

Building for the people

To recognise both established and emerging architecture talents in Asia, Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM) has introduced two awards — the Arcasia Awards on Architecture 2014 (AAA) and the inaugural Architecture Asia Awards for Emerging Architects (AAAEA). The awards are two of several events to be held during the 16th Asian Congress of Architects (ACA16) from June 24 to 29 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. This is the third time PAM has hosted the congress, 14 years after the last event.

PAM's annual DATUM: KL International Architectural Design Conference will be held at the same time. It comprises the Kuala Lumpur Design Forum, Professional Practice Forum, Building Industry Gala Nite, and the Malaysia Architecture, Interior Design, and Building Exhibition (Archides).

ARCASIA, or Architects Regional Council of Asia, is an organisation of National Institute of Architects from 19 Asian countries — Macau, Laos, Thailand, China, Bhutan, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Nepal, the Philippines, Mongolia, Vietnam and Malaysia.

City & Country recently sat down with the judges of the two awards to learn more about the need for such awards, the state of the architectural practice in Asia and the calibre of the entries, among others.

BY WONG KING WAH

The growth of the Asian economies have drawn many foreign architects to Asian shores, resulting in buildings that may be iconic but do not have relevance to the Asian context or culture, say judges of the AAA. As such, they believe that buildings should be built with the people in mind.

"Architecture has to go back to the fundamentals, where we design for the community in the context of the culture and environment," says one of the judges, Tan Pui Ing, principal of P I Architects and president of Arcasia.

"Over a period of time, we have looked to the West so much so that we've lost the ability to design based on this fundamental. Over the years, people have not been driven by form. The building has no more soul. China faced that problem with its fast development.

"They [the Chinese] realised that their cities have no soul. One city looks the same as another. A lot of the buildings do not respond to the local climatic conditions, they are not even livable. At the end of the day, you have to go back

to responsible architecture, responsible to climatic conditions, to culture, to the local context," says the former PAM president, the first female architect to hold the post.

Tan, along with her fellow AAA2014 judges — Keisuke Maeda from Japan; Kazi Khaleed Azfar from Honolulu, the US; Rafiq Azam from Bangladesh; and Khairiah Talha, managing director and qualified town planner from Malaysia's RWA Planners — deliberated over submissions to 16 categories. They were Single Family Residential Projects; Multiple Family Residential Complexes; Public Amenities: Commercial Buildings; Public Amenities: Resort Buildings; Public Amenities: Social/Institutional Buildings; Specialised Buildings; Industrial Buildings; Conservation Projects; Social Responsible Architecture; and Sustainability. The results will be announced on June 26.

Tan says the awards were restructured and relaunched last year to positive reviews. The awards ceremony now reflects the abundance of talent in Asia because previously, there was not "a platform to showcase our members' works, to tell the whole world that Asian architects are equal or more capa-



The AAA2014 judges — (from left) Kazi, Khairiah, Tan, Maeda and Rafiq — believe strongly in Asia's architectural talent to build structures for the community and the people who live in it

able than our Western counterparts". Kazi Ashraf, who is originally from Bangladesh and teaches at the University of Hawaii in Manoa, Honolulu, says while Asian architects have the competency to do the work, some may need to take time to reflect on their Asian heritage.

"Foreign architects are rushing to Asia to work," he says. "And they usually don't understand the local conditions. And I would like to say that a lot of Asian architects don't understand their own local conditions and that is a crisis and a challenge.

"Asia is in a complex situation. It is a group of different civilisations, developing and growing at different tempos. There are innovations to be made, there are traditions to be retained, and sometimes these are conflicting. I think you need to be in dialogue with others beyond Asia," adds the urbanist and architectural researcher.

Idea sharing is something that Khairiah, who has over 30 years' experience in town planning, strongly believes in. She says collaboration with many parties make for better urban centres for a strata society.

"The urban problems we are facing

require all professionals to come together with a single goal and vision, and that is to make our human environment a better place, our cities better places," she says. "Whatever architects create, it must be for the people first. But who are the people? I feel that a lot of architects design for those who can pay well. But what about those who are marginalised? There are a lot of problems with low-income housing, for instance, or providing housing for the poor.

"But there is no one looking or delving into it, or researching how best to provide comfortable and affordable housing for the marginalised. As cities grow, as our urban population grows, we ought to address those kinds of issues," adds the past president of Malaysian Institute of Planners.

The sharing of knowledge is something that Rafiq believes will be beneficial to all. "We need to share information on how we can create a living environment that is positive for society and for humanity, rather than having a commodity for people who just want to earn money out of it," explains the three-time recipient of the World Architecture Community Award. "This global problem needs everyone to sit

down and share the issues that create a pressure group. We may end up in a positive situation, in an environment in which we can live peacefully and create something for the new generations."

