

Fall 2016

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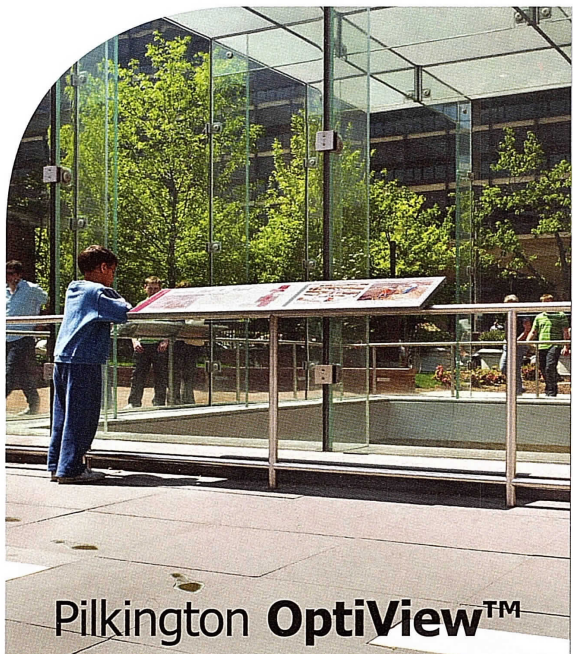
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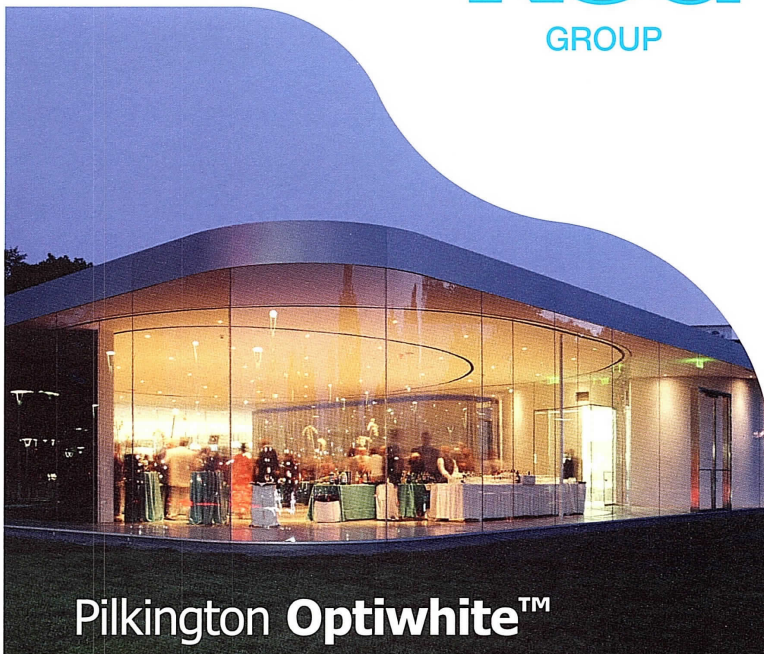


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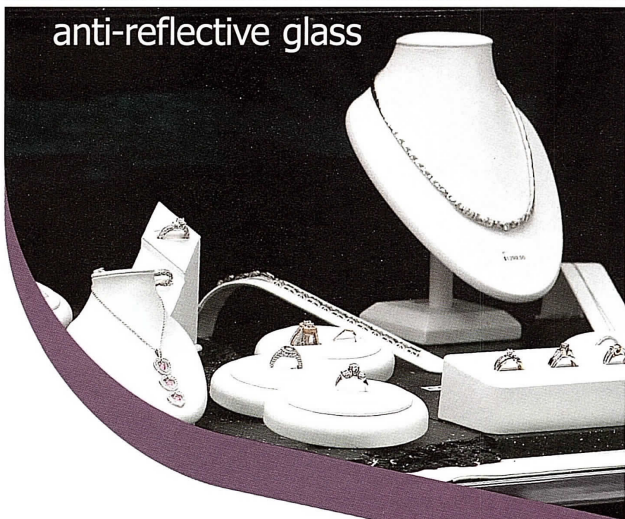


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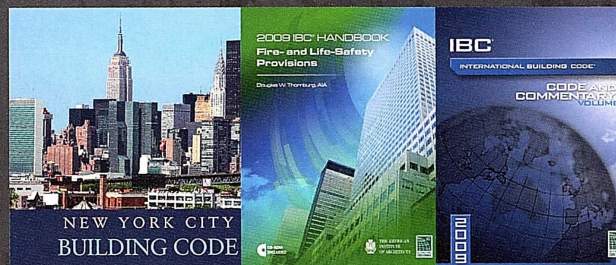
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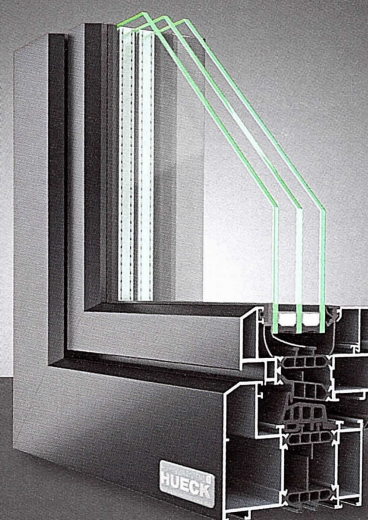
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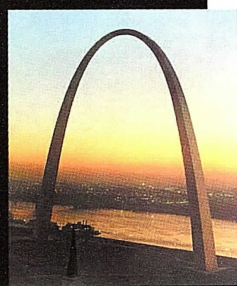
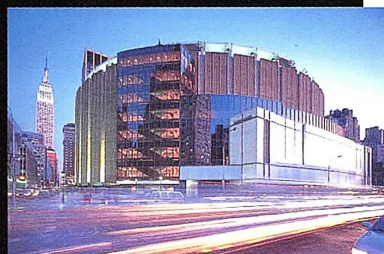
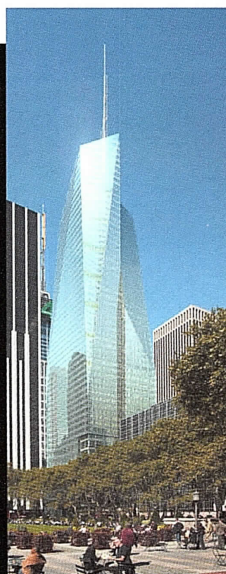
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Cover: Industry City's "Innovation Alley," designed by S9 Architecture. ©Courtesy of Industry City, pg. 38

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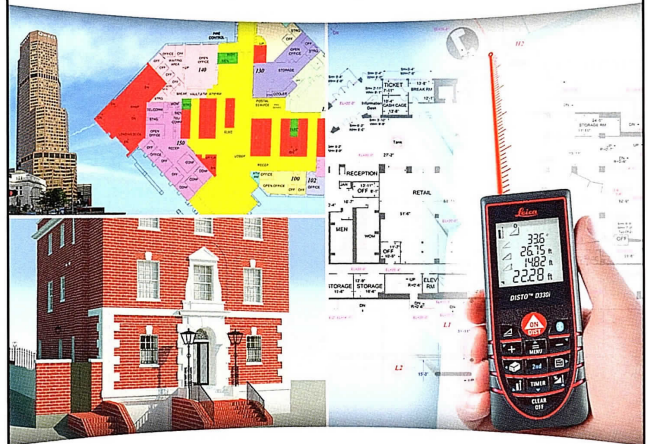
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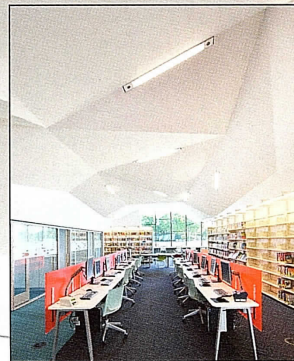
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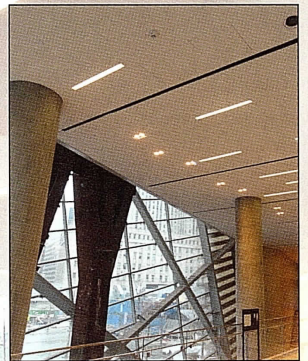
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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Timeless Questions of Coexistence

Jane Jacobs or Robert Moses? Preservation or development? Glass or terra cotta? Authenticity or innovation?

These either/or questions are not new. And today, new questions in the same vein are emerging: Can a contemporary building use age-old materials? Will digital do away with print? Should new development only look to the future?

I purposely linked the words “authenticity” and “innovation” with “and” instead of “or” as my presidential theme at the beginning of the year. Can two apparently opposing ideas coexist? And embedded in that question is the value component: Should they coexist?

I look to Philadelphia, where my formative years were spent, to tell a story of unrelenting urban renewal and its consequences. In the eastern part of Center City, the National Park Service tore down all buildings built after the colonial era to create an authentic historic Philadelphia. Hard-line preservationists cheered. On the other side of town, much of Market Street was torn down, including a Frank Furness-designed train station, to create a modern office corridor. Some thought this would make Philadelphia competitive in a post-textile-driven city. Both initiatives left the city in a lesser state for the purity of their efforts.

In the early 1970s, Romaldo Giurgola, FAIA, emerged in Philadelphia as a master of accommodating – and even celebrating – the coexistence of these two seemingly opposed approaches. In my mind, he took architecture and urbanism in a new

direction with the Penn Mutual building, where he married a 19th-century, four-story Egyptian Revival building to a new, strikingly innovative, and sustainable 22-story building. Romaldo (known as Aldo to friends and colleagues) later took this sensitive and extraordinarily creative approach on the road, most notably at the Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, where he synthesized site, program, and identity in a wholly new and instantly iconic vision for the country and its seat of government. Sadly, Aldo passed away this year, but his legacy lives on. We have much to learn from this kind, sensitive, and poetic architect.

And now, as we face ever more critical issues of resilience, energy use, housing shortages, inadequate schools and hospitals, and poor infrastructure, a nuanced and thoughtful approach to architecture is more important than ever. Achieving this goal will require imaginative and out-of-the-box thinking. As architects, we are trained to be problem solvers, and we should join the effort to take the best of the past forward into the future.

This issue of *Oculus* is dedicated to the challenges of reusing older buildings and integrating them into the contemporary urban landscape. In addition, the Center for Architecture is hosting the exhibit “Authenticity and Innovation,” curated by Donald Albrecht, opening on September 30. An October 1 symposium associated with the exhibition will explore the architectural, cultural, social, and environmental issues associated with these initiatives. Please come join the conversation.

Carol Loewenson, FAIA, LEED AP
2016 President, AIA New York Chapter



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Editor checking out Johnny Swing's *Murmuration* chaise of welded nickels at The Four Seasons pre-auction preview. (Final gavel: \$112,500 – it is not in editor's living room.)

New Spirit in Great Old Bones

This is the second time the Oculus Committee has collaborated with the AIANY president and the exhibition curator to build an issue around an exhibition that highlights the “President’s Theme” for the year. The first was the Spring 2014 issue, “Civic Spirit: Civic Visions,” which expanded upon the theme of 2014 AIANY President Lance Jay Brown, FAIA, “Open to the Public: Civic Space Now,” also the title of the exhibition curated by Thomas Mellins.

This year we worked closely with 2016 AIANY President Carol Loewenson, FAIA, LEED AP, and Donald Albrecht, curator of this fall’s presidential theme exhibition “Authenticity + Innovation.” Some of the projects featured here are included in the exhibition. Others expand the conversation about respectfully reusing historic structures to meet 21st-century needs – and it goes without saying that it’s not always without challenges. Albrecht’s eloquent “Opener” on page 25 puts them all in context of “the dynamic fusion of old and new that is at the core of what is authentically New York City.”

In our regular departments, “One Block Over” climbs the new Hills on Governors Island. “In Print” delves into tomes about dream cities and the British Empire. And “97-Year Watch” tells us the fascinating tale of a rather extreme façadectomy: how “Goodhue’s splendid St. Bartholomew’s Church was designed to incorporate the entry front of the congregation’s former home.”

