

SINGAPORE

Green tapestry

The British legacy gave the city-state of Singapore, country buildings that were part of an English garden. Recently, in this land scarce city, valuable gardens began to be placed within buildings themselves - on roofs, facades and sky-gardens as community spaces. Singapore's landscape architectural firm Tierra's Green Tapestry project at Terminal 3, Changi Airport brings this idea forward. Spanning 300 metres across the middle of the voluminous interior, the suspended I-beams and stainless steel cable structure is covered with vines, creepers and epiphytes in a scale that have never been seen before in this city-state.

Passengers travelling through the new "atmospheric" environment of the new terminal can now enjoy the city's garden not only immediately upon arrival but also during their departure as the suspended green tapestry can be seen from the departure and arrival area. The client for the project is the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore, while CPG Consultants are the architects and Horti-Flora Services is the landscape contractor.



US Honour awards

The AIA Chicago recently announced the winners of its 2007 Design Excellence Awards. The Gary Comer Youth Center received multiple awards, including honour awards in both the distinguished building and divine detail categories and a special recognition in sustainable design for the building's green roof. Jurors liked the way the building turned its "solid skin to the street side, and then opened up inside." Designed by Chicago architect John Ronan, the building is topped by a steel-framed tower, complete with an LED sign that advertises events at the centre to the community. Ronan used a variety, including a translucent green glass from Germany that accents the building's entries. The firm used large walls of glass to make the Comer Youth Center's cafeteria and its convertible gymnasium/ theatre appear to be a single space. The multipurpose space is the main practice and performance space of the South Shore Drill Team.

Atop the Comer Youth Center is

a courtyard like roof garden that is directly outside the building's third-floor office. It offers children in the neighbourhood a serene place to experience nature. Ronan accented the roof garden with sleek skylights that draw natural light into the building's gymnasium-theatre. The building's "divine detail" is its rain-screen cladding system and window detail.

The exhibition/lecture hall of the Comer Youth Center is one of the several flexible spaces in the building that can be adapted to different uses. It also is among the rooms in the building that offer views of the surrounding neighbourhood, including a nearby church.

Among the many green-roof entries, the project stood out as "exceptional," jurors said. 46 awards were given in the categories of distinguished building, sustainable design, interior architecture, and "divine detail," including 13 honour awards, the highest honour.