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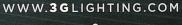


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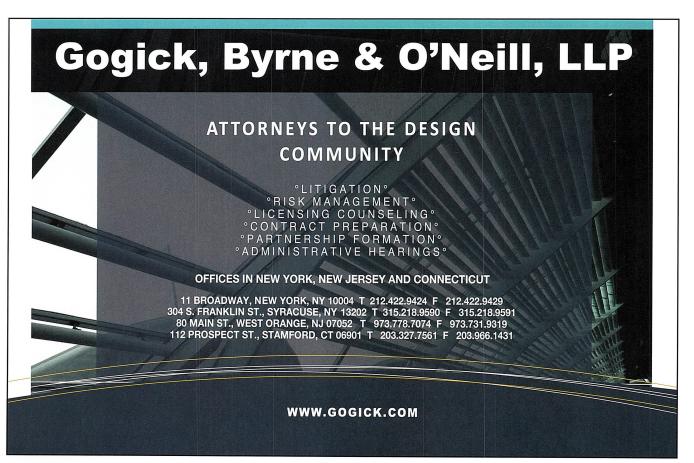
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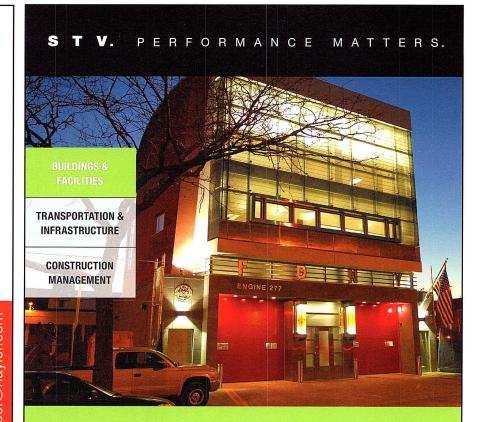
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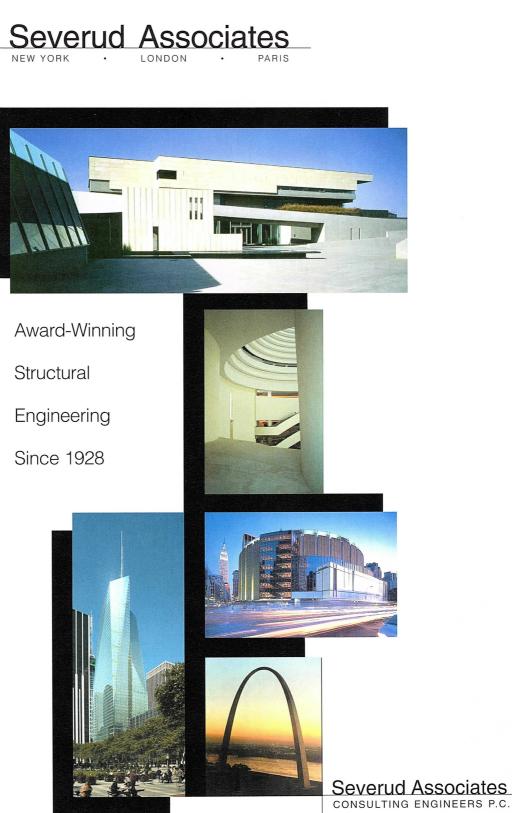


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Table of Contents

11 First Words

New Views of New York By Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP

13 A Word from the Editor Inside Jobs By Kristen Richards, Hon. AIA,

15 Center for Architecture Center Highlights

17 One Block Over

Hon. ASLA

Auto Alley Gets a Tune-up By Claire Wilson

34 In Print

The Power of Pro Bono: 40 Stories about Design for the Public Good by Architects and Their Clients, edited by John Cary and Public Architecture

Otto Neurath: The Language of the Global Polis, by Nader Vossoughian

Pocket Neighborhoods: Creating Small-Scale Community in a Large-Scale World, by Ross Chapin

Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York, by Samuel Zipp

Reviews by Stanley Stark, FAIA

35 57-Year Watch

A 1954 branch bank noted for its iconic transparent design is now the subject of heated preservation controversy By John Morris Dixon, FAIA

37 Last Words

Off-Center By Rick Bell, FAIA

40 Index to Advertisers

Alphabetical and Categorical Index

FEATURES

19 Opener: The New Office Space

New trends in technology, work style, and corporate culture make change the constant in workplace design By Richard Staub

22 Small Spaces, Transforming Results

Three interior jobs show that good things come in small packages By Linda G. Miller

24 Redesigned Practice

A sluggish economy and a spirit of entrepreneurship prompt many architects to diversify their services and develop new business models By Lisa Delgado

Oculus Fall 2011 Interior Motives: Activity & Growth

27 The Lure of Pop-ups

Low budgets, tight deadlines, and impermanence ought to be turnoffs, but architects love these temporary projects By Claire Wilson

30 A Giant, Hardly Sleeping: Pro Bono Sector

When architects and designers pick up the challenges of social responsibility, it means more than charity. The non-profit world is uniquely capable of putting the "public" back into "pro bono publico" By Bill Millard



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Blue Sky Studios by HOK, pg. 19

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Correction: In the Summer 2011 AIANY Design Awards issue, the top left photo on pg. 23 of the C.V. Starr East Asian Library should be credited to Michael Moran.

Cover: Sullivan Family Student Center at the College of Education, University of Wyoming Architect: Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis/LTL Architects Photography: ©Michael Moran

Congratulations to the winners of **AIA** National Chapter 2011 Honor Awards Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates and Weiss/Manfredi Architects

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Interior Motives: Activity & Growth

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



New Views of New York

Vert elcome to Archtober, the first-ever monthlong celebration of architecture and design in New York City! The festival is launched at the same time as the opening of the presidentialtheme exhibition "Buildings=Energy," which highlights innovative environmental theory and practice in our city. These two events are taking shape during a very exciting time for the AIA New York Chapter and the Center for Architecture: As we go to press with this issue of *Oculus*, the Chapter has announced it is expanding into the adjacent storefront at 532 LaGuardia Place, in the heart of historic Greenwich Village, where the Center continues to pay tribute to both the iconic past and bright future of New York architecture and design.

Sustainability is not just a buzzword for me, but a central idea to which AIANY is committed. It encompasses many aspects of the future of architecture and design, and is increasingly about our efforts and the precious resources of our world. While it is a focus of sustainability, energy is not only something we consume. As architects and designers, we create an intangible energy within the built environment, corresponding directly to interiors, the focus of this issue of Oculus. No city in the world outpaces the energy created by the physical environment in our frenetic, energetic New York City. As we hope you'll see throughout Archtober's programs, the interiors of our most innovative, contemporary buildings are just as dynamic as their exterior geometries.

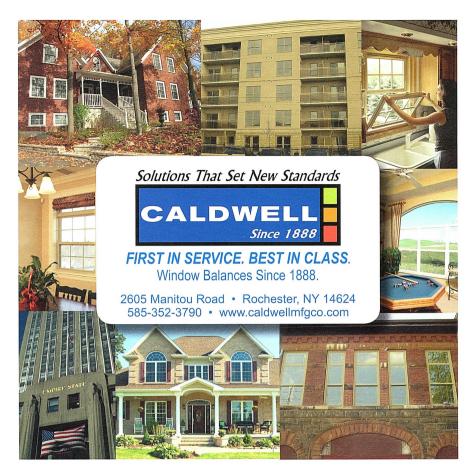
The interior environment has received heightened attention from AIANY members during the past several years of economic distress. The realities of lost financing and downsizing across the spectrum of our industry have provoked creative responses from architects when little or nothing is being built. Our profession has responded to the challenge by finding innovative ways of renovating existing structures. We have made our city a leader in sustainable design by focusing on how to do more with what is here. In fact, the new NYC energy code calls for treating existing buildings as if they were new construction, making interior fit-out all the more important as an environmental tool for carbon reduction.

Archtober events highlight the very best of what architects and designers have offered the city. Every day of the month we have designated a "Building of the Day;" each has been a winner of an AIANY Design Award between 2006 and 2011. Unprecedented access to the interiors of the structures that make our cityscape leap forward will be provided in conjunction with openhousenewyork (OHNY). The interactive and inspirational spaces are ours for the OHNY weekend and the entire month of Archtober. Partner organizations around the city are enthusiastically participating.

Some of the special interior places on the Archtober calendar include the David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center; Top of the Rock at Rockefeller Center; the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center, The New School; the NYC Information Center; and our home, the Center for Architecture. But, for my part, the most exciting new interior is that of 532 LaGuardia.

Over the summer, *Crain's New York Business* reported on a study conducted by the Center for an Urban Future, titled, "Growth by Design: The Powerful Impact and Untapped Potential of NYC's Architecture and Design Sectors." Among the recommendations made as a result of the study was to establish a high-profile design festival in New York. If form follows function, and our buildings come alive through the activities and design decisions visible in their interiors, then what a great time to be an architect in New York, and what a welcome opportunity to celebrate architecture and design. Happy Archtober!

Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, AIA, LEED AP 2011 President, AIA New York Chapter



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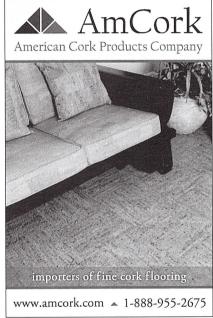
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first words

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Inside Jobs

n the midst of the current economic doldrums, with many in the industry (indeed the world) downsizing or merging – or even closing up shop – some hefty rethinking and, dare I say, soul-searching seem to be going on.

This issue highlights the good news: a lot of that hard-nosed introspection pays off. Within these pages we examine some firms' and architects' interior motivations and internal strategies that are changing – and growing – their businesses.

