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 32nd year of publication,
 has since inception been
 sponsored by Corobrik.

Obituary



TED TOLLMAN (1930–2007)

Following a fall, Ted Tollman died on 21st May 2007. Though born in Johannesburg on 15th May 1930, Ted was a Durbanite who attended DHS before studying Architecture at the University Natal 1950–56, joining the full-time staff and teaching indelible lessons in basic Design and Professional Practice from 1961 to his retirement in 1993. He served as NPAA President 1982–3; as regional editor of Architecture SA for a while; and as editorial assistant to this Journal from 1996 onwards. In recognition of his service over many years, KZ-NIA awarded Ted with an illuminated scroll in 1993.

For his mentorship in teaching, for nurturing me into the Institute, and launching me into the editorship of this Journal, I remain grateful to Ted Tollman.

—Walter Peters, Editor

The obituary is penned by none better than Errol Haarhoff, student, colleague, and partner of Ted Tollman. He is Professor and former Head of the School of Architecture & Planning at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

The cultural fraternity has lost an outstanding colleague and friend with the passing of Edwin (Ted) Tollman. Many will have an enduring memory of his

warmth and extraordinary generosity and his impeccable dress-style with narrow ties. I am among those whose first contact with Ted was as a student at the University of Natal over 40 years ago, and thanks to him, in 2nd year did learn to design bathrooms and kitchens thoroughly, and came to understand the importance of sound design principles. He

was generous as a teacher, giving his students their own space to learn and strive for excellence without taking credit for himself.

Like some others I was also privileged to know Ted as an academic colleague, and to experience his teaching role from the other side. He was a committed teacher right up to the time of his retirement. His lectures were always delivered in great detail and student work assessed with scrupulous fairness. Apart from sharing his company at tea times in the School, some will also remember what appeared to be a quirk when he would place three teaspoons in his tea cup. I was later to learn that this was grounded in physics, with the teaspoons acting as heat sinks rapidly cooling the tea to a drinking temperature. Through his knowledge, consistency of values and encouraging style of teaching he made an enduring contribution to the education of many generations of graduates now dispersed across the globe.

He was generous in serving the profession of architecture and the wider community in general as well as sitting on boards of trustees, on professional committees

and numerous task groups making an impact on their activities. For many years this included serving the profession of architecture in KwaZulu-Natal with his membership of the local committee. A cogent reminder of such duties is seeing his name as the Assistant Editor to this very Journal, which sadly, will disappear as



a more visible manifestation of his passing.

Ted practised as an architect, urban designer and planner over many decades, something that was close to me as a professional partner in this enterprise for a period of time (Tollman, Haarhoff & Partners, 1981–87). When I reflect on his work, I think of the cool, white houses he created, at once uncompromisingly modernist while being sensitive to the green and verdant climate and landscape that typifies the city he knew so well and loved – Durban. At a time before conservation emerged as an issue, Ted was already crafting well-tempered and beautifully furnished spaces sympathetic to heritage values. His own houses and the practice office at 95 St George's Street were replete with what he called 'brick lace' and other devices that reinterpreted the decorative details of 19th century Durban architecture in a

thoroughly modern way. Apart from its architectural attributes, the house at 136 Chelmsford Rd will also be remembered by many for the generously hosted events and dinners enjoyed in a wonderful environment.

Above all Ted possessed a sense of principled fairness and social justice, and a great sense of humour.



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Making CPD part of architectural professional life:

On 1st January 2007, the renewal of professional registration of all persons controlled by the Architectural Profession Act (No 44 of 2000) became conditional upon an accumulation of points earned through the participation in Continued Professional Development (CPD) activities.

While the statutory requirement might be an affront to some, any practitioner who believes in his/her vocation, should, as a matter of principle, want to attain and maintain the highest levels of competence in practice. In this context, CPD is understood as a process that "maintains, enhances and increases the knowledge and skills necessary for the proper execution of professional duties" (SACAP circular to all registered persons dated 30 May 2006).

Principles and credits

The system is structured on a five-year cycle within which architects must earn a minimum of 25 credit points. The annual minimum is three, and any excess may be accumulated over the cycle. Credit values are time-based whereby a ten-hour activity will earn a single point, and activities of less duration adjusted pro-rata.

Categories

Credit points are earned from three categories, but every year one point must be earned from Category 1 activities:

Category 1: This includes attendance and participation in formal lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences etc. If interactive in nature, two credit points apply for a programme of ten hours duration ie a full day; if non-interactive, only one. **Category 2:** These are work-based points earned for practising or teaching. The limit is two points for 800 hours; one for 400; and one point for fifty hours of mentoring per annum.



thoroughly modern way. Apart from its architectural attributes, the house at 136 Chelmsford Rd will also be remembered by many for the generously hosted events and dinners enjoyed in a wonderful environment.

Above all Ted possessed a sense of principled fairness and social justice, and a great sense of humour.

Category 3: These are individual activities including membership of a professional body ie KZ-NIA, which carries one point per annum. Other activities include the acquisition of higher qualifications; setting or conducting examinations; the presenting of conference papers; authorship of refereed articles; or the involvement in pro-bono community activities etc.

Recording of credits

Activities and points earned are recorded either manually or electronically via SACAP website (www.sacapsa.com), and details should be submitted no later than thirty days after the event. SACAP intends conducting random audits.

Service providers and the validation of offerings:

SACAP has deemed accredited educational institutions and recognized voluntary professional associations as approved service providers of CPD courses. But, all providers of CPD activities must first present a template of their proposed offering in the specified format for accreditation. As a voluntary association, KZ-NIA is able to accredit and validate courses.

In approving a Category 1 CPD activity, the following is taken into consideration:

- The activity should serve to maintain or enhance the knowledge, skills and competence of all those who participate in it;
- The activity should meet an educational and developmental need and provide an effective learning experience for the participants;
- The depth and breadth of the subject matter covered must be appropriate; and
- The subject covered should provide a balanced view and should not be unduly promotional.

The KZ-NIA sub-committee for accrediting category 1 CPD activities consists of Ms Trish Emmett (SACAP Council member); Bruce Clark (KZ-NIA Practice Committee Chairman); and Walter Peters, Senior Professor of Architecture, UKZN.

KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture 2007

Editorial



2007 KZ-NIA Awards jury on site. From left: Chantal Pieterse (sound space design); Peter Kidger; Nasreen Arabi; Don Albert (soundspace design); Debbie Preller; Ivor Daniel; Mthulisi Msimang; Aline Otto and Sydney Baillon.

In the biennial cycle of this Journal, one issue is always particularly pleasurable to prepare for publication: the Awards issue. Firstly, because entries are due at a deadline set by the regional committee which is strictly adhered to; secondly, because I have been privileged to participate in the jury continuously since 1993, thirdly, I can experience the buildings at scale 1:1 and lastly I can engage in the debate of the jury.

This, the 16th consecutive biennial Awards programme for buildings erected during 2005–06, was distinguished in two ways.

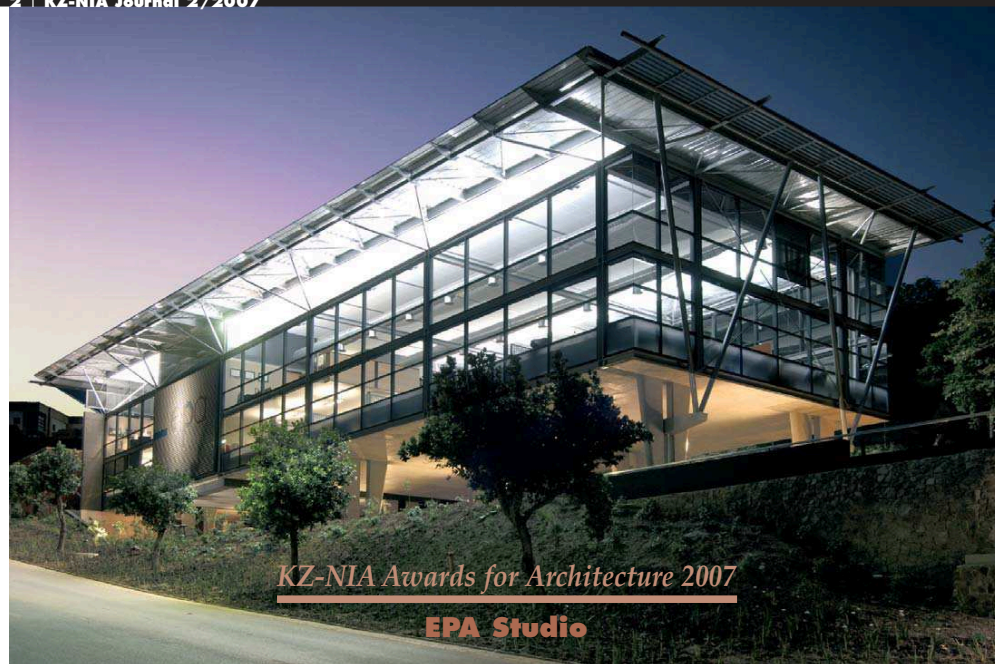
In setting up the tour for inspection, one architect telephoned to request a personal presentation of his building to the jury. According to that request set the precedent for the architect of each entry to serve as the guide and to answer any questions. That was a particular privilege.

Rather unusually, only nine entries were received, a single-digit figure last witnessed in 1981, for work executed during 1979–80. Besides, only two submissions were for residential houses, and all entries were located in Durban and the North Coast, making inspections possible over two consecutive days. Following the low entry in 1981, I wrote with concern in the Editorial of issue NPAA/1/1982 about the few buildings deemed worthy of an award being a cause for missing, and that concern I now reiterate. On the other hand, while jury inspections are a privilege, they can also be extremely tiring physically. The fact that the inspection of the 2007 submissions could be accomplished in two days was a pleasure indeed.

