Banda Aceh, Indonesia, has not only been devastated by the 2004 tsunami; it has also been ravaged by conflict, poverty and desolation. Situated in the Islamic and tropical world, both with a history marked by earthquakes and war, this building serves as a symbol of the Acehnese people’s desire to rebuild their city and move towards a new future.

The design has become a sort of temple: formal, organized, serene and impressive. It is a building that fills every inhabitant of Aceh with pride when he or she sees it, because it looks very modern, but at the same time meets requirements, sustainability, disaster and climate resistance, with respect for the Islamic lifestyle.

A large sensational community building which houses a library, but where you can also eat, drink and relax. A building that looks modern, yet is disaster resistant, sustainable, and suitable for the local climate at the same time.

To accommodate the needs and desires of the Acehnese people, Celine Bent (2006-2007) designed a building that has a market, a library, a café, exhibition spaces and a reflecting pond. The pond is lit in the evening and, at the same time, it reflects the city axis, which was ignored during the reconstruction of the town, and which used to connect the centre with the river.

Additionally, the building had to support the development of the local people, especially women and children. It had to also provide public space and reestablish an old part of the interior space between the openworked columns and library facade makes the water become a rotating dodecaedron is situated on the other side of the river.

The node where laminated bamboo floors, steel rings and bamboo culms come together, is special. The triangles of the vertical structure and the squares of the horizontal structure, meet in an object which consists of triangles and squares, not a platonic but an Archimedean solid called rombicuboctaedron: an octagon in section, it reflects pond below.

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