As we put this issue together, auctioneers sold off the contents of The Four Seasons Restaurant. I’ve lived within three blocks of the Philip Johnson-designed jewel box for umpteen years. It was my refuge whenever the city was too much for me. One shaken-not-stirred cocktail later, as I watched the beaded curtains form sun-dappled waves across the windows, and I was back in love with my city again.

I think Johnson’s spirit left 99 East 52 Street with the news of The Four Seasons’ departure and auction. Johnson’s Table 32, estimated at \$3,000 to \$5,000, sold for \$35,000. (I had hopes for a Huxtable-designed metal, footed bread basket – ha!) I’m glad that (most of) the interior is landmarked. And while the space will continue as a restaurant and not remodeled into something else, the whole adventure had me wondering about the old, but not necessarily landmarked, buildings and spaces presented here given new life with, as Albrecht writes, “new uses never imagined by their original designers and builders.” What would those designers and builders think? Philip has left the building. Have they? Perhaps, but they left behind some great bones.

With the passage of Intro. 775-A in June, which many consider a weakening of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, I’m heartened by the number of developers, owners, architects – and city agencies – who see beyond the abandoned factory building and storm-ravaged office tower to find inspiration in those great old bones.

Kristen Richards, Hon. AIA, Hon. ASLA
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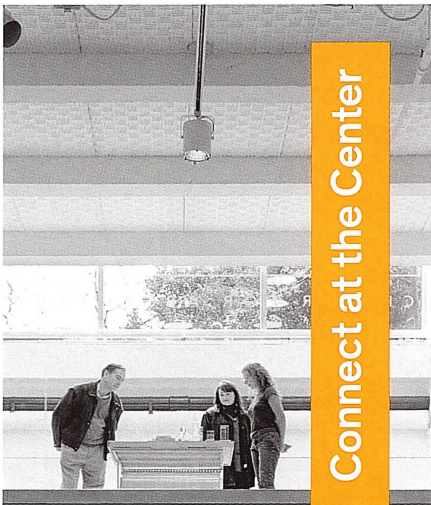
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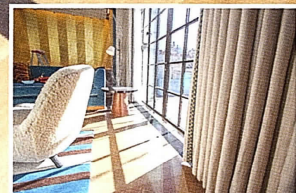
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Center Highlights



(left) At FitCity 2016, **Margaret O'Donoghue Castillo, FAIA, LEED AP**, Chief Architect at the NYC Department of Design + Construction, discussed health initiatives at the DDC with **Benjamin Prosky, Assoc. AIA**, Executive Director, AIANY and the Center for Architecture, held at BAM Fisher.



(above) **Charles Renfro, AIA**, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, emceed the annual Etch-A-Sketch fundraiser in support of K-12 design education programs. Competing teams of honoree sketchers included **Paula Scher** of Pentagram (at easel), along with **Jonathan J. Marvel, FAIA**, Marvel Architects; **Ronnette Riley, FAIA**, Ronnette Riley Architect; and **Dan Wood, FAIA**, WORK Architecture Company (WORKac).

(right) **Lou Switzer**, Founder and CEO of The Switzer Group, and **Curtis J. Moody, FAIA**, Founder and CEO of Moody Nolan Architects, discussed design, practice, and legacy in a conversation moderated by **Toni Griffin**, Adjunct Professor, Harvard GSD.



(below) **Vishaan Chakrabarti, AIA**, Founder, Partnership for Architecture and Urbanism (PAU), and **Annabelle Selldorf, FAIA**, Principal, Selldorf Architects, had a lively conversation about the changing role of architects today.



(above) AIANY and Center for Architecture Executive Director **Benjamin Prosky, Assoc. AIA**, and AIANY 2016 President **Carol Loewenson, FAIA, LEED AP**, welcomed **Billie Tsien, AIA**, and **Tod Williams, FAIA**,

Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners, to discuss how they reconcile the use of innovative materials and processes with the desire for natural and traditional materials.



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(left) The Center for Architecture, in collaboration with CONSTRUCTO, presented "EXTRA-ORDINARY: New Practices in Chilean Architecture," showcasing recent, innovative work by 15 Chilean firms.

(right) The Center for Architecture partnered with Columbia University's Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture to present the New York premiere of "House Housing: An Untimely History of Architecture and Real Estate."

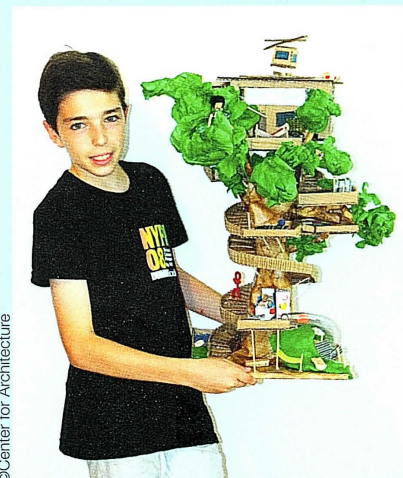


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(above) At July's Oculus Book talk, **Joel Sanders, AIA**, Professor of Architecture, Yale University, joined **Mario Gooden, AIA**, Principal, Huff + Gooden Architects and Professor of Practice, Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, to discuss Gooden's latest book, *Dark Space: Architecture, Representation, Black Identity*.



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(left) Eighth grader **Fernando Nagore** joined 15 other middle-school students for the Center's Treehouse Design program, in which students created their own model trees and treehouses.



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(above) Elementary-school students spent a week learning about architecture and urban design by exploring Greenwich Village, then designed

and built their own ideal neighborhood as part of the Center's Summer@theCenter weeklong design programs.

one block over



Conceal and Reveal: Hills with Magical Views

Recycled debris and granite blocks are the bedrock of the new Hills on Governors Island

BY CLAIRE WILSON

Skeptics called it “the crazy hill idea.” They liked the concept of dramatic changes to the topography of Governors Island, but said it couldn’t be done. Engineering problems, they predicted. Cost issues. Maintenance concerns.

In July, six years after the completion of the master plan and a year ahead of schedule, the Trust for Governors Island officially opened the Hills, four mounds of largely recycled materials that are the centerpiece of the former military base. Designed by Adriaan Geuze of the Rotterdam-based urban design and landscape architecture firm West 8, with NYC-based Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects, the new man-made landscape delivers marvelous views of the Lower New York Bay, a close-up of the Statue of Liberty, and a lush greensward for visitors to get lost in.

The four masses – Grassy Hill, Discovery Hill, Outlook Hill, and Slide Hill (named for four slides that snake down its slope) – were built on a 10-acre expanse of what had been mostly parking lot, using fill and recycled debris from demolished island buildings. They also sit on the man-made part of the island, created with debris from the construction of the Lexington Avenue subway in the early 1900s.

As the hills progressed, they required constant geotechnical monitoring for settlement and stability, according to Jamie Maslyn Larson, RLA, ASLA, principal and partner in West 8’s New York office. Topsoil is in the mix, and the whole confection is held together with mechanical stabilization. Runoff also had to

be carefully managed on the Hills, which are effectively a system of microclimates with varying wind conditions, rainfall amounts, threats from salt water, and sun exposure. Erosion control fabric covers vulnerable spots in the landscape until the 41,000 new shrubs, 860 new trees, and multiple varieties of grasses take root and further ensure the slopes’ stability, according to Kim Mathews, RLA, ASLA, principal, Mathews Nielsen.

At one point, Outlook Hill, the highest of the four at 70 feet, was deemed too tall and heavy. Ten feet was removed from the top, and heavy sand, silt, and gravel were replaced with lightweight but durable pumice from Greece. That was an expensive but necessary addition to a project whose very design was dictated to some degree by what materials were on hand and the prohibitive cost of carting away debris. Likewise, handsome reclaimed granite seawall blocks were repurposed into a stone step installation called the Scramble that invites children and adults to climb to the top of Outlook Hill. The blocks also support the slides on Slide Hill and make up the Stonehenge-like arrangements on the lawn below the haunting *Cabin*, the concrete reverse cast of a shed by Rachel Whiteread.

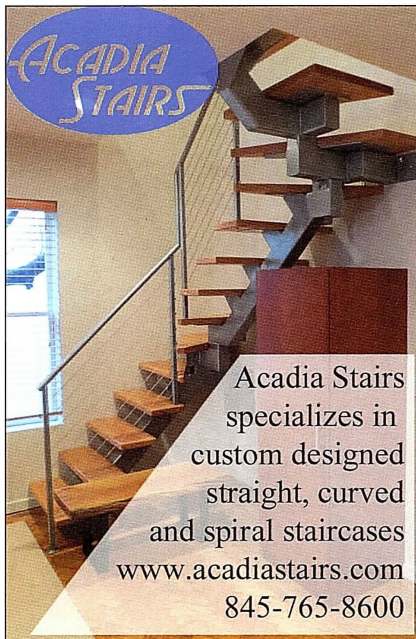
Looking back, Leslie Koch, former president of the Trust for Governors Island, admits that even she thought the whole hill thing was a bit, well, crazy. But with 500,000 visitors expected this year, she is more than happy with the result of the crazy plan. “It more than exceeds my expectations,” she says. “And they were very high.”

Claire Wilson is a New York-based freelance writer.



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Authenticity and Innovation

BY DONALD ALBRECHT

This issue of *Oculus* explores preservation in contemporary New York City, a particularly relevant topic for a metropolis characterized by perennial change. Here, old buildings embody cultural memory and moor a rapidly transforming cityscape as it is continually reshaped by development pressures and evolving architectural taste. How these historic buildings respond to the fast pace around them – how they can be both preserved and innovatively repurposed for our times – is the focus of this issue.

Two of the featured projects, a WPA-era post office and a block of 19th-century tenements, are being given new life under the guidelines of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. This municipal agency was established 51 years ago to save New York's architectural patrimony. Today it is responsible for protecting more than 35,000 designated landmark properties, most of which sit in 139 historic districts throughout the city. The magazine's other four projects – a mid-century modern skyscraper and an underutilized industrial building turned into an of-the-moment shared work environment, an armory transformed into housing and recreation center, and a waterfront "Industry City" that's now a community of artisans and cutting-edge companies – are not officially designated as "significant" by the commission, but their reuse represents a phenomenon that can be called "preservation beyond the preservation law."

These four projects are among 24 others that are showcased in a new exhibition, "Authenticity and Innovation," being presented at the Center for Architecture through January 14, 2017. The reclamation of these 28 structures acknowledges their valued role in communities and shows appreciation for their time-honored materials and craftsmanship, durability, and generous scale. Creative developers, owners, tenants, and architects recognize the potential of the buildings to house new uses never imagined by their original designers and builders. These structures accommodate contemporary patterns of living, working, and playing; help transform neighborhoods; and support the city's capacity to embrace new and vibrant industries.

The projects in "Authenticity and Innovation" prompt questions about the role of preservation in New York City. How can we balance increasing density and interest in sustainability with valuing the city's historic character? What is the relationship between preservation and gentrification, as new uses displace both people and traditional industries? What is stylistically appropriate when adapting old buildings for new functions? While demonstrating a variety of strategies for balancing change and preservation, the projects in the exhibition and this issue of *Oculus* also represent the dynamic fusion of old and new that is at the core of what is authentically New York City.

DONALD ALBRECHT, guest curator of the Center for Architecture's "Authenticity and Innovation" exhibition, is the Museum of the City of New York's curator of architecture and design, and an independent curator. His exhibitions and books include retrospectives on the work of Charles and Ray Eames and Eero Saarinen. His next exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York, "Gay Gotham: Art and Underground Culture in New York," opens on October 7, 2016.

