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Plainly Malaspina

Malaspina University College - A View from the Depths

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MUC Triumphs Again!

LOUD PLAUDITS FOR DECONSTRUCTION SITE

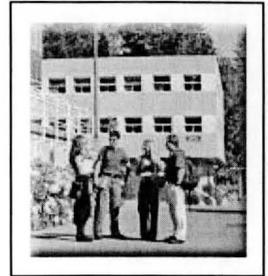
Readers will be delighted to hear that the annual PM Award for Excellence in Educational Architecture has once again been won by Malaspina.

The panel of judges was unanimous in granting the prestigious award to the architects, engineers and planners whose unstinting efforts have graced the Nanaimo campus with the new International Building on Fourth Street.

Panel Chair Prof. I.M.A. Poseur of the Department of Critical Studies has provided PM with the following extract from the official judgment:

Building 255 surpasses anything ever achieved before at Malaspina. The external form, from aluminium-sided base to airy and light-filled apex, mediates the conceptual gradient between the vocational hustle and bustle of the lower campus and the more ethereal preoccupations of the upper regions, in keeping with its hardly providential siting in the intervening topographical interstice.

Also deconstructed are the dualisms of cold-hot, light-dark, well built-shoddy and East-West, as the apex itself, an inverted triangular prism of negative space, is vaguely reminiscent of the



panel's cinematically-derived notion of the architecture of the Orient.

The Eastern reference continues inside, as a typically Japanese devotion to calculated asymmetry is manifest in the deliberate failure of perpendicular office walls to match up with the gaps between the windows. The resultant enforced sharing of sources of fresh air will go a long way to ensuring that staff model the kind of cheerful cooperation which is so distinctive of our efforts to meet our global siblings in the free-and-easy marketplace of ideas.

Nor does the building lack a sense of history. The charming if eccentric use of antique cable-conduit, 3/4" in diameter instead of the post-modern industry-standard 2", not only adds heritage value, but also greatly encourages the preservation of ancient techniques, as IT technicians have to hand-solder all the connectors too big to fit through it.

In any good building, form reflects function; Building 255 goes much farther – here the form of function reflected is a function of the form of form which functions to form the overall reflection of function in formal terms, whereas the very function of the form itself is formed of functional elements which form a sort of meta-functional protoformality functioning to

. . . *continued p.94*