



## REFLECTIONS

### HYPERBOLIC CITIES

In its 60<sup>th</sup> year, the National Association of Students of Architecture (NASA) has chosen the idea of 'Reflection' to be its theme. Any time is a good time to reflect... on the past, the present, the future and our own roles within these time frames. For that matter, 2017 also marks 70 years since independence. As architects, this translates to 70 years of shaping the cities that we live in since independence. Indeed, as imperative as it is for architects to strike a balance between art, function and innovation in the process of integrating the needs of various user groups and stakeholders through design, there is also a need to acknowledge one's contribution to the overall built environment of the city.

However, it is axiomatic that not all architectural plans lead to the construction of buildings. Even the most grandest and most brilliant have remained on paper. Be it the plans for London after the great fire of 1666 or Archigram's Walking City or Tatlin's Tower in St. Petersburg. Political and economic forces directly impact the realization of projects. Those that get built become part of the city's architectural legacy and those that don't go on to become as Daniel Burnham called them- 'logical diagrams that never die'. But what most of us don't acknowledge is that, in fact, some projects are never meant to be built.



Vladimir Tatlin with a model of Tatlin's Tower or The Monument to the Third International in 1919. The tower though never built became the icon of an avant-gardism that could have been for Russian artists in the 1970s and 80s.

## hyperbolic

adjective hy•per•bol•ic

: of, relating to, or marked by language that exaggerates or overstates the truth

: of, relating to, or marked by hyperbole or extravagant exaggeration

Architectural drawings/ designs can also be created as theoretical works that give shape to concepts in the form of buildings. The drawings of Le Corbusier's Villa Radieuse or Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City or Antonio Sant Elia's La Citta Nuova were explicit representations of an urban future in response to their individual philosophical premises as a point of departure from the status quo urbanism. In essence, architecture can and must also take on the role of a polemical medium.

It is also possible for architects to create a design to help the city and its people to envision a future development. This can be in the form of testing an idea from the standpoint of a proposed master plan or development control regulations. It could also be to just elucidate the potential of a specific site in the city. At the very least, these designs become necessary to allure financial backing that is needed to take the project idea to a construction phase. But more importantly, these designs become necessary to trigger the imagination of the people with regard to what our cities can be like.

An exercise like this becomes particularly relevant in our cities today given the irony that while the discourse on cities is picking up more vociferously than ever, the ambiguity that surrounds the image of these cities only abounds. In other words, the discourse excludes discussion on what the collective architecture of our cities should look like.

Powerful ideas have the capacity to open up possibilities and encourage creativity that can in turn influence the course of a city. In a city's timeline, there are always moments that call for such powerful ideas and designs. Present day architects must use the potential of architecture as a polemical statement to provoke and excite new possibilities for a city's future.

The brief for the 2017-18 G-Sen Trophy is a call for creating a catalogue of architectural ideas under the theme '**Hyperbolic Cities**'.

## **THE BRIEF**

*Consider this as an exercise in imagining urban futures and visualizing cities through architecture.*

*Consider this as an exercise to acknowledge the long term effect that each building has on the environment.*

*Consider this as an exercise to revisit the role of architecture as a polemical medium.*

*Consider this as an exercise to explore various types of tools and documents that architects use, from freehand sketches to montages to presentation models to convey an architectural idea.*

Teams are required to first choose the city they intend to work with.

Following this, teams must carefully choose a 'context' which will become the basis for an architectural response. Acceptable 'contexts' would include but are not limited to-

- Proposed Master Plans or Detailed Development Plans
- Proposed/ existing Development Control Regulations
- Proposed/ existing guidelines for Special Regulation Zones
- Proposed/ adopted Policy documents
- A site that warrants a proposal because of its pivotal nature in the larger context of the city
- An event that warrants a proposal because of its pivotal nature in the timeline of the city
- A prevailing situation that warrants a proposal that could potentially change the future of the city

Upon choosing a context to respond to, teams will first analyse the context and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the same.

As an extension of the analysis phase, teams will further generate an ideological response that is a reflection of the team's philosophical premise.

The final proposal must be an architectural expression of the team's ideological response. It may be understood that while the ideology behind the proposal is rooted in a real context, the aim of the architectural expression should be to test the imagination through extravagant exaggeration.

Teams are advised to explore various tools and techniques to effectively convey the architectural idea.

## **JUDGING CRITERIA**

- Submissions will be judged on the following criteria (but not limited to):
  - Validity of the chosen 'context'.
  - Depth of understanding of the chosen 'context'.
  - Evidence of strong philosophical premise or backing for the ideological response to the chosen 'context'.
  - Vigour of the architectural expression in elucidating the ideological response.
- Bonus points will be given for:
  - Attention to detail.
  - Boldness and variety of representation techniques.

- Level of polemic visible in the proposal.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

- **SHEETS:**
  - Ideas must be presented through a minimum of four A1 sheets and a maximum of six A1 sheets.
  - The soft copy in PDF format shall not exceed 18mb.
  - One A1 sheet out of the full set of sheets must outline the context and analysis which warrants the proposal.
  - All individual sheets shall have the words 'G SEN TROPHY 2017 - 2018' clearly mentioned on them.
  - All sheets shall also bear the NASA logo, in proper specification on the right hand bottom corner.
- **VIDEO:**
  - A video (not exceeding 5 minutes) must accompany the sheets to explain the broad ideology behind the proposal as well as the nuances of the design.
  - The video link must be submitted at the time of online submission.
  - A space for a laptop to screen the video will be provided for every presentation. The laptop however must be arranged by the participating college.
- **DVDS:**
  - Two DVDs with soft copy of all the sheets in editable and PDF format and video file must be submitted. (Applicable only to shortlisted participants)
  - PDFs should be submitted as a set of high-res versions suitable for printing as well as a set of low-res versions for on-screen viewing.
- Any misconduct such as exposing identity through college name/stamp, participant(s) name or college code on the sheets will be DISQUALIFIED.

## **PRIZE MONEY:**

Prize money of 2 lakhs Rupees is allotted to the trophy and it will be divided according to the no. of Citations and Special Mentions.

**CHECK LIST FOR SUBMISSION:**

- Soft copy of submission in PDF to be uploaded on NASA India website- <https://nasaindia.co/trophy/gsen> .
- Authenticating letter from college HoD for each entry the work submitted is genuine and they have endorsed copyrights for the same and with the name of Participant(s) and stating the unit shall abide by whatever may be the final results and also agree that this entry is property of both the institute and NASA India.
- Declaration by the participant(s) stating the work submitted is genuine and they have endorsed copyrights for the same and to adhere by all the rules and regulations, Jury process and the results.
- Editable format of the sheets has to be submitted during the Annual NASA Convention (Applicable only for shortlisted entries).

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

- Registrations and submissions should be done by the Unit Secretary in NASA India website before the deadline failing which the submission shall be considered incomplete.
- Kindly print the form on the college letterhead along with the attestation by the college HoD/Principal/Director and uploaded the scanned copy of the same during registration.
- Orientation Workshop will happen in Zonal Convention.

**Any Kind of Queries need to be submitted through <https://nasaindia.co/trophy/gsen> to**

Srivardhan Rajalingam  
**National President | 2017-18**  
**NASA-India**