
Primary School, Gando, Burkina Faso – architect: Diébédo Francis Kéré, Burkina Faso.

Sandbag Shelter Prototypes, Iran, Mexico, Canada, India, Thailand, Siberia, Brazil, Chile and US – architects: Cal-Earth Institute, US (Nader Khalili, concept and design; Iliona Outram, project manager).

Restoration of Al-Abbas Mosque, near Asaf, Yemen – conservators: Marylène Barret, France, with Abdullah al-Hadrami, Yemen.

Old City of Jerusalem Revitalization Programme (OCJRP), Jerusalem – conservation: OCJRP Technical Office, Jerusalem.

B2 House, Büyükhüson, Ayvacık, Turkey – architect: Han Tümertekin, Turkey.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture (OCJRP), Jerusalem – conservation: The Mosque and the Modern World: With 213 illustrations, 100 in colour

James Steele

The Complete Works of Hassan Fathy: An Architecture for People: Foreword by Charles Correa

Renata Holod and Hasan-Uddin Khan

Architects, Patrons and Designs Since the 1950s

With 280 illustrations, mostly in colour


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Architectural Design, Local Construction and Vernacular Ingenuity

From Snøhetta’s Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt to a primary school in Burkina Faso, from the revitalization of Jerusalem’s Old City to Cesar Pelli’s Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, there is a great degree of ingenuity, care and excellence demonstrated in these multifaceted achievements. These achievements include projects for Muslim societies since 1977, ranging from the architecture and urban planning of the restored Abbasiids mosque in the old city of Faso to a prototype construction system using sandbags for rebuilding the village of Jafar in Yemen.

The ninth Award cycle, an independent Jury comprising architects, engineers, artists, historians, philosophers and urban planners, has selected seven projects to form the basis of its work on the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2004. The Jury met in the autumn of 2003 to consider all the entries received during the previous 18 months. At the same time, the to-do list from the previous cycle was examined and some projects were added. The Jury’s report, which includes an analysis of the projects under consideration, will be published later this year.

The Award Jury is charged with understanding and innovation, positive change and better places for Muslim societies around the world. The jury’s work is aimed at helping to mainstream values and proactive approaches to urban and architectural design, local construction and vernacular concepts that are essential for the success of any architectural project.

Putting into action and applying the work of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture requires a variety of initiatives: training and education, concept and design, implementation and funding. The Award seeks to influence thinking, research and debate across the professions and the public sphere. Interventions and projects are expected to provide insights and new perspectives on the future of Muslim architecture.

The 2004 Jury is comprised of:

- Jacques Herzog (Architecture, London, UK)
- Abdou Filali-Ansary (Architecture, Casablanca, Morocco)
- Charles Correa (Architecture, New Delhi, India)
- Akram Abu Hamdan (Planning, Amman, Jordan)
- His Highness the Aga Khan, Chairman (Architecture, Mombasa, Kenya)
- Jafar Tukan (Architecture, Amman, Jordan)
- Billie Tsien (Architecture, New York, USA)
- Elías Torres Tur (Architecture, San Francisco, USA)
- Reinhard Schulze (Architecture, London, UK)
- Modjtaba Sadria (Architecture, Tehran, Iran)
- Rahul Mehrotra (Architecture, Cambridge, USA)
- Hanif Kara (Architecture, London, UK)
- Ghada Amer (Arts, New York, USA)
- Babar Mumtaz Khan (Architecture, London, UK)

On the cover: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alexandria, Egypt
Architecture and Polyphony:
Building in the Islamic World Today
which is the identity of the other world - the identity, a restated link.

- vector vectors.

- Primary Group

- Petronas

- Restoration of all areas - unique

Whose dream?
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Acknowledgements

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Inside cover: Collages from the Jury Meetings by Ghada Amer
The 2004 Aga Khan Award for Architecture

The year 2004 marks the completion of the ninth triennial cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, established in 1977 by His Highness the Aga Khan. During the twenty-seven years since it was founded, the Award has responded to the constant changes that have taken place in Muslim societies throughout the world. The results of this cycle of the Award reveal a renewed sense of confidence and hope in the contributions that Muslims today make to architecture and society throughout the world, even while retaining their cultural specificity and identity.

