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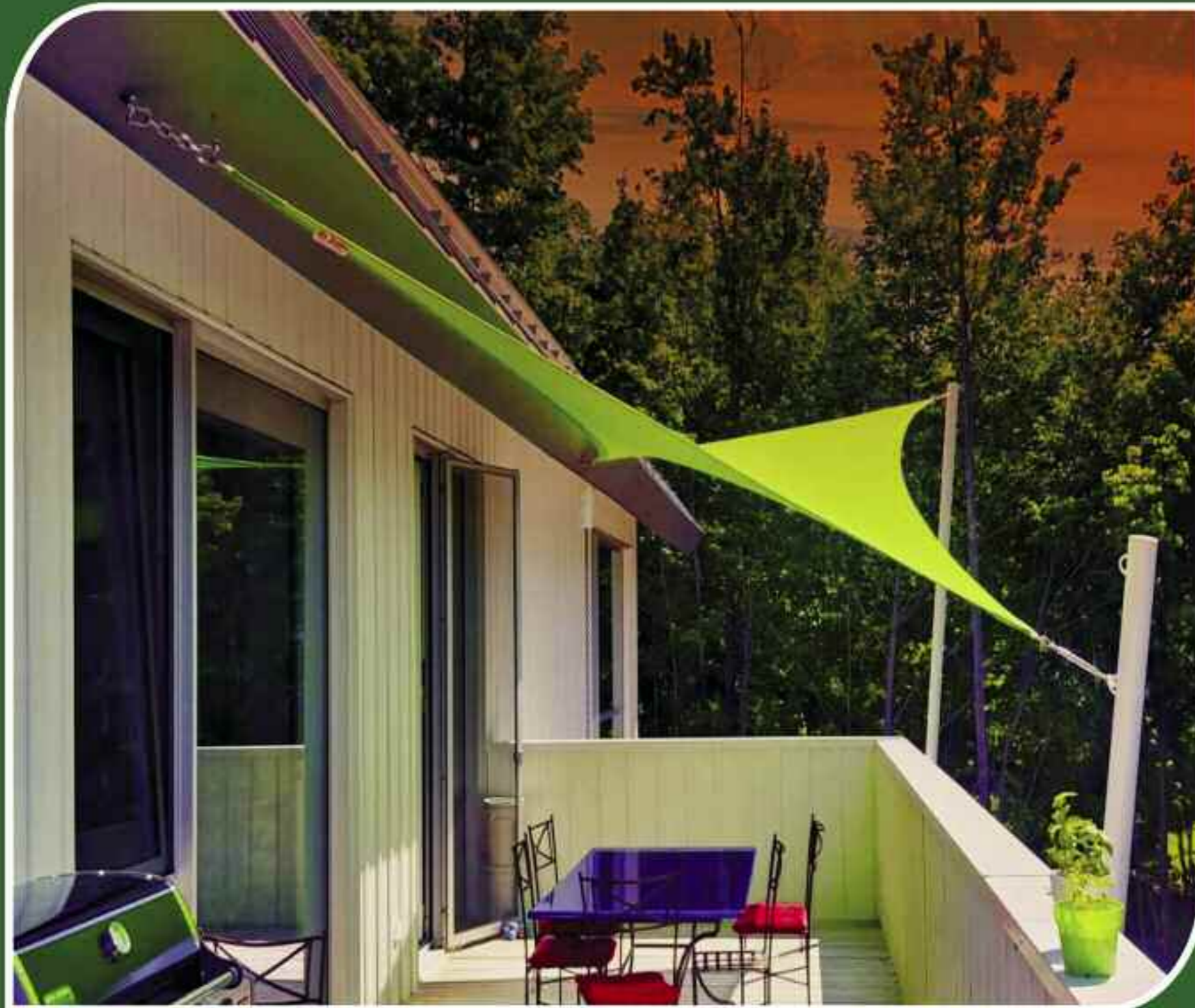
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### IMAM REZA COMPLEX MOSQUE

The main form of the Shabestan, with the grandeur of a religious space, provides the opportunity of a unique experience to fulfill the immemorial ambition to connect with the Creator and feel the symbolic form of the dome. This immediate and elucidate connection is also formed by a sunken courtyard as one of the characteristics of Persian architecture, which allows the users to get away from the exterior crowd and perceive the building in a tranquil space.

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### MINOR MOSQUE

Minor mosque is characterized by its Italian white marble finishing. It shines under the clear sky and its turquoise dome seems to be vanishing in the sky. It is divided to the open front part with terraces, and big round hall with gold plated mihrab (a semicircular niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the Qibla) adorned with writings from Koran.

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### KING HUSSEIN BIN TALAL MOSQUE

The Palace official said a local contractor implemented the project, while a team from Balqa Applied University's Islamic Arts Faculty created the mihrab, the focal point in a mosque that directs worshippers towards Mecca. The facade of the mihrab is made of rare kinds of wood, which were used for the first time in 300 years in the Islamic world, according to Malhas.

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### AL IRSYAD MOSQUE

The mosque is also designed to 'blend in' with nature. The stacked stones allow for natural ventilation without the need for air-conditioning. Surrounded by water, the ambient temperature around the mosque will be lower during the hot season. Once inside, the people are able to look out and appreciate the external.

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### MOHOR PARA MOSQUE

Bangladesh is a deltaic plane dotted with many Mosques from various Architectural Style Period, mostly Pre-Mughal and Mughal. The Mohorpara Mosque is a contemporary endeavor to commemorate those traditional design in local context. The Mosque is conceived as a 'rural lantern' amidst the exuberant greenery illuminating Mohor Para and beyond with its spiritual guidance and omnipresence.

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# CONTENTS

## KING ABDULLAH MOSQUE

The building emerges at the convergence of three of KAFD's 'wadis'. In KAFD, the wadi is represented by a submerged public realm which is the shaded and pleasantly landscaped pedestrian linking element to the overall masterplan. As such, the building is a hidden gem as viewed from the wadis.

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## BASUNA MOSQUE

For 300 years the Abu Stait Mosque has been Basuna's main mosque. It was built and rebuilt a couple of times. The latest building was completed 70 years ago, on the very same plot in the center of the village, adjacent to the village's graveyard serving as the main Friday Mosque and the only funerary mosque in the entire village.

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## REVIVING KARACHI'S DIVERSE HISTORY

Built in the 1930s, the house was initially owned by a Hindu woman, Mrs. Haribai Motiram. In June 1948, she sold it to another woman, Hanifabai Haji Gani, who acquired it so that her daughter, Aisha Bai Dawood, could reside there. In April 1961, the house was donated to The Dawood Foundation for philanthropic education activities and in 1965, Mr. Ahmed Dawood established the Hanifa Hajiani Vocational Training Centre for women, to empower community women.

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## OTHERS

Editorial  
Project News  
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Happenings

## ARCHI TALK

To promote & appreciate architecture, A+i is publishing interviews of renowned Architects & Interior Designers in Newage Architect's interview series. In this issue we are publishing Architects Hassan Uddin Khan and Dr. Mashary Al Naim interviews.

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## Editorial

In the current scenario of pandemic covid-19 we should redesign slums for the poor; moving them away not a solution, better quality of life needed.

Redevelopment policies should be revisited to provide a better quality of life to the poor, rather than just displacing slums to make big houses, creating another set of slums. Slums in Pakistan is like keeping garbage together and calling it a community, making it hard to survive, the people living in slums must be accepted as much a part of the new Pakistan as anyone else, rather than being ashamed of their living. Coronavirus as a wakeup call to show us the new concerns, such as that arising from living in close proximity.

Considering the miserable standard of living in slums with lack of fresh air, hygiene, open space, and close proximity, it is suggested re-examining the acceptable standards in terms of quality of life. Usually, when a real estate project is approved and comes under construction, the slums in the area are displaced to another place, without any improvement in their stands of living. This also solidifies the gap that exists between slums and other sects of the country.

We are featuring in this summer issue of Architecture + Interiors (A+i) AI Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture. The main objective of AFAMA award is the development of contemporary design of mosques, throughout a specialized and classified database. The Third Cycle that was completed earlier this year got over 200 entries, of which 27 mosques were shortlisted from 16 countries. There were 5 mosques from Indonesia, 5 from Bangladesh, and mosques from Turkey, Malaysia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Chechnya, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Ghana, Mali and Sudan.

In this issue, we are also publishing TDF House designed by Shahab Ghani and Associates.

In our ARCHI TALK section, we are publishing Architects Hassan Uddin Khan and Dr. Mashary Al Naim interviews.

## DUBAI ICONIC MOSQUE - DUBAI



The Iconic Mosque of Emaar is designed as an interpretation of blending the UAE local tradition, the Islamic heritage, and the modern vision of Dubai by using today's language. The project is based on the fractal rotational movement which is seen in the universe from micro-scale to macro-scale, reveals seeking a new perspective in terms of abstraction, stylization, and interpretation of tradition in mosque architecture. The project has a 10,000 sq.m built area consisting of main mosque "which can accommodate 7500 worshippers", accommodation block, and the basement which include culture center, ablution, and parking. Pearl diving was once the most common profession in the United Arab Emirates and was tightly woven into the UAE culture that dates back around 7,000 years. Based on this fact the mosque design was inspired by the pearl and its shell. Illustrating it into a dome, minaret, and arches. Eight arches have formed the main elevation of the mosque. The number eight was influenced by the eight doors of Jannah in Islam as well as the eight angels which carry the throne of Allah. The dome which is "The Pearl" will act as a skylight in the daytime to illuminate the main prayer hall, while it will convert into a lantern in the evening, together with the magnificent vertical minaret which merges the ground with the sky, both will give tranquility and a spiritual feeling to Dubai creek.

## THE EIGHT ARCHES

The concept idea starts with a plain box that is divided into 8-segment equal sections. In the Islamic religion, 8-figure is considered very important. This represents the "8-Gates of Jannah (heaven)" as well as the 8 angels that carry the throne of Allah.

## THE ARCH SHAPE

The openings were designed by tapering both sides while pushing the tip upwards to form the Islamic arch. This type of arch will be applied to all openings. The Rear part will be wrap in inward direction while the front in an outward direction in order to achieve the shell form. The overall openings will create a beautiful impression of the Sand dunes.

## INTERIOR DESIGN

The interior design of the museum is flexible and innovative at the same time. This area is located below the ground but it has a direct connection to the main plaza through skylights that are part of the outdoor ground floor design. The large area of the museum allows to have a different kind of exhibitions and it is made by curved elements that create different spaces according to the required functions. The columns become part of the design and are defined by curve shaped lights that add aesthetic value to the whole composition. The water features of the plaza will be visible from this level and they will reflect different tonalities of colors on the white walls and floor.

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## CHENGDU'S XICHEN PARADISE WALK IN CHINA



LWK + Partners create experiential retail space to encourage social interaction and community life to bring together people, with their neighbourhoods and nature. As a pilot project of the third-generation Paradise Walk brand, Xichen Paradise Walk is the retail component of an integrated complex in the heart of west Chengdu. It is bookended by an office tower and a serviced apartment tower also designed by LWK + Partners and adjacent to the residential component. The architectural form features an interplay of geometric shapes, creating an iconic beacon-like façade. Addressing an important traffic intersection to the south-west, the corresponding elevation features an urban-scale shop window designed for the ever-changing, large-scale installations and seasonal contents. Accessibility and transparency underpin the architectural concept. The notion of multiple ground floors allows entry from different levels, giving different points for attracting visitors and higher accessibility especially to the higher levels, as well as blurring the boundaries between the mall and the surrounding neighbourhood. Most of the retail floors are visible from the main entrance for maximised visibility. The inter-connected circulation enables users with ample flexibility to personalise their own visiting experience. There's an outdoor rooftop piazza allows for social interactions, public events or simply a place to relax, with open-air terraces accessible from various retail zones, connecting not only outdoor-indoor spaces, but also different levels.

## DEVELOPMENT OF RAS AL KHOR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY - DUBAI



Development of Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary by Dubai Municipality is an entry in the Future Projects - Urban Design Category of the 2020 WAN Awards. The Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary (RAWS) is located at the end of the Upper Dubai Creek, it is home to approximately 270 species of fauna and 47 species of flora. RAWS is identified as a globally important Bird Area by Birdlife International and is a unique wetland within the UAE, having been declared as the UAE's first RAMSAR Site in 2007. Dubai Municipality is looking at opportunities for habitat restoration and enhancement, and for enriching the visitor experiences with the goal to transforming Ras al Khor into a main destination for Eco-Tourism. In addition to the current mangrove and wetland areas the master plan proposes to introduce new reed bed areas as well as encouraging growth of new mangroves and mud plains. The master plan identifies the opportunity to showcase this natural asset to the millions of visitors that fly into Dubai every year. It instantly provides the tourist and the resident a unique perspective of the city that is usually seen through the lens of glamour, luxury retail, hotel and entertainment offers. The master plan provides engaging activities for all ages, this may be in the form of observing the feathered visitors from the hidden confines of a carefully crafted hide or indeed walking through the many trails through the newly developed perimeter visitor zone. A children's eco village is crafted in to the master plan to cater to family visitors whilst the many lookout towers give the visitor a panoramic view of this wonderful sanctuary.



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# H A S S A N U D D I N K H A N



Personalities like Hassan Uddin Khan are the assets of the architecture world. Hassan-Uddin is a living legend. His achievements and services for the architecture have been tremendous - either it is convening the Aga Khan Award or publishing the journal Mimar, through which he strived to put the architecture of third world onto the map. He does not believe in boundaries, but in crossing them. He also has many scholarly activities. His academic research focuses on contemporary architecture and urbanism in Asia, mosque buildings, and architectural and urban conservation in Asia and Africa. Professionally, he continues to collaborate on architectural projects, and serve on the advisory boards of several organizations. He lectures widely and participate in different forums and international conferences. He is the editor/author of nine books, including, The architecture of Habib Fida Ali (2012), Le Corbusier, Chandigarh, and the Modern City (co-editor and author, 2010), The Middle East: 1900-2000 (English and Chinese editions, 2001), International Style, 1925-1965, (published in several languages, 1998, paperback 2002), Th e Mosque and the Modern World, (co-author with R. Holod, 1997), and Contemporary Asian Architects (1995). He also has over sixty published articles, in journals and books. He continues a limited architectural practice and consultancy. He has a life full of adventure, learning and experiences. He has travelled a lot and has experienced many endeavors of life. "People like me are at home everywhere, and belong nowhere," he says. Despite of list of numerous services and achievements, Khan is very humble. He is full of life. Recently, ARCHITECTURE + INTERIORS (A+i) had the honor to talk to him during his visit to Pakistan. The following is the discussion we had.

Interview by: Ar. Amna Riaz

**TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR EDUCATION AND EARLY CAREER?**  
**Hasan-Uddin Khan:** I grew up in Pakistan, received my early education from Lahore and Karachi. Then the family went to Bangladesh for several years and from there we came back to Karachi. I went to England for my O' levels and A' levels. After that I studied architecture at the Architectural Association (AA) School of Architecture, where Babar and Kamil Khan Mumtaz were my seniors, and where Habib Fida Ali had also gone. After my studies and working in London for a couple of years for Payette Associates on the Aga Khan Hospital and Medical school (as it was known in those days), I came back to Pakistan, worked here with Navaid Hussain, and conducted some planning studies with Reza Ali, both of whom were also my fellows in school.

Then I went to States, married and worked to form the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Three years later I went to Indonesia where my wife was posted for her work, lived there for a while and then went to Europe. HH the Aga Khan asked me to join him in Paris at his secretariat. I worked for him and the Aga Khan Network and the architecture award for a total of 16 years. I looked after many of his architectural projects and help set up several new programs. I ended up in Geneva when the Aga Khan Trust was formed. I left it in 1994 and came to the United States because I wanted to write and teach having had a rich trove of experiences to recount. MIT offered me a position there as a visiting associate professor and I was there some 6 years. At the time I lived in Lexington near Boston. Then I joined Roger Williams University in 2000 as a Distinguished Professor of Architecture and Historic Preservation and worked there until the end of 2019. I retired and now live in Providence, Rhode Island.

**WHAT PERSUADED YOU TO BE AN ARCHITECT?**  
**HK:** I wanted to be an architect since my childhood. I used to like buildings; I liked building blocks and Legos. I knew what I wanted to be since I was a kid of age 11. I had also wanted to be an artist, but my parents persuaded me to opt for architecture, because it was a profession.

**THEN WHAT WAS YOUR REASON TO CHOOSE ACADEMIA?**  
**HK:** That was essentially by chance, without any plan. As I mentioned, I worked in London and in Pakistan. When HH the Aga Khan asked me to join in helping set up the Award, this gave me a chance to explore my culture because he was interested in the Islamic world. Later, I wanted to write. At MIT, the basic idea was to do research, but half time teaching was also offered. But after some two years, it became full time. I never intended to teach, but fate takes you in different directions. Since then I'm not in practice:, I mainly teach, which I liked a great deal.

**FROM WHOM DO YOU TAKE YOUR INSPIRATION IN TERMS OF ARCHITECTURE, AND IN ANY OTHER ASPECTS OF LIFE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?**  
**HK:** The biggest influence were my parents. My father worked for an oil company and my mother was a house-wife. Both were from Hyderabad Deccan, where I was born at Partition. My father was an introspective person and instrumental for me to look at art, music, and architecture, as he was very involved in those things. On the other hand, my mother was very different in many ways. She was more outgoing and demonstratively loving, and a strong believer and practitioner in Islam; at the same time she was, tolerant and very open-minded. When I married an American girl, both of them encouraged me to do whatever I wanted. They are no longer a live.

When I was at the AA there were some people who influenced my thinking about architecture. Among them was Keith Critchlow, who taught us in the first year. He was interested in geometry and patterns and natural systems. Then there was Hassan Fathy, who made me look into local, indigenous architecture and building for the poor. He was my teacher for a while and I also went on to work with him for a short time later in Cairo. In my fifth year, John Turner helped me look into the poor. I worked on issues related to slums with him for a semester. Elia Zhengelis and other Greek teachers too were influential.

Paul Oliver, who taught me for a while, worked on art, architecture and jazz in those days. He was the one to publish my first article while I was a student, on truck painting in Pakistan. I was also very lucky in that. I had an amazing group of teachers. Renzo Piano and Norman Foster were my teachers who introduced me to hi-tech design, although I was really never into it. The range was very wide and open-minded.

Later, The Aga khan was another person to inspire me. He opened my eyes

to numerous opportunities beyond focusing on a certain typology of architecture. I did a lot of travelling because of him. He made it possible for me to meet major architects, ministers, leaders and students, all around the world. Working with him was an extraordinary experience. He is an amazing man. Although at times I was frustrated, but I was mainly excited by the job and the projects in which I was involved. When I left the organization, I decided that I wanted to write about my experiences and ideas about architecture. Although I had written a bunch of articles before that, but after that job I decided to put together and communicate all the information and knowledge that I had gleaned in all those years working for him.

**WHAT ARE THE THINGS, YOU LIKE TO DO, APART FROM WRITING AND TEACHING?**  
**HK:** I do a lot of photography. I write. I love travelling, to see new places and to meet new people. I learnt a lot from the places I visited.

**A LOT OF TRAVELLING HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN YOUR LIFE, SO HOW IT HAD IT HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOU?**  
**HK:** It opened my mind.

**WHAT KIND OF BOUNDARIES SHOULD EXIST BETWEEN THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION AND ACADEMIA? OR SHOULD THEY WORK TOGETHER?**  
**HK:** They should work together. But, both should have their own definition. The academy has a certain purpose and certain time frame to train and let students think about design, architecture and planning. Part of its purpose is to allow one to join the profession in some way, which does not mean that you have to join an office. One thing that architectural schools should do is to open the doors as it did in my case. I did some social work and met with lots of people. I understood architecture through it: how people live, what community wants and needs. Because to me, in the final analysis architecture is not about building: It's about people and what they do. I think my emphasis has always been on what the art of architecture is about. What is its purpose? I also love designing. Although the social aspect is important, I enjoy art and designing I like things that are beautiful and I think about the environment and nature... To me the great buildings are the buildings that inspire you. Not buildings that answer the brief, but ones that make you feel better and elicit an emotional response. So for me, architecture is both about art and solving problems.

**SO WHAT ARE THE BUILDINGS THAT INSPIRED YOU?**  
**HK:** There are a number of them Firstly if we talk about historical ones its, Badshahi Mosque and several buildings in Istanbul, such as the Sultan Ahmed Mosque and Topkapi Palace, which I found to be very inspiring. The villages of the Greek islands and the Italian hillside towns are favorites for the way in which they work with the landscape and for the simple materials thay use. Other wonderful buildings include Frank Lloyd Wright's houses and Louis Kahn's Salk Institute and his Capital Complex in Dhaka. When I was a student, I spent my holidays visiting buildings in Europe and the States. I went to Ronchamp, Le Corbusier's marvelous chapel in France. I don't think that he was a religious man, but he designed one of the most spiritual places in the world.

I grew up at the time, when we were looking at modern architecture. I was trained as a modernist. So I visited many modern buildings, and I liked many of them. I really like what Mies van der Rohe did - Crown Hall in Chicago and the Seagram Building in New York. When I first saw the latter, I was moved by its purity of line. He left a whole plaza empty in the front so that people could not only enjoy its view but also provide a civic urban space. Good architecture is a combination of what an architect and client both think. And in the Seagram building, Mies' young client, Phyllis Lambert, was an architect herself, who worked with him and gave him freedom in design. So he produced great piece of architecture. Whilst I was studying, I saw the Center Pompidou, designed by Piano and Rogers, which was our third year project as both of them were teaching at the AA. They were designing it for real when I was doing it in their studio.

