The Future of UAE Architecture

There is no doubt, the regional architecture industry has developed tremendously over the past decade. We wanted to know what the greatest achievements of the industry are to date and how past lessons shape the future development of architecture in the UAE.
Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility

Sumaya Dabbagh shares her view on the necessity of employing ‘emotionally intelligent architecture’ to create a sense of place that connects people to the built environment, creates a feeling of community and ultimately, a sense of identity.

The art of transforming ‘space’ into ‘place’ is the first step towards creating a feeling of belonging and a sense of identity and community.

Development needs to understand, through careful study and research, where they are historically, culturally, and physically. They need to explore the story of what had existed before and allow it to evolve through sensitive design.

Dubai needs an architecture that caters to the human scale and human interactions. One that allows dialogue between building and street, one that addresses the spaces in between buildings that are often neglected and are human-unfriendly. An architecture that respects memory but not in nostalgic stylized references but one that creates a place for memory, of both passing of time and stillness. One that allows for adaptability and continuity.

The fragments of our city are the areas that need to be sensitively addressed through the upcoming 2020 themes. For true sustainability is not only about lowering fossil fuel consumption or carbon emission, it is about sustainability of communities, cultures and allowing identity to evolve with time and place.

Technology allows us to have buildings that can overcome gravity with feats of engineering so that they can soar into the sky. Buildings can be “smart” and “intelligent” and enhance our sense of identity and community.

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The Expo 2020 themes of connectivity, mobility and accessibility are directly related to the city’s fabric and how it can reanimate the sense of place to our neighbourhoods. Architectural interventions can create a dialogue between people and buildings. On a practical level, architecture can achieve this connection through an understanding of the importance of context, scale and memory.

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