The jury appointed by the KZ-NIA regional committee comprised KZ-NIA-President Ivor Daniel who was elected chairman; architect from another region Ms Deborah Preller, Cape Institute immediate past-President; layperson Peter Kidger, Corobrik Director of Sales; three KZ-NIA members: Ms Nasreen Arabi 2001 Corobrik Regional Student; Mthulisi Msimang, Pietermaritzburg practitioner; and Sydney Baillon, co-ordinator and jury-member continuously since 1991; with the writer as the academic member. Because all submissions were easily reachable and space was available, 4th year exchange student at UKZN Aline Otto from Stuttgart University, was able to participate as an observer – on condition that she made herself useful – a proviso which she discharged with aplomb. This was indeed the most diverse jury KZ-NIA has ever fielded.

Differing from previous programmes, there is no longer a distinction between new buildings and conservation projects – all entries are now eligible for KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture. I am pleased with the outcome of the four Awards, which as usual and not unnaturally, the jury was not in all cases unanimous about. But all four have now been forwarded to Johannesburg for judging with other regional submissions for SAIA Awards of Merit, or for Excellence. We wish them well in this round where, certainly, their chances are as good as any other. We congratulate all winners but especially Elphick Proome Architects, on an Award for another office building of their own.

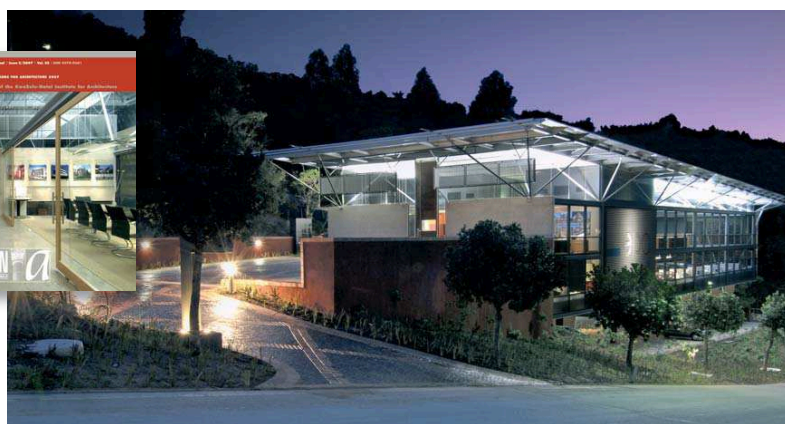
Walter Peters —Editor



COVER: View from inside EPA Studio to visitor entrance.



This project was announced overall winner of the 2007 SA Steel Institute's awards programme.
— Editor



EPA Studio
16 The Boulevard, Westway
Elphick Proome Architects

The practice had long outgrown its (1993 ISAA Natal Award of Merit) office building at Tollgate. Searching for a similarly accessible location, EPA acquired a steep vacant site in Westway Office Park below the N2 highway at the Pavilion Shopping Centre, Westville.

The architects turned the difficult site into an opportunity. Without compromising orientation, and by distinguishing between visitor and staff parking at either end of the road frontage, they reconciled the levels internally. This prompted the split level longitudinal section and the tilted roof plane in acknowledgement of the interior space.

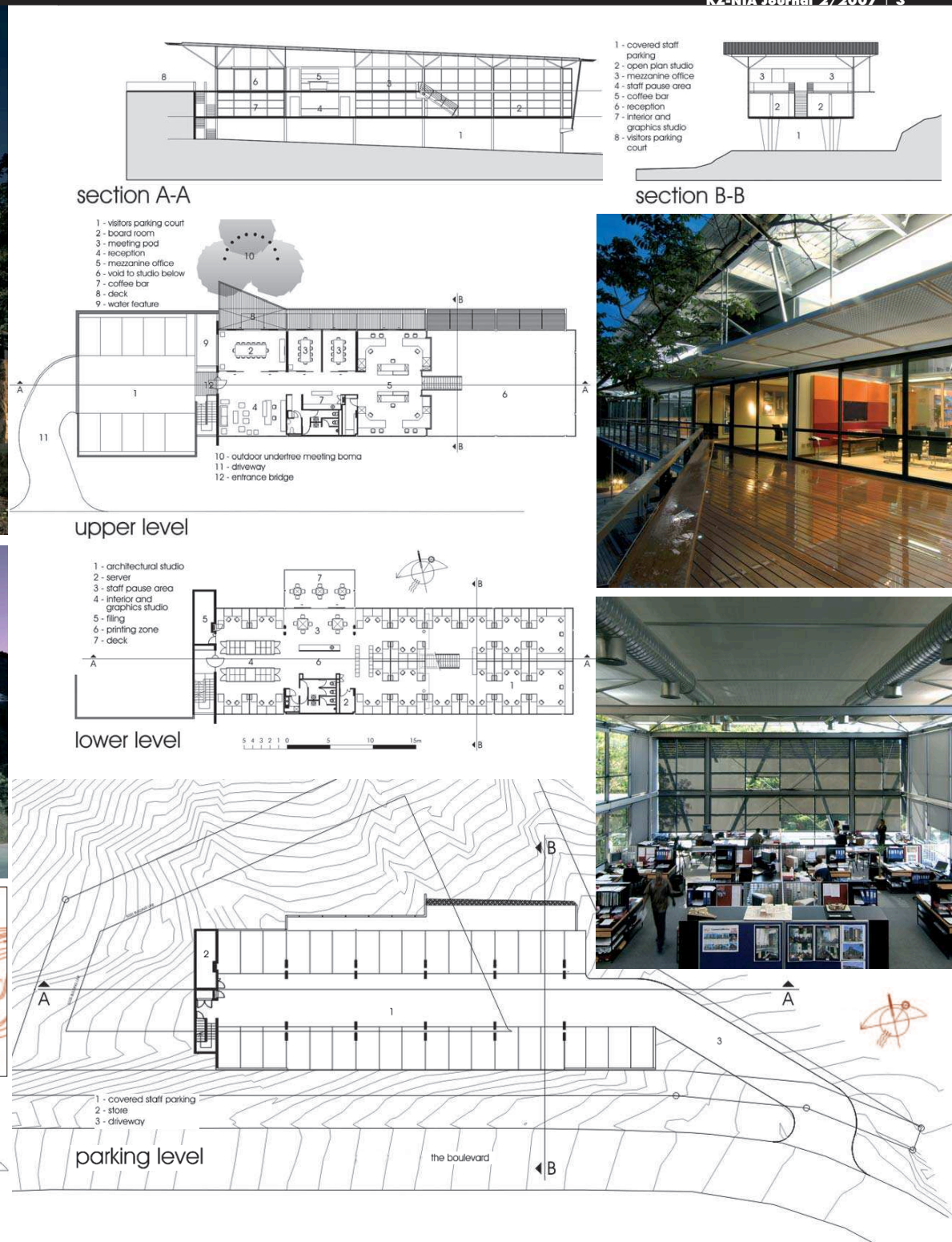
While working in an established modernist vocabulary, this glass and steel Miesian box is carefully crafted and site specific.

Due to the steepness of the site, the building is split over three levels. On one side, the staff parking-terrace provides the platform for the studio above; on the other, the visitor parking-terrace gives access to the public level, split to overlook the studio below. The whole is covered with a wide over-sailing roof, inclined in acknowledgement of the longitudinal cross-section.

The jury was impressed by the strong design concept; the precise fit with topography and nature; the resolution of the large volumes; the creation of poetic spaces; and the sensitive detailing.

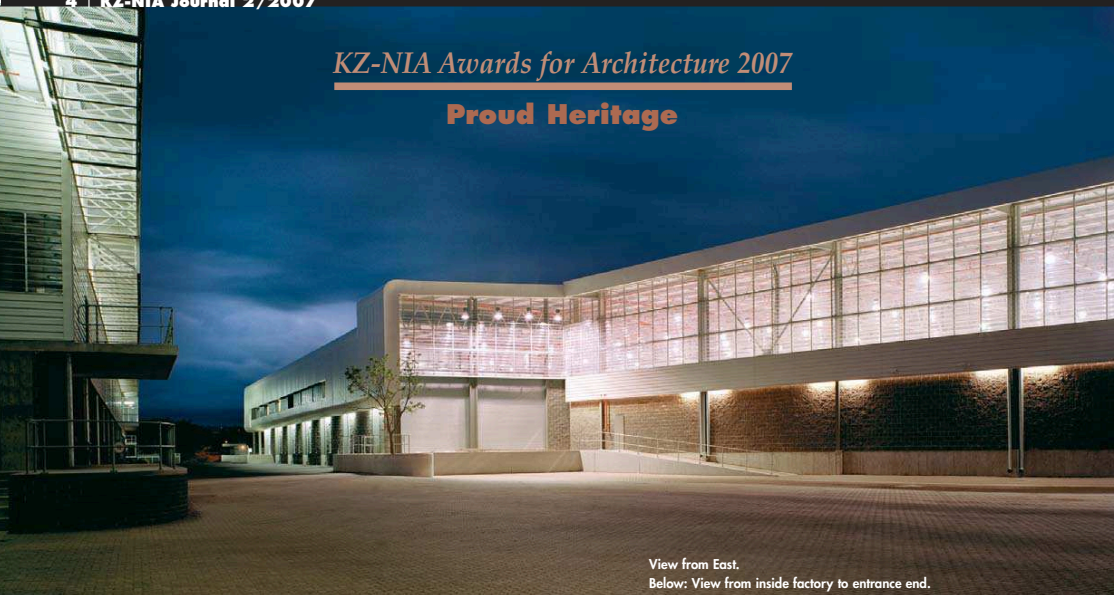


Quantity Surveyors: Francis Williams-Jones Kgole
Structural Engineers: Young & Satharia
Electrical Engineers: Ugesi Consulting
Mechanical Engineers: BD&O Design Partnership
Landscape Architects: Ulys & White
Contractor: Construction ID
Photographer: Karl Beath



KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture 2007

Proud Heritage



View from East.
Below: View from inside factory to entrance end.

