

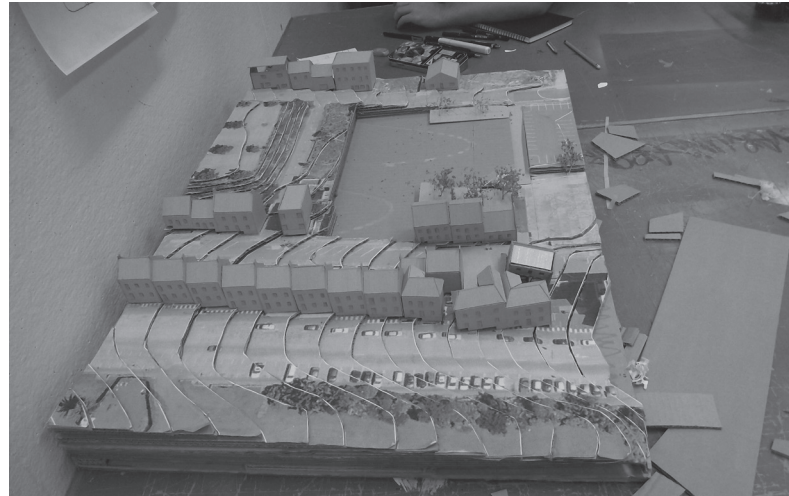
WORKSHOPPING ON VALENTINE’S

Nosiphiwo Mgoduka

While others were going through the motions of picking out flowers, selecting chocolate and making reservations at restaurants, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s architecture students attended workshops hosted by numerous international architects.

As Raul Pantaleo’s workshop shifted into gear, a group of students discussed their Valentine’s Day plans while congregated around a map-like model of a section of the Nelson Mandela Bay. In the midst of piecing together little towers of cardboard to recreate Donkin Street and negotiating thread around needles stuck into the map model to demonstrate transportation routes in the area, they shared ideas for the night to come.

The large contingent of students was then divided up into 10 smaller groups before eagerly fulfilling their duties pertaining to the outcome of the workshop. The Italian architect’s plan was to have the teams work on different aspects of the Metropolitan Area, namely the historical buildings in Central Hill in Donkin Street, Belmont Terrace, Russell Road and Chapel Street.



A cardboard model representing Donkin Street



Students from Raul Pantaleo’s workshop working hard to finish their presentation for Friday’s exhibition

“What I’m trying to achieve is that the students are happy to have had a community experience building one project,” Pantaleo said. “We share ideas, feelings, and the idea that we are a group.”

Student Justin Kemink said it was interesting to see how 60 individuals with different styles and ideas came together creatively for one big project.

“What I’m trying to achieve is that the students are happy to have had a community experience...”

Architecture Workshop Heading for the Final Lap

Mvuyisi Tyiwani

On Monday 17 February, the 2014 Architectural Workshop, being held on South Campus, started its final week. Students began to put together the final touch-ups on their designs.

During the morning session of Workshop 2 (facilitated by Prof Renato Rizzi), the early rush of compiling the final designs began with a high pace, with most groups having started the phase of finalising their designs. The Architecture Lecturers provided assistance when it was required. The atmosphere within the Architecture building was frenetic as the Friday deadline began to loom on the horizon.

In the past two weeks, different groups within the Workshop were still doing the ground phase of the project, centred on retaining and mobilising the image of Port Elizabeth and its buildings. The ground phase presented its own challenges but with only days to go before the exhibition, nerves are startling to jangle around groups that are either designing or compiling the map of Port Elizabeth.

Within the groups the task of remaking the designs and making sure they fit the bill for Friday Night has driven certain students to the edge.

During the morning, certain Architecture Students shared their experiences of this Workshop and made comparisons with the one that was held last year.

Group 3 member, Naledi Segale, a 2nd Year Architecture Student, described her experiences of working in the Workshop over the past two weeks. Segale stated, that the groups were performing rough sketches previously, but now that it is the final week, the final designs and ideas are beginning to unfold.

Segale explained the design of the Port Elizabeth Map and how the Map will be able to accommodate the people of Port Elizabeth, with features such as Transport Services

Scott and Segale reiterated that the whole purpose of this workshop was mostly based on looking at the bigger picture for Port Elizabeth and restoring its image.

The students summed up their views by stating that this year’s workshop ended on a positive note and that they would love to end off this workshop with a “beautiful swansong”.

