² Bored by their studies, the students set out in November 2008 for the village of Noh Bo to build the orphanage.

The children required shelter quickly and a dialogue with the community of 2,000 refugees soon ensued. Seeing the orphanage as an aid in creating a “normal” village, it was conceived like a village quarter, with small houses where the children could sleep and live under the care of older members of the community. To cut cost it was decided to use bamboo – a material with which many were already familiar.

TYIN designed six pavilions with timber skeletons and bamboo walls, prepared and assembled by the refugees. The ventilated roofs are shaped like “butterfly’s wings” or, in the local language, *Soe Ker Tie* – the name which the Karen gave to the orphanage which opened in February 2009. During these three months, the students – supported by 15 other Trondheim students and their teachers – also built a community building and a bathhouse on another site.

The ease with which the young people carried out the action is partly explained by the Nordic way of teaching. The timber building tradition and its affinity between drawing and doing makes them better able *to move from thinking to doing* and to deal with real situations and exchange ideas than students brought up in the monoculture of concrete. The professor who came to help build the community hall was Sami Rintala, who drew up the theory behind the idea of teaching through *building workshops*.³

In this light it is interesting that, today, students worldwide are demanding courses which address ideas like sustainable development, hands-on building and the social engagement of the architect. Is it possible to bring about a new political dawn? TYIN hopes so: “there are enough architects designing efficient circulations plans and ‘innovative façades’. It is time to step up and join the socially conscious workforce that is striving for global development.”¹

Innovation

Since 2008, TYIN’s approach has matured from project to project, using building workshops and seeking out methods *ad hoc from the site*. And these sometimes surprising and thought-provoking methods naturally tempt one to wonder if one could do the same in the West.

Consider how TYIN unites programme and project in a common act of doing; by bringing users together they reveal a collective sense of purpose essential for the realisation of a project. At Bangkok, a project in the slums of the Old Market took a whole year to start up due to TYIN’s approach of “firstly setting up a place for the locals to record their problems. At first only children came to draw and only later did their elders feel involved”¹

The result of this approach was that the subsequent building process had to be carried out with urgency: The project had brought together a deprived community, but the delay was itself a threat to this sense of re-empowerment - which is of

course anthropological reality. Such haste, however, should not be at the expense of building culture – for exactly the same human reason: “Attention to detail and choice of material provide proximity for users and allow for the inclusion of those involved.”⁴

The resulting building is – perhaps surprisingly – *evaluated*. Do we ever truly evaluate architecture? In the case of emergency architecture, the answer is often yes. “The Architecture of Necessity is properly planned, considerably executed and meticulously evaluated. The evaluation generates knowledge of the continued life of the building and of future projects. Reflection ensures a long-term economy,”⁴ *a process which is, above all, intensely human*, and highly rewarding. “A building is not something to be completed, it is something to be developed.”⁴

Finally, the intervention of the non-industrial economy modifies the construction of beauty. Industries are absent, with all their sophistication. The architect should take from the primary material an aesthetic which brings sense. This truth also lies behind Yashar Hanstad’s intense observation that “the project is a process for transforming the brutal contact with reality”¹

MH Contal

The non-profit organisation TYIN tegnestue Architects was created in 2008 by five architecture students from the NTNU at Trondheim, with the aim of “carrying out humanitarian work.”. Of the five, Yashar Hanstad and Andreas G. Gjersten continue to develop the work of TYIN today: seeking funds, designing and realising projects. Their work has received a number of awards including the Thai prize Best of TIDA, l’Eco and the Conservation Award in 2010 and the International Architecture Awards in 2011. TYIN has featured in a number of exhibitions including Construire ailleurs by Florence Sarano, Villa Noailles de Hyères, 2010 and Architecture of Consequence, NAI in Rotterdam, 2011.

