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TRAINING OF ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIANS

JOURNAL OF THE NATAL PROVINCIAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS • TYDSKRIF VAN DIE NATALSE PROVINSIALE INSTITUUT VAN ARGITEKTE
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EDITORIAL

ARCHITECTS AND TECHNICIANS

In this issue, *NPIAJ* focuses on the training of architectural technicians at the two Durban technikons, Natal and M L Sultan. It does so in the belief that an explanation of the training of the technicians will lead to a better understanding of the complementary roles of architects and technicians. (Issue 3—1982 covered the Natal School of Architecture.)
Already there exists in Natal an Institute/Technicians Liaison Committee and currently on its agenda is a request by the S.A. Council for Architects for comments on alternative means of education for professional registration.
There are common elements in the syllabuses of the universities and technikons and one scenario would be to integrate these or have them mutually accredited. Those students with sufficient skills and motivation could then proceed to the degree course to become professionally registered. Both technicians and architects have a common aim in getting buildings built and if they shared some common education their professional interdependence might be more readily acknowledged.
Leslie Croft, Emeritus Professor of Architecture at the University of Natal and now on the staff of the Natal Technikon is best qualified to comment on the theme of this issue and the *NPIAJ* is most grateful to him for his contribution.

Walter Peters, Editor

NATIONAL DIPLOMA AND HIGHER DIPLOMA SYLLABUS FOR ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIANS

- **Entry requirements**

Senior Certificate or equivalent. (Mathematics is not required. Art is not required but is a help)

- **Duration of course**

Diploma: Three six-month semesters of technikon attendance and eighteen months of in-service training i.e. employment under a registered architect. (Total of 3 years)

Higher Diploma: One additional semester at the technikon and an additional six months of in-service training with a registered architect.

- **Subject pass mark**

50%.

- **Subjects**

The course comprises the following subjects, all of which are compulsory:

- **Diploma**

First Semester:
Architectural Draughtsmanship T1
Architectural Presentation T1
History of Architecture T1
Construction Technology T1
Construction Science T1
Communication T1

Second Semester:
Architectural Draughtsmanship T2
Architectural Presentation T2
Practical Building Studies T2
External Works and Site Levels T2
Construction Technology T2

Third Semester:
Architectural Draughtsmanship T3
Architectural Office Organisation T3
Elements of Architectural Design T3
Building Services (Architectural) T3
Construction Technology T3

- **Higher Diploma**

Fourth Semester:
Architectural Studio Work T4
Building Services (Architectural) T4
Specifications and Estimates (Architectural) T4
Environmental Effects on Design T4
Modelmaking and Photography T4

TECHNIKON NATAL

THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

- **The Diploma and Higher Diploma : Architectural Technicians**

The Diploma for Architectural Technicians is awarded after three years of training. This comprises three semesters of study at the Technikon (total of 16 subjects) and 18 months of in-service work under the supervision of architects. This practical experience is carefully monitored.
The Higher Diploma can be undertaken only after the Diploma is fully completed, and comprises a further semester of study and six months of practical office work.
The Diplomas have been issued since 1981 and a good number of architects in practice will be familiar with course content by virtue of employing graduates from the Natal Technikon as well as other technikons.

- **The technician's place in the profession**

At the outset it needs to be stated that the courses have been specifically designed to be complementary to the degree courses offered at South African universities. Technicians receive a training which gives them full competency as assistants in architectural offices. They are not designers, but they are capable draughtsmen and have a good grounding in construction technology as well as building services. They are not trained to be administrators, but do have a knowledge of how architectural administration is conducted. They receive tuition in responsibilities such as taking levels, organising sample rooms and libraries and assisting in specifications and quantities. More detail is given below.