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CIVIC PURPOSE REPURPOSED: BROOKLYN

At a Crown Heights armory where cavalry once maneuvered, a public/private/philanthropic collaboration is supporting its conversion into a multipurpose complex that balances historical and community priorities

BY BILL MILLARD

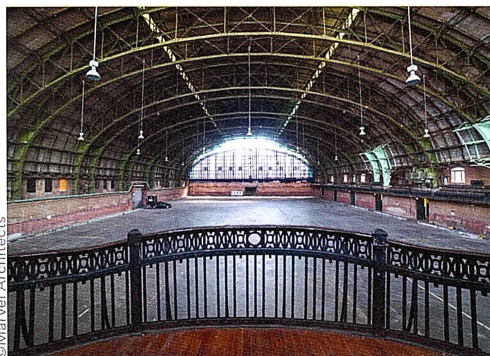
The Bedford-Union Armory, an Art Nouveau palace in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, was “where the Rough Riders trained,” explains Jonathan Marvel, FAIA, principal at Marvel Architects. He is referring to original tenants of the brick and stone pile, built from 1903 to 1907 to a design by Lewis Pilcher and William Tachau, the Troop C Cavalry Unit, later part of the fabled First U.S. Cavalry. In its post-equine life, the armory’s 58,000-square-foot drill shed has been used for film shoots, Caribbean and Hasidic community gatherings, and distribution of aid supplies after the Haitian earthquake.

“We no longer need horses,” Marvel continues, “but we do need housing. So replacing the stables with housing is a wonderful tradeoff.” The revamped armory, including head house, converted stables, and a residential addition, will give civilians homes and recreational/educational/cultural spaces, operated by local nonprofit CAMBA. Brooklyn-born Knicks forward Carmelo Anthony’s foundation plans to assist the project. The head house will include office space, and the rental section will hold classrooms for Medgar Evers College. It takes an urban village, it seems, for a 542,000-square-foot project covering 80% of its block to realize its potential.

Full size and fully accessible

John Valladares, representing developer BFC Partners (operating with Slate Property Group as Bedford Courts), chose a mix heavy on recreation based on a 2012 NYU report prepared for then-Borough President Marty Markowitz, which saw conversion of the armory as potentially a major step in overcoming poverty and crime in its Crown Heights neighborhood.

The building has not been designated a landmark, which opened the door to drastic modifications that were once on the table. “There was a challenge to get as much affordable housing on the site as you could,” reports Marvel’s partner, Guido Hartray, AIA. One plan involved shortening the drill shed to spread housing across more of the site. However, the community favored “maintaining as much of the usable athletic recreational space of the drill shed as you could,” he says. The rental building will be 13 stories, set back from shorter buildings on Rogers Avenue. “The only transformation we’re doing on the outside of the head house is one new ADA-accessible entrance,” he adds. The head house gets a café and similar small commercial uses, serving “1,000 hungry kids a day plus parents waiting.” None of the retail opens directly outside. The masonry exterior “doesn’t lend itself to glass shop windows.”



The drill shed as seen from the original observation balcony, which will be restored; photo taken April 2016.



(opposite page, top) The 542,000-square-foot project covers 80% of its block.

(left) Three basketball courts, a soccer field, and spaces for volleyball, tennis, and other sports will occupy one end of the drill shed.

“Everyone in the community had been thinking about what to do with this building for a long time,” Hartray recalls. “It’s hard to get all those desires to fit.” The business model and spatial allocation both called for fine-tuning. The 330 rental units will be half market and half affordable, with the lower-cost units targeted at a split of 50/30/20% of area median income. A condominium wing replacing stables along President Street will contain 80% market units.

The condo section will feature double-height units in bays whose load-bearing walls create a street rhythm echoing what Hartray calls “the grain of the vaults of the drill shed.” A driveway to an interior garage takes advantage of the building’s one-story drop from Union Street to President; cars enter at grade efficiently from President but end up below grade, so parking is concealed without extensive excavation. (Marvel adds that the Department of City Planning’s Zoning for Quality and Affordability, a zoning-code amendment, allows relief from parking minimums in transit areas; the armory is within a five-minute walk to the 2, 3, 4, and 5 lines.)

Unlike buildings that reinforce status hierarchies – gyms and pools off-limits to tenants of affordable units, or stigmatizing, now-illegal “poor doors” – the armory distributes its rental apartments democratically. “Actually, we’re going further,” says Marvel Senior Architect Annya Ramirez-Jimenez, AIA. “We are designing the units equally,” with sizes and amenities evenly shared. The agreement with the NYC Economic Development Corporation requires community access and discounted rates for the facility’s public programming. The armory team strives to answer local needs, including business incubators, academic after-school programs, and farmers’ markets. “We’ve probably had 30 or 40 meetings with local institutions interested in running or having programs hosted out of the armory,” Valladares reports.

A celebratory form

Schematic designs for the residential components are about 90% complete, and the project will go through the Uniform Land Use Review Process by about November 2016. Construction may begin in fall 2017 and continue until late 2019 or 2020.

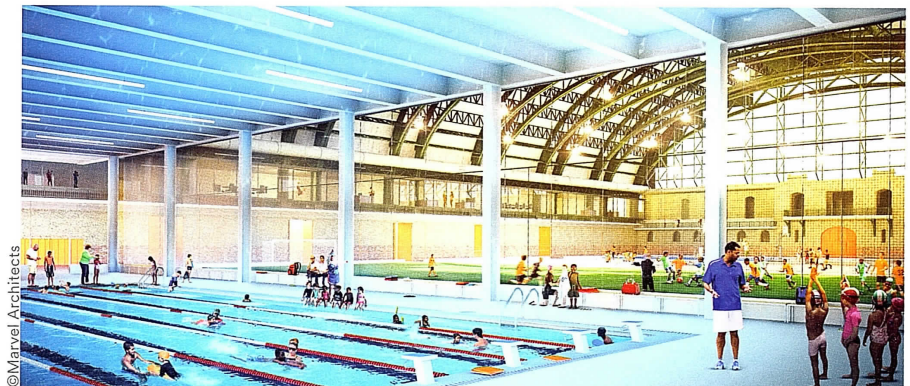
Keeping “that beautiful long-span structure” untruncated, Marvel says, was a major victory. “It’s a celebration of architecture. It’s unusual to have buildings perform, as it were, such gymnastics.” Its elliptical steel support system, Hartray learned from structural engineers at Severud Associates, is “not even operating as an arch; it’s operating just as a bent beam,” so that questions about whether excavation for the pool might compromise structural stability were ultimately not troublesome.

“The head house was the symbolic face of the building, and the drill shed is the ‘engine,’” Marvel explains. “We’re engaged in an architecture of wrapping, if you will. It’s not just a façade. This is actually a very thick wrapper that includes many units of housing and community spaces around this amazing structure.” After decades of enduring privations, with its civic gem hiding in plain sight all the while, Crown Heights residents will soon have the privilege of unwrapping a most impressive package. ■

BILL MILLARD is a freelance writer and editor whose work has appeared in *Oculus*, *Architect*, *Icon*, *Content*, *The Architect’s Newspaper*, *LEAF Review*, *Architectural Record*, and other publications.

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MEP & Fire Protection:
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Consulting Engineers
Pool Consultant:
Trace Pool Design
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Consultant:** JM Zoning
**Main Operator/Facility
Management for
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CAMBA
(originally Church
Avenue Merchants
Block Association)



The swimming pool at the eastern end of the shed will be “a new building inside the existing building” for thermal control and dehumidification.

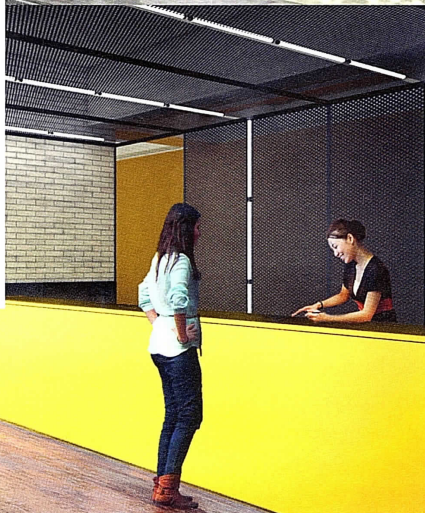
FEATURE



CIVIC PURPOSE REPURPOSED: BRONX

A landmark post office on the Grand Concourse will soon rise from hibernation to become a mixed-use community center, helping to catalyze the borough's renewal

BY BILL MILLARD



The Bronx is still recovering from the “the Bronx is burning” headlines of the 1970s. But Jay Valgora, AIA, principal of Studio V Architecture, aims to erase those tragic memories.

Valgora's firm is converting the Bronx General Post Office (GPO), a 1937 Thomas Harlan Ellett building at East 149th Street and Grand Concourse that has a streamlined look and monumental arched windows, from what he calls “an empty facility sitting on the borough's most important corner” to a multipurpose commercial magnet.

Its lobby features the murals *Resources of America* by Ben and Bernarda Shahn, 13 frescos depicting workers in multiple fields: farms, heavy industry, and culture. They will be included in the revived landmark building, which will consist of retail, a food hall, a restaurant, Class A office space, arts/events programming, and a postal branch. The site, an inclined block located near Hostos Community College, Lincoln Hospital, and public transit, makes the new “Bronx Post Place” a gateway to a neighborhood and borough primed for a cultural and economic renaissance.

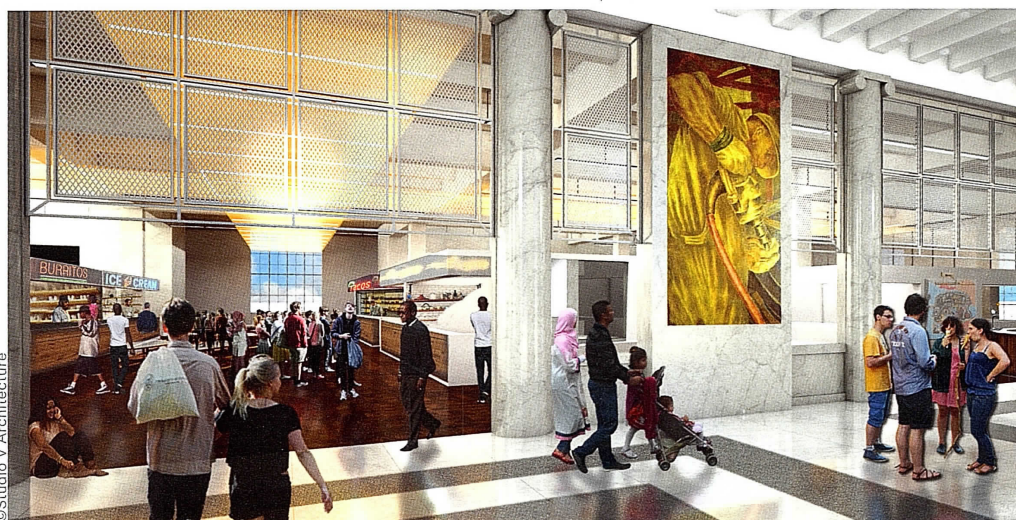
Grandeur, mystery, and welcome

The U.S. Postal Service's decision to sell the building overcame initial pushback. Borough President Rubén Díaz, Jr., and Rep. José Serrano both questioned the sale and urged the postal service not to proceed without community input; protecting the Shahns' work was a priority.

Developer Young S. Woo, himself originally trained as an architect, admired Studio V's work on the Empire Stores in DUMBO and cold-called Valgora to give the area a center for commerce, arts, and

The Bronx Post Office in its current condition.





(opposite page, top) Rooftop restaurant and roof garden.
(opposite page, second and third) The former loading dock will be the entrance and lobby for the Class A office space.
(left) View to the new food market through the landmarked lobby with restored Ben and Bernarda Shahn frescos.

cuisine. (The area is currently considered a food desert, despite its magnet institutions.) Valgora's team had good raw material: with large arched windows, glazed silver brick cladding, prominent balustrades, and a grand staircase on the west façade, the GPO shows the dignity associated with Works Progress Administration projects. It has a "wonderful classicism, but also a modernity," Valgora says, with "fine details that almost look machined... an extremely clean aesthetic."

For many decades, however, much of this space was inaccessible. "Even though the landmarked lobby is very important to the community," he continues, "the vast majority of the building was secure for mail processing and untouchable – no one was ever allowed in. And the building itself sits on a plinth raised up and removed from the street, perhaps befitting the grand nature of a federal building." As northern New York City's chief sorting facility, the GPO kept much of its interior private; working spaces were structured for nearly Orwellian surveillance, with catwalks overhead, clandestine observation slits in certain walls, and "strange metal tubes with little slots in them, almost like telescopes inside of periscopes."

