



Global Architect Alliance

Issue 16:

Weekly newsletter

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INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DAY
#BreakTheBias

Global Architect Alliance
**BREAK
THE
BIAS**

By Jason Boyle

International Women Day Logo

International Women's Day - #break thebias



Jason Boyle FRSA FRIBA

Youngest Fellow of the RIBA | Nuclear Architect at Sellafield Ltd | RIBA...

23 articles

✓ Following

March 8, 2022

Open Immersive Reader

Firstly welcome to *Issue 8* of the *GAA Newsletter*. With over 7,200 regular readers we are fast becoming a great resource for the construction sector. In this issue we talk about International Women's Day (IWD) with Tika Gilbert, highlight this weeks podcast "*Architects Pay - Are you getting a rise this year?*" and end with a call for sponsors for season 2 of the GAA Podcast. We are also proud to announce that our newsletters are now sponsored by the **Architect Marketing Institute**. "AMI is Where Smart Architects And Designers Come To Learn How To Win Better Projects."



AMI offers a fantastic **FREE**, 1-hr webinar by co-founder Richard Petrie, a well-established expert on how to attract

and win A-grade clients. This topic is particularly relevant for Design Professionals during this challenging period.

This is AIA Approved Online Training - a 'crash course' on architect marketing strategies!

In this free, 90 minute online training Richard Petrie reveals a psychologically potent framework that enables architects around the world to differentiate their firms.

Learn how a 113 year old discovery by an Italian economist can be used to win design projects, This discovery is used by some of the smartest marketers on the planet and now by a few architects to work smarter not harder.

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IWD2022 #breakthebias

Today, 8th March 2022 is [International Women's Day](#) and this year's campaign theme is "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow". To celebrate IWD22 GAA Ambassador [Tika Gilbert](#) has written an article for this weeks newsletter.



Almost two years ago, I took the leap to entrepreneurship after moving back to my home country of Bermuda and registering as a Chartered Architect in the UK. Sounds like a crazy thing to do huh.. yes, because the world was in midst of the Covid 19 pandemic. Everyone was holding on to their wallets and looking out the window to see what was going to happen next. I was told through several conversations that there wasn't any work out there. After living in the UK for 11 years, studying and working no one knew who I was. I had to try to find a way of reintroducing myself to those I knew and introducing myself to those I didn't.

As we celebrate women's achievements, I remember sitting in the audience of my sister's graduation in North Carolina, USA, (2006) feeling very proud of her accomplishments. Having raised three kids and getting married wasn't easy while studying. I heard her cries as she wanted to quit so many times, but she didn't. The speaker from one of the courses was a single mother of two that hadn't given up her dreams and with the support of her mother focused on finishing college. This gave me the final inspiration of possibly attending university to study architecture, a long-lost dream. Although I had a degree in Interior Design, I started working as a Draftsperson/Architectural Technician for a practice to focus on Bermudian Architecture. They were a newly formed practice, but they did really good work and the partners were very encouraging.

