



DESIGN FEATURE

# GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

By **DAIMIAN S. HINES** AIA, NOMA

In 2018, the Government of Jamaica, acting through the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, launched an international competition to design a new parliament building. Since securing its independence in 1963, the country's parliament has met at a temporary location, Gordon House in Kingston, the capital city. The Government envisioned a state-of-the-art facility that will signify its independence and stable democracy. For all competitors, teams were required to include a registered Jamaican architect and also a minimum of fifty percent Jamaican citizens or those of Jamaican diaspora.

Jamaican-born Gordon Gill of ASGG served as the competition patron in promoting the design process's transparency. The Urban Development Corporation of Jamaica managed the competition process which was comprised of a distinguished jury of design industry leaders throughout the island and other Caribbean

countries. Subsequently, the jury and separately the voting public made final selections and rankings for competitors in this two-stage process. Our team consisted of four individuals: **Daimian S. Hines**, AIA, NOMA; **Christopher Bent**, Assoc AIA; and **Gregory Lake**, AIA, who are all Jamaican born and now residing in Texas. Additionally, the team included **Evan Williams**, JIA, a practicing architect in Kingston, Jamaica. Some 37 proposals were submitted, and five shortlisted. Among the entrants was British architect David Adjaye.

In March 2019, the Honorable Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced the winning teams. Our team—named after the country's motto, "Out of Many, One People"—won both the coveted People's Choice and Design Jury first-place selections. Hines Architecture + Design (design architect) joint-ventured with Design Collaborative Ltd. of Jamaica (architect of record) to deliver the building design as well as a comprehensive campus masterplan. Our team also collaborated with the office of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill, who was commissioned to deliver a masterplan for a government oval project which is adjacent to our project's 52-acre site. As our site was the focal point of the larger master plan, the work of the two teams needed to be a confluence of themes. *Continues on next page >*



**PROJECT NAME**

Government of Jamaica  
New Houses of Parliament

**COMPANY NAME**

Hines Architecture + Design  
WWW.HINESAD.COM  
DAIMIAN.HINES@HINESAD.COM

**PROJECT LOCATION**

National Heroes Park, Kingston,  
Jamaica W.I.

**COMPLETION YEAR**

On the Boards, Estimated 2023

**OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

**Hines Architecture + Design (HINESAD)**  
ROLE

DESIGN ARCHITECT: Programming, design  
and construction documentation services

**US TEAM**

PIC: Daimian S Hines, AIA, NOMA,  
LEED BD+C

PM: Christopher Bent, Assoc AIA

PA: Nico Stearley AIA, LEED BD+C

PD: Chris Oliver, AIA

BIM MANAGER: Logan Kemp

ID DESIGN MANAGER: Juliana Touma, RA

DESIGN SUPPORT: Juliet Serem, AIA, NOMA

DESIGN SUPPORT: Clayton Fry, AIA

CONSULTANT: Gregory Lake, AIA

INTERN: Antonio Perez

INTERN: Kenny Nguyen

INTERN: Maggie Au

INTERN: Jhamaria Hewell

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Burohappold

CIVIL ENGINEERING: Vogt Engineering

MEP ENGINEERING: DBR Engineering

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: OJB

ACOUSTICS: Bai

FOOD SERVICE: FDP

SUSTAINABILITY: Synrho

FAÇADE: MGI

SPECIFICATIONS: Lisa Murray & Associates

INTERIOR DESIGN: SPADPS

LEGAL: Egbuono Law

**Design Collaborative Ltd (DCL)****ROLE**

Architect of Record

**JAMAICA TEAM**

PIC: Evan Williams, JIA

ARCHITECT: Jason Scott

SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR: Abigail Evans

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Hue Lyew Chin

CIVIL ENGINEERING: Hue Lyew Chin

MEP ENGINEERING: Satyn

LANDSCAPE CONSULTANT: Maryanne

Twymann

QUANTITY SURVEYOR: Handel Bowen,

Burrowes & Wallace

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING: Premier Land & Water

ENVIRONMENTAL: Environmental

Solutions Ltd.

LAND SURVEY: GEO Graphics Ltd.

GEOTECH: NHL Engineering

**PHOTO CREDITS:**

Hines Architecture + Design



The building program centers on two debate chambers. The spaces are the House of Representatives and Senate debate chambers. The balance of the program includes other parliamentary support spaces, offices, a museum, a library, visitors accommodations, and other amenities. Critical adjacencies drove the program development to support various user interfaces while simultaneously segregating government and visitor circulation and access protocols.

