

Exhibition of Design Ideas for an Interpretative Centre at Katong Park

Sunday, 8 January 2006, Mountbatten Community Club, Singapore



"Raising History, Planting Roots" Fort Tanjong Katong Archaeology Project in Singapore is an initiative by the Mountbatten Constituency under Mr. Andy Gan Lai Chiang, MP for Marine Parade GRC and Dr. Patrick H.M. Loh, PBM, grass-root leader of Mountbatten Constituency to involve the local residents and schools as a community involvement program to encourage ownership of local heritage. Since September 2004 the archaeologists have been excavating the 19th century British colonial period fort at Katong Park.

In the last few months, an active archaeology research program on Singapore, led by a handful of archaeologists and dedicated archaeology volunteers called Southeast Asian Archaeology (<http://www.searchaeology.com>) has been uncovered significant remains of the fort still in situ, essentially, a pair of bastions, the perimeter of the inner moat escarp and what appears to be the drawbridge superstructure. Presently the group is lobbying for the site to be gazetted as a National Monument, and hopefully after which they are able to incorporate the fort remains to be featured as part of the park.

This site has been chosen for last semester academic exercise by three studio groups of year 3 Architecture students of BA.Arch program at the Department of Architecture, National University of

Singapore, under Dr. Johannes Widodo, Dr. Ruzica Bozovic-Stamenovic, and Mr. Theodore Chan. Dr. Patrick Loh and Mr. Lim Chen Sian (the archaeologist) were actively participating in giving inputs and in the critic sessions during the studio process.

From 30 design ideas produced by the students, 10 design schemes have been chosen for the public exhibition in Mountbatten CC on January 8, 2006:

- Hi Kai Ling, Kelly (Singapore): Interpretative Centre @ Katong Park
- Huang Yisu (Singapore): The Bastion at Katong Park
- Lin Huiru, Rosalind (Singapore): Interpretative Centre @ Katong Park
- Namgoong Hae (Korea): Continuity: An Interpretative Centre at Katong Park
- No Gyu-Ho (Korea): The Forgotten Line
- Sim Chee Wee (Singapore): Katong Park Interpretive Center
- Tan Guoyi (Singapore): Fort Tanjong Katong Interpretative Centre @ Katong Park
- Yeo Boon Keong, Benjamin (Singapore): Oasis@Katong Park
- Zeng Kexiang (Singapore): Fort@Katong
- Zheng Xuhui (China): Tanjong Katong Archaeological Park Interpretive Centre

This particular design exercise program is aimed to produce some concept plans and design ideas – based on each group's main focus (environmental, or technology), proposing an interpretative and information centre which can attract people to the site, to inform them about the historic and archaeological significance of the site, and at the same time to provide the archaeological site protection and possibility for further excavation works.

This special exercise is one of NUS Department of Architecture contributions to the local community in Singapore, especially in supporting the community bonding, participation, and appreciation of their own local heritage and identity. For the students this is a great opportunity to deal with real site, real concern, and real stake holders – which is very useful for their future career as Architects.

<jw-12012005>