

# **2006/2007 International Bamboo Building Design Competition**

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“The works of the past always influence us, whether or not we care to admit it, or to structure an understanding of how that influence occurs. The past is not just that which we know, it is that which we use, in a variety of ways in the making of new work... The typology argument today asserts that despite the diversity of our culture there are still roots of this kind which allow us to speak of the idea of the library, a museum, a city hall or a house. The continuity of these ideas of type, such as they are, and the esteemed examples which have established their identity and assured their continued cultural resonance, constitute an established line of inquiry in which new work may be effectively grounded.”<sup>1</sup>



Bamboo has a special place in human's culture. In China bamboo's long life symbolizes duration and longevity. The bamboo, plum blossom, orchid, and chrysanthemum are collectively referred to as the four Noble ones. These four plants also represent the four seasons. The pine tree, the bamboo, and the plum blossom are also admired for their perseverance under harsh conditions. In India it resembles friendship. However its rare blossoming has let to the flowers being regarded as a sign of impending famine. In Japanese culture a bamboo forest sometimes surrounds a Shinto shrine as part of a sacred barrier against evil.<sup>2</sup>

This pavilion is made up of bamboo and is constructed on water. Bamboo, seemingly a simple type of plant, has symbolizes long life and friendship. According to various ancient myths and narrated legends the origin of the creation of man and women lies in this mysterious plant, bamboo. In the Philippine creation myth, legend tells that the first man and the first woman were split open from a bamboo stem created after the battle of the elemental forces. A similar myth in Malaysian legend tells a story about a man who dreams of a beautiful woman while sleeping under a bamboo plants he wakes up and breaks the bamboo stem, discovering a woman inside.<sup>3</sup>

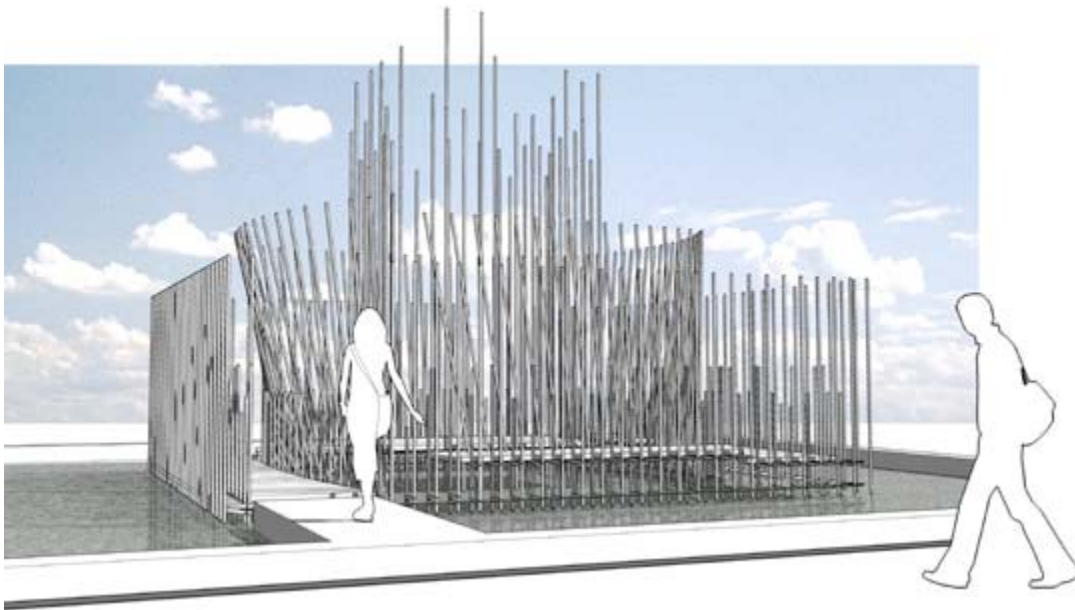
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<sup>1</sup>The Harvard Architectural review. Volume 5, Precedent and Inventions between history and traditions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<sup>3</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bamboo>

Pavilion is a temporary structure that can act as a “nomadic space”. This space could be symbolic, cultural, and spiritual. Therefore I have used this competition as an opportunity to design a pavilion and to create a symbolic structure that presents the essence of bamboo. This pavilion represents friendship and spirituality. And its structure on the water recommends its stability and it symbolizes long life. Like bamboo itself the place in which this baffling plant grows is considered divine and heavenly.



Like the plant itself, this bamboo pavilion looks geometrically perfect from afar. But once we enter the space, its organic pattern appears. The pavilion consists of a pathway and sitting area. The pathway is consisted of 4 platforms, each of which is connected to the next by a step thus increasing the elevation of each platform. These platforms are formed by one vertical wall on one side and a slanted one on the other. These interior walls are constructed with slanted bamboo sticks of even heights, while the exterior walls, visible from the outside appear to be perfectly straight.

As we move through the platforms the angle of the slanted walls changes outward from the base creating an expansion in the upper space amongst the two walls and a contraction in the lower space.

As bamboo symbolizes divinity and long life, walking through this pavilion emanates the evolving feelings of growth and spirituality. As the lower spaces narrow, earthly secular feelings resonate. If there is more than one person on the platform, this confinement, could be the magical bamboo instigator of friendship among them. Once proceeding through the path, the widened upper space elevates the soul to its divine level. At this point, we can get to the seating area – the absolute sacred place.

Also the fact that pavilion is situated on water helps mirror the images of the bamboos, creating a parallax effect. This effect is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also gives off a natural feeling of the real organic bamboo environment which acts as a catalyst in this spiritual journey.

This pavilion is consisting of bamboo posts; one advantage of bamboo is that it grows much faster than a tree. The woody stems are strong and hard, yet light and flexible. This makes them very popular for making buildings, scaffolding and many other items. The young shoots are edible, as well, when still tender. In China, seven million hectares are devoted to growing bamboo, in both natural forests and plantations.<sup>4</sup>This pavilion is climate friendly and it could be built in any environment.

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<sup>4</sup> [www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin/en/chine/bambou/bambou.htm](http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin/en/chine/bambou/bambou.htm)