Y. Hanstad and A. G. Giersten received their architectural diplomas from the University of Trondheim in 2010.

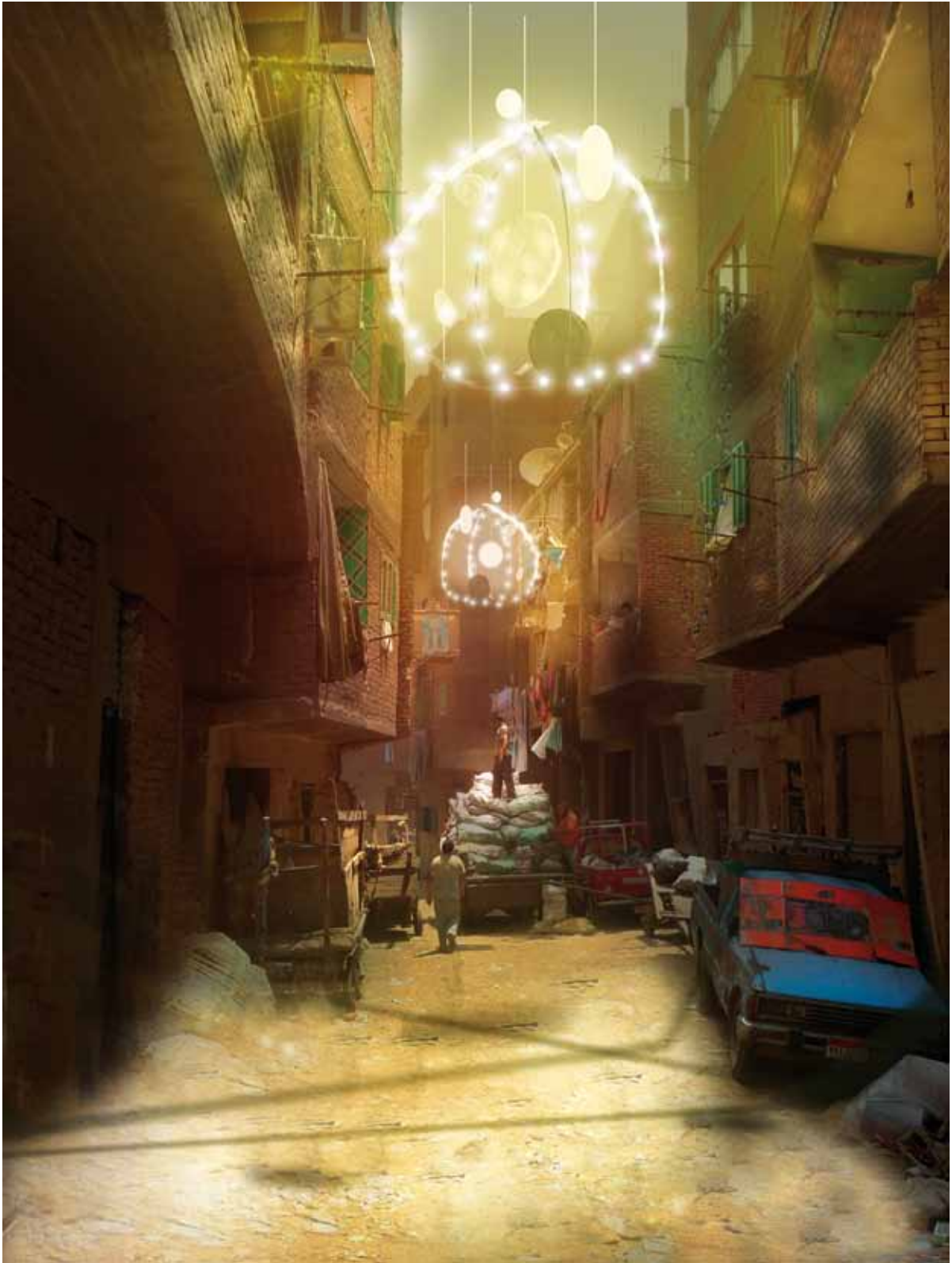


1. Catalogue of the Exhibition *Construire ailleurs - TYIN*, Anna Heringer - Curator, Florence Sarano, Association Villa Noailles - FIAMH - Archibooks, Paris 2010

2. Comments recorded by Jean-Paul Hugon - Cyber-Archi – 20.02.2012

3. See the dossier “Architectures altermodernes”: Sami Rintala – Construire/transmettre/construire, MH Contal, revue *D’A* n° 200

4. “Appeal for an Architecture of Necessity”, 30.09.2009, Virserum Art Museum, Smaland, Sweden



Zabbaleen Lighting System, Studio Mumbai, designed by Bijoy Jain, Global Award 2009, project by LOCUS Foundation.

THE TIMETABLE FOR 2012

21 March 07:00 PM

Institut Français d'Égypte - Cairo

Press conference : launching of the LOCUS Practice Project Zabbaleen, Urban renewal in the Garbage district (Zabbaleen) with the Zabaleen Community, Cairo. Presentation of the project Zabbaleen Lighting system: design of urban lighting chandeliers produced with recycled materials by Zabbaleen, fed by solar energy.

