



CHRISTOPHE POLACK

ARCHITECT & URBAN PLANNER

Christophe Polack is an architect-urbanist with a keen interest in socio-spatial research, designing, theorizing and architectural education. He has 2 masters' degrees; Masters of Science in Spatial and Urban Planning, University of Ghent and Masters of Architecture in Human Settlements Design from K.U. Leuven, Belgium. He has lived and worked in Belgium and Pakistan and has a deep insight into both the contexts and their design challenges.

He is currently running his own practice with partner Asiya Sadiq in Belgium and has been a visiting lecturer at the International Masters of the Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven, campuses Ghent and Brussels.

📍 Belgium

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🗣 English

French

Dutch

Urdu

EDUCATION

- Master of Architecture in Human Settlements, Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven (KU Leuven, Belgium), Cum Laude - 1997 (English medium).
- Master of Science in Spatial and Urban Planning, University of Ghent (UG, Belgium) - 1996 (Dutch medium).
- Master of Architecture, St-Lucas, "Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst", Brussels (Belgium), Cum Laude - 1995.

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

- Winner - Architecture Category: Competition Project - A Place for All - ADA Awards - 2023.
- Winner - Best of the Best Award - 'Reimagining Public Spaces and Built Environment' in Reimagining Architecture and Urbanism in the Post-pandemic World - University of Alberta - 2022.
- Top 20 Entries - 'Places to Breathe' in Reimagining Architecture and Urbanism in the Post-pandemic World - University of Alberta - 2022.
- Honourable Mention - Proposal submitted for the Belgian Pavilion - Biennale Architettura - 2020.
- Winners - Competition Project for the Municipality of Hoeilaart - Belgium. A project for creating a conducive space for inter cultural dialogue amongst immigrant/marginalized groups and the local population - 2013.
- Honourable Mention - Competition Project for the Pedestrianization of Boulevard "Anspach" in Brussels - Organised by an NGO - BRAL 2013.

- Honourable Mention - Competition Project for the Revitalization of the Degraded Areas of Vauxhall in London - Organised by the RIBA-UK, in Participation with ArchitectsLab - 2013.
- Honourable Mention - Competition Project for, "Fez Historic Core Redevelopment Project" for the Govt. of Morocco - 2010.
- Invited Participant - "The Rising Tide - New Direction in Art and Architecture from Pakistan 1990 to 2010". An exhibition of Modern Art Practices, curated by Artist Naiza Khan for the Mohatta Palace Museum - Karachi - October - 2010.
- Presentation - "IAPEX conference on the topic; The Generation Next" - Organized by the Institute of Architects - 2010.
- Participant - Prestigious competition for, "Institute of Architect's Building Design in Karachi" - Organized by the Institute of Architects, Pakistan - 2008.
- Exhibition - Works as a part of the "IAPEX conference and exhibit" - Organized by the Institute of Architects, Pakistan - 2008.
- Winner - Design Competition, "Hussainabad Neighbourhood Park - Karachi" - Organized by the Institute of Architects - Pakistan - 2006.
- Self-Initiated "Earthquake Rehabilitation Project", including the design of an earthquake

PUBLICATIONS

1. Polack Christophe; "Understanding the origins of the urban sprawl in Flanders (Belgium) and recent attempts to counter it."
Peer reviewed paper for the 7th seminar on Urban and Regional Planning of the NED University for Engineering and Technology, Karachi (Pakistan). Seminar Proceedings published by the Department of Architecture and Planning, NED vUniversity of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan - March - 2012.
2. Contributed in the book, "The Rising Tide - New Directions in Art from Pakistan 1990-2010", (ISBN 978-969-9535-00-0) published in conjunction with the exhibition, to which work was also contributed.
Published by the Mohatta Palace Museum - Karachi - October - 2010.
3. Hasan Arif, Sadiq Asiya, Polack Christophe; "The Hawkers of Saddar Bazar, A Plan for Revitalisation of Saddar Bazar, Karachi, through Traffic Rerouting and the Rehabilitation of its Hawkers", (ISBN 969-8588-61-2), an Urban Resource Centre - Karachi Publication by Ushba Publishing International, 2008. Based on the empirical research carried out by the authors for the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), Thailand.
4. Polack Christophe (contribution), "Karachi, SITE Town and the Orangi Nalla, Living and Working in the Riverbed: Six Micro-stories", Published by the European Union, Brussels - 2007.
5. Sadiq Polack Asiya and Polack Christophe; "Livelihoods and the City Centre. Rehabilitating the Hawkers", published City No 03, a quarterly on urban society by City Press - Karachi - Jan to Mar - 2003.
6. Article in Daily Dawn, on "Possibilities of Rehabilitating Hawkers, Encroachments and Leased Markets in Saddar, Karachi leading to consequent rejuvenation" - 19th Jan - 2003.
7. Numerous related articles and interviews in "Daily Times", "The News" and "Herald Tribune" Newspapers.

