

NOTES AND NEWS

LETTERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF STEEL CONSTRUCTION AWARD

DIAMOND HILL PLAZA

The Diamond Hill Toll Plaza on the Pretoria-Witbank highway, featured briefly in the previous issue of *Architecture South Africa*, was the overall winner in the 2005 SAISC Awards. Designed by Karlien Thomashoff Architects, in association with Mathews and Associates Architects, the Diamond Hill Toll Plaza also received an Award of Merit from the Pretoria Institute of Architects.



OBITUARY

ROMAN SOLTYSKI (1907-2005)

Roman Soltynski was born in Lvov, Poland, now part of Ukraine. In common with many fellow Poles, his family lost everything to subsequent invasions by German and Soviet troops. From Scotland, he and his wife Barbara managed to obtain passage to a new life in South Africa. He found employment with Lord Walford, later obtaining a lecturing post at the University of Cape Town and starting his own practice.

As a practising architect, he was awarded a Bronze Medal by the Cape Institute of Architects for the Mary Kihn School for the Hard of Hearing in 1968. His students will remember him with mixed emotions.

He could be quite cutting in 'crits', and whilst his command of written English was exemplary, his spoken English could lead to both elucidation and confusion. To Roman all prepositions were a waste of breath, and to this day former students talk of 'fenomens' and 'sum sort of a sumthings'. Oddly apt, as mine was a generation of students (70s) who talked design rather than drawing it, and believed that buildings were unnecessary evils invented to frustrate the higher needs and ideals of mankind. Archigram ruled!

Roman travelled extensively, holding visiting lectureships at, amongst others, UC San Luis Obispo, and used his contacts to encourage return visits by foreign colleagues.

Famous amongst these was Yoshio Taniguchi, now better known for recently completed additions to MoMA in New York. He retired from teaching in 1971, but continued in practise until 1991. Age was no deterrent to roof inspections or country drives in the blue Alfa to distant sites.

Roman's influence as a friend, teacher and architect lives on through his sometimes quirky designs, and a somewhat mischievous irreverence for authority, which if it didn't rub you up the wrong way, rubbed off on those he mentored and advised.

Stig Winberg
Former student, colleague and friend