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SEP/10

A Sustainable Ideal: Local designers discuss how sustainability affects aesthetics | Into The Great Wide Open: Architects position themselves for the future | Design Pittsburgh 2010 Jurors | AIA Pittsburgh and the American Institute of Architects



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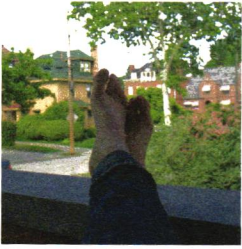
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HOMEFRONT

BY BECKY SPEVACK



Ted Mosby. You may not recognize the name, but I'm sure you'll recognize the archetype. He's an architect in his mid-thirties. He started his career working for a prominent architecture firm, in the hopes that working so closely with one so admired would impact his own work and give him the chance to be part of the design team for something great. Being let go from that firm, he decided to strike out and start his own practice out of his apartment, but found this to be more difficult than anticipated, unable to develop the much needed client base. After a period of struggle, he accepts a teaching position at a local, though noteworthy, university, enthusiastic to share his love of the subject to the next generation.

If you're still reading, by this point you are potentially racking your brain: Do I know a Ted Mosby? Is the name familiar? Have we met? Well, not likely, unless you're a fan of the sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*, in which he is one of the main characters. This character, while also trying to lead an honest and self-examined life, is a far cry from the portrayal of architects such as "Juror 8" in the 1957 film *12 Angry Men*. Just as the ways in which the profession is perceived has changed over the decades, so too has the profession. Perhaps most drastically over the last 10 years, advances in technology, shifts in the economy, and a redefining of the workplace has created a whole new work environment. Both of the main features in this issue address this change in their own ways. The first, "A Sustainable Ideal", takes a look at whether the trend towards greener building has influenced a design aesthetic. Our second feature, "Into the Great Wide Open" addresses this ever-changing world and how the role of architect is evolving to stay relevant. Just as Ted Mosby

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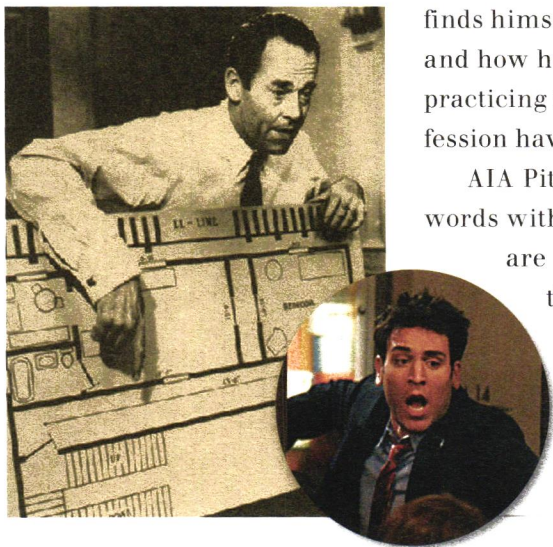
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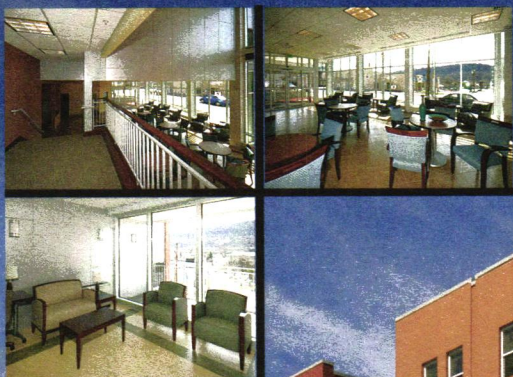
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finds himself in a position to evaluate and re-evaluate his career and how he defines himself as ‘architect’, so too do many of you practicing in the real world stumble upon how shifts in the profession have impacted you.

AIA Pittsburgh and *Columns* hopes you continue to find the words within these pages resonant. Your thoughts and feedback are always welcome, and especially in this time, when there are more questions than answers, we would love to hear about your experiences as we navigate through this new landscape. My inbox is always open; I can be reached at bspevack@aiaapgh.org. 



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THE VIRTUE OF SKEPTICISM

BY KEVIN WAGSTAFF, AIA

Most institutions demand unqualified faith; but the institution of science makes skepticism a virtue."

— ROBERT K. MERTON, AMERICAN SOCIOLOGIST

My old college dictionary defines architecture as "the science, art, or profession of designing and constructing buildings, bridges, etc." It is this marriage of disciplines that makes architecture so rich, and so difficult. The aesthetics of architecture has always gotten the lion's share of the history, press, and glory. While the aesthetic priority largely continues today, the rapid rise of environmental concerns is changing how both the profession and the public think about architecture. The rise of environmental concerns is really a renewed focus on the scientific aspects of the complex chemistry that makes good architecture. Avant-garde innovations in form and surface made possible by computer aided design look increasingly self-indulgent and perhaps even irrelevant when considered through a framework that gives environmental performance equal consideration. This elevation of the science in architecture is challenging the profession to reconsider how we design good buildings and how we evaluate the merits of architectural work.


While we are making progress as a profession, I am often disappointed by architects and journalists making shallow or dubious claims regarding the sustainable features of a building. Too often imperatives of style are clearly in the driver's seat and the performance aspects of the building are just compensating for a questionable decision driven by fashion. Prime examples are any number of new "green" residential towers with floor to ceiling glass on all sides of the building. I believe we need to take the responsibilities of science more seriously. Science demands rigor

— a systematic methodology based on evidence. Science is not based on faith or dogma. Carl Sagan captures the responsibility of science beautifully in his book, "The Demon-Haunted World":

"If it is to be applied consistently, science imposes, in exchange for its manifold gifts, a certain onerous burden: We are enjoined, no matter how uncomfortable it might be, to consider ourselves and our cultural institutions scientifically – not to accept uncritically whatever we are told; to surmount as best we can our hopes, conceits, and unexamined beliefs; to view ourselves as we really are."

In short Carl Sagan is calling for skepticism, not the false skepticism that serves only to defend a preconceived ideological position, but empirical skepticism that looks for evidence before accepting claims. This is a skill we all possess. As Mr. Sagan puts it:

"The tenets of skepticism do not require an advanced degree to master, as most successful used car buyers demonstrate. The whole idea of a democratic application of skepticism is that everyone should have the essential tools to effectively and constructively evaluate claims to knowledge. All science asks is to employ the same levels of skepticism we use in buying a used car or in judging the quality of analgesics or beer from their television commercials."

It strikes me that scientific skepticism is much needed in our collective pursuit of sustainable design. The community of architecture should welcome new ideas, but subject them to rigorous scrutiny. We will most quickly advance the quality of building performance, and its successful synthesis with aesthetics, if we adopt the scientific approach – a delicate mix of openness and skepticism, encouraging experimentation and vigorous debate. 



AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

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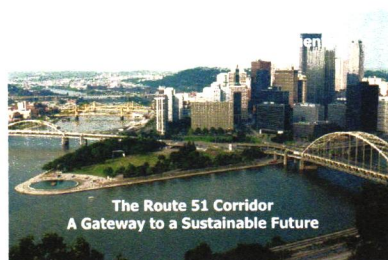
DESIGN PITTSBURGH 2010

Save the Date! Design Pittsburgh is AIA Pittsburgh's signature program, celebrating architecture, design, and those who create it. After last year's success, this year's exhibit will again be held at the August Wilson Center. The design exhibit will be open to the public on October 26th, and the Celebration and Awards Ceremony will take place on the evening of Wednesday, October 27th. Lead juror Scott Merrill, AIA of Merrill, Pastor & Colgan will be in attendance as the awards are given.

