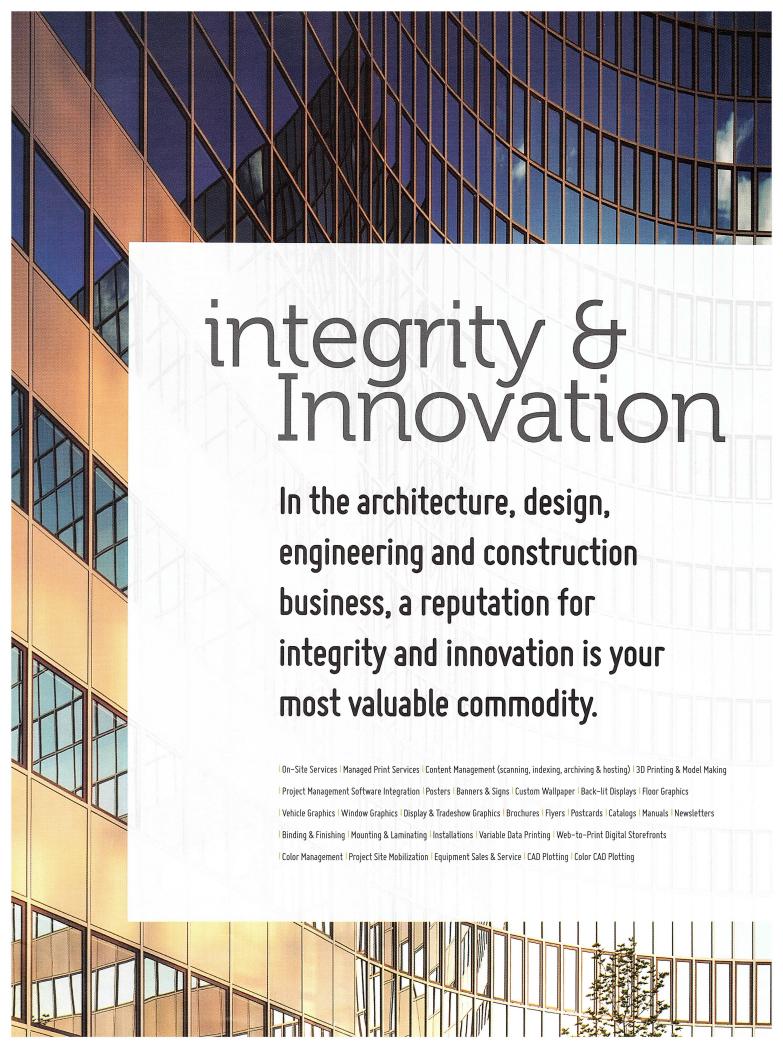


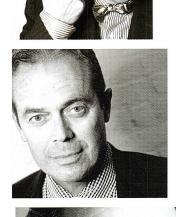
### PRACTICE

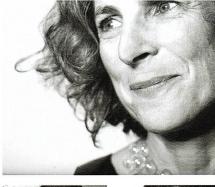
How Cities Learn from Each Other Why Isn't Architecture a U.S. Export Priority? When Small Firms Venture Abroad Thinking Globally, Acting Humbly Out of Africa



### FACES OF THE AIA

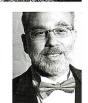
NRI's annual published national portraits of the AEC community captures the energy, freewheeling exuberance and love for designing spaces and making buildings. This work is printed annually as a folio and bi-annually in a commemorative, limited-edition volume published exclusively by NRI and offered with a Moleskine cover. The full collection of images is posted on NRI's micro-site NRINET.com/FACES throughout the year as part of a permanent collection online. Members of the AIA can purchase the iconic book, with the yearly collection, online and enjoy an assortment of professional service benefits.





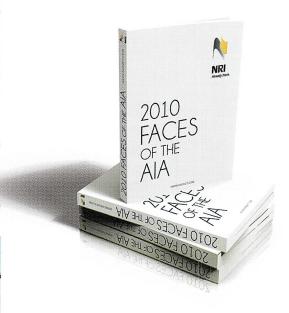


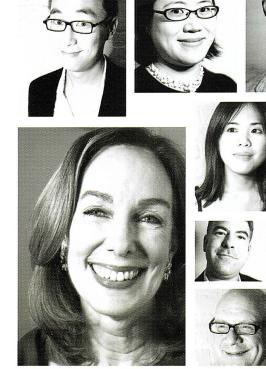


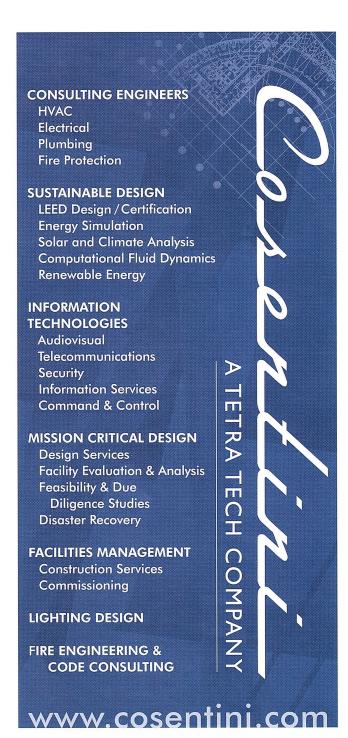




New York | Princeton | Philadelphia | Washington, DC | Boston | San Francisco | Atlanta | Los Angeles | San Diego WWW.NRINET.COM







NEW YORK, NY Two Pennsylvania Plaza t: 212.615.3600 info@cosentini.com



CAMBRIDGE, MA
CHICAGO, IL
FREEHOLD, NJ
ORLANDO, FL
ABU DHABI, UAE
DUBAI, UAE
MOSCOW, RUSSIA
PARIS, FRANCE
SHANGHAI, CHINA
SEOUL, S. KOREA

### 2010/11.<mark>72.4</mark>

### WINTER 2010/11

Vol. 72, No. 4
Oculus: A publication of the
AIA New York Chapter

**OCULUS Staff** 

Kristen Richards, Hon. ASLA kristen@ArchNewsNow.com

Lisa Delgado, John Morris Dixon, FAIA, Daniel Heuberger, AIA, LEED AP, Bill Millard, Linda G. Miller, Stanley Stark, FAIA, Richard Staub, Claire Wilson

Copy Editor Elena Serocki Art Director

James Colgan Design Consultant Pentagram, New York

Michael Gericke, Gillian deSousa

Naylor, LLC eOCULUS

Jessica Sheridan, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP eoculus@aiany.org Oculus Committee/Advisory Board

Miguel Baltierra, Assoc. AlA Rick Bell, FAIA Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP

LEED AP Diana Darling Gerard (Guy) F.X. Geier, II, FAIA, FIIDA, LEED AP Daniel Heuberger, AIA, LEED AP Elizabeth Kubany

Alexander Lamis, AlA Maxinne Leighton, Assoc. AlA David Piscuskas, FAIA Kirsten Sibilia, Assoc. AlA, LEED AP

**Editorial Advisor** 

James S. Russell, FAIA Board of Directors 2011

President Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP

First Vice President, President-Elect Joseph J. Aliotta, AIA, LEED AP Vice President, Design Excellence

Vice President, Design Excellence Mary A. Burke, AIA, IIDA Vice President, Professional Development

Jill N. Lerner, FAIA Vice President, Public Outreach Abby P. Suckle, FAIA, LEED

Secretary Umberto Dindo, AIA

Treasurer Kenneth D. Levien, AIA Director, Publications

Kirsten Sibilia, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP Director, Educational Affairs Megan Sterling Chusid, Assoc. AIA

Director, Programs & Strategic Plannir Lance Jay Brown, FAIA

Margery H. Perlmutter, Esq., AIA Director, Industry Affairs David S. Penick, AIA

Director, Development Affairs
Marcy Stanley, Hon. AIA

Mark Behm, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP Public Director Lori P. Mazor, AIA

Public Director, Educational Affairs Stanley T. Allen, AlA Public Director, Professional Affairs Craig Schwitter, PE

Director, Student Affairs Santiago Rivera, AIAS Immediate Past President

Anthony P. Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA Alternate Director, Professional Development

Carl Galioto, FAIA Alternate Director, Design Excellence David Piscuskas, FAIA Alternate Director, Public Outreach

Alternate Director, Public Outreach Ernest W. Hutton, Jr., Assoc. AIA, FAICP, LEED AP Legal Counsel and ex officio

Michael S. Zetlin, Esq. Executive Director and ex officio Rick Bell, FAIA American Institute of Architects

New York Chapter Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Place New York, NY 10012 212.683.0023 E-mail: info@aiany.org

Chapter Staff and Services

Executive Director
Rick Bell, FAIA (ext. 110)
bell@aiany.org

Managing Director
Cynthia Phifer Kracauer, AIA, LEED AP

(ext. 119) ckracauer@aiany.org

Development Manager Jennifer Apple (ext. 108)

japple@aiany.org Policy Director Jay Bond (ext. 116)

jbond@aiany.org

Committee Programs Manager Jeremy Chance (ext. 117)

jchance@aiany.org
Director of Exhibitions

Rosamond Fletcher (ext. 138) rfletcher@aiany.org

Office Manager Daniel Fox (ext. 113) info@aiany.org

Into@alany.org
Events and Marketing Manager

Christina Jung (ext. 112) cjung@aiany.org

Member Services Director Suzanne Howell Mecs (ext. 115) smecs@aiany.org

Communications Director Emily Nemens (ext. 126)

enemens@aiany.org Exhibitions Coordinator

Suchitra Paul (ext. 120) spaul@aiany.org

Partnership Programs Manager Laura Trimble (ext. 111)

Itrimble@aiany.org
Finance Director
Henry Zachary (ext. 131)
hzachary@aiany.org

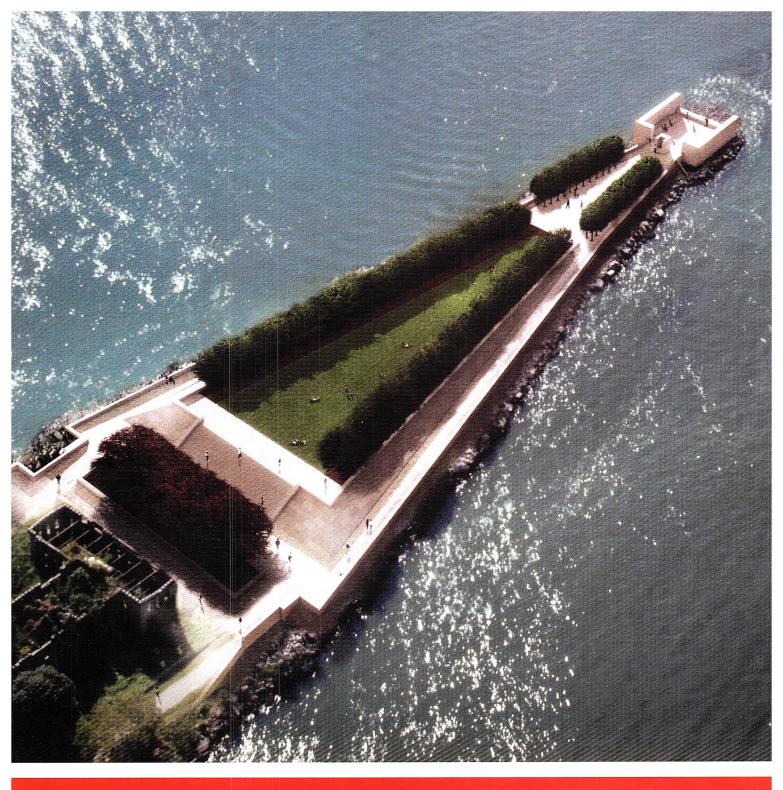
OCULUS is a benefit of both AIA New York Chapter and Center for Architecture membership. For information on professional and public memberships, please call 212.358.6115.

One-year subscription (4 issues): \$40 (U.S.), \$60 (foreign). The AIA New York Chapter also publishes the twice-monthly online newsletter eOCULUS. To advertise in OCULUS or eOculus, please contact Drew Jasinski at djasinski@naylor.com or 352.333.3434. For reprint or back issue information, or to be placed on the e-mail list, contact info@aiany.org.

The opinions expressed herein or the representations made by advertisers, including copyrights and warranties, are not those of the Board of Directors, officers, or staff of the AIA New York Chapter or the Editor of OCULUS, unless expressly stated otherwise.

© 2011 The American Institute of Architects New York Chapter. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited.





### Sciame

HERE BUILDING IS AN ART

onstruction Managers onsultants uilders

### Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park

Architect: Louis I. Kahn, FAIA, Architect Architect of Record: Mitchell Giurgola Architects

### Severud Associates NEW YORK . LONDON . PARIS

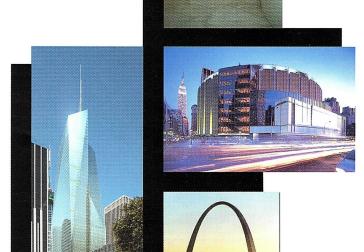


Award-Winning

Structural

Engineering

Since 1928



### Severud Associates

CONSULTING ENGINEERS P.C.

469 Seventh Avenue, Suite 900 New York, NY 10018 (212) 986-3700 info@severud.com

#### Oculus Winter 2010/11

Global / Practice / New York

### Contents

### **Departments**

### 7 First Words Letters from Two Presidents

Leading the Way

By Anthony P. Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA

The Next Steps
Towards Sustainability

By Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP

### 9 A Word from the Editor

Hello, World!

By Kristen Richards, Hon. ASLA

### 10 Center for Architecture

Center Highlights

### 13 One Block Over

Flushing, Queens: Thriving On Chaos

By Claire Wilson

### 14 So Says...Craig Dykers,

### AIA, LEED AP

The co-founder of Oslo- and NYC-based Snøhetta talks about the differences between working here, there, and everywhere, and life as a nomadic architect

Interview by Kristen Richards, Hon. ASLA

#### **39 Good Practices**

Chronicles of Life in the Profession, Episode 8: Three Existential Crises

By Stanley Stark, FAIA

### **Features**

17 Opener

Taking a Global Track
By James Cramer, Hon. AIA,
Hon. IIDA, and Jane Gaboury

### How Cities Learn from Each Other

In an increasingly networked world, cities borrow, lend, and adapt strategies for public space, buildings, and infrastructure – usually, though not always, for the better By Bill Millard

### 22 Why Isn't Architecture

### a U.S. Export Priority?

Other countries do a better job of promoting their design talent to the world. The U.S. government could – and should – do more than it does

By Lucy Bullivant, Hon. FRIBA

### Outward Bound

The thriving international market makes work abroad very attractive to large firms – if you've got the budget, management, and vision to support it By Richard Staub

### When Small Firms Venture Abroad

Knowing little details can make overseas operations a success By Claire Wilson

### O Division of Labor

Outsourcing is not new, but some firms are finding new ways of putting it to good use

By Jacqueline Pezzillo, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP

### 30 Infrastructure

Two New York firms followed very different paths to commissions for metro stations in India and a bridge in China By John Morris Dixon, FAIA

Out of Africa
Sustainable and
cutting-edge technologies are
being used by New York-based
architects in Malawi, Botswana,
and other African countries to
help boost the economy and
empower the people

By Linda G. Miller

### Thinking Globally, Acting Humbly

As NYC-based architects launch humanitarian projects abroad, they're learning lessons in flexibility and perseverance By Lisa Delgado

### 41 64-Year Watch

The design of the iconic United Nations headquarters called for an unprecedented international collaborative effort initiated in 1947

By John Morris Dixon, FAIA

#### 42 In Print+

Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age, by Blair Kamin: Great Public Squares: An Architect's Selection, by Robert F. Gatie, FAIA: The Pan Am Building and the Shattering of the Modernist Dream. bv Meredith L. Clausen: Mannahatta: A Natural History of New York City, by Eric Sanderson By Stanley Stark, FAIA

#### 43 Click Here:

Citiscope.org
By Jessica Sheridan,
Assoc. AIA, LEED AP

#### **45 Last Words**

We are Building

By Rick Bell, FAIA

#### **46 Index to Advertisers**

Alphabetical and Categorical Index



distributed by Parksite

DuPont<sup>™</sup> Tyvek<sup>®</sup> Fluid Applied WB—30 years of industry-leading performance engineered for everything from high-rises to hospitals.

The superior performance of DuPont™ Tyvek® CommercialWrap® is now available by the gallon. Tyvek® Fluid Applied WB goes on quickly and easily, making it the ideal solution for buildings from five to fifty stories. And it works on a range of materials from concrete to gypsum board. So when you're looking for a weather barrier you know you can trust, there's just one place to turn-DuPont. Learn more at www.fluidapplied.tyvek.com

©2010 DuPont. All rights reserved. The DuPont Oval Logo, DuPont™, CommercialWrap® and Tyvek® are registered trademarks or trademarks of E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company or its affiliates.



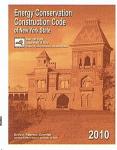
People Helping People Build a Safer World™

### 2010 NEW YORK STATE ENERGY CODE NOW MANDATORY

Based on the 2009 IECC°, new regulations lead the way to building a safe and sustainable future.