The Award Steering Committee

This cycle of the Award has been characterized by a commitment to pluralism and tolerance, with a focus on recognizing architectural achievements that demonstrate the highest international standards of excellence in building. The Award Steering Committee, chaired by the Aga Khan, worked intensely throughout the current cycle, beginning with a review and revision of the eligibility requirements projects should meet in order to be considered. These requirements were then communicated to over a thousand nominators who recommend projects to the Award office. They include an emphasis on innovative types of architecture emerging throughout the Muslim world – projects that may be large-scale or modest in scope and that demonstrate new directions for architecture, planning and landscaping in both urban and rural contexts. The Steering Committee acknowledged that such projects do not fit easily into any single category, but embrace a variety of programmes and building types. The Committee also placed importance on projects by young architects and on the categories of infrastructure, landscaping, community development and public urban spaces. In particular, the Committee asked nominators to give special attention to projects that respond to the growing housing crisis in many Muslim societies. New types of project – productive territories, active landscapes or land-reclamation projects – were also recommended, and the Steering Committee expressed specific interest in locality and contemporary conditions.

To be eligible for the Ninth Award Cycle, projects must have been completed during the twelve-year period from 1991 to 2002 and in use for at least one full year between the period 1 January 1991 and 31 December 2002. No projects may be considered that are commissioned by His Highness the Aga Khan or undertaken by current members of the Award Steering Committee, Master Jury or Award staff, or by the Board or staff of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

The nomination process yielded a total of 378 eligible projects, located in forty-four countries, and these formed the basis of the first week-long meeting of the 2004 Master Jury during January 2004. The Master Jury – an independent and autonomous group appointed by the Steering Committee – comprised nine men and women from throughout the world, including practising architects, structural engineers, artists, historians, philosophers and experts in urban planning and restoration.
Issues and criteria
In order to explain the objectives and procedures of the Award, the Steering Committee met with the members of the Jury before the latter’s review of projects and subsequent deliberations. In a written note to the Jury Members, the Steering Committee indicated its belief that all of the finalist projects should meet a number of ‘threshold criteria’, contributing to established ways of doing things or extending boundaries in the field, making intelligent use of available resources and materials and responding sensitively to the environment, and showing social and ethical responsibility with respect to individual and community self-determination.

The Steering Committee also identified a number of issues that emerged in the course of discussions during the Ninth Award Cycle as important factors in current architectural practice in the Islamic world. These were: the symbolization of power and authority (dealing with issues of power relations); the articulation of public and private spaces; issues of cultural identity and cultural representation; sensitivity to plurality; and constructive aspirations for individuals and societies.

The issues put forward by the Steering Committee were intended to stimulate initial conversation among the Jury Members. Reconfirming the Master Jury’s independent and autonomous mandate, the Committee noted that it was the Jury Members’ responsibility to determine which, if any, of the criteria and suggested issues were pertinent to their deliberations. The Steering Committee noted that it would be unlikely for any individual project to meet all of the threshold criteria and deal with all of the issues proposed, but expressed hope that the projects selected for Awards by the Master Jury would be recognizable by their thoughtful approach to one or more of the criteria.

To avoid inadvertently affecting the Jury’s decision-making process by the imposition of classifications such as building type or location, the Steering Committee requested that the nominated projects be presented in alphabetical order by name of architect or architectural firm.

The 2004 Award Master Jury
As a result of their first meeting, the nine Master Jury members selected twenty-three projects for further study as part of the Award’s On-Site Project Review Programme. All of the twenty-three shortlisted projects were visited on site between February and May 2004 by experts appointed by the Award. These Project Reviewers prepared written reports and at the second Master Jury meeting, in June 2004, made half-hour presentations on each project and discussed particular points of interest raised by the Jury. Deliberations continued in private sessions over the following four days and resulted in the Jury’s selection of seven projects to share the 2004 Aga Khan Award for Architecture. The Jury’s decisions were unanimous.
Architecture and Polyphony: Building in the Islamic World Today