Valgora's strategic interventions preserve distinctive features while opening up areas for new uses. Where a courtyard was filled in to create a lunchroom, Studio V has retained non-bearing masonry to create modular offices. The former loading dock on Anthony J. Griffin Place is becoming a separate ground-floor entrance to serve neighborhoods east of the Concourse. He added stairs leading up

to the plinth, which wraps three façades (150th, Grand Concourse, and 149th) and will become public. "By letting people occupy that terrace," he says, "they can look back to their school, have something to eat, and participate in the life of the street without compromising the landmark character of the building."

New Deal details, New Deal values

The Shahns "wanted to bring the life of the rural poor into New York City," Valgora says, but their murals have decayed despite postal officials' efforts. "It looked like they put varnish over them to try to preserve them," he reports. "They're very dark and yellow, so they had to be meticulously restored." Marble door surrounds, a terra-cotta staircase, and terrazzo flooring are also being retained, along with the elegant lobby and vestibules, light fixtures, an antique safe, and decorative metal screens that had been replaced by drywall.

Valgora is adding a landscaped rooftop restaurant, using polycarbonate, glass, and zinc and other metal finishes to retain the theme of industrial materials. The restaurant is set back to preserve symmetries and sightlines. The restaurateur, not identified at this writing, will be local, reflecting the development team's commitment to strengthening community ties.

Valgora speaks enthusiastically about how Bronx Post Place fits into wider rejuvenation across the South Bronx and northern Manhattan. From the 2001 designation of the Grand Concourse Historic District to the new Yankee Stadium to pedestrian bridges and green space, the South Bronx is revealing new and long-

overlooked treasures, including a chain of parks that could rival Frederick Law Olmsted's Boston "emerald necklace."

"All our work has to do with reconciling contemporary architecture and the city," he continues. "Architecture tried to assassinate the city, and now it's trying to save the city." He views "the gaps of cities, the interstices, the edges, the leftover places" as ideal sites to bring abandoned infrastructure back to life. He also sees the landmarking process as a spur to creativity. "We have to cherish the results of that law, but also we have to ask ourselves, 'What have we learned?' I think we've learned how to balance the respect for those buildings and reusing them in creative ways that serve their communities, and also fulfilling our obligation to create great design."

The Bronx is turning. ■

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

Owner/Client:
YoungWoo and Associates
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Design Team: Jay Valgora, AIA, AICP, LEED AP, Sohee Moon, Matt Horvath, Yashar Ghasemkhani
Preservation Consultant: Higgins Quasebarth & Partners

Structural Engineer:
Robert Silman and Associates
MEP Engineer:
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A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

A state-of-the-art coworking space offers a homey yet edgy vibe to create a memorable adaptive reuse project in Gowanus **BY LISA DELGADO**

Local clients often have a nostalgic fondness for old brick buildings with a traditional “Brooklyn character,” remarks Thomas Leeser, RA, principal of an eponymous DUMBO-based architecture firm. Why can’t “Brooklyn character” encompass cutting-edge designs, too? In a recent Gowanus adaptive reuse project, the firm boldly mixed old and new, creating a provocative study in contrasts.

The project at 68 3rd Street transformed a 47,000-square-foot space

in a former tile factory – a simple but charming early 20th-century structure of brick walls and wood beams and columns – into a “coworking” office space to be shared by a variety of small businesses and freelancers. The client, named Coworkrs, rents out workspace to a diverse group of customers.

When LEESER Architecture started the project in October 2014, Coworkrs didn’t have a specific design concept in mind, but it wanted a traditional Brook-

lyn character, Leeser recalls. It would have been easy to adhere to the building’s existing aesthetic and go for a tried-and-true industrial chic. But if the architects had stayed purely “in this kind of historic style, the space would’ve been really cozy and comfortable, but not very memorable,” he says.

Leeser also considered that fact that Coworkrs’ customers tend to be young and adventurous, including many workers in start-ups. “They’re kind of hipsters,



(opposite page) Brightly colored stairs outlined with LEDs connect the three floors.
(left) A kitchen outlined in LEDs reflects the angularity of the stairs.

and we felt there needs to be a design that is not just a run-down old factory, but has energy,” he says. “We wanted it to be dynamic and contemporary.”

A new pair of dramatically angled, origami-like steel staircases form the centerpiece of the renovation. They weave together the space’s three levels, which contain a mix of private offices, communal worktables, conference rooms, and other amenities. Near each staircase are kitchens and seating areas, to promote social interaction.

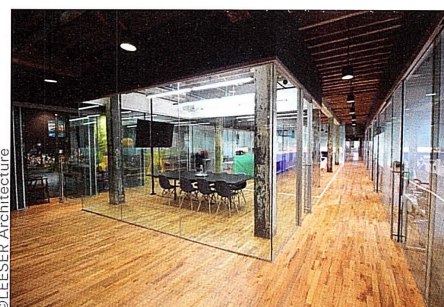
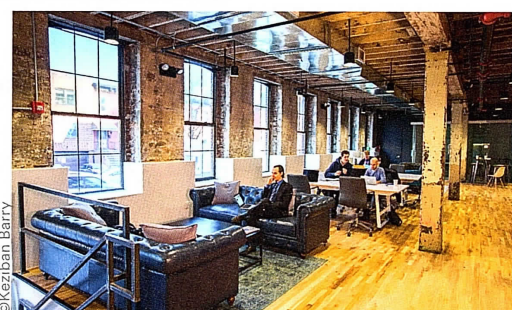
The outside walls of the staircases are cloaked in eye-grabbing Yves Klein-blue paint – a color chosen to contrast strongly with the muted browns and reds of the original architecture. Inside the staircases is vibrant teal paint, with matching rubber tiling underfoot, edged with glowing bands of LED lighting. On the ground floor, the teal path also extends along the floor to link the two staircases, bringing clarity to the circulation. The LED lines appear elsewhere, too, tracing the angled forms of a kitchen countertop or outlining the volumes of communal spaces like “3D drawings,” as Leeser describes it. The unexpected forms of the staircases and the LEDs intentionally bring a jolt of surprise. “There’s this sense of otherness,” he says, “something new.”

Small alterations to the existing architecture were needed to cut the staircases through and add a skylight, but the design team otherwise left the existing structure almost untouched, out of respect for its beauty and a desire to emphasize the contrast with the staircases.

Initially, the slick, contemporary elements were a hard sell to the client company, which had in mind a more homey vibe in keeping with the company slogan “At Home At Work.” Coworkrs CEO Shlomo



(above left) A new skylight brings natural light to communal work tables in the basement level.
(above right top) One of many communal “hangout” spaces.



(above right bottom) A glass-enclosed conference room anchors the second floor, lined with enclosed offices.

Silber recalls, “We had many debates. It took me a long time to warm up to a lot of the ideas Leeser wanted to do.” But they managed to strike a delicate balance with welcoming touches like large, comfortable couches offsetting the sleek, sculptural elements. “We were able to work together so I could add my little flavors, and he could add his ‘shock elements,’ like that staircase,” Silber explains. As a result, it’s “a very interesting space, not just your standard industrial Brooklyn space.”

Since the Gowanus location opened in January 2016, the positive response from Coworkrs’ customers has helped validate the choice to take design risks. “I haven’t met anybody yet who has walked through the space and hasn’t been wowed by it,” Silber says.

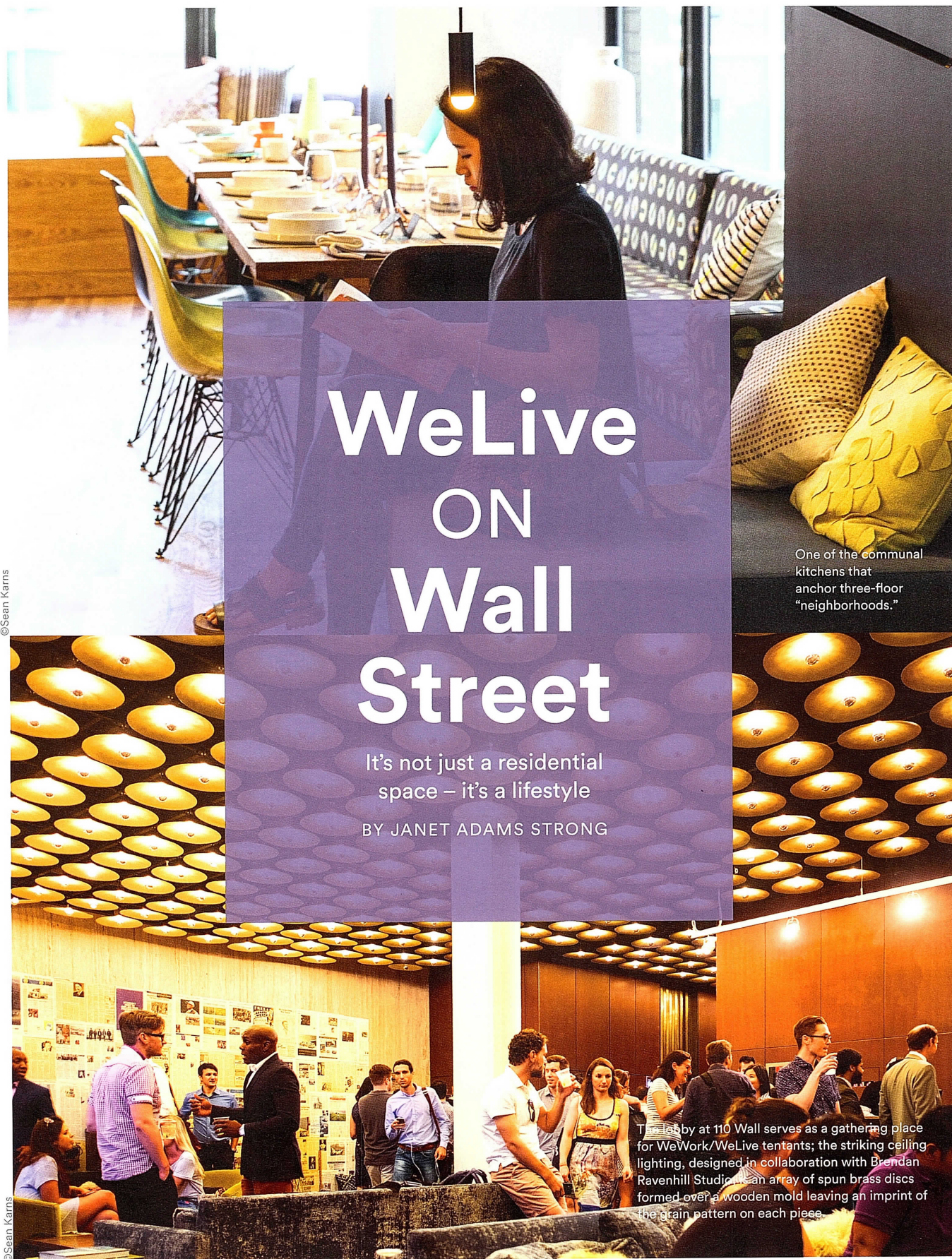
For a fairly small, low-budget project, it has also drawn a surprising amount of media attention from around the world,

Leeser says. He attributes the design’s success not to the new elements alone, but to the deliberately strong contrast between the new and old. That “tension” boosts the design’s impact: “The contrast is exactly what gives it energy,” he says. ■

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

Client: Coworkrs
Architect:
LEESER Architecture
Design Team:
Thomas Leeser, RA,
Simon Arnold, RA,
Anja Mistic Pavlin
Structural Engineer:
Structural Engineering
Technologies

M/E/P Engineer:
Guth DeConzo
Consulting Engineers
General Contractor:
Titan Realty &
Construction



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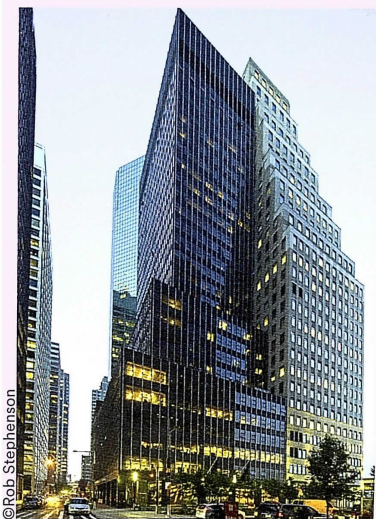
WeLive ON Wall Street

It's not just a residential
space – it's a lifestyle

BY JANET ADAMS STRONG

One of the communal
kitchens that
anchor three-floor
"neighborhoods."