Proud Heritage 20/37 Rustic Close, Briardene sound space design cc

The plan was determined, to a large extent, by the dictates of truck manoeuvring. Thus, the factory and the warehouse lie astride the interior street which is an extension of the access road. The problem inside the factory building was one of creating visual and functional connections, which was addressed by the double-storey solution at the entrance end.

Structural & Civil Engineering:
Young & Satharia
Mechanical & Electrical Engineering:
CS Consulting
Quantity Surveyors:
Edgecombe & Hayes-Hill
Contractors:
G Liviero & Son
Photography:
Dave Southwood; Angela Buckland
Below: Factory entrance.

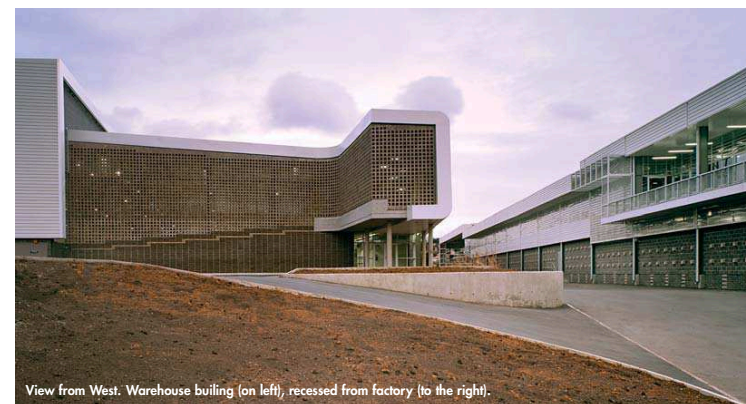
This project consists of two parallel industrial buildings of complementary character, conceived as a campus and architecturally characterized by ramps affording equity of access. These buildings had to be passively ventilated and naturally lit, and yet be comfortable and inspiring places to work in, aspects the jury experienced and can confirm.

One building is engaging and confidently acknowledges its status as the entrance to the campus; the other is recessed. One end of the main building contains the staff facilities on the lower floor and the administration and consulting area on the upper, providing visual connections with the factory floor and where one can enjoy a variety of viewing experiences offered from the elevated position.

The jury commends the concept, which through the assured and refined qualities of each design, lifts the bar for industrial buildings; the promotion of environmental initiatives; the rigour of constructional logic and the lucidity of the plans.



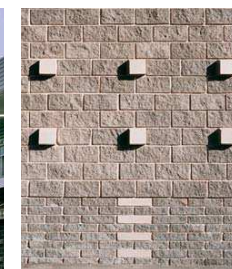
First Floor



View from West. Warehouse building (on left), recessed from factory (to the right).



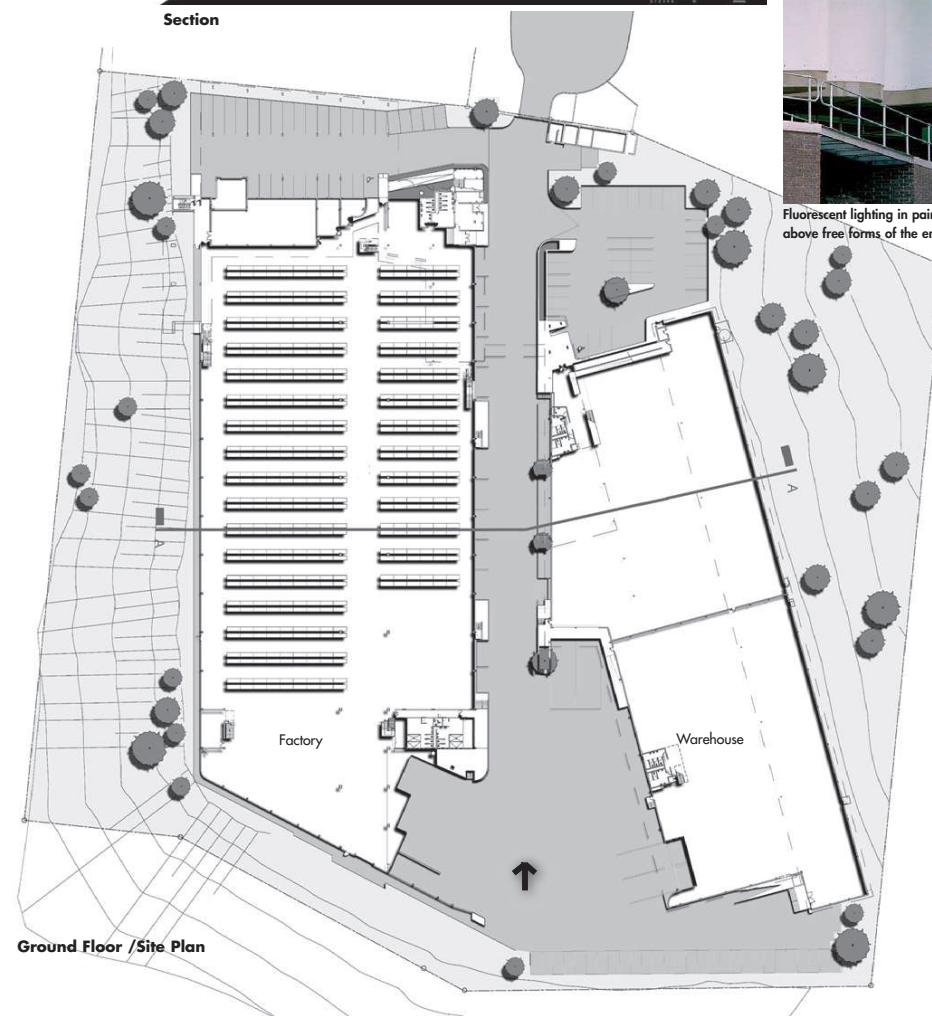
Section



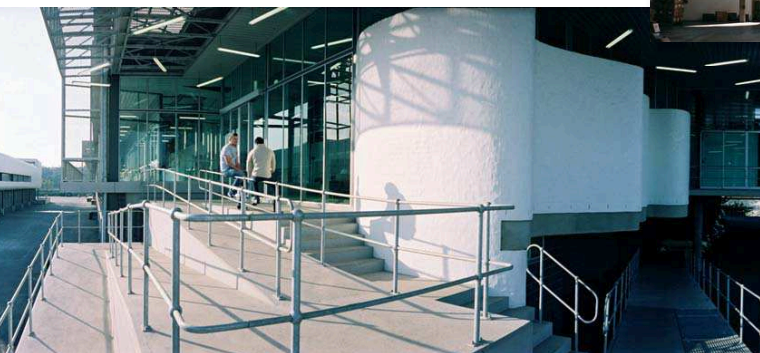
Rusticated brick- and black-work detail.



Fluorescent lighting in painterly fashion above free forms of the entrance area.

