

May 2012

Round I of the National Library of Israel's Design Competition Has Concluded

Four Israeli Architects Chosen to Continue to Round II

Four Other Architects Win Honorable Mention

The international panel of judges in the Architects' Competition of the National Library of Israel met in Jerusalem on 17-19 April. The panel included four architects – Prof. Luis Fernandez-Galiano (Chair), Prof. Elinoar Komissar-Barza, Prof. Rafael Moneo and Gaby Schwartz. Prof. Massimiliano Fuksas announced at the last moment that he was unable to participate for reasons beyond his control. Prior to examining the submissions, the panel toured the site designated for construction of the building and received a videotaped message on the vision for the Library renewal from the National Library's Chairman of the Board, David Blumberg. (His remarks are attached below).

Eighty-one (81) proposals were submitted in this first stage of the competition. Selecting the stipulated four proposals from such a large number of submissions posed a challenge to the jury. The panel of judges noted in its summation that it was impressed by the range of the participants' ideas and by their creativity, and said that it was evident that the architects had devoted considerable time and thought to their proposals.

Prof. Luis Fernandez-Galiano, Chairman of the panel of judges, said:

'The jury was impressed by the wide variety of approaches tested by the participants, by the high-quality of many of the entries, and by the extreme professionalism of several. Most projects showed a painstaking awareness of the difficulty and relevance of the site, and attempted to express the significance of the institution with commendable effort. The task of selecting only four was not easy, and the jury decided unanimously to award the maximum number of honorable mentions allowed by the competition rules.'

The panel was unanimous in its selection of the four proposals submitted by the architects who will advance to the second stage of the competition. (A brief resume provided by each of the architects appears at the end of this document.):

- Daniel Assayag
- Gil Even-Tsur
- Rafi Segal
- David Zarhy

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In addition, the committee deemed it appropriate to award 'Honorable Mention – Round I of the Competition' to four additional proposals that were particularly impressive (architects are listed alphabetically):

- Meira Efrat-Kowalsky (with Wiel Arets and Zvi Efrat)
- Peter Keinan, Yuval Amitzi and Lichen Amitzi (with Dori Sadan and Ruti Orev)
- Yifat Rom (with Eran Chen)
- Yishai Well

David Blumberg, Chairman of the National Library Board of Directors, noted that:

'The importance of the project was clearly reflected in the large number of submissions. We thank the eighty-one architects and firms that worked hard and devoted energy, time and money to designing solutions that met the requirements. We recognize and appreciate the investment involved. We congratulate the winners and those cited for honorable mention, and wish the four winners the best of luck in the second stage of the competition.'

In Round II of the competition, which is slated to begin in early May, up to 12 architects will participate: the four selected in Round I, together with as many as eight architects (up to four Israelis and up to four international), who were directly invited to participate in Round II. Round II will conclude in October 2012.

Additional details about the competition can be found at www.nli-competition.org.il. Questions and requests for additional details related to this announcement can be addressed to Ms. Rachel Cavits or Ms. Anat Tyomkin at Yad Hanadiv, tel. 02-5665107 or at competition@nli-renewal.org.il. **Responses will be provided in writing.**

This announcement and/or the Internet site are intended only to provide general information. The instructions included in the competition kit alone are binding. The National Library Construction Company, Ltd. (non-profit) reserves the right to revise any of the above terms and instructions and/or those on the Internet site, as stipulated in the competition kit.

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OUR VISION OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY RENEWAL
A Recorded Message to the Jury by
David Blumberg, Chairman Of The Board Of Directors, National Library Of Israel
April 17, 2012 – 25 NISSAN 5772

Professor Luis Fernandez-Galiano, chairman of the jury, Prof. Elinoar Komissar-Barza, Prof. Rafael Moneo, architect Gaby Schwartz – shalom and welcome.

Thank you for agreeing to serve as the jury in the international competition to select the architect for the new home of the National Library of Israel. I am convinced that your work will produce a worthy result and, with your active assistance, the most suitable architect will be selected for the National Library's new building.

I apologize that for unanticipated reasons I had to travel abroad and could not meet with you at this stage, as the judging begins. I am sure that we will meet later on. Nonetheless, in light of the importance of the matter, I found it appropriate to directly communicate to you a message about the vision as we see it.

Just over a year ago, on 27 March 27 2011, we convened the leadership of the State, including the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, the Speaker of the Knesset, the President of the Supreme Court, the State Comptroller, the Governor of the Bank of Israel, the President of the National Academy of Sciences and others, to signed the charter of the National Library of Israel, which states:

‘We believe in the vision of the renewed library and in the crucial importance of this project and we will do everything in our power to make this a reality.’

We believe that the time has come to unlock the treasures of the National Library and to make them accessible to as many people as possible, both physically and through technological means. This increased accessibility is, in essence, the heart of the Library's renewal process.

You will visit, I assume, the existing building of the National Library. It is a beautiful building, but I am sure you will notice that it is sealed, almost without windows. Its wisdom is imprisoned inside an academic ivory tower.

Our aim is to make the Library's treasures available to the broadest possible audience in Israel and abroad. The uniqueness of our National Library lies in its duality: It serves as the National Library of the State of Israel, with its diversity of residents and ideas, the ultra-Orthodox, the religious, the secular, modern and traditional, Jews, Arabs, Muslims, Christians and members of other religions. At the same time, it serves as a National Library of the Jewish people, collecting, preserving and

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administering the cultural work of thousands of years, created in dozens of countries in diverse cultural settings.