Designing for the 21st-century corporate workplace is a prime example. A generation ago, it was news when architecture firms established in-house interior design studios. Today, those studios are expanding their services (and profits) by including "workplace strategists" and "planning and strategy leaders" who allow firms to meet new challenges in a shifting business climate. They are positioned to help clients reevaluate their own corporate cultures, and cope with speed-of-light changes in technologies.

When building projects are scarce, smaller and younger firms stay nimble and quick in a number of ways. Profiled here are three interiors projects that, though small in footprint, deliver big results - for both the clients and the architects. Also offered are case studies where entrepreneurship and research in business, materials, and the digital realm result in new business models and ventures. A peek at pop-ups illustrates how others are keeping their creative juices flowing with temporary projects that could lead to permanent clients. Not to be overlooked are the countless ways architects and firms "pay it forward" via socially-responsible pro bono work for non-profits that goes beyond charity. As desigNYC Executive Director Laetitia Wolff tells us, pro bono publico means "for the good of the people," but that doesn't always translate to "for free." And Public Architecture's John Peterson, AIA, points out that the non-profit world is "a lively and rich community to serve, not only for the satisfaction and impact of the work, but for the business opportunity." Such work also inspires, encourages - and trains - the next generation of architects, engineers, designers, and public service/ sector advocates who learn to work together in ever-more meaningful ways.

In our regular departments, "One Block Over" tools around the oncescraggly stretch of 11th Avenue's Auto Alley, now being transformed into "an auto mall pleasant enough for a weekend stroll." In "57-Year Watch," we revisit SOM's landmarked 1954 bank branch interior on Fifth Avenue which, at press time, is embroiled in a heated preservation debate. And we're delighted that "In Print" returns to print with reviews of *The Power of Pro Bono; Pocket Neighborhoods; Otto Neurath: The Language of the Global Polis*; and *Manhattan Projects.* ("So Says..." will appear online in e-Oculus in October.)

If what we showcase here is any indication, times may be tough, but indomitable spirits can – and will – prevail.

Kristen Richards, Hon. AIA, Hon. ASLA Kristen@ArchNewsNow.com



Editor-as-canvas in living color at Publicolor's 2010 Stir, Splatter + Roll benefit (painting not by editor).

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Center Highlights





AIANY President Margaret Castillo, AIA, LEED AP, and Executive Director Rick Bell, FAIA, discuss the future of 532 LaGuardia Place – the new and exciting addition to the Center for Architecture, right next door.



Rafael Viñoly Architects; Leslie Robertson, Hon. AIANY, Leslie E. Robertson Associates; Clifford Pearson, Deputy Editor, Architectural Record; Paul Katz, FAIA, HKIA, Managing Principal, Kohn Pedersen Fox

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Sasaki, JIA, Founder,

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Kurumado, JIA, General



In May, the AIANY Global Dialogues Committee presented "Dialogues for a New Japan – Japan: Brainstorming," which explored the connections between the devastating March

earthquake and the built environment through the lens of architects and engineers with direct knowledge of Japan. Panelists included (I-r): Rafael Viñoly, FAIA, JIA, SCA, Int. FRIBA, Principal,





The Center welcomed nearly 200 French architects at an opening reception for Atelier Projet Urbain (I-r): Rick Bell, FAIA; Jean-Marc Michel, Director General of the French Directorate for Planning, Housing, and Nature; Ariella Masboungi, General Advisor for Sustainable Development Ministry of Ecology for France; Jean-Louis Cohen, Professor, New York University Institute of Fine Arts; and Barbara Chénot Carnus, The New School.



In collaboration with the AIANY Center for Architecture, ARCAM (Amsterdam Center for Architecture) opened the "Glimpses: New York & Amsterdam 2040" exhibition on July 4. Present at the opening (I-r): Marlies Buurman, ARCAM; Luc Vrolijks, Urban Progress Design and "Glimpses" curator; Tracy Metz, journalist; Margaret Castillo, AIA, LEED AP, AIANY President; David Bragdon, Director, NYC Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning & Sustainability; and Zef Hemel, Deputy Director, Amsterdam Office of Environmental Planning. Tragically, our friend Luc died on August 1. The "Glimpses" exhibitions in both New York and Amsterdam are dedicated to his memory.



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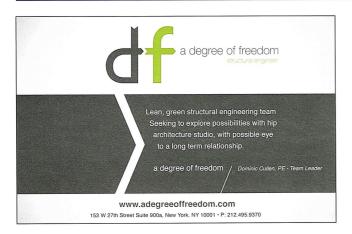


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Auto Alley Gets a Tune-up

Elegant new car showrooms on 11th Avenue honor tradition and rev up a stalled neighborhood BY CLAIRE WILSON

You wouldn't exactly call 11th Avenue in Manhattan's West 50s a "destination," like the Meatpacking District or Restaurant Row. There's been no reason to go there except to avoid traffic on 12th Avenue or drop off a car for servicing. But the unveiling in June of the elegant, high-tech, and beautifully designed Mercedes-Benz showroom, occupying the block between 53rd and 54th Streets, promises to change all that.

Designed by the Spector Group, it is an impressive glass "vitrine" for some of the most prestigious, high-performance automobiles in the world. New and pre-owned models sparkle from within and are visible from blocks away, especially at night. An escalator, a dramatic staircase, and a glass elevator activate the interior and add curb appeal for pedestrians and drivers alike. The showroom also has lounge-seating areas, a wall of media screens, an accessories boutique, and a copious casual buffet that is always available. Regular and aspiring customers alike have been known to stop by and just hang out. "Mercedes doesn't mind lingering," says Scott Spector, AIA, a principal at Spector Group. "Visitors may become buyers."

Mercedes and Volkswagen/Audi both recently relocated to this stretch of 11th Avenue, which has always been home to car dealerships. What is now the Manhattan Automobile Company, home to Ford brands, was designed as the Packard showroom in the 1920s by Albert Kahn, who also designed the building VW shares with Audi at 55th Street. In a redesign now underway, the German carmakers will each get a unique façade, but share a service area. Spector Group has designed the core and shell, CR Studios is doing the interior of the Audi portion, and Detroit-based Cityscape Architects the VW interior.

BMW will soon unveil its newly renovated, LEED-certified flagship showroom on 57th Street and its new (also eco-friendly) MINI of Manhattan dealership in the Chapman Building at 11th Avenue and 56th Street, designed by HLW International. Other refurbishments on the strip include the interior of Fiat, by Spector Group, and an exterior renovation on the Ford building



(left) Auto Alley looking north along 11th Avenue, with VW/Audi showrooms under construction (at right). (above) HLW International is designing BMW's new MINI of Manhattan dealership at 11th Avenue and 56th Street.

by Cityscape, according to Gregg Stouder, RA, principal. (His firm also renovated the Kahn building in 1995 and again in 2004.) Eleventh Avenue also boasts showrooms for Lexus, Prius, Toyota, Acura, Nissan, GM, Mini Cooper, and Smart Car via Mercedes. Infiniti is reportedly planning to move to the avenue from West 57th Street.

The aggregate has turned 11th Avenue into a sort of Toys "R" Us for the big boys and their big toys – an auto mall pleasant enough for a weekend stroll. The street is wide, the manufacturing-zoned buildings are of a pleasing scale, and spectacular sunsets can be seen over the Hudson about a block away. De Witt Clinton Park, opposite Mercedes, has been refurbished, as if giving a nod to new residential development in the area, like The Mercedes apartment tower (by TEN Arquitectos) sharing the site with the carmaker's showroom.

Other neighborhood amenities haven't quite made it that far west. You can catch a taping of *The Colbert Report* on West 54th Street or go to the supermarket on 10th Avenue, but there's not much in the way of restaurants, for example. Stouder of Cityscape says, "You have to walk pretty far to get away from dirty-water-dog stands." But the crowds at the newish Print restaurant (designed by Rockwell Group) say change is afoot.

Claire Wilson writes for the New York Times.

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The New Office Space

New trends in technology, work style, and corporate culture make change the constant in workplace design

or several decades, the corporate facility mandate has been to design for change. To keep pace, workplace design has moved from a linear sequence of programming, planning, design, and construction to a much broader and more complex involvement in a company's culture, brand, and business.

©Paúl Rivera/Arch Photo

The 1960s' executive row of *Mad Men* gave way to the 1980s' cubicles of *Dilbert*. Today's focus on collaboration and information sharing creates the five-floor hive of activity that brings together News Corporation's Dow Jones print, online, and wire services in Midtown; the cooler, airier headquarters of L'Oréal USA in New Jersey; and the let-boys-be-boys aesthetic of some tech startups. Some businesses allow staff to work at home as well as the office. Others want employees in-house all the time. What these companies have in common, whatever their work policies, are spaces that meet the demand for flexibility, mobility, technology, and sustainability – and reinforce corporate culture and identity.

While technology has the greatest impact, other powerful influences are also driving corporations – and the firms that design for them – to plan and design for change. These include expanding markets in different countries and cultures, evolving customer demographics, sustainability, different styles of work and collaboration, and a younger workforce whose approach to work and lifestyle has been shaped by technology.

That 70s shift

The great shift in workplace design has been under way since the early 1970s. That's when one of the leading consulting practices in workplace strategies, DEGW, hung out its shingle in London. Technology firms like IBM and Cisco Systems were finding that their plans to open branches in other countries met with cultural and building challenges they hadn't anticipated. And corporate London itself was being transformed by technology and frustrated by an aging and unresponsive building stock.

Realizing that traditional architecture firms couldn't deal with these challenges, Francis Duffy and three others founded DEGW in 1973 to focus on the planning and design of workplace environments. The firm has established an international practice, with Andrew Laing, a company director, opening its first North American office in New York in 1998.