- **Course content: Draughtsmanship, Construction Technology and Services**

The greater proportion of time is given to these subjects and they are interrelated as far as possible during training.
DRAUGHTSMANSHIP commences with simple exercises and proceeds to a small building, all in pencil, in T1 (Semester 1). In T2 (Semester 2), working drawings are done in ink and cover a double-storey domestic project. All lettering to this level is freehand. Progression is then made at T3 level to a project comprising a small office building in framed concrete and a factory in steel with light cladding. Stencils are used for lettering. At T4 (Higher Diploma), the syllabus calls for typical working drawings covering a high-rise project, and the opportunity is taken to teach overlay, cut-and-paste, and reprographic systems. None of the above calls for the student to deal with design (except in elevation), but they do have the option of modifying layouts and details if desired.
CAD 3-D MODELLING. The transition to computer-aided design and draughting is well on its way and we are pleased to have been the first technikon to introduce CAD in the architectural courses. For the last three years we have had "Scribe" 3-D modelling software operating on six stations. An orthographic plan is constructed on the screen with a 3rd dimension which is not visible. This is transformed to an orthographic elevation, a perspective or an isometric projection instantaneously. Solar viewpoints of models for particular times, dates and latitudes can be projected so that the effects of shadow patterns can be assessed.
2-D DRAUGHTING. In the near future we hope to offer courses in CAD on the Autocad 2.5 with Gordon Extensions. The software is amazingly user-friendly, very versatile, and the modifications by Gerald Gordon, architect, can be seen to be specifically suited to architects. The "mouse" is used to select commands from easily manipulated menus, and all "standard" and frequently used items in plan and elevation are brought on to the screen and placed where required.
The 2.5 version also has a limited 3-D projection capability which can be used to very good effect.
The future should bring us draughting and 3-D combinations allowing the architect to communicate with the contractor in much easier-to-read terms. Working details in isometric are far easier to read than plans, sections and elevations which are confusing to the untrained eye.
CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY is covered in three semesters and progresses from domestic-scale work to high-rise technology.
BUILDING SERVICES at T3 level deals with plumbing and drainage, and at T4 level with mechanical services.
A full list of subjects appears at the beginning of this article but a few comments on some of the subjects could be useful. Two semesters are given to the basics of ARCHITECTURAL PRESENTATION using dry and wet techniques. At T1 level a short course deals with an outline on the HISTORY OF WESTERN ARCHITECTURE from Greek and Roman times to the present day.
At T2, PRACTICAL BUILDING STUDIES is given entirely to on-site observation of a complete domestic project. Observations are recorded in writing together with drawings and photographs. This subject is an essential aid to learning construction technology, not only in gaining a deeper understanding for application at the drawing board, but in seeing the order of trades, the organisation of the site and in gaining confidence within the site environment with a view to assisting in site supervision.
In EXTERNAL WORKS students learn about site development, landscape design, and handle a small project involving the taking of levels.
One semester is given to the ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN with the purpose of giving the technician an understanding of how the architect thinks. This deals with human space requirements, planning principles and visual design. Domestic design projects are handled in fair detail and larger projects dealt with as zoning exercises.
A small course in OFFICE ORGANISATION trains the student in office responsibilities other than the drawing board. This includes the filing of literature, storing samples, the principles of the building contract, building regulations and details of the relationships of allied professions.
At T4 (Higher Diploma) a detailed STUDY OF CLIMATOLOGY and its application to the design of buildings is studied. An outline on SPECIFICATION WRITING with exercises in QUANTITIES AND ESTIMATES gives an understanding of definitive and legal documentation as well as an appreciation of building elements.
The course is rounded off with a practical study on MODEL-MAKING AND PHOTOGRAPHY as applied in the profession.
It can be seen that the course is orientated to provide a very practical base from which the technician can progress with further office experience to become a versatile and useful person and right-hand man in the profession.

- **Practical experience**

Technikons call this In-Service Training. As mentioned at the outset, the Diploma for Architectural Technicians calls for 18 months of practical work. It should be noted that the requirement is for the student to obtain such experience under the supervision of a professional architect. A logbook has to be filled out and employers are especially asked, as far as possible, to provide a variety of experience during this period and secondly, to assist in a teaching capacity to complete the student's training. It should also be noted that students who have had say 12 or 18 months academic experience are not yet qualified. A broad base of teaching is given at the technikon and the discipline of an office is very different from that of the lecture room and students need time to gain confidence.
As previously mentioned, the practical experience is monitored. Students submit their logbooks together with examples of their drawings and these are studied in order to ascertain whether they have gained the required all-round experience.

- **Standards**

We are always looking to the profession as a guide towards standards, and we do appreciate constructive feed-back, especially from those who employ technicians.
We have recently completed a survey nationwide on what the profession needs in a technician. Does it want better technicians or does it want "mini-architects" who have a deeper understanding of the theory of architecture, design, history and creativity? The response was overwhelmingly in favour of the former. Answers and comments have given us a good guide for the future and the standards that are required.

TECHNIKON NATAL

THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE cont.

As a general statement, we can say that students who come out of the technikon with above 75% in their main subjects comprise good material and, with experience, may be entrusted with carrying out complete schemes (bar design) entirely on their own. Those with 50% or 60% are regarded as useful in more routine or repetitive or smaller works. The pass mark is 50 percent.

• **The future**

It has been proposed for some time that the present course be modified and that more advanced levels be introduced. This would probably entail a further six months' academic study and six months of practical work giving a Diploma in Technology. A further similar year would lead to a Laureatus.

At the Natal Technikon we are single-minded in making this course technical and not design orientated. We feel there needs to be a better knowledge of building technology in modern methods — mainly as connected with the completed product and components rather than the science and manufacture of the materials concerned. This would especially include current cladding materials and techniques. We feel that a more thorough knowledge of building services and science should be emphasised, such as plumbing and drainage, acoustics and lighting. Of especial importance would be a more mature capability in architectural detailing, and this would call for a deeper sensitivity in design.

It is understood that the host technikon handling proposed changes is Pretoria. The normal procedure for further development is for the architectural heads from each technikon to meet and to set up draft proposals, which are then circulated, modified and approved. Nearly all such staff are qualified architects. In this process it would be appropriate to obtain the opinion of architects in practice.

• **Professional registration of technicians**

The establishment of a technician's register under the National Council's (and Institute's) administration is long overdue. Far from being an "opposition group", graduates from the technikons form a strong growing body that is a useful asset to the profession. A positive attitude by the technikons to the profession has always existed and the relationship between the two bodies has never been stronger than at present. A professional register would help erase any "negative" attitudes that may still exist, and no one would be happier than the technicians themselves.

• **Cross-accreditation**

It is hoped that through negotiation with the universities some form of accreditation will be acceptable by the universities for technicians who wish to transfer to the degree course. At present, one or two of our diplomates take this step each year, but they have to start the degree course at first year without any credit at all.

• **The Department and student intake**

The Architectural Department functions independently of other departments although there is a small amount of interdependence. Our Building Department, offering courses in Construction Supervision and Building Surveying, is of great assistance to us in the fields of Construction Science, Construction Technology and Estimating.

Teaching is conducted very much on the lines of that at universities. Where necessary, for subjective areas like design, two or more opinions are brought to bear on the assessment of marks. Group "crits" are conducted.