The lobby at 110 Wall serves as a gathering place for WeWork/WeLive tenants; the striking ceiling lighting, designed in collaboration with Brendan Ravenhill Studio, is an array of spun brass discs formed over a wooden mold leaving an imprint of the grain pattern on each piece.



©Rob Stephenson

As the Financial District staged a comeback from Midtown in 1964, developer Samuel Rudin made history by commissioning a Modernist tower from Emery Roth & Sons at the corner of Wall and Front Streets, the first privately sponsored office building on Wall Street since the Great Depression. In 2016, the same 28-story tower, ravaged by Hurricane Sandy, completely gutted and repurposed, again made history, this time as the prototype of a new “social building” typology for small-footprint, high-tech urban living centered on “community-driven” experience.

WeLive is the residential platform of WeWork, a shared workspace startup begun by Adam Neumann and Miguel McKelvey in 2010, now valued at some \$16 billion. The 300,000-square-foot flagship at 110 Wall Street is the first building completely occupied by the company, with cowork floors two through six topped by 21 floors of co-living.

Perfect site for co-living

The project took shape in 2013 when Darrick Borowski, Assoc. AIA, and Rik Ekstrom, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP, partners in ARExA (silent x), were offered space at an early WeWork site. Observing young, mobile entrepreneurs who didn’t want to be tied down by long leases suggested to McKelvey that WeWork’s advantages might have a residential counterpart. He asked ARExA to translate the underlying principles of coworking to co-living. The flooded, abandoned building at 110 Wall

emerged as a test site. “Office buildings typically have deeper floor plates than residential buildings, so we had more space to play with in the dark center of the building,” says Borowski. “We relished the inefficiencies and used them to our advantage. The WeLive concept is perfect for the reuse of old office buildings.” In repurposing the building, the “infrastructure needed to be completely redesigned and adapted, not just for the new user, but to withstand the next Sandy and be truly resilient,” adds Sital Patel, AIA, LEED AP, principal of S9 Architecture. “Research and brainstorming sessions with WeWork/WeLive led to creative solutions within the building, whose new uses could have never been imagined by the building’s original architects.”

Three diminishing floorplates (16,000 to 10,700 to 6,600 square feet) offer 22 apartment types, from studios to four bedrooms. In the compact units everything folds down, up, or out, like a Swiss army knife. In studios, a Murphy bed hinges down from the wall onto a built-in sofa to extend over a height-adjustable coffee/work/eating table; no rearranging is necessary.

The largest apartments, about 1,000 square feet, have separate bedrooms with real beds, but the most common units, six per floor, are 450-square-foot hybrids designed to be shared. Each includes a Murphy pull-down and an alcove bed inspired by traditional Swedish cottages, where beds are set into cubicles and protected for warmth and privacy by a front curtain. The notion of tucking a bed into the wall proved a breakthrough for the design team, and led to their concept of a modular program-loaded party wall that organizes each living unit. Instead of bulky freestanding furniture, all apartments have sound absorptive casework carved into the walls. Even the smallest units impressively answer a major complaint about New York apartments: insufficient storage.

The neutrally colored apartments are “inviting but not precious or industrial,” Borowski says, basically providing “a clean slate” that occupants can personalize with interactive pegboards and pin-ups on felt or cork wall panels. Most

living units have a corner kitchen zone with an induction stove top, microwave, and full-size refrigerator/freezer (everything needed for take-out and frozen foods). The luxury of an unusually large bathroom somehow decompresses the otherwise tight quarters.

“Walk in and start living”

“Small spaces feel more livable and less cluttered when they’re organized,” explains Quinton Kerns, senior WeLive designer overseeing the rollout of 110 Wall. “It’s all very clean and pared down, just like the lifestyle of members who live here.” The fully furnished apartments are equipped with basic kitchen utensils, dishes, towels, linens, and art. “All you have to do is walk in and start living.”

In selecting an apartment configuration, residents also have limited choices: for example, whether to use a particular module as a built-in desk or as additional storage. In general, options are greater in the upper floors, where lessons learned are implemented, as the whole is an incubator for new ideas and ways of doing things. Among the experimental concepts in development are hotel-like accommodations for overnight stays. The prototype is evolving.

The typical month-to-month lease includes a \$125 fee for cleaning, utilities, Internet, and cable connection to a standard 55-inch television. All units have operable windows and ceiling fans, occupancy-triggered climate control, and WiFi-connected speakers. The high-tech environment is controlled by a smartphone app that accesses housekeeping and services, activities, personal profiles, and social networks – even finding a compatible roommate.

In developing the prototype, ARExA investigated monasteries, dormitories, communes, kibbutzim, Soviet Social Condensers (constructivist attempts to influence social behavior through the design of public spaces), and particularly failed public housing in the U.S. to learn about perceived ownership of communal spaces. The team studied urban sociologists like William “Holly” Whyte and Jane Jacobs before adopting a strategy of three-floor vertical neighborhoods. Each

offers a communal kitchen configured for family-style, hibachi, or other popular dining themes, including a demonstration kitchen to host cooking classes. Each neighborhood includes a unique shared living room and a defining “destination” space with amenities that lure people throughout the building to socialize. Among the most popular destinations is the laundry room, which, liberated from the basement, is centrally located and equipped with ping-pong and pool tables and video arcades, transforming weekly drudgery into an enjoyable social occasion. Other destination spaces include a yoga/exercise room and a communal entertainment center for watching sports, concerts, and other popular events. Each neighborhood has its own character, colors, textures, and finishes, with subtle variations to distinguish one floor from the other two.

“The greatest challenge,” explains Borowski, “was dealing with outmoded zoning and building codes. They’re really structured to churn out what’s been done before, not to encourage trying something new.” Requirements for fire-rated compartments were especially challenging. Unlike the typical apartment building, where a “community room” is glimpsed through a small wire-glass window in a heavy metal door, the whole idea was to create a continuous flow of social space. “We outlawed the word ‘corridor,’” Borowski says. “The idea was that the interstitial space – the forgotten space – could actually become the seed of a more interesting, more social way of life.”

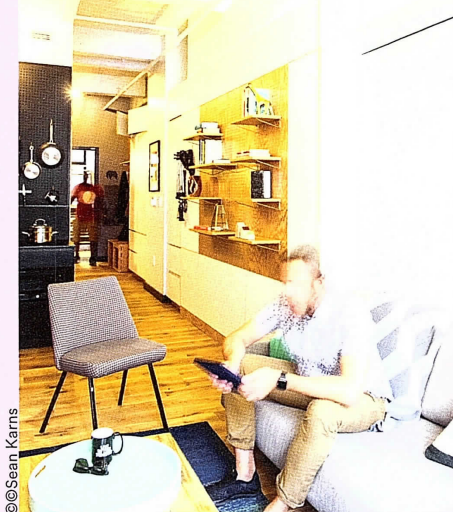
Landing pad and launching pad

Thanks to the deep office building floorplates, the non-corridors, filled with neighborhood-specific music, are much wider than typical hallways. More like long public rooms, they invite lingering in lounges, breakfast nooks, occasional seating, even an open library (with soft music), all designed to draw people out of their apartments into the larger community. Handsome open stairways are also “a huge part of the concept” and encourage active use over elevators. A basement mailroom-bar that invites after-work interactions is planned, as is a ground-floor

restaurant that will connect the whole to the street. The fundamental idea was to create a landing pad where people could arrive in a new city and immediately feel at home, and then a launching pad for networking and plugging in.

How does WeLive compare with other apartments in the area? “It’s a tricky question,” says Kerns. “It’s not an apples-to-apples or square-foot equation. What we offer is a lifestyle.”

To be sure, that lifestyle is not for everyone. Its appeal is for a certain mindset that values community and experience over possessions. The demographic is much wider than one might expect, including mostly millennials, but also adults with children, freelancers, and seniors; residents literally range from 8 to 80 years of age. Even for those who don’t fit the tech and social profile, WeLive offers a provocative and still-evolving experiment in social living borne of convenience, efficiency, thoughtful design – and a very high quotient of cool. ■



(top) One of the most popular spaces is the centrally located laundry room, which sports ping-pong and pool tables and video arcades. (left and above) Studio apartments include a Murphy bed that folds down over a built-in sofa.

Client: WeWork/WeLive	Structural Engineer: Severud Associates
Client Team: Miguel McKelvey, Kyle O’Keefe Sally, Shay Lam, Matt Williamson, Quinton Kerns, Lauren Shaw, Mark Bardoff, Sarah Wiss, Aidan Pellegrino	MEP/FP Engineer: Cosentini Associates
Architect: S9 Architecture	Acoustical Engineer: Longman Lindsay
Design Team: Sital Patel, AIA, Dave Gagne, AIA, Stephanie Lage, Cannelle Legler	Lobby Lighting Installation: Collaboration with Brendan Ravenhill Studio
Design Consultant & Interiors: ARExA	Vertical Transport: Jenkins & Huntington
Design Team: Darrick Borowski, Assoc. AIA, Rik Ekstrom, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP, Sean Kerns, Assoc. AIA, Michael Kim, AIA, Chaerim Shin, Kristin Mueller, Tyler O’Rielley	Envelope: Stone Engineering
	BIM Consultant: CASE
	Code Consultant: CCI
	Expeditors: William Vitacco
	Associates; KM Associates
	Construction Manager/General Contractor: The Sweet Construction Group

JANET ADAMS STRONG, PH.D., is an architectural historian and author, and is principal of Strong and Partners communications.

A Preservation Paradox

The reuse of an architecturally and culturally significant Harlem block for low-income housing illustrates struggles to overcome absurdities in the treatment of historic structures

BY JONATHAN LERNER

For the leafy block of West 114th Street between Frederick Douglass and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Boulevards, two factors secured designation as a National Register Historic District: a landmarked 1902 Collegiate Revival school, and an intact swath of original Harlem residential building fabric. The latter consists of 36 circa-1895 “Old Law” tenements with mildly ornate Renaissance Revival façades in brownstone, limestone, and terra cotta. Lining both sides of the street, they have an agreeable scale, repetition, and stylistic consistency. In the late 1960s, they were acquired by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), renovated, and named for the civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph. Now the Randolph Houses are being renovated again, in a partnership between NYCHA and Trinity Financial, with the aid of federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. The design, by SLCE Architects, offers a mix of public and affordable housing. But a rigid approach to the preservation requirements that flowed with the tax credits has severely impaired the buildings’ functionality and street life.

Work has only begun on the 14 buildings on the north side of the street, but the 22 on the south side are finished and occupied. Where there had been 432 cramped units, a gut rehab has produced 168, ranging from 400-square-foot studios to 1,350-square-foot, four-bedroom, two-bath apartments. A defining feature of Old Law buildings is the narrow air shafts that deliver dim light and meager drafts of air to inner rooms. The 1970s renovation left 110 rooms on each floor in the south side buildings with windows that opened only onto the claustrophobic airways. Now that number is reduced to 11. The separate tenements have been merged into two buildings, each served by a central corridor on each floor. And now each has only one entrance at sidewalk level. (The 14 buildings on the north side will be similarly merged into one.)

That ‘70s show

The new single entries are necessary for accessibility, management efficiency, and



security. But this leaves 22 useless stoops and doorways leading from the sidewalk to nowhere, retained to preserve the façades. Bizarrely, what is preserved is not original to the buildings. The stoops are circa-1970 concrete-slab replacements, the wrongness of which is compounded by the fact that they align with neither the detailing of the façades nor each other. In the long view down the block, they seem to twitch like a queue of hyperactive kids.

