



Report on *Architecture Asia* 2024-2025

09/10/2025

AA Focus in the Past Year

1. Focus on “Asia Issues” and call for submissions from member institutes

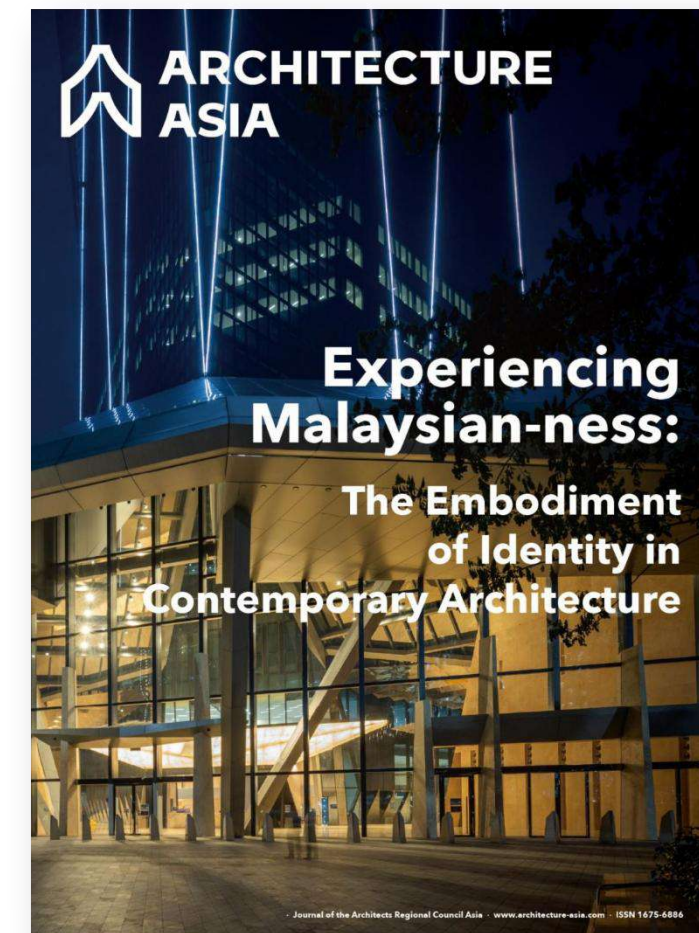
- Emphasize the unique challenges and opportunities faced by the Asian architectural profession, strengthen the regional focus of architects, and highlight Asia-specific perspectives.

2. Expand Guest Editor network to showcase industry developments of member institutes

- Collaborate with Guest Editors to comprehensively present the evolving architectural practices of member institutes, combining articles, projects, and forums for in-depth discussion.

3. Strengthen digital distribution to reach a wider readership

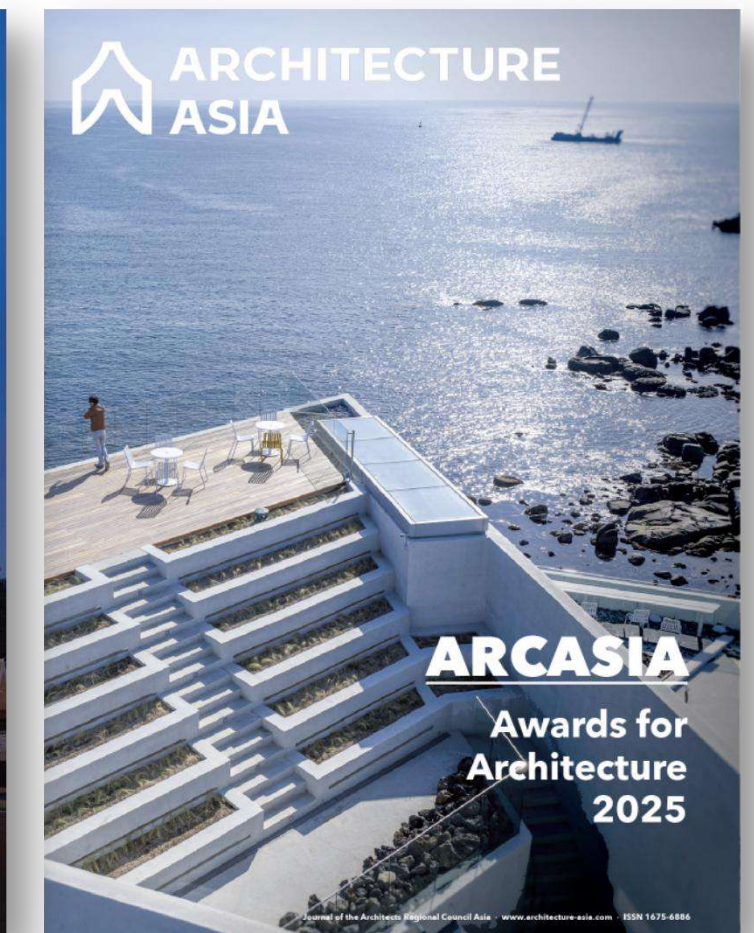
- With the journal now fully published in digital format, AA continuously leverages the website and social media to engage a wider audience both within Asia and globally.



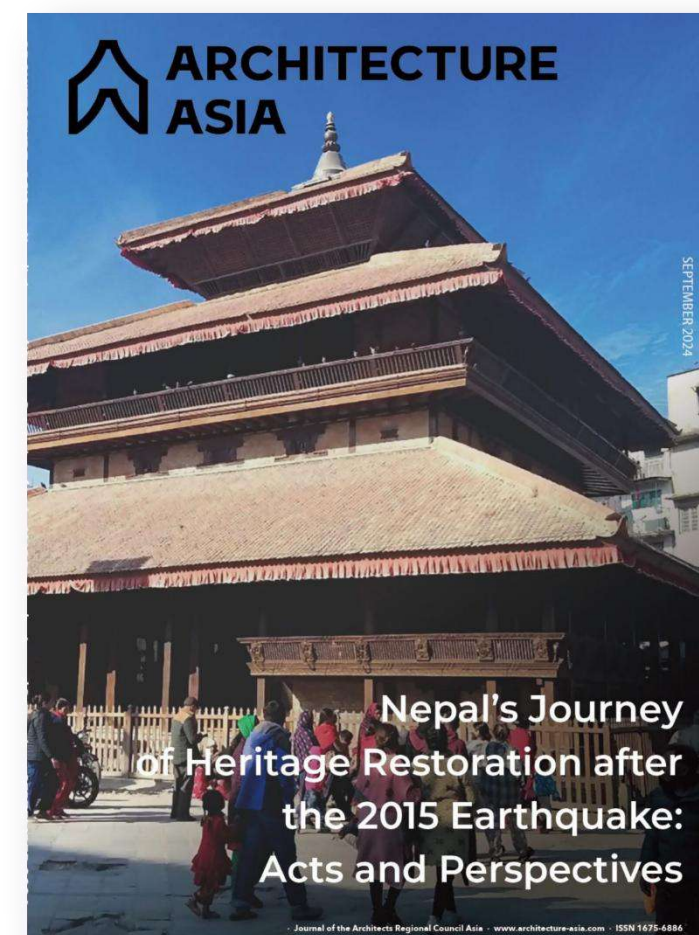
March 2025



June 2025



September 2025



September 2024



December 2024

1 Latest Issues

2 Review of the Last Five Years

3 Future Plan

1 Latest Issues

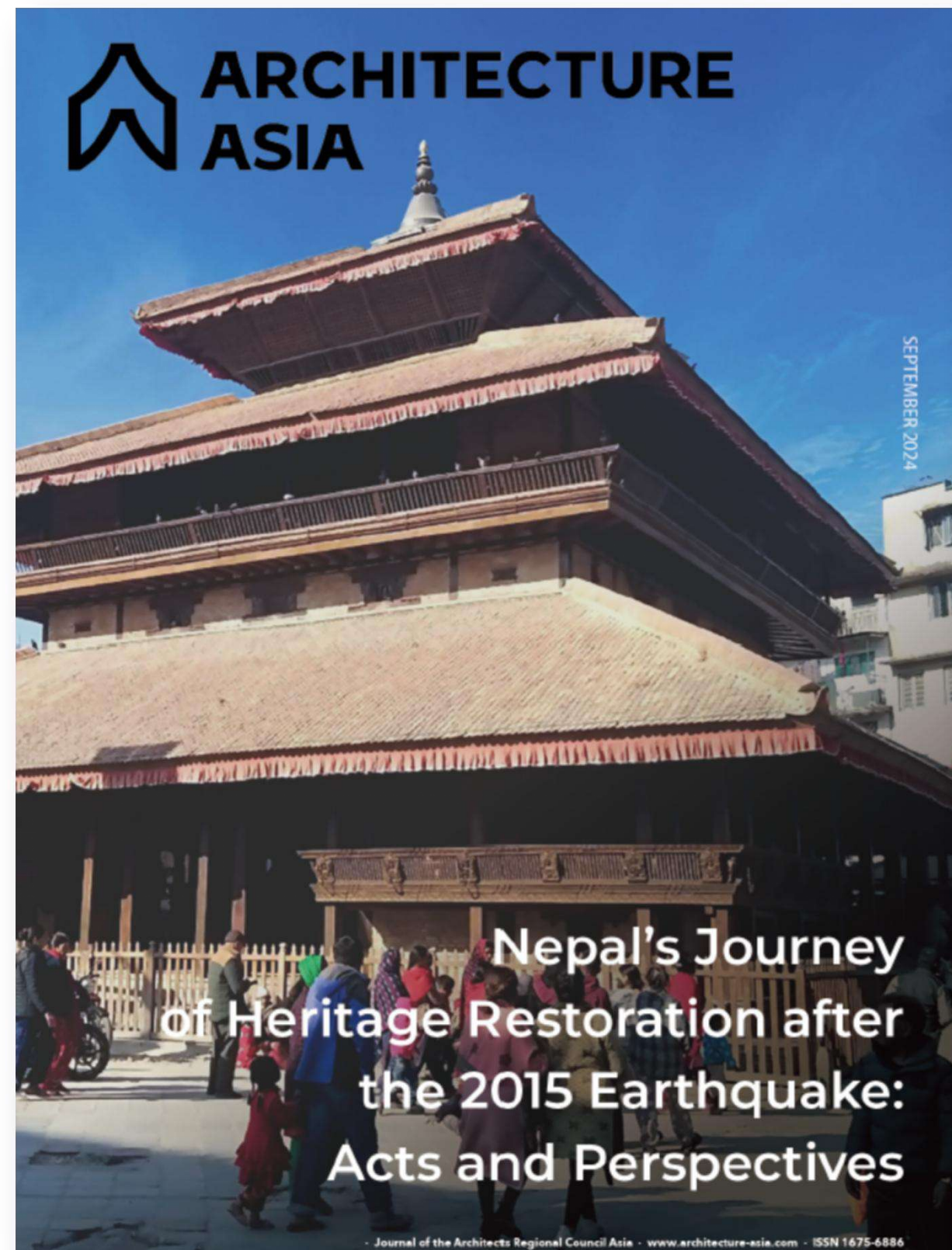
Latest Issues

Nepal's Journey of Heritage Restoration after the 2015 Earthquake: Acts and Perspectives September 2024

- This issue explores post-2015 Nepal earthquake **heritage reconstruction and conservation**, showing modern strategies with traditional methods and highlighting successful conservation cases.



Guest Editor:
Padma Sundar Maharjan, SONA



Contents

Editorial¹

ARTICLES

Restoration of the 2015 Earthquake Ravaged Heritage of Kathmandu Valley: Contributions towards Reconstructive Conservation²
Sudanshan Raj TIWARI

Earthquake Response & Reconstruction Efforts in Patan Darbar Square in the 2015 Nepal Earthquake¹⁶
Rohit BANJIKAR

Revitalizing Historic Urban Squares: Sustainability Challenges in Urban Revival: A Case Study of Pimbahal³⁰
Nisha JOSHI, Jharna JOSHI

Build Back Better Dilemma: Post-Gorkha Earthquake Reconstruction of Architectural Heritage in Patan⁴⁰
Gyanendra SHAKYA, Lata SHAKYA, Manindra SHRESTHA

Revisiting Newar Heritage Ideology and Technology in the Light of the Reconstruction of Kasthamandap⁵⁸
Manindra SHRESTHA

Architectural Design Guidelines for Private House Construction in Bungamati, Nepal⁷²
Bijaya Krishna SHRESTHA

Historic Settlements of the Kathmandu Valley: Voices and Actions Post 2015 Earthquake⁹⁰
Sabina TANDUKAR

PROJECT

Mahansan Ghar: Pashupati Museum⁹⁸
RICH Architectures Company

Patan Museum Tourist Toilet¹⁰⁸
Hobitus Creations

Restoration and Extension of Ghami Dzong Palace¹¹²
Sirish BHATT Dhiraj BHANDARI, Suresh SHRESTHA

Sikami Chhen: "Woodcarver's House"¹²²
Rabita SHILPAKAR, Indrakaj SHILPAKAR, Indra Prasad SHILPAKAR



Fig. 1 Kathmandap (pre-2015) before the 2015 earthquake



Fig. 2 Kathmandap (pre-2024) after reconstruction

Introduction and Prior Learnings in Contemporary Restoration: The unique brick, wood and tile architecture and the urban fabric of the central palace core of settlements of Kathmandu Valley have held the world captivated ever since Nepal opened up to the outside world from its century-old self-imposed political seclusion in 1951. The Department of Archaeology was set up in 1953 and the Nepal Ancient Monuments Act, modeled after similar Indian legal instruments, came into force in 1956. World interest in saving and supporting the maintenance of this medieval built culture grew also as Nepal started receiving technical assistance and experts under the United Nations development programs. In the early 1970s, Nepal got the Kathmandu Valley Inventory (of heritage) as well as the Masterplan for the Conservation of the Cultural Heritage of the Kathmandu Valley prepared as outcomes of UN-sponsored assistance. The complexity of the problem of conservation of the cultural heritage of Kathmandu had thus been

studied and the basic principles were set out early enough. Nepal's sincerity towards the preservation and protection of its heritage and its willingness to learn from Western experiences is well expressed in these documents prepared even as the idea of World Heritage was shaping up under UNESCO. Kathmandu Valley Heritage was the first applicant seeking listing as World Heritage in 1977 and highlighted the eagerness of the experts involved in its identification and development of protection plans. Its incorporation as WHS was approved in 1979. Kathmandu Valley WHS is one-of-a-kind cultural heritage. It has seven monument zones, and each monument zone has a large number of listed monuments. The typologies of these monuments vary functionally from temples and palaces to public urban resthouses and pavilions, and their building materials and structures are also as diverse. It also brings together built heritage in the middle of a living town along with sensitive and active religious sites and the

PROJECT

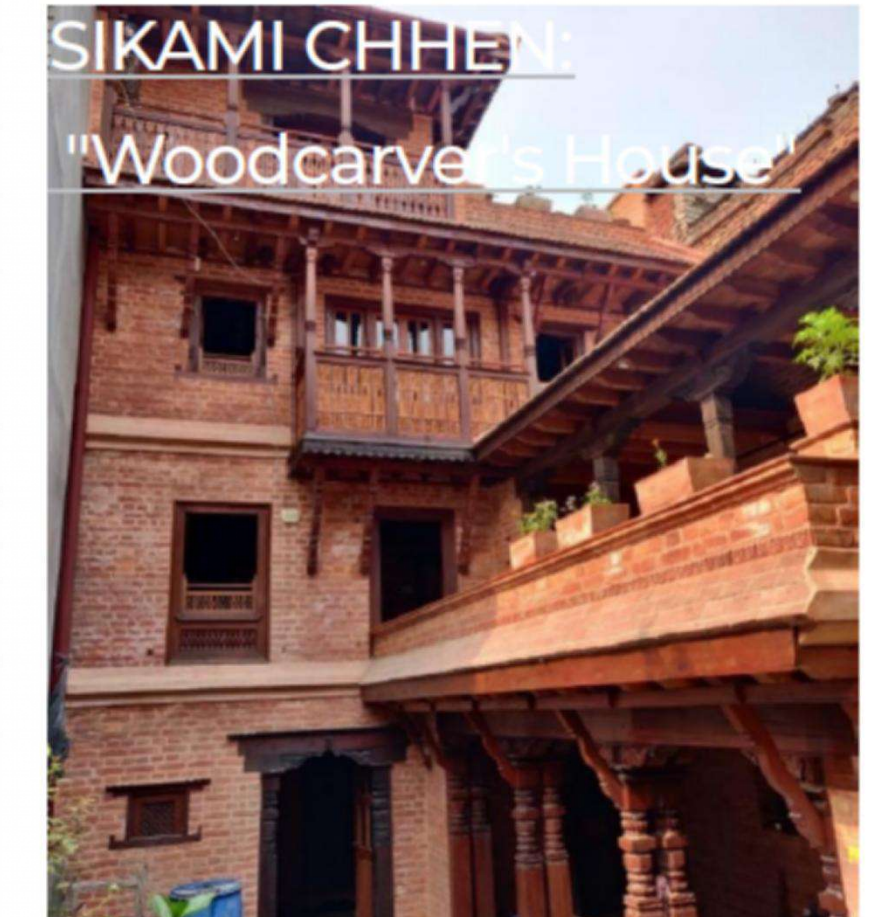


Fig. 1 Sikami Chhen, View from the south courtyard

Achievement: awarded for the special recognition for sustainable development at the 2023 Asia Pacific Award for cultural heritage conservation.
Designed Team: Dr. Rabita Shilpakar, Mr. Indrakaj Shilpakar, Mr. Indra Prasad Shilpakar, Ex. Sasin Prajapati
Location: Khazama 03, Bhaktapur, Nepal
Plot Area: 1857 sq. m
Completion Date: 2022
Owner: Mr. Indrakaj Shilpakar
Photography: Rabita Shilpakar

The 'Sikami Chhen' (Woodcarver's House), a reconstructed residential structure, sustained severe damage during the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, rendering it structurally unsound and uninhabitable. The building subsequently required significant structural interventions to address its compromised stability. The house is located on the western outskirts of Bhaktapur Durbar Square, with access through an underpass to a communal courtyard. While it has limited frontage facing the courtyard, the entrance leads to a welcoming backyard. Originally, with its foundations dating back approximately two centuries, it underwent numerous modifications over the years, rendering it incompatible with contemporary living standards. The only viable solution was a comprehensive reconstruction, and the task was carried out by Mr. Indrakaj Shilpakar, a renowned woodcarver, who understood the importance of preserving this heritage with traditional art and craftsmanship.

Latest Issues

Nepal's Journey of Heritage Restoration after the 2015 Earthquake: Acts and Perspectives September 2024

- The issue includes 7 articles and 4 projects.

Article

ARTICLES

Earthquake Response & Reconstruction Efforts Patan Darbar Square in the 2015 Nepal Earthquake

Rohit MALIKAR
Country Director, Kathmandu Valley Resilience Trust
Email: rohitr@kvr.org.np

Abstract
Patan Darbar Square, a historic site in the Kathmandu Valley, was heavily damaged in the 2015 Earthquake, which caused great loss to cultural heritage. Many temples and traditional buildings collapsed or were severely damaged. This disaster highlighted the vulnerability of heritage structures, often weakened due to lack of regular maintenance. Despite the destruction, the local community in Patan acted quickly to protect the site, rescued valuable artifacts like statues and temple pinnacles, and moved them to the Patan Museum for safekeeping. Their swift and dedicated response showed deep care for their cultural heritage, even though they had no formal training in disaster response. The Kathmandu Valley Resilience Trust, working with the Department of Archaeology, the Patan Museum, and the local community, led the rescue, documentation, and storage of artifacts. Many volunteers, police, and army personnel helped to carefully recover architectural elements from the rubble without using damaging equipment. Like bulldozers, all recovered items were documented, cleaned, and stored for reuse. Restoration work required careful planning, skilled artisans, and traditional materials. Damaged pieces were repaired or replicated using old photographs and expert craftsmanship. Structural reinforcements were added to strengthen the monuments and improve safety. Overall, the recovery of Patan Darbar Square has been a community-driven success, blending traditional knowledge with modern conservation techniques. It serves as an example of how heritage can be preserved even after major disasters, as long as there is collaboration, care, and commitment.

Keywords: Earthquake, Historic, Reconstruction, Structure, Monument.



Fig. 1 (A) View of Darbar Square, before and (B) after the earthquake. The two most important temples, Hanuman and Chhatrapati, totally collapsed. Photographs by Rohit Malikar, 2015 and April 26, 2018.

Patan Darbar Square is one of the Monument Zones in the Kathmandu Valley, badly affected by the recent 2015 Cocha Earthquake. We are now ten years after the devastating earthquake that hit Nepal on 25 April 2015, and to date almost 9000 lives and destroyed a large number of cultural heritage buildings. Many major historic structures collapsed, and hundreds of private houses, shrines, and monasteries were fully or partially damaged. The impact was particularly devastating in the urban centers of the metropolitan of Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur, as well as the smaller historic settlements of Changu Narayan, Sankhu, Bungamati, Thohara, and others. These historic structures are the showpiece of the valley's art and architecture, developed over centuries with a distinct architectural character. These heritage were developed by a community and passed on from generation

to generation, which, express tangible as well as intangible custom practices with their artistic expressions. None of the public monuments or private residences were monotonously built as is done today with prototype designs. Each monument or structure was built to its custom design. We have archival records since the 18th century of earthquakes that struck the Valley every 90-100 years or so. We do not know much about the history of restoration or rebuilding before the 1935 earthquake and the present condition, in the case of the 1935 tremor, that several temples and parts of the palace were not rebuilt in the original configuration, and also that there were monuments that were not rebuilt and hence lost forever.

Project



Fig. 1 Southern facade of Mahasana Ghar after the restoration work.

Architectural Firm: RICH Architecture Company
Design Team: Bijay Baidya, Sabina Tandel, Radma Sunda, Malojan Loonkar, Deepan, Pashupati, Kathmandu, Nepal
Area: 1725 sq. m
Completion Date: 2021
Function: Museum (Adaptive reuse)
Photography: Radma Sunda, Malojan

Mahasana Ghar, founded by King Binu Bahadur Shah (c. 1777-1799), stands at the western edge of the Pashupati temple complex. The structure is a quadrang building measuring 20.2m x 26.0m, featuring two-bay arcades on the western and southern wings and single-bay arcades on the eastern and northern sides. Rising four stories with a total height of 11.3 meters, the building showcases a delicate blend of

architectural influences. A notable feature is the baluster columns (21 x 21 cm) adorned with ornate scrolls at the top and bottom. These columns, inspired by Mughal prototypes, were introduced in the 1790s, replacing traditional Nepalese pillars. Following the demolition of the original structure in 2015, the building was reconstructed without the original arch between the pillars.



Fig. 2 Temple design on the south-west corner of the building and a view of the upper floor.

The southern facade presents a striking design with a seven-bay colonnaded platform on the ground floor and a symmetrical five-bay window and seven-bay clerical window arrangement on the first and second floors, respectively. The western facade includes an entry door, topped by three-bay windows on the first and second floors. The remaining windows follow the traditional two-story style, preserving the building's historic character. This architectural composition reflects a fusion of Indo-Islamic and Nepalese influences, marking Mahasana Ghar as a unique monument in Nepal's heritage. The 2015 earthquake caused severe damage to Mahasana Ghar, particularly affecting its upper floors and eastern section. The most significant destruction included: the collapse of the eastern gable wall, which was attached to a central structural frame around the window and clerical window openings, with cracks and delaminated masonry; severe damage to the roof structure, compromising its stability; and widespread cracks in walls and floors, resulting in partial collapse in certain sections. The earthquake left the building in a fragile state, with its load-bearing masonry walls fractured and crumbling, necessitating urgent conservation efforts. To rescue the building, the Kathmandu Area Development Trust (KADT) initiated the project with funding from Nepal Investment Bank Limited. The overall restoration project was completed in three phases.

Preparation of Measured Drawings and Post-Earthquake Damage Assessment (2015)
This initiative encompassed three key tasks: (i) Comprehensive photographic documentation of structural damage caused by the 2015 earthquake. In this, a detailed set of photographs was taken to check the severity of the damage and condition of the building. This helped in analyzing the pattern of damage in detail investigations. (ii) Detailed architectural measured drawings to record the existing conditions. An architectural detailed drawing was prepared based on the initial reference drawings provided by KADT. The details of the masonry, carpentry joints, and all necessary dimensions were recorded to prepare a set of assessment drawings. That helped in estimating the cost for the intervention, repairs, restoration, and reconstruction works. (iii) Preparation of general estimates for immediate restoration needs. A preliminary restoration estimate was prepared, outlining the scope of work, required materials, and an assessment of reusable architectural elements within the building. This included detailed quantity estimations, procurement needs, and an inventory of salvageable historic components to ensure preservation while maintaining structural integrity.