### **ENERGY CONSERVATION CONSTRUCTION CODE OF NEW** YORK STATE, 2010 EDITION

A fully integrated custom code based on the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code®. Encourages energy conservation through efficiency in envelope design, mechanical systems, lighting systems, and the use of new materials and techniques. Features include time-tested safety concepts and innovative construction technology. #3800S10NY



Don't forget your 2009 IECC® Code and Commentary, 2009 IECC® Study Companion, and Energy Inspector's Guide: Based on the 2009 IECC® and ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1-2007 available online now!







Coming April 2011 - User's Guide to the 2010 Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State

#### ICC SERVICES help you prepare for change and master the 2010 New York State Codes

I-Code Training • I-Code Certification • Plan Review Services • ICC ES-SAVE Program • IAS Special Inspection Agency Accreditation

GET STARTED TODAY! 1-800-786-4452 | www.iccsafe.org/NYenergy

10-03975

### Leading the Way

t's hard to believe that the year of the Architect as Leader has come to an end. As we began the year, we were optimistic that the economic recovery would be strong. But while the economy improves, its pace is glacial and continues to be of concern. Meanwhile, the AIA New York Chapter has considerably strengthened its government advocacy efforts, with a major initiative to affect Charter Reform to improve the development process. Our proposal to establish a Buildings Commission caused the Charter Commission to report that the issue requires further detailed study. It also resonated with Deputy Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, who has invited us to join his task force to streamline government processes. We also advocated at the state level for design liability reform and smart growth initiatives, and at the federal level for increased tax incentives for energy-efficient buildings, and funding for the greening of our schools.

Our Center for Architecture has delivered hundreds of programs and 20 exhibitions, culminating in "Innovate: Integrate – Building Better Together," which explored the architect's leadership role in both design and construction. The exhibition's highlight was the Liquid Wall, a full-size curtain-wall prototype that integrated energy-efficient principles. This prototype was a first for the Center, and we hope not the last exhibition that will feature the partnership of architects, contractors, and higher-education research organizations to demonstrate experimental design and construction technologies.

Architecture Week was another smashing success, from packed symposiums to a very successful Heritage Ball, where 1,100 people gathered at Chelsea Piers to celebrate leadership. We also launched "MADE IN NEW YORK," a public exhibition of member work that took over the West 4th Street subway station.

There were many other initiatives in 2010. We launched Architects Fast Track Leadership, a professional development series spearheaded by Mark Behm, Assoc. AlA. While it targets our young professionals, it has also attracted a mature audience. AlA National's call for a 2030 Commitment to reduce greenhouse gases was promoted in New York City with public programs, tours, and training sessions. My commitment to build One AlA in the city made progress, and all five borough Chapter presidents have been meeting and collaborating on citywide issues.

Many thanks to the Chapter staff, who have been a joy to work with, and to the 2010 Board members, who have served admirably. I'd also like to thank the hundreds of volunteers who made these programs and other Chapter initiatives in 2010 so successful. I'm happy to pass the gavel to Margaret Castillo, AIA, LEED AP. Margaret hasn't just spent this year as President-elect learning the job, but has truly been a partner, leading the Chapter's efforts in sustainable design and international outreach. I look forward to assisting her in 2011!

### The Next Steps Towards Sustainability

would like to thank Tony for his remarkable year of leadership in strengthening AIANY, which is particularly notable in the economic downturn. My goal is to continue supporting architects to lead, especially in dealing with the environmental challenges we face.

In 2008, for the first time in history, more than half the world's population lived in cities. It is estimated that by



Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP, and Anthony P. Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA

2030, 60% of us will be in urban environments. Never has it been more important for architects, engineers, landscape architects, and urban planners to collaborate and address the issues of urban infrastructure. It is critical that we look at our natural resources and the built environment in terms of economic, environmental, and social health – and that we use our resources wisely. It is incumbent upon architects to become the agents of change, and address the fact that so much of our energy consumption is attributed to cities and the buildings within them. For these reasons I have selected the theme, "Design for a Change."

In 2011 we will continue our collaboration with UN-HABITAT and the UN Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, and bring global representatives to New York to share best practices and innovative ideas. In the spring we will host the exhibition, "Jugaad Urbanism: Resourceful Strategies for Indian Cities," featuring home-grown solutions and design interventions for daily life in India's population centers. A series of lectures will address planning, informal settlements, societal change, and the role of design in Indian cities, and bring New York's design community a new perspective on "think globally, act locally."

Meanwhile, AIANY's own Committee on the Environment and Building Codes Committee will continue to produce continuing education programs on how to design and build with more energy efficiency. In October 2011, the year's theme will culminate with a major exhibition on buildings and energy. We must change the way we design, because it is through design that we can change the way our buildings are built and how they perform. Design matters – for the Vitruvian reasons of firmness, commodity, and delight – but also because our society's healthy future is contingent on responsible growth.

# AIANY DESIGNAMANA AWARDS 2011

February 4, 5 PM — Submission Deadline

**March 1, 6 PM** — Winners Announced at Design Awards Jury Symposium

April 12 — Design Awards Luncheon at Cipriani, Wall Street

**April 14, 6 PM** — Design Awards Exhibition Opening

For submission instructions and additional information, visit

AIANY.ORG/AWARDS

### Hello, World!

nd what a world. Depending on who's talking, we are/aren't coming out from under a major recession. We are/aren't taking climate change and energy independence seriously. We are/aren't paying enough attention to our built and natural environments to support a burgeoning population. The list goes on and on. The only thing that's clear, now more than ever, is that "we" no longer means just "us" within our own borders.

Today, what happens in Las Vegas doesn't stay in Las Vegas – or Shanghai or Mumbai or Sydney or New York City. Not that it ever really did – it's just easier to get to "there" from "here," sometimes without ever having to actually leave home.

The last time *Oculus* explored NYC architects on the international scene was Fall 2003 with "New York as Global City." The focus was on their processes, challenges, and rewards. Now we're taking a much broader view. As James P. Cramer, Hon. AIA, Hon. IIDA, and Jane Gaboury point out in the Opener, "...firms taking a global tack in business development...will be moving into the front seats of our industry." Cramer and Gaboury back this up with astounding statistics regarding projected non-U.S. billings for 2010, along with seven trends that "offer some strategic assistance" any firms already working or considering work abroad might want to take to heart.

For the Big Picture, we examine one of the most significant global trends: how cities learn from each other, exchanging and adapting strategies – and architectural and planning talent – to make our buildings, public spaces, and infrastructure better. With business challenges galore, London-based Lucy Bullivant, Hon. FRIBA, offers a timely look at how other countries



Editor: Long distance, please

recognize the economic value of architectural services and support them as a valued export. (Architecture, after all, doesn't need a passport.) By contrast, the U.S. does so little. Two features tackle what it takes for large and small firms to survive and thrive in the international market; another looks at the changing face of outsourcing. As case studies, we offer two NYC firms' very different paths to winning infrastructure projects in China and India, and another two making very different headway in Africa. Still others are lending their skills (and hearts) to humanitarian projects abroad.

Our regular departments are also internationally flavored. "So Says" catches a minute with Craig Dykers, AIA, LEED AP, co-founder of Oslo- and NYC-based Snøhetta, to talk about the differences between working here, there, and everywhere. "One Block Over" visits Flushing, Queens, a mélange of immigrant cultures that seems to thrive on chaos. "64-Year Watch" revisits the unprecedented international collaboration that went into building the United Nations headquarters. "Good Practices" offers Episode 8 of "Chronicles of Life in the Profession," highlighting Three Existential Crises. "In Print+" gives four thumbs-ups to tomes by Kamin, Gatje, Clausen, and Sanderson that are, respectively, "vivid," "delicious," "highly relevant," and "rare and magical." And "Click Here" scopes out Citiscope.org, spearheaded by noted journalist Neal Peirce (one of the best at reporting on and analyzing urban issues) to "increase attention to world cities' dramatic 21st century needs – and potentials."

Internationalized practice certainly offers pitfalls with its opportunities, but also reasons for optimism – even if we still have a ways to go before we truly are a small world after all.

An important housekeeping note: I am very pleased to announce that AIANY and the Oculus Committee have selected Naylor as the new publisher of *Oculus* and e-Oculus. With its 40+ years of experience supporting the media needs of trade and professional associations, we look forward to a long and mutually rewarding collaboration. Beginning with this issue, you'll see some changes in the magazine this year – including (drum roll, please!) a fully interactive digital edition!

Kristen Richards, Hon. ASLA kristen@ArchNewsNow.com

6 OCULUS WINTER 10/11

### Center Highlights

#### Heritage Ball 2010



Heritage Ball 2010 honored the Clinton Climate Initiative: A project of the William J. Clinton Foundation; Vicki Match Suna, AIA, New York University Langone Medical Center; Henry Cobb, FAIA, Founding Partner, Pei Cobb Freed & Partners Architects; and the 200 West Street Project Team (I-r): 2010 Center for Architecture Foundation President Jean Parker Phifer, FAIA; 2010 AIANY President Tony Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA; Arah Schurr (Clinton Climate Initiative); Suna; Cobb; and Timur Galen (200 West Street Project Team).



MADE IN NEW YORK was on view in the West 4th Street subway station for the month of October. The show featured recent projects located the world over designed by AIANY members.



The Center hosted the launch of the Inclusive Design Guidelines (IDG) in November (I-r): Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) General Counsel Jason Michel, Esq.; MOPD's Christian Valle; Jerry Maltz, AIA, co-chair, AIANY Design for Aging Committee; MOPD Comissioner Matthew Sapolin; MOPD Deputy Commissioner Robert Piccolo, AIA, editor-in-chief of the IDG; MOPD's Nicholas Kaminsky, Assoc. AIA; AIANY Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA.



Party@theCenter kept the cheer of Heritage Ball going late into the night. Almost 700 revelers danced the night away at the Center for Architecture below the mezzanine-cum-DJ booth.



**Ahmad** Mikhail, students at the City College of New York Bernard and Spitzer Architecture, received scholarships; CCNY was the institution selected by the Clinton Climate Initiative: A Program of the William J. Clinton Foundation. Five students received scholarships on behalf of the Heritage **Ball honorees.** 







The 2010 President's Theme show, "Innovate: Integrate – Building Better Together," opened in October. Sciame Construction built a prototype of the "Liquid Wall" in the Center's double-height space: (top) Passersby looking at the Liquid Wall; (above) Frank Sciame, Hon. AIANY, and Tony Schirripa, FAIA, at the exhibition opening.



In September the Center welcomed Danish architect and urban planning visionary Jan Gehl to New York (I-r): AIANY Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA; AIANY 2010 President Tony Schirripa, FAIA, IIDA; NYC Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan; Gehl; and City Planning Chair Amanda Burden, FAICP, Hon. AIA.



Last fall, the Center and Checkerboard Films organized a series of four "Checkerboard Conversations" between leading architects and Architectural Record's Deputy Editor Suzanne Stephens. In September she spoke with Ray Kappe, FAIA, founder of SCI-Arc and principal of Kappe Architects/Planners.



For Sukkah City, an international design competition, team members David Getty, Stephanie Gunawan, and Matthew Jacobs installed the cedar-planked Shim Sukkah in Union Square for a weekend, after which it was installed at the Center's Helfand Gallery.



The deans of 13 area architecture schools participated in this year's Deans' Roundtable in October (I-r): Thomas Hanrahan, Pratt Institute, and 2010 AIANY Public Director for Educational Affairs; Stan Allen, AIA, Princeton University and Hanrahan's 2011 successor on the AIANY Board; Evan Douglis, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Mark Robbins, Syracuse University; and Brian Carter, SUNY at Buffalo.



In October, AIANY traveled to Buffalo for the AIA New York State Convention (I-r): AIANY's longtime Membership Director Suzanne Mecs, Hon. AIANYS, was given an Honorary Membership; Burton Roslyn, FAIA, received the Matthew W. DelGaudio Award; and Mark Behm, Assoc. AIA, was selected for the Associates Award. Other AIANY members honored but not pictured include: Leevi Kiil, FAIA, James W. Kideney Gold Medal; Stanley Stark, FAIA, President's Award; FXFOWLE Architects, Firm Award; and Kenneth Frampton, Assoc. AIA, Educators Award.

#### **Center for Architecture Foundation**



Students from the NYCiSchool in SoHo proudly display their project, "A Case for a Green Roof," at the opening of the 14th annual "Building Connections" exhibition, a collection of the Center for Architecture Foundation's K-12 student design work from the 2009-2010 school year (see *Oculus* Spring 2010, "Raising the (Old School) Roof").



Third- and fourth-grade students build architectural models in the Foundation's Architecture Inside-Out after-school studio offered each Tuesday last fall.

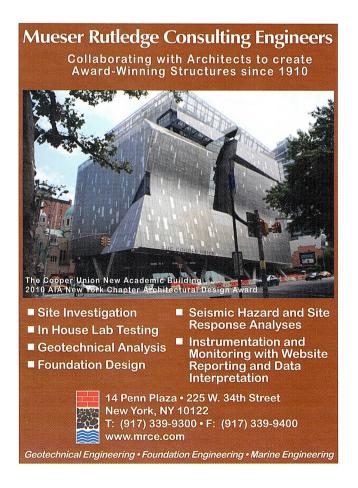
### THE CONSTRUCTION GROUP AT INGRAM YUZEK GAINEN CARROLL & BERTOLOTTI, LLP

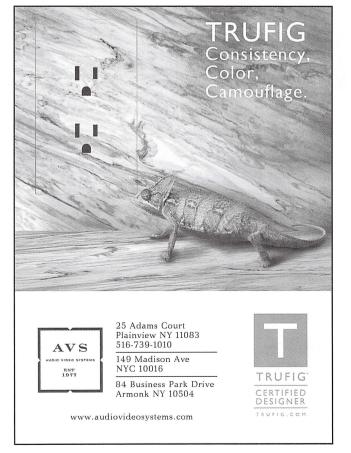


Larry F. Gainen Robert A. Banner Melissa T. Billig Mark E. Klein Jessica L. Rothman Tara B. Mulrooney Caitlin L. Bronner

We have over 20 years of experience representing design and construction professionals with contracts, litigation, alternate dispute resolution, ownership transition, the sale and purchase of practices, intellectual property, risk management and other business issues.

250 Park Avenue · New York · New York · 212.907.9600 <u>www.ingramllp.com</u>

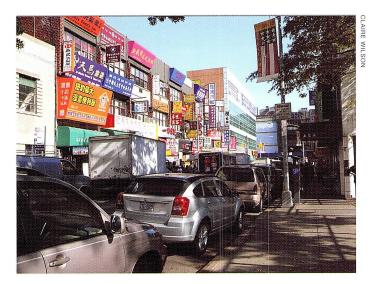




## Flushing, Queens: Thriving On Chaos

lushing, Queens, can be a bit of a shock for first-time visitors. It is a heaving pastiche of businesses, restaurants, and immigrants, mostly Asian, and is touted as one of the city's most diverse corners. Thirty-five minutes via the No. 7 subway from Grand Central Station, it is the largest transit hub outside of Manhattan, with links to the Long Island Railroad and 21 New York City bus routes, including one to LaGuardia Airport. According to Dion Yu, executive director of the Downtown Flushing Transit Hub Business Improvement District, 100,000 pedestrians pass through the intersection of Main Street and Roosevelt Avenue daily.

But the people of that corner of Queens must thrive on such colorful urban chaos, because there is a move afoot to add to it. Work is going ahead on plans for more residential and commercial space, and additional parking that will bring - surprise! - more cars.



Flushing commercial streets like this are a jumble of small businesses one on top of the other

Four projects expected to move forward at this writing include Flushing Commons, a 1.8-million-square-foot mixed-use residential complex designed by Perkins Eastman Architects, a joint venture of F&T Group and the Rockefeller Group; and another mixed-use project by F&T, this one 50,000 square feet with a Hyatt Place Hotel, designed by Margulies Hoelzli Architecture. STUDIO V Architecture designed a residential complex that will sit atop what remains of the historic RKO Keith Theater (partially bulldozed 20 years ago in a fit of pique by a former owner), as well as a master plan for the Flushing waterfront, which will include cafes, retail, entertainment venues, and 1,700 residential units.

These sleek, modern new projects are reminiscent of Queens Crossing, a 12-story commercial condo with lower-level retail at the corner of Main Street and 39th Avenue; Flushing Mall, which opened in 2000 (both by F&T); and Sky View Parc, a mixed-use complex built by Muss Development and designed by Perkins Eastman and landscape architect



STUDIO V Architecture: a residential complex will sit atop what remains of the historic RKO Keith Theater

Moss Gilday Group. They all stand in stark contrast to the teeming jumble of primarily low-rise Korean and Chinese jewelry stores, restaurants, food shops, herb shops, nail salons, banks, and clothing stores currently there, with nary a vacancy to be found. Even the rafters under the elevated train station function as retail.

Despite concerns about added congestion and stress on infrastructure - the No. 7 train is already at capacity - these new projects have much to recommend them. They might give Queens the "downtown" it lacks, according to Michael Meyer, president of F&T; the neighborhood would also be closer to the models of Asian capitals, with which the immigrant population retains close ties. Further, F&T's Flushing Commons will have 50% more parking spaces than the municipal lot on which it will be built, and more than an acre of public green space (the area's only one), designed by Thomas Balsley Associates.

The RKO Keith, designed by Thomas Lamb in 1928, is key to the area's revitalization, according to Jay Valgora, AIA, AICP, LEED AP, founder and principal of STUDIO V. Not only will his design restore the lobby that was not destroyed, but the mixed-use building will anchor that end of Main Street the way Ennead Architects' (formerly Polshek Partnership) Flushing branch of the Queens Public Library does at the Kissena Boulevard end.

