

## ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE OF GENDER ROLE IN DIGITAL ERA

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### ABSTRACT

*Many influential architects—many of them female—have been able to change how the world sees architectural design and the built environment. Their works are masterpieces that have not only been able to transform how the world understands architecture, but have also forefronted gender equality. This study thus seeks to forefront the building design of female architects who have influenced world civilization. Using a case study method, this research explains the architectural flow adopted by women architects, as well as the function, design, and characteristics of their works. It shows that women such as Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norma Merrick Sklarek have been able to balance and inform urban development around the world, providing role models for young female architects in the digital era.* Publication Rationale: We desire to show that gender equality exists in the world of architecture, and that the works of female architects have been able to influence world civilization.

**Keywords:** *architecture, female architects, gender equality, world civilization, building design, city development, case study*

### INTRODUCTION

Although the issue of gender inequality is not presently a hot issue, with women becoming cornerstones of various professions, women still have different experiences than men. Women are often positioned as gentle people who lack intellectual potential. Owing to traditional, cultural, and environmental factors, women frequently lack confidence when dealing with work.

The issue of gender inequality has been widely discussed in World Architecture Festivals (WAF), who have used the topic of women and architecture to remind the world that a range of women have presented various ideas and created captivating works that have contributed significantly to architecture. Take, for example, Zaha Hadid; in 2004, she became the first woman to ever receive the

Pritzker Prize in 2004, more than two decades after its establishment. Her example shows that, even as women experience gender discrimination and misconceptions, gender equality has begun to emerge in the field of architecture. Gender does not limit individuals' capacity and ability to contribute to the world of architecture. Through hard work and creativity, young architects around the world can make serious headway on the international level.

History shows that women architects have played a significant role in the advancement of human civilization. Through their work, they do not only fulfil humans' need for activity spaces, but also create icons around which surroundings spaces can be developed. Such success has been promoted by technological advancements in the digital era, which have increasingly supported architectural activities over time. Their concepts and ideas about architecture have originated architectural masterpiece. This study thus seeks to express and illustrate the magnitude of women's contributions to world civilization through architecture.

## **METHOD**

This study is used a qualitative research that will descriptively examine its research object. With using the phenomenological approach, this study will explain the architectural flow adopted by women architects, as well as the describe the functions, designs, and characteristics of their works.

Phenomenology research begins by paying attention and examining the focus of the phenomenon that is to be studied, which looks at various subjective aspects of object behavior. Then, the researchers extracted data in the form of architectural, the function, design descriptions, and the design characteristics of each architect in giving meaning to world civilization. Data mining is carried out by conducting biographical studies and in-depth literature studies of research objects, then interpreting them. The female architects who were the object of study were Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norm Merrick Sklarek.

As its cases, this study takes Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norm Merrick Sklarek. This study summarizes the architects' biographies, works of global concern, and design characteristics, supplementing its descriptive analysis of collected data with several images to strengthen the research description. The research results and

findings will support the research objective, which is to show how women architects have contributed to world civilization in the digital era through their architectural works.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Buildings' grandiosity, their ability to captivate the eye, cannot be separated from the hard work and creative thought of their architects. Architects shape the future through their works. Although architecture is frequently framed as a "man's game", it has nonetheless drawn the attention and interest of women worldwide. Several of these women have excelled, surpassing their male peers and becoming the best in their field.

Women quality with adequate knowledge will be the architects of visionary civilization. She will be able to make clear designs and progressive thinking about how her role can bring great benefits to others through a series of positive activities that she can do. Women as architects of civilization must be intelligent women in various ways, both academically, spiritually, emotionally and with personalities that can be role models for anyone. Women as a civilization architects, in addition to being smart must also have a high concern for their environment. She must be sensitive to all the problems around her, become the initiator of new ideas that are creative and innovative for efforts to solve physical and non-physical problems. Women must be enthusiastic in seeking renewal, so that they can be an inspiration to many people. High hopes are placed on women as civilization architects. At the very least, women need to be given the same space as men to be able to access various positive things for their own progress and the world progress.

The following are three figures of world female architects who give color to world development through their work and artwork produced in the world architectural civilization.

## **Julia Morgan (1872–1957)**



Figure 1. Julia Morgan. Source : google.com

Julia Morgan was the first woman to study architecture at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, France. In 1904, she became the first woman to become a licensed architect in California, United States. For almost fifty years she dedicated herself to the field, ultimately designing approximately seven hundred buildings, including the St. John Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove, and the Hearst Castle in San Simeon (McNeill, 2007). In 2014, almost sixty years after her death, she posthumously received the AIA Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), thus becoming the award's first female recipient. Less than a decade later, she became California's first licensed woman architect (AIA California Council, 2013).

Over the course of her career, she designed more than 700 buildings, including St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, the Hearst Castle in San Siemon, and the Riverside Art Museum in Riverside.

Julia Morgan's projects were personal and distinct, using enduring and sustainable methods. One of her most prominent is the Hearst Castle in San Simeon, California, which has become a silent witness to the state's history.