Much later I became intrigued by Frank Gehry who introduced sculpture into architecture. ZahaHadid was at school with me, but I was some four years senior to her and did not know her well. She has done some extraordinary buildings. I may not agree with everything that Gehry and Zaha have done but they are worth considering seriously.

I consider myself lucky to know most of the famous architects in the world and many others with great talent, to meet them, and to look at their whole range of buildings - an opportunity given to me by HH the Aga Khan when I worked for him. I think that one of the greatest architects of the world was



Blue mosque by Sedefkar Mehmet Agha in Istanbul



Islamic Society of North America plainfield Illionoiz by Gulzar Haider



Mughal Badshahi Mosque in Lahore



Mosque in Samarkand



Selimye complex in Edirne by the great Ottoman architect, Sinan



Xian Mosque

Geoffrey Bawa. When I first met him, I thought here is a person who understands nature, landscape, narrative, and materials. He was a modernist, but he uses the vernacular in certain innovative ways. He has done wonderful projects. I spent a little time with Laurie Baker and have always admired his work. I think some of the work that Mazhar-ul Islam did in Bangladesh is very elegant. I have written several articles on particular architects, including a book on the Indian architect, Charles Correa, who has done some wonderful buildings and interesting work with urban settlements, and another on Habib Fida Ali.

For very long time, I was not interested architecture here in Pakistan, because I thought that although there was some good, competent, architecture, architects weren't moving the boundaries of architecture. The Indians were doing it, Bangladeshis were doing it, Sri Lankans were doing it, but not us. However, in the last 6 or 7 years, I started looking at the work of some younger architects in Pakistan and felt that I needed to know more. One of the things I'm doing on this trip, as I'm on a sabbatical of several months from my university, I am working on a book on contemporary architecture in Pakistan. No one has done one since the 1980s when Kamil Khan Mumtaz wrote Architecture in Pakistan (which I published). Yasmeen Lari has written about architecture and historic buildings; Mushtaq Husain wrote a book on 100 architects' houses, Shikoh and Mankani, and there are a few others.

I have been meeting a lot of people and seeing some good buildings. I think I have an idea of how to frame a narrative for the book. There is much research and writing to be done about architecture in Pakistan. We should write and talk about architecture, not just in a scholarly way but also for a more general audience.

**HOW DO YOU SEE THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES HERE AND IN THE UNITED STATES?**

HK: The professional bodies here need to do more for profession itself, and more people should get involved. However, it is heartening to note the many who are taking a role in the profession here – sometimes I get the impression that they do this for their own benefit more than for general good. There are very lively professional bodies in U.S. They have different roles. I'm not sure about the role advocated in architect's training in the profession, and not just in the academy. Being here only for short periods at a time, I don't know enough about the profession to make any useful comments; so I can't answer what could be or should be the roll of professionals.

**WHAT DO THINK WE LACK IN OUR SYSTEM OF ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION?**

HK: I think we have a lot of enthusiastic people here in the country. But there is a kind of bureaucracy that seems to limit the potential of students and academics in terms of exploration. We don't have enough critical thinking and we don't encourage it. We try to teach people a lot of things, too many for them to absorb, but I believe you cannot teach everything. What we need to do is to teach our students to look critically at everything they come across, to see what is relevant. When I talk to some young architects here, they tell me about schools that teach to draw better and to operate more software. But what I like to hear is for those who teach to train them to think critically.

The other thing that is necessary for the students, is for them to want to learn. I can show you many things, but it's you, who have to engage in them and expand your own interests. We no longer need to teach much about the computer stuff, students can learn much of it by themselves, and with their colleagues. I am there to teach them to look at the world critically. I worked with Fathy, when I was a student, because I knew that he could teach me something different and open my eyes to new ways of looking at things. He was not directly my school teacher, but a small group of us requested him to let us work with him, and he was very generous to say yes. We were not paid or received credit for courses, but we got to learn a lot from him. The initiative came from us as we wanted to learn. This is the thing that students need to have.

**YOU ARE SO MUCH INTO MOSQUES. WHICH ARE YOUR FAVORITE MOSQUES?**

HK: It's a hard question... (thinking)... It is easier to look at historic mosques as we have a critical distance from them. The 17th century Sultan Ahmet or Blue mosque by Sedefkar

Mehmet Agha in Istanbul, or the magnificent Selimye complex in Edirne by the great Ottoman architect, Sinan, are some of the greatest mosques in Islam, as is the Mughal Badshahi Mosque in Lahore. Sultan Hassan in Cairo, the Great Mosque of Cordoba (one of my very favorites), Samarkand, Xian and Mali also come to mind. There are numerous others.

Among newer 20th century mosques, I like Dalokay's Faisal Masjid in Islamabad. It's big and it makes grand gesture reminding us of the mountains and the majesty of Allah. The cubic Mosque in Manhattan, NY, by SOM and the Islamic Center Mosque in Rome by Paolo Portoghesi and others, are magnificent in a contemporary expression. There are also small, beautiful mosques. The earthen New Gournia Mosque near Luxor by Hassan Fathy has an understated elegance. In Iran the architect, Kamran Diba, designed some very modern small mosques – including ones in Jondishapur and Shushtar, they are beautiful and simple with elegant tile-work in places. Two more recent mosques, one in Bangladesh, the Bait Ur Rouf Mosque near Dhaka by Marina Tabassum and to my mind perhaps the most elegant one anywhere is the Sancaklar Mosque near Istanbul by Emre Arolat. There are others, but they skip my mind at this moment!

On the other hand we have sometimes added to our mosques to their detriment. There is a mosque in Java; it was a local mosque in local traditional architecture. But now they have put a dome on it, changing its architecture. For me it's unfortunate to change it. Domes don't make a building 'Islamic'. It is influenced by Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, and its fine for their cultures, but bringing domes to Indonesia is an alien thing. It was a beautiful; mosque which I think has been ruined for last ten years.

A mosque that I really like is a small part of another building. It's Louis Kahn's mosque above the entrance of the capital complex in Dhaka. The mosque is very serene, and the way in which the light comes in, makes it an inspiring space. To me how light works is perhaps the most important element in a mosque as it has not only been used as metaphor for Allah, i.e. in surah Al-Noor, but also creates the ambience. To me Kahn's prayer place is a piece of pure geometry and elegant proportion - a truly sacred space.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AS CONVENER IN THE AGA KHAN AWARD FORMATION? HOW WAS THE JOURNEY?**

HK: When I joined to help set up the Award, His Highness the Aga Khan said that we should look at the contemporary architecture of Muslim societies, which I had never looked at. He wanted to look into the architecture of Islamic countries that no one had seriously done earlier. So when I joined him, I was always learning something new. I travelled around the world, met different people, and began to think about what architecture is and means in Muslim societies in the broadest cultural terms.

When we setup the award, I worked on the processes of documentation and evaluation. When I joined in early 1977, Renata Holod, the first Convener, was the head and I was her assistant. She was the historian, I was the architect. We travelled together and help set the agenda for the award alongside the Steering Committee. The first eight or so years were very exciting for me, because we had to figure out important different issues, different happenings. The program and discourse we started was all very new. So it was amazing for me, to convene the first award having taken over from Renata who went back to teach at her university.

When we had our first award in 1980 at Shalimar Garden in Lahore, I was on the stage. I read the citations, which was a very exciting moment. It was giving birth to something new that people were to talk about, to look at. A few years ago, when I was at the award presentation ceremony in Lisbon the Aga Khan said to me, "You must be pleased that your child has grown up, and has grown up strong and



Sultan Hassan in Cairo, the Great Mosques of Cordoba



Sancaklar Mosque near Istanbul Emre Arolat



Squash Complex Karachi, designed by Hasan Uddin Khan



Second Jury Members of Al Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture



Hasan Uddin Khan and The Aga Khan giving AKAA to Hasan Fathy in Lahore, Pakistan

happy". I responded that it was really his child but that one always feels great when your kids are independent and stronger than you. In convening the first award we felt that we were embarked on a great adventure. I didn't really know for the first years, where it was going and what is was worth, but after a year and a half we found that we might be going to do something that would change how people think about architecture. So the award and the Ag Khan have been very important in my life.

#### **WHY DID YOU CHOSE TO STUDY ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE AND WHAT MADE YOU SO INTERESTED IN MOSQUES?**

**HK:** I believe in Islam. Many people may not consider me as a practicing Muslim as I don't do many things I should do as a Muslim. But I do believe in Islam as an ethical and social and belief system, and when I do look into its architecture, several questions arise. For example, what are the building types important in Islam: they include mosques, madrassas and hospitals, and caravan-sarays. (There are a bunch of others.)

I became interested in mosques not only because of religion, but because they symbolize who we are and what we stand for. I believe that if you look at the architecture of the mosque, you can understand faith a little bit better, and you can understand what people's beliefs are, and what they aspire to and how they regard their Maker. Mosque designs express our aspirations regardless whether it is a small community mosque or a bigger symbolic one. I am most interested in the relationship of architecture to community and the mosque. Over the years, I looked at mosques and all different kinds of buildings and wrote about them. And I'm still writing about them including in a short book that is still in its draft form as a guide to a client or community and even for an architect to build a mosque today. GulzarHaider, a fine architect and thinker, has done some work on the philosophical and design concepts in Islam, and Oleg Grabar the historian and the philosopher Mohammed Arkoun also wrote about mosques in a scholarly way. (Alas, the last two are no longer living.) They all have pertinent ideas about community and the mosque, and issues related to technology and design.

Also, about certain practices today where in many societies women also go to mosque regularly with their children. So what is the place of women in mosque? In some places men and women pray together although in separate areas, while in some societies women hardly go the mosque. Mosques have always been community centers of a sort, taking on a number of other functions besides being a house of communal prayer. They are often educational centers, places for the distribution of alms to the poor, in some places they cater to burials, where one attends to preparing the dead for burial, and so on. When we look at mosques in North America and Europe, some of the imams are women and lead the prayers, not just for the women but for everyone, however this is still rare. The changing roles of men and women are going to change our views and practice of the faith. Some countries would say it is blasphemous, while in others women are proclaiming that they are equals who are equally able to interpret the Quran, and that their knowledge is equal to that of men. This is going to change mosque design. Islam has never been static. Mosques reflect many religious and societal issues, including those that deal with men's rights, women's rights, and the aspirations of all of society.

Architecturally, I am interested in how these issues reflect upon the space, and place of meeting, and in design, dealing with proportion, scale, etc. These are actually questions that need to be addressed by architects for all building types. That's why the mosques are so interesting. They show what changes are happening in Islam and how the society is behaving. In some places we are becoming more conservative, while liberal in some others places.

#### **HOW DOES IT FEEL TO WRITE ABOUT THE WORK OF OTHER ARCHITECTS WHILE YOU ARE AN ARCHITECT YOURSELF? CAN WE SAY THAT THERE IS A LOT MORE CRITICISM INVOLVED WHEN ANOTHER ARCHITECT IS DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK?**

**HK:** It can be difficult to be objective. Most architects cannot be so about their

colleagues' work. I was trained as an architect and have the same problems at looking at the work of other architects; but because I have done research and I am somewhere between a historian and a critic, I believe I can be more unbiased. I have written 10 books by now, and there are around 60 articles in international journals by me on different aspects of architecture, which have helped put architecture into a larger perspective.

I can, hopefully, write objectively to some extent, which does not mean one does not have opinions – one does. I think one writes a narrative, a story about what the architecture is about, and places it within a context, which leads to understanding of the work. For instance, when I wrote about Habib Fida Ali, I wrote about what meaning he has for modernism in Pakistan and about his explorations in modern architecture. One of the problems is that I knew Habib since I was a student and hold him in high regard, and he is still practicing! (Since this interview Habib has passed on; a loss to the profession in Pakistan.) So perhaps I was somewhat less critical than I could have been. He has been consistent by working in the same idiom he did 50 years ago, he is a consummate modernist and continues to be so, but he is doing it in a progressively better way. He always had a great sense of design. When I did the book on Charles Correa, I also knew him for long time. We had lots of discussion about his buildings and we visited some of them together. It is interesting when one gets the architect's point of view as well. My purpose in all my writing is to help people understand the work of these architects. That is also why, when I work with students, I aim to help them to succeed. We have a role as teachers, we have a role as critical writers the same way. I am not there to show how clever I am in observing an architect's work.

#### **DO YOU GIVE YOUR OPINION ABOUT THEIR WORK AS WELL IN YOUR WRITINGS?**

**HK:** Yes, but I do it in a way that separates my opinion from the facts. When I look at the architectural magazines in general there is lot of reporting and I would like to see more critical analysis, especially in Pakistan. What one thinks should also come into the lime light as well; to state what are the buildings that I like and the buildings that I don't like, and why. You can have different opinion to mine, and my opinion is not better than yours. But I can raise questions about it. I should be able to give my reasoning for my opinion. Does it meet the criteria that it was built for? There is a balance to be maintained between opinion, criticism and information when presenting a building. This is particularly so when writing a work of reference.

The main purpose of starting the journal Mimar in 1980 was that to people what was happening here in this region. That was more of a reporting and raising awareness thing as at the time there was very little information about architecture in our part of the world. On the other hand, the purpose of my forth coming book is to suggest a story of architecture in Pakistan - a narrative about the sweep of architectural development since independence in 1947 without giving a personal opinion..

#### **SHOULD THERE BE AN IDENTITY IN ARCHITECTURE REFERRING TO ANY OF THE COUNTRY?**

**HK:** I don't think so because the question can be interpreted in so many different ways. We all have different identities even in one place. There have been a few attempts to do so in architecture. Turkey tried it in 1920s and 30s. They did this with a purpose in mind - to express unity. In Morocco, King Hassan did it to refer to the long distant past as an area of legitimacy for his dynasty.

So the question arises: whose identity are we talking about? If we are talking about Pakistani identity, then there are so many groups in Pakistan. Are we talking about Sindhi, Punjabi, or other provincial identities? Are we talking of the identities of the mohajirs who are part of the country? There are different religious groups that share the same physical space. We are different, and we have different identities, or should we all have to be same? My own belief is that we should have architecture that talks about space, climate, materials, technology and environment, and the ways in which we live. That's the identity portrayed by architecture, and even that can change.

Then there is the phrase 'Islamic Architecture'. I'm very wary about this term because it makes us suggest that all Muslims are same. We are not. In Indonesia, they are different. In India they are different. Although being part of the ummah we share common beliefs, but there are differences. There are different cultures and different backgrounds. ... So we should not to try think of identity for a place or peoples, as architectural identity – however we did this at Partition to assert a set of identities that pertained to nationalism, religion and modernism. As Islam is not just a religion but professes a set of ethical values as well (i.e. don't harm anybody, don't lie, be stewards of the earth, etc.), so how can one define and judge its architecture?

So can there be AN identity that can be applied to us through architecture? I think not. Identity in architecture has never really existed except for manufactured political and social purposes. For example, when the Mughals built, they designed using local materials, local construction technology of that time, and learned from the past architectures to create their own. They never thought that they were building Mughal architecture, they were just working on vernacular building and eventually somebody named it Mughal architecture for historical convenience.

#### **WHAT ARE YOUR PIPELINE PROJECTS THAT WE SHOULD LOOK FORWARD TO?**

**HK:** I am working on a book project dealing with preservation practice in the Islamic world, defined as places with majority Muslim populations (still an unresolved emphasis!). I am not sure about how will I tell the story, but I have gathered all the material for it over the past fifteen years. As when I was working on mosques as co-author I collected the data for about 200 mosques, but then we shortlisted 30-40 mosques for publication. The whole book is divided on the basis of clients of mosques. What are the different requirements of different clients i.e. the state might be looking for oneother thing, an individual client would have different requirements, and different institutions would like to see some other things in mosques. This may also becomebe the way in which the preservation book might be divided.

I am also preparing a volume of my collected essays about architecture that have been already published in different journals. Bringing them together and re-editing them and adding to them is a larger task than I had envisioned. However the Pakistani Architecture book is my current priority. I keep being diverted by interesting short term projects!

#### **YOU HAVE WRITTEN A BOOK ON MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE. CAN YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE IS AS IT HAS VERY HIGH IMPORTANCE IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES?**

**HK:** As I noted earlier, mosques are emblematic of Islam as a faith and as a social system. They are not "sacred spaces" as in Catholicism. The word masjid is used many times in the Qur'an, but is only applied to three specific buildings: the Masjid Al-Haram al-Sharif (Kaaba), Qubat as-Sakhra a.k.a. the Dome of the Rock, and the Masjid Al Aqsa (Jerusalem), and the Masjid at the oasis at Quba, south-east of Medina. This mosque, referred to as the Mosque of the Prophet at Medina was his house – it was destroyed and rebuilt. Often the Mosque of Kufa and the Umayyad Great Mosque at Damascus are given a very high status.

As we know, the requirements for a mosque are minimal – one should pray in a clean place and face Makkah. Since Islam does not treat material things as sacrosanct, the differentiation between the 'sacred' and the 'profane' and the dichotomy between body and soul do not exist. Thus, besides being places for prayer and community, they house several functions besides prayer.

#### **YOU WERE THE JURY MEMBER OF THE ALFOZAN MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE AWARD WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ABOUT THIS AFMAA INITIATIVE?**

**HK:** The Al Fozan Award was the first international award set up to examine mosque architecture and how it could live up to modern 21st century challenges. The award established in 2011. Other awards have been given to mosques, for example the Aga Khan Award, but this one has a specific focus.

I was very pleased to be asked by Sheikh Abdellatif AlFozan to be on the first Jury. Its members were; Saleh Hathlool and Ibrahim Alnaimi from Saudi Arabia, Charles Correa from India, Sahal Al-Hayari from Jordan, Glen Lowrey from New York, and myself. The scope of the jury was to look only at projects in Saudi Arabia, with the extension of expanding the range to other places in the future.

A second jury was selected for the 2014 round of awards to select projects from the Arabian Gulf states. Again I was pleased and honored to be on this one as well. The jury consisted of five members: Ken Yeang from Malaysia, the Jordanian Muhammad al-Asad, Suha Ozkan from Turkey, Khalid Omar Azzam based in London, and myself. The jury defined and focused on three categories of mosques; the Juma masjid, the neighborhood mosque, and what was termed central mosques within an urban setting. Some 13 projects were shortlisted, and three winners selected. There were also two special awards given to architects, Abdel Wahid El Wakil of Egypt and Rasem Badran of Jordan for their lifetimes work on mosques. In March 2017, under the patronage of HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman and HRH Prince Khaled Alfaisal, the ceremony took a place in Jeddah. Al Fozan published the results of the competition in a 2016 book: 'Minarets of the Arabian Gulf'.

I understand that the third round of awards has been held and the jury, with which I have not been involved, met in Malaysia in 2019 and selected a number of projects. I do not know what the winning projects were. The ceremony was supposed to have been conducted this year but due to the Coronavirus was not held. There is supposed to be a fourth cycle of awards that should commence this year, but I don't know their status.

I am glad the Al Fozan Award was established as it adds to our discourse of architecture in the Islamic World.

#### **YOUR MESSAGE FOR YOUNG ARCHITECTS?**

**HK:** I have drifted and journeyed in many directions. I was lucky to have that opportunity. But I have always had a set of core beliefs about architecture and people, which anchored me because it was about design and people.

So I think one should have an agenda or set of concerns on which to act. I don't know about the agendas of young architects in Pakistan. I would like them to be interested in something, but it is for them to decide what. We should remember the lessons of history and actively use them. Just don't let architecture happen and don't do it for money. I'm not against making money, and hopefully one will, but do it with a commitment to something beyond oneself. Architects like ASA have moved in that direction.

I would like to mention three people here. Arif Hasan, is a designer but he has gone in a different direction. He is committed to think about society and its problems, as a planner and as an architect. Yasmeen Lari is committed in our history and past, and architecture for the poor. So she has some specific long-term projectsthings in which she is involved. Kamil Khan Mumtaz is interested in another direction to do with craft and spirituality. They all have a strong point of view and act on it in admirable ways. I don't know about the young generation. I would love to find it out.

To reiterate, architecture should be more than about oneself and design. One should beis making a contribution for something bigger, and that's true for us as human beings; we can understand and develop ourselves through architecture. Architects should cultivate a series of things in which they are interested. They can be different things, from fine and economically conscious design to social activism and cultural expression. I'm not suggesting for everybody to do the same thing. In fact, this interview has helped me articulate my own ideas and place them in a broader context – and for this I thank you. Having an agenda helps by bringing one back to the core of ones interests and being.