"It has been the missing tooth for two decades," Valgora says, "but is a real opportunity to bring life and vitality to that end of Main Street."

Claire Wilson writes for the New York Times.

### So Says...

### Craic



Craig Dykers, AIA, LEED AP, received his Bachelor's in Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin in 1985. He co-founded the Oslo, Norway-based architecture, landscape, and interiors collaborative Snøhetta with Kjetil Trædal Thorsen in 1989, after its members designed the competition-winning entry for the Alexandria Library in Egypt. Upon being awarded the commission to design the National September 11 Memorial & Museum Pavilion at the World Trade Center site in 2004, the firm opened an office in New York City with Dykers at the helm. Trying to catch him sitting down is like trying to catch a falling leaf in a winter wind. Chances are he's in the air, somewhere between his Oslo and New York offices, or just about anywhere else in the world. Oculus Editor Kristen Richards finally connected with him (via email) while he was winging his way to Houston - or was it San Francisco, where the firm recently won the competition to design the expansion of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art? - to talk about the differences between working here and abroad, and life as a nomadic architect.

Kristen Richards: You had a rather nomadic childhood – one profile called you an "Army brat." Was that experience influential in your becoming what some might consider a nomadic architect?

Craig Dykers: I was born a military dependent. As soon as I made friends in one place, my family would move and I would find myself making new friends and waiting for the next message that my father would be stationed elsewhere. For me this was a positive influence. I developed skills for connecting to people in a short period of time. I taught myself how to engage and be empathetic. My sensitivity to language grew more profound. Also, I was raised in Europe and the U.S., so my education was broader than if I had been brought up within one specific cultural base.

KR

What most inspired you to become an architect?

When we were living in Darmstadt, Germany, where the German *Jugendstil* developed, I was fascinated by a small arts ghetto there that had been populated by Olbrich, Behrens, and others. As I grew up, my family allowed me to visit a number of cities in Europe. Simultaneously, there was always an atmosphere of culture in my home. This surely had an influence.

I began my university work studying fashion design and business, but these fields felt too superficial for me. Later I transferred to pre-med school, and was counseled to become a medical illustrator due to my skill at drafting and knowledge of science. My father suggested I look into architecture, as it is a good link between art and science. I have not looked back, but all of these pursuits have to do with human form and need.

Your 1989 competition-winning design for the Alexandria Library in Egypt was the result of an international team, and Snøhetta came out of that collaboration. How and why did you settle on Norway and Snøhetta?

We were a loose collection of young people, none over age 30, all recently out of school. We understood that the project was too large for any one of us to consider alone or within a small group. This important understanding cultivated a sense of collaboration and engagement that has stayed with us to this day. It is a different kind of ego than one traditionally finds in architecture; it is a feeling of being singular in the plural.

What was the impetus to open an office in New York?

Our office in Oslo was founded within an unusual contextual environment. We had drawn the Alexandria Library competition in Los Angeles, but the participants mainly came from Oslo or had ties to Europe. We found that creating a work environment outside the ordinary walls that defined our lives was a useful stress that could help us evaluate our architectural interests better. New York was a way of doing that again, after being successful for 20 years in Oslo.

What are the most striking differences between working in New York and Oslo?

Many people in Norway have a more relaxed understanding of design, and often this promotes more radical proposals. In New York, some colleagues who have been trained in the U.S. rely on more aggressive methods of conceiving architecture that involve a great deal of research and preemptive accountability, meaning modeling behavior patterns during the design process.

### ykers, AIA, LEED



What can you do in New York that you can't do elsewhere?

New York is one of the more European cities in the U.S., and it still manages to concentrate a wide variety of strong thinkers both permanently and in the short-term. This makes locating here less culturally divergent for a European practice than, say, starting a practice elsewhere in the U.S. Also, you don't need a car. I haven't owned one in 20 years.

In New York it is possible to continually engage with a wide range of the most interesting and influential people in the world. Some live here and others just visit; still, it is tremendously stimulating. This stimulation comes from all avenues, from the amazing taxi driver to the Nobel Prize winner at dinner. But with so much stimulation, it can be difficult to find meditative moments, and you have to work to slow down time.

Your Oslo office really is a local firm. If it becomes a truly global firm, are staff members "always the locals" - or always the foreigners?

Because of my upbringing, I have never completely embraced the distinction between foreign and local. I often say that culture is at its core something powerful but also very superficial. It is a collection of habits that a larger group identifies with.

Our most basic motivation is to be local, rather than international, wherever we are. This is why we have gone to extremes to establish ourselves in places we feel we could have a positive impact. We did not need to establish ourselves in New York; we chose to for the benefit of connecting directly to the place. We have had offices in London and Cairo, also. We did not disassemble our home in Oslo to come to New York, nor do we feel we have to indoctrinate everyone in Norway to have an authentic office in New York, without losing our Norwegian and Scandinavian values.

Where are the easiest and most difficult places to work?

We had a positive although challenging experience in Egypt. The clients respected our opinions and often acted on our suggestions. They respected the design and stayed with it throughout the long process to create a memorable building at a level they had not seen in modern times. They simply said, "We haven't done this before, so let's work together to make it happen." Often in the West, you find a different attitude. Everyone thinks they know everything about everything, and everyone wants to tell everyone else what to do.

The U.S. is very difficult for several reasons. First, the level of engagement with the design process by people not trained in the profession is very high, often leaving the work very muddled. We respect the input of a broad

range of people in design and construction of a building. The problem has more to do with timing and the actual time spent in this mode. Also, the U.S. remains heavily burdened by code, insurance, and safety issues that segregate design from its natural context. Another issue is that clients tend to expect more work from architects without paying for it. Finally, it is getting increasingly difficult for younger or smaller practices to build due to ever-increasing regulations limiting the choice of architects.

Are there places you wouldn't accept work?

We have had discussions about working, for example, in Saudi Arabia. Rather than saying no, we decided to engage with these places on our own terms. In Saudi Arabia we said we would not work on projects unless we were allowed to utilize a female project director. Originally this was not accepted, but eventually we won this discussion, and our values have been translated to this culture. This would not have happened if we just said no. Still we have our limits; if we cannot maintain our social values we will say no.

What was it like when you got the call that you'd won the National September 11 Memorial & Museum Pavilion?

We had already been through two enormously critical cultural projects, the Alexandria Library and the National Opera in Oslo (the opera had been politically volatile in Norwegian politics for 150 years before we began designing). This gave us a sense of calm with respect to engaging with the complex political world we knew would follow the commission. I believe that we have been successful due to our patience, openness, and positive outlook that a company with a less diverse background could not provide.

You recently said, "We wanted to be seen as place makers as opposed to the makers of places." Can you explain the difference?

We put the notion of place before the notion of authorship, so the place becomes the identifier of the interaction and engagement we seek. This particular saying is more of a sound bite to get people to talk, rather than a final manifesto. Another comment I made recently was: "I have never witnessed anyone walk into a building, drop to his knees, and say, 'What a f\*cking great concept!"



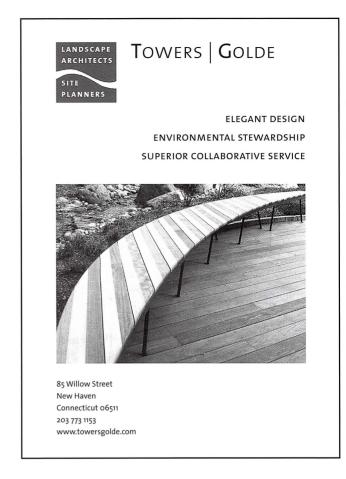
Do you keep track of your frequent-flyer miles?

I don't keep track, but we have a giant supercomputer that does.

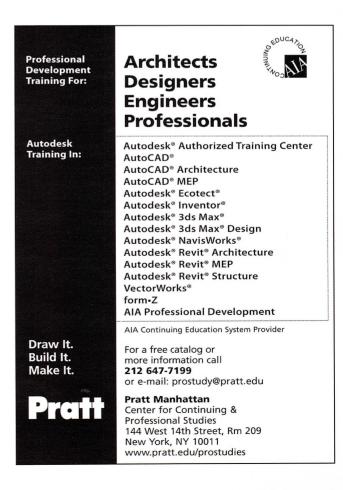


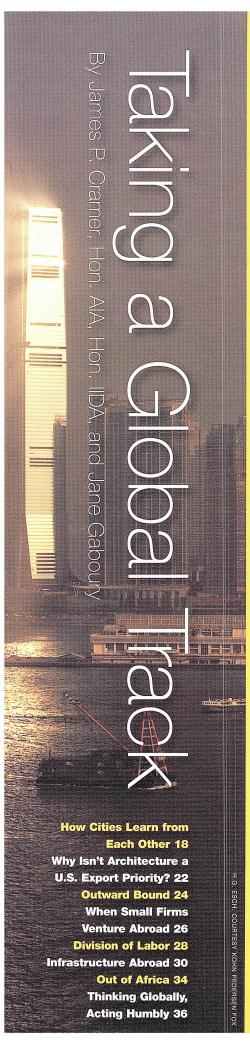
Petty Burton Associates

Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc.









ncertainty continues to hang over U.S. markets regardless of economists' declaration that the great recession ended in mid-2009. Many architects, however, aren't simply ducking their heads and waiting for things to change. Firms large and small are basing growth plans on an international strategy that banks on the encouraging investments being made in South America, Africa, Asia, India, pockets of Europe, and other emerging outliers.

Research on changing marketplaces and global practices has been conducted by DesignIntelligence and Greenway Group for more than a decade. What we foresee is that firms taking a global tack in business development - by actively seeking to export professional services - will be moving into the front seats of our industry.

The Multinational Design Firm Fee survey published in the September/October 2010 issue of DesignIntelligence identified the top 30 U.S.-based firms exporting architecture services. Of these, 14 have significant offices in New York City and account for a majority of non-U.S. billings. Projections made in mid-2010 for year-end billings found that total non-U.S. fees generated by the top 30 in 2010 were expected to be more than \$1.5 billion, with \$1.1 billion of that coming from firms with noteworthy New York City practices. For instance, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill anticipated billing \$173 million for work outside the U.S. and \$118 million for work within. Kohn Pedersen Fox projected \$55 million in foreign fees in addition to \$75 million in U.S. fees. And Cannon Design projected \$45 million in foreign fees on top of \$160 million from U.S. work.

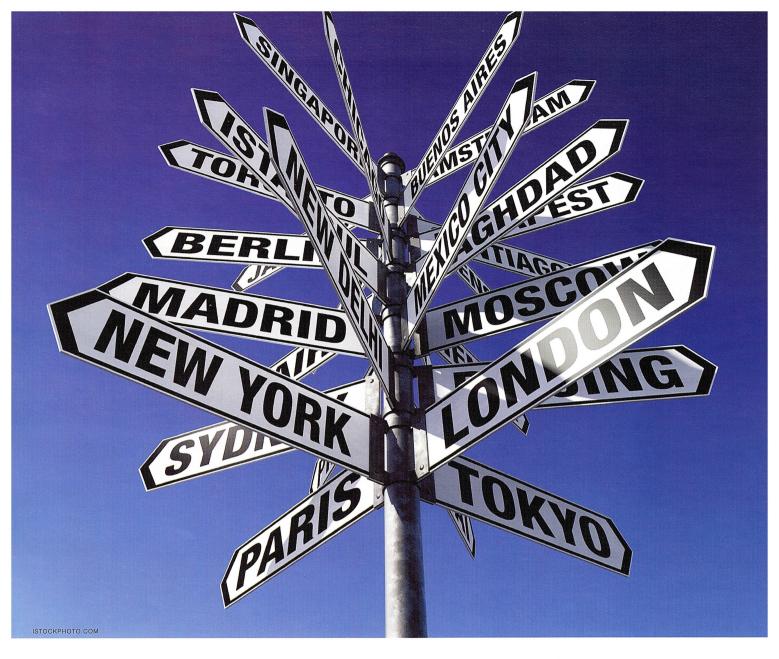
While firms of any size can experience success through a global vision, international practice itself won't ensure success. Seven trends we've identified may offer some strategic assistance:

- 1. Global professionals will experience persistent downward fee pressure. New commissions and their resultant contracts often involve newer competitive business models, new structures in service delivery, new productivity benchmarks, free market economy philosophies, and prevailing currency valuations.
- 2. You can become irrelevant overnight. The power of the Internet is awesome, and some of it is disruptive to professional services. It's now used in designer selection processes, for example. The electronic frontier will trip up firms slow to change.
- 3. You will be expected to achieve and sustain world-class service levels. Because global practices must be passionate about achieving superior results, it's more necessary than ever to weed out under-performers and set free the sacred cows. Take care of your high performers.
- 4. Entrepreneurial zeal will be rewarded. There is a definite chain of cause and effect that extends from design entrepreneurship to bottom-line success. Nothing is more inspirational than the energy of the entrepreneur.
- 5. China and Asia are powerful forces driving the global economy. China has traditionally borrowed many of its ideas from the West, but this is changing. Chinese architects have a youthful enthusiasm, and U.S. architects can learn much from their vigor and lack of cynicism.
- 6. Global marketing success is increasingly dependent on relationships, but it's difficult to become a trusted advisor in some countries due to anti-American views. Exporters of professional services must reevaluate their relationships with clients and reset their sails as necessary.
- 7. Seismic shifts will come out of nowhere. Changes in the A/E/C economy have accelerated during the recession, so resilient strategy is more important than ever. Investment in innovation (including cheaper services for frugal clients) is essential. Borderless capital and populations in needy urban environments are wild cards that could trigger enormous shifts.

Constructing a successful global practice is not easy, but as you'll see throughout this issue, it's being done well and in exciting ways. Not only can an international mindset portend business success, it can also help make a positive impact on the global community.

James R. Oramer, Hon. AIA, Hon. IIDA, is founding editor of DesignIntelligence and co-chair of the Design Futures Council. He is chairman of the Greenway Group, a foresight management consultancy.

Jane Gaboury is the editor and associate publisher of DesignIntelligence. She is Greenway Group's principal for publishing and editorial as well as a senior consultant.



### How Cities Learn from Each Other

In an increasingly networked world, cities borrow, lend, and adapt strategies for public space, buildings, and infrastructure – usually, though not always, for the better By Bill Millard

o city is an island, not even island cities. New York looks at Copenhagen, Curitiba, Portland, and elsewhere for ideas on transportation. Asian cities emulate New York's verticality, and in some ways are now outstripping it. Innovations in active design are making New York a convergence point for public-health and built-environment expertise; Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) epidemiologist Karen Lee, MD, MHSc, FRCPC, recently told a UN-HABITAT audience that the Active Design Guidelines are catching on broadly enough that the Fit City series (organized by DOHMH, Department of Design + Construction, and AIANY) may go national or even global. Cities worldwide study Paris for ideas on preservation, potable water, sanitation, urban/suburban linkages, and a bicycle-sharing system. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Barcelona lead the way in waterfront renovation while maintaining maritime industries. The cities profiled in the Center for Architecture's recent "Our Cities Ourselves" exhibition offer green transport models. Fast-rising Seoul and Dubai are inconceivable without this global intellectual influx.

How cities learn from each other varies with the means of communication, the specific sites involved, and the types of memes being

100 MINTER 10/11

shared (building designs, urban plans, environmental strategies, cultural-architectural connections). Some channels are institutional: universities, conferences, the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanism, the Urban Land Institute, the United Nations' World Urban Forum, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Mayors' Institute on City Design, and comparable groups. Firms spread memes globally by opening multiple offices, consolidating into mega-organizations like AECOM and Aedas, or launching publishing sidelines, such as Grimshaw's new Blue series and OMA's books and research group AMO.

Some forms of idea transfer depend on one charismatic figure: Jan Gehl advising New York's Department of Transportation on human-scaled spaces and transportation modes; Jaime Lerner making Curitiba an influential transit laboratory. Concepts leveraging largescale capital investments translate best into environments where authority is strong. Other ideas migrate through technology adoption, spreading without any conscious push at all.

#### **Double-edged swords and two-way traffic**

As channels of communication expand and cities recognize the problems they share, the vector toward greater exchange of ideas appears irreversible. Along with useful opportunities, however, increased idea exchange carries the risk that an international monoculture, more responsive to business imperatives than human ones, will steamroller the qualities that residents and visitors cherish about specific places. "For decades we have exercised a professional colonialism where we go to developing nations," says Urs P. Gauchat, Hon. AIA, dean of the College of Architecture and Design at New Jersey Institute of Technology. "Somebody stays in a hotel room for a week, and tells them what they should be doing - which is preposterous, when you think about it. What do you know after a week there? Nothing."

Architects with global experience agree that knowledge about urban systems is local and scalable. The need to balance broad expertise with local immersion can shape a firm's structure. Grimshaw, says NYC-based Managing Partner Andrew Whalley, AIA, Dipl. RIBA, FRSA, prefers opening remote offices "rather than just hopping in and out of London and doing the odd trophy building." The firm is "not an office with satellites," he says, but "a network of offices with one partnership." This distinction has "allowed us to get much more involved in a new and growing area: cities' infrastructure...everything from flood mitigation to bicycle racks to the first public toilets in New York in 20 years to the Fulton Street transit hub." Despite political barriers to investments like those being made in Asian cities, Whalley sees today's New York carrying on the European tradition of "recapturing" infrastructure" so that "what made a city a civilization was also a piece of architecture."