Retained between them are functional but bland railings and areaway gates that in the earlier renovation replaced curlicue originals. These stoops and railings are in decent shape; keeping them might have been a budgetary necessity. But the 22 doorways have been replaced with aluminum-framed glass doors, sidelights, and transoms resembling those installed inappropriately in the '70s.

It gets worse. The architects were required by the National Park Service, which arbitrates historic correctness for tax-credit projects, to preserve the footprints of original vestibules and hallways, even though no original interior detailing remains and none was restored – those passageways are quite blank. Dummy doors were required to indicate the openings into the original front apartments; however, the vestibules are accessible neither to residents nor the public (The historic halls and stairways can be accessed – but only by building management, with a key.) Still worse: the 22 original stairways also had to be retained, and at considerable expense, and repaired, although they, too, are not used, not even for emergency egress. Usable internal stairways had to be provided elsewhere. One can imagine the contortions required to lay out efficient apartments given the 43 airshafts in the south side buildings, the preserved vestibules and stairways, and new stairways.

Friend or faux?

Meanwhile, mini blinds inside the faux street entries are often as not kept closed, defeating the possibility that passersby might get a glimpse of the bowdlerized historic fabric so painstakingly preserved within. Anyway, passersby are not exactly invited to appreciate the entrances, since each glass door sports a “No Loitering”



(previous page) Randolph Houses' renovated façades.
(above) The façades before renovation.

sign, and above each stoop are mounted a surveillance camera and a loudspeaker from which occasionally issues forth the instruction, “Please move from the area.”

The block remains dangerous, possibly exacerbated by the lack of residents helping to reduce crime by sitting on their stoops and contributing their eyes to the street. The useless yet-to-be-renovated stoops invite plenty of loitering, and possibly dealing. While this article was in preparation there was a shooting death there, which resulted in a perpetual police presence.

A play space and a landscaped and furnished strip tucked into a side yard and behind the buildings are locked within high fences and accessible only from the basement. This new outdoor area further divorces residents from the street. Did no one involved ask how the new single entries, the forbidding stoops, and the enclosed outdoor space would affect street life and sense of community? What value does the preservation of anachronistic features, or original ones rendered invisible, contribute?

Neighborhood historian Michael Henry Adams, author of *Harlem Lost and Found*, expresses dismay. “Harlem people automatically think of stoops as a welcoming place to congregate,” he says, but the security cameras will be seen as “harassment of people while all they’re trying to do is to come out and chill.” Regarding

the odd preservation requirements, he notes these buildings “were created in the 19th century when poor people living in tenement buildings wanted the dignity of buildings that emulated private houses with decoration and ornament. But retaining interior staircases that don’t function and vestibules that are superfluous space neither honors that goal of an uplifting architectural environment, nor enhances the lives of the people who live there.”

A clean, well-lighted place

A few intriguing preservation requirements for the renovation can be found. Wherever historic party walls were pierced, the openings were framed in reused old brick. Otherwise, there’s little detailing, and only basic finishes. But the apartments are spacious and well laid out, with generous interior halls and closets, and abundant natural light. To anyone familiar with the sort of dark, narrow railroad flats of the dumbbell tenements these once were, the renovated apartments are unrecognizably better. One side of the new five-foot-wide corridors is aligned with a number of the airshafts with windows, which bring in natural light (but that won’t be possible in the third building). There is a laundry room on each floor. In the basement are common rooms – computer lab, classroom, exercise room, pantry, and lounge. These are low-ceilinged and unfortunately dreary,



(left) Old bricks were reused to frame historic party walls that were pierced to form new corridors; airshaft windows bring in natural light.
(below) A landscaped, furnished strip is tucked into a side yard; not seen is a small play area.
(bottom) View through the living room to the dining room and kitchen of a new, spacious apartment.



despite each having either a small window or a (solid) door to the outdoor space.

The waste of space on trivial historic elements rankles given the distinctly non-luxury budget. Remaking the 22 buildings on the street's south side cost \$95.5 million – not much for 168 dwelling units in Manhattan. And during construction, wherever workers touched, “it was a disaster,” says Radmila Lazarevic, SLCE’s project manager, due to found conditions at the site. Many structural elements could not be reused as planned; unexpected costs far outstripped the planned contingency.

“With all the downsides, the renovation takes a stand about maintaining Harlem fabric in this moment of huge change, and also maintaining low-income housing,” says Richard Plunz, author of *A History of Housing in New York City*. He enumerates what he sees as worse possible alternatives: cookie-cutter market-rate high-rises, massive public housing structures like those of mid-century, or gentrification that might have yielded better architectural restoration, but almost certainly worse displacement. “You’ve got another model here,” says Plunz. “You’ve got to admire those architects. They’re in the trenches, trying to do something impossible.” ■

JONATHAN LERNER’S articles have appeared in *Landscape Architecture*, *Metropolis*, *Pacific Standard*, *Modern*, and many other design and mainstream magazines. He also heads the consultancy UrbanistCommunications.com.

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Architect:
SLCE Architects
Design Team:
Saky Yakasm, AIA,
Radmila Lazarevic,
Raymund Beltran,
Alla Schechter, Hanna
Browning, Elizabeth
Christian, Richard Lew
Historic Preservation:
Higgins Quasebarth &
Partners
Structural Engineer:
De Nardis Engineering

MEP Engineer:
Rodkin Cardinale
Consulting Engineers
Façade Consultant:
CANY Architecture
+ Engineering/CANY
Technical Services
Landscape Architect:
The RBA Group
Code Consultant/
Expeditor: William
Vitacco Associates
General Contractor:
Mega Contracting
Group

INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH

Brooklyn's Industry City has been designed as an innovation ecosystem where makers and shakers come to start, develop, and grow their businesses

BY GREGORY J. HALEY, AIA, AICP, LEED AP

©Courtesy of Industry City

One of several communal courtyards, each designed for different uses and activities; this one designed by Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects.



Everyone wants to be part of the innovation economy. But with six million square feet of industrial loft space housing more than 400 tenants in 16 buildings, Industry City is endeavoring to create what its CEO Andrew Kimball calls an “innovation ecosystem.”

For architects, this is an opportunity to link the city’s industrial past to its small-scale, but often high-tech manufacturing future by reworking spaces that have innate amenity, such as robust “bones,” high ceilings, extraordinary light, and a waterfront location.

Spread across a 30-acre campus in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, Industry City is but a portion of a once-larger complex: Bush Terminal. Built by Irving T. Bush over the first half of the 20th century, the Bush Terminal complex was a trendsetter for the integration of manufacturing and warehousing with direct rail and port terminal connections. The story of its creation is itself a tale of innovation. Observing the inefficiencies of commerce in New York, Bush wrote in his 1928 memoir *Working With The World*, “The ships were on one shore, the railways on another, and the factories were scattered about the city on any old street without any relation to either kind of transportation. Why not bring them to one place, and tie the ship, the railroad, the warehouse, and the factory together with ties of railroad tracks?” This synergistic act of “co-location” set the stage for the success of Bush Terminal and the emergence of the greater South Brooklyn industrial waterfront.

“Major anchor”

Today, the ownership of Industry City, led since 2013 by managing partners

Belvedere Capital and Jamestown Properties, has ambitious plans to reimagine the site as a “major anchor” within a longer chain of innovation hubs stretching from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to the Brooklyn Army Terminal. Leading the projected \$1 billion overhaul of the complex, Kimball calls this “an extraordinary opportunity to build on the rapid growth of the innovation economy in New York City and, in particular, Brooklyn.”

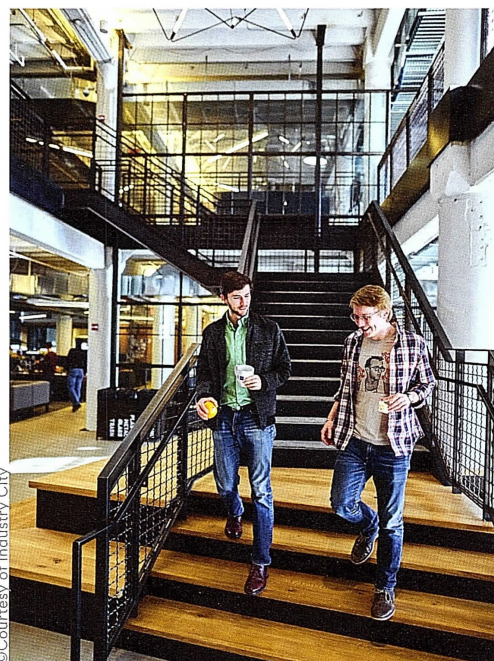
Innovation economy businesses – described by Industry City ownership as “making a physical, digital, or engineered product, from initial research and development, to engineering and design to manufacturing and production” – are increasingly found clustering within former industrial districts. According to Bruce Katz and Julie Wagner of the Brookings Institution, this type of adaptive reuse fits what they label as a “reimagined urban area” often found “near or along historic waterfronts, where industrial or warehouse districts are undergoing a physical and economic transformation to chart a new path of innovative growth.” These changes, they claim in their paper, “The

Rise of Innovation Districts,” are “powered, in part, by transit access, a historic building stock, and their proximity to downtowns in high-rent cities.” Industry City fits this general profile, but what specifically about it supports innovation?

“Incredible Bones”

With its open, regularly structured floorplates, high ceilings, and large windows, Industry City buildings have, as Kimball puts it, “incredible bones.” This allows the flexibility to subdivide and adapt to accommodate a wide variety of tenants and uses. Additionally, several tenants note that the specificity of Industry City’s character and sense of place are key to its attraction.

Last year, the venerable Time Inc. chose to set up shop at Industry City to



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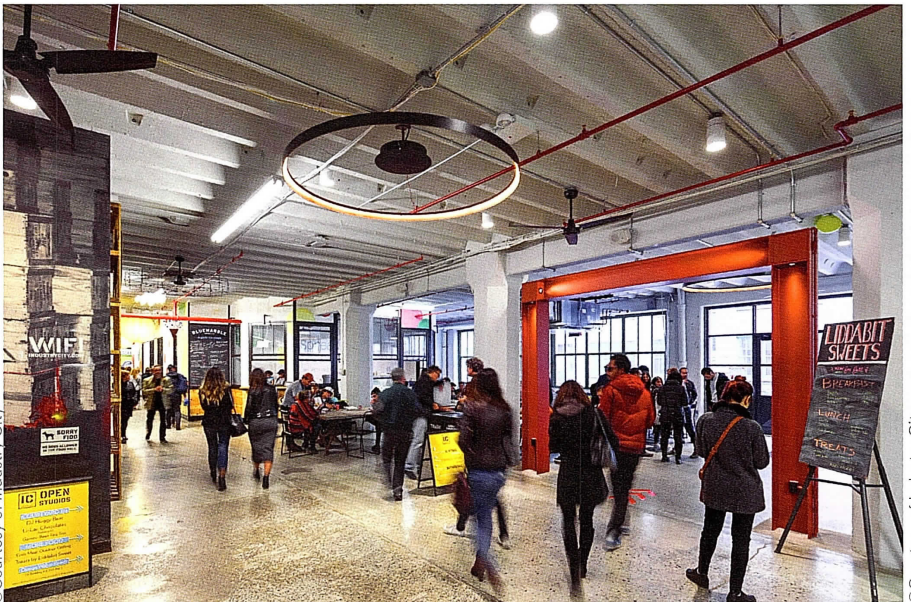
(top) Aerial view of Industry City’s 30-acre campus. (above and left) Time Inc.’s two-floor “The Foundry,” designed by TPG Architects, is organized around a central stairwell with integrated stadium seating.



One Girl Cookies retail shop, designed by Oliver Freundlich Design, is in the Food Hall.

complement its Lower Manhattan location. Dubbed “The Foundry,” its new 55,000-square-foot site brings together the company’s Innovation Studio and Content Solutions within a two-story space in Building One. Supporting its new automotive culture website “The Drive” is a ground-floor gallery showroom. The company moved here, according to Donald Hickey, Jr., Time Inc. vice president of Real Estate & Facilities Capital Projects, to contribute to the emerging vision of Industry City, be part of a “larger community,” and take advantage of space and transit connections.