*Many thanks for talking to us!*

# DR MASHARY AL NAIM

*Dr. Prof. Mashary Al Naim is Secretary General of Al Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture (AFAMA). During the last two decades, Prof. Al Naim worked as a consultant and practitioner for many of the architectural and planning major projects in Saudi Arabia and the region, He participated in several studies with specialized institutes and centers in the world in the field of urban studies. Furthermore, Prof. Al Naim is a writer specialized in architecture and urbanism. In the last two decades, he published hundreds of researches and articles in the fields of architecture in both Arabic and English. In this exclusive interview with Architecture + Interiors (A+i), he talks about the establishments of AFAMA and other issues.*



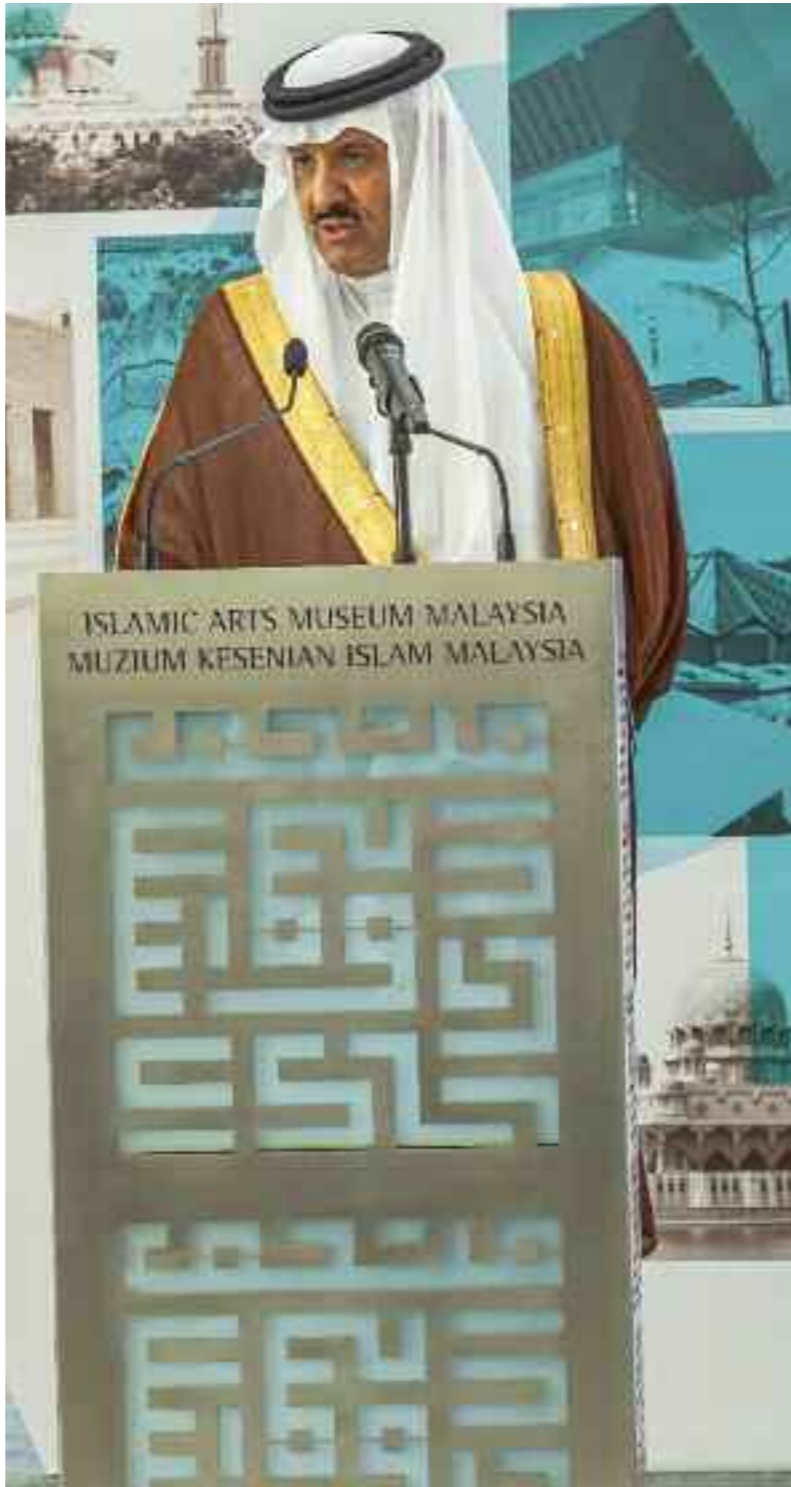
Shaikh Abdullatif Al Fozan, Founder of the Award

## MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

“Abdullatif Al Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture” cares about the future of mosque architecture; this is the main objective of the Award. Over the years, we have witnessed the construction of numerous mosques that accumulated records of mosques numbers worldwide, and consequently, it contributes to the multiple problems of mosque architecture given the expansion of cities and the complexity of life. The main question that we raised upon initiating this Award were about the possible added value to Mosques architecture, and how we can make mosque architecture rebirth and matching contemporary challenges, let alone adequately tackle them; this building type is pivotal and ‘symbolic’, for it gives our cities their identity. However, we did not consider ‘form’ only, but took into consideration other vital parameters beyond “form” such as urban issues that influence mosque architecture. Urban relations of the mosque with the architectural context is faced with different urban and city planning intersctions, and so this leads us to think about the socio-cultural impact of the mosque and its role in shaping social practices within a local network that binds individuals in the community visually, functionally and emotionally.

– Shaikh Abdullatif Al Fozan





**Interview by:** Ar. Hammad Husain

**HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME AN ARCHITECT AND WHERE DID YOU STUDY?**

**Mashary Al Naim:** As a matter of fact, architecture has chosen me to be an architect. And I studied my bachelor and master's degrees in architecture at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, however, I did my Ph.D. in architecture critic at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne at the United Kingdom.

**YOU HAVE BEEN AN ACADEMICIAN AND HAVE ALSO WRITTEN PAPERS AND BOOKS. CAN YOU SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF TEACHING AND PUBLISHING?**

**MN:** As we all know that academic research is the main core of work in the academic field, where the work environment encourages reading, exchanging

views with fellows and students, and of course this will lead to writing papers and books. But reading was a hobby for me since my childhood, so academic work has elaborated my skills.

Research in architecture is not a normal research usually its part of the creativity of the critic because usually researcher and critic in architecture deals with creative products and the need to be an intellectual and creative level of the architect. This is why there are huge differences between the research in the sciences of architecture and the creative product of architecture.

This is why in my teaching experiences I tried very hard to allow my students to see what is beyond the obvious and in my research mostly I

concentrate in the implicit meanings because architecture is an internal product and generate new meanings overtime.

**WHAT DIFFERENCE DO YOU SEE BETWEEN THE ARCHITECTURE GRADUATES OF THE 1980S / 90S, AND THE CURRENT FRESH GRADUATES IN SAUDI ARABIA?**

**MN:** I can summarize the differences in two aspects, receiving information and producing information. In 1980s, sources of information were different, it was either through books, studio, or oral lectures, but in the 1990s all sources of information developed when internet started to show up.

Yet in 2000s, with that massive evolution in communications technology we have started to

experience new methodologies at either receiving or producing information and this led to producing architects with virtual skills. In the 1980s the skills could be tested and sensed from the ability of the architect to draw and design, unfortunately now the half skilled students can produce great drawings with the assistant of software without understanding what they are producing.

**WHAT WAS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE BEHIND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AL-FOZAN AWARD FOR MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE?**

**MN:** There are many reasons for establishing Abdullatif Alfozan Award for Mosque Architecture, but the main reason is to develop a strong platform for architecture of future mosques, and to bring back the role of the

mosque as an urban and social hub for enlightenment and development.

Furthermore, there are 3.7 million mosques around the world, as per the estimation of different organizations, and most of these mosques are suffering from bad architectural conditions, and consuming enormous quantities of water and power. Therefore, for this reason and the above-mentioned reasons, it's important to have this architectural award and institution to lead the development of mosque architecture.

**HOW HAS BEEN THE RESPONSE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL FRATERNITY AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIRST 3 CYCLES OF AFAMA?**

**MN:** Since the beginning of the 3rd cycle in

2017, and currently in the 4th cycle, we have planned to address the international community with our Award, either by inclusion of all countries around the world, or by our cooperation with selective professional organizations and institutions. Therefore, the important step was our partnership with the International Union of Architects (UIA). This partnership has confirmed the architectural component of the award and enabled us to approach all architects around the world. Plus, it gave credibility and enhanced the professionalism of it. In addition to UIA, we managed to have a professional international network of universities and research centers, who are cooperating with us in the Award affairs, and our other parallel programs of the award.



**THE IMAGE OF A MOSQUE IN THE POPULAR MIND IN WEST ASIA AND EUROPE IS OF THE OTTOMAN MOSQUE WITH DOMES, SEMI-DOME AND PENCIL MINARETS, WHEREAS IN SOUTH ASIA, PEOPLE ASSOCIATE MOSQUE DESIGN WITH MUGHAL ERA MOSQUES. BUT DOMES, ARCHES, CALLIGRAPHY, COURTYARD AND SYMMETRY ARE SOME OF THE ELEMENTS THAT MUSLIMS ALL OVER THE WORLD ASSOCIATE WITH A MOSQUE. AFAMA IS PROMOTING DIVERSITY IN DESIGN AND CONTEMPORARY MOSQUE DESIGNS OF THE 21ST CENTURY. IS IT A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE?**

**MN:** Our philosophy in mosque architecture is inspired from the role of the mosque through history. We tracked how the mosque crossed cultures and geographical boundaries, how it interacted with the local people and incubated their daily social life. How it was the physical device that carried the local arts and images. This is why we encourage diversity and we believe that mosques should reflect the spirit of place that it is located in. This is why, at the Award as a professional organization we are welcoming any mosque architecture that matches our rules and

conditions regardless of its architectural style or geographical locations although we follow professional guidance and respect scientific rules that been created by our governing bodies.

**AGA KHAN AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURE (AKAA) FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON MUSLIM SOCIETIES. IN THE LAST FOUR DECADES, SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT, DOZENS OF PROJECTS HAVE WON THE AKAA AWARD BUT THERE HAVE ONLY BEEN A FEW MOSQUES THAT WON THE AWARD. WITH THE FORMATION OF AFAMA, WILL MOSQUE AS AN IMPORTANT BUILDING TYPE OF MUSLIM SOCIETIES GET THE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND IMPORTANCE IT DESERVES?**

**MN:** It is our intention to bring the mosque again as the sole important building in Muslims societies, the mosque is the only worship building that ties people in the local community five times a day, seven days a week.

From a historical point of view a mosque as building was the main experimental laboratory/incubator for architectural forms,

structural forms, ornamentation, furniture, object design, and calligraphy and it was the main inspiring architectural element in Islamic civilization for intellectuals, architects, craftsmen, technologists etc. This is why AFAMA seeks to rebirth the role of the mosques from an architectural point of view. We believe by the assistance of all intellectuals and architects in all Islamic communities in the world and by the architects and critics all over the world the Award can be the authority in mosque architecture in the coming few years.

**WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE IN DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE WORLD?**

**MN:** The fundamental difference is not the function because we all know the main function of the mosques with some cultural and social facilities attached with the mosque over centuries. However, as I mentioned above, mosques are a vehicle for cultural transmission that represent two dimensions, one belongs to the local community and its history, art and architecture,

the second represents the global influence of the mosque and the implicit meanings that are impeded. These two meanings are nourishing the diversity of architectural style and images of the mosque and it will also nourish the diversity in the future because we will always face the value of the place making or sense of place that makes mosques part of its surrounding even if it carries this global effect.

**FOR CENTURIES, MOSQUE WAS THE FOCAL POINT OF EVERY MUSLIM COMMUNITY. IN THE LAST FEW HUNDRED YEARS, THE ROLE OF MOSQUE IN COMMUNITIES GOT RESTRICTED ONLY TO PRAYER. DO YOU FORESEE THAT THE ROLE OF A MOSQUE WILL REVIVE IN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES TO ENCOMPASS COMMUNAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES?**

**MN:** Even though AFAMA is an architectural award, I believe that we could revive the authentic role of the mosque through encouraging best practicing in architectural or urban design of mosques. This intention is related to reasons of building of the Prophet's mosque and the roles that it carried. "SALAT" was the main reason but

connecting people and building solid communities is the symbolic meaning of the consolidation of the role during the prayer, and the importance of the social role of the mosques. We cannot imagine the mosque remaining only for prayers because its role is connecting people with Allah and connecting people with each other.

**AS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF AFAMA, HOW DO YOU SEE THE RESPONSE FROM PAKISTAN? WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PROMOTE AFAMA IN PAKISTAN?**

**MN:** Pakistan is an important and influential Moslem country, full of talented architects and inspiring intellectuals. It is the country of craftsmanship with its long-standing history and we think that the impact of the Pakistani intellectuals and architects will be great on the future of AFAMA. Integrating the award with the local people in Pakistan is a very important objective and this can happen through your magazine and professional media platforms in Pakistan, we would appreciate delivery of our calls to Pakistani architects and researchers to start nominating mosques for our 4th cycle, follow

our activities and to support our professional platforms on mosque architecture that are available on our portal [www.alfozanaward.org](http://www.alfozanaward.org)

**DOES AFAMA PLAN TO HOLD ANY OF ITS FUTURE EVENTS IN PAKISTAN?**

**MN:** Our award is open for any initiatives or suggestions from any institutions at Pakistan that shows interest in Mosque Architecture.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE TO YOUNG PAKISTANI ARCHITECTS?**

**MN:** We could develop our life by developing our architecture, and we can maintain our true Islamic faith by developing our mosque architecture. From my experience when I visited Pakistan (Karachi) in 2007 I met with great young Pakistani architects. I believe they have the potential to produce and reproduce the great architecture that distinguished Pakistan over centuries. We hope that they would contribute by their architectural and intellectual products.

*Many thanks for talking to us!*



ABDULLATIF AL FOZAN AWARD FOR

MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE

# CELEBRATING MOSQUE AS A BUILDING TYPE

## THE AL-FOZAN AWARD FOR MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE

By Ar Hammad Husain

(Technical Reviewer, Al-Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture)

Mosque architecture has evolved through ages, from humble beginnings in 622 AD, when the first mosque, Masjid-e-Quba was constructed in Medina with mud bricks and tree leaves, to the grand Ottoman Turkish Selimiye Mosque in Edirne (1574 AD) and Blue Mosque in Istanbul (1616 AD), which employed gigantic domes, semi-domes, buttresses and piers. Mosques commissioned by post-Middle Ages Muslim rulers rivalled the churches and palaces of the Western world in design, size and grandeur. The mosque became the nucleus of the Muslim societies. Apart from the primary function of prayer, mosques complexes included classrooms, kitchens that prepared food for the poor, libraries, congregation spaces and several other social functions.

The invention of Portland cement and the commercial usage of reinforced concrete in the late 19th century rendered obsolete the complex engineering knowledge of masonry load transfer and thrust calculations of buttresses, domes and piers, and paved the way for bold experimentations in form and scale. The 20th century saw the gradual transformation of the mosque typology and the 21st century ushered in an era of modern mosques with contemporary designs, with a clear departure from the traditional mosque form comprising arches and domes that had, in the popular mind, become associated with mosque architecture, and by extension, Islamic Architecture.

The world of Architecture has seen several international awards over the past few decades. In 2011, a Saudi philanthropist, Sheikh Abdullatif Al-Fozan initiated an award focused on the architectural, urban, and technical aspects of mosques all over the world: The Al-Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture (AFAMA). The Award is run by an executive committee headed by a secretary general. A well-known academician Dr Mashary Al Naim has been the secretary general since the formation of the award.

*“The main objective of AFAMA award is the development of contemporary design of mosques, throughout a specialized and classified database. Moreover, it encourages the architects to create new mosque’s designs, which represent mosques in the twenty first century.”* The Award has categorized mosques in three categories: The Central Mosque (Large or main city mosque), The Juma Mosque (intermediate size) and the neighbourhood Mosque (small size).

Since 2011, the triennial award has completed three cycles. The First Cycle was for mosques in Saudi Arabia only, the Second Cycle encompassed the mosques of the Gulf countries and the Third Cycle was open to entries from the entire Muslim World. The Fourth Cycle that has just started is now open to entries from all over the world. AFAMA has gone global in 2020.

AFAMA award selection process is very transparent and merit-based. Anyone can submit an entry of a mosque built in the 21st century. A jury of reputable professionals, selected from different countries from diverse fields are nominated by the AFAMA Executive Committee who then go through all submitted entries and shortlist those that fulfil the selection criteria. The Executive Committee then nominates Technical Reviewers to physically visit the shortlisted mosques and write a detailed report based on a set criteria. The technical reviewers then present their assessments and explain the projects to the Master jury which finally selects the winners.

The Third Cycle that was completed earlier this year got over 200 entries, of which 27 mosques were shortlisted from 16 countries. There were 5 mosques from Indonesia, 5 from Bangladesh, and mosques from Turkey, Malaysia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Chechnya, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Ghana, Mali and Sudan.

The Executive Committee nominated 10 Technical Reviewers from 9 different countries. I was honoured to be nominated from Pakistan. The Technical Reviewers visited the mosques assigned to them in the summer of 2019 and the final jury session for the 27 shortlisted mosques was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November 2019, followed by an international conference on mosque architecture. In this issue of ARCHITECTURE + INTERIORS (A+I) we are publishing all the short listed mosques. The Final Award ceremony was planned to be held in Saudi Arabia in March but was delayed because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

‘Living Mosque’ is the main theme of the Fourth Cycle. *“The intention of this cycle is retrieving the original function of mosques not only as a place for worship but also as an urban pivot, which is strongly connected to societies’ daily activities.”* – AFAMA website

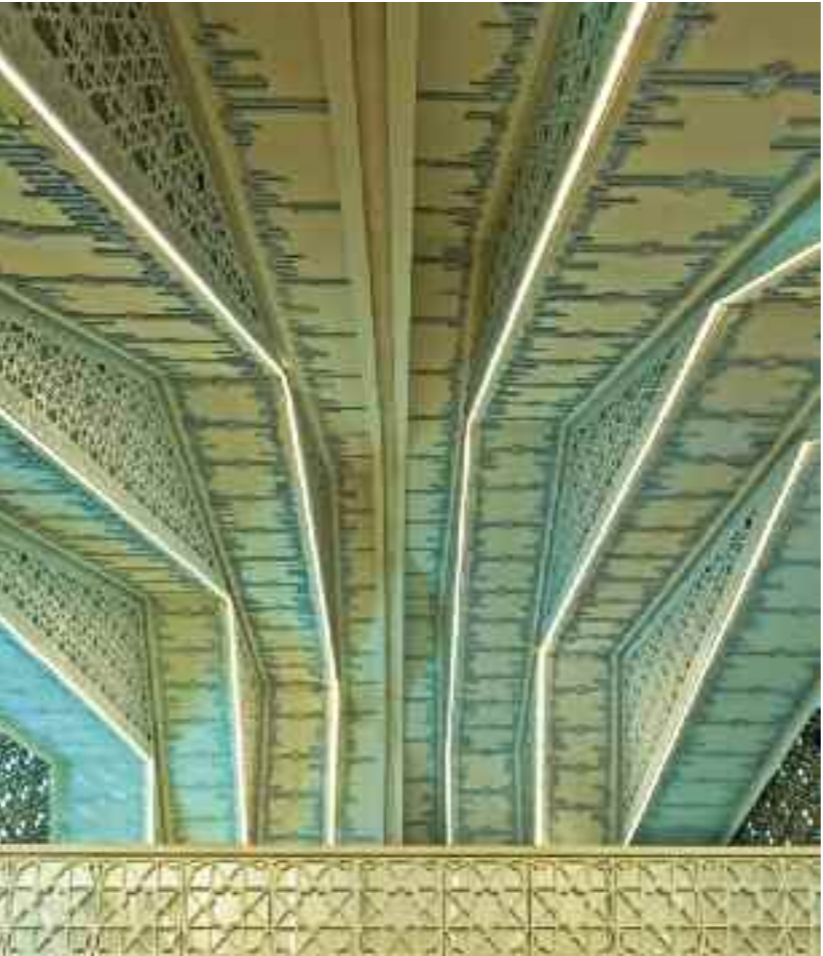
AFAMA is a wonderful initiative that has come during a time when the image of Islam as a religion and Muslims of the world are under criticism from the West since 9/11. Some argue that Samuel Huntington’s theory of ‘Clash of Civilizations’ is coming true. For the sake of peace and humanity, one hopes that the theory is unfounded. However, this Award will go a long way in getting across the peaceful and true image of Islam and in getting mosques the due recognition globally as an important building type for nearly two billion people.

# IMAM REZA COMPLEX MOSQUE

Architect  
Kalout Architect Studio

Location  
Imam Hossein Square – Tehran- Iran

Area  
6500.0 sqm



## Urban and Architectural

The main idea of correlation and interrelationship between different social groups and encouraging the presence of the new generation in the complex, is reflected in the final form of the Shabestan which was shaped by the idea of interlocking hands as a symbol of unity and social cohesion. Following this main form, the side wings of the building with the supplementary functions rise from and rest on the ground to create an innovative form visually.

## Description

The main form of the Shabestan, with the grandeur of a religious space, provides the opportunity of a unique experience to fulfill the immemorial ambition to connect with the Creator and feel the symbolic form of the dome. This immediate and elucidate connection is also formed by a sunken courtyard as one of the characteristics of Persian architecture, which allows the users to get away from the exterior crowd and perceive the building in a tranquil space.