Fast-developing nations can do appalling things with Western ideas. In Paris and Rome, history and architecture are "so sacred they do a lot to preserve it," says Joan Blumenfeld, FAIA, IIDA, LEED AP, a principal at Perkins+Will. Seoul, in contrast, endured such wartime destruction that it essentially had no built history. "The few buildings that still existed, like the palace and grounds, were reconstructed badly," she says. The city's efficiency-oriented revival imported generic mid-century-Modernist building models. Middle Eastern buildings from the 1970s, she finds, often dealt well with sunlight and shading

using local strategies, but mixed bland Western forms with decorative "lip-service regionalism." Cairo's blend of weak government, high population, and heavy automobilization is anarchic. There are no traffic signals, and "you don't have to pay taxes if buildings are unfinished," Blumenfeld reports, "so most buildings are left unfinished. The chaos is hard to fathom."

In fairness, Blumenfeld adds, both Seoul and Cairo have features the West might usefully adapt. Seoul's urban space has a rural greenbelt and little suburban sprawl. Few Koreans demand expanses of land for privacy, resulting in compact cities. Cairo lacks civic garbage collection, but its independent garbage-pickers are more efficient than industrialized sanitation systems. Recycling specialists worldwide have studied their skills.

As channels of communication expand and cities recognize the problems they share, the vector toward greater exchange of ideas appears irreversible.

Perkins Eastman Principal Theodore Liebman, FAIA, emphasizes that not all aspects of urban design that enhance the quality of life are measurable or communicable. Assessing projects by profitability alone underemphasizes qualitative features: whether housing harmonizes with mores, whether public spaces accommodate mixed uses. Designing Iranian neighborhoods in the '70s, he learned their lifestyle required "getting bread three times a day - not shopping at the supermarket - because bread is old in an hour." Most Muslim women, he observes, are more comfortable in spaces offering shelter, not exposure, and in homes where adjacent buildings don't overlook one's garden. American housing and commercial forms can clash with other cultures' expectations about privacy, cuisine, or intergenerational closeness. They are the world's most exported models, Liebman finds, but "they may be the least appropriate to borrow from culturally."

For those convinced the U.S. has everything to teach and nothing to learn, it can be humbling to encounter Mongolia's solar collectors and 97% literacy rate.

Two-way idea traffic is now the norm, notes Lance Jay Brown, FAIA, DPACSA, a professor at the School of Architecture at CCNY/CUNY, whose eponymous architecture and urban design practice does international work. For those convinced the U.S. has everything to teach and nothing to learn, it can be humbling to encounter Mongolia's solar collectors and 97% literacy rate, or a French rail map that "shows you how in 20 years you'll be able to go anywhere in France in half the time at half the cost," he says. A board member of the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, Brown adds that "things change so quickly that, given an accelerated rate of change, you have to incorporate accelerated learning as well." This includes "leapfrogging what is going on at the moment," as when cities upgrading their transport systems choose bus rapid transit over costly tunnel-drilling projects.

### **Game-changing catalysts**

The global spotlight can inspire these rapid leaps. An Olympics, World Cup, or World's Fair offers its host nation a prominent stage. The International Olympic Committee now requires bidding cities to plan for quality-of-life improvements; this process can focus plans even when a bid fails (New York's effort for 2012 led to PlaNYC, notes Ernest Hutton, FAICP, Assoc. AIA, co-chair of New York New Visions). At UNHABITAT's October conference Better City, Better Life, representatives of London and Rio de Janeiro discussed how their respective Olympics (2012 and 2016) should spark urban regeneration: London will reclaim brownfields in transit-rich but blighted Stratford for 2012, according to Buro Happold engineer and Principal Andrew Comer, and Rio's municipal designer Washington Fajardo outlined potential infrastructural benefits for hillside *favelas*, or shanty towns.

The International Olympic Committee now requires bidding cities to plan for quality-of-life improvements; this process can focus plans even when a bid fails.

Other catalysts for urban change are unplanned, notes Gauchat. The world's 6.8 billion people use 5 billion cell phones; Facebook, with half a billion users, is Earth's third-largest "nation;" 2 billion people do their banking over cell phones. No one predicted that mobile telephony or social media would spread so fast or far, but technology is catalyzing forms of progress that outstrip governmental and philanthropic efforts. Users of GPS-equipped phones in the developing world are independently mapping shanty towns, organizing demand for infrastructure, and monitoring institutions' behavior, bringing Jane Jacobsstyle eyes on the street to regions where official assertions are unreliable and streets as we know them are unrecognizable.

Technology can transform cities more dramatically than public-sector action, Gauchat finds. "The political rhythm has a fairly short fuse," he says. "You have people vying for the House of Representatives every two years, but most things that change cities

BERLIN WADRID NOSC WADRID NOSC SIDARIS TOK can't be accomplished in two years." Phenomena driven by voluntarism and self-interest strike him as more capable of marshaling incentives effectively: for example, one novel barter system in Africa provides extra phone minutes for AIDS patients who take their medications. Conventional politics may leave citizens apathetic, but as their attention turns to "this sense of community on the ether," he sees "enormous possibilities for reengagement in the whole decision-making process in our cities."

Communications media, however, have not eliminated functions that only the public sector can take on. Arquitectonica Principal Bernardo Fort-Brescia, FAIA, cites discussions with planning authorities as vital communication channels; planning departments, he finds, are influential in defining "the personality of a city." Some cities' planners interpret codes strictly by the book, while others are more open to dialogue, as he found on a San Francisco project. "If there weren't flexibility, discussion, and interaction with the planning department," he says, "you probably could never build on that site."

Though energy usage and green practices vary locally, differentials in expertise are evening out, so that ideas rather than people do the traveling.

Jordan L. Gruzen, FAIA, partner at Gruzen Samton and a veteran of projects in Russia, Korea, Dubai, and elsewhere, observes a worldwide movement toward smart growth and sustainability traveling through law, codes, education, and economics. Speakers at the Urban Land Institute's October meeting, he says, noted how "these objectives, which were optional a few years ago and are now being written into law - the way New York City is passing new laws for energy and water - are going to be even more mandatory in the future. Groups will either play ball with that scenario or they won't be able to do their project." Though energy usage and green practices vary locally, differentials in expertise are evening out, so that ideas rather than people do the traveling. At one time, he saw emerging nations emulating "what we did, not in this cycle but in a previous cycle," replicating "a Corbusier world" while Western cities were embracing "a Jane Jacobs world." Now, Asian developers grow more comfortable hiring local talent rather than outsiders.

"It's very heartening to see how the green movement has taken," says Gruzen. "Not only the professionals, who usually take the lead on this, but developers themselves are beginning to talk about the long-term value that results from sustainability." Greater alignment of market incentives and regulatory imperatives suggests that sustainable urbanism picks up momentum no matter what channels it travels through.

When cities speak to each other, their messages add up to a meta-message: that the built environment is also a cultural environment, an intertwining of materials and memes. "If you build without culture, you build failure," says Brown. "Where you build with culture, you're likely to get success."

Bill Millard is a freelance writer and editor whose work has appeared in *Oculus, Icon, Content, The Architect's Newspaper, LEAF Review,* and other publications.

### NEW DOCUMENTS RELEASED

#### Protect your project for tomorrow with AIA Contract Documents today.

AIA Contract Documents just released new and updated agreements that address the unique requirements of urban planning, multi-family and mixed-use residential projects. With an eye towards sustainability, we offer documents that can help guide your revitalization project with a framework for transforming aging urban structures into vibrant communities. Easy to use, widely accepted and fair and balanced for all parties involved — get off to a smart start with AIA Contract Documents.

NEW DOCUMENTS TO INCLUDE URBAN PLANNING, MIXED-USE HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS - AVAILABLE THROUGH AIA CONTRACT DOCUMENTS SOFTWARE AND AIA DOCUMENTS-ON-DEMAND $^{\mathsf{TM}}$ .

To learn more, call 800-242-3837 or visit aia.org/contractdocs.





# COULUS WINTER 10/11

### Why Isn't Architecture a U.S. Export Priority?

Other countries do a better job of promoting their design talent to the world. The U.S. government could and should - do more than it does By Lucy Bullivant, Hon. FRIBA

ow can America be better at promoting its architecture abroad? We may not remember the days when Louis Armstrong, U.S. Ambassador of Good Will, used to perform overseas as part of government initiatives. But many who saw those performances fondly remember them as representing America's rich culture and unique character. Promoting U.S. culture abroad has been out of fashion for decades, but American architects compete on a global stage on which other nations lavish support for architecture as key to their export strategy. Some 70 million people visited Shanghai's Expo 2010, with nations like Spain and the U.K. attracting hours-long lines by leading with their best design talent. By contrast. The Huffington Post was not alone in deeming the U.S. Pavilion, designed by the Canadian architect Clive Grout, "a supply storage shed" or "a temporary NASA admin building c. 1970."

Another lost opportunity for American architects is the Venice Biennale, the key fair for architecture worldwide. Hans Hollein, director of the 1996 Architecture Biennale, was so frustrated with the lackluster American effort that he went to then-Guggenheim Director Thomas Krens with an ultimatum: "You have to come up with something, otherwise you cannot participate." Krens selected the theme "Building A Dream: The Art of Disney." In 2006 Architectural Record also mounted "After the Flood," a self-funded exhibit curated by the editors on the redevelopment of New Orleans.

William Menking, editor and founder of The Architect's Newspaper, was co-curator of the U.S. Pavilion on socially responsible architecture at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale. With the Guggenheim, Menking raised \$375,000 to augment the \$75,000 offered by the U.S. Department of State. By contrast, the Austrian pavilion reportedly cost 680,000 euros (about \$940,000) and the German, 500,000 euros (\$694,000), all provided by the state.

For all its place in the limelight, the U.S. Pavilion gets meager support, and the system is full of flaws. Menking's grant was released at the end of May, giving him just three months to pull off his exhibit. "Now it's increasingly going to be corporatized," says Menking, who is looking into starting a non-profit to raise money for the U.S. Pavilion ahead of time, to avoid the squeeze.

#### **Getting Promoted**

Scananavia gets it. This winter the non-profit American-Scandinavian Foundation in NYC celebrates its centennial with "Nordic Models +

Common Ground," an exhibit supported by the government of Norway and curated by the Norwegian and New York City architecture firm Snøhetta. Helsinki is the World Design Capital 2012, yet another government-supported promotion of the value of architecture, the appeal of Helsinki, and the talents of Finnish architects. The city has already started an international satellite events program with Hel Yes!, a pop-up restaurant-cum-exhibit in London.

The U.K. promotes its architecture overseas through the and British the Council Department of Trade Industry, aiding such global giants as Arup, Foster + Partners, and others. Netherlands subsidizes mono-



U.S. Pavilion at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale, co-curated by William Menking, founder and editor of The Architect's Newspaper

OCULUS WINTER 10/11

graphs and exhibits on Dutch architecture, and the expansive Netherlands Architecture Institute - which has helped OMA, MVRDV, UNStudio, and other Dutch firms become global brand names. It has specialist consular support linked to the Dutch Ministry of Culture; its shows include "Big Soft Orange" (Storefront for Art and Architecture, 1999) and another from ARCAM, Amsterdam, coming to the Center for Architecture this summer. Australia has the new Australian Design Alliance and the Queensland government-sponsored HEAT program, now consulting to several other countries and cities.

AIANY/Center for Architecture's Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA, says increased state funding "would make a big difference in organizing exhibitions, symposia, and study tours." Compared with countries like Russia and Asia, "American government funding is paltry for traveling exhibitions," he says. Since 2003 the Center has presented 150 exhibits, including "Berlin/New York Dialogues," and shows in collaboration with Mexico City and Barcelona (the latter funded significantly by Barcelona and Cataluña). "Made in New York: Socially Responsible Architecture" was exhibited at the Zodchestvo Architectural Festival in Moscow last fall, thanks to the Union of Architects of Russia. And, on the one hand, the Center is stepping up its collaboration with UN-HABITAT on issues of sustainable urbanization while, on the other, AIANY seeks to support opportunities for NYC-based architects to find commercial opportunities worldwide.

### **Identity Crisis**

"Export promotion for architecture is simply not on the national radar screen," says Bell. This lack of attention makes it very difficult, he notes. "Architects working abroad also create opportunities for U.S. engineers, building manufacturers, and contractors," he says. "There is also lack of national design identity - or even a vigorous debate about what it should be." Lindy Johnson, who instigated HEAT for the State of Queensland, says, "Someone needs to take the lead and identify the strengths of American architecture."

Since the 1990s, Congress has failed to appropriate funds for EXPO pavilions, so American efforts depend on private sector funding. The U.S. Pavilion at the EXPO 2010 Shanghai was hampered by fundraising that fell short. Although the pavilion had a waterfall and a vegetable garden roof modeled on Michelle Obama's garden at the White House, the iconography of the building - an eagle with open wings - and dull grev forms were ill-matched and nothing like the standard of Buckminster Fuller's exceptional U.S. Pavilion at the Montreal World Expo in 1967.

Having funds is not the whole issue, says Olympia Kazi, executive director of the Van Alen Institute. Van Alen, which inherited an endowment in the 1990s and has commercial rental income covering about a third of its income, receives a lot of government agency support. Kazi doesn't agree that the state funding system is deficient. For cultural initiatives, private funds in the U.S. are "exorbitantly bigger than in Europe, where government money can be wasted without enough criteria or accountability," she says. "If events had more funds, you wouldn't necessarily see a better result. Give people time and space for thinking."

Eva Franch, Storefront director, believes that state sponsorship is extremely important, but more important is how funds are allocated, given, for example, that "the final contents of the U.S. Pavilion exhibition in Venice had to be approved by the government." Most governments tend to promote the commercial side of design, but isn't the issue the economic value to the U.S. of exporting architectural talent? Franch's response is that talent must lead. "Jason Schupbach, the newly appointed design director at the National Endowment for the Arts, comes with lots of energy," she says. "Perhaps, with great collaborative projects between all existing institutions, we can help shape a topography of processes, funding opportunities, and programs that position America in the forefront of architectural innovation in terms of exhibitions, production, and materialization of ideas."

Private funding can help close the government gap; however, this is about brand promotion and not just architecture, and that invariably limits what corporations will do. Commercially-driven ventures like the BMW Guggenheim Lab, a six-year program of traveling workshops and public discussions inspiring "forward-looking concepts and designs for urban life," are also promoting cross-cultural, participative export models. In allying itself with architecture and urban design, BMW joins other corporate initiatives, like the Audi Urban Futures Award and the Zumtobel Sustainable Architecture Awards, all launched in 2010.



AIANY/Center for Architecture's "Made in New York: Socially Responsible Architecture" was exhibited at the Zodchestvo Architectural Festival in Moscow last fall, thanks to the Union of Architects of Russia

For all their glamour, corporate brands are undesirable as sole funders of architectural promotion. Bell emphasizes how important it was for AIANY's Center for Architecture to partner with the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, a non-governmental group that works with cities worldwide to bring about transport solutions that cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve the quality of urban life. The ITDP and the Center collaborated on the recent exhibition, "Our Cities Ourselves," to envision 10 cities in 2030, centered around safe and enjoyable walking, cycling, and public transit.

Integrating architecture into American export strategy requires opening a new, more urgent, and creative dialogue between and in the design marketplace and the halls of government.

Lucy Bullivant, Hon. FRIBA, is an architecture curator, author, and critic based in London.

# COULUS WINTER 10/11

### Dutward Bound

The thriving international market makes work abroad very attractive to large firms - if you've got the budget, management, and vision to support it By Richard Staub

t's become a given that during a recession, large New York City architecture firms will look abroad for work. And indeed, the rewards can be substantial. Among the several firms Oculus talked to for this article, current fees for work abroad range from 20% to 70% of their annual income. Even in these straitened times, markets such as China, India, Brazil, and parts of the Middle East remain far more robust than those in the U.S.



Kohn Pedersen Fox: The International Commerce Center is the tallest building in Hong Kong and includes the highest hotel in the world, The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong

But getting work abroad is hardly a piece of cake. Even firms with several decades of experience enter each new country on the lookout for unknowns - such as currency restrictions, different land-use laws, and standards of construction. And they do so knowing that equally experienced international competitors may be right on their tail, if not already there.

That hasn't always been the case. Indeed, accelerating in the late 1980s, as foreign markets became primed for major development, international corporations and developers turned to firms such as Skidmore. Owings & Merrill (SOM), Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF), and HOK for design help. Offering know-how that local firms didn't have in creating complex, large-scale buildings, major New York practices began serving first the European market and then those in the Middle East and Asia, designing commercial towers that became urban landmarks.

Some architects, such as Bradford Perkins, FAIA, who worked on international projects prior to co-founding Perkins Eastman, have practiced abroad all of their careers. In the 1960s and '70s, HLW International got a head start designing laboratories and healthcare facilities for oil giant Aramco's Middle Eastern projects. Perkins remembers firms starting to look abroad during the recession of the late '70s. According to Paul Katz, FAIA, president of KPF, the big opening for KPF, SOM, Pelli Clarke Pelli, and several other firms came in the late '80s when then-U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher reduced regulation and London-based financial service firms made plans for the first high-rise complex in the nation, Canary Wharf. Keeping pace, other countries followed and the international tall building race was on.