In 1920, the national poet Haim Nahman Bialik, together with friends – leading writers, poets and intellectuals of the era – founded a publishing house that was intended, among other things, to publish volumes of philosophy, literature and poetry that would serve the needs of The Hebrew University, which was about to be established. The name chosen for the new publishing house was Dvir, like the name of the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The symbol selected for the Dvir Publishing House was the gates of the Temple. This is perhaps a fitting symbolic reference to Jewish creative work, to the world of Jewish books and culture.

Our main requirements for the building are outlined in Chapter 2 of the brief, entitled: 'Guiding Principles for Design.' This chapter summarizes our insights from three or four years of work on reorganizing the library internally and expresses, as noted, our insights regarding the needs of the new building.

We ask that you read this chapter closely and that you use it as a guide when examining the various proposals.

The prestige in designing a National Library, together with its singular location at the foot of the Knesset and the unique environs of Kiryat Haleom, produces the temptation to design an architectural monument. This is not our intent. What we are seeking to create is a beautiful, dignified and modest building, integrated into its surroundings, which, above all, serves the content needs of the library.

We believe that this is possible. We believe that with your help we will succeed in making a worthy choice.

Thank you.

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The National Library of Israel Architects' Competition – Winners of Round I
Short Resumés Provided by the Architects (in alphabetical order)

Daniel Assayag, Jerusalem (1956)

A graduate of the Architecture Department of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, and also a graduate of the School of Architecture of the Pratt Institute in New York. After gaining experience in a number of architectural firms in New York, he became a senior partner at Schocken-Assayag Architects, where he engaged in a wide range of projects, including: adding wings to the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, an educational complex in the Shachmon neighborhood in Eilat, a school in Jerusalem, laboratory buildings for The Hebrew University, the Graphoprint printing company for the Haaretz newspaper and Schocken group, a town planning scheme for a neighborhood of 1,200 housing units in Beit Shemesh, and second place in a competition for designing the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. Since 1999, he has owned an independent architecture firm. Among the projects he designed: a school and a synagogue in the town of Adam, community centers in Oranit and Givat Zeev, a town planning scheme for 1,450 housing units in the town of Adam for the Ministry of Housing, and a city planning scheme for the Havazelet site in Jerusalem, which includes building additions and preservation of historic buildings for the Jerusalem Development Authority, and residential buildings in Jerusalem.

Gil Even-Tsur, New York and Hadera (1971)

At an early age He was active in the arts, playing the saxophone and practicing music at the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem. After receiving his Bachelor of Architecture from City College of New York School of Architecture and winning the Best Thesis honour, He began working for the Pritzker Award recipient, architect Richard Meier. During his eight years at Richard Meier & Partners, Gil had the opportunity to work on numerous outstanding projects. Most notable is the design for the AIA prize-winning condominium, 165 Charles Street located in Manhattan's Greenwich Village, and Ara Pasic, a museum in Rome. He also served as a project architect of the residential tower 'Meier on Rothschild' in the centre of the White City of Tel Aviv, Israel.

For the past 5 years, He has studied and developed synagogue building types for both religious and secular communities throughout Israel and the US. He is currently working on a book and exhibition on the subject. He is an adjunct professor at the New York Institute of Technology School of Architecture and Design. In 2010, Architecture Workshop was established in New York and Tel Aviv, commissioning various building projects both in Israel and the US, including the design for Olive Oil museum in Baltimore, MD.

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Rafi Segal, New York and Tel Aviv (1967)

Received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Technion's Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, and earned a doctorate from Princeton University. Early in his professional career, he worked in partnership with the architect Zvi Hecker on designing the Palmach Museum in Tel Aviv, which won the Rokach Prize for Architecture from the Tel Aviv Municipality (2005). In 2001, he won the Zeev Rechter Prize for young architects from the Israel Association of Architects. Today, he divides his time between the US and Israel – engaging in architectural and urban planning in Israel and abroad, and also teaching architecture at Harvard University and Cooper Union College in New York. His work currently in the planning and construction stages includes: the Peace Museum and War Archives in Uganda, a master plan for the port area of Boston, a residential project on Andros Island in Greece and a master plan for a kibbutz in central Israel. His work and writings have gained international exposure in exhibitions and publications – for example, his participation in the 'Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream' exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the 'Making Room' project, which proposed plans for alternative urban housing.

David Zarhy, Tel Aviv (1951)

A graduate of the Technion, he manages the Zarhy Architects firm together with Anat Zarhy. The firm engages in designing a wide range of projects, including the campus of the ISCAR at Tefen, the Physics Library at the Weizmann Institute, the Teva factory in Jerusalem, and the Weizmann Center in Tel Aviv. Two projects currently being completed are a 35-story office tower at the Atidim high-tech park in Tel Aviv and Teva's logistics center in the Hevel Modiin industrial zone. The firm recently was awarded prizes in a number of design competitions. Operating under the firm's roof is the PEZ studio, founded in 2011 by Daniel Zarhy and Pedro Pania, who previously worked together at the firm of Herzog & De Meuron. The studio is engaged in a number of projects in Israel and abroad, and recently won first prize in the European competition for designing student housing at Eindhoven University in Holland.