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# 19

## THE MALAYSIAN ARMADA

Iconic architecture affirms Malaysia's new capital, Putrajaya

**ARCHITECTURE** 11 pages of global architectural projects + the innovative extension to the Ewha Womans University in Korea + the new Liangzhu Culture Museum in China + the multipurpose Beans Dome from Japan **HOUSES** Three unique designs from diverse continents skilfully crafted into their unique contexts **INTERIOR DESIGN** The Gramercy Park Hotel from New York + avant-garde product designs in Trend Setter section + innovative and memorable interior-architecture from across the globe **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** Local, regional and international news for landscape architects + award-winning landscape design of the Mesa Arts Centre for the Performing and Visual Arts + more **URBAN DESIGN** Community and planning news + Urban design of Riva town's waterfront 'living room' + Waterfront City, Dubai **GREEN ARCHITECTURE** Exemplary projects that lead the way to a more green and sustainable future **SMART ENVIRONMENTS** Projects that push the boundaries of architectural technology: Albania's Tirana International Airport + Prague National Library + more **CONSERVATION** Conserving the historic Citadel Square in downtown Beirut, Lebanon **INDUSTRY** Local and regional issues concerning profession and the people shaping our urban future + industry news



**Ian Schrager Company (ISC)** builds, develops and markets innovative lifestyle residences and hotels, introducing new concepts and reinventing industry standards. ISC was founded in 2005 by visionary Ian Schrager after a formative career revolutionising and impacting nightlife (Studio 54 and Palladium) and hospitality (Morgans, Royalton, Paramount, Hudson, Mondrian, Delano, Shore Club, Clift, St. Martin's Lane and Sanderson). Current projects include the transformation of the fabled Gramercy Park Hotel in New York (August 2006), 50 Gramercy Park North (summer 2006), 40 Bond (spring 2007), One Madison (2007), two hotels in Miami and additional projects in New York and Las Vegas.



**Martha Schwartz** is a landscape architect and artist with a major interest in urban projects and the exploration of new design expression in the landscape. Her background is in both fine arts and landscape architecture. As president of Martha Schwartz Partners in Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, UK, her goal is to find opportunities where landscape design solutions can enhance the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of a place and raise them to a level of fine art. She has over 29 years of

experience as a landscape architect and artist collaborating with a variety of world-renowned architects on a diverse portfolio of projects. Ms Schwartz is the recipient of numerous awards and prizes including the Cooper-Hewitt Museum National Design Award for her body of work in Landscape Architecture, an honorary fellowship from the Royal Institute of British Architects, several design awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects, and visiting residencies at Radcliffe College and the American Academy in Rome. Ms Schwartz is also a professor of Landscape Architecture at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, where she has taught since 1992. She has lectured both nationally and internationally about the landscape. Her work has been featured widely in publications as well as gallery exhibitions.



**Esther Sperber** founded Studio ST in early 2003 after spending almost five years at Pei Partnership Architects. Studio ST is a young, creative and full-service architectural and interior design firm located in midtown Manhattan. The firm believes in innovative and responsible design. It is intrigued by new computer technologies and changes in design and production methods and strives to experiment with these tools in creative ways.

The firms built work is a combination of high-end residential renovations and budget-conscious construction projects for real-estate developers, including a four apartment townhouse in Brooklyn in 2005 and a number of high-end duplex renovations in 2006-2007. Studio ST Architects also regularly participates in international competitions and has been invited to submit designs for the Mediatheque in France and the Hoboken 9/11 Memorial, and has been published in various architectural magazines in the US and Europe.



**Guy Zucker** is the principal and founder of Z-A, an architecture studio based in New York City. Z-A is dedicated to research into adaptive structures that can adjust and respond to the ever changing needs of a project. Through different mediums, the economy of spatial mutations and temporal existence is explored and cultivated into a specific design tool. The studio gained national and international visibility through numerous awards and publications; it was exhibited and acknowledged by various institutions

including the Municipal Art Society of NY, Columbia University, the Van Alen Institute, the Ramat-Gan Museum, the Fulbright Foundation and the William Kinne Fellowship. In addition to running his practice, Zucker now teaches a studio course at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Architecture

**Hin Tan**, BA (Hons), BArch (Hons), RIBA, APAM, IPDM, (b. 1958, Malacca, Malaysia) completed a term in the Law Faculty, University Malaya before heading to the UK in the winter of 1978 to study architecture at the University of Manchester. He returned to Malaysia 18 years later after having settled and worked in the UK and France. In London, birthplace of the high tech movement, he worked in the offices of Arup Associates, Richard Rogers Partnership and finally, Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners, where he stayed for seven years. In Paris, he worked with renowned Spanish architect-engineer, Santiago Calatrava.