The fit-out of The Foundry, designed by TPG Architects, capitalizes on the open loft character of the buildings by arranging the workspace into clusters of workbenches within a larger open floor to support creative interaction. These two floors are organized around a central stairwell with integrated stadium seating, which Hickey describes as a “town meeting” venue for staff. Additionally, the space is structured around a series of amenities, including a library, a communal kitchen, and flexible spaces with stadium seating and communal tables for impromptu meetings organized along perimeter walls to capitalize on daylight and harbor views. On the ground floor, The Drive’s 5,000-square-foot showroom provides a public interface for the organization by addressing the inner-block



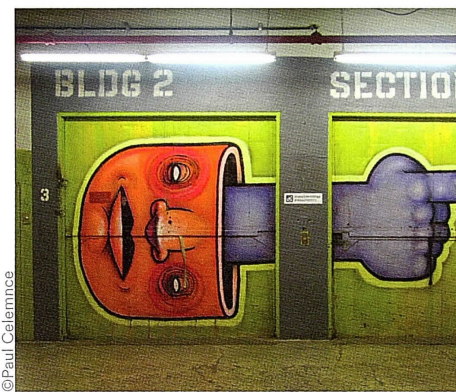
The Food Hall.

courtyard with a large garage door.

To fit in with the local culture, Time Inc., in conjunction with TPG and Industry City, worked with Brooklyn artisans to design and fabricate furniture and other elements that punctuate the space with a uniquely local character. These elements include workbenches, custom-built by Red Hook woodworkers Uhuru; a collection of signage and light installations created by Gowanus-based Lite Brite Neon Studio; a chandelier commissioned from Brooklyn artist James Dieter; and the central stair and lower-level garage door, both fabricated by Industry City metalworkers, ATH Studios.

A place for “making”

One Girl Cookies, in the Food Hall at the base of Building Two, has always been in Brooklyn. Beginning in Cobble Hill, this wife-and-husband-run enterprise expanded first to Dumbo, then last year to a 6,000-square-foot-space in Industry City, where bakery operations are consolidated and the wholesale component has expanded. As with all Food Hall tenants, One Girl’s space is composed of a back-of-house production facility and a front-of-house retail store. Designed by Oliver Freundlich Design, the retail café strikes a balance between these two aspects. With high, exposed ceilings and oversized factory windows, the storefront exudes a raw, loft-like atmosphere, while



Playful signage appears throughout.

the color and material accents throughout – such as the ornately-patterned blue floor tiling and the ash millwork – lend a touch of elegant domesticity. A large picture window looking into the back-of-house bakery from the café serves as a reminder that this place is for “making.” The design of the space also incorporates the handiwork of Brooklyn-based artisans: the millwork was fabricated by Reliquary Studio, located at Industry City, and the large mural depicting characters inspired by historic photos of the owners’ family was commissioned from Brooklyn-based artist Jing Wei.

According to David Crofton, co-owner, with Dawn Casales, of One Girl Cookies, the café benefits in two ways from its space at Industry City: first, from the foot traffic generated by its proximity to the main entrance to the complex; second, by convenient access to the Gowanus Expressway for its growing wholesale



The Mathews Nielsen-designed courtyard hosting a public event.

business. Crofton also notes the sense of community within the Food Hall. Like neighbors, tenants collaborate and borrow ingredients – but, instead of the proverbial cup, he says, “we borrow 50 pounds of sugar!”

One of the most unusual tenants of Industry City, the Brooklyn Nets, opened a new 88,000-square-foot training facility and hospital for special surgery here earlier this year. Designed by MANICA Architecture with Mancini•Duffy as architect-of-record, the facility occupies the top floor and a rooftop entertainment space in Building 19, with panoramic views toward downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn.

“Creative ecosystems”

Industry City’s buildings were originally designed with a great deal of operational specificity. Configured as a series of U-shaped, block-long structures designed to receive rail freight in the central courtyard and ship via horse-drawn street carts, and eventually trucks on the exterior streets, the architecture is imbued with an infrastructural logic that gives it grain and character. This urban spatial structure also breaks down the complex into a series of neighborhoods, while simultaneously gathering them into a larger campus. Today this campus structure is being reimagined by Industry City through a number of public-realm improvements, including communal courtyards, each



The Brooklyn Nets' practice court, part of an 88,000-square-foot training facility and hospital for special surgery, designed by MANICA Architecture with Mancini•Duffy as architect-of-record.

uniquely designed to cater to different uses and activities, and “Innovation Alley,” a central north-south cross-building circulation spine designed by S9 Architecture that connects tenant communal spaces and amenities. Industry City has also developed a clever raised sidewalk with integrated parallel loading docks to improve movement for both pedestrians and delivery trucks. According to Eric Goeres, general manager of The Drive, the shared public areas enable Time Inc. employees to mingle with other tenants, creating a sense of community. Kimball agrees, calling the areas “real game-changers” – where “creative ecosystems can take root and thrive.” The courtyards also provide a public face to Industry City through regularly programmed public events, installations, and performances.

Kimball and his team have only begun. When Belvedere Capital and Jamestown Properties came on as managing partners at Industry City in 2013, they faced \$300-million in deferred maintenance accumulated over 50 years. Since then, Industry City has begun to revive the buildings’ infrastructure with electrical upgrades, elevator replacements, and the replacement of 18,000 windows, in addition to ongoing public-realm improvements. Meanwhile, employment at Industry City has more than doubled from 1,900 to more than 4,000. The long-term goal is 20,000 jobs by 2025.

To achieve this, the management team is engaged in ongoing discussions with the city and local community about zoning changes. First, managers are proposing to rezone their properties from an M3 heavy industry to an M1 light manufacturing designation, which would allow the expansion of retail and the integration of university-based academic facilities, which they consider a critical component of their vision. Second, they are investigating opportunities to incorporate a hotel and conference space to serve the growing business community.

Kimball believes that Industry City’s “great sense of history and authenticity that speaks to the last great era of manufacturing and industry in New York City” will connect it to “a new, very different era of manufacturing that is quickly becoming the backbone of the city’s economy.” ■

GREGORY J. HALEY, AIA, AICP, LEED AP, an associate with Grimshaw Architects, is an architect and urban designer based in NYC.



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▲ Glass Factory Housing, New York, NY: Originally built circa 1920 as a glass factory, its architect unknown, the structure now provides housing for adults living with HIV/AIDS. Redeveloped in 2009, it was designed by Harden + Van Arnham Architects.



©Rob Stephenson

▲ QueensWay, Queens, NY: Initially built as an elevated rail from 1877 to the 1920s, this stretch of railway is currently in the planning stages of redevelopment. The Friends of the QueensWay proposed it be turned into a 3.5-mile park; WXY architecture + urban design and DLANDstudio are its first section proposal designers.

► Pitkin Theatre Center/Ascend Charter School, Brooklyn, NY: This was first built as a vaudeville and silent film theater in 1929, designed by Thomas W. Lamb. It was renovated in 2010, with Kitchen & Associates as the architect, into a mixed-use education and retail complex.

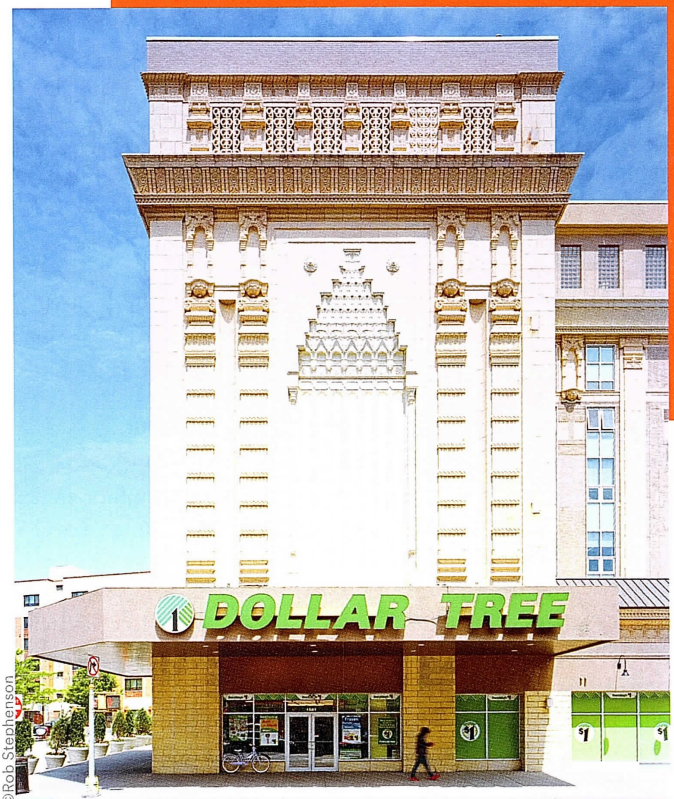
► The Old American Can Factory, Brooklyn, NY: Originally designed as a canning facility by an unknown architect in 1901, it was redeveloped from 2003 to 2012 into curated studios designed by XØ Projects Inc. for artists and artisan manufacturers.



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Innovation Rooted in History

BY BERIT HOFF,
Center for Architecture
Director of Exhibitions



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◀ Metrograph Theater, New York, NY: This independent movie theater, redeveloped in 2016 and designed by Margulies Hoelzi Architecture, was originally built as a warehouse, its architect unknown.



▲ Gregory Jackson Center, Brooklyn, NY: The original use for the space when built circa 1910 is unknown, as is the architect. It was later used as medical offices, and is now being transformed into a community center, designed by Bernheimer Architecture.



▲ Wythe Hotel, Brooklyn, NY: This was originally built as a barrel manufactory in 1901; the architect is unknown. The building was transformed in 2014 into a fashionable hotel designed by Morris Adjmi Architects.



◀ The Standard Motor Products Building/Brooklyn Grange, Queens, NY: Initially built as the Karpen Furniture factory in 1919 and designed by an unknown architect, it now houses creative and light industrial tenants, with an urban farm on the roof. Jattuso Architecture with Bromley Caldari Architects designed the building, which was redeveloped from 2010 to 2014.

“Authenticity and Innovation,” on view at the Center for Architecture from September 30, 2016 through January 16, 2017, presents 28 historic buildings and structures that have been given new life by the efforts of entrepreneurs, architects, and developers. The small sampling here highlights the range of projects presented. The exhibition is curated by Donald Albrecht and designed by Perrin Studio, and features original photography by Rob Stephenson. ■

Raves + Reviews

REVIEWS BY STANLEY STARK, FAIA

Dream Cities: Seven Urban Ideas that Shape the World

By Wade Graham

Graham profiles seven building types and planning approaches, the architects and planners who pioneered these ideas, and the process by which they were adopted and became pacesetters. Two big ideas come forward: the visionary concepts that emerged with Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries have become major patterns for urban development; and architect-driven urban concepts don't always translate well.

Graham organizes the discussion into seven categories:

- Bertram Goodhue and the influential romantic, historicist suburb, and suburban city such as Santa Barbara, which became a national model for high-end suburban enclaves.
- Daniel Burnham and the City Beautiful Movement, which endowed cities with everything from master plans to monumental, historically styled buildings to top-down planning approaches.
- Le Corbusier's "towers in the park" vision coupled with Robert Moses' ruthless execution of urban renewal – questionable ideas producing disastrous results globally.
- Frank Lloyd Wright's 1930s car-centric, anti-urban Broadacre City translated on a massive scale as the post-war suburb.
- Jane Jacobs' critique of the anti-urban Le Corbusian/Moses model, oddly paired with Andrés Duany and the New Urbanists' initiatives, to create an urban-suburban hybrid.
- Victor Gruen and Jon Jerde and the energized, entertainment-infused shopping mall initiatives to create a centrally focused urban or suburban place.
- Kenzo Tange/Moshe Safdie/Norman Foster (another odd pairing) as avatars of the multiuse urban mega-structure serving as a complex habitat, which, taking many different forms, has been an anchor for urban developments.