Initiator: LOCUS Foundation

Design and process: Studio Mumbaiï, Bijoy Jain, Global Award 2009

Partenaires: Fondation d'entreprise GDF-SUEZ; Institut Français d'Égypte, Cairo; Synergie Solaire, Aix-en-Provence; Environment Quality International, Cairo ; NGO Association for the Protection of Environment, Cairo-Zabaleen District; NGO Garbage Collectors, Cairo-Zabaleen District.

*Contact-Information*s: www.locus-foundation.com

3 April, 11:00 AM

OEnR - Salon des Énergies Renouvelables, Porte de Versailles, Paris

Presentation of the project Zabbaleen Lighting system: design of urban lighting chandeliers produced with recycled materials by Zabbaleen, fed by solar energy, on the stand of the Fondation Synergie Solaire, partner of LOCUS Foundation.

5 April - 11 July

Forum d'Urbanisme et d'Architecture, Nice

Exhibition *Building elsewhere* - TYIN/Anna Heringer.

Producer: Villa Noailles, Hyères

Curator: Florence Sarano

10-11 April

Krizik Palace, Prague

ARKOS Forum 2012: Urban renewal

Producer: ARKOS

Partners: LOCUS, Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine

Transmit the knowledge about eco-responsible architecture and sustainable planning in the eastern side of Europe is the objective of the annual Arkos Forum.

Study Days 2012: Sustainable renovation

Opening lecture: Jana Revedin, President of LOCUS

Keynote lecture: Philippe Madec, (GA 2012)

Lectures: Loïc Julienne (GA 2009), Safer Hajek & Radim Bajgar, Frédéric Druot, Hans Toolen & Marc Okhuijsen, Gilles Debrun-MDW Architecture.

Opening of the exhibition *Ecological living*, Production Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine, Paris.

*Contacts-Information*s: www.arkosforum.com

13 April

Symposium Global Award for Sustainable Architecture 2012

Global Award for Sustainable Architecture Ceremony 2012

Opening exhibition *Global Award* - posters of the awarded 2011: Shlomo Aronson (Israel), Vatnavinir (Island), Anna Heringer (Germany-Bangladesh), Teddy Cruz (USA), Q'ewwachaka (Peru).

20 May

Garbage district (Zabbaleen) - Cairo

Installation on the main square of the district of the first line of chandeliers of the LOCUS Zabbaleen Lighting system.

Initiator: LOCUS Foundation

Design et processus: Studio Mumbaiï, Bijoy Jain, lauréat Global Award 2009

Partenaires: Fondation d'entreprise GDF-SUEZ; Institut Français d'Égypte, Le Caire; Synergie Solaire, Aix-en-Provence; Environment Quality International, Cairo; ONG Association for the Protection of Environment, Cairo-Zabaleen District; ONG Garbage Collectors, Cairo-Zabaleen District.

*Contact-Information*s: www.locus-foundation.com

18-27 May

Carrière Collot, Epinal, France

7th edition Wood Challenge (Défis du Bois) under the patronage of Jana Revedin, President of LOCUS Foundation

The wood challenge allows to architects and engineers students to design and build inventive, audacious and poetic wooden structures. French students from "Architecture, Wood, Construction" specialty of the "Civil Engineering" Master's degree are joined by students coming from university partners (Germany, Austria, Scotland, Belgium, Brazil, Canada).

University Partners: ENSTIB Epinal; ENSA Nancy; ENSA Strasbourg; CRITT Epinal; CRAI Nancy Caire.

*Contact-Information*s: www.defisbois.fr

23-29 June

École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Nancy, France

18th International Week at the ENS Architecture of Nancy

Building Workshop with TYIN, Andreas Gesten & Yashar Hanstad, Global Award 2012.

September

Casablanca, Centre d'exposition du Sacré-Cœur

Opening of the exhibition *Global Award for Sustainable Architecture 2007-2012*.

First step of the itinerance of the exhibition in Morocco, 2012-2013, accompanied by events (students workshops, lectures of awarded architects, forums).