He formed Hintan Associates in October 2000 to pursue his own visions of the built environment, and has since delivered projects for the Port of Tanjung Pelepas, Maersk Sealand, Maersk Logistics, Maersk Line, Clipsal Integrated Systems, ISP Asia Pacific, Trustasia, Senai Airport Terminal Services, Gulf International Investments Group, MMC Corporation Berhad in Malaysia and elsewhere. Today, Hin Tan is the Principal Director of Hintan Associates.

**David Archer Architects** was founded in 2002 by David Archer and Julie Humphries. The practice has won a string of major commissions from hoteliers, property developers and restaurateurs and is fast establishing a reputation for producing highly crafted, elegantly detailed unique interiors. Completed projects include London neighbourhood restaurant Isarn, Downtown by Starck in New York and the refurbishment of a country house estate in the Cotswolds, UK. Current projects include a new GBP 3 million restaurant in central London for GaryYau and spa hotels in Buxton and Bath for the Trevor Osborne Property Group.



**3LHD** is a multidisciplinary architectural practice based in Zagreb, Croatia, focused on integrating various disciplines - architecture, urban planning, design and art. 3LHD architects constantly explore new possibilities of interaction between architecture, society

and individuals. With a contemporary approach, the team of young architects resolves all projects in cooperation with many experts from various disciplines. Projects, such as the Memorial Bridge in Rijeka, the Croatian Pavilion in EXPO 2005 in Japan, Riva waterfront in Split, the study for Bale/Valle in Istria, Hotel Lone in Rovinj and recently the Eastern European Cultural Centre in Xi'an, China are some of the important highlights. The work of 3LHD has received major Croatian and international awards, including the AR Annual Award, the world's leading emerging architecture award by The Architectural Review (UK), the ID Magazine Award (USA); and Croatian professional awards to Bernardi (2005), Viktor Kovačič (2001) and Vladimir Nazor (1999).

**The Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)** is a leading international partnership practicing contemporary architecture, urbanism and cultural analysis. The office is led by six partners: Rem Koolhaas, Ole Scheeren, Ellen van Loon, Reinier de Graaf, Floris Alkemade and Managing Partner Victor van der Chijs.

From its headquarters in The Netherlands, OMA Netherlands is working on a masterplan for the White City area of London; a harbour redevelopment and contemporary art Museum in Riga; the Cordoba Congress Centre in Spain; the redevelopment of the Mercati Generali in Rome; a Science Centre and Aquarium in Hamburg; an architectural centre, offices and housing in Copenhagen; the new head office of Rothschild Bank in London and multi-use towers in Rotterdam and The Hague. It is also working on various masterplans in The Netherlands and Belgium. In addition, the Rotterdam office has a number of activities in the Middle East including office and residential towers and masterplans in Dubai, a masterplan in Kuwait, three masterplans in Ras-Al-Khaimah and several public buildings in Qatar.

**Machado and Silveti Associates** is an architecture and urban design firm known for distinctive spaces and unique works of architecture in the United States and abroad. Their designs are the result of careful integration of the client's aspirations, the project's programmatic requirements, and the nature and character of the place for which a proposal is designed. The work does not espouse any signature style, but strives to find that which is unique and important within a given project, and to express that urbanistically and architecturally. The projects are distinctive for their conceptual clarity and visual intensity.

Machado and Silveti Associates became incorporated in 1985, although principals Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silveti have been in association since 1974. The firm's projects have been of diverse size and nature, having developed special expertise in Art Museums, educational institutions, and urban design and planning worldwide for Berlin, Beirut, Buenos Aires, Sicily, Frankfurt, San Juan, Pamplona, Rome, Seoul, Singapore, Tenerife, Venice, Vienna, and in the United States for major cities throughout New England, in New York, Texas, California, Utah, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Arkansas among others.

The firm's designs have been published in all the major international professional magazines and displayed in numerous exhibitions in the United States, Europe, and Latin America, most notably at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Biennale di Venezia, the National Building Museum in Washington D.C., the 1984 I.B.A. Exhibition in Berlin, and the XVII Triennale di Milano.