This book was designed by Irma Boom. All texts were edited by Philippa Baker with the assistance of Prince Hussain Aga Khan. Features on the seven winning projects include descriptions and illustrations of each project, with texts based on the reports by the On-Site Reviewers. The written Statement of the Award Master Jury is integral to understanding the collective significance of the seven projects, and an Introduction to the Statement by the Chair of the Jury, Professor Farshid Moussavi, describes the nature and challenges of the Jury discussions and deliberations in a more personal fashion. Many of the Jury Members have contributed essays to this volume, developing their professional or personal views about architecture and its condition in Muslim societies today. Reflecting the breadth and diversity of the Award process, the two philosophers on the Jury – professors Modjtaba Sadria and Reinhard Schulze – have contributed writings that situate the role of architecture in the wider realm of contemporary society. Artist Ghada Amer, also a member of the Jury, has prepared a visual interpretation of the eleven days of Jury meetings during January and June 2004. The volume concludes with an essay, ‘Architecture without Building’, by Steering Committee member Babar Khan Mumtaz, while ‘A Breakthrough’, by Dr Suha Özkan, Secretary General of the Award, situates the current winning projects within the larger perspective of the nine completed Award cycles.

The Aga Khan Development Network

His Highness the Aga Khan, forty-ninth hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, is the Chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network, a group of agencies working in health, education, culture and rural and economic development, primarily in Asia and Africa. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, of which the Aga Khan Award for Architecture is a part, undertakes the Network’s cultural programmes.
Introduction to the Statement of the Award Master Jury
Farshid Moussavi, Chair of the Jury

It is an honour to represent the Master Jury and I thank the Steering Committee on behalf of the Jury for giving us this opportunity to reflect on and learn from architectural processes and interventions in the Muslim world and to contribute through the Award towards the enhancement of the environment. The composition of the Master Jury is a microcosm of conditions in Muslim societies as well as the world at large – a vortex of people, cultures, ages, expectations, architectural heritage, economics. Architecture, we believe, needs to develop a variety of tools to respond to this plural, multifaceted condition. The composition of the Jury was determined by the Steering Committee. The Jury therefore recognizes the conditions the Steering Committee has tried to create in bringing the Jury Members together. But of course this also means that the Steering Committee is responsible for the outcome!

Selecting the winning projects was an exhausting experience but also very interesting and we even managed to enjoy it. The two philosophers in the group were geographically placed in the room in such a way as to sandwich and shape the rest of us, who represent more intuitive, creative and artistic approaches. They were constantly trying to broaden the field in which architecture operates beyond the mere act of building and technical perfection to include issues such as politics, identity, cross-cultural exchange, pluralism and public investment. The designers, architects, engineers and artists on the Jury were superexcited by this power that the philosophers were bestowing on architecture. It felt as if architecture could still play a central role in our societies and that everything is possible – that our role need not be reduced to the mere act of building but might also include facilitating larger processes that are latent in this complex and rich context.
But we did not submit entirely to this broader view, knowing that one of the powerful ways in which architecture can improve the environment is in the way it transfers and crystallizes these processes into form. And at the same time, if we are committed to innovation, we must look at projects at every level of detail. **Innovation rarely happens in a vacuum; it happens only intermittently, in response to acute conditions and the consolidation of problems that arise out of various cultures.** So innovation may be necessary at the ‘macro’ scale or at the ‘micro’ scale of delivering an architectural solution.

We were also interested in recognizing architectural processes as well as architectural ideas that symbolize the Muslim world. After all, we all know that ideas make up only ten per cent of an architectural venture. Architects are more like sailors who are constantly against a sea of odds, such as project managers who want to ‘value engineer’ the scheme, budgets that are never big enough, politicians who are single-minded, public consultations that subject a scheme to selfish perspectives, time… So for us as a group, the architect’s skill in guiding this process is as important as his or her original ideas.

One of the ways in which we think the Award should extend is to be not only the mechanism to acknowledge outstanding results but also an initiator – a platform for seeds of ideas that show the potential to trigger improvement and enhancement of the environment in Muslim societies.
Statement of the Award Master Jury

The Jury met for the first time in January 2004 and started by reviewing 378 projects that had been nominated for the Ninth Cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. After vigorous and concentrated discussions, the Jury shortlisted twenty-three projects that were proposed for On-Site Project Review. During the second meeting, in June 2004, the Reviewers presented to the Jury their detailed reports and, after discussions, the Jury selected seven projects to receive the 2004 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

From the outset, the Jury agreed that they would need to seek out a comprehensive approach in order to discover, understand and explain the challenges of architecture in the Muslim world as it confronts modernity in all its diversity. Four areas of social meaning came to the fore, and the Jury expressed these as a series of questions.

