

ARCHITECTURE  
DESIGN  
CULTURE

# icon



£4.50  
MARCH 2010

## HERZOG & DE MEURON

A Miami drive-in

## MINARET BAN

Architects rethink the Swiss mosque

## LOST ISTANBUL

Growing pains of a supercity

## GAMFRATESI

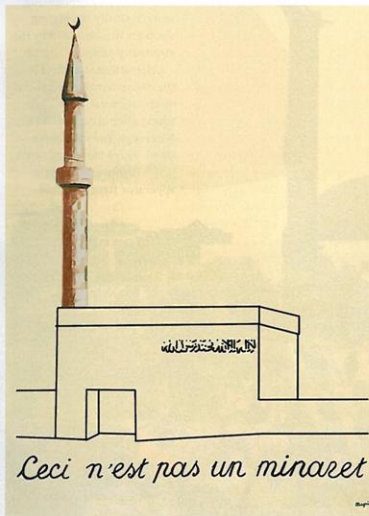
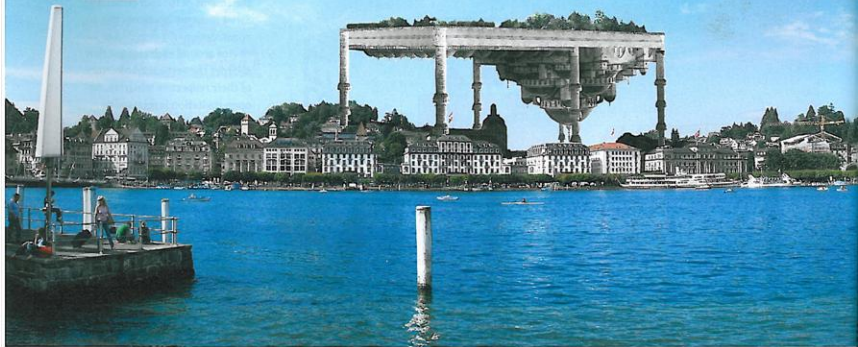
Cartoon furniture

PLUS BRASILIA AT 50, TAIWAN TURNS TO  
DESIGN, PIET HEIN EEK, MARTIN PARR, DECODE,  
SHENZHEN AND HONG KONG BIENNALE



**MONTE ROSA HUTTE**  
MOUNTAIN MIRROR

**JULIEN  
DE  
SMEDT**  
JDS



## **AOC** (AFTER MAGRITTE)

**"THIS IS NOT A MINARET."**

When Magritte painted a pipe and wrote under it "This is not a pipe" he was highlighting the discrepancy between an object and a representation of that object. Our image of a minaret (from the Zurich mosque) is similarly labelled to highlight the creative potential of the discrepancy between a built form and the name given to that form.

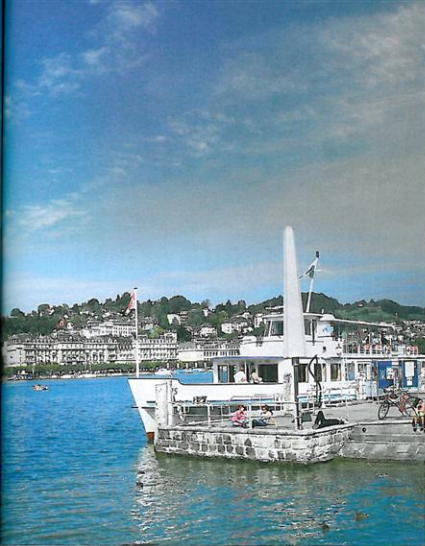
There is no official definition of a minaret. A brief survey of the world's minarets, past and present, would suggest a formal diversity defying definition. Banning minarets as the Swiss have, without providing a formal definition, is somewhat problematic. To overcome the ban anyone wishing to build a minaret-like structure merely

needs to name it differently.

This is not a minaret, it is a spire / column / viewing gallery / ventilation shaft\*.

This approach is soon to be tested in Switzerland. The Islamic community of Langenthal have made an application to build a "tower" on their mosque, citing its inability to be used for the call to prayer as evidence that it cannot be deemed a minaret. Such conceptual creativity / legal fastidiousness\* appears to provide the minority a useful opportunity to defend their buildings, and maybe even associated beliefs and practices, against the demands of the majority.

\* delete as appropriate.



Street-level muezzin.

## SALEEM JALIL

My design proposal primarily emphasises the ideology of monotheism and its importance in Islam. However, it also refers to the importance of the parts without which the whole ceases to function.

The building sits on a platform, so worshippers approach indirectly, circling the prayer hall before entering it, a route that suggests the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. Water, an important element in Islam, is represented in the form of an urban water feature. This feature also serves

as a wayfinding element indicating the two separate entrances for men and women. The space for women is equal to that of the men rather than secondary, emphasising the role of women in Islam.



Mosque typology pre 2009  
Swiss referendum

Mosque typology pre  
Ottoman rule

No religious obligation to  
include minarets

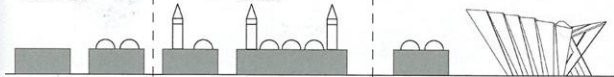
Mosque typology post  
Ottoman rule

Minarets were symbolically  
introduced

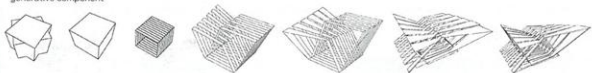
We could go back  
to BASICS ...?

or ...

WE COULD DO THIS!



Back to Basics!  
generative component



The whole architecture is derived from traditional forms including the minaret, but the result does not suggest a minaret to an observer. The building's vertical structural elements point to the Kiblah – the point to which worshippers orient themselves for prayers.

Finally, the internal structures provide a play of light and shadow suggesting a minimal but subtle ornamentation pattern.