# A Building for Books



## PROJECT DETAILS

**TITLE** Prague National Library  
**TYPE** National library  
**LOCATION** Prague, Czech Republic  
**CLIENT** Prague National Library  
**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN** Studio ST Architects & Z-A  
**DESIGN TEAM** Esther Sperber, Guy Zucker, Yuteki Donozo, Chris Becker

## PROJECT FACTS

**SITE AREA** N/a  
**BUILT-UP AREA** 56,000 sq. metres  
**BUDGET** US\$ \$110 million  
**COST** US\$2,000/sq. metre  
**STATUS** Design competition entry

Libraries were once built for books. However, in the past centuries, library buildings have gradually assumed a different role, the iconic role of representing the 'good institution', the place where rulers and governments invest in knowledge and the enlightenment of their people. Presidents do not build obelisks, they build libraries to commemorate themselves; cities and universities place their central libraries at their core.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the typology of library buildings has changed as well. The growing archived information on the one hand and the iconic role of the library on the other, have created a split between the building and the books. The building maintained its monumental features while the books were peeled off the walls and organised on bookshelves in an open floor configuration. This split, while granting flexibility for book archiving, generated buildings devoid of spatial specificities. In some extreme conditions, the library building remained as only the 'public interface', while the book archive was located in a remote storage facility.

Re-examining the evolution of this typology stood at the basis of the design process. On the one hand, the accelerated growth of information prevents us from going back to the old model of walls covered in books. On the other hand, the iconic role of the central library as an urban monument still remains. "However, we found that the open plan configuration and the bookshelf as a freestanding object, taken for granted in the design of contemporary libraries, are not only an unnecessary constraint but also create a

redundancy", explains Studio ST's principal and architect Esther Sperber, whose entry for the Prague International Library design competition, in conjunction with the Manhattan-based architectural studio Z-A, questions the fundamental notion of a national library in the 21st century while pushing the boundaries of building technology. "Libraries go through huge strains to construct large open spans which are then filled with stacks of bookshelves that in turn divide the wide open space", she adds.

The findings determined the main concepts that would generate the design schemes: the mass of books can regain its spatial presence through reconfiguring its organisation; and to do so, constant growth and mutation has to be embedded in the design.

## Structural typology

For the designers, the main vehicle for obtaining the presence of books throughout the building was the book mass turned into a building structure. This operation generated different structural types for the different programmes:

1. Books: Using the bookshelf as the module for the building, the structure is based on a dense grid of columns 1 metre by 2.25 metres apart. The density of the column grid allowed the designers to reduce the size of the columns, creating a delicate lattice of supporting structure throughout the building. The structural column grid supports both the bookshelves and the building as a whole. >>



2. Offices: The columns along the east, west and south facades are 'stretched' out to create the medium span spaces for the offices and workrooms. The office floor plate projects out from the book storage core and creates modulation on the facade revealing the areas of human activity on the building exterior skin.

3. Reading rooms: The reading halls are large spaces used by the public. These spaces are inserted into the book mass and suspended within the dense structural grid. Double and triple height spaces with delicate steel posts wrapping around them create cathedral type spaces celebrating the interaction of the public with the body of knowledge collected in the National Library.

