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POWER IN POISE

Çağda Akten on how discipline, detail, and design integrity are shaping her company's philosophy



**Rukn Eldeen
Mohammed, PhD**
Special Projects Principal
Omrania

Dr Rukn Eldeen's path into architecture was shaped by an early interest in how cities evolve as living systems rather than isolated compositions. That perspective has guided his career, defined by increasing scale and complexity, from discrete interventions to strategic urban frameworks.

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At Omrania, this trajectory is reinforced by a practice that has operated across cycles of transformation in Saudi Arabia, consistently adapting while maintaining a clear commitment to civic value and spatial coherence. Several projects that he has led, being with Omrania for almost 35 years, stand out for how they engage with institutional and urban identity. The Kingdom Centre established a clear and enduring high-rise presence within Riyadh's skyline, while the PIF Tower reflects a disciplined integration of structure, envelope, and skyline expression. The KAFD Grand Mosque offers a more introspective counterpoint, translating cultural and spiritual values into a contemporary architectural language, while GOSI Office Park explores workplace environments through landscape-driven planning. The Riyadh Metro Blue Line reshapes movement through a connected network of stations and public spaces, and King Salman Park redefines landscape as a central civic framework, with Prince Sattam Park reinforcing accessibility at a community scale.

Dr Rukn sees the role of architecture in Saudi Arabia evolving in response to the scale and speed of transformation demand not only innovation, but a disciplined approach to planning and delivery. He believes what will prevail is work that can absorb change without losing clarity, projects that are technically robust, contextually grounded, and capable of evolving over time. Omrania projects trace Saudi Arabia's urban transformation over 53 years, from the Riyadh Water Tower, to contemporary Diriyah Gate. Delivered through economic flux, they establish benchmarks for institutional resilience, mobility networks, and public realm integration. The legacy lies in architecture that quietly structures enduring civic coherence amid Saudi Arabia's strong evolution.



Ahmad Fares
Head of Architecture Concept Unit
Aji Built Environment

As a child, Ahmad Fares was captivated by his grandfather's courtyard house in Palestine, whose spatial organisation and climate-responsive design left a lasting impression. That early experience shaped his curiosity about how architecture can create spaces that are both meaningful and grounded in context.

Overtime, Ahmad's career has evolved from focusing purely on design to leading teams and coordinating projects, ensuring that architectural visions translate effectively into the built environment. Among the projects that have shaped his professional outlook are developments such as the Jabal Omar Development, where he refined his approach to precision, detailing and global collaboration, and the planning work in Al-Sadr City, where community engagement and cultural understanding informed the architectural and urban design process.

Looking ahead, he sees architecture in the region evolving rapidly due to shifts in market demands, developer expectations, design tools, and increasingly compressed project timelines.



**Alejandra de Cordoba
Estepa**
Principal of Architecture EMEA
HBA (Hirsch Bedner Associates)

Alejandra has built a distinguished career by shaping hospitality destinations that seamlessly merge design, culture, and human experience. Over the years, her work has spanned Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, evolving from hands-on design to leading complex international developments and multidisciplinary teams.

Her portfolio includes transformative resort redevelopments and destination hotels where architecture, interiors, and landscape work together. These projects stand out for creating a strong sense of place, responding thoughtfully to natural context, climate, and cultural heritage, while enhancing guest experience and operational performance.

Alejandra's design philosophy is rooted in authenticity, contextual sensitivity, and spatial clarity, ensuring that every environment feels genuine, connected, and memorable. She sees architecture as a tool not just to build structures but to strengthen communities. Her goal is to leave a legacy of projects that enrich the surroundings, honour cultural context, and inspire the architects of tomorrow.