Programm 2012-2013: Casablanca, Tanger, Tétouan, Marrakech, Agadir

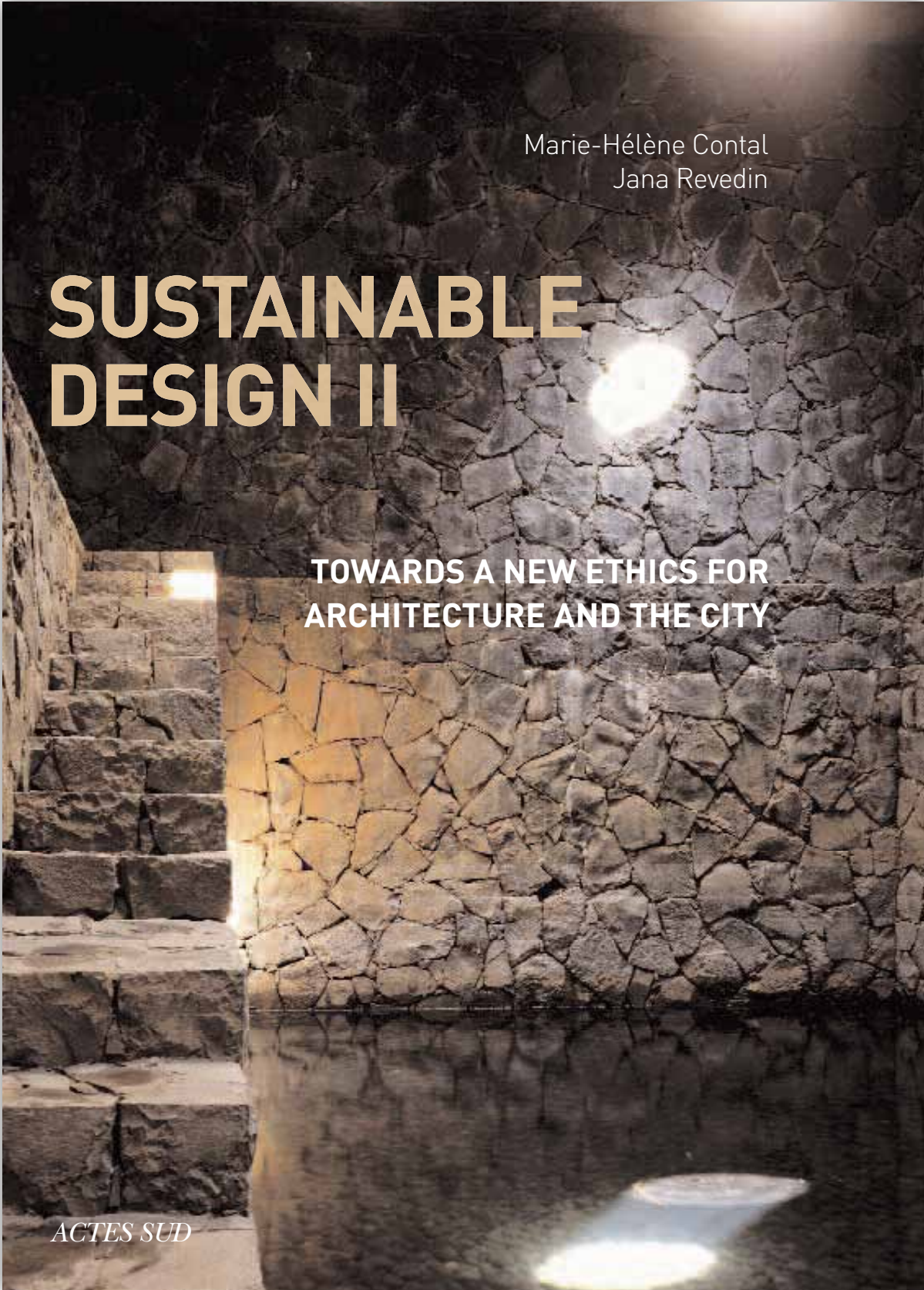
Producer: Groupe Archimédia, Casablanca

Coordination: Florence Michel, Casablanca

15 October

ONG Association for the Protection of Environment (APE), Garbage district Zabbaleen, Cairo

LOCUS Zabbaleen Lighting system, development of the production lines of the chandeliers with the workshops of APE - Design Workshop with Carin Smuts, GA 2009.

The book cover features a photograph of a stone wall and a set of stone stairs. The wall is constructed from irregular, dark grey stones, and the stairs are made of larger, rectangular stone blocks. The scene is dimly lit, with several circular spotlights illuminating the wall and stairs, creating a dramatic and textured effect. The overall atmosphere is one of historical or traditional architecture.

