

## Our main principle; using what is of quality, economical and environmental..

*WE ARCHITECTS LIKE AND CARE ABOUT QUALITY, GOOD BRANDS AND AESTHETICS. WE LIKE TO PRESENT A BUILDING WITH A GOOD MAKE-UP WHEN IT IS DONE. THE FAÇADE OF THE BUILDING IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS. I LIKE METAL COATINGS, ALUMINIUM, GLASS, NATURAL MATERIALS, ESPECIALLY NATURAL STONES.*

### **What are your remarks on the subject of environmental awareness and sustainability on your architectural design decisions?**

Architectural sustainability and environmental awareness is one of our main principles. We are the most important of the leading real estate firms for a long time now and for the country and for the industry it is important for us to be leaders on this subject too. Our project team, our architects, our technical staff altogether bring every single detail regarding the environment of the project that is being made and we, one by one, evaluate them together. What should we stick to, what should we touch or not.... We do a brainstorm before starting the project.

We have a wide and experienced staff therefore mistakes can go unnoticed, but we prevent them. Our preliminary design phase take three to four months. In this timeframe we recursively revise the whole thing, evaluate if mistakes are found. The environmental element is important; the material that will be decided upon, whether the display of the building will fit its setting, how to prevent alienation, is

it possible to make it look as if the building had been there for a long time, we pay great attention to these things. We care about giving a separate identity to every single building we make, we have received no criticisms regarding building alienation to this day. Perhaps we made some mistakes here and there; we aim to fix those in the next one.

With our projects, apart from environmental awareness, energy efficiency and LEED certificates have also become crucial. Before Turkey even brought these subjects to its agenda we had seen these in our visits in United States and Europe and we wanted to put them into action. There's a great environment for competition in Turkey; this brings quality with it.

We can say that we were one of pioneer firms who brought these into the market. We received many LEED certificates with many of our projects; we also have projects that are, as of now, in the process of acquiring certificates. Being a candidate for the certificates and to actually obtain them with such big, continuing projects as the Maslak 1453 and the Finance Centre is a great achievement. With some iconic





LOSING WHAT YOU CANNOT REPLACE IS SADDENING. WE MUST THINK WHAT OUR PROFITS WILL TAKE FROM US, WE MUST PLAN WITH THE LONG-TERM IN MIND; “GREEN” IS VERY IMPORTANT...

buildings, such as those high buildings that are comprised of two blocks it is certainly easy to get the certificates but, with bigger square meters, to obtain such things is costly for the financier, but we still take care and continue on the path; it is one of our main principles. With these two projects that I have talked about we aim to get Gold or better certificates.

**Are you responsible for choosing what kind of materials that will be used on your projects?**

We decide it with our team; we care about teamwork. We put various alternatives on the table, pick our choices and evaluate them, calculate the costs, decide which material can be useful for which project. It is like a chain reaction; our main principle is using what is good, is of quality and

economical. Respecting nature and the environment is also indispensable.

**As an architect, what are the three materials that you prefer or like to use the most?**

We architects like and care about quality, good brands and aesthetics. We like to present a building with a good make-up when it is done. The façade of the building is one of the most important factors. I like metal coatings, aluminium, glass, natural materials, especially natural stones. If combinations of these are evaluated well, the identity of a building blends in. You need to arrange the ratios and the places of their use well. When you use a rather expensive material in an improper way, it might not be efficient or can even make the building look facile. To aim for beauty in simplicity

is a rather hard effort but one of our main principles is to seize pure beauty, without exaggeration.

**What are your thoughts about sustainable façade solutions and systems?**

The façade is like clothing; an overcoat for the structure. Istanbul does not have an unusual climate belt but with the new climate changes we can live rather different climatic factors.

Sustainable energy is indispensable for today's world. This is why we care about identifying façade solutions that highlight energy efficiency and sustain it with proper materials.