Lecturing is more "teacher orientated" than at university because of the nature and density of the courses and because of the grade of the average student.

Lecturers are allotted 20 contact hours per week.

One serious disadvantage is the lack of permanent studio space, where, although facilities are good (e.g. draughting machines are provided), groups still have to operate as in schools and trek with books and equipment from room to room.

Student intake is limited to a maximum of 45 and these are selected from sometimes well over 100 applicants. This results in a better quality of work and the pass rate is high. Selection is based on the senior certificate term aggregate, with no particular subjects being demanded, but with bonus points for course-related subjects and for practical experience.

Each semester level has two groups of 15 to 20 (excepting T4), ensuring good contact-tuition for each student. The groups are not streamed, and this creates positive incentive and likewise, two groups tend to compete, without any prompting from the staff.

A good collection of library books has been accumulated but with a centralised library, access is mediocre instead of good. It seems an eternal problem getting students to use the library voluntarily.

• **The staff**

Bryan V Cooke has been Head of Department since 1983 and has had a number of years lecturing at the Cape Technikon. He received his Bachelor of Architecture Degree at Cape Town University and has worked in Malawi, USA, Canada, UK, Saudi Arabia and Aden; and just before joining us here, had two years in Windhoek.

Professor Leslie T Croft is well-known to all in architectural, town planning, building and university circles. He retired from the Headship of the School of Architecture at the University of Natal in 1978 and joined the technikon in 1983. With a Liverpool degree in Architecture and a diploma in Town Planning (Wits), he has a wealth of experience as an educationalist.

Peter E Douglas joined in mid 1985. He graduated with an Honours degree from Nottingham University. Born in Dublin, Eire, Mr Douglas at present is working on a Masters degree (Natal University) on a study of the place of computers in the profession in South Africa.

Alaric Napier (Senior Lecturer) with a Natal Bachelor of Architecture degree has been with the technikon for 12 years. He has worked in the UK, with local practices, and lectured in the former Town Planning Department. On return visits to the UK he has made leisure-time studies of specific New Towns as well as paying visits to several polytechnics and universities.

Alaric Napier

TECHNIKON NATAL

From left to right: Bryan Cooke, Peter Douglas, Prof Leslie Croft and Alaric Napier.

M L SULTAN TECHNIKON

ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIANS

Architectural technicians may elect to study for their diplomas at any one of seven South African technikons. The curriculum, syllabuses and conditions are identical at all technikons and the examinations which qualify the student for a diploma are set by the Department of National Education. Details of course content are covered elsewhere in this publication.

Understandably, however, teaching methods and emphases on differing aspects of the course will vary from one institution to another.

Students receive a National Diploma (Architectural) after the completion of their third year of study and become eligible for a National Higher Diploma after an additional year. A student who graduates with the National Higher Diploma will have reached a high level of competency with regard to the production of working drawings and details.

The course will inculcate a feeling and understanding for the principles of architecture and the student will be capable of producing, under the supervision of an architect, drawings ranging from simple buildings to multistorey structures. Reports received from architects who employ diplomates from M L Sultan Technikon indicate that they are quickly assimilated as essential members of a project team.

The majority of the students who elect to study at the M L Sultan Technikon are members of the Indian race group. A common question therefore is, "Because of their cultural background, is their approach and work any different to students who studied at other technikons?" The answer is no, the students demonstrate equal dexterity when dealing with eastern and western architectural influences.

The M L Sultan Technikon is able to accommodate an average of 90 architectural students per year, of which 40 students are at T1 level. The demand is large, however, and many students are disappointed when they cannot be accepted.

• **The role of the technikon**

The next 10 years could well be described as the era of the technikons and will see increased growth and recognition of the technikon movement. This is due, in no small measure, to the increasingly important contribution being made by the technician in the work place.

The importance of the technikon is underlined by a major trend in education which has manifested itself during the last 10 years. The trend is to take education out of its traditional purely academic setting and place it in a new setting which combines the elements of practical and academic training.

This new trend in education demands that the technikons and industry form a partnership to enable the embryo technician to receive the well balanced education that he needs if he is to take his place in the technological society in which we live. The more practical, on-the-job training is given by the employers during the time that the student spends with him and the student's academic needs are catered for during his semesters at the technikon.

The new system is termed "co-operative education" and has forged strong links between the technikon and the employers who finally make use of the knowledge and practical experience gained by the technician.

Before the advent of the technikon movement, nearly all of the work undertaken in the office of an architectural practice was done by university trained staff. Now, however, architects have indicated the need for a well educated, practical, architectural technician who can free the architect from the necessity of preparing working drawings and door and window schedules etc. The technician thus enables the architect to concentrate on the creative aspects of his profession. Because of the very specific needs of the architectural profession, the emphasis in the technician's training is placed on the development of his drawing and presentation skills but at the same time his creative ability is not neglected.

The limited liaison which exists between the universities and the technikons has been questioned in some quarters and it is felt that greater co-operation and recognition of qualifications should be fostered. The question was answered, however, by the Principal of the University of Natal, Professor Desmond Clarence, when he stated: "There is no question of a coalescence of the work of universities and technikons. The specific aims and obligations of each type of institution are clearly defined and understood, but that is not to say that where possible in the field of tertiary education, there should not be co-operation."

• **Staff**

Wray Steele (Senior Lecturer) received his degree at the University of Natal and apart from working in a number of local practices, he spent 18 months with a firm of architects in London. Further studies include a Teaching Diploma and a number of Fine Art Diploma credits. Wray has been at M L Sultan Technikon for 14 years.

