

ITB Berlin
Special Press Release
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ITB Berlin 2009
March 11 to 15

ITB Destination Days –
Architecture & Tourism

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The topic of one of this year's ITB Destination Days within the ITB Berlin Convention is the link between Architecture and Tourism. On Wednesday 11 March between 14h45 and 17h25 a variety of presentations and panelists will look at the importance of the relationship between the architecture of destinations old and new and how this impacts on tourism. The ITB Destination Day will be moderated by **Professor Doctor Felizitas Romeiss-Stracke** of the Platform for Tourism and Architecture at the Technical University of Munich.

Building a competitive edge, literally, over rivals is hardly new. The gravitas empowered by the mere age of the structures of the ancient Greek and Roman empires made them essential stops for the sons of aristocratic families on their Grand Tour in the 17th & 18th centuries. The Coliseum and Parthenon were built to impress and still do today. However, like the interiors of the Sistine Chapel or the Alhambra, they were built with purpose and not tourists in mind.

A more contemporary example of construction for attraction, and certainly one that is totally synonymous with its location is the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The association is incredibly strong and more amazing given the fact that Eiffel's structure to celebrate the World's Expo was designed for disassembly and should have come down in 1909 after just 20 years. Similarly the Sydney Opera House built by Jørn Utzon and construction giant Ove Arup has not only stood the test of time but is synonymous with the city and was not overshadowed by the constructions of the 2000 Olympiad.

Nevertheless Paris and Sydney were and are both cities with other significant attributes besides the aforementioned iconic buildings. The rise of interest in the competitive edge that architecture can bring to a destination was more recently initiated. The completion in 1997 of the waves of titanium that clad the Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry served to put the formerly down-at-heel provincial port city of Bilbao on the map. Tourists made a new pilgrimage to this shrine of modern architecture in remote northern Spain; cruise ships added it to their itineraries.

Mitchell Schwarzer, in his opening essay on architecture and mass tourism in the book „Architourism: Authentic, Escapist, Exotic, Spectacular“ by Joan Ockman and Salomon Frausto, agrees that the construction of iconic structures is not new, but today the difference is „in the number of tourist-magnet buildings underway, as well as the global marketing considerations that go into all aspects of project planning, including design.“ The so-called „Bilbao effect“ showed what could be achieved and city authorities saw the me-too opportunity to market themselves through appealing to the traveller's cultural consciousness. Impetus has been added to the communication of spectacular modern buildings through the use of CAD modelling techniques to build awareness when the project is far from complete.

The cast of international architects & their constructions whose names have begun to enter the sub-consciousness of even the most architecturally challenged is lengthy. Sir Norman Foster & his Millau Viaduct in France or SwissRe „Gherkin“ tower in London.



Santiago Calatrava and his airports at Bilbao and Lyon or bridge at Liege, Belgium. I. M. Pei and the pyramids of the Louvre and Bank of China Tower in Hong Kong. Sir Richard Rogers and the Barajas Terminal 4 in Madrid or the Pompidou Centre. Herzog and De Meuron, Zaha Hadid, Renzo Piano, David Chipperfield, Daniel Libeskind....the list goes on.

However Romeiss-Stracke subscribes to a different view. „The time of architectural icons built by a handful of international star architects, or „starchitects“, is gone“, she explains. With their building techniques often only affordable by the wealthiest of states, each panel of Gehry’s museum in Bilbao was hand crafted piece by piece, the current economic environment means the reality of all the current projects reaching completion declines every day. „The time of architectural icons will give way to a period of careful renewal of destinations and the building of new ones on preferably a small scale as mass tourism gives way to very individualized forms of tourism,“ continues Romeiss-Stracke. We are seeing a rise in the search for both authenticity and a narrative.

Long have architects sought to tell a story through their work, developing architectural references to the locale in terms of the re-interpretation of the building vernacular and the layering of imagery through materials and finishes. **Bernhard Franken** of Franken\Architekten GmbH in his keynote speech will elaborate on four different forms of spatial narrative: Parametric, Semantic, Ritual and Scenographic. On the basis of these four typologies and using tourism related examples from his own practice and those of others, Franken explains how architecture can enhance this narrative to build or add to the brand experience for a city or region.

The quest for authenticity is examined by three different case studies of rural communities in Europe that have taken unusual steps in an attempt to secure their futures through tourism. **Urezza Famos** describes how the mountain community of Vnà in southeastern Switzerland has become a hotel-village. A local group has put together a tourism concept, Piz Tschütta, with a centralised cultural centre and guesthouse, as well as rooms for visitors in homes around the village. www.fundaziunvna.ch and www.hotelvna.ch. In a similar way Italian-Swedish entrepreneur **Daniele Kihlgren** has kept largely intact the original buildings lining the cobblestoned streets of the hamlet of Santo Stefano di Sassanio in Abruzzo whilst still creating hotel accommodation. www.sextantio.it In a more contrived way but faithfully recreating the traditional architecture of the Carinthian mountain villages of Southern Austria, is the hut and lodge ensemble of Almdorf SEINERZEIT as described by Managing Director, **Johann Landschützer**.

