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The Delegation of the Ismaili Imamatus - Tour Notes

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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 aluminum
 - 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 49th 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