

David Adjaye lectures on his latest work

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David Adjaye OBE is recognized as a leading architect of his generation. Adjaye was born in Tanzania to Ghanaian parents and his influences range from contemporary art, music and science to African art forms and the civic life of cities. In 1994 he set up his first office, where his ingenious use of materials and his sculptural ability established him as an architect with an artist's sensibility and vision.

Adjaye Associates now has four international offices, with projects throughout the world. These include a shopping and cultural complex in Beirut (ongoing), a concept store in Lagos (2014), a new headquarters building for the International Finance Corporation in Dakar (ongoing) and a hospital in Rwanda (ongoing). Adjaye has taught at the Royal College of Art, where he had previously studied, and at the Architectural Association School in London, and has held distinguished professorships at the universities

of Pennsylvania, Yale and Princeton. He is currently the John C. Portman Design Critic in Architecture at Harvard. Followed by a plethora of awards and commissions located globally.

David's understanding of architecture derives from his acknowledgement that quality design is a superposition of fundamental ideas. As in intentionally represented professional his investigations always start with a close examination of the cultural district that he is trying to effect. He views his work as temporary landmarks in time that highlight the history of a demographic as a formal narrative. He most specifically does this by collecting cultural tropes as the backbone for his forms and then abstracting them to a constructible model.

His lecture consisted of a 5 project dialogue lasting just over the course of a short hour and a half. During this time he started with his 2013 project, The Gwangju Pavilion or The River Reading Room, which sits on the banks of the River Gwangju. The Pavilion

encourages interaction between the city's inhabitants through the exchange of books.

The design allows for the open circulation of exactly 200 books, symbolizing the loss of 200 student lives at The Chonnam National University in May 1980. Conceptually the structure asks what is a Library with out walls, and will it be successful? Literally making the building a public experiment while using infrastructure as a nodal point makes a statement of the communities well-crafted respect for one another.

He finished with a detailed presentation of his recent work The National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), a 500 million dollar project currently underway. Located in Washington, D.C. this project expressly makes a stance to not overtly outshine the already stacked monuments in the area. The goal was to unfold the narrative in a museum format using specially chosen emotional artifacts (some of which needed to be moved in as construction was underway because of their size). The real

conceptual push here was to create a building that acts as a lens to view D.C. while making the commentary of society "sweeping under the rug" the atrocities of African American oppression starting with slavery. The building does this by excavating 80 feet downward to house the bulk of the objects. Viewing this time in history like a set of unearthed ruins of a by gone time and the hindsight approach to cover it up. The façade is a free standing skin based from an abstracted geometry pulled from the traditional lattice iron work, very commonly found in traditional southern architecture. While making the point that it was in great numbers the highly skilled artisans drafted to America from their home of Africa who created a majority of these masterpieces. Its worth noting that the industrial revolution promoted the increase in iron work, while the laborer's traditionally favored wood.

It is Adjaye's devotion to understanding culture as a thread and using that to weave urban fabrics which made his lecture inspiring.

Student org feature: Art & Digital Design

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An integral part of college is having multiple organizations that help students find their hidden potential, whether it is being an artist or a leader. IIT has a large number of organizations, some very well-known while others' exists are more hidden. It's of utmost importance that their existence to everyone is known, so that they may use full potential of the organizations for future endeavors. This week, I would like to introduce the Art and Digital Design organization, which is a newly formed organization on campus for all those students interested in arts, but at the same time would like to work on a computer. This organization is head by Saya Nassyr, a freshman at the college of Architecture. The club's aim is to bring artists together and expose art to those people who

dropped it as a class in high school. With the proper guidance and resources, they believe every student can unlock the artist within them. Some may question why it is important for a tech school to have such an organization. Their simple answer was, "A tech school lacks art and it is a hidden opportunity not everyone has explored, in order to do that people need the right guidance and resources, for which we are here for." Art is a form of expression which many times inspires people to do work on new things.

The idea to set this up was thought of last semester, wherein people wanted to fuse art with the digital form and produce designs. "We made many changes along the way," quotes Migel Santos, one of the founding members. Yet, with all the changes, they believe the organization is working to

a better cause and has been successful as of now. They believe in working together and combining the requirements of the people to produce the wonderful designs that they have been working on for the past few weeks. "The more we spend time with the people, the more we understand their expectations and the more we mold our ways to suit theirs," quoted Donell Daniel, one of the founding members. They plan on working with design fields the rest of the semester and having a final exhibit at the end, in a professional manner.

Many students who know about this organization fear that they may need some prior knowledge in art or design. But according to the president Saya Nassyr, "There is no need of such knowledge. It is a way of fusing new ideas together and have an experience in the digital world. Sometimes, all we need

is a small fire to start a forest fire. A small burning passion is all that is needed to join this organization. We present with possibilities that people shouldn't be afraid to try, but rather enjoy the experience." Prior to having fun designing, they also help in portfolio building and acquiring skills in design software.

Currently, the organization meets every Monday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the MTCC, by the post office. Their future plans add field trips and to rise beyond the horizon of the MTCC. They have a variety of different expertise that includes: video designing, jeweler making, design templates and much more. The organization is just a start-up but seems to be of great success and they hope to continue the same for the future.



Photos by Abhinaya Iyer