The attraction of such changing rural landscapes to many, particularly European, travellers who are seeking a return to more traditional values and environments are clear. And whilst the historical architecture of „old Europe“ continues to have enormous appeal to travellers from still expanding origination markets, especially those in Asia, Europe’s urban renewal projects are also driving travellers from closer to home. One of the best examples is the HafenCity development of Hamburg’s Elbe River



waterfront. The pièce de résistance of which is the Elbphilharmonie concert hall designed by Herzog & de Meuron and due to open in 2011. The ephemeral-looking, glass-clad top structure that rests on a former brick warehouse incorporates meetings venues and a hotel. Already tour groups are to be seen walking the construction site.

Possibly the biggest construction sites of them all are to be found currently in the Middle East. The Emirate states, recognising the need to diversify their oil-focussed economies, have made huge strides to develop other more sustainable sources of wealth including tourism via the construction of both hotels and tourist attractions. Rumour has it that there are more cranes in the Middle East than the rest of the world put together. Immediately prior to the current world economic crisis, the main concern for construction companies was the lack of raw materials such as steel and concrete. Dubai has made the biggest splash, taking the region's iconic architecture mantle with the Burj Al Arab deluxe hotel becoming a state symbol and deeply embedded in everyone's psyche. Will the astonishing rate of expansion and wealth of concrete seen in the Palm and World create too much „noise“ and begin a process of anaesthetisation? There are only so many iconic structures one place can have and there are concerns over the crowding out of projects and ability of the infrastructure to cope.

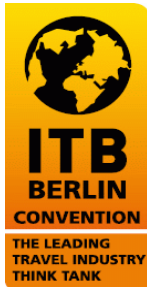
If the experience of Dubai has been more of a headlong rush, Abu Dhabi's approach appears more considered. This is best seen in the development of a cultural centre on Saadiyat Island by the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority. Sites on the island are being developed in accordance with a master plan, supported by planning regulations and design guidelines. Once again we have the role call of „starchitects“: the Maritime Museum by Tadao Ando, the Sheikh Zayed National Museum by Foster + Partners, the Guggenheim Modern Art Museum by Frank Gehry, the Louvre Abu Dhabi by Jean Nouvel and a Performing Arts Centre by Zaha Hadid.

Within the cradle of civilization other new Middle Eastern cultural developments include the Alexandria Library in Egypt and the Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar by I.M. Pei. However neither of these match the attempt at cultural globalization seen on Saadiyat Island. The impact on the economy of Abu Dhabi of the world's largest cultural district with thousands of guest rooms in this mixed-use project that includes commercial and residential aspects, is discussed at ITB Berlin Convention.

At a different scale *David Saurí* of the Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona discusses the environmental impacts of one aspect of tourist architecture. Saurí examines the assertion that concentrated, high-rise tourist settlements tend to be more efficient in water and energy use per capita (and generate less waste as well) than disperse, horizontal tourist settlements. The example is made of water use and management in Benidorm on the Spanish Mediterranean coast. Whilst accepting the fact that high-rise developments can cause other environmental ills such as visual impacts, congestion and noise when compared to less dense tourist settlements, they also generate important social benefits such as affordability. Could such democratic tourism opportunities led to renaissance of the Costas or high-rise hospitality in general?



The economic success of countries and cities has surely been advanced by the development of large architectural iconic structures. However Romeiss-Stracke argues, „the total built environment is more important than just singular architecture. Tourism managers need to take care of the „everyday architecture“ in their destinations and resorts.“ The „workability“ of planning, transport, safety, green spaces and the interaction of the local community are all required if the totality of the built environment is to be attractive. Attitude shifts by local communities to embrace tourism require strong leadership but can have as big an influence as an iconic structure on the success or not of tourism.



ITB Berlin Convention 2009 takes place from March 11 to 14, 2009 in halls 7.3, 7.1 a and 7.1 b. **ITB Destination Days** taking place from **March 11 to 14** showing successful destination marketing:

March 11

12.00 – 13.00: *The World's Most Liveable Cities*

Keynote Speaker: Tyler Brülé, Editor-in-chief & Chairman, Monocle

13.30 – 14.30: *Best Practice Destination Management: Lessons from the Leaders,*

Introductory

presentation

& Moderation:

Panel guests:

Dr. Auliana Poon, Managing Director, Tourism Intelligence International Ltd.