What's Inside

- 19 The New Office Space
- 22 Small Spaces, Transforming Results
- 24 Redesigned Practice
- 27 The Lure of Pop-ups
- 30 A Giant, Hardly Sleeping: Pro Bono Sector

(above) Perkins+Will: At the bright, airy L'Oréal USA headquarters in Berkeley Heights, NJ, which brings together 600 employees from corporate divisions that had not worked together before, a central activity hub offers staff and visitors a place to have informal meetings, get coffee, check e-mail, and preview new product introductions.



"Every decision about the workplace centers on a company's business goals," says Laing. "DEGW was the first firm to do in-depth research to establish the business case for significant facilities change. But change requires a financial investment, and with every project we've had to prove the benefits will show up in the bottom line. That continues today, as does the continuing evolution of the workplace."

Trends that started a decade ago, such as "hoteling," where employees work outside the office and come into the office part-time or as needed, are now commonplace. The hierarchical culture that promoted the private office and a sense of personal turf is declining, replaced by a more horizontal management structure and a wide variety of spaces where staff can work privately or in groups.

Managing change, says Laing, calls for a continuing evaluation of how work gets done, the effect of new technology, and the efficient use of space. While DEGW may get hired by a corporation's real-estate or facilities department, it often becomes involved in management decisions at the highest level because the way work is done can result in transformational organization change.

Achieving "stickiness"

Over the last 12 years, strategic planning services have become part of some major U.S. architecture firms that design corporate interiors. "Perkins+Will [P+W] clients were coming for full design services, and it was obvious that more comprehensive planning was required," says Janice Barnes, LEED AP, P+W's global discipline leader for planning and strategies. "We started going upstream in the organizations to understand our clients' challenges, and found companies questioning how to align the workplace with their goals. That started an ongoing evaluation of what's important to get the work done."

When it comes to planning interiors, "we want to achieve 'stickiness," says Joan Blumenfeld, FAIA, LEED AP, interior design leader for P+W's New York office. "Today's work environment is saturated with information sharing, but for that exchange to have an impact, what's said has to stick with the listener. So we find ways to change how people can tap into the knowledge flow and process what they're hearing."

"Especially when corporations have staff working off-campus, interiors have to make a strong statement about the corporate culture and brand when workers report in," says Sonya Dufner, ASID, LEED AP, a P+W planning and strategies leader in the New York office. "The new L'Oréal USA headquarters in Berkeley Heights, NJ, brought together corporate divisions that had not worked together before, and we designed an environment that enhanced the presentation of the many products the company sells."

Sustainability is another important design consideration for P+W. "Just providing energy savings and access to daylight has major benefits in planning," says Blumenfeld, "and sustainability makes the corporation that much more attractive in recruiting new talent. We also promote active design to make the work-place as healthy as possible."

"Organize fractally"

A leader in HOK's Advanced Strategies department, Leigh Stringer, LEED AP, has found that biomimicry, the study of organizational patterns found in nature, provides guiding principles for workplace organization and change. Put forward by the Biomimicry Guild, a leading organization in the field, HOK has paraphrased these ideas as follows: "evolve solutions, don't plan them," "organize fractally," "design for swarm because the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," and "optimize the system rather than maximizing components."

For example, one way HOK evolves solutions – and does so fractally – is by testing organizational strategies on a small pilot group. This lets the HOK team develop benchmarks for change, make the business case for the investment, work out glitches, and observe the staff's response to their new work environment. "The real challenge comes when we roll out the design firmwide, and the staff has to make significant adjustments to the space they have and how they work," says Stringer. "That's where the corporate change management team should make the case for the new environment."



Interior Motives: Activity & Growth



(above) STUDIOS Architecture: News Corporation's fivefloor Midtown headquarters for Dow Jones combines a central staircase and openings in the large floor-plates to support personal as well as technological connectivity.

(opposite left) HLW International: The "heart" of the new headquarters for Agency Rx, a healthcare communications company located in a converted warehouse in TriBeCa, is organized around a central, elevated "piazza" adjacent to the reception area and used as a café and meeting space.

(opposite right) HOK: The lively White Plains office for the CGI-animation company Blue Sky Studios features lots of color and energy, which helps recruit and retain bright, young, creative people, and encourages them to think outside the box. Research shows that, in most cases, companies can do more with less space, so the workplace is shrinking dramatically. "But even with technology getting smaller and faster, in some places the workplace has shrunk about as much as it can," says Stringer. "When there is that much sharing, acoustics and daylighting become much more important. We continue to rebalance the amount of private and open space."

HLW International calls its predesign phase "Discovery" because it tailors the process individually for each company. "We want to know its vision, determine who the stakeholders are, and consider the activities that take place," says Kimberly Sacramone, IIDA, LEED AP, an HLW principal and director of interior architecture. "We do a lot of one-on-one interviews and space utilization studies, working with both the leadership and staff. While an internal change management team is very helpful, we've had clients like JetBlue, which looks to us to help socialize change. We're the messengers for how the culture will evolve. There is a risk in engaging employees, though, because we don't want to encourage expectations that can't be met." For Sacramone, the private office hasn't gone away but is designed for function rather than title or individual.

"Ultimate flexibility"

STUDIOS Architecture goes one step further. "Sometimes corporate interior design gets reduced to finding the next best desk system," says Todd DeGarmo, FAIA, LEED AP, the firm's CEO and chief workplace strategist. "We attract clients where the leadership has already made the case for change and wants to get workers out of silos with as much flexibility and mobility as possible. We make the program neutral. The space the individual occupies is not the driver, since most people don't have to come into the office to work. Our focus is on creating memorable, authentic spaces that allow for ultimate flexibility." One of these is News Corporation's Dow Jones headquarters on five floors of 1211 Avenue of the Americas (a 2010 AIANY Design Award winner).

"Our solution took the client by surprise," says David Burns, a firm principal. "We introduced a central staircase and openings in the large floorplates to facilitate personal as well as technological connectivity. While the client was reluctant to give up floor area for these openings, the payoff in energized information sharing was worth it."

Heightened flexibility means eliminating some standard practices of corporate interior design, such as raised platforms and complex desk systems. "Ten years ago we developed a shared desk 'bench' prototype for corporate offices based on hedge-fund trading desks, and couldn't get furniture manufacturers to go for it," says DeGarmo. "Now there are a variety of benching systems to choose from. We also rely on Revit so all systems are thoroughly and quickly integrated."

Both DeGarmo and Laing share similar frustrations and visions for the workplace of the future. "One great obstacle to change is the current office building stock and the process of financing, designing, and building office buildings," says Laing. "Developers are still producing office towers with floor plates that inhibit the interaction our clients want. The long process of acquiring, designing, and building space introduces a lag time that's the opposite of what our clients are looking for."

"Our clients have staffs who want a richer work experience," says DeGarmo, "and that includes their office neighborhoods." Laing believes the diversity of the city is the best metaphor for the corporate environment. "Both within the office space and in the world around them, workers are looking for a more stimulating place to work," says Laing. "The vitality, interconnectedness, and variety of being in a lively city is the direction that corporate leaders are heading."

The corporate workplace has come a long way and, given the rate of change, there's an update due momentarily. Stay tuned.

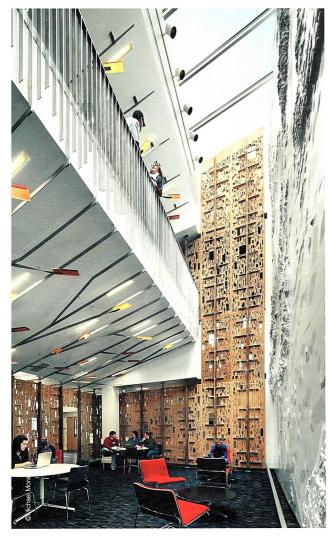
Richard Staub is a marketing consultant and writer who focuses on issues important to the design and building community.

Small Spaces, Transforming Results

Three interior jobs show that good things come in small packages BY LINDA G. MILLER

Some firms consider interiors projects stepping stones towards landing that one architecture project that will put them on the map. Others see interiors work as worthy on its own, and find ways to keep it fresh. Wary clients test the waters with interior fit-outs when building projects look too risky. That means interiors projects in today's economic climate can allow small firms to keep valued staff working and the ledger in the black – and let the creative juices flow.

These three interiors are small spaces that deliver big results. A student center that started as leftover space becomes a popular campus destination. A temporary storefront-turned-gallery connects a university with its neighborhood. An office allows an idea-driven organization to reach out globally.



Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis/LTL Architects: The two-level Sullivan Family Student Center is topped by a skylight and features a full-height topographic map of Wyoming.

Project Credits UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING SULLIVAN FAMILY STUDENT CENTER CLIENT: University of Wyoming College of Education ARCHITECT: Lewis.Tsurumaki. Lewis/LTL Architects PROJECT TEAM: Paul Lewis, AIA, Marc Tsurumaki, AIA, David J. Lewis, Hye-Young Chung, Matthew Clarke, Clark Manning, Laura Cheung ARCHITECT-OF-RECORD: University of Wyoming Facilities Planning Office GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Elk Ridge Builders & Design STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Robert Silman Associates CAD/CAM CONSULTANT: Tietz-Baccon Design and Fabrication SLATE FLOOR: Vermont Structural Slate Company WALLCOVERING: Knoll Textiles BULLETIN BOARD: Forbo BAMBOO PANELS: Smith & Fong Co. Plyboo; New World Millworks (CNC milling) FLOORCOVERING: Karastan Contract (carpet): Flexco (rubber flooring) FELT BENCH: Buffalo Felt Products TABLES, CHAIRS: Offi; Blu Dot PROJECT SIGN: Building Image Group ART FRAMES: JBD, Inc. LIGHTING: Amerlux 3-Form Barco Lighting PAINT: Benjamin Moore

Sullivan Family Student Center at the College of Education, University of Wyoming LARAMIE, WY Architect: Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis/LTL Architects

On the heels of its acclaimed renovation of the Arthouse in Austin, Texas, LTL Architects was commissioned to design a student center for the University of Wyoming. Asked to create a space like no other on campus, LTL turned a non-descript, underutilized space in the recently-renovated College of Education building into a comfortable, contemporary, two-level student lounge that students have made an essential destination.