Latest Issues

AA Awards Special Issue 2024, December 2024

- AAA 2024, hosted by ASC, gave us the opportunity to streamline the workflow for the AAA Special Issue. This involved reaching out to each winner to request high-resolution images and confirm copyright agreements.
- Clarifying these steps has provided us with valuable experience for our collaboration with KIRA to ensure the timely release of AAA 2025.



JURY BOARD

ARCSIA Awards for Architecture 2024

Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad
JURY MEMBER Zone C, ARCSIA 2019-2023

- Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad, is the President of ARCSIA (Architects Regional Council Asia) 2024-2025, Past President of PAM 2017-2019. He is currently Principal of Saifuddin Architect and Managing Director of SNO Architects Sdn Bhd.
- Ar. Saifuddin completed his Diploma in Architecture at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur in 1980 and graduated with Bachelor of Architecture from Deakin University Australia in 1983.
- He is a fellow of Pertubuhan Akhitek Malaysia, Registered Asean Architect, ASAC Architect and Honorary Member of Australian Institute of Architects, Association of Siamese Architects by Royal Patronage.
- Ar. Saifuddin is a member of the Board of University Directors at Universiti Malaysia from March 2011 to Apr 2022 and from February 2023 to January 2025. He is one of the longest serving board members.
- Ar. Saifuddin is a member of the Board of Directors Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd since February 2025. He is also Chairman of its subsidiary Lingkarin MRT Sdn Bhd, a company responsible for the implementation of MRT Line 3.
- He was awarded by his alma mater, Deakin University, Australia, Alumni of the Year 2020. He was the first Malaysian to be accorded with the award. He was chosen as one of the distinguished alumni by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia during the university's 50th anniversary in 2022.
- Ar. Saifuddin was one of the recipients of the 2023 CIDB Fellowship Award, a recognition and appreciation from CIDB to industry players who have contributed significantly to the development of the construction industry.
- Ar. Saifuddin had the opportunity to successfully design, manage and complete the Low Energy Office (LEO) for the Ministry of Green Technology and Water in Putrajaya, Perak E. This building was conferred the prestigious ASEAN Energy Award 2008 by the ASEAN ENERGY CENTRE and was awarded the first Green Building Index Silver rating for existing building. The LEO building was also chosen to be on the Malaysian 50 sen commemorative stamp for the Energy Efficiency Building Series in 2008.
- Under the leadership of Ar. Saifuddin, SNO Architects Sdn Bhd has won the SME Corp Enterprise 50 for the years 2013, 2014 and 2016.

IDR. Lai Siew Hong
JURY MEMBER Non-architect Emeritus

- IDR. Lai Siew Hong is the Co-founder and Chief Executive Designer of award-winning interior design firm Blu Water. Headquartered in Kuala Lumpur since 2010, the design studio focuses on hospitality subtypes and the design of hotels, resorts and F&B establishments around the region.
- Lai graduated from the State University of New York with an Associate Degree in Applied Science Interior Design. His passion for nurturing young emerging talent translates into his deep involvement in mentorship and regional conferences over the years. Locally, he served as an Adjunct Lecturer at Taylor's University Malaysia and internationally, he mentored graduate students at China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China. He is now serving as the Master Coach for Interior Architecture and Design Programme at The One Academy.
- Today he continues to be the mentor-mentee behind some of the most stunning luxury hotels and resorts in the country and the world over; most recently recognized as Asia's Most Influential Designer Award by DOTY 2020 and Tatler Asia's Most Influential MY 2021.
- Lai is also the immediate Past President of the Malaysian Institute of Interior Designers (MIID) 2022-2024, which is the national institute representing interior design professionals in Malaysia and Board Member of Asia-Pacific Space Designers Association (APSDA) 2023-2025.

Ar. Jitendra Mehta
JURY MEMBER Zone A

- Ar. Jitendra Mehta is a renowned Architect-urbanist with over 20 years of experience in the industry. He is known for his innovative designs that blend modern aesthetics with sustainable practices.
- Mehta has successfully led numerous high-profile projects countrywide, contributing to urban landscapes of India with his visionary architecture. Transforming inner-city with diverse expertise in the field of architecture, urban planning, infrastructure development and project management services, he has completed more than 2000 distinguished projects across India.
- His work spans residential, commercial, and public spaces, earning him numerous awards and accolades. He is also a multiple-time winner of 5 prestigious Indian National Awards like SA Excellence in Architecture Award, Indian Building Congress Award for excellence in Built environment, HUDCO Design Award, JK Cement 'Architect of the Year', ICI Construction Awards.
- His high professional benchmark in the Central India region includes winning the Prestigious Smart City Mission competition for 6 cities in India. Few of his other landmark projects are the World's Third largest International Cricket Stadium at Jaipur, Indian Institute of Management Indore, Pipliyapala Lakefront development project, IT parks, "Start-up Parks", etc. at Indore. He has been instrumental in shaping the skyline of several other Indian cities.
- He has been holding significant positions in professional and social realm. He is a much sought-after speaker at architectural conferences and a mentor to aspiring young architects, sharing his insights and fostering the next generation of architectural talent. Being a past national cricket player, he is also known for his passion for sports, culture and a great bonding with other architects, nationally and internationally.
- His commitment to sustainability for "Efficient & Resilient" Architecture is evident in his innovative use of eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient designs, contributing significantly to the green building movement in India, along with CSR works.

Ar. Richard Kirk
JURY MEMBER International

- Richard Kirk (FRAIA) is an Australian Architect who is recognised for creating advanced sustainable buildings and places. Richard founded the practice KIRK in 1995, and now has studios across Australia and South-East Asia reflecting our commitment to advancing sustainable design in the region.
- Richard is a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects, an Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland, and Councillor for Region 4 of the International Union of Architects (IUA). He has served as National President and National Awards Director for the Australian Institute of Architects and is an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects.
- KIRK's portfolio is diverse encompassing all project types and masterplanning. Notable works include the Advanced Engineering Building (AEB) at the University of Queensland, which exemplifies his dedication to sustainability as Australia's largest naturally ventilated building and one of the first to use engineered timber structure at scale. The holistic approach to the integration of technology and sustainable design in the AEB is a hallmark of the practice's work.
- Richard's commitment to the profession through advocacy and practice remains a hallmark of his career.

Ar. Raymond Fung JP
JURY MEMBER Zone C

- Fellow of Hong Kong Institute of Architect
- Adjunct Professor of Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Raymond Fung Wing Kee is a renowned architect and artist in Hong Kong. He was awarded as Hong Kong Top Ten Designer, Justice of Peace and was conferred Life long Achievement by HU Magazine.
- Fung has exhibited extensively with solo exhibitions in London, New York, Paris, Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Taipei and Hong Kong, with collections in major international art museums.
- Fung is presently a member of Acquisition Committee of Hong Kong Palace Museum, Honorary Advisor of Hong Kong LCSD Museums and Board member of Hong Kong Arts Centre and Honorary Advisor of Hong Kong Architecture Centre.
- He was also a former Board Member of West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, Hong Kong Palace Museum and Adjunct Professor of School of Architecture, Chinese University of Hong Kong and Visiting Professor of Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing.
- He has written several books on architecture and arts respectively published in China and in the United Kingdom.

Ar. WU Jiang
AWARDS CONVENOR

- Vice President (Zone C), ARCSIA 2019-2023
- Editor-in-chief, Architecture Asia
- Full professor, Tongji University CAUP
- Former Executive Vice President, Tongji University
- Former Deputy Director, Shanghai Urban Planning Administrative Bureau
- Member of l'Académie d'Architecture de France
- Board Chairman, GUPEI
- Member, UIA Education Commission (EDU-COM)
- Vice President, Urban Planning Society of China (UPIC)
- Council Member, Architectural Society of China (ASC)

CONVENOR

ARCSIA has established the ARCSIA Architecture Awards (AAA) to encourage and recognize the outstanding achievements of architects working in Asia and to promote the development of architectural standards across Asia and its member states. The awards are judged by an independent panel appointed by the ARCSIA Council, consisting of top architects from Asia and one non-architect. The winners are determined by this panel and announced by the council.

The purpose of the ARCSIA Architecture Awards is to acknowledge excellent architectural works, to foster the development and improvement of the architectural environment in Asia, and to enhance the recognition of the role architects play in the socio-economic and cultural life of Asian countries. Additionally, the awards aim to showcase outstanding architectural designs that positively impact the human environment and exemplify the harmonious coexistence of material development with local cultural values, national identity, and the natural environment.

In the AAA2024, there were 340 eligible entries from 15 different countries or regions. The jury selected 25 projects, including 7 gold awards and 18 honorable mentions.

EDITORIAL

Latest Issues

AA Awards Special Issue 2024, December 2024

- The issue features 7 gold medals and 17 honorary mentions.
- Each award category is given a dedicated layout to showcase the projects as fully as possible.

RESTORATION & ALTERATION/ADDITION WORKS TO EXISTING CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

GOLD WINNER

Award Winner: Rita Saw Lan, SCL, KOC Architects The Ltd
Project Location: Hougang, Singapore

GANSU GUAZHOU YULIN GROTTOS VISITOR RECEPTION CENTER

GOLD WINNER

Award Winner: 11team Design Studio for Urban Architecture
Project Location: Juqu'an, China

PINK HOUSE

HONORARY MENTION

Award Winner: 23o5 studio
Project Location: Long Xuyen, An Giang Province, Viet Nam

The space is separated into different layers with a homogeneous wash stone (granite) material inside and outside, blurring the boundaries, only the subject and the atmosphere surrounding the subject form solid. Calculation of the space is determined by the purpose of use and each activity that takes place. Architecture has a special material relationship with human life, as a cover and foundation for the life that unfolds around it. A large opening with space connecting the sky and the building, has a metaphorical and evocative connotation of the small image of man before vast nature. Functional spaces are compressed in a solid mass.

CHILDREN FRIENDLY CENTER OF XUZHOU

HONORARY MENTION

Award Winner: Kai Cui, China Architecture Design & Research Group
Project Location: Xuzhou, China

The Children Friendly Center is a supporting educational facility for the 12th Xuzhou International Manufacture Park. The building is located in a relatively wide and independent base, with functions including a children's activity room, a laboratory, a restaurant, a book bar, and an independent sports entrance. It is a children's activity center built for children to safely and happily approach and explore nature, and will continue to operate after the event. Its forms arise from a natural chaotic chain—the a colored pencil, like a colorful building book, like a fairy tale cottage with simple shapes for children.

NONSPACE

HONORARY MENTION

Award Winner: WOONGK JUNG
Project Location: Lhaese, Republic of Korea

This project is to regenerate a vacant space, renovated for rice and forest-land use but suffering from the aging of population with new possibilities of life by proposing an experimental cross-cultural facility within the "cross-space" enabling the interaction between diverse cultures.

FLOATING BAMBOO HOUSE

HONORARY MENTION

Award Winner: Doan Thanh Ha, Nguyen Th Thanh, HSP Architects
Project Location: Phu Cat, Quao, Viet Nam

floating bamboo house is a housing model for vulnerable people whose livelihoods are threatened, especially those in the Mekong delta. It is a new type of three-compartment house made of solid cored bamboo (bamboo in a form, 3m and 4m long) which are joined together simply with chords and ties. The house is covered (bamboo) and partitioned (bamboo) with light materials (compressed washed bamboo sheets, woven, corrugated iron, bamboo screens, etc.) and has a large roof to collect rainwater and harvest solar energy. The door systems that can open and close flexibly help make the house sturdy enough in severe weather event, while creating a typical identity. The house can instantly become an outdoor space to its plastic drum systems tied to the floor beams. In the center of the house are two water storage tanks and aptic holes. It has a square ground area with two areas which can be extended to increase the area of use. When the second floor panels are removed, the house becomes much more spacious (functioning as a communal house, a classroom, or a store, etc.), a reminiscence of the stilt house. Kim positioning using fabric panels of Vietnamese people in the future, a peaceful

NOKHA VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE

HONORARY MENTION

Award Winner: Sanjay Puri Architects
Project Location: Nokha, Rajasthan, India

Located in Rajasthan, India, amidst the arid landscapes of the Thar Desert, the Nokha Village Community Centre is a project that not only serves as a community hub for the 144 villages in the district but also as a memorial for Basmah Khatun, envisioned by its family.

Latest Issues

AA Awards Special Issue 2024, December 2024

- It was the first time that the AA Awards issue has been officially published before the AAA Ceremony. The hardcopies were presented to the winners along with the medals and certificates.



Latest Issues

Experiencing Malaysian-ness: the Embodiment of Identity in Contemporary Architecture March 2025

- This issue examines how **Malaysian architecture** expresses national spirit via **innovation and culture**, with diverse projects and expert insights. It highlights identity as a dynamic process influenced by **hybridity, memory, and modernity**.



Guest Editors:
David Teoh, PAM
Veronica Ng Foong Peng, PAM



Contents

Editorial ¹

ARTICLES

Cities Within a City: Notes on Neoliberalism and Kuala Lumpur's Archipelago Urbanization ⁵
Nazmi ANUAR

Responding to Place through Making in Architectural Practice ¹⁶
Eileen JAMIL

Reaching New Heights: The Story Behind Merdeka 118 — Interview with Dato' Tengku Ab. Aziz and Ar. Ahmad Farid Baharuddin ²⁸
David TEOH and Faris CHOYO

Experiencing Malaysian-ness The embodiment of identity in Placemaking ³⁶
Jia-Ping LEE

PROJECT

Rambut Rambut / Temple of Togetherness ⁴⁶
Mior Aluddin FAIMI

Women's Aid Organization Shelter Home ⁵⁸
Syah KAMARUDDIN

UR-MU @ Bukit Bintang ⁶⁸
TAN Loke Mun

Sama Square ⁶⁶
Rien TAN

Sentul Works ⁷⁴
Eric CHOO Poo Liang

Oculus House ⁸⁶
WOOI Lok Kuang

GDP Campus ⁹²
GDP Architects Sdn. Bhd.

Factory in the Forest ⁹⁸
John BULLOCK, CHIN Kuen Cheng

The Expansion of Bagan Specialist Centre ¹⁰⁶
WEE Hi Min

MERDEKA 118 ¹¹⁸
Fender Katsalidis and RSP Architects Sdn. Bhd.

PROJECT

Rambut Rambut / Temple of Togetherness



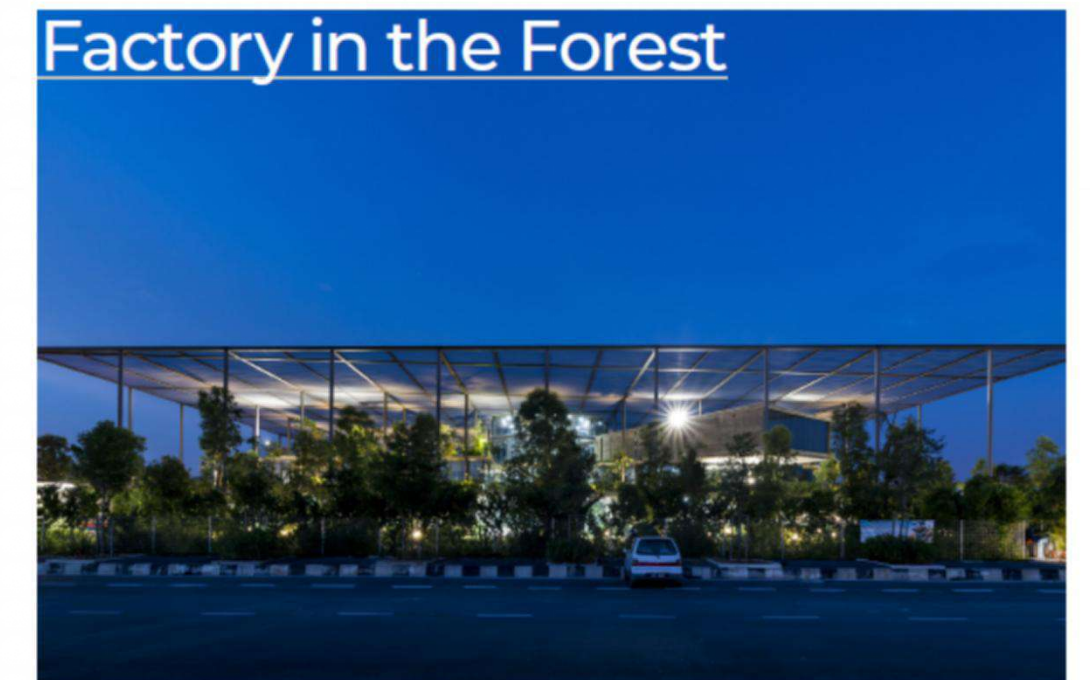
View inside the installation

Landscape Architecture Firm: Bunga
Design Atelier
Principal Designer: Mior Aluddin FAIMI
Design Team: Mohamad AHMAD, Aliqwan AZRAEL, Nik Nur AZLIN, and few other students/volunteers / strangers
Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Area: 14.88 sq m
Completion Date: 2023
Photography: Bunga Design Atelier

A temple is a place of sanctity and devotion, created specifically for the act of worship. It serves as a sacred space where individuals seek solace, reflection, and connection, not only with the divine but also with one another. In this spirit, Rambut[!] Rambut[!] emerges as a unique architectural installation that cherishes and honors the essence of togetherness, a celebration of unity, friendship, and mutual understanding among people.

PROJECT

Factory in the Forest



Exterior view at night

Architecture Firm: Design Unit Architects Sdn Bhd
Principal Architect: John BULLOCK, CHIN Kuen Cheng
Website: <http://designunit.com.my/>
Contact e-mail: info@designunit.com.my
Firm Location: 8th Floor, Syed Kechik Building, Jalan K. Apas, Bangsar, 69100 Kuala Lumpur
Project Location: Penang, Malaysia
Area: 16060.29 sq m
Completion Date: Jan 2017

Credits
Client: Tecan CDMO Solutions PN Sdn. Bhd.
Architect: Design Unit Architects Sdn Bhd
Engineering & Construction: Web Structures Sdn Bhd
Mechanical & Electrical Engineer: Perunding Eagles Engineers Sdn Bhd
Project Management: JLI Sdn Bhd
Environment Consultants: IEN Consultants Sdn Bhd
Main Contractor: South Island Building Sdn Bhd
Photography: LIN HO Photography

As an architectural competition winning entry for an electronics manufacturing plant, this site is conceived as a forest that penetrates, surrounds & steps over the building creating maximum contact with nature - green, breeze, scent, sound, touch.
A canopy supported by a "forest" of columns creates unity to office & courtyard while giving protection from the tropical sun. Office levels give access to roof gardens and staff are encouraged out for breaks, meetings or just contemplation. A green courtyard separates the office & factory with views and access from both. A bridge over the courtyard links the office &

production, and this circulation route becomes a space for meetings, breaks & lectures.
The factory has views to landscape and the sky condition through full height and clerestory glazing with the glazing protected from the sun by free-standing off-form concrete fins and roof louvers. Rainwater cascades from roof spouts - heightening awareness of tropical storms - to storage tanks for landscape irrigation. The plant receives natural diffused light across the entire factory floor reducing dependency on artificial lighting that, combined with chilled water floor slab cooling & cutting-edge air-conditioning

technology, reduces energy consumption to half that of a conventional plant of similar size.
Structure & materials are expressed: off-form reinforced concrete and steel structure, glazing and landscape. With this small palette of materials, the building explains to us what it is, what it is made of & how it is put together.
The approach was to create a stimulating & meaningful working environment for all employees - the forest - to be the face of the building & company. Forests, critical for both macro & microclimates are also vital for our psychological well-being.

Latest Issues

Experiencing Malaysian-ness: the Embodiment of Identity in Contemporary Architecture March 2025

- The issue includes 4 articles and 10 projects.

Article

ARTICLES

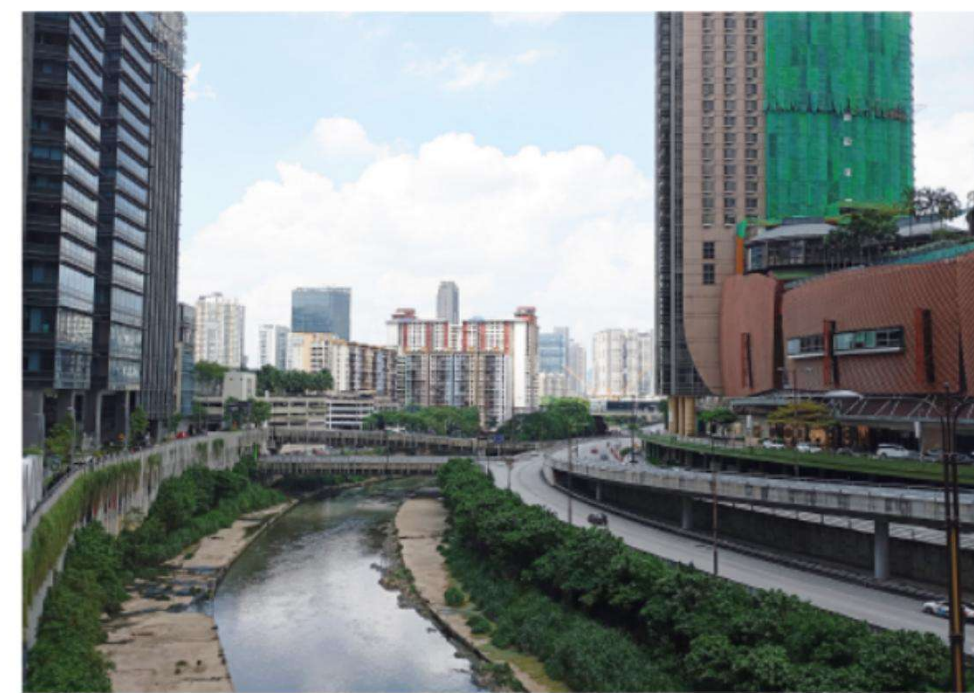
Cities Within a City: Notes on Neoliberalism and Kuala Lumpur's Archipelago Urbanization

Nozmi ANUAR, School of Architecture, Building & Design, Taylor's University, SPA
Email: Alnohizmi.kh@taylor.edu.my

Author's Biography
Nozmi Anuar is a former member of the research journal *ES&A* and a lecturer at the School of Architecture, Building and Design, Taylor's University. Her research interests are in the relationship between architecture and the city. Her research includes a PhD on the role of architecture in the development of the city. She is also the author of the book *Body and Place* (2022) and co-author with *ES&A* of the book *Between Soil and River: Notes in Time on Khayri* (2023).

Abstract
The city of Kuala Lumpur could be read as an agglomeration of large-scale developments. With their detachment from the immediate context, these developments - such as Mid Valley City, KL Eco City, Empire City etc. - could be read as isolated 'city within the city' or 'urban islands,' which together generate the peculiar archipelago urbanization of Kuala Lumpur, where the city is fragmented and made up of the accumulation of many smaller cities. Kuala Lumpur is becoming a stage ground of speculative large-scale commercial development. Therefore, this article aims to explore this phenomenon in relation to an overview of neoliberal urbanization and the idea of the city as an archipelago based on theoretical methodology. Through a critical review of related theories and literature, the study identified the point of emergence of large-scale developments in Kuala Lumpur, their key characteristics, and their possible impact on the physical and social fabric of the city.

Keywords: neoliberalism, neoliberal urbanization, city within the city, urban islands, archipelago city.