Geoff Buckley, Director, Tourism Australia (to be confirmed)
Karl Mootosamy, Director, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) (to be confirmed)

Sindiswa Nhlumayo, Deputy Director General, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Südafrika

Maria Revelo, Deputy Manager & Director of Marketing, ICT (Instituto Costarricense de Turismo), Costa Rica

14.45 – 17.25: *Architecture and Tourism*

Moderated by:

Prof. Dr. Felizitas Romeiss-Stracke, Technical University of Munich, Platform for Tourism and Architecture

14.45 – 15.00:

Architecture and Building Culture as a competitive Advantage In Tourism, Speaker: Prof. Dr. Felizitas Romeiss-Stracke

15.00 – 15.20:

Narrative Rooms, Keynote Speaker: Bernhard Franken, Architect, Franken\Architekten GmbH



- 15.25 – 16.10: *The Authentic Village Resort: A Goodbye to Mass Tourism?*
 Moderated by: Prof. Dr. Felizitas Romeiss-Stracke
 Panel guests: Daniele Kihlgren, Albergo Diffuso Sextantio
 Johann Landschützer, Managing Director, Almdorf SEINERZEIT BetriebsGmbH
- 16.15 – 16.45: *Abu Dhabi's Cultural District: Spectacular Architecture = Tourism Hotspot*
- 16.45 – 17.15 Uhr: *Eco-tourism in Tourist Blocks?*
 Speaker: David Sauri, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
- 17.15 – 17.25: *Outlook*, Speaker: Prof. Dr. Felizitas Romeiss-Stracke
- 17.30 – 18.00: *Presentation of the ITB Science Prize by DGT e.V.*
 Presentations of the awarded papers will be held at the ITB University Forum in hall 5.1
- March 12
 10.15 – 12.30: *Latin America Forum: Chances in the Crisis*
 Welcome &
 Moderation: Andreas M. Gross, Chairman, ARGE Lateinamerika e.V.
 Panel guests: Roland Junker, Senior Product Manager of the Carribean and Latin Amerika, Neckermann Fernreisen GmbH
 Gareth Lyons, Sales Manager, Senderos
 José Ramirez, Director, National Tourist Office of Mexico
 Norbert Salcher, Tourism Expert
 Beate Zwermann, Managing Director, BZ.Comm
- 12.45 – 14.15: *Progress in Tourism Research: Financial Crisis*
 Moderated by: Prof. Dr. Harald Pechlaner, President, German Society for Research in Tourism (DGT e.V.), Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
- Speakers &
 Panel guests: Dr. Andreas Deuber, Deputy Director Real Estate M&A, UBS AG
 Dr. Jörg Frehse, Managing Partner, Frehse Hotel Corporate Finance GmbH & Co. KG
 Raimon Kaufeld, Equity Analyst Travel, Transport, Logistics, WestLB AG
 John Koldowski, Director Strategic Intelligence Centre, PATA
 Prof. Dr. Harald Pechlaner
- 14.30 – 15.30: *Turkey Forum: Investment in Tourism Destinations in Times of the financial Crisis*
 Introduction: Ayse Didem Akman, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
 Aysegül Öztas, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
 Panel guests: Michael Maasmeier, Entrepreneur, Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey (ISPAT)
 Ayla Mirmahmutogullari, Director General of Investment and Business, Ministry for Culture and Tourism, Turkey
 Oya Narin, President, Martý Hotel Management Co.
 Koray Yetik, Secretary General, Turkish Tourism Investors Association (TYD)



15.45 – 17.30: *Africa Forum: 2010 FIFA World Cup:
Tourism Development in Southern Africa*
Welcome: Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Keynote-Speaker: Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Ministry of Environment & Tourism, Namibia
Moderated by: Dieter Möller, Journalist Tourism / Finance
Panel guests: Helge Bendl, Journalist, Photographer and Zambezi Adventurer
Eberhard Brandes, CEO, WWF Deutschland
Dr. Ingolf Diedrich, Head of Division Southern Africa, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
The Litunga of Western Province Paramount Chief Lubosi Imwiko II, Zambia (to be confirmed)
Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah
Ousmane Ndiaye, Regional representative for Africa, UNWTO
Tomasz Salomao, Executive Secretary, Southern Africa Development Community SADC (to be confirmed)
Bruno Wenn, Senior Vice President, Regional Department Sub-Saharan Africa, KfW Development Bank

March 13
11.00 – 15.30: *ITB Tourism and Culture Day*

March 14
11.00 – 15.30: *ITB Indigenous Day*

For further information please visit: www.itb-convention.com

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