ARCHITECTURE

BELGIUM

- 1. A Place For All - School Making Redefined - Ethiopia - 2021**
(Completed)
A Competition Project for NGO Abay Ethiopia. The project's requirement was a flexible model needed to be adapted to both Hiddi and Dillu sites. The design proposed is a Contemporary Neo Vernacular model with an understanding of the brief, building typology, and the local context.
- 2. Masjid Ar-Rahman - Halle - 2021**
(Ongoing)
The Adaptive Re-Use of a 2600 m² Warehouse into a Mosque with Community Facilities.
- 3. Transit Storage Facility - Zaventem - 2019**
(Ongoing)
The Adaptive Re-Use of a 654 m² Industrial Lab into an Artist's Transit Storage and Office space in Zaventem
- 4. Proposal Belgian Pavilion - Biennale Architettura - 2020**
(Completed)
A competition proposal for the International Biennale in Venice. In collaboration with Artist Monali Meher & Architect Orcun Yazici.
- 5. Multipharma - Sint-Pieters-Leeuw - 2019**
(Completed)
Principal Architect for the design and construction of a state-of-the-art automated pharmaceutical distribution centre with a floor area of 10.500 m² situated on the periphery of Brussels.
- 6. Porsche Centre - Louvain-La-Neuve - 2019**
(Completed) Consultant to D+A Project
Project lead for the design and construction of a "Porsche" car-showroom and workshop with a floor area of 5.500 m² situated near Louvain-La-Neuve.
- 7. Eco-educational neighbourhood park, Mariën binnengebied - Hoeilaart - 2016 (VZW Hoeilaart 2000 Award Winning Design Project)**
(Completed)
Competition Winning Project for the renovation and rehabilitation of an existing public space in Hoeilaart. The project's aim was the positive reactivation of a neglected public zone in between buildings through the creation of a multi-generational activity.
- 8. Masterplan Puihoek - Antwerp - 2014**
(Design Study Completed) Consultant to Tom Lagast "Spacelab"
Puihoek, the development of a 39 ha area located in the outskirts of Antwerp. The area is prone to flooding and has consequently been developed as a 1/3 residential area and 2/3 park. Both landuses have been conceived to actively contribute to water excess regulation. In collaboration with Antea group/ Andre Campos & Souto De Mouro Architects (Portugal).
- 9. Master plan study for the Embassy of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Belgium - 2014**
(Completed)
The design of the overall master plan has been based on the client's requirements, current documentation of available and unavailable space(s), the current bye-laws and overall costs.

10. **Groenendaal Station - 2014**

Competition entry in collaboration with Gisèle Gantois Architecture, Architect Laurentiu Tiberiu Stançu & Peter Schoutsen Sculptor
The Adaptive re-use of the Groenendaal station, Hoeilaart.

12. **Vauxhall - London - 2013**

RIBA competition entry in collaboration with ArchitectsLab-Brussels developing a multi-level - mixed use, green and cultural platform trail addressing the place making of the river front, Vauxhall local centre, Vauxhall gyratory and neighborhood destinations in London.

13. **Anspach Park - Brussels - 2012**

Competition entry for BRAL.

In collaboration with Christoph Thijs, Philip Stessens; Ahmed Zaib Khan Mahsud ; Andre Ricardo ; Evelyne Vanhoutte ; Gordan Cengic ; Daan Van Tassel.

The design for the development of an urban park on Anspach Lane in Brussels.

14. **Academic research in the field of Urban Planning, Urban Design - 2012- 2021 (Ongoing)**

City, Citizen and Space: Through the theoretical approach of the design studio, attempts are being made to address the polemics of city, citizens and space. It explores how urban residents (could/should) appropriate open and built-up spaces and/or non-spaces within the study area for various uses and which strategies could be implemented to develop a sense of ownership wherein urban private and public life is partially created and sustained by them.

Between 2012 and 2021 following sites have been given to the 4th and final year students of the International Masters Program at the Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven, Campus Brussels/Ghent.