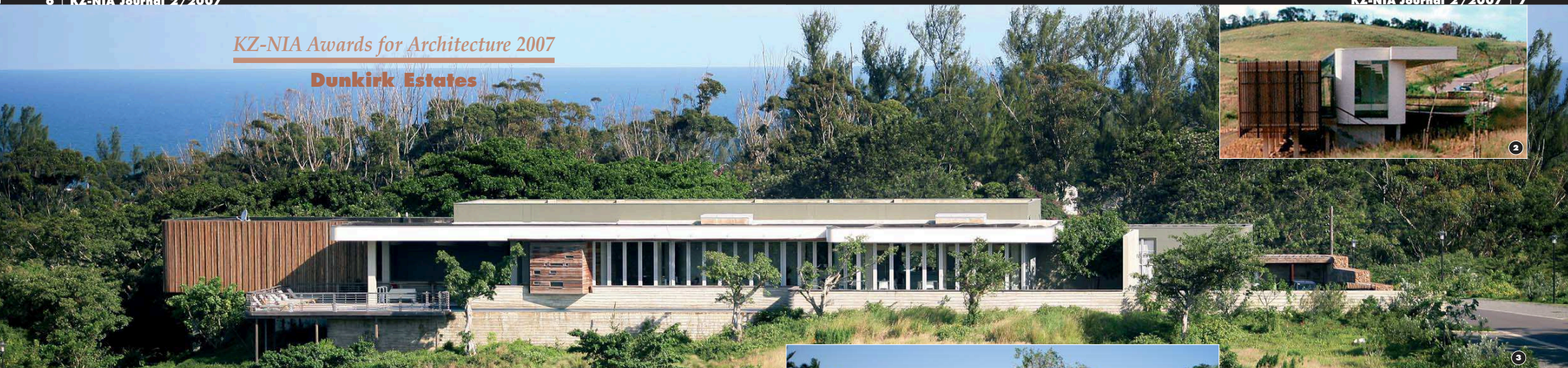


Ground Floor / Site Plan



KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture 2007

Dunkirk Estates

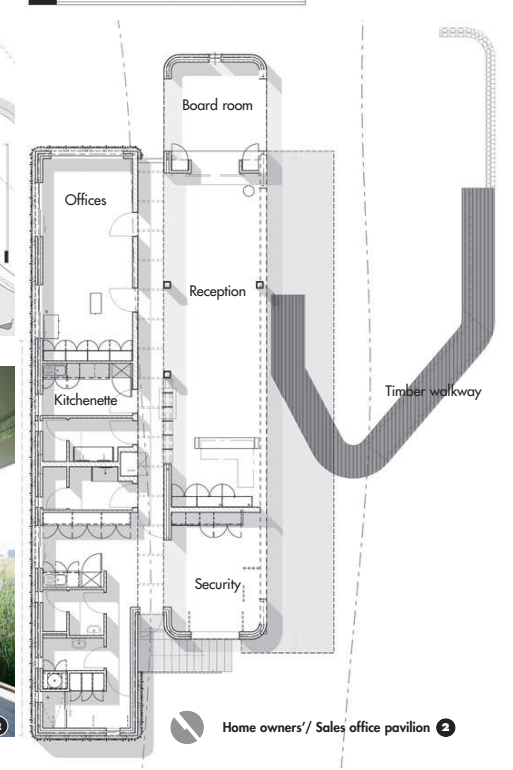
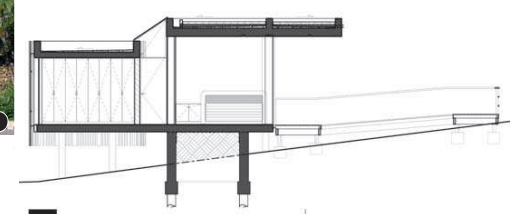
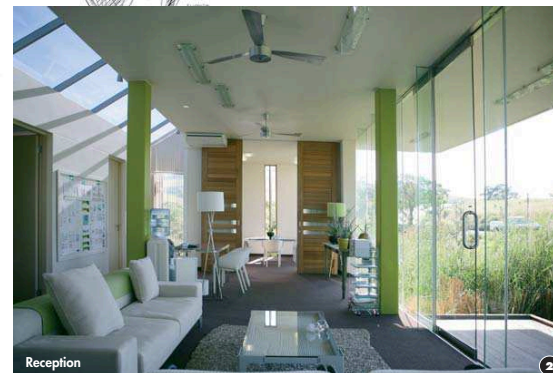
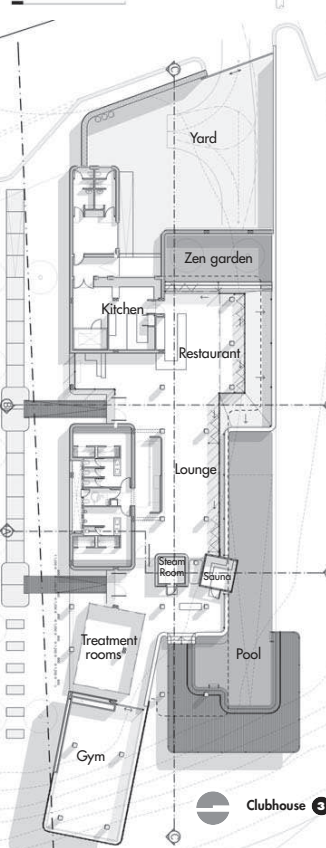
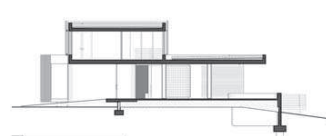


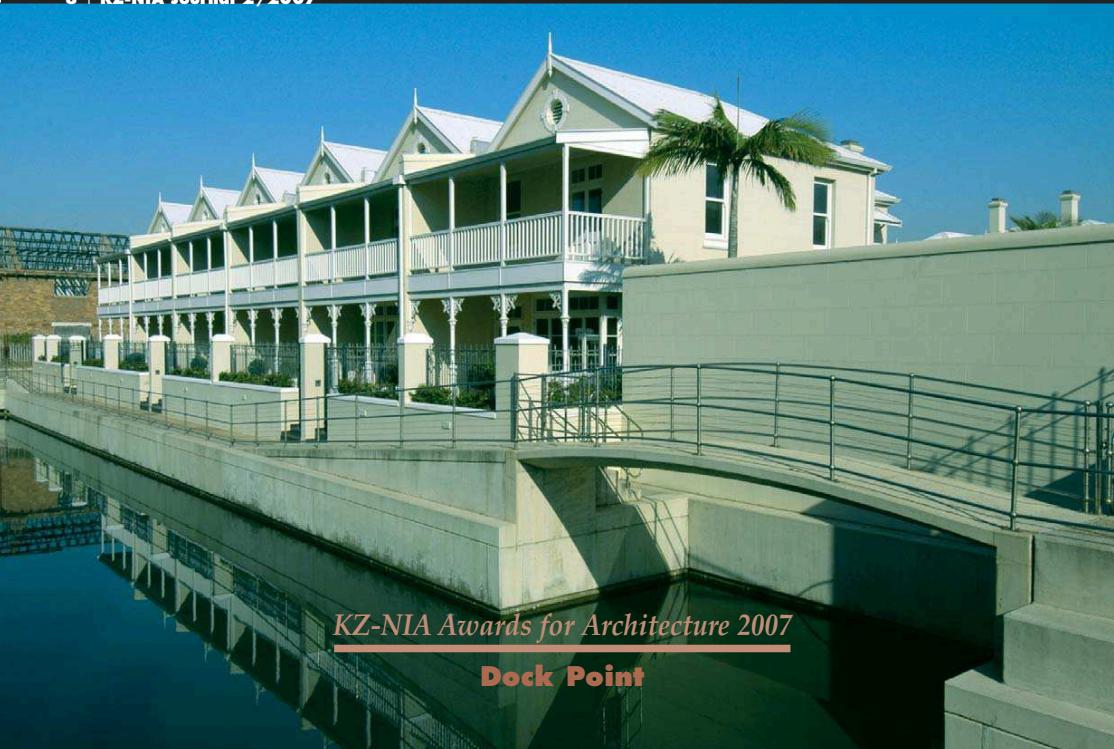
Dunkirk Estates
1 Salt Rock Rd, Salt Rock
OMM Design Workshop

Living in secure residential estates has brought with it an insistence of building within a set of design codes. At Dunkirk, the developers opted for another approach, believing that the quality of the public buildings, their settings and streetscapes would set the example for emulation.

This submission comprises the gateway, sales office and clubhouse for Dunkirk residential estate – public buildings commissioned to achieve a unique identity and high standard in preference to the usual arrangement of building with design codes.

The bold vocabulary of the portals, the modest footprint of the pavilions, and the conception of the clubhouse as both building and landscape, are all confidently contemporary design approaches yet specific to the natural context. The resultant buildings effuse a poetic balance between presence and transparency, and bode well for the full development of the verdant site.





KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture 2007

Dock Point

Dock Point

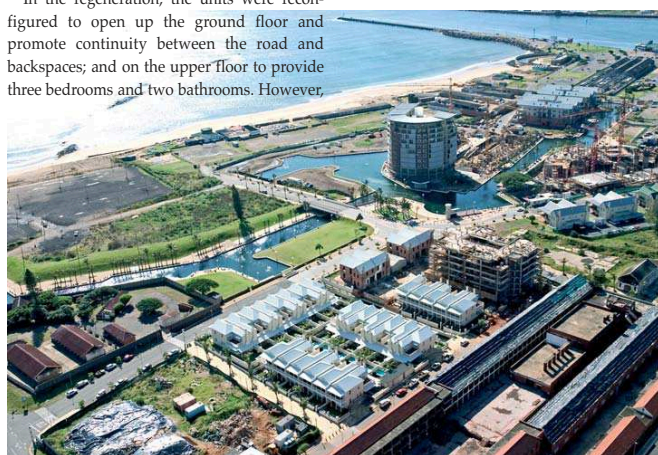
Patterson Street, Point
Emmett:Emmett Architects

This ensemble of back-to-back verandahed row-houses with picturesque chimneys and double-storey outbuildings, was built for dockworkers during the period 1895–1907, but long discarded and vandalized. Within the context of the redevelopment of the Point, the dividing street, Patterson Street, was recreated as an arm to the canal system.

In the regeneration, the units were reconfigured to open up the ground floor and promote continuity between the road and backspaces; and on the upper floor to provide three bedrooms and two bathrooms. However,

regeneration without two dedicated secure parking spaces per unit was unthinkable. Thus dawned the possibility of creating a parking basement within the confines of the backyard space. Over this, the outbuildings were reconstituted, as garden and entertainment facilities.

In the restoration, the corrugated roof sheeting was replaced by aluminium; sliding sashes and joinery were replicated; and missing cast iron elements substituted in aluminium.



The canalisation of Patterson Street:

ABOVE: Patterson Street recreated as an arm of the canal system.

BELOW: Before redevelopment.

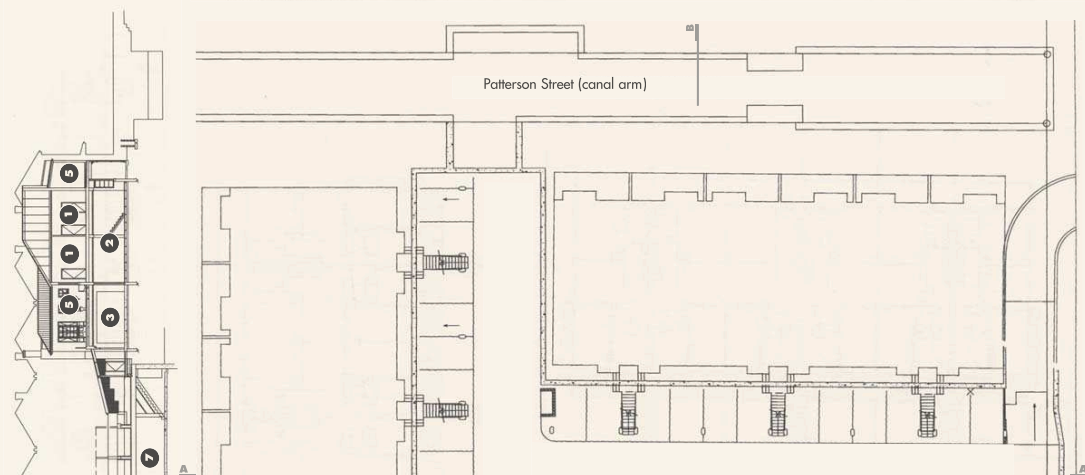
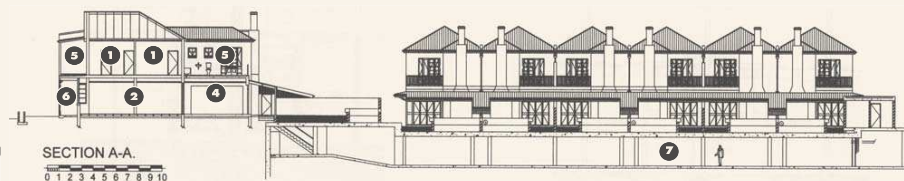


This unique cluster of Victorian row-houses had long been neglected. Within a vision of history as a continuous, changing process, the architects repaired the units and made them sound, reinstated lost details, and acknowledged their interventions by leaving footprints of the former spaces.

