



ECOWEEK 2010 WORKSHOPS in the Middle East: from Ecology & Green Architecture to Cooperation & Peace

August 2010

ECOWEEK an international NGO with the mission to raise environmental awareness is active in Europe and the Middle East. ECOWEEK international workshops aim to join young and established architects from around the world for a week of intense training in sustainable design. Among the distinguished workshop leaders were US architect **Michael Sorkin** (Sorkin Studio), Greek landscape architect **Thomas Doxiadis** (doxiadis+) and Palestinian architect **Omar Yousef**.



W1: The Shorouq Society for Women, Al-Izaryia

The Shorouq Charitable Society for Women is a Palestinian non-profit organization established in 2002 to improve the status and empower women. The Center rents a building in Al-Izaryia, which does not meet the Society's needs. The design rearranges the interiors, adds a roof pergola and vine, a traditional Palestinian element, and uses local materials and skills. It improves indoor conditions and is a source of pride to Palestinian woman. **Workshop leaders:** Mai Haseba, Dan Price, Ziad Jallad, with the support of Gilad Rosezweig. **Workshop team:** Listovskaya Irina, Prentou Polina, Yacoby Yael, Zevi Laura, Ranad Shqeir, Valitutto Irene, Michael Rozio, Tal Blumberg-Mandel.



W4: French Hill, Jerusalem Workshop

“City of Collision: Jerusalem and the Principles of Conflict Urbanism”

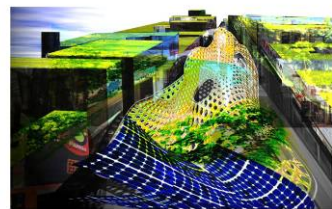
In Jerusalem “buffer zones” between urban typologies link or separate and create contradictions. Sprawling Jerusalem and its discontinuities mirror the tensions of rapid urbanization under conditions of conflict over identity, ownership, and esthetic domination. The proposed design creates an independent layer of water and natural life for pedestrian movement, promoting cohabitation of mixed communities on both sides of the Green Line, environmental awareness and coexistence. **Workshop leaders:** Yehuda Greenfield-Gilat, Karen-Lee Bar-Sinai, Chen Farkas, Konstantinos Labrinopoulos, Ahmad Sadaqa, Layali Sadaqa, Nihal Abu Salameh. **Workshop team:** Dima



Khoury, Noa Joelson, Yael Kaftal, Wesam Oden, Ariel Avraham, Ihab Zein, Abdelhay W. Shahada, Fadi B. Maswadee, Mohammad R. Sedr, Odai Shaheen.

W5: KK”L Street, Old City, Beersheva “Energy Line”

Karen Kayemet Le-Israel (KK”L) street is a central street in the old city of Beersheva. With the guidance of the City Architect the workshop considered how to turn KK”L into fully pedestrian and ‘green’. The proposed ‘Energy Line’ is inspired by a tree and involves a bicycle and pedestrian street surrounded by landscaping, that collects water, shades the street, generates electricity, and encourages recycling – such as cooking oil for bio-fuel. **Workshop leaders:** Michael Sorkin, Omar Yousef, Mati Kones with the support of Oren Yiftachel. **Workshop team:** Adi Haran, Orit Yerofeev, Sahar Qawasmi, Caroline Charvier, Michael Leef, Zeldal Elalouf, Mahammud N. H. Jaber, Abdelhamid Qneibie, Mohammad Suleumiyya.



W6-1: 2nd Bat Yam Biennale Agronomic Ergonomic Landscape Furniture

The Bat Yam Biennale aims turning the urban space of Bat Yam into an active center of everyday life. The proposed design aims to bringing the life that is hidden in the living rooms and bedrooms of Bat Yam into the street and the park, by transforming the landscape into furniture and well-recognized forms such as the couch, the chair or the bed abstracted through landscape means. **Workshop leaders:** Thomas Doxiadis, Braha Kunda. **Workshop team:** Stephanie Ayache, Liat Dahari, Olympia Datsi, Yael Gross, Yael Neftali, Nofar Rosenblatt, Andrea Sankowsky.



W6-2: Bat Yam Biennale at the Agricultural Farm “Seeds into the City”

The agricultural farm of Bat-Yam was founded 25 years ago as an educational center for the Bat-Yam residents. The farm is located on the outskirts of the city, offering classes and workshops. The design creates a dialogue between the farm and the city, proposing green "stations" and "corridors" along the urban axes that lead to the farm, spreading ecology from the farm into the city and the individual homes. **Workshop leaders:** Revital Shoshani and Galia Hanoch-Roe. **Workshop team:** Avital Lowe, Gilon Mor, May Gohtel, Ginat Girshengom, Hila Bar Mashiah, Orit Vahaba.

We focused on the urban spatial aspect by drawing attention to the location of the farm, while providing a glimpse into its contents and activity. We chose to mark, both visually and sensually, the major public transportation axis leading to the farm in the vicinity of the Biennale zone, by marking selected bus stops on the axis as well as major pedestrian passages.

THE GREEN HUT

The green hut will use the existing construction as well as the design of punctured aluminum screens. The existing on-site design will be expanded to serve as a container for round shaped degradable plant containers to be distributed to the public during the Biennale and after. As in the past stations, the display of plants will demonstrate various planting uses.

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W7: Kiryat Gat

Ethiopian Community Center

'Hineni' foundation was established by members of the Ethiopian community who shared the vision of empowering the community. The proposed Center in Hashoftim neighborhood in Kiryat Gat aims to serve the Ethiopian community and the other neighborhood residents. The design is inspired by the traditional Ethiopian village group of huts where communal life occupies the spaces in-between. The double roof covered in vegetation, increases natural ventilation, passive cooling and shading. **Workshop leaders:** Gilad Rosenzweig, Gil Peled. **Workshop team:** Tsofnat Malobatsky, Gaby Schwake, Tanya Roitman, Tomer Pereg, Adi Kolker.



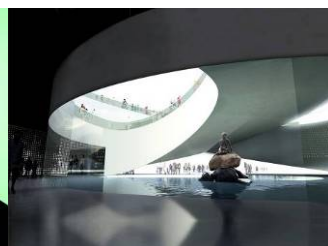
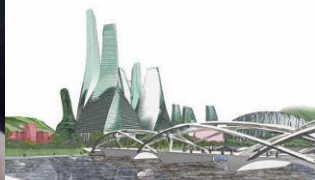
W8: IPCRI, Jerusalem

The Trusting Box

IPCRI is located in Tantur (in Arabic *top hill*) in East Jerusalem. The proposed building will house 4 Israeli-Palestinians peace organizations under one roof. "Trusting box" from the expression "think out of the box" refers to the trust needed in the peace process on both sides. The design surrounds an existing building which is emptied to create an open courtyard, combining and responding to sun, wind, water, movement and views. **Workshop Leaders:** Ohad Yehieli, Elias Messinas with the support of Epaminondas Daskalakis. **Workshop team:** Adi Mor, Sagi Golan, Ruth Mizrahi, Giuditta De Vecchi, Murad T.M. Jaradat, Hakeem T. M. Alharithi, Taleb Alharithi, and Read M.S. Shaheen.



N GO ECOWEEK was born on the island of Aegina, Greece, in 2005. Its activity included local events at the Folklore Museum and the historic medieval tower of Markellos; visits to passive solar houses by award-winning architect Alexandros Tombazis and renowned architect Kostas Tspiras. In 2007 ECOWEEK invited **Al Gore** to present his slide show at the Athens Concert Hall with Megaron Plus, in 2008 ECOWEEK started activity in Cyprus with the Municipality of Larnaka and MKC City College and in 2009 ECOWEEK co-organized the conference "Green Civil Engineering" with SCE College of Engineering and the partial support of the Ministry of Environment of Israel. Last year, ECOWEEK brought to Athens the gurus of modern 'green' Architecture **Shigeru Ban** and **Ken Yeang**. This year keynote speakers here **Michael Sorkin** (photo) and **Bjarke Ingels (BIG)** (photo).



At the beginning of this month ECOWEEK successfully completed its first large scale conference in the Middle East titled “Green Architecture : Community : Sustainability”. A unique initiative that combined ecology with peace, cooperation and ‘green’ buildings for non-profit community organizations.

Palestinian architect **Omar Yousef**, who lectured and led a workshop at ECOWEEK, put it very poetically. He compared ECOWEEK 2010 to a healthy forest: ‘ECOWEEK is like a healthy forest,’ he said. It contains the ingredients of a forest, such as biodiversity, mutual support and cooperation. Indeed, the participating young architects and students were Greek, Israeli, Palestinian, Italian, French and British, forming a group very rich in texture, ideas, backgrounds, and beliefs. Nevertheless, for one week this group worked harmonically and creatively together producing exceptional designs, under the guidance of leading architects from around the world. ECOWEEK 2010 speakers were award-winning architects **Bjarke Ingels (BIG)**, **Michael Sorkin (Sorkin Studio)**, and **Thomas Rau (Rau Architects)**. The 4-day long ECOWEEK workshops were led by leading architects such as architect and urban planner from New York **Michael Sorkin (Sorkin studio)**, the Greek award-winning landscape architect **Thomas Doxiadis (doxiadis+)**, and the leading Palestinian architect **Omar Yousef**. The workshops produced ecological buildings for the Shorouq Palestinian Women Society in Al-Izaryia, a community center for the Ethiopian community in Kiryat Gat, a building to house IPCRI and other peace organizations in Jerusalem, urban interventions for the environmental awareness of the local communities within the 2nd Bat Yam Biennale, the first ecological pedestrian street in the old city of Beersheva, and other assignments.



The ECOWEEK team also met with the planners of the first modern and highly sophisticated Palestinian city **Rawabi** currently under construction, in the outskirts of Ramallah.

Of course, it is not the first time that an NGO brings together Israelis and Palestinians,’ says ECOWEEK founder and Chairman architect Elias Messinas. ‘What was unique about ECOWEEK in the Middle East, was the combination of ingredients, some of which have been implemented in the past, but never in that combination, and in such extend and scope. The binding element of the conference was cooperation: between young and established architects, designers and landscape architects, and graduate students; between Israelis and Palestinians. Israelis and Greeks. Israelis that designed community buildings for Palestinians and Palestinians for Israelis. Education was another very important ingredient, together with the implementation of the principles of ‘green’ buildings, and community projects for real communities some of which will be built. This rich texture of cooperation was not only in the content, but it also run through the organization of the conference. ECOWEEK 2010 in the Middle East was the result of cooperation between a number of exceptional and leading organizations, groups and people.’