The project site is quite significant in the collective history of the island nation. The site resonates as a reminder of the island's colonial past. The site is currently underutilized as downtown Kingston experienced a substantial exodus of commerce to New Kingston, which is the new central business district. The design solution is a circular building that is legible at both urban and human scales. In analyzing the oval site, a former colonial-era horse racing track, coupled with the notions of the country's motto "Out of Many, One People," suggested a circular building that would have no perceived front, back, rear, or side profiles. The building form would always present a front while the landscape would define the vehicular and pedestrian site access and circulation pathways.

HINESAD collaborated with OJB Landscape architects whom without hesitation signed on early during the competition stage of the pursuit. Through a series of workshops with local stakeholders and government officials, our team developed an informed site program that captured the imagination of our client. Our vision was a dynamic park that included a series of outdoor rooms that formalize a variety of functions and activities.

Some of these functions included a national memorial shrine area where the country's national heroes are or will be interred, a plant

nursery, a public amphitheater, formal parliament access and demonstration areas, an extensive water wall plaza, and a walking trail loop with defined areas for future art installations. The site, therefore, is divided into three primary zones. The site to the north includes a large flexible community space for activities such as the annual kite festival. The center of the site consists of a civic plaza with community amphitheaters and a featured water wall in addition to the parliament building and parking garages capped by planted roofs. The southern campus contains a formal and historic program. This space includes a renovated shrine area for national heroes including interred prime ministers, governors-general, and historic figures as well as a new heroes pavilion.

The building shape resulted from the analyst site and historical notions. During the competition stage, I felt it was important, as Design Architect, to query team members regarding their childhood memories as well as their aspirations for the island nation. The expression of the building façade is envisioned as a series of precast concrete X-shaped columns. The column shape was derived from a study of geometries contained within the Jamaican flag. We wanted the flag to be experiential as an occupiable space. We also wanted the columns to be a metaphor for the relationship between the island's citizens and their elected representatives as inter-connected pillars that form the foundation of the country's system of parliament. The building plan maintains a clear circulation strategy with a central circulation boulevard and circular loop around two interior gardens which introduce natural light from rooftop skylight glazing systems. Rich woods, stones, planting, and feature walls to incorporate local art define the main circulation routes throughout the building.



Commentary by **DAIMIAN S. HINES AIA, NOMA**

# ARCHITECTURE OF EMOTION

It is not often that architects have an opportunity to work on a transformational design such as the Jamaican parliament building.

Prime minister the Honorable Andrew Holness, noted that this project will be the most important in the history of the country. I had the opportunity to study in India where I was able to visit Chandigarh, the country's capital. There I was able to experience the masterwork of Le Corbusier's designs for the buildings that comprised the Indian parliament. This was a magnificent experience and was made even more profound as I was able to build a relationship with one of the country's most notable architects Balkrishna Doshi, a protege of Le Corbusier.

I also had the opportunity to study in Berlin, where I and fellow students toured the then under construction iconic German Chancellory, which spans the Spree River, with the lead Architect Axel Schultes.

I did not imagine that in 2018 I would be conceptualizing a modern vision for my country of birth. This experience was both surreal and a source of great pride. I was extremely emotional during the entire design process. When I was eight years old, my family migrated to America so that my sister and I would have a chance at a better education. After graduating from university and practicing in Chicago, Houston, and Southeast Asia, I returned to Houston where I started a boutique design office. I leveraged relationships across the world to compete with notable competitors as British architect David Adjaye and French architect Hugh Dutton.

My emotions were fuel during this almost one-year-long international competition. The process included several trips to the island



which were educational, enlightening, and in some cases, a trigger for memories long forgotten. Never did I think our team would sweep the competition awards nor did I allow myself to dwell on the possibilities. My core focus was on producing the body of work required to compete.

As a small office, I was confident we could compete. I had studied at a top college for architecture, I had worked in large scale competitive design firms, and I had recently built a sixty-person office in Southeast Asia with a long time cohort Daniel West, AIA.

Since winning the commission, I have been asked to speak about the competition process and the design of the Government of Jamaica's new parliament building. I often start a speaking engagement with a preemptive disclaimer noting that I may become emotional.

I have since abandoned the disclaimer and embraced the notion that architecture should and can be emotional.

I, therefore, implore our NOMA design community to seek and deliver projects that evoke strong emotion, challenge traditional forms of practice and endeavor to compete whenever an opportunity arises.