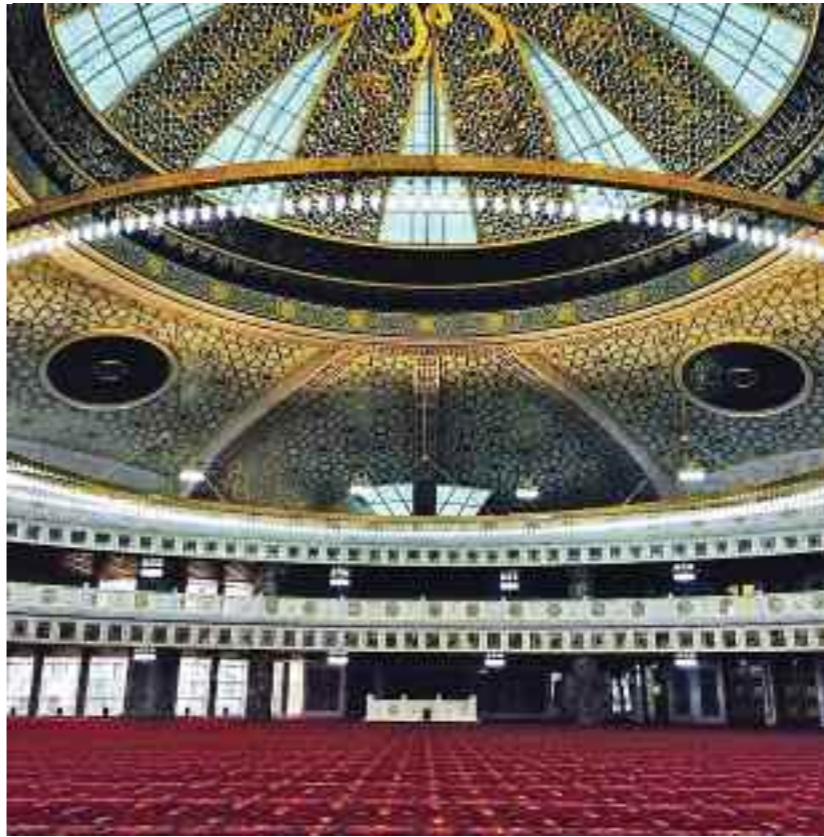
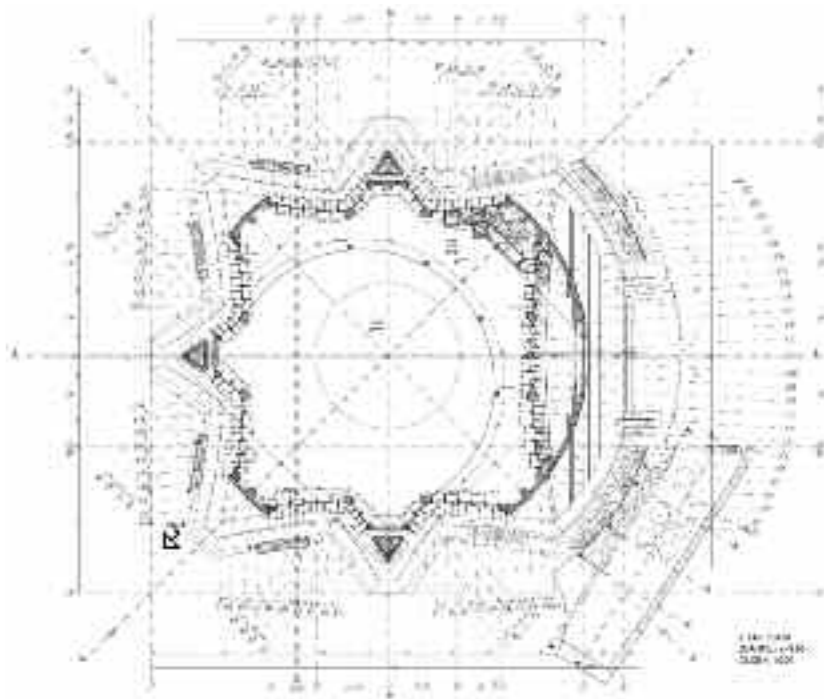
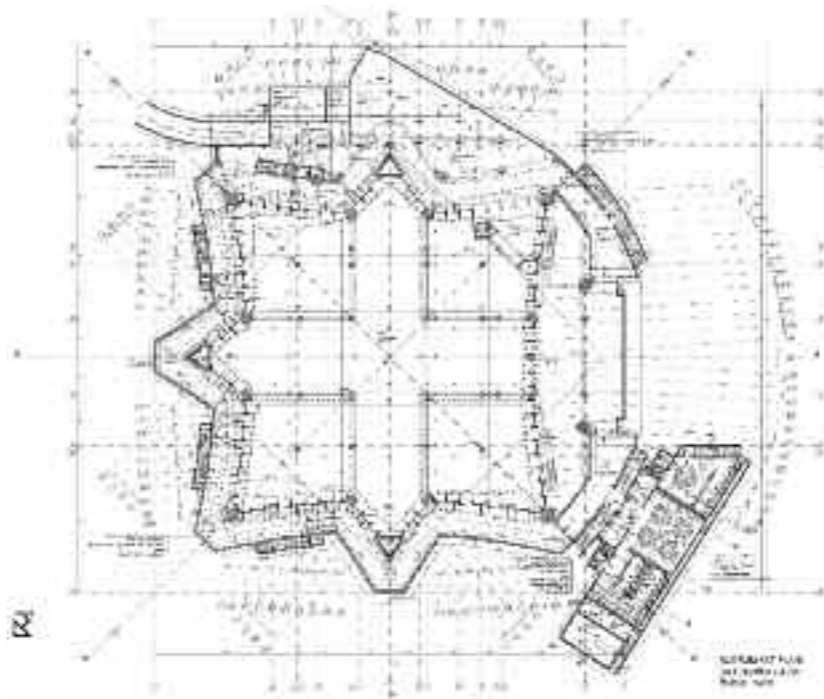
# ARGUN MOSQUE

Architect  
Baykan mimarlik

Location  
Arqun City – Chechnya Republic – Russia

Year  
2014

No. of Worshipers  
7000



**Description**  
Argun Mosque was built in Argun City, Caucasus Chechen Sovereign Republic is within the boundaries of Russian Federation. The mosque's roject studies and construction works were started in 2010 and then in 2014, the project was completed. Total capacity of the mosque for worshipping is 7000

- person. It was built with concrete shell and steel mix construction system. Argun Mosque's total s pan is about 80 meters. The design process of Argun Mosque, for creating contemporary Islamic architecture tipology and utilizing modern opportunities in traditional frames many constituents were evaluated eclectically.

# GREAT MOSQUE OF CENTRAL JAVA

Architect  
Ir. H. Ahmad Fanani

Location  
Semarang – Central Java – Indonesia

Area  
7.669 sqm



**Description**

The many newly-built mosques in this part of the world have evolved to become great monumental structures , which were initially basic, simple and rudimentary structures. Even so, some the newly-built mosques remain purely as a place of worship, without being utilised fully as it had been done by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH in the Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah .

With the Prophet ' s guiding principle in proposing the building of this mosque , the Central Java Province authority initiated a mosque design

competition aimed at re-living the glories in the same spirit as when the Prophet Muhammad PBUH first built his mosque in Madinah.

Completed in 2006 , the Great Mosque of Central Java in Semarang is the largest and most important mosque in the province, with a capacity to accommodate up to 16,000 worshippers. In addition to the main prayer hall , the mosque complex comprises ablution facilities , an auditorium, and museum, a building for the Islamic cultural office, shops, guest houses, a radio studio and library, as well as an open courtyard with minarets.



**THE INTERNATIONAL LOCAL MOSQUE**

The design submitted by Jakarta-based architectural firm PT Atelier Enam Mekar Bangun was selected by the competition committee. Located in the district of Gayamsari, construction of the mosque began in 2001 and was completed in 2006. The mosque's site is surrounded by picturesque settings of green paddy fields to the west and neighbouring housing areas to the east and south.

The design of the mosque mixes the Southeast Asian style with elements of Arabian-Middle East and Postmodern design. A mixture of the various styles is clearly seen in the huge pyramidal roof structure, surmounted by a bulbous round dome flanked immediately by a group of four minarets. The main building is preceded by two rectangular buildings with a courtyard at its centre.

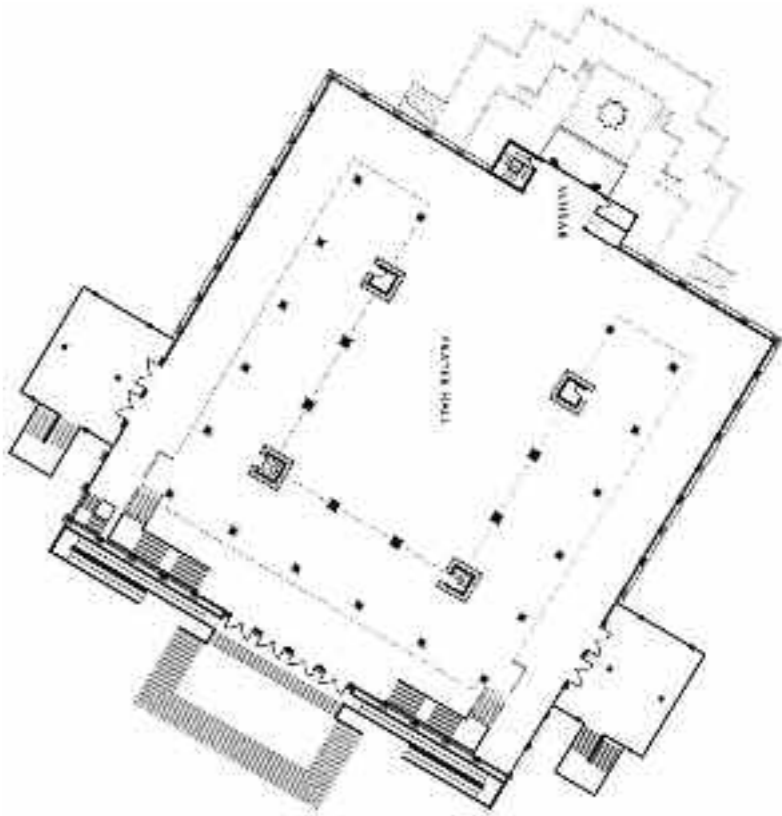
The courtyard is also used as an overspill area for praying and is uniquely equipped with retractable umbrella tent structures reminiscent of the umbrellas of Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah. The six large, hydraulically-operated umbrellas can be deployed automatically and used during important occasions or Friday prayers, to shade the courtyard from the hot mid-afternoon sun, thus making the space usable for the worshippers. At the near end of the courtyard, a U-shaped open structure with horseshoe-shaped arches with modified Greek style columns encircles the fountain pool.

Built as an integrated religious complex, the Great Mosque of Central Java has also been developed as an attraction for religious practices and tourism. The 99 metres [324 feet] Al-Husna Tower, which bears resemblance to the tower of the Menara Kudus Mosque, houses a radio studio, museum, revolving restaurant and an observation gallery.

**THE LARGE INTERIOR**

The wide square prayer hall was formed by four mammoth columns that support the upper-roof tier where the main dome and four minarets are located. The roof tier is furnished with clerestory windows which illuminate the interior space with natural light, supplementing the light cast by the grand, circular chandelier.

Besides its columns and wide-spanning arches , the space of the main prayer hall is largely dominated by the pyramidal roof trusses that run vertically on all sides. The space is rendered in green and is designed as a double volume space which allows for a raised female prayer gallery. The mihrab and mimbar were formed by a built-in portal at the centre of the qib/a wall, flanked by cut-out arches. The entablature of the portal is adorned with a band of calligraphic Quranic inscriptions, with a fine timber arch outlining the marble niche space. Several wall arches, framed in the wood facilitate natural lighting into the space below. On the right of the mihrab is a built-in mimbar with a round arched opening of the pulpit platform.



# MINOR MOSQUE

Location  
Tashkent City – Uzbekistan


Year  
2014

No. of Worshipers  
2400



**Description**  
Minor mosque is characterized by its Italian white marble finishing. It shines under the clear sky and its turquoise dome seems to be vanishing in the sky. It is divided to the open front part with terraces, and big round hall with gold plated mihrab (a semicircular niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the Qibla) adorned with writings from Koran. Minor Mosque has been

constructed on a shore of water tunnel and green areas, allowing visitors to view beautiful landscapes in the surrounding. It was built in the traditional eastern and Uzbek style, has two minarets and dome of sky-blue. Its interior is decorated in the style of "naqsh" and mihrab is decorated by sayings from the Koran, and hadiths "sayings of the Prophet Muhammad".




# KING HUSSEIN BIN TALAL MOSQUE

Architect  
Khaled Azzam

Location  
Amman City – Jordan

Area  
4000 sqm.

No. of Worshipers  
2500





Description

The four-minaret mosque, built in the Islamic architectural style prevalent in Bilad Sham, has a primary praying area characterised by vaulted ceilings and Umayyad-style ornamentation carved in Jordanian stone.

The Palace official said a local contractor implemented the project, while a team from Balqa Applied University's Islamic Arts Faculty created the mihrab, the focal point in a mosque that directs worshippers towards Mecca. The facade of the mihrab is made of rare kinds of wood, which were used for the first time in 300 years in the Islamic world, according to Malhas.

Meanwhile, a covered 2,000sq.m outdoor praying area with a similar 10-metre-high vaulted ceiling can accommodate 2,500 worshippers.

Directly above part of the outdoor and indoor halls is a two-wing 350sq.m area dedicated as praying hall for women, with a capacity for 350 worshippers. Offices, lecture halls, a library and other facilities are on the first floor of the mosque, which sits above King Hussein Park in the Dabouq neighbourhood.

Malhas said all the building material and furnishings are from Jordan, except for the carpets and chandeliers, which were brought from Turkey, "for technical reasons and time constraints." The mosque also hosts the Hashemite History Museum, which displays belongings related to the Prophet in the possession of Jordan such as a letter he sent Hercules, king of the Byzantines, in the early days of Islam.;

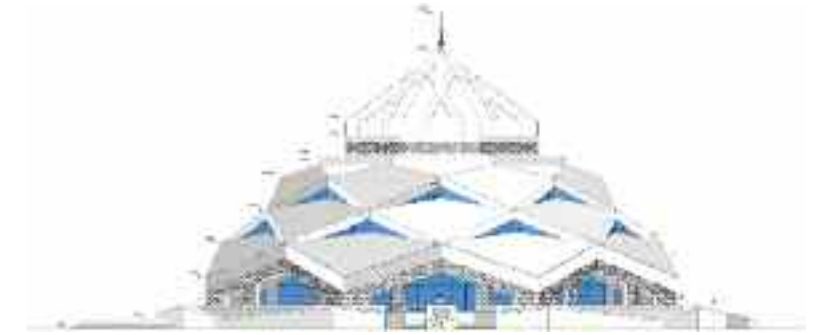
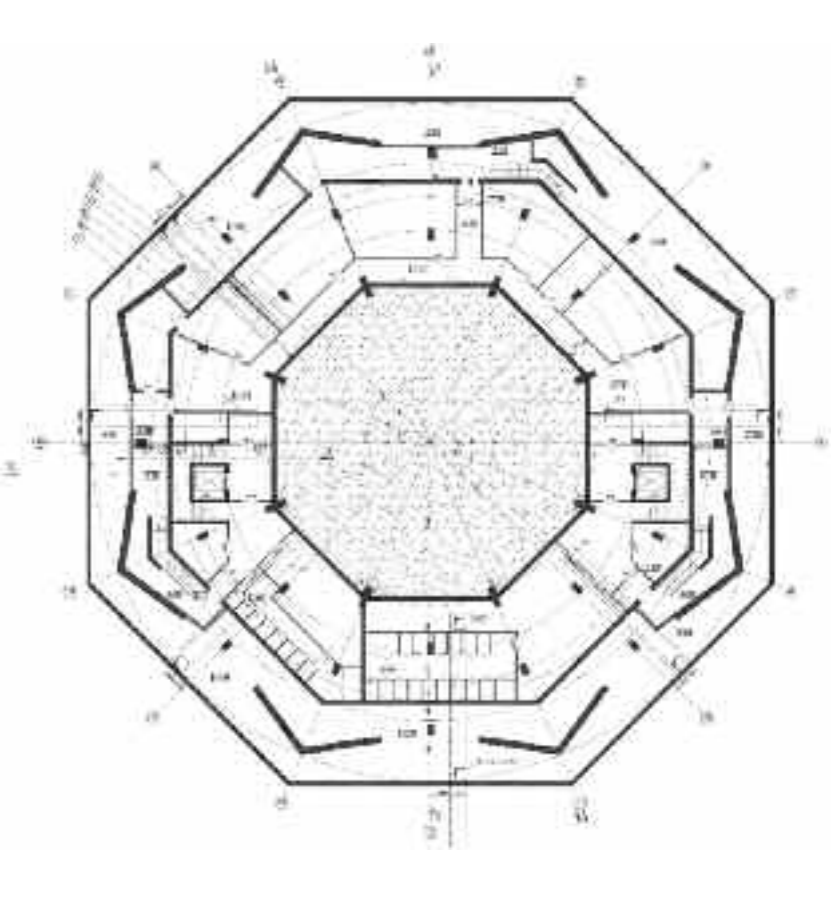
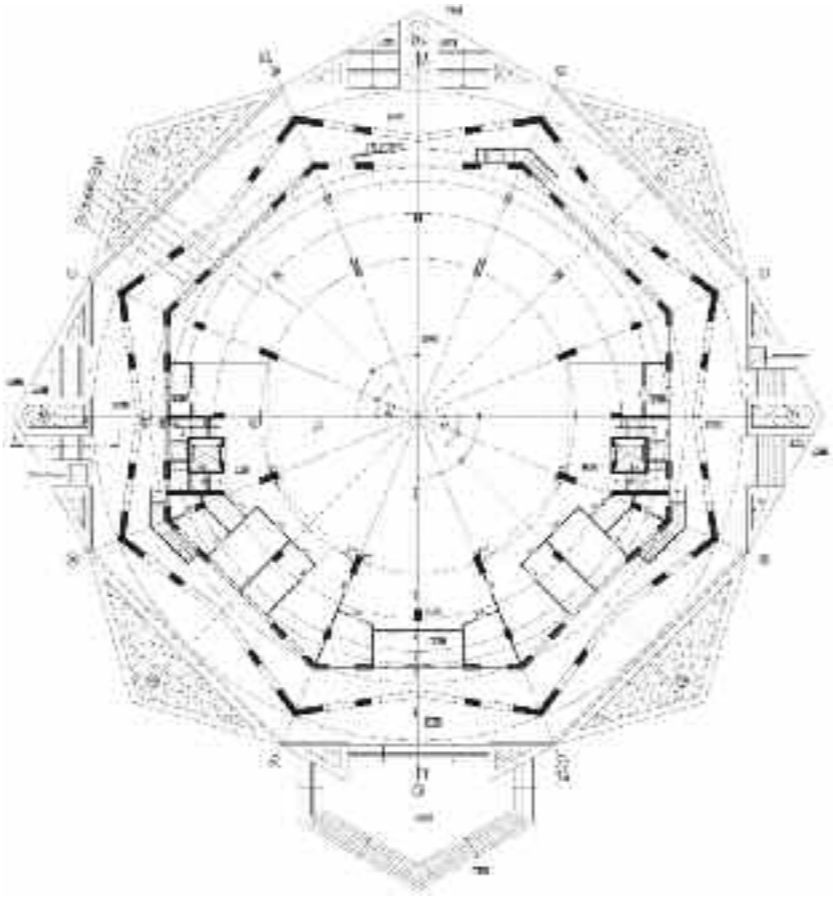
# THE FLOWER OF GOD MOSQUE

Architect  
Sagyndyk Dzhambulatov

Location  
Astana City – Kazakhstan

Area  
22480 sqm

Year  
2012



## Description

This is first mosque in the world with a positive electricity balance and an extremely low heat demand. Complex photovoltaic system and solar panels were used for the energy supply producing three times more electricity than required. When the structural part was ready, some changes were introduced by Austrian companies. This led to reducing the heat

consumption by 61%, reducing ventilation and cooling by 87% and 80%, taking 30% of the electricity from the city, but produce it themselves. The building of the mosque is designed in the postmodernism style. The main building has a hemispherical shape, consisting of triangular inclined planes, culminating in a dome. Externally, the design of the mosque resembles a flower and at the same time diamond face.

# GRAND MOSQUE OF WEST SUMATRA

Architect  
Urbane Indonesia's

Location  
Padang – Indonesia

Area  
4430 sqm

No. of Worshipers  
2000



## Description

West Sumatra Grand Mosque (Masjid Raya Sumatera Barat) was designed by Rizal Muslimin, an architect from Bandung. He won the 2007 National Architectural Design Competition for a new mosque in West Sumatra held by the Government of West Sumatra Province. The competition had 323 national and international participants. The winning design proceeded to technical planning and the construction finally began in early 2008.

The architect explained that the mosque roof depicts a stretch of cloth used to carry Hajar al-Aswad (the Black Stone). When the four tribes of Quraysh in Mecca disagreed over who was entitled to return the Hajar al-Aswad to its position after the renovation of the Ka'bah, the Prophet Muhammad decided to lay the Black Stone on a piece of cloth so that it can be carried together by a representative from each tribe holding each corner of the cloth. When viewed from above, the mosque roof is square with spired roof in all four corners. This towering tall angle also gives visualization of the gonjong (spired) roof of Rumah Gadang (Big House, Minangkabau traditional house). Visualization of the roof of this gadang house is evident when viewed from the four sides of the building. Minang colors are also seen in the unique carvings of Minangkabau Songket and calligraphy on all four sides of the façades. The interesting construction of the mosque is the roof. Vertical roof-load force is distributed to four tilted concrete columns of 47-meter high and two concrete slabs that bring together diagonal tilted concrete columns. The tilted column is driven into the ground to a depth of 21 m and supported by 24-point pile foundation with a diameter of 80 centimeters while the roof frame construction using steel pipes.

The mosque, located within a complex of 40,343 m2, was built with concrete and steel frame constructions. Consisting of 3 floors, this mosque can accommodate 20,000 worshippers, the ground floor can accommodate 15,000 worshippers and the second and third floors can accommodate 5,000 worshippers, respectively. The mosque is also designed as shelter and evacuation site situated on the second and third floor.

The main prayer hall, a spacious space serving as a place of worship, is on the second floor at a seven-meter elevation. The main hall, aside from being accessible from the inside through a staircase, is also accessible from the outside through a sloping ramp with an open terrace shape. With an area of 4,430 m2, the second floor can accommodate between 5,000-6,000 worshippers.