The first question raises the issue of how the complexity of history and of historical memory can be expressed in architecture. Because restoration deals with history in architectural terms, it tends, pragmatically, not simply to freeze the past as it may have existed at a given moment. Instead, restoration increasingly responds to the needs of present-day groups and individuals, who often use historic buildings for new purposes. By accommodating historical meaning and contemporary needs, a building retains social meaning rather than becoming simply an object of tourism.

Secondly, the Jury considered the question of how private initiatives are integrated into the emerging public sphere. The Jury believes that the development of a pluralist public realm is one of the most important issues facing many Muslim countries. Today, more and more private initiatives in the public realm empower societies and address their needs, be it in the fields of education, sanitation or other social requirements. Architecture plays an important role in manifesting these endeavours, and the Jury particularly appreciated a balanced relationship between the social content of an initiative and its architectural representation.

The winning projects also address the question of how to express individuality in complex social settings. In modernity, architecture expresses individuality, permitting a poetical interpretation of the self. The Jury recognized the growing awareness and appreciation of individuality in the Muslim world. On the one hand, this individuality counters the idea that Muslim societies emphasize collective identities; on the other, it reveals the plurality of Muslim traditions.

The fourth question the Jury considered was the issue of how power and authority in the global domains of technology, culture and economics might be addressed through architecture. The Jury paid special attention to the responsibility of architecture in the Muslim world and to projects that show understanding of the worldwide exchange of technological, cultural and economic knowledge in local contexts. The translation of global identities...
into architecture – which can occur in the technology used in buildings or in the potential functions of buildings – was considered by the Jury to be of great importance for many parts of the Muslim world.

The Jury also analysed how these four issues have been transferred to architecture. It is common sense that the way structure and design are used in a project should always be adequate to the issue addressed. Adequacy, however, does not mean simply assigning a form to a problem and updating traditional architectural solutions. It means adopting a critical perspective on the problem and addressing it by means of architectural techniques. The Jury recognized this by giving importance to projects that raise the standards of excellence.

Finally, the Jury focused on the social, cultural and environmental impact of the projects, analysing the balance between intention and realization, meaning and material, and functionality and use. The integration of projects within the environment and the criticism of tradition were also factors in assessing projects.

Architecture in the Muslim world partakes of all the features of modernity in architecture. However, it often also tries to incorporate specific Islamic meanings, and it is only in such deliberate instances that architecture can be labelled ‘Islamic’. When ‘Islamic’ traditions are followed instinctively, the result is simply architecture in a Muslim cultural context. This means that there is a difference between architecture in the Muslim world and what is defined in discourse as ‘Islamic architecture’. The plurality of architecture in the Muslim world is evident at many levels: in varied discourses on architecture; in architecture that deals with restoration in ways that re-establish the generic pluralism of Muslim culture; and in the multiplicity of forms produced by a variety of social, cultural and economic environments. The Jury was particularly aware of the complexity of the plurality of the Muslim world and was critical of those projects that tried to establish a cultural normativity that could threaten that plurality.

The Jury believes that all seven projects selected for the 2004 Aga Khan Award for Architecture meet with the foregoing criteria.

Ghada Amer
Hanif Kara
Rahul Mehrotra
Farshid Moussavi
Modjtaba Sadria
Reinhard Schulze
Elias Torres Tur
Billie Tsien
Jafar Tukan

Geneva, June 2004
The Ninth Award Cycle 2002-04 • The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

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Old City of Jerusalem
Revitalization Programme
Jerusalem

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Restoration of
Al-Abbas Mosque
Asnaf, Yemen

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Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Alexandria, Egypt

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B2 House
Ayvacik, Turkey

32–49
Gando Primary School
Gando, Burkina Faso

The Nineteenth Award Cycle 2002–04
Recipients of the 2004 Aga Khan Award for Architecture

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Sandbag Shelter Prototypes
Various locations

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Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia