

DAEWHA KANG PROFILE

DAEWHA KANG DESIGN

DaeWha Kang

Bio

DaeWha has spent twenty-five years studying, designing, and building architecture. After working for ten years with Zaha Hadid Architects, he founded his award-winning practice, DaeWha Kang Design. Born in Korea, educated in America, and with a practice in London, he works across the UK, Middle East and Far East.

The studio's work spans cultural institutions, hospitality, workplace design, and exhibition scenography - connected by a belief that architecture should touch the body, speak to the mind, and make the world tangibly better. "Beauty built with wisdom" reflects that philosophy: design that is visually memorable but grounded in long-term thinking, sustainability, and measurable human wellbeing. Specific competencies and industry leadership include parametric design, digital fabrication, adaptive reuse, and working within challenging heritage contexts.

Beyond his design work, DaeWha has taught at the Yale University School of Architecture, The Bartlett School of Architecture, and Istituto Marangoni London. He has sat on juries at the Architecture Association, The Bartlett School, and architecture schools in the United States including Columbia, Pratt Institute, and NYU. DaeWha is also involved in the architecture community, having served on awards juries for the American Institute of Architects, the Royal Institute of British Architects, and others.

Selected public lectures include the second Al Murabba Lecture for the Architecture Commission of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh Design Festival, New London Architecture Lecture Series, and the Churches Conservation Trust. DaeWha has written for industry and academic publications including AD magazine and Perspecta, the Yale Architectural Journal, published by MIT Press.

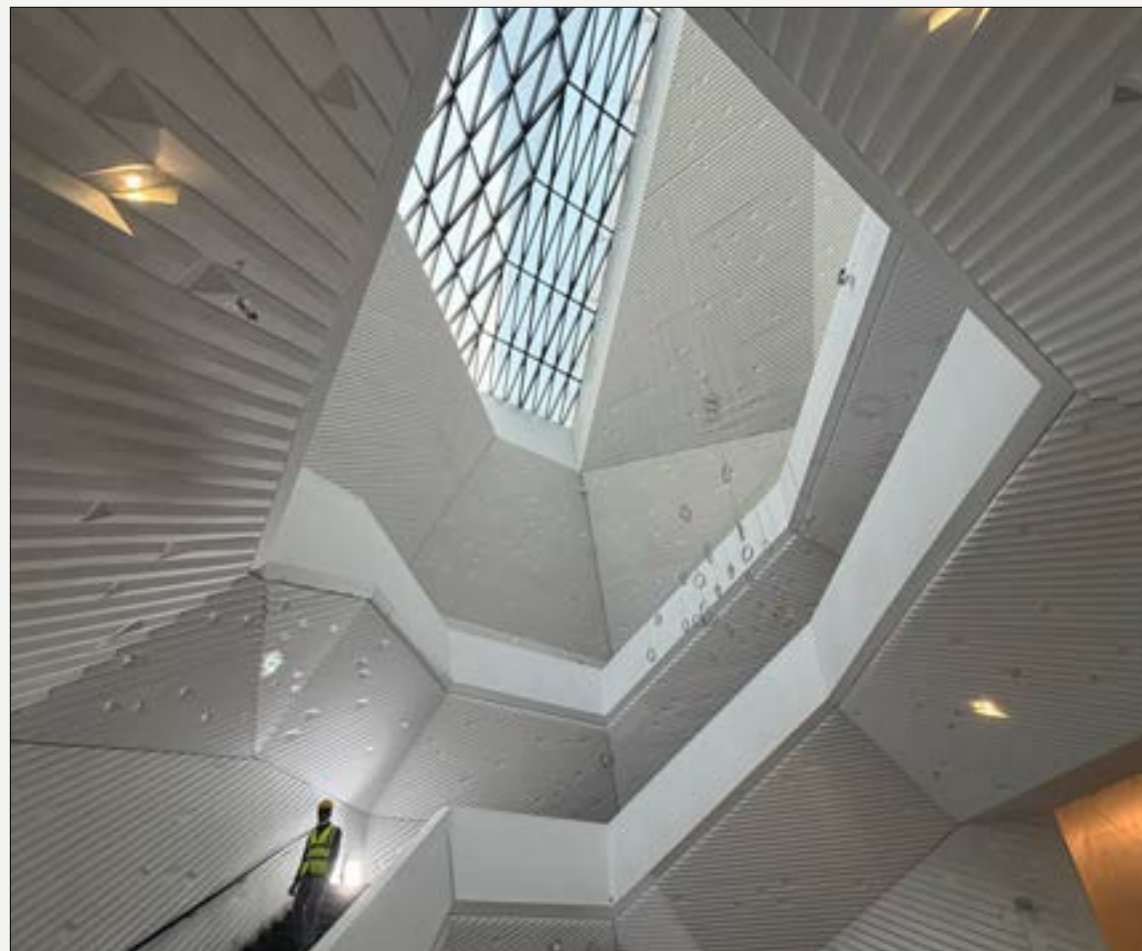
DaeWha is also co-founder of Climate Change All Change, an educational charity that brings designers and children together to co-design solutions for climate adaptation.



“Beauty built with wisdom” captures the essence of our philosophy of long-term thinking, dedication to sustainability, and defining new frontiers.

Significant Projects

Europe, Middle East, and Far East



BLACK GOLD MUSEUM, RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA
2026

Total conversion of the library building in the iconic KAPSARC complex into an international calibre fine arts museum.



OLD WAR OFFICE, LONDON, UK
2023

Restaurant pavilion for heritage site with hospitality and new hotel in central London.



ST ANDREW HOLBORN CHURCH, LONDON, UK
2022

Full regeneration and restoration of a Grade I Listed church designed by Christopher Wren.



PAJU RAINBOW BUILDING, PAJU BOOK CITY, KOREA
2017

A new-build office headquarters and residence in Paju Book City, Korea.

Significant Projects

Europe, Middle East, and Far East



FARM CITY MASTERPLAN, PAJU, KOREA 2021

Masterplan vision for phase 3 of Paju Book City, combining agriculture, ecopark, and new urban development in a circular city concept.



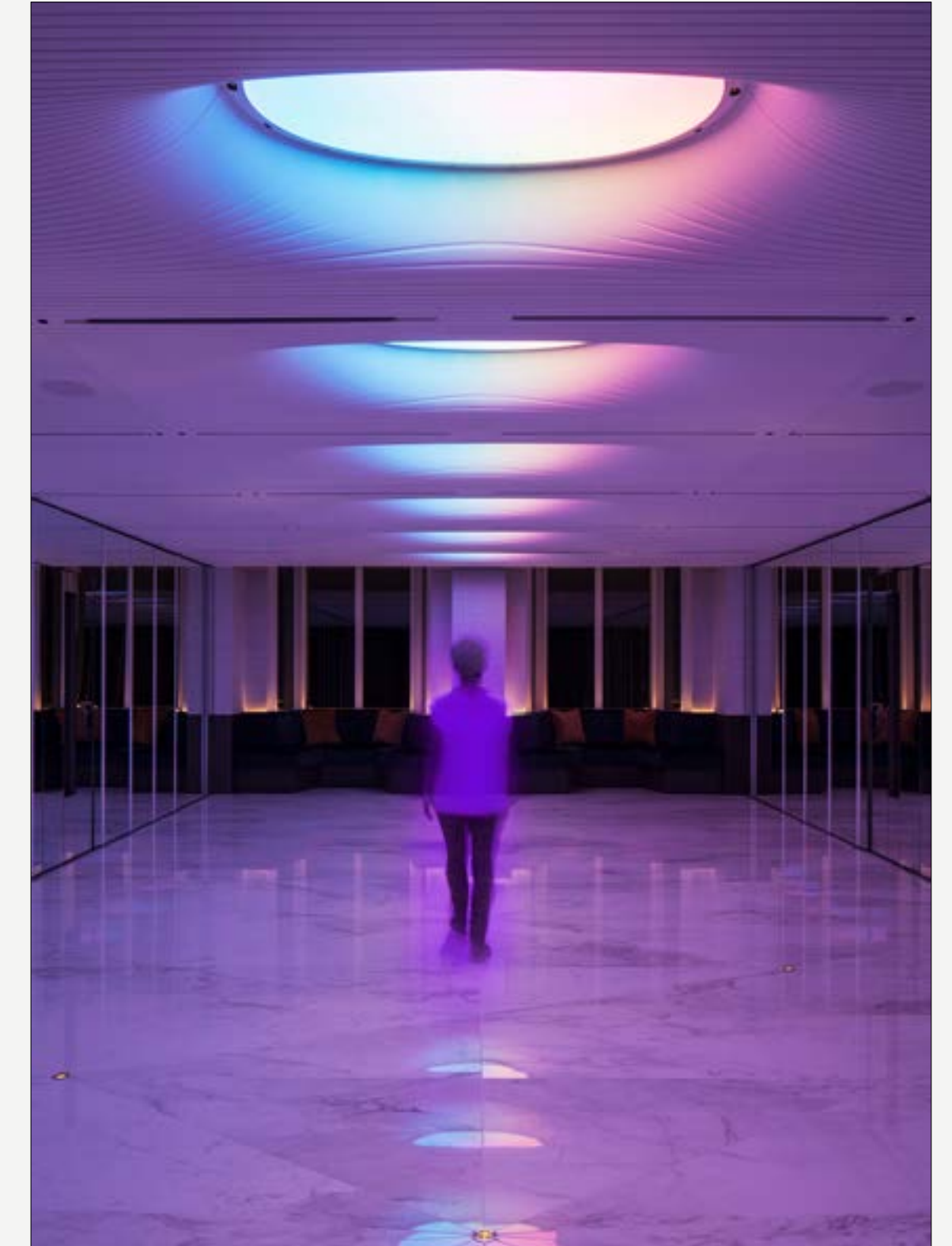
BARKING CIVIC CENTRE, LONDON, UK 2019

Urban design and master planning for a new civic centre in East London.



COMMUNIQUE HEADQUARTERS, SEOUL, KR 2015

Façade design, café, roof terrace, and interior design for the new company headquarters of a prominent public relations firm in Korea.



VEDANTA HEADQUARTERS, LONDON, UK 2018

Interior fitout for company headquarters and hosting space in Mayfair, London.



Education

Registered as an architect in the United Kingdom (ARB registration number 075510i).

RIBA Part III
KINGSTON UNIVERSITY
London, United Kingdom
2009

MArch
YALE UNIVERSITY
New Haven, Connecticut, USA
2001 - 2004

BA
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
Princeton, New Jersey, USA
1994 - 1998

Selected Awards:

Robert Leon Coombs Scholarship for academic excellence
David M Schwarz Traveling Fellowship and Internship
Kenneth A Householder Prize
AIA Scholarship

Selected Experience

DAEWHA KANG DESIGN, LONDON, UK
2014 - PRESENT

Black Gold Museum, Saudi Arabia. 7,000 square metre contemporary arts museum in Riyadh.

The Grand Courtyard and Pavilion at the OWO, London. Dining pavilion and public realm design in Grade II* listed former Old War Office.

St Andrew Holborn Regeneration, London. Full reordering and interior design of Grade I listed church.

Paju Farm City Masterplan, Korea. Concept Masterplan for circular city integrating agriculture and new development.

Communique Headquarters, Korea. Company headquarters. Winner of Korea Ministry of Land award for best adaptive reuse in Korea,

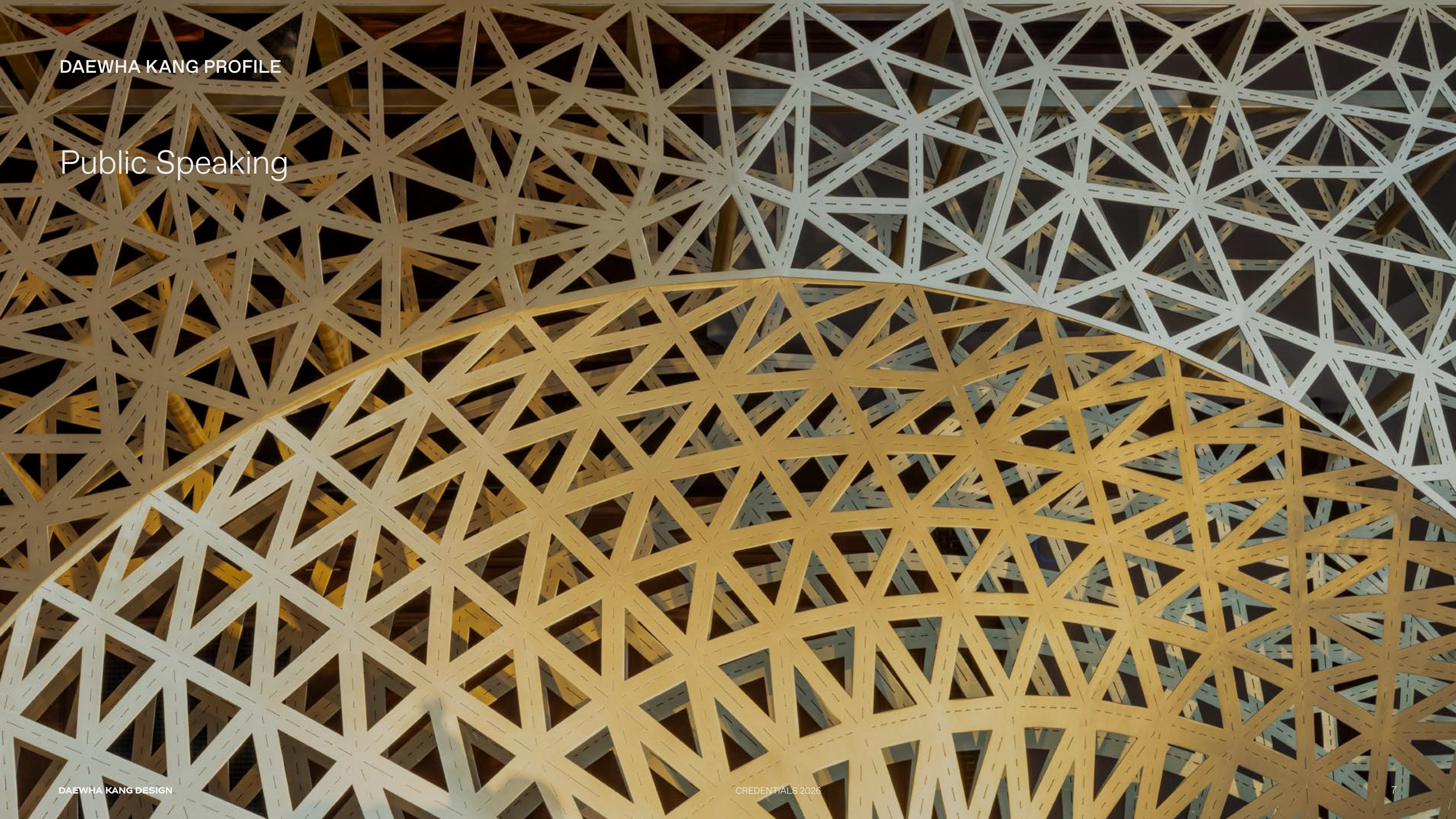
ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS, LONDON, UK
Senior Associate, 2004 - 2014

Design Director, King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Centre, Saudi Arabia. 66,000 square metre mixed-use complex including Conference, Research, Library, and Musalla.

Design Director, Sleuk Rith Institute, Cambodia. Genocide Institute and Memorial.

Project Director, Competition Stage. Masaryk Mixed Use Development, Czech Republic. 180,000 square metre office and retail development.

Project Architect: Kartal-Pendik Masterplan, Turkey. 330 hectare new city centre masterplan on the Asian side of Istanbul.



DAEWHA KANG PROFILE

Public Speaking

Keynote Talks



- Keynote**

SAUDI ARABIA MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Al Murabba Public Lecture, November 2023
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Moderated by Prince Nawaf bin Ayyaf

“From nature to culture: international practice of DaeWha Kang Design”

The studio’s work across Europe, Middle East, and Far East, focusing on questions of cultural identity and architectural expression
- CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST**
Public Lecture, March 2023. London, UK

“When the past meets the future: The regeneration of Wren’s St Andrew Holborn, and reflections on contemporary architectural practice”
- TEMPLE BAR TRUST**
Public Lecture, 2021, London, UK

“Pathfinders: Wellness, Design and Transcendence”
St Andrew Holborn in the context of DaeWha Kang Design practice
- SPIRIT DESTINY PODCAST**
Public Lecture, 2021

“The wellbeing benefits of biophilic design”

Educational Institutes



Lectures

LASALLE COLLEGE OF ARTS, Singapore, 2025
“An Architecture of Transformation: Regenerative Design and the Future of Construction”

Exploring the possibilities of innovative design within adaptive reuse and conservation architecture.

ASSOCIATION FOR STUDIES IN THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, London, 2024
“Where the Past Meets the Future: The regeneration of St Andrew Holborn and reflections on contemporary architectural practice”,

The studio philosophy exemplified in a major refurbishment of Christopher Wren’s largest parish church.

YALE VISITING PROGRAMME, London, 2023
“Architecture and activism in the civic and cultural realm”

The studio’s intersection of climate advocacy, education, and cultural projects.

ARCHITECTURE ASSOCIATION, London, 2023
“Smart buildings and big data: health, wellbeing, and the digitisation of our built environment”

The studio’s work on interactive installations, smart buildings, and wellbeing.

UNIVERSITY OF SAPIENZA, Italy, 2022
Public Conference on Health, Wellbeing and Biophilia in Architecture

“Biophilic architecture in the city: Building deeper connections with nature through biophilic design”

ISTITUTO MARANGONI, London, 2021
“Practice and precedents: the work of DaeWha Kang Design”

HIGHGATE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE
“Biophilia and Design for Wellbeing”

ISTITUTO MARANGONI, London, 2020
“Practice and precedents: the work of DaeWha Kang Design”

Teaching

ISTITUTO MARANGONI, London
Course mentor, 2020 - 2021

THE BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
Tutor, Urban Design Master Course, 2011 - 2013

YALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, USA
Visiting Critic, 2007

Events & Design Conferences



Lectures

ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM CURATOR’S TALK 2026
Oxford, UK

“In Bloom: How Plants Changed Our World”

Curator and Designer’s lecture about regenerative design

SAUDI DESIGN FESTIVAL 2023
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

“Yesterday, today, and tomorrow: Anchoring identity with contemporary architecture”

The studio’s work in Saudi Arabia and London, on building cultural capital.

FACILITIES SHOW, London 2019
Conference Lecture

“Wellbeing in the workplace: The Living Lab at the Shard, London”

Studio work in biophilic design and wellbeing

WOOD AND WELLNESS, London 2019
Public Lecture

“Wood and wellbeing: biophilic practices”

Living lab and other innovative timber designs by the studio

SAUDI DESIGN FESTIVAL 2019
Public Lecture, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

“KAPSARC Building: an iconic design and more”

Panels

UCL SUSTAINABILITY PANEL, London 2026
Panelist

“From Sustainability to Regeneration: Rethinking The Built Environment?”

NEXT IN VOGUE, Singapore 2025
Panelist

“Forms of the Future: Asian Design Reimagined”

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENOCIDE 2024
Kingdom of Cambodia

“Healing: Architecture of Despair and Hope”

UK SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK 2022
Sustainability in Education Panel

“Architecture, nature, and the climate crisis: educational approaches”

IMMERSIVE KIND COLLECTIVE 2021
London

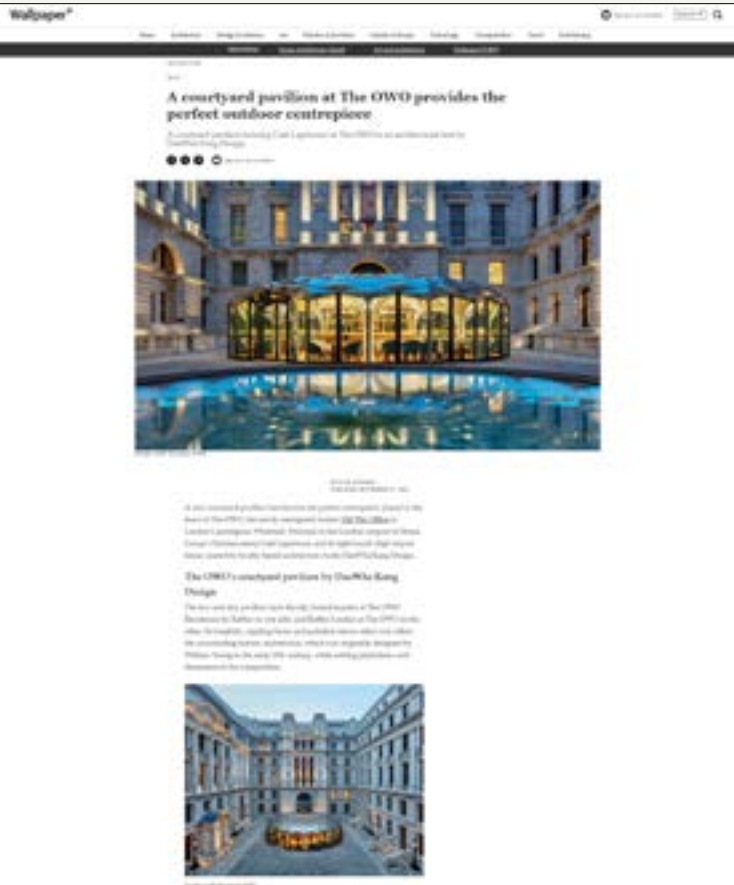
“Immersive Worlds”

Panel discussion on mixed reality and design as part of ‘The Sustainable Ethical Human’ series

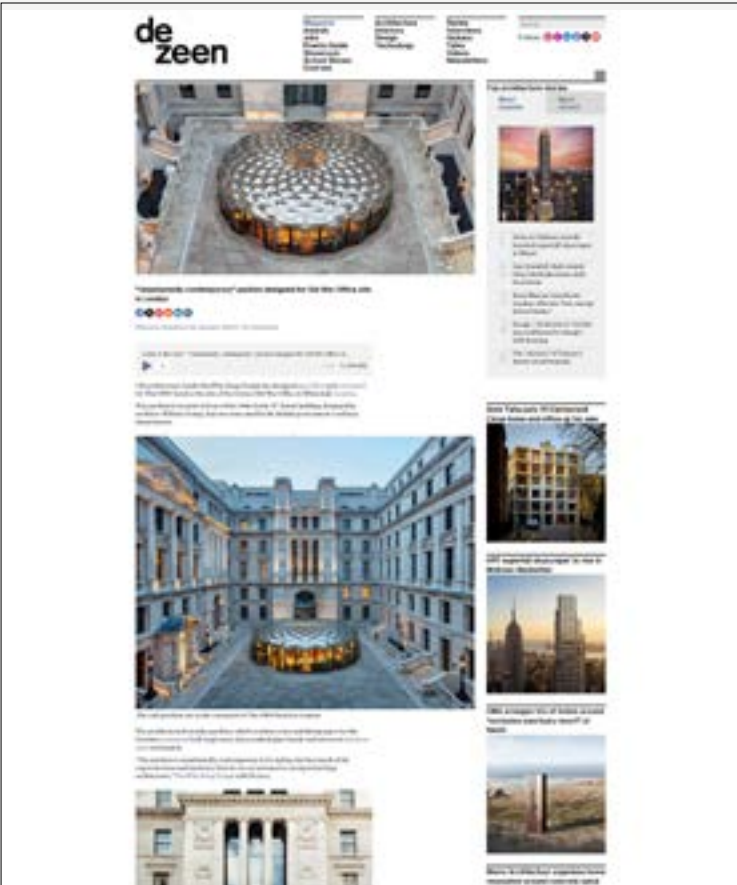
Coverage

Selected Media

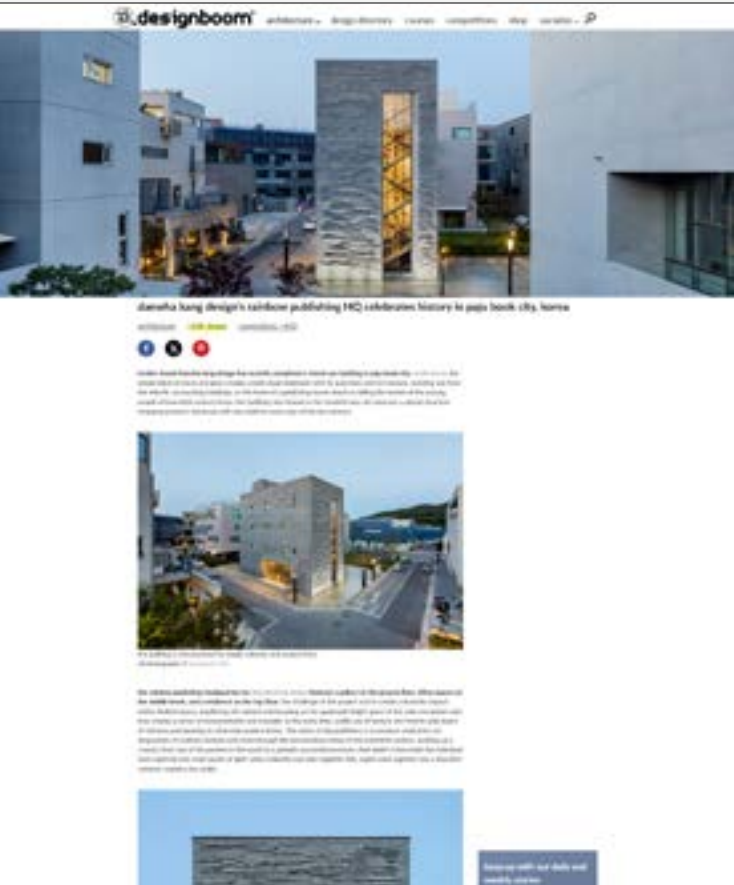
Online



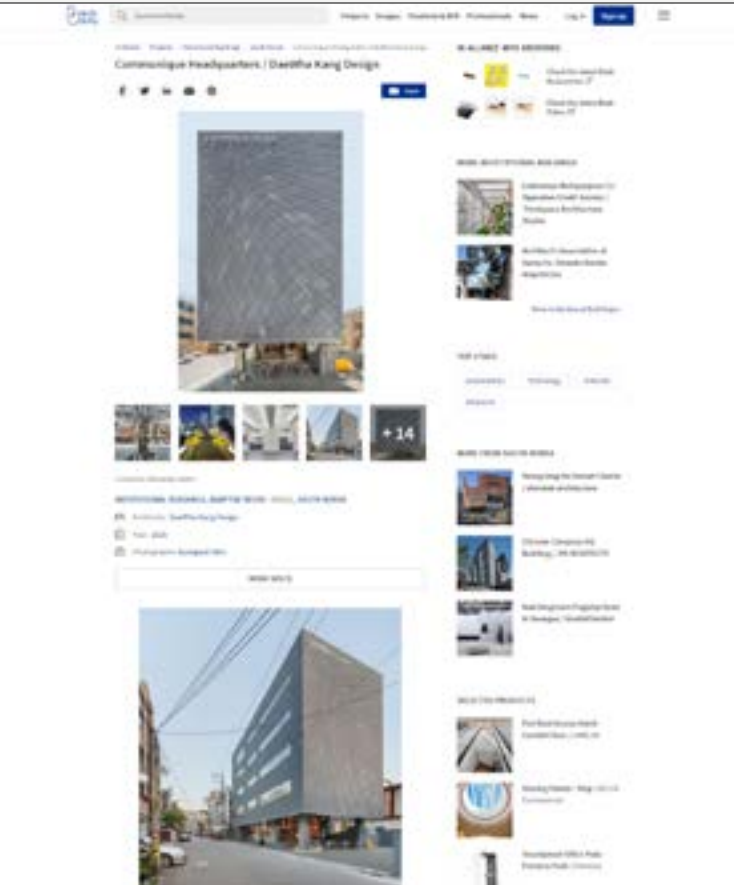
Wallpaper*



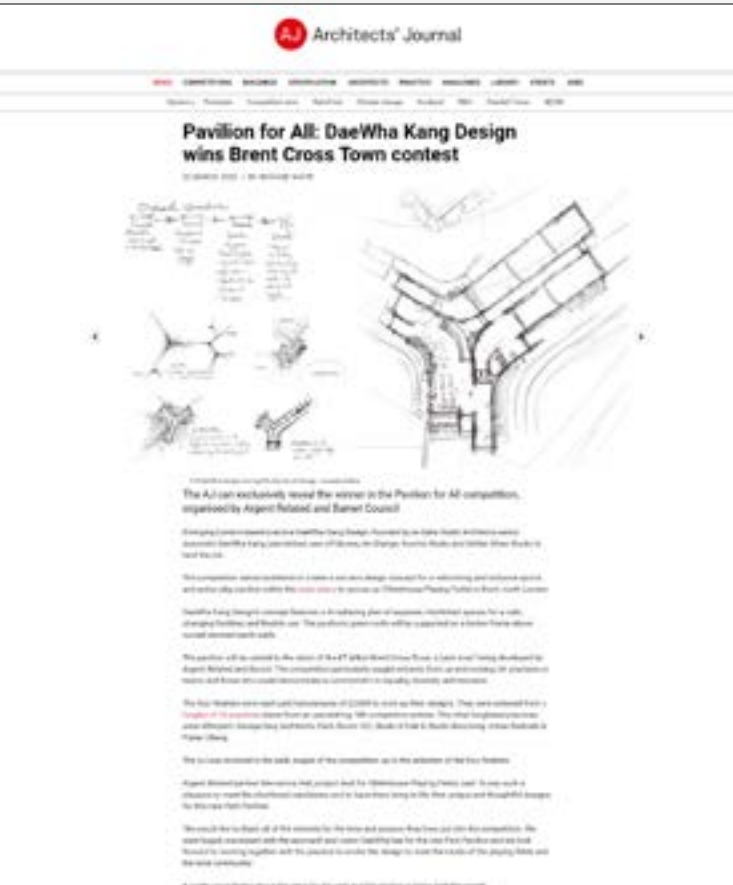
de:zeen



designboom



archdaily



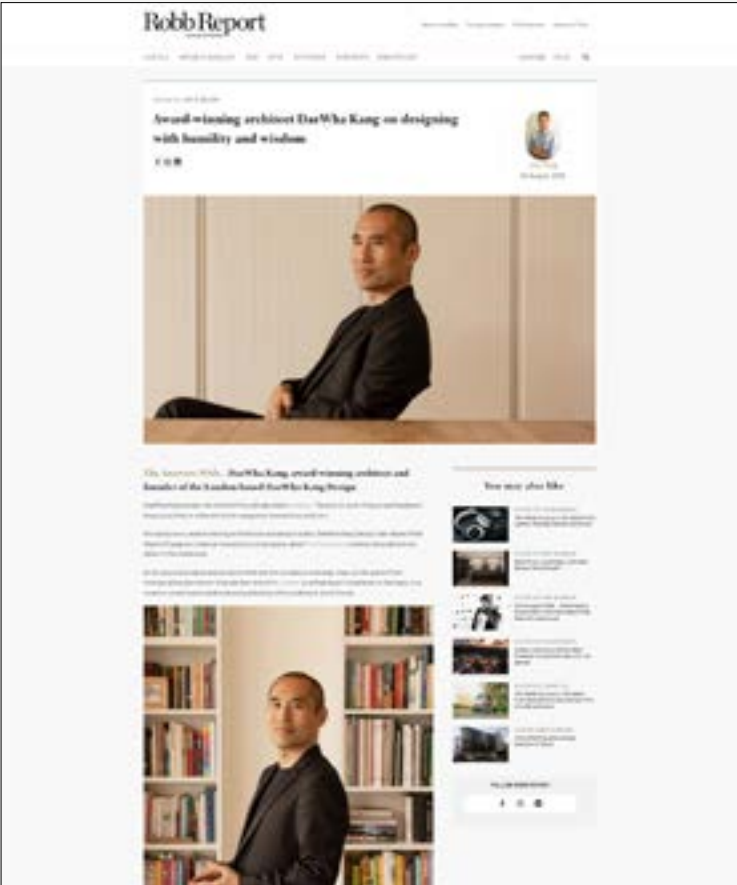
Architects' Journal



The Architect's Newspaper



Condé Nast Traveler



Robb Report



FRAME



Mirror



The Independent



SE ASIA GLOBE

Selected Publications

In Print



“THE ANSWERS WITH...DAEWHA KANG”

Published by Robb Report, Singapore, Summer 2023

An in-depth interview with DaeWha Kang discussing the studio approach to work and his personal outlook on design and wellbeing.



“DESIGN TRANSFORMATION OF THE OWO COURTYARD AND PAVILION”

Published by Conservation & Heritage Journal, Jan 2024

A detailed review into the balance and harmony of the contemporary pavilion within the conservation and heritage context of the Old War Office.



“TO A CURATOR OF BEAUTIFUL LIVES,” AD MAGAZINE: DESIGNING OUR TOMORROW

Published by Wiley, June 2015

A speculative report from the year 2050 describing how design will look one generation from today.



THE YALE ARCHITECTURAL JOURNAL, PERSPECTA 37: FAMOUS.

Published by MIT Press, December 2005

A collection of essays and interviews with Greg Lynn, Michael Graves, Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid, and others exploring the impact of fame on the architectural profession.

Accolades

Selected Awards



OLD WAR OFFICE PAVILION

RIBA Award 2026
Winner

Royal Fine Arts Commission Trust,
Building Beauty Award 2024
Winner

LIV Hospitality Award 2023
Winner, Architectural Design of the
Year

UK Society of Facade Engineers,
Facade of the Year
Winner



ST ANDREW HOLBORN

RIBA Award 2024
Winner

British Institute of Interior Design
Award 2023
Winner

AJ Architecture Awards 2023
Community & Faith Project Under
£2m, Finalist

National Churches Trust
President's Award Finalist

Art & Christianity Award
Art in a Religious Context, Finalist



RAINBOW PUBLISHING HOUSE

The Architecture Masterprize
Winner in Architectural Design / Mixed
Use Architecture



THE LIVING LAB

AJ Small Projects Award, 2019
Project of the Year, Finalist

ABB Leaf Awards, 2019
Best New Start-Up Practice, Finalist

Wood Awards, 2019
Highly Commended



BARKING CIVIC CENTRE

Build Architecture Awards, 2021
Best Urban Regeneration Project UK



COMMUNIQUE HQ

Korean Ministry of Land Award
Best Adaptive Reuse

Restaurant and Bar Design Awards
Finalist



Other Initiatives



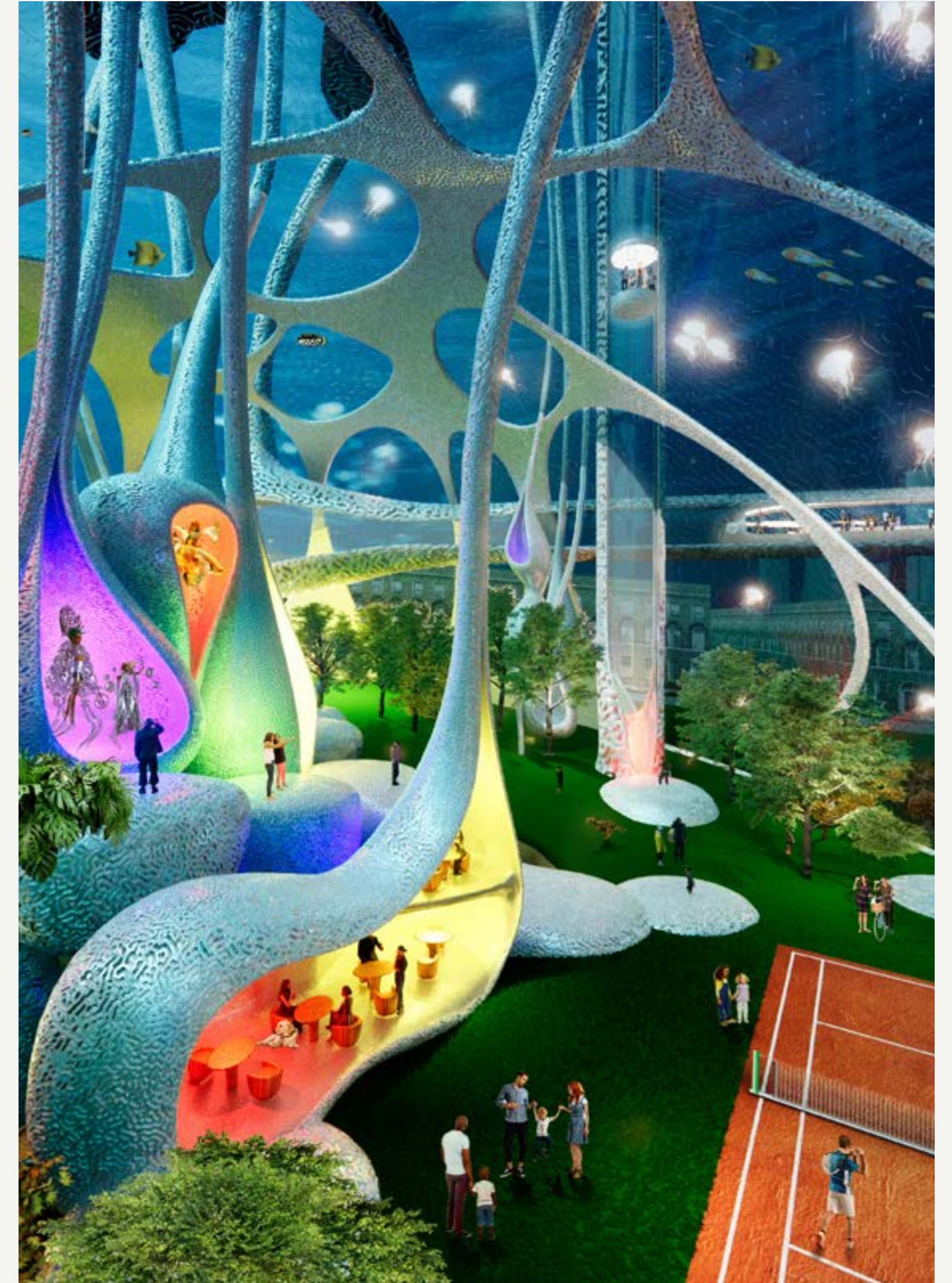
Other Initiatives

Climate Change All Change

DaeWha Kang is co-founder of Climate Change All Change (CCAC) which uses the power of design to engage school children with climate change.

Through face-to-face collaborations with professional designers, children are given the opportunity to learn about the impending climate crisis – and co-create solutions for a climate-changed world.

This powerful collaboration is shared at major institutions through a series of exploratory exhibitions. The most recent display of children's work was at the V&A Museum, London, in 2024.



Other Initiatives

Letters to My Grandchild

I have had a lifelong fascination with transcendence. What are those things in the world that take us beyond? Beyond the ordinary, beyond the day-to-day, and beyond our limited perspective of our own lives?

These letters are one way of seeing design and creation as something that goes beyond our daily work. Using them, I try to ensure that the work I do from day to day is something worth doing: something that would make my grandchild’s life better when he or she is born.



Our Voice
October 17, 2016

Dear Grandchild,

"Success has many fathers, while failure is an orphan."

Hello again after quite some time. In our days something called Youtube is super popular: people post music, videos, films, and pretty much any moving thing you can imagine onto it. They often criticise it as an enormous outlet for time-wasting for the entire global population. Videos of cats doing strange things get millions of views. Usually I watch it for a laugh, or to learn a new wiring technique for electronics, or how to cook something new.

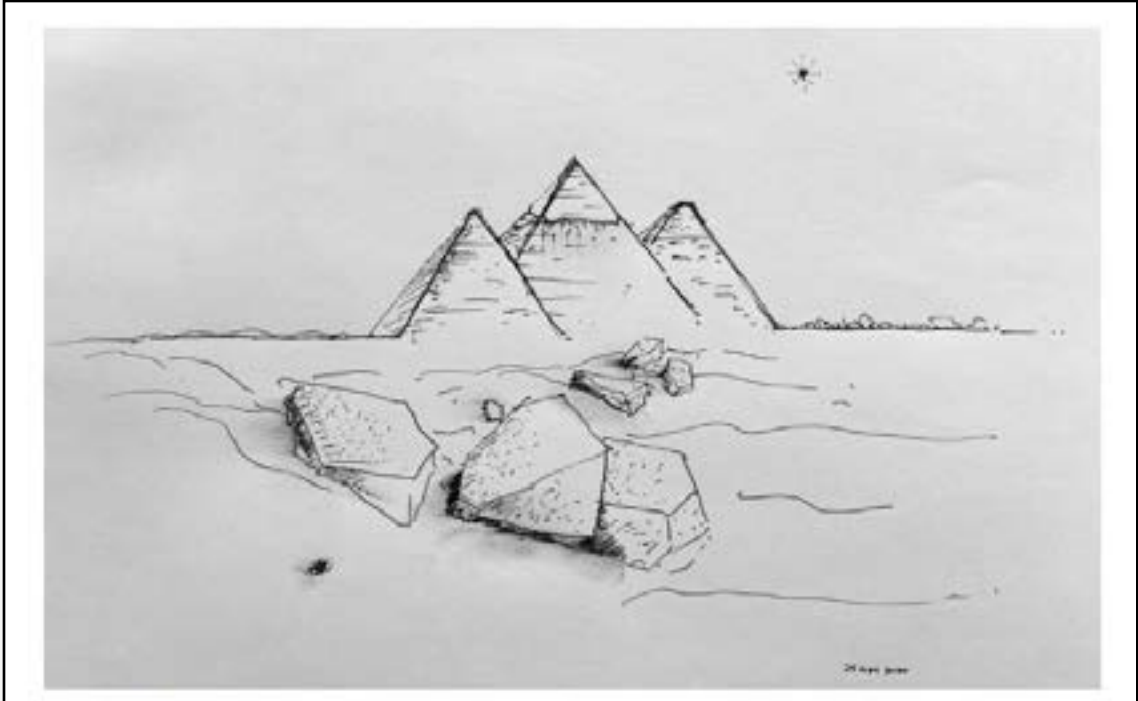
But tonight I spent twenty minutes watching a guy named Pharrell Williams interview a guy named Usher. By your time they will probably be hobbling around on canes. But right now they are exceptionally talented and successful singers, dancers, producers, and artists. A couple of moments stood out to me and I wanted to share them with you.