The creation of something new should not be at the expense of one's own culture, says Maeda. "Until the 20th century, the people of Asia had always been looking outside to Europe or bigger nations, but we forget where we came from. So, what we need to do is change the way we look at our traditional place or the place that we come from, so that we can create something great that what we have. Sometimes, we overlook promoting our local architecture," says the winner of the AAA2013.

In a nutshell, the judges are passionate about designing structures that fit the local context. However, whether in Asia or another continent, the key is to ensure that buildings are built with people in mind. "We are designing for the community," Tan reiterates. "And as people change and countries become more developed, architecture has to adapt to the change. But it should not lose its soul, such as a building a 'foreign' object that has no relationship with the people." ■

Architecture competition to recognise regional young talent

BY RACHEAL LEE

The idea for the inaugural Architecture Asia Awards for Emerging Architects (AAAEA) came from the "30 Under 40 Emerging Malaysian Architects" exhibition in 2011.

"The exhibition allowed young architects to showcase their works and we were thinking about how to bring it to the next level. PAM is organising the bi-annual Asian Congress of Architects Malaysia this year, we thought it was the best time to merge all these ideas together and start a regional competition," says Boon Chee Wee, convener for AAAEA. According to Boon, the award also aims to encourage Asian architects to look for solutions within Asia for their projects.

The introduction of the award is timely as Asia continues to be the



Lucky Shophouse in Singapore

hubs for global economic growth and for the creative and design industry, where the next generation will rise and take the lead in the future, says Boon.

PAM hopes it will be an annual competition, he adds.

During his tenure as president of PAM from 2009 to 2011, Boon led the institute in launching the "30 Under

40 Emerging Malaysian Architects" exhibition as well as the annual Kuala Lumpur Architecture Festival to establish the capital as an international design hub.

The AAAEA is open to all architects aged 40 or younger this year and professionally registered in Asia. Entrants may be individuals, or employees and members of partnerships, companies or collaborative groups.

Works must have been completed after 2009 in or outside Asia. One entrant may submit more than one entry, but every entry must be registered and submitted separately.

The jury will decide on the categories the entries will fall into, including master plans, new and refurbished buildings or extensions, new and refurbished interiors, infrastructures, urban design, temporary structures, portable installations, exhibition and theatrical works.

The jury panel consists of five

judges — Lee Chor Wah, Jan Opdekamp, Mook Unterfriller, Professor Alberto Ferlenga and Martin Duplantier. They are also the speakers at Datum: KL.

PAM has received 50 entries from 10 countries, which will be judged on their creativity, sustainability, and contribution to the advancement of architectural design and architectural technology in Asia. The 21 shortlisted entries will be exhibited online and during the Datum: KL International Architectural Design Conference, where the finalists will deliver a presentation to the jury panel. Later, awards will be presented to the 10 winners, as well as certificates to all finalists. The winners will be featured in the 2014 Issue of Architecture Asia.

According to Boon, the entries came from China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Pakistan,

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Jury Panel

LEE CHOR WAH (CHIEF JUDGE, MALAYSIA)

Lee is the convener of the Asian Congress of Architects 2014 in Kuala Lumpur. A past president of the Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM), he was also a board member of the Board of Lembaga Arkitek Malaysia (LAM) and vice-president of Flobi Malaysia in 2008 and 2009. He has worked on projects in Australia, Malaysia, Pakistan and Vietnam. He is currently a lecturer at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Malaysia.

JAN OPEDEKAMP (BELGIUM)

A graduate from the Sint-Lucas School of Architecture in Brussels, Opedekamp is a senior architect at 51N4E, where he is responsible for the acquisition management of new office projects as well as the execution of several large-scale building projects in Europe. Today, he mainly focuses on the mutual development of several collective housing projects in France, together with a team of architects and partnerships.

MUCH UNTERTRIFALLER (AUSTRIA)

Untertrifaller studied architecture at the Vienna University of Technology, where he met Ernst Hiesmayr, an important teacher. Since 2007, he has been a guest professor at University of Konstanz and Vienna University of Technology. He is also a member of the executive board of the Architecture Foundation of Austria and of the design advisory board for the city of Graz.

PROFESSOR ALBERTO FERLENGA (ITALY)

Having taught at various universities in Europe and the US, Ferlenga is a professor of architectural design at the University Institute of Architecture in Venice. After he graduated from Polytechnic University of Milan, he worked as an editorial staff member of Lotus International magazine while taking part in different architecture competitions. His work earned him the Venice Biennale award.