Mid Valley City and KL Eco City, facing each other across the Klang River. Two examples of Kuala Lumpur's city within a city or urban islands. (author's photo)

Notes on Neoliberalism
The Developmental State: Neoliberalism and Malaysia
In his landmark study *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, David Harvey defined neoliberalism as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey 2006). Neoliberalism can also be understood as the intrusion of market dynamics into all aspects of life (Springer, Birch, and MacLurey 2016) as a "new political, economic, and social arrangements within society that emphasize market relations, re-tuning the role of the state, and individual responsibility" (Springer, Birch, and MacLurey 2016) and a "political belief in the primacy of the market for governing human affairs" (Dupuis, Catteluzano, and Hartson 2003). In practice, neoliberalism has been commonly associated with market-oriented policies, which have been linked with various socio-political ill-effects (Springer 2017). Rather than a case of erosion of state power in the face of market forces - as is prevalent in the West - the Malaysian version of neoliberalism maintains and expands state power through active collaboration between the forces of the market and the "developmental state", which is defined as "the state that is understood to have prioritized national resources for investment in nurturing targeted industries through bureaucratic systems while maintaining state-led development of the market" (Chan and Shin 2019). Malaysia's shift into the developmental state approach was dated by Chareonwongrak to the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971 (Chareonwongrak 2023). Implemented in 1971 for economic restructuring after the racial riots of May 1969, the NEP has been argued to reveal "the determination of the government to enact quasi-neoliberal policies before the era of neoliberalism came to dominate the West." (Tedong, Grant, and Wan Abd Aziz 2019). Through the NEP, measures such as privatization and affirmative action were introduced to improve the economic standing of the Malays while furthering the interests of politicians and the elites (Tedong, Grant, and Wan Abd Aziz 2019). The enforcement of neoliberalism as an economic ideology could be traced to the first administration of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed (prime minister: 1981 - 2003), who instituted practices such as privatization, free market policies, and financial liberalization (Tedong, Grant, and Wan Abd Aziz 2019). The fifth Malaysia Plan (1996 - 1999) launched what is referred to as Mahathir's "authoritarian neoliberalism" (Duago 2018), which is similar of "authoritarianism, crony capitalism, and neoliberalism" implemented through "patronage politics, authoritarianism, and economic restructuring" (Duago 2018). As we shall see, the effects of neoliberalism on the urban fabric manifested themselves in the 1990s (Kotowski, Huston, and Mohd Yusoff 2022).

Project

PROJECT

The Expansion of Bagan Specialist Centre



The newly upgraded park is the new landscape for the hospital.



199 - construction began for the original Bagan Specialist Centre.

Architecture Firm: MINWEE Architect
Principal Architect: WEE Hui Min
Design Team: WEE Hui Min, LEONG Guan Wen, LEE Pei Jing, HUI CHIAM Tai Hong, FONG LAW, Claudia LAW, George LEE
Location: Penang, Malaysia
Area: 57,624.00 sq.m
Completion Date: April 2024
Photography: Daniel YAM, Sean WEE, CK TAN, Jenny CHOW

Background
The Bagan Specialist Centre is a private hospital built in the 1990s in Batuferuss, Penang, on a triangular site with its long side along the Penang River and the existing six-story hospital at the widest edge of the site. Since its inception, it has been providing off-odible care to the residents of the area.

The expansion more than doubles the bed capacity from 150 to 330 beds, and includes a new Cancer Care Centre with Radiotherapy, a new Chemotherapy Department. Other new facilities include a new Car Park Block, a new operating theatre, 10 specialist clinics, a cafeteria and bar/cafeteria room.

Brief
The hospital has been providing off-odible healthcare since its inception, and our client wanted to continue her father's legacy. She is a strong proponent of lean management principles, a big driver behind the project's direction. The project brief is comprehensive and made more complex by several factors:
- The existing hospital remained open to maintain the existing hospital's reputation.
- The existing hospital remained open to maintain the existing hospital's reputation.
- Construction, hospital operations, and upgrades are carried out following a strict sequence.

Planning
With the existing hospital as the cornerstone, the new nine-story Ward Block is aligned with the river, with the Front Clinical Block facing the park and the main road. Service spaces are plugged into leftover spaces: a car park block occupies the narrow corner of the site, while a M&E Block fills the gap between the new and old wards. The existing hospital is later linked up with the OT Block, completing the ring of buildings framing a triangular planted courtyard in the heart of the hospital complex.

Strategies
The architectural scheme is a balance between complying with medical flow requirements and five overarching design strategies:
1. Shade
2. Permeability
3. Three blocks
4. Sufficiency
5. Community
These are simple tasks for building in the tropics; we employ them creatively when designing houses and commercial projects. They are in fact more important in public buildings for the gains in comfort and reduction in construction and operation costs.



Isometric view of the hospital complex, used to manage construction sequence, demarcation of departments and traffic flow.



The newly upgraded park is the new landscape for the hospital.

Latest Issues

Singapore Architecture at 60: A snapshot and reassessment, June 2025

- This issue showcases how, on its 60th independence anniversary, Singapore uses architecture and design to reflect on its **development and identity**, from iconic landmarks to community renewal and sustainable innovation.



Guest Editor:
Hoo Cheong Fong, SIA



Contents

Editorial ¹

ARTICLES

Beneath All That Glitters: The Architecture of a Constructed Society ²
Ronald C. T. LIM

DELTA SPORT CENTRE ²²
Red Bean Architects

Ground up Reassessment (DOCOMOMO) ³⁶
DOCOMOMO.sg

Rethinking what is Climate and Tradition Interview ⁴⁶
Erik l'Heureux, Fong Hoo CHEONG

Singa and the Merlion: a Design History ⁶⁶
Lai Chee KIEN

PROJECT

Proposed ASA And Restoration Works to the Existing Church of The Blessed Sacrament at 1 Commonwealth Drive for the Church of The Blessed Sacrament ⁷⁶
RDO Architects Pte Ltd

Bukit Timah Railway Station & 9 Mile Platform ⁹²
Kay Ngee Tan Architects

The GEAR ⁹²
Surbana Jurong

House of Parts ¹⁰⁶
I Architects

21 Carpenter Street ¹¹²
WOMA Architects Pte Ltd

Goodlife Studio @ Bukit Purmei ¹²⁰
DP Architects Pte Ltd



Latest Issues

Singapore Architecture at 60: A snapshot and reassessment, June 2025

- The issue includes 5 articles and 6 projects.
- The editing work has been completed, and the issue is currently in the final confirmation stage with guest editor and authors.

Article

ARTICLES

Beneath All That Glitters: The Architecture of a Constructed Society

*Surveying the Spatial Transformations of
Singapore over the Last Decades*

Ronald C. T. LIM

Image captions, credits & sources in table below the essay

As Ronald C. T. Lim is a Singapore-focused architect and design educator who works at the intersection of architectural culture, design research and practice. He has worked internationally for distinguished architects like Cesar Pelli and Ruminho Heald and more recently collaborated with Lakster Architects on groundbreaking design research. He also curated the first major retrospective exhibition for the newly launched Singapore Architecture Collection, "To Draw An Idea: Retracing the Designs of William Lim Associates (WLA Architects)". Besides running his eponymous practice Ronald Lim Architects, Dr. Lim was also Co-Chief Editor of The Singapore Architect magazine and currently teaches at the National University of Singapore. He holds a Master of Architecture from Yale University.

Depending on who one speaks to, the city-state of Singapore conjures different images, impressions and meanings, which then frame and colour differing perceptions of its architecture. For an international audience, the prevalent image is likely that of a technological utopia humming with technocratic efficiency. Second numbers of international visitors (some 16.5 million in 2024) through this global business city whose sparkling skyline of gleaming skyscrapers and the decade-old Marina Bay Sands (MBS) continue to define brand Singapore, the technopia. This icon-filled skyline, itself the handiwork of generations of urban planners at the nation's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) glitters as demonstration of a Singaporean exceptionalism stemming from global capitalism.

Yet, this ubiquitous image of a global city par excellence illustrates but one outer facet of the polity: many simultaneous, overlapping realities. As a multicultural city-state with a spotlight society of diverse origins, spatial effort is made to weave and coalesce a common national espousal in the everyday such that this diverse society also identifies itself as one people. Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding prime minister, often proclaimed, "To understand Singapore and why it is what it is, you've got to start off with the fact that it's not supposed to exist and cannot exist...we don't have the ingredients of a nation, the elementary factors: a homogenous population, common language, common culture and common destiny!" The effort, beginning with policy and extending to the built environment, the Singapore government exerts every effort to create the common, accessible spaces and amenities that define the common Singaporean lived experience.

Notwithstanding the many options for per se modernist or post-modernist or neo-classical or neo-traditional or neo-Asian luxury that wealth on the island, the large majority of everyday Singaporeans reside in large, heterogeneous neighbourhoods that were planned and constructed by the state where public housing, neighbourhood retail and recreation co-exist with private condominiums for the upper middle-class.



The Singapore skyline




Beyond the traditional modern, there is a reality where the built environment of Singapore is a mix of neighbourhoods planned and constructed by the state, where public housing amenities co-exist with private condominiums. In a Queenstown Block, Singapore, image by the author for the Singapore Architecture Collection, image by the author for the Singapore Architecture Collection, image by the author for the Singapore Architecture Collection.

2

Project

PROJECT

21 Carpenter Street



The former and current building

Architecture Firm: WOHA
Lead Architect: Richard Hazellett
Year of Completion: December 2023
Land Area: 654.3 sq. m
Built-Up Area: 3,892.96 sq. m
Project Lead: Darren Soh / WOHA

Summary
21 Carpenter is a heritage boutique hotel at the gateway to the historical Chinatown district. It extends to four conserved shophouses from 1936, adding a contemporary rear block. The design seeks to incorporate history, art, and sustainability in a dignified and effective way within the envelope-controlled heritage property.

21 Carpenter was awarded the 2025 President's Design Award, Design of the year.



South East corner view showing how the new form and use are articulated to the conserved section

112

113

Latest Issues

New Section: Architect Interviews

- Building on academic articles and architectural projects, the latest two issues, 2025, added architect interview setion, showing the creative working process of Asian architects and their perspectives on the professional practice.

Reaching New Heights: The Story Behind Merdeka 118 Interview with Dato' Tengku Ab. Aziz and Ar. Ahmad Farid Baharuddin

DATO' TENGKU AB. AZIZ TENGKU MAHMUD (TA), CEO OF PNB MERDEKA VENTURES, AHMAD FARID BAHARUDDIN (FB), PRINCIPAL OF RSP ARCHITECTS — SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE ICONIC MERDEKA 118 AND THE SURROUNDING PRECINCT. Interview by David Teoh and Fatic Choo Monday, 3rd March 2025, 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm, Kolambi, Level 92, Merdeka 118. Photography by Gertel99.

Rising 678 metres above Kuala Lumpur, Merdeka 118 is the world's second-tallest building and a striking new symbol of Malaysia's ambition. Developed by PNB Merdeka Ventures, a subsidiary of Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB) — a state-owned investment company — the tower anchors a Precinct on the historic site of Merdeka Park, next to Stadium Merdeka where the nation's independence was declared in 1957. Blending heritage, public spaces, retail, hospitality, and workplaces, Merdeka 118 is reshaping the southern edge of the city's historic core. The architects of this tower are Fender Katsalidis, an internationally acclaimed Australian architecture studio behind landmarks such as the Fureko tower in Melbourne, and RSP Architects Sdn Bhd, one of Malaysia's leading architectural practices with an extensive portfolio of major developments. Together, they have delivered a design that fuses global expertise with local insight, creating a tower that is both technically ambitious and deeply rooted in its cultural context. In this feature, we speak with Dato' Tengku Ab. Aziz Tengku Mahmud (TA), CEO of PNB Merdeka Ventures, and Ar. Ahmad Farid Baharuddin (FB), Principal of RSP Architects, to share their insights on this landmark project and its surrounding precinct. Guiding the conversation are Ar. David Teoh (DT) and Ar. Fatic Choo (FC).

INCEPTION
DT Tell us what inspired PNB to eventually decide upon the current development masterplan, which includes the iconic Merdeka 118.
TA We went through a long process to determine what kind of development we wanted to implement in this area. Out of the 40 acres, a portion is dedicated to heritage, which is a state matter. So, what can we do with the remaining space? How do we create a project that respects the past while also having the potential for economic growth in the future? Initially, we could have started with a series of 50-storey buildings, just like a typical development, but in 2010, we decided to take a different approach. Once we had that in mind, it completely changed the parameters. Having a 118-storey tower in place meant that the urban design and overall development had to be viewed in that context. We wanted to consolidate multiple smaller buildings into one iconic tower, optimising space and respecting the heritage elements. PNB wanted to create a landmark that reflects Malaysia's heritage while driving economic growth. The master plan was inspired by the historical significance of Stadium Merdeka and the need for a modern, world-class development that also benefits the community. Merdeka 118 was designed to celebrate the nation's past while shaping its future, providing commercial spaces, cultural attractions, and improved public areas.
FC Was this project initiated by the Malaysian Government or invited by PNB?
TA This project was initiated by PNB as part of its long-term investment strategy. It was developed to create a meaningful landmark while contributing to economic and community growth. Yes, since this was a significant undertaking, we needed to secure the government's support. It wasn't initiated by the federal government, but something we thought was necessary to generate economic activity. We also had many meetings with Kuala Lumpur City Hall to have their support, along with other authorities. Once we received the necessary endorsements, it provided the green light for the project to move forward.
FC Did PNB specify the site for the various components, or was it left to the Architect?
TA PNB earmarked this location and established the overall vision and key site requirements for the development. While the architects were given a clear brief, they also had the creative freedom to design the mixed-use development that achieves optimal design, functionality, and seamless integration with the surrounding area.



Ar. Ahmad Farid Baharuddin, Principal of RSP Architects | Dato' Tengku Ab. Aziz Tengku Mahmud, CEO of PNB Merdeka Ventures | Ar. David Teoh | Ar. Fatic Choo

INNOVATION
DT What do you deem to be the major innovations introduced in this project? Could you name innovations that were new to Malaysia?
FB Wind engineering played a crucial role. We conducted extensive wind tunnel testing to optimise the design and reduce wind loads. The tower's unique shape helps break up wind patterns, making the structure more stable. We also introduced advanced fire evacuation systems. Instead of requiring all floors to evacuate at once, we designed a staggered evacuation plan that allows people to move safely to the point of safety (sky lobby) before proceeding further down. This system is based on international best practices and was validated by fire engineers from the US.
TA The Merdeka 118 project features several key innovations in design, engineering, and sustainability. It integrates advanced building technologies and sustainable solutions, some of which are new to Malaysia, enhancing efficiency and the overall experience for both visitors and those based in the tower. Designed with a forward-thinking approach, Merdeka 118 remains relevant a decade after its inception, demonstrating how architectural vision can stand the test of time. It is also built with cutting-edge safety features, including an evacuation lift system designed for use during emergencies, a first of its kind in the country. Merdeka 118 tower is now LEED Platinum certified and is actively working towards GreenRE certifications, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

URBAN CONTEXT
FC How do you see this tower in relation to the urban context and the surrounding neighbourhood?
FB This tower is located in the heart of KL, in Petaling Street, one of Kuala Lumpur's most famous tourist spots, and it's right next to Stadium Negara and Stadium Merdeka, and Chin Woon Stadium, which are important national landmarks. It is also part of the Golden Triangle, in the heart of the city's modern business and shopping districts. Chinatown is located on Petaling Street, featuring street-level shops and numerous local restaurants that attract not only locals but also tourists seeking a unique experience in Kuala Lumpur. I see the tower as a kind of bridge between these two areas: the traditional, lively atmosphere of Petaling Street and the sleek, modern vibe of the business district. Bringing them together with a prominent new tower like this one will help shape a more connected and dynamic urban space for the city as it continues to grow and develop.
DT Does the tower draw inspiration from the local context or architecture?
FB Yes, the design of the tower seamlessly incorporates elements of local architecture, reflecting a deep connection to the region's cultural heritage. The building's unique faceted facade, resembling an elongated crystalline diamond, is inspired by traditional motifs, particularly the intricate songket motif, which features triangular and crystalline patterns. This design language extends throughout the interior, including the main foyer, where triangulated patterns are also evident. The main reception desk in the lobby draws influence from the Mironglabau roof of Negeri Sembilan. This iconic roof, a hallmark of traditional Malay architecture, has profoundly shaped vernacular design in Malaysia. Its sweeping, curved shape has become a symbol of cultural identity and plays an essential role in the history of Malaysian architecture. During the recent UAGL Forum, an audience member asked Karl Fensler if the tower's iconic form was inspired by the image of Tunku Abdul Rahman. While the silhouette of the building does indeed bear a resemblance to Tunku Abdul Rahman raising his hand in the Declaration of Independence, it was ultimately concluded that this similarity is purely coincidental. Nonetheless, this interpretation has captured the public imagination, sparking widespread discussion. As a result, it has added sentimental value to the tower, especially given its proximity to heritage buildings and its connection to the memory of our first Prime Minister.



PNB (left), Ar. Ahmad Farid Baharuddin, Dato' Tengku Ab. Aziz Tengku Mahmud, Ar. Fatic Choo and Ar. David Teoh

ARTICLES Rethinking what is Climate and Tradition Interview

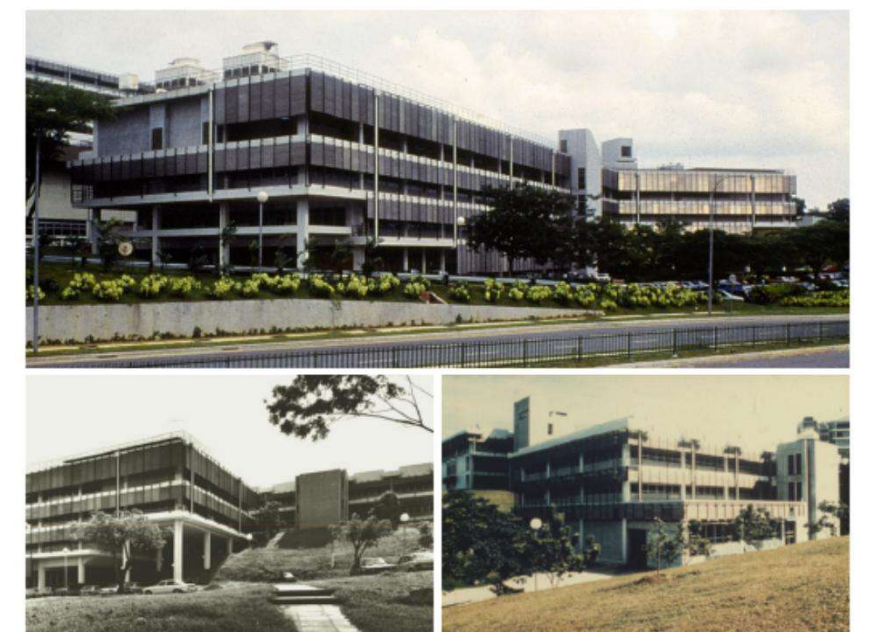
Erik L'Houérou, Fong Hoo CHEONG. Email: Erik.LHourou@monash.edu, fhong@hcls.com.sg

Erik G. L'Houérou (PhD) FAIA is an award-winning architect, educator, and academic leader whose creative practice engages the dense equatorial city, with particular expertise in adaptive reuse, Net Zero energy design, and decarbonization. His work is characterized by simple monolithic forms and finely tuned climatic wells that calibrate buildings, interiors, and experiences to the hot, humid air of the urban equator—transforming climate into a medium for delight and surprise. He is Professor of Design and Decarbonization and Head of the Department of Architecture at Monash University. From 2003 to 2025, during his tenure at the National University of Singapore, he served as Dean's Chair Associate Professor, Vice Dean and Director of both the Undergraduate and Master of Architecture programs. In these roles, he led award-winning Net Zero energy retrofits and advanced design strategies that lock in embodied carbon while significantly reducing operational emissions. Through an integrated approach to creative practice, design research, and pedagogy, Erik advances architecture's capacity to address the climate crisis. His teaching and practice equip the next generation of architects to critically engage with a warming world, shaping a more resilient, inclusive, decarbonized—and beautiful—future.



SERI New Britain | Favela Shree New Brighton

Q The project seems to be concerning renewal, reassessment of what is the current agenda of Architecture. As a teacher in NUS and also the designer you have a unique insight. I have questions that will let our reader understand more. What was the original design basis for NUS and why do the buildings look like this in 1980. Any comments on CO200's master plan etc.
NUS, which now houses the Equatorial School of Architecture, occupies the western edge of the Kent Ridge campus—a site shaped by late-1960s planning ideals. The original campus plan, CO200, was conceived as a decentralized, infrastructural network—more circuit board than civic ensemble—reflecting the industrializing ambitions of Singapore during that period. The architectural manifestation was consistent and systematized: a modular grid of reinforced concrete columns, aluminum sunscreens, yellow-painted soffits, and brick pavers coursing across the ridge. This was a campus without a center, with facilities dispersed rather than clustered, each plugged into the larger network. The architectural language of the time was one of mechanization and industrial promise. Mechanical systems—ducts, vents, chiller plants—were not hidden but celebrated, forming an iconography of modernity. Even before air conditioning was fully installed, the architecture anticipated it—projecting an ethos of mechanical comfort and environmental control. In many ways, the became an "iconography", a belief that climate could and should be controlled through technology, not through form, section, or material behavior. The redesign of SERI and SDEI engages this legacy critically. While respecting the infrastructural clarity of the original grid, the new interventions seek to recalibrate its environmental assumptions—opening the buildings to air, light, and landscape through passive strategies and breathable envelopes. Here, comfort is not imposed but negotiated—through climate-responsive forms, adaptive reuse, and low-carbon material assemblies—anchoring a new architectural ethos for an equatorial school of architecture.

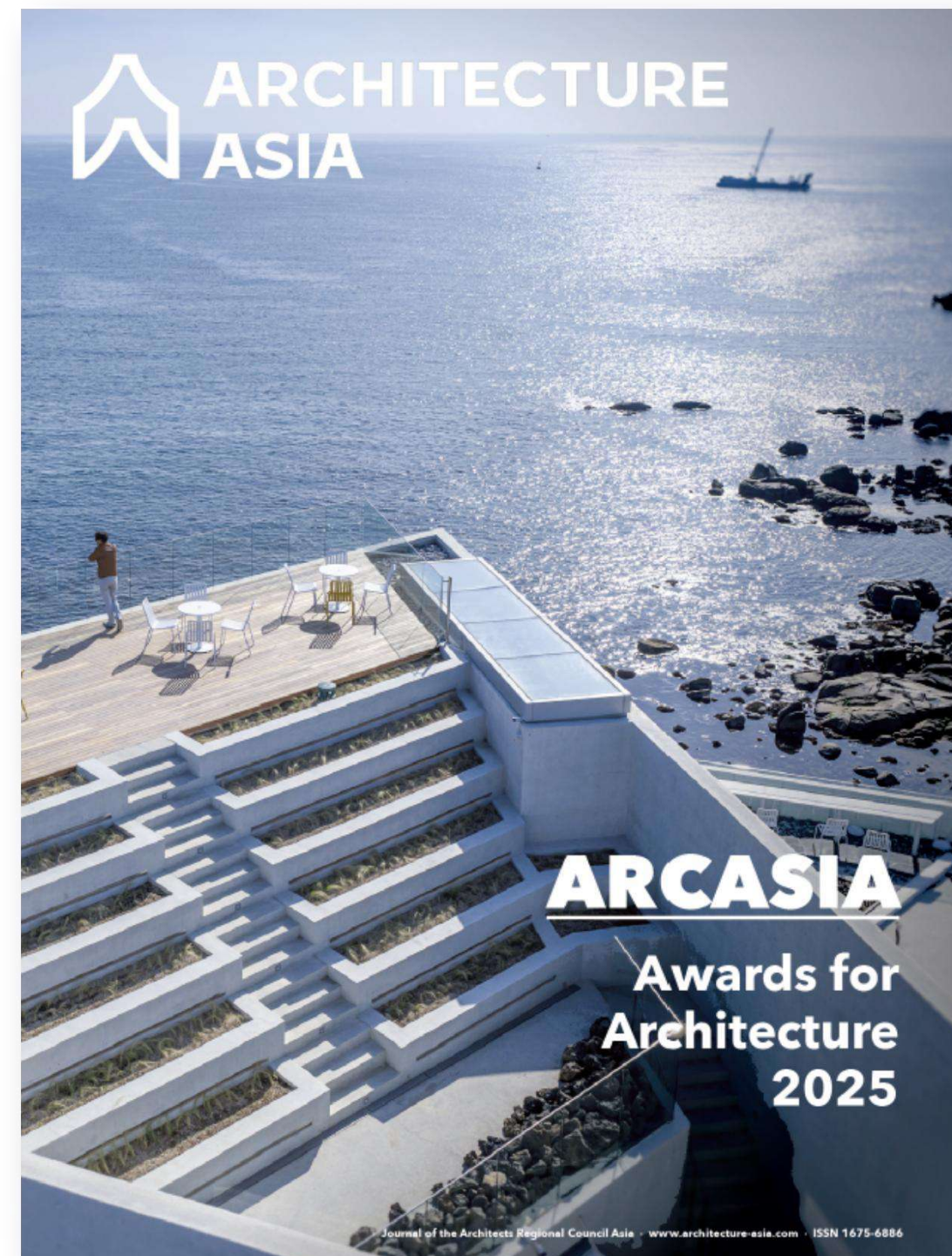


SERI 3 view 1980s, Top: North West view. Bottom left: South West view and Main stairs in SERI. Bottom right: SERI 1980s view.

