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"We shape our buildings; thereafter, they shape us"
— Winston Churchill

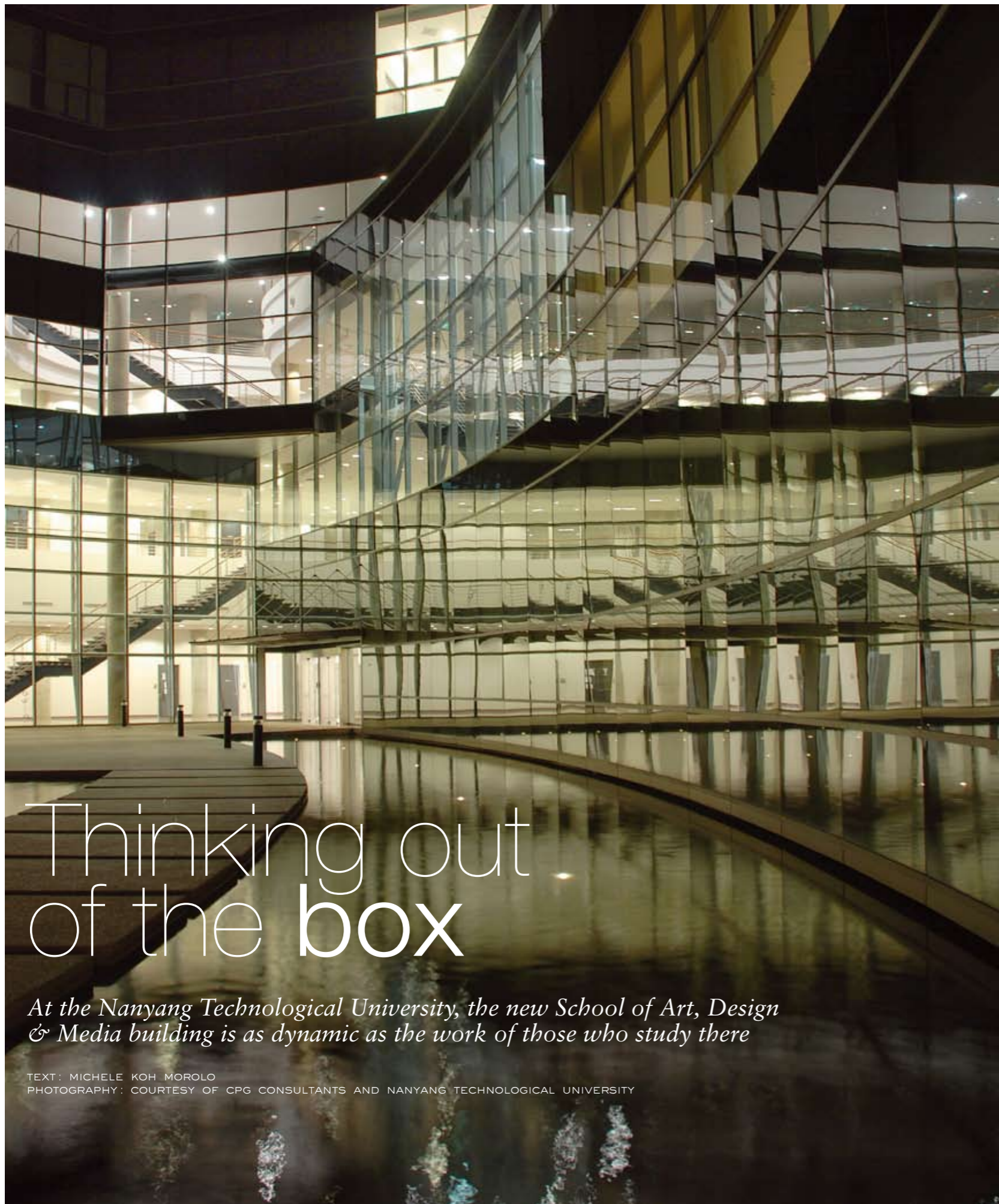
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Thinking out of the box

At the Nanyang Technological University, the new School of Art, Design & Media building is as dynamic as the work of those who study there

TEXT: MICHELE KOH MOROLO
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF CPG CONSULTANTS AND NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



With a solid reputation as one of the best science, technology and research universities in the world, Singapore's Nanyang Technological University has decided it's time to enlarge its right brain. The school recently launched an art, design and media (ADM) department, where students learn their craft through a holistic atelier approach that allows them to exchange ideas and engage with their environment and the corporate world – with students constantly encouraged to think outside the box, it is only fitting that the spaces where they congregate should also live up to that ethos.