Henri Fenelon, who has a National Building Diploma and a Teaching Diploma, is an experienced lecturer having been in education for 24 years. He taught technical drawing and building drawing at the Technical High School before joining the technikon. Prior to becoming a lecturer Henri worked for structural steel engineers in Durban and in the Transvaal.

Abdul Mahomed is a product of the M L Sultan Technikon, where he obtained his National Higher Diploma in Building. He followed this with a Teaching Diploma. Before receiving his Higher Diploma, Abdul served his apprenticeship in the building industry as a carpenter. His knowledge and practical experience in construction technology is invaluable.

Wouter Gildenhuys graduated from the University of the Free State and joined us three years ago. His interests include art and history of architecture related to different cultures. Wouter has worked in Welkom and Johannesburg. He is also involved in work of an educational nature outside the technikon aimed at the upliftment of the underprivileged.

Braam Loubser is the Director of the School of Building and Civil Engineering, which currently houses the Architectural Division.

Wray Steele.

M.L. Sultan Technikon

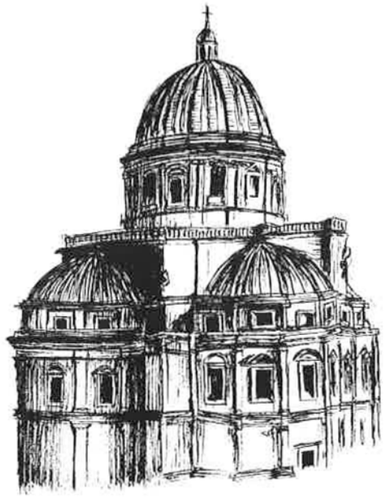
From left to right: Braam Loubser, Wray Steele, Wouter Gildenhuys, Henri Fenelon, Abdul Mahomed.

TECHNIKON NATAL NATIONAL DIPLOMA

STUDENTS' WORK

T1

Ionic Capital and Renaissance Domes
The T1's do a whistle-stop history course from classical times to the present day — with emphasis on South Africa. Results are often very pleasing, as shown in these drawings by Yvette de Klein.

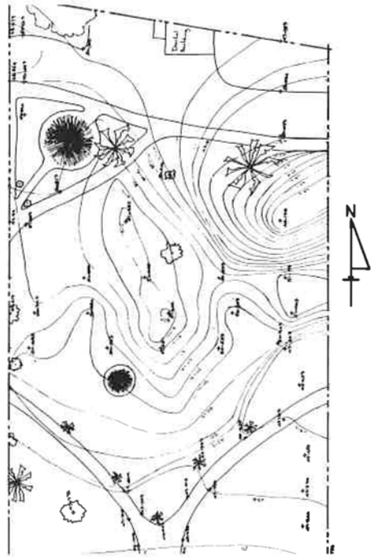


T2

In practical building studies students spend a generous amount of time on sites, each one watching a specific project from beginning to end.

A contour plan derived from levels taken on site.

Mark Zank >

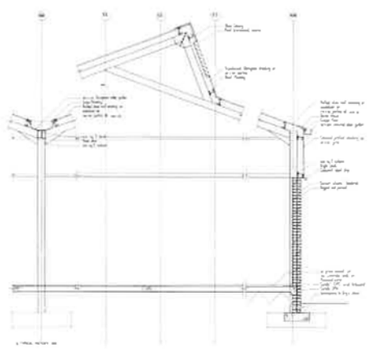


T3

Complex shapes are easily drawn up on our IBMs using Autocad with Gordon Extensions. Ingrid Mileham is having hands-on practice.

Factory constructional sections. Students are given guidance on a number of options and they then develop details to suit,

L C Trenor >



M L SULTAN NATIONAL DIPLOMA

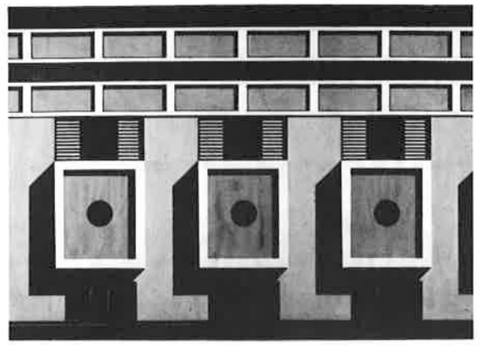
STUDENTS' WORK

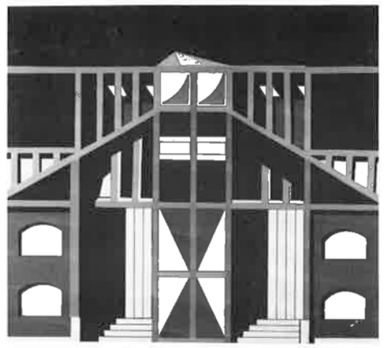
T1

Monochrome presentation of part-elevation of an existing building, to include the study of shadow projection.

K Padayachee >

R Naidoo >





T2

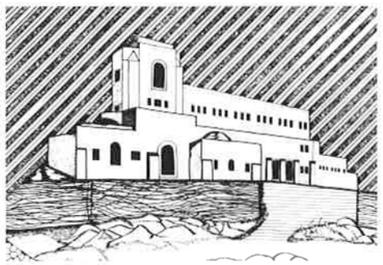
Two-point perspectives using various pen and ink techniques such as scribble, dots, cross-hatch, etc. to achieve tonal contrast. Existing perspectives and photographs were used as a reference.