Marie-Hélène Contal
Jana Revedin

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN II

TOWARDS A NEW ETHICS FOR
ARCHITECTURE AND THE CITY

ACTES SUD

ISBN: 978-2-330-00052-1

SYMPOSIUM 2012

14:00 Welcome from François de Mazières,
President of the Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine

14:15 News about the LOCUS Practice Projects
from Jana Revedin, President of the LOCUS Foundation:
Urban renewal of the harbour of Shouzhan, masterplan by
Wang Shu, GA 2007
Urban renewal of the Zabbaleen district in Cairo, Project
"Lighting System", Bijoy Jain, GA 2009

14:30 Announcement of the Winners of the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture 2012

With Philippe Peyrat, Director General of the GDF-SUEZ
Corporate Foundation, partner of the LOCUS Foundation;
Francesco Bandarin, UNESCO Assistant Director-General
for Culture

Lectures by the Architect Winners of the Global Award 2012

14:45 Salma Samar Damluji,
Da'wan Architecture Foundation,
London, England; Da'wan, Yemen
Moderator, Spela Hudnik, Director, IABL, Ljubljana,
Slovenia

15:15 Anne Feenstra, AFIR Architects,
Kabul, Afghanistan,
Arch i Platform, Delhi, India
Moderator, Marie-Hélène Contal, Deputy Director, IFA,
Paris, France

15:45 Coffee break

16:15 Suriya Umpasiriratana, Bangkok, Thailand
Moderator, Kriistina Nivari, Deputy Director, MFA,
Helsinki, Finland

16:45 Philippe Madec, Paris, France
Moderator, Christophe Pourtois, Director, CIVA, Brussels,
Belgium

17:15 Yashar Handstad, Co-founder, TYIN Architects, Trondheim, Norway
Moderator, Benno Albrecht, Professor, IUAV Venice, Italy

Questions

18:30-20:30 Cocktail - Exhibition
Global Award for Sustainable Architecture 2011
Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine -
Foyer de l'auditorium - Hall about

Global Award 2011: Shlomo Aronson Israel
Vatnavinir Iceland | **Anna Heringer** Germany
Teddy Cruz USA | **Q'eswachaka** Peru

PARTNERS

THE FOUNDER

LOCUS

Le LOCUS Fund seeks out and awards the most innovative and engaged architects from all corners of the globe through the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture. Through its college of experts LOCUS is also home to an international network of experts, supporting its research and experimental projects. LOCUS also defends the beauty of their architecture and the ways in which it provides dignity to its inhabitants; opens up a new dialogue with nature and provides an image for the future of the city. Driven by humanism and hope and mindful of the preservation of both resources and cultures, the Fund provides the College of Architects with a place for activities and communication in which it can “dare, transmit and federate.” In addition to its work with the Cité, LOCUS supports large-scale, socially responsible projects (the revitalisation of a sea-front in China; upgrading of the rubbish collectors’ district in Cairo) in collaboration with the architects of the Global Award College.

www.locus-foundation.org

THE PARTNERS



The Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine guarantees the cultural presence of the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture through its European and international network of experts and architecture centres. Each spring, the Cité organises the annual symposium and presentation of the five winners and their work. It also works with LOCUS on publicising the work of the award through :

- travelling exhibitions about the nominated architects
- publications and conferences.

www.citechaillot.fr



The GDF SUEZ Foundation supports LOCUS. The GDF SUEZ Foundation supports the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture and the Practice Projects driven by LOCUS with the architects of the Global Award College.

Interview with Philippe Peyrat: General Delegate of the GDF Suez Foundation

Why are cities and their development such an important concern for your Group?

Philippe Peyrat: Dwindling fossil energy reserves, the preservation of the environment and the growth of cities (with the emergence of 19 megalopolises of over ten million inhabitants between now and 2020) are the major challenges of the 21st century and these should cause us to reflect upon the best sort of urban ecosystem for our planet. Urban design has a key role in addressing changes in society and is in a position to reconcile the various aspects - economic, social, cultural and environmental - of sustainable development.

GDF Suez reinvests the growth generated at the heart of its activities in addressing the major challenges which we are facing in the areas of energy and the environment.

Today, the Group is one of the leading global providers of energy and a major player along the length of the energy chain in the areas of both electricity and natural gas. Making full use of its expertise, the Group is becoming increasingly involved in urban development projects, seeking global solutions to the needs of cities.