NEW! Young Architects Studio Competition – The competition, new to Design Pittsburgh in 2010, is a chance for architecture graduates, licensed or non-licensed, to address a specific design challenge – the “Ten Penn Folly” – and be part of Design Pittsburgh with an opportunity to take home an Honor Award for the solution. To learn more, go to www.aiapgh.org, and look for design submissions at the celebration this October! 

SDAT COMES TO PITTSBURGH

Over the past months, AIA Pittsburgh and Jen Bee, AIA have been working with several municipalities located along Route 51 as they plan the creation of a multi-municipality comprehensive plan. The group submitted their proposal, **The Route 51 Corridor: A Gateway to a Sustainable Future**, to the AIA's SDAT (Sustainable Design Assistance Team) program and was chosen. This October, SDAT will be traveling to Pittsburgh to meet with representatives of the Route 51 Corridor group in hopes of addressing some of the issues involved in creating this comprehensive plan. On the evening of October 5th, a workshop organized as a town hall meeting will be held to provide an opportunity for the team to hear about the challenges of Route 51 from local residents. Then, on October 7th, the team will report back to the community with a presentation based on their findings and ideas. For more information about the SDAT program, and this proposal specifically, go to <http://www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075425>. 




CORRECTION

In the Breaking Ground section of the June 2010 issue, the Dicks Sporting Good's Corporate Headquarters was mentioned with Strada LLC listed as the project architect. DLA+ Architecture & Interior Design was also involved as the interior designer for the project. Additionally, Strada was not involved in the airstrip and hanger portions of the project. *Columns* regrets the error.

PARK(ing) DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!



This is your opportunity to get Pittsburghers thinking about how important public spaces are and how parks improve our communities. PARK(ing) Day installations aim to transform urban environments designed for vehicle use into a communal space for public use. Join AIA Pittsburgh downtown on September 17th to help create an architecturally inspired PARK(ing) space! Pittsburgh PARK(ing) Day is organized by the CDCP and the Mattress Factory. To learn more, visit <http://parkingdaypittsburgh.blogspot.com>. 



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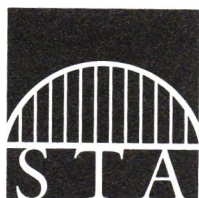
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a sustainable ideal

Has designing with sustainability in mind changed the face of architecture?

BY JOHN ALTDORFER

On one of the hottest days of this past summer, Peter Q. Bohlin, FAIA sits near the end of a long conference table at the Wilkes-Barre office of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, the firm he helped found in 1965. Impeccably dressed in a blue button down shirt and grayish white slacks, peering at a video screen that projects the image of an interviewer 250 miles away in Pittsburgh, he pauses a moment, then coolly states his opinion about people who think that sustainable design is uninspired design.



“If an architect thinks that, he’s brain dead,” replies the 72-year-old AIA Gold Medalist. “And if the public thinks that way, then it’s our job to convince them that it’s not.”

With nearly a half-century of groundbreaking – and equally breathtaking – sustainable projects to his credit, Bohlin needn’t do much to persuade the unconvinced. From the woodsy Connecticut Forest House retreat he designed almost 40 years ago for his parents to a plentiful crop of Apple computer stores currently opening around the world, Bohlin’s work speaks for itself.

Still, the question of whether and how sustainability affects the design process remains

OPPOSITE AND INSET: Ballard Library and Neighborhood Service Center, Seattle, WA. Architect: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. Photos by Nic Lehoux

a nagging question. While government regulations regarding sustainability, along with green certification guidelines, might seem restrictive, Bohlin claims those “rules” aren’t so new and actually stimulate creativity – a sentiment shared by many architects in the region.

“Sustainability and design have been joined at the hip forever, since humans stopped living in caves,” says Peter Kreuthmeier, a principal at Loysen + Kreuthmeier Architects. “I don’t think the world has changed. I think we’re just looking at sustainability in a different way.”

NEW FOCUS ON AN OLD CONCEPT

You don’t need to be a rocket scientist – or even an architect – to understand the meaning of sustainability at its fundamental level. Simply put, a sustainable building is one that is designed to suit a particular site’s environment and constructed with local materials. Sustainable structures such as igloos, teepees, and thatch-roof bamboo huts reveal that humans had an early grasp on the concept. The builders of those dwellings turned to nearly inexhaustible and renewable sources of nearby materials to build structures that withstood the extremes of the climates in which they stood. In their straightforward, functional approach, those buildings performed exactly as needed. Yet that spare, utilitarian approach, some people will tell you, is the Achilles heel of sustainable design. Not so, says Karen Loysen, AIA, a principal at Loysen + Kreuthmeier.

“I don’t see a connection between sustainability and a lack of design,” she says. “I don’t see the sustainability of buildings rising and the quality of design declining. One of the least interesting periods of design was in the 1960s and ’70s, when many new buildings weren’t sustainable at all and didn’t really look that good.”

Case in point, the monolithic GM Building on New York City’s Fifth Avenue and Bohlin Cywinski Jackson’s Apple store that sits in the GM plaza. Completed in 1968 for the then-leading U.S. automaker, the towering monolith casts an all-enveloping shadow across the ur-

ban landscape. In contrast, Bohlin’s midtown Manhattan project, which opened in 2006, with its 32-foot tall glass cube ground level entrance, allows light to cascade into the subterranean retail space below. Containing no structural steel, the store’s glass panes reflect, so to speak, the skyscraper’s rectilinear form while creating an open and transparent environment, despite its bulky neighbor looming behind it.

“I find that the way that architects are taught seems to be heading back to fundamental design principles that are specific to climate and location,” says Catherine Sheane, sustainable design manager at Astorino. “And many of the more experienced architects already have that sensibility from their training. There are still a few people in the industry who think that sustainability is a fad. But the reality is that sustainability is taking architectural design back to where it started.”

Another plus, according to Loysen, is that the added emphasis on sustainability just might reinvigorate regional architectural distinctiveness.

“As technology and transportation became more sophisticated over the years, architectural styles became more homogenized and far less context-specific,” she says. “Before the time when we could ship just about anything anywhere, each climate, each culture, and each choice of materials resulted in diversity of architecture. The return to sustainability may bring about a rebirth of regionalism and context-specific architecture, too.”

FOLLOW THE LEED

If *Wall Street* movie villain Gordon Gekko had been a law-abiding architect instead of an illegal inside trader-financier, he might have uttered the phrase “Green is good.” Especially if he set his mind on securing LEED platinum certification.

Long regarded as the Holy Grail of sustainability, LEED certification – at any level – triggers a mixed bag of feelings among architects, clients, and the general public. As the internationally recognized third party, green building

verification and certification system, LEED ensures that a project is designed and built using principles and processes that will improve long-term performance in energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions, indoor environment quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their affect on the planet.

Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 1998, LEED set up a well-defined framework that aids architects, contractors, clients, and eventual end users in identifying and implementing practical and measurable processes and solutions for green building design, construction, and operations. Even though the LEED process can present demanding challenges at times, local architects generally agree that the LEED guidelines for growing a green building tend to deliver a positive effect instead of dampening creativity.

“Going for LEED certification doesn’t inhib-

it the design and aesthetics of a building,” says Sheane. “I don’t think the designers feel limited in building form or materials when they’re designing a green building. When I have a LEED checklist, I use it as a progress report to see whether we’re meeting a set of goals.”

For Christine Mondor, AIA, co-founder of evolveEA in the city’s East End, LEED’s significance reaches beyond its role as a roadmap to the sustainability honor roll.

“You have to think of LEED as an organizational teaching tool, as a way of exchanging values in a common language,” she says. “Once everyone’s on the same page, there are more opportunities to benefit from that tool and to get back to that idea of creativity and not just follow a set formula. That’s the sweet spot we like to occupy.”

On the other hand, chasing LEED can create some not so sweet record-keeping headaches and financial drawbacks.