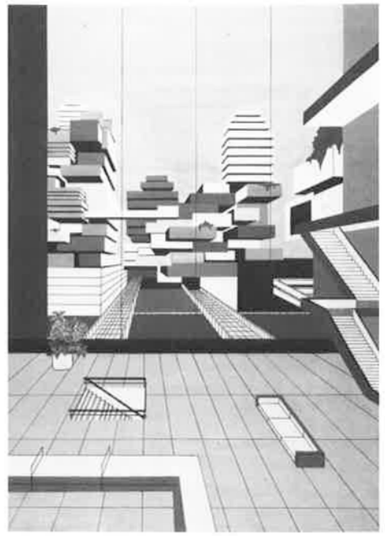
F Ballim >

S Murugan >

Students interpretation in colour of a one-point perspective based on an existing freehand sketch.

S Murugan >

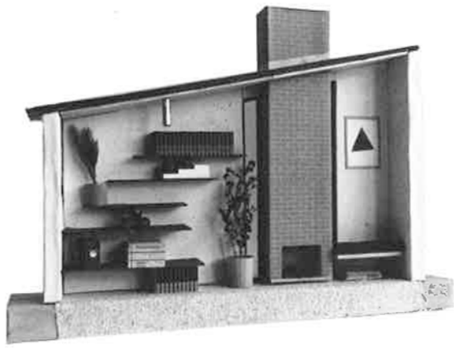




T3

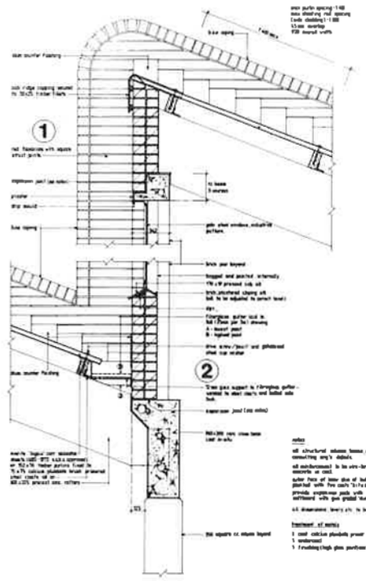
Students were required to construct a model to a scale of 1:20 of a feature wall in a living room. Overall dimensions in plan and section were given and the position of the fireplace was fixed. Texture, colour, materials, contrasting tones, related shapes and the spaces between the various elements had to be considered.
Prior to commencing the model, a sectional elevation was drawn.

A Narshai
S Pillay >



Working drawings of a small concrete frame factory with south light roof based on given sketch plans and details.

R Ashram >



TECHNIKON NATAL HIGHER DIPLOMA

STUDENTS' WORK

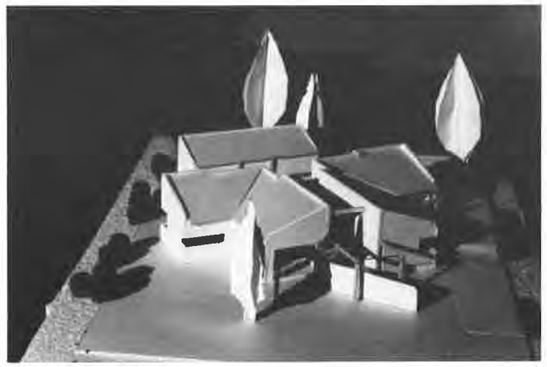
T4

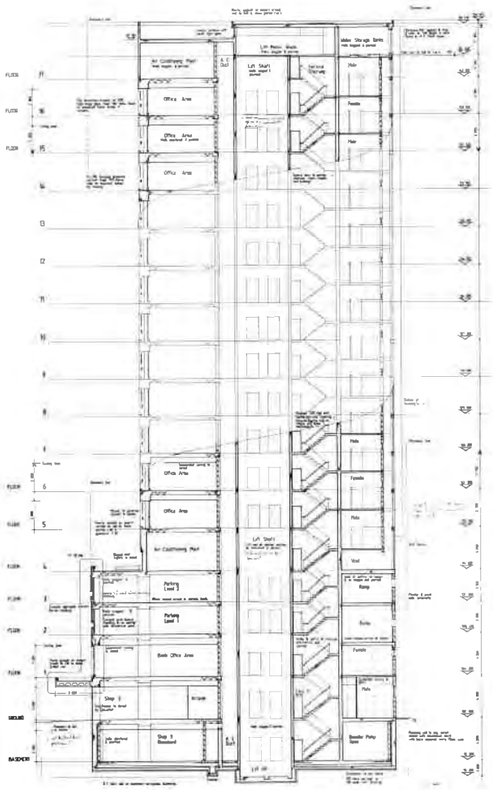
The techniques of very quick bulk-form modelling, as in the high-rise tower by Ingrid Mileham and Chris Davis, together with more careful monochrome and formalised models, as in the house by Chris.