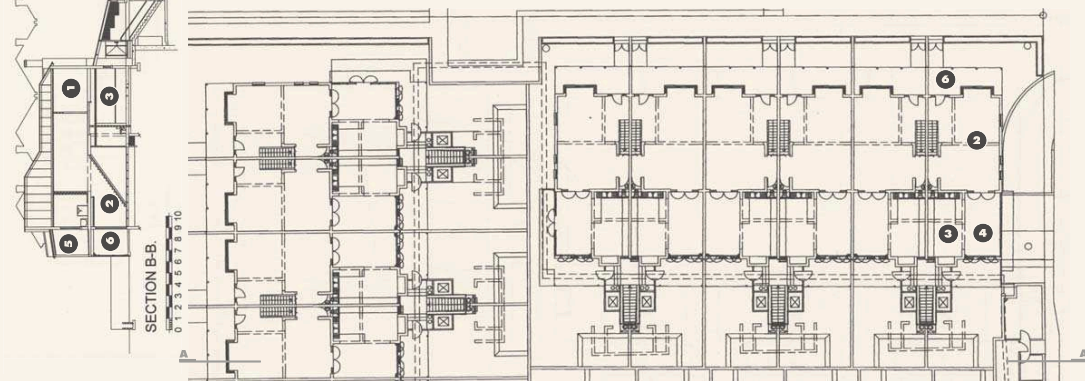
While viability involved the removal of the outbuildings and the incorporation of a parking basement, the ensemble was given new life in a way which celebrates the past.

The jury was impressed by the restraint exercised in the regeneration of this heritage streetscape of row-houses.

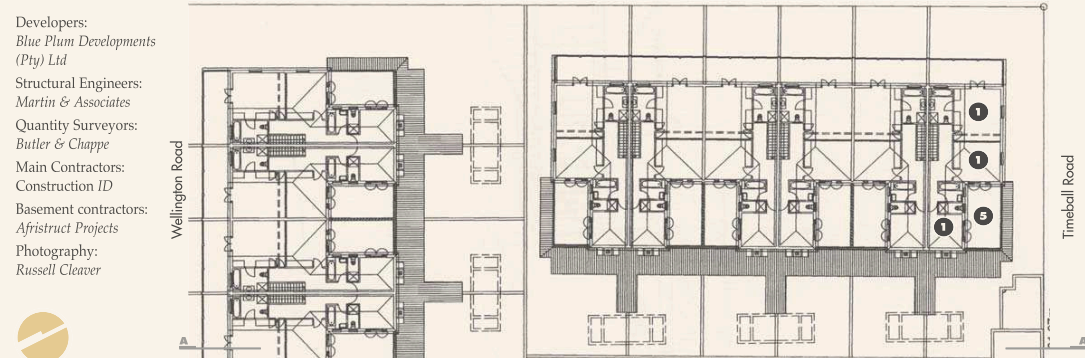
- 1 Bedroom
- 2 Living Room
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Dining Room
- 5 Balcony
- 6 Verandah
- 7 Basement Parking



Part-Basement



Part-Ground floor



Part-First floor

Developers:
Blue Plum Developments
(Pty) Ltd

Structural Engineers:
Martin & Associates

Quantity Surveyors:
Butler & Chappe

Main Contractors:
Construction ID

Basement contractors:
Afristruct Projects

Photography:
Russell Cleaver



KZ-NIA Awards for Architecture 2007

Comments on the 2007 KZ-NIA Awards Programme

Not being able to lay claim to being born in KwaZulu-Natal, nor having received any form of education there, I can only admit that KZ-NIA has always been one of my favourite Provinces (probably as a result of spending memorable childhood holidays there, as did most of us growing up, land-locked in what used to be Transvaal). And as it also couldn't have been through my being a direct descendant of Dingaan's friend Piet Retief – as that hasn't earned me brownie points for some time now – I can only surmise that it is the images of rolling hills, sunshine, vibrant colour and the intoxicating mix of cultures which makes this Province so appealing.

Lately, KZ-N has become a local reminder of my life and roots in Jamaica. Durban, in particular, is very much like Kingston: the colonial history so much in evidence between [East] Indian and African culture, the lush tropical foliage and undulating hills softening both the built landscape and the divide between rich and poor, and between old formal and new informal settlements. So to be invited as the “architect from another Province” was a great privilege and a pleasure. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and thank Ivor, Wally and KZ-NIA for the opportunity.

In recent years I was also fortunate to be the “architect from another province” for the 2005 Free State and the Northern Cape regions; being closely involved with my own region [the Cape]; and as a member of the national jury for the 2003 SAIA Awards of Merit and for Excellence. This, and now visiting KZ-N, gives one an overview of the ‘state of the nation’, highlighting architectural differences and similarities, regional issues and agendas – but most importantly it confirms that we have tremendously talented practitioners amongst our members, some whose work has proved to stand tall internationally. However, there are many colleagues, both members and non-members of the Institute, who do not feel it necessary to enter their work for scrutiny by their peers, resulting in meritorious work remaining undiscovered or unrecognised.

Selecting the right combination of these ‘peers’ to constitute adjudication panels is a critical part of the Awards process. KZ-NIA seems to have a well organised system as regards to continuity in the seasoned academic, Wally, and the young Pietermaritzburg practitioner Mthulisi. Another regular, Sydney, was our convenor. The ‘layman’ was represented by *Corobrik*'s Peter [Kidger]; while Nasreen who works in the local authority brought knowledge of the City's vision; Ivor the KZ-NIA president and the natural choice to

chair our panel; and myself as the ‘uitlander’. (As I was now the third woman in a row fulfilling this role, KZ-NIA is to be congratulated on also being sensitive towards gender, albeit towards the more mature or middle-aged female architects!).

Our panel seemed to ‘gel’ easily; there were the usual debates – and as one would expect, polite and not at all heated – and remarkably few disagreements. Coming from the Cape where things can get rather tense, with public report-backs demanded from the panel to explain their choices where these are not in agreement with the local mafia, we have hopefully come off lightly in KZ-N! (Unlike other regions, the management committee of the KZ-NIA approves the panel's decisions before announcing the awards.)

This year positive changes were made to the SAIA Awards Programme that should go some way to alleviate previous complaints. It is no longer required that the regional panels select which of their regional awards are eligible for the ‘Merit Award’ category, as all projects receiving Regional Awards will be considered. The intention is to allow a more consistent evaluation by the single national jury. So we constantly reminded each other that this round was *not* the adjudication of the Awards of Merit or Awards for Excellence – but that another team would be doing that at the next tier! But

we all surely know and accept that appreciation of architecture ends up being subjective, and due to the unique composition of each regional jury this could, invariably, lead to not only a few ruffled feathers but real unhappiness, and sometimes understandably so.

It was reassuring that we were able to visit all of the KZ-N entries over two days and could give each project our undivided attention and consideration. (Pity the poor convenor attempting to coordinate the Cape panel's visit to the 60 projects entered there this year...a logistical nightmare and a drain on panel members' time given so freely and unselfishly!)

Another welcome change to the Awards Programme was that all regions now bestow regional “Awards of Architecture” on the winning built projects – the title ‘Commendation’ never did sound right. Our panel debated whether there should be a category for special ‘Silver/25 year Awards’ given to projects which have stood the test of time.

What I missed amongst the various building types were the community projects which are usually of a high standard in KZ-N. Surprisingly, too, there were very few individual houses (to compare yet again: coming from the Cape where half the entries are luxury residences costing as much as a school or two or three). This was a relief – and a positive



Proud Heritage, Briardene.
sound space design cc.

RIGHT: Dunkirk, Salt Rock.
OMM Design Workshop.



127 Nkwazi Drive, Zinkwazi. Kawansky Roos Architects.



Hopdene Grove, Berea. Alistair Hume Architect.

indication for KZ-N and South African architecture in general.

Juries are not often asked to adjudicate industrial projects. But here we were introduced to the work of a young and very capable architect who appears to think logically, clearly and creatively, combining vibrant, sleek administrative spaces with honest, practical industrial areas. I salute this young designer who convinces owners of industrial premises to transform their unglamorous workhorse-buildings into beautiful sculptural elements, layered facades and creative sophistication when these could so easily have been the usual unimaginative industrial complexes.

I am looking forward to seeing, in time, whether a beautiful wooded forest will emerge around the mini-Michel Memorial look-alike; whether the monumental proportions of a ‘getaway’ holiday home (complete with lack of handrail at the rim-flow pool on the second floor which made me unsure on my feet for the rest of the day) helps its owners to relax; whether the quote in the well detailed, well executed strong concept of the architects' offices will keep reminding their young designers that “simple does not mean easy”; whether there is a fine line between restoration and replication; whether a vibrant community



Cover KZ-NIAJ 1/2007: Research Office, UKZN, Westville campus. MA Gafoor Architect cc.

will again flourish at Dock Point; and whether real tree canopies can be substituted with roofs.

Whilst visiting one of the entries, we happened to look down onto a dismal looking roof-garden, once “an open expanse of lawn, shrubs and trees and an extensive area of quarry tile and brick paving – spread out like a richly patterned carpet...a rooftop haven, shared with several tortoises who inhabit it” (Harrop-Allin: 1975, 108). We were seeing the now moth-eaten “carpet” on the roof of the last



major work by one of the most underrated South African architects – Norman Eaton's Netherlands Bank – completed in 1965.

