

Design Future



Saeed Zaki, Ph.D., MD of architecture and interior design firm dwp (design worldwide partnership) talks about regional architectural trends.

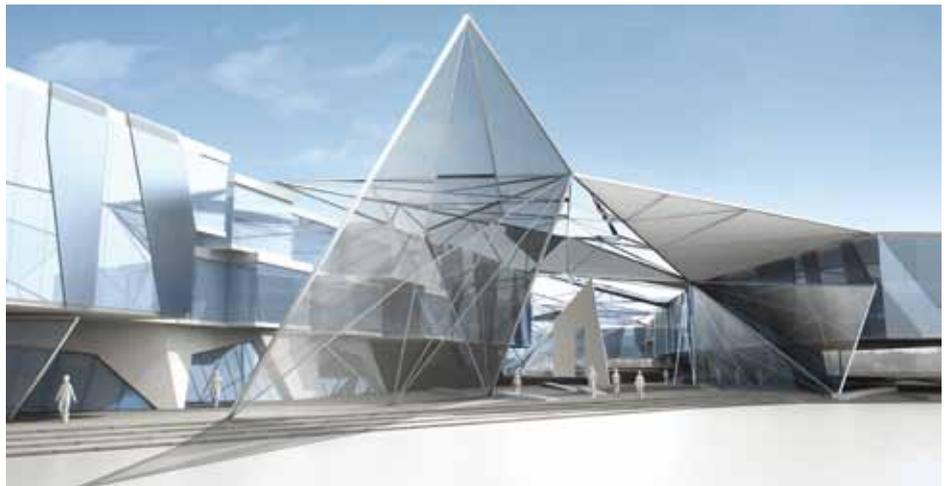
The future is always a tricky animal to predict. When we look at the ideas that people had in the 1950s and 60s, about the future and the 2000s in particular, we see that sometimes they were dead on, other times they miss the mark by a light year. Taking a look at the current trends in society and in architecture and interior design movements, we can tell a lot about how the design of our future is being and will continue to be influenced.

Urban Planning

With a continual increase in migration of populations across Asia to the cities, the trend of urbanisation will continue and cities will grow, become more sprawling, and new ones will be formed, such as can be seen in rapidly urbanising China. To ensure that the trend is sustainable and not uncontrolled, the future of urban planning will be a combination of socio-economic factors, sensitive to the needs of the population, while ensuring a minimal impact on environment. We will see more and more cities embracing sustainable urban development with the emergence of 'eco' or 'green' cities. Presently, such initiatives are being made in China and the Middle East. However, the initiatives were first made in Europe, with an attempt to create urban development, based on the principles of eco-design. Under this approach, the idea was to create emission-free settlements, by using the waste of one land as a source of energy for another. An example of this is integrated cities that use industrial and agricultural waste or bi-products for generating energy. The cities of the future are increasingly going to be compact versus the more sprawled cities of today, especially as land becomes ever more a premium and space dwindles. This will mean higher densities, requiring urban infrastructure capable of taking on heavier loads and thus requiring more technology-driven foundations.

Architecture

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more and more high-rise buildings to minimise their ecological footprint on future development. The buildings of the future will resemble small self-sufficient cities, with sky gardens, parks and even small farms. Technology will drive not only horizontal transportation, but there will be increased mass transportation to move people and goods swiftly, vertically. Buildings of the future will employ new and modern technology driven by smart materials, like nano-technology, which will be self-cleaning and eco-friendly. Built-form will be increasingly more complex, as more computer-aided design is employed, allowing designers of the future to conceive forms and spaces previously unimaginable.

Interior Design

To go hand-in-hand with futuristic architecture, interior spaces will also reflect a more tech-savvy environment. In the workplace, for example, we will see a major transformation - offices of the future will be very different from today. Workstations will be giant touchscreens, used for work, display, communication and storage. Computers of today will be obsolete, becoming integral to the layout. Paperless offices will be a future necessity, not a luxury or a wish. Storage spaces will disappear with greater reliance on digital technology. There may be an increased amalgamation of home and work. Some small business will not even have a formal place of work, as professionals will simply work from home or live where they work. Offices will be very compact, as spaces will be at a premium. The same can be predicted for the average home of the future. Flexibility in design and layout will be key to maximise multi-functional usage everywhere.

Dr. Saeed Zaki

is an architect, urban designer and planner with a proven track record of successful project design, development and implementation. He is responsible for the overall operation and key commercial strategies and initiatives, across the market for dwp (Design Worldwide Partnership).