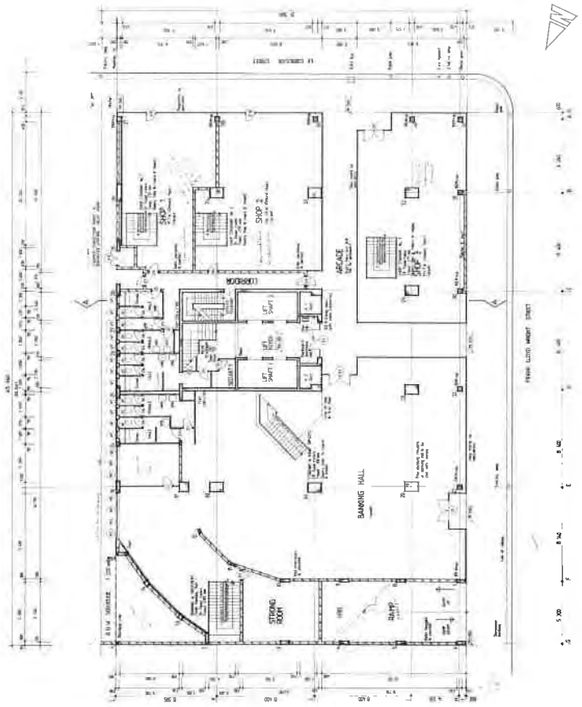
>

There is not time to produce a full range of drawings. The more important typical drawings are done, and are produced from 1:200 outlines of the project. Reprographic methods are picked up in this semester. Drawings by Chris Davis

V







M L SULTAN HIGHER DIPLOMA

STUDENTS' WORK

T4

Model of a house on a sloping site

Students were set the task of constructing a model of a house on a sloping site from a common sketch plan and contour plan. Different roofs were specified in each case.

K Rampaul

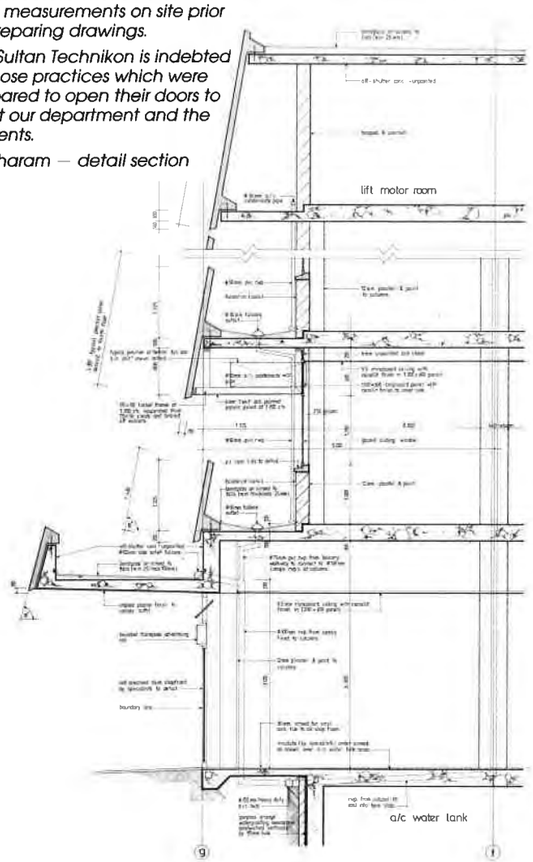
>

Working drawings of a multi-storey office block.

With the assistance of local practices, plans and/or letting brochures showing basic layout and dimensions of existing projects were obtained. Certain modifications were made and these drawings were used as a reference to prepare a portfolio of working drawings and details. Students were expected to sketch details, make notes and take measurements on site prior to preparing drawings.

M L Sultan Technikon is indebted to those practices which were prepared to open their doors to assist our department and the students.

R Asharam — detail section

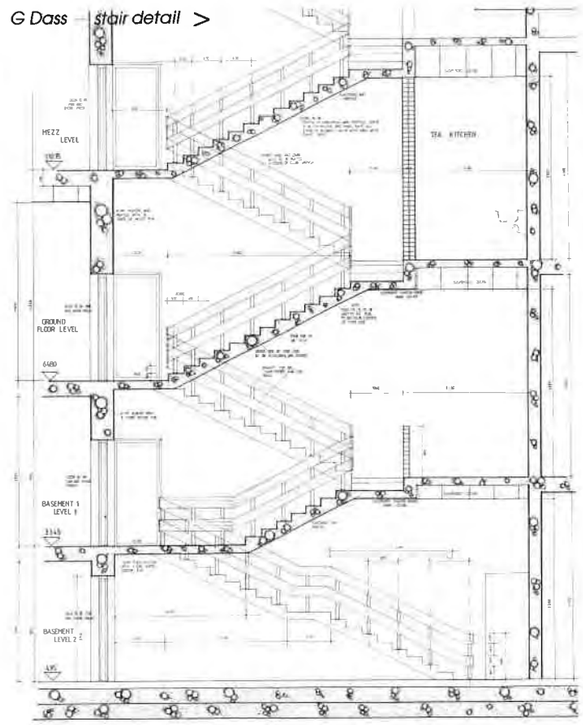


Model of facade.

Students were required to choose an existing building, either historic or modern, and to prepare a measured drawing of part of the elevation. The models were then constructed to a scale of 1:50.