Head Start for NMMU Architecture Students

Atenkosi Plaatjie

The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s architecture students have been given an opportunity to design a new upgraded Lifesaving center at Kings Beach, Port Elizabeth.

The department of architecture held a workshop on Tuesday, 18 February with Professor Ora Joubert from the University of the KwaZulu-Natal and the University of the Free State. Prof Joubert gave a lecture on the process of designing structures when it comes to an existing facility. The architecture students were given an opportunity to present their ideas and were given construction criticism and ideas on how to go about designing a project of this magnitude.

According to Prof Joubert the Nelson Mandela Bay Development agency is in talks over the financing of the new Lifesaving center project, “The exciting thing about this project is that it is a realistic design project that the students can work on” said Prof Joubert.

The students were given three weeks to come up with the design concepts. On the 21st of February the various groups will meet with the client for a formal presentation of the four design proposals the students have come up with. The winning concept will then be used to upgrade the old Lifesaving center.



Nelson Mandela
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NMMU SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOPS 2014

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TAKING CARE IN ARCHITECTURE

Deon van der Walt

Raul Pantaleo addressed the final gathering of the Architectural workshops on Wednesday where he emphasized the importance of the connection between Architecture and Society.



Raul Pantaleo

Pantaleo said that the main idea of architecture is to first and foremost “take care of the people”. According to Pantaleo architecture is a crucial part in the transformation of society. “Over the past three weeks students received ideas about the role of an architect”, he said.

The concluding speech by Pantaleo made the entire expectation of the Workshops clear with regard to the role that needs to be played by a person in order to improve the lives of general society.

Furthermore Pantaleo asked the question of whether beauty can save the world. Pantaleo’s interpretation of beauty can be considered as taking care of people, places and architecture. Pantaleo concluded with the illustration of some of his previous work and how it linked to his philosophical take on architecture.

A quote from the Master Jury Report perfectly summed up Pantaleo’s illustration: “It is possible for a low budget project to combine functionality with design, utility with beauty and affordability with excellence.”



Nelson Mandela Metropolitan City Hall

The Last Day Project Phase: ‘Life Savers Club’

Siphokazi Chutu

The Architecture Department at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University offers two different courses, namely, Architectural Studies and Architectural Technology.

The students from both courses were put in four different groups: Group 1 to Group 3 consisting of Architecture Studies students; Group 4 including only Architectural Technology students. Monday the 17th of February was the day of the completion of the project phase of the workshops. Even before their lecturer arrived, students gathered round at the architecture building, discussing their project plans and what adjustments to make.

Professor Ora Joubert, former Head of the Architecture Department at the University of Pretoria, arrived to meet the group of students that form Group 4. She immediately got to business, asking the students about their progress and what changes have been made since they last spoke. As the students presented their work, including a floor plan of their project, Prof Joubert offered encouraging feedback, showcasing a clear indication of her past experience as a lecturer.

The project the students have been assigned with is to design a Life Savers’ Centre for King’s Beach in Humewood. The project aims to upgrade the existing facilities and also design a new building for the beach. “We’ve been tasked to rejuvenate the facility so that it is very exciting. That will then be submitted to the Mandela Bay Development Agency (MBDA)”, Professor Joubert explains. The facilities will be safer and will encourage the general public to go to the beach more.

Closer to the End

Babalwa Magqwanti

Architecture students working with Professor Stephen Read are getting closer to the end of their projects after completing research where they took a sample of nine neighborhoods in Port Elizabeth.

The residents of these nine areas were asked about their daily movements, from their journeys to work, school and shops and these journeys were then plotted on a map of Port Elizabeth. These areas were chosen to be roughly representative of the diversity of cultural backgrounds and socio-economic groups in Port Elizabeth.

Amongst the residents interviewed on their ways of transportation were New Brighton residents. All seven of the case studies interviewed made use of public transport. Third year student, Judy Cizek, said they were busy collecting data and the aim is to make PE a more mobile city.

She added that the challenge for this project would be getting people to think about local issues.

She made an example of Cape Town whereby trains go into every neighborhood and how they want PE to move in that sort of direction.

Professor Read said this week the students would present their final designs which will be shown at the exhibition on Friday, 21 February. Prof Read who is from Delft in The Netherlands quelled any problems, lamenting on the pace with NMMU students. “It has worked out pretty well”.