Green roof at Seattle City Hall, Seattle, WA. Architect: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. Photo by Nic Lehoux.

“I think sometimes there’s a frustration with the documentation that’s involved with LEED,” says Sheane. “When you do it on a regular basis, it’s not that complicated. But it’s an extra step in the process to have to prove your claims for efficiencies in design and energy. That can be viewed as a burden because the paperwork does require additional attention and effort. And it can add time to the project and increase fees because of the extra depth.”

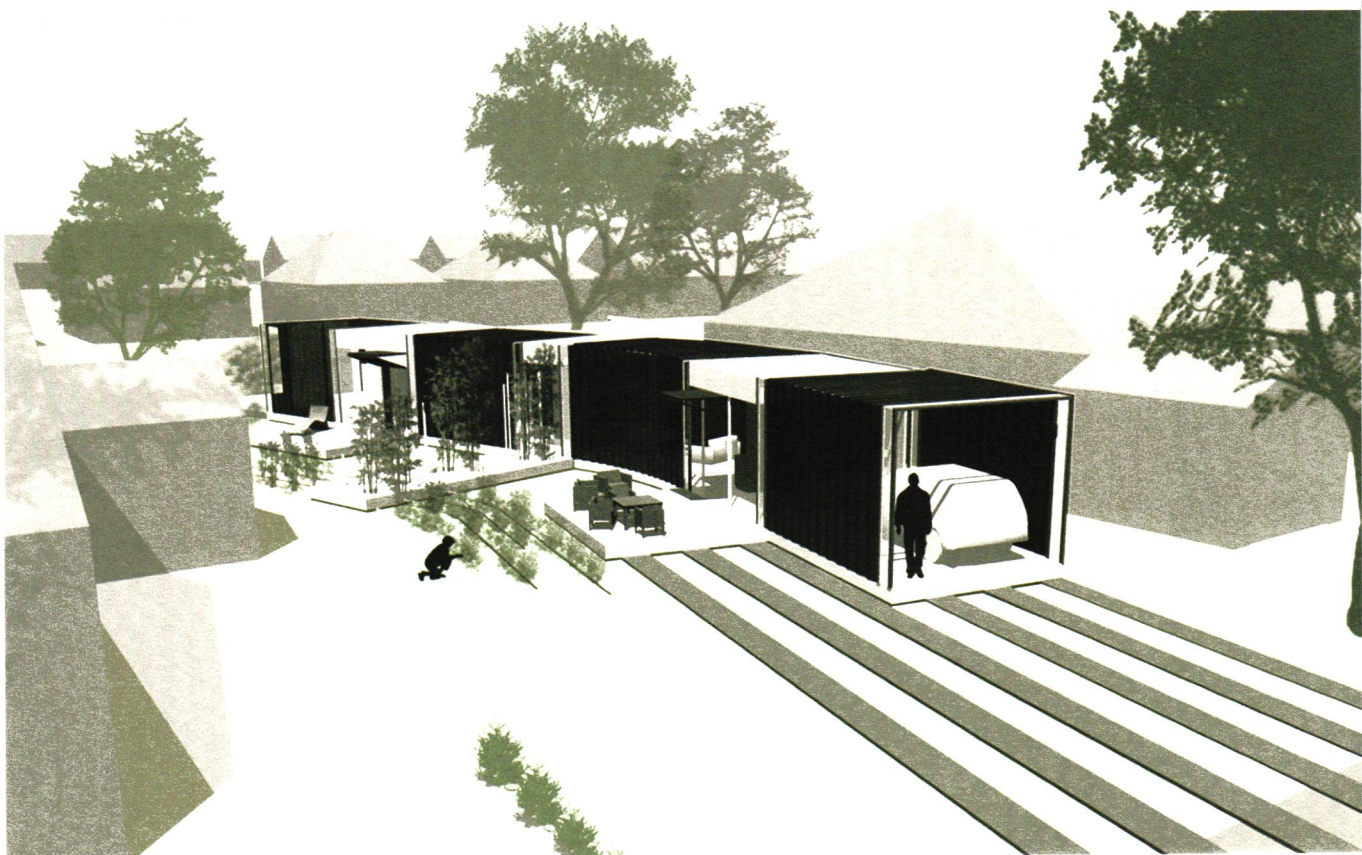
Often, that extra depth extends deep into the pockets of the design firm. While some pass along the entire cost of applying for LEED certification to their clients, most often share the substantial fees generated by the additional hours and work associated with compliance.

At Astorino, Sheane says the firm’s extensive LEED background helps streamline the certification process and keep fees at a minimum, when possible. However, other firms absorb the cost or encourage clients to seek a lower level of certification. Another option is to forego LEED certification altogether.

“One of the first questions we ask a client is whether they want to pursue LEED,” says Nick Doichey, AIA, senior designer at DLA+Architecture & Design. “Some say yes. Some say no. And some say, ‘Hell no.’ Of course, some do want LEED certification and wear it like a badge. But a lot of clients don’t want a rating system. They want a good, efficient building. They choose not to pursue LEED because they



Extended Stay, evolveEA. A national Design Ideas Competition winner, Extended Stay was a way for the firm to be both optimistic and critical of society’s belief in technology as a driver of sustainability. The project’s four principles – distributed power production, micro and kinetic energy generation, energy feedback monitoring, and closing water loops on-site – became opportunities to design products and systems and to speculate how those systems could be integrated into daily living patterns, expanding the role of the designer.



know it will cost them more to pay for another layer of bureaucracy. In return you get the recognition and the plaque, but what does that add to your building? I'm not thinking about sustainability because I want to save the world and earn validation for my work. I think about sustainability because it benefits me and my client."

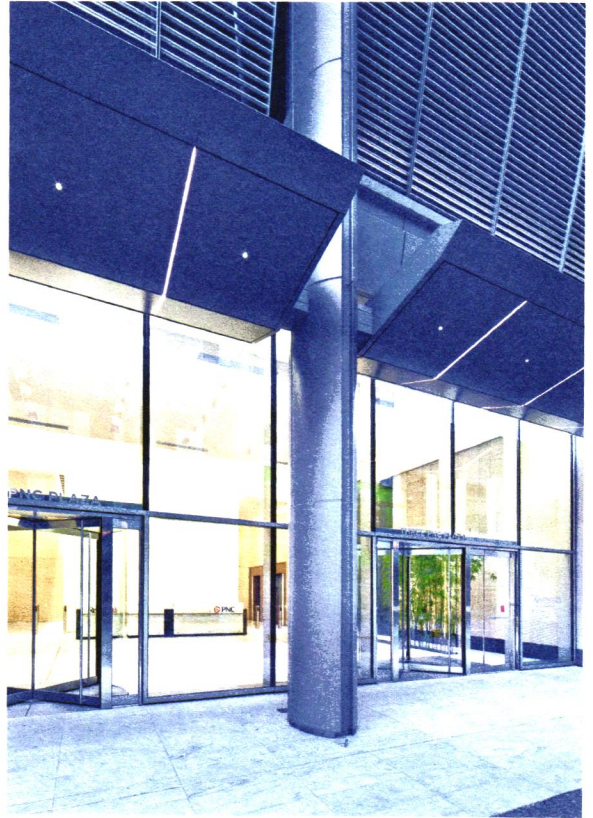
Still, Doichev admits that sustainability is a good thing – with a caveat or two – even if a project doesn't go for LEED gold or other levels of certification.

"Early in my career, nobody really paid attention to how efficient a building's HVAC systems were," he recalls. "Energy was cheap. So you heated and cooled the building as much as necessary to defeat the elements. Now energy is getting more expensive, and we have to pay more attention to HVAC systems. Of course, designing those systems is more difficult at times. The joy of this type of challenge is to solve the problem. To be more creative should be part of the sustainability equation. That adds complexity to the designer's job and requires them to spend more time on how they design buildings. But I see that challenge as a welcome opportunity to change."

