The architect should be equipped with knowledge of various branches of study and art. This knowledge is the result of practice and theory. Practice is the continuous and regular activity of improvement that results in a steady growth and refinement of skill.

The problem is how to design a structure. There are many factors in the design to be considered, such as aesthetics, structural integrity, and functionality. The architect must be able to balance these factors to create a design that is both practical and visually appealing.

The architect should also have a thorough understanding of the materials and technologies used in construction. This knowledge is crucial in ensuring that the design is both safe and durable.

In conclusion, the architect is a multi-disciplinary professional who must have a broad range of skills and knowledge to create successful designs. The ability to think creatively and solve complex problems is essential for the success of any architectural project.
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Editor’s Note

This October is a very eventful month for architects and designers. World Architecture Festival is held here, with all the architectural luminaries from Wolf D. Prix of COOP HIMMELB(l)AU, Ken Yeang, Moshe Safdie, Thomas Heatherwick to our very own WOHA, Arc Studio, Kerry Hill, etc., all gathering at Marina Bay Sands Convention Hall for three days of architectural euphoria.

We will also be celebrating architecture with Archifest, an annual event initiated by the Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA), and this year is the first time that we have an external festival director Adib Jalal. It is also the first time we will be building a stand-alone Pavilion named Wonder / Wall by WOW Architects at The Foothills Fort Canning Park. So do expect a completely fresh direction and many exciting new activities for the Archifest this year. This year’s theme is Rethinking Singapore, and it couldn’t be a better time with Singaporeans becoming more politically aware after last year’s General Elections, which was considered a “watershed election.” A record 82 out of 87 seats were contested by various opposition parties, with the “groundbreaking” result of the Workers’ Party winning six seats in Parliament—this went down in Singapore’s political history as the best opposition results since independence. Although six out of 87 seats is nothing in most democracies, for the generally politically tame nation of Singapore, this is earth shaking, which probably prompted the Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to call for an open conversation with the citizens. So hopefully, this year’s Archifest theme to rethink Singapore will open up enough questions and inspire suggestions and solutions to add on to this open conversation with our government, who is conventionally less engaging of the citizens’ opinions. As our SIA President Theodore Chan best puts it, “Since the general elections, there has been a ‘rise of the community,’ and there were community issues addressed and it was clear that the political elite suffered a disconnection with the ground . . . Also, Singapore is in its 47th year of independence and as a country, has reached middle age. These had bearings on the conceptualisation of the theme Rethink Singapore.”

Amidst this changing political landscape and a more vocal nation, it will be interesting to see how our architectural scene will respond to this, as architecture, historically, is a direct outcome and a reflection of the social, cultural, economical, and political state of a nation.

Architecture is a difficult profession. Designing and executing a building takes years and there are so many aspects beyond just design that an architect needs to know. Vitruvius wrote in The Ten Books on Architecture, “to the inexperienced, it will seem a marvel that human nature can comprehend such a great number of studies and keep them in memory.” But I think as architects, we should always keep in mind that at the end of it all, there should be something as simple as joy in making architecture, and in keeping with Vitruvius’s principles, a good architect should enjoy music, theatre, philosophy, medicine, and on top of it all, never forget to be honest and honourable. “As for philosophy, it makes an architect high-minded and not self-assuming, but rather renders him courteous, just, and honest without avariciousness. This is very important, for no work can be rightly done without honesty and incorruptibility.”

In this month of celebrating architecture, let’s all keep in mind that in the practice of our profession, to always put our hearts in the right place and be good architects.

Yours faithfully,

Kelley Cheng
Editor-in-Chief
Singapore Architect
3rd October 2012
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