Latest Issues

AA Awards Special Issue 2025, September 2025

- Working closely with KIRA, we have been engaged in intensive editorial work on the issue since the end of June, beginning immediately after the final review, including collecting high-resolution images, signing copyright agreements, typesetting, and proofreading.
- This issue includes 29 projects. As the final results of the AA Awards have not yet been announced, only a selection of pages is shown here.



JURY BOARD

ARCASIA Awards for Architecture 2025



Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad
JURY MEMBER ARCASIA President

- Ar. Saifuddin bin Ahmad
- Diploma in Architecture (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia)
- Bachelor of Architecture (Deakin University Australia)
- SARFUDIN ARCHITECT (Principal)
- SNO ARCHITECTS SDN BHD (Managing Director)
- Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad, 65, is the President of ARCASIA (Architects Regional Council Asia) 2024-2025. He is a fellow of Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia, Registered ASEAN Architect, APEC Architect and Honorary Member of Australian Institute of Architects, Association of Siamese Architects by Royal Patronage.
- The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has awarded the AIA President's Medal and Honorary AIA Membership during the International Presidents' Forum in Washington DC on June 8th, 2024.
- Ar. Saifuddin is a member of the Board of Directors Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd since February 2021. He is also Chairman of its subsidiary Lingkar MRT Sdn Bhd, the company responsible for the implementation of MRT Line 3. Ar. Saifuddin was a member of the Board of University Directors at Universiti Malaysia since 2011 to 2024. Ar. Saifuddin was appointed as Adjunct professor UCSI University's school of Architecture and Built Environment (June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025) the first for the school.
- He was awarded by his alma mater Deakin University, Australia, Alumni of Year 2020. He was chosen as one of the distinguished alumni by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia during the university's 50th anniversary in 2022. Ar. Saifuddin was one of the recipients of The 2023 CIDB Fellowship Awards, a recognition and appreciation from CIDB Malaysia.



Ar. Shahid Abdulla
JURY MEMBER Zone A

- Shahid Abdulla, founder and director of Arshad Shahid Abdulla (ASA) (Pvt.) Ltd., earned his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Illinois, Chicago, in 1977. He co-founded ASA with his late brother in 1979 and is a Fellow of the Institute of Architects, Pakistan (IAP), as well as a registered member of the Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners (PCATP).
- Among his accolades are the IAP Design Excellence Award (2012), the IAP Award for Excellence (2017), and several honors at the ADA Awards (2019) for projects like the Hater Foundation DMS Campus and the Nuseerwanje Building. Shahid received the President's Prize of Performance in 2014 and the Sitara-e-Imtiaz in 2022 for his contributions to art, design, and social work in Pakistan.



Ar. Anna Kwong
JURY MEMBER Zone C

- Past President of The Hong Kong Institute of Architects ("HKIA"), Ar. Anna is an Authorized Person - Registered Architect, APEC architect and possesses PRC Class 1 Registered Architect Qualification. She

has served at the strategic HK Government ("HKGP") Town Planning Board, HK Green Building Council, Council of HK Lingnan University, HK Academy of Performing Arts, Legal Aids Council and Trustee of the HKU Azalea Endowment Fund and etc.

- As a juror, Ar. Anna has served HKIA, RIBA, UNESCO Asia-Pacific Office as well as universities in HK and China on many occasions.
- Her works on Cultural Heritage Conservation have earned her the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Award.
- Catholic Cathedral, HK (2003), St Joseph's Chapel, YinTinTsai ("YTT"), ShaKung, HK (2005) and Revitalization of the Saltpans, YTT (2019).
- Ar. Anna was the Project proponent of the YTT Arts Festival which received subsequently full sponsorship from HKG Tourism Commission Office; and the team who curated the ECO Rotunda at YTT won the 2024 HKIA Special Award for Architectural Installation, Curator & Exhibition Design.
- In recognition of her contribution to the community by the Bushinia Service Award by the HK Agency for Volunteer Services and a Medal of Honour were conferred on Ar. Anna by HKG.



Prof. Ken Nah
JURY MEMBER Non-Architect

- Prof. Nah Ken is a faculty member at the International Design School for Advanced Studies (IDAS) at HongKong University and currently serves as the Master Designer of Busan Metropolitan City. He earned a B.S. in Industrial Engineering from Hanyang University, Korea, a M.S. in Industrial Engineering from KAIST (Korea Advanced Institute for Science and Technology), Korea, and a Ph.D. in Engineering Design from Tufts University, USA. He has served as the



Ar. Chun Gyu Shin
AWARDS CO-CHAIRMAN

- Ar. Chun Gyu Shin, KIRA/AAA
- AAA Convenor, 2025 ACAA, Incheon
- Principal, CGS Architects and Associates
- VP, ARCASIA (2022/2023)
- City Architect, Cheong Ju City (2022/2023), Sejong Administrative City (2020/2021)
- Member of Seoul Metro Architecture Policy Commission (2013/2019)
- Adjunct professor, Yonsei University (1998/2015)
- Architectural Advisor, KOICA (2013/2019)
- Ar. Chun Gyu Shin, KIRA/AAA is a principal architect and founder of CGS Architecture and Association. He is an Immediate Past VP of ARCASIA, past City Architect of Cheongju City and an adjunct professor at Yonsei University for 20 years. He received Bachelor degree at Yonsei University, Master of Architecture and Master of Urban Planning at Ohio State University, USA. He was also a member of Architectural Policy Committee in Seoul Metropolitan Government, an architectural advisor of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and Master Planner of National Museum Complex of Sejong Administrative City. His major works are "Ainsak Factory" (received Presidential Award of Korea Architecture Award, 2008 and Gold Medal of ARCASIA, 2010), "Chungheo Building Remodelling" (received Seoul Architecture Award, 2010), "Creative Village at ChungGang College of Cultural Industries" (received Korea Architecture Award, 2019) and etc.



Ar. Beverly Frank
JURY MEMBER International

- Ar. Beverly Frank, AIA, NCARB, GGP, CSI-CDT is the founding partner of BFrank Studio, LLC in Tampa, Florida, United States of America. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Art Education degree and a Master of Architecture degree from the University of South Florida - where she also teaches as an adjunct professor. Her practice centers around commercial and institutional work with a focus on adaptive reuse and renovations in higher education.
- Beverly served as the president of the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 2023. She is very active in civic and professional organizations. Her service to the profession and community currently include two appointments by the governor of the state of Florida, including the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and the Florida Board of Architecture and Interior Design - the state based Board that regulates the practice of architecture and interior design.

CONVENER

EDITORIAL

ARCASIA has established the ARCASIA AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURE (AAA) to encourage and recognize exemplary works done by ARCHITECTS working in Asia in its endeavor to raise the standard of the built environment throughout Asia in general and in its Member countries in particular. The awards are judged by an independent panel appointed by the ARCASIA Council, consisting of three eminent architects from Asia, one eminent architect from outside Asia, and one non-architect. The winners are determined by this jury panel and announced by the council.

The objective of the ARCASIA AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURE (AAA) is to acknowledge exemplary architectural work and, in doing so, celebrate the Asian spirit, encourage the development and improvement of the Asian built environment and enhance awareness of the role of architects in the socio-economic and cultural life of Asian countries. The ARCASIA Award also aims to demonstrate that good architecture is a key positive influence on the human environment and that successful physical development in Asia need not be in disharmony with the cultural values, national identity or the natural environment of developing countries. In the AAA2025, there were 412 entries from 15 member countries or regions, and 398 entries were deemed eligible after a two-week qualification review. The jury selected 29 projects, including 10 Gold medals, 15 honorable mentions and 3 special awards (one for Socially responsible and two for Sustainability). This year, the jury also selected Project of the Year from among Gold medal winners, recognizing the best of the best projects. (cgs 10/2025)

Award Convener	Admin Team	
Chun Gyu Shin, KIRA	Jongsu Lee, AIA/CIAT	So Raeg Moon
Award Committee	Jury Members	
Chun Gyu Shin, KIRA Elena Asanac, IAP	Saifuddin Ahmad ARCASIA President	Shahid Abdulla Zone-A Anna Kwong Zone-C
	Ken Nah Non-architect, Korea	Beverly Frank AIA, USA

Comming Issue

2025 December Issue

- The issue is currently in the editing process. This year, we received more high-quality submissions.



I|A The Lakshmi Mills



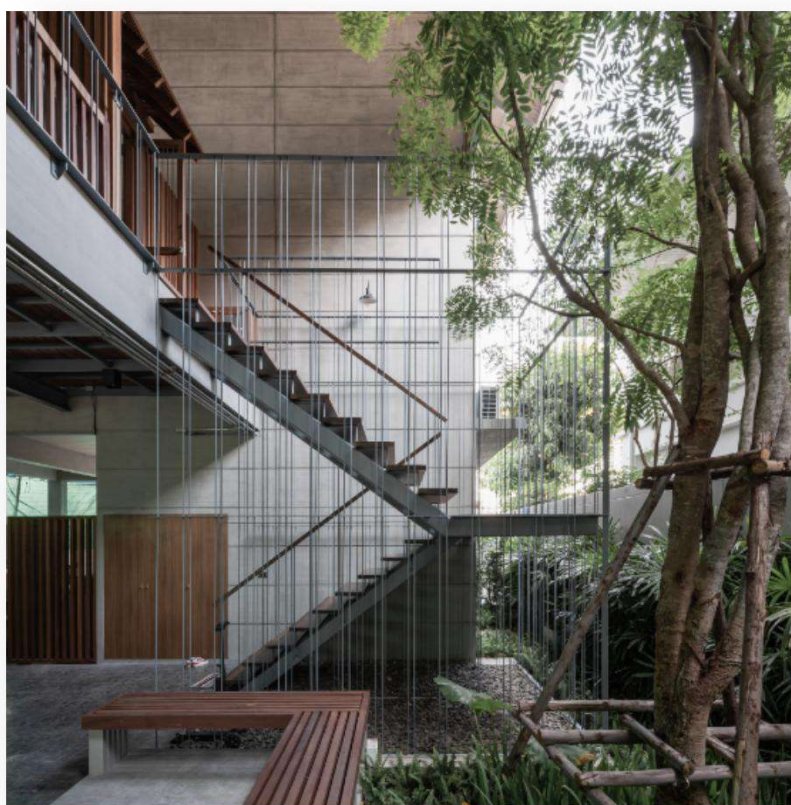
I|A Aalloa Hills Residence



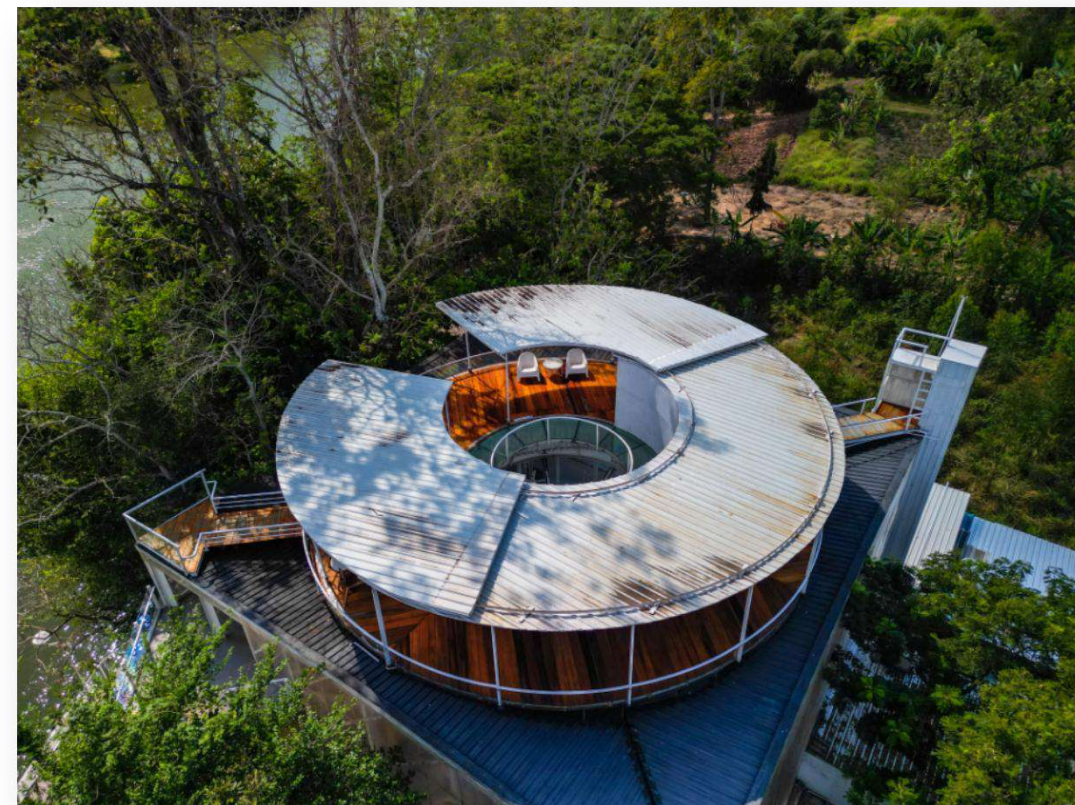
I|A Vedic Vidya Kendra



ASC The Blue Insight Cave Space



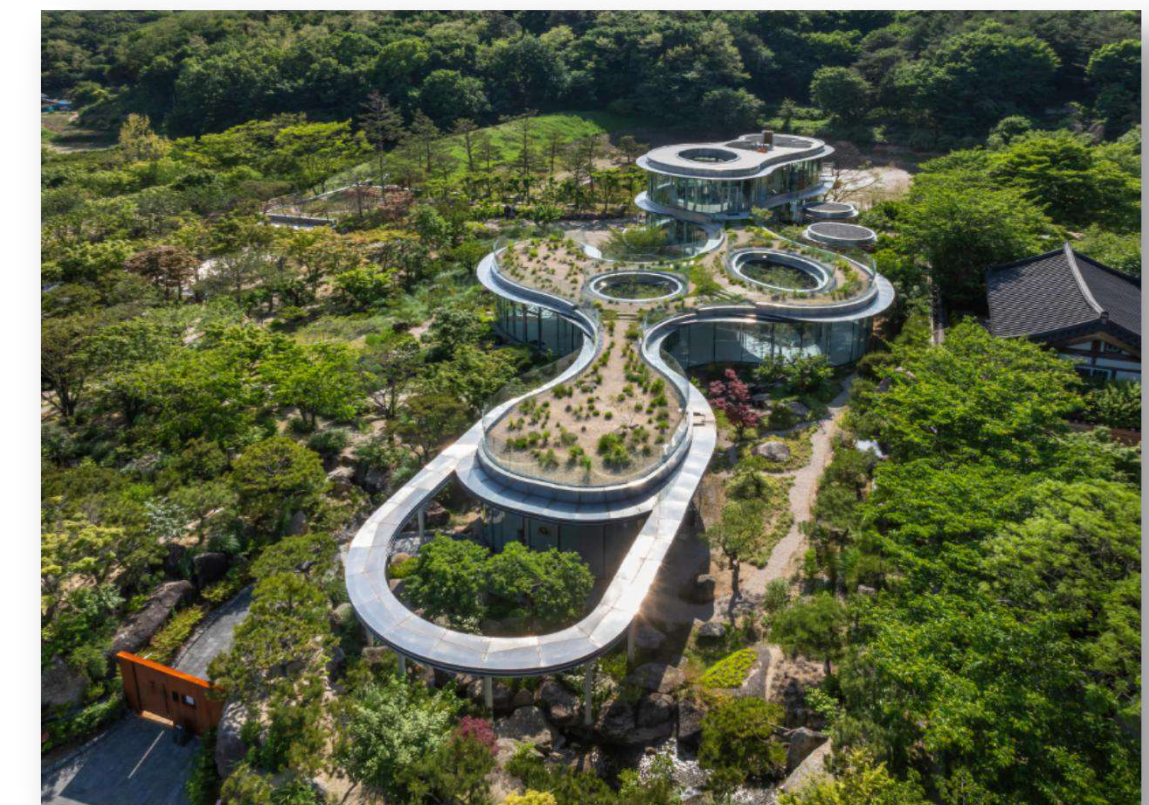
ASA Baan Nonn | Thai Family Bond House



ASA Varee Valley Restaurant | Jungle Junction



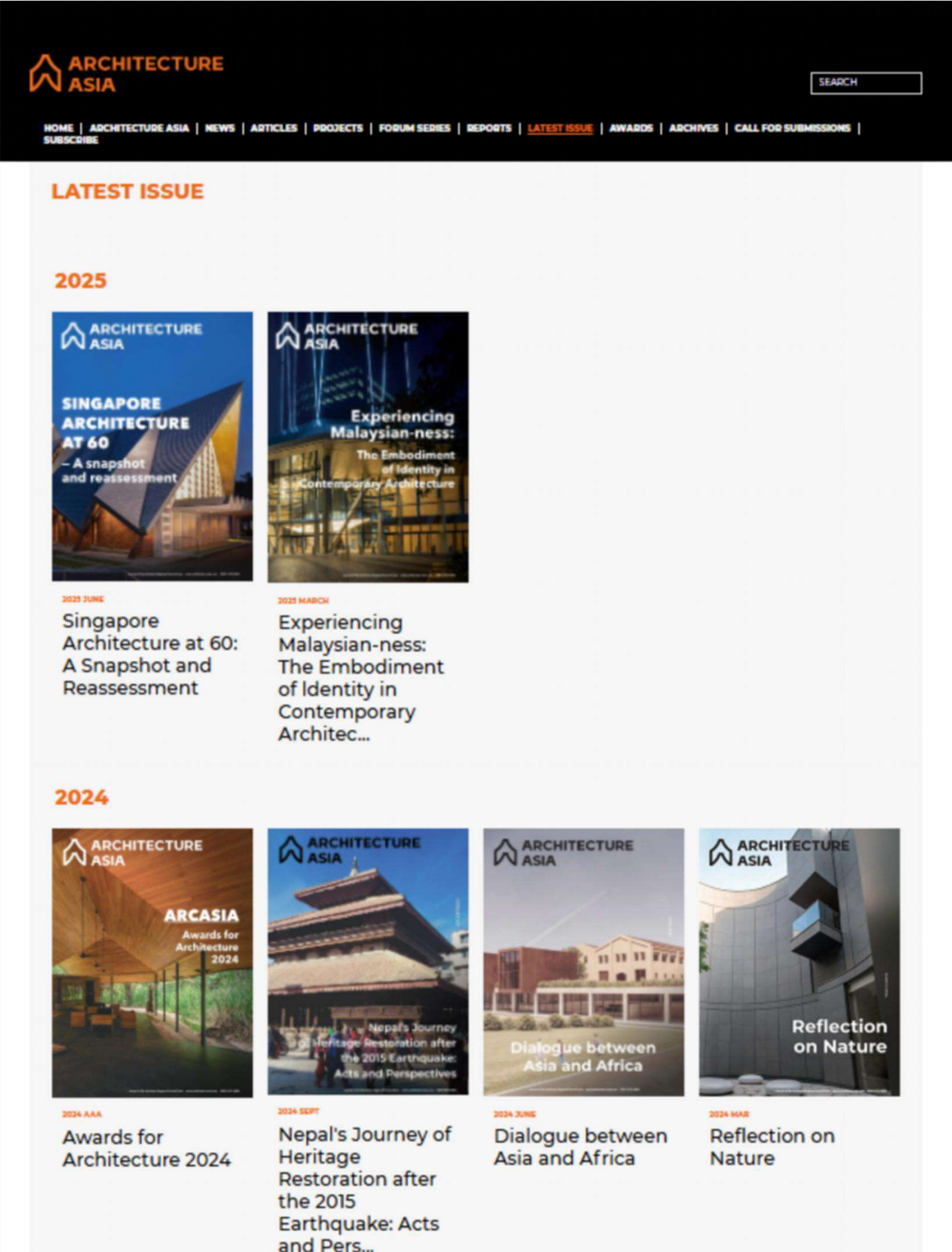
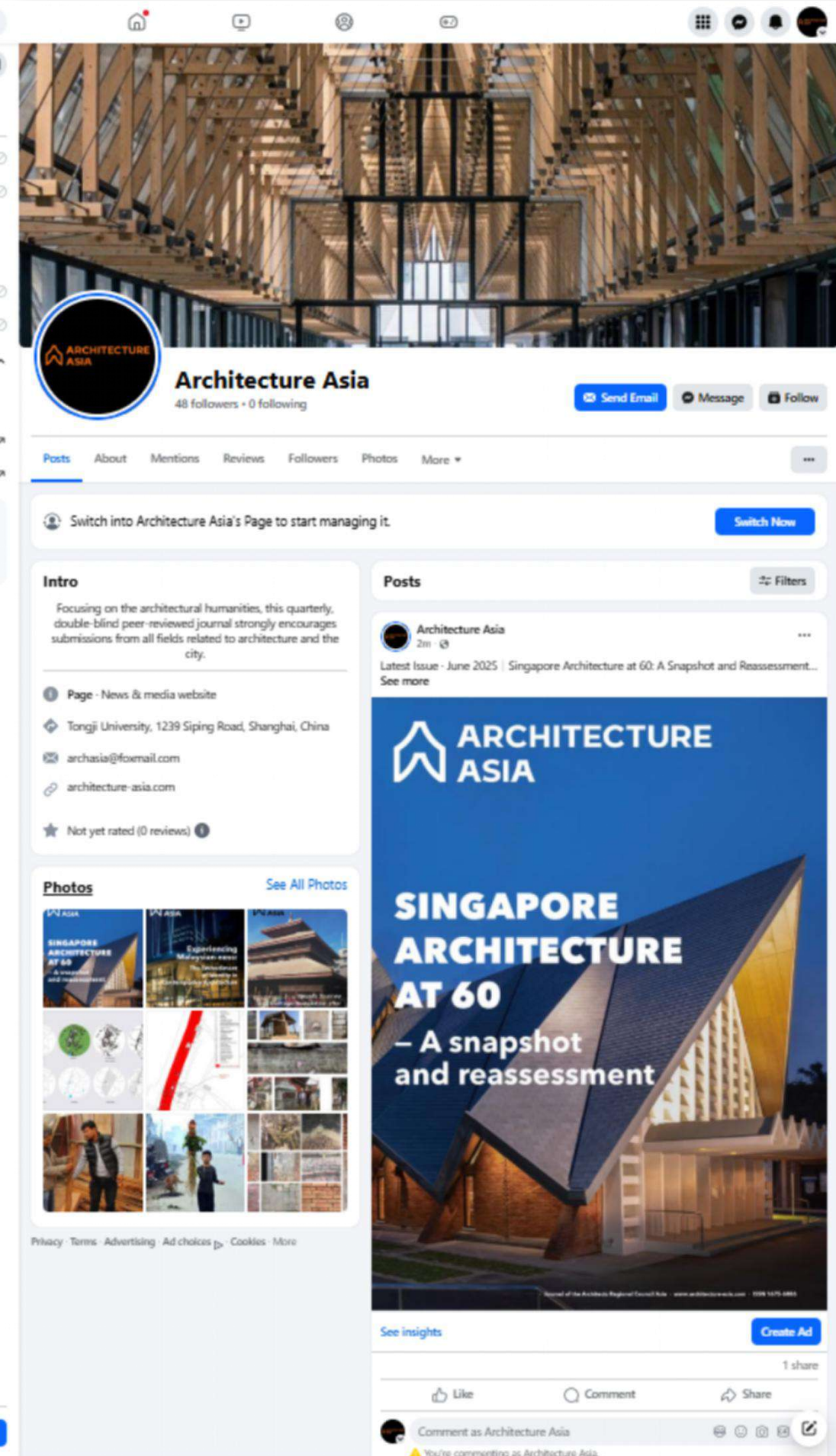
ASC Dingshu Vocational School of Pottery



KIRA MIGHUI

Social Media Platform

- With the release of the new issue, we are sharing its content on social media in real time, aiming to reach more readers across Asia and beyond.