Inspired by the organization of a courtyard in a cloister, the 5,200-square-foot center layers a two-level lounge space in a sequence of skins and armatures. Digitally-milled, bamboo plywood screens, produced by a computer script, are perforated with random openings of various sizes. The screens define the lounges and allow views between the cloistered "courtyards" and trafficked hallways. Walnut columns on the first level support both the bamboo panels and a stainless-steel "horizontal chandelier" with colored resin "petals." It skims the ceiling, extending out toward the front door in one direction; inside the lounge it folds vertically to link to the upper-level guard rail. The architects thought a double-height wall topped with a skylight should be neutral, but certainly not boring. They constructed a CNC-milled, 900-square-foot topographic map of Wyoming that extends between the two floors. It is installed so that the setting sun pours through the skylight on the second level, animating the mountainous contours of the state.

"Typically, a building's interior will be transformed more frequently than its shell," says LTL Architects Principal Paul Lewis, AIA. "Interiors, therefore, can be critical to a young practice's finances. But we approach interiors for their capacity to invent richer ways for people to inhabit spaces, and as a testing ground for material and organizational experiments. They can happen more quickly and at lower costs than exterior construction."



NYU Open House NEW YORK, NY Architect: James Sanders + Associates

NYU Open House is a 3,000-square-foot temporary public gallery and event space – steps away from the Center for Architecture – where, for the last year, New York University has highlighted its history and displayed its often controversial growth plans to its Greenwich Village community. Given a modest budget, James Sanders + Associates drew inspiration from the time when SoHo's cast-iron buildings were filled with galleries and artists' lofts, taking advantage of the rhythm of stately cast-iron columns and large storefront windows to entice passersby.

An ongoing exhibition includes five central panels of archival and contemporary images and a large model of NYU's long-term expansion plans for its historic core and remote sites. Easel-like panels in front of an exposed brick wall display rotating exhibitions. The space is "choreographed" to be multifunctional: The central panels, mounted on aluminum poles, are usually aligned to draw visitors along, but they can be rotated out of the way so that the university can present programs, configuring a 70-seat theater, for example.

"This project, though relatively modest in size, was ideal for our office," says James Sanders, AIA. "It took advantage of the unusual mix of different capabilities we have, which extend beyond architecture to include exhibitions and media projects. It was a wonderful opportunity to fully engage our 'hybrid' practice."

Project Credits

NYU OPEN HOUSE CLIENT: New York University Architecture, Design, PROGRAMMING: James Sanders + Associates PROJECT TEAM: James Sanders, AIA, Hannah Cloepfil, Arta Yazdanseta, LEED AP, Delbert Helper GRAPHIC DESIGN: 2 x 4, Inc. FABRICATION & INSTALLATION: Wizard Studios; Union Square Group GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Brosna Construction LIGHTING DESIGN: Michael Stiller Design INTERIORS CONSULTANT: GH Interiors (above left) James Sanders + Associates: The large storefront windows and deep sight lines of NYU Open House invite passersby to step inside.

(above right) Atema Architecture: The TED Conferences office is anchored by a pair of curved rolling bleachers that are used as an informal work area and a "theater" for presentations and meetings.

Project Credits

TED CONFERENCES OFFICE CLIENT: TED Conferences ARCHITECT: Atema Architecture PROJECT TEAM: Ate Atema. RA, Carl Mahaney, AIA, Julia Savastinuk MEP & EP ENGINEER Robert Derector Associates GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Gannon Vitolo Contracting CUSTOM FURNITURE: Atema Architecture with Steelcase CONTRACT FURNITURE: Steelcase CARPET: InterfaceFLOR ACOUSTIC WALL & CEILING PANELS: Tectum LIGHTING: Legion; Hera; Halo; Lightolier; Artemide SERVER ROOM AC: Liebert



TED Conferences Office NEW YORK, NY Architect: Atema Architecture

TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) Conferences' credo is "Ideas worth spreading." The nonprofit produces conferences and talks with visionaries from a variety of disciplines in a theater-like setting. Its compact, 5,600-square-foot headquarters in Hudson Square needed to be representative of the organization's philosophy. Atema Architecture was selected for the job after TED Curator Chris Anderson saw the firm's creative approach in devising a striking identity for the offices of the Acumen Fund.

With the advent of laptops, tablets, and Wi-Fi, office workers are no longer tethered to their desks, but there are still the pragmatic constraints of space and privacy to overcome, especially in an open office like this one. For starters, the firm adopted the theater typology, so much a part of TED's DNA, by using rolling bleachers as seating for informal and formal presentations and meetings. Moreover, each of TED's 50 or so staffers has the option of working at a custom-made desk or in a low lounge chair, with an ottoman and a "sidecar" for storage. The space allocated to Anderson, for example, is furnished with an Eames chair and a round table. Other arrangements include a shared, adjustable-height table for each team, a stand-up coffee bar, and conference rooms. More private spaces include what architect Ate Atema, RA, calls "phone booths," which can be mini-meeting places or quiet rooms for up to four people. And there's "The Corb," a small, freestanding meeting room with a "nap loft" above.

"Interior work is a big part of what we do, whether commercial, residential, or retail/hospitality," says Atema. "To get the bigger core-and-shell work, we'd need to partner up or grow larger. We're working on that, but until then, scarcity of work doesn't mean a lack of interesting work. Many clients are making the most of the space they have."

In the meantime, TED will be hiring additional staff but not adding more space, so Atema will have to reconfigure the space so it is denser yet still productively and socially viable.

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

Redesigned Practice

A sluggish economy and a spirit of entrepreneurship prompt many architects to diversify their services and develop new business models

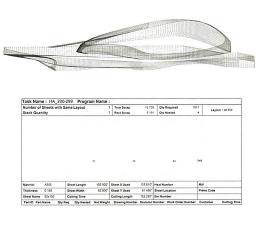
BY LISA DELGADO

A growing number of NYC architects and designers are applying their design skills to a new challenge: remaking their own practices. Fresh business approaches and partnerships are the order of the day, sometimes spurred by the pressures of the recession, sometimes by a passion for exploring related fields.

Long known for its forays into development, SHoP Architects recently has been gaining traction in construction management and giving it a hightech update. In 2007, SHoP Construction Services launched, which is a separate business entity but shares SHoP Architects' office space. The new business manages a mix of building projects, including some designed by SHoP Architects, such as the Barclays Center, and some by other firms.

Over the past dozen years, SHoP has focused strongly "on how to use modeling software to not only improve the way we design, but how we execute our projects in the field," says Christopher Sharples, AIA, a principal of SHoP Architects and SHoP Construction. Increasingly, the role of an architect is "not just to make great designs and then hand them off to the builder, but to work with the builder in realizing those projects," he adds. "That's really at the core of where we think the role of the architect is going."

In its construction management approach, SHoP Construction is distinguished by its enthusiastic embrace of technology to streamline the design-to-construction process and boost collaboration between architects, builders, and clients. The company's services include developing building information models and leading the virtual design and construction process. In addition to using common software such as Revit and Navisworks, SHoP has been developing some of its own technologies, including a VDC portal. "This is a Web-based interface that project stakeholders use to engage an information model live on their own website and interact with that model," says Jonathan L. Mallie, AIA, a principal/managing director of SHoP Construction and a principal of SHoP Architects. "So they wouldn't necessarily see the model only in a project meeting; they could be at their desk and research information."





"Increasingly, the role of an architect is not just to make great designs and then hand them off to the builder, but to work with the builder in realizing those projects. That's really at the core of where we think the role of the architect is going."

-Christopher Sharples, AIA

(top left) SHoP Architects used CATIA to create this design model of the weathering steel latticework that wraps around the Barclays Center.

(bottom left) SHoP Construction used SigmaNEST software to flatten the curved geometries in the design model and to nest the panels efficiently within larger steel sheets. Here, four panels are nested within a single sheet. Altogether, 12,000 uniquelysized steel panels make up the latticework.

(right) SHoP Construction uses a custom barcodescanning iPhone app to track each panel as it is waterjet cut, bent, preweathered, assembled, and installed. SHoP is also developing iPhone and iPad apps to allow users to access building models. One of its iPhone apps is tracking the steel panels in the Barclays Center project, for example. "As the panels are being fabricated, pre-weathered, assembled, and shipped, they're tracked through an automated iPhone application that updates a database," Mallie explains.

Despite the recession (or perhaps because of it), the construction management company has grown from seven members to 27. The tight economy is boosting the building industry's interest in the efficiencies of a virtual design and construction process, according to Mallie. "There's a huge learning curve going on," he says. "Not everyone is ready for it or willing, but there's a strong need, so people are far more open to it."

Developing a different direction

For Jared Della Valle, AIA, LEED AP, branching out into real-estate development has paradoxically helped bring him deeper into the world of architectural design. He rose to fame in the local architecture community as co-founder of Della Valle Bernheimer (DVB), and in 2006 he co-founded Alloy Development, a design-oriented development and consulting company that has often served as the developer for DVB's designs. Last summer, Della Valle resigned from DVB (now named Bernheimer Architecture and headed by Andrew Bernheimer, AIA) to focus exclusively on his work at Alloy. The two companies plan to continue collaborating; one recent joint project is 192 Water Street, a former warehouse converted into residential lofts in Brooklyn's DUMBO.

The news of Della Valle's departure surprised some. "Everybody asked, 'Aren't you going to miss architecture?' I told them, 'No, I get to do more of it," he says. Since he and others in Alloy are architects by training, the company designs a lot of its development projects, he explains. Without having to deal with an outside client, the architects have more control over the outcome.