>

G Dass — stair detail >



COMMENT

THE ARCHITECTURAL DRAUGHTSMAN/TECHNICIAN

When we consider the urban growth in South Africa in the last 60 years and the changes that have taken place in the scale and complexity of building, we see that the advent of the architectural technician has been an obvious development, necessary to enable the architect's practice to operate in the changed circumstances.
These include the increased technical content of buildings, the need for the architect to devote more time to planning and social, economic and environmental matters and the need for more sophisticated management and administrative skills.
Architecture is a wide subject which has its roots in the arts and fine arts, the sciences and social sciences. It is a subject with many complementary qualities. It is rational and emotional, an art and a technology.
The process of architectural design is a form of creativity, which is both an expression of the creator, thus a very personal product, and also satisfying, and an integration of the demands of the functional requirements. It is concerned with unification; with the bringing together of the many requirements to create a satisfying whole. (1)
The changes in the scale and complexity of building have increased the architect's concern with aesthetic, environmental and functional requirements.
These changes require the education of the architectural student to be a more general and liberal one to cope adequately with the social, environmental, economic and aesthetic problems he has to solve. It also requires the architect to acknowledge that he cannot be the generalist in all fields that he once was.
Just as he no longer is expected to be a structural engineer, so he should accept that he cannot be the expert in all other fields, although he must understand the principles involved. In which particular area he accepts another "helper" is for him to decide. Some of the areas may be: the production of working drawings whether by hand or by computer; plumbing and other technical matters and the associated materials; dealing with Central and Local Government; to mention only three areas in which there have been considerable developments and changes in recent years.
The Commission of Inquiry into the Training of Architects, Report (2), recommends that the "technician must in the first instance be a competent draughtsman."
We are concerned with education and training. What do we mean by education and training? In 1867 John Stuart Mill said: "What professional men should carry away with them from a university is not professional knowledge, but that which should direct the use of their professional knowledge and bring the light of general culture to illuminate the technicalities of a special pursuit." (3)
In 1965 Lord Llewelyn Davies said: "The task of a professional designer can only be met by a man who has been educated and not just trained. You can be trained as a machinegunner or a draughtsman. Education is a deeper and broader preparation, needed for men who are to undertake complex and responsible roles in society." (4)
It is in the difference between the meaning of the words education and training that we see the difference in the work and education of the architect and the work and training of the architectural draughtsman.
The architect needs to have a liberal and general education so that he has the broader preparation needed for men who are to undertake complex and responsible roles in society.
The architectural draughtsman needs a training so that he can complement the work of the architect with draughting skills and technological expertise.
In conclusion, we say that the trained architectural draughtsman/technician has emerged to meet a very real need. He is trained in the technikon as is shown elsewhere. He is trained to complement the work of the architect and, just as his place is primarily in the architect's office, so his place is within the architectural profession.
The Commission of Inquiry into the Training of Architects recommended that the South African Council for Architects should "in terms of the Architects' Act 1970 initiate and/or co-ordinate under its aegis an appropriate organisation . . . for architectural draughtsmen." (5) This we believe to be most desirable and in the interest of both architects and architectural draughtsmen.

Leslie T Croft

References

1. CROFT, LESLIE: Architecture, Education and the University, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg 1965 p3.
2. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Training of Architects R.P./1979 p57.
3. MILL, JOHN STUART: Address to the University of St Andrews, 1867.
4. DAVIES, LORD LLEWELYN: Disciplines before Design in Design, January 1965.
5. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Training of Architects R.P./1979 p69.

LETTERS

• Issue 4/1986 : Durban Heritage Year
Dear Dr Peters,
I would like to congratulate you on the very interesting and well-edited issue 4/1986 of the Journal. It is not always fully appreciated how much planning, effort and hours are necessary to publish such a Journal. Most of the time for "Mahala"!
My sincere thanks and congratulations!
Yours faithfully, *Roux Wildenboer*

• Issue 1/1987 : Third National Architectural Students' Congress
Dear Sir,
I wondered if you published Peter Ahrends' letter because you agreed with his sentiments and/or actions (and hoped to influence others to do likewise), or whether you wanted comment.
concluded that you could not possibly believe Ahrends' idea that people (here and elsewhere) opposed to apartheid, should follow his example and turn their backs on SA while it is under the "current regime", in the hope that when they look round again they will see the automatic and only alternative . . . his kind of utopia!
In the same post as the NPIA JOURNAL 1/1987, I received a personal letter from a world-renowned American, recently retired from UCLA, and who visited RSA last year. In his letter Dr Kyle writes: "Joyce and I heard a speaker from Cal-Tech the other night on South Africa. He has been there 40 times in the past 10 years and operates a charity to support educational institutions for coloureds and blacks. He gave the first balanced view that I have heard since I got back. He said that sanctions were a strong statement, but a negative one, and that if people wanted to make a positive statement, they would try to support organisations that educate blacks. According to him the professional labour market will be forced to absorb blacks in ever increasing numbers in the future, and that would be the most effective way to break down racial barriers without violence."
It would be nice if there were another occasion soon when Peter Ahrends could be asked to reconsider his decision not to share his architectural knowledge.
Sincerely,
John Stegmann, Newlands

• Issue 1/1987 : Correction
The building numbered 13 on the map *Architectural Highlights* (p7) was incorrectly attributed. The caption should have read, "Victoria Street Bus Terminus. *Myles, Porter, Pugh, Sherlock and Jarvis.*" Editors' apologies.

NEWS

• New non-permanent Head of the Natal School of Architecture

Consequent upon a Senate decision of the University of Natal, no further appointments of permanent heads of departments will be made in pursuance of this policy, Dr Errol Haarhoff has been appointed Head of the Natal School of Architecture for a four-year term of office as from 1 January 1987.
As the Headship is separate from the Professorship, Professor Don Dyke-Wells continues as Professor of Architecture in the permanently established professorial post in the Natal School of Architecture.

• Honorary degree

James Walton, prolific writer on vernacular architecture in the UK and Southern Africa, recipient of the ISAA Writers and Critics Award and numerous other honours, has had the degree Doctor of Architecture, *honoris causa*, conferred upon him at the Graduation Ceremony of the University of Natal, Durban, on Friday, 10 April 1987.