In paying tribute to Eaton after his death in 1966, Lord Holford rated this as Eaton's “most complete, most perfect design. Despite the traffic and the general melange of Smith Street, the little building...holds its own in scale, texture, colour and composition with the whole of Durban's central

business district. It is one of the most charming modern buildings in the world” (Harrop-Allin: 1975, 111).

Staring at the Bank later from across Smith Street, I desperately wanted to give this building an award! I trust that KZ-NIA, known as a region where architectural heritage and conservation is taken seriously, will encourage the owners of this building to cherish and protect this modest gem in the changing inner city. And so, yes, KZ-NIA start the ball rolling by giving this and other deserving older and ‘timeless’ projects in your region their “Silver Awards”!

Deborah Preller

A graduate of the University of Pretoria and partner in the Cape Town-based practice Groenewald Preller Architects, Ms Preller is immediate-past CIA-President. — Editor

Bibliography:

Harrop-Allin, C (1975) *Norman Eaton: Architect*. Cape Town: Struik.



1980s photograph from street level, Netherlands Bank, Smith Street, Durban. Norman Eaton, 1965.

INSET: Roof Terrace, 2007.

BELOW: Truism attributed to Le Corbusier emblazoned on the lintel of the staff entrance at EPA Studio. (Jencks, C *Le Corbusier and the Tragic View of Architecture*).



Reflections on a visit to South Africa

Architectural History as a Codification of Memory

It was only last year, after decades of involvement with vernacular architecture elsewhere in Africa, that an invitation from the Tshwane University of Technology to participate in the South African Architecture Students' Conference (May 2006) afforded an opportunity to visit what was for me a still unexplored part of the continent. It was a visit I had long resisted, yet ardently yearned for ever since Professor Franco Frescura's Ph.D. dissertation on indigenous rural South African architecture had crossed my desk.

Readily admitting to an almost complete ignorance of South African architecture, the proposed visit involved frantically tracking down the sparse available literature in US libraries and going *en charette*. Cramming to absorb the abbreviated entries from *The Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, I was spurred on by the fascinating photographic imagery and moving descriptions of Margaret Courtney-Clarke and David Goldblatt, and followed up with Walton, Knuffel, Biermann and Van Wyk. However, I quickly realized that unlike the Africa I was familiar with, there was a solid corpus of subject matter above and beyond the vernacular tradition, so I proceeded to peruse Lewcock and Fransen & Cook, then Kearney and Larssen, and was ultimately sobered by the South African National Building Research Institute reports tucked away deep within American archival resources. But no amount of cramming prepared me for the rich fare of hospitality, familiarity – and complexity – which I subsequently encountered in the course of my visit.

Exhausted by the long hours of travel, compounded by an unexpected overnight delay in Dakar, I immediately realized, from the warm welcoming reception I received, that the virtue of hospitality is truly indigenous to ALL of Africa – it extends across the entire continent. I had come to share my own particular accumulated knowledge of African architecture, acquired over decades of research and practice with South African listeners, but in the course of my two-week visit, I soon discovered that as different as South Africa was from other quadrants of the continent, it was still very much Africa and there was much that was remarkably familiar to me. I had come “home” again.

There is a well-known West African saying that “In Africa, when an elder

dies, it is like a library which has burnt down”. In recalling and highlighting vignettes from my West African perspective of architecture, I sought to share my personal library “before it burnt down” with architecture students in South Africa. The image which remains most vividly in my mind as the most unique experience of my visit – indeed of my life's experience – were the exciting hours during which I was able to look out over a sea of some 700 eager, attentive faces – black and white student conferees who patiently and politely tolerated the mishaps imposed by my antiquated visual slide presentation.

The lessons from my past involvement with African architectural history which I tried to convey to them, is that architectural thought and creativity, primarily visual, is even more so in the African context, where the art of memory is often grounded in – and expressed via – spatial metaphors. Houses, streets, walls, windows and gates are never simply utilitarian works, explained by sociological and/or anthropological rationale; their configurations are born of, and weaned by the cultural dimensions of space. In such cultures and societies, the art of memory is often grounded in – and expressed via – spatial metaphors. The built environment is thus a repository of collective and individual history and memory. Indeed, one can speak of architectural history as a codification of memory. By extension, the technological style and performance embedded in building components are equally supported by a set of

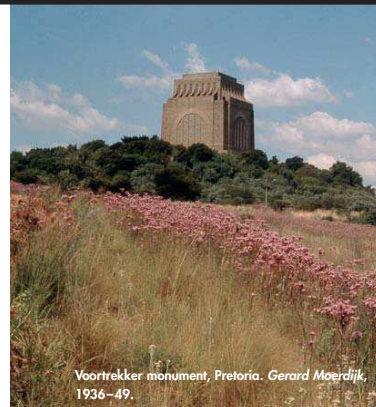
underlying values related to the metaphysical dimensions of reality.

Considering architectural history from a practitioner's perspective, the genesis of any design – whether it be anonymous or authored, individual or collective – involves a set of participating collaborators. Each of the participants brings to the process his or her own cultural heritage and intellect, infusing it and endowing it with different, often divergent or diverse sets of meaning in the course of its life. Their dialogue, progressively modified over time, is intrinsic to its aesthetic. Transplanted in space, this dialogue changes by its very introduction into another context. New owners and new users in turn imbue and overlay it with new symbolic and tectonic dimensions, much like a process of conceptual patination, a process exemplified by the range of architectural imagery which unfolded in the course of my brief visit.

What intrigued me most in the course of my very intense, much too hurried exposure was the complex interface over time between the indigenous and the interloper, the invader and the immigrant, which coalesced into its cultural – hence architectural – history.

Shepherded and chauffeured at breakneck-speed through a host of contrasting impressions by the caring hands and thoughtful concern of a multitude of newly-met colleagues, the truly rich mix of experiences could hardly be matched: the sensory display beneath the Tumulus at Maropeng in the Cradle of Mankind which, encapsulated, honors and acknowledges the birthplace of humanity in South Africa, and the rock paintings of the San Bushmen; the dramatic vistas of the central and northern Drakensberg mountains which majestically and sequentially unfolded, cradling the Basotho Cultural Village nestled within. The persistent, albeit close to extinct presence, of Zulu armature-frame housing evoked the Somali *Danakil* and Kenyan *Gabra* nomadic housing which I was so familiar with from the desert, while the rural stone and thatch ‘cone on cylinder’ prototypes of mountaintop housing in Lesotho appeared equally familiar to me from elsewhere on the African continent, and the exploration of urban Mamelodi low-cost housing and informal settlement, which subtly unveiled both urban problems and solutions, again evoked the West African context and the seemingly unanswerable questions of viable housing solutions.

In contrast, the solitary pinnacle of the Voortrekker Monument rising above Pretoria like a symbolic beacon only approachable and accessible by its hazardous steps, reminded me



Voortrekker monument, Pretoria. Gerard Maerdijk, 1936–49.

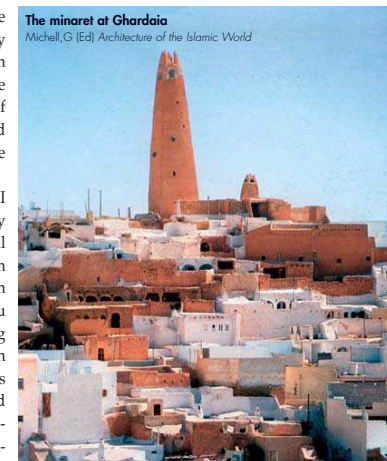
of the tower in Henrik Ibsen's *The Master Builder*, (London: Heinemann, 1893) a symbol of both defeat and victory. It seemed particularly fitting that the Awards Ceremony for the Des Baker Student Competition sponsored by *Murray & Roberts* was staged at its apex, and that the first winning entry focused not on place, but on street interaction as the essence of the city and city life. But the Voortrekker Monument equally brought to mind the single minaret rising above the hilltop city of Ghardaia, Algeria, in the North African Mzab, and now, in retrospect, I recall the validity of Norberg-Schultz's discussion of the vertical dimension as both the sacred dimension of space and the ultimate expression of man's power of creation.

Among the limited library resources I explored during my personal preparatory *charette*, was an exhibition of architectural research carried out by the South African National Building Research Institute in 1946–56. One of the projects was on ‘Bantu housing’, another was on ‘low-cost housing for Europeans’, and another was on ‘Indian and Coloured housing’. Since no basis existed for judging what was ‘valid housing’, the goal set forth was “the establishment of minimum standards of accommodation for low-cost housing in south Africa.” The proposed prototypes were coaxed exclusively in terms of building materials and their costs. The parallels with my own early efforts in Ghana, in response to resettlement

needs generated by the building of the Volta Dam and the formation of the Volta Lake, struck me forcefully.

More than anything else, the visit (much too short) inspired me to consider and ruminate on new research which might explore the underlying tenets of vernacular architecture throughout the African continent, tenets which could provide new insights into the current concern with ‘sustainability’, provide new inspiration for the African Renaissance and suggest innovative ways of exploring what lies at the basis of a truly indigenous African architectural value system.

How is architectural knowledge and expertise transmitted? Who were the designers, the builders and skilled artisans responsible for architectural creativity in South Africa, and what was their role and position within Africa's complex social and symbolic building process? How did architectural design and decision-making interface with indigenous building practices and traditions on one hand and with political aspiration and/or religious dictates on the other?



The minaret at Ghardaia
Michell, G. (Ed) *Architecture of the Islamic World*

‘Sustainability’ needs to be redefined in terms of maintenance and renew-ability; worded not in terms of purely physical needs, but in terms of providing an environment in which a person can find his/her own identity. It is not inherent in the building material itself, but in how that material or service invites interaction with, is attended to, and lovingly preserved by its users.