- Liedtsplein, Brussels
- Ledeborg, Ghent
- Kirchberg, GH Luxemburg
- Pachecolaan, Brussel
- Tinel site, Mechelen
- Krijgslaan - Fort 6, Antwerp
- Slachthuislaan, Antwerp
- Brabantwijk, Brussels
- Cureghem (square Albert I), Brussels
- South-West Antwerp

14. **1999 - 2000**

Project Architect at "Les Architectes Polak", Brussels

15. **1997-1999**

Project Architect/Planner (Internee) at "D+A Planning International", Sint-Pieters-Leeuw

PAKISTAN

1. **Guesthouses and Convention Centre in Nagarpakar, Sindh - 2011**

(Implemented)

The Design of Guesthouse facilities with Convention Centre for THARDEEP- NGO (Hasan and Polack- partnership with Arif Hasan - Architect and Planner, ref. <<http://arifhasan.org/>>)

2. **Sindh Wildlife Museum (1918), Havelock Road - Karachi - 2011**

(Implemented)

Restoration and adaptation of a heritage declared building in Saddar Bazaar, Karachi.

3. **Visual Arts Department - Karachi - 2008-2011**
(Design Study Completed)
A new Visual Arts Department visualized within the Karachi University Campus originally designed by Ecochard - 1960. The design aspired to follow climatically efficient, eco-friendly principles developed in harmony with Ecochard's Master Plan.
4. **Restoration of Suleman Umar Building (1918), Saddar Bazaar - Karachi - 2008**
(Implemented)
Restoration and adaptation of a heritage declared building in Saddar Bazaar, Karachi.
5. **Rehabilitation of the Earthquake Affected Areas - Battagram - 2007**
Consultant to the Belgian - French Speaking Red Cross. The Design of Seismic Resistant Model Houses and layout of a neighborhood in the remote areas of Battagram was developed responding to the local needs and conditions.
6. **Habib Public School - Karachi - 2007**
(Implemented)
Masterplan for the renovation and extensive extensions of the 10 ha Habib Public School.
7. **Sonmiani Eco Tourist Center - Balochistan - 2005**
(Implemented)
Eco-tourist centre on the Makran Coast (Hasan and Polack- partnership with Arif Hasan - Architect and Planner, ref. <<http://arifhasan.org/>>)
8. **NED-UET Labs for Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering - Karachi - 2004**
(Implemented)
Architectural Design & Detailing of a 531 m² Lab integrating into the existing architectural fabric of campus yet maintaining a contemporary look.
9. **NED-UET Telecommunication Labs - Karachi - 2004**
(Implemented)
Architectural Design & Detailing of a 586.6 m² Lab integrating into the existing architectural fabric of campus yet maintaining a contemporary look.
10. **Karachi University (Designed by French Modernist Planner, Michel Ecochard, 1960) - Karachi - 2004**
(Completed)
Worked as consultant to the University for the preparation of conceptual architectural design proposals for 19 new departments supplemented with a proposal for rehabilitation of the campus.
11. **NED-UET - Circulation Library - Karachi - 2003**
(Implemented)
Architectural Design & Detailing of a 2000 m² Library & Reading Hall integrating into the existing architectural fabric of campus yet maintaining a contemporary look.
12. **Adaptive Re-Use of the Sindh Zamindar Hotel (1920), MA Jinnah Road - Karachi - 2003**
(Implemented)
The Adaptive Re-Use of a 3000 m² heritage listed building into a Multi-Storied Cloth Market on main M.A. Jinnah Road (Hasan and Polack- partnership with Arif Hasan - Architect and Planner, ref. <<http://arifhasan.org/>>)
13. **Prototype Prayer Hall for Pakistan State Oil (PSO) - 2001**
(Implemented)
A Prototypical 100 m² Prayer Hall for the PSO Petrol Pumps. Implemented in Sindh and Punjab.

SAUDI ARABIA

1. **Equestrian Centre and International Standard Horse Race Track - KSA - 2007**
(90 ha - Detailed Feasibility Completed)
Program development and Design of an Equestrian Centre and International Standard Horse Race Track in the Al Nawa Buffer zone, Yanbu Al Sinay, KSA. As lead consultant to "Al Jazeera Engineers and Consultants (Pvt.) Ltd." (AJEC, Yanbu, KSA)
2. **Prototypical Primary Health Clinics - KSA - 2007**
(6000 m² - Completed)
Design of 3 Primary Health Clinics with attached neighborhood parks for Yanbu, KSA. As lead consultant to "Al Jazeera Engineers and Consultants (Pvt.) Ltd." (AJEC, Yanbu, KSA)