THE HUMAN FACTOR

With a renewed focus on sustainability, architecture can make people change the way they think about and construct buildings. But can sustainability change the habits of the people who live, work, or play in those structures?

"Design does offer ways for social norms to change," says Mondor. "We often work with clients that started off with wanting a sustainable building and end up greening their entire organization. We looked at how that happens and observed that these green projects require a client to have a new internal governance structure to deal with the project in ways it never had to before. When one of our clients moved to a new location after never having its own headquarters, the organization had to think about and manage sustainability. There were tangible demonstrations that being in a green building did change



3 PNC (detail), Astorino and Gensler Associates. The first skyscraper built downtown in over 20 years, LEED certified 3 PNC is home to office space, condos, a restaurant, retail, and a luxury hotel. Photo by Alexander Denmarsh.

the way people thought and acted. The director of the organization said that he tried to persuade his staff to recycle in the old facility without much success. But once the organization got its own place, the staff worked to help sustainability reach into other areas of what they do."

For Mondor, sustainability is a vital tool in challenging and changing social norms. Whether it's convincing populations to live in clusters of smaller dwellings closer to cities or trading in their SUVs for hybrid autos, she firmly believes that architecture can subtly lead people to alter their behavior for the benefit of themselves, their communities, and the planet. It's part of the philosophy behind evolve's motto – People, Process, Place.

"Sustainability implies a relationship between us and our environment," she says. "That's really a cultural thing. There's no technology that's going to fix how we act. Change comes from what we believe and what we do about sustainability."

Pointing to the work of Le Corbusier in his attempts through architecture to improve living conditions in the slums of Paris during the 1920s, Doichev offers a differing view.

“I’m not a believer in architecture changing social contracts,” he says. “People’s behavior doesn’t change because a building is sustainable. It’s a noble sentiment to think that if I build it green, people will change. I can install a bicycle rack and showers in a building to earn extra LEED points, but I can’t guarantee that people will bike to work as a result. It’s nature versus nurture. Yes, environment can change people. But people usually change because it benefits them directly.”

However, clients do choose to go green for personal gain and to reduce their impact on the planet, according to Kreuthmeier.

“We have a loft under construction now, where the client is a professor of planetary geology,” he says. “So he’s ubergreen. But we’re not pursuing any sort of certification, because it doesn’t have a tangible benefit for the client. Having lower utility bills has a tangible benefit for him. Having a garden in the middle of his living space has tangible benefit for him. He’s putting a solar array on his roof and other things because they are dear to him. I think that’s fantastic. And just because he doesn’t have a certificate on the wall doesn’t diminish the sustainable aspect one bit.”



Office space addition, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, evolveEA. Through an inclusive process that related issues of sustainability to the organization’s mission and vision, the team examined vectors of behavior and beliefs of the occupants, their processes and resource flows, and the places that support these activities. The emphasis shifted to how to facilitate an organization to design their living and work patterns as well as designing their space.



Western Avenue Loft, Loysen + Kreuthmeier Architects. An adaptive reuse of a two-story commercial building, the second floor owner’s residence incorporates a courtyard to introduce daylight, natural ventilation, and outdoor space to the mid-block property. The vegetated roof also includes a photovoltaic array, providing over 50% of the loft’s electricity.

SUSTAINABLE FOR LIFE

Back in Wilkes-Barre, Peter Bohlin checks his watch. In a few minutes he will leave his office to prepare for a European trip to visit new Apple stores in London and Paris. He missed the opening of the Paris store, located in a former bank across from the city’s famed opera house, because he couldn’t be away from his grandchildren on the Fourth of July.

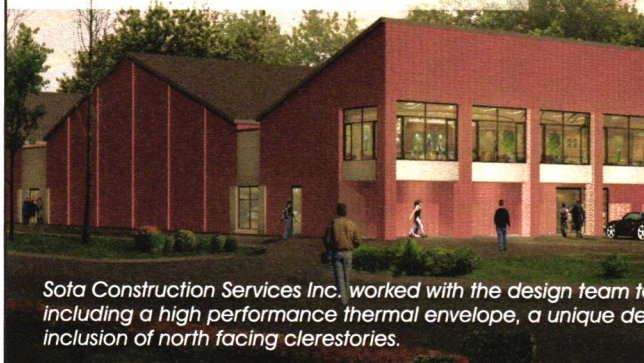
After all the discussion about the merits of sustainable building based on creativity, environmental stewardship, and costs, Bohlin believes that sustainability will lead to more powerful architecture – with a huge dividend for the end users.

“I believe in the absolute necessity of sustainability,” he says. “And I believe in discovering what that means in helping people to be more connected to the world around them and to lead richer, fuller lives.” **C**

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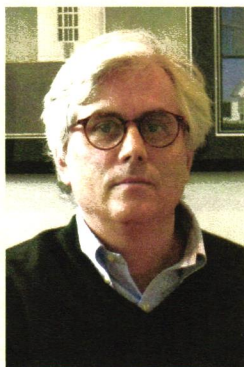
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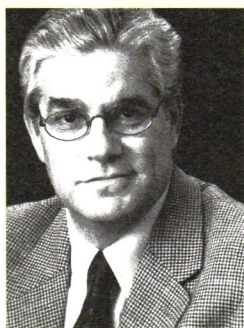
design pittsburgh 2010

Meet this year's Design Pittsburgh jury from Miami, Florida



Our lead juror, **SCOTT MERRILL, AIA** is the founder of Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects, and has been the lead designer since it was founded in 1990. The firm's work spans a wide range of scales, a variety of building programs, and varied sites. A principle interest has been the development of building types and site planning that use land more efficiently and intensely. The work covers all scales, from houses to large urban design projects, including a federal courthouse, churches, town halls, hotels, barns, mixed-use blocks, a university addition and master plan, and multifamily and single family housing, among others.

Both Merrill himself and the firm have received recognition for their designs. Merrill's first project as a sole practitioner received a national AIA Design Award in 1990, and the firm's first group of buildings received a national AIA Urban Design Award in 2000.



JOSE GELABERT-NAVIA, AIA is a principal at Perkins + Will, Miami, where he is also the managing director. He is also a professor of design at the University of Miami's School of Architecture. Gelabert-Navia received both a Bachelor and Masters of Architecture from Cornell University.

The Miami office of Perkins + Will is one of the most diverse in the firm; professionals are trained locally and internationally and projects often bring together a wide spectrum of cultures, traditions, contexts, and climates. With over 25 years of experience, Gelabert-Navia has worked on academic buildings, museums, corporate, and residential projects. He has recently worked on the new Delray Beach Public Library and the Village of Merrick Park Multi-use Complex in Coral Gables, Florida. He also has an extensive list of published works, with topics ranging from the architecture of Havana and the Caribbean to Modernism in Miami Beach. Gelabert-Navia has sat on the Board of Architects, Coral Gables as well as the Miami Beach Design Review Board. He is currently active with the Heritage Conservation Board, City of Miami Beach and a Trustee with the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.



SUZANNE MARTINSON, AIA has been the principal of her own firm, Suzanne Martinson Architects, since 1985. Her work has included residential, commercial, financial, government, educational, and interiors. Martinson has won five Awards of Excellence from the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects and three National Design Awards from the Institute for Business Design. She was also the project architect for the nationally acclaimed South Miami Heights/Caribbean Elementary School Post-Hurricane Rebuilding Project, which involved the planning of 86 acres for transitional and elderly housing, parks, a public square, and an elementary school.

Martinson received her Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Miami and her Masters from Columbia University. In addition to her work in architecture, she designs furniture and accessories.