2 Review of the Last Five Years

The Past Five Years

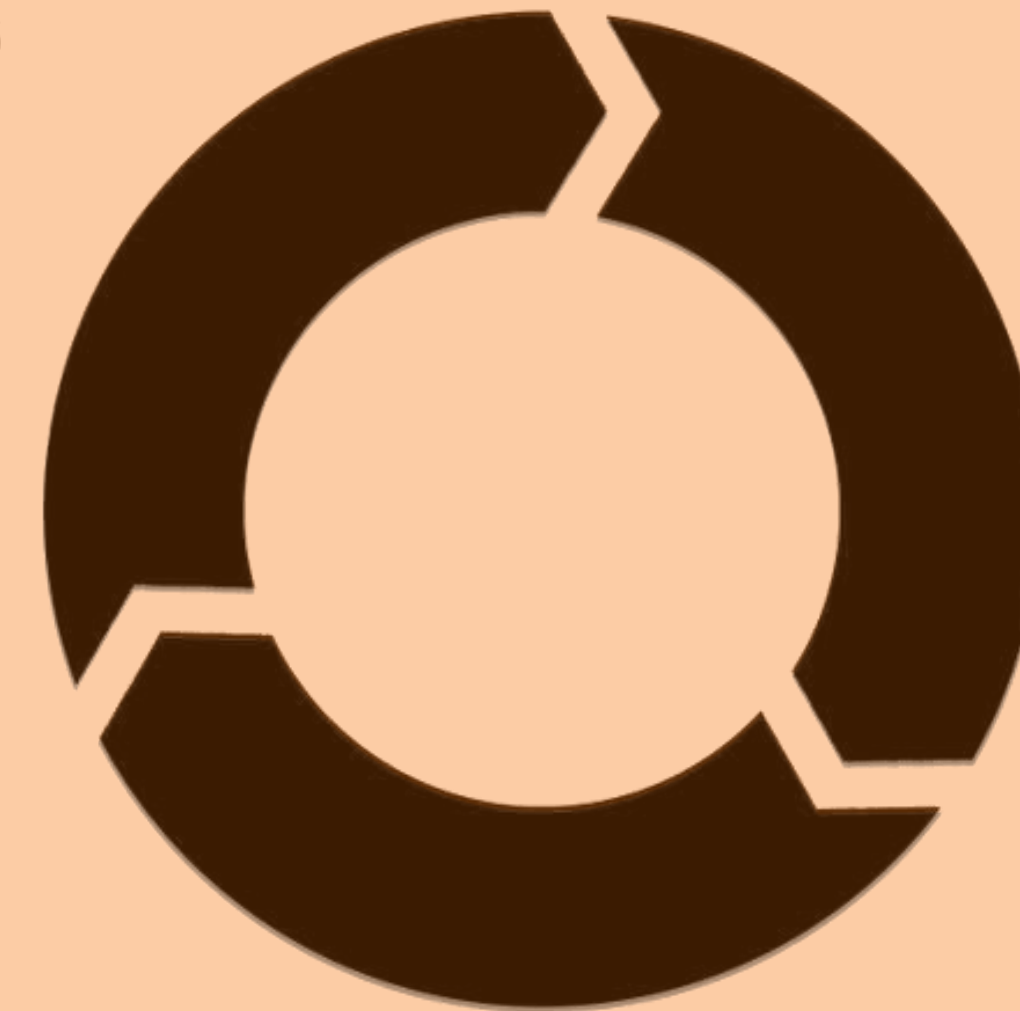
- Over the past five years, AA has been evolving and continuously optimizing the publishing model. We have explored ways to use the magazine as a platform to create face-to-face dialogue opportunities for Asian architects and expand our professional network.

Our efforts include:

- Highlighting Asia issues
- Exploring new distribution models
- Building a network of guest editors
- Hosting the Architecture Asia Forum series
- Developing our social media presence

**Architects
Network**

**Journal
Publication**



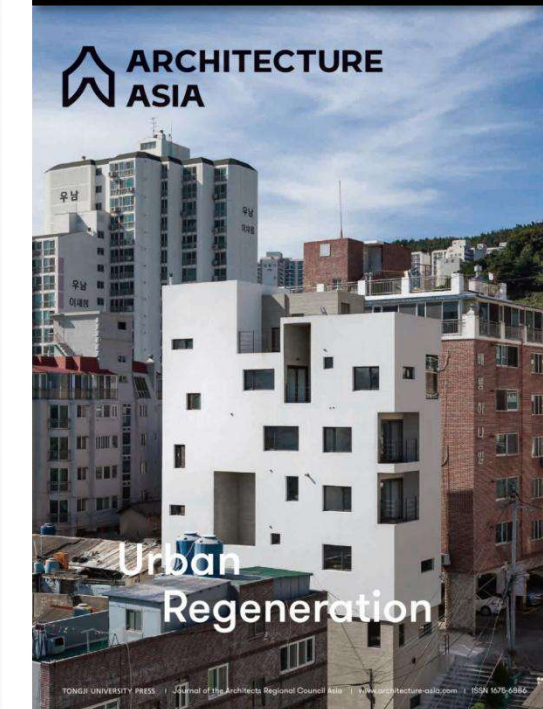
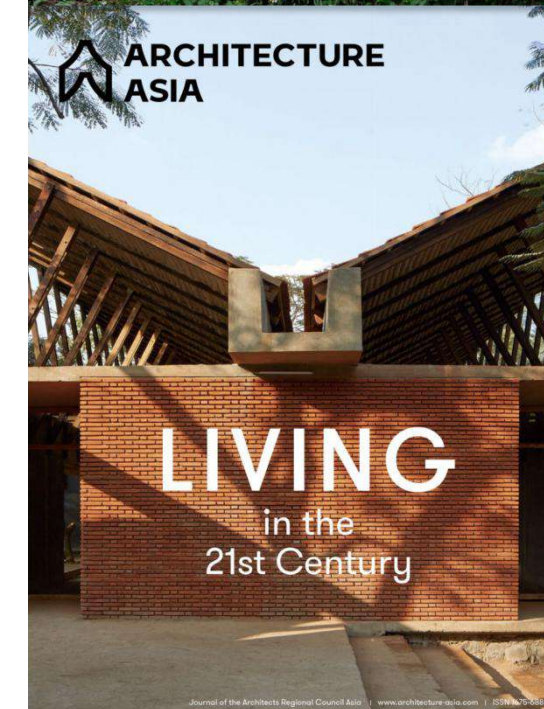
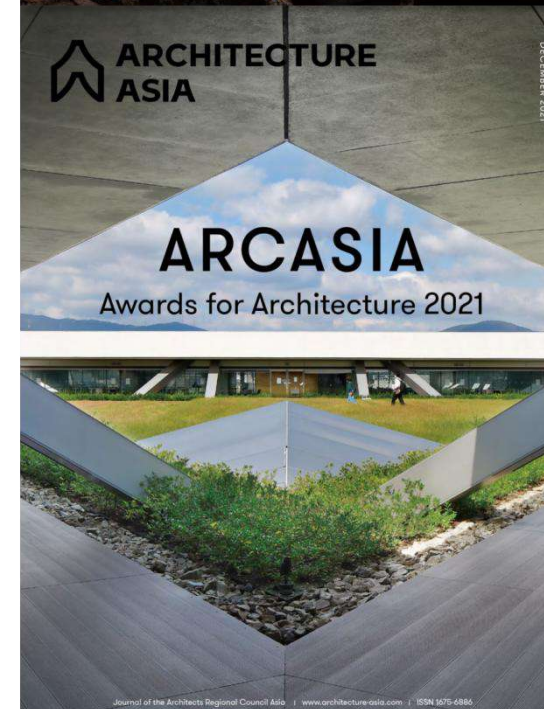
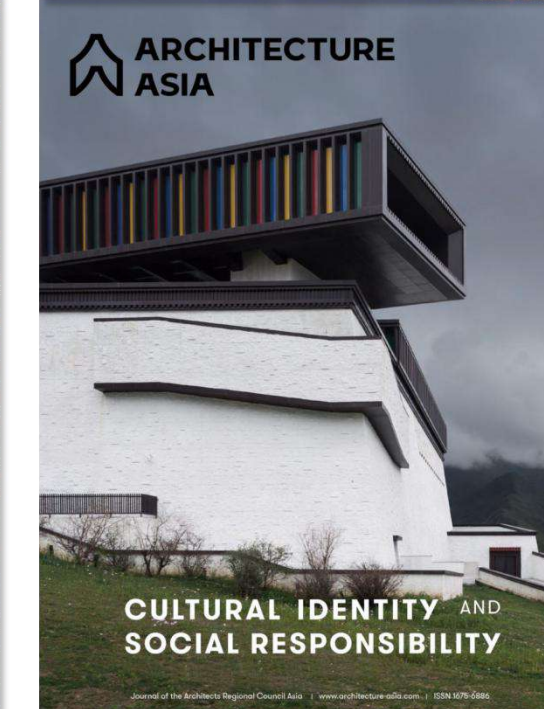
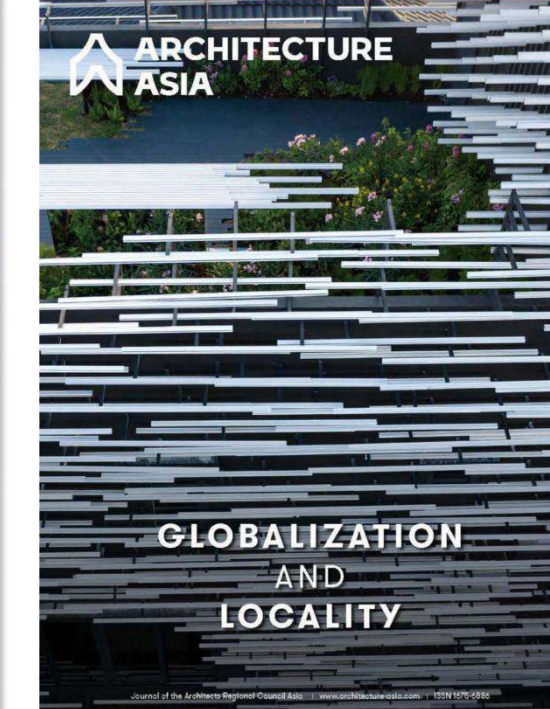
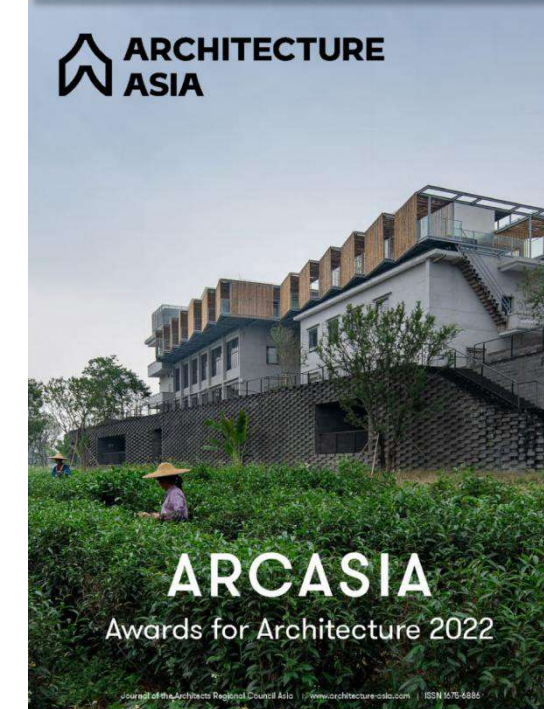
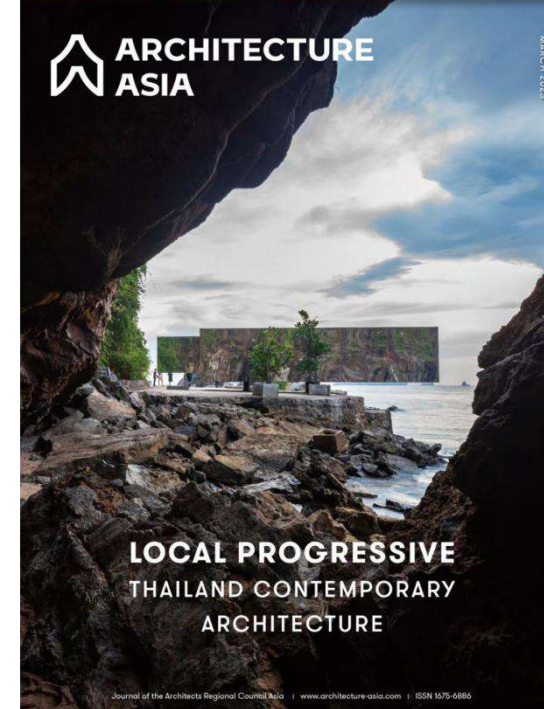
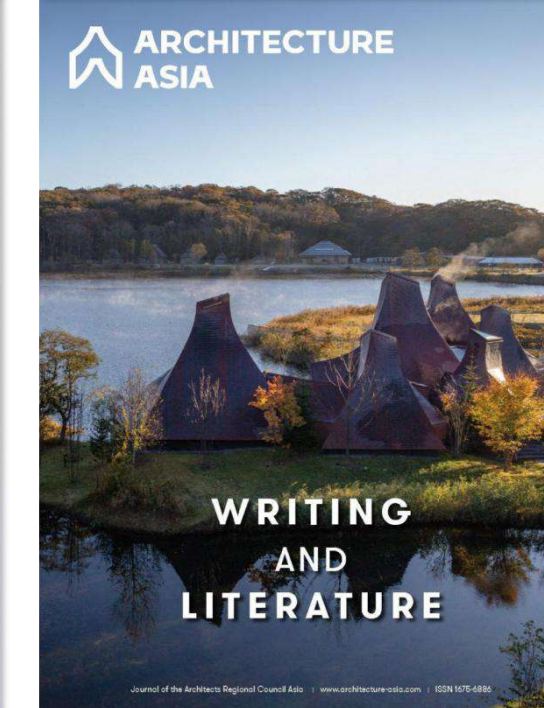
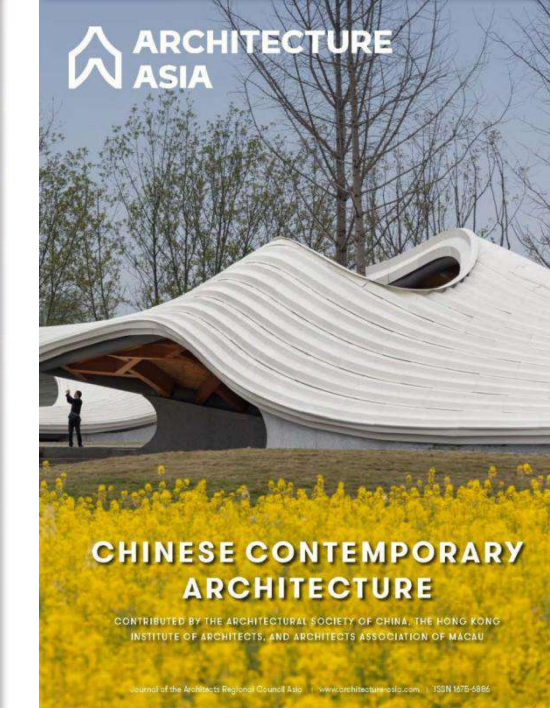
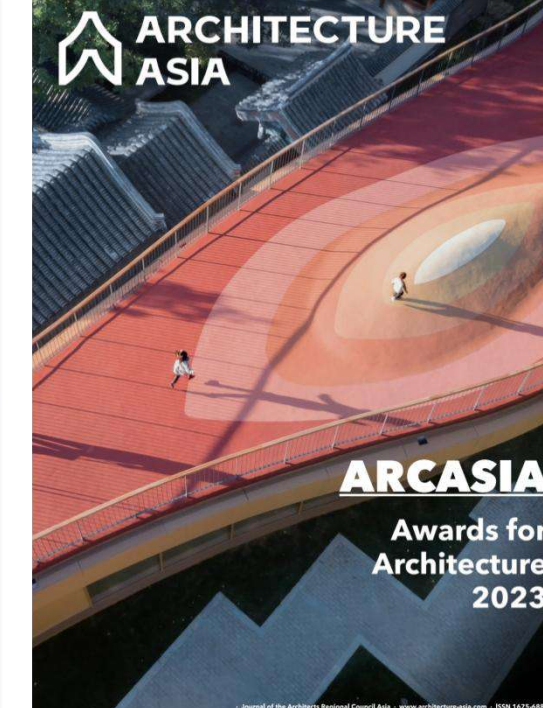
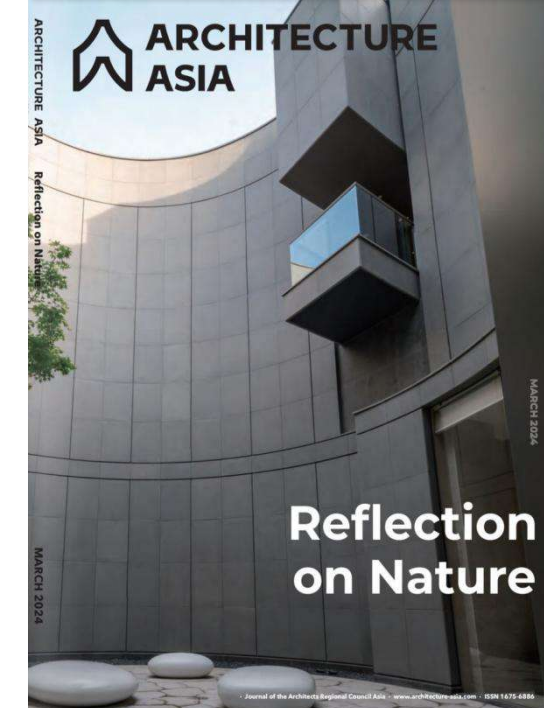
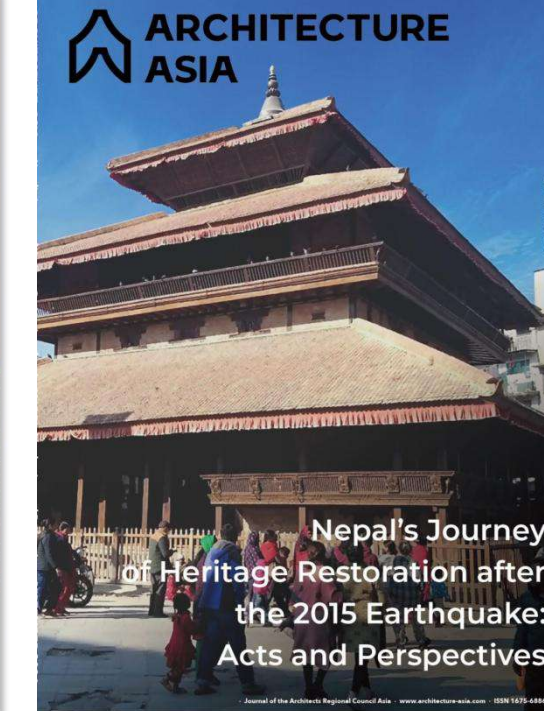
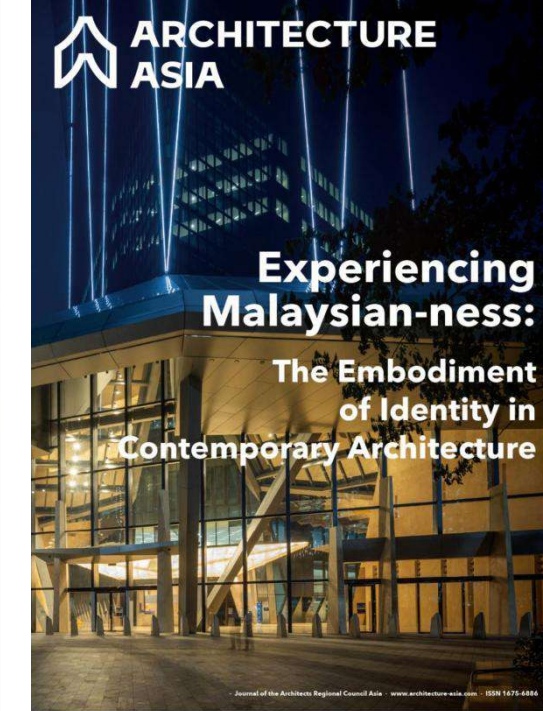
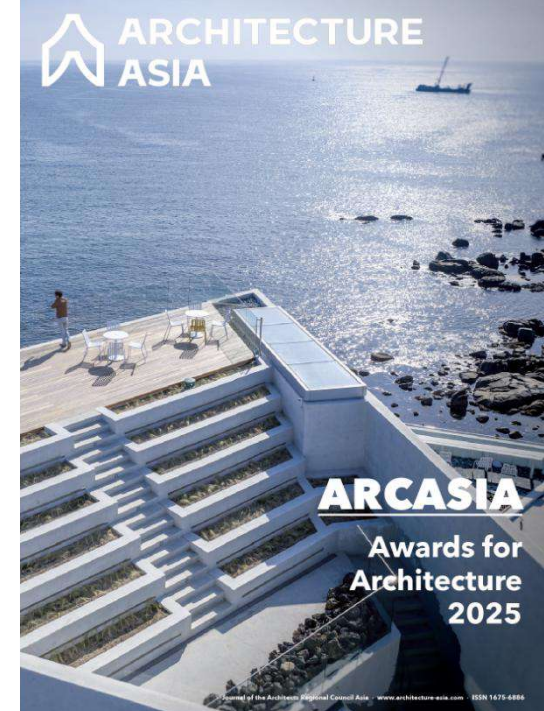
Architecture Asia Forum Series

The Past Five Years

AA has published 20 issues, including:

- 14 themed issues
- 5 special issues on AA Awards

featuring contributions from more than 70 scholars and 300 architects from ARCAISA member institutes.



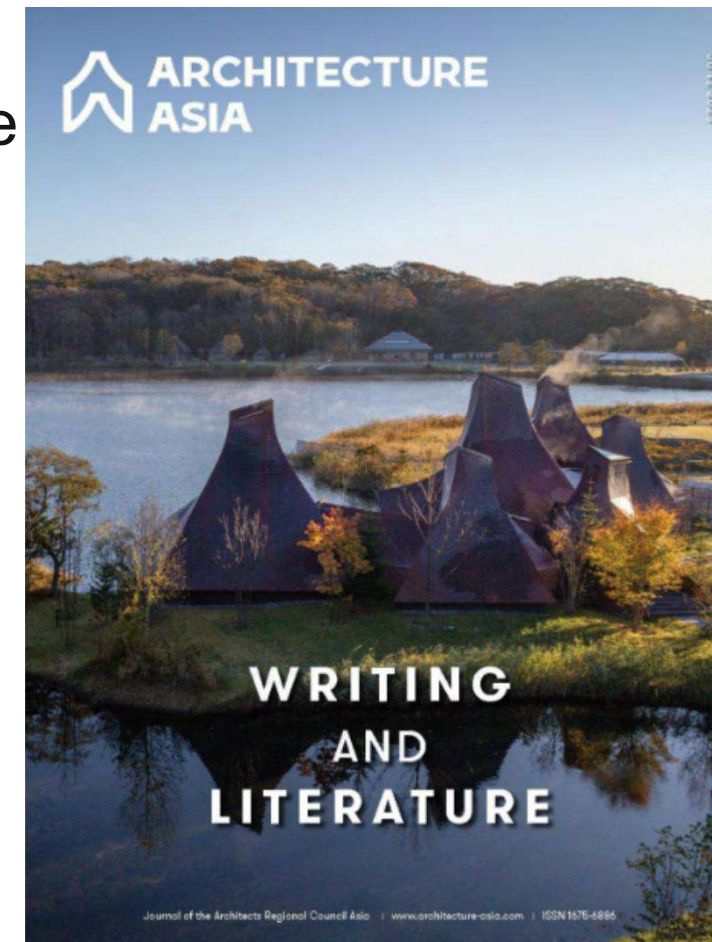
Guest Editor Network

- In the past 3 years, AA worked with 9 guest editors and completed 6 related issues.