While some examples are occasionally stretched, Graham's analyses are useful and cautionary.

Stanley Stark, FAIA, served as chair of the Oculus Committee from 2005 to 2007.

Cities of Empire: The British Colonies and the Creation of the Urban World

By Tristram Hunt

The consequences of the British Empire are still with us, and among the most vivid is the string of global cities it created. Hunt's book looks at the empire and urban globalization through portraits of 10 major urban centers created, developed, or enhanced by Britain's imperial efforts, many of which have grown to global prominence: Boston, Bridgetown (Barbados), Dublin, Capetown, Calcutta (now Kolkata), New Delhi, Hong Kong, Bombay (now Mumbai), Melbourne, and Liverpool.

Each portrait intertwines political and urban history, the influences of local geography and climate, urban design, and the organizing idea, since the development of each was driven by a dominating purpose. Different as these cities are, they share common roots: the important role of trade; strategic support to the British navy; Britain's cultural imprint on the physical environment; and history revealed through streets, squares, monuments, institutions, and sewers. This look at urban globalization from the perspective of Britain's nearly 400 years of imperial reach is revealing, enlightening, and sobering.

Noted but Not Reviewed

Ethnography for Designers

By Galen Kranz

A guidebook and primer for designers on conducting research to reveal the significant cultural and sociological aspects underlying design projects.

Cartographic Grounds: Projecting the Landscape Imaginary

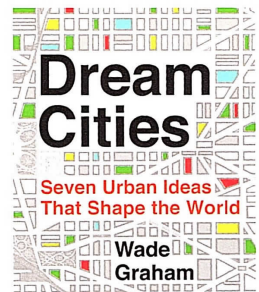
By Jill Desimini and Charles Waldheim

A visual exploration of cartography, design, and cartographic representation.

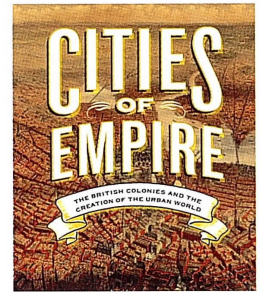
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By Paul Lewis, Marc Tsurumaki, David J. Lewis

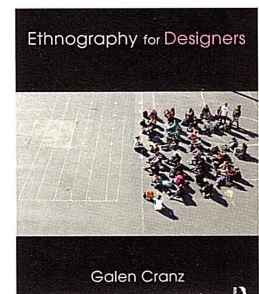
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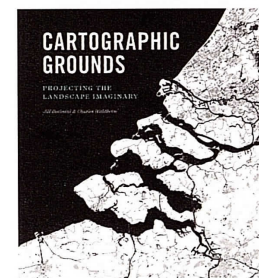
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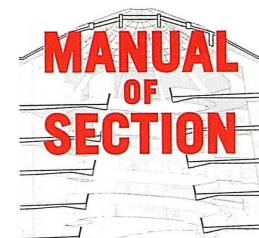
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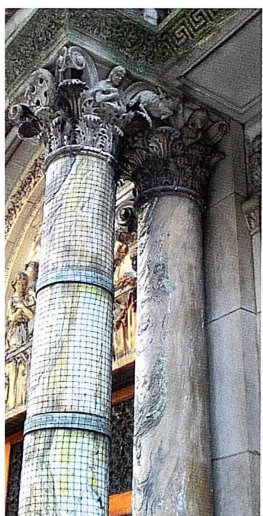
New York: Routledge, 2016. 276 pp. \$39.95



New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2016. 272 pp. \$50



New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2016. 208 pp. \$29.95



Behind Repurposed Portals

Bertram Goodhue's splendid St. Bartholomew's Church was designed to incorporate the entry front of the congregation's former home

BY JOHN MORRIS DIXON, FAIA

Rarely has an architect turned a limitation to such advantage. When Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue won the commission for a new St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, prominently sited on then-developing Park Avenue, he had to include the entry portals to the congregation's earlier church. For his new church, completed in 1919, this potential liability became the basis of a surprising design achievement.

Dating from 1903, the three-portal front imposed on Goodhue was special in two respects. It was erected as a memorial to Cornelius Vanderbilt II, and it was designed by Stanford White, who had modeled it closely on the 12th-century façade of the abbey church at St. Gilles-du-Gard, which White had once called “the best piece of architecture in France.” The bronze reliefs on the front's three sets of doors – and the sculpture surrounding them – had been entrusted to three prominent artists of the time, with Daniel Chester French responsible for the central portal.

Photos of the old St. Bartholomew's, at Madison Avenue and 44th Street (Renwick & Sands, 1872–1876), with White's added front indicate a rather awkward relationship to a structure somewhat loosely based on Lombard Romanesque precedents. White may well have wanted to rebuild the entire church to suit the new front.

By the time the congregation was ready to commission its Park Avenue church, White and his partner Charles McKim had both passed on. Goodhue had just launched his own practice after a 24-year partnership with Ralph Adams Cram that had produced Gothic Revival landmarks – one of the finest being St. Thomas Church nearby on Fifth Avenue. Once on his own, Goodhue explored more exotic revival styles, including the Span-

ish Colonial pavilions at San Diego's 1915–1916 World's Fair, preserved today as cultural facilities in Balboa Park.

Given the exceptional social, architectural, and sculptural pedigree of this reused front, many an architect might have produced a textbook essay in French Romanesque. But Goodhue was ready to do the unexpected, and here he designed a church in what is generally identified as Byzantine style, with a prominent central dome and no tower. But there is a certain sleekness of surface and simplification of detail here that prefigures the Art Deco.

The complementary community house next to the church (now housing a popular restaurant) was completed by Goodhue's firm in 1928, four years after his mid-career death. This wing and its garden join the church proper in a notably effective composition occupying a whole Park Avenue blockfront between 50th and 51st Streets. A more extensive and unusual architectural ensemble was created in 1931, with the completion of the RCA Victor (later GE) office tower, by Cross & Cross, directly behind the church on Lexington Avenue. Displaying the same smooth salmon brick surfaces and stone trim as the church, this slim tower became, in effect, its campanile.

Back at those original portals, it is all too obvious that some of the exotic marble columns in that reused front – exposed to the New York atmosphere for 113 years – have seriously deteriorated. For more than a decade, they've been braced with metal straps and wrapped in wire mesh. Passing beyond these preservation challenges, you're urged to enter and enjoy Goodhue's light and uncluttered interiors, enhanced by Hildreth Meière's elegant Proto-Deco mosaics.

John Morris Dixon, FAIA, left the drafting board for journalism in 1960 and was editor of *Progressive Architecture* from 1972 to 1996. He continues to write for a number of publications, and he received AIANY's 2011 Stephen A. Klimont Oculus Award for Excellence in Journalism.

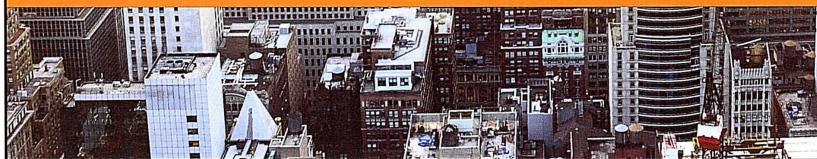


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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



From “Houses of Knowledge” to “Houses of Access”

Throughout this year, the AIA New York Chapter and Center for Architecture have been inspired by the theme “Authenticity and Innovation.” Our efforts have focused on a series of curated projects that include this issue of *Oculus*, which is a complement to the exhibit in the main galleries. The spotlight is on buildings that have been adaptively reused, and by extension preserved, to accommodate functions that would have been unimaginable to the architects who built them decades ago. A building type not explored in the exhibit, however, is the library. A resurgence of interest has led to significant investments in library design projects, such as renovations to the main branch of the New York Public Library (NYPL) led by Francine Houben, Hon. FAIA, of the Dutch firm Mecanoo with Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners as architect-of-record, and modifications to many other branches by other designers. Libraries are not simply being restored and preserved, they are being reimagined to respond to the needs of the communities they serve. This fall, we are also examining the changing role of libraries in an exhibit and symposium, and even in our own spaces, in an effort to again make the Chapter’s book collection available to members.

In a 2013 project by the Pew Research Center titled “Library Services in the Digital Age,” authors Kathryn Zickuhr, Lee Rainie, and Kristen Purcell reported that many librarians see the role of a library, especially in the digital age, as a place to enable access to information, regardless of the format. “Public libraries should move away from being ‘houses of knowledge’ and move more towards being ‘houses of access,’” said one librarian. Designers, in turn, are being asked to allocate often precious and scarce space to computers rather than to books. Many books are now being relocated to off-site facilities so that technology, offering more multi-channel access to knowledge, can be installed in place of stacks.

The struggle between books and technology is also playing out in our personal spaces. As the son

of an English literature professor, I grew up amid the spatial challenges presented by owning many books in a New York City apartment. If you had asked my late father if he really needed all five copies of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, he would have insisted, “Of course!” They each contained different notes and were read at different times in his life: one for his dissertation, another when he taught the book as an adjunct, and so on. Though these books contain the same words, in a pre-digital era they represented an archive of thoughts and research. These kinds of notes we now keep on our laptops or tablets. In both apartments and libraries, space is at a premium, so it is no longer necessary, practical, or even feasible to keep so many books on hand.

To join the discussion about books, technology, space, and libraries, we invite you to the survey exhibit “Reading Room,” featuring photographs of NYPL branches by Elizabeth Falicella, currently on view at the Center. The images help us understand how libraries have been designed and used, and how architects update them to serve current needs. On October 29, amidst the photographs, a symposium on library design and the roles libraries play in civic life will be explored by librarians, architects, journalists, and scholars.

And finally, the AIANY library will be relocated to the Training Center on the lower level of the Center. This room will essentially become a multifunctional *médiathèque*, taking on many characteristics of the new libraries we’ve been exploring. Books will line the southern wall. Laptops will replace the large desktop computers currently occupying the space (which will be stored and used for classes and training, as needed). A table will be installed for member meetings, reading, and research. As this space is at a premium, too, we look forward to creating our own multifunctional library – or, rather, a “house of access” – at the Center for Architecture.

Benjamin Prosky, Assoc. AIA, Executive Director
AIA New York Chapter and Center for Architecture

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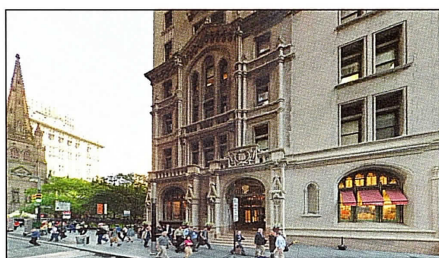


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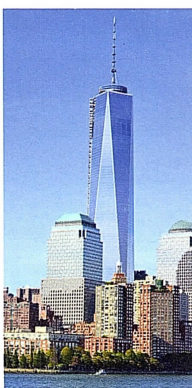
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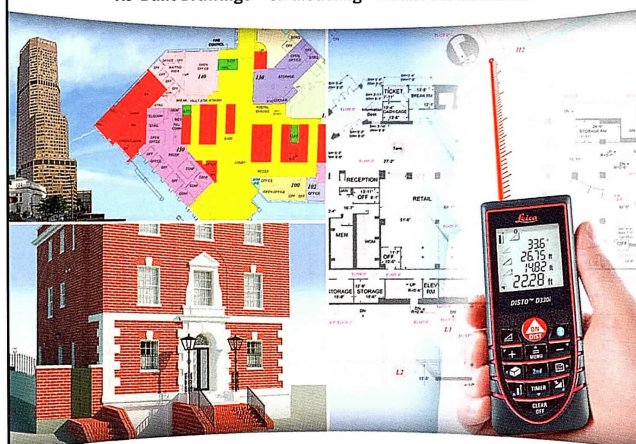
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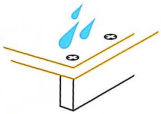
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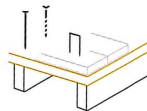
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