The main hall is supported by 631 piles, the pile cap has a diameter of 1.7-meter and a depth of 7.7-meter. While the third floor of the mosque is a U-shaped 1832-meters square mezzanine floor.

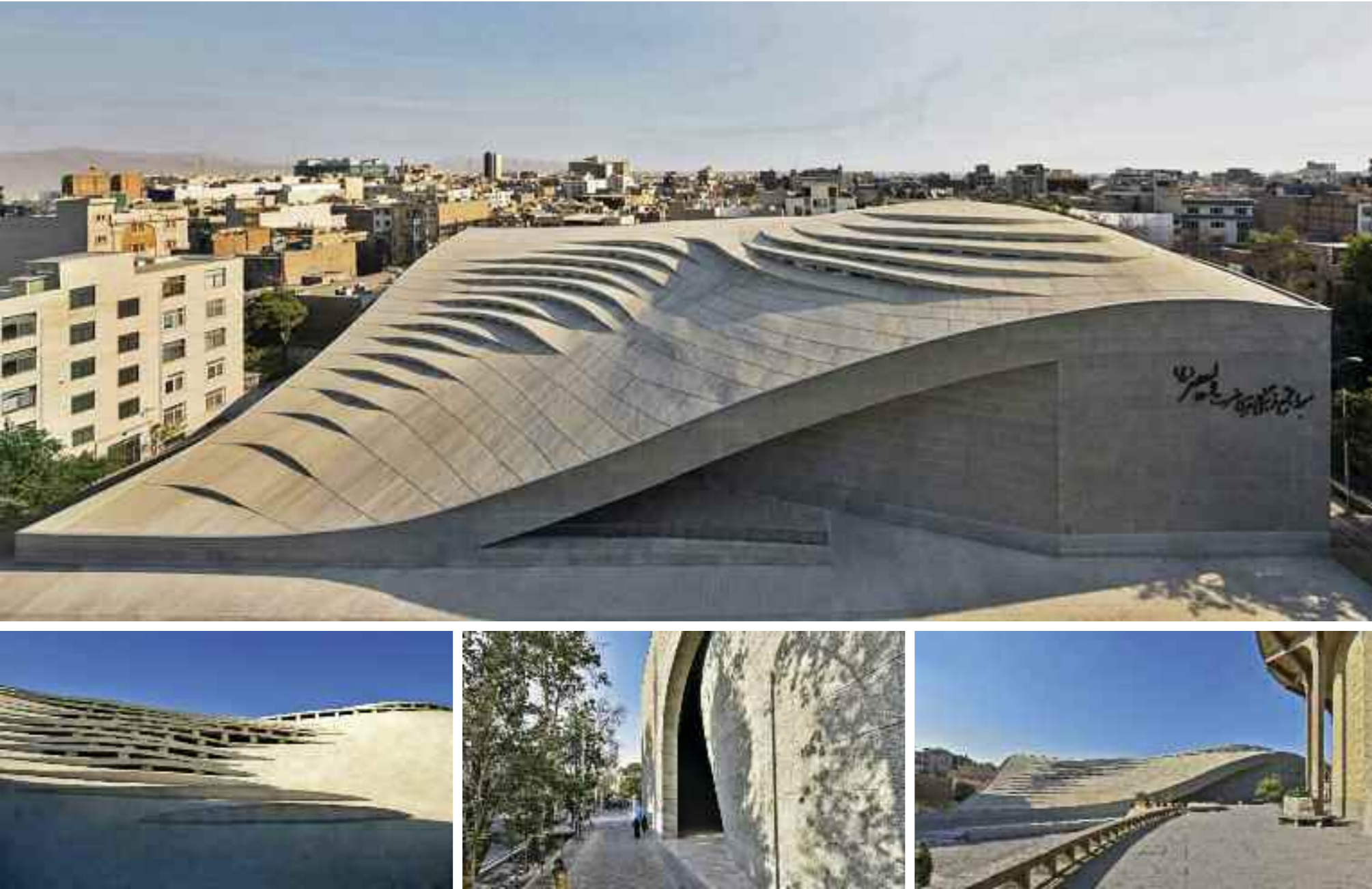
The structural system and the building construction have considered the geographical condition of West Sumatra which is located in the earthquake prone area. The mosque is built with strong structures and construction design, shock absorbers that help buildings resist earthquakes. Due to its close proximity to Padang Beach, in addition to its function as house of worship, it can also be tsunami evacuation shelter or site by utilizing the second and the third floors.



# VALI-E-ASR MOSQUE

Architect Fluid motion architects	Location Tehran – Iran	Year 2018	Area 22000 Sqm
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Description

Centrally located in the Iranian capital Tehran, the Vali-e-Asr Mosque’s most distinguishing aspect is the fact that it does not look like a mosque. Designed by Iranian architects Reza Daneshmir and Catherine Spiridonoff of Fluid Motion Architects, the building eschews the stereotypical typology of large domes and tall minarets in favour of a modest horizontality thereby making the mosque harmoniously co-exist with the surrounding buildings and adjacent park. Organically rising from the street level towards Mecca, in a tiered configuration of concave and convex strips that create a spectacular interior, the Mosque’s gentle slope allows the building not only to become part of the public space but to also make it more inviting while enhancing the sense of spirituality. The mosque’s tradition-defying design proved quite controversial in conservative Iran; in fact the history of its construction is as interesting as the finished building. The project was initially spearheaded by one of Tehran’s previous mayors who envisioned a grand dome of 55 metres in

height overshadowing the adjacent pre-revolutionary City Theatre as a religious statement in an area that also hosts the country’s most prestigious university and some of the city’s largest bookstores. Following popular opposition due to its oversized scale, the project was put on hold for two years until 2007 when Fluid Motion Architects were commissioned to produce a new design which nonetheless had to incorporate those parts of the old design that had already been built. The new design’s controversial modesty brought about legal challenges from prominent conservative circles that resulted in delays and budgetary constraints. It may have taken more than 10 years for the Vali-e-asr Mosque to be finished but Fluid Motion’s innovative design was well worth it.

Rising from the street level to the height of the neighbouring City Theatre, the mosque is organically interweaved into the public space, neither eclipsing nor being eclipsed by the surrounding cultural institutions. “We tried to create an interaction between the mosque, which has a cultural



essence, and the City theatre” the architects explain. “We wanted to make it a cultural project that would be in harmony with its surroundings.” To do so, they looked back in time, finding inspiration in the 7th century Quba Mosque in Medina, Saudi Arabia, which dates back to the lifetime of the prophet Muhammad and is considered to be the first mosque in Islam.

The design of the mosque’s sloping roof was based on a complex geometry of ribbed vaults and intersecting arches named Karbandi which was developed in Persia for the construction of domed spaces. Incorporated into the roof’s design, a series of splits provide sunlight, air flow and natural ventilation, and enhance the connection between the interior and exterior. From the outside they appear like fish gills while inside they create a spiral movement that starts from the entrance hall and soars to the prayer hall which occupies the tallest space in the building. With the total floor area of 25,000 square metres, the mosque also houses a series of communal spaces

such as a library, meeting hall and classrooms, as well as four underground levels of parking, connected via gently sloping ramps to make circulation easier for the elderly, the disabled and parents with strollers.

Faced with the aforementioned budgetary restraints, the architects applied a simple interior aesthetic based on inexpensive cream marble for the flooring and walls of the main spaces, and white coloured plaster for the ceilings and columns. The minimalist, all-white décor may be the result of cost cutting but it proved ideal as it allows the soaring architecture to take center stage and imbues the interiors with a soothing ambience. Meanwhile, washed concrete was used for the mosque’s roof and façade echoing the colour of the City Theatre next door, a gesture that further enhances the harmonious relationship between the two buildings as well as spurring a productive dialogue between religion and culture.

TOSYALI ORAN MOSQUE

Architect  
Bakırküre Architects

Location  
Oran City – Algeria

Area  
12000 sqm

Year  
2018



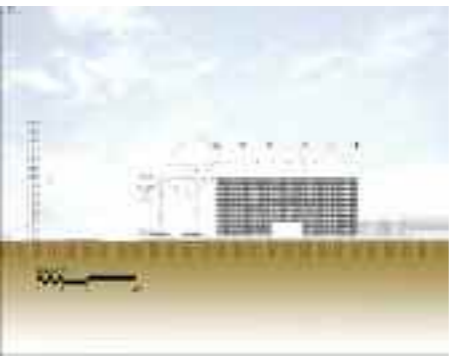
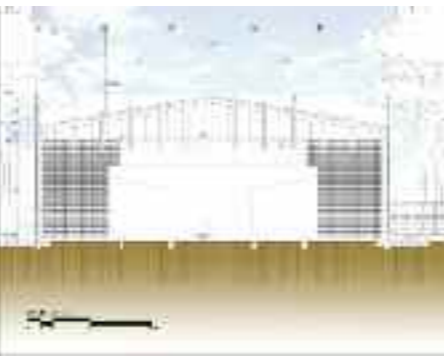
**Description**  
The foundation of Tosyali Mosque Oran, which was built by Tosyali Holding in the city of Oran in Algeria with Maghreb architecture, was laid with prayers. Tosyali Mosque Oran, which is built on a total area of 12,000 meters, a capacity of 1,050 people , height above ground is 30 metres , and the height of minaret is 50 metres long . The dome part of the Tosyali Mosque, which was designed with Maghreb architecture in order to reflect the characteristics of the lands it is located in, will be made of steel.



# AL-IRSYAD MOSQUE

Architect Urbane Indonesia's	Location Central Java- Indonesia	Area 8000 sqm	Year 2010
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**Urban and Architectural**  
The architecture of the KBP mosque is unique in that it uses stacked stones as the main façade to create tectonic effect, while embedding Islamic text/calligraphy on the façade as a graphic element and reminder prayer.

**Description**  
The primary shape of the mosque takes the form of a square, which seems the most efficient since Muslims pray in straight rows facing a specific direction or the Qiblah. The structural columns are arranged in such way that

the façade seems like it is not supported by any frame. This shape also alludes to Ka'bah, the most important structure in the Islamic world, to which all Muslims' prayers are directed.

The mosque is also designed to 'blend in' with nature. The stacked stones allow for natural ventilation without the need for air-conditioning. Surrounded by water, the ambient temperature around the mosque will be lower during the hot season. Once inside, the people are able to look out and appreciate the external.

# AL SAFAR MOSQUE

Architect Urbane Indonesia's	Location Padalarang – West Java – Indonesia	Area 1200 sqm	Year 2013
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**Description**  
In Al-Safar Mosque, the main mosque building consists of a main prayer hall, Multipurpose room, and entrance hall; an open female prayer hall is situated on the mezzanine floor. The mosque has a square layout; however, the corner siders have been tilted facing the qibla, creating a triangular space for the mihrab. The mihrab is formed by a triangular arch, ornamented with

a glass wall and embossed calligraphic plate. The glass wall replicated throughout the façade in the form of triangular glass opening creates the visual effect of green color background of its mihrab. Rather than replicating a traditional mimbar with separate pulpit platform; a rostrum is provided in the front of the mihrab space.

# CHANDGAON MOSQUE

Architect <b>Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury</b>	Location <b>Chittagong- Bangladesh</b>	Area <b>1048 sqm</b>	No. of Worshipers <b>230</b>
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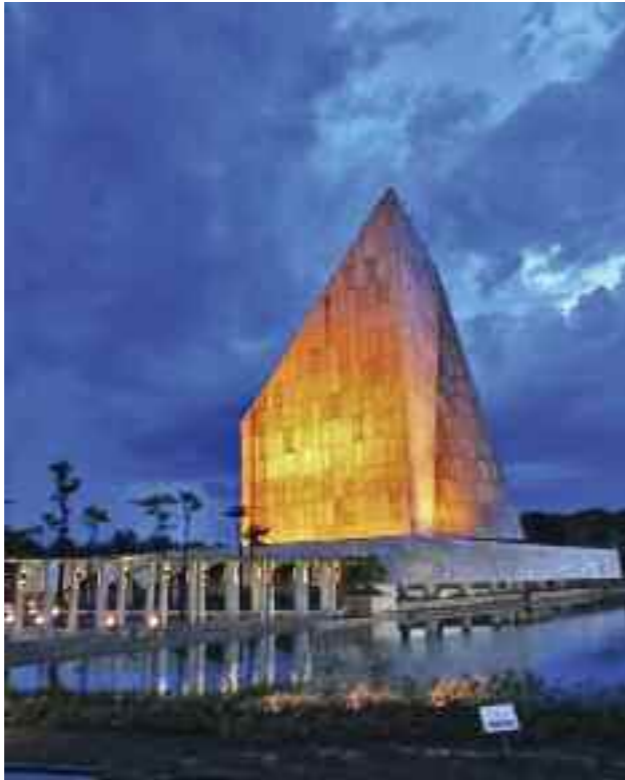
**Description**  
This mosque on the suburban periphery of the port of Chittagong in Bangladesh seeks to fulfil the traditional role of a mosque as both a place of spirituality and as a gathering place for the community. The architect began by identifying the essential elements of a mosque to create a new form and articulation for a typology that goes back for a millennium and a half. The result is this monolithic and spare mosque, pared down to two identical cuboid structures. The first is the front court, its heavy masonry walls punctuated with low, wide openings onto the surrounding landscape, with a

large eyelike opening above. In the second volume, the naturally lit mihrab wall is balanced by an iconic, cut dome. While the apertures give a sense of openness and draw in light and ventilation by day, by night they allow light to shine out of the mosque like a beacon. With its stark, geometric clarity, the Chandgaon mosque stands apart from many such structures that have reduced architectural features associated with the usual mosque type to the level of kitsch. It makes a definitive architectural statement in a different direction, pointing to the contemporary, to a desire to live in spaces that reflect the universal values of the present day.



BAITUS SHOBUR MOSQUE

Architect Andramatin	Location Lampung – Indonesia	Area 1165 sqm	No. of Worshipers 2500
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History

Lampung has a new landmark. Baitus Shobur Mosque and Sesat Agung Adat Hall, two modern buildings with a touch of Lampung, and one monument at the road junction, Tugu Rato. October 11, 2016 was the day of the inauguration of the Great Mosque and Heresy which was packaged in the "2016 Tubaba Cultural Rescue" event, a series of events from morning to night.

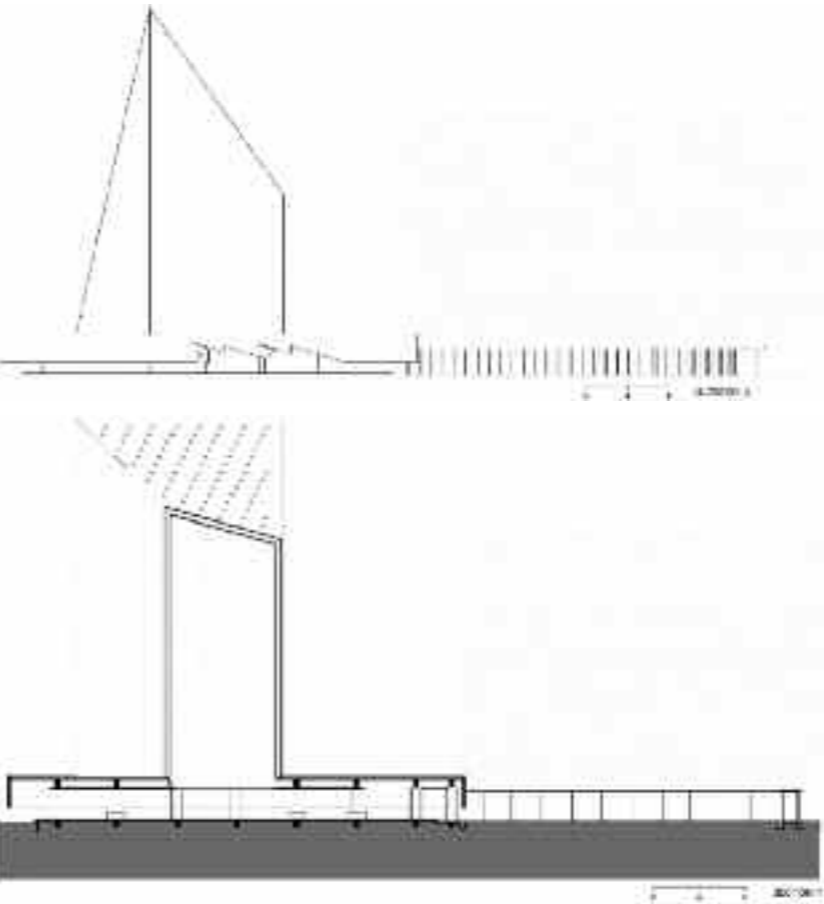
Description

The As Sobur Mosque stands in Tulang Bawang Barat's Islamic Center, in Lampung. The architecture of the mosque combines two elements that are usually found in mosque architecture, a dome and a minaret (tower), into one, by creating a large and tall tower as its main mass. The tower creates a very high void within the mosque. This tower rests on a low podium mass to highlight the tension of the interiors. The wide podium uses hanging walls around it to bring down temperature and protect it from rainfall, while still providing views to the landscape surrounding the mosque. Lampung's traditional scripts were carved into several sides of the walls to underline context and identity. The mosque implements Islamic numerology throughout its design. For example, the tower goes up to 30 meters, just as the number of 30 juz in the holy Qur'an, and there are 99 light openings at the top of the tower, taken out of the 99 names of Allah, the mosque's platform dimensions are 34 by 34 meters, taken from the number of sujud (prostrations) Muslims do each day in their prayers. The distance between columns are 5 meters, taken from the number of fardhu prayers in a day. There are also 114 number of columns in the building's corridor, taken from the number of surahs (chapters) in the Qur'an.

As a house of worship, the mosque expresses vertically in its massing, to mirror human's relationship with the higher power – as known as habluminallah. Concrete was used as the main material. Its homogeneity projects a sense of honesty and strength. There are no ornaments, only plain massive concrete without paint, from top to bottom. The mosque's ceiling is made of reflective metal sheets so that people can reflect upon themselves whenever they look up and pray. The name of Allah (Asma Ul Husna) was carved on the ceilings repetitively. At night, these perforations function as the mosque's main light source. Therefore, the full name of this mosque, as written on the inauguration inscription, is "the Grand Mosque of 99 Light Asmaul Husna Baitus Shobur". The ceiling in the deepest part is in the form of a high aisle, as high as the five-story building, which leads to 99 small holes in the top. Twice a year when the sun passes through the equator, in March and September, the light will enter the holes.

In the design, Andra inserted a lot of symbols in it. Colorless and ornamental exposed concrete symbolizes the absence, that the outside appearance is not as important as its contents, and worship is not to be exhibited. The mosque was intentionally made without an onion dome and without any ornaments on the outside such as mosques generally in Indonesia today (mosques in the archipelago before the exotic Republic of Indonesia were characterized by their respective regions and without domes).

"Now all mosques use domes, which does not mean we also have to use domes. Muslims do not like to imitate but must be at the forefront. Berislam must also be humble because Islam itself is already great," Andra explained after the inauguration of the Baitus Shobur mosque in Tubaba, October 11, 2016. It took a year to design and a year for its construction.



# MOHOR PARA MOSQUE

Architect  
A K M Tanvir Hassan Niru

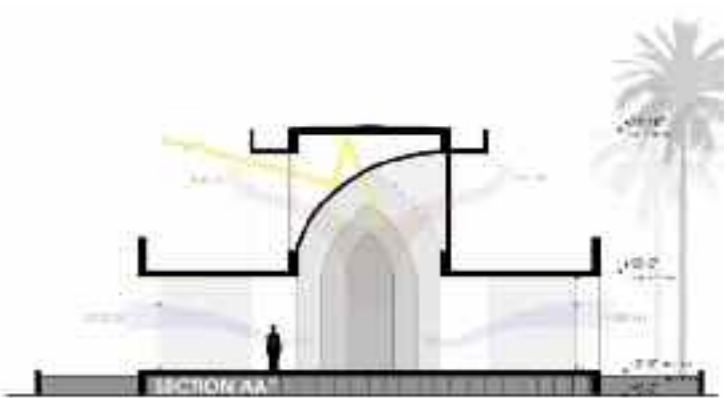
Location  
Mohorpara, Shibpur, Narshingdi – Bangladesh

Area  
477 sqm

Year  
2014



**History**  
Bangladesh is a deltaic plane dotted with many Mosques from various Architectural Style Period, mostly Pre-Mughal and Mughal. The Mohorpara Mosque is a contemporary endeavor to commemorate those traditional design in local context. The Mosque is conceived as a 'rural lantern' amidst the exuberant greenery illuminating Mohor Para and beyond with its spiritual guidance and omnipresence. The white radiant façade bold yet sublime adjures the worshippers and passersby throughout the day. During Night the transparency of the mosque acts as a lantern against darkness and calls for submission to the Almighty. The white mosque became innate part of landscape as well as the landform, whereas the traditional mosques floating amidst lush green with the glimpse of red bricks or lime plaster.

