

The Yad Vashem Archives and Library have moved to a brand new building, leaving the tight premises in the ground floor of the administration building and relocating to a state-of-the-art 3,000m² facility. Archives and Library employees are pleased with the move, and if the documents, photographs, films, testimonies and books, stored in 1,500m² of strong rooms, could speak, they would echo the same appreciation for the extra space.

Daniel Lanski, the Haifa-born architect who designed the new Archives and Library building conferred with a team of Archives personnel on the specific functions of the Yad Vashem Archives. The team included Yoram Mayorek, the former Director of the Central Zionist Archives; Yaacov Lozowick, Director of Yad Vashem's Archives Division; Nomi Halpern, Deputy Director; and Esther Aran, Director of Registration and Methods of the Archives. Lanski took into consideration the team's requirements, and integrated their feedback into his design.

Built to house the Yad Vashem Library and Archives, it could be said that the building has two different "faces," an extrovert and an introvert. In the extrovert or public part of the building on the top floor (the entrance floor), a stretch of windows parallel to the foyer, the Information Center, and the Reading and Research rooms opens the building up to its surrounding environment, and bathes the areas in natural light.

The introvert or private part of the building extends from the lower to the middle floor. The lower floor consists only of strong rooms. On the middle

The new Archives and Library building



Sheltering the Records

floor, the research and conservation labs are situated on the building's northern front where they are exposed to the light. Additional strong rooms housing the books and documents are located on the building's southern side. Only Archives and Library employees have access to these areas.

Not being distracted by the magnificent view of the Jerusalem hills from every window of this building is hard to imagine, unless one is secluded in one of the twelve private study rooms available within the Research Room. The administration offices are located beyond this point.

"I wanted to inspire the feeling of a shelter," says Lanski when asked to explain the concept behind the building. Indeed, with only two of its three floors having access to natural light, the building is well protected. Lanski's work, and that of interior designers Leora Vinograd and Tamar Carmi, landscape architect Dan Tzur, and Dorit Harel who designed the signposts, has created a sublime architectural balance where human beings and documents can achieve a synergistic relationship and where the building and its surroundings are in dialogue.

The New Archives and Library Building

The entrance to the new Archives and Library building



The Reading Room