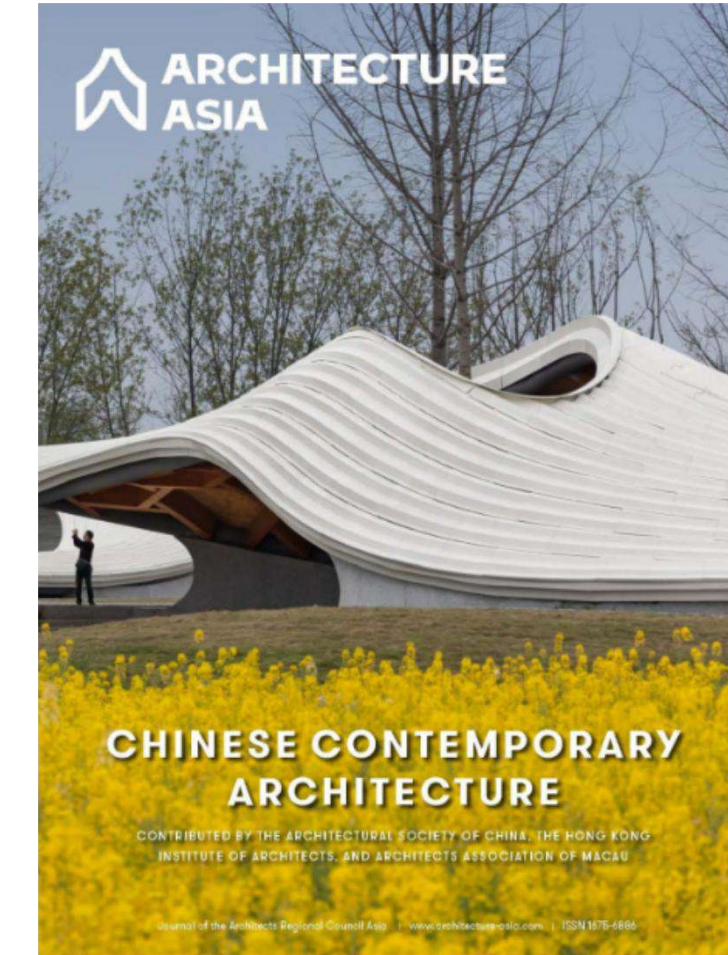
Kulthida Songkittipakdee (right),
Jenchieh Hung (left),
ASA

March 2023



Apurva Bose Dutta,
IIA

June 2023



Zhu Xiaofeng,
ASC

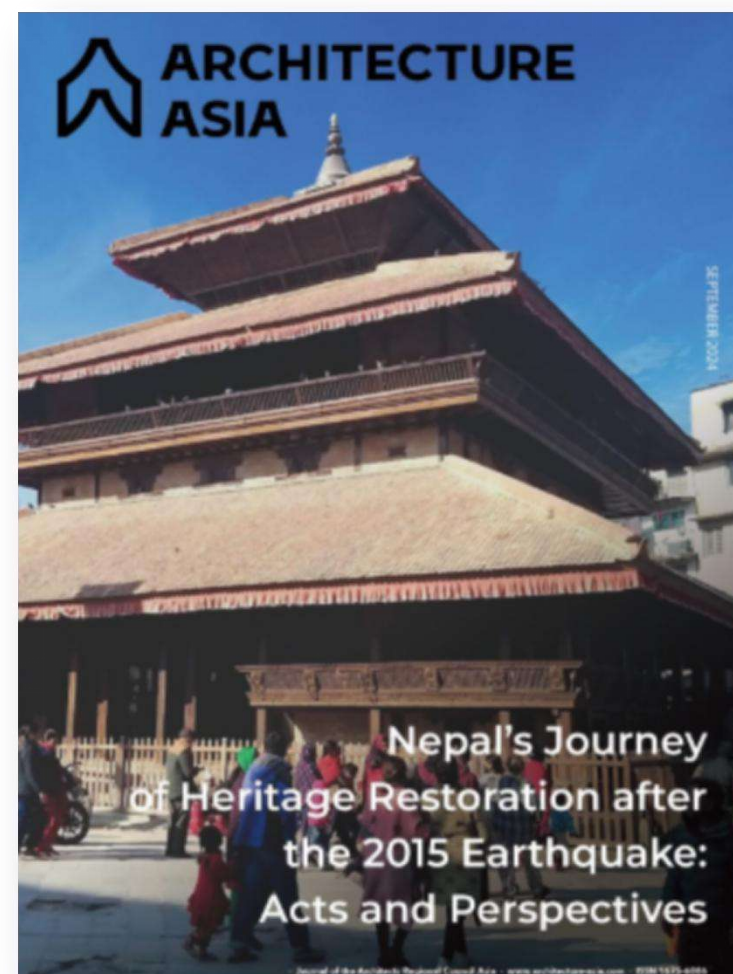


Zhong Hongliang,
HKIA



Nuno Soares,
AAM

September 2023



Padma Sundar Maharjan,
SONA

September 2024



David Teoh
PAM



Veronica Ng Foong Peng
PAM

March 2025



Hoo Cheong Fong,
SIA

June 2025

Guest Editor Network

Tasks of Guest Editor (draft)

Guest Editor is recommended by ARCASIA member institutes.

- a. **Proposing themes** that reflect the unique characteristics of the architectural profession in the specific country or region, ensuring both academic value and relevance to professional practice.
- b. **Preparing a thematic proposal** that includes background information, scholarly significance, target readership, anticipated contributions, a list of potential authors, and a proposed timeline.
- c. **Leading the solicitation of manuscripts** by inviting prominent scholars, practicing architects, and other experts through personal academic networks or professional platforms.
- d. **Assisting authors** in understanding the journal's formatting requirements and scholarly standards, offering topic-specific suggestions or writing guidance, and ensuring the quality of submissions.
- e. **Organizing the accepted manuscripts**, integrating content, and composing the editorial introduction for the special issue.
- f. **Collaborating with the editorial team** on language, graphics, and content review to ensure compliance with publication standards and maintaining communication with authors until the issue is published.
- g. **Participating in academic activities** related to the special issue, such as organizing online lectures, forums, dialogues, or social media outreach, to enhance the issue's visibility and impact.

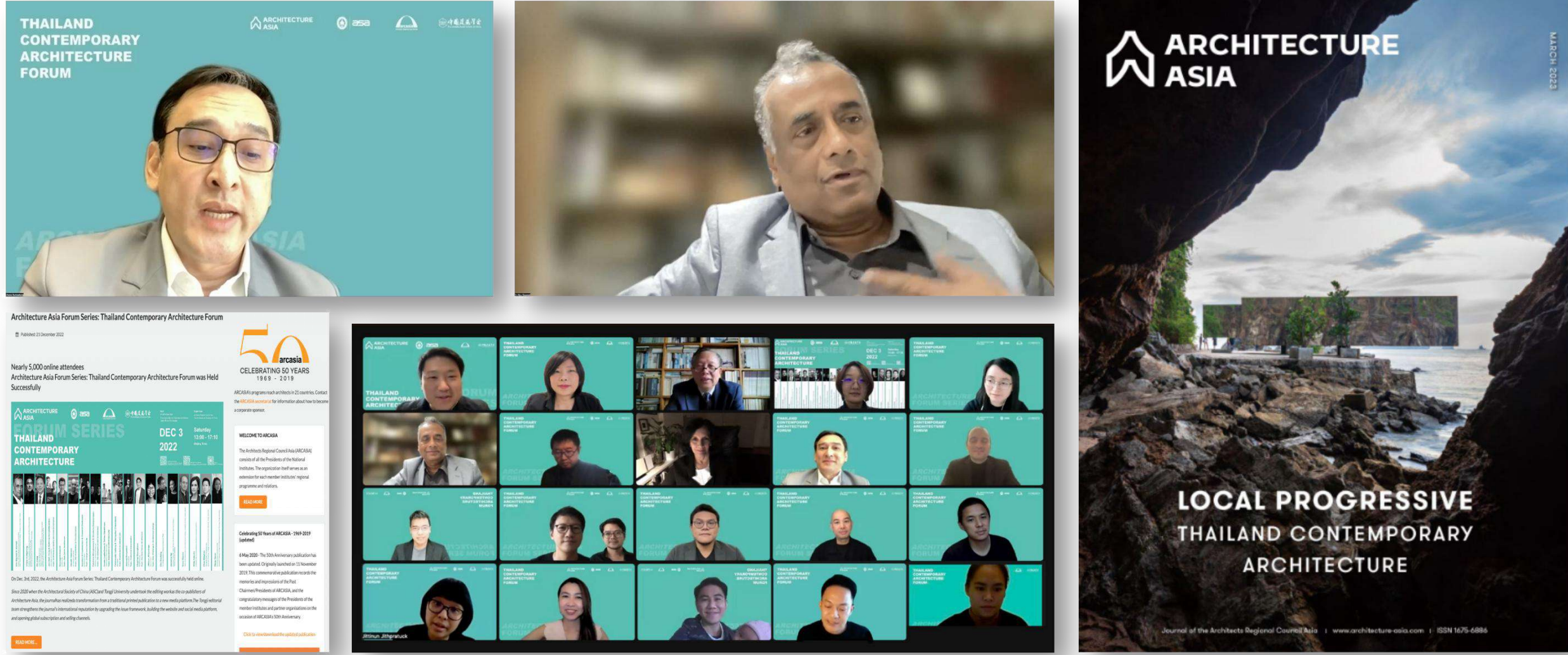
Guest Editor Network

Selection Criteria of Guest Editor (draft)

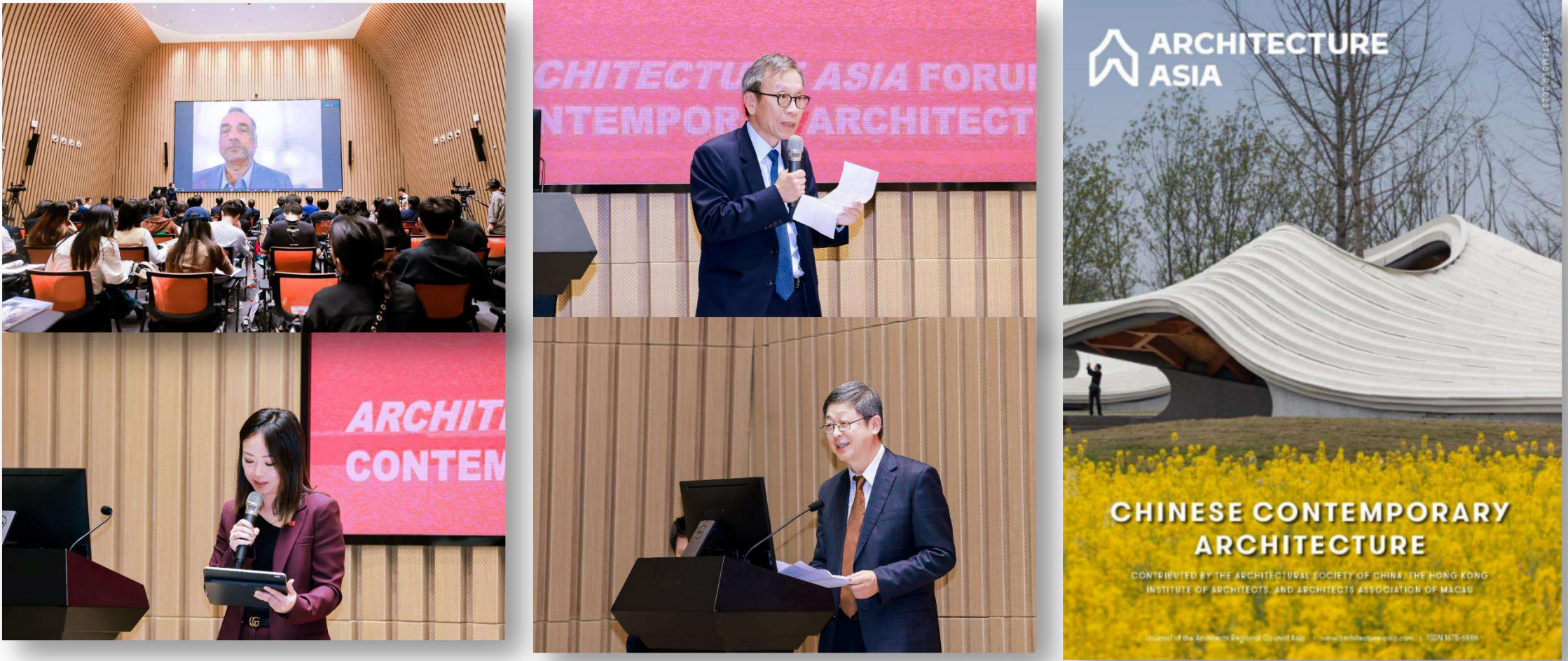
- a. Guest editors must be permanent residents of the member country or region of ARCASIA.
- b. Nominations must have at least five years of active engagement in architecture or related fields. Eligible backgrounds include, but are not limited to practicing architects, faculty members from schools of architecture or research institutes, independent researchers, architectural critics, curators, or publishers.
- c. Nominations for guest editor positions must come from the respective member institutes of ARCASIA. Each nomination cycle may include multiple candidates, and an official letter of recommendation must be submitted.
- d. The nominating institute must provide the candidate's curriculum vitae, which includes information on their educational background, professional experience, institutional affiliations, and notable achievements.
- e. All nominations will be reviewed and approved by the Editorial Board.
- f. The nominating institute is responsible for overseeing the guest editor's work throughout the process to ensure the authenticity and timeliness of the content.

AA Forum Series

Thailand Contemporary Architecture Forum, December 3, 2022



Contemporary Architecture in HKIA, AAM and ASC Forum, December 10, 2023



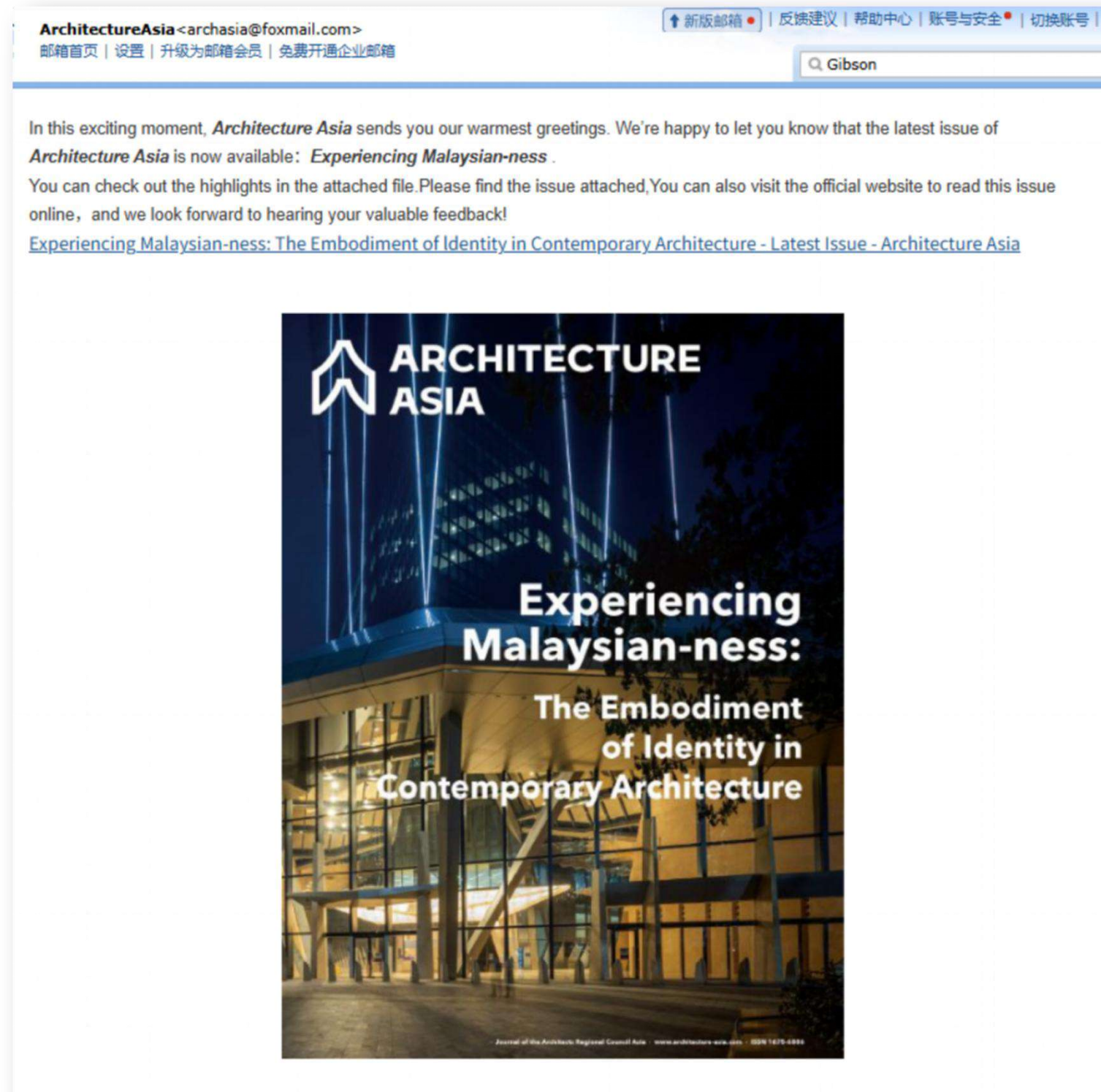
Dialogue between Asia and Africa Forum, June 22, 2024



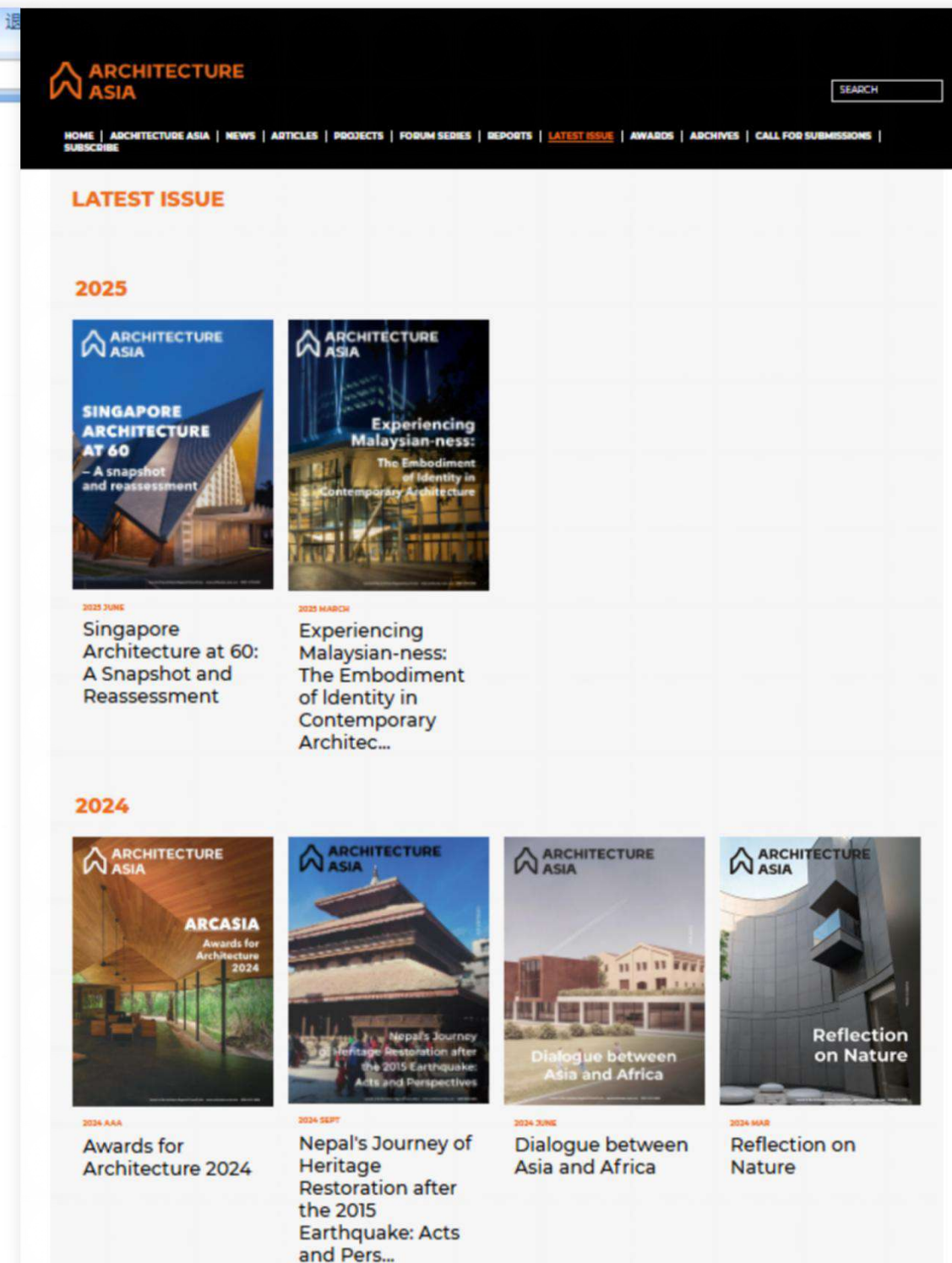
Digital Publication

- To ensure timeliness, starting with AAA 2023 (December 2023 issue), AA has become a fully digital publication. The PDF version is sent via email to ARCASIA member institutes, the editorial board, authors, and readers. Each issue is also available on the journal's website, where readers can view it online or download a watermark-free PDF for free.

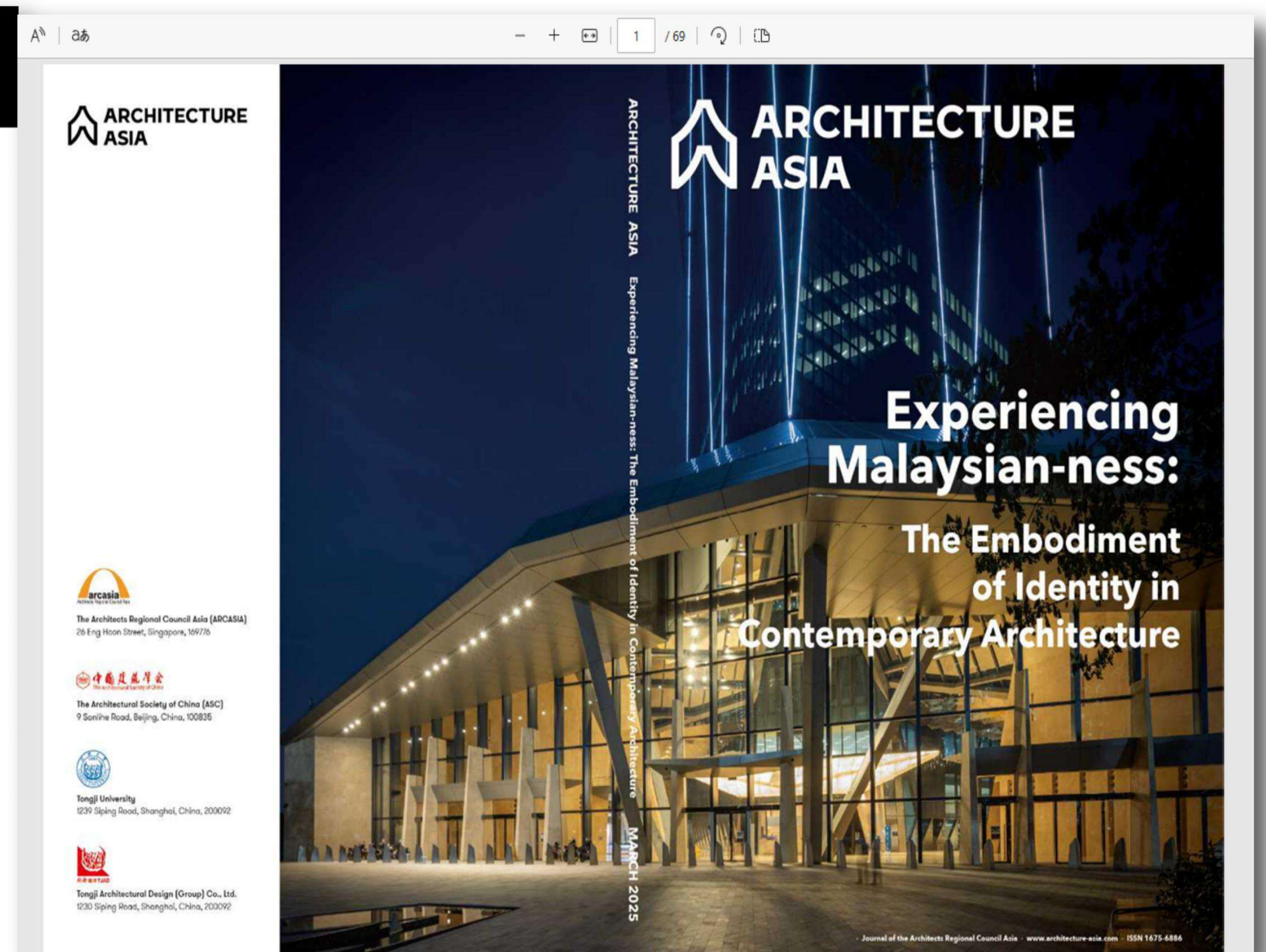
Email



Website



PDF online



Website

- We launched the official AA website on January 31, 2021.