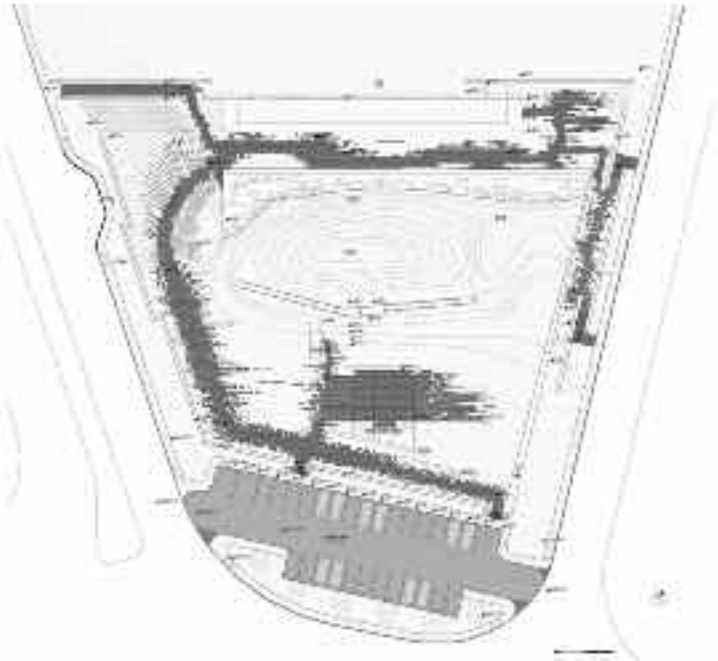
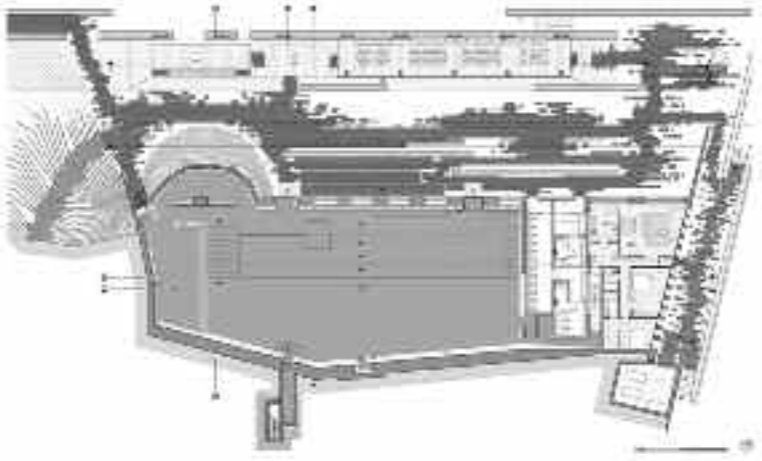


# SANCAKLAR MOSQUE

Architect  
EAA – Emre Arolat Architects

Location  
Istanbul-Turkey

Area  
700 sqm



## History

Sancaklar Mosque located in Buyukçekmece, a suburban neighborhood in the outskirts of Istanbul, aims to address the fundamental issues of designing a mosque by distancing itself from the current architectural discussions based on form and focusing solely on the essence of religious space. Turkish firm Emre Arolat Architects used a combination of light grey stone and reinforced concrete to construct the Sancaklar Mosque, which is set into a plaza made up of shallow terraced steps.

## Urban and Architectural

Turkish firm Emre Arolat Architects used a combination of light grey stone and reinforced concrete to construct the Sancaklar Mosque, which is set into a plaza made up of shallow terraced steps.

The 700-square-metre structure is situated in Buyukçekmece, a suburb on the outskirts of Istanbul and is separated from the surrounding gated communities by a busy highway and tall stone walls. The pared-back and

unornamented structure is set into a depression in the landscape, with only the stone roof and a tall minaret visible from certain points around the perimeter.

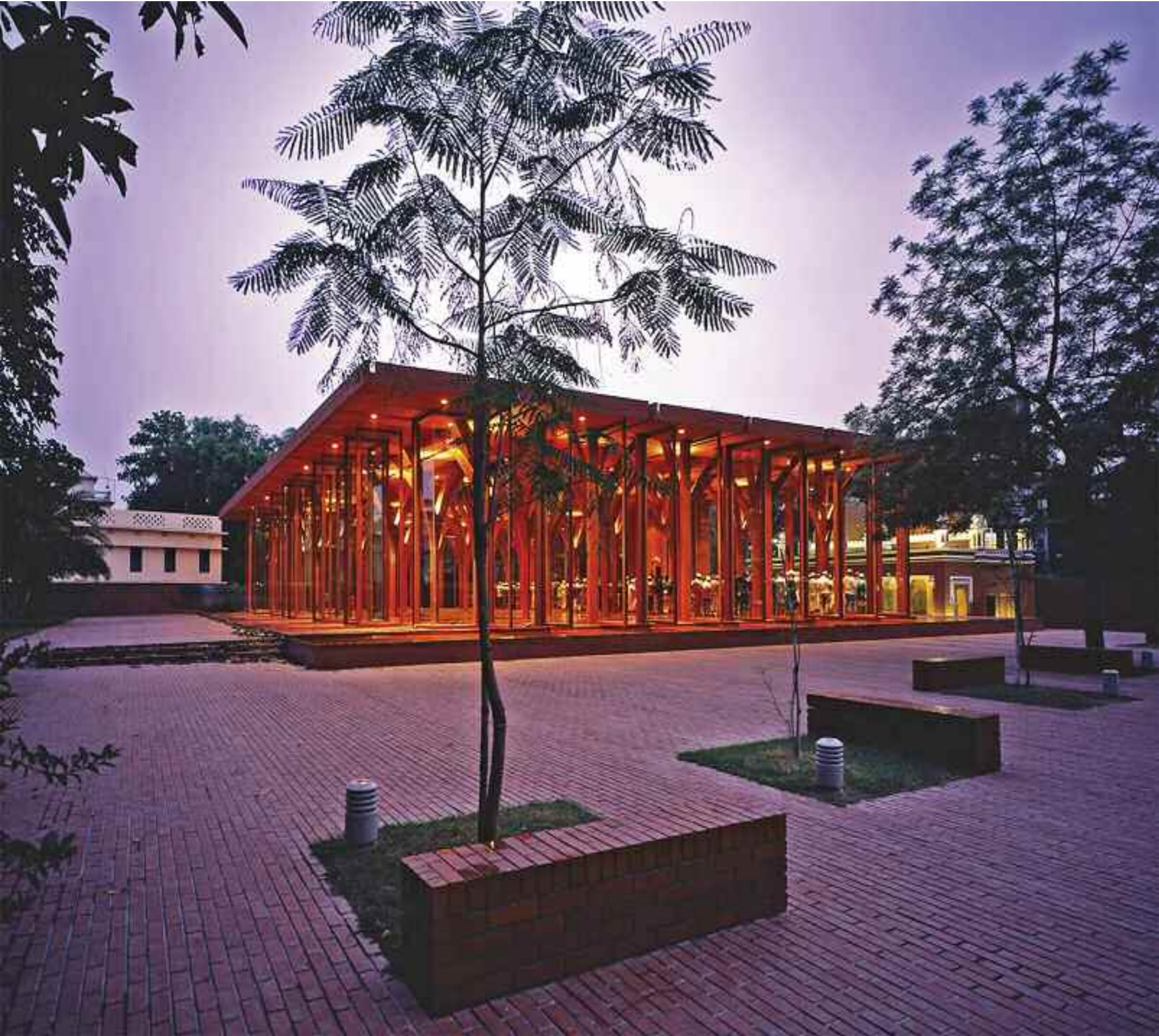
"Sancaklar Mosque aims to address the fundamental issues of designing a mosque by distancing itself from the current architectural discussions based on form and focusing solely on the essence of religious space," said the architects. Pieces of stone set into the sloping terrain create rows of long, earthen steps that lead down to the sunken building. Tufts of grass have sprouted around the stonework, helping to integrate the steps and roof into the landscape.

## Description

The interior of the mosque, a simple cave like space, becomes a dramatic and awe inspiring place to pray and be alone with God. The slits and fractures along the Qiblah wall enhances the directionality of the prayer space and allows daylight to filter into the prayer hall.

THE RED MOSQUE

Architect Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury	Location Keraniganj – Bangladesh	Area 3218 sqm	Year 2017	No. of Worshipers 1000
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**History**  
Dhaka, which is now four hundred years old, grew from the banks of the river Buriganga but perhaps inexplicably, grew only northwards and not substantially on its other bank to the south. It was much later that the area south of the river grew to be what is now part of Keraniganj, of very high densities and irregular unplanned growth. The Red Mosque is located in such a dense residential area serviced by narrow roads, with hardly any parks, playgrounds or opens spaces. The existence of a two-hundred year old mosque and the clients intention to preserve it, was the generator of the design. However, from the first instance, the architect felt this should be more than a place of worship for a people for whom religion is already central to their daily lives. Here was an opportunity to open up hitherto blocked or unused spaces and make it accessible to the community.

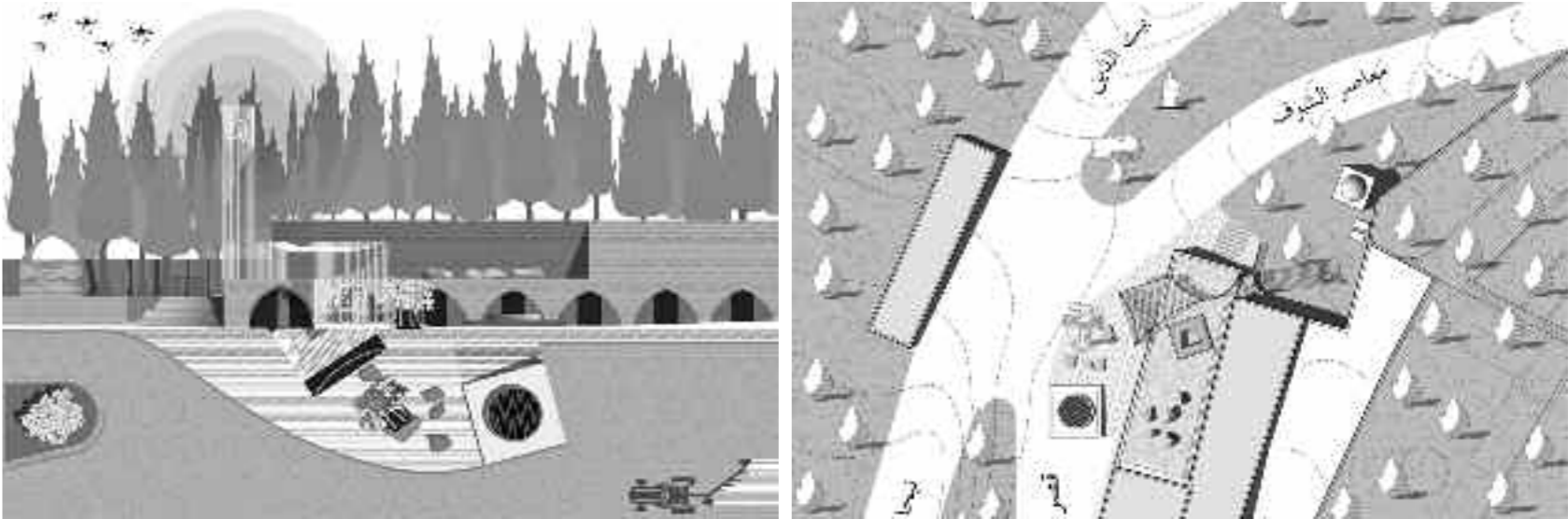
**Urban and Architectural**  
The Mosque Inspired by the simplicity of the first mosque in Islam, the prophet’s mosque, the Red Mosque takes on a true pavilion form, open visually on all sides and to the elements on three. Large eighteen-foot tall apertures let in welcome breeze, obviating the need for air-conditioning in

a climate where summers can get very hot. A shallow body of water encircles the main prayer space, separating it from the adjacent garden and plaza and offering micro-climatic cooling. This concept of freeness continues in the structure itself: The roof is a series of slabs separated by a light gap and held in place by columns branching out like trees to hold adjacent sections. In straight perspective, these appear to form arches, a subtle reference to traditional examples, not unlike the old mosque which it faces to its west. The slabs rise and bulge at the centre to form an ovoid form, giving a larger central space. Underneath the mihrab and mimbar are simply delineated, visible from long distances because of the wall-free design. Bathed in light, the tall scale of the interior do not overwhelm yet brings in the colors of adjacent greens as well the reddish brown of the older structure. In an area where there is so much pollution, noise and visual chaos, the mosque and its environs are conceived as a sanctuary of peace and simplicity. Palette of materials is limited: Exposed red concrete for structure and local red terrazzo for floors. So are architectural elements: columns, slabs and a tall glazing to protect from cold winters or dust when not in use. The open spaces are articulated unambiguously, leaving generous spaces for the gathering of friends or simply for the eye to travel or the mind to rest.



# AMIR SHAKIB ARSLAN MOSQUE

Architect L.E.FT Architects	Location Moukhtara- Lebanon	Area 100 sqm	No. of Worshipers 50
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**Urban and Architectural**  
"...the orientation of the axis of every mosque on Moslem soil toward the black stone of Kaaba is an awe-inspiring symbol of the unity of faith" Le Corbusier, 'Journey to the East', p.104. "The contention is that architects, more efficiently than intellectuals and scholars, can resist the devastating violence generated by the confrontation of religion, state and society (Din, Dunya, Dawla -the three major concepts developed in classical Arabic thought) at a greater scale than all societies and cultures in history have achieved thus far. This means that all important architectural achievements contribute either to strengthening the dominant ideology in any given historical tradition and political order, or to creating a breakthrough in the inherited, imposed system of values and beliefs."

**Description**  
This small mosque of 100m2 included a renovation of an existing masonry cross-vaulted space and the addition of a minaret, grafted onto the existing structure as a symbolic landmark, next to the 18th century old palace. A new civic plaza was created in what was before an adjoining parking space, turning the frontage of the mosque into a public square with seating, water fountain, ablution space and shading under a newly planted fig tree. Given the non-alignment of the existing structure with the required directionality to Makkah, the design approach was first set to correct the orientation through a series of physical transformations and additions. The directionality towards Makkah became the only tool/language

mobilized to shape the new mosque and its surrounding, at all scales, from the interior of the mosque to the outdoor plaza. On the architectural level, the mosque's new slender minaret is linked horizontally through a gently concave canopy to a curved wall at the plaza level, delineating a portico for the mosque below and creating a transitional space between the interior of the mosque and the street as well as adding privacy for the mosque from the outside. The envelope of the mosque is strictly formed of thinly sliced painted white steel plates, faithfully angled in a parallel direction to Makkah. When looked at obliquely from an angle, the steel plates stack to compose a complete and comprehensive volume of the mosque. Looked at frontally, the mosque's volume, through its thin planarity, disappears and blends with its visually rich historical backdrop, momentarily suspending belief in its actual presence.

Rather than the traditional inert Cube/Dome/Minaret volumetric expression of normative mosque architecture, the design offers a lighter reading of the typology, an ephemeral tectonic presence. The concave/convex planar surfaces of the new mosque brace the outside plaza and street in an extroverted geometry, and link it to the interior religious space which would have been usually hermetically enclosed. As we now know, these two spaces (the religious space within and the public space of the street without) were hybridized in the 'Arab Spring' uprisings where the public space of the city intersected the public space of the mosque.

# BAIT UR ROUF MOSQUE

Architect  
Marina Tabassum

Location  
Dhaka – Bangladesh

Area  
754 sqm

Year  
2010



**Description**

The mosque is a perfect square that sits on a high plinth, which prevents floodwater from entering the structure, allows people to sit and talk, and creates a separation between the sacred site and the busy street.

An adherence to the essential – both in the definition of the space and the means of construction – was crucial in formulating the design of Bait ur Rouf Mosque. With land donated by her grandmother and modest funds raised by the local community, the architect has created an elemental place for meditation and prayer. The irregularly shaped site is covered by a high plinth, which not only protects against flooding but provides a gathering place set apart from the crowded street below. On top of the plinth sits the mosque, a perfect square, 23m x 23m, and 7.6m high. Within this square is a cylinder, displaced to the northwest corner of the perimeter wall to create additional depth for the colonnade and the ablution area on the south- and east-facing sides respectively.

And within this cylinder is in turn a smaller square, 16.75m x 16.75m and 10.6m high that is, 3m taller than the perimeter wall. Rotated within the cylinder to orientate itself with the qibla, this pavilion contains the prayer hall, which is separated from the rest of the building by open-to-sky light wells.

There are two structural systems in place – the load-bearing brick walls that define the outer perimeter and the smaller spaces, and the reinforced-concrete frame that spans the column-free prayer hall. The brick walls exploit the depth between the outer square and the inner cylinder, allowing for buttressing in the interstitial space. This in turn makes it possible for panels between the load-bearing structure to have a jali of brick, leaving out alternate bricks and rotating them. In the prayer hall itself, a simple vertical gap in the brick denotes the direction of the qibla, but the recess is splayed so that worshippers are not distracted by sight lines onto the busy street. What they see instead is sunlight bouncing off the wall behind. Awash with light, open to the elements, the

mosque ‘breathes’. -The quality of space and architecture in this project proves that with the use of local materials and dedicated craftsmen, and an attempt towards spirituality through light can span the distance between here and infinity, between today and eternity. -The monsoon rain may pose a problem as the openings for the hot air to escape also allow in rain. However, it is important to keep cross-ventilation even when it is raining, and the rain seems to have good drainage in the spaces where it enters. Also,

-Column-free prayer hall is raised on eight peripheral columns, in addition to four light courts, random circular roof openings allow daylight into the prayer hall creating an ornate pattern on the floor enhancing spirituality through light.

-Qibla direction is marked by a slit of light penetrating the cylendrical brick wall which forms a light court with the facing flat wall.

Corner Light court and the vertival linear gap that indicates the qibla direction.

-Interior view showing the minimum materials used, exposed concrete and bricks, where light and ventilation are naturally provided by the simple vocabulary of Jali bricks architecture.

-The prayer hall is a carefully scaled and proportioned volume that is contemplative in nature, is evenly lit to enhance the feeling of all as equal.

The riwaq, or colonnade use the additional depth allocated by the cylinder off-centred on the south facing side.

-Terracotta bricks used for the structure are left exposed internally and externally. They lend the building a character that references the architecture of nearby buildings, as well as religious architecture of the past.



# CONCRETE MOSQUE

Architect  
Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury

Location  
Halishahar-Bangladesh

Area  
438 sqm

Year  
2016



## Urban and Architectural

Existence of a 220-year old mosque at site, conserved from its dilapidated conditions, was a generator of the new scheme. The new structure is designed in such a way that it forms a backdrop to the old mosque – an act of reversal in which the past is brought to the fore and the new comes after the old. Echoing the volumetric rise of the traditional dome in a mosque, the central cuboid volume of the mosque emerges like a modern monolith, embellished on the outside with only the heavy textures of white concrete cast in wood. The lower volume is clothed in a cast-iron grille – which, generated from a traditional motif of the old mosque, provides security and shade but also lets in filtered light and breeze.

The grille protects an ambulatory space which itself gives protection to the main prayer hall, whose doors can be left open for ventilation during heavy rain. An experiential climax occurs when one enters the main hall with its soaring volume animated by light entering through slender apertures in corners and the ceiling. The new building uses entirely natural means to accommodate the tropical climate of its site. The generous central volume with its high windows uses the stack effect to ventilate the space naturally.

To further facilitate micro-climatic cooling, a pond on the south - the predominant direction of airflow - is augmented by shallow pools on three sides of the mosque. Scented flower bearing trees have been planted in specific positions to grant an olfactory experience to visitors. The architecture was inspired by the age-old heritage of crafted ornament in the various traditions of mosque building. From the outside, however, the treatment is spare: Only the texture of the concrete is caught by sunlight. Inside, the ceiling structure and finishes, inspired by Moghul and Nasrid

examples, serve as a counterpoise to the otherwise bare, simple treatment everywhere. A departure for the architect in using such treatments, it is an ode to the craftsmanship and mastery of techniques which have adorned great mosques since centuries past.

## Description

Concrete Moshjid is an example of contemporary mosque. It is constructed at 2015. It is located at the back of old Asgar Ali Chowdhury Jame Moshjid which was built over 200 years ago. The old mosque is now conserved as a heritage building. The newly build mosque is surrounded by agricultural land and beautiful nature. There is a 'Shaan' space in front of it along with a small water body to the South.

The old mosque is adjacent to the 'Shaan' space. In front of the old mosque there is a 12 feet wide road and a big pond beside the road. A primary school is located at the North-West corner of the mosque. There is no mentionable noise source in this area rather it's a quiet and calm place blended with nature. The composition of materials in this mosque is some reflective and absorbing materials which are rough concrete wall, huge wooden doors, some glass works at the top corners. Ceiling is composed with rough concrete and glass. All areaof the floor is covered by mosaic floor finishing. A square plan mosque with a cubic form is very significant.

The semi outdoor space is surrounded by massive steel Jali (net). The main prayer hall is consists of a square plan of 38'-0" X 38'- 0" and height of 38'- 0". The main prayer hall of this mosque has an estimated volume of 54,872 cubic feet and a floor area of 1444 square feet. No extra acoustical design is noticeable in this mosque.

# KING ABDULLAH FINANCIAL DISTRICT MOSQUE

Architect  
Omrania Office

Location  
Riyadh – Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia

Area  
1466 sqm

Year  
2018



## Urban and Architectural

The inspiration and basis for the unique geometry of the mosque is the crystalline intersecting plates of a desert rose. The building is further landmarked by two sculpted 60m minarets. The development of the design involved a series of complex parametric arrays to ultimately create a simplified and dynamic massing which represents an abstraction of the desert rose. This form and movement in stone extends to the 5th elevation completing an exciting profile, viewed from all angles. The skin of the building appears to rise up from the earth as an emerging crystal mass, bursting from the earth. In the same way the minarets appear to rise up, piercing the landscape.

## Description

The building emerges at the convergence of three of KAFD's 'wadis'. In KAFD, the wadi is represented by a submerged public realm which is the shaded and pleasantly landscaped pedestrian linking element to the overall masterplan. As such, the building is a hidden gem as viewed from the wadis. The building is also viewed predominantly from above (from the neighboring buildings) and thus the roof represents the 5th and very significant elevation.. The building has been meticulously placed over an urban plaza. The plaza provides a temporal public realm and amenity to the district and serves as an outdoor prayer extension to the mosque during religious celebrations.



