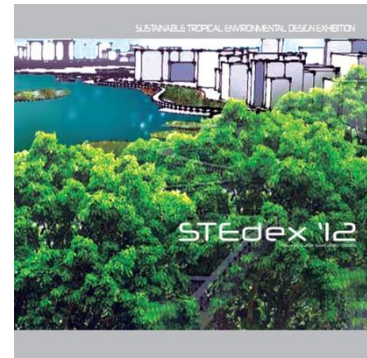


## **Work, Respite and Revitalize**

*Sustainable Tropical Environmental Design Exhibition 2012*

<http://www.vlmp.upm.edu.my>



STEdex'12 – Zalina Shari, ***Work, Respite and Revitalize, Sustainable Tropical Environmental Design Exhibition 2012***, ISSN : 2180-0685, Vol : 4, [148-149], Faculty of Design and Architecture, Universiti Putra Malaysia

With the semester theme “Work, Respite and Revitalize”, the fourth semester students of the Bachelor of Design (Architecture) were given two project briefs to design medium-sized public buildings. The design aspects throughout this semester emphasized several issues. How spaces are organized? How internal spaces are related to the outdoor spaces and integrated to the landscape? A concern for climate? Clear distribution of public and private spaces? Articulation of openness and enclosure with daylight, natural ventilation, transparency and shading elements? Other environmental strategies that have been imposed on both projects are preservation and enhancement of existing natural features on site as much as possible.

The first project, Studio Lodge and Therapy Centre, reflects the “work and respite” part of the semester theme. The project demands the student’s creativity to design the site instead of just the building by conceptualising on three aspects: planning, architecture, and interior concurrently during the design process. Specifically, students are challenged to design two separate building types with timber post and beam construction, namely: 1) a 40m2 prototype studio living unit to accommodate two UPM’s guests; and 2) a small therapy centre, consisting of a meditation room, sand therapy room, corporate massage room, and small cafe serving UPM staff who undergo counselling and mind therapy procedures.

Located on a one-acre land near MARDI area, this 5-week project requires six prototype studio living units and a therapy centre to be located on the site by considering their relationships with the existing reception office. Visually organised planning, comfort level and pure forms with good three-dimensional proportions are the selection criteria of the students’ projects reviewed in the following articles. The second project is the Studio Lodge and Therapy Centre: ZEALOUS. In order to generate and maintain the ambiance of a resort, Esther created an exciting tropical atmosphere using a blend of large scale landscape, a lush courtyard, and structures arranged in an axial composition. Due to the staggered composition, an attractive perspective view of the lodge units is offered for guests as they enter the site.

Esther's design also eliminates potentially dismal perspectives from all lodge units by creating views to the central sculptural courtyard (inward looking) and to more expansive views across MARDI green fields (outward looking). The lodge units sit on a plateau evoking a processional route celebrating a transformation of sensuality accentuated by the heat and the humidity. However, the therapy centre is placed perpendicular to the overall scheme, creating an anomaly in the site planning. Overall, the building structures seem to integrate seamlessly with the landscaped areas, expressing zeal and a sense of unity and harmony.