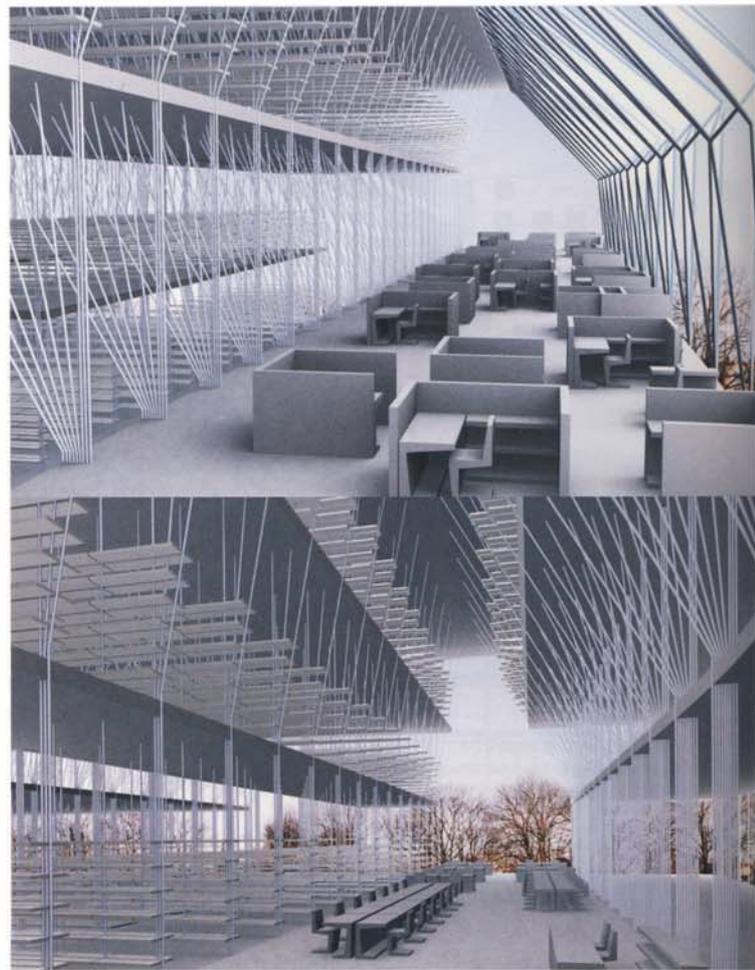
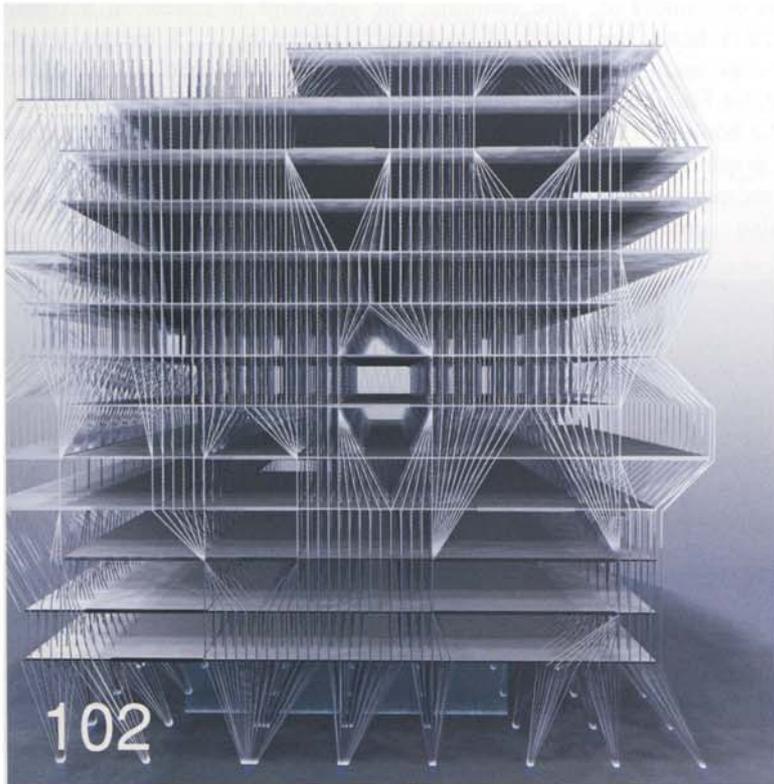
4. Public core: A continuous lobby space is similarly 'carved' out of the book storage mass and meanders vertically to connect all the publicly accessible spaces.

5. Parking: To accommodate parking, the dense structural grid is clustered into a 9-metre by 9-metre grid in the below grade levels.

6. Entrance plaza: The clustering of the structural elements between the second floor and the ground floor opens up a 10-metre high space for a public open plaza and entrance hall.

#### Internal vertical growth

The competition brief suggested an adjacent building for future expansion, mostly for book storage. The proposed building, while adhering to the floor plan requirements of the brief, is composed of 5-metre floor-to-ceiling height that results in a larger volume. This enlarged volume enables the building to expand within the proposed library envelope by adding partial floors between the existing floor plates. This interior growth allows each department to expand organically and independently from other departments, doubling its size in a contiguous space.



#### Programmatic distribution

Following the structural logic, the three main occupants of the building: books, public and the library staff are distributed in a way that responds to their programmatic and circulatory needs:

1. Books: The core of the library is the mass of book storage areas located in the centre of the building from the second to the 12th floor protected from exterior air and light.

2. Staff: Wrapping around this core are the support areas including all the offices, workspaces and labs. Located on a 9-metre band along the building perimeter, these support spaces receive direct access to air light and exterior views as well as easy access to the adjacent collections.

3. Public: The publicly accessible spaces, which include the reading halls, the main lobby, the theatre and the lecture halls, are inserted as large span spaces within the mass of books. This insertion allows both the direct connection of the public with the accessible book stack on the same floor slab and visual connection with the vast amount of data that is not physically accessible to the public.

This distribution enables the vertical circulation cores to create continuous vertical flow within each of the distinct occupant groups (Books, Staff, and Public). The different departments of the library (Universal Collection, National Collection, Parliament Collection, etc) are organised on the same floor slabs and connect horizontally between their related occupant groups. -Text and images: Studio ST Architects & Z-A. Ed.: Architecture Plus