The aim of the project is to cut the gap between urban and sub-urban areas and to be “the melting-pot of differences for the metropolitan area”



Third year student, Judy Cizek

LINKING URBAN RENEWAL TO SOCIETY

Marc Jacobson

Plans to revamp the Mermaid’s Precinct block in Central were conceptualised and presented to Raul Pantaleo by the Workshop 1 Architectural students on Thursday 13th February. This was after more in-depth studies of the physical environment and the natural flow in the area were focused on.

The smaller groups present were merged together into bigger groups with similar aspects of focus and thereafter their ideas and plans were collaborated. These collaborations of the different groups were subsequently presented to Prof. Pantaleo who then offered guidance, direction and concluding points.

“Many groups focused on similar factors that bridge onto one another, so that at the end, everything will be linked in order to make the whole project successful,” said architectural student, Chansa Chansa, “[e]very detail is taken into consideration, even the energy and the density and direction of the traffic flow”. Other factors that should be focused on between the groups were urban farming, small scale work, activity centres, housing and accommodation, transportation, urban sustainability and energy. All aspects play a role and should align together in reaching the overall goal for the project to be sustainable and profitable.

“All the houses for example deal with the same concept but deal with different portions of location,” said Chansa. The Victoria Hotel, situated near the block, is linked to housing and accommodation, as well as to the commercial component. “The hotel links to cultural/residential expansion, because a portion of it is planned to become a chef school by which the culinary learners can stay as well - much like a boarding house,” added Chansa.

Another aspect of focus was the exposure and accessibility that the various housing and commercial stations had to the public in the area. This is vitally important to be managed and designed well in a way as to attract walk-by residents and visitors and to retain their perseverance.

“We have designed a walk-way moving between plots for walk-by visitors in such a way that there are only two entrances on either side of the block, creating a linear design from the bottom of the block to the top,” said Joseph Tamale, Architectural student dealing with urban farming and small scale work.

The gaps on the side of the block where the road is planned are to be closed by fencing, which will draw visitors to the two entrances only. This technique is used so that people will not take short cuts when walking and skip the various workshops and businesses. “There are different terraces in this design, as the block is situated on a hill, so we have plans to establish a business on each level terrace,” said Joseph. “At the bottom we have an internet café, and then on the second level we have a fab lab on the one side and a private school on the other side,” he added.

This all links together such that the school pupils are able to access the internet café for academic and research purposes and the fab lab be used for production. All groups had to combine their plans through drawings and diagrams and had to then present it to Raul Panatleo.

port elizabeth: going forward

Students Feel the Pressure

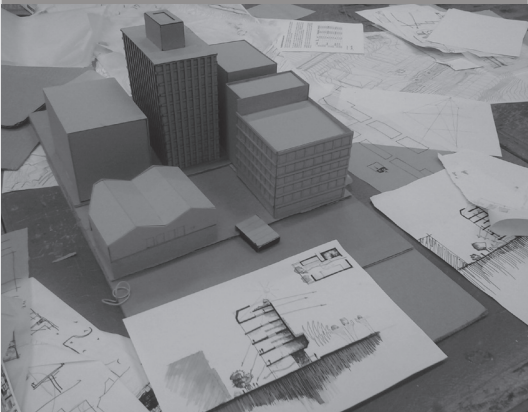
Bianca Wicks

Raul Pantaleo’s workshop began their final week by preparing for the exhibition on Friday. Split into ten groups, their tasks included building models, creating a map of the proposed cycle lanes concerning the mermaid project and starting on the CAD (Computer-aided design) drawings.

The main objective of the project is to find a sufficient use of energy in the area. When the work is completed, all the groups will compile what they have done into a complete final project.

As the exhibition draws ever closer, the students are fretting that they might not have anything to present on Friday. Prof Pantaleo encouraged them to start finalising the project by telling them to stop worrying about being perfect and to work with what they have. He also suggested that the final presentation be done on a vertical A0.

First year BAS student Spahakeme Vilakazi said he enjoyed the workshop even though it took up a lot of his time. “We’ve been here every day since nine in the morning until six at night. So it’s hectic, but it’s still awesome,” he said.



A Big Thank You

Esona Funeka

Head of Department for the School of Architecture, Mr Boban Varghese, and the Director of the School of Architecture, Ms Nicola Darke, are a significant fraction of the team that made it possible for the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to host their first ever International Architecture Workshop.