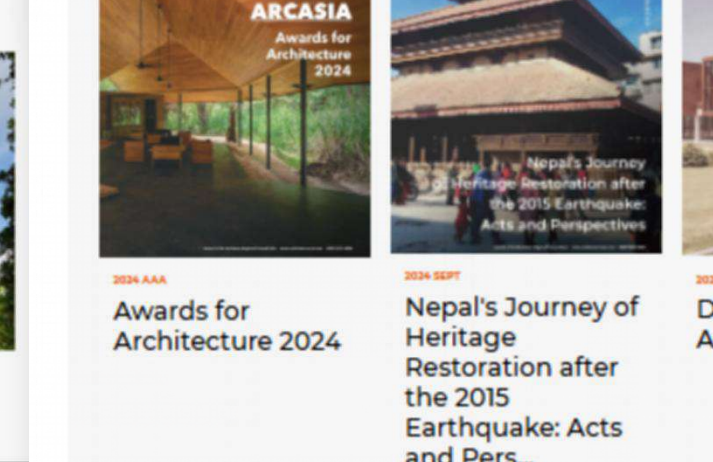
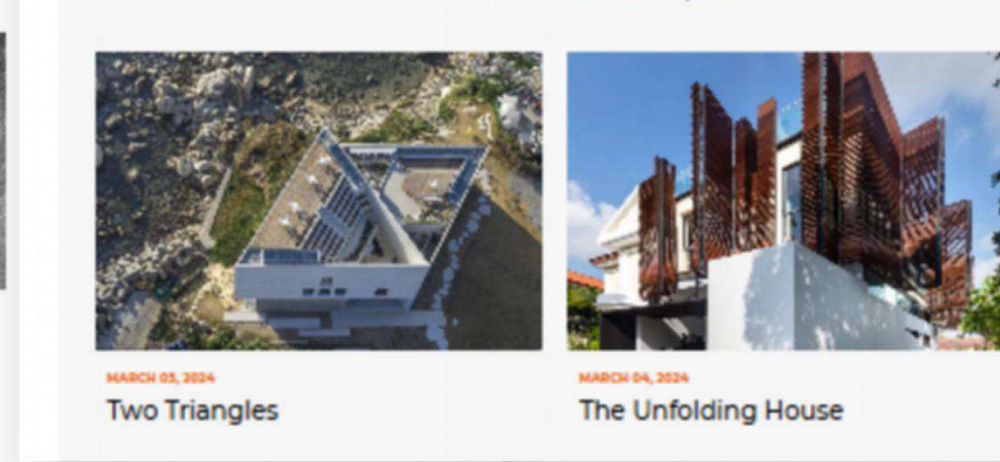
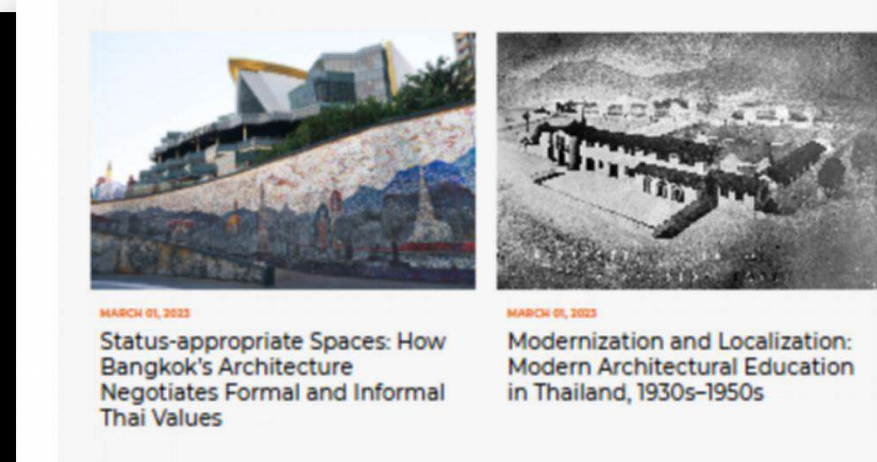
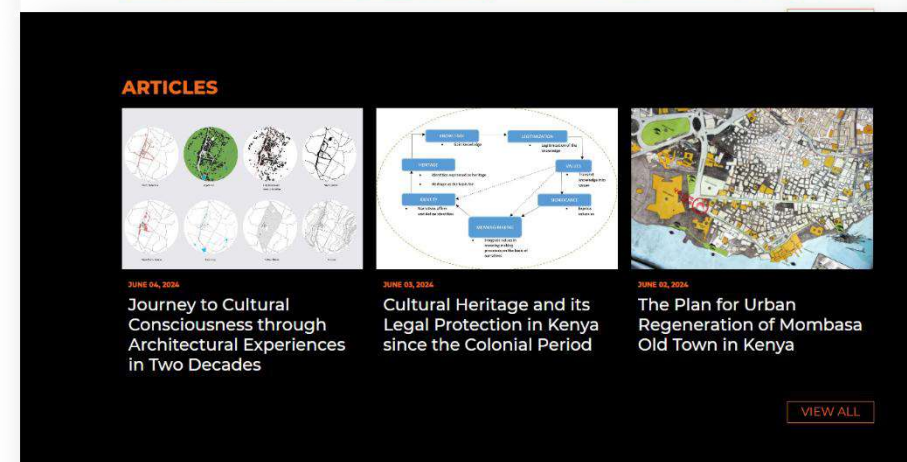
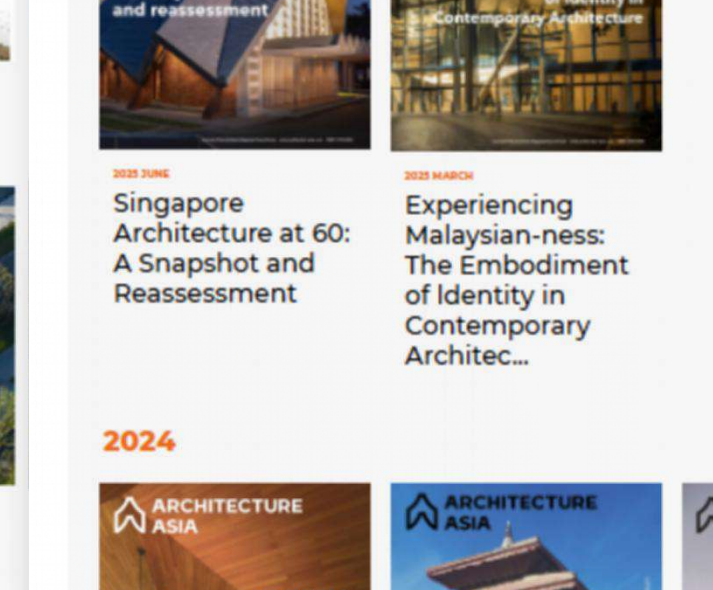
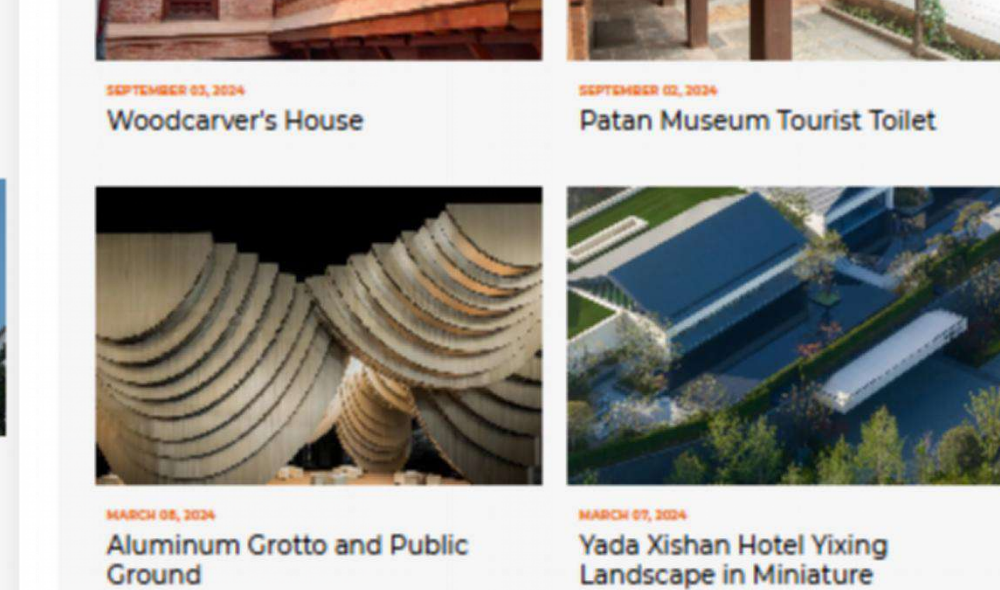
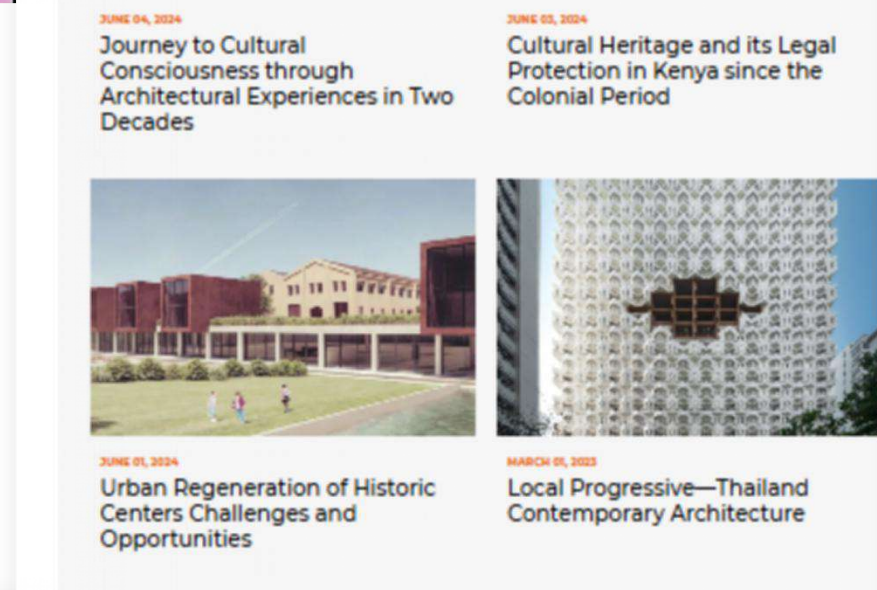
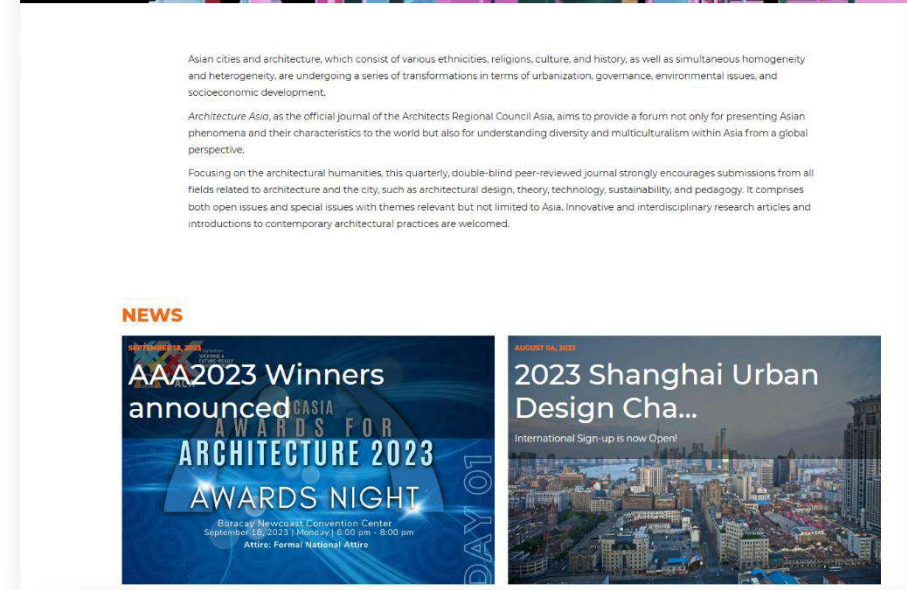
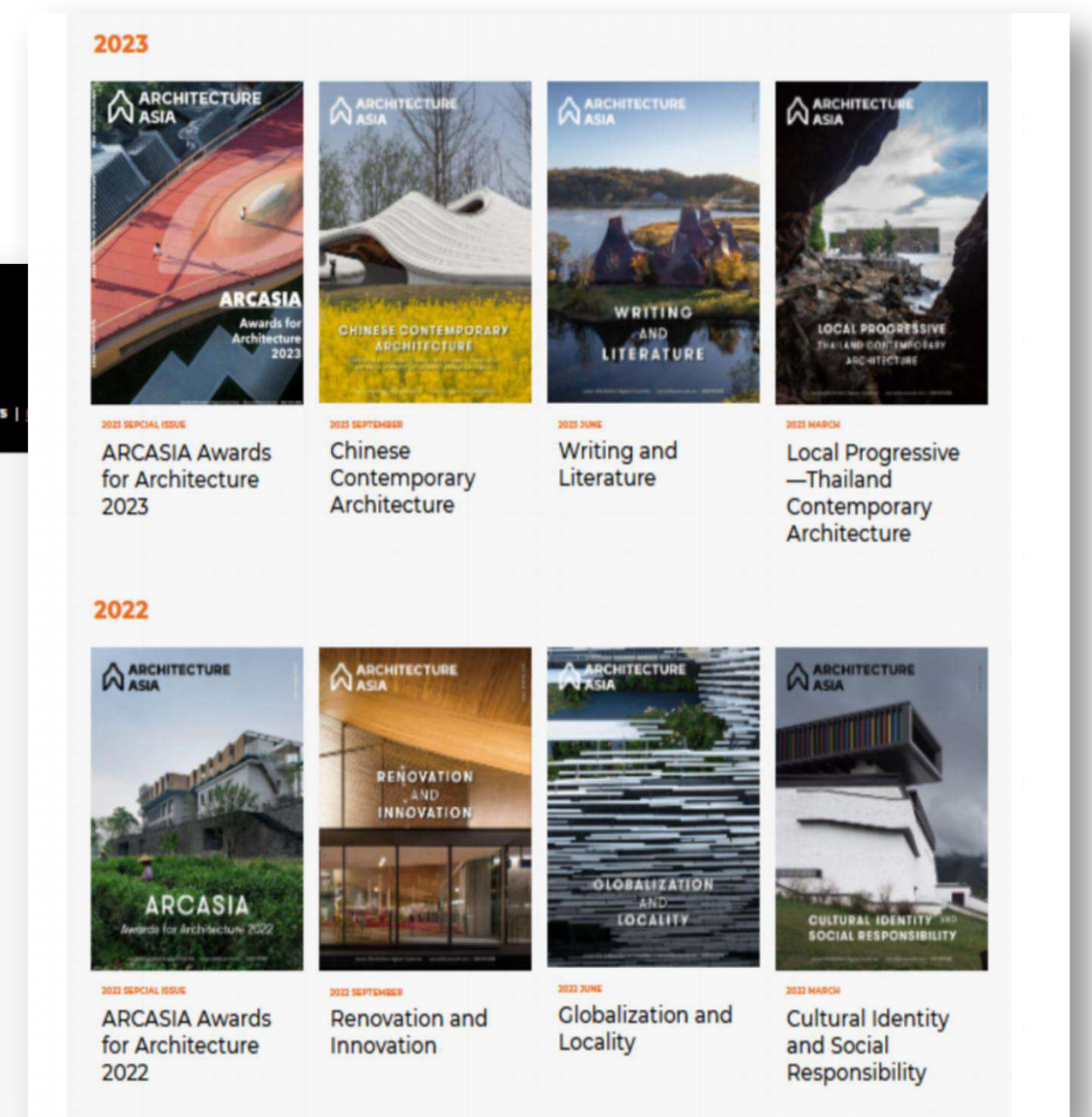
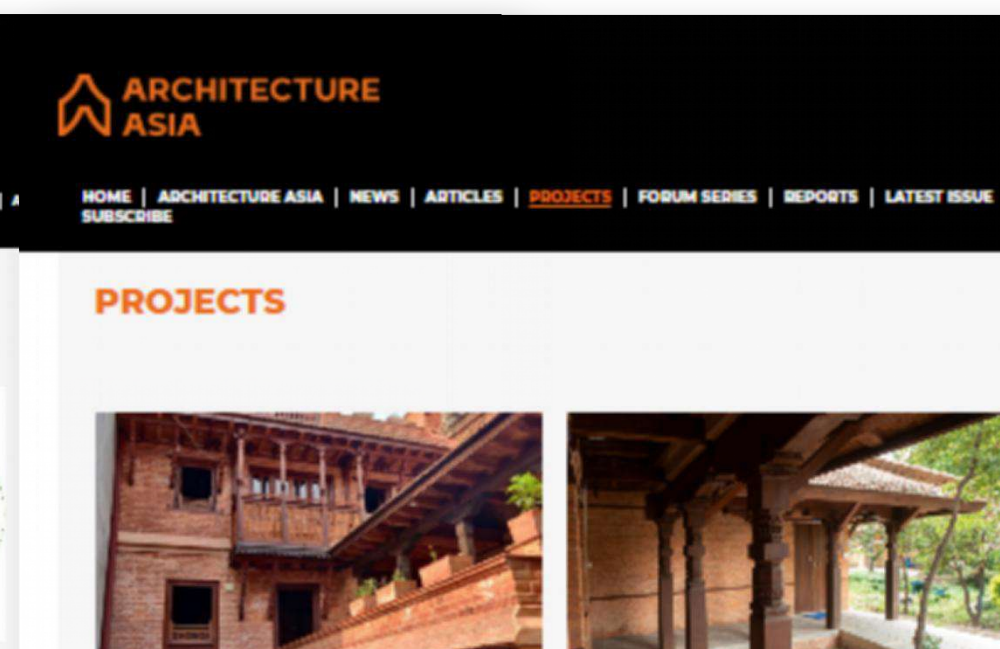
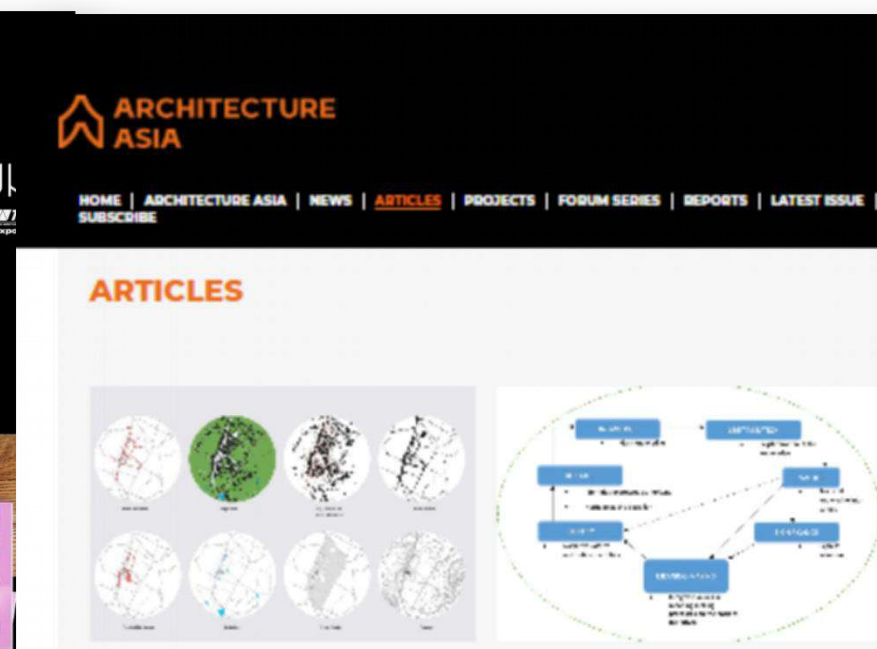
<https://www.architecture-asia.com/>

News

Articles

Projects

Latest issues



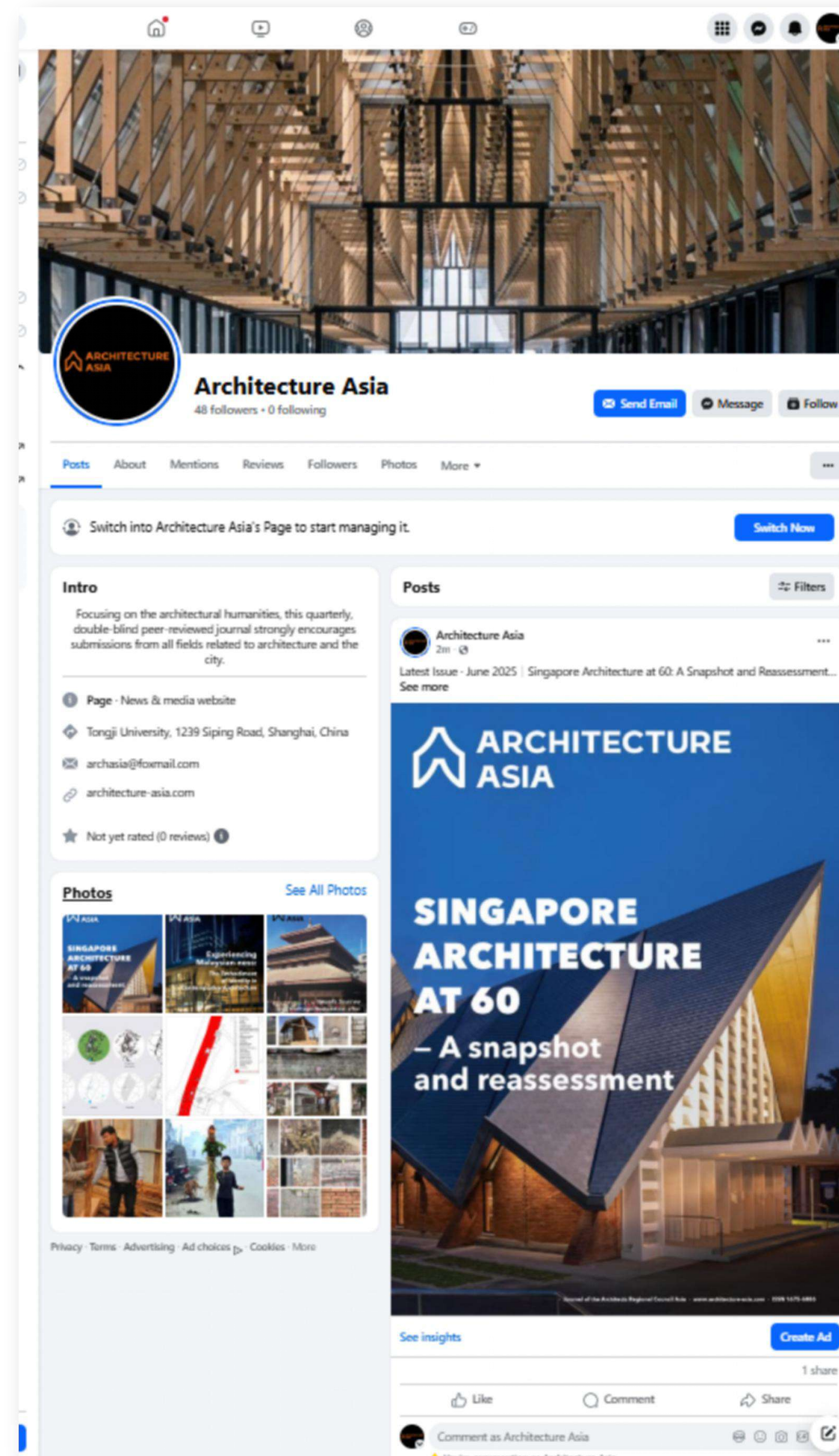
Facebook & Wechat

Facebook @Architecture Asia

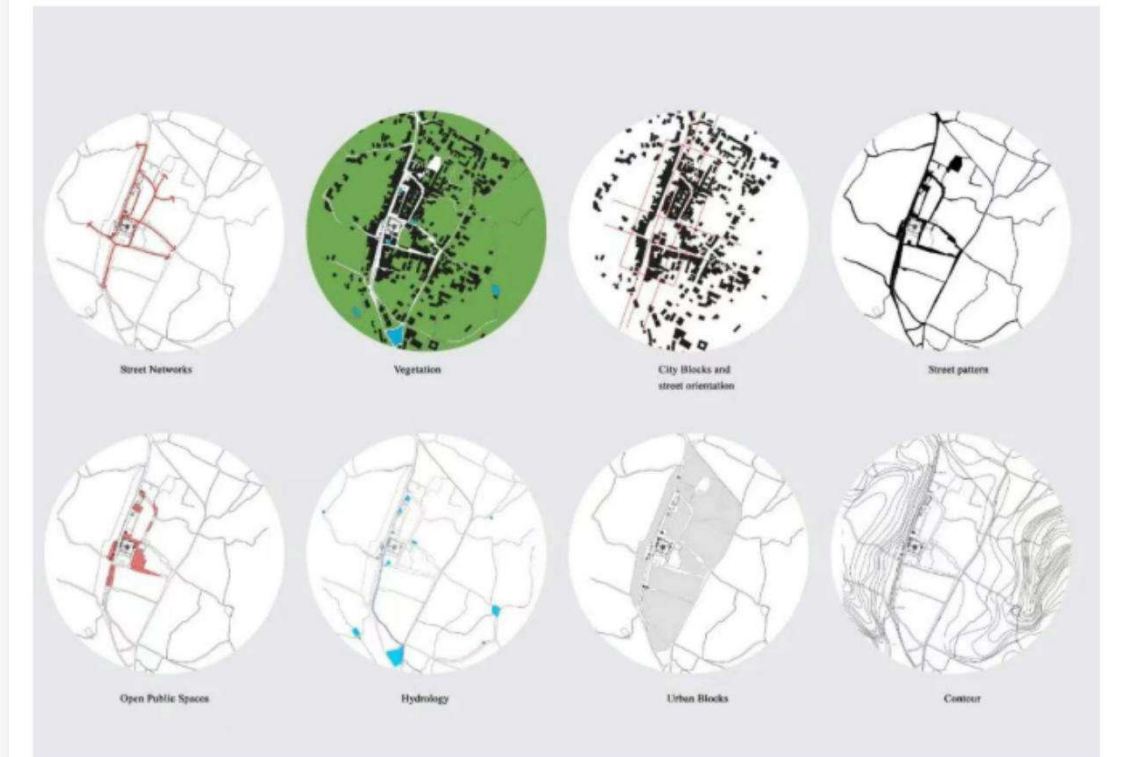
- In regular updates of issues and events;
- Please follow by scanning the QR code.