The questions which beg for answers include how local artists and architects (male and female) integrate traditions of foreign origin into their own heritage? How indigenous architects transform newly-introduced western architecture into ‘their own’? How indigenous building practices interact with the introduction of Western science and technology? What is the relationship between African

vernacular and the dynamics of urbanism in post-colonial, post-apartheid South Africa?

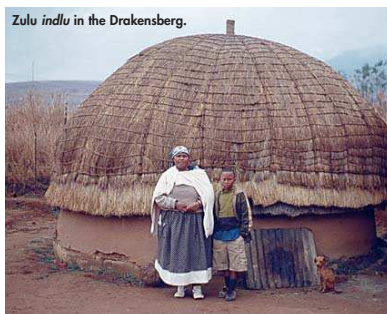
More specifically, how does leaving women and related family members behind as heads-of-households, particularly in the context of the mass exodus of men to urban centers, with communities characterized by women builders, women's ownership, occupancy and jurisdiction, affect architectural creativity? How can the innovative integration of available ‘pre-fab’ urban components into so-called rural-vernacular environments be defined and initiated? How can the innovative use and re-use of traditional resources be explored? How do the changing patterns of urbanization and redefined occupancy impact on available and exercised choices? How does the integration of ‘high-tech’ and ‘pre-fab’ building materials which the re-allocation of building skills has generated, affect the consequent gender-discrete involvement in the building process?

Initially educated in the arts, my motive and rationale in choosing architecture as a profession was that it was the most ‘social’ of the arts, and it offered a path leading to what could be a most meaningful personal life. The world, Africa in particular, has changed since I began to construct my life – and so have I. The decades have been witness to a vast transformation within which new global approaches, new interpretations of cultural identity and innovative insights into architectural viability have unfolded. By combining continuity and change, common denominators and expanded comparisons, with an appreciation and respect for the native genius, both anonymous and authored, African architectural history can provide the world at large with a paradigm for the very definition of the practicing profession and its tectonic heritage. By looking at indigenous knowledge systems, the lost roots of architecture, the true principles of an African aesthetic can be recovered.

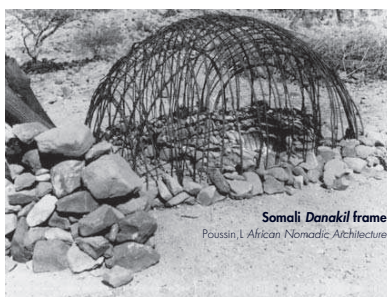
I am deeply indebted to the many colleagues and conference organizers who by giving of their time and hospitality, transformed my visit from merely an ‘experience’ into a set of revelations – rather like *satori*. This initial visit has inspired me with an ardent desire not only to return, but to continue to learn from and contribute to, a brave new African world.

Labelle Prussin

After practising architecture in the USA, 1955-61, Prof Prussin practised and taught in Ghana, 1961-66. She is the author of “Hutunere: Islamic Design in West Africa” (1986) and “African Nomadic Architecture: Space, Place and Gender” (1995); Professor Emeritus of City University of New York; and Honorary Fellow of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. To add to those accolades, Prof Prussin has recently been appointed an Honorary Research Fellow at UKZN. —Editor



Zulu indlu in the Drakensberg.



Somali *Danakil* frame
Poussin, L. *African Nomadic Architecture*



Stone rondavel, Lesotho



Architects a decade into independent practice

Film Set Design: "Russian Survivor"



Acacia thorn-wood perimeter stockades

The Editorial Committee of KZ-NIA Journal has decided to promote the work of emerging practices by featuring a project by a practice in operation for less than a decade in every issue. KZ-NIA members who meet this criteria, are encouraged to contact the KZ-NIA Executive Officer so that coverage can be planned for.

—Editor

peter königkrämer
architects cc

Looking for a film location for an upcoming Russian version of the reality television series Survivor, the Moscow-based Russian television company VID approached the Johannesburg producers Endemol to facilitate. To VID the word 'Zulu' had become synonymous with Africa, and the once fierce warrior-nation had a history deemed exciting in world terms. The series would be broadcast in prime-time, on the First Channel of Russian Television, with an anticipated audience of eight million people and a budget of R30m!

Having selected Amatikulu Nature Reserve on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast as the



Completing the domical structure formed by arches in two directions on plan.
Below left: Saplings bent and tied to form arches from four points of ignition.

preferred location, VID undertook to include a large component of Zulu heritage within its Survivor production. However, progressive environmental legislation in South Africa meant that negotiations to construct the large film set within a proclaimed nature reserve were lengthy and complex.

Brief

The brief was to design and construct a large traditional Zulu homestead or *umuzi* to be used as the main film set. Unusually, the architect was also tasked with obtaining the necessary film permits and was to fulfil an advisory role in ensuring that the Zulu heritage was treated with sensitivity and respect. Due to the rigid time-frames and delays in securing the film permit, construction of the set had to be completed in just six days!



Thatching commences with the affixing of the perimeter mat of *ubhaqa* grass.

Below: The crown is covered with mats formed of *ubhaqa* grass tied end-to-end.



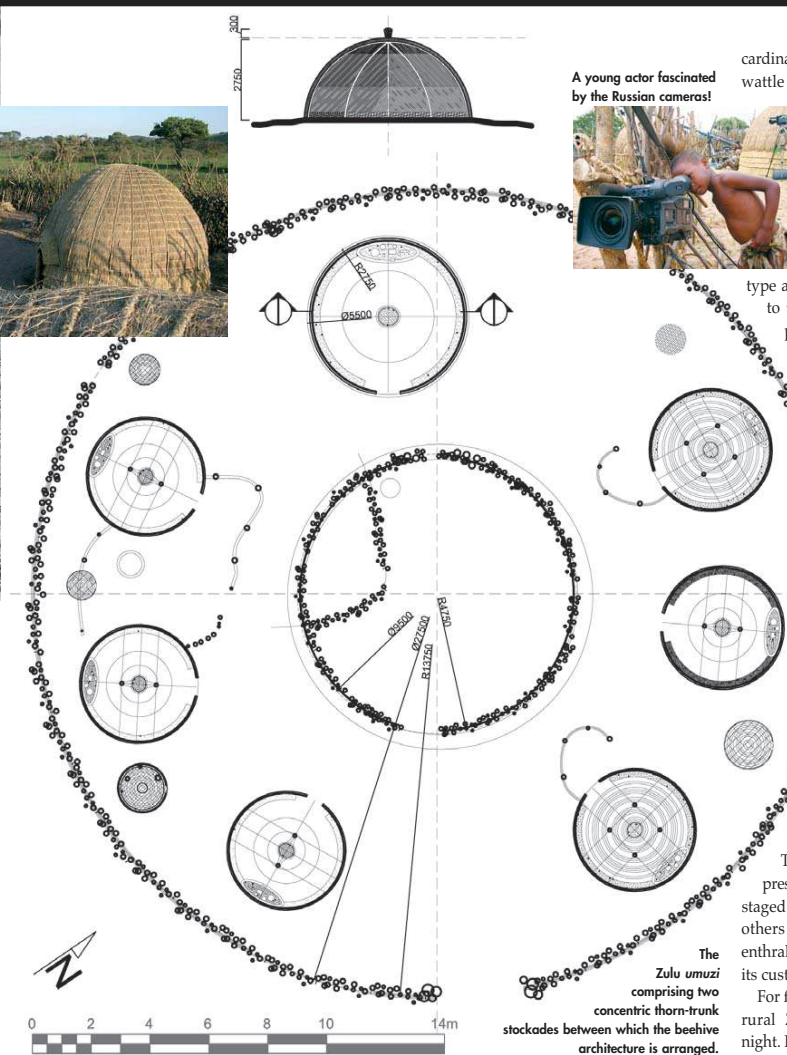
Design criteria included:

- Compliance with the completion deadline of six days, which could not be extended under any circumstances.
- Historical accuracy with the utmost attention to detail.
- An understanding that the end product would be subjected to camera scrutiny from all angles including aerial footage.
- Consideration of the environmental impact of construction and building processes on both flora and fauna within the nature reserve.
- Ensuring that the components of the set could physically accommodate twenty-five local Zulu people and provide them with shelter from the elements for a period of forty days.

Construction preparation

To ensure least damage to sensitive plants and bulbs, a 100mm layer of river-sand was spread across the site during construction and subsequent filming. This protective layer was then carefully removed after filming to allow a full rejuvenation of the many plant species. Material storage, access to site and, in particular, foot-traffic (including a 100 member Russian film crew) was confined to demarcated areas.

The natural acacia thorn-wood required for the construction of the perimeter stockades was sourced from within the nature reserve under the guidance of conservation officials. This was labour-intensive but ensured the employment of locals and was consistent with bush encroachment policies.



Mist-belt *ingongoni* grass layered beneath the woven grass ropes.



A young actor fascinated by the Russian cameras!



cardinal points. This results in a double layer of wattle sapling or *intingu* rings, which are secured in opposing directions to form the underlying domical structural-lattice. As height progresses, the dome slowly takes shape, propped occasionally inside at an angle, with bark twine securing each *intingu* to the other.

A series of grass mats, unique in type and weave are then applied as underlay to the primary thatching layer. The lower perimeter mats are formed by thatch *ubhaqa* woven side by side; the slender ends upwards with the cut ends below to shed water.

A series of overlapping layers create horizontal shadow lines which then disappear beneath successive layers of mats. The crown of the dome is covered with mats formed by thatch *ubhaqa* tied end-to-end whilst fanned grasses radiate around the entrance arch. Woven grass ropes; tethered at entrance level are stretched over the matted dome to form an external strapping, to which are interwoven fine twines in concentric horizontal rings beneath which the mist-belt *ingongoni* grass is layered.