In a recent interview Mr Varghese expressed his role as the HOD as promoting architectural education, further emphasising that architectural education is not solely based on specific knowledge, but rather an unlimited combination of creativity and critical thinking. This, of course, is what the workshop has been working towards these past two weeks, harnessing the skills and creativity of the students.

The School of Architecture’s International Workshop has been continuing this week, and features world leading architects such as Ernst Struwig, Raul Pantaleo, Prof Stephen Read, and Prof Renato Rizzi, who have been working closely with NMMU architecture students. Mr Varghese emphasised that this is an opportunity for students to achieve their goals, especially now that they have been given the chance to work closely with these superlative names.

Ms Darke added that this has been an excellent chance for the students, and everything is going “fantastic” at the moment. She continued by saying that the school plans on hosting many more international workshops since this was the first. Speaking at the evening lecture talk held on 12 February 2014 at Port Elizabeth City Hall (by Prof. Arch. Renato Rizzi from the University Institute of Architecture, Venice, Italy), Ms Darke commented that the attendance of people, especially students, was surprising; after a significant turnout of 250 people. “It was very unusual”, she commented.

The idea of the workshops started in 2013, but Mr Varghese and Ms Drake did not anticipate that there would be funds to do it, or that there would be internationally renowned architects who have the time to attend. However, they asserted that the main reason for the success of the workshops were due to the teamwork involved between the management of the school, the task team and everyone else who worked tirelessly on the project.

Both Mr Varghese and Ms Drake expressed their great appreciation and gratitude to the Vice- Chancellor of NMMU, Prof Derrick Swartz, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academics, Prof Piet Naude, adding that that a great deal of thanks should also be given to the International office, for assisting in funding the initiative.

More thanks were given to Prof Ora Joubert and Dr Magda Minguzzi, as well as many others who took their valuable time to come and partake in this initiative of the University. Further gratitude was expressed towards the Mandela Bay Development Agency for their role in allocating sites.

Mr. Varghese concluded by stating that a venture of this caliber was definitely a risk that was worth taking, especially looking towards the future.

PROJECT ‘SAVE THE DONKIN RESERVE’

Esona Funeka



‘The Unknown Servant’ Statue at the Donkin Reserve - Port Elizabeth

Week two of the International Workshops hosted by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s School of Architecture saw Raul Pantaleo and his group of students focusing on the old Port Elizabeth Central Business District and specifically, the Donkin Reserve.

This historical site - which carries much of the city’s history - has recently been abandoned due to its inertness and failure to attract locals within the Nelson Mandela Bay area, with more dwindling attractiveness due to lack of interest by national and international tourists.

The Donkin Reserve has undoubtedly been a big part of Port Elizabeth’s history. It was proclaimed by the founder of the city Sir Rufane Donkin in 1820 as a dedicatory to his wife, Elizabeth, who passed away while he navigated around the world. Subsequently, this is where the name of the city comes from: Port Elizabeth. One of the most striking elements of this area is the inscribed pyramid beside the towering lighthouse, showcasing Donkin’s ode for his dear wife: “To the memory of one of the most perfect of human beings who has given her name to the Town below”. The Donkin Reserve itself is, however, a wide space with few artifacts occupying it. It has a lot of exposed space which can be implemented into other features of interest thereby drawing more spectators.

The idea behind the visit was to not only inspect the Reserve itself but also to come up with an intervention to bring new life to the area. The student group was then divided into various teams so as to strategize on different innovations that can be implemented to aid this historical landmark. These teams were then tasked with, firstly, coming up with names for their different squads, and there were all kinds of aliases: The ‘A-team’, ‘Dream Team’, ‘Kids Next Door’ and ‘Smurfs’, amongst others.

Each team had different sections of the CBD area to develop, such as the centre and the Victoria Hotel, for example. As the brainstorming session continued, teams had to present their ideas in drawings to Pantaleo and the rest of the group. Many great ideas were offered to the main group and constructive criticism bestowed on the participants, answered with much applause and adoration from all the teams.



The ‘Dream Team’ brainstorming their ideas for the renovation of the Donkin Reserve

“The Donkin Reserve has undoubtedly been a big part of Port Elizabeth’s history”

port elizabeth: going forward

port elizabeth: going forward