Wechat @Architecture Asia 亚洲建筑

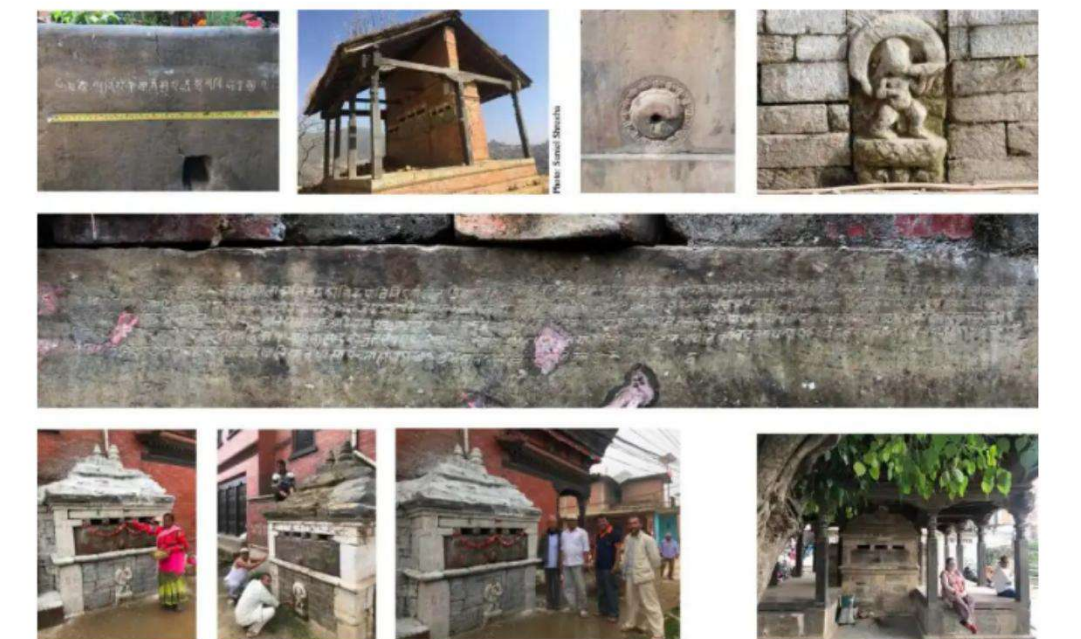
- In regular updates of issues and events;
- Use bilingual promotional content in both English and Chinese.



文章 | 通过二十年建筑体验之旅走向文化自觉
ArchitectureAsia ArchitectureAsia亚洲建筑 2025年04月15日 13:05 上海



▲ Sunaguthi 的多方面文化映射 Cultural mappings of various aspects from Sunaguthi



▲ 水遗产是人类最古老的遗产，蕴藏着众多隐藏的文化、历史与考古等多层次信息。Water heritage is the most ancient heritage of mankind showcasing many hidden cultural, historical and archaeological layers.

投稿链接

CALL FOR SUBMISSION



3 Future Plan

AA Forum Series

Malaysian Forum and Singapore Forum

- Following the success of three forums, AA will continue to collaborate with guest editors to organize forums aligned with the 2025 Malaysian and Singapore issues.
- We have already had preliminary discussions with the Malaysian Guest editors and have begun preparations for the Malaysian Forum.



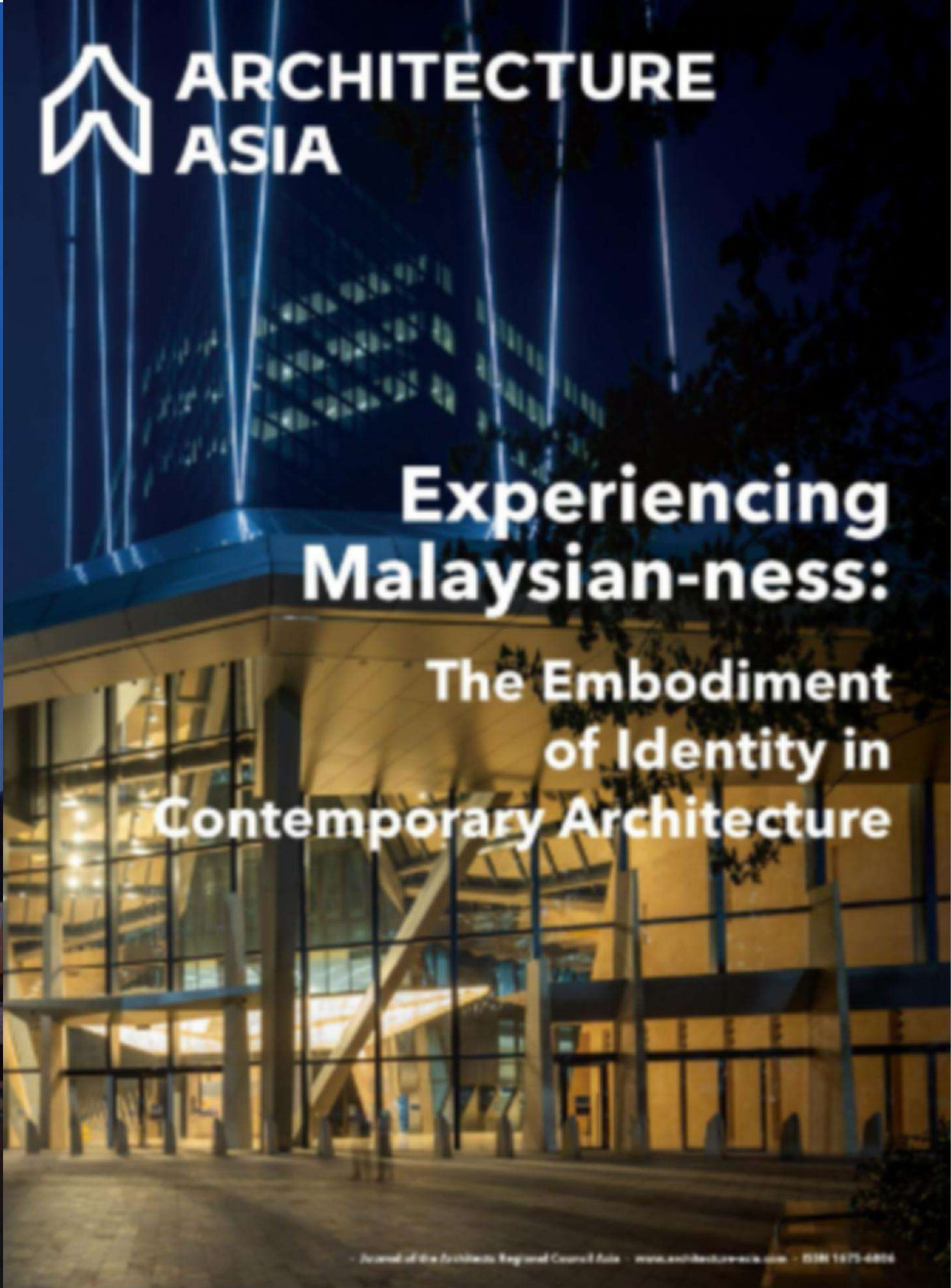
David Teoh,
PAM



Veronica Ng Foong
Peng, PAM

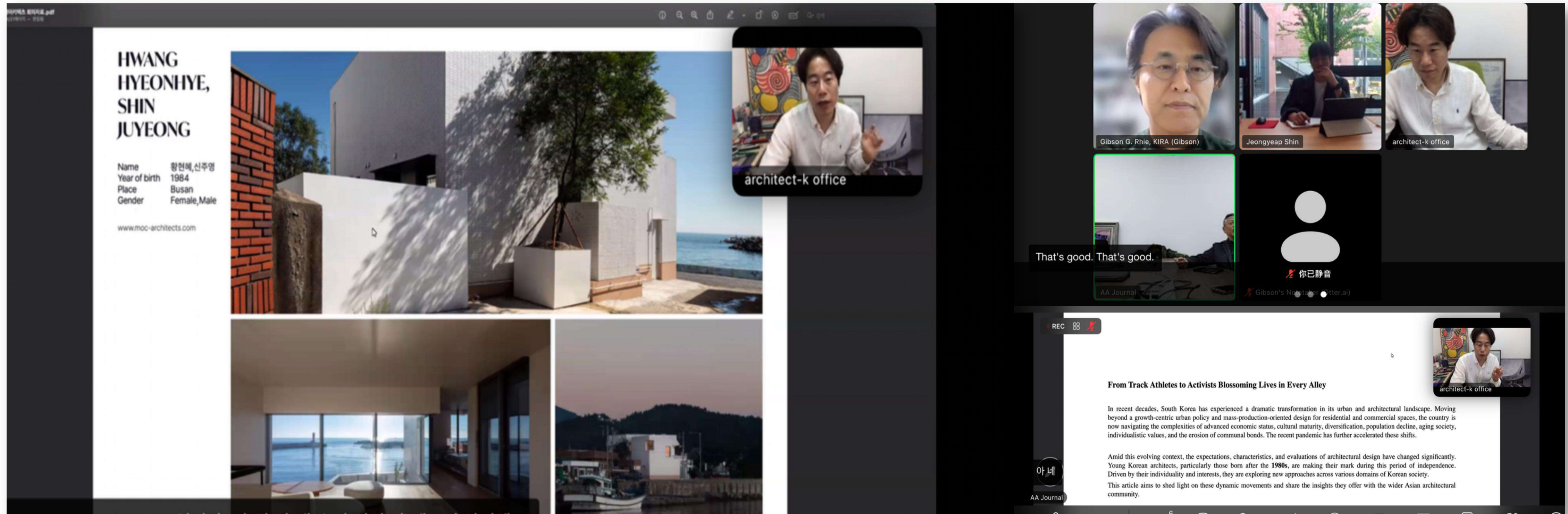


Hoo Cheong Fong,
SIA



Comming Issue of Young Korean Architects

- In close collaboration with KIRA, AA will launch an issue on young Korean architects, focusing on the comtemporary architecture in Korea and the professional dynamics of emerging architects.
- On May 15, 2025, we held the first online meeting with KIRA to discuss content and plan to invite scholars to contribute, providing deeper insights into the work of young Korean architects



Guest Editor: **Kichul Lee**

Korean architect, founder of Architect-K

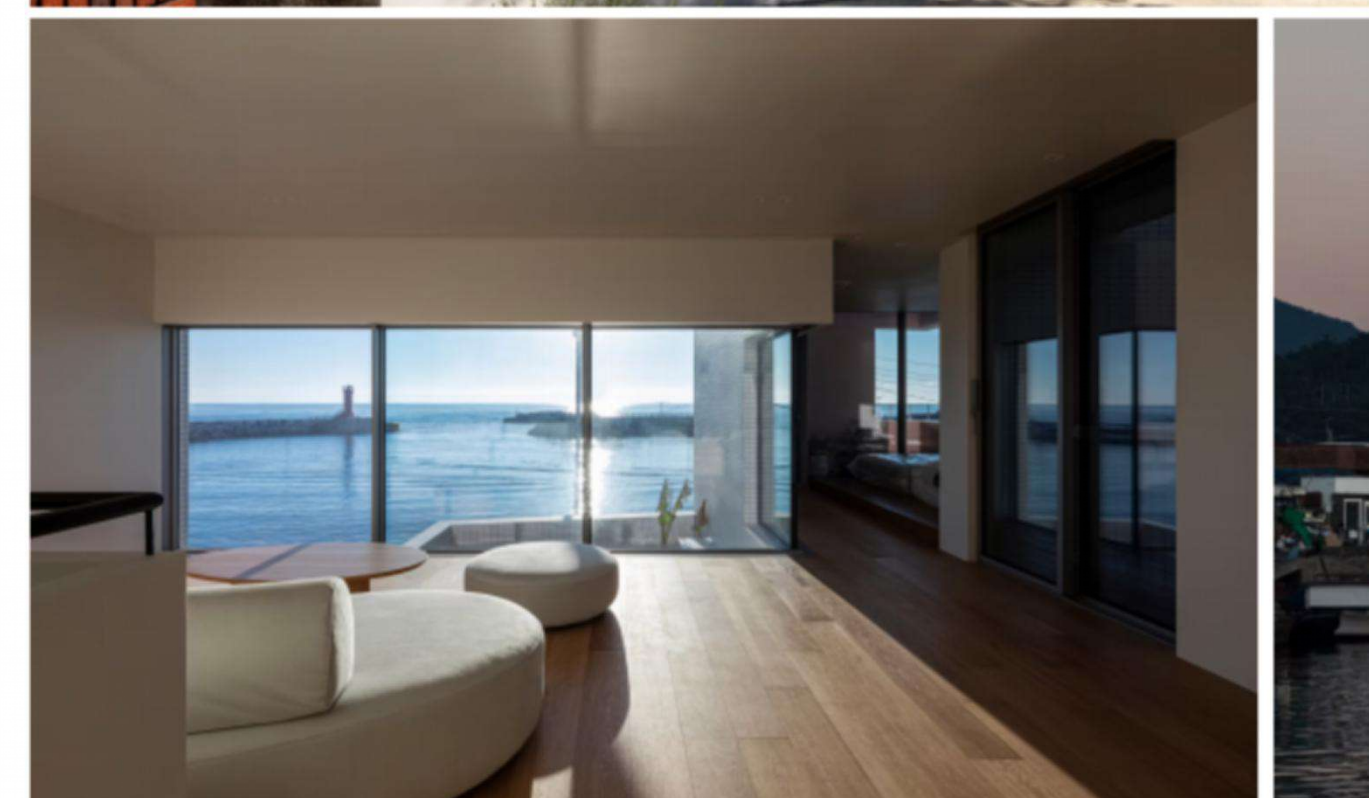
KIRA Meeting

Comming Issue of Young Korean Architects

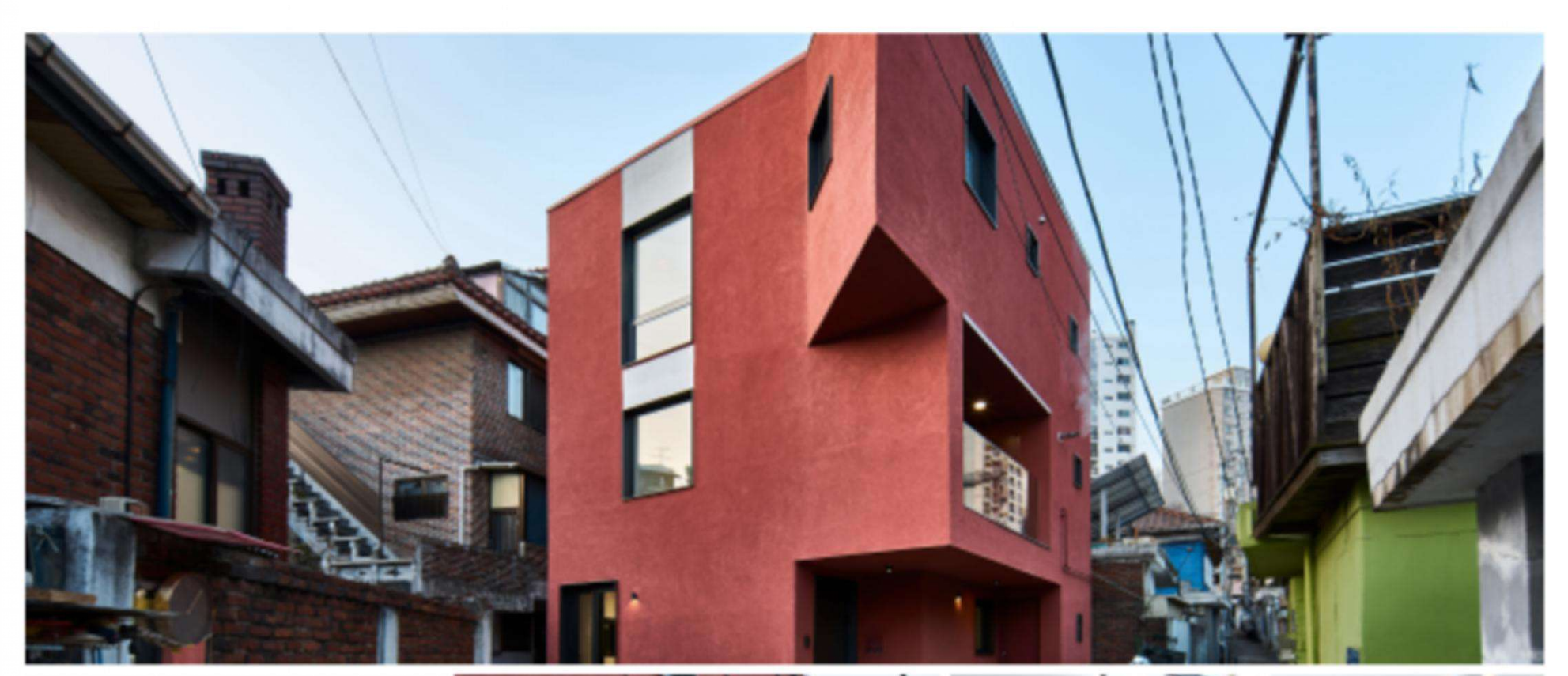
- We're organizing meet-ups in Incheon with young Korean architects to take the KIRA issue planning further.



HyeHwa Hanok Renovation 2022



Small But ()



The house where the stars live 2023



Woo Ji hyo

Lee Changkyu, Kang Jung Yoon

LEE Hye seung

Selection Guide of Guest Editor

- We are formulating work rules and procedures, so as to involve more member institutes.
- We will also further distribute the document via email to member institutions to seek your opinions, and hope that there will be more guest editors who can join us.

Selection Criteria of Guest Editor

- a. Guest editors must be permanent residents of the member country or region of ARCASIA.
- b. Nominations must have at least five years of active engagement in architecture or related fields. Eligible backgrounds include, but are not limited to, practicing architects, faculty members from schools of architecture or research institutes, independent researchers, architectural critics, curators, or publishers.
- c. Nominations for guest editor positions must come from the respective member institutes of ARCASIA. Each nomination cycle may include multiple candidates, and an official letter of recommendation must be submitted.
- d. The nominating institute must provide the candidate's curriculum vitae, which includes information on their educational background, professional experience, institutional affiliations, and notable achievements.
- e. All nominations will be reviewed and approved by the Editorial Board.
- f. The nominating institute is responsible for overseeing the guest editor's work throughout the process to ensure the authenticity and timeliness of the content.

The plan on the selection of guest editors

The editorial team of the journal includes permanent editors, who will collaborate with guest editors to produce each issue. Guest editors are responsible for planning and coordinating issues dedicated to the countries or regions. Throughout the member institutes' nomination, they work closely with the journal's editorial team, managing the entire process from theme development to final publication. Their main responsibilities include:

- a. Proposing themes that reflect the unique characteristics of the architectural profession in the specific country or region, ensuring both academic value and relevance to professional practice.
- b. Preparing a thematic proposal that includes background information, scholarly significance, target readership, anticipated contributions, a list of potential authors, and a proposed timeline.
- c. Leading the solicitation of manuscripts by inviting prominent scholars, practicing architects, and other experts through personal academic networks or professional platforms.
- d. Assisting authors in understanding the journal's formatting requirements and scholarly standards, offering topic-specific suggestions or writing guidance, and ensuring the quality of submissions.
- e. Organizing the accepted manuscripts, integrating content, and composing the editorial introduction for the special issue.
- f. Collaborating with the editorial team on language, graphics, and content review to ensure compliance with publication standards and maintaining communication with authors until the issue is published.
- g. Participating in academic activities related to the special issue, such as organizing online lectures, scholarly dialogues, or social media outreach, to enhance the journal's visibility and impact.

Working Guide with AA Awards Team

- Based on the experience of hosting the AA Awards and collaborating with KIRA this year, we are developing a **work manual** to ensure the publication of the Special Issue more efficiently.
- The main challenge of the work lies in the short time interval between the end of the award review process and the September award ceremony, thus requiring efficient cooperation between both parties.

Mid-June, within 3 days after the conclusion of the judging process

The host will provide the editorial office with the list of award recipients and project materials, including low-resolution images from the application website.

Early August

The editorial office will deliver the first layout draft.
The host verifies all information and provide feedback, after which the editorial office will adjust the layout accordingly.

Around 20 August

The final proof is completed, and the editorial office provides the host with an electronic version for promotion at the awards ceremony. If printed copies are needed, the responsibility for printing is on the host.

Jun.
Final
Review

End of June

The host prepares a profile of the convenor, profiles of the jury members, and an editorial authored by the convenor.
The host contacts the award recipients to request high-resolution images and a project description that meets the journal's requirements, along with signed copyright agreements.

Early September

After the awards ceremony, the editorial team releases the special issue via email, the website, and social media platforms.

Sept.
Award
Ceremony



**We look forward to the support of our member institutes!
Let us promote Asian Architecture and Architects!
Showcase the best of ARCASIA!**

Thank you!

ARCHITECTURE ASIA

Official Website: www.architecture-asia.com

Email: archasia@foxmail.com