Perkins Eastman: The Concordia International School Shanghai is a new 129,200-square-foot high school completed through a joint effort of the firm's New York and Shanghai offices

#### **A Steep Learning Curve**

Of course, many firms started to work internationally for other reasons. Some already had connections through their leadership or staff or, in the case of David Brody Bond Aedas, had a client who brought them foreign opportunities. Others, like Steven Holl Architects, won a competition or, like Rafael Viñoly Architects, were sought out because of their design reputation. But however the firm won the project, taking the next big step of opening a thriving office meant a steep learning curve, with different legal systems, building codes, social customs, styles of building and design, currency, and probably language. Perkins, whose firm now works on four continents, offers a thorough overview in his book, International Practice for Architects (Wiley, 2007).

"We gave a lot of thought to opening offices abroad before we did so in the mid-1990s," says Ted Hammer, FAIA, LEED AP, a partner-incharge at HLW International. "We considered who should lead the effort and office locations from both a design and business development perspective. When we opened our London and Shanghai offices, entrepreneurial members of our New York office who came from those cities started them up. And most of those offices' staffs now come from the region."

"In 2005 and 2006, when FXFOWLE Architects was looking to diversify, we were lucky to have a senior partner, Sudhir Jambhekar,



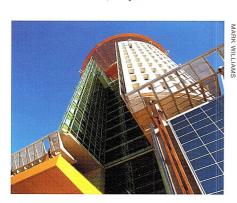


FXFOWLE Architects: The 12,540-square-foot King Abdullah Financial District Mosque will serve residents and visitors in an all-new mixed-use district in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

FAIA, RIBA, LEED AP, who wanted to champion the effort," offers Guy Geier, FAIA, FIIDA, LEED AP, one of the firm's senior partners. "We looked at the Middle East and India, establishing an office in Dubai when things were still very active. When its economy collapsed, we cut back on the office, but our presence in the area has resulted in other substantial projects, including participation in the King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia."

### **Designed in New York**

Offices abroad use their outposts for business development, but the ratio of design to production work varies, with design happening mostly if not entirely in the U.S. "Our international clients like working with a New York firm. They are hiring us for our design ability, and that means our New York office," says Katz. "Asian clients expect greater visibility



HLW International: The design for the 355,200-square-foot Kuwait Chamber of Commerce headquarters in Kuwait City is based on the traditional concept of the caravanserai, or mercantile fortress, underscoring the Chamber's ideals of protection, unity, and communication

and recognition for their buildings enduring structures that go beyond the norm - which means greater opportunities for innovative design," says Gregory Cranford, AIA, a design principal with BBG-BBGM. "Since many selffinance their buildings, they don't have to answer to investors or show immediate profitability," as projects for American commercial clients do. Overseas clients trust

Perkins Eastman to design building types it hadn't done in the U.S., giving it the track record to pursue similar projects at home. "In Asia, if a client likes you, they are more likely to give you a chance with a building type you've not designed before," says Katz.

While electronic communication technology seamlessly links global offices, it does not replace hands-on understanding of site particulars and a country's customs and design styles. Some firms rely on photos transmitted from the local office to resolve minor site issues, but the design leader usually must visit to resolve key questions onsite, and sometimes stays in the country for several months. If the design work happens in New York, however, firm leaders rack up frequent-flyer miles traveling to their clients abroad. "We have to travel much more, because clients want a level of attention from principals that goes with their buildings' budgets," says Cranford.

One downside of having the New York office design a building in Shanghai, for example, is that staff architects who work on the project rarely get to experience the construction process or the completed building, and that cuts down on lessons learned. And then there's the challenge of maintaining a cohesive firm identity and approach to practice among offices abroad, staffed wholly or in part by architects who've never been to the United States, let alone the head office. "The only way to keep offices abroad from feeling marginalized is to treat all of the locations as one firm," says Perkins.

This decade's new markets story may be the rapid development of the very populous countries: India, Brazil, possibly Indonesia, and Mexico. Russia, building on vast mineral wealth, may also grow quickly. Each raises questions: What's the financial and construction capability? Is intellectual property protected? Are officials corrupt? How do we

learn to adapt to foreign climates and customs?

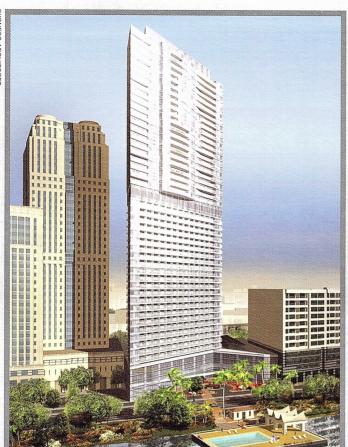
"We're very optimistic about the future of the international market." says Katz. "The high-rise tower has proven its value as a sustainable structure in every urban environment, and now New York firms are designing master plans and a wide variety of building types abroad." Indeed, the recent opening of studioaria suggests the evolution of the model for international practice. Formed a year ago by five former senior mem-



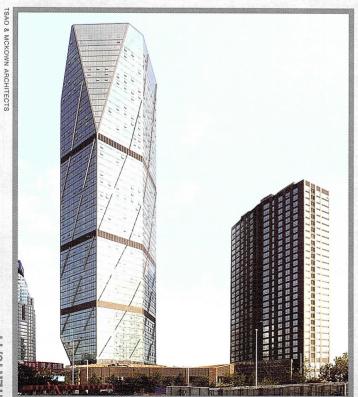
BBG-BBGM: Two large mixed-use buildings and two smaller retail buildings grouped around a five-acre park are part of a 30-acre mixed-use development in New Delhi, India

bers of BBG-BBGM, the architecture and planning firm has offices in New York, Sydney, and Shanghai, with at least one director in each and 10 major projects in the U.K., Lithuania, Japan, and China already in development. Its directors have their Skype address on their business cards, and conference electronically at least once a day. Their mantra is to think and act globally and stay nimble. Given the growing opportunities of the international marketplace, it may be the way to go.

Richard Staub is a marketing consultant and writer who focuses on issues important to the design and building community.



Sydness Architects: Planned hotel and condo complex on the Nile River in Cairo, with retail on four levels at the base and a floating pool in the river



Tsao & McKown Architects: The IMC Tower and Residence at the Agora, in Qingdao, China, includes a 51-story, 936,000-square-foot office tower and a 30-story, 96-unit condominium tower

### When Small Firms Venture Abroad

ran make a success

By Claire Wilson

ou'd think there would be so many things that would c courage small architecture firms from working abroad. For of the unknown. Worry about getting paid. Cultural mir fields. Language barriers. Bureaucracy. Sexism. Build codes. Earthquakes, even. Who needs it?

Need it? Maybe not. Want it? Seems so. More and more sn New York firms are taking those international commissions and he few, if any, downsides to report. The fees are not the same but for it most part the jobs are unusual, the travel interesting, and the fore partnerships enriching personally and professionally.

Audrey Matlock, AIA, principal in Audrey Matlock Architect, I projects in Trinidad, Kazakhstan, and Turkey. Her New York staff only 12 is nimble enough to take on these jobs. She manages the fi and can do whatever she wants, she says. "I don't have to run throu a bunch of partners, and nobody has to run through the financials say whether it fits into the overall marketing plan," she explains. "encounter an opportunity I think is interesting and good for the fi and myself, I will jump on it."

K. Jeffries (Jeff) Sydness, AIA, principal in Sydness Architects, no has a staff of five, down from about 12 before the economy sagger Among other projects in Asia, his firm designed the St. Regis Hote Shanghai. He says that a staff of 10 to 15 is ideal for taking on foreity jobs of any scale. "Be lean and mean so you can do what you was without all the overhead," says Sydness, who did numerous interrational projects with his former firm, Johnson Burgee Architects.

Practically speaking, a staff of two is too small to take on we abroad, according to Vrinda Khanna, partner with her husband Rob Schultz, AlA, LEED AP, in the four-year-old Brooklyn-based Khan Schultz. A staff of five or six like they had in the past was a better s for the firm, which has done many projects in Khanna's native Inc These included warehouses, office buildings, and residential housir among others, all for the same client. "Two is hard because of the traeling," she notes. "You want to have people in the office so the burc of travel doesn't always fall on one of the two of you."

Whether a staff of one or team of 15, international business wo be impossible without the available technology. Firms rely heavily teleconferencing between far-flung offices, and the use of third-pa servers and FedEx to transmit large drawings. Louise Braverms FAIA, has a staff of six in her eponymous firm, Louise Braverm Architect, which is designing a women's health pavilion in the Afric nation of Burundi and a museum in Portugal, the Centro de Arl Nadir Afonso. She travels frequently to both places but communicat







Louise Braverman Architect: Centro de Artes Nadir Afonso, Boticas, Portugal



Khanna Schultz: Completed in 2010, the 10-story St. Leo Road Apartments in Mumbai, India, includes a double-height pool/gym area above the ground-floor lobby, and seven full-floor apartments

electronically most of the time. "We work on Skype, have meetings, view drawings, and share information every week," she explains.

According to Khanna, technology is important but only when partnered with the hands-on approach, since many architects often do basic drawings and then make changes at the site with the contractors present. "The value of making those decisions on-site cannot be stressed enough," she says. The Mumbai native also believes it is important for foreign architects to spend large chunks of time in a country to better understand culture nuances, architectural precedent, materiality, and how space is used. She and Schultz, who is American, spent three years living and working in India, where they now do many projects.

That kind of time is a luxury, but sensitivity to local norms coming out of long stays is an imperative, according to Sydness. He notes the importance of seemingly minor details like seating arrangements at dinners in Shanghai, where everyone at the traditional round table for 10 wants to sit next to the architect, considered the honored guest. "There is a certain amount of diplomacy that goes with it, and some Americans are not always the best travelers," says Sydness, who is awaiting the green light on a project in Egypt. "You have to be careful."

All say language is a challenge, but trying to learn the patois has certain advantages too, according to Matlock. She is studying Turkish to enhance her interactions with colleagues in Istanbul and Kazakhstan. "It is valuable even if you only make the effort to show you have some investment in their culture," she says.

Local partners are key to successful projects. They handle document translation, navigating building codes, tax codes, local corruption where present, and government agencies. "Always work with someone local to avoid getting charged extra or being misinformed," cautions Khanna.

Braverman works with a local firm in Portugal, but in Burundi the partner is the Village Health Works, a non-profit with years of experience in this particularly rugged geographic and social landscape. "They are excellent," she says. "It is all collaboration."

One unusual thing these small firms have in common is that with rare exception, the first international clients came to them - the firms didn't seek them out. Matlock has a client in Trinidad, who one day walked off the street into her New York street-front office, liked what he saw, and hired the firm to do a luxury waterfront leisure complex. Braverman's African client found her through an online search. Calvin Tsao, FAIA, partner in the 20-person Tsao & McKown Architects, won a competition to do the 6-million-square-foot Sun Tech City complex in Singapore many years back, but gained no new clients. Then the West Village apartment he did for his sister was published in a magazine, and the offers poured in - for product design, fashion-show stage sets, retail stores throughout Asia, housing projects, and a planning project in Istanbul.

Firms successfully operating abroad were happy to have the extra revenue as the U.S. economy tanked and so many projects were put on hold. But according to Tsao, consistent international success comes at the end of a long process of network building and can't be done overnight. "It is a little late if they do it in a way that is meant to save themselves," he says.

Claire Wilson writes for the New York Times.

### Division of Labor

Outsourcing is not new, but some firms are finding new ways of putting it to good use

By Jacqueline Pezzillo, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP

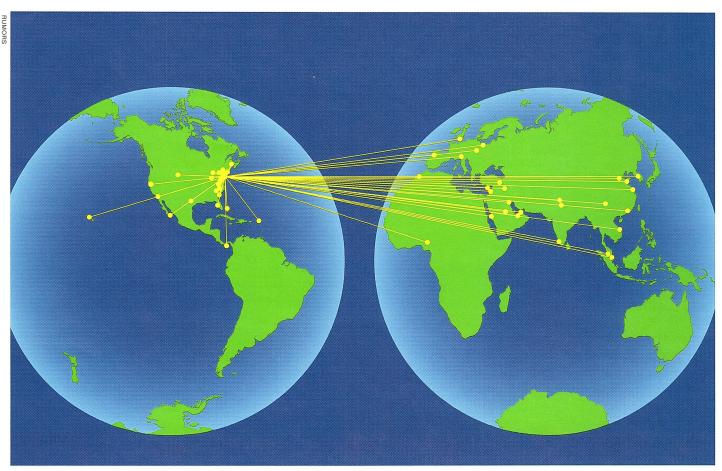
wenty-five years ago, Stephen J. Hegeman, AIA, currently a principal at Francis Cauffman Architects, was working on a project in Philadelphia with CAD drawings produced by a firm in Palo Alto. The practice of outsourcing – contracting professional services to a third party – is not new, but has evolved substantially since then, and the implications of this trend are far-reaching for the A/E/C industry. According to the 2006 AIA Firm Survey, more than 60% of architecture firms outsourced work at least occasionally, and 8% of these engaged in offshore outsourcing, the practice of sending work to third parties overseas. It is estimated that 20% to 30% of U.S. architecture jobs will be offshore by 2015.

During an offshore outsourcing roundtable held by the AIA International Practice Committee in 2006, attendees cited the domestic shortage of skilled junior architects and high-quality interns as a primary driver of offshore outsourcing. Hegeman, co-chair of the AIANY Professional Practice Committee, agrees with this reasoning. In 2006–07 the industry was struggling to find skilled staff, he says, and

"We need to pull out of the economic downturn successfully...and skilled staff is crucial so we can leverage labor, technology, and skill sets."

Stephen J. Hegeman, AIA

skilled labor pools developing overseas were leveraged by U.S. firms, spurring an increase in offshore outsourcing practices. As the economic climate shifted and more young architects found themselves looking for work, however, there was a change in offshoring trends. In 2009 it became easier to find qualified staff and less important to outsource, says Hegeman, making lower labor rates the new primary driver of offshoring.



#### Is outsourcing helping or hurting?

In addition to saving money, outsourcing enables firms to manage multiple projects, especially during peak periods, which increases competitive advantage and profitability. Having 24/7 project documentation in multiple time zones by multiple labor shifts allows fast-track production and adherence to aggressive project schedules.

FXFOWLE Architects' New York office has been engaged in offshore outsourcing for almost two years. According to Krishna Rao, the firm's digital design manager, the transition to BIM was a turning point. The procurement of a large contract in the Middle East, the firm's first experience with Revit modeling requirements, caused management to look outside its borders for assistance, specifically, to CADForce, a Los Angeles-based outsourcing firm with production centers in Pune, India. FXFOWLE views CADForce technicians as an extension of its junior production team; Rao considers them an integrated unit of the in-house staff, giving him the flexibility to adjust staff resources as project demands change. Offshoring is also augmenting the practice's business development, providing an opportunity to leverage a local resource and make connections on the ground in expanding markets. The firm's work in Latin America, for example, is buttressed through its collaboration with the Argentinean production firm, Estudio Libovich Arquitectura. The production firm plays the role of associate architect, providing FXFOWLE with credibility in a region where they do not have a local office.

According to the 2006 AIA Firm Survey, more than 60% of architecture firms outsourced work at least occasionally, and 8% of these engaged in offshore outsourcing, the practice of sending work to third parties overseas. It is estimated that 20% to 30% of U.S. architecture jobs will be offshore by 2015.

Quality control and risk management are common concerns associated with outsourcing. Steve Whitehorn, managing principal of Whitehorn Financial Group, a professional liability and risk management practice, strongly advises his clients to carefully review the quality of work received from third parties. Overlooked issues such as incorrect dimensions, errors in construction detailing, and omissions can be detrimental to budget, schedule, and professional reputation. While FXFOWLE recognizes that in-house management yields better quality control, it allocates time and establishes protocol to manage document review of outsourced work as soon as it arrives. "We align expectations at the start of a project," says Rao.

Among those who argue that outsourcing has damaging consequences, Hegeman lauds the training and skills that intern development programs provide to young designers, and is disquieted by the detrimental effects of outsourcing on staff development. "We need to pull out of the economic downturn successfully," he says, "and skilled staff is crucial so we can leverage labor, technology, and skill sets." Hegeman adds, "AIANY has established the ENYA [Emerging New

York Architects] and New Practices Committees to engage and provide leadership opportunities for emerging architects and new practitioners. In combination with those committees, the Professional Practice Committee is sponsoring the Architect's Fast Track Leadership program to prepare up-and-coming firm members for the transition to firm leadership." FXFOWLE's long-term goal is to acquire and train in-house staff to meet BIM needs; in the interim, however, offshore outsourcing allows the design-oriented practice to focus resources and enables staff to gain Revit skills through osmosis and collaboration with CADForce.