The identity of a building, and its architecture is important here; high, low, and extensive buildings need diverse solutions. We prefer those solutions that provide efficiency but use as little energy as possible. LEED Certificate and LEED experts are actually directing us on these subjects. We have two LEED APs in our body; with these friends we co-operate with the firms that represent LEED in Turkey. We create

energy modelling for structures, from the kinds of glass that will be used to the insulation rates that will be present on the façade, everything is determined. After this process, the kinds of materials with energy-efficient properties present themselves to us. We put these materials on the table, determine the varieties in colour, texture and elements and constitute our façade values. This presents a great advantage for the user in terms of energy efficiency, our buildings heat up and cool down with as little energy waste as possible. I can say that architecture and physics work hand in hand in this subject.

The 1453 project, which is 40 percent finished, is an important project for us. In terms of a frontal panel system we employ double façades. The significance of such measures in terms of energy efficiency is already apparent. Just like putting an overcoat on top of a jacket we create sheltered balconies and independent areas that are energy efficient. The outcome is both nice in terms of its functionality for the user and in terms of its efficiency. All materials have already been chosen. Where the façade is finished our work is now shifted to the ceramics of bathrooms and kitchens. We will present the first deliveries near the end of 2016, the first stage of the project it seems will be done at the end of 2016.

**Nowadays we hear a lot more about smart cities, smart buildings and other smart technologies, do you have project that has a smart façade?**

These systems in the long run provide efficiency for the users of the building; our work in a way ensures such things. The controlling mechanisms of the sunshades that are used in façades that make them able to collapse and re-open, the use of qualified glasses and such properties are now being available especially for office



buildings. Such utilizations are not so common in houses. But I expect them to become widespread in the upcoming eras. Structure automation is now an indispensable part of this profession. All the mechanical systems and their controls are automated and are monitored from pre-determined centres. When there are faults, the systems alert these centres. One of the most important parts of the fire automation is the implementation of fire detection systems into these smart structures, mapping these signals and other vital factors such as the possibility of early interventions. These now are a must for any building. When it comes to the smart systems that are applied within the flats, we first used these in the My World Ataşehir project but the responses we received from end-users were not so great. These systems are smart, but they also require users to adapt themselves to them. When those who use them have no competence, they lock themselves down in order to prevent any accidents... We had a number of people calling for help, many decided to cancel their systems. Smart systems that control the buildings, the central system, and the mechanical and electrical elements

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MURAD ACAR



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of the façade are becoming a must for this profession and will continue to move in that direction.

**What kind of precautions do you take in terms of job safety?**

Job safety is a very important subject and we take great care as a company. More than 170 job safety personnel are working on our Maslak 1453 project. These include job safety surveillance personnel, signalmen, those who work with the machinery, our doctors, nurses and ambulance drivers. But the human factor is important no matter how careful you are. We create a very expensive product in terms of what we sell. The level of education of those who work with us in its creation is mostly low. When they start working with us we put them on a two-day job safety training course. The two day training includes what kind of precautions the worker must take before going into the field, what kind of clothing or materials they should use... We give them certificates when the training

is done, after that they are able to work in the field. We also have security specialists that control them in the field. They make risk assessments before every project and notify the relevant departments of what kind of precautions will be needed, the departments take those precautions and we start the project after that.

Yet we still experience work accidents even after all these precautions, the workers need to take care of themselves a little bit. We give fines to those who refuse to put on their helmets and safety belts.

**The north of the Bosphorus is a waking dream for many... Our green space is not higher than 1,5 percent yet there is a possibility that with the 3rd bridge the northern forests may also be zoned for construction. What are your thoughts on this subject?**

We are a group that gives importance to green spaces; that respects them. I went to the Amazon Forest on a holiday. After I experienced the life and all the creatures there I realized we are polluting the earth. No matter how convenient the things you do are; with concrete, asphalt, paving and other factors we prevent the earth from breathing. The world actually lives there. We can no longer experience this in cities; we experience droughts, the rains stops falling, everything is contaminated and the green space is decreasing... We need to pay attention to these things. The world is ours, it belongs to our children, we must think of those who will replace us. Therefore losing what you cannot replace is saddening. We must think what our profits will take from us, we must plan with the long-term in mind; "green" is very important...

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