

The Architect: Marina Tabassum

HerStory Foundation

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 The Asia Foundation



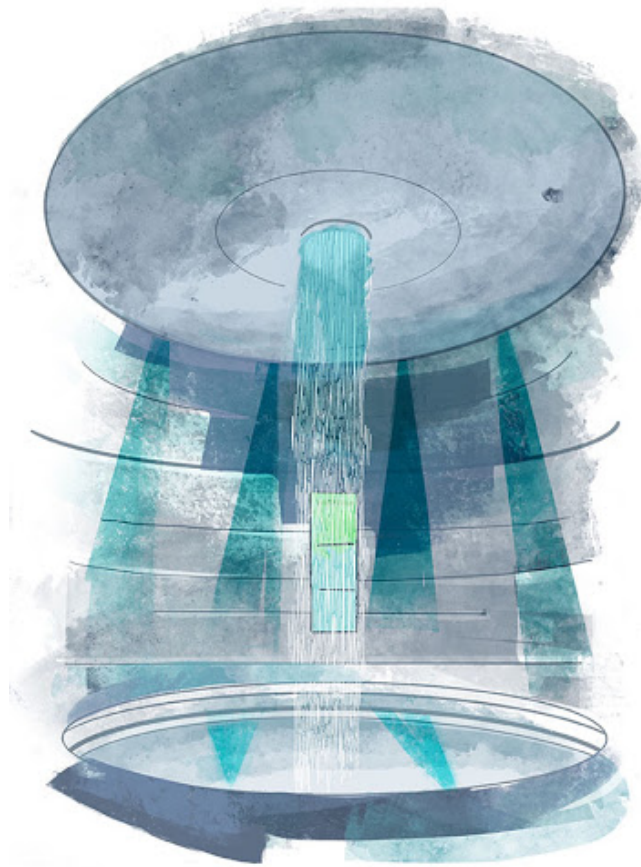
Supergirl Marina Tabassum grew up in independent Bangladesh, when there was a lot rebuilding to do after the war. Marina was very inspired by an amazing building in the city: the Parliament. She dreamed of one day becoming an architect—a designer of buildings.



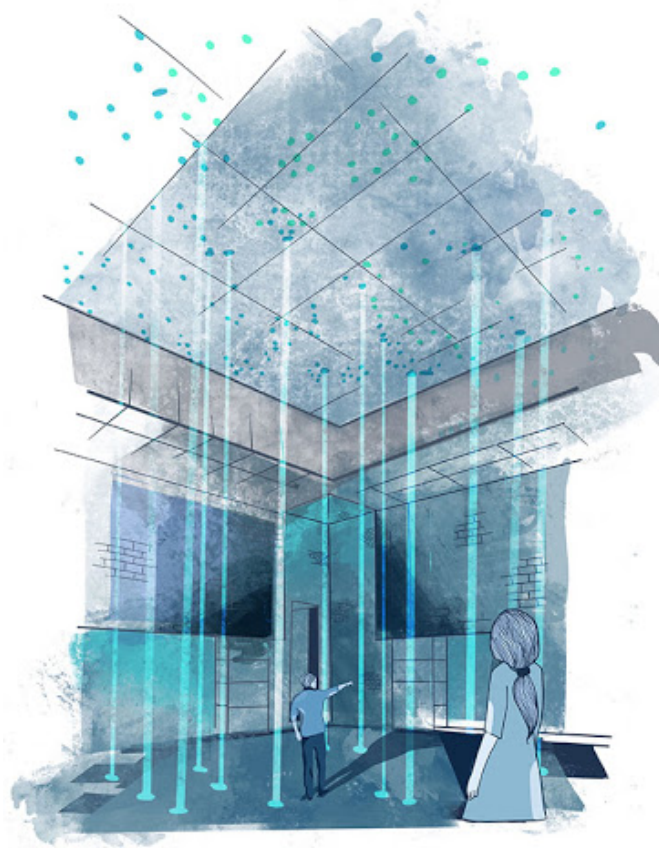
Marina studied very hard and imagined fantastic structures. While other students were planning to build with bricks, cement and wood, Marina wanted to make use of natural elements: light and air. Her building designs were spacious and breezy, with strange and interesting rooms, nooks and passages.



Marina lived in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, and the city was growing very fast, with new buildings coming up every day. She was offered many jobs to build apartments, but she was not interested in that kind of work; so she said, “No, thank you.” Marina did not want to waste time on projects she did not believe in. What she really wanted to do was to make buildings that told stories.



Marina started an architecture studio and created fantastic designs; rooms with water pillars, walls with holes and ceilings with fountains. In time, the sketches became gorgeous structures. In this way, she co-designed the Independence Museum in Dhaka, an underground gallery with an upside down fountain!



One of Marina's most important works is the Bait Ur Rouf Mosque, for which she won an international award. It is a very simple space where girls and boys can come to pray and spend time dreaming and thinking. It is made entirely of red-bricks, and there are many openings in the walls and roof to let in air and light. Marina designs buildings for a future where people are free to be themselves—girls and boys alike!



This inspiring story is part of the HerStories collection originally created by the HerStory Foundation and adapted into individual books in collaboration with The Asia Foundation's Let's Read initiative.

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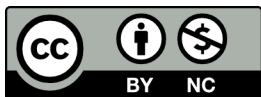
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Original Story

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