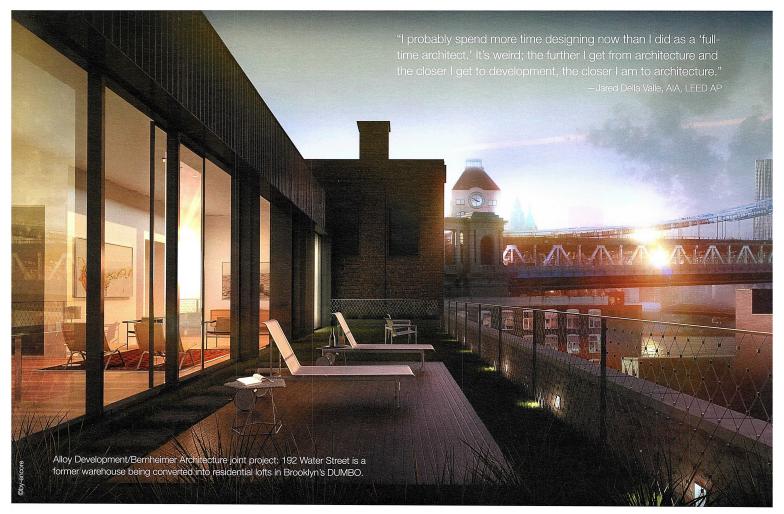
The downside of development is the stress of putting your financial assets on the line. "It's a hugely risky proposition, and certainly not for everyone," Della Valle remarks. "It's not a hobby." One reason he decided to leave DVB was that it was tricky to balance the demands of both jobs. At Alloy, he says, "I'm personally at risk for the properties and the projects I work on, and it's hard to manage private clients at the same time." It's rare to see companies like Alloy, which blend development and design so thoroughly in their work, Della Valle says, citing FLANK and Tamarkin Co. as examples. "It is a new practice type," he observes. But for him, it offers the best of both worlds.

"I probably spend more time designing now than I did as a 'full-time architect," he says. "It's weird; the further I get from architecture and the closer I get to development, the closer I am to architecture. By that I mean, we get complete control over all the detail resolution and decisions without having to ask a 'client.' We don't make any presentations. We're on fire all day long – we're making decisions for ourselves."

Furnishing new revenue

Other architects are diversifying their skills and revenue base by taking up furniture design. In 2009, Susan Doban, AIA, of Doban Architecture teamed up with furniture designer Jason Gorsline to found Think Fabricate, a company that designs and makes furniture and other products. Doban's architecture firm and Think Fabricate frequently work together on projects, and some staff work for both. However, they are separate business entities for liability and branding reasons. "We wanted to establish a clear, fresh identity for products and furnishings in the marketplace," Doban says. The two companies share office space in downtown Brooklyn, but the furniture business also has a fabrication shop in East Williamsburg.

Think Fabricate was born out of a longstanding collaboration and creative affinity between Doban and Gorsline that began in 2007, when Gorsline designed some furniture for Doban's home. The furniture company wasn't founded as a reaction to the recession, but the diversification has proven helpful in a fluc-



tuating market. As far as the stream of architecture projects, "since we were doing a lot of public work, that has gone down a little bit this year," Doban says. "But Think Fabricate's work seems to be picking up, which is a good thing about diversifying."

et al. collaborative, a Brooklyn- and Detroitbased firm, has also found that doing a mix of architecture and furniture design has helped it weather the recession while satisfying its multidisciplinary interests. As a young firm that started up in 2009, it had to be flexible, sometimes searching out projects overseas or taking on small-scale local furniture projects.

For the firm, furniture design can be just as interesting as bigger architectural projects. "Design, to us, is design," says partner Manu Garza, Assoc. AIA. "It doesn't matter the scale of the project, because for us it's about a series of observations and the connection we feel with each client." One plus of the furniture projects, he adds, is "how quickly you can produce something and the immediate gratification you feel."

Using the buddy system

Another approach is to team up with a different architecture firm to offer expanded services. That's what Spacesmith and Aedas (then named Davis Brody Bond Aedas) did in May, when they formed an unusual partnership. The two firms are still separate business entities, but Aedas now owns a share of the smaller firm, which moved into Aedas's office. Essentially, Spacesmith is now a firm within the larger firm, and they frequently share staff.

Spacesmith is a small boutique firm known for its work in interiors, while Aedas is a large international firm that historically has focused less on interiors, at least locally. When they first



(above and right) et al. Collaborative: Designed in collaboration with industrial designer William Lee, LEAN has a dual function: it's a coffee table when set on its side, and a chair when stood upright in a corner.

"If everybody's well fed, you're doing the same kind of work you've always done, and there's lots of it, then you don't even have time to think about new strategy. I think these downs are a time to regroup and ask, 'Where do we want to be going forward?'"

-Jane Smith, AIA, IIDA

(below) Doban Architecture's sister company, Think Fabricate, developed the Stepping Stones Collection, which includes a lacquered credenza with bamboo plywood doors and a recycled marble top.





began collaborating last year, "it became clear quickly that each of us had good things that the other wanted or needed for diversity and strength," recalls Jane Smith, AIA, IIDA, a partner of Spacesmith. By forming the partnership, "we now have that depth we wanted, and Aedas Americas now has a strong interior architecture practice."

By keeping the two firms legally separate, the smaller firm gets to keep its identity and its status as a woman-owned business. Some Aedas partners have also become partners in Spacesmith, but Smith owns 51% of the company. Thus it's not a case of a larger firm gobbling up a smaller firm, whose identity soon disappears. When Smith was first contemplating the partnership, the terms "made it very easy to say, 'What's not to like about this?' We're going to try it out, and if it doesn't work, my company is still intact," she remarks.

The recession was one impetus for the new partnership, according to Smith. "The competition is getting stiffer, and you have to find a way to meet the marketplace," she says. "If everybody's well fed, you're doing the same kind of work you've always done, and there's lots of it, then you don't even have time to think about new strategy. I think these downs are a time to regroup and ask, 'Where do we want to be going forward?' To run firms that are basically entrepreneurial, you've got to be ahead of the game."

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



The Lure of Pop-ups

Low budgets, tight deadlines, and impermanence ought to be turnoffs, but architects and designers love these temporary projects BY CLAIRE WILSON

A great deal is said and written about all that is disposable and temporary in our society, but amid all the posturing on ephemera and the environment, something that is by its very nature temporary has taken hold around town: the pop-up.

Through December 14, the five winners of the second annual BOFFO Building Fashion Competition that teams architects with fashion designers will be rotating their pop-up showroom installations at 57 Walker Street in TriBeCa, each on display for two weeks. Van Alen Books on West 22 Street, designed by LOT-EK, is a temporary home in a long-empty space for the city's only shop exclusively selling architecture books. Situ Studio has done a fabric installation that wraps 16 existing 25-foot-tall classical columns, enlivening the Great Hall at the Brooklyn Museum until January. Last July 30, two pop-up wedding chapels went up in Central Park as a venue for gay marriage ceremonies. The chapels, one by ICRAVE, with rainbow ribbons fluttering from a mesh ceiling on a white frame, and a second by Z-A Studios, called *(below)* LOT-EK: Van Alen Books is a 300-square-foot pop-up architecture bookstore with seating platforms made of recycled doors. feature

(left) "reOrder: An Architectural Environment by Situ Studio" is a fabric installation that wraps 16 existing classical columns in the Brooklyn Museum's Great Hall, recently renovated by Ennead Architects.

"The Kiss" and made from recycled honeycomb cardboard on a plywood base, were designed to live for just a day.

Temporary in the case of pop-ups is completely subjective, but it is the temporary nature of the beast that appeals to architects who design them. According to Craig Konyk, AIA, principal of KONYK Architecture, the impermanence is a departure from the way architects usually think, and therefore is a good exercise. The turnover, low budgets, and sometimes very short deadlines inspire creativity, he says. He compares pop-ups to Andy Warhol's Factory, which was broken down and remade daily, New York's now-defunct Area nightclub, which changed themes every three weeks, and Lady Gaga's outrageous single-use outfits.

"We architects are trained in permanence, to make things that will last beyond ourselves," says Konyk, who last year won the Supima Field competition to design the outdoor event space under the High Line in the first BOFFO competition. "There is a delight in doing something like theater that closes down if it doesn't work out, and that doesn't outlive you."

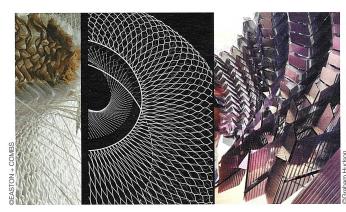
Giuseppe Lignano, Int'l. Assoc. AIA, a principal of LOT-EK, likes the way pop-ups limit the designer's investment in many ways, without limiting the rewards. "It is always stimulating to do projects that are an adventure from almost every point of view," he says, "and it's not like it takes years of your time." Though LOT-EK's bookstore for Van Alen, he notes, may end up being permanent.





Situ Studio has done pop-up pavilions for Citysol, the annual summer festival of Solar One, a green energy, arts, and education organization, using free salvaged materials, like the cardboard tubes from fabric bolts and carpet rolls, or inexpensive items, like slotted plywood strips fastened together. Situ partner and co-founder Aleksey Lukyanov-Cherny likes the sustainability aspect of those projects, as well as how they allow designers to experiment. "It's about pushing those ideas of smart and efficient construction systems that can be prefabricated in the shop and quickly installed, or completely fabricated and installed on the site," he says. "And they don't have to be complex or necessarily done by skilled workers." He also points out that temporary structures may not need permits, which can be a boon for young designers just starting out.