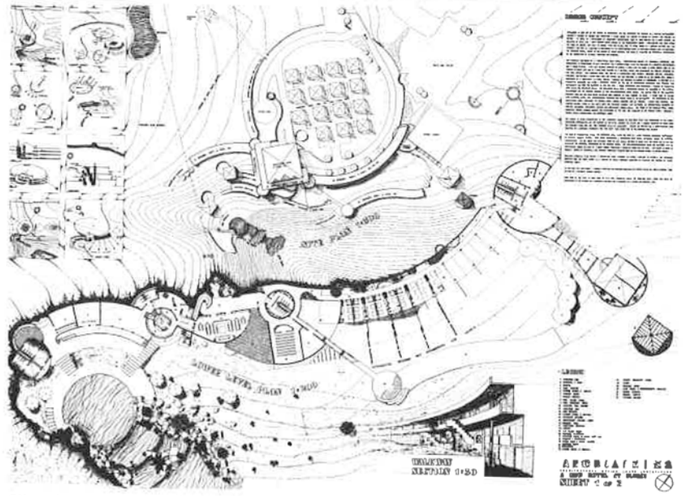
ULUNDI HOTEL DESIGN COMPETITION

WON BY PFEIFFER, MARAIS AND MOULL

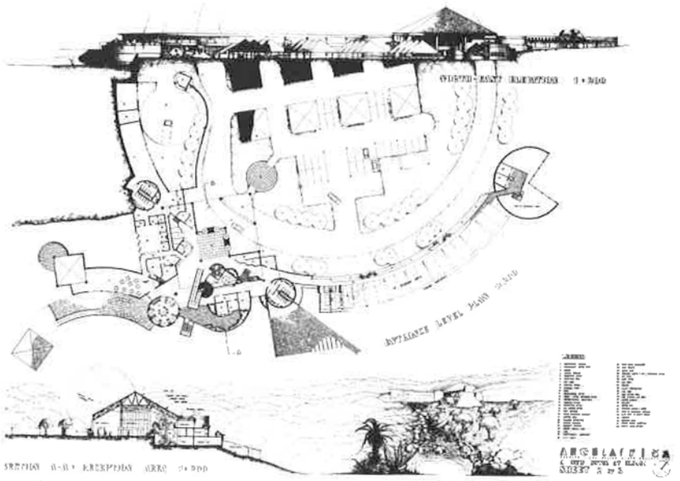
The design competition for a new hotel at Ulundi organised by the KwaZulu Finance and Investment Corporation Ltd has been won by the firm of Pfeiffer, Marais and Moull. Joint second places went to Roy Farren; Andre Hodgskin, Thomas Craig and Jan van Wijk of Cape Town; and Mohammed Mayet of Johannesburg.

• *Drawings, photographs and extracts from the winning design report:*

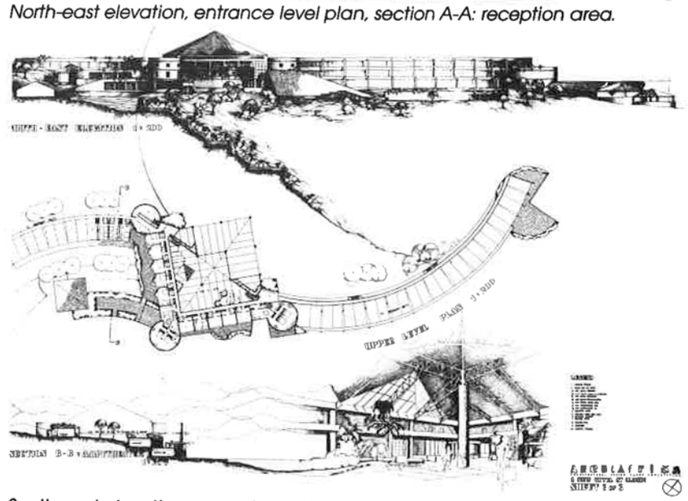
Our design for a new hotel at Ulundi was approached in the spirit of the competition brief which, although demanding, allowed the architect an amount of flexibility to explore and question within given constraints. The brief's challenge to "marry rural charm and modern design" called for an hotel that would be appropriate to its setting and the culture of the region in which it would be situated, while also creating a memorable image for a modern hotel.
The concept of the hotel is based on an image of the circular enclosure of a traditional tribal kraal. Within the enclosure a "village" of huts is created by shade-cloth parking structures which protect the traveller's car from the harsh Zululand elements of sun and hail. In this way a powerful and symbolic identity is created for the approach to the hotel while at the same time the parking area becomes a visually exciting element, in contrast to most parking lots. Our solution also challenges another element of hotel design — the unexciting, dim and narrow corridor. In our design, the enclosing circular walls, whilst acting as a sunscreen, become a series of open, stepped walkways that are filled with natural light, planting and architectural features.
On entering the hotel through the lofty volume of the reception area, the hotel becomes less formal and relates more closely to the dramatic site and the needs of its inhabitants. The entertainment and conference areas are arranged in the form of an amphitheatre around the head of a dramatic gorge which is transformed by a series of pools and waterfalls, seemingly cascading to the White Mfolozi River 70 metres below. The bedroom units follow the contours of the land to provide maximum views for the guests. The possibility of an adjoining game reserve to the west is recognised by the siting of a game viewing hide which would overlook a waterhole.



Site plan, lower level plan, walkway section.



North-east elevation, entrance level plan, section A-A: reception area.



South-east elevation, upper level plan, section B-B: amphitheatre.