URBAN

1. **DCK City - Karachi - 2011**
(Planning Stage Completed)
In 2010-2011, positioned as senior urban planner for Osmani and Company (Pvt.) Ltd. in Karachi, Pakistan, as local chief planner for the Master planning of DCK-City Karachi, a 6,000 Ha new "Green" city. In partnership with Doxiadis Associates (Greece), RMJM (Dubai) and Prof. S. Pollalis (USA).
2. **Structure Plan - Nagarparkar Taluka Planning Project - Nagarparkar - 2010**
(Advocacy ongoing with the Federal and Provincial government)
The Development of a Structure plan for the Nagarparkar district in the Thar Desert, Pakistan. The plan proposes a future plan in view of the Thar coal project, its related road infrastructure and the possible problems and potentials related to a changed economy, sociology, real estate and local tourism. (Hasan and Polack- partnership with Arif Hasan - Architect and Planner, ref. <<http://arifhasan.org/>>)
3. **Kot Digi Public Park - 2009**
(Implemented)
The Design of a 1.5 ha Public Park with visitor facilities at the foothill of the UNESCO listed Kot Digi Fort.
4. **EU Funded - Asia Link - Urban Design Curriculum Project for the Lyari Nallas and Orangi Nallas open rainwater channels turned into sewerage water drains - Karachi - 2004 to 2007**

[Coordinators: Sadiq Asiya, Ahmad Noman, ASIA LINK/IN/Asia-Link/001(81517) URBAN AND CITY DESIGN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT]

Local project coordinator on behalf of DAP - NED-UET for the Urban Design investigation of the development of the river beds and banks along the Lyari and Orangi Nallas, incorporating local formal and informal activities, stakeholders and natural terrain. It was a collaboration between 5 Universities; NED-UET (Pakistan), the KU Leuven (Belgium), TU/e (The Netherlands), Moratowa University (Sri Lanka) and CEPT (India).

5. **Masterplan for Winder Low-Income Housing Scheme - 2007**
(Implemented)
The Design of a Low-Income Housing Scheme of 10 ha in Balochistan.
6. **Hussainabad Neighbourhood Park - Karachi - 2006**
(Partially Implemented)
Institute of Architects, Pakistan (Award winning design project)
A park design for a lower middle-income area in Karachi.

7. **Proposal for the Rehabilitation of the Pedestrian Movement in Hussainabad, FB Area - Karachi - 2006 Institute of Architects, Pakistan Award Winning Design Project**
(Design Study Realized)
The development of a commercial pedestrian underpass integrated with an open to sky area integrating the local street vendors and commerce.
8. **Masterplan Design of Indus Motor Company - Karachi - 2004**
(Completed)
Master plan for the direct and future expansion of 50 ha (2000-2020) of the I.M.C. premises (Toyota-Daihatsu Manufacturing Facilities) at Port Bin-Qasim, Karachi.
9. **Masterplan for Khuda Ki Basti 3 Phase 2 - Karachi - 2002**
(Implemented)
Design for one of the schemes for the Aga Khan Award winning incremental low-income housing concept "Khuda Ki Basti", 40 ha., Khi. (Hasan and Polack- partnership with Arif Hasan - Architect and Planner, ref. <<http://arifhasan.org/>>)
10. **Structure Plan Peshawar 2002-2020 - Karachi - 2002**
(Partially Implemented)
Principal Design Consultant to Engineering Consultants (ECIL) for the development of the Structure plan design and report of Peshawar city in Khyber Pashtunkwa.
11. **Brotherhood Village Foundation - Gadap Town - 2002**
(Design Study Realized)
Charitable low-income housing scheme in the outskirts of Karachi.

ACADEMICS

1. **Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven, Campuses Brussels/Ghent (English medium)**
From February 2012 to October 2021: Part-time faculty (20%) as studio instructor and theory lecturer for the International Masters in Advanced Urban and Architectural Design.
2. **Vrije Universiteit of Brussels (VUB) (Dutch medium)**
From February 2012 to June 2012: Part time faculty (20%) for 1st year Architecture, Lecturer in History of Urban Planning.
3. **Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi. (English medium)**
From 2000 to 2011: Full time and Part time faculty for 2nd and 4th Year Architecture, Assistant and Lead Studio Instructor.
4. **Visual Arts Department, Karachi University, Karachi. (English medium)**
From 2003 to 2005: Part time faculty for 4th year Architecture, Lead Studio Instructor + Lecturer in Theory of Architecture.
5. **NED University of Eng. and Planning, Department of Architecture & Planning, Karachi. (English medium)**
From 2010 to 2011: Part time faculty for the Masters Degree in Architecture, Lead Studio Instructor.