Pop-ups can have their disadvantages, however, says Mark Foster Gage, principal of Gage/Clemenceau Architects, a winner of this year's BOFFO competition. Not done thoughtfully, they can foster "a culture of disposability," says Gage, who is also assistant dean, chairman of admissions, and associate

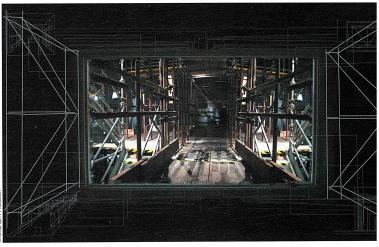


A competition, sponsored by Architizer.com and TheKnot.com, to design a pop-up chapel in Central Park to host gay marriage ceremonies for one day in July resulted in two winners: "The Kiss" by Z-A Studios (*left*), made from recycled honeycomb cardboard; and ICRAVE's fluttering, rainbow-colored vinyl and polycarbonate ribbons (*below*), which were suspended from a metal mesh "ceiling" by paperclips.



professor at the Yale School of Architecture. The danger, he explains, is that pop-ups may "encourage architects to come up with short-term, cheap ideas that, in the long-term, devalue what architecture does."

This year's jurors for the BOFFO Building Fashion Competition, co-sponsored by the non-profit arts and culture organization BOFFO and the website Architizer.com, were Charles Renfro, AIA, principal, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Winka Dubbeldam, Assoc. AIA, principal, Archi-Tectonics, and Robert Hammond, co-founder with Joshua David of Friends of the High Line. The



Interior Motives: Activity & Growth

fashion designers were brought in at the end of the process to review the finalists' design concepts and choose which pairing would have the most synergy and the most potential for a continuing relationship between the architect and the fashion concern.

Winners (all but one are NYC-based), whose work went on display beginning September 8, include THEVERYMANY, in collaboration with jewelry designer Irene Neuwirth; U.K.based Graham Hudson, Architect, working with menswear designer Patrik Ervell; SOFTlab teamed with lingerie company The Lake & Stars; and EASTON+COMBS paired with the women's clothing line Ohne Titel. Gage/Clemenceau Architects joined forces with Nicola Formichetti, who is creative director for French designer Thierry Mugler, but is probably best known as fashion director to Lady Gaga.

Each winner this year got \$20,000 to design and build the installations, up from \$5,000 last year. Those sums go for materials; the winning BOFFO architects work without compensation, as LOT-EK did for the Van Alen Institute's bookstore. "It was our way of contributing to the life of the institute," Lignano explains. For anyone doing pop-ups like the BOFFO competition, the exposure and experience can be priceless, especially if they lead to designing a store whose budget is likely to be in the \$500,000 range or more.

According to Lukyanov-Cherny of Situ Studio, pop-ups will be more popular going forward than they were in pre-recession days, when developers had seemingly unlimited funds. The economy over the past three years has called for less expensive approaches to design challenges. "Projects need to have smaller budgets while being interesting, innovative, adaptable, and flexible, like a showroom





"It's about pushing those ideas of smart and efficient construction systems that can be prefabricated in the shop and quickly installed, or completely fabricated and installed on the site. And they don't have to be complex or necessarily done by skilled workers."

-Aleksey Lukyanov-Cherny

that has to travel from site to site," he says. "Popups fit into this category."

The ability to engage in experimental and crossdisciplinary collaborations is the chief advantage of pop-ups for Gage. He quickly saw the synergy between his firm and the work of Nicola Formichetti, his BOFFO partner. "This is about finding common ground for collaborations with other design disciplines," he says. "It is an incubator for ideas and for developing a language that, hopefully, lives on in future projects."

Claire Wilson writes for the New York Times.

BOFFO Building Fasion Design Competition Projects: (*top*) SOFTIab for The Lake & Stars.

(middle) KONYK Architecture's "flatfield" won the Supima Field competition to design the event space for the 2010 BOFFO Building Fashion Design pop-up installations under the High Line.

(bottom row, I-r) EASTON + COMBS for Ohne Titel; Graham Hudson, Architect for Patrik Ervell; Gage/Clemenceau Architects for Nicola Formichetti; THEVERYMANY for Irene Neuwirth.





A Giant, Hardly Sleeping: Pro Bono Sector

When architects and designers pick up the challenges of social responsibility, it means more than charity. The non-profit world is uniquely capable of putting the "public" back into "pro bono publico." BY BILL MILLARD

G reat projects require great clients, but for vast categories of design, the most rewarding client is a community group or the public at large. As with lawyers' pro bono practice, architects use their skills to "give back" or "pay it forward." Participants distinguish volunteer services from pure philanthropy: the achievements, challenges, and exchanges are more about problem-solving than conscience-salving. "As a young firm, you're responding to a lot of RFPs and doing competitions without compensation anyway," says Emily Abruzzo, AIA, LEED AP, of Abruzzo Bodziak Architects, one of several firms converting a city-owned Brooklyn brownfield into a mobile greenhouse for neighborhood residents. "Why not do it for something that benefits your community?"

It helps to remember the literal sense of the full phrase, *pro bono publico*. "It means 'for good,' not 'for free," says Laetitia Wolff, the new executive director of desigNYC, a meta-nonprofit that brings causes and design professionals together. Founded in 2009 by Edwin Schlossberg and Michelle Mullineaux and attaining 501(c)3 status last July, desigNYC views design as multiplying the benefits of efforts promoting wellbeing and sustainable communities. DesigNYC's projects do not "just launch another logo for a non-profit," says Wolff. They create multidisciplinary linkages, envision placemaking where "design can be lived and understood on a gut level," she says, and assess achievable goals, specifying the scope of work at the outset. In this respect, desigNYC helps professionalize projects that are driven by admirable idealism and talent but founder when participants are new to construction processes such as permitting. These results-oriented steps are vital, she notes, amid city budget cuts and other effects of the economic downturn. "In a period of crisis," she says, "the design community has so much to give and should not just drop the ball, but rather offer services to organizations in need."

John Peterson, AIA, founder of Public Architecture, the San Francisco organization that hosts The 1% program, in which member firms agree to dedicate that proportion of their billable hours to pro bono service; and co-author (with John Cary) of *The Power of Pro Bono* (see "In Print," pg. 34), blurs the humanitarian/market distinction altogether. "We're actually not inclined to separate charitable interests from business interests," he says. Public's business model blends private, public, and "high-impact non-profit" support, with many collaborations leveraging "spe(opposite page) desigNYC matched Abruzzo Bodziak Architects and graphic designer Claire Taylor Hansen with the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, New York Sun Works, and East New York Farms! for the Greenhouse Project in Cypress Hills, a prototype for temporary, mobile greenhouses to be built on vacant-lot eyesores in Cypress Hills, Brooklyn.

(below) FXFOWLE ACE Team 22 included Stuyvesant High School students led by Pascale Saint-Louis, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP. The team designed a prototype campus for the Les Moissonneurs de l'AMHE school in Haiti, which is sponsored by Les Moissonneurs de l'Association des Médecins Haïtiens à l'Étranger (Association of Haitian Physicians Abroad – NJ Chapter). cific experience we simply don't have. We're more setting the expectations and curating than acting as a traditional design firm." Community purposes guide Public's decisions. "In some cases," he notes, "we take on projects that don't even have a client."

Networks with deep roots

The rise of design non-profit umbrellas like desigNYC, Public's The 1%, Architecture for Humanity's Open Architecture Network, and others suggests that humanitarian partnerships are a definable sector. Some have scaled up from early initiatives addressing specific needs. In 1995, Thornton Tomasetti founder Charles H. Thornton, Hon. AIA, foresaw a shortage of students entering degree programs in architecture, construction, and engineering, and launched a New York-area mentoring effort, which swiftly went national. Pamela R. Mullender, president/CEO of the ACE Mentor Program of America, reports that the group now has 62 affiliates in 32 states, with some 10,000 students (more than half from economically challenged backgrounds) going through the program each year. About 97% graduate from high school on time, 103,000 have gained experience in these three professions since 1998, and some practice in major firms and mentor students themselves.

Mentors devote 40 to 50 hours a year imparting skills, reports longtime ACE mentor Joseph J. Aliotta, AIA, LEED AP, U.S. chief operating operator at Swanke Hayden Connell Architects and incoming president of AIANY. These include drafting exercises for students who may have never used a



scale, and AutoCAD in offices where students can show off computer chops. ACE Mentoring is also a partner in the annual Iron Designer Challenge held at the School of Design and Construction.

For the firms, benefits include new talent; students get career guidance, scholarships, and an inside view of disciplines they might never have discovered. Mark Behm, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP, IDP auxiliary coordinator for Mancini Duffy, who mentors and evaluates scholarship applications, says the real-world insight is invaluable: "As students go through school, they have a glimpse of what's going to be coming down the road and can start pursuing careers with a little more intelligence."

The content of mentoring projects can also be purposeful. This past spring Pascale Saint-Louis, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP, a designer in FXFOWLE's International Studio, led Stuyvesant High School students on the FXFOWLE ACE Team 22 to help the New Jersey chapter of the Association des Médecins Haïtiens à l'Étranger (Association of Haitian Physicians Abroad). The charity sponsors a school in La Saline, Haiti, and Saint-Louis helped design a campus, replacing buildings damaged in the 2010 earthquake. "The kids got to work on what may be a real project, and also help the organization," Saint-Louis says. Using IBC 2009 codes and other relevant standards (LEED 2009 for Schools, Habitat for Humanity, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency), the group created a prototype design for an area needing sturdier, sustainable construction. Impressed by the students' intelligence and commitment, Saint-Louis recalls a conversation at an ACE Mentors' Ball: "We all thought we were mentoring these students, but at the end of the day, we were the mentees."