Figure 2. Hearst Castle in San Simeon



Figure 3. Inner atmosphere of Hearst Castle in San Simeon

The Hearst Castle was conceptualized by Morgan in conjunction with its ultimate owner, media tycoon William Randolph Hearst. This building, which sits over the city of San Simeon in California, contains an extraordinary collection of art and antiques. It is managed by the California government.

**Zaha Hadid (1950–2016)**



Figure 3. Zaha Hadid

Zaha Hadid was an architect of the deconstruction school, designing her works based on her experiences and her observations of architectural works around the world. Consequently, she was known for a complex blend of architectural stylings. In her siting, she would incorporate conditions of the site, including its proximity to water and its use. Zaha Hadid created spaces and linked them by imagining how she would feel in them. In her form, meanwhile, Zaha Hadid tended to incorporate bends and curves. The function of her buildings tended to be evident in her site and materials, while in composition they utilized glass, steel, and concrete—all of which are necessary for skyscrapers.

Zaha Hadid, the first woman to receive the RIBA Royal Gold Medal and the Pritzker Prize, first contributed to architecture with the Vitra Fire Station (1989–1993) in Weil am Rhein, Germany (Keim, 2017). This building incorporated sharp, colliding diagonal forms, which collided to resemble a flying bird. She was chosen to design the Cardiff Bay Opera House, Wales, in 1994, and this design—although never built—brought Hadid to prominence. She was thus asked to complete the IBA Housing Project in Berlin, the Mind Zone Exhibition Space in the Millennium Dome, London, and Land Formation One in Weil am Rhein (Hiesinger, 2011). Her greatest success was the Rosenthal Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, United States (1997–2000), for which she received two awards—the British Architects Award (2004) and the American Architecture Award (2005). Over the next decade, she completed such phenomenal works as the MAXXI Contemporary Art Museum in Rome; the Heydar Aliyev Center; the London Aquatics Center; the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University; and Guangzhou Opera House (Sebastian, et al, 2018).

Through such works, Hadid became the most famous woman architect in the world. She became the first woman architect to receive the prestigious Pritzker Prize in 2004, and became known as the "queen of curves" for her frequent incorporation of this element in her designs. These curves and bends can be seen, for example, in the Rosenthal Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, which the *New York Times* termed "the most important American building to be completed since the Cold War", as well as the Abu Dhabi Performing Arts Center in the United Arab Emirates.



Figure 4. Hadid's first major project was the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein, Germany.



Figure 4. The other view of the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein, Germany.

Hadid contributed significantly to the advancement of world architecture. She created and realized extreme designs that many deemed impossible, thereby motivating and inspiring other architects to create iconic designs and shape the face of world architecture.

### **Norma Merrick Sklarek (1928–2012)**



Figure 5. Norma Merrick Sklarek



Norma Merrick Sklarek studied architecture at the University of Columbia, becoming the third African-American woman to become a licensed architect. After years of working for major corporations—she became the first African-American woman to receive an award from the American Institute of Architects. She continued to develop professionally, joining Margot Siegal and Katherine Diamond to establish Siegel, Sklarek, & Diamond (1985); this firm ultimately became one of the largest in the United States. Among her most famous works are Fox Plaza in San Francisco, California Mart in Los Angeles, San Bernardino City Hall in San Bernardino, and Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles; she also designed the Embassy of the United States in Tokyo and the Mall of America in Minneapolis (Penrice, 2007).

Norma Merrick Sklarek was the first African-American woman to become licensed in two states, New York and California. She was also the first to be recognized by AIA. Over the course of her career, she became an influential woman architect. Her most prominent works include the Pacific Design Center, San Bernardino City Hall, and LAX Terminal One. (Kaplan, 2006)



Figure 6. The Pasific Design Center





Figure 6. Interior of Pacific Design Center

The Pacific Design Center, for instance, was designed by Sklarek in conjunction with the Argentinian architect Cesar Pelli. Boasting three large glass buildings in an iconic late modernist style, it presents a bold, massive landmark in West Hollywood, Los Angeles. Although perhaps better known to city residents than the outside world, it has aged remarkably well since its first building was completed in 1975. The complex is visually striking and unmissable in its unusual use of primary colors as well as the asymmetrical building shapes and arrangements.

### **The Influence of Female Architects on World Civilization**

The masterpieces of the three architects above (Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norm Merrick Sklarek) prove that gender is not an obstacle for women to develop and advance to influence the surrounding environment. The progress of the city and world civilization is not merely assessed from the form of the work produced but from the figure who plays the role behind that success. The willingness, motivation, and responsibility for a vision or goal will show the consistency of the efforts made. The work that was born from the hands and brilliant ideas of these great women is not only a manifestation of their identity as an influential person but there is an intention to advance the environment, the people around them, and themselves. Everything can be beneficial when a job is carried out

with a noble intention to progress together primarily in giving color to the world civilization (digital era). The three female architects, Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norm Merrick Sklarek have proven it.

## CONCLUSION

The works of Julia Morgan, Zaha Hadid, and Norma Merrick Sklarek show that gender is no obstacle in women's ability to contribute to the development of architecture and world civilization. Architecture is no mere "man's game". Women architects have unique characteristics that they incorporate into their works, enabling them to produce buildings that are no less extraordinary and enticing than those designed by men.

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