The brainchild and fruit of the architects and engineers of CPG Consultants, a Singaporean multidisciplinary architecture and engineering consultancy services firm that has contributed to projects like the Singapore Changi Airport terminals, Gems World Academy in Tianjin and the Apollo Cancer Hospital in Hyderabad, India.

The driving force behind the project's blueprint was harmonious integration with the

existing environment; the site chosen is a wooded valley originally designated as a 'green lung' in the original campus master plan. Instead of building on top of this valley, the design team decided to mould the new structure in and around it, allowing the original greenery of the site to exist and coexist with the new structure.

The building's outline is both gentle and organic. Eschewing the boxy steel and glass look of modern skyscrapers, the architects made it a point to ensure that the structure would look as natural as possible and not overshadow its environment or the surrounding buildings.

Its form consists of three boomerang-shaped curves that interlock with one another, symbolising the three components of the school. When viewed from afar, the unfolding arms of the four-storey blocks of the ADM resemble grass-coated, ribbon shaped bridges that flow into each other at the ends.

This layout creates an inviting open-air courtyard with a plaza in the middle. "This building redefines the meaning of, and educational institution campus architecture in

general," says Lim Choon Keang, senior vice-president (architecture) of CPG. "Traditional academic buildings can sometimes be inhibiting. The ADM building is different because it exudes openness and warmth."

The building's reflective glass façade, courtyard water features and artificial turf-covered roof, which is easily accessible from the outdoor areas, represent the openness, limitlessness and indeterminacy of arts, design and media in the world today. A double-volume entrance leads to a large lobby with open staircases, elevators and a link bridge. Within the building, corridors and cosy nooks double up as informal galleries where students can exhibit their works.

As well as teaching and research facilities and classrooms, there is plenty of open spaces where small groups can gather and brainstorm. During the daytime, the glass façade flushes the interior with natural sunlight while keeping the tropical heat at bay. The turf-covered roof also adds to the natural cooling effect, reducing internal temperatures by 10 degrees Celsius.

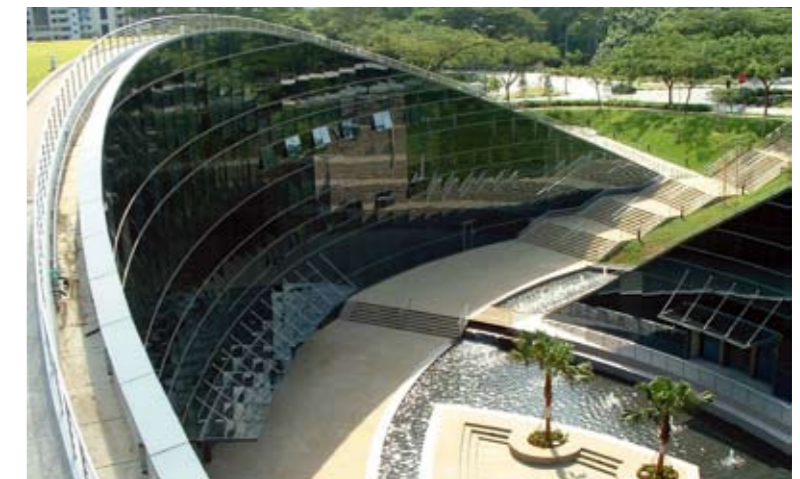


The façade also acts as a 'mirror', a reflection of the surrounding greenery, water and sky, thus expanding the vision of nature. When the sun sets, the lit-up interiors of the building are fully exposed and the building glows from within like a lantern. There are even lights on the pedestrian-friendly roofs.

The heightened sense of transparency and connectivity challenge traditional teacher-student-classroom set-ups. Here, many different types of spaces – formal auditoriums, casual studio rooms, passageways, breakout lounges, outdoor corners and a sunken outdoor plaza formed by the embracing arms and roof of the building – serve as unconventional study zones.

