

Aga Khan Awards for Architecture 2001



The Aga Khan Award was inaugurated in 1977 to encourage excellence in architectural design, community development, housing, restoration, conservation as well as landscape design and environmental improvement in the Muslim world. Nominations are sent from all over the world to the awards secretariat that prepares a short list of about a hundred. This is examined by the jury and further reduced to a shorter list for visits by technical assessors. The jury then evaluates the assessor's reports to make the final selection. Awards are given to buildings that have been in use for at least three years.

The 2001 Awards - eighth in the series of triennial programmes – were held at the Citadel of Aleppo in Syria on the 6 November when the following Awards were announced:

1. **College, Tilonia, India. Barefoot Architects.** Tilonia is a village near Ajmer in Rajasthan. The college was set up to train local people in appropriate new skills in a settlement founded in 1986 and based on five fundamental principles: (i) Equality - regardless of education, gender and social class, (ii) Collectivity - everyone involved in decision-making, (iii) Self reliance - help each other and work together for the welfare of the community, (iv) Local decision-making - at the grass roots level, and (v) Austerity - simple life committed to the betterment of the community and the environment. The college has teaching, administrative, medical, dining, and craft building as well as residential accommodation. Using courtyards and verandahs and traditional methods and materials of construction – mud bricks, thatch, gravel, stone, cement, sand and a few steel beams for wide spans - the college was built by local farmers guided by the Barefoot architects. The programme has also built 200 houses for the homeless.
2. **Poultry Farming School, Koliagbe, Kindia, Guinea. Heikkinen-Komonen Architects, Helsinki, Finland.** The aim of the school is to train local people to produce chicken for the much-needed protein diet. The architects, already familiar with the area through previous work, used bricks made of mud and cement, sisal fibre reinforced cement roof tiles, local wood and materials.
3. **SOS Children's Village, Aqaba, Jordan. Jafar Tukan and Partners, Architects.** This is the third of the children's houses designed by the same architect. The village comprises eight houses for the orphans, each run by a 'mother', administration and staff house arranged as enclosed courtyards in landscaped setting. A sports hall, kindergarten, pharmacy and supermarket are located along the edge of the site to be shared with the community.
4. **Datai Hotel, Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia. Kerry Hill Architects.** Sensitively incorporated in 750 hectares of rainforest, the complex comprises 84 rooms and 40 villas for the tourists. Using local labour and materials - including tree trunks from the forest transported by elephants – the project was commended for its sustainable design and adaptation of local tradition.

5. **Olbia Social Centre, Antalya, Turkey. Cengiz Bektas architect.** Founded in the first century BC, Antalya is a historic city with urban fabric from the Romans, Seljuks and Ottoman periods. As a part of its recent expansion, it acquired a sprawling university campus without much sense of place and history. Cengiz Bektas, an architect poet, has attempted to provide a covered pedestrian spine to connect the rambling buildings and at the same time provide a range of new student facilities including shops, internet café, nature club, post office, meeting rooms, restaurant and an amphitheatre.
6. **Nubian Museum, Aswan, Egypt. Mahmoud El-Hakim/Arab Bureau for Design, architects.** The museum was built to display the artifacts salvaged when the Aswan Dam was built. It comprises a museum building with main exhibition area, galleries, lecture halls, library, shops and cafeteria. There is outdoor exhibition area with some relocated old building and a canal to simulate the Nile.
7. **Bagh-e-Firdowsi, Tehran. Baft-e-Shahr, architects and urban planners.** Like many other cities, Tehran has expanded from half a million in the middle of the last century to ten million people now spread over 600 kilometers along the southern slopes of Alborz mountains. In the process, the expansion has absorbed many of the public spaces and gardens that once gave the city its special atmosphere. As a part of the city's programme to enhance its environment, the 30 hectare Bagh-e-Firdowsi rises from 1800 to 2100 meters above the sea level and provides a variety of public recreation facilities
8. **Urban Restoration, Isfahan and Yazd, by the Urban Development and Revitalisation Corporation, Tehran.** Many non-western cities have neither the will and resources nor the necessary skill and know-how to look after their historic fabric. Iranian cities still retain extraordinary historic cores and buildings that need to be revitalised, restored and adapted to contemporary use. Isfahan and Yazd ought to set examples for other cities to follow.
9. **Berber Settlements, Ait Iktel, Abadou, Morocco. Ali Amahan and Mohamed Amahan.** Self-help example of a small town in High Atlas mountains without proper water supply, electricity, education and infrastructure acquiring all these through community effort and cooperation. Using local labour and resources, they have built *Seguia*, a two-and-half kilometer canal to irrigate their land, added water filter plant, a diesel generator for electricity and a library to provide a working example for many similar areas in other parts of the world.

The Chairman's Award for lifetime's contribution to architecture was given to Geoffrey Bawa, the distinguished Sri Lankan architect. The two previous winners of the Award were the Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy in 1980, and the Iraqi architect and teacher Rifat Chadirji in 1986.

More information: Architectural Review, London, November 2001 and www.akdn.org

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