Upper Terrace at Windsor Town Center, FL, Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects



Chiva Vive, Valencia, Spain, Perkins + Will, Miami



Ellison Residence exterior, Miami, FL, Suzanne Martinson Architects. Photo by Steven Brooke Studios.

how the jury is selected

Each June finds the Design Pittsburgh committee coming together to begin the conversation that will lead to the planning of AIA Pittsburgh's annual design competition and celebration. The committee is chaired by the Board of Directors' 1st vice president, and one of his responsibilities is selecting what city the year's jurying will take place in, followed by traveling there with executive director Anne Swager, Hon. AIA and all of the Design Pittsburgh submissions. This year Eric Osth, AIA has the honor of chairing the committee, and has chosen to go south this autumn to Miami, Florida.

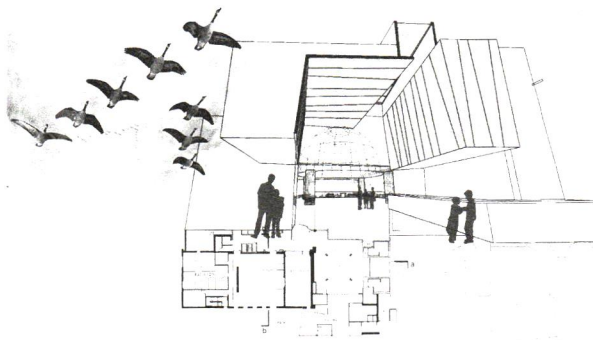
In previous years, once the jury's city was settled upon, the committee would work to choose an architect to be the lead juror, and once that juror was secured, he or she would suggest others from the city to fill the jury. This year our committee has taken a more active approach, handpicking not only the lead, but all three jury members, with the hope of creating a group of professionals from diverse backgrounds whose wide range of experiences mirror the multifaceted architects that make up AIA Pittsburgh.

BREAKING

FROM THE FIRMS

Burt Hill is providing design services in a collaborative effort with Schools for the Children of the World (SCW) to design a new school in Haiti. Located approximately 35 miles west of Port au Prince near the epicenter of the recent earthquake, The École National Saint Rose de Lima in Léogâne will house 600 students in grades K-15. Volunteers from Burt Hill's K-12 studio will be traveling to Haiti to oversee the design process. The educational facility will include 12 classrooms for the primary grades and five for the secondary grades, a small administration building, a guard house, living facilities for four employees, a library, two science rooms, a multipurpose room, and a kitchen.

Desmone & Associates Architects has completed a 14,500 sf facility for Seton Hill University's new graduate orthodontics program. The project included 28 patient treatment bays, sterilization, lab, and resident support areas as well as lecture rooms and business offices. Also, Saints John and Paul Roman Catholic Church – the newest and fastest growing Catholic parish in the Diocese of Pitts-



The National Aviary

burgh, hired **Desmone & Associates Architects** to design a new worship facility, which was dedicated May 2, 2010. The new basilica-like structure is constructed of brick and sandstone in the shape of a cross; the design features rough-cut timbers and natural materials. Over the years the parish has acquired an impressive private collection of over 50 beautiful stained-glass windows from the former St. Anthony's School in Oakmont, and other schools and parishes throughout western Pennsylvania. These pieces were retro-fitted into new custom frames. The new church includes seating for 1,500, a choir loft, a full basement to house parish offices, meeting space and a grotto chapel with seating for 150.

The National Aviary has completed a renovation and addition designed by **SPRINGBOARD Architecture**

Communication Design LLC.

The building will be the first LEED certified (LEED Silver) Aviary in the world and is the first explicitly bird-friendly building in Pittsburgh. The renovated and expanded facility opens to the public in September.



Duquesne University residence hall

WTW Architects is working with Duquesne University to design a new 12-story residence hall. The building will be erected on the site of Des Places Hall, with construction beginning next spring and expected to be completed by the fall of 2012. Additionally, the firm has entered phase three (of six) of the creation of Knowledge Commons in the Pattee Library at the University Park campus of Penn State University. Knowledge Commons will be a technology-rich learning environment, assembling in one place content, new technologies, and experts to as-

sist students in utilizing and combining media together for research, projects, and presentations. Completion is planned for late 2011.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Chris Furman has joined Bluming & Glusky, LLP, a downtown-based law firm with practice groups in construction, real estate, commercial, and corporate law. The firm has also added Jeffrey Sassie and Louis Alexander to the practice.

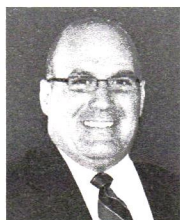
Burt Hill has hired Mitchel Levitt as the national director of business strategy. In this newly established position, Levitt will work closely with the healthcare practice group to help strengthen and grow that market segment. He has 30 years experience in architecture and engineering focusing in the healthcare market.

The Construction Legislative Council of Western Pennsylvania has announced the election of its officers for the 2010/2011 year. They are chairwoman **Paula Maynes, AIA** of AIA Pittsburgh; vice-chairman William Ligetti of the Ironworkers Employers Association of Western PA; treasurer Michael Sadaka of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers; and secretary Jon O'Brien of the Master Builders' Association.

Joseph M. Professori Sr. has joined **Desmone & Associates Architects** as director of business development. With 25 years of experience, Professori brings a diversified background in management, sales, marketing, and business development. Prior to



Saints John and Paul Roman Catholic Church, Photo by Massery Photography



Professori

this position, he was President of Global Power Services – a turnkey substation and maintenance construction firm.

Hayes Large Architects has announced the addition of Rebecca Griffith as an architectural intern in its State College office. Griffith has earned both a Master of Architecture and a Master of Construction Management from Washington University in St. Louis. A LEED accredited professional, she has spent time studying architecture in Spain and Argentina, and is fluent in German.

KUDOS

Astorino was recently ranked 24th by Modern Healthcare in the Top Architecture Firms for the 2010 Construction and Design Survey. The survey is conducted annually to recognize top performing firms and measure design trends within the healthcare construction industry.

Burt Hill has been recognized recently for designs both close to home and across the globe. The 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania honored Harrisburg University of Science and Technology and **Burt Hill** with a 2010 Commonwealth Award for the university's new 373,000 sf Academic Center. The Silver Award was presented during an awards ceremony held in early May. The awards pro-

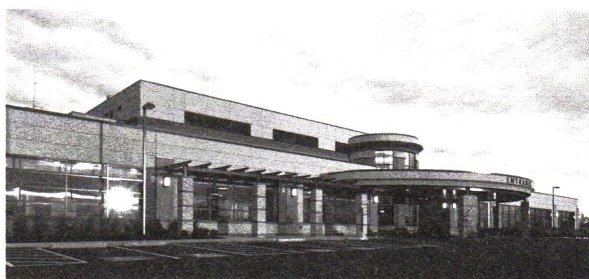
gram recognizes those who contribute to creating a better future for the residents of Pennsylvania, both economically and environmentally. Additionally, Al Mafrq Hospital, designed by **Burt Hill** and operated by Abu Dhabi Health Services Company (SEHA), was named "Best Sustainable Hospital Project" in the prestigious Hospital Build Middle East 2010 Awards program. The award recognizes outstanding commitment to sustainability in terms of design, development, and construction by honoring projects that demonstrate an efficient use of resources, such as energy and water, and use of materials that reduce environmental and health impacts of the facility.

Phillip Foreman, AIA, president and CEO of **Foreman Architects Engineers, Inc.** has been honored as an AE Centennial Fellow for Penn State University. The AE Centennial Fellows represent alumni from the architectural engineering department who's continued participation to the department has contributed to the history and legacy of the department. Foreman earned a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering in 1985, Bachelor of Science in Architecture in 1998 and a Bachelor of Architecture in 1999, all from Penn State University. He has continued to be involved with the school and department, supporting scholarships for architecture, engineering, and construction management students over the past 10 years.