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

1. Presentation - MURP Seminar NEDUET on, "Housing along the Nallas of Karachi; From Sewers to Sustainable Settlements" - Karachi - 23rd March - 2014
2. Keynote Lecture - Advanced Knowledge Seminar of the EAUM's PhD Program in school of Architecture - University of Minho (EAUM) - June 5th - 2020.

3. Lecture - "City, Citizens and Space 2000 to 2014 From Karachi to Brussels" - Dawood University - 12th July - 2017.
4. Presentation - "A Sustainable Approach towards Formal Design Practice in Post-Colonial - As Found Contexts "Causes, Trends and Practices" - Institute of Oriental and Asian studies (IOA), Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, Bonn University - 3rd June - 2014.
5. Member Panel of Chairmen - Final year juries at the Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst, St-Lucas, in Brussels and Gent for their International Masters Programme (in English) and Bachelor's of Architecture (in Dutch) - 2014.
6. Lecture - "City, Citizens and Space 2000 to 2014 From Karachi to Brussels" - Indus Valley School for Art and Architecture (IVSAA) - 10th April - 2014.
7. Lecture - "Sustainability and Architecture" - Department of Architecture and Planning - DCET University, Karachi's Professional Lecture Series - 27th April - 2013.
8. Paper Presenter - 7th Urban and Regional Planning Seminar, the NED University for Engineering and Technology, "Urbanisation and Secondary Cities, Form - Trends - Potentials - Challenges" - Karachi (Pakistan) - 2012.
9. Lecture - "Open Spaces in Karachi and Health Impacts" - Aga Khan University Hospital's Orientation Lecture Series - 24th April - 2012.
10. Presentation - "Professional practice Initiatives" at the IAPEx - 2011, Architecture and Urban Planning Conference - Karachi - 2011.
11. Presentation - NED University of Technology and Planning as convener and initiator of the "Rising Tide" event - Karachi - 2011.
12. Panelist - 4th Urban and Regional Planning Seminar, NED-UET, "Urban Planning in a Globalizing world."
13. Organizer- Student workshops at the Technical University of Eindhoven (Tue, Eindhoven, The Netherlands) under the umbrella of ASIA URBS and ASIA LINK - Eindhoven - 2008.
14. Paper Presenter - 3rd Urban and Regional Planning Seminar, "Research and design proposals for the Orangi Nallah River banks" - NED-UET Karachi - 2007.
15. Presentation - Studio works, urban design cases at professional work sessions at the "Asia Link / Asia Urbs International Workshop" - TU/e, Netherlands - April - 2006.
16. Organization and Presentation of studio works, urban design cases at professional work sessions at the "Asia Link/ Asia Urbs International Workshop", - NEDUET - Karachi - August - 2006
17. Lectures and studio teaching for 4th year students of TU/e - Netherlands - April - 2006.
18. Presentation of studio works, urban design cases at professional work sessions at the "Asia Link / Asia Urbs International Workshop" - UoM (University of Moratowa) Sri Lanka - January - 2006.
19. Organizer and Paper Presenter - "Asia Link / Urbs Workshop" - NED-UET - August - 2005.
20. Presenter - NED-UET, Window into Tomorrow (WIT) lecture series, research on, "Rehabilitation of Hawkers and Revitalization of Saddar Area in Karachi" - Karachi - 2005.
21. Paper Presenter - "Asia Link Studio Workshop" - KU Leuven, Belgium and TU/e, Netherlands - March - 2005.
20. Participant - "Project Formulation Meeting of the Asia Link Project" - Leuven, Belgium - July - 2004.

21. Invited Speaker - "Mostar 2004 Workshop", an Initiative of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art & Culture (IRCICA) in Bosnia - Herzegovina. Paper presented, "Revitalization of Karachi's Historic Core through an urban design intervention" - 16th to 27th July - 2003.
22. Participant - Students workshop held in Essaouira (Morocco) organised by PGCHS - K.U. Leuven for the ongoing project "Localising Agenda 21" - January - 1997.
23. Final Year Architecture Jury member at IVS - 2004 and 2008.
24. Final Year Architecture Jury member at NED-UET - 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010.
25. Final Year Architecture Jury member at Karachi University - 2002 and 2004.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Enrolled on the Board of Architects of Vlaams Brabant-Brussels, no. A 401486.
- Enrolled on the Board of Urban Planners, Flanders (Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering van 5 mei 2000)
- Co-founding Member - "Urban Research and Design Cell (URDC)" at NED-UET, Karachi, Pakistan since 2005.
- Team member - "Sustainable Initiatives" a consulting/ action research group, based in Karachi, Pakistan, representing a resource pool of academics, engineers and scientists, who in their individual capacities and experience cover a wide range of disciplines from environmental engineering to development and social sciences.