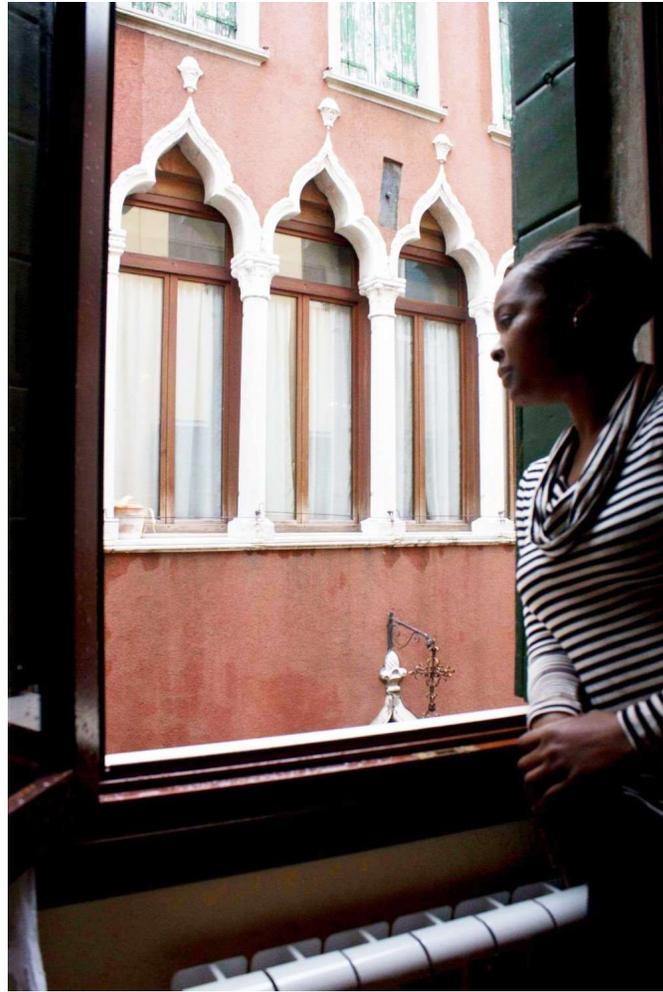
The Move/study



View of the blue skies and turquoise waters over a traditional Bermuda style roof.

I always wanted to be an Architect, however, studying wasn't going to be easy as a single mother, because I had to move to another country without the family support I was used to. In 2008, I left a comfortable job and life in Bermuda and moved to the UK to study Architecture along with my than 11-year-old daughter. It was all exciting until the turquoise waters were no longer visible as we sat on the BA flight. Things became a bit more apparent as we arrived in the UK, looking at the grey skies and brown roofs. I was

naïve, but of course there was a plan, and I was not returning to Bermuda until I became a registered architect.



Studying Venetian Architecture in Venice

I remember reading an article about Women in Architecture. The women we should look up to because of their lives outside of university. Raising one or two kids, managing life with their husband. How can one be so brave and strong to endure the stress and commitment that was present in architecture? The course is a journey on its own with requirements to complete three qualifications before calling yourself an architect. I envied these women as I never talked about being a single parent because of the stigma towards single parents and the role it plays on the child's life (*who is doing very well in education, her career and as an entrepreneur*) I never believed in that box, neither

one of us is perfect and I silently fought against it. However, I did see it play out while in university.

I will call her Monica, ashamed that I cannot remember her name. She was the second person that came to me and said they remember me giving a tour and presenting my portfolio for the incoming year. She applied that year but was not accepted but applied the following year and was accepted. Originally from Africa she was a single parent wanting to pursue her dream of becoming an architect. I was one of many asked to be a mentor to first year students that were having a difficult time understanding their projects. I presented my undergraduate portfolio and offered to help in any way through email or face to face. I saw her often and asked how she was making out. She always said OK, her body language said something else. Or maybe she didn't want to say anything because architecture was tough, and we were all stressed. A year later, I saw her in the corridor, and I asked the same question. How are you doing? I instantly felt her pain and frustration. I remember speaking often to a young lady that missed studio because she couldn't get childcare for her child and though she pleaded with the tutors it became very difficult for her. When I look at the situation today, it probably wasn't her time but with situations like this people often give up forever. The passion is completely lost. Being a single mother in architecture school I could empathised those who faced hurdles. However, I thought the tutors were great and was mostly inspired by some of the women tutors as they helped me realise by potential. This has been evident in architecture, photography, and my art. I will forever be grateful. However, with all the adversity I faced, there was always an opportunity awaiting. I always took a leap of faith even when I didn't know the outcome.

I later developed my own style of art after using plaster and concrete to produce architecture models. Artwork using plaster and charcoal.



The pandemic has affected the mental well-being of so many of us, but I am writing this in hopes to encourage any women second guessing herself and or going through a difficult time, know that it will pass. Maybe not straight away in the time you wish, but it will pass.

If you knew of the struggles you will face, you will never make that journey. There is much waiting for you in the future, new connections, and happier moments. Everyone's journey is different so you must give energy to your dreams as you do your fears. I am thankful for everything in my past for its shaped me into the person I am today.

As it is heartwarming and encouraging to see the number of growing women architects in Bermuda, I am the only black women registered both in the UK and Bermuda. - Tika Gilbert.

Happy International Women's Day!