James "Jimmy" Goldman, AIA, local architect and sports facility consultant, participated in the U.S. Master Swimmers "Search for



IKM Incorporated receives Award of Excellence for Reading Hospital and Medical Center Post Acute Rehabilitation Hospital



Monongy" event this July, an open water swim that took place in the Allegheny River near downtown. Goldman won his 70-to-75 age division for the 1.2 mile lap and was featured in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. He was one of 52 participants to brave the elements and the water.

IKM Incorporated, along with Wohlsen Construction Company, received the Keystone Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors Award of Excellence for the new Reading Hospital and Medical Center Post Acute Rehabilitation Hospital. The \$42 million project includes a 110-bed facility for inpatient rehabilitation. **Michael**

McDonnell, AIA is the principal in charge of design for rehabilitation facilities.

The Sextant Group was awarded Archi-Tech Magazine's "Grand Prize for Best Project over \$1 Million" and ProAV Magazine's 2010 Spotlight Award for "Best Health Care AV Project" at InfoComm2010. Both awards were for the Center for Connected Medicine, which showcases advances in high-level communication, computing, networking, and healthcare technologies in a flexible, one-of-a-kind experience center, exhibiting the possibilities of an interconnected healthcare system.



The Sextant Group wins awards for The Center for Connected Medicine

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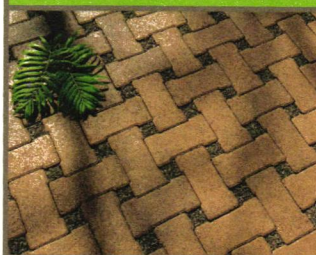
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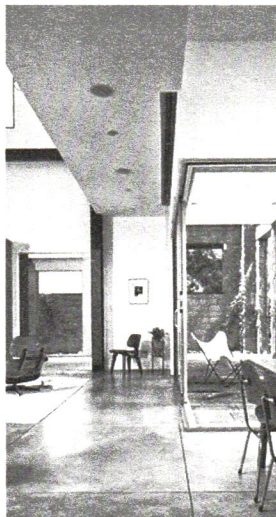
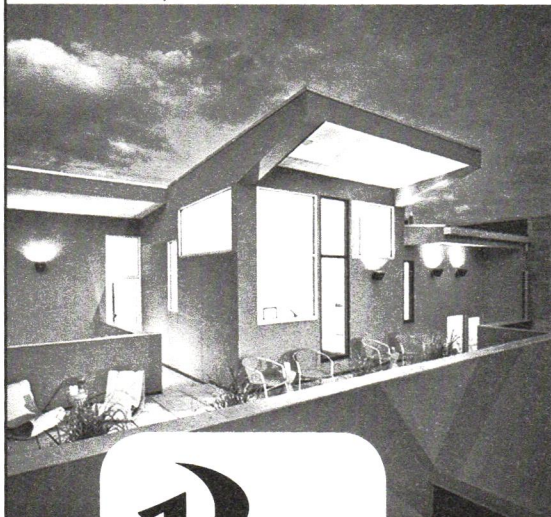
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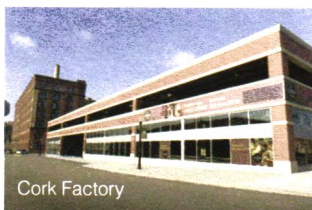
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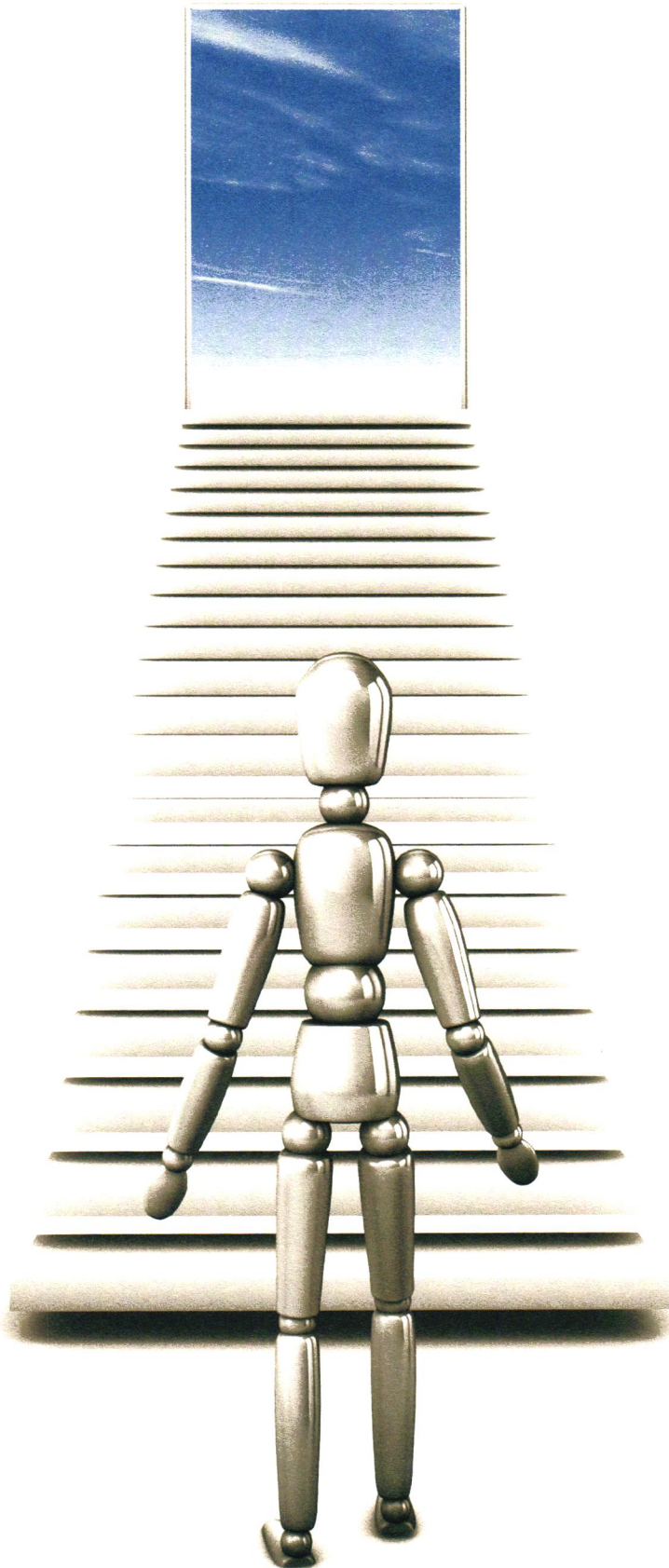
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into the great wide open

The future is uncertain. How will architects position themselves to be key players?

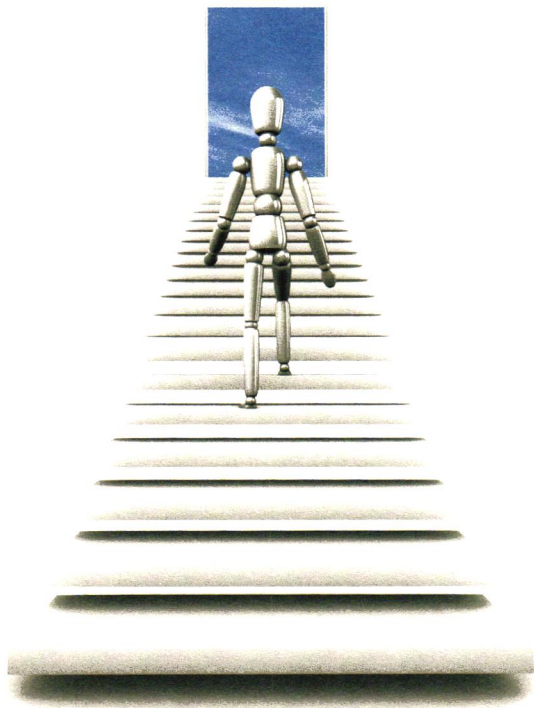
BY BECKY SPEVACK

“Technology has taught us to reflect anew on the concept of architecture.... And this is where we stand today. We have come a long way in a remarkably short time. The formalistic bonds of traditional architecture have been broken. Where do we go from here?”