The entrance flows into the main foyer, which in turn branches into the various spaces within and right out into the turfed roofs, giving the interior continuity. Glass walls inside the building further enhance a sense of transparency and flow, thus promoting interaction and camaraderie. Much of the walls inside and outside the building are left raw to serve as blank canvasses that the students can paint or display their creations on.

"This is a building that engages the human senses and encourages students, faculty and visitors to feel, touch, sit, walk and lie on it," says Lim.





不拘常規

南洋理工大學新藝術設計媒體學院跟學生們的作品同樣多姿多彩

撰文：MICHELLE KOH MOROLO
攝影：由CPG CONSULTANTS及南洋理工大學提供

新 加坡南洋理工大學是世界著名主打科學、科技與研究的學府之一。最近，大學決意開發創意學科，創辦藝術設計媒體學院 (ADM)，學生透過全面的工作室教學模式學習手藝，藉此交流意見，投入學習環境及了解企業世界的運作。學院常鼓勵學生別墨守成規，而學院大樓的設計也符合此原則。

曾參與新加坡樟宜國際機場大廈、天津杰美司國際學校及印度海德拉巴阿波羅腫瘤醫院的多範疇新加坡建築工程顧問公司 CPG，全力負責是次新學院的設計。

新學院以融入周遭自然環境為設計藍圖，選址為一種有樹木的谷地，原意在校園整體規劃中作「綠肺」（即城市綠化）之用。設計團隊排除了把新建築物蓋在谷地上，反而把新結構埋在裡面兼圍繞谷地而建，保留選址上原有的綠化環境，同時又能跟新建築物合為一體。

大樓線條柔和自然，建築師刻意偏離現代的鋼筋玻璃盒子式的摩天大樓，務求令學院外表顯得自然，避免掩蓋四周自然環境或建築物的氣勢。

新建築物由三組回力刀型的曲狀結構組成，各組連鎖在一起，代表學院的三個學科。從遠處看，ADM學院每座四層高的建築物如展開雙臂般，形如絲帶狀的橋子，鋪上草坡，於末端緊扣對方。

如此的佈局塑造了一個迷人的露天庭院，中間還有一個廣場。CPG建築高級副主席 Lim Choon kang 說：「這所新學院建築為一般學院的校園建築重新定義。傳統的學院建築設計有時會很抑制，但ADM學院的開放和溫暖的感覺

跟別的很不一樣。」

大樓的玻璃外牆、庭院水景觀及人造草坪天台都便捷地連接戶外空間，代表今天藝術、設計與媒體界的開放、無限制與不確定性。雙層入口大門通往設有開放式樓梯、升降機及連接行人橋的寬敞大堂。大樓內，走廊與舒適的角落更可用作展廊，展出學生的作品。

除了教學及研究的設施與課室，學院內還有大量開放式空間供同學們交流與集體研究。日間，玻璃外牆讓日光滲進室內，同時阻隔熱帶氣候的熱度。草坪天花有自然冷卻效果，減低室內溫度達攝氏十度。

外牆同時是一面鏡子，映照出周遭綠意盎然的環境、清澈的水景觀及蔚藍的天空，擴大大自然景觀。日落後，亮了燈的室內令大樓曝露於四周，就連天台供行人行的小徑也著了燈，大樓亮得像個燈籠。

學院設計更著重透明與連接度，挑戰傳統班房的設計。不同功能的空間如禮堂、工作室、走廊、休息室、戶外角落及戶外凹陷的廣場互相連接，加上大樓的天台，是一個不一樣的學習環境。

入口直通主大堂；大堂分成不同的空間直達草坪天台，加強室內的空間連續性。大樓內的玻璃牆進一步加強透明與流通感，鼓勵友儕間的互動。室內外大部份牆壁都沒有加工，粗糙的表面正好讓學生用作繪圖或展覽作品的畫布。

Lim 說：「這座大樓充滿人性表現，鼓勵學生、學院上上下下和訪客親身接觸周圍的環境、行行坐坐、甚至臥下來感受一番。」