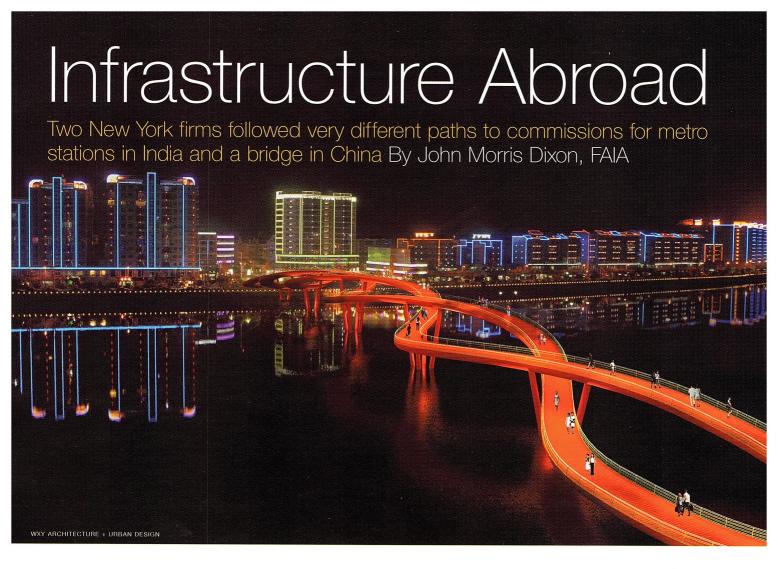
"Work is sent to where it is most efficiently completed...which is more important than where it is completed the cheapest." Craig Schwitter, PE

### Work-sharing and outsourcing business savvy

With 25 offices across the U.S., U.K., Europe, and Middle East, the engineering firm Buro Happold does some limited outsourcing, but it also engages in work-sharing, which allows it to take advantage of the firm's global resources. According to Craig Schwitter, PE, a principal based in the New York office, the goal of work-sharing is to shift work across offices to leverage talented and top-performing staff. Hubs of expertise exist in specific locations, and they are sourced for skill according to project needs. "Work is sent to where it is most efficiently completed," says Schwitter, "which is more important than where it is completed the cheapest." While there are varying labor rates among offices - staff rates in Poland are roughly a third of those in New York - Schwitter says the firm's work-sharing doesn't have a huge impact on the bottom line. It does, however, help Buro Happold's engineers across the world develop competitive skills. In turn, this allows the firm to become more marketable in a global economy and capable of pursuing work in international markets.

TEK Architects does not engage in outsourcing of architectural services, as Principal Charles Thanhauser, AIA, rationalizes that architects should be experts in their trade. But the firm, which has been a client of Whitehorn Financial for more than 20 years, does take advantage of not only the company's practice-management services, but also its help in developing strategies to improve business, extend professional networks, and market. In areas where architects are less knowledgeable, such as risk management and business development, "bringing in an expert is just good practice," says Thanhauser.

Jacqueline Pezzillo, Assoc. AlA, LEED AP, is the communications manager at Davis Brody Bond Aedas and a regular contributor to e-Oculus.



s the economies of China and India have expanded, their demand for distinctive design has continued to rise. And the firms that first established beachheads in Asia don't necessarily get all the choice commissions. Two relatively small New York firms with special areas of expertise have recently produced memorable designs for infrastructure projects in these countries.

For Lee Harris Pomeroy Architects (LHPA), work in both China and India has developed in steps that could not have been planned. The firm designed the Lally School of Management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), where Lee Harris Pomeroy, FAIA, RIBA, met a Chinese professor in the school's Sino-American MBA program. This encounter led to a meeting with the director of a new Economic Development Area in the port city of Tianjin. The two men invited Pomeroy to visit the site and asked him to do a feasibility study for a convention center there, which he carried out with a financial planning group from RPI. LHPA designed the center, which was completed in 2004. Convention activity it attracted led to its expansion, according to plan, in 2009. Contacts made as a result of the Tianjin work led a public/private partnership to commission LHPA to design the 1,000-unit Westgate residential and retail development in Shanghai, first phase completed in 2007.

Later visiting India, Pomeroy met with the developer and Bollywood movie idol Sanjay Khan. Impressed with the firm's work in China, Khan invited him to master plan a mixed-use development called Skill City in a Special Economic Zone near Bangalore.

#### **Design Distinction for a Metro Line**

Several factors lay behind LHPA's commission to design the stations for the new East-West Corridor of the Kolkata Metro Railway. In New York, the firm had completed renovation/expansion projects at the Lincoln Center, Union Square, MoMA, and Fulton Street subway stations, and had projects under way at the Bleecker Street and the 180th Street stations (both joint ventures with Weidlinger Associates). The latter involves restoration of a prominent, landmarked structure and its entry plaza.

Through these jobs, Pomeroy forged contacts with New York City Transit Authority staff members who came from India and had since returned there. As qualifications for the Kolkata project, LHPA's New York subway experience was complemented by its success with projects abroad. The firm was invited to join a design and engineering consortium with firms from the United Kingdom, France, Japan, and India, which won the metro commission.

LHPA has designed the aboveground portions of six stations on this new subway line, which will link Kolkata's two main railroad stations and an existing subway. All of the metro stations will have a significant urban presence – some with just a broad identifying canopy, others integrated into new mixed-use structures. One of them will be worked into the fabric of the Howrah Station, an imposing landmark of British rule. Another will be the dominant feature of a large new plaza at the busy Sealdah station.

OCULUS WINTER 10/11

Further LHPA projects in India include participation, as the architecture firm on multidisciplinary teams, in a program to build world-class stations in 26 cities. These involve public/private partnerships linking transportation to economic development, which Pomeroy sees as setting a pattern for urban development throughout India.

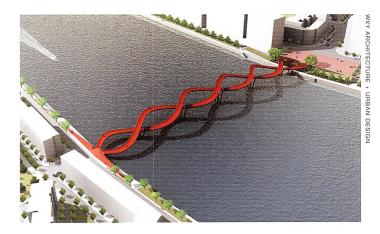
#### **A Signature Footbridge**

WXY Architecture + Urban Design won its commission for a pedestrian and bicycle bridge in Xinjin, China, through the time-honored design competition process - this one open only to prequalified teams. For the qualifying round, Weidlinger Associates asked WXY to join its team.

WXY had previously designed several footbridges: proposed links over West Street from Battery Park City (unbuilt) and another in Coney Island (on hold). To cross a slip on the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront, the firm designed a series of pods and footbridges (under construction). Its previous collaboration with Weidlinger, however, had been on structures now under way in Hudson River Park.

To prepare for the Xinjin competition, WXY partners Claire Weisz, AIA, and Mark Yoes, AIA, LEED AP, visited the site with engineer Qi Ye from Weidlinger and found an intriguing context for their work. Located in southwest China, Xinjin is a satellite of the regional metropolis Chengdu. It is known as a place of history and a leisurely "teahouse culture," in an area resembling a traditional landscape scroll.

The competition encompassed four bridges, three of them vehicular and the fourth a footbridge crossing the Nanhe River at the center of Xinjin. Five teams were chosen to submit proposals. The WXY-Weidlinger scheme took first place for the footbridge and came in second for the three vehicular bridges, which were awarded to a Chinese team.



WXY Architecture + Urban Design and Weidlinger Associates (design engineer): The Nanhe River Bridge (above and opposite page), a pedestrian and bicycle bridge in Xinjin, China, will link a riverfront plaza in the town's historic core to the center of a new development across the river

The proposed footbridge links a riverfront plaza in the town's historic core to the center of a new development across the river. Its purpose in replacing an existing footbridge is to increase capacity and create a memorable landmark.

The unique WXY-Weidlinger design proposes two intertwining sets of spans, both held up on five multipronged supports, with 80-foot spans between them. The architects say the resulting twists may make the journey across seem shorter than the "long corridor" of a straight bridge. That perception is likely to vary depending on how urgently an individual wants to reach the other end. In any case, the twin ribbons will definitely meet the goal of making the crossing "an

experience unto itself."

The spans themselves will be simple box girders, with sleekly curved cross sections. The engineers took pains to deal with the potential vibration problems of footbridges, given the cautionary example of the Millennium Bridge across the Thames in 2000.

Every part of the bridge will be red, even the paving, made with a red aggregate. Lighting along it will consist of both under-handrail illumination of the footpaths and an array of linear and circular lights along the flanks of the spans. These are to be programmable in moving patterns. (Vivid and kinetic lighting of buildings, including those along this river, has become common in China.)

WXY and Weidlinger are



Lee Harris Pomeroy Architects: The entry pavilion at the Howrah Metro Station, part of Kolkata's new East-West Metro System is elevated to accommodate monsoon conditions

carrying their footbridge scheme through essentially the design development phase, with the collaborating Southwest Municipal Engineering Design and Research Institute of China taking the process to completion, scheduled for next year. The details remain subject to design review by WXY and Weidlinger.

These commissions are just a few of many that architects from various countries have been carrying out in China and India. They demonstrate that there are intriguing opportunities abroad for a variety of firms, and that the outcome of these commissions can increase the international stature of American architects.

John Morris Dixon, FAIA, left the drafting board for journalism in 1960 and was editor of *Progressive Architecture* from 1972 to 1996. He wrote the Midtown Manhattan portion of the original 1967 *AIA Guide to New York City.* In recent years he has written for *Architectural Record, Architecture, Architect,* and other publications.

#### **Project Credits:**

Kolkata Metro Railway East-West Corridor (Underground Segment) Client: Kolkata Metro Rail Corp. Ltd. (KMRCL)

Lee Harris Pomeroy Architects Team (Station Architecture, Support Facilities, and Property Development): Lee Harris Pomeroy, FAIA, RIBA, Antonio Figueroa, AIA, James Wright, AIA, Richard Foley, AIA, Leopoldo Torrocha Project Management, Civil, Structural, Geotechnical Engineering; and Tunneling: Maunsell / AECOM

Railway Engineering Systems: EGIS Rail S.A.

Underground Engineering: Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd.

Transportation Planning: SGI/SEMS

Construction Administration: CES (Consulting Engineering Services India Private Limited)

Nanhe River Landscape Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge, Xinjin, China Client: Chengdu and Xinjin Development Corporation

WXY Architecture + Urban Design Team: Claire Weisz, AIA, Mark Yoes, AIA, LEED AP, Layng Pew, AIA, Kate Brumder, LEED AP, Yeju Choi, Travis Eby, LEED AP, Matthew Gilbert, Shachi Pandey, LEED AP, Alan Tse, LEED AP

Weidlinger Associates Team (Design Engineer): Guang-Nan Fanjiang, PE, Qi Ye, PE, Jeremy Zhang, PE, Courtney Clark

Engineer-of-Record: Southwest Municipal Engineering Design & Research Institute of China



Lee Harris Pomeroy Architects: The entrance to the Sealdah Metro Station that provides an intermodal link to Sealdah Train Station includes a Mandala symbol in a sunken plaza



Position your products and services in front of some of he most influential architects and design professionals in the United States.





Show your company's commitment and trength to architectural professionals by articipating in our extensive publications rogram. Contact your Naylor account xecutive today to learn more about the rint and online opportunities with AIANY.

Reach the decision-making architects, engineers, and construction professionals in the largest AIA chapter in the country.

### Magazine (Print Edition)

Published four times a year, New York architects rely on *Oculus* as a resource to stay up-to-date about the profession. It covers trends in practice, new projects and products. *Oculus* is also a marketing tool for architects whose projects are featured and for the AIA New York Chapter. It is distributed by mail and at conferences and is on sale at the Center for Architecture throughout the year.

### Magazine (Digital Edition)

Extend your print advertising investment with the unique benefits of digital media. In addition to print, *Oculus* is now available to readers for the first time in a fully interactive digital version. *Oculus* digital edition allows readers to forward to colleagues, view issues instantly from most smart phones, and read the issue online or download and print for later.

### Oculus Newsletter

This bi-weekly electronic newsletter delivers the latest chapter news, industry developments and architectural news to our member architects, allied professionals, students, and public members in the office or on-the-go.

### AlANY.org Advertising

The AIANY website is the gateway for members and non-members to access information about the architectural profession online and to web visitors who are interested in the Center for Architecture's many programs and exhibitions. Ads on our website allow viewers to click through to your company's website.

For more information about advertising with AIANY, contact:

Chris Zabel. Publication Leader

Naylor, LLC





### Out of Africa

New York-based architects are using sustainable and cutting-edge technologies in Malawi, Botswana, and other African countries to help boost the economy and empower the people By Linda G. Miller

alawi is not the only developing country in sub-Saharan Africa plagued by extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, drought, substandard infrastructure, and a lack of clinics and schools, but her situation is one of the most desperate. In 2006 pop idol Madonna and Michael Berg co-founded Raising Malawi, an organization that aims to end the suffering of the country's 2 million children who are at risk.

Three years later, a Moringa tree was planted north of Lilongwe, the country's capital, to mark the start of construction on the Raising Malawi Academy for Girls, designed by Markus Dochantschi, Assoc. AIA, founder of NYC-based studioMDA. When completed in 2012, the 113-acre campus will include classrooms, dormitories, staff houses, a library and administration building, a dining hall, a gymnasium, a wellness center, and a sports field. True to its mission, the school will be a place where Malawian girls can be educated, instilled with cultural responsibility, and empowered to realize their potential.

studioMDA's involvement with Raising Malawi began when a former staffer, designer Jessica Wilpon, was in Malawi for her master's thesis and met the organization's director. Wilpon suggested the director meet with Dochantschi. And so for the past two years, the firm has invested its time and intellectual capital on the project – on a pro bono basis. Dochantschi travels to Malawi about every eight weeks, with studioMDA designer Chris Maurer working on-site, alongside local architect Ismail Patel of IMDesign and other members of the international design team, until the project is completed.

"As foreigners," says Doschantschi, "we don't want to force our design philosophy." With the academy, however, the firm can practice what it preaches - environmental, cultural, and fiscal sustainability. The design team has developed passive methods of sustainability, such as the orientation and functionality of the buildings. The geometry of the roofs and fenestration of each building are designed to optimize natural light and airflow, a deceptively complicated task that combines intuition and state-of-the-art computer simulations. Active methods are also employed, such as using locally sourced construction materials like hydraform bricks, made from soil on-site. This alleviates the use of burned bricks, which are largely responsible for widespread deforestation in Malawi.

Since the primary vocation of Malawians is subsistence agriculture, landscape architecture has played an important role in the master plan of the campus. Landscape architect Susannah Drake, ASLA, AIA, principal of Brooklyn-based dlandstudio, is also participating in the project on a pro bono basis, creating a landscape that reflects the different ecoregions of the country from which the students come. In addition, she is designing agricultural areas where students can experiment with different farming practices. These include outdoor classrooms carved out of the brush in pod-like forms, and larger areas for collective outdoor education. Asked about the directors of Raising Malawi, Drake says, "I am impressed by their commitment to sustainability, but more by their mission of educating young women to be the future leaders of the country."



SHoP Architects: Botswana Innovation Hub

The Raising Malawi Academy is one of several studioMDAs projects in Africa. In 2009, Dochantschi, along with studioMDA designer Chad Kellogg, LEED AP, presented final plans for an all-girls school for the Georges Malaika Foundation in Kalebuka, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is now under construction. Also on the boards is a clinic designed for Millennium Villages – a project of The Earth Institute at Columbia University, the United Nations Development Programme, and Millennium Promise in Mwandama, Malawi. As an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia University, Dochantschi is also using his African adventures as a learning tool for his students in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, leading research trips to Malawi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ghana.

#### "A World-Class Facility"

For some, Africa is not inching towards the 21st century but leap-frogging into it. For NYC-based SHoP Architects, the Republic of Botswana, with its "clean" diamond industry and thriving domestic financial sector, is a land of opportunity – and a place where architects can apply innovations in process, materials, and technology.

In April 2010, SHoP won an international competition, besting seven other short-listed firms, including Foster + Partners, Gensler,

and Perkins+Will, to design the Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH) in the capital city of Gaborone. A ground-breaking ceremony was held last October. Wanting to achieve economic diversification, Botswana is developing the BIH as a science and technology park that will provide office and laboratory space for technology-driven and knowledge-intensive foreign and local businesses, as well as research and advanced training institutes.

"Our clients are interested in pushing the envelope," says SHoP Principal William Sharples, AIA. "They're forward-thinking, and interested in implementing new ideas and cutting-edge technologies to create a world-class facility that fosters innovative ideas and cultivates new businesses."

SHoP is responsible for the design of the iconic central building – four "bar" structures, connected by bridges and interspersed with gardens – that will be surrounded by a development of 41 low-rise office and lab buildings. SHoP is also collaborating with Arup on the master plan and urban design of the site. And, to facilitate the work process and guarantee the integrity of their design, the SHoP team is sharing its knowledge of the design tools used on the project, such as BIM and Revit, with local architecture partner Nuttall Smith Architects. The firm is also exploring ways to share its knowledge of digital programs with other local architects, and has offered to teach workshops at the University of Botswana.

Ex Africa semper aliquid novi – From Africa always something new – was an expression coined by the Romans. For centuries, Africa has been a source of wonderment for naturalists. In the 21st century, it is proving to be fertile ground for New York architects, too.

Linda G. Miller is a New York City-based freelance writer.