Filming

The *umuzi* set was completed in the prescribed six days. Cultural events were staged within its enclosures, some Russian, others Zulu. Russian audiences were enthralled by the beauty of Africa, its people, its customs, and its beliefs.

For forty days it became home to twenty-five rural Zulus. Most became celebrities over night. Few seemed intimidated by the cameras. A smile, a handshake, or a nodding of the head seemed to transcend language and cultural barriers. Two young Zulu men even made the journey to snow-covered Moscow, as guests of VID and ambassadors of Zululand.

On conclusion of the film-shoot, the set was demolished and its components recycled to the local communities from whence they came. The grass has now re-grown and the site is rehabilitated.

Peter Königkrämer

Peter graduated from Natal in 1998 and gained experience in both the private and public sectors before setting up on his own in Glenwood, Durban, in 2004. Besides practising architecture, he is an accredited guide and specialist in Zulu culture and owns and manages a cultural tourism and development company, Zulu Country Tours cc. With this background, he was an appropriate choice for an unusual commission in beehive architecture

—Editor

Building the beehives

The core construction team comprised forty locals. In line with tradition, the men undertook the structural work whilst the women attended to the ornate grass weaving and thatching.

The Zulu *umuzi* comprises two concentric thorn-trunk stockades between which the beehive architecture was arranged. One enters the outer enclosure on the lower side; then encounters the grass beehive domes or *iqhugwana*, which radiate and disappear to either side of the *isibaya*.

A dome is an arch rotated around its vertical axis. Typically domes have vast structural strength. In this case, saplings were driven into a circle marked on the floor, and then bent to form arches initiated, effectively, from the four

A Travel Diary Thessaloniki to Athens



- 1 Thessaloniki
- 2 Xorto
- 3 Meteora
- 4 Mendini
- 5 Amfissa
- 6 Aliki
- 7 Athens



Diminishing light before a golden sunset in Xorto.

A week with the Hellenes

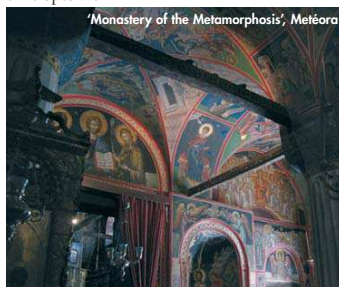
I 'love' people who fly into South Africa and after being here for a week, discourse expertly about what we do wrong and how we should go about repairing it. So, I decided to do the same thing to the people of Greece. Here then, are my observations and recommendations!

I think you should be more welcoming to tourists and foreigners, although having read up a little of your history over the past fifteen-hundred years or so, I forgive you. It's spine-chilling to drive through the mysterious mountains and small settlements and see simple memorials and hear the stories of slaughter and heroism—be they Gestapo, Bulgars, Ottomans, Crusaders, Venetians, Atatürk's armies, or whoever.

So, don't change anything—continue to distrust everyone and everything. Make them

work for your recognition. Keep making that slow, deep melancholy music that spans East and West, Ancient and New. Keep the nervous *bouzouki* in the foreground to make the bodies move. (Hear it, by the way, on DSTV, Greek Channel 95, on Saturday-night late!) Don't touch those ancient Byzantine churches sunk beneath the ground and groaning with history and faith, architectural spaces that only grow and reveal themselves if you linger. Time in any case seems eternal here. Candlelight flickers onto smoke-layered vaults, as if searching for golden images.

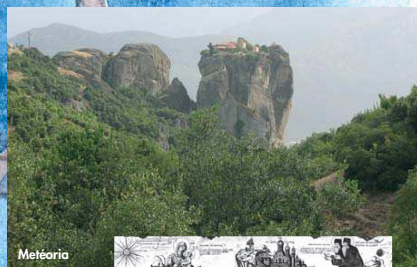
I recommend that they stay as they are, keep loving them and they will preserve that sense of eternity and eventuality that envelops them.



'Monastery of the Metamorphosis', Meteora



Thessaloniki



Meteoria



The Sutherland's and friends, Xorto.

Do not listen to your 'American'-educated tourism CEOs who force you to build parking areas, bridges and staircases into remote mountain monasteries, once only accessible by basket or ladder. Only glimpses survive. These buildings were hewn inch by inch into the depth of the sandstone conglomerate. Carefully placed stones were packed and cemented with prayer. Not a job for contractors and consultants. The results are sad. I think you are doing the correct thing when you plant small road-signs which direct you over rocky tracks, through gnarled olive groves, to little patches of landscape where 2500 year-old pillars have tumbled onto the ground; where, during certain light, one can make out the footprint of a temple, or a step; a chunk of marble cornice, a hefty dished piece of terracotta, a tile, a pipe, a pot—Roman,



Dome on pendives, Monastery of Osios Loukas.



Greek, Byzantine? – in between endless heat and beehives in glorious colours [photo at right] so that one knows where home is, like Chatsworth.

Don't change anything here. How do you create a society that is so respectful or so well rooted that things survive for two millennia?

And that even applies when materials are recycled. Those amazing fortified mountain villages—bits of a Doric lintel here and there, married to the glorious and lofty Ottoman solariums huddled in the steep mountains. Nothing is ever lost.

Who showed the communities how to plan their villages? How come the only little flat part of the precipice is retained for the village square, shouldering the church and the houses into the sides of the mountains? Large shady poplar trees frame the views to the Aegean Sea beyond and create the atmosphere for civilised existence. A cool breeze drifts over grey-blue distant olive groves and through the oak, beech and chestnut forests. Banish forever the grotesque engineer or architect who created a tourist parking area on mountainous fill in front of the square? No, just make him sit there and suffer!

Most of all, don't change your towns. They still seem to be about people. Everybody lives in an apartment of sorts, small I think, three or four stories high. Every home seems to be 30% balcony—with vines, and flowers, and washing, and *life* generally. There is only one way—cubic, functional, in white limewash—when they can afford it. It's the style of the place. In the mountains roofs are important because it rains and snows. Simple age-old stuff. Most life, however, seems to happen downstairs in the public spaces. There is a square around every corner, with coffee-houses and tavernas and bakeries, whatever. Not a *Checkers* in sight.

From 11 or so in the morning, until five in the afternoon a gentle sleep seems to overcome the whole community. Then, as the heat subsides, slowly, nothing ever happened



Milies, Pilon

'fastly' while we were there, doors open and they emerge—young, old, very young, very old, and they sit and talk and the kids run around, and food is brought to the square(s) from the surrounding eateries while others are working away at their shop-fitting or road repairs. In the more secluded corners are the old men with their strings of beads keeping each other company. Black-clad widows gather elsewhere and stare ahead, done with talking long ago. They were all still going strong when we turned in at around twelve-thirty.

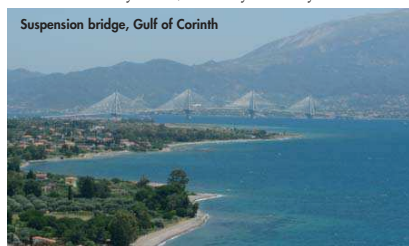
Beehives enroute to Aliki



Recycled materials, Osios Loukas

Thessaloniki is a huge city—yet even here, it's the people who dominate. Squares are larger, and buildings a bit higher—but that is all—although, here and there the odd curtain-wall monstrosity is pock-marked with rusting air-conditioners.

I'm glad that Greece seems not to be very rich in monetary terms, or newly rich maybe.

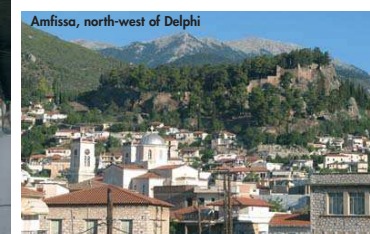


Suspension bridge, Gulf of Corinth

There is a general sense that one did not need to show off, although a little bit of it in the right place can be fantastic. The new suspension bridge over the Gulf of Corinth to the Peloponnese is just too beautiful—like the *London Eye*. It's just not okay when every little bridge wants to be one, or every building the *Eye*, then it hurts.

Four other things...

One: I ended up in Greece because my friend Maria (graphic designer of this journal) was attending the international typography conference in Thessaloniki, and so I imagined that with her native-language skills we could



Amfissa, north-west of Delphi

together, with a little help from *Avis*, explore every nook and cranny from Thessaloniki down to Athens before an *Olympic Airlines* connection to Johannesburg. I learned that the distances are actually much further than you'd think, and that most Greeks—including Maria—don't know where places are, or won't tell you, so we were constantly getting lost. But, nicely so!

Two: When you really think you are at the remotest outpost in the world and wander out onto a little fishing pier in the morning, you turn around and strolling past is Ian Sutherland, who recently stepped down as head of the School of Design at Durban's DUT to travel more! "Hi Ian," "Hi Maria"!

Three: If you hire a car, and you go searching the ruins amongst the thorny bushes of the Greek mountain sides, you can rub the scratches out with toothpaste before you take it back to *Avis*!

Four, and lastly: Having spent some days before at the British Museum in London examining Hellenic ceramics—those elegant vessels with their terracotta and black slip-glaze and fine black line figure drawings—I was pleased to note that in the Greece

of today, even in the remotest places, men no longer walk about with their private parts being totally exposed to the public at large, whilst women dressed in flowing robes expose but a head and a foot, here and there. While I have always sympathised with those of us who occasionally, when in a rush, leave our fly undone—leaving your trousers at home seems to me to be the ultimate in forgetfulness. Unless it was done to frighten away the Romans. Who knows. Personally I believe that a bit of Greek dangling genitalia would strike amusement rather than fear into the enemy and may explain the demise of the Greek civilisation.

My final verdict then—a great week; a great country; not expensive at all; the food out on the pier and eating squiggly things from the sea with Maria and a setting sun; and no *izigebenghu*. — Heaven.

Paul Mikula, June 2007

P.S. Read *The Balkan Ghosts* by Robert C. Kaplan before you visit.