# MOGAN LAKE MOSQUE

Architect  
**Hilmi Güner, Hüseyin Bütüner**

Location  
**Yenimahalle – Ankara – Turkey**

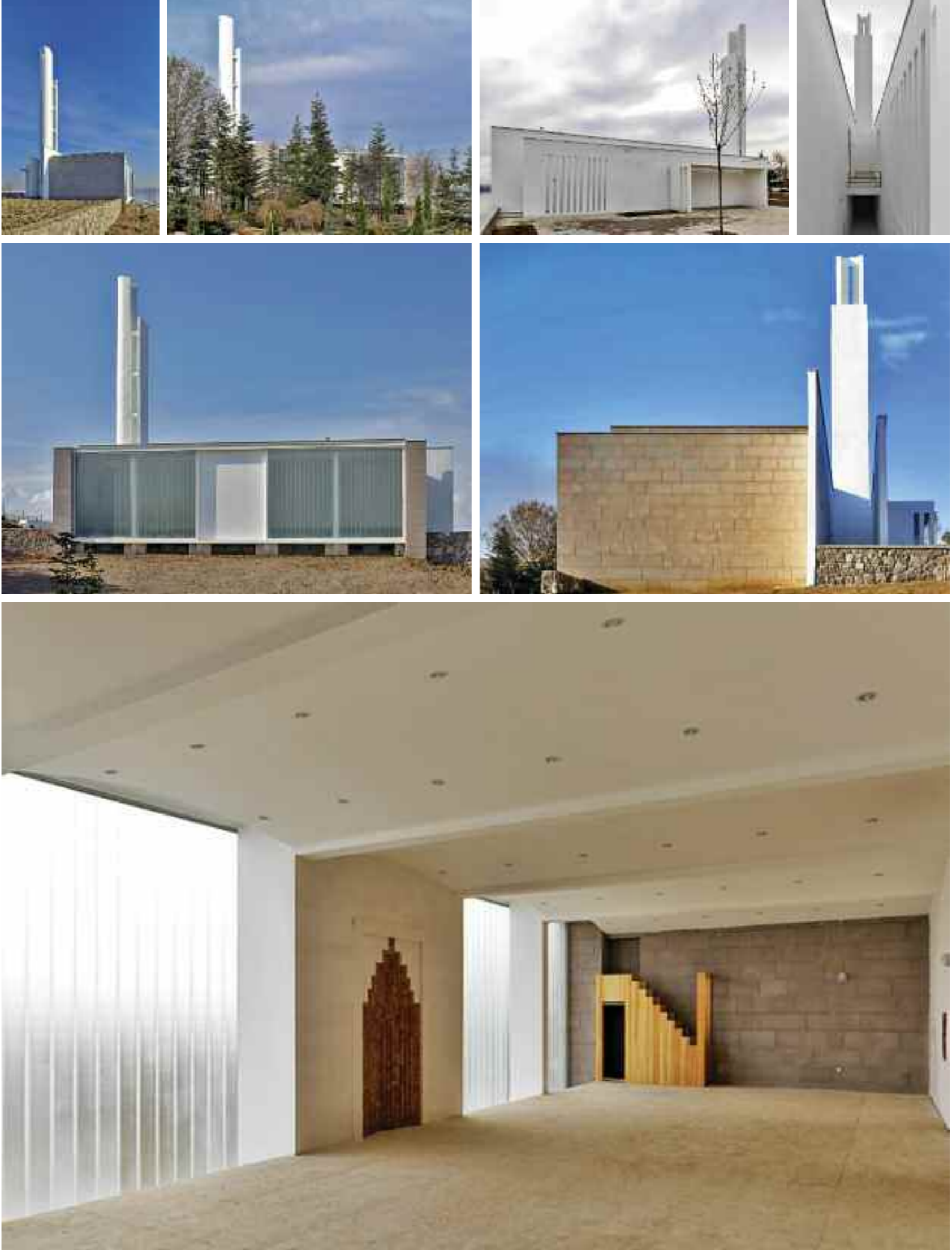
Area  
**2772 sqm**

No. of Worshipers  
**160**



**Urban and Architectural**  
Mogan Lake Mosque is located adjacent to Mogan Nature Park. • The mosque is developed as a genuine interpretation of the typological context within local set of conditions. In this regard, three significant references were applied from mosque buildings and their evolution under certain plan and mass typologies. 1. Similar to the earliest Islamic temple understanding, the

tradition of praying in close proximity to mihrab wall is applied as longitudinal rectangular plan disposition. 2. Influenced by the Ottoman architectural tradition of using stained glass on mihrab walls, the Qibla direction is abstracted into a light wall. 3. The idea of Namazgâh in extra urban settings is expressed in the structure as a set of mihrab walls above an artificial terrace.





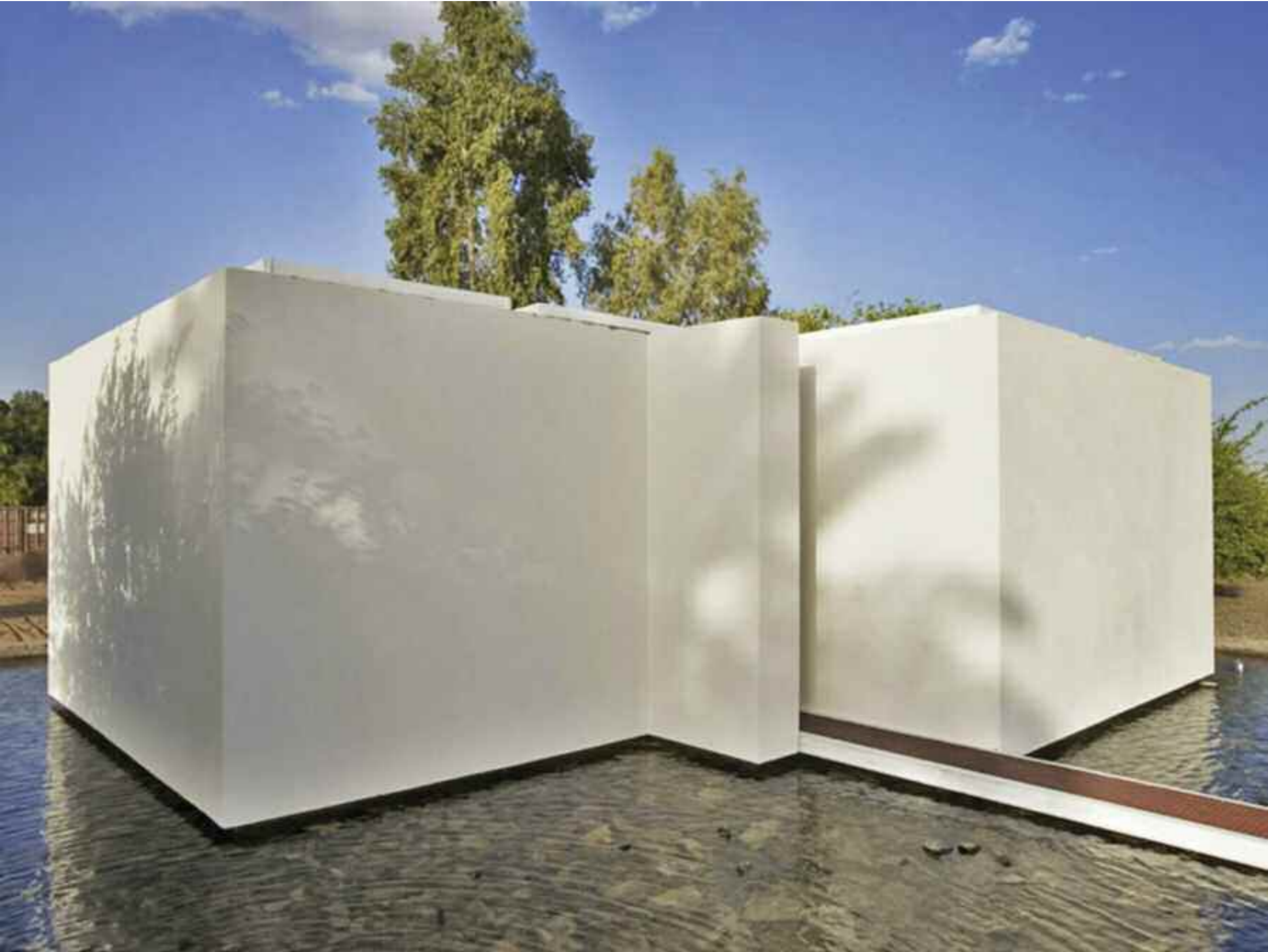
# PRAYER AND MEDITATION PAVILION

Architect  
Studio Tam associati

Location  
Khartoum- Sudan

Area  
2007





**Urban and Architectural**  
The strong symbolic value of the combination of architecture and ethics lent great significance to the construction of the Pavilion of Meditation and Prayer. Set in the hospital garden it is an integral part of the Salam Center for Cardiac Surgery in Khartoum, run by the Italian NGO called EMERGENCY, a centre that offers free high quality assistance to patients with congenital and acquired surgical diseases. It was no easy task to design a space for prayer, customary in any health care facility, in a state that over the last twenty years had been ravaged by endless inter-ethnic wars, but above all inter- religious ones.

It meant devising a building that could house the spiritual complexity of a country such as Sudan (inhabited by Muslims, Christians, Copts and animists), without giving priority to any form of worship, simply creating a space for the profession of all faiths. Or perhaps, more simply, a meditation space.

**Description**  
A Microcosm for All Religions.  
The pavilion is a pure volume consisting of two staggered and communicating white cubes, protected by a translucent roof made of palm leaf pith. The interiors, characterized by neutral surfaces painted white, contained two ornamental trees that made these places at the same time sacred and profane, by the presence of a natural element in an artificial space. The few vertical openings

along the outer walls allow light to enter, creating delicate patterns of shadow. A large pool surrounds the pavilion, creating a spiritual gap between the hospital's outer macrocosm (and the rest of the world) and the ventral microcosm intended for prayer. Two walkways traverse the pool on opposite sides, giving access to the two nuclei of the small building. Water drawn from the Nile and then reused for irrigation is an element charged with symbolic values in the sub-Saharan region. Representing purification in religious terms, it is also the source of life, a vision of salvation in the arid desert, evoking the Garden of Eden.

Though we did not mean to favor any religion, functionally we had to deal with the Muslim religion, dominant among the Sudanese, and the rules it imposes, such as ablu-tion or the separation of men and women. But we set these rituals in an estranging setting which made them non-dominant, concealing all symbols and elements that could be traced to a single faith.

The space for ablutions, for example, is simply a water spray that rises higher inside the pool, an integrating element without any religious connotation, which enables the faithful to perform their ritual ablutions before entering the place of worship. The asymmetric union of the two volumes in turn allows for the separation of the sexes, giving this functional constraint an added value within the balance of a composition that seeks to embody the idea of tolerance in architecture.

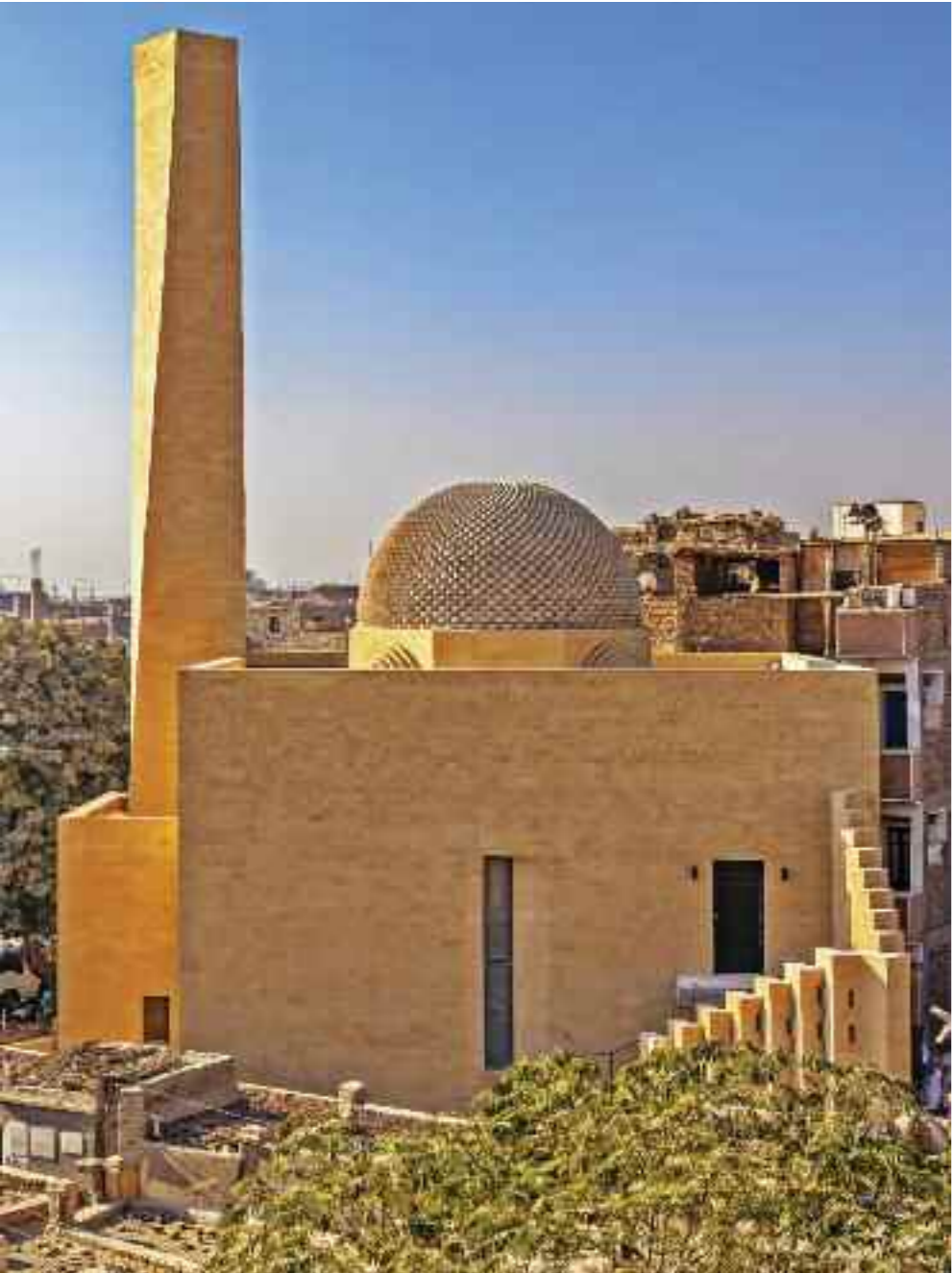
# BASUNA MOSQUE

Architect  
Dar Arafa Architecture

Location  
Basuna – Suhaj- Egypt

Year  
2019

Area  
497 sqm



## History

For 300 years the Abu Stait Mosque has been Basuna’s main mosque. It was built and rebuilt a couple of times. The latest building was completed 70 years ago, on the very same plot in the center of the village, adjacent to the village’s graveyard serving as the main Friday Mosque and the only funerary mosque in the entire village. A flash-flood and a soil subsidence caused by the construction of a neighboring building, inflicted considerable structural damage rendering the mosque unsafe, and so it had to be demolished.

## Urban and Architectural

Project Concept The main concept is the mosque as the “House of God”. A physical space, a House for the One who is beyond space and time, which are nothing but His own creatures. “No human vision can encompass Him, whereas He encompasses all human vision: for He alone is unfathomable, all-aware.” [Qur’an 6:103] “[...] there is nothing like unto Him, and He alone is all-hearing, all-seeing” [Qur’an 42:11] This design is intended to look into the architectural

expression of the connection between the physical and the metaphysical, the created and the Creator. The House of God houses His will, which is known to us through His books. The Revealed ‘Written’ Book Kitab Allah al-Mashtur (Qur’an and Hadith) and the Created ‘Sensed’ Book, Kitab Allah alMandhur, the Cosmos. The Revealed book shows us His will through a prescribed world view and prescribed worship, while the Cosmos shows us His will through natural order and scientific laws which govern physical existence. His will is that we journey back to Him. The journey must have an Orientation. A Qibla, the point of origin and return, the archetypical House of God, which could be understood by creatures only through the Attributes of Divine Perfection, more famously known as the 99 names of God; The House of houses, represented in this project as the “Cube of Cubes”\* which is the prayer niche or Mihrab. Contemplating, understanding and devoting ourselves to the ethical implications and spiritual values of the Attributes -within human capacity- is our earthly journey or Israa, which leads us to our Ascension or Miraaj in endless cycles until our earthly life is over and we carry on in another eternal form of



life. These cycles of combined horizontal/earthly/physical/bodily interaction with the Vertical/ Heavenly/ metaphysical/ spiritual creates an upward spiralling force, represented in the apparent Hajj-like counter-clock circumambulation of all four columns bearing the main dome, which is formed by 64 circumambulating blocks in each of the 35 vertical courses. The blocks represent worshippers in their attempt to escape their earthly material being, which shrinks in dimension as they leap up from one orbit to the higher orbit, until the last course of blocks vanishes and becomes one with the heavenly dome. The same force gives the minaret its form, which is also topped by the Cube of Cubes confirming the motivation and orientation. The pendentive-domes take their form and orientation from abiding by God’s will in His Cosmos; respecting the wind behaviour and the principles of solar movement to allow for the God-given breeze and light to shower the interior of the mosque while keeping away glare and heat. A prayer of nature. The first thing the worshippers encounter as they turn from the main entrance into the main prayer hall is a single vertical window overlooking the cemetery, which reminds them of the end of their journey before they turn right to the Qibla to begin their prayers; “Stand upright and pray as if it is your final prayer”.



# SURAU NUSA IDAMAN MOSQUE

Architect  
**Razin Architecture**

Location  
**IskandarPuteri- Johor-Malaysia**

Area  
**485 sqm**

No. of Worshipers  
**200**



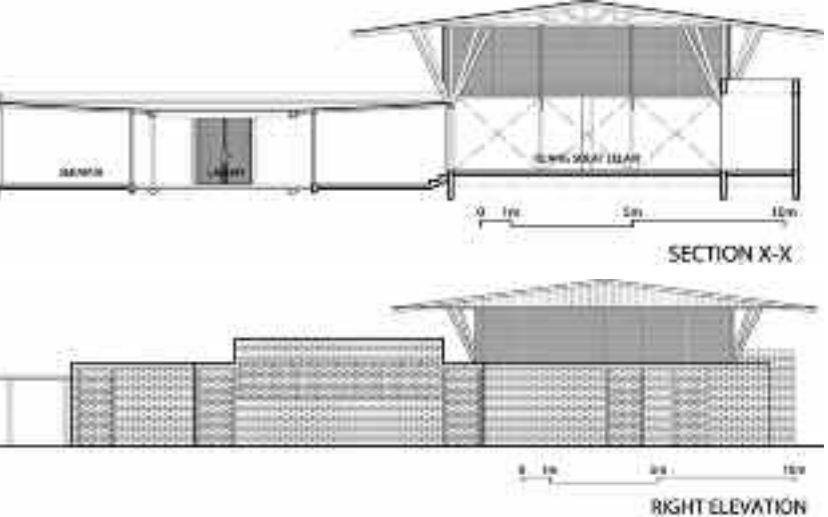
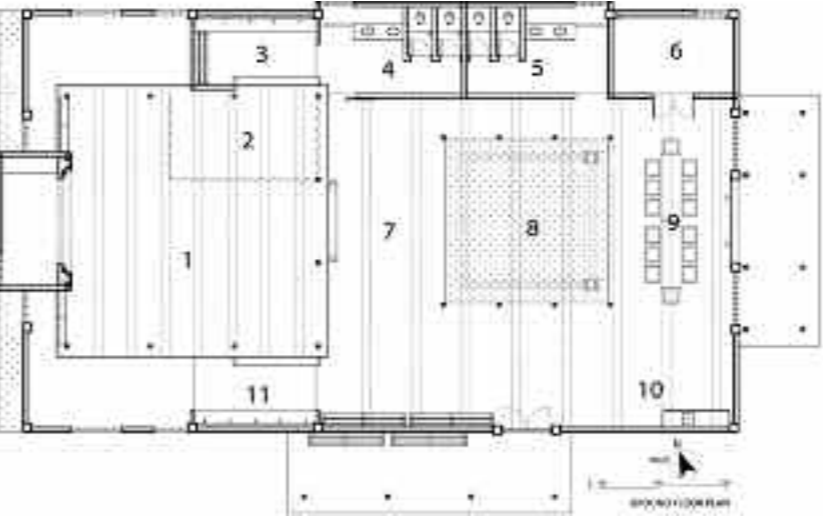
## Urban and Architectural

Despite many constraints and downturns faced throughout its construction, the Nusa Idaman has successfully turned into a remarkable edifice that has become a simple rudimentary structure, designed to express a modest, yet tastefully constructed modern mosque for the local community.

## Description

Open- Space design of the mosque represents the seamless, Close relation-

ship between light, wind, water and other natural element. This can be translated as a reminder to the faithful of the essential element that make up the universe, and which are to be celebrated and blessed throughout our lives,. It will also endeavour to bring man closer to the environment and eventually to his creator. The green elements have been imparted into the design, with the prior consensus of the resident. It is also a way to educate and inform the public on sustainable architecture.