Raising Malawi Academy for Girls, Lilongwe, Malawi

Client: Raising Malawi Architect: StudioMDA

Design Team: Markus Dochantschi, Assoc. AlA, Chris Maure,

Chad Kellogg, LEED AP

Landscape Architect: dlandstudio
Design Engineer: Adams Kara Tailor
Architect-of-Record: IM Designs, Malawi
Cost Estimating: SFS Property Consultants
Structural Engineer: RD Consultants
Landscaping: ULC Landscapes
Mechanical Engineer: M&E Associates

Consulting Engineers: Transsolar Climate Engineers; John Todd

Ecological Design; ARUP Consulting Engineers

Botswana Innovation Hub, Gaborone, Botswana, Africa

Client: Botswana Development Corporation

Architect: SHoP Architects

Design Team: Christopher R. Sharples, AIA, William W. Sharples, AIA, Coren D. Sharples, AIA, Kimberly J. Holden, AIA, Gregg A. Pasquarelli, AIA, Jen Conway, Zach Downey, LEED AP, Kevin Fennell, RA, Steven Garcia, Tyler Goss, Shannon Han, Rem Koning, Chris Lee, LEED AP,

Luisa Mendez, Ayumi Sugiyama, RA, Andrea Vittandini

Local Architect: Nuttall Smith Architects
Lighting Consultant: Tillotson Design Associates
Master Plan: SHOP in collaboration with Arup

# Thinking Globally, Acting Humbly

As NYC-based architects launch humanitarian projects abroad, they're learning lessons in flexibility and perseverance
By Lisa Delgado

ou don't have to be an expert in working abroad to do good humanitarian work overseas. In fact, an open mind and a willingness to listen to the locals may be your best assets, along with patience and ingenuity. "You really have to be humble and willing to learn," advises Noushin Ehsan, AIA, president of 2nd Opinion Design and chair of the AIANY Global Dialogues Committee.

When Ehsan traveled to Port-au-Prince in March 2010 with the U.S.-based nongovernmental organization (NGO) Love for Haiti, she led a team of several architects and engineers who assumed they could best help by assessing the safety of earthquake-damaged buildings. One day the team visited a tent city, where a group of Haitians approached them angrily, assuming they were disaster tourists. "We are not animals to be displayed," one said. From that point on, team members decided that, despite their limited resources and access to materials (not to mention scant experience in hands-on construction), they needed to take some kind of concrete action to help. With the aid of locals, they built a few structures in a couple of different designs.

The most successful design they call the "Nura dome," a 10-foothigh, round structure whose frame is made of 10 pieces of bent rebar. It can be covered with tarp or more durable materials. It's inexpensive, easy to build and replicate, and earthquake-safe because of its shape.



Designed by the SOFTHOUSEgroup, the HaitiSOFTHOUSE consists of hexagonal steel-frame modules that can be combined to serve many different programs over time; ecofriendly elements include rainwater collection and waterproof fabric panels that, when no longer needed, can be reused as material for raincoats or purses





In addition to sustainable housing, Studio Unité's Village Tournesol will include a vocational school and agricultural spaces to promote education and jobs, helping the residents become self-sufficient

"My fondest dream would be to see the Nura dome 'wikified' - i.e., that people appropriate it, spread it around, modify, take ownership of it," says Mark Freehill, who came up with the design concept.

In three hours the team built two Nura domes, which were greeted with an outpouring of gratitude. "If you'd given them a castle, they would not be as happy," Ehsan says. "Compared to a tent, where they must bend down, they could stand up in the Nura dome." Since then, Love for Haiti has built 22 more domes.

The Nura domes are a step up from tents, but Ehsan is scouting for better long-term solutions. After returning to the U.S., she formed Haiti-Habitat (haiti-habitat.com), a subcommittee of the Global Dialogues Committee, which worked with others to issue a call for collaborative design in October. Their goal is to draw upon the best of those ideas to create a prototype housing cluster in Haiti, with construction to be funded by donors.

Other NYC-based architects are working to make a difference overseas, often teaming up with humanitarian organizations that can help with logistics or funding. U.S.-based Architecture for Humanity/AFH (architectureforhumanity.org), Building Foundations with Haiti (buildfoundhaiti.org), and Architects Without Borders (www.awb-seattle.org), and London-based Article 25 (www.article-25.org) are just a few of many such groups around the world. One intriguing design for Haiti originated with designer and teacher Alice Min Soo Chun and her nonprofit group Studio Unité (web.studiounite.org), which grew out of a studio she taught at Columbia University last spring. Drawing upon her expertise in community development, Chun led the creation of a highly holistic design called Village Tournesol (tournesol means "sunflower" in French); AFH is a partner in the project.

The sunflower is "efficient and strong, but also provides food and fuel for humans, animals, and other plants," Chun explains. Similarly, Village Tournesol functions in harmony with the local ecology through solar-powered electricity and rainwater collection, helping the inhabitants become self-sufficient in a country with limited infrastructure. In addition to housing, the village will include a vocational school and agricultural spaces to promote education and jobs. "In these crisis situations, if there aren't jobs available after the NGOs have gone, then there's no hope," she says.

Other NYC-based architects are working to make a difference overseas, often teaming up with humanitarian organizations that can help with logistics or funding. U.S.-based Architecture for Humanity/AFH (architectureforhumanity.org), Building Foundations with Haiti (buildfoundhaiti.org), and Architects Without Borders (www.awb-seattle.org), and London-based Article 25 (www.article-25.org) are just a few of many such groups around the world.

It's a project that's well aligned with AFH's ideals. Since its beginnings in 1999, the organization has become increasingly conscious of the importance of sustainability in its broadest sense: environmental, economic, and cultural, says co-founder Cameron Sinclair, Assoc. AIA. Foreign architects need to make sure their work maximizes the economic well-being of a locale. For example, Sinclair explains that AFH would prefer to "use a traditional construction technology in India, which employs 10 times as many people for the same amount of money. Locally, that means economic sustainability."

Disaster often draws manufacturers and contractors whose primary motives are profit, says NYC-based EASTON+COMBS Principal Lonn Combs, AIA. "For every architect working in Haiti and thinking about reconstruction as a design opportunity for creative and sustainable com-

munities, there are at least 10 contractors or large-scale industrial manufacturers that see the country purely as a market," he says. "They'll offer what is essentially a kind of outhouse for \$500, which is made out of solid steel or tin solutions that take no consideration for design whatsoever." Similarly, Ehsan was dismayed to see a dome in Haiti made of fiberglass, another material illsuited for a hot climate.

Combs traveled to Haiti as part of his work to prototypes create HaitiSOFTHOUSE, a sustainmodular structure designed in collaboration with



Nura domes, created by Love for Haiti. can be covered with tarp or other materials; this photo shows an experiment in covering one with plaster

Rodney Leon, AIA, principal of an eponymous NYC-based firm; architect and landscape architect Dragana Zoric, RA, RLA, who works at tentwenty and W Architecture; and artist Mark Parsons. The four designers teamed up soon after the January 2010 earthquake, when they were all teaching at Pratt, to form SOFTHOUSEgroup (www.haitisofthouse.org).

Clearly there's a huge need for the work of architects, and Combs advises people with ideas for rebuilding efforts in Haiti to "get off the



In Cambodia, Cook+Fox Architects worked pro bono to design the Center for Friends Without a Border, a sustainable visitors' center for the Angkor Hospital for Children in Siem Reap

drawing board as soon as possible" and start construction. In his experience, it's valuable to build structures a couple at a time to test and refine them for the future. Part of his learning process has been adjusting expectations for the speed at which a project can be done in a disaster-ravaged Third World country. "What would take a day in New York could take up to two weeks in Haiti," he says.

Rick Cook, AIA, of Cook+Fox Architects is working to improve conditions in another troubled country, Cambodia. When he and his wife



At The Green Initiative biodiesel facility in Phnom Penh, large tanks are used to store and convert collected waste vegetable oil into biodiesel for distribution. The biofuels project, established by Cook+Fox Architects Principal Rick Cook, AIA, and others in 2006, is changing to a new moniker: Naga Fuels, a name that references Cambodian mythology and is easy to pronounce for both Cambodians and English speakers

visited Phnom Penh in 2002 on a trip to bring their two sons home and form an adoptive family, he was struck by how the country was filled with contrasts, as a rising consumer and car culture was replacing older traditions and technologies.

From 2006 to 2008 Cook's firm worked pro bono to design the Center for Friends Without a Border (a sustainable visitors' center for the Angkor Hospital for Children in Siem Reap), which won an AIA New York State Award of Excellence in 2009. Though green building design is his forte, he also realized that designing energy-efficient buildings could only go so far - the larger issue is that energy production itself tends to be highly inefficient. He helped establish The Green Initiative in 2006, a biofuels project in Cambodia. TGI uses waste vegetable oil to create 7,000 liters of biodiesel a month, providing fuel for Angkor Hospital and five other organizations. (The project was a semifinalist in the 2010 Buckminster Fuller Challenge.)

The biofuels venture has had its share of travails, but it has also led to a serendipitous surprise. A byproduct of producing the fuel turned out to be a high-quality, biodegradable glycerine that mechanics can use instead of gasoline to degrease parts. "That's probably the single biggest environmental impact we could have, and it's just an accident we stumbled upon," Cook says. To architects thinking of embarking on a similar project, he offers these words of advice: it can be "infinitely harder than your wildest imagination. At the same time, if you persevere, new avenues open up."

Lisa Delgado is a freelance journalist who has written for e-Oculus, The Architect's Newspaper, Architectural Record, Blueprint, and Wired. among other publications.

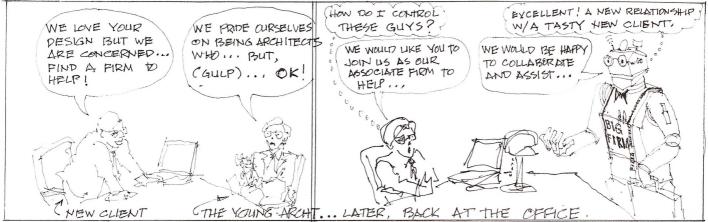
By Stanley Stark, FAIA

## Chronicles of Life in the Profession Episode 8: Career Path Charting (Part 2)

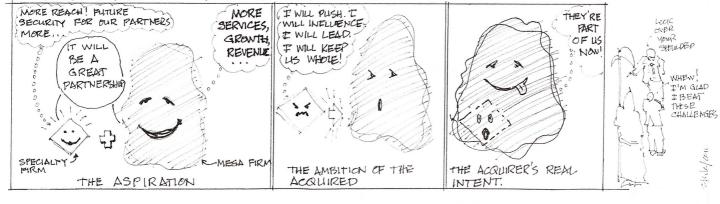
More advice on navigation but, sadly, no definitive maps



## A YOUNG FIRM FACES THE THREAT TO AUTHORSHIP AND REPUTATION!



## MALA: A MATURE SPECIALTY FIRM FACES THE THREAT TO INDEPENDENCE AND IDENTITY.



#### Botswana

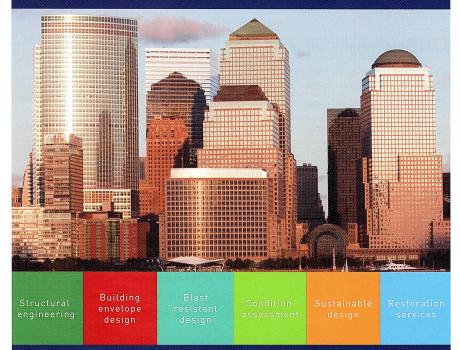
Nuttall Smith Architects are proud to be associated with SHoP Architects as their Botswana Partner Architect for the prestigious Icon Building for the Botswana Innovation Hub in Gaborone Nuttall Smith Architects have been practicing continuously in Botswana since 1987 with offices located in the capital Gaborone and in Francistown, the principal city of the north.

Nuttall Smith Architects are registered with the Botswana Government (PPADB) to provide professional architectural services for any size of project and over the years have successfully completed many large government and private sector assignments.

If we can assist you with projects located in the Southern African region please feel free to contact us at <gaborone@nsa-arch.com> or <francistown@nsa-arch.com>

# A proud member of the New York design community...

For more than 25 years, Halcrow Yolles has collaborated on iconic structures that shape the skyline of this dynamic city.



As part of the New York design community, we have the opportunity to combine local knowledge with international best practices to develop engineering solutions that complement the city's unique cultural and physical landscape.

With our global reach, our creative energy and shared passion for landmark design, we help our clients realize their most ambitious projects, anywhere in the world.

To learn more about our work visit our website or email contact.us@halcrowyolles.com.

halcrowyolles.com

Offices worldwide

**Halcrow Yolles** 

#### Center for Architecture

F26 LaCuarda Placa Navi Vert, NV 10010

101. 212.000.0020 | 11109diarly.org

### AIA New York Chapter Office Hours Monday-Friday:

9:00am-5:00pm, Saturday-Sunday: CLOSED

The Center for Architecture is a hub for all interested in the built environment. It is a place to gather, share, learn, honor, and advocate. The Center's mission is to:

- Provide a center of learning for the public and building industry professionals in order to improve the quality of the built environment
- Explore cutting-edge topics, technological innovations and other issues concerning the built environment
- Foster an exchange and collaboration among members of the design, construction and real estate community
- Promote an appreciation of New York's unique urban fabric
- Inspire community values and provide fellowship opportunities
- Promote cultural tourism of New York City's architecture

#### **Gallery Hours**

Monday-Friday: 9:00am-8:00pm Saturday: 11:00am-5:00pm Sunday: CLOSED

# 64-Year Watch

The design of the iconic United Nations headquarters called for an unprecedented international collaborative effort initiated in 1947

By John Morris Dixon, FAIA

or American architects, "international practice" generally refers to commissions abroad. But the United Nations headquarters in New York is the world's most prominent instance of design carried out jointly by architects from many nations.

When the UN, founded in 1945, addressed the need for a headquarters, an international design competition was widely anticipated. But perhaps because of the disappointing competition for the seat of its precursor, the League of Nations in Geneva, the UN opted for an unprecedented procedure: design by a panel of 10 respected architects from as many different countries.

Early site searches focused on locating the headquarters in a suburban setting, where a self-contained UN community could be established. The environs of Philadelphia and San Francisco vied with those of New York. When UN leaders rejected several locations in the New York area, including a Flushing Meadows Park tract promoted by Robert Moses, it seemed cer-

tain the organization would go elsewhere. But some determined city leaders came to the rescue.

Developer William Zeckendorf had acquired several blocks along the East River, from 42nd Street northward, where he proposed to replace the area's obsolescent slaughterhouses with a high-density, mixed-use development dubbed "X City." Its futuristic design, published in October 1946, had been drawn up by Wallace K. Harrison, FAIA. When Zeckendorf's plans stalled, however, Nelson Rockefeller quickly rallied family members and well-connected associates to buy the parcel in December 1946. Within three days the UN accepted this site as a gift.

In January 1947 UN officials appointed Harrison director of design for the headquarters – a virtually inevitable choice, given his key roles in the designs of Rockefeller Center and X City – and charged him with assembling a 10-member Board of Design. For this, Le Corbusier seems to have been a given. He was to dominate the group, since Harrison and most other appointees subscribed to his design principles. The other board members were G.A. Soilleux of Australia, Gaston Brunfaut of Belgium, Oscar Niemeyer of Brazil, Ernest Cormier of Canada, Liang Ssu-ch'eng of China, Sven Markelius of Sweden, Nikolai D. Bassov of the USSR, Howard M. Robertson of the United Kingdom, and Julio Vilamajo of Uruguay. The board's one-from-each-country composition ruled out other U.S. architects, hence no Wright; and no Gropius or Mies, who had become U.S. citizens by then. And architects had to come from UN member nations, which ruled out Aalto, whose country had been an Axis ally in the recent war.



An early scheme for the UN complex, rendered by Hugh Ferriss

The board went right to work in February 1947, its varied proposals over the next few months conveyed in uniformly formatted sketches by the eminent renderer Hugh Ferriss. The headquarters design, essentially as built, won General Assembly approval in May. George A. Dudley, FAIA, who had served as secretary to the Board of Design, wrote a book about this unique, often acrimonious, design process titled *A Workshop for Peace* (The MIT Press, 1994). The well-illustrated, 415-page volume includes intriguing excerpts from day-by-day minutes.

The UN is currently undertaking a \$1.9-billion restoration project, directed by Michael Adlerstein, FAIA, the UN assistant secretary general and executive director of the UN Capital Master Plan. Because the world body decided to restore rather than transform the building, it didn't recreate the original process of involving global luminaries. Responsibilities for the Secretariat tower are assigned to HLW International for updating interiors, the Syska Hennessey Group for mechanical systems, and R.A. Heintges & Associates for replacement of the complex's pioneering curtain walls. Einhorn Yaffee Prescott will oversee renovation of the General Assembly building. The product of those few feverish months in 1947, completed in 1952, is being revitalized for many more decades of service.

John Morris Dixon, FAIA, left the drafting board for journalism in 1960 and was editor of *Progressive Architecture* from 1972 to 1996. He wrote the Midtown Manhattan portion of the original 1967 *AIA Guide to New York City*. In recent years he has written for *Architectural Record*, *Architecture*, *Architect*, and other publications.

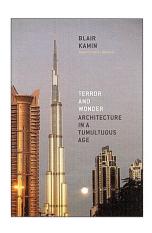
OCULUS WINTER 10/1

# Raves & Reviews

#### **Terror and Wonder: Architecture** in a Tumultuous Age, by Blair Kamin. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2010.

304 pp. \$30

Blair Kamin's book surveys the design themes of the first decade of the 21st century, bookended by the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001 and the opening of Dubai's 160-story, quarter-mile-tall Burj Khalifa in 2010. From his vantage point as architectural critic of the Chicago Tribune, Kamin depicts



an era of extreme oscillation - between terror and spectacle, artistic triumph and the grandiose banal, socially-conscious sustainable design and self-involved indifference, and boom times and urban disasters, both driven by a combination of natural forces and human nature.