— HANS POELZIG, *THE ARCHITECT*, 1951

Where do we go? And perhaps more importantly, how? German architect Hans Poelzig asked these questions in 1931, as both the world and the world of architecture were undergoing great transformations. Modernism, mass-production, the World Wars – they were changing the way we lived, did business, and defined ourselves. The world was becoming smaller.

Eighty years later we find ourselves once again at such a precipice, but under much different circumstances. Today we face a new and somewhat dour economic landscape; technology that replaces itself faster than we can learn to utilize it; diminishing resources; and a lack of confidence in the importance of quality design. The role of ‘architect’ is once again shifting, but what will it settle on? What will that role be as we become better equipped to navigate said landscape? No one has the answers to



We are the bridge for making IPD happen. We are the ones who are aggressively diving into the new 3-D realm with its myriad parameters to input. We should understand the ramifications for how integration should occur, and should be able to meaningfully share that information with decision-makers in our firms.

JOANNA BERES, ASSOC. AIA

these questions, but there are clues, indicators within (and outside of) the profession that point to what will be the practice of tomorrow, and how those practicing can prepare themselves to be key players.

CREATING AN EXPERIENCE

Technology has infiltrated our lives in almost every way imaginable. The internet provides us with news, research, communications, shopping, banking... you name it, and it can be done online. We don't even need computers to access it – our phones are able to keep us connected no matter where we are. If so much of our lives are able to be taken care of electronically, how will brick and mortar continue to impact us? One major way design, especially for retail, is shifting is to embrace the idea of creating an experience. Physical stores are no longer needed to supply the public with merchandise. Instead, they are becoming a place to market a brand, to introduce a shopper to a product. The space is created as a display.

No one has taken this idea further than Apple. Walk into any Apple store, and you instantly have a sense of the brand identity. The slick, clean lines and uncluttered spaces mimic the technology on display. Each store creates a user experience, encouraging you to interact with their products. Architecture firm Bohlin Cywinski Jackson has handled the design of Apple's most prominent stores, creating the flagship glass stairwells that pull consumers up (or down, as is the case at the Fifth Avenue store) and deeper in. This attention to the customers' experience in the space is no coincidence.

"The Apple personality comes through every time the customer encounters the brand, whether on television, in print or outdoor advertising, or through interacting with one of Apple's products. The Apple stores are no different, and Apple is able to project that personality across all these channels by maintaining rigorous consistency of design," writes Jesse James Garrett, president of Adaptive Path and recognized technology product designer.

MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE

The traditional mode of project delivery has seen its heyday, and a new model has been introduced, responding to the transformation in the field of architecture and the socio-economic forces impacting that transformation. Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) brings all parties together from the earliest practical moment and is defined by the AIA as “built on collaboration, which in turn is built on trust.” By involving all key participants at the beginning of a project, goals are developed and agreed upon early, and, assuming trust-based collaboration, parties are encouraged to focus on project outcomes rather than individual goals.

Another major selling point to IPD is the technology involved. While Building Information Modeling (or BIM) is no longer the stunning new idea that it was five years ago, it is still an evolving technology that many in the field are not familiar with. BIM, a digital, 3-D model linked to a database of project information, is one of the most powerful tools supporting IPD. The AIA’s IPD Guide explains that “because BIM can combine the design, fabrication information, erection instructions, and project management logistics in one database, it provides a platform for collaboration throughout the project’s design and construction. Additionally, because the model and database can exist for the life of the building, the owner may use BIM to manage the facility well beyond completion of construction.”

Joanna Beres, Assoc. AIA, has had the opportunity to work on projects utilizing the IPD model, and sees it as where the profession is head-

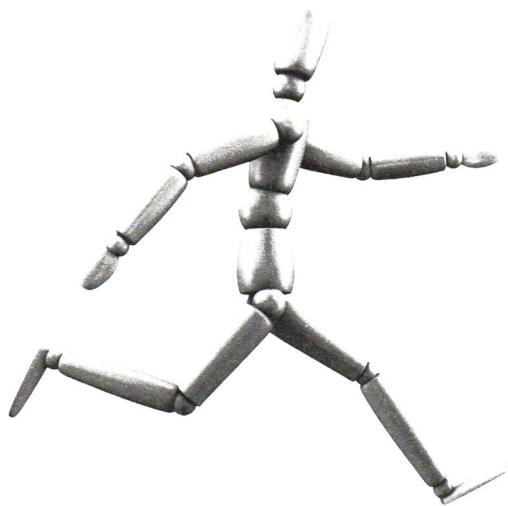
ing. “It’s made to create a more efficient project, both time- and money-wise,” she says, “and it’s an amazing tool.” Beres considers it part of the upcoming generation’s responsibility to help introduce and educate both professionals and clients about the many advantages to using this model. “We are the bridge for making IPD happen.... We are the ones who are aggressively diving into the new 3-D realm with its myriad parameters to input. We, in turn, should understand the ramifications for how integration should occur, and should be able to meaningfully share that information with decision-makers in our firms.”

But what about those who don’t have an in depth understanding of BIM, who aren’t diving into the new 3-D realm? Scott Womack, AIA, project manager at WTW Architects, has been reaching out to bring people up to speed. Womack is involved with the Steel City Revit Users

Group, which has free monthly meetings, providing attendees with a place to learn, share, and discuss this BIM software. He sees technology speeding up the design and delivery process, and the construction process as well. But, he warns, “it sometimes appears that as the knowledge of technology increase, the knowledge and understanding of construction has somewhat decreased.

“The architectural profession is on the cusp of some major changes, whether we like it or not,” he expounds. “We, as architects, need to move things back towards the ‘master builder’ side of things, or we’ll become a pure commodity service industry, abdicating all of





The architectural profession is on the cusp of some major changes, whether we like it or not. We, as architects, need to move things back towards the 'master builder' side of things, or we'll become a pure commodity service industry, abdicating all of our authority to others in the process.

SCOTT WOMACK, AIA

our authority to others in the process. Part of this is the beginnings of using the BIM model to directly fabricate pieces of the building from the digital model. Without a move towards the 'master builder' mentality, we'll end up abdicating the construction documentation part of our profession, as well as its fees, to the constructors/fabricators in the industry."

To make any sort of gains in the industry, Womack strongly believes that more experienced architects need to stay engaged in the advances in technology. The industry, mirroring the world, is becoming increasingly digital. "Already, submittals are either completely digital, or very close to it," Womack explains. "In twenty years, there may not be a set of hardcopy prints issued. The BIM model would be issued." And, tying into the collaborative nature of IPD, he sees the traditional phases of pre-design, schematic design, design development, and construction documentation going by the wayside. "A product such as Revit has completely blurred the lines of the design development and construction documentation phases. If [Revit] is used earlier... it will blur the lines to the point where they really become one phase."

ARCHITECT BE NIMBLE

The idea of flexibility cannot be emphasized enough. While the profession may not know what lies ahead, the ability to adapt, to shift and meet the changes in the surrounding landscape will help keep architects on their feet.

"Larger firms, while offering greater possibilities, are also slower to react to changing markets. They carry so much overhead that it is difficult to compete with smaller firms on anything but the largest jobs... of which there don't seem to be too many at the moment. Keeping overhead low is particularly important as fees continue to trend downward and competition gets fiercer," predicts Matthew Brind'Amour of Brind'Amour Design.


