
Louvre Museum Architect and Qatari Pearl Engineer at Brazil's Architectour

Contributed by Marina Sarruf
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Brazil is going to host the first International Seminar on Architecture for Tourism, the Architectour 2008, to be held tomorrow (07) and on the day after. The event will happen in the island of Florianópolis, capital of the Brazilian southern state of Santa Catarina.

Guest lecturers include Danish engineer Thomas Gierlevsen, one of the persons in charge of project The Pearl, which is among the world's largest artificial islands, occupying 400 hectares, and is currently under construction in Qatar.

Gierlevsen, who works for Danish group COWI, a leading consultancy firm in the coastal and marine engineering segment, is going to talk about his experience with projects in the Arab countries and other nations. According to the event's organizer, Hamilton Lyra Adriano, the engineer is one of world's foremost coastal project specialists.

The holder of a degree in Civil Engineering, Gierlevsen has worked with marine and coastal engineering ever since his graduation in 1995. In 2004, he joined the COWI group and began working on the creation of The Pearl project.

He became the general director of COWI in Qatar and, up to 2007, worked on the hydraulic part of the island. Presently, he works at the group's office in Denmark, where he is the director for COWI's hydraulic and coastal projects worldwide.

The first phase of The Pearl project should be concluded still this year, and work should be finished by 2011. Once it is ready, the island will be linked to the continent by a 355-meter (1165 feet) long bridge with eight lanes. The locale, where luxury will be a prominent feature, will offer apartments, hotels and tourist attractions to over 40,000 inhabitants.

According to Adriano, one of the reasons that led the engineer to accept the invitation to the Brazilian seminar is the fact that the event takes place on an island.

According to the organizer, Gierlevsen's presentation may contribute ideas for improving urban planning in Florianópolis and other Brazilian cities. "The lectures will give examples of what is going on in the world in terms of urban planning," stated Adriano.

The seminar is going to count on the participation of 26 Brazilian and foreign lecturers, such as the Chinese architect Chien Chung Pei, who helped design the glass pyramid at the Louvre Museum, in Paris; the French couple Elisabeth and Christian de Portzamparc; the Argentine Rubén Pesci; and architects Máximo Rumis and Marcela Leiva, both from DPZ Latin America, the world's largest urban planning bureau.

"It is going to be a major event, very interesting and, at the same time, a provocation for government officials, who will be able to see what can be done, by looking at large-sized projects that were successful worldwide," said Adriano, who has already confirmed the presence of leading names in architecture for the 2009 seminar.

The Architectour is turned to architects, environmentalists, geographers, engineers, historians, designers, government officials and people in the tourism industry.

According to Adriano, the idea is to put effort into discussing the planning of tourist spots by means of architectural and urbanistic aspects. Valuing culture and preserving the environment are also among the event's goals.

Service

Architectour 2008

Date: August 07 and 08

Place: Convention center at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC)

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