MARTIN DUPLANTIER (FRANCE)

Of Franco-Belgian roots, Duplantier grew up in Bordeaux and the US. He began his career with an internship at Gerkan, Marg, and Partners Architekten in Berlin, before moving on to David Chipperfield Architects in London where he was part of the concept team in charge of international competitions. He has worked on several regional projects, namely the Seafarnt at Anglet, and the AZette regeneration project on the border with Luxembourg.

Awards a platform for international exposure, says finalist

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Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The award was promoted in other countries through various architecture organisations. "As this is the first year, we didn't set any categories," he says. "The response is better than expected, as we expected 30 entries."

Finalists' responses

Japanese finalist Yoshiaki Tanaka explains that his entry, ORIGAMI, was designed for a young couple that lived in the city and is now returning home to mountain ranges.

"I was thinking about how we should design this home for the clients, to enable them to live peacefully in this location while building a new relationship with the local people," he says. "In my country, origami is deeply rooted as child's play. When I picked up a piece of paper and started to fold it into a shape without much consideration, it almost became this diagonal roof shape."

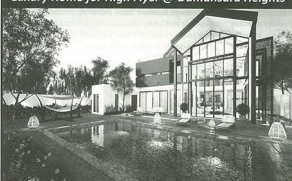
The design features a roof that looks like it has been folded in five places. It also provides a structure that helps to protect against wind and earthquakes.

He sees the AAAEA as a platform for people

Shortlisted finalists

PROJECTS	LOCATION	COMPLETION YEAR	ARCHITECTS
Act Naturally / Act Lightly	Nakorn Rachasirama/Bangkok, Thailand	2012	Rachaporn Choochuay
Estate Bungalow at Matugama	Matugama, Sri Lanka	2010	Narein Gerald Rajitha Perera
Fourfarmside Residence	Macau Old Town, Macau	2014	Dominic Chi Lok Choi
Galileo Brezceway	Central Jakarta, Indonesia	2014	Heru Mudito Prasetyo
GMT Institute of Property Management	Jakarta, Indonesia	2010	Henry Salm
Holiday Home	Maduru Oya, Sri Lanka	2009	Damith Chandimal Prernathilake
Hotel by the Waterfalls	Ramboda Sri Lanka	2013	Palinda Kannangara
House F	Osaka, Japan	2010	Kerji Ido
House in Hinomiya	Nagoya, Aichi, Japan	2009	Yoshiaki Tanaka
House in Tamatsu	Osaka, Japan	2012	Kerji Ido
IBA Alumni Students' Centre	IBA Main Campus, Karachi, Pakistan	2013	Ahsan Najmi
Integrated Institute for Learning in Management	Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India	2013	Manjit Rastogi
JAIST Gallery	Nomi-city, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan	2012	Tatsuo Matsuda
Lucky Shophouse	Singapore	2012	Chang Yong Ter
Namly House	Singapore	2012	Chang Yong Ter
NO. 19	Subang Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia	2012	Teoh Chee Wai
ORIGAMI	Kuwana, Mie, Japan	2013	Yoshiaki Tanaka
School Floating in the Sky	Shanghaibai, Kancharaburi, Thailand	2014	Kijima Watarabe
Sound of Silence - War Heroes Memorial	Boyangane, Kurangye, Sri Lanka	2012	Ranga Diyaisena
Terio Green Design Center	Tianjin, China	2013	Remiun
Tianjin Xiqing District Zhangjiao Town Elementary	Xiqing District, Tianjin, China	2009	Lu Qiang

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ORIGAMI, Japan



to learn about his work and subsequently provide him with an opportunity to design buildings in countries outside of Japan.

Singaporean architect Chang Yong Ter's two entries, Lucky Shophouse and Namly House, made it into the final round. This award, he says, offers great opportunity for the exchange of design ideas and experiences in the respective practices and context. It also provides inspiration for Asian architects of the new era.

"Lucky Shophouse is a conservation project involving a new extension at the rear [of a shophouse]," he says. "This had influenced the design of the rear extension, resulting in a new single-storey structure that aims to be contemporary, yet is in sync with the old-world charms that the front of the shophouse exudes."

Most of the design ideas and decisions, he adds, were influenced and guided by the site forces such as the finishes, layout and daylighting control. Some decisions were made

during construction, in response to unforeseen site constraints and upon discovery of certain existing site conditions.

"The final result rekindles the communal spirit of yesteryear — the days of living in a community where homes were interconnected social spaces, of spaces that were simple and adaptive, and where the rituals of everyday life were enriched by architecture," he notes.

Namly House, meanwhile, is a direct response to the client's aim to have two homes in one concrete building, in a tropical environment. The house demonstrates the potential of new definitions of tropicality, and offers refreshing solutions in responding to the tropical climate.

"It also points to new directions of housing a multi-generation family, offering contemporary living and promoting harmonious living among family members of different generations," he says.