Unique design demands

Sonya Dufner, FASID, LEED AP, associate principal at Perkins+Will (P+W), learned through colleagues about Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS), which shelters young women fleeing sexual exploitation. P+W is part of The 1% program, and it held a fundraiser, collecting in-kind donations worth \$170,000. The firm itself contributed more than 1,100 hours of pro bono services (their own and consultants') toward upgrading the GEMS office.

The GEMS mission poses special design challenges, combining a professional-looking entry for potential donors with space for girls seeking sanctuary from abuse. Staff also need to monitor these survivors for risky behavior (such as reading e-mail sent by a pimp). Striking a balance among



privacy, trust, and accountability, P+W used half-height walls, partially frosted translucent windows, and ample art areas to create a place that, Dufner says, "reminded me of Virginia Woolf [who said] that each young woman needs 'a place of her own' to feel secure, safe, and creative."

Non-profit clients are often used to getting by on tight budgets. Where mission and necessity drive design decisions, Dufner notes, architects are wise to trust a client's needs assessment, though sometimes "they don't know what they don't know, because they've always made do with inadequate space."

Some ideas are such intuitive winners that even entrenched bureaucracies can't stand in their way. While getting her masters at Pratt, industrial designer Ruth Lande Shuman noticed that public schools in East Harlem were as dreary as prisons. "When you walk into a school that looks as cold as this," she says, "you are offering up sensory deprivation. That's what the military does when they want to break an enemy down."

Many observers understand how surroundings affect people's energy level, sense of safety, perception of respect or disdain, and performance in work or school. Designers, however, can do something about it. Shuman founded Publicolor in 1996, merging her interests in education and the built environment into a program in which students paint their own schools, developing a stake in the condition of their spaces while learning about aesthetics, psychology, and work skills. With supplies donated by Benjamin Moore Paints, Publicolor students have brightened their schools and benefited from programs combining tutoring, college-preparation and financial-aid workshops, and career guidance through exposure to corporate volunteers, who paint alongside them on Saturdays.

Results of the program's effects are clear. Participating students have an 86% on-time graduation rate, compared with 42% among non-painting schoolmates. Pre- and post-participation surveys show gains in attendance and teacher retention, and, as Shuman notes, "100% of our kids went on to college, and all are the first in their families to go." Administrators don't always grasp Publicolor's value – or they do, but have to make hard choices (improve the environment or buy books?). Still, she praises today's NYC School Construction Authority leadership for overcoming the bottom-line-only focus of their predecessors. Her organization has extended its paint rollers into community and senior centers, playgrounds, the pediatric intensive(*left*) The 1%: Perkins+Will and consultants contributed more than 1,100 hours of pro bono services toward upgrading offices for the Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS), which shelters young women fleeing sexual exploitation.

(below) Publicolor students, partnering with corporate volunteers, are directly engaged in selecting new, energizing colors to transform their NYC public schools with supplies donated by Benjamin Moore.

care unit at Mt. Sinai, and other places of learning and "places where people go with a heavy heart."

Nationwide, there is no shortage of people with heavy hearts; social-service non-profits may be one of the few sectors for which demand hasn't slackened since the 2008 crash. By some criteria, the field is expanding. Last July, Common Ground (see "Common Sense" in *Oculus*, Fall 2010, pg. 22) launched a new national-scale spinoff group, Community Solutions, which works with assorted stakeholders and "change agents" to connect vulnerable people with resources. "Housing is part of ending homelessness, but it's not the only part," says Nadine Maleh, director of design and planning, hailing partner architects' ingenuity at overcoming budgetary limits. It's "exciting for them to figure out how to use different types of materials in innovative ways, and how to have the architecture sing, and truly be architecture, without having the budget dictate the form."

Public's Peterson describes the non-profit world as "a lively and rich community to serve, not only for the satisfaction and impact of the work, but for the business opportunity. Non-profits in this country last year generated more than \$1.4 trillion in revenue. Effectively none of that was spent on design expertise. I've asked groups of sophisticated design-firm leaders if they know who are the No. 1 and No. 2 health-care providers in the world, and no one has ever known." (Respectively, it's the Red Cross and International Planned Parenthood.) "The reason is they're not their clients," Peterson says, "and the reason they're not their clients is because the design profession has never shown these organizations that design matters to their mission.

"If, as a profession, we want to be more relevant and healthier, both culturally and from a business standpoint, we've got to show organizations like these that we can be effective." It's a broad and serious challenge but, with allies like these, no one need answer it alone.

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



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Raves + Reviews

REVIEWS BY STANLEY STARK, FAIA

The Power of Pro Bono: 40 Stories about Design for the Public Good by Architects and Their Clients

Edited By John Cary and Public Architecture. Foreword By Majora Carter. Preface By John Peterson.

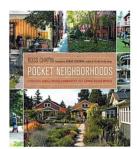
Focused on socially responsible projects for nonprofit organizations, this book describes 40 cases involving a wide range of building types where the provision of pro-bono design services led to positive results. The examples are linked by pro bono (the provision of some or all of a firm's services for free), commitment to socially responsible action, and mutually positive outcomes and attention for all involved. Practical advice on contracts, professional responsibilities, and risks when services are provided in the absence of fee is scant. But as an enlightening and encouraging survey of the field, this volume makes a worthwhile contribution.

Pocket Neighborhoods: Creating Small-Scale Community in a Large-Scale World By Ross Chapin

Architect and author Chapin's purpose is to make neighborhoods real again, imbued with a sense of community and safety. His vehicle is the pocket neighborhood, which is a clustered group of neighborhood houses gathered around an open space. In the many urban and suburban examples Chapin describes, animating the open space (a court, a street, backyards, shared commons) is critical to creating the cohesiveness, energy, and security that successful neighborhoods offer. There is a definite affinity and linkage between Gordon Cullen's "Townscape," new urbanism, and Chapin's approach. His examples, survey of design strategies, and this resonance all contribute to making this an important and helpful volume.



New York: D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, 2010. 288 pp. \$40

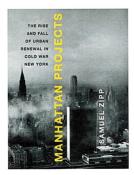


Newtown, Connecticut: Taunton Press, 2011. 224 pp. \$30

Otto Neurath



New York: NAi Publishers/ D.A.P., 2011. 176 pp. \$35



New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. 469 pp. \$34.95

Otto Neurath: The Language of the Global Polis By Nader Vossoughian

Neurath was a sociologist, economist, and information designer. He made critical contributions to 20th-century Modernist thought as the inventor of the Isotype pictorial system of universally comprehensible silhouettes as a method of conveying information. Through his involvement with the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM) and his contacts with Sigfried Giedion, Le Corbusier, László Moholy-Nagy, and graphic designer Gerd Arntz, the system of Isotypes became the international language of urban planning and design. His influence as an engaged intellectual who sought to foster interactive and participatory approaches to social planning and design was enormous. In addition to reminding us of Neurath's contributions, the author suggests that his example has valuable lessons for us today.

Noted but Not Reviewed

Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York By Samuel Zipp

This book offers a new perspective on the dreary saga of urban renewal and its shaky promises of "benevolent intervention." Zipp concentrates on four major post-war projects with uneven results – the UN Headquarters, Stuyvesant Town, Lincoln Center, and East Harlem public housing – and emphasizes the challenges and perils of a comprehensive urban vision.

Stanley Stark, FAIA, is an executive project director at EYP. He is a frequent contributor to *Oculus* and previously served as chair of the Oculus Committee.

57-Year Watch



A 1954

Ezra Stoller's iconic 1954 portrait of Manufacturers Trust.

branch bank noted for its iconic transparent design is now the subject of heated preservation controversy

BY JOHN MORRIS DIXON, FAIA

The Modern ideal of a transparent building envelope was never more vividly realized than in Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's branch bank at Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street – originally Manufacturers Trust, later Manufacturers Hanover, and until last year, Chase. Ada Louise Huxtable recently characterized it as "a structure where exterior and interior were conceived as one thing, unified and inseparable, to be seen and understood as a continuous visual, spatial and aesthetic experience." The current owners, Vornado Realty Trust, are now reconfiguring the building to accommodate two retail stores facing Fifth Avenue.

Gordon Bunshaft's original design reflects a specific set of circumstances. The bank needed more public interior than the square footage of the site, hence the two banking floors. The structure's transparency met the bank's desire for an "inviting look" that appeared progressive and would appeal to a broad range of customers.

Such a transparent glass cage would not have worked just anywhere. A site that faced north and east, largely in the shadow of taller structures, eliminated the need for blinds or tinted glass. Sufficient interior light intensity to sustain the transparency was provided by continuous luminous ceilings, an innovation that was just being perfected in the early 1950s. Because the second floor stops short of the street walls, cantilevering off interior columns, it appears to float within a single lofty space. White marble cladding on the columns inside the space almost dematerializes them when seen from the street against the luminous ceilings.

Surprisingly, SOM was not entirely responsible for this iconic interior, as it was for subsequent Manhattan branch banks. Since the firm didn't have an interiors division in the early 1950s, the elegantly severe furnishings were done in collaboration with Eleanor Le Maire, a distinguished interior designer who'd worked with Manufacturers Trust.

In 1997, the building received exterior landmark designation, applying only to the envelope. Although the building's banking floors were clearly visible from the street, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) didn't designate the interior until February 2011, after the last banking occupant left and the current owners sought retail tenants.

For the proposed new occupancy, the LPC approved alterations to both interior (dividing the space in two, among other changes) and exterior (mainly two new entries cut into the Fifth Avenue front). While the proposal would restore key elements of the interior to their original appearance, it would do so by re-creating them after the gutting that has already taken place. In July, the advocacy group Citizens Emergency Committee to Preserve Preservation filed a lawsuit charging that Vornado Realty Trust and the LPC disregarded an obligation to protect the interior.

Ironically, SOM is the owner's architect for the current architectural alterations, exterior and interior. Moreover, one of the bank's 1950s requirements was that the public interiors be adaptable to retail use. But a space so plainly designed as one whole volume would be seriously compromised by being divided in two.

