

Style of the Era



Renault Distribution Centre

Most of Norman Foster's work was done between the 1980s and the early 2000s, during the modernist, postmodernist and deconstructivist phases.

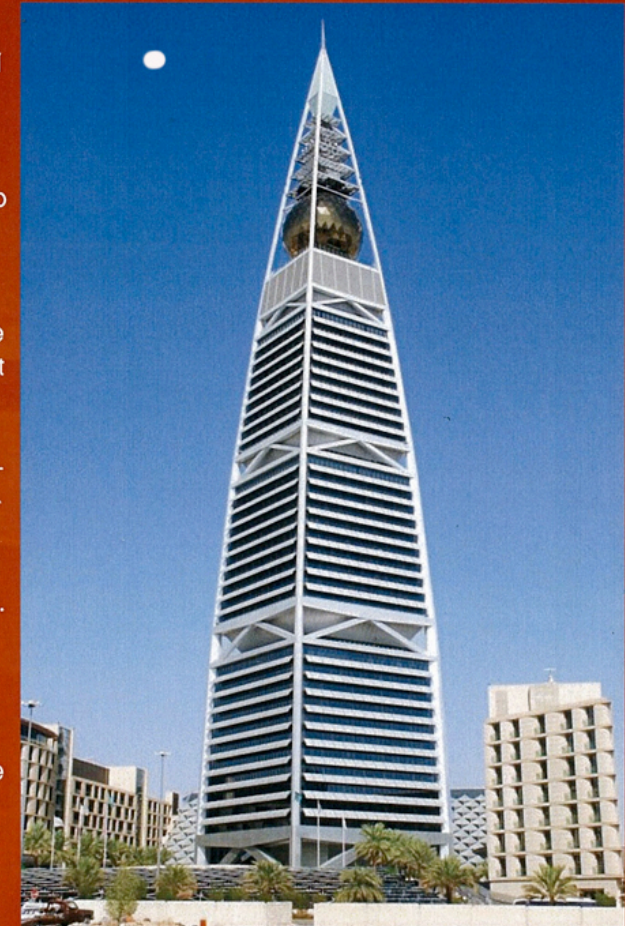
The modernist movement was about designing objects that had a function, and to look very formal or 'processed'. The main qualities of modernist structures are: industrialized decoration, constructed from man made materials only (eg. Metal, concrete, etc.), designed to look factory made and to not appear as a traditional structure.

The Renault Distribution Centre was designed by Norman Foster and has very clear modernist look about it. The yellow support frames around the entire building look like the arms of a crane with the pulley ropes connecting to the top, as if the building is built in the middle of a large industrial area. The main building has a clinical appearance with a plain linear theme, painted in a 'hospital colour' white.

The Renault Distribution Centre has been clearly influenced by the modernist style and was constructed in 1983, when the modernist's design was a very sought after style of architecture. Norman Foster was definitely influenced by the modernist movement in this design and has others with similar qualities.

Postmodernism was another style of architecture around during Norman Foster's 'business boom'. The postmodernist movement featured structures that were informal and were interesting to look at. Postmodernist designs try to involve natural shapes, featuring curves, and try to not look man made.

The Al Faisaliah Tower was built in 2001 and is one of Norman Foster's postmodernist designs. In the plan of the tower, the base is square which then tapers off to a point at the top. The tower stands 267 metres tall and showcases a gold glass sphere near the top, which contains a restaurant, above the housing and office floors. The pinnacle design of the tower represents a stalagmite growing from the centre of a plaza. The tower features curves, spheres and natural tapering, which defines it from Norman Foster's other modernist influenced designs.



The deconstructivist style was around during the postmodernism era in the mid 1990s onwards. Deconstructivists use non-linear shapes in their designs, and use many shapes to create different textures on one structure. Norman has been influenced by some of the styles during his 'business boom' but was not influenced by the deconstructivist style. Although Norman has not designed many deconstructivist buildings in the past, he is designing more currently and in the future.



Queen Alia International Airport

From above the airport looks like a field of mushrooms in the shape of an insect.

Currently, Norman is designing the Queen Alia International Airport which is constructed of many umbrella shaped arches and circular terminals. The airport will include a strong sense of technology in its final state. Norman is also designing the Spaceport America terminal for the first tourists into outer space. The terminal conveys the feeling that it is meant to be in space itself, yet also takes the shape of the surrounding land to connect it strongly to the earth.

As deconstructivist designs are becoming more popular, Norman is starting to design deconstructivist structures. Norman Foster is still influenced by the style of his time.