It's a vibrant and confusing picture bereft of any organizing ideology, except perhaps for the worship of and hunger for celebrity. But Kamin has detected a few important themes which he uses to organize his selection of articles and observations:

- The state of cities in the aftermath of 9/11 and Katrina
- The residential and commercial booms
- The parallel cultural and campus building frenzy characterized by competition, celebrity, and spectacle
- · Preservation and sustainability as emerging, ongoing trends in design, as well as their frequently converging approaches
- The new dedication to infrastructure-related issues

He also misses a few: the renewed interest in central cities as an alternative to the suburbs; the fracturing of the profession into stars and hacks, and into specialty firms and all-purpose megafirms; and the surge of public interest in design, unaccompanied by any broadbased sense of design literacy.

Still, Kamin writes with insight, sensitivity, and balance. His collection is a vivid, memorable, wide-angled panorama of the decade. It is a refresher we need right now.

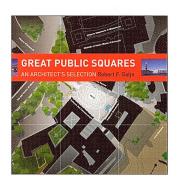
All book reviews by Stanley Stark, FAIA

#### Great Public Squares: An Architect's Selection, by Robert F. Gatje, FAIA. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010. 224 pp. \$65

Gatje, an esteemed architect and a former partner of Marcel Breuer, has assembled a sumptuously illustrated compilation comparing and analyzing 35 great public squares in Europe and the U.S. The selections range from the well known (such as Piazza Navona and Rockefeller Center) to the less familiar and surprising (Old Town Square in Telc,

Czech Republic). But in Gatje's hands they all offer lessons.

Referring to authoritative landmark texts by Camillo Sitte and Paul Zucker, Gatje identifies features and principles that abet the success (no thru traffic) or result in the indifferent performance (too great a ratio of width to height) of these spaces. Many of the well-



selected photographs and all of the scaled analytic plans are by Gatje. and they demonstrate the value of the architect's eve.

Even in our digital age, public spaces endure as vital elements of successful urban environments. Gatjes's delicious book helps to illuminate the reasons why.



The Pan Am Building and the **Shattering of the Modernist** Dream, by Meredith L. Clausen. The MIT Press, 2006. 497 pp. \$22.95

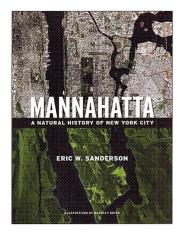
Meredith L. Clausen's book, originally published in 2004, describes the long, involved, and disheartening history of how the Pan Am Building atop Grand Central Terminal came about between 1958 and 1963. In the process of the

project's realization, the value of modern architecture, the fidelity of Modernism's master architects, and the effectiveness of the city's planning regulatory mechanisms were all cast into doubt. It is not a happy story, but it is highly relevant to how we practice now.

The Pan Am project generated squalls of controversy about its design, size, bulk, and impact on the congested Grand Central district. Discord also focused on the conflicted roles played by its lead designers (Walter Gropius, Pietro Belluschi, and Richard Roth). The project became emblematic of a crisis within modern American architecture, and a harbinger of new forces that were reshaping the relationships among design, finance, and government.

The banal, overbearing building that resulted from this turmoil never created the urban chaos its opponents predicted. But it signaled that the rules governing large-scale public design had changed. The voices of finance and the development community became dominant, and the role of design less potent. Developers reverted to forced marriages of convenience between design architects and executive architects to fulfill public expectations while pursuing their own business objectives.

The Pan Am experience is a pointed reminder of how the design process and project life are often conflicted.



**Mannahatta: A Natural** History of New York City, by Eric Sanderson; illustrated by Markley Boyer. New York: Abrams, 2009. 352 pp. \$40

Sanderson's ecological history of New York, wonderfully enriched by Boyer's visualizations, combines the findings of a 10-year research project, a narrative history of the city's physical development, and a hopeful forecast of the city's physical future.

Mannahatta recreates the city and its ecosystem prior to Henry Hudson's arrival in 1609, and charts the impact of the human footprint since then. New York's ecological structure and the evolution of its physical form have been closely intertwined. While human influence has been enormous, the diversity of nature has not been diminished.

This is a rare and magical book that eludes easy categorization. But it bridges many disciplines (ecology, geology, history, economics, and construction) and many eons as well.

#### Noted But Not Reviewed

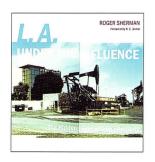
#### **Architecture Under** Construction, by Stanley Greenberg; foreword by Joseph Rosa. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2010. 120 pp. \$45

These revealing, spare, and elegant but gritty black-and-white photographs of buildings under construction represent the idyllic progress photos architects fantasize about.



Garden Guide: New York City (Revised Edition), by Nancy Berner and Susan Lowry. New York: W. W. Norton, 2010. 424 pp. \$22.95

A guide to 100 public gardens in the five boroughs, updated from the 2002 edition.



L.A. Under the Influence: The Hidden Logic of Urban Property, by Roger Sherman; foreword by R.E. Somol. Minneapolis: **University of Minnesota Press,** 2010. 240 pp. \$34.95

The use of game theory to understand how competing public and private interests shape the urban landscape.

#### **Click Here:** Citiscope.org

Citiscope.org launched with the World Urban Campaign and UN-HABITAT at the 2010 World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro. The website aims "to cover the area of cities' cutting-edge efforts – all-too-often neglected in today's normal newspaper, broadcast, Internet news coverage." according to Editor-in-Chief Neal Peirce. Articles feature innovative approaches to improving cities, unusual processes and partnerships, and people who are leading the initiatives.



Still in a beta phase at the time of this report, the website brings together international thought leaders to discuss urban planning. Reporters contribute stories on local breakthroughs that may serve as models for other cities. Comments, related links, and an "Expert Viewpoints" column accompany every article.

The layout opens each issue to discussion. In "Singapore's Transportation Secrets," for example, Christopher Tan, a senior correspondent with The Straits Times newspaper in Singapore, posits that the reason the city has little congestion despite its 11 million commuters is due to early planning and "massive investment across many modes of transport." In response, Thomas Downs, chairman of the North American Board of Veolia Transportation and former NJ Commissioner of Transportation, comments, "Perhaps we can use Singapore's experience to spur us on to overcome the political stagnation that has kept us from solving these problems..."

As Citiscope grows, the website will be key to keeping a finger on the pulse of new developments in cities globally.

By Jessica Sheridan, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP

Integrated Communications Technology and Acoustic Consulting

516.487.6097

www.capitalcraftsmen.com

From Manhattan to Montauk & Everywhere in Between



Luxurious Custom Homes • Exquisite Craftsmanship • Elite Manhattan Apartments

information@capitalcraftsmen.com











#### **Design Insurance** Agency Inc.

Dedicated to satisfying the needs of today's design professional

90 Broad Street, 15th Floor, New York 10004 Phone: (212) 233-6890 Fax: (212) 233-7852

E-mail: tcoghlan@dia.tc

Thomas G. Coghlan

CHARTER MEMBER A/E Choice FOUNDER & MEMBER OF a/e ProNet







# We are Building

**Last Words** 

Rick Bell, FAIA

Executive Director

AIA New York Chapter

And if you think of Brick, for instance, and you say to Brick, "What do you want Brick?" And Brick says to you "I like an Arch." Louis Kahn

"And you," the great Khan asked Polo, "you return from lands equally distant and you can tell me only the thoughts that come to a man who sits on his doorstep at evening to enjoy the cool air. What is the use, then, of all your traveling?" Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 1972

We are building / Bridges of compromise / We are building / Whispers of acceptance / We are building / Stacks of analyses / Between our worlds...

Ana Popovic, from "Between our Worlds" in Still Making History, 2010

IA New York is building strategic alliances with colleagues in other countries, including Brazil, Russia, India, China and Korea, known at AIA National as BRICK.

#### BRAZIL

In spring 2010, AIANY was represented at the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro by Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA (2011 Chapter President), Lance Jay Brown, FAIA, James McCullar, FAIA, and Urs P. Gauchat, Hon. AIA. Castillo presented PlaNYC2030, the environmental plan of New York City, at a conference that included architects, city planners, and urban designers worldwide, accompanied by elected officials and heads of government planning agencies. The presentation reinforced anticipation about the 2011 exchange of New Practices with São Paolo, featuring seven NYC design firms: Archipelagos, EASTON+COMBS, LEONG LEONG, MANIFOLD, SOFTlab, SO-IL, and Tacklebox. An equivalent group of young Brazilian architects will have their work displayed at the AIANY Chapter's Center for Architecture.

#### RUSSIA

"Made in New York: The Architecture of Social Responsibility" was AIANY's exhibition at the Zodchestvo 2010 Architectural Festival in Moscow. Organized in collaboration with the Union of Architects of Russia, the show reprised "MADE IN NEW YORK," the West 4th Street subway station exhibit of members' work. It brought 30 of the 200 projects to Manezh, the State Exhibition Hall a block from Red Square. More than 50,000 conference attendees saw NY-designed schools, libraries, recreation centers, parks, and plazas. With assistance from Zodchestvo Festival Director Yuri Avvakumov, Festival Curator Egor Solopov, and architects Anya Bokov and Vladimir Belogolovsky, the Moscow exhibition was a corollary to Architecture Week in New York.

#### INDIA

"Jugaad Urbanism: Resourceful Strategies for Indian Cities" will open at the Center for Architecture in February 2011. The Hindi term jugaad is used to describe innovative, resourceful approaches that often challenge traditional spatial hierarchies and predetermined planning princi-

ples. The show will highlight small-scale interventions that make urban design community-based, and solutions that respond to limited resources with common sense and great design. Developed in conjunction with the India-China Institute of The New School, the Indo-American Arts Council, and the Society of Indo-



**Bell in Red Square** 

American Engineers and Architects, the exhibition will present symposia, workshops, and films that portray numerous sites and solutions illustrating what the U.S. can learn from the Subcontinent.

#### CHINA

The expectations of ongoing cultural exchange developed in Rio extended to Shanghai, where Karen H. Lee, MD, MHSc, presented the *Active Design Guidelines*, developed by the NYC Departments of Health & Mental Hygiene and Design + Construction, in concert with AIANY. Dr. Lee wrote that "in some regards, cities across China had already implemented the precepts we had published about the relation of public health and design, and the importance of active living facilitated by design decisions including bike lanes, generous provision of parkland, and well-designed and inviting buildings." Previously, AIANY commissioned photographer Iwan Baan to document new work for our exhibition "Building China," a show that accompanied the Danish Architecture Center's prizewinning presentation addressing rapid urbanization and environmental challenges in China.

#### **KOREA**

In October 2008, the AIANY Design Awards represented New York City in a 10-metropolis exhibition held as part of the Seoul Design Olympiad at the Olympic Stadium along the Han River. Organized under the aegis of Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon, the related conference brought together architects, planners, and industrial designers from around the world. AIANY's presentation of award-winning New York architecture stood beside fashion design from Paris and Olympic concept design from Beijing, representing the best of what was happening in the design world. During the keynote addresses, New York architects, including Daniel Libeskind, AIA, presented projects being constructed all over the world that spoke to the importance of architecture and the power of design.

Common to these interventions is the realization that, despite alphabet differences and travel distances, the design world is unified. Technology today changes Babel to Babylon, with green walls in Seoul being interchangeable with green roofs in SoHo. Not nomads but green globalists, architects today create communities that redefine the future. In the words of theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "The Age of Nations is past. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to build the Earth."

#### **Index to Advertisers**

Accessibility Contractors
Handi-Lift, IncInside Back Cover
Appliances
Karl's Appliance Wholesale Division47
Architects
Nuttall Smith Architects40
Architectural Bar Grilles
Architectural Grille47
Attorneys
Schwartzman Garelik Walker & Troy46
Zetlin & De Chiara, LLPInside Back Cover
Audio Visual/Accoustical Consulting
Shen Milsom & Wilke44
Audio/Visual
Audio Video Systems12
Bollards
Architectural Iron Company16
Claims Dispute Resolution
Schwartzman Garelik Walker & Troy46
Zetlin & De Chiara, LLPInside Back Cover
Construction Services
Capital Craftsmen 44

Consulting Engineers
Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York46
Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers12
Severud Associates Consulting Engineers4
Continuing Education
Institute of Design and Construction48
International Code Council6
Cork Flooring
American Cork Products Company44
<b>Educational Facilities</b>
Pratt Manhattan16
Electrical Engineers
Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York46
Elevators
Handi-Lift, IncInside Back Cover
Engineering
Cosentini Associates2
De Nardis EngineeringOutside Back Cover
Halcrow, Inc40

Parksite Inc.....6

**General Building Products** 

General Contractors
Capital Craftsmen44
F.J. Sciame Construction Co., Inc3
Insurance
Design Insurance Agency Inc44
Petty Burton Associates16
Prosurance Redeker Group48
Landscape
Towers   Golde16
Law Firms
Ingram, Yuzek, Gainen, Carroll & Bertolotti12
Schwartzman Garelik Walker & Troy46
Zetlin & De Chiara, LLPInside Back Cover
Lighting
Lighting By Gregory, LLC44
Mechanical Engineers
Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York46
Printing
National Reprographics, Inc.
Inside Front Cover, 1
Renovations
Capital Craftsmen44
Structural Engineering
A Degree of Freedom46





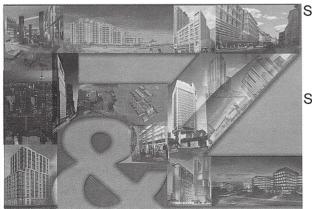


New York, NY 10017 Fax: 212/983-4193

A full service law firm representing architects and related design professionals for over 60 years.

> Contact: Edward N. Walker, Esq. ewalker@sgwkt.com • http://sgwkt.com

#### **EDWARDS & ZUCK CONSULTING ENGINEERS**



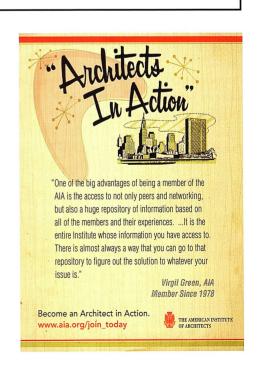
Services MEP/FP Engineering Life Safety Commissioning Sustainable Design

#### Sectors

Commercial Critical Systems Educational Retail Hospitality Gaming Residential

315 Park Avenue South New York, NY 10010 (212) 330-6200 www.edzuck.com

Stamford Shanghai New York



#### **Alphabetical Index to Advertisers**

Alphabetical fildex to Advertisers
A Degree of Freedom www.adegreeoffreedom.com46
American Cork Products Company
www.amcork.com
Architectural Grille www.archgrille.com
Architectural Iron Company www.architecturaliron.com16
Audio Video Systems www.audiovideosystems.com12
Capital Craftsmen www.capitalcraftsmen.com44
Cosentini Associates www.cosentini.com
De Nardis Engineering www.denardis.comOutside Back Cover
Design Insurance Agency Inc. www.designinsuranceagency.com44
Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York www.edzuck.com
F.J. Sciame Construction Co., Inc. www.sciame.com
Halcrow, Inc. www.halcrowyolles.com40
Handi-Lift, Inc. www.handi-lift.comInside Back Cover
Ingram, Yuzek, Gainen, Carroll & Bertolotti www.ingramllp.com12
Institute of Design and Construction www.idc.edu
International Code Council www.ICCSafe.org6
Karl's Appliance Wholesale Division www.karlsappliance.com47
Lighting By Gregory, LLC www.lightingbygregory.com44
Mueser Rutledge Consulting Engineers www.mrce.com12
National Reprographics, Inc. www.nrinet.comInside Front Cover, 1
Nuttall Smith Architects40
Parksite Inc www.parksite.com6
Petty Burton Associates16
Pratt Manhattan www.pratt.edu16
Prosurance Redeker Group www.ae-insurance.com48
Schwartzman Garelik Walker & Troy www.sgwkt.com46
Severud Associates Consulting Engineers P.C. www.severudcom4
Shen Milsom & Wilke www.smwinc.com
Towers   Golde www.towersgolde.com
Zetlin & De Chiara, LLP www.zdlaw.comInside Back Cover



Is New York's Best Appliance Resource In *New Jersey?* 



Is Your **BEST CHOICE**For Appliances!

Miele | Sub-Zero | Viking | Wolf | Thermador | GE | Electrolux | Jenn-Air | Frigidaire | KitchenAid | Whirlpool

65 PASSAIC AVENUE, FAIRFIELD 469 ROUTE 17 SOUTH, PARAMUS

Call us at: 888-98-KARLS

Visit us online at: WWW.KARLSAPPLIANCE.COM

E-Mail Our Architect/Builder/Wholesale Division: glopatin@karlsappliance.com or jbecker@karlsappliance.com

#### **ACCELERATE YOUR CAREER PATH**

Prepare for the Architect Registration Examination® or fulfill your continuing education requirements



#### Institute of Design & Construction offers courses in:

- Architect Registration Examination® Preparation
- Green Building Design (LEED)
- · Construction Site Safety (OSHA)
- NYC Construction Code

For a full course list, call 718-855-3661 or visit www.idc.edu

INSTITUTE OF DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION 141 Willoughby Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201



For more information about advertising with AIANY, contact:

OCULUS WINTER 10/11