After talking at length about authenticity, inspiration, and love, Pharrell just went straight out and asked Usher what he thought was the most essential element of his success. Was it the dance moves, the magnetism, the spectacle? Usher said it was his voice. At the end of the day, a dance move might be amazing but someone can copy it. The same with the spectacle. But the voice, the voice is unique to him and him alone. It is not only the product of years of physical training and practice, but also the accumulation of a million experiences, inspirations, and judgments taken, expressed in just his own way.

In this age, my peers and I are grappling with the ascendance of technology. Because so much of what we do as architects is digital, so much of it can be lifted, copied, mixed, and remixed in the blink of an eye. It is easy to complain that something nice I made was so quickly picked up and copied by someone else, and now it seems they're getting the credit. I think Usher's lesson is a good one to we architects as well. If we want to create something unique and magnetic, with staying power even to your generation, we have to make it with our voice. We have to move beyond technique and through to the soul.

The other quote, the one that opens this letter acknowledges the many streams that flow into us to make us who we are. We are on a constant search for springs of inspiration and rivers of support. We can never stand still, never cut ourselves off, and never stop feeding that soul and that voice, lest our flowing water dries up and comes to an end.

All best wishes, your grandfather. 17 October 2016.



Guardians of the Past
May 24, 2020

Dear Grandchild,

I wrote this while listening to Fake Plastic Trees, by Radiohead.

How valuable are old things? Old people? Old buildings? Old friends and old traditions?

Today I had a long call with my friend Patrick Giannini from Yale Architecture School, nearly twenty years ago now. Patrick was the one who inspired me most at Yale—always creating something unusual and unforgettable. One day it was a set of three faceted houses that emerged one from another like a living outcrop of geometric rock. Another day it was a copper-plate print where the metal had been left to rust in the rain, then pressed into paper to make unbelievable textures of green and blue. And day after day, all kinds of other unexpected things. Patrick has these huge, crystalline blue eyes, and I imagined him as some future being who saw the world with twice as many rays of light as the rest of us.

Today he asked me about making architecture in London, and I told him about my presentation to the city two days ago for the big sculptural pavilion I am working on right now. It's still confidential, so I can't name the project, but it definitely won't be when you read this—remember, the one where Winston Churchill and Lawrence of Arabia used to work? Close to Buckingham Palace? I'm sure I've taken you there for a cup of tea or a really tasty cake by now.

I told Patrick that one of the best things about my job is how I get to make really futuristic things in really old places. There is something powerful that stirs in me when I touch a stone today knowing the heroes of the past touched that same stone in their own time. (They say that young Julius Caesar arrived at the Rock of Gibraltar and wept, knowing that Alexander the Great had been there before him).

To work in buildings of such historical importance, I have to work with people who are absolute experts in old buildings. You know that really cool pattern I showed you in the stones of the courtyard? For the presentation the other day, I had to explain that we were going to take those fifty-thousand little cubes of hundred-year-old stone and completely rearrange them to make our own new pattern. Hannah Parham from Donald Insall Associates was there to help me understand how to safeguard the history of the building even as we made our new mark on it.

Hannah is always inspiring me with her uncompromising search for significance. She digs deep into books, grainy photos, and faded newsprint to find the true history of things, giving voice to the forgotten stories of those stones. Hannah has these penetrating brown eyes framed by horn-rimmed spectacles, and I imagine an ancient, righteous power hidden just below the surface of her youthful features. I can picture her as some temple guardian of our precious past.

You know, the future is infinite: it's full of time, of possibilities, of second and third and fourth chances. But the past—those really important old things that hold the echoes of history and heroes? It's limited, it's scarce. And each time we lose some important old thing, we have lost something irreplaceable—because you can't make something new that has a hundred years of accumulated history.

So these old buildings really do need guarding. They need guardians.



A Thousand Days
September 13, 2017

Dear Grandchild,

Today was one thousand and one days since setting up this studio and beginning to write you these letters.

I wonder how long people will live when you read this letter. In my day, the average life expectancy of someone born in this country, is 81.6 years, or almost 30,000 days. To know the measure of a thousand days, I picture my lifetime compressed down to a single month. This thousand-day journey would have taken a day from that month-long life.

I imagine myself setting out on a long walk at the first hint of sun rising on the horizon. Where would I go, and what could I see? Night falls. I continue through twilight, midnight, and the dark hours before dawn. As rose-coloured light fills the east, I know the sun is coming and only twenty-nine days remain of a brief span on this earth. Have I accomplished what I set out to do on this precious day? Have I made the right choices? Should I have taken a different path?

A thousand days is a long time to spend on any endeavour, and this one has been no different. To spend a thousand days is to continue, day on day, week on week, through all the highs and lows, through days of feeling strong and days of feeling weak. To persevere for this duration requires a certain structure and a certain discipline. Years of working in office buildings have developed in me the rigor of just showing up—just being there every morning, five days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. The "place" in a workplace is so important for any journey like this one.

Yesterday I visited the Shard to see the site for our latest project. In our day the Shard is the tallest building in all of Europe. It stands as a tall crystal pyramid overlooking the Thames. One can see it from all corners of London—even from our house on distant Barnsbury Hill. We are designing experimental work areas on the twelfth floor for a company called Mitie. These "biophilic" spaces will immerse the workers in natural materials, rich textures, and dynamic light.

As we measure the effects of those spaces on the employees there, we hope to learn more about what factors will help them feel stronger, more focused, and more motivated at their daily jobs. Day in, day out, the workers will spend time in these spaces that your grandfather has created for them. Will these spaces help those people take their own thousand day journeys? Will they add meaning and richness to the days spent working? I hope so.

All best wishes, your grandfather. 13 September 2017.
p.s. from today I began writing down the music I was listening to while writing you these letters. Today was: Birth – Piano and String Quintet, by Dario Faini, Dardust.

For more information:

DaeWha Kang Design
Studio 24-4B Fourth Floor
24 Shacklewell Lane Dalston
London E8 2EZ
+44 (0)7540 643 663
info@daewha.com
daewha.com