# MALI COMMUNITY MOSQUE



## History

The Great Mosque that we see today is rectilinear in plan and is partly enclosed by an exterior wall. An earthen roof covers the building, which is supported by monumental pillars. The roof has several holes covered by terra-cotta lids (above), which provide its interior spaces with fresh air even during the hottest days. The façade of the Great Mosque includes three minarets and a series of engaged columns that together create a rhythmic effect. At the top of the pillars are conical extensions with ostrich eggs

placed at the very top—symbol of fertility and purity in the Malian region. Timber beams throughout the exterior are both decorative and structural. These elements also function as scaffolding for the re-plastering of the mosque during the annual festival of the Crepissage. Compared to images and descriptions of the previous buildings, the present Great Mosque includes several innovations such as a special court reserved for women and a principal entrance with earthen pillars, that signal the graves of two local religious leaders.



## GHANA COMMUNITY MOSQUE



### History

Most of the communities of the regions of Northern Ghana, especially the Northern Region, are Muslim. Islam, which first entered Africa through Egypt in the 10th Century AD, progressed from Egypt towards the west and the south at the same time as the trans-Saharan slave and gold trade routes.

In Ghana, these trade routes were used by Mande warriors, Islamic Traders and Missionaries. Occasionally, these routes were marked by incursions by the Almoravids, a Berber Dynasty, which played a major role in the spread of Islam in the area. At rest points for the Islamic traders along the routes, and in conquered territories, people were converted to Islam and this led to the construction of mosques in the Northern part of Ghana. Some of these mosques still exist today and they date as far back as the 17th Century AD.

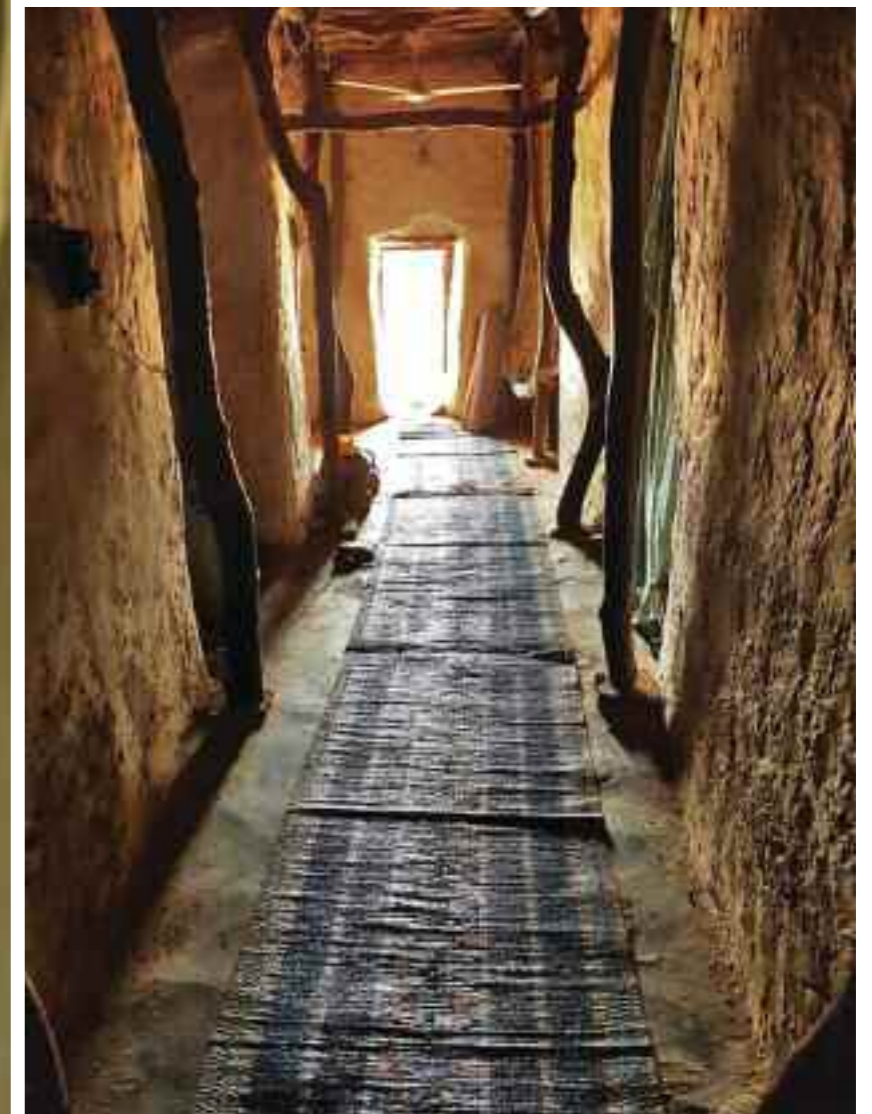
### Architectural style

The Sudanic style, though rectangular, has timber frame structures or pillars

supporting the roof. It is characterized by two pyramidal towers (the minaret and the mihrab), and by a number of irregularly shaped buttresses, with pinnacles projecting above the parapet, which enlivens the mosque's elevations.

Like other mosques in the Northern Region of Ghana, Larabanga Mosque is built in the traditional Sudanic-Sahelian architectural style, using local materials and construction techniques.

The mosque is built with mud and reeds, and measures about 8 metres (26 ft) by 8 metres (26 ft). It has two towers in a pyramidal shape, one for the mihrab which faces towards Mecca forming the facade on the east and the other as a minaret in the northeast corner. In addition, 12 buttresses of conical shape on the external walls are strengthened by horizontally-aligned timber elements. The architectural style is also known as "flat-footed adobe architecture". All the structures are given a white wash.





# REVIVING KARACHI'S DIVERSE HISTORY TDF HOUSE

SHAHAB GHANI AND ASSOCIATES

- Named after Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta, who established it.
- The area became the first dedicated cooperative residential complex for the middle class in Karachi.
- He invited different communities across Sindh and India to establish their own colonies e.g. the Shikarpur colony and the Parsi colony.
- The neighborhood became known for its religious diversity, being home to Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsis, and Jews, marking the urbanization of Karachi.
- The Parsi colony established by the Katrak family has its own park and library, owned by a community trust.



Before and After Renovation Images



**Text by:** Madiha Ghani Khan  
**Photography:** Irfanaqi

Built in the 1930s, the house was initially owned by a Hindu woman, Mrs. Haribai Motiram. In June 1948, she sold it to another woman, Hanifabai Haji Gani, who acquired it so that her daughter, Aisha Bai Dawood, could reside there.

In April 1961, the house was donated to The Dawood Foundation for philanthropic education activities and in 1965, Mr. Ahmed Dawood established the Hanifa Hajjani Vocational Training Centre for women, to empower community women.

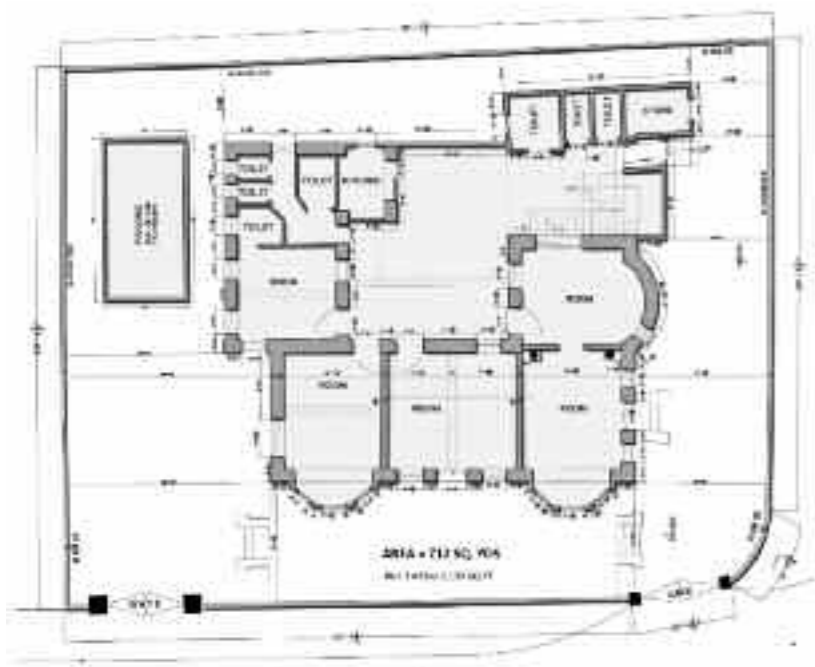
With time, the training center witnessed a decline and was eventually closed down in 1991. This was followed by years of the building remaining vacant, only to be forcefully occupied by land grabbers. A tedious court case later, the property was back in the possession of the Foundation, and



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN (SURVEY CONDUCTED)



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN (SURVEY CONDUCTED)





work began in September 2016 to implement adaptive reuse of this once magnificent building.

The TDF Ghar aims to promote informal learning spaces in Karachi, with a backdrop of the diverse and rich history of Karachi.

In a city where towers reign supreme, space acts as a breathing space for the public.

Reminiscing over the city's past, "The Living Room" museum comprises of artifacts and collectables from that era, while the Sehan Café reminds the visitors of the Iranian Café culture to which Karachi was once a host.

The tiles on the first floor rooms were all in perfect condition to be retained in their original form, whereas those in the hall required replacement.

A small makeshift M.S staircase provided access to the roof, which was in a dangerous state and was meant for temporary use.

The first floor houses three Numaish Halls and a training room, intended to be utilized for organizing workshops, seminars, meetups, exhibitions, and other activities.

A staircase to the roof was added to the existing structure, which provides views of the Quaid-eAzam's mausoleum.

Toilets had been introduced as a later addition to the building. Discoloration on walls, Floor tiles had discolored overtime with visible chipping, wear and tear. The existing staircase provides access only to the 1st floor. Absence of railing.





# ARCHITECTURE AFTER INDEPENDENCE:

# 55 ARCHITECTS OF PAKISTAN

Book review by:  
**Mehrdad Hadighi**  
Professor and Head  
Department of Architecture  
Stuckeman Chair of Integrative Design  
The Pennsylvania State University

Architecture After Independence, 55 Architects of Pakistan was published by Arch Press in 2016. It is a hard cover book of 336 pages, 29x26cm in full color, documenting the architectural productions of fifty-five architects in Pakistan, practicing since the Independence. The book is edited by Murtuza Shikoh and Zain Mankani, and has four substantial essays to launch the critical conversation. Kamil Khan Mumtaz provides a thorough documentation of the architects since independence, and follows their education and professional training in detail. He brings much personal knowledge of the individuals involved and the histories that developed around them. His essay should, in fact, be expanded into a new book, following his two earlier books of 1985 and 1999, documenting the sources of the contemporary architecture of Pakistan. Arif Hassan’s “Architecture Then and Now” provides the most critical view of the architecture in its ignorance of the socio-political realities that surround it. Even in cases where architects are building for the poor, he documents that architects are unfamiliar with materials, and techniques of construction that are inevitably used in those contexts, resulting in a discord between the built and the methods of building. Hasan-Uddin Khan provides a bibliography of books that cover recent architecture in Pakistan, most valuable for those interested in researching this arena. He continues by analyzing the development of possible architectural agendas since “independence”, from post-colonial to modern to Islamic identity to regionally appropriate and finally to hyper-modern. Jawaid Haider traces the history of an integrative model of studio instruction, developed at the Dawood College Department of Architecture, and follows its trajectory to contemporary instruction and provides a critique of the instruction of architecture both in Pakistan and abroad. He also points to important fissures between education and practice. Each essay concentrates on a particular angle of analysis, and collectively, they provide a great introduction to the issues at stake, both in the work presented and in the larger architectural context of Pakistan, the region and the globe.

Before I set out to examine the material in the book, it is important to mention how significant it is to collect a body of work under a “banner”. It is the necessary step towards any serious examination of any topic. To that end, the book is a commendable effort in collecting, collating, and documenting a particular history. Without documents of this nature, any serious study will not exist. So, at the outset, the book has accomplished a remarkable feat of producing an archive of architectural work in Pakistan of the last approximately sixty-five years. The four essays in the book open avenues of research and critique for future researchers. In addition, the essays, through providing a thorough document, pave the way for new research, even those that may not have been called upon by the essays themselves.

The title of the book: Architecture After Independence, 55 Architects of Pakistan gives us a glimpse of the complexities within. The title of the book presents two worlds, one, “Architecture After Independence” that involves history; politics, religion, and points to architecture that is, and perhaps, must be, engaged historically, socially and politically. The other, “55 Architects of Pakistan”, presents a more neutral stance where architecture may be viewed and studied within its own formal and tectonic realm. The two appear in the book under the same cover, but almost independently, one following the other. This very duality between interdependence and independence is the critical edge of the book and the issues that it puts forth.

“Architecture After Independence”, already in the title, suggests a breaking point, a historical fissure that may be recognized and detected in its architectural forms. In 1946, just after World War II, the British government was convinced that the Indian sub-continent was to be independent, and in 1947, it announced its agreement with the principal of independence and also of the division of “British India” into two independent states, those of India and Pakistan. There is, however, further nuance in this independence and division. Pakistan was originally formed as the Islamic republic of Pakistan. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Pakistan movement, in his first broadcast to the nation as Pakistan’s first governor general stated: “August 14 is the birthday of the independent and sovereign state of Pakistan. It marks the fulfillment of the destiny of the Muslim nation which made great sacrifices in the past few years to have its homeland.” The “Independence” that appears in the title of the book is both an independence from the British, and from India. Although not in the title of the book, independence, in this case, also means the beginning of the Islamic Republic, with all of the socio-cultural, and architectural contexts of Islam. The simple title of “Architecture After Independence” already has pointed to the nuanced complexities that exist within the book, both in its temporal bracketing of “after independence”, and in its engagement of architecture within a country whose main religion is Islam. This plays a major role in much of the discussions in the book, and bears further attention.

The essays in the book are concerned with the issue of “tradition” in the context of “Architecture after Independence”. The use of tradition is also nuanced. On the one hand, if we take 1947 as the start date for architecture presented in this book, we would be looking essentially at modernity as the tradition. However, there is, I believe, a different sense of what constitutes tradition within the four essays of the book. It is a combination of building traditions of the people who occupied the land that became Pakistan, independent from “independence”, and the traditions of architecture within countries whose main religion is Islam. The strength of the essays and the book lies in outlining the relationship between modernity and tradition as the struggle and the complexity of practicing architecture in Pakistan. I will suggest that this complexity is, and has been, the foundational complexity of architecture around the world. Of course, the tradition changes, and so does our definition of modernity, but the complexity remains for all architects to explore. Modernity, as one of the poles to which the architecture in the book gravitates, is approached most often, though not always, as a fixed and stable entity, incapable of nuance and change. Modernity grew out of the industrial revolution, new materials and technologies of construction, and new social agendas, long before it was labeled a style. In fact, I would argue that modern architecture was very much in line with traditions of construction and building that served as the foundations of architecture for centuries. Modern architecture grew out of traditions of construction in the West. In this light, it must be considered an evolutionary practice, one that has evolved from inception, and will keep evolving. Its adherence to certain formal ideologies and ignorance of certain other programmatic and urban issues are a part of its evolution, and it is up to us as architects to evolve it in directions that are sustainable urbanistically, programmatically, socio-politically, but also formally and aesthetically, and yet progressive and challenging.

The vernacular building traditions of the land that became Pakistan served and still serve buildings of modest scale (although Arif Hassan’s point about the discord between contemporary architecture and vernacular building traditions need to be contemplated). However, in today’s heavily urbanized world we cannot rely on low-rise building as the pre-dominant source of housing, governmental and commercial buildings, without embarking on irresponsible and un-sustainable sprawl. Large-scale buildings, such as those imagined for the new capital of Islamabad, buildings such as monumental mosques, town halls, and memorials would need to be conceived, at

least structurally, using modern technologies. What, then, becomes of these buildings, if they cannot be expressions of traditional materials and modes of structuring and construction, in the way their traditional counter-parts were. In this context, we must examine, at least structurally, modern building technologies. What should these buildings look like? Should they derive their appearances from their materials and methods of structuring and construction, or should they serve as symbols of ideologies, whatever those ideologies may be? We see examples of where building traditions and construction technologies went hand-in-hand with the appearance of buildings in centuries-old mosques, and bazaars. We also see the same inter-dependence between buildings and materials and methods of construction in modern architecture, though resulting in different architectural sensibilities than those earlier traditions. This is the question that is raised by the book: Given the necessity of modern technologies and techniques of construction in large buildings, what gives expression to the building, if not their modern materials and methods.

There is clear delineation of what the answer is not. More than once, the careful balance of history and tradition with innovation and the “new” is mentioned in the book. It re-appears in the four essays from different perspectives, and documents an astute reading of the socio-economic and architectural context. Arif Hasan refers to it as “draftsman-designed”<sup>31</sup>, and Jawaid Haider as “Dubaization”. We know from the book that the complete independence of the architectural expression from its materials and methods of construction is not desired. The extreme of this case is made by all four citing examples of buildings that are cloaked in an expression of wealth. Arif Hasan’s essay provides a powerful analysis of the client as one of the possible sources of this discord. He documents the international shift from the “elite” and public clients to the “rich”, and developer clients, and its effects on the architectural landscape of the world, specially the poorer parts of the developing world. Hasan-Uddin Khan refers to this as a “display of wealth in an essentially poor country”<sup>42</sup>. We recognize from the essays that this model of expression is not one to be followed. However, it is much more difficult to find a model that addresses the larger question stated earlier: Given the necessity of modern technologies and techniques of construction in large buildings, what gives expression to the building, if not their modern materials and methods.

Another nuance that appears in the essays and requires much deeper analysis is the relationship of culture to colonial discourse. The word colonial is used often, always in the context of the British colonial power. Here, like the use of the word “modern”, it is assumed to be unified, fixed and stable. A narrower definition of “colonial” would limit its use to a country or empire controlling another. A more nuanced reading would include ways of life. There is much written history of the recent colonization of the entire world by western media. So, we know that colonization is not limited to a government or empire. In this context, religion would also fall within the definition of colonization. I believe this very issue is another avenue of research to which the book points, but towards which it does not venture. How can we be, wholesale, against one kind of colonization, and support another? The issue, it appears to me, is not so much tied to colonization, but much more to a critical and nuanced reading of colonization. It is clear from the book that Islam, although not native to Pakistan, and not born there, appears as the tradition, and modernity, also not born in Pakistan, as the outsider, the foreign agenda that has been imposed on the country.

I will suggest that the division between tradition and modernity is not clear-cut and is embedded with much more complexity and nuance. Tradition, in the book, splits into local building traditions-whose expressions are appreciated-and the traditions of older buildings within the Islamic culture found elsewhere in the world. Tradition, assumed to be vernacular and local, is, in fact, a mixture of local and colonial. Modernity, on

the other hand, appears as the outsider, although its practices have been the norm everywhere around the world for almost a century. That, which may be local by now, we consider to be “foreign” and colonial. When we mention the word colonial, we use it in the context of practices with which we do not have affinity. Those practices with which we do have affinity, regardless of their source, we consider “tradition”. This is the gift of the book, opening this door into an in-depth discussion of what constitutes tradition, what constitutes modernity, and how architects practice in the space opened by the nuance of the definitions of tradition and modernity.

## About the Author

Mehrdad Hadighi is Professor and Head of the Department of Architecture at Pennsylvania State University and Stuckeman Chair of Integrative Design. Most recently, he served two terms as chair of the Department of Architecture at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Hadighi is an Iranian-born, US educated architect, and has been an academic for the past twenty-eight years, teaching in the United States and abroad.



Hadighi completed his post-professional graduate studies at Cornell University and holds a professional degree in architecture and a degree in studio art from the University of Maryland. A licensed architect, he is founding principal of the Studio for Architecture, a design practice that is engaged in research and experimentation through building projects of different scales and scopes, site-specific gallery installations, and design competitions.

Hadighi’spremiated design competition entries include the Studentenheim + Bauernmarkt, Glockengasse, Public Space in the New American City, Atlanta, Berlin Alexanderplatz Design Competition, Austrian Cultural Institute in Manhattan, and the Peace Garden Design Competition. Hadighi has been selected as one of “25 most intriguing, innovative and intrepid architects, from all over the world” by Wallpaper\* magazine; and as one of “10 Young Firms Reshaping the Globe” by the Architectural Record magazine in their Design Vanguard issue. The Architectural League of New York selected Hadighi as one of the six notable “Young Architects” in their “Young Architects Forum” series. His work is the subject of a monograph by SHARESTAN, and his most recent work has been featured in the following books: Architecture Today, Conversions; Small Structures, Green Architecture; Xs Green: Big Ideas, Small Buildings; Extensions and Renovations; Up, Down, Across: Domestic Extensions; House Plus, New House Design; and Architecture In Detail. He is the author of Tschumi’s Architectural Manifestoes, a dual language book in English and Parsi, and IIAW of WALL. His building for Lafayette 148, a New York-based fashion design company is the subject of a new book by ACTAR, to be published in 2016.

His scholarly work focuses on drawing parallels between 20th century art, critical theory and the constructive principles of architecture. This work has been celebrated with prestigious research awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts.



#### IAPEX & CONFERENCE

The 16th International Exhibition of building materials & services, IAPEX 2020, organised by the Institute of Architects Pakistan - Karachi Chapter. Themed "Designing Narratives" the event showcased both local and international building materials and service providers, with daily conference sessions that had speakers from all over the Asian region. Through 'Designing Narratives', the entire organising committee's aim was to make the event more inclusive and create a dialogue amongst the design professionals to bring about necessary awareness and positive change. Through 'Designing Narratives', the entire organising committee's aim was to make the event more inclusive and create a dialogue amongst the design professionals to bring about necessary awareness and positive change.

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