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The Delegation of the Ismaili Imam - Tour Notes

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**KATHERINE BOYES**

**Atrium:**

- upper right side – residences
- upper corner – hotel suites for guests and staff
- upper bit – boardroom, dining room, offices for the Aga Khan and his representative
  - rectangle form assures privacy for the Aga Khan
- building sits on granite podium to be street level with Sussex drive
- pie shaped land with elevated levels
- use to have a path, kept original trees and added more
- Maki and associates first project in Canada
- Maki was juror on the panel for Aga Khan Architecture award show
  - master of light and shadow
  - modern style
  - openness and transparency
  - light and shadows intentional

**Roof:**

- rock crystals – agakhan loves shiny sparkly forms and reflections
- these ideas are translated by the glass roof
- Second layer underneath is functional as it keeps the warmth away
- juxtaposed opaqueness and transparency
- fiber glass- material, stretched and part woven
  
- The Aga Khan wanted to apply a modern approach to Islamic ideas
- the screen forms function and beauty
- provides privacy but still allows light to go through
- jali screen – usually wood or stone but in this case sandcast alimunium
  - engine part manufacturer in Ontario was able to create it
  - one woman divided all the holes in the curtains
  - purely geometric
  - 150 pound panels
  
- 49 squares for 49<sup>th</sup> Imam

**Garden:**

- Charbag – ‘char’ meaning four. ‘bagh’ meaning garden
- Islamic but modern
- moving water collects to represent the fountain
- during winters, the collective snow is used to imitate moving water

*“how do you feel working in this space?”*

- working at the the foundation for 10 years
  - works with volunteering training
  - space should humble and inspire you
  - massive difference in working in a regular building as opposed to working in an architectural icon
  - inspiring place to work and visit
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**ELTA****-ROOF:**

- seismic joints in 4 corners
- tremor proof

**Garden/Exterior Wall:**

- window moulins on inside
  - water hitting facade flows down like waterfall
- local trees were replanted in garden due to winter, used to have juniper trees
- french limestone

**Design:**

- subbasements hold mechanical, electrical, pump rooms
- things are concealed and incorporated in the design on the interior
- supply and return of chemical units hidden
- acoustic fibers behind walls
  - specially constructed for King Edward, North Side – due to highway and residences

## **Power Distribution:**

- due to Sussex drive location, the building is not subject to power spikes
- has backup supply and generates

## **Office Space:**

- open concept
- glass panelling for walls to keep out noise
- white noise generated through building
- signage limited
- Maki wanted to keep things from eye to shin level free of objects and minimalist, thus locks for doors all below shin level
- minimal access panels

## **Lighting:**

- last 5 years were spent phasing in LED retrofit
- Easter to thanksgiving – only emergency lights
- white rocks on the roof make it look crystallized

## **Challenges**

- Japanese architectural thresholds are fragile
  - in Canadian architecture there's weather stripping
  - however, the tolerance for change is low in Japanese architecture
  - doors get stuck at times due to expansion and contraction due to the lower temperatures during the winter
- European design
  - worked over 10 yrs to Canadianize the designs – pendant lights and bullet lights all European
    - the lights came from Germany
  - if things broke down they would need to be replaced with Canadian products
- cooling systems undersized
  - “when we push 45C it's a challenge to keep the building even”
  - “load shedding used to facilitate electric bills”
  - similarly at -40 due to glass and no insulation, frost comes into the building”
- Maki created monolithic seamless entrance
  - caused issues from the maintenance side
  - “face-hill” system has high maintenance – the climate makes it tough
  - roof is an example of how function and form is not factored into the construction 0 they could not clean the grid curtain (jaali)

- uses industrial vacuum to suck dust underneath rather than get it from the top
- openings in the Jaali are cleaned by hand