This issue of *Oculus* will go to press before the preservation drama plays out. But it's clear that – whatever happens – this landmark is assured a place in the history of Modern architecture.

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. Dixon received AIANY's 2011 Stephen A. Kliment Oculus Award for Excellence in Journalism.

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Rell left of the Center at 532 LaGuardia Place.

Occasion is thus of the greatest importance in regard to every production; indeed, it is this which essentially decides the question regarding its true aesthetic value... A creation is a production from nothing; the occasion is, however, the nothing from which everything comes.

> -Søren Kierkegaard in Either/Or, 1843

Ecstasy affords the occasion and expediency determines the form.

-Marianne Moore in "The Past is the Present," 1917

That psychedelic doors-of-perceptionstyle illustration, a long-haired man walking a street made patchwork from two different (and spurious) architectural styles, from the shadows of which watched eves.

> -China Miéville in The City & The City, 2009

Off-Center

he Center for Architecture opened its doors on October 7, 2003, with a 16-hour-long marathon "Design In," featuring 80 speakers and one microphone. The space was so new that the lectern was not on hand, and speakers stood behind a beautiful steel sculpture created in the upstate barn of artist Julie Dermansky. That day we also opened three exhibitions on planning, members' work, and Olympic Summer Game building types. Since then we have offered 160 exhibitions and approximately 8,000 events, most for continuingeducation credit. The AIA New York Chapter's Center for Architecture is the vehicle by which we promote design excellence through exhibitions, professional development by programs, and political advocacy using our enhanced visibility and civic engagement. The Center is showcase, classroom, and soapbox.

Somewhere along the line, we noticed that the Center, which seemed so large compared with our sixth-floor showroom at 200 Lexington Avenue, had gotten smaller. Or perhaps the programming, exhibitions, training, and special events had grown beyond all expectations, as had the activities for children and their parents at the Center for Architecture Foundation. So when the adjacent storefront to the south became available, we rented it. (As Yogi Berra said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it.") The space at 532 LaGuardia Place is in a five-story 1850s building graced by cast-iron columns and a 9- by 16-foot rear garden.

The expansion is daunting, as the space has become familiar to the NYC design community as well as to visitors from around the world. Do we need more meeting space for members and partner organizations? Do we need a different type of program and exhibition space? Can member/staff interaction be improved and unanticipated needs be addressed? In an organization of almost 5,000 architects and designers, there is no dearth of ideas and no lack of creativity. The Chapter's Premises Committee, originally chaired in 2003 by the late Margaret Helfand, FAIA, has been resurrected. Led by Mary Burke, AIA, who also serves on the advi-

sory group of the AIA National Interiors Knowledge Community, the Committee has entertained numerous suggestions and reached out to many in the design and construction industries.

Comparable spaces have been studied, including design centers from Anchorage to Lima, and those in Copenhagen, London, and Paris. New AIA Centers for Architecture have opened since 2003 in Austin, Columbus, Dallas, Houston, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Richmond, San Antonio, and San Francisco. And ideas that animate similar types of space have been considered. My personal favorite was the office space in Tel Aviv, designed by Edit Riftin, which included a full gymnasium and boxing ring. Do we have room for a gym at the Center for Architecture - or even more interior bicycle parking? Is a bookstore/café in the offing, following the lead of Van Alen Books? For the time being, in the lingering economic downturn, frugality and simplicity are the credo. While we may aspire to the enhanced street identity of a multi-building neighborhood anchor such as Zabar's or J&R Music World, the fact is that we are giving ourselves the same advice that many architects share with their clients: If you build it, they will come - but let's watch the bottom line, and make sure the HVAC is environmentally appropriate. As Jim Bouton wrote in Foul Ball, "A good plan without money is better than a bad plan with money." There is a logic to the ideal of gradual, incremental extension that, on LaGuardia Place, has been fueled by opportunity.

At the Center for Architecture, the balance will shift slightly off-center, slightly downtown towards Lower Manhattan. The growth changes the potential for how the combined space of 536 and 532 LaGuardia Place is used, how it is seen, and, more importantly, what it means. Expansion in tough times is a gesture of optimism, a symbol of not only the importance of the profession, but of its resilience and street smarts. Architects design for the long haul, for the future. The street front has gotten longer, and the future is now.

> Rick Bell, FAIA Executive Director, AIA New York Chapter

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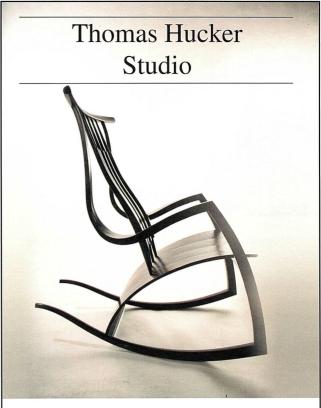


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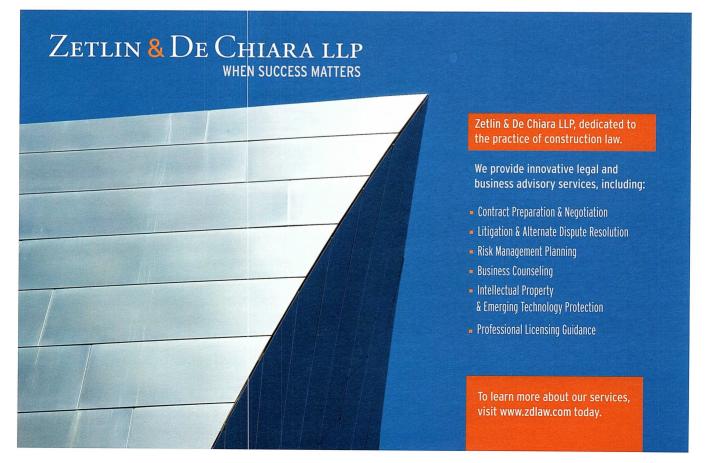


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ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING, ANIMATIONS & SCALE MODELS

Genesis Studios, Inc...... 41

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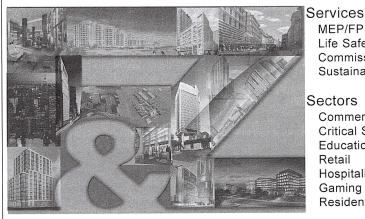
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New York

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AUDIO/VISUAL

Audio Video Systems	 38
BOLLARDS	

Architectural Iron Company 10

CLAIMS DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Zetlin & De Chiara, LLP...... 39

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Microsol Resources	
Microsol Resources	

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York 40
Mueser Rutledge
Consulting Engineers10
Severud Associates
Consulting Engineers P.C8

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Institute of Design and Construction .. 7 International Code Council...... 40

CORK FLOORING American Cork Products Company . 12

CURTAIN WALL & BUILDING ENCLOSURE SYSTEMS Jordan Panel Systems Corp. 18

DESIGN/BUILD STV7

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES Pratt Manhattan..... 41

STV7 ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS Edwards & Zuck, P.C. New York 40

ENERGY MANAGEMENT NYSERDA 3

ENGINEERING

Cosentini Associates	4
De Nardis Engineering	
Outside Back	Cover
Halcrow, Inc	16
STV	7
WSP Flack & Kurtz	33
FURNITURE	

Thomas Hucker Studio 38

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

F.J. Sciame Construction Co., Inc..... Inside Back Cover

GLASS FILM

GlassFilm	Enterprises		12
-----------	-------------	--	----

HARDWARE

Caldwell Manufacturing Company North America 12

INSURANCE

Design Insurance Agency Inc 44	5
Genatt Associates	3
Prosurance Redeker Group	6

INTERIORS

Perianth Interior Design
& Buy My Eye 33
STV

KITCHEN/BATH

LANDSCAPE

Towers Golde 44	Towers	Golde		44
-------------------	--------	-------	--	----

LAW FIRMS

Ingram, Yuzek, Gainen,	
Carroll & Bertolotti	5
Shaub, Ahmuty,	
Citrin & Spratt, LLP 4	12
Zetlin & De Chiara, LLP 3	39

LIGHTING

3G Lighting, Inc. Inside Front Cover

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Development Training For:

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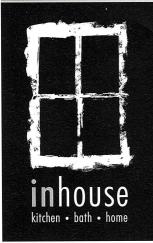


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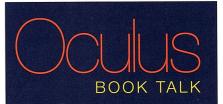
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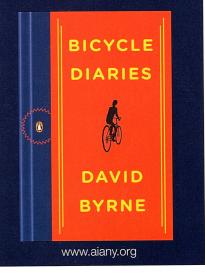
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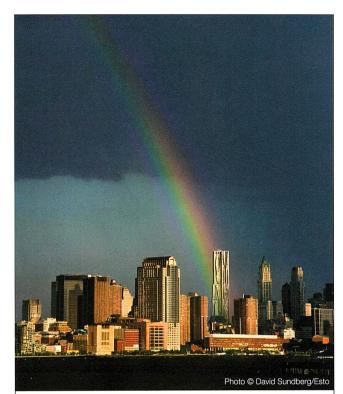


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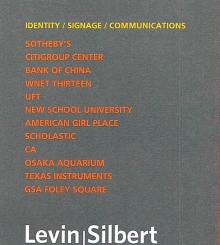
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Caldwell Manufacturing Company North America www.caldwellmfgco.com
Cosentini Associates www.cosentini.com4
De Nardis Engineering www.denardis.com Outside Back Cover
Design Insurance Agency Inc. www.designinsuranceagency.com45
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Institute of Design and Construction www.idc.edu7
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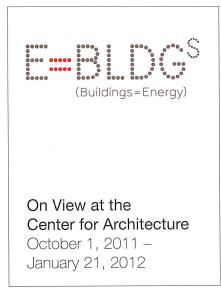
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