

Architect as an Artist /Engineer

Satish Joshi

Visiting Faculty Kavikuluguru Institute of Technology and Science Ramtek, Dist. Nagpur [MS] 441106
E-mail: satishjoshi_2007@rediffmail.com

Abstract—*Architect is an Artist and is also, an Engineer. In the consciousness of his mind he acquires the particular role as and when the need arises. The perception and attitudinal difference arises only because we have compartmentalized the different disciplines. Architect as an artist, visualizes a form and at the same time Architect as an Engineer, with the help of the technical knowledge brings the 'art' form into reality. The technical knowledge acquired by him, thus becomes a source of inspiration for him to think 'beyond'.*

An artist, within an Architect makes him to go for 'wild dreams', whereas the engineer within, brings him back to the cool realities of the financial, social, and development plans' constraints. The synthesis of the two thus brings a dream into a reality.

The forces and the reactions of the structural elements thus get related to an artistic expression. The floating lines of the elevation and the structural stability as expressed by the 'form' in total, converges in the design as conceived by the architect.

Thus to produce a masterpiece in the urban canvas with efficiency, economy, and conscious economic expression, and at the same time to create his rightful place in the creative art, an architect has to be an artist as well as an engineer. Fazlur Khan, designer of tall buildings systems from the SOM Engineers believed- 'only when architectural design is grounded in structural realities, celebrating architecture's nature as a constructive art, rooted in earth- can the resulting aesthetics...have transcendental value and quality'.

1. INTRODUCTION

Architecture is the Synthesis and Symbiosis of Art & Engineering. No structure would be great if it doesn't have the fusion of both. However the debate still continues even today, which was started earlier by Kant and continued by great thinkers like Ruskin Bond. Both had opposite view on 'what should an architect be? Their individual expression is cited below, to give an idea

Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason* distinguished between *mechanic* and *aesthetic art*. Art is mechanical when the artist, "in conformity with the knowledge of a possible object, only performs the actions which are necessary to realize it". we can talk about aesthetic art when "its immediate scope is the sentiment of pleasure. Architecture cannot survive without science, without the mechanic component; but also, it cannot be called architecture if it doesn't satisfy people's need to live in good-looking cities. Therefore, for architects to be architects in the most complete sense of the word, they need to be artists as well as technicians.

Benjamin Genocchio in his article 'Architect as Artist' published in Nov. 2008 wrote'

Once upon a time artists were architects, and architects were artists. Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini designed palaces, churches, fountains and piazzas in 17th-century Rome while achieving prominence as a sculptor. Michelangelo was a painter, sculptor and architect, as was Giorgio Vasari, who also wrote biographies of his contemporaries.

In modern times, with increasing specialization, the disciplines of art and architecture have parted company. Architects design buildings for clients with a brief in mind, whereas artists can give free rein to their ideas. But there remains among many architects a residual attachment to the idea of being an artist, or at least to the idea of architecture as a creative and imaginative discipline.

So, whatever can be the views of the great thinkers, one thing is but sure that for an Architect to produce great works, he has to be an artist & Engineer as well. The synopsis is put forth by citing the examples of great Architects, who were, and / or have given equal importance to both the art and the engineering part as well.

2. EXAMPLES

Architecture is bringing into existence the idea, which ultimately will satisfy the requirements, needs, ego of the person other than an architect himself. An architect cannot create something like a painter, who says 'art for the sake of art'; architecture is beyond that. It is not a free expression, it is bound by legal, economic, and technical limits.

3. MR. FARIBORZ SAHBA

Mr. Fariborz Sahba, Architect for Lotus Temple Delhi, searched for an analogy, to represent a temple for the Bahá'í Faith in India. The artist in him found 'Lotus' as a fitting symbol and the rest is history. In one of his interviews, he replied "We realise that the lotus is associated with worship, and has been a part of the life and thoughts of Indians through the ages. It will seem to them as though they have been worshipping in this Temple in their dreams for years. Now their vision has become a reality and. God willing, some day they will all enter and worship in it."



Fig. 1: Lotus Temple, New Delhi



Fig. 3: The dramatic image, resembling a harp, transformed bridge engineering into a form of sculpture that can invigorate its surrounding landscape.

4. EERO SAARINEN

Three over reaching themes emerge from projects, of Architect Saarinen. His commitment to explore new materials and building technologies, Second, he treated every architectural commission as a separate artistic problem. Third, Saarinen clearly imagined his buildings as inhabited and animated spaces, and he thus focused on circulation, framing, and the sensual experiences of clients.

As an architect who is also an artist and an engineer, he has learned to combine sculptural concepts with technology to create designs that are both visually striking and structurally daring. As a painter and sculptor, he seeks inspiration in nature, in the forms and movements of man flowers and trees. As an engineer he is concerned with materials and the mechanics.



Fig. 2: General Motors: Styling Building stairs.

6. LOUIS I. KAHN

For him, Architecture was the thoughtful making of spaces whose design can and should simultaneously reveal the story of their construction and meet the aesthetic and functional needs of the people who inhabit them. He believed strongly that architecture should appeal not only to practical and aesthetic needs but also to the humanistic needs of the people and communities it serves. He was continually striving to create spaces that evoked a sense of spirituality

5. SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

Santiago Calatrava takes his inspiration from natural and human forms fusing them with his carefully chosen materials to create aesthetic harmony. His style is unique and symbolic, recognisable the world over for the sense of movement that he manages to capture in a stationary object. With reinforced concrete and steel at his disposal, Mr. Calatrava understood that he could go further, conceiving lengthy or vaulted or overhanging.

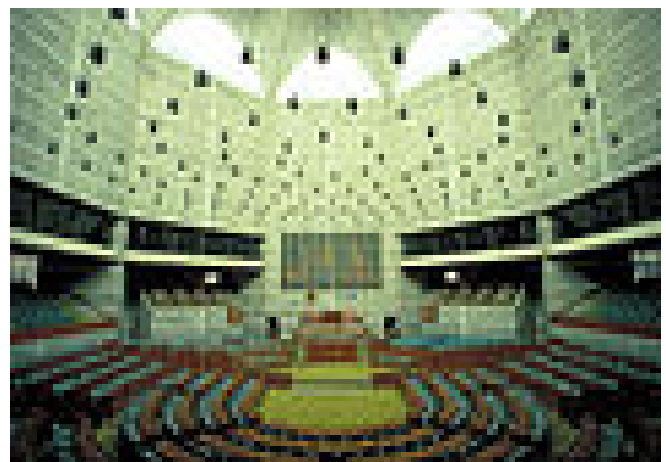


Fig. 4: National Assembly of Bangladesh

7. MIES VAN DER ROHE

He redefined architectural boundaries and emphasised the beauty of simple forms, the importance of functionality and the versatility of new materials such as glass, steel and marble. An analysis of his work shows that the development from High Modernism to Postmodernism, where playful and ironic decoration and humanist theories were reintroduced into what had become a 'cold' Modernist aesthetic.



Fig. 5: Caroline Weiss Law Building in Houston, Texas

The reasoning can be concluded, on the topic by what Santiago Calatrava says about himself "Yet it is only as an architect that he can properly express himself, where his love for art and science merge".

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