Brind'Amour also sees the connections among industries, and how that overlap could create opportunities. After being laid off, he

began to take classes to obtain his real estate license; he was fortunate to find work as a freelance designer shortly thereafter. While he has not scheduled the exam for his real estate license, he was drawn to this possibility for a number of reasons. “First, my preference in architecture is residential design or other small projects. I prefer projects that allow a lot of control and smaller projects typically allow for that.... I also see the potential, particularly now that I have established my own business, for cross-over work to develop from real estate relationships. Being involved (now primarily) in residential design, getting to work with real estate buyers would present, I should think, opportunities to educate the buyers about their potential homes, the role of architects, and also present potential renovation and design opportunities.”

Another opportunity often overlooked is marketing. It’s not headline news that architects are notoriously bad at promoting themselves. “Why are we [architects] so bad at building ourselves up?” Joanna Beres asked when this topic was broached. Now, more than ever, the profession needs to find its voice and learn to shout. There IS value in design. Good design of a space DOES impact productivity, health, happiness. Those practicing architecture already know this. The challenge is helping the public, the client, and potential clients understand just how true this is.

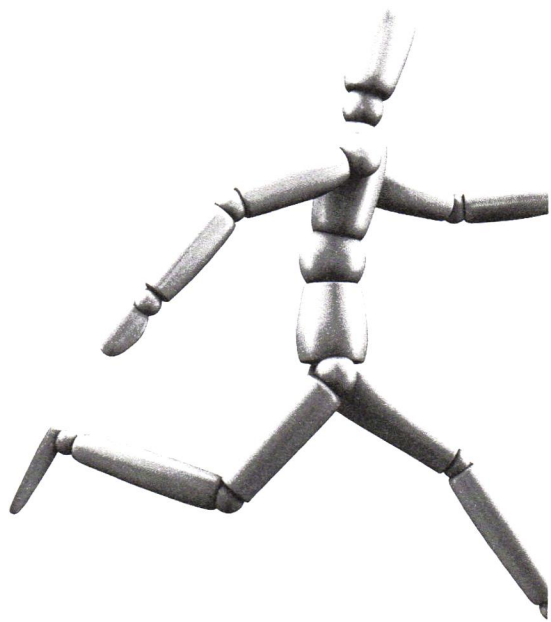
“Working now with a home builder as one of my clients has made it clear that many of the end users don’t give much thought at all to architects and the value they bring to the table,” relates Brind’Amour. “I think that architects must continue working to educate the public about the value they offer to a design. Fortunately, this builder does understand the value of good design and on a number of occasions I’ve had the opportunity to review existing design choices and have been able to greatly improve the efficiency and function of this builder’s existing designs, saving them and their clients money... while creating a more cohesive, livable, and marketable design in the process.

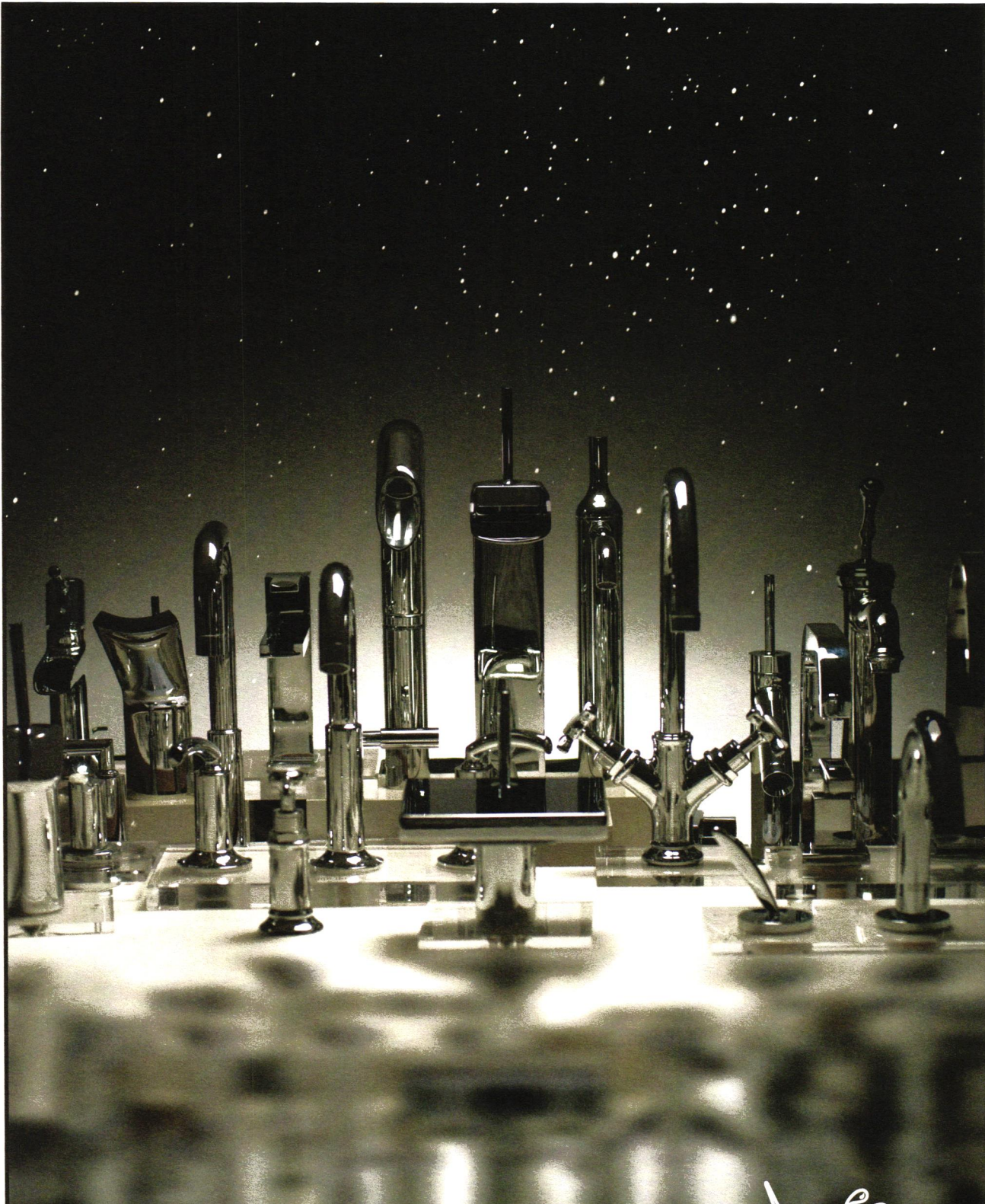
“Actually educating the masses will not be an easy thing to do,” he continues, “but at a small scale we do get to work with individual clients – who thought they were just buying a house from a builder – and we do get to demonstrate our profession’s value when we work through design issues with them. In the larger community, though, I think we need to better advertise ourselves and our value. Educational institutions, and not just colleges, could be a good place to start...”

The unknown can be a scary place. But there are clues and indicators to help determine where the profession is going. BIM and IPD are here to stay, and making the effort to become familiar with them will provide steps towards more stable ground. Keep an ear to the ground, continue to read and engage with a multitude of sources, and consider adopting new best practices as they emerge. And staying flexible, remembering that change can be good, is a mindset that will help make the transition into the unknown a little bit easier. 

Steel City Revit Users Group

The group typically meets on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting location changes monthly and there is no charge to attend. The next meeting is September 16th at Atlantic Engineering Services. If you have further questions, contact Scott Womack, AIA at 412-321-0551 x327 or at swomack@wtwarch.com. Visit <http://rugpitt.design.officelive.com/default.aspx>





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