How are these challenges directly reflected in the work of the Foundation?

PP: The GDF Suez Foundation works to meet its objectives on both the social and the environmental levels. In the name of solidarity it implements programmes to help those with pressing needs in the fields of health, education and energy.

The environmental work of the Foundation is ambitiously focussed on two areas of activity which are both complementary and receive much attention: on the one hand there is its intensive work in the fields of biodiversity, the protection of ecosystems and the fight against climate change and on the other hand there is the Foundation's "Living Tomorrow" programme.

The objective of the Foundation in carrying out this programme is to accompany and enhance the global debate surrounding the challenges of urbanisation and sustainable architecture - issues which are both vital for the planet and at the heart of the strategy of the Group.

This partnership with Locus illustrates this ambition. In supporting the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture, which annually recognises the work and ideas of architects around the globe who are engaged in the issue of sustainable development, the Foundation is highlighting a new vision of the city which is in step not only with its own vision but also with that of the entire GDF Suez Group.

www.fondation-gdfsuez.com



Le Global Award was put under the patronage of Unesco in 2011.

www.unesco.com

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Benno Albrecht, architect, professor Università IUAV di Venezia, Venice,

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Spela Hudnik, architect, professor, director International Architecture Biennale of Ljubljana,

Kristiina Nivari, historian, deputy director Museum of Finnish Architecture, Helsinki,

Christophe Pourtois, historian, director Centre International pour la Ville, l'Architecture et le Paysage – Bruxelles,

Jana Revedin, architect, professor Blekinge Institute of Technology, Suède, president LOCUS Fund.

Activities

Oversees an international network of experts responsible for collecting the candidacies of architects,

Manages the annual process of choosing the nominees

Is responsible for conceiving and programming the development activities of the Global Award.



Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine

Paris - www.citechaillo.fr

The Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine offers its visitors an exceptionally diverse cultural experience organised in a single, unique location occupying 22,000m² in the heart of Paris. From urban renewal to the revitalisation of our cultural heritage questions of the city occupy us daily. A public entity under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture and Communications, the role of the Cité is to be a source of information and knowledge in all questions related to the quality of architecture, from the upgrading of our cultural heritage to the preservation of the urban environment. Aimed at both the general public and a more specialist audience, the programme of the Cité is highly diversified: permanent and temporary exhibitions, teaching and workshops, symposia, debates, projections... Specialists in the areas of architecture and urbanism are invited to take advantage of the courses offered by the École de Chaillot as well as the library and the archives of the Cité.



Centre International pour la Ville, l'Architecture et le Paysage

Bruxelles - www.civa.be

The Centre International pour la Ville, l'Architecture et le Paysage (CIVA) contains a library, an archive and a documentation centre as well as a range of exhibition and meeting spaces. The mission of CIVA is to introduce architectural and environmental issues to as large a public as possible while breaking down the divisions between disciplines. The CIVA is also the coordinator of the European GAU:DI network which brings together the continent's principal architectural institutions.

I - Università IUAV di Venezia

Venise - www.iuav.it

Venice's Università IUAV is one of the world's best known architecture schools and enjoys a particular reputation for the quality of its research laboratories in the areas of composition and the theory and history of architecture and the city. Since 2005, the Università IUAV has created an international master's degree in Sustainable Urban Planning as a centrepiece of its research programmes.



Museum of Finnish Architecture

Helsinki - www.mfa.fi

Created in 1956, the Museum of Finnish Architecture is the world's oldest architecture museum. Since its creation, it has produced and sent out 1,000 exhibitions. Today, MFA is home to valuable expertise in the area of sustainable architecture, in particular in Northern Europe, the focus of the most advanced research in this area. The Museum of Finnish Architecture works in close collaboration with the GAU:DI network and the most important international architectural.



International Architecture Biennale

Ljubljana - www.architecturebiennaleljubljana.si

The International Biennale of Architecture of Ljubljana was created in 2000 by Peter Vežjak and Špela Hudnik. This young biennale of contemporary architecture is one of the most dynamic players on the Eastern European architecture scene. Focussed on the exchange of information, the event organises an innovation competition and on-line activities of excellent quality. This intra-European platform allows local figures (from Slovenia, Italy and Austria) to